

murdered on the 20th March by a man who recently returned from Yugo-Slavia. He has said that his motive was revenge against the Communists for his sufferings in the training camp at Boulkes.

Military operations to clear several areas of bandits have begun and successes have been reported, particularly from the areas of Kilkis, Vermion and Larissa. Near Grevena, the Greek Army has attacked a band 800 strong.

The United Nations Commission have made several journeys into Yugoslavia and Bulgaria and have visited the scenes of various incidents including Skra. They also investigated the Sourmena incident of the 20th September and Greek officers showed them that the geography of the terrain proved that the bands could not have retired before the Greek forces otherwise than over the Yugoslav frontier. It was felt that the Yugoslav witnesses were "clearly subject to strict control and unwilling to commit themselves to anything beyond the prepared statement."

The Soviet and Polish delegates and the three liaison representatives who remained in rebel-territory last week returned to Salonica on the 22nd March, claiming to have met Markos.

Albania

While in New York M. Hysni Kapo has been trying his best to convince the Security Council (as a *Times* correspondent neatly put it) that "the British Navy on the 12th-13th November last laid the mines that blew up the destroyers three weeks previously," Enver Hoxha himself has helped to keep the ball rolling by bringing a *fresh* complaint to the notice of M. Trygve Lie. This time he alleges that on the 13th March a tanker coming from the direction of Italy without flag and without warning penetrated into Albanian territorial waters near Valona. He says that when an Albanian motor launch tried to approach her, the unknown ship went off at full speed without having been identified. In the absence of any better explanation he jumps to his usual conclusion. "At a time when previous repeated violations by British ships are before the Security Council for discussion, this new violation constitutes a premeditated and inadmissible act of provocation against Albanian sovereignty." Once more he asks, why does not the Security Council act?

Mr. Murphy and Sir William Strang came in for some sharp criticism from *Bashkimi* on the 19th March for having put forward objections to Albania's claim

to a small share in reparations from Germany. The suggestion that Austria could make out as good a case as Albania was particularly resented.

Yet another "treason trial" has been going on. Seven men were convicted at Koritsa on the 21st March of having plotted against their country in the interests of "a Greek terrorist fascist organization" called E.A.V.I. They were sentenced to terms of imprisonment varying from twenty years to three years.

Bulgaria

In answering a Parliamentary Question on the 17th March about the events of the 7th at Sofia, Mr. McNeil stated that His Majesty's Government regarded the Bulgarian Government's reply to the collectively signed protest presented to them by the seven heads of missions on the 11th as being "in no sense satisfactory." He also said that after making rigorous enquiries he was satisfied that our mission had been involved in no transactions designed to make illegal profits from currency. It is hoped that the whole disagreeable incident may be terminated this week by the publication in the Sofia press of a joint statement to be agreed between the Bulgarian Government and the foreign missions involved. At the time of writing the Bulgarian Government have, however, not given their consent to this course, which would involve their publicly undertaking not to act without prior consultation with the missions in any parallel case that might occur in the future.

When the Bulgarian Foreign Minister received the new British Political Representative on the 19th March, he tactfully enquired when he might hope to address him as H.M. Minister. M. Georgiev was politely told that he must wait until after the ratification of the treaty.

For the second time since the New Year, it has been found necessary to reduce the standard bread ration: it will now be 300 grammes of white bread or 370 grammes of wholemeal a day. At the same time the meat ration has been increased from 200 to 300 grammes a week. It is possible that the necessity of repaying last year's loan of cereals by the Russians may be behind the bread cut.

The suspension of the Opposition newspapers continues. M. Petkov was ordered out of the Assembly for complaining about it and told he might not resume his seat for three days. The entire Opposition thereupon marched out of the Chamber in a body.

Turkey

The Turkish press greeted President Truman's message to Congress about Greece and Turkey, with a paean of praise. No doubt was expressed but that substantial help would be forthcoming. The United States were believed to have understood the Soviet danger at last, and it was hoped that a firm American and British stand would produce results at Moscow. At the same time the Turks betrayed misgivings not only as to the value of Britain as an ally, but also as to limitations of their freedom which American help might connote. To their mentality it is almost inconceivable that British withdrawal from India and Egypt should be due to anything but weakness. On the other hand they are genuinely perturbed lest American help should mean American domination, and fears of a virtual return of the capitulations or of "Egyptianisation" have been seriously entertained. Upon all these misgivings Soviet propaganda has been trying to play. It has long been insinuating that the alliance with Great Britain is valueless to Turkey—unlike what one with Soviet Russia would be. Now Soviet broadcasts also suggest that American capitalism is trying to take Turkey under its control. However, the vulnerability of Turkey is such that even the Turk in the street cannot fail to realise how momentous for his country and the whole Middle East it will be if the United States step actively into

an arena where Great Britain and Russia have hitherto been face to face.

The Minister of State announced in the House of Commons on the 17th March that, since the end of the war with Germany, Great Britain had supplied two destroyers, a submarine, a score of smaller vessels and more than £500,000 worth of equipment for the Turkish navy; small quantities of equipment for the Army; and 400 aircraft. All this had been furnished against payment except in so far as it was covered by the unused portion of the 1939 armament credit. A number of naval, military and air advisers had also been provided for purposes of training and supply.

The Turkish Government are not in the habit of paying much attention to the Turks of Cyprus who form some 18 per cent. of the population. Some importance may therefore attach to a leading article in the *Ulus* of the 28th February on the subject of the recent visit to the United Kingdom of a delegation of Cypriot Greeks who begged for union with Greece. After dwelling on the strategic importance of the island the semi-official paper remarked that the 60,000 Cypriot Turks would see great disadvantage in annexation to Greece and would not consent to it. It might therefore be taken for certain, the *Ulus* continued, that there was no question of any change in the status of the island.

THE MIDDLE EAST

Egypt

Although Hussein Heikal Pasha, after a meeting of the Liberal Constitutional party on the 18th March, said that the Egyptian Government might still consider the mediation of the Levant States if His Majesty's Government would make some further acceptable concession, and there seemed at one moment to be a chance that the Arab League meeting might be used to cover a retreat from an appeal to the United Nations, it now seems likely that the Government will go forward with this project. The debate in the Senate, which was adjourned on the 11th March, was resumed on the 18th, when the Wafdist Opposition leader, Sabri Abu Alam Pasha, challenged the Government to declare their attitude to mediation proposals, and questioned the finality of the decision to appeal to the United Nations. He rejected on principle the possibility of a plebiscite in a part of the Nile Valley on the ground that the idea of submitting the question of

the unity of Egypt and the Sudan under the Egyptian Crown to a plebiscite was inadmissible and would be rejected by the nation. He demanded from the Prime Minister an answer, "yes" or "no" to the question whether he guaranteed that, after the evacuation, a treaty would not be concluded with Great Britain to fill the vacuum of which Mr. Bevin had spoken. In conclusion he protested that those who had approved of the Sidky-Bevin proposals could not appear before the United Nations, since they would be faced with the approval with which they had bound themselves. Nokrashy Pasha merely suggested reference to his previous statement about mediation. Taufiq Doss Pasha gave as his opinion that previous proposals would not be binding on the present Government, but that the United Nations might be influenced by Mr. Attlee's announcement that the Egyptian Government had approved of them, and thought that steps should be taken to avoid this risk