

The Family Council

Editor's Note: The Family Council consists of a judge, a psychiatrist, three clergymen, three editors and a women's editor. Each article is a summary of an actual case history. The Council reports on problems that have been dealt with by responsible agencies and counselors.

Karen S.—She's giving up her life in a losing battle.
Ada G.—I want to see what love can do for a retarded child.

Karen S.—My sister and brother-in-law have a daughter who is 7 and, almost from the time she was born, they realized she was retarded. But instead of giving her up or placing her in an institution, they have made hermits and wrecks of themselves trying to care for this child and make her happy.

Naturally they won't go anywhere without Jeanne and when they all come to family parties, poor Jeanne is bewildered and the other children are torn between curiosity and fear. So Ada stays home, except when she can leave the child with her husband, which isn't often. I can't understand why she is sacrificing everything for this child who is so frail she may not even live to grow up. And even if she does grow up, she can never hope for a normal life.

We're heartbroken over what this is doing to Ada.
Ada G.—Only someone who loves Jeanne and has watched her improve in ways that are hardly visible can understand why her father and I will never give up hope. Karen only sees what we do for Jeanne. She doesn't realize what that sweet child does for us.

Shortly after Jeanne was born we knew there was something wrong. But our

doctor explained we couldn't be sure about how badly she was retarded until she was older and could be tested.

Somehow I had faith that our baby wasn't too far below normal and that I could do more than any institution to help her develop. I was right. The tests show her to be a borderline case, not a moron by any means. She's simply slow, but she can learn many things.

It's true that Jeanne is our Number One project. But there's no one else, certainly no institution, to give our daughter the patient encouragement and affection she needs.

The Council: By "institution" we assume these sisters refer to a custodial, residential training school for retarded children, the sort of place that's the "away" in the expression, "put her away." But that type of refuge is old-fashioned and used ideally only for completely unresponsive and virtually hopeless cases. The institutions that have superseded it are the home, the special class, the special school, the special camp, all working together.

So far, so good, we'd say to Ada. But why such isolation, both for you and your daughter?

If, as you say, she is only slightly below normal, (she ought to qualify for admission to a special class in a public school. The social factor in Jeanne's development has been largely neglected and it's a vital test of her readiness to leave her mother's side.

Depending upon the degree of retardation, there are now many alternatives to the former horrors of banishment to an asylum or hiding "in the attic." Even when a boarding school is required for levels of teaching the home cannot provide, there are frequent returns to family living which keep the child belonging to the stream of the here and now.

We understand Ada's caution in exposing Jeanne to other children. Youngsters can be cruel to the devious, unless briefed in advance. That's why it's high time Jeanne joined a group of similar children, either in a school or camp, to have her first socializing experiences in a setting where her own inadequacies will not stand out.

Correction, Aunt Karen. The mentally retarded can and do grow up to make good adjustments to life. With a relative or an organization keeping a watchful eye on them, they fill many useful positions in commerce and industry. And occasionally those sagging IQ's have been known to rise, too, thanks to skilled training.

To end her own and her child's aloneness and also to get expert help on what's best to do next, Ada has recourse. There's a livewire organization, The National Association for Retarded Children at 386 Park Avenue South, New York 10, with booklets and advice on tap. And the Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D.C., offers a pamphlet, "The Retarded Child Goes to School," for 15 cents.

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Oregon Medicine Said Monetarily Undernourished

Portland—Dr. Forrest Rieke, vice president of the Oregon State Board of Health, declared Wednesday that public and preventive medicine in Oregon is monetarily "chronically undernourished."

Speaking before the opening session of the 1960 Health Officers' Conference, Dr. Rieke said that as a result of lack of financial support the same physicians and the same communities who expect and receive excellent private medical and hospital services accept without apparent objection health services which are inadequate in quality and amount.

Expenditures Differ He said that total expenditures for patients per day in regular hospitals is about \$39 while the average expenditure at state mental hospitals including services of the medical staff is \$4.24 per day.

Dr. Rieke said the state board has tried to hire a psychiatrist for four years at a top salary of \$15,000 annually. But the state board is told there is not enough money to pay a decent salary.

The board, he said, is told to hire a top pathologist for a state medical examiner, but the salary difference between what is offered and what the similar position would draw in other states is \$10,000.

