



THE WEEK IN REVIEW

Challenge and Promise

WINSTON CHURCHILL'S speech last Sunday, reviewing the two tremendous years since the Nazi fury fell upon Norway and the Low Countries, has been widely judged as more confident, more genuinely optimistic than his speeches of the past. It was that, of course—and the Prime Minister certainly gave his listeners a sense of the steady crescendo of the war that must end in victory for our side. But two features in his remarks were especially noteworthy; one will be received with anguish and anger, the other with very mixed feelings.

We refer first to his revelation that the Nazis are using poison gas on the Soviet front. This came in the form of a warning to Hitler that Britain was itself prepared for gas warfare, and would retaliate if Germany used it against the Russians. But coupled with the *Tass* report of gas shells being fired from trench mortars in the Crimea, it is clear that Churchill was informing the world of a fact, rather than predicting a possibility. The war has reached a new plane of horror. Chemical warfare has begun. It was to be expected that in their desperation the Nazis would not shrink from using poison gas. But the news is heavy and shocking. It brings home again the realization that this war is decisive. It is the annihilation of us or the enemy. And it emphasizes the need for a major effort to smash the enemy this year.

In this latter respect, and this was to us the second noteworthy feature of Churchill's address, the Prime Minister left mixed impressions. On the one hand, he acknowledged the deep demand in England for a "second front," and by his observation that he could not reveal military intentions, left some hope that such a front was under consideration. But in his emphasis on the intensified air offensive, in which American flying fortresses will soon join, and in his failure to project the idea of victory in 1942, Churchill took some of the edge off an otherwise aggressive and encouraging address. It seems to us this will prove disappointing to that wide British public that wants to do more than merely bomb the Ruhr Valley this year.

That is not to deny the real achievement of the Royal Air Force in its continual and intense drubbing of German industrial centers from the air. Certainly, this must be damaging to the Nazis. But if this air offensive is

meant as a substitute for a "second front," it will not meet the urgency of the war's crisis this summer; if, on the other hand, this air offensive is intended as preparatory to the opening of land fronts, as Anthony Eden and Archibald Sinclair, the British Air Minister, implied in speeches last week, that is another story. But even there the question is one of *timing*: an air offensive is necessary to prepare the second front, but the second front must come *this summer* to meet and forestall the dangers that confront us.

It is significant that almost all other observers agree that this summer, the next few months, will see the war's crisis. For example, there was the statement of General Wladislaw Anders, commanding Polish forces in the USSR, on May 8. He anticipated powerful German drives all along the front, especially from Smolensk and toward the Caucasus, and mentioned also the possibility of a Japanese attack in Mongolia.

THEN THERE was Vice-President Henry Wallace's remarkable speech to the Free World Association, also on May 8, in which he said: "I am convinced that the summer and fall of 1942 will be a time of supreme crisis for us all." He suggested that Hitler "is gathering all his remaining forces for one desperate blow," predicted possibilities of a thrust against Alaska, and a German directed drive from Dakar to foster an uprising in Latin America.

"We must be prepared," he said with extreme realism, "for the worst kind of fifth column work in Latin America, much of it operating through the agency of governments with which the United States is at present at peace."

In other words, the crisis of the war is definitely upon us, and whether it comes against Russia or is directed at our communications with Britain or on the Latin American flank of the United States, obviously only an offensive counter-thrust by the United Nations will enable us to meet it.

If Anders and Wallace are right, then we cannot think of air warfare only, and certainly not in terms of next year.

The Vice-President's speech had other significant features. It breathed understanding of the *people's* character of this war. Wallace emphasized that this war will bring changes

that will be classed with the great revolutions of the eighteenth century, the French and American, the revolutions of 1848, and the vast new horizons that were opened to mankind in November 1917.

He stressed the interests of the common man in this war, spoke of advancing education, raising living standards, and properly characterized the fascists as men who were trying to bring the whole world back to medieval times, to slavery and darkness. He looked forward to the spread of education in Asia in the use of industrial techniques; he urged that the older nations help the younger ones to higher levels of productivity, and disavowed both "military and economic imperialism." He gave a sense of the powerfully progressive role that the United States is playing today, as the deep democratic instincts of our people are being aroused, and as we rely more and more on all that is advanced and democratic in our tradition.

