

PSYCHOLOGY

# Propaganda Protection Needed In the United States Today

Expert Replying to Science Service Inquiry Declares  
American People Already Mentally Prepared for War

*War of nerves—war of propaganda. Call it what you will, we in America are to experience the powerful backwash of the European conflict. What we need is psychological protection. What is likely to happen to us, in the opinion of psychological experts: The American people are already mentally prepared to accept war and to accept the fact that sooner or later they will be drawn into it. Propagandists will capitalize on the recent depression by suggesting that through playing the war game we can win back prosperity. The mental effects of war would be as disastrous as the maiming and lethal results of high explosives. Free speech and free press will be lost. Faith in democratic processes will give way to a following of a strong military leader. International hatred will be cultivated and minority groups, including labor organizations, will be persecuted. Mental disease, neuroses, and twisted personalities will develop on a frightfully increased scale. The values and ideals of civilization will be crushed. Fear and horror will rule the world despite the attempts of propagandists to artificially deaden these human emotions.*

*Science Service has queried leading psychologists in the field of social problems on new methods of propaganda likely to be developed in a new European War and new methods of combatting it. We also asked what would be the effect of such a catastrophe on the mental state of the people of both warring and neutral nations.*

PSYCHOLOGY

## Official Reasons For War Are Seldom Real Causes

By DR. I. KRECHEVSKY

Secretary, Society for the Psychological  
Study of Social Issues

THE PRESENT conflict in Europe is not that of democracy versus fascism. It is the final tragic chapter in the politics of power and profits which has dominated the world for more than half a century, but psychologists know well that the official reasons for war are seldom the real causes.

Propagandists knowing that the American people are sincerely anti-fascists will raise the slogan of democracy versus fascism. England and France will be glorified as democracies and thus clever appeals to our highest ideals will be used in the hope that our baser emotions of

aggression will be released with the result that we will be ready to stampede into a war for "democracy" and "do our bit."

Also an attempt will be made to take advantage of our previous economic plight and propagandists will suggest that through playing the war game we can win back prosperity.

The group opposed to our participation in such a war will no doubt attempt to publicize the real issues involved. They will remind the American people of the old slogan used in the last war and will offer a more positive and constructive program for economic security in this country. Such anti-war propaganda will also have to recognize our democratic sympathies and show that by defending and extending democracy and peace at

home, the American people will be working most effectively for democracy the world over.

*Science News Letter, September 9, 1939*

PSYCHOLOGY

## War Interrupts Natural Activities of Living

By DR. FRANKLIN FEARING

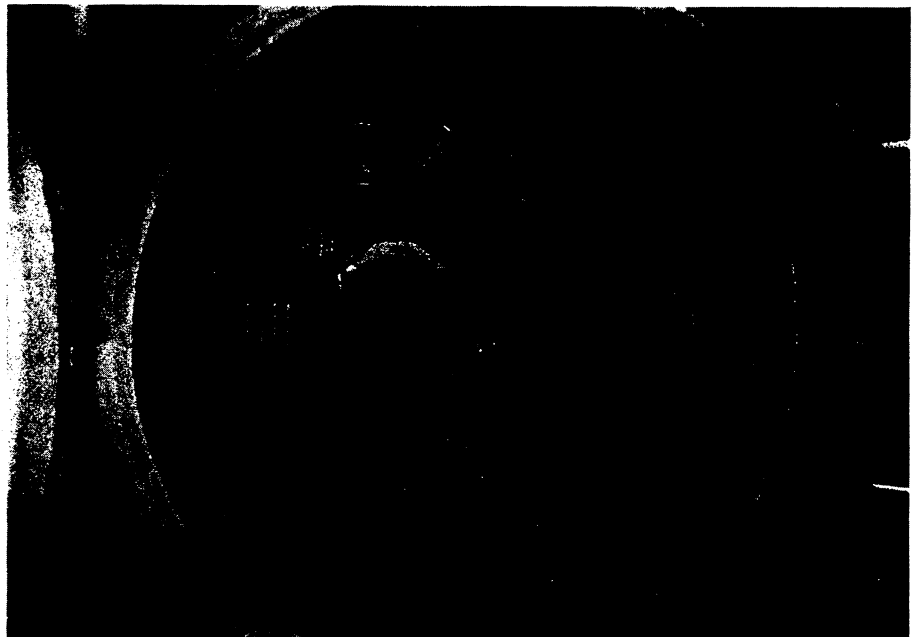
Professor of Psychology, University of  
California at Los Angeles

THE SITUATION at present is psychologically not the same as in 1916. Constant familiarity with activities of fascist countries has already mentally prepared the American people to accept war, and to accept the fact that sooner or later they will be drawn into it.

