

President Beneš and the Czechoslovak Government in London as to the necessity and purpose of the rising. In answer to a direct question, the Slovak spokesmen denied absolutely that there was any truth in the statements contained in Dr. Osuský's letter to *The Times* of the 14th October (see last week's *Summary*). The Slovak National Council will comprise 50 members, 42 of whom have already been nominated; 21 of these form the Socialist bloc, which is a fusion of the Communists and Social Democrats, and 20 the *Občianský* or citizens' bloc, representing an amalgamation of the other parties, whose members might perhaps be loosely described as Liberals of the Right; the remaining seat is held by General Golian, representing the military element of the rising.

The crossing of the Carpathians along the entire northern frontier of Ruthenia and the thrust to within 30 miles of Slovakia's southern border by the Red Army column pressing northwards through Hungary beyond Nyiregyháza have caused the enemy to increase his pressure on the resistance forces in Slovakia with the obvious intention of opening up Slovakia as a way back for his forces occupying the dangerously extended salient in Ruthenia. During the past week the patriots have been attacked strongly from east and west and their position has deteriorated. They still suffer from a lack of military supplies and are appealing for additional material aid from the Soviet Union and from the Western Allies.

His Majesty's Government has declared its recognition of the belligerent status of the Czechoslovak forces fighting in Slovakia and has warned the enemy of the consequences of failure to treat them as such. The Czechoslovak Government has issued a statement identifying itself with the British and United States warning of the 10th October to the German authorities regarding the persons held in the concentration camps at Oswiecim and Brzezinka. A considerable number of Czechoslovak subjects are known to be imprisoned in those camps.

The Director-General of U.N.R.R.A. announced in Washington on the 16th October that a mission was to be sent as soon as possible to the Czechoslovak Government to make detailed plans for U.N.R.R.A. assistance in Czechoslovak territory.

POLAND.

The official communiqué on the Moscow conversations, issued in London on the 20th October, stated, in regard to Poland: "Important progress was made towards a solution of the Polish question. . . . These discussions have notably narrowed differences and dispelled misconceptions; conversations are continuing on outstanding points." No further official pronouncement has yet been made. M. Mikolajczyk arrived back in London with his delegation on the 22nd October and saw the Polish President on the following day. He will shortly consult his Cabinet on the outstanding points. These are known to include three main issues on which, for the sake of a Polono-Russian agreement, he would be required to go beyond the Polish proposal of August 1944 (discussed in *Summary* No. 257). The crucial issues are those of the acceptance of the Curzon Line now, rather than at a future peace conference; its acceptance as a frontier, and not merely as a line of demarcation; and its extension through Eastern Galicia to the Carpathians in such a way as to cut off Lwow from Poland, *i.e.*, following Line "A" of the Paris Peace Conference.

These three issues all lie completely outside the Polish Government's latest proposals, and M. Mikolajczyk had no authority to make concessions in respect of any one of them.

As to the Polish National Liberation Committee at Lublin, whose delegates were at Moscow during the conversations, and had an interview with the British Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary and Marshal Stalin, there is no change of vital importance to record. It may, perhaps, have been recognised that such differences as there were between the Polish Government's proposals for a reconstituted Government and those of the Lublin Committee and, indeed, between the general programmes of the two bodies, were matters in which no fundamental clash of principle was involved; but that the necessary adjustment of their rival claims could hardly be effected before the basic issues between Poland and the U.S.S.R. had been solved. On the other hand, it has been observed that the Lublin Committee's organs have shown an increase of hostility towards the Polish Government, including M. Mikolajczyk personally, since his earlier visit to Moscow in August; and it cannot be left out of account that since that time the Committee's administration has continued to develop, and the degree of support accorded to it by the Soviet Government has somewhat increased. Its

latest step is the appointment of M. Stefan Wilanowski, who has been chairman of an organisation known as the *All-Slav Committee* in London, as London representative of the National Liberation Committee. It was noticeable that during the Moscow negotiations the Lublin Committee gave much publicity to what it described as "terrorist acts on liberated Polish territory," alleged to have been committed by detachments of the (official) Polish underground army. The Lublin-sponsored *Polpress* suggested that these terrorist acts were deliberately timed to coincide with M. Mikolajczyk's second visit, as the Warsaw rising had been with his first visit.

SOVIET UNION.

In the extreme north of its vast front the Red Army has reached the Norwegian frontier between the sea and Salmijävi, a distance of 30 miles as the crow flies, and on the 23rd October the Soviet communiqué reported that all the Petsamo nickel mines had been captured. By this date, too, the whole of the right bank of the River Niemen for a distance of 90 miles inland was in Russian hands except for the immediate neighbourhood of Memel. The same communiqué gave an account at last of the fighting which had been in progress for days in East Prussia, and it became evident that the Red Army had already penetrated East Prussia proper up to 20 miles on a front of 30 miles and had also captured Suwalki, an important nodal point in a Lithuanian district seized by Germany and added to East Prussia in 1939; on the 24th October Auguston, in the same district, fell. On the 18th October it had been announced that no less than six passes over the Carpathians had been forced, and that Russian troops were fighting inside Czechoslovakia to a depth of 30 miles. The liberation of Transylvania has been all but completed and in Hungary the town of Nyiregyháza was captured on the 22nd October, three days after Debrecen had at last been cleared of the enemy. The Russian troops which crossed the Tisa below Szeged have cut across and reached the Danube on a 30-mile front between Baja and Sombor. Belgrade fell on the 19th October.

The Prime Minister and Mr. Eden left Moscow on the 19th October. Among those present at the airfield to bid them farewell was Marshal Stalin, and it may be worth recording that he has only once before paid this compliment to a foreign visitor on his departure. The other occasion was when he quite unexpectedly arrived at the station just before M. Matsuo's train left in April 1941, after the signing of the valuable Soviet-Japanese Neutrality Pact. On the airfield Mr. Churchill broadcast to those assembled there a short speech, concluding with the earnest hope and deep conviction that "the warrior statesman and head of Russia will lead the Russian peoples, all the peoples of Russia, through these years of storm and tempest into the sunlight of a broader and happier age for all, and that with him in this task will march the British Commonwealth of Nations and the mighty United States." There had been a farewell banquet to Mr. Churchill at the Kremlin the night before, and among the Soviet guests were no less than six People's Commissars responsible for war production—MM. Kosygin, Shakhurin, Malyshev, Vannikov, Ustinov and Tevosyan.

The Anglo-Soviet communiqué on the results of the meetings which had taken place between the British and Soviet leaders from the 9th to the 18th October reported that the military plans agreed upon at Tehran had been comprehensively reviewed; that important progress had been made towards the solution of the Polish question, the discussions having notably narrowed the differences and dispelled misconceptions; and that the march of events in South-Eastern Europe had been fully considered, with the result that agreement had been reached on remaining points in the Bulgarian Armistice terms and also on a joint policy in Yugoslavia. *Pravda* and *Izvestiya* devoted leading articles to the communiqué, that of the former being the most full of colour. The Party organ noted with satisfaction that the nearer the moment of final victory came, the stronger was the determination of the Allies to render Germany completely harmless and to deprive her of the possibility of further predatory aggression. "The growing unanimity of the Allies on this problem is naturally the primary condition for a future stable peace in Europe." *Pravda* also expressed the satisfaction of the Soviet public at learning that progress had been made towards the solution of the Polish problem, but, having said that, laid it down in no uncertain terms that the Soviet people was vitally interested in seeing that Poland together with the other western neighbours of the U.S.S.R. should cease