

SPAIN AND PORTUGAL.

The growing restlessness of some of the younger Monarchists may be seen in the recent report of an impending visit by one of their number to Don Juan in Switzerland, apparently without the knowledge of the Spanish authorities. The emissary professed to be the bearer of an "ultimatum" from his group insisting that Don Juan should issue a proclamation abandoning his neutral attitude, declaring his opposition to totalitarianism, and announcing his intention to set up a constitutional, liberal and Catholic Monarchy. It is confirmed that the Vatican was not consulted about General Franco's reference in his Almeria speech (see last week's *Summary*) to Spain as uniting herself with the Pope in his efforts for the restoration of peace.

Elements of the Falangist party police, when questioned recently regarding their systematic molestation of callers at Allied consulates, gave as their reason the fact that Spanish neutrality was being undermined by stories of great Allied successes. This was prior to the Axis *débâcle* in Tunisia. Since that *débâcle* the State Department has had occasion to take notice of a further series of vexatious incidents, such as are hardly reconcilable either with Count Jordana's assurances of Spanish neutrality or with General Franco's references to Spanish "serenity." That serenity continues to be assailed from various quarters. Reports said to have been received in the Spanish Foreign Office, concerning alleged Russian opposition to the idea of an Allied operation in Turkey, are believed to have caused a renewal of alarm lest the second front may after all implicate the Peninsula. The tribute implied to the efficacy of German propaganda regarding the impregnability of Europe's western defences may give a clue to the source of these reports. Also possibly of German-inspired origin may be the story of a note said to have reached Madrid from Moscow enquiring whether captured Blue Division soldiers were to be regarded as volunteers. If so, they would be shot: if not, Russia would regard herself as at war with Spain. *Arriba* has printed more "documents" in proof of the unchanging duplicity of the U.S.S.R., allegedly exhumed this time from the Quai d'Orsay as part of a new anti-Soviet propaganda drive from Berlin. Even in Falangist Spain, however, facts may eventually speak louder than propaganda. The same *Arriba* gave more space to Mr. Churchill's address to Congress of the 19th May than it has ever given to a speech of his before, while long extracts filled two columns of *Ya*.

Considerable progress has now been made between London and Washington regarding the bases which would permit of the initiation of negotiations with the Spanish Government for the supply to Spain of limited quantities of aviation spirit. The German Government has categorically refused to consider the establishment of a direct air-line between Spain and Switzerland mentioned earlier in this connexion (see *Summary* No. 187). In Tangier the Spanish authorities have withdrawn their opposition to the distribution of food-stuffs by the British Consulate-General to British nationals. The Belgian Government in London is said to be nearing agreement with the Spanish Government regarding the renewal of diplomatic relations.

The only official statements so far elicited from the Spanish side regarding the highly-coloured reports, again, curiously enough, first given currency by Berlin, of serious damage to naval units and to the dockyards at El Ferrol "del Caudillo" would appear to be denials issued by the Spanish Ambassadors to Vichy and London that the fire was other than accidental or that it caused more than slight material damage to buildings of the "Constructora Naval."

In conversation with His Majesty's Ambassador, recently returned from London, Dr. Salazar—who is reported to be suffering from insomnia—has shown himself slightly more receptive to the idea that Russia has come to stay and that the surest way of turning her into a respectable member of the society of nations will be an honest attempt to draw her into close and confident collaboration. Sir R. Campbell reported to Dr. Salazar that he had found in England some decline in sympathy for Portugal, due to such factors as the law nationalising foreign capital, the continued failure on Portugal's part to deal adequately with Axis espionage agents, and the acceptance of a new Vichy Minister when the Vichy Government could no longer lay claim to independence. A factor weighing heavily on Dr. Salazar in respect of this last is that Portugal is in charge of Brazilian interests in Vichy France. Sir R. Campbell complained further of new evidence of partiality for German propaganda shown in the Portuguese censorship, and took the opportunity to inform Dr. Salazar of the reply recently returned by His Majesty's Government to an enquiry from the Spanish Minister

