

SOCIOLOGY

Commission for Children

► ESTABLISHMENT of a commission for children and young people in the Office of War Mobilization was proposed by the Senate Subcommittee on War-time Health and Education, of which Senator Claude Pepper, Fla., is chairman.

The proposal came as one of three recommendations to the Senate Committee on Education and Labor, following an investigation of the problem of juvenile delinquency.

Juvenile delinquency, the Pepper Committee found, does not have any single cause, such as working mothers or the demoralizing effect of higher family income. It is not war-born and has the same roots in peace and war. It cannot be cured by any single remedy.

Prevention is the soundest approach to the problem, the committee found from testimony of many witnesses with experience in child health and welfare. Many agencies are struggling with the problem, but overall leadership and co-

ordination are needed, it was emphasized.

Although there are at least 12 agencies in the Federal Government alone which are performing special services for children, the services of none of them, from the Children's Bureau to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, can be spared, the committee reported. Nor is there any federal agency known to the committee which is set up in a way to provide the adequate leadership and coordination it finds is needed in the field of delinquency prevention.

Besides the recommendation for the commission for children and young people, the committee recommends that a central administrative authority arrange for fuller participation of children in home-front war activities and for a national publicity and educational policy to acquaint the people of the United States fully with facts about children and their basic needs.

Science News Letter, September 30, 1944

NUTRITION

Vitamin C From Trees

► THE CHIEF shop of a Soviet vitamin factory that produces the anti-scurvy vitamin C is situated in a woods which formerly attracted attention only from casual holiday-makers who came to pick wild nuts. In these Zakatalsk forests thick growths of nut trees spread over a distance of about 10,000 acres.

Nature has endowed these nuts, protected by a thick shell, with rare qualities which medicine has searched for in many fruits and plants. Both the flesh and the shell contain large quantities of vitamin C, an ascorbic acid as it is known chemically. Formerly the fruit of the wild rose was considered to have a larger content of this vitamin than any other plant growing in the U.S.S.R. Today unripe walnuts have taken first place in the table of raw materials containing vitamin C.

The vitamin C content of lemons, oranges and tangerines is between one-fortieth and one-fiftieth that of Zakatalsk nuts. During a short period in spring and summer the walnuts are saturated with the vitamin, which forms from 1.5 to 3% of the weight of the entire nut. The first experiments on

these nuts were made in Azerbaijan before the war and now a large vitamin factory has been built there.

A concentrate of the vitamin from the nuts is prepared by a very simple process. The nut in which a cut has been made is washed in several waters during which it easily parts with the vitamin it contains. The only rule in this step is to keep a strict watch on the temperature and to make sure that the raw material is kept in a hermetically sealed vessel.

The juice obtained from the unripe nut, however, is unbearably bitter and this gave the greatest difficulty in making use of the walnut supply of vitamin C. The experimenters frequently gazed sadly at the bottles containing the scurvy-curing and preventing liquid which, however, could not be used in that form.

Then a second process was worked out by which this mistake of nature was corrected and soon a way was found by which the bitter juices of the nuts were refined and the taste changed to one more palatable.

This new sort of vitamin C is used chiefly in hospitals and military units.

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ORDNANCE

Handy Scooter Speeds Starting of Airplanes

► A SELF-propelled aircraft electric generator power plant mounted on a three-wheel gasoline scooter now speeds the starting of airplanes at the Municipal Airport, Wichita, Kans.

The scooter-generator, built by three civilian aircraft mechanics working with the AAF Materiel Command, can be driven over fields or to nearby auxiliary flying fields, or to any point on the grounds of a large airport, to be hooked into a plane and provide the necessary starting power. The new unit is especially useful in cold or inclement weather, and speeds the servicing of a large number of planes.

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