

contents of this correspondence remain undisclosed, but the President has said that the understanding and accord between him and Marshal Stalin were excellent. Thus the cordiality recently noted in public sentiment towards the Soviet Union is encouraged. But two questions are always near the surface of American thought on this subject: that of the Siberian bases, and that of Finland. Mr. Raymond Clapper in his recent reports from Stockholm has again been asking whether Moscow could not find a policy which would lead to Finland's withdrawal from her alliance with the Axis.

The Food Conference closed on the 3rd June amidst a general feeling that it had done very well. This is not the place to attempt to summarise its conclusions, but a few points of general interest may be selected. Firstly, it was of special importance that this first United Nations Conference should be a success. There seems no doubt that both the Administration and public opinion (always excepting the irreconcilables) have been encouraged by its results, and are in a mood to repeat the experience. Secondly, the part played by the United Kingdom and other British Delegations has been cordially appreciated in Washington, and is of good omen for the future. Thirdly, the conference unanimously laid stress on the need for political security as a condition of all the social improvements for which it hoped; and this point was picked out for special emphasis by the President in his speech to the delegates on the 7th June. Fourthly, while this acknowledgment that international action in the economic field is hopeless unless based on a system of security is a big step forward from the pre-war attitude of the United States, the fact that the Soviet Union shows signs of participating on the economic and not, as before 1939, only on the political side represents a corresponding advance on its part. Fifthly, experience of this conference (as also, in its degree, of the Bermuda Meeting on Refugees) emphasised the need for an adequate secretarial organisation for the preparation and service of the United Nations conferences. The State Department is perhaps unique in possessing a special Division of International Conferences, and the head of that division was the secretary-general of the conference, and the conference expressed high appreciation of his work and that of his staff. But these complex, if minor, matters cannot be fully covered by a single administration, nor can their management be improvised. This applies in even greater measure to the executive measures needed for carrying out the decisions reached by the many countries concerned.

The Trade Agreements Act passed the Senate by 59 to 23; in 1940 the figures were 42 to 37. Voting on amendments had been rather closer: the smallest majority was 51 to 33, which is still a comfortable margin, but reminded those who were looking for portents of the future of the perilous power of Senate minorities, since 33 is exactly the figure of one-third plus one which can defeat a treaty in a full House. There is a proposal before the Senate to amend the Constitution and allow ratification by simple majority. It has impressive press support, but no one expects it to lead to direct results. A point of interest is that the proposer is Senator Gillette (Democrat, Iowa), who used to be counted among the Isolationists. With the passing of the Trade Agreements Act, the two major hurdles foreseen for the foreign policy of the Administration in the first half of this year have been cleared; the other was the renewal of the Lend-Lease Act. Though the substance of these results was a great success for the Administration, the Republican Party successfully avoided having to take any definite stand on the issue of post-war policy. A further step in the direction of trying to find its point of greatest agreement in this field was taken last week, when Mr. Spangler, Chairman of the Republican National Committee, set up a Republican Post-war Advisory Council consisting of 5 Senators, 13 Representatives, a few Party officials and the 24 Republican State Governors. Three Senators, Messrs. Austin, Taft and Vandenberg, are leading personalities in the Party counsels; so, of course, are several State Governors, though it may be doubted whether they will be able to take any continuous part in the work. Messrs. Hoover, Landon and Willkie are not included, but will be consulted. Anti-Isolationist Republican papers, such as the *New York Herald-Tribune*, considered the Committee to be somewhat Isolationist in colour. Meanwhile, it is disappointing that the Senate's own post-war sub-committee, set up over two months ago to consider the Ball-Burton-Hatch-Hill resolution and others, still shows no sign of producing any report.

The coal-miners, with few exceptions, were on strike from the 1st June to the end of the week. They have now gone back to work for another fortnight. There was no new development of importance as regards the miners' claims and the various negotiations to which they have given rise. The fact that a real, if

short, stoppage took place (the stoppage a month ago covered only Saturday to Sunday) was a reminder of the very grave nature of the threat: industrial reserves are very short and some steel producers were declaring after only three days that they would have to cut down operations at once, though it does not appear that any have actually done so. This seems to bear out Mr. Ickes's view that there is plenty of room for the increase in production which should result from his order to work six days a week instead of five; the four extra days worked in May should have gone far to cancel out those lost in the strike. The Press has paid little attention to Mr. Ickes's statement that some of the big owners bear a considerable share of responsibility for the failure to reach agreement. It now tends to describe the latest developments as a severe defeat for Mr. Lewis. Such a judgment is as premature as that of a week or two ago which asserted that he had won a complete victory over the President. But his position is not altogether comfortable; and there are signs that his application to rejoin the A.F. of L. is meeting with some difficulties, or at least is being used in the first place by that body as a bargaining counter in its negotiations for reunion with the C.I.O. One complication is that the A.F. of L. already includes a miners' union, the Progressive Mineworkers of America, which refuses to relinquish its charter; it is small, but has a terrific reputation for "toughness." It is an unfortunate coincidence for the A.F. of L., and indeed for the dignity of the Labour movement in the United States, that the large and old-established Machinists' (engineers) Union should have chosen this moment to leave it, owing to its dissatisfaction with the decisions taken in a jurisdictional dispute.

Meanwhile the House of Representatives has passed a Bill to enlarge the powers of the War Labour Board, to make it a criminal offence to promote strikes against the Government in time of war, and to impose certain new controls on the unions. This appears to be a strengthened version of the Smith Bill, which originally was the same as the Connally Bill already adopted by the Senate. It is now for the latter to decide whether it will accept the additions made by the House. Legislation of this sort has long been opposed by the President, but Washington correspondents seem to think he would welcome it now. Both Bills would be expected to affect Mr. Lewis's future freedom of action, since the mines were taken over by the Government at the end of April. But his legal ingenuity is great.

By the 1st June, if the Administration's plans were successful, the cost of food was to have been rolled back by 10 per cent. There is nothing to suggest that this has been done, and the bleakest spot on the home front at present is the management of rationing and food prices. The Office of Price Administration, which is responsible for both, is once more, as it was before the November elections, the meeting-point for all sorts of resentments and discontents. It is now undergoing a fierce attack from the food distribution industry, which declares that it faces imminent ruin. O.P.A. has never been a very strong growth, thanks to Congressional hostility and refusal to vote the funds which its late head, Mr. Leon Henderson, considered essential.

It has been a very tough job, and the rather feeble defence put up for it, that without it things would have been much worse, is doubtless true. If, as many prophets now think, it fails to survive the present storm, it will presumably be replaced by some more closely integrated organisation having greater powers over food production, distribution and price.

LATIN-AMERICA.

On the morning of the 4th June two bodies of troops under the command of General Ramirez, the Minister of War, and General Rawson, a cavalry commander, marched on Buenos Aires from the Argentine military base of Campo de Mayo and the airfield of El Palomar. There was some fighting between military and naval detachments in the northern suburbs, and the Navy, in contrast to the Army and the Air Force, was at first reported to be divided in its sympathies. The *coup d'état*, however, was accomplished with extraordinary little loss of life; resistance had ceased by noon; and President Castillo, who had left Government House at 9.30 A.M., sought refuge with his Cabinet on the flagship of the river squadron. Five of his Ministers, including the Minister for Foreign Affairs, landed at Montevideo the following morning (returning to Buenos Aires later in the day). President Castillo himself, with his Ministers of the Interior and Marine, returned to Argentine soil and surrendered on the afternoon of the 5th June. The President then signed his resignation and was