The last Gallup poll shows that 76% of the people believed that in event of a European war, we will be involved.

Counter propaganda is not likely to be effective.

The mental effects of war are extremely complex. Among the more important is a loss of faith in democratic processes and an increase in belief that a strong man at the top can save us.



### TEST FOR HIGH FLYING

*The high altitude tank at the Mayo Clinic's new aviation medicine research laboratory at Rochester, Minn. Such effects as lack of oxygen on the human body and mind, and such questions as how fast can a man descend comfortably and safely can be studied in this tank which, by low pressure, simulates upper air levels. Here a research worker wears an oxygen mask invented by three of the men responsible for this laboratory, Drs. Walter M. Boothby, W. Randolph Lovelace and A. L. Bulbulian. Oxygen is necessary at altitudes above about 9,000 feet.*

All forms of social freedom are curtailed, and a fear and persecution of all minority groups, particularly labor organizations, will probably develop.

Since war serves no human or biological need but is essentially a pathological state and violently interrupts all the natural activities of living, its effects on all participants are serious.

If war is prosecuted for a long period, it is necessary to artificially inflate enthusiasm and to artificially deaden normal reactions of fear and horror. This is likely to result in serious psychological changes in the individual and to increase the psychoses of frustration.

*Science News Letter, September 9, 1939*

#### PSYCHOLOGY

## War Propaganda Success Depends Upon Rousing Hate

By DR. ROSS STAGNER

University of Colorado

**P**ROPAGANDA designed to involve United States in war will take the form of glorifying one side of the European conflict while vilifying opposed countries.

The success of propaganda depends upon arousing emotions of anger, hatred and fear. Its effects can be neutralized by trying to see both sides, avoiding policies based on revenge and intimidation, doubting atrocity stories, shunning name calling, remembering that national governments do not publish true facts on national disputes.

Our studies emphasize that American people hate war but by allowing emotion to sweep away reason they may be plunged into it.

Appeals to our highest ideals may be shrewdly planned to let loose our most destructive emotions.

If the United States is drawn into war, we shall have censorship, destruction of free speech and preaching of international hatred on an unprecedented scale.

Here, as elsewhere, will occur a frightful increase in neurosis, insanity and twisted personalities.

Civilized values and democratic ideals will be crushed. The psychological effects will persist for twenty years or more.

Psychologists appraising this crisis plead for caution, reason and delay in judgment until facts are clear, warn against quick condemnation based on possibly distorted information.

*Science News Letter, September 9, 1939*



#### ONE OF TWINS

*Polishing one of the America's propellers. Two such giants, which must be hand-finished, will be driven by geared turbines to take the ship across the Atlantic in a comfortable, economical seven days.*

#### ENGINEERING

## Newly Launched Liner Is Safest Ship in The World

**T**HE S. S. AMERICA, launched on August 31, is not only the largest passenger vessel ever built in the United States but is the safest ocean liner in the world. Its design, naval architects of the Newport News Shipbuilding and Drydock Company, its builders, and the U. S. Maritime Commission unite in saying, incorporates a great many unusual features.

The America will never burn like the Morro Castle, the Paris, Atlantique and Georges Philippar. Fireproof construction featuring marinite, an asbestos-based material for paneling, brick and partition filler, is being used throughout. All the vessels under construction or called for in the Maritime Commission's program for rebuilding the merchant marine are similarly designed, but only a few vessels incorporating it have been finished. The America will be the largest fireproof steamship afloat.

Wood construction between state-

rooms and other enclosures, and wood paneling throughout, are the source of fire danger in ocean liners. Only a small amount of wood paneling will be in the ship and because of the wide use of marinite, it is not at all dangerous. Marinite was proved to be a successful fireproofing material in tests aboard the S. S. Nantasket, conducted following the Morro Castle disaster.

The America is about 40% complete today. It will be finished in what is known as a "fitting basin." Its displacement will be about 34,000 tons. Its gross register tonnage, which will not be known exactly until the ship has been finished, will be about 26,000 tons as compared with more than 80,000 gross register tons for the Queen Mary and the Normandie. Gross register tonnage, most frequently used as a measure of a passenger vessel's size, has nothing to do with weight but is a measure of the space enclosed by the hull, decks and