IN A WAY related to the Vice-President's speech was the statement by Albert G. Milbank of the prominent law firm of Milbank, Hope & Tweed and president of the Milbank Memorial Fund. He observed that Russia and China were on the "threshold of becoming world powers," and suggested that in any future organization of Europe and Asia, these two countries ought to act as "spearheads" for the United Nations in keeping Germany and Japan within bounds. Naturally, we may disagree with the concept of Russia and China "policing" Europe and Asia; perhaps, after this war, the German and Japanese people may not need "policing" in the sense that Mr. Milbank visualizes.

But what strikes us is that his proposal represents a departure in current thinking on postwar matters. NEW MASSES has refrained from joining in this speculation, holding as we do that winning the war presents difficult enough problems, and believing as we do that much of the discussion of the future represents an evasion of problems of the present. But, thus far, the preponderant speculation in this country has been that the United States must win the peace and more or less administer it alone; perhaps together with a subordinated Britain. It strikes us as a great advance when men like Wallace and Milbank emphasize the *world role* of other powers, such as China and Russia. The sooner it is realized that a lasting peace can be built only together with them, the better off we shall be when the war is over.

FROM SWITZERLAND comes the report of the German Cardinal, Michael Faulhaber, to the Vatican, charging that Hitler is waging "a veritable war against Christianity." The Cardinal enumerates eleven points, among

them that a systematic "anti-Christian espionage" is maintained by the Nazis, that "a moral blackmail" is used against faithful Catholics, in which less attendance at church is one of the conditions for keeping a job. Religious publications have been forbidden, young persons are denied the right to attend church gatherings, church property has been sequestered, often without warning or compensation. And Cardinal Faulhaber indicates in his report that these persecutions are directed not only against Catholics, but Protestants as well, so that no one denomination, but religion as such, has become the object of the Nazi campaign.

Coming from such an authoritative source, this exposure of fascism should serve to eliminate every doubt in Catholic circles as to whether or not it is possible to cooperate with Hitler. It should undermine completely every Coughlinite pretension. What began in Germany as a persecution of the Jews and "radicals" now reveals itself as a revolt against advanced, progressive, and democratic thinking, as well as the ideals and institutions of Christianity as such. On the eve of an anticipated statement on the war from Pope Pius, Cardinal Faulhaber's memorandum is bound to have wide repercussions.

Model for Labor

WE HOPE that Pennsylvania really is the Keystone State so far as American labor is concerned. In the week of May 3-10, the Pennsylvania CIO and the AFL, at their respective state conventions in Pittsburgh and Scranton, did some inspiring things. They showed, first of all, that they were out to win the war, and win it this year. And the first step on that program is unity: so both bodies of organized labor demonstrated their unreserved support for President Roosevelt and opposition to the snipers and defeatists. Both adopted resolutions urging their national executive boards to initiate negotiations for friendly cooperation of American, British, and Russian trade unions. And both stood for still closer unity between AFL and CIO—for continued joint action, only more of it. In the CIO convention, delegates pledged their full loyalty to Philip Murray, thereby slapping down John L. Lewis' disruptive followers. The latter did manage to defeat a resolution against their activities, by pressing a vote when nearly half the delegates were absent from the hall, however, the mighty CIO of Pittsburgh adopted the resolution unanimously that night. And while both conventions failed to speak out clearly for a Western Front this year, the whole tone of their speeches and resolutions was that of victory-in-1942. An outstanding contribution by the CIO delegates was its election pro-

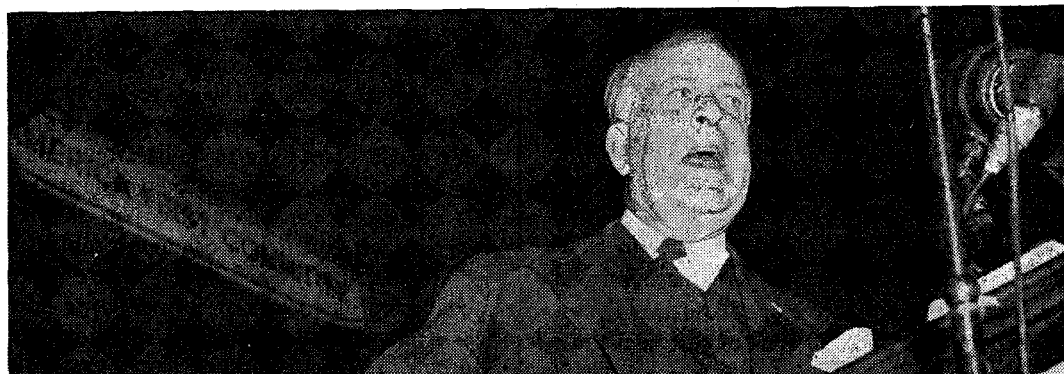
gram—according to this, candidates must pass a stern test of actively supporting an offensive war this year and backing President Roosevelt's seven-point program.

