

Is That So?

By OLGA BURNS

Field mice are harmless enough generally but occasionally, as in the case of the great Nevada mouse plague of 1906-07, they become a menace.

Mouse plagues get started due to the enormous fecundity of the rodent—they may have as many as ten litters a year with as high as 12 in a litter. A birth rate like that plus plenty of food, plus a decline in the number of predators adds up to a plague.

What happened in Nevada's Humboldt Valley is a graphic example. In the spring of 1906 the mouse population began to boom. By fall there were so many that crops were seriously damaged. However, it was felt conditions would be better by the following spring.

They weren't. The mice had increased during the winter, and as the growing season progressed, they advanced across the valley eating everything in sight and breeding as they went. In fact, the holes they made in the ground gave it a Swiss cheese appearance.

The ranchers and agriculture officials did what they could to halt the plague. They spread sackfuls of poison, killing mice by the thousands, along with hundreds of predators and even some livestock. But for every mouse killed two seemed to take its place with the result that by November a survey showed an actual net increase. In some parts of the valley they were estimated to number 12,000 to the acre.

At that point, many of the ranchers simply ploughed up their land and quit farming until the plague had run its course. Fortunately, during the winter an epidemic hit

the mice hard enough to send the count down to 1,500 per acre by spring. From there on it declined rapidly to around 200, leaving the ranchers with a loss of \$300,000 damages to 15,000 acres of land.

Though poisoning methods have improved since then, it is doubtful that poison is an effective way of preventing mouse plagues from starting. Probably the most effective means is the existence of a satisfactory number of predators. Many birds and most animals from a grizzly bear down to another mouse prey on field mice.

Though predators will not stop a mouse plague after it has started, no one will ever know how many mouse plagues they have prevented.

In view of the immense reproductive powers of field mice, it is obvious that any hawk that eats even so few as 100 in a year may deserve an occasional chicken for dessert.

(Released by McClure Newspaper Syndicate)

Free: By special arrangement with the editors of the Encyclopedia Americana, my panel of judges will award each week to the reader who sends me the best true-life nature observation, or the best question on nature and wildlife, a complete 30-volume set of this world-famous reference work in a handsome Sealcraft binding. Each week new submissions will be considered. Sorry, I simply can't answer your many friendly letters. Please address your letter to: Is That So? c/o Medford Mail Tribune, Box 1069, San Francisco, Calif.



BIDDING FAREWELL to Queen Frederika, of Greece, following White House luncheon in her honor, President Eisenhower bows low as she smiles at photographers.

The Family Council

Editor's note: The Family Council consists of a judge, a psychiatrist, three clergymen, a newspaper editor, a women's editor and two writers. Each article is a summary of an actual report. The Family Council does not give advice; it merely reports on problems that have been dealt with by responsible agencies and counselors.

Sue S. — He doesn't give me affection.

Henry S. — She embarrasses me.

Sue S. — My husband and I have been married more than 15 years and have a family of four. I suppose we are reasonably happy, but as far as I am concerned our marriage is far from ideal.

I was an only child and received a great deal of love and affection. My husband lost his mother at an early age and lived with a series of aunts and finally a stepmother. They were good to him, but did not give him a real mother's love. I suppose this accounts for the difference in our temperaments.

In any case, as time goes on, I find myself more and more unable to stand Henry's coldness. I am actually envious when I see other men put their arms around their wives in public. Even at home, Henry is sour and disinclined to give any of the little attentions women crave.

Henry S. — I could never understand Sue's desire to make a public display of her emotion. She knows it embarrasses me. She says she can't restrain herself sometimes, but this is a little hard to believe of a woman who has been married as long as she has.

I disagree that I am sour at home, but Sue often does provoke me by bothering me for attentions. When she criticizes me, I don't feel inclined to go in for the affectionate gestures she claims she wants.

It is true that I didn't get too much affection as a child, but I don't think it's done me any harm. I feel a man should have a certain amount of hardness. In my work I am an administrator and I must keep my emotions to myself, and it's not too easy to become a different person at home.

The Council: Undoubtedly Henry's childhood experiences have had their effect on him and make it difficult for him to display his feelings. But we think he should be aware that emotion must be displayed in some way when it is truly felt. Probably he freezes his feelings at the source. He could be much happier if he would permit himself a little more freedom in this direction.

