

GEORGE BROCK CHISHOLM — 1896 - 1971



Early in February, the not unexpected news of Brock Chisholm's death at seventy-four recalled for many of us vivid pictures of a man, quietly outspoken, uncomfortably logical and disturbingly accurate in his forecasts of events to come. He never thought of himself as a prophet, yet he predicted as early as 1934 the coming of World War II, and he was alarmed, years before they became current topics of concern, by such world problems as over-population, over-pollution and the potential over-kill by nuclear arms. Brock, like most prophets, was not without honour, save perhaps in his own country.

Born in Oakville, Ontario, he graduated in medicine at Toronto before taking psychiatric training in England and the United States, and was in private practice as a psychiatrist in Toronto from 1934 to 1940. It was during this period that, characteristically, he appeared as a witness for the defence of a public health nurse arrested for teaching birth control in the depressed area of the Ottawa Valley. He started discussion groups in Oakville and Toronto on the

growth and development of children, and he laid the foundations for his essentially humanistic approach to problems of people's relationships to people.

His military career in both World Wars was impressive. He enlisted in 1915 as a private and fought as an infantryman at Vimy Ridge, the Somme and in other Canadian engagements. He was commissioned in the field in 1917 and was awarded the Military Cross and Bar. In 1938, because he was certain war was coming he rejoined the Canadian Militia, and was finally given a full-time General Staff post in 1940. The following year, together with the late Dr. William Line, he organized the Army's Personnel Selection Directorate, and then was appointed Director General of Medical Services with the rank of Major General. Towards the end of the War he was elected National President of the Canadian Mental Health Association but resigned when he was appointed Deputy Minister of Health in the Department of National Health and Welfare.

In 1948 he was unanimously elected Director General of the World Health Organization, and he held this post until his retirement in 1953. He then moved to Victoria, British Columbia, where he continued an active career of lecturing and writing for several years. He was made Honorary President of the World Federalists of Canada and became a member of the Board of Directors of the Canadian Peace Research Institute and President of the World Federation for Mental Health. He was an honorary member of the Canadian Psychiatric Association.

He received many honours from professional societies, universities and governments around the world. His published works range from simple pamphlets on army *morale*, to books on world survival. His last published work (1958) was also prophetic — *Can People Learn to Learn?*

As we say farewell to Brock, we can only echo sadly "can they?"

J.D.G.