

other point of interest in his speech was the statement that members of the N.S.B. would not be required to surrender their radio sets, because they stood by the Germans and the Germans stood by them.

In spite of this concession Mussert is unhappy, and does not like the reinternment of Dutch soldiers; for that measure makes plain his utter impotence to protect Dutch interests.

There has been fresh evidence of anti-German activities in Belgium. The labour drive has not produced the expected results, and German propaganda to persuade Belgian workers that they will be comfortable and well-paid in Germany has continued. It is also worth noting that the output of at least some of the coal mines in the Campine has fallen. The ostensible reasons for the drop are the under-feeding of the miners and the deterioration of machinery. Both these reasons are plausible, but a go-slow policy on the part of the miners may also have been a contributing factor.

Recent information shows that the policy of deporting patriotic Luxemburg families to remote parts of the German Lebensraum and of replacing them by persons whose loyalty to the Reich is regarded as firm is being carried on with unabated vigour. According to official German statements persons from the South Tyrol, the Bukovina and Transylvania are steadily being settled in the Grand Duchy.

M. Spaak has delivered an important speech on peace aims. He denied that there was any conflict of interest between the Great and Small Powers and stated that the coming peace must guarantee both political security and economic prosperity. To secure these ends he favoured an association of democratic States with an international army, a common monetary policy, and a common minimum programme of social legislation along the lines of the Beveridge Report. In conclusion, he strongly urged the need for agreement on these principles at the earliest possible date.

FRANCE.

German propaganda has been using the Paris press and wireless with concentrated intensity to impress upon the French public a sense of the impregnability of the German coastal defences which spread from Dunkirk to the Bidassoa; the visions conjured up of the German recapture of a town after bombing and fierce street fighting in the "unlikely" event of "infiltration" nevertheless taking place are no doubt designed to stress the horrors of a desperate venture which could only increase French suffering. Parties of collaborationist journalists have been visiting the fortifications, and photographs are widely reproduced to show the havoc wrought by Allied bombing in the living-quarters of coastal towns and the immunity of the fortifications on which the Organisation Todt has employed much French as well as foreign labour. Efforts are also made to show that these defences have been extended on the same scale along the Mediterranean coast; and evidence certainly points not only to large-scale evacuation of towns in this area and in the Eastern Pyrenees (Carcassonne being the latest reported), but to a considerable amount of labour having been put in particular into defence construction since last November in the coastal area spreading from the Pyrenees to Marseilles—an area which is much less evidently defensible than the Côte d'Azur. On the other hand, it is the Italians who occupy the whole area between Toulon and Ventimiglia, their occupation now extending over the Departments of Haute-Savoie, Savoie, Isère, Hautes-Alpes, Basses-Alpes, Var and Alpes-Maritimes, as well as Corsica. Whatever German stiffening there may be in certain places, the line between German-occupied and Italian-occupied France is treated as a frontier, and a German permit is needed to cross it. Inside the Italian area there have for months been reports pointing to the accommodating and even flattering attitude of the Italians to the French, particularly in the coastal Departments. This has taken not only the form of failure to apply anti-Jewish measures and of help to escaping Jews, but of the reported liberation of British and American internees, and of connivance with the local French authorities in preventing deportation of workers to Germany, and even of open co-operation with the Prefect in the case of Toulon, where the Germans only occupy the arsenal. Reports of the generally passive or *non possumus* attitude of the Italians to the larger strategic issues of the war were recently confirmed on his arrival in London by M. Louis Jacquinet, former Under-Secretary for the Interior in M. Reynaud's Government. In contrast to this easing of formal occupation are reports that the workmen and their families further east in the

Alpes-Maritimes are literally starving, as this is the most denuded Department of all France.

Evidence is scanty regarding the recruiting of French labour for the building of inner defence lines, whether in the new Chemin des Dames, or round Macon or in other areas within a hundred miles or more of the French coast; but conscription for these purposes has to some extent neutralised the large-scale deportations for labour in Germany and beyond.

The victories of the French army, the recovery of Tunisia and improvements of economic prospects have combined to give all sections of the population in North Africa a new self-confidence and have temporarily silenced malcontents, whether French or Arab. Ten thousand of General Giraud's troops took part in the great march-past of 28,000 Allied troops on the 23rd May, the Fighting Frenchmen providing only a small detachment of 400, but it is reliably reported that Frenchmen in Tunisia are "predominantly Gaullist in the broad sense." General Juin, the Acting Resident-General, has abolished the compulsory labour service in Tunisia; and this will no doubt stimulate recruiting. But the effort of the Fighting French under General de Larminat to exploit their popularity by recruiting for their own forces in Tunisia has greatly incensed General Giraud, who has cancelled the agreement to give an option to French refugees from Spain arriving in North Africa: 300 out of 500 in the first batch of these opted for General de Gaulle.

Despite fears felt regarding the effects in Algiers of the publication of the message from the Central Committee of Resistance, marked progress has been made in the negotiations between the two Generals. The message in question and London comment upon it (British and French) were given full publicity in Algiers four days later, when papers made the best of what was felt to be an unfortunate incident and emphasised the point that there was no intention in Fighting French quarters of going back on the points of agreement already reached.

General Catroux brought to London General Giraud's reply to General de Gaulle's letter of the 10th May (reported in last week's *Summary*). This reply has been published. General Giraud, again insisting on "the rapid amalgamation into one army of victory of all French forces" (a point which has a direct bearing on the difficulty of rival recruiting), proposes the immediate formation of a Central Executive Committee which he and General de Gaulle should preside over in turn; each of them should nominate two other members and three further members should be chosen later by this initial Committee of six. The Committee should be limited in duration and its responsibility should be collective. If agreement is reached it should meet at Algiers and be the "Central Power" dealing with all matters hitherto dealt with by the National Committee in London and the Civil and Military Commander-in-Chief in Algiers. It would organise a National Consultative Council and a Committee of Resistance, appoint Commissioners, &c. Though convinced they are acting in accordance with the wishes of the French people, they hold their authority (General Giraud contends) from a *de facto* situation and cannot be a French Government. Such a Government would, as soon as the country was freed, be constituted according to the law of the 15th February, 1872 (loi Tréveneuc), intended for a situation when legislative assemblies have, as now, ceased to function. This law could, moreover, be adapted by appealing to elected bodies on the advice of the National Consultative Council and the Council of Legislation.

The National Committee met at Carlton Gardens on the 24th May under General de Gaulle and with General Catroux attending. It was noted that "no differences of importance exist" between their conception and that of General Giraud's latest letter. General Catroux was to return to Algiers, and it is thought that General de Gaulle himself will leave this week for the North African capital accompanied by M. Massigli, National Commissioner for Foreign Affairs, and M. André Philip, National Commissioner for the Interior and for Labour.

Mr. Harold Macmillan, His Majesty's Minister Resident at Algiers, has himself returned to London and seen Mr. Eden. He will shortly leave again for Algiers.

It is learned on good authority that MM. Blum, Daladier and Jouhaux and General Gamelin are interned together under reasonably good conditions, in a country house somewhere in Germany.