The Lehman Statement

Governor's Remark on Axis Power Preference Approved

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEW YORK TIMES:
The plain meaning of Governor Lehman’s statement that the Axis Powers preferred the election of Mr. Willkie to that of President Roosevelt was misinterpreted and garbled both by Mr. Willkie himself and by the editorial writer of The New York Times. That Governor Lehman was unqualifiedly correct emerges now from the wireless message of The Times’s own correspondent in Rome, Herbert L. Matthews. In the issue of Oct. 4 appears this paragraph:

"Moreover, the Axis is out to defeat President Roosevelt not as a measure of interference in the internal policies of the United States but because of the President's foreign policy and because of everything for which he stands in the eyes of the Italians and Germans. The coming United States election is realized to be of vast importance to the Axis. Therefore the normal strategy for the Axis is to do something before Nov. 5 that would somehow have a great effect on the electoral campaign."

Mr. Matthews goes on in the next paragraph to make this further observation: "* * * it is possible that a trend has been noted that may have encouraged a new move in the same direction."

No additional evidence is necessary to establish the way the wind blows abroad. Of all the tragic issues in this campaign none is more charged with danger than permitting enemies abroad to underestimate the seriousness of the American effort or to suggest that anything like appeasement is in the atmosphere.

ALFRED E. Cohn.
New York, Oct. 4, 1940.