NATIONAL SURVIVAL THROUGH SCIENCE

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When I speak of national survival through science I refer not only to the vital aid of science in winning this war, but also to its great service in the difficult years that follow. To the pessimists who believe that the Allies will lose and that the United States will finally be forced, by economic strangulation, to yield to Hitler’s orders I am compelled to say that under such throttling our chief hope of survival as a free nation will lie in the resourcefulness of our scientists.

The profound influence on our civilization of anesthetics and antiseptics, the steam engine, the electric dynamo and motor, the telegraph, telephone and wireless, the cotton gin, Portland cement, the pig-iron furnace and steel mill, refrigeration and the motor car convinces every thoughtful person that this is a scientific civilization. To be truly cultured you must have some understanding of the achievements, the methods and the possibilities of scientific research.

Centuries ago recovery from great disasters such as plague, famine, flood, war and oppression was slow—fatally slow for some nations.

Medical science can now check pestilence in most of its forms, although it did not check the world epidemic of virulent flu in 1918 until millions of lives were lost. The encouraging fact to-day is that science learns from every disaster, be it yellow fever, typhus, the bubonic plague, an earthquake or a great flood on the Yellow River in China or on our own Mississippi.

Typhus fever has killed 200,000,000 people in
Editor's Summary

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