

## PSYCHIATRY

# World Tension Remedies

► **REMEDIES** for easing tensions in the atomic age were prescribed by psychiatrists attending the American Psychiatric Association meeting in Toronto, Canada.

The remedies were advanced at a "staff conference" by some of the world's experts on interpersonal and international relations.

"Superordinate goals" was the name of a remedy prescribed by Dr. Otto Klineberg, Canadian-born psychologist of Columbia University, New York. He told of research carried on in the small world of a boys' camp that shows how antagonistic people can be brought together.

Different groups or "parties" were deliberately built up in the camp and friction between them incited until they thoroughly hated each other. Then all the friction was wiped out. This was done by artificially rigging a situation such that a crisis in the camp could be resolved only when all the boys worked together on it. For example, a truck bringing food to the camp broke down or was stuck in the mud. The boys could not eat until all pitched in and pulled the truck from the mire.

The difficulty, Dr. Klineberg said, in eliminating international tensions is in finding a super-project urgent enough to arouse the interest and willingness of Russia and the

United States to cooperate. Research in space might be such a superordinate goal. UNICEF, the United Nations program for promoting child health, might be another because Russians and Americans alike love their children. The World Health Organization, WHO, might be another.

Some very practical measures were prescribed by Dr. Joost A. M. Meerloo, New York psychiatrist formerly with the underground in the Netherlands. Drop the word "inspection" in negotiations with the USSR over test bans and disarmament. Fear in one nation produces fear in others, he said. Suspicion builds suspicion on the part of others. The word "inspection," although not intended to do so, carries the implication of both fear and suspicion.

Another measure urged by Dr. Meerloo is the appointment of psychologists or other social scientists as field workers and advisers wherever American officials must administer foreign territories or take part in negotiations.

Neurotics in public life inflame and build up the fears not only of themselves but others and provide leadership for the "lunatic fringe." This was the warning of Dr. James S. Tyhurst, psychiatrist of Vancouver, B. C., Canada.

• Science News Letter, 81:327 May 26, 1962

## PSYCHIATRY

# Ignorant About Sex

► **DOCTORS** are woefully ignorant about sex, Dr. Harold Isaiah Lief, psychiatrist of Tulane University, New Orleans, La., told the American Psychiatric Association meeting in Toronto, Canada.

At the same time, he said, the public has built up myths about the medical student and the graduate physician. The medical student is thought to be sexually wild and irresponsible. Once he has finished his internship, however, he is supposed to be highly responsible and well-informed in matters pertaining to sexual behavior.

In reality, the average medical student is somewhat more inhibited in his sexual behavior than a young man of his age and socio-economic background in another walk of life. The majority of medical students are highly conscientious self-disciplined persons either because admissions committees pick this type or because most of the applicants are this kind of person.

So the public idea of the physician as a responsible person is fairly close to the truth, Dr. Lief said. But the public picture of the doctor as an expert on sex is far from the truth.

A survey of graduates from some 12 medical schools indicated that the sex instruction they had received was most inadequate especially with regard to normal sex relations and the psychological aspects.

Dr. Lief urged that the matter be considered at one of the training institutes of

the American Association of Medical Colleges in the near future.

• Science News Letter, 81:327 May 26, 1962

## Judging the Incompetent

► **THE PROCESS** of committing an accused person to a hospital because he is incompetent to stand trial has "gone awry" —at least in the State of Michigan.

Drs. John H. Hess Jr. of the University of Michigan Medical Center, Ann Arbor, and Herbert E. Thomas of Western Psychiatric Institute, Pittsburgh, Pa., reported to the American Psychiatric Association in Toronto that over half the patients committed as incompetent are never released. Others are kept in the hospital far longer than they would have been kept in prison if convicted of the crime. After their long stay, they are then returned to the court only to have the charges dropped.

The psychiatrist testifying in court often fails to grasp the intent behind the concept of incompetency, the report indicated. He may find the defendant "incompetent" because he does not feel that the defendant should be punished. Or he may usurp the function of the court and decide that the defendant is guilty and should be punished.

And finally, the court itself fails to understand either the law or the legal intent underlying incompetency proceedings, the

report stated. The court misuses the expert witness in simply accepting his conclusions without scientific validation. After the accused is committed, the court relinquishes its authority over the individual and permits the hospital to deal with him according to standards of mental health which go far beyond the requirements of the statute.

The committed person exists in a no man's land, his role being between that of half-criminal and half-patient.

• Science News Letter, 81:327 May 26, 1962

## Neurotics Vanishing

► **THE "CLASSICAL NEUROTIC"** may join the hysteric as a "Vanishing American," a California team of psychiatrists told the meeting of the American Psychiatric Association in Toronto, Canada.

The patient presently being turned away from psychiatric clinics, they reported, has a character disorder and is interested in immediate symptom relief rather than insight. With the expansion of clinical facilities, the numbers of such patients will increase and more emphasis will have to be given to teaching the psychiatric resident how to deal with them.

The team making the report consisted of Drs. Ronald R. Koegler, Sara J. Jordan and Norman Q. Brill of the University of California at Los Angeles Medical Center, and Leon J. Epstein of the Langley Porter Neuropsychiatric Institute, San Francisco.

• Science News Letter, 81:327 May 26, 1962

**SCIENCE FAIR WINNERS**—*Shown on the following two pages are the thirteen top winners with their exhibits at the 13th National Science Fair-International held at Seattle, Washington, May 2-5. (See story SNL, 81:309, May 19, 1962.)*

*Reading from left to right, top row: Donna Gene Hayes, 18, Maumee Valley Country Day School, Maumee, Ohio; Frederick A. Dombrose, 17, Sylvania H.S., Sylvania, Ohio; Leonard S. Joeris, Jr., 16, Ann Arbor H.S., Ann Arbor, Mich.; Richard Lee Falwell, 17, Walter Johnson H.S., Rockville, Md.;*

*Middle row: Charles Lee Dryden II, 17, Falfurrias H.S., Falfurrias, Tex.; Maryce M. Jacobs, 17, Las Cruces H.S., Las Cruces, N. Mex.; Bette Jane Wyckoff, 17, Quakertown Community H.S., Quakertown, Pa.; Robert H. Timme, 17, Jesse H. Jones H.S., Houston, Tex.*

*Bottom row: Henry Allen Lester, 16, Teaneck H.S., Teaneck, N. J.; Lewis Binoth Haberly, 17, Schroon Lake Central School, Schroon Lake, N. Y.; Vicki Lynn Harper, 16, Leonia H.S., Leonia, N. J.; Melodie MacLeod Williams, 18, Chateaugay Central School, Chateaugay, N. Y.; Gary Paul Wulfsberg, 17, Washington H.S., Cedar Rapids, Iowa.*