for Foreign Affairs regarding our attitude to neutrals after the war, to the effect that that attitude would necessarily depend on the attitude shown by the neutrals during the war, and particularly from now on. There has been evidence recently that the Portuguese police are still under instructions to continue the anti-Communist drive with the utmost severity. A Roumanian refugee has been sentenced to expulsion for having printed, in a pamphlet concerning his own country, favourable allusions to Soviet Russia, this being, in words attributed to the Portuguese Minister of the Interior, in direct opposition to Portuguese policy.

The Portuguese Government is believed to be ready to admit a representative of French North Africa, who would occupy himself with commercial matters, visas, refugees and the like, but would prefer someone not formally connected with the Vichy Legation in Lisbon. It is also anxious to resume the earlier North African trading agreement.

ITALY.

Less attention than might have been expected in the circumstances was paid by Italian broadcasters to the fourth anniversary on the 22nd May of the signature of the Italo-German Alliance, and it was perhaps significant that the earliest talk given on that day on the subject put "the personal friendship between the Duce and the Führer" first among the bases on which the Pact of Steel rested. There was, however, the usual exchange of messages between King Victor Emanuel and Mussolini and Hitler, and again between Mussolini and Bastianini and Ribbentrop, and various Italian spokesmen in the press and on the radio dwelt upon the indissoluble character of the bonds binding the two Axis partners together and upon their determination to carry through the war to a victorious finish. These assurances were probably intended largely for foreign consumption and to counter the spate of rumours about the parlous situation in Italy. There have been reports that both the King and his party and also a group surrounding the Crown Prince Umberto are working, though upon different lines, for the withdrawal of Italy from the war. There is no trustworthy confirmation of these alleged manoeuvres. The *Stefani* news agency has also been mobilised to deny the suggestion that Germany was ready to abandon Italy to her fate. "The eventual abandonment of Italy by Germany," it was declared, "is as absurd a hypothesis as would be the inverse supposition." Not even Mrs. Micawber, in short, ever asserted her determination never to desert Mr. Macawber with greater vehemence, and if there were a Dunmow Fitch for international conjugal felicity Italy and Germany would, on the basis of their propaganda, have strong claims to the award. The reports, at any rate, that Germany was withdrawing her land and air forces from Italy and the Mediterranean should be received with caution, and they are, in fact, directly contradicted by other reports stating that Hitler had moved several divisions into Italy and had reinforced the Luftwaffe under Kesselring in Southern Italy, Sicily and Sardinia.

Be all this as it may, there are clear signs that Italian opinion is profoundly perturbed not only by the prospect of military invasion but also by suspicions of recent political developments. Senator Salata, in a "report" on the work of the Foreign Office, referred specifically to Italian claims against France and said that, without disclosing diplomatic secrets, he could assert that "even after the last meeting between the Führer and Laval, attended by Bastianini, Italy's legitimate claims had in no way been prejudiced—and these were among the main premises for Italy's entry into the war. Germany had repeatedly recognised them." These words obviously connote popular anxiety lest Italian interests had been sacrificed by Hitler as part of a deal with Laval. In commenting upon Salata's "report" Bastianini took the opportunity to stress "the fundamental principles" proclaimed at the meeting between Mussolini and Hitler on the 7th-10th April, and declared that Italian policy had always defended the principle of nationality for others as well as for herself, and that it had never aimed at the subjection or oppression of other European peoples. He claimed that Italy and Germany intended to remain (*sic*) faithful to those principles so as to lay the foundations of a New World Order. His association of Germany with Italy may well have been a deliberate attempt to force Germany's hand, since the stress laid in Rome upon this feature of the Mussolini-Hitler conversations was much greater than that given to it by the *Herrenvolk* in Berlin. Bastianini, who, like Salata, paid homage to the Monarchy and the House of Savoy, also referred to France, who, he said, "must understand the need of making

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