THE VIEWPOINT OF THE PSYCHIATRIST

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PSYCHIATRY is that specialty of medicine dealing with mental disorders. As such it naturally progresses from the treating of serious mental disorders to a study of their causes and prevention, and finally to methods for obtaining the optimum of mental health. The problem of mental health is linked with the problem of physical health. This integration of mental and physical, of psyche and soma, is basic in psychiatry. Psychiatry therefore finds itself satisfied with the definition of health as laid down by the World Health Organization of the United Nations which reads as follows:

> Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.
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> The enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being without distinction of race, religion, political belief, economic or social condition.
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> The health of all peoples is fundamental to the attainment of peace and security and is dependent upon the fullest co-operation of individuals and States.

We see in this definition the acceptance of the idea that mental health is an essential part of all health and not something to be dissociated and studied apart. The problems of mental health and mental disease should be integrated closely with the study of physical health and physical disease. In fact, they cannot be separated and kept apart. From all this it follows that any organization which is concerned with the health of the worker must of necessity include the psychiatrist as a part of its machinery for carrying out its project. This does not mean that all health organizations must have specially trained psychiatrists. In many cases the physician or the surgeon who understands the general principles of mental hygiene and who has had some training or experience along psychiatric lines may be able to deal with many, if not most, of the problems which come up.

These ideas are not at all new. For 30 years psychiatrists have been pointing out that there is a place for a psychiatrist setup in industrial medicine and that those practicing industrial medicine will be able to do a better job if they have some familiarity with psychiatric principles.

The psychiatrist is a person who is interested in personality, in all its aspects both mental and physical. Furthermore, he is able to integrate these two aspects of the personality, so that he can make a unique contribution to the solution of

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From the Langley Porter Clinic.

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