

Psychology Can Aid Law Enforcement

Psychology

Commission Minus Psychologist Called Paradox

THE EXISTENCE of a National Commission of Law Enforcement without a psychologist in its membership is a "paradoxical spectacle," declared Dr. Knight Dunlap, professor of experimental psychology at the Johns Hopkins University, in a radio address. Dr. Dunlap spoke under the auspices of Science Service through a nation-wide network of the Columbia Broadcasting System, on the subject, "What is Psychology Good For?"

"In respect to the general application of laws there is a field in which psychology can be of immense service to the public, but this work has not even commenced," he said. "But," he added, "I don't know where we would find a psychologist today properly trained for this special work."

In Legal Procedure

"In the field of legal procedure there has been great interest in the applications of psychology," he continued. "Particularly, since psychiatry has shown itself such a dismal failure in this field. Unskilled attempts to treat the prisoner as a psychological problem and to cure him, instead of punishing him, have been made; but always with deplorable results. The present situation in one of our largest

American cities can be traced, in part, to well meant but ignorant efforts in this direction. The application of psychology is needed; but we need first the training of a considerable number of psychologists for this work, in which at present practically no psychologists are engaged. The work itself, must commence experimentally, under the direction of scientific men."

Dr. Dunlap branded as "good for nothing" a great deal "of what passes for psychology today."

"Anybody with nothing more than a stock of fine-sounding phrases can set himself up as a psychologist," he declared, "and a great many persons with no more equipment than a desire for notoriety or for money do thus set themselves up. We have had a great many self-styled psychologists giving courses at so much per head, in topics ranging from how to develop your personality to theories of soul-vibrations, and some of these have swindled the gullible public out of large sums of money. We have had psychoanalysts posing as psychologists and writing popular books of wide circulation telling all about complexes and repressions and other bunk, some of which is merely stupid, and some of which has done great harm. It can be certified that practically all

psychoanalysts who write popular books or articles know very little psychology, and their nostrums are as worthless or dangerous as the patent medicines sold in bottles.

Best Psychologists Are Cautious

"The only psychology which is good for anything is the product of psychologists connected with universities or reputable scientific institutions, and these men are cautious about putting out popular instructions, because psychology of the scientific sort is a very difficult subject, and the most important parts of it can not be successfully applied to any problem or case except by an expert of broad and intensive training, or under his direct supervision.

"Not all legitimate psychologists are reliable experts, any more than all doctors are reliable, but just as you find reliable doctors only among the qualified men, so the reliable psychologists are found only in the ranks of those who conform to certain standards. . . .

"The great field in which psychology is being applied today is that of personal adjustment," Dr. Dunlap stated. "People who are badly adapted to their social and economic environments: who are peculiar, or inefficient: who are not getting what they should out of life, and who are not able to do their work properly, are legion. Some of these people are really mentally diseased, and are in need of psychiatric care. The vast majority, however, do not need a psychiatrist, but a psychologist. Just one narrow stretch of the field will illustrate. In many cases, a disintegrating family, headed for the rocks, is saved by the advice of a psychologist. Sometimes children who are becoming morbid may be saved by treatment of the parents. Sex perversions, if not of too long standing, may be cleared up by psychological treatment. In another minor field, that of stammering and similar speech defects, while little of value has yet been done, we have gone far enough to see that much may be done if a sufficient number of properly trained psychologists apply themselves to the job."

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European Cities Cleaner Than American

Sanitation

AMERICAN cities lag behind European ones in the matter of cleanliness and efficiency of refuse collection and disposal, Dr. George A. Soper found in a recent survey of the situation here and abroad.

Munich, Germany, was the cleanest city, Dr. Soper said, although several other German cities closely approached its high degree of cleanliness.

Dustless refuse collection systems being used in Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia and England are a new and remarkable development, Dr. Soper reported.

The cooperation of all the citizens in keeping the cities clean was everywhere apparent and it is this cooperation which must be the keynote in any plan for municipal cleanliness. It ranks above the mechanical develop-

ments, it appears from the report.

Gutter flushing is a useful European procedure which is seldom practiced in America. In Paris it is done with a large amount of water and seems almost indispensable. In Dresden there is a different technic using less water but apparently operating as efficiently.

Another European custom novel to American city dwellers is the practice of the street-cleaning department of cleaning the sidewalks as well as the pavements, except during snowy seasons when the householder does it.

This plan might well be followed in New York, Dr. Soper suggested. The sidewalk is really a part of the street and there is no good reason why its care should be left to the householder.