

Legislators Walk Among The Living Dead At Central State



Rep. Louis Churilla (D. East Chicago) takes a close look at the ceiling of ward seven of Central State Hospital Women's section.

Plaster Falling, Sanitation Bad, All in the Name of Economy

By RICHARD LEWIS

I took a walk through Central State Hospital the other day with a couple of state Representatives, and in the catacomb-like recesses of that institution we saw the living dead.

They are what institutional operators call "senile custodial cases." They lie on lumpy mattresses or bare springs. There are not enough mattresses to go around.

There are about 200 of them, and Rep. Louis Churilla of East

men and women. They are housed in separate buildings which the institution calls infirmaries.

The infirmary inhabitants are the aged and the feeble. Most of them are skeletal. Some lie in shapeless lumps under thin, dirty blankets. Some sit up and babble.

Like Neglected Stables

Each resides in his own private misery and mental torment, unaware probably of the powerful stench of the infirmaries, which smell like neglected stables.

These citizens are the end products of the mental hospital program in Indiana, which ranks sixth among the states of the union in per capita wealth and first in pride.

It was dusk when we walked through the men's and women's infirmaries where the aged insane who have lost control of bodily functions are put out to die. The floors and the walls were alive with fat roaches.

A rat scuttled across the broken concrete floor, leaving his droppings in a shallow chuck hole. In this final phase of Indiana's mental health program the patient no longer in touch with the real world sinks into final sleep.

After that, he is buried in a comparatively clean grave.

Watches Deterioration

We took a long walk that day. Central State Hospital is a vast place. It begins with the antiquated office of the superintendent, Dr. Max A. Bahr, a physician and psychiatrist who has devoted his life to the institution and who now is rewarded by seeing it deteriorate for lack of funds.

Rep. Nick Balog of Hammond

some truck gardening and chicken raising is done by inmates.

For reasons of economy, the State has seen fit to employ only two psychiatrists, each of whom doubles in brass in administration. One is Dr. Bahr, who manages the institution in addition to giving psychotherapy, and the other is Dr. Jess V. Cohn, who is also medical director when he is not treating patients.

Dr. Walter L. Bruesch, a neuro-pathologist, is research director.

Normally, there are 10 to 12 registered nurses in an institution this size. Two trained nurses were hired last fall. Only one is still there.

There is no surgeon on the staff. If a patient requires major surgery, his family must be in a position to pay for it elsewhere, otherwise it is not done.

Additional psychiatric help is being sought and if the institution's budget is not cut, this help may materialize.

"A Custodial Institution"

We walked into the fresh air under the trees of the campus.

"This is a custodial institution," someone was explaining. "Only the tiniest spark of psychiatric work can be done here. We have just enough doctors to give the minimum of medical care in the whole state—30 doctors for five institutions, and some are part time."

Under the minimum medical and psychiatric care, the patient committed to a mental hospital in Indiana sometimes recovers enough to leave, usually never to return.

"They stay in the wards until they lose control of their body functions," commented Rep. Balog, "and they wind up in those infirmaries. You can see that."

No one said anything.

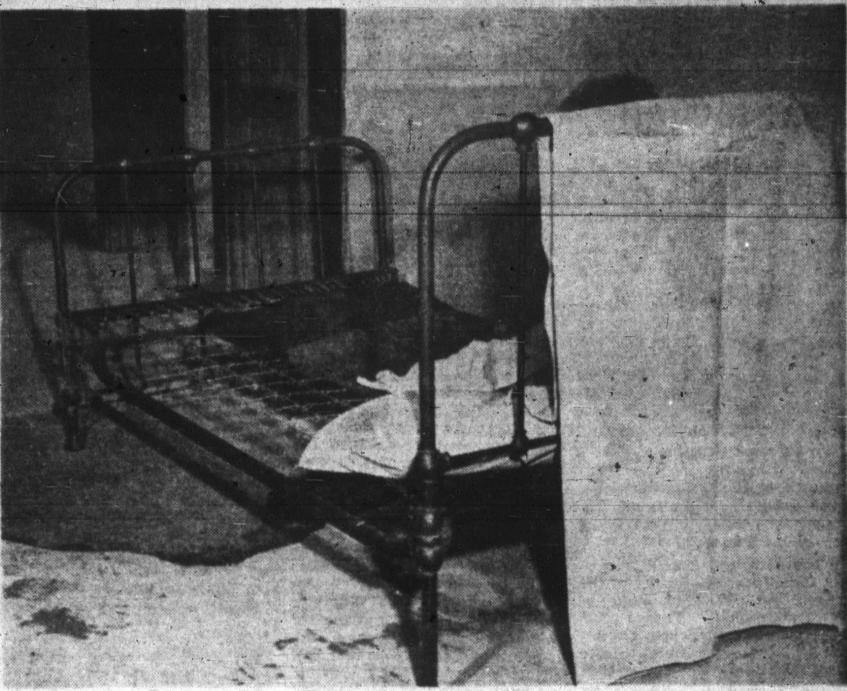
In the dark branches of the bare trees, a bird whistled in a minor key.

