

groups who also have a poorer level of health and hygiene.

A second problem plaguing researchers is that there seems to be little correlation between detectable degrees of brain abnormality and the degree of retardation. Grossly deformed brains may carry little or no retardation, while those with no apparent malformation may belong to severely retarded persons. Pinpointing definite amounts of biochemical change holds much promise in this area.

Whatever the cause, and regardless of the advances in prevention, there are 5,000,000 persons in the U.S. who are already irreversibly retarded. About 150,000 of them are being cared for in institutions across the country.

Fortunately, most of the mentally deficient (85%) have I.Q.'s between 50 and 75 and can eventually advance to the mental age of eight to 12 years. They develop mentally and scholastically from one-half to three-fourths as fast as an average child. Although their vocabularies are

always limited, they learn to read and do simple arithmetic, and by age 16 can handle second to fourth grade material. By learning to do unskilled or semi-skilled work, these "educable" children can usually support themselves.

The "trainable" group, with I.Q.'s between 20 and 49, comprise about half the population in institutions for the mentally subnormal. Limited to a mental age of three to seven years, these persons can learn to care for themselves, adjust to the society of family and neighborhood, and can help with simple tasks in a sheltered, supervised environment. Generally, academic pursuits are beyond their reach.

For the 3.5% of the mentally retarded who are totally dependent, life is a perpetual infant world that will never grow beyond the two-year-old level. So great are the needs of this group that three out of ten are placed under institutional care. For them, the need for a cure to be found is particularly urgent.

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PUBLIC SAFETY

Toxic Agents Curbed

► THE FOOD and Drug Administration is getting letters from different parts of the United States concerning dangerous ingredients of model airplane cement.

A typical case is that of a 13-year-old boy recently arrested in El Paso, Texas, who was "high" from sniffing a cloth soaked in model airplane "glue."

The FDA expects that the new Federal Hazardous Substances Labeling Act, passed by Congress this year, will be a help in protecting innocent youngsters from the dangers of inhaling solvents that could cause kidney, liver or blood damage. The Act provides that court action to enforce the law will begin in February, 1961.

Any effective solvent for plastics is likely to have a depressive effect on the central nervous system. Therefore, parents are warned to tell their children not to inhale fumes from cements used in making model planes.

One of the solvents used is Methyl Cellosolve (ethylene glycol monomethyl ether) which is rated as poisonous.

Gasoline or benzine were formerly used as solvents for these cements, but even these older solvents were hazardous. Not only can gasoline cause intoxication, as youngsters have discovered from uncapping and sniffing the gasoline tanks of parked cars, but there is an explosion and fire hazard.

When FDA starts to administer the new labeling law, the following information must be put on the labels of hazardous products:

1. Name and place of business of the manufacturer, packer or seller.

2. The common or usual name of each component that is toxic.

3. The signal word "Danger" must appear on substances extremely flammable, corrosive or highly toxic as defined in the Labeling Act.

4. The signal words "Warning" or "Caution" on all other hazardous substances.

5. An affirmative statement of the hazard, such as "flammable," "vapor harmful," "causes burns," "absorbed through the skin," or similar wording that describes the hazard.

6. Instruction when appropriate or necessary for first aid.

7. The word "Poison" if the substance is highly toxic.

8. Instruction for handling or storage of packages which require special care.

9. "Keep out of reach of children" or the practical equivalent of this statement.

10. All must be in English and prominent on the label, made conspicuous by typography, layout and color.

Hazardous substances which do not meet the labeling requirements are deemed misbranded under law and may not be shipped in interstate commerce.

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Do You Know

Blue tongue, a serious virus disease of *sheep*, is a warm weather disease carried from sheep to sheep by flying insects.

The Navajo is the largest of the remaining American *Indian* tribes.

Diseases of the *thyroid* gland are more common than those of any other endocrine gland.

In 1959, American dairymen were sixth in *milk* production per cow; cows in the Netherlands, Denmark, Belgium, West Germany and the United Kingdom produced more.

About two persons in every hundred over 40 years of age in the U.S. have *glaucoma*.

The best *fertilizers* for fall lawn care are those that contain a high percentage of nitrate nitrogen.

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