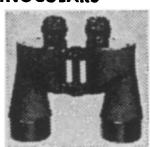


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FROM BRITAIN

Hidden Illness

A massive amount of hidden illness being uncovered in health surveys in London involves men much more than women.

Nearly 6,000 apparently healthy persons took an average of five tests each at a center opened by Dr. R. J. Donaldson, health officer at Rotherham.

More than 1,000 failed at least one test, Dr. Donaldson reports. Nearly 2,000 men took part in the health check and were found twice as likely as the women to have hidden illness.

One man in four and one woman in seven were shown to need treatment for unsuspected defects.

These ranged from eye trouble to diabetes, cancer and heart disease. Some required urgent treatment, which was made immediately available.

There were five cases of active tuberculosis and two of cervical cancer.

"We have found," says Dr. Donaldson, "that illness, particularly high blood pressure and diabetes, can develop until it is really serious without the slightest sign or warning to those concerned." Special lung, heart and artery checks were available only for men.

The more serious illnesses uncovered included 18 cases of abnormally high blood pressure in men aged 30 to 59 and 16 unsuspecting diabetics.

Seventy-three men were found to have heart trouble and 128 chest illness. Fifty women are having further tests for breast tumors.

More than 100 people were anemic, 56 failed a hearing test, and 448, including 182 already wearing glasses, failed a vision test.

FROM SWITZERLAND

City Sickness

As people on every continent leave their farms and villages to converge on cities, they bring with them, or create, health problems with which the world's doctors are wrestling.

More than 400 doctor-delegates from 128 member nations are exploring the health risks posed by city sprawl and congestion during the 20th annual World Health Assembly in Geneva.

By the end of the century, WHO doctors estimate, 80 percent of the world's population will live in cities.

Colleagues of Dr. Pavel Macuch, Czechoslovakian Health Minister and conference chairman, note that the most dramatic pressures and statistics have been coming from Asia, Africa and Latin America, "where no amount of regulations, laws or decrees thus far

have been able to stem the human tide." Many urban areas have doubled their populations in the past 10 years, and are expected to double them again by 1975.

Only five percent of 250 million people living in cities in poorer countries enjoy even rudimentary health-protecting services—a figure based on surveys and data provided by the countries themselves.

In the richer countries, health authorities are warning more and more about air and water pollution, overcrowding, alcoholism, juvenile delinquency and tension-building noise and traffic.

A report from Great Britain says two-thirds of all infant deaths there could be prevented by eliminating overcrowding, poverty and overemployment of women.

India's health ministry says Calcutta is typical. Almost 80 percent of families there live in a single room and up to 50 people share one privy.

Kinshasa in the Republic of the Congo is one of many African cities where masses of unskilled and unlettered young people, lacking city experience, have created huge "reservoirs of venereal and other diseases, alcoholism and delinquency."

The United Kingdom, Russia, Sweden, Brazil, France and others are making attempts to decentralize. Venezuela has created a new city port to relieve the capital. Burma is replanning old towns and settling squatters around Rangoon in satellite cities. Americans expect to house an entire neighborhood in one building. The Communist countries all have planned communities in the country. The Russians strictly separate work and residential areas by green belts.

In an effort to hold back the tides of in-migration, the Russians are working to keep medical talent in the countryside. Priority in education is given, according to Dr. L. A. Sakvarelidse, health minister of the Georgian Republic, to rural students who are likely to return to their regions rather than stay in the city.

FROM CANADA

Bridge Stress Measured

For some time engineers suspected that bridges in Canada are overdesigned to withstand the impact of moving ice during the spring breakup. Since little information is available, an engineering team in Alberta Province designed a movable steel pier—a sort of steel nose or shield—to measure and record ice pressure.

The recorder is strong enough to resist an ice force of 400 tons, yet (see p. 531)