PSYCHOLOGY

From Now On: Behavior

A more scientific knowledge of human behavior and an application of the principles in relations between nations is a must for the future in order to realize world peace.

By WATSON DAVIS

Twenty-third in a series of glances forward in science.

➤ TO keep people from fighting each other, either in the sense of a cold or a hot war, is the objective of international relations among nations, as well as all government and policing within nations and the states.

Peace in the world is to a large extent an extension to nations of the problems that all of us have within our families, cities and states.

Relations between nations have been traditionally the problems of diplomats, military men, industrialists, business men, and historians.

As the world recovers from the physical and mental wounds of two great world wars, some of those charged with running the world have awakened to the possibility that scientists can help them in the maintenance of the peace. Psychological warfare was used effectively in fighting the war. Psychological welfare can be promoted to keep the peace.

Even nations which regard themselves as most friendly neighbors have areas of tension. There is conflict in the cold war as there is in a fighting war.

The facts in these tensions on an international scale are beclouded by stereotyped thinking, nationalistic feeling, catch phrases and slogans. This is just as true of world politics as it is in a hard-fought, "dirty" city election.

In recent years sociologists, anthropologists and psychiatrists have learned a great deal about the way in which people think and feel. They know that what often seem to be the obvious reasons for an action are not at all the causes. There are hidden reasons for many things that happen—hidden in the human mind and past experience.

There has been a great advance in methods of determining, by polls, questionnaires, by probing into attitudes, by interviews, just what people feel and why they do what they do. There have been practical experiments on how to modify and change attitudes which may cause trouble in the world. Conflicts over "race" and prejudices against Negroes, Jews, Communists or any other minority group are often caused by lack of information or experience and background.

Why are groups often hostile toward other groups? The influences that make for aggressive nationalism are very important in our world which is so far from being united. History is full of examples, as in Germany and Japan, where a military career was the highest achievement to which a boy could look forward. Militarism may be ingrained in the culture, and yet this does not mean that war is inevitable, or that it is a fundamental part of human nature.

The psychiatrists study hostile individuals bent upon personal or social harm. These individuals throw some light upon the origins of war itself.

An important achievement of UNESCO has been the study of the whole problem of these so-called social tensions affecting international understanding. Dr. Otto Klineberg of Columbia University has just brought together a survey of research in this field.

As yet the experts in this field of science do not sit down with the statesmen and the generals and the admirals.

For the future we may expect:

A. Those who understand human behavior—why people act the way they do—will play a larger role in advising on the conduct of international relations and the preventing of future wars.

B. Just as the people generally now have a better idea of the usefulness of psychology and psychiatry in the conduct of their personal and family lives, so there will be more general understanding of the need of exploring human behavior in relations between peoples and nations.

C. The peace-promoting activities of the various United Nations agencies, our Department of State and the equivalent organizations in other countries will be more firmly based upon the facts of human behavior.

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VETERINARY MEDICINE

Immunity from Dog Plague

➤ SAVING the lives of many pets is now possible with the development of effective immunization and treatment of leptospirosis, a disease capable of decimating dog populations and an increasingly great health hazard to man.

An antigen capable of conferring immunity to dogs, and probably to man, has been developed in the Hooper Foundation at the University of California Medical Center by Dr. Karl Meyer, director, and K. T. Brunner, researcher.

The scientists also reported that streptomycin and aureomycin are highly effective in the treatment of dogs contracting the disease, which often takes a death toll as high as 85% of the animals afflicted in an epidemic.

Dr. Meyer, whose work was supported by the National Canine Research Foundation, Inc., New York, said that dog owners could protect themselves against possible loss of pets by having their dogs treated thoroughly with streptomycin before they are discharged from kennels or dog hospitals.

Leptospirosis, which is also known as Stuttgart dog plague, is caused by ratborne spirochete-like organisms of two principal types: *leptospira canicola* and *leptospira icterohaemorrhagiae*. A source of infection for man, dogs, hogs and possibly cattle is contact with objects soiled by the urine of rats.

Dogs infect each other, and also pass the disease along to man by close contact, for example when an animal licks his master's hand at a place where it may be scratched.

In man the infection is known as Weil's disease. A variant is swineherder's disease, which is contracted from hogs. The disease is not nearly so deadly in man as it is in dogs. The victims usually recover after a siege of fever, with jaundice occurring in about 60% of cases.

The disease is found frequently among individuals working under unsatisfactory sanitary conditions, including poultry handlers, slaughterhouse employees, fish workers, junk peddlers and gardeners. It is also prevalent on the Island of Hawaii among the cane field workers.

Dr. Meyer said that although only 229 human cases have been reported in the U. S. in the past 40 years, improving laboratory techniques indicate that the incidence is much greater. For example, 78 cases were diagnosed in the Detroit area alone between 1937 and 1946.

Tests show that significant percentages of dog populations in widely separated areas of the U. S. have survived mild infections. The infection rate in small groups of dogs was 19% in southern California, 34% in San Francisco, 38% in Pennsylvania.

The immunizing antigen was prepared by inactivating leptospira organisms by freezing. Earlier antigens prepared by heat inactivation have been less effective. Dr. Brunner tried the antigen on himself with no adverse effects, so that it apparently is useful in man. The antigen protects only against leptospira canicola. An antigen to the other organism is now being prepared.

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