



# THE WEEK IN REVIEW



THE staggering job of reconverting America to a peacetime economy became the nation's number one problem this week. Failure of the Administration and Congress to set up an advance plan of orderly reconversion is bound to make the vastly complicated assignment even more difficult, and for this the blame rests in large measure on the refusal of the military bureaucracy to sanction effective planning while hostilities continued.



Pres. Truman

President Truman conferred this week with officials who head up the war programs and with Congressional leaders. Congress, which is in recess until Oct. 8, will almost certainly be called back before that date, probably on Sept. 4. Senate Majority Leader Alben Barkley said after conferring with Mr. Truman. Barkley admitted after his session at the White House that much of the needed legislation is not ready for action, and that he and the President agreed there is "no use" calling Congress back until a lot more spade work has been done.

Meanwhile, the tentative picture of immediate and imminent home-front developments looked something like this at mid-week:

1. Hundreds of "stop work" telegrams were dispatched by the War and Navy Departments, cancelling war contracts estimated at 12 billion dollars, principally for ships, planes, and munitions. The total was expected to reach a much higher figure as soon as the formal papers of surrender were signed.
2. The War Department announced that it will speed up the discharge of men from the Army, but its first statement asserted that the strength of the land and air forces would not be less than 3,000,000 men a full year after V-J Day.
3. Government officials predicted that gasoline and shoe rationing would end soon after the final capitulation of Japan. Travel restrictions will remain in effect for at least several months. Most food controls, including rationing, will not be discarded for the present although there was no clear-cut statement of plans at mid-week.
4. Production of such items as vacuum cleaners, electric refrigerators, washing machines, and toasters—heretofore not expected in any great volume before mid-1946—will be speeded up tremendously.
5. The release of vast quantities of steel will permit the manufacture of 500,000 automobiles in 1945—double the number planned previously. Passenger tires will also become more plentiful, the War Production Board promised, with the end of rationing seen in 2 or 3 months.

## Battle Over Draft

A major battle may develop over the size of the Army and the continuance of Selective Service. Draft Director Lewis Hershey indicated recently that inductions would continue at the rate of 100,000 men monthly even after the capitulation of Japan. The present draft act, which was reenacted last May 9, remains operative until next May 15 "or the date of the termination of hostilities in the present war, or on such earlier date as may be specified" by Congress.

Although War Department brass hats would like to continue conscription, many members of Congress are convinced that the draft program should be ended at the earliest possible moment. The Associated Press quoted unidentified "Congressional leaders" as believing that the draft act "should be terminated no later than Nov. 1, regardless of whether fighting is still continuing in the Pacific."

From the tone of the comment by Senators this week it was clear that the draft might not even last until Nov. 1—regardless of the wishes of the brass hats. Sen. Elbert Thomas, Utah Democrat who is chairman of the Military Affairs Committee, said there must be immediate action when Congress reconvenes in September. "It will be foolish," he said, "to keep on drafting boys into the Army after the war ends."



Sen. Langer

Sen. William Langer, North Dakota Republican, announced that as soon as Congress reconvenes, he will introduce legislation to stop the draft immediately. The bill also would provide that men already inducted and not yet sent abroad be returned to their homes, and that those on furlough not be sent back overseas.

## Atomic Power Implications

The unveiling of the terrifying atomic bomb in raids over Japan prompted avid and widespread discussion this week over the social and political as well as the military implications of this fantastic development in science.

Strongest condemnation of the use of the atomic bomb in terror raids came from the *Osservatore Romano*, official Vatican City newspaper, which said that "this incredible destructive instrument remains a

## Coming Up Like Thunder



Chicago Sun

temptation for posterity." The editorial recalled that Leonardo da Vinci destroyed his plans for a submarine because he feared that man would not apply it to progress, namely to the constructive uses of civilization, but to its ruin. He destroyed that possible instrument of destruction.

"The last twilight of the war is colored by mortal flames never before seen on the horizons of the universe, from its heavenly dawn to this infernal era.

"The war gives us a catastrophic conclusion that seems not to put an end to its apocalyptic surprises. Force, and its cult and its exaltation, have their punishment and their nemesis. Its great priests are not all dispersed and those who survive had better meditate."

## A Moral Calamity

One of the most thoughtful comments in this country was written by Richard L. Strout, Washington correspondent for the *Christian Science Monitor*. Strout declared that the dropping of atomic bombs on Japan

was a mistake and "perhaps a calamity in its moral consequences." Strout asserted that popular discussion should have preceded the use of "this awful weapon," and added:

"By its use the United States has incurred a terrible responsibility to history which now, unfortunately, can never be withdrawn.

"How can the United States in the future appeal to the conscience of mankind not to use this new weapon? It was the United States which first used it. Has not the moral ground for such an appeal been cut away from under our feet?"

