

PSYCHOLOGY

Epidemic of Fascist Ideas Should Be Battled as Disease

Psychologist Points to Gradual Change of Attitude That Occurred in Europe; Says It Can Happen Here

FASCIST ideas are gaining ground in America and the epidemic should be battled by psychological health methods parallel to those used by public health officials in fighting a disease like infantile paralysis or influenza, Dr. Goodwin Watson, of Teachers College, Columbia University, said in his address as retiring president of the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues, meeting at Minneapolis.

Although Americans still resent being called Fascist, the movement is steadily gaining ground, Dr. Watson indicated in summarizing psychological surveys of public opinion, and noting a parallel to what has recently happened in Germany and Spain.

In ordinary times, Dr. Watson said, Americans mostly belong in a great body of sensible middle-of-the-road opinion. But in emergencies, and during the days preceding a major social decision, this group becomes sharply divided away from a compromise attitude and into one extreme or the other.

"Did not something like this happen with reference to our entrance into the World War, to prohibition, to the New Deal, and recently, to modification of the Supreme Court?" Dr. Watson pointed out.

"I think I saw this process most clearly in Germany during 1930-32. Chancellor Bruening represented the numerous Centrist parties. At one extreme were the Communists, at the other the obstreperous but ridiculous Nazis. It seemed apparent that the great body of sensible German citizens were in neither camp. The bulk of business support and social prestige was given to a moderate middle-of-the-road position.

Strength at Extremes

"But as Germany's difficulties increased one could observe the vitality draining out of the center positions into the extremes. At each extreme were young men and women ready to lay down their lives for their cause. The middle-of-the-road group became weaker than its size warranted, because the re-

maining supporters of that position were past middle age, fattish, flabby, wishy-washy, lacking in conviction and drive.

"In France today it is possible to trace the outlines of a similar process. The tragic attack of united Fascist powers quickly drove Spain into a situation where groups of widely different social outlook have come to recognize basically only two possible positions. The middle class liberals of Spain who hung white towels from their windows to indicate that they still clung to what was once the mode of opinion, are few and utterly ineffective.

"Is such a change taking place in America?" Dr. Watson went on to ask. Psychological tests and surveys already conducted will provide the answer, he

said. Already they show that Fascism is popular.

Other questions demanding the attention of psychologists may hold the clue to America's fate in connection with class and political wars as well as possible military encounters, he said. Will men respond more to a program which offers security or to one which suggests adventure? That is one of such questions. Is it better to rest a program, as American labor seems to be doing, upon an appeal to immediate economic interests, or is it better to appeal, as our government did with those same men in 1917, with a challenge to die for great ideals?

Students Conservative

College students are not "red"; neither are they markedly Fascist in their views, if students at the University of Minnesota can be considered a fair example, it was reported by Stuart W. Cook and Dr. Evelyn Raskin to the American Psychological Association.

Attitudes of the students were obtained by asking them to indicate their "opinions about the depression," by giving a numerical rating to each of 18

ARE YOU A FASCIST?

NATURALLY you will probably say no. But here are questions designed to reveal your secret leanings.

Dr. Goodwin Watson, of Teachers College, Columbia University, and president of the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues, meeting with the American Psychological Association at Minneapolis, is responsible for them.

Do You Believe:

1. That we must all, before everything else, be loyal Americans?
2. That in America classes have little significance? Any poor boy can climb the ladder of success? And only foreign agitators stir up the idea of class conflict?
3. That it is right for owners to control in accord with their wealth? And that employers and employes should work together peacefully in the public interest, like one large happy family?
4. That if labor will not accept this proper place peacefully, then labor will have to learn in bitter experience what a strong government can do to protect the rights of the neutral public?
5. That the sessions of Congress and most legislatures have ceased to be centers of creative thought and have degenerated into compromises of interests, trades, deals, back-scratching, log-rolling and other political chicanery which benefits the common people very little?
6. That what America needs is a real leader, a man loyal to the sound ideals of service and property which made America great, a man clean in his own living and ready to lay down his life for the welfare of this country?
7. That then youth would awaken and follow him, that business and professional people would again see hope for an orderly and prosperous society, that America would be ready for its re-birth?

It is in such dressed-up appeals that Fascist doctrines have their beginnings, Dr. Watson told his colleagues at the meeting.

statements to show whether they believed it true, were doubtful, or felt sure of its error. The true purpose of the questionnaire was concealed from the students intentionally because of the natural tendency of anyone to let his answers be influenced by personal prejudice.

Dislike Label

Such a prejudice against the term Fascism does exist among the students, it was clearly revealed by answers for one of the statements included in the scale. The statement, "Fascism is the form of government most capable of solving our national problems," was disagreed with by about 84 per cent., although their answers for other statements demonstrated that actually they were neither pro-Fascist nor anti-Fascist. Even the 33 students whose answers showed that they were strongest in the Fascist viewpoint had only two in their number that approved of Fascism when so labeled.

