PSYCHOLOGY

Propaganda Offensive

We need to let the whole world know that we do not want war. Delegates to international conferences should be screened for mental adjustment.

➤ MAJOR task for the United States in the present world crisis is to reduce the fear that Russia has of the United States, Prof. Otto Klineberg, of Columbia University, told his colleagues in State College, Pa., at the meeting of the American Psychological Association.

"We cannot disarm," he said. "That would be too dangerous at this juncture. We can, however, embark upon a powerful propaganda or informational offensive, designed to make clear to the whole world, including the Soviet Union, that we want peace and not war; that we will never start a war, not even a preventive war."

Psychologists know that aggression may be born of fear. The violent "running amok" which afflicts some Indonesian natives was found to be due to the conviction on the part of the sufferer that he is about to be attacked by others. He slashes about in fury to protect himself from his imaginary enemies. In a similar manner, one of the factors of Soviet aggression against us may be fear of us.

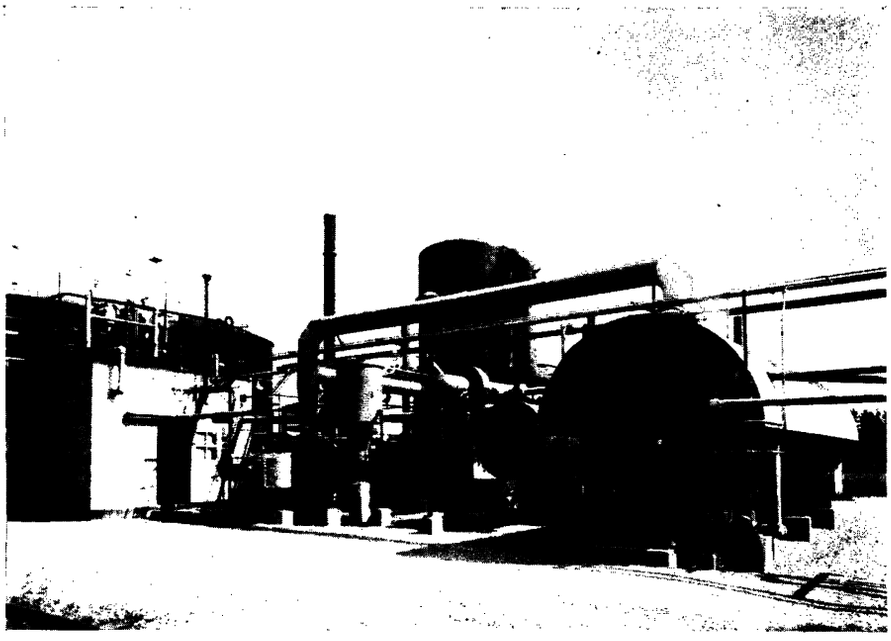
Psychologists also know that a person's way of viewing an action, or even an object, is influenced by his nationality and other group affiliations.

U. S. diplomatic and military actions should be planned with this fact in mind, Prof. Klineberg suggested. American aid to Greece and Turkey, for example, is seen differently by ourselves and the Soviet leaders. What looks right to us as a legitimate means of aiding these countries to remain free, looks to the Russians like a threat to themselves.

Delegates to international conferences should be screened for mental adjustment, Prof. Klineberg suggested.

"Not a few international conferences have been wrecked," he said, "by the presence of one or more participants who were insecure, oversensitive, suspicious or resentful, to a degree which indicated that they were not psychologically healthy individuals."

Before a man is allowed to attain a position of national leadership, he should be certified as "normal" by a panel of experts from an independent organization such as the World Health Organization, the World Federation for Mental Health or an International Association of Psychologists, Prof. Klineberg proposed. We make candidates for the police force pass tests of physical and mental capacity, why not national leaders? If such a test had been in use, Hitler, Goering, Himmler, Hess, and Streicher could not have reached power, he stated.



OPEN AIR CHEMISTRY—An American Cyanamid Company commercial-size plant in Hamilton, Ohio, for the production of sulfuric acid is an example of chemistry in the open. Operating hazards and maintenance costs are cut to a minimum in this type of plant.

Science News Letter, September 23, 1950

CHEMISTRY

Outdoor Chemical Plants Provide Greater Safety

➤ OUTDOOR plants for manufacturing chemicals, particularly where explosion and poisoning hazards may exist, have many advantages, the American Institute of Chemical Engineers was told in Minneapolis, Minn. Now quite general in oil refineries, they are suitable for other industries.

Unhoused chemical plants can advantageously be installed in Canada and Michigan, with their long winters, as well as in warmer country, the engineers were told by William H. Williams, Dow Chemical Company, Midland, Mich.

The out-of-doors plant has many advantages, he said, of which reduction in operating hazard and maintenance costs is probably the most important.

Perhaps the principal cause of disaster in the operation of an organic chemical plant, handling materials that are flammable but not explosive in nature, is explosion caused by the confinement of vapors in a restricted space.

This is the opinion of Homer Kieweg, Commercial Solvents Corporation, Terre Haute, Ind. Concentrations of vapors in the explosive ranges are likely to occur due to some failure of equipment or operation, he said. Prevention of explosive mixtures in confined spaces under these conditions is oftentimes impossible. With outdoor plants this danger is eliminated.

The former general custom of housing chemical plants in totally enclosed-type structures is gradually being reversed in the direction of outdoor-type installations, the meeting was told by representatives of the E. B. Badger & Sons Company, Boston. Petroleum refineries were cited as examples.

Science News Letter, September 23, 1950

BOTANY

Naphtha Spray Kills Evergreen Nursery Weeds

➤ A FINE spray of mineral spirits or naphtha can take the weeds out of evergreen nurseries at a cost of only a tenth that of the usual laborious hand weeding, J. H. Stoeckeler, forester in charge of the Northern Lakes Forest Research Center, Rhinelander, Wis., reported to the American Chemical Society in Chicago, Ill.

Such sprays applied at relatively high pressure are effective on seedbeds of pine, fir, juniper and spruce, but broadleaf species such as elm, oak and maple are killed by the naphtha.

Science News Letter, September 23, 1950