It is very difficult to retrain the emotions. Probably Henry could not do it without psychiatric help. If he wants to change strongly enough, it might be a good idea.

We do think, however, that

The new Federation of the West Indies is composed of Jamaica, Barbados, Antigua, Montserrat, Trinidad and Tobago, St. Kitts, Dominica, Nevia and Anguilla, Grenada, St. Lucia and St. Vincent.

Australia's Antarctic territory covers 2,470,000 square miles, about half the area of the frozen continent.

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California Tops Population Gain

Washington—UPI—Six states, led by California, marked up population gains of more than one million between the 1950 census and July 1, 1957, the Commerce Department has reported.

Revised state population estimates for the period also showed that Alaska had grown greatest percentage-wise with a 64 per cent increase since 1950.

The six states with more than a million increase were California, 3,293,000; Texas, 1,464,000; Florida, 1,438,000; Michigan, 1,334,000; New York, 1,318,000, and Ohio, 1,260,000.

On a percentage rating, among the present 48 states, Nevada led with a 63 per cent gain followed by Florida, 52 per cent, and Arizona, 44 per cent.

Morse Points To Dulles 'Defeatism'

New York—UPI—Sen. Wayne Morse (D-Ore.) said Sunday night that Secretary of State John Foster Dulles has presented "a sad example of defeatism" in refusing to submit the Quemoy-Matsu question and other issues involving Communist nations to the World Court.

Morse spoke at the 13th annual charter day dinner of Yeshiva University at which he received his charter day award for "outstanding leadership and forceful advocacy of our democratic tradition."

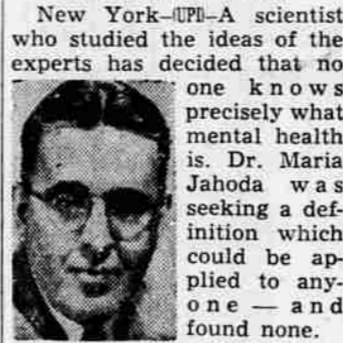
Morse said his suggestion in 1955 that the offshore islands dispute be submitted to the Court "was ignored." Former New York Gov. Thomas E. Dewey made the same proposal recently, he said, and Dulles "characteristically dismissed it on the ground that Communist China would never agree to submit the ownership of Quemoy to the court."

Havana—UPI—Loyal soldiers and sailors have joined forces to drive rebels off the property of the U.S. government's Nicaraguan nickel plant.

St. Louis was founded in 1764 as a fur trading post.

Scientist Fails To Find Definition Of Mental Health

By DELOS SMITH
 UPI Science Editor



Delos Smith
 New York—UPI—A scientist who studied the ideas of the experts has decided that no one knows precisely what mental health is. Dr. Maria Jahoda was seeking a definition which could be applied to anyone — and found none.

Such a definition would be extremely useful. With it, any person could tell if his mental health was slipping and take steps. For that reason Dr. Jahoda was employed by the government-sponsored Joint Commission on Mental Illnesses and Health to work out a definition.

She ran into all kinds of problems, many of them unanticipated. One problem was, are you mentally healthy if you're "normal"? If you're normal, she figured, you think, feel and act like the majority. But "the majority does many things that one would hesitate to call healthy."

So she rejected the "normality" definition. Then she took up the idea that "happiness," "Contentment," "satisfaction" and-or a bounding sense of "well-being" stand for mental health. You may feel those things when what you want from life agrees with what life offers.

But, she continued, the individual may not be able to control life's offerings, despite his very best efforts. "To say that he must feel well, happy, content or satisfied under all conditions of misfortune or deprivation assumes a naive belief in the moral justice of whatever happens to him," she said. An individual's happiness about whatever happens to him can hardly be judged to be a good measure of his mental health. In many situations, it is healthier to be unhappy.

Psychological sciences offer six approaches to a "positive" definition of mental health, but for various reasons not one is the universal definition which can be applied to everyone, she said. The six approaches are:

1. Self-perception — seeing yourself as you really are;
2. Self actualization—living up to your capabilities;
3. Integration—having an emotional balance which permits you to take setbacks and bounce back;
4. Autonomy — to be able to reject some things while accepting others; to be yourself while being part of something than yourself;
5. Perception of reality—seeing the things outside yourself as they really are;
6. Environmental mastery, which is the ability to master any situation as it arises.

