THE CHEMIST IN THREE WARS—II
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The Present World War

Now that we are in the midst of the second World War, what is the set-up among chemists for support of the war effort? Have we organized our forces so that they can be and are being utilized in the best possible manner?

I wish I could answer this question in the affirmative.

The top government agency created for scientific war work is the Office of Scientific Research and Development, headed by Dr. V. Bush, president of the Carnegie Institution of Washington. This office can both initiate war projects or solve them; in practice it also functions in an advisory capacity. Much actual work is being performed under the direction of the National Defense Research Committee, of which Dr. James B. Conant, president of Harvard University, is chairman. This committee has two chief divisions pertaining to our line of work, that of chemistry and physics; organic problems are in charge of Dr. Roger Adams, of the University of Illinois, inorganic and industrial chemical matters are under the direction of W. K. Lewis, of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The National Inventors Council, under C. F. Kettering, is designated to sift novel thoughts submitted to it. Some problems, which are military secrets, have been assigned to government controlled laboratories; there is no doubt that these tasks are being handled well, and under fine leadership.

So far, so good. What we need next is a complete roster of all chemical talent in the country; such a