

PSYCHOLOGY

# Pattern for World Peace

Specialists gathered at the first International Congress on Mental Health explained how the world could avoid the disaster of another war.

By GEORGE GLENWOOD

Written from London

► DURING the past year in some 27 countries about 5,000 men and women, each a specialist in some phase of mental health or human relationships or both, focused their skilled attention on three questions which today are constantly on the minds of people everywhere:

"Can the catastrophe of a third world war be averted?"

"Can the peoples of the world learn to cooperate for the good of all?"

"On what basis is there hope for enduring peace?"

Recently some 2,000 of these social scientists met in London for the ten-day session of the first International Congress on Mental Health. They discussed the results of their year's work, and approved, by an almost unanimous vote, a number of recommendations prepared by their International Preparatory Committee. Before they disbanded they created a permanent World Federation for Mental Health to take up the torch of sanity and world citizenship in an attempt to light the way to world harmony and good will.

## Dubbed Idealistic

In some quarters these well-meaning, forward-looking social scientists have been labeled as impractical visionaries. Peace through mental health is all very good, say some people, but who is going to get the world to listen to idealistic proposals for curing the ailments of our sick society?

Unless the proposals of the social scientists can see the light of practical application they are not worth the thought it takes to formulate them. To obtain competent opinion on the future application of mental health principles to international good will and cooperation, four of the leading luminaries at the Congress were interviewed. They were asked three pertinent questions. Their answers reflect the full range of hope and despair with which the world may face the future.

The panel of experts was made up of:

Dr. Carl Binger, consultant to the Neuro-psychiatric Division of the U. S. Veterans Administration, Editor-in-chief of *PSYCHOSOMATIC MEDICINE*, associate professor of clinical psychiatry at Cornell University, and speaker to the Congress on "World Citizenship and Good Group Relations."

Dr. Margaret Mead, assistant curator of ethnology at the American Museum of Natural History, New York, one of the world's foremost anthropologists, writer of

a half dozen books on primitive societies, consultant to the UNESCO Workshop for International Understanding and to the International Congress of Americanists, and Congress speaker on "Collective Guilt" and "The Individual and Society."

Dr. David Mitrany, adviser on international affairs to Lever Bros. and Unilever Ltd., for seven years assistant European editor of Carnegie Endowment's "Economic and Social History of the World War," author and lecturer on world citizenship and peace, and Congress speaker on "The Mental Health Aspect of World Citizenship."

Dr. John R. Rees, consulting psychiatrist to the British Army in World War II, Director of Medical Services at London's world famous Tavistock Clinic, President of the Congress and now first president of the World Federation for Mental Health.

The first question was: How will recommendations on mental health and good international relationships be brought home to the politician and statesman?

All four of the experts are in agreement that at present the social scientist is generally ignored by governmental agencies on the policy-making level. Yet that is just the

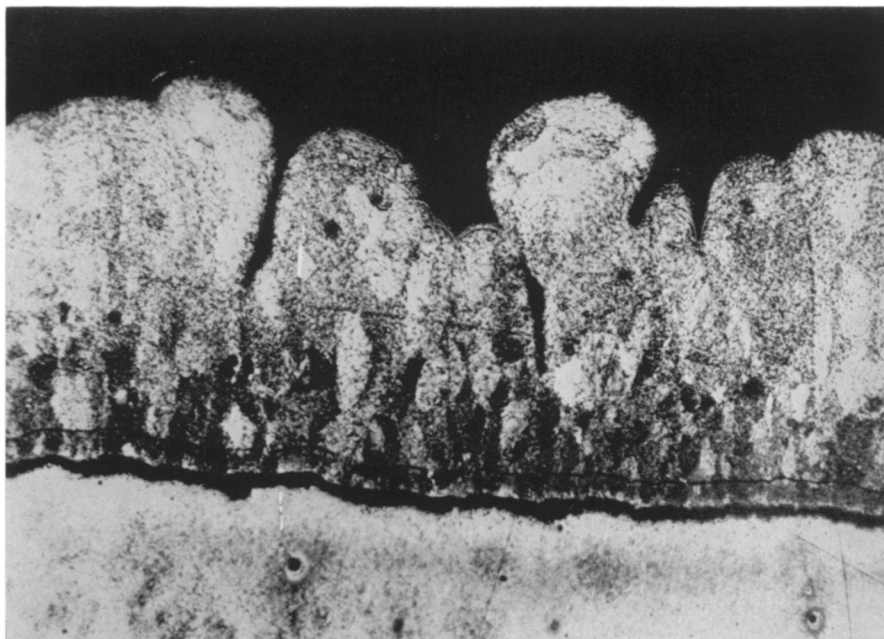
level where the social sciences can do the most to promote peace and serve mankind. Nor, thinks Dr. Rees, is there any immediate hope of getting governmental policy jobs for social scientists. He agrees with Dr. Mitrany that the social scientists must begin by winning public opinion to their side, since politicians must ultimately give ear to public opinion. Dr. Mitrany believes that social scientists can best win the attention of the public by first agreeing on and then putting forward a considered view "on the possible implications and effects of particular pieces of social legislation in regard to mental health."

## World Health Organization

Dr. Binger and Dr. Rees are both of the opinion that one of the most promising avenues of international influence of the World Federation for Mental Health is through its association with the World Health Organization, which has 64 closely cooperating member nations, including Russia. Both Drs. Mead and Binger think that the personal influence of individual social scientists will gradually induce law makers, administrators, industrialists, etc., to give more serious consideration to principles of mental health. Dr. Mead also advocates attack at points of least resistance. "We must look for points of leverage," she says, "and use them to pry open the wall of resistance."

The second question was: Can a nation which is receptive to ideas of mental health and peace launch a national program of education for peace if its unreceptive neighbors continue to wax aggressive?

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