

Whitef - Whiting

Whiting

I think if you were to count in all of the people who were not accepted in the services because they were found, for one reason or another, to be slightly unbalanced even though they could go on living as they had been without being classed as mental cases, your speaker was probably fairly correct in his statement. If he were to take only the cases, after they had been accepted, I doubt

if he could prove his
statement for the simple
reason that the mental
harms done to many
people will not be
known for many years.

It is very difficult to
estimate how different
people were affected

MAY 19, 1951
MRS. E. J. H. H.
New York

Handwritten notes on a separate sheet of paper:
I would like to see the mental hospital for the homeless.

Whiting

May 19, 1947

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt
Hyde Park, Dutchess County
New York

Subject: Mental Casualties in World II

Dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

Recently at a Town Hall lecture here a speaker made the statement that 50% of the casualties in World War II were mental casualties.

This seems excessively high and so in order to verify the statement I wrote to the Surgeon General of the War Dept. in Washington D.C. His reply was quite lengthy and went into a lot of detail but still left me in a quandary as to whether the speaker was justified in making the statement. He also said that Russia only had 5% mental casualties and England 3%.

The letter from the Surgeon General in part reads "according to statistics available, 39.2% of all discharges through medical channels from 1941 to 1945 were for neuropsychiatric reasons. This amounted to a little over 388,000 men. In addition, there were 163,000 men discharged through administrative channels because of habits and traits of character or inadaptability to the service. These two figures when added together amount to 49% of all discharges for either physical or mental reasons. If 49% is used as a figure for all separations due to neuropsychiatric reasons it must not be interpreted as being for purely "mental" Neurological diseases are included, which are not mental. If those discharged through medical and administrative channels are thought of as a total percentage of 100, then 47% were separated for psychoneurosis and 10% for psychosis. This amounts to about one-half of those discharged for neuropsychiatric reasons, broadly speaking, and which are in a sense "mental" reasons. hope the foregoing helps to make clear what is meant by the statement referred to as 50% of casualties of World War II were mental in origin."

In your opinion, would you say, broadly speaking, that the Town Hall speaker was correct in his statement? This subject has become very controversial among various groups here and is being discussed a great deal. We would indeed value your opinion on the subject.

Very truly yours,

Alyce Whiting

Alyce Whiting (Mrs. F.M.)
499 Marina Blvd.
San Francisco 23, Calif.

Handwritten signature: *Whiting*

P.S. I thoroughly enjoyed your speech which you made here in March at the Scottish Rite Temple.

[W.H.T.-J.E.]
600 Langham Street
Brooklyn, New York
April 7, 1947

Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt
Washington Square
New York City

My dear Mrs. Roosevelt:

Just to let you know
that many Americans shall
always remember that two years
ago the greatest person, the
most wonderful soul in the
world was taken away from
us. No one can ever take
his place, for I do not
believe anyone can be as

good as he was. He was indeed
the Savior of our times.

I want you to know
that we believe too, that you are
honestly the most wonderful
woman in this world. May
you carry on with your
great work. God bless you.

One of your many,
devoted admirers.

Sincerely,

Ellen M. Whiting
(Mrs. David D.)