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From Prof. Mott's Message to Mainichi Readers

As president of the International Union of Pure and Applied Physics, it is a pleasure to have this opportunity of addressing a few words to the readers of your newspaper. We physicists from the Western countries have greatly admired the advances in science made by our Japanese colleagues, so fittingly recognised by the recent award of Nobel Prize to Professor Yukawa.

It is therefore with the most lively interest and pleasure that we look forward to visiting Japan, and to making the acquaintance of this work at first hand. We are sincerely grateful to those in Japan who have made this conference possible, for the arduous work which they have done in organizing it and for the gracious hospitality which they offer us in your country.

We physicists, those of your country and those of other countries which are coming to visit you, have this in common: that our aim is to advance man's understanding of the material world and also his power over it.

With generous aid from UNESCO, and in the case of this conference, from the Rockefeller Foundation we do our best to arrange scientists to overcome the barriers of distance and of language.

But all that I have written about this conference up till now touches its effect on scientists and on science.

Here in the West it always seems to me that science has two faces: the pure disinterested search for knowledge by the experimental method, and the desire to gain power over nature, to make machines that will aid man to achieve his material desire.

In our country we still believe that the search for knowledge is a worthy activity, and we wish to search for truth for its own sake. We do not believe that the pursuit of pure science needs any apology.

But if the search for knowledge has transformed man's way of thinking it is practical science, the control over nature, that has transformed the way he lives.

Applied science is the great agent of social change: by transforming the means of production, it leads to a continuous change of the whole way of life of the nations which adopt it.