

"Children's Hour" on Moscow Radio on the 4th June included a poem entitled "Rommel's March," which in the style of a traditional Russian folk song, "Malbrook v pokhod sobral'sya" (Marlborough went to the wars), begins:—

Rommel went forth to war
Across the Libyan sands,

and ends:—

Back over Libyan sands,
Back into Tripoli;
Routed his German bands,
His jackals from Italy;
Bayonets hasten his flight
From Mareth to Cape Bon;
Rommel has faded from sight—
Ta-ra-ra-tum-tum-tum!

SCANDINAVIA.

The German Government has at last, after six weeks' delay, returned a polite and indeed apologetic reply to the Swedish note of protest against the anchoring of German mines inside Swedish territorial waters. The excuse was put forward from Berlin that, although the mines could not have been originally laid in these waters, they must have been moved there by the strong currents, and an offer was made of co-operation by the German navy in sweeping them up. It is stated, however, that the Swedes have already done this themselves.

Swedish reception of the news of the dissolution of the Comintern was a mixed one. There was general agreement that the step was wise and opportune as a political gesture towards world opinion, but by no means every organ of the press found it possible to believe that it signified a change of heart on the part of the Communists in relation to world revolution. *Dagens Nyheter*, in particular, emphasised that for a nation like Sweden the future conduct of the Soviet Union towards the neighbouring States in the West would provide the decisive indication as to the meaning of the new course. This paper, on the 29th May, in the third of a series of articles on the subject, exposed the failure which had attended the Comintern's efforts to promote world revolution, and reminded its readers that the Bavarian revolution under the leadership of Kurt Eisner was launched before the Third International existed, and that bolshevism was the product of internal political conditions and looked after itself without outside help. The Comintern had only acted as a drag on the international relations of the U.S.S.R., and the paper concluded that it was no wonder that the Nazis grieved when the dissolution of the Comintern followed in the wake of the Anglo-Soviet Alliance for twenty years and Soviet acceptance of the Atlantic Charter. London and Washington realised that there were two alternatives. Either the present coalition would be dissolved and the Soviet Union return to its former isolation, which would open up the prospect of a new world war, or the three victorious world Powers would continue to collaborate after the war, which would allow the Moscow Government to devote its undivided attention to reconstruction and to improving the standard of living. The dissolution of the Third International was a step in that direction. The *Upsala Nya Tidning* of the 24th May also focussed attention on the baneful influence of the Comintern on the foreign relations of the U.S.S.R. and its repercussions on the latter's internal situation: "It cannot have meant a great sacrifice for the Russian Government to dissolve the Comintern. During recent years the organisation has proved a hindrance in relations with the Anglo-Saxon Powers. The Communist International would have hindered Russia in her efforts to clear up the post-war frontier problems and to reconstruct the areas devastated by the war." Interest attaches to the fact that on the day on which the news of the dissolution was released, the Swedish Communist Party newspaper *Ny Dag* had no comment to make. On the following day, however, a statement was issued by Party headquarters to the effect that the Party had been consulted in advance and had approved the decision taken in Moscow. This statement was followed by another which announced that the Swedish Communist Party would not be dissolved, nor would it change its name. The obvious embarrassment of the local Communists has given considerable amusement to their opponents in Sweden.

Nasjonal Samling published an offer on the 4th June of unconditional pardon to any Norwegian refugees who will return at once from Sweden. They are promised that they will not be detained for more than four days, needed for the

issue to them of all necessary papers; their property and other assets, and those of their parents, will be returned; moreover, all people who have been arrested because of their flight will also be released. N.S. propaganda has seized on the fact that a handful of Norwegians of low character who had got into trouble with the Swedish authorities has indeed returned, and is pretending in talks on the wireless that "every other day Norwegians are returning from Sweden. They all believe that across the Norwegian frontier life will be much better . . . those boys who have returned can all tell about the good welcome they have received," &c. Whether this sort of talk will have much effect on the remaining 16,000 refugees in Sweden is, however, more than doubtful. Though the reason for this Quisling move is not certain, it is probably to be found in the severe labour shortage with which the Germans are faced in Norway.

There is, unfortunately, only too good ground to fear that disease of various kinds is making considerable progress in Norway. Diphtheria cases, for example, numbered 2,609 in 1941, but 8,339 in 1942, whilst in the month of January 1943 alone there were 1,602 cases. Similarly, scarlet fever cases had risen from 3,825 in 1940 to 13,908 in 1942, and syphilis, which was almost non-existent before the war, claimed 5,187 patients in 1942. Coincidentally with the above, medical examinations in the schools show that a great number of school-children are under-weight, and illness has increased.

The effects of war and German occupation on the health of Finnish children, too, have been disclosed in an interview given by Professor Ylppoe, the head of the Helsinki Children's Clinic, who said that last year the rate of infantile mortality in Finland was 50 per cent. above normal, and that this year matters were worse still. It seems that the professor, in view of the fact that his clinic is over-full, has been trying to arrange for the reception in Sweden of further numbers of sick Finnish children, but, according to *Göteborgs Sjöfarts och Handelstidning* of the 15th May, the position in respect of children already in Sweden is critical, owing to funds having been exhausted.

The Finnish volunteer battalion returned to Finland on the 1st June and received an official welcome in which various German notabilities participated. *Uusi Suomi*, in commenting on the event, indicated that their contract was for two years, which had expired, and it made the somewhat curious statement: "Sooner than they perhaps expected, they were drafted into active fighting, although far away from our own frontiers," whilst *Karjala* acknowledged that "in many Finnish homes there is grief for the fallen. Their comrades who return have gone through experiences which few survive."

The series of sabotage incidents in Denmark, referred to in previous *Summaries*, continues, and there is evidence of a more careful selection of targets and of more systematic performance. Armed men overpower the guards, bind and gag them, and put them in a place of safety, while the explosive or incendiary is placed. Recent targets have been the foundry of the Frederikssund Iron Foundry and Machine Factory on the 10th May, the locomotive sheds at the Toender railway station, where locomotives were damaged, on the 31st May, and the Roerdals Cement Factory in some harbour works near Aalborg on the 2nd June. Here bombs had been placed under various machines and four explosions took place which seem to have caused considerable damage.

FRANCE.

In Algiers the difficulties raised by the circumstances accompanying M. Peyrouton's resignation and the appointment of Admiral Muselier were finally overcome, after efforts to which the British and American Ministers contributed; and at a meeting on the 3rd June, attended by Generals Giraud, de Gaulle, Georges and Catroux, and MM. Massigli, Monnet, Philip, it was decided that those present should constitute the French Committee for National Liberation, and that other members might be co-opted later. Further, General Catroux was to replace M. Peyrouton as Governor-General of Algeria and also to be Commissioner for Moslem Affairs; General Bouscat, who had headed General Giraud's mission to London, was to replace General Mendigal as Commander-in-Chief of the French Air Force; and M. Gabriel Puaux, the former French High Commissioner in Syria, who escaped from Tunisia after the battle, was to succeed General Noguès as Resident-General of French Morocco. The new Committee claims to constitute the Central Power organising the French war effort in all its forms, exercising sovereignty over all French territory not occupied by the