

C170200

with the more ambitious purpose of outflanking Moscow, or in the hope of finding and annihilating the main reserves of the Red Army. Stockholm despatches suggest, however, that a general German offensive may not take place at all this summer because of oil shortages, because of the need for reserves which may be moved quickly to a second front at any moment, and because the Luftwaffe no longer dominates the eastern front. (Russia claims that its forces shot down 2,069 German planes in the month of May, when air activity was a feature of fighting in all sectors of the front from the Arctic Ocean to Novorossiisk.)

Two hundred and eighteen divisions are said to be at the disposal of the German high command on the Russian front, but many of these are not as well trained as the troops <sup>which were</sup> available in 1941 and 1942. Twenty-eight divisions have been furnished by satellite countries, 190 are German. All Italian units have been withdrawn for use at home.

An attack on Kursk. by 500 Nazi aircraft, reported today, may indicate that a general assault in this region is about to be launched. Russian fighters are said to have accounted for a quarter of the enemy planes in this initial trial of strength in the region where the main German drive has been expected.