The next big scene in the labor-at-war drama takes place in Cleveland, May 19, when the Steel Workers Organizing Committee holds its constitutional convention. At that time, the Committee is to be reconstituted into a union—with 500,000 organized workers, perhaps the most important workers in the whole war program. These workers have gone through titanic battles to attain their present strength. They are mobilizing in Cleveland to map a campaign in the biggest battle of the times, the war against the Axis. Not that they haven't been fighting it already: steel is now being produced at about ninety-nine percent of previous capacity estimates, and the workers have broken record after record. True, the convention will face unsolved problems. There are still mills and departments in the steel industry not producing fully or, in some cases, producing at all. There is still unemployment in the industry. There is a need to put more life and action into the labor-management councils, to elicit full cooperation from the steel companies and from many workers who have not yet responded to the demands of victorious war. And there is the problem of adjusting wages to higher living costs (A. B. Magil discusses this subject in his article on page 6). But the SWOC has thrown some mighty big problems in its history; the organized steel workers will surely come to grips with these.

On the Wrong Foot

SECRETARY of the Treasury Morgenthau got off on the wrong foot with his request for the lowering of income tax exemptions. In his message to Congress presenting his seven-point economic program President Roosevelt asked that the new tax law "seek to take by taxation all undue or excess profits" and suggested that "no American citizen ought to have a net income, after he has paid his taxes, of more than \$25,000 a year." That means heavy taxation of the very wealthy, both individuals and corporations. So far the Treasury has failed to bring in any proposals along that line. Instead it wants single men who make as little as twelve dollars a week and married men who earn only twenty-four dollars a week to pay income taxes (though they already bear more than their proportionate share of all kinds of indirect taxation). This would also mean raising the levies on the \$2,000 to \$10,000 a year brackets beyond the stiff increases proposed by Morgenthau on March 3.

When he originally presented his tax program in March, the Secretary of the Treasury objected to lowering exemptions and declared: "I cannot recommend a direct tax upon them [the very lowest income earners] until we have exhausted every possible source of revenue from those who enjoy higher incomes." What happened between March 3 and May 7 to convince Morgenthau that the point of exhaustion in regard to more revenue from higher incomes had been reached? One



SEN. DAVID WALSH. On the night this picture was taken, the senator from Massachusetts shared the platform with Charles Lindbergh (note the America First banner in the background). Recently Senator Walsh was identified by the New York "Post" as the "Senator X" who, according to the "Post," often visited a house of degradation in Brooklyn which was frequented by Nazis. The importance of this expose does not pertain to Walsh's personal life. The significant, vital fact is that this was a Nazi hangout, to which American sailors were lured, and Walsh is chairman of the Senate Naval Affairs Committee. Moreover, he has a long record as an appeaser; even since Pearl Harbor he has voiced the conviction that the American fleet should be kept as close to home as possible. Walsh attained the chairmanship of this powerful Senate committee through seniority—i.e., length of service in the Senate. That is how Robert Reynolds of North Carolina got to head the Senate Military Affairs Committee. Reynolds is known as a pro-fascist from way back. He recently sponsored anti-Semite Gerald L. K. Smith's publication, "The Cross and the Flag," which follows a line for which "Social Justice" was finally banned. Walsh and Reynolds, through their chairmanships, are privy to military information which can be of great help to the enemy. No men with their political records should be permitted even to remain in the Senate.

of the things that had happened is that the House Ways and Means Committee whittled down the Treasury's proposals for taxes on corporations by about \$800,000,000. The committee's proposed 94 percent excess profits tax is only a show window. Its glitter aims to obscure from voters the fact that the committee reduced the Treasury's request for a thirty-one percent corporate surtax to sixteen percent and modified the basis for calculating excess profits so as to make an already bad method even worse. That the Ways and Means Committee, which is loaded with saboteurs of the President's program, has managed to have the national interest get lost in the shuffle is not surprising. And it's no secret that quite a number of those gentlemen are aching for a sales tax. But why should the Treasury play into their hands with a proposal that clearly violates the principle of equality of sacrifice which President Roosevelt emphasized in his message to Congress?

