

## PUBLIC HEALTH

# Puerto Rico Commended

Death rate being reduced, but island needs help from mainland for 84,000 families living in unhealthy slums, one-fourth of population illiterate.

► PUERTO RICO is "commended" by Federal Security Administrator Oscar R. Ewing. At the same time, Mr. Ewing urges mainland U. S. citizens to give further aid to this island dependency.

This will shock many Americans, coming so soon after the attempted assassination of President Truman by two Puerto Ricans and Puerto Rican attempts at revolt from the U. S.

The point on which Mr. Ewing praises Puerto Ricans and appeals for more U. S. aid, however, is undoubtedly pertinent. The irony of Mr. Ewing's statement appearing at this time is accidental and due to a prearranged printing schedule.

The statement concerns the "Needs of Children of Puerto Rico" as determined by the Interdepartmental Committee on Children and Youth, of which Mr. Ewing is chairman. If some of these needs had been met two decades or so ago, there might not have been the attempt on President Truman's life that shocked the nation. For example:

Over 84,000 families in Puerto Rico in 1947 were crowded into unhealthy slums.

Over one-fourth of the population over

age nine in 1946 could not read or write. (In continental U. S. the figure is 2.7% of the population over age 13.)

Almost half, 46%, of the teachers employed in 1948 did not meet the requirement of normal school certificates for elementary teachers and university degrees for high school teachers.

Almost half the children, 48%, never go beyond fourth grade.

Only about one-third of the children needing social services are being reached.

These and other findings of the Interdepartmental Committee paint a picture of conditions of poverty, over-crowding, ill health and ignorance, or the little knowledge that is proverbially dangerous. Such conditions are generally recognized as breeding restlessness, rebellion and crime.

On the bright side of the picture, the report points to recent reductions in deaths of mothers and children, free milk and food for infants and pre-school children, devotion of one-fifth of the insular budget to health services and 39% of the budget to schools, and increase in funds for recreation from \$23,000 in 1940 to \$525,000 in 1948.

Puerto Rico has accomplished much in the last half dozen years. Of the future, Mr. Ewing says:

"With a child population larger than in 32 of our 48 states and with a per capita income less than half that of our poorest state, Puerto Rico needs help from the rest of us if its children are to have the good start in life we crave for every child under the flag of the United States."

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## METALLURGY

## Better Alloys Asked To Offset Manpower Lack

► SINCE the western world suffers a manpower deficiency, it is vital that we give the men of our armed forces superior weapons, techniques and equipment.

That is the opinion of Maj. Gen. Ward H. Maris, expressed to the Washington section of the American Institute of Mining and Metallurgical Engineers. General Maris is chief of the Army's research and development division.

So far as metallurgy is concerned, the General asked his audience for more and better steel alloys, more and better titanium, magnesium and aluminum.

There is need, he pointed out, for utilization in tanks and other equipment, of low alloy steel, greater strength, of steel that is lighter and more easily welded. Lightness, he said, is important in considering the needs of airborne troops.

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## ENGINEERING

## New Windshield Glass Lessens Road Glare

► MOTORISTS will benefit by a new automobile windshield glass that reduces road glare and heat. It is a glass of excellent optical qualities which is tinted a slight bluish-green in color and has a graduated shading above the eye level.

This tinted safety plate glass is a product of Libbey-Owens-Ford Glass Company and has already been thoroughly road tested in many parts of the United States. It passes the light-transmission requirements of the American Standards Association with a good margin to spare, according to G. P. MacNichol, Jr., of the glass company. Its use will make outside sun visors unnecessary.

The bluish-green tint in the glass itself is obtained by mixing iron oxides in the glass during manufacture. By balancing the ingredients properly, it was found possible to eliminate about one-third of the sun's glare-producing rays and one-half the heat rays and still preserve the optical qualities of the glass. A secret process is used to produce the modulated shading of the plastic in the upper part of the windshield.

Science News Letter, November 18, 1950



**CUTS GLARE**—On the left you see how bright sun or glare looks through the conventional windshield. At right glare is eliminated in the upper shaded portion.