Major Overhaul Suggested For Mental Health System

By VINCENT THOMAS
Assemblyman, 68th District
A sweeping overhaul of treatment, if any.

Only about one-fourth of cluding extensive regision of laws and court procedures themselves or to others, yet ment to the impressonal for committeen of persons to state hospitals in the story of state hospitals and court procedures themselves or to others, yet ment to the impressonal for in a recently released report by the Assembly Subcommittee on Mental Health Services.

The report also points out

System

The Assembly report, preliminary to a final one early in 1967, recommends that of the deferition of the deferment of proliminary to a final one early in 1967, recommends that of the deferment of the elderly and the poor, and the elderly and an analysis of interestment, if any.

Only about one-fourth of laws and court procedures the mental to the impressonal to state hospitals into the elderly and the poor, and the elderly and the poor and the elderly and the poor, and the elderly and the poor and the elderly and the poor, and the elderly and the poor and the

Services.

The report also points out the need for changes in public attitudes toward the mentally ill, saying that in many cases these erroneous concepts and conflicting goals have caused needless com-mitments, have resulted in worsening rather than improving patients' mental health, and have boosted costs to the taxpayers with-

out corresponding benefits.

California's basic dilemma, the report says, is that ma, the report says, is that under the present system the courts and the hospitals are forced to choose between two objectives, individual health and public safety. Or to put it another way, between treat-ment and civil liberties, or between medical and legal considerations, Regardless of which objective or approach which objective or approach is favored in a particular sit-uation, the result tends to be that the patient is committed into long-term custodial care, treatment is negligible and his changes for recovery and his chances for recovery and return to society are rather

HERE ARE some interesting and thought-provoking excerpts from the Assembly committee report, cited as background for its recom-

mendations:
Of the 16,322 admissions
to California state hospitals
in 1955, 13,534 were involuntary, amounting to 83 per cent. Ten years later, in 1965, there were 22,189 admissions of which 13,612 were invol untary, or 61 per cent. The rate of admission per 100,000 population in 1955 was 130; in 1965 it was 141. Last year, there were more than 40,000 psychiatric patients in California institutions, public and

formia institutions, public and private.

There are no precise definitions, diagnoses or treatments of mental illness—it's still mostly trial, and entor or one more or less qualified person's opinion against another's.

THERE ARE almost as many types and degrees of mental illness as there are of other illnesses: No competent doctor would prescribe the same treatment for pneumonia as for heart disease, yet most mental patients, regardless of witat

Three Marine Reserve second lieutenants from Torrance were among the 594 new Marine Corps officers graduated from the 41st Offi-cer Candidate Course at the cer Candidate Course at the Marine Corps Schools, Quantico, Va. The new officers are Jerome L. Lemberger, son of Mr. and Mrs. Jerome Lemberger, 4103 W. Artesia Blvd., Robert M. Flick, son of Mr. and Mrs. Robert J. Flick, 4710 Reese Road; and Robin R. Bowen, son of Mr. and Mrs. Ross H. Bowen, 3650 Newton St.

Engineman Fireman Mike H. Leischner, USN, son of Mrs. G. B. Thompson of 21111 Dolores St., is attending the basic Engineman School at the Service School Command, Naval Training Center, Great Lakes, Ill.



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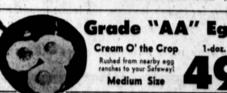
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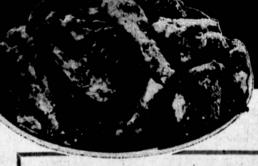
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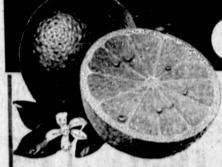




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