It may, of course, be necessary to increase the individual surtax rates beyond the point requested by Secretary Morgenthau on March 3. But at least an equal firmness ought to be shown regarding corporation taxes. And at any rate, it should be possible to achieve the desired goal without taking from those who already have so little. This is all the more necessary in view of the fact that a large part of the proposed two billions extra to be derived from social security taxes will come from wage-earners, including those with the lowest pay.

Looking Ahead

It's provident and patriotic, says the War Production Board, to fill up the coal bins now for next winter. For when that season arrives, weather transportation problems and the fuel oil situation on the East Coast will make it very difficult to obtain coal in sufficient quantities. Consumers have been warned by Joseph Eastman, director of Defense Transportation, that 350,000 tons of soft coal must be moved each week for the rest of 1942. To make the buying of the fuel easier now, the WPB has informed retail coal dealers that they can get financial assistance from the RFC or local banks, to purchase coal for shipment from the mines before August 1. This latest action of the WPB has meaning beyond its immediate effect on the coal situation. We think it will reassure and hearten America's civilian fighters to realize that the government is exercising foresight about possible shortages.

And now gasoline rationing has been set in motion, clarifying a somewhat confusing situation arising out of conflicting statements from Washington. The allotments are reasonable and fair. First of all, they apply only to



THE WEEK in LONDON by CLAUDE COCKBURN

The Fuel Rationing Debate

(By cable.)

WE ARE in the middle of a debate on fuel rationing which certainly is going to last until June 1, when the government scheme, whatever it finally turns out to be, comes into operation, and probably long after that. In fact, the debate on the coal position which will occupy the public mind after the introduction of the fuel rationing is likely to prove more important and far-reaching than the discussions now in progress. And that is just why the most important interests of the coal, electricity, and gas business in Britain have been and are putting on remarkable anti-governmental agitation against the fuel rationing. Because when you get right down to it, rationing of any sort of commodity brings the whole consumer public, including a large stratum of the least politically minded public, slap up against the real problems of a national war economy—all the way from production to distribution.

Put it this way. Until now the only time the British consumer has taken a vivid interest in the problems of our coal mining industry has been when conditions there reached a point where the miners felt compelled to strike. Now, and more so in the future, we are in a situation where everybody will be asking searching questions about the organization of the mining industry, pay received by miners, whether pay couldn't be raised for such a vital, dangerous job, whether the tangle of individual property interests in the mines is really most conducive to full war production.

Very few people, outside those newspapers which have taken alarm from what is conceived as a potential threat to the huge interests, are expressing opposition to the fuel rationing. Everybody knows it's going to be an abominable nuisance. Everybody suspects it won't work out quite as perfectly in the sense of "equality of sacrifice" as the government planners say it will. But on the other hand, everybody can see that even if coal production could be raised by a large amount, that certainly won't do much to meet the immediate needs of the expanding war industry unless there is rationing of domestic fuel.

During the past few days I've heard government supporters complain bitterly of the attitude of the coal owners and the great distributive interests. These interests seem to be more concerned with their own alleged "rights"—and above all with the avoidance of the principle of governmental control of their industry from production to distribution—than they are with the immediate needs of the war effort. Opposition to rationing from workers comes not as opposition to rationing in principle, but out of fear based on past experience that sufficient attention won't be paid to special workers' needs. Working class housewives, for example, want to know whether the Beveridge-Dalton plan takes account of the fact that huge numbers of workers live some distance from their plants and work the early shift. These housewives have to burn lights most months of the year from the moment of getting up to the moment their families depart for work. Fires have to be lit around dawn and it is a big job for a housewife to have to let the fire go out and then relight it at the intervals when needed. This, of course, is not a very serious problem in the relatively modern house with full gas-cooking equipment. But it is a common problem in many working class areas in north Britain and particularly in London where a very large number of workers live in cheap converted basements of former large houses broken up into flats.