"It is true that Japan was warned either to surrender or to suffer fearful destruction. It is true that an object lesson may have been needed. But on the other hand, there was no fear that Japan would win the war. Japan is already defeated. In a moral decision as overwhelming as this, knowing already that the use of such a relatively minor weapon as poison gas has been avoided, it seems to this writer that Congress or the public might have been first consulted."

In Washington, Sen. Harley Kilgore, West Virginia Democrat, chairman of a special Senate investigating committee, announced that a complete inquiry into the ownership of the patents will be launched when Congress reconvenes.



Sen. Kilgore

The Kilgore Committee and the Department of Justice have already started investigations into other Government-financed inventions and have found that there is "no consistent policy" of protecting the public interest. The Federal Government has put 2 billion dollars into atomic bomb development—more than it has invested in all other war research projects combined.

In a thought-provoking editorial this week, *Labor*, publication of the Railroad Brotherhoods, expressed the conviction that people generally were hopeful "about the future vistas opened by the bomb."

"Does it mean that—sooner or later—hard labor will be abolished, and human beings set free to guide the enormous forces loosed from atoms?"

"Or will those forces be locked up by some 'super-trust' to throw millions out of jobs and roll up fabulous profits?"

"In war, who will control these irresistible forces—the people or some tyrant armed with power undreamed of by Caesar, Napoleon, or Hitler?"

"Fortunately, as the discovery comes first in America, the answers to these portentous questions are still in the people's hands."

## Names And Notes In The News

**Social Security.** The nation's Social Security System observed its 10th birthday this week. In that period nearly \$8,750,000,000 in benefits have been paid out, of which \$5,779,000,000 was for public assistance, \$2,218,000,000 for unemployment compensation, and \$750,000,000 for old age and survivors' insurance.

**Frankenstein.** Richard T. Frankenstein, 38-year-old international vice president of the United Automobile Workers (CIO), made a strong showing in Detroit's municipal primaries last week when he was nominated to oppose Mayor E. J. Jefferies in the Nov. 6 election. Frankenstein led the field of 7 candidates with a vote of 82,936. Mayor Jefferies finished second with 14,182 votes fewer. The rest of the pack was far behind.

**GI Education.** The War Department reported last week that more than 800,000 servicemen, both in the U. S. and overseas, have taken correspondence and self-teaching courses in their off duty hours from the U. S. Armed Forces Institute, an agency sponsored jointly by the Army and the Navy.

**Warning.** A grim warning that as a result of the war the U. S. has made more enemies than friends was sounded at a U. S. Maritime Service graduation ceremony last week by Vice Admiral Wilson Brown, former naval aide to President Roosevelt. "We will be bitterly hated by our present recognized enemies. We will be envied and reviled by many we sought to help," Brown asserted. "It behooves us to be strong in our own defense and to be fair and decent in the treatment of our less powerful neighbors lest, in our might, we find ourselves in the unenviable role of bully and tyrant."

**Unemployment.** War Manpower Commission officials reported last week that Government predictions around V-E Day that 2,000,000 persons would be jobless by August were high of the mark by at least 30 per cent. The prediction, WMC said, was "far too pessimistic," pointing out that current unemployment stands at 1,400,000 persons. This compares with a total of 1,100,000 in June and 630,000 in March.

**War Costs.** The war cost the U. S. more than 325 billion dollars, or 9 times the entire cost of World War I. Only about 40 per cent of the total expenditures during the period from July 1, 1940, to the present time, or about \$135,000,000,000, has been met by current revenues. The rest of the cost has been met by borrowing. In this period the national debt rose to \$262,749,845,000 (as of Aug. 9), an increase of 211 billion dollars since the start of the defense program in 1940.

**UNRRA.** Herbert Lehman, director of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, estimated last week that more than 2 billion dollars in new funds is required to carry on UNRRA relief work because the work has been "suddenly doubled" by the approach of the end of the war in the Pacific. "Large as this sum may seem," Lehman declared, "it will barely suffice to bridge the gap until the minimum of restoration has been achieved. Our fears of starvation and disease are stark realities now. It is inconceivable that the United Nations could abandon the liberated peoples at this moment of their greatest peril."

**New Party?** Alf M. Landon, Republican Presidential nominee in 1936, predicted last week that "left-wing New Dealers," encouraged by the sweeping Labor Party victory in Great Britain, will form a third party if President Truman does not yield to their demands. Speaking at Topeka, Kan., Landon said that "the British election unquestionably means that a new high-pressure area has been formed. The American New Dealers are feeling their oats." Landon said he did not think that "after this British election the left-wing New Dealers will stand for any middle-ground position. Political parties mean nothing to them. In politics, it is easy to confuse personalities and policies. There are too many high-ranking New Deal casualties already to make them very happy with Mr. Truman."



Alf Landon