

## Chemical Progress Week

CHEMICAL PROGRESS WEEK starts May 17 to run through May 22. This admirable project sponsored by the Manufacturing Chemists' Association has as its theme "A Better America Through Chemical Progress." The program has the support of our major chemical companies and is aimed particularly at community relations at the grass roots level. Activities at the national level through such media as radio, television, and newspapers certainly will not be neglected but an important part of the objective is to get across the idea of the influence the chemical industry has on everyday life, and to do it by direct local contact as much as possible.

Individuals in the chemical industry ranging from top executives through to the office boy will be taking part in an effort to present answers to the following questions:

1. How does the chemical industry affect the daily life of the individual?
  - a. Through the products he uses
  - b. Through economic factors
  - c. Through national security
2. How has the chemical industry improved the life of the individual during the past 20 years?
3. How is continued progress of the chemical industry important for his future?
4. What is the chemical industry and what does it consist of?

Chemical companies will furnish representatives to speak before local organizations and on local radio stations. Local newsmen will be conducted through plants in their areas and be given a good explanation of what is done and how it is significant to that community and to our entire standard of living. Exhibits and posters will be placed in prominent spots where the local citizen will feel that the information stems from a source with which he is acquainted.

Chemical Progress Week is not intended to be a single-shot piece of superpromotion. This year will be only a beginning to sow the seeds for future growth of appreciation of the chemical industry by the public. It will be repeated each year. This year it is hoped that an atmosphere of discussion and active thinking about the chemical industry and its place in our society can be developed intensively during chemical progress week. Some of it will stick and a start will be made. Next year a second program will revive, emphasize, and add to the awareness of chemical progress and in five to 10 years there will be an important build-up of the sense of influence and importance of chemical progress.

Members of the chemical industry are of course, keenly aware of the importance of their work, but the general

public must have it brought to them. Generally it is true that information from a source close to us is more effective and lasting in its impression. Medicines prescribed by the local physician, and automobiles and kitchen equipment sold by local dealers impress us with scientific or technical advancement, but the impression usually is not with the contributions of chemistry in the development of those things. Chemical products are not sold extensively to the consumer as chemical products and the retailer seldom is impressed with the significance of the contribution of that industry to the new product.

The chemical profession has made a great deal of advancement during the past decade. It has gained both strength and prestige as a profession. But the industry and the profession are so interdependent that the health of one is of vital concern to the health of the other. The industry, as such, is facing certain public education problems.

The Manufacturing Chemists' Association discovered by a survey two years ago that more than half of the people interviewed considered the chemical industry a dangerous and unhealthy business in which to work and 67% apparently felt that there was not enough competition in the industry. If personnel of every chemical plant in the country will make a strong effort accurately to inform the people of their community as to what each plant does and what it contributes to our goods and standard of life, it will have an effect that cannot be achieved through national media where the sponsor is only a company name or an individual who, to the listener or reader, is someone from a totally different sphere of life.

A number of local sections of the ACS are actively cooperating in forwarding Chemical Progress Week through participation of their members and the use of their experience in carrying to the public a sense of the contributions of chemists and chemical engineers to our welfare. We urge the cooperation of every person engaged in the operations of the chemical process industries—which certainly includes those industries dependent upon agricultural and food chemistry for their development—to undertake at least one personal project to inform people in his or her acquaintance on what the chemical industry really is and really does. Chemical Progress Week can and should be a success this year, but even more so in the future if we start now.