And these are only two or three samples of the enormous number of intricate problems. I said workers' fears "based on past experiences." It would be a mistake to take this to mean that, so far, rationing has worked more unfairly for the workers than things would have worked out without rationing. But it is also true that rationing hasn't precisely worked out as a means of ensuring total "equality of sacrifice" in those commodities to which rationing applies. The greatest friction around rationing provisions has resulted from insufficiently wide and vigorous worker representation on the bodies which decide rationing methods and which supervise them in practice.

those seventeen Atlantic Coast states where there are shortages because of insufficient facilities to transport gasoline, and oil from which gasoline is made, from the fields of production. In those states (except for certain exempted areas), non-essential motorists receive three gallons a week. People who must use their cars to get to work receive varying amounts according to their daily mileage.

And essential motorists (doctors, nurses, etc.) get whatever they require.

Doubtless this will cut down on the joy-riding (as is intended) and will work some hardship here and there. The cruelest effect, however, will not be felt anywhere in America, but in the Axis countries. For every gallon of gas eliminated from civilian consumption goes to fuel our ships, tanks, and planes.

More on Steinbeck

TO NEW MASSES: I believe that serious injustice is done to a good many books because neither the reader nor the reviewer inquires into the author's real intention. If, for example, an author wishes to describe a beefsteak, it is useless to reproach him for not having described a strawberry shortcake.

In *The Moon Is Down*, John Steinbeck is consciously striving for the simplicity and universality which are the keynote of his little book. The technique of the work reminds one of the technique of certain contemporary American painters, Grant Wood, for example. To us Europeans this technique of Steinbeck and of Grant Wood, a large, clear, simple, straight-line technique, seems in a new and good sense American.

I consider it an advantage that the book is not naturalistic. The total effect emerges all the more realistically by the author's avoiding individual details, just as the picture of a mountain range stands out more clearly from a distance. What Steinbeck obviously wishes to portray is the ever deepening hatred of the oppressed and the ever deepening fear of the oppressors. For that, it seems to me, his simplifying technique is more appropriate than any other. Steinbeck has succeeded in making real this fear which physically envelops the conquerors until they feel like flies on flypaper; he has succeeded in making this elusive and lurking fear so palpable that the reader touches and tastes it. The effect recalls certain of Goya's drawings.

And herein, I think, lies the book's strongest propaganda value. To dictate to Steinbeck the creator that he should have portrayed the Nazis as beasts seems to me an undue interference with the creative process. He has portrayed the bestiality of Nazism. That seems to me technically more difficult and artistically more valuable. In addition, it is more effective as propaganda. The style of the work would have been impaired if he had treated it differently.

If Steinbeck, as his critics demand of him, had depicted a menagerie of Nazi beasts, he might perhaps have achieved a powerful momentary effect, but merely added another book to the thousand and one already written. Hence, his book, by showing the total impact of Nazi bestiality, gives a very strong impression of the menace inherent in Nazism. *The Moon Is Down* creates hate, not disgust, in the reader. At the same time, however, since it portrays, better than any previous book, the physical fear which constantly dogs the Nazis, it inspires deep confidence in the reader that these fear-ridden creatures will very soon give way to the pressures surrounding them.

LION FEUCHTWANGER.

Los Angeles.

Help Them Now

TO NEW MASSES: Of the sixty-odd exiled anti-Nazi authors whom the Exiled Writers Committee helped bring to this hemisphere, twenty-five still look to us for support while they search for work and for markets for their writing. We have provided their food and lodging since they arrived, but we have no money for them next month unless you come to their rescue again.

So that you may know for whom your money is needed and what the immediate requirements are, I list the following from among the many Czech, Italian, Yugoslav, and German writers in Mexico and New York:

Anna Seghers:—Foremost German woman novelist, winner of the Kleist Prize for her novel, *Revolt*



of the Fishermen. Her new book will soon be published here by Little Brown and Co. She needs seventy-five dollars a month to support herself and two children in Mexico.

Egon Erwin Kisch:—Famous Czech "roving reporter," author of many best sellers and of the recently published *Sensation Fair*. He needs sixty dollars a month to support himself and his wife.

Paul Westheim:—Noted German art critic who recently arrived in Mexico with sight of one eye lost as result of two years in unoccupied France. He needs one hundred dollars to save sight of other eye.

Ludwig Renn:—Military expert, well known author, and former chief-of-staff in International Brigades in Spain, who is without a job in Mexico. He needs thirty dollars a month.

