

Military Mission were invited, and were also present. General Martel had returned on the 19th May from a week's visit to the front, during which he was the recipient of a present from the Red Army of two tanks, a T. 34 medium tank and a K.V. (Klim Voroshilov) heavy model. Just before he left the front, too, he was given a large bouquet of lilac, which may probably have embarrassed him more than the tanks.

The leading article in *Pravda* of the 22nd May demonstrated once again that the Communist State is no more free from labour troubles than are democratic capitalist ones. It has become necessary once again to draw attention to the existence of absenteeism and loafing in industry, and those guilty of them were stigmatised as "in fact stealing from the Red Army. They are depriving it of a certain amount of armaments, ammunition, equipment, bread and meat." Members of the Party, the Young Communist League and the Trade Union organisations, as well as industrial leaders, were warned against thinking that the fact that the country is at war would of itself impose discipline on everybody: "in war the full force of the law must be directed against that handful of backward undisciplined workers, &c." Some Party and Trade Union workers were attempting to draw a distinction between "honest" and "dishonest" absentees, but every wilful absence was a crime.

Air Marshal Sir John Babington, K.C.B., C.B.E., D.S.O., is expected shortly to take up an appointment as head of the Air Section of the British Military Mission in Moscow, though the appointment will not yet be made public.

M. Konstantin Umansky, who was Soviet Ambassador in Washington before the arrival there of M. Litvinov, was announced on the 18th May as having been appointed Minister Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the U.S.S.R. in Mexico, in which post he will, however, retain his rank of Ambassador. He is to succeed M. Fedyushin, who is being relieved at his own request on the ground of ill-health.

On the 25th May, on the occasion of the first anniversary of the Anglo-Soviet Treaty, the Secretary of State, on behalf of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the nation, sent a message to the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, in which, after referring to the respective exploits in the past year of the Red Army and the British and Allied armies, he declared: "We can look forward to the coming year, not unhelpfully, sure in the knowledge that we shall each play our part to the utmost of our capacity against our common foe. Dangers and disappointments we may have to face, but we here in Great Britain are convinced that these can and will be overcome and that the Anglo-Soviet alliance, marked by ever-growing friendship and understanding and tried in the flames of war, will, in the victorious peace to follow, continue for the mutual benefit of our two peoples and for the cause which the United Nations have at heart."

SCANDINAVIA.

It seems evident that the Germans in Norway are extremely nervous on the subject of an invasion of the country. In spite of propaganda utterances to the contrary, recent reports make it clear that the defensive preparations are felt to be far from complete, and, though it may be true that the labour conscription is also designed to serve other purposes, there can be no doubt that there is a genuine need, hitherto unsatisfied, for an increased supply of labour on the fortifications. In the allocation of conscripts, the Todt organisation has first preference, and 60 per cent. of the labour sent to the north is devoted to work on fortifications. Resistance to the conscription is hardening, and has from the first succeeded in delaying and diminishing the effects of the measure to a very important extent.

A recent editorial in the Quisling press comments sarcastically on the fact that the Norwegians, though normally regarded as healthy people, were suddenly afflicted with a variety of ailments after the appearance of the labour decree. Confidence in the loyalist ranks has evidently been highly stimulated by the Tunisian victory; *Fritt Folk* (the 21st May) remarks on the sudden development of a sense of calm security among the "Jössings," whilst at the same time it admits that the N.S. are discarding their party badges and considerably weakening in their convictions.

Two further pieces of evidence support the view that the German demand for Norwegian labour is still far from satisfied. Lippestad, the Minister for Social Affairs, has already had to issue a new regulation, published on the 16th May, considerably restricting the exemptions from registration hitherto allowed to

Norwegian civil servants. Further evidence of the stringency of the demand for labour is provided by the announcement on the 23rd May of the calling up of 4,000 women for service. Though it is asserted that these are not to be employed on German war work, it is clear that they are intended to release other workers who can be so used. The Quisling authorities have found it necessary to broadcast an assurance that the girls will only be used in agricultural employment.

Some indication of the nervous bewilderment of the occupying Power may be found in the inconsistencies of its policy. On the one hand, Terboven has made a gesture of clemency by releasing a considerable number of political prisoners on the 17th May; on the other hand, on the 19th ten Norwegians suffered the death penalty, of whom it is not suggested that all were Communists; and the Swedish paper *Nya Dagligt Allehanda* reported on the 21st May the execution of three others who had been arrested while attempting to escape to Sweden. The Germans have also reverted to the practice of arresting as hostages the relatives of persons who leave the country, and the policy is for the first time publicly announced in the controlled press. The publication of the first batch of executions somewhat stultified a leader in the same issue of *Fritt Folk*, alluding to the Führer's friendly feelings towards Norway, which, it said, were shared by the whole German people.

There seems to be a marked divergence of policy between the Wehrmacht, who, under Falkenhorst's orders, are adopting a conciliatory attitude, and the S.S., who are becoming increasingly ruthless and aggressive. Both attitudes are interpreted as evidence of nervousness and the former at any rate as a sign that the battle for Norway is considered lost.

The favourable turn in the situation seems also to have affected the Swedish Government, which is stated to be about to restore Baron Beck Friis to his former post as Minister accredited to King Haakon, from which he was removed to Lisbon after the invasion of Norway. There is a natural expectation in Norwegian circles that this gesture will be followed by a corresponding improvement in the Norwegian Legation in Stockholm, which has hitherto been in the hands of a chargé d'affaires since the death of the last occupant of the post, owing to an undertaking given earlier in the war by the Swedish Government to the German Government not to allow any changes in the staffs of the missions of the occupied Allies.

The well-known Swedish cartoonist Gösta Chatham has been dismissed by the proprietors from the editorship of a humorous weekly, for disseminating Nazi propaganda, and his retention of the post of cartoonist in *Svenska Dagbladet* is said to be also doubtful.

King Christian's condemnation of sabotage in Denmark, made on his resumption of authority on the 15th May (see last week's *Summary*), does not seem to have brought about any noticeable change. Five new attempts of a serious character took place between this and the following day; four of the saboteurs believed to have been responsible for one of these acts, directed against the scutching works at Holbaek, were arrested on the night of the 17th, while another was shot in the course of the round-up. It is, of course, possible that some of these incidents may have been arranged before the King's speech was heard; there seems to have been an exceptional outbreak, including a number of suspicious fires, in the days immediately preceding the King's pronouncement. *National Socialisten* for the 14th May reports that the shop windows of an Esbjerg informer were defaced by inscribing the word "Traitor" with a corrosive fluid, and that other windows in the same town had been similarly damaged. The paper admits that obviously others besides Communists are responsible for such actions.

THE LOW COUNTRIES.

The latest news from the Netherlands shows that strikes, disorders, and executions have been serious. There is reason to believe that many farmers have been holding up deliveries of food.

On the 20th May a speech by Seyss-Inquart was broadcast, in which he stressed the efficacy of the measures taken by the Germans to keep the Netherlands under control. It is to be noted that he alluded to the possibility that the Allies might attempt a landing in the Netherlands, though he naturally represented such an attempt as doomed to failure. He also argued at length that the Netherlands Government had lost all legitimate authority from the moment of their flight and delivered an attack on Radio Orange. The Dutch doctors and clergy, who have been strongly anti-German, were likewise the targets of his abuse. The only