She rejected all "negative"

definitions of mental health. Of course, since she was seeking a "positive" one. The common negative definitions are "absence of mental illness" or "a person who is not under treatment by a psychiatrist."

Her study was described in a book "current concepts of mental health" published Thursday under the joint commission's sponsorship by Basic Books, Inc., New York. She is a former professor of social psychology and director of the research center for human relations at New York University, and now is working in London.

The book contained a dissent by Dr. Walter E. Barton, Boston, a psychiatrist and

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76 times at bat and two scratch hits make a pretty low batting average. It's time a major leaguer went to bat for the 4th District!

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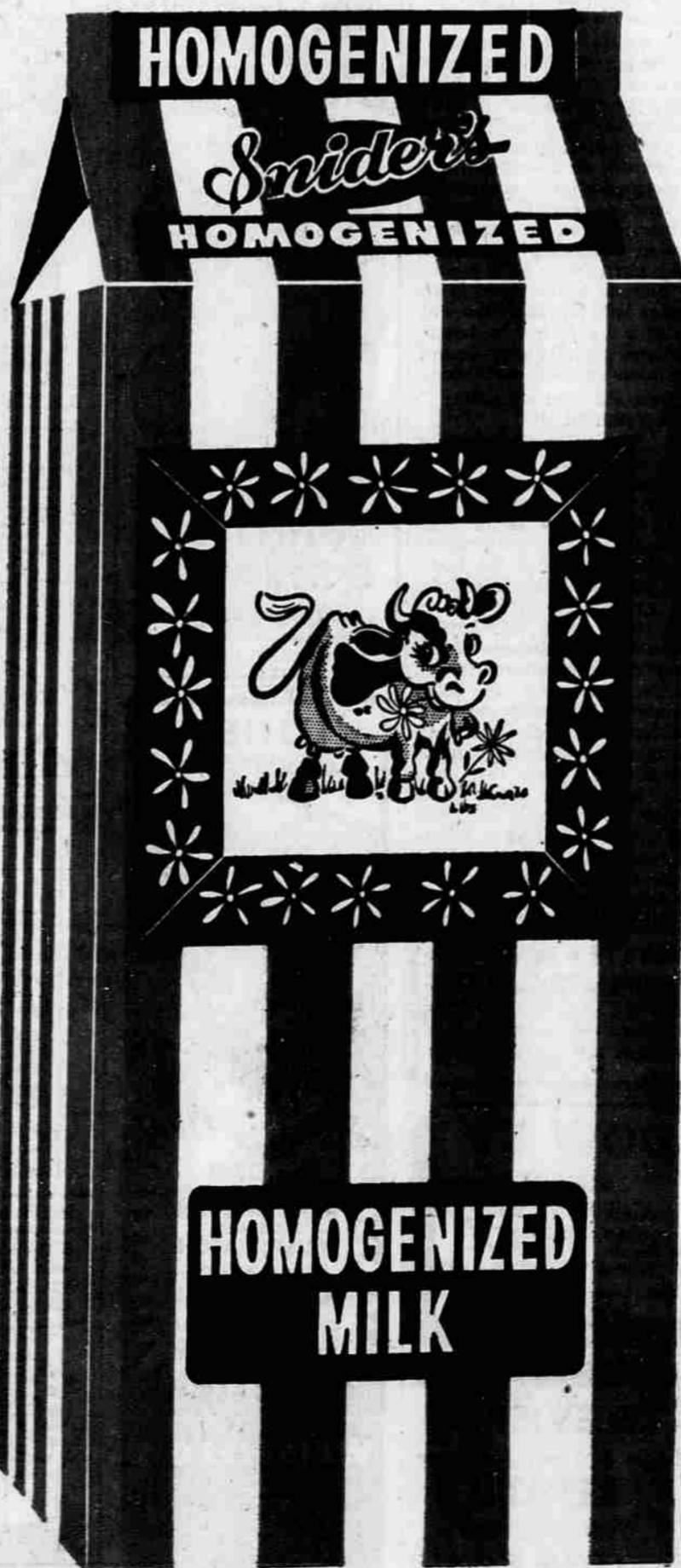
Q. **WHERE** can I hear him speak during the next five days.

A. KBES-TV, 10 p.m., Oct. 30th
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