Bruno Frei:—Austrian journalist, author of the biography of Hanussen, Hitler's magician, and an editor of *Freies Deutschland* in Mexico. He needs thirty dollars a month.

Aladar Tamas:—Noted Hungarian writer, member of Pen Club, former editor of the literary anti-Nazi magazine *100%* in Hungary. He needs sixty dollars a month to support himself and wife.

Theo Balk:—Jugoslav writer and physician, author of books on racial theory, the Saar, and the Nazi fifth column. Served as a surgeon with the International Brigades in Spain. He needs sixty dollars a month to support himself and his wife.

Of course, these men and women are making every effort to become self-supporting. Some of the best writers of Europe are working as shipping clerks, printers' helpers; their wives work as domestic servants, dressmakers. But the work is uncertain, poorly paid, and they have families to feed, ill health to care for.

So I write to you, remembering how American writers sent these same European colleagues food when they were starving in France; how they helped purchase their safety from the Gestapo by buying their passages to the new world; how they rescued their talent so they can now contribute to our war effort. This month, unless you help them again, these exiled writers cannot pay their rent nor buy food, let alone finish their manuscripts or participate in anti-Nazi work. Why did we save their lives if we fail them now?

DASHIELL HAMMETT,
Chairman, Exiled Writers Committee,
381 Fourth Avenue, N. Y. C.

Everybody's Job

TO NEW MASSES: NEW MASSES is to be complimented on printing the letter "I Have No Right to Be Out of Job" (New Masses, April 7) which so ably poses the question now worrying ever larger sections of the white-collar groups. My first reaction was that when this serious problem can be put forth in such a vigorous manner demanding a quick solution, we are going to solve it.

The problem of the disemployment of white-collar men and women and small business men is

naturally a question that goes beyond the limits of trade unionism. However, I am confident that the American Labor Movement will help solve this problem which indicates that the small businessman and his employees now feel the need of unity for their mutual protection and the need of reliance upon Organized Labor.

To me the question of this growing disemployment is not just the question of a new war baby. Deep-going changes are taking place in our economic life. This problem of disemployment hits not only those who are engaged in selling, in small business endeavors and in the services; it is beginning to reach into basic industry itself.

We in the Federation of Architects, Engineers, Chemists and Technicians are beginning to feel similar effects, not only in those sections of industry such as building construction which may be sharply curtailed by the war, but even in basic fields of chemistry and machine building. It has been natural for big industrial enterprises to maintain research and development laboratories. There are over 2,000 such laboratories in the United States and upward of 70,000 technical and research workers involved. Is their research work productive? Is their research work needed for the war effort?

The answer is that in the past the major part of this research work has been of a competitive nature, Standard Oil trying to copy the products of Shell Oil, Shell Oil of Standard Oil, not to mention Gulf, Texaco, Tidewater, and a host of other oil companies. This has been considered good business in the past, but no one in their senses would dig up a neighbor's sewer pipe in order to find out how to lay his own; yet much of the nation's research is being carried out by such methods. There is no question but that war needs is going to crack down and bring to a halt this type of research.

I for one can foresee a situation very soon where these highly trained men of science will be thrown out of work at a time when there will be a burning need for utilizing every scientific talent and ability for helping in what is the greatest war of science, the war of the United Nations against the barbarous Axis.

It would seem to me that here is a problem of gigantic proportions and one that may multiply in scope, magnitude, and seriousness and it just can't be left hanging in the air.

In the case of many affected we will need a program of reeducation and retraining in order to fit the men and women into jobs that are needed for the war effort. Joseph T. Gordon in his letter indicated some of the steps that are necessary. As I recall the WPA program, American ingenuity in time of crises developed a new program and initiated projects which were of great benefit to the nation and at the same time utilized the work of millions who had become disemployed. This despite the lies and slanders of poll tax congressmen, smart columnists and embittered editorial writers.

What is needed now is an approach to a program of retraining that will be even bolder than the WPA program. We might well think of a White-Collar and Business Council to tackle this problem and to see to it that Washington will give quick and serious consideration to all proposals brought forth to keep all of our loyal American workers at work at a time when more energy, more effort and more work is needed to out-produce and to smash the enemies of our country. We have the ingenuity to do this and I am confident that the CIO unions will again rise to the fore and show that their interests are the interests of the great mass of the common people of America.

MARCEL SCHERER,
President, Federation of Architects, Engineers,
Chemists and Technicians.