The students differed in their Fascist leanings according to their differences in scholastic interests. Nurses and members of the Reserve Officers Training Corps rated nearer to the Fascist end of the scale, with scores of plus 7.8 and plus 5.5, while students of political psychology and social psychology were toward the anti-Fascist end, with scores of minus 7.1 and minus 8.5 respectively.

Washing Makes Radicals

Small boys being forced unwillingly to wash their faces may be hotbeds of future radicalism. This conjecture is suggested by a report by Dr. Maurice H. Krout, of Chicago City Junior Colleges, to the psychology meeting.

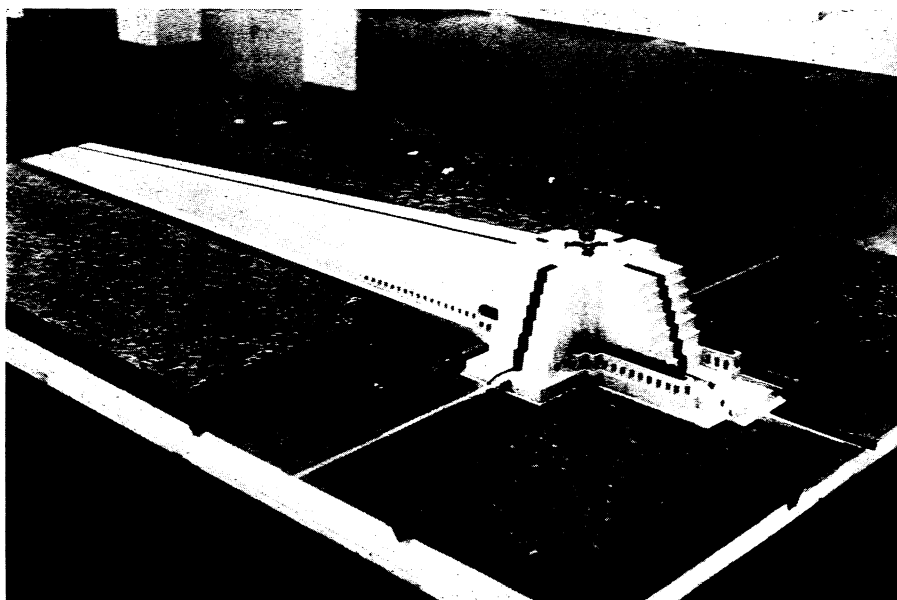
Searching out the childhood history of two groups of young political radicals and another group of non-radicals, Dr. Krout found that one of the significant differences distinguishing the radicals was a lack of pleasant recollections connected with face-washing. Childhood punishments of the radicals more often took the form of nagging, reproach and ridicule rather than spanking.

Girl radicals reported less desire to be like their mothers; boys who turn out radicals are not the ones who admire and wish to emulate their fathers.

Men who are radicals more often talk in their sleep than do the non-radicals with whom they were compared. Women radicals talk in their sleep less often.

Radicals have a less optimistic attitude toward life.

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INTERNATIONAL MEMORIAL

This model shows the appearance of the 1,000-foot shining white cross to be constructed in the West Indies as a memorial to Columbus, whose bones may be removed from the Cathedral vault where they now lie to a tomb under the cross. A powerful beacon will be mounted on the cross to guide ships and airliners in Caribbean waters.

AVIATION—HISTORY

Columbus and Aviation Linked in Memorial Beacon

CHRISTOPHER Columbus and aviation!

They were 400 years apart in history. But the twentieth century wants to bring them together in an international Columbus memorial.

The memorial stands ready on paper. News readers may recall the design, which attracted wide interest a few years ago when it was chosen. An international competition was held, in the quest for an outstanding design, and a young English architect named J. L. Gleave won, with a plan for a monumental structure combining the symbolic and the practical.

It will be a recumbent cross, 1,000 feet long, shining white. It will be constructed in the city of the West Indies where Columbus' bones already rest—Trujillo City, capital of the Dominican Republic. The memorial planners hope to have Columbus' remains transferred from their present tomb in the cathedral to this new tomb under the center of the shining cross. That might take persuasion. The few

bones left of the great navigator are so treasured at the cathedral that three keys guard the vault, and it takes combined consent of state officials, archbishop, and curator—who hold the three keys—to unlock the vault.

Yet, we may imagine the new tomb would please Columbus' own adventure-loving heart. For surmounting the cross will be a powerful beacon, doing lighthouse duty, to guide ships at sea and also airliners crossing the Caribbean. And the memorial grounds are to be a great Pan American park and an airplane landing field.

To arouse renewed interest in this project, four airplanes will rise from this field October 12 and fly on a 20,000 mile tour, touching every republic in North and South America. If all goes well, the lighthouse cross will be dedicated 450 years from our discovery date—October 12, 1492.

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The first radio broadcasting station in Greece is now being built in Athens.