

## NEWS AND VIEWS

## President Roosevelt and Aid to the Democracies

PRESIDENT'S ROOSEVELT'S speech at the dinner of the White House correspondents in Washington on March 15 will rank in future ages among the most momentous events in world history. Thereby he laid down a pledge that the efforts of a great and united people should suffer no relaxation until the total victory of the democracies over the menace of the aggression and tyranny of the dictators has been won. In his review of the events of the preceding week, following on the passing into law of the Lease-and-Lend Bill, or as he now preferred to call it the Aid-for-Democracies Bill, he stressed with the utmost emphasis two elements. Of these the first was that of speed. "The urgency," he said, "is now . . . the time element is of supreme importance," and he went on to recall, what was by that time well known to his audience, how the Bill was signed by him within half an hour of being agreed upon in both Houses of Congress, and that five minutes later he had approved a mass of articles for immediate shipment, of which, he added, many were already on their way. The second element upon which he dwelt with if anything even stronger emphasis was the comprehensive nature of the help for which democracies—among whom he went on explicitly to include China—may look to the United States, whence will come munitions in any and every form, planes, guns, tanks, ammunition, food, and the ships to carry them.

With a generosity without parallel in history, the total resources of the United States are placed at the service of those who are engaged in the struggle on behalf of free institutions; and the United States now is, in the fullest sense of the phrase, the arsenal of the democracies. Mr. Roosevelt called upon every grade of the people of the United States for great sacrifices in the interests of those in the fighting line; but he made this demand upon the national will to sacrifice and to work with confidence. For, as he had already pointed out, the decision had been fully argued by every means of popular debate, and the decisions of democracy when made were proclaimed not with the voice of any one man, but as the voice of one hundred and thirty millions. For every one of these millions the President said, the "ultimate stakes" are what he had already marked on a previous occasion as the four freedoms—freedom of speech and expression, freedom to worship God in his own way, freedom from wrong and freedom from fear.

This Presidential speech repays careful study. It is close packed with virile and telling phases, which owe nothing to rhetorical ornament. They have strengthened the enthusiasm of the people of the United States, and enheartened everywhere those who are engaged in the life and death struggle for the continued existence of democracy. Yet even the urgent and vital necessities of the immediate conflict

must not be allowed to obscure the supreme significance of the President's pledge that "when the dictatorships disintegrate, . . . then our country must continue to play its great part in the period of world reconstruction for the good of humanity". Mr. Churchill, in acknowledging with gratitude in the House of Commons the passage into law of the Aid-for-Democracies Bill, spoke of it as a Magna Charta for free nations.

It would indeed be rash to attempt to forecast even in part the implications of the close co-operation which this far-reaching measure will demand for its fullest implementation; but that Mr. Churchill's analogy is no rhetorical compliment, but rather an inspired vision of its potential force, is endorsed by Mr. Roosevelt's recital of the creed to which it will be his endeavour that reconstruction shall conform. Thus it runs: that any nationality, no matter how small, has the inherent right to its own nationhood, . . . that the men and women of such nations . . . can through the processes of peace serve themselves and serve the world by protecting the common man's security, can improve the standards of healthful living and provide markets for manufacture and agriculture. Through that trend of peaceful service every nation can increase its own happiness, banish the terrors of war and abandon man's inhumanity to man". Such then is the ultimate goal to which the President looks as the justification for his own resolve and that of the people of the United States to implement to the fullest extent the Aid-for-Democracies Bill, and for which he trusts it may be said in the days to come that "our children and our children's children will rise up and call us blessed".

## Science and Post-War Reconstruction

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT'S momentous pronouncement on "the great part" which the United States will play in post-war reconstruction will be received with heartfelt relief and gratitude by all who hold fast to faith in the future of democracy as an assurance of justice as between man and man and between nations in the new world order which is to come. Most of all, perhaps, is this clearly appreciated by men of science, to whom it is a fundamental conviction that the progress towards ideals of democracy—freedom of thought and action, justice and tolerance—is to be achieved only by the application of science and scientific modes of thought to the problems of securing the conditions in which alone free institutions can function freely.

This is not merely a matter of broad and far-reaching principles—principles framed, indeed, in the Christian spirit, but to which all, irrespective of creed, race or nation, will subscribe; but it involves as a practical measure the solution of a thousand and one subsidiary problems affecting the daily life of the