

it down that Unions must file particulars about their membership and their funds : this provision was finally omitted.) The Bill seems to be a very uncertain weapon against Mr. Lewis, though resentment against him inspired much of its contents and inspires also much of the pressure on Mr. Roosevelt to sign it. The latter's decision will doubtless be known by the time this is printed. In any case, it is not impossible that he may use more direct action *vis-à-vis* of the miners. But even an order by the President and Commander-in-Chief to go back would apparently make less impression on the miners now than it did at the beginning of May. As has more than once been recorded in this *Summary*, the effect of a strike on the war industries would at once be serious, and in a few weeks hardly less than catastrophic.

The food problem—production, distribution, price—is, of course, inextricably interwoven with labour questions, and it is particularly unfortunate that it should be becoming increasingly serious just at this moment. Production is not up to the high levels of the last three years, and this at a time when needs are greater than before, owing, amongst other things, to lend-lease exports, particularly to Russia and North Africa. Distribution arrangements have broken down badly in many areas, and the selfish action of trade interests has made matters worse. As an example, when it was known that the price of butter was to be "rolled back," the trade quickly disposed of all its stocks at the old price, and momentary plenty will now be followed by a shortage. Prices have risen to a degree that hurts the poorer households (the rise is sometimes concealed under quality reduction), yet no agreement as to how they can be reduced, or even effectively held, has yet been reached. Indeed, perhaps the gravest element in the present situation is the fact that Congress and Administration seem unable for the time being to maintain that minimum of co-operation which is needful, even in the United States, to meet the difficulties of war conditions. Congress, which has sometimes seemed to be sparring rather than fighting, has in these last days got in a number of blows that really hurt. In particular it has hardened its stand against the use of subsidies, which the President and Mr. Prentiss Brown, head of the Office of Price Administration, declare to be the only practicable method of keeping down food prices. The President, on his side, rejects the suggestion to appoint a "food Czar" with power over all aspects of the question. At the same time the House of Representatives has cut down the appropriation for O.P.A. by 20 per cent. This agency has been attempting to improve the working of the rationing arrangements by increasing the competence and responsibility of its regional, district and local organisations. This obviously calls for a high standard among the paid officials of the regional and district offices. The local boards are composed of volunteer workers, but they need some paid clerical staff and their efficiency has already been gravely handicapped by insufficient funds for this purpose. A cut of 20 per cent., if it is maintained, is bound in these circumstances to have serious consequences.

The ill-humour of Congress has also been shown by an attack on the Office of War Information. Its budget had already been heavily cut in committee, and the House of Representatives then proceeded to reject the whole appropriation for its work at home, leaving only that for foreign publicity. This decision, if maintained, would completely alter the character of the office and lead to many resignations. The Director, Mr. Elmer Davis, has also got into hot water with the press by pointing out the shortcomings of Washington correspondents, a very influential group. But many who criticise Mr. Davis and the office probably would not want to see them liquidated, and the House decision may well undergo modification. Radio speakers defend the office, and remind their hearers that the British Ministry of Information had often been attacked, but was never in danger of being abolished. The National Resources Planning Board has also been hit; the House cut its budget to nil, the Senate proposed to give it a small fraction of the appropriation asked for; and the decision now announced, which is presumably a joint one, is to give it the funds needed to wind up its work by August next. The Senate's mood has led it to adopt the McKellar Bill, which would subject all official appointments with a salary of \$4,500 or more to Senatorial approval. (There are said to be about 36,000 such posts.) But this attempt to recover the patronage powers of which the Senate had gradually been deprived by the adoption of the "merit system" in Federal Agencies perhaps comes rather under the head of sparring; it may not pass the House, and would certainly be rejected by the President.

The Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives has approved by a unanimous vote a resolution under the terms of which Congress would go on record as favouring the creation of international machinery with

power adequate to establish just and lasting peace, and favouring also the participation therein of the United States. The committee contains fifteen Democrats and eleven Republicans; it has the reputation of being a more liberal-minded body than its counterpart in the Senate, though it includes at least four Republicans (Messrs. Vorys, Chipfield, Mundt and Jonkman) who are usually considered as 100 per cent. isolationists, and a number of others who have been strongly inclined that way in the past. The House Committee has, of course, much less influence on foreign policy than the Senate Committee, since only the Senate has to approve treaties. The resolution now approved has still to be considered by the House as a whole; if adopted there it will go to the Senate, where it will doubtless be submitted to the Foreign Relations Committee, and in particular to its post-war sub-Committee which for three months has been discussing a number of draft resolutions on the same subject. Thus its chances of final adoption by Congress must be considered slim. Yet the House Committee vote is an event of real importance both as applying a spur to the Senate Committee, and because of the fact that all the Republican as well as Democrat members voted for it. Its avowed purpose is to give the other United Nations an assurance that a reasonable plan for collective security will not, as in 1919-20, be blocked in Congress. It could not, in any case, constitute a binding assurance: but even if it gets no further, it is an encouragement which is not entirely negligible. The proposer was Representative Fulbright, one of a number of new members who take a keen and enlightened interest in foreign affairs and who happily are not confined to one Party. The resolution has been fairly well received in the House, and also by the press, especially by the *New York Times*, which has long been urging Congress to take some such action. Papers such as the *Christian Science Monitor* find it too general, and the fact that Mr. Hamilton Fish has given it his approval cannot strengthen it in the eyes of these more convinced supporters of collective security. The subject is likely to figure in the discussions of the meeting of State Governors in Columbus, Ohio, which opened on the 21st June. Its membership is about equally divided between the two Parties. It is of some interest that Governor Dewey and some other Republicans show signs of using this as an occasion for the Party to continue clearing itself of the isolationist label and neutralising the question as a campaign issue. Mr. Dewey has called the Fulbright resolution an "excellent start" in this respect.

LATIN AMERICA.

The aims and character of the new Argentine Government are slowly becoming more clearly defined. It has now forbidden that the word "provisional" should be applied to it. It has confirmed the decree of the 5th June, under which Congress was dissolved. It has ordered the suspension of the Presidential elections, which were due to take place in September. And it has undertaken a slaughter of the innocents, or, as President Ramirez prefers it, the guilty, on a considerable scale. All this is in the name of administrative honesty and political purity; and a recent statement by the President to the Press implies that reformatory action will involve the removal of most if not all of the Provincial Governors and the subjection of the Provinces to Federal Intervention. To emphasise the contrast between the old and the new order, the President and the new Ministers have renounced any salaries accruing to them, except on account of their military or naval rank.

This renunciatory gesture, however, does not disguise the fact that Argentina is now in the hands of a military dictatorship; and while Argentine politics, which have long displayed an exuberance of corruption, were in need of reformation, such appointments as those of General Pertiné as mayor of Buenos Aires (even flanked, as he is reported to be, by officials with democratic leanings) inspire no confidence. The Government is, indeed, reported to have assured the Supreme Court of its intention, while exposing corruption, to operate within the framework of the Argentine Constitution, and the fact that the liberal-minded Bishop Andrea is one of its supporters and advisers is a point in its favour. But the distinguishing features of the new régime (apart from the emphasis on administrative honesty) are its military character, its extreme nationalistic tendencies and its pronounced anti-communism. The possibility cannot be ignored that the first step may have been taken towards the abolition, not merely of bad, but of all, parliamentary government in Argentina and the establishment of an authoritarian State on the lines either of Spain or of Brazil.