

Mental health workers seek out the tiny roots from which mental and emotional disturbances grow. They strive relentlessly to pierce the dark curtain which obscures the bright path of normalcy and a satisfying pattern of living. So, too, on the world scene, through the United Nations and other instruments of international co-operation, we are now attempting to discover the root sources of misunderstanding and conflict. It we should fail to find some means of penetrating the curtains of ignorance, fear and mistrust that now so tragically divide the world's peoples we may be forced to ring down the final curtain on the great pageant of human progress.

The essential weakness of all authoritarian political regimes is not the physical impoverishment they impose on their subjects or their failure to provide the progress and prosperity they promise but the way in which they degrade and demean the human spirit. The real gulf between the free world and the totalitarian systems lies, not in economic theory but in the wide divergence of opinion as to the rightful place of the individual human being. In a democratic society, the individual is not regarded as the personification of categories -- economic or otherwise -- but as a free and sacred human personality.

And so I believe that the mental health movement which centres itself on the individual and which has human personality as its first concern, can make a vital contribution to sanity and order in these tremendous times. For never before has it been more essential to encourage sound and healthy attitudes so that we may yet reach our objective of an enduring peace in a healthy and stable world society.

Sixty years ago the cleavage in the world's thinking was eloquently phrased by one of mankind's greatest benefactors, Louis Pasteur -- whose words are strangely true today:

"Two contrary laws seem to be wrestling with each other nowadays: the one, a law of blood and death, ever imaging new means of destruction and forcing nations to be constantly ready for the battlefield. The other, a law of peace, work and health, ever evolving new means of delivering man from the scourges which mislead him. The one seeks violent conquest, the other the relief of humanity. The latter places one human life above any victory, while the former would sacrifice hundrede of thousands of lives to the ambition of one. Which of these laws shall ultimately prevail, God alone knows."

We can set ourselves no finer objective than to advance respect for human dignity in accordance with the law of peace and work and health.