

PHILOSOPHY

Teach Slogan Respect

► PEOPLE SHOULD be trained to pay respect to such slogans as "freedom" or "democracy" in the way that they pay respect to the flag of the nation or a creed for which they have enthusiasm, Prof. Philipp Frank, Harvard philosopher, declared at the Third Conference on Science, Philosophy and Religion held in New York.

"But people should learn to respect a slogan or a flag only as the symbol of an actual fighting group," he continued, "and to follow the slogan or the flag only when and if it heads the group to which we have vowed allegiance."

The beliefs that slogans contain some "absolute truth" should never be encouraged, Prof. Frank contended. Whenever we start discussing the question of truth, he explained, we have to use the doctrine of the relativity of truth to avoid logical and moral confusion.

"Truth can only be stated in complicated, qualified, relativized language," Prof. Frank said. "But the decision in a fight has to be quick and plain. The inspiring slogans can and must lead our decisions, but they cannot and must not be our guidance in the search for truth. "Under the slogan, 'freedom', liberal, fascist, and communist forces do their fighting. Therefore, 'fight for freedom' may mean 'fight for any these goals'. If we believe in a statement in which 'freedom' occurs without an operational definition as in an 'absolute truth', we can without effort join the fight on the side of a party we actually dislike.

"The red colored banner is traditionally connected with a specific type of political creed. When the red banner is hoisted, it adds to the inspiration of people who sympathize with this creed. But the sympathizers of this creed should not be misled into the belief that they have to join every fight on the

side on which the red banner is displayed."

As an example, Prof. Frank explained that such good experts in propaganda as the founders of the Nazi party, gave to their swastika a red background to use the emotional effect of this color upon large groups of people.

Science News Letter, September 5, 1942

PHYSIOLOGY

Thick Skin, Not Pigment, May Protect from Sunburn

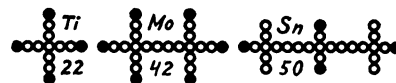
► NOW THAT you have that summer tan, did you ever stop to think why you no longer sunburn?

For a long time even the doctors thought it was due to the increased production of color pigment in the skin, called melanin, which causes "tanning." But some scientists observed that this pigment is located deep in the skin, except in Negroes, where it is distributed more thickly throughout the skin. And most sunburn occurs in the upper layers of the skin, above the protective pigment in the white race.

Recent evidence (*Science*, Aug. 28) suggests that suntanned skin does not sunburn because of a thickening of the corneum, which consists of layers of flattened horny skin cells on the outer surface. Thus upon exposure to the sun, a person gets "thick skinned" on this outer surface, and is protected from the burning rays. This theory is backed up by experiments with albino mice which cannot form the color pigment. When exposed to the sun, the mice also become resistant to burn, Dr. Harold F. Blum and Dr. John S. Kirby-Smith, of the National Cancer Institute report.

Science News Letter, September 5, 1942

ESSAYS ON THE NEW VORTEX ATOM VORTEX-ATOM STRUCTURES OF THE HEAVIER ELEMENTS



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C. F. Krafft, 1322 Amherst Ave., Richmond, Va.

ENGINEERING

Use "Hairy" Planes to Test Streamlining Efficiency

► "HAIRY" AIRPLANES may seem in the same class with pink elephants, but they are not. The hairs are not real, however. Bits of string are stuck all over the plane so that engineers may study the direction of air-flow during wind-tunnel tests. Photographs taken during the tests show which way the wind blows and where the streamlining is defective.

Science News Letter, September 5, 1942

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