Space Capsules On Display at National Museum

Washington (Science Service)—Space capsules have joined the other historic Space Age "relics" now on display at the Smithsonian Institution's National Air Museum.

The capsules, used last May 28, in the nation's first successful rocket launching and recovery of animal life from outer space were presented to the Museum by the Army.

They are the cradles that carried monkeys Able and Baker on a 1,500-mile Jupiter rocket flight, during which the animals experienced nine minutes of weightlessness and nearly 40 g's, or 40 times the normal force of gravity, without harm. Able, who later died from causes not induced by the history-making flight, is preserved and mounted in the Air Museum display in the original cradle in which she made her flight. Baker still is alive and well.

2,000 Space Miles

The flight of the monkeys covered 2,000 "space miles" at a maximum altitude of about 300 miles, with a peak velocity of 10,000 miles per hour. During the flight, the monkeys rested in special contoured fiberglass beds in a semisupine position during the launch phase, in much the same physical position the Project Mercury astronauts will assume in their flights and orbits.

Philip S. Hopkins, director of the National Air Museum, commenting on this latest addition to the Museum's rapidly growing space flight collection, observed that "This historic accession, forerunner of manned space flight, is an example of history repeating itself. In 1783, before man's first ascent into the air in free flight in a Montgolfier balloon, a duck, a sheep, and a rooster were sent aloft for experiment. Similarly today, before the first astronaut accomplishes human space flight, the monkeys Able and Baker have safely preceded him. We consider this a truly significant specimen in the history of flight."

Chess Game Being Played by Radio

Christchurch, New Zealand—Americans, Russians and New Zealanders are playing chess with each other by radio in Antarctica across thousands of miles of ice and snow.

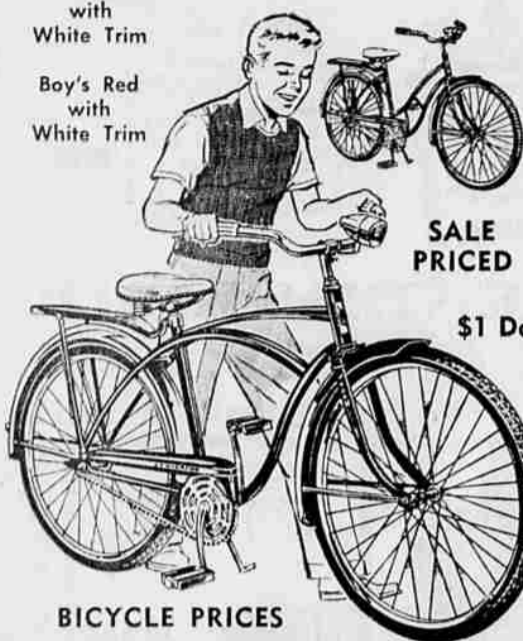
Men stationed at New Zealand's Scott Base in McMurdo Sound are competing with Russians at the Soviet station of Lazarev Queen Maud Land nearly 3,000 miles away. Players at American Sound are competing with men at the main Russian base of Mirny on the Queen Mary coast in East Antarctica.

Sveneldt Evteev, a Russian scientist on an American base on Ross Island, relayed moves to the Russian stations. When Russian moves are received, he makes changes on master chess boards.



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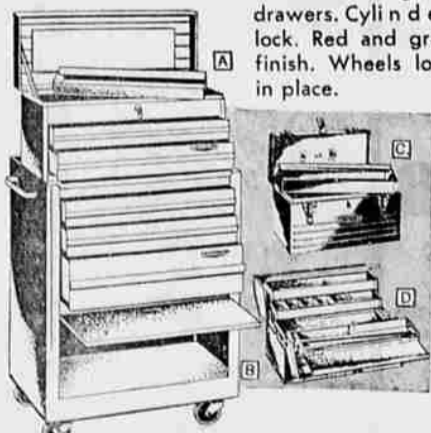
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46⁷⁵

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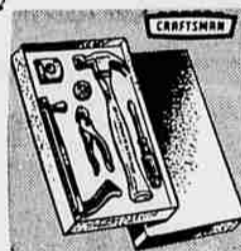
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