

EDITORIAL COMMENT

IN MEMORIAM, PAUL H. HOCH, M.D.

It is appropriate for this *QUARTERLY* to express regrets over the untimely death of Commissioner Paul H. Hoch, M.D., of the New York State Department of Mental Hygiene on December 15, 1964 and to extend condolences to his widow, the former Barbara Griffiths of Brooklyn.

Doctor Hoch had held the post of commissioner for more than nine years. He was appointed by Governor Harriman in July 1955 and was reappointed by Governor Rockefeller in 1959. He was 62 years old.

Born in Budapest, Paul Hoch was graduated in medicine from the University of Göttingen, Germany, where he later served on the faculty. He was director of the out-patient department and of the brain research division of the neuropsychiatric clinic at Göttingen when he came to the United States in 1933. He joined the staff of Manhattan (N.Y.) State Hospital that same year. In 1942, he was chief medical officer of a United States Public Health Service hospital for war neuroses. In 1943, he returned to the New York State hospital system, joining the staff of the New York State Psychiatric Institute. He headed the department of experimental psychiatry there from 1948 until he was named commissioner.

Doctor Hoch was a diplomate in both psychiatry and neurology of the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology. He was a fellow of the American Psychiatric Association, the American Medical Association, the American Association on Mental Deficiency, and the New York Academy of Medicine. He belonged to 22 scientific and professional societies and had held office in many of them, including the Collegium Internationale Neuro-Psycho-Pharmacologium, the American-Hungarian Medical Society, the Schilder Society, the Rudolf Virchow Medical Society, the Society of Biological Psychiatry, the American Psychopathological Association and the American College of Neuropsychopharmacology.

Doctor Hoch was author or co-author, or editor or co-editor of more than 80 books and scientific articles. He may very well be best remembered for one of the concepts upon which he wrote with

Philip Polatin, M.D., that of pseudoneurotic schizophrenia, which added a new diagnostic category to the field. As commissioner, he encouraged the use of tranquilizing drugs, the spread of open hospital wards and the development of intensive re-treatment programs for chronic patients.

THE QUARTERLY can conclude no better than by quoting from the tribute to Doctor Hoch that Governor Rockefeller made following the commissioner's death. "He was," said the governor, "an internationally recognized figure in his field . . . deeply dedicated to the cause of public psychiatry. The master plan for treatment of mental disabilities, which he developed for New York State two years ago, was adopted by President Kennedy and the Congress as a model for federal action." Calling him "one of the great researchers in mental hygiene in the nation and the world," the governor said his death was "a great shock and a tremendous loss to the state and the nation. He was a wonderfully warm, understanding human being."

THE EDITOR