"Did you notice," said Rep. Balog, "there was only one tin cup for all those poor souls in the men's infirmary?"

"What happens," asked Rep. Churilla, "if they lose the cup?"



One bathtub has to do for 50 women patients at the state mental hospital.



In the women's infirmary, an elderly woman patient behind curtain lies on a rubber sheet on bare springs. The mattress is being renovated and no extra mattress was available.

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In Indianapolis—Vital Statistics

MARRIAGE LICENSES

Vernon Eugene Michener, 18, 1341 W. 27th; Marilyn Irene Walker, 17, 982 W. 36th;	Howard Dale Whitlock, 22, Fairbanks; Wilfred Taylor, 23, 3550 N. Capitol; Dolores Louise Howard, 19, 958 W. 34th; James Duffield Collins, 29, 514 N. Bossard; Richard T. Hesly, 19, 3622 Graceland; Marlene Gearhart, 17, 2915 N. Station;
Leona C. Huster, 23, Gary; Betty Jean Eimora, 20, 1142 Kentucky.	Harold Bowers, 19, 1028 S. Taff; Dora Eggers, 17, 840 N. Fleming.
Harry Bowman, 43, Rushville; Leona E. Byrd, 47, 3204 Ralston.	Earl Frederick Williams, 19, 1510 Edge; Doris Reissner, 28, May 1949, Carrolline; Walter Oman Carter; Nelson A. vs. Elizabeth Warren; McGlothan vs. Major Jones.
James Mathis, 18, 320 N. Reimer; Luretta Smith, 18, 1144 N. Harrison; Neal Hart, 33, 1144 W. New York; Ruth Bianchi, 20, 244 Cumberland; Odell Young, 21, 850 E. 111th; Thelma Madsen, 25, 111th; John W. Davis, Jr., 30, 805 N. Emerson; Norma Jean Martin, 17, 850 N. Alton; James Thompson, 23, Toledo; O. E. Hertene Brown, 27, 524 Blake; Augusta Reeder, 23, 524 Blake; Rosemary Mathis, 26, 507½ Mass.; Grace Brown, 28, 507½ Mass.; Ray K. Broadstone, 44, 3812 E. Terrace; Betty Lou McPherson, 30, 233 S. Dearborn; Donald R. Taylor, 27, Ridgeville; Imagine C. Taylor, 24, Portland; Lawrence Franklin Gehbauer, 39, 266 Ed- Cottendorf; Florence V. DeVore, 28, 1812 Central; Charles R. White, 27, 456 Blake; Rosella Reeder, 26, 507½ Mass.; John W. Davis, Jr., 31 Blake; Edna Roberton, 16, 723 Torbett; William C. Laramore, 28, 507½ Mass.; Barbara Laramore, 29, 509 N. Capitol; Clarence Lawson Closs, 33, 446 N. Pine; Freida Laverne Burke, 25, 1119 Bellefontaine.	Robert Chester Davis, 18, Greenfield; Robert Charles Davis, 18, 958 W. 34th; Della May Jones, 20, 273 S. Ritter; Leroy Mansfield, 27, 2354 Marindale; Florence LaPave, 43, 220 N. Illinois; Thelma Maxine Carpenter, 24, 202 N. Reimer; Forrest Dalton Moreland, 26, 330 Fletcher; Robert C. Hodges, 21, 1115 N. Franklin; Richard Charles Bogart, 20, 1428 (Idell) Beville; Betty Jean Matthews, 19, 410 N. Noble; Robert David Jones, 19, 2878 N. LaSalle; Roberta Ann Jones, 20, 273 S. Ritter; Leroy Mansfield, 27, 2354 Marindale; Florence LaPave, 43, 220 N. Illinois; Thelma Maxine Carpenter, 24, 202 N. Reimer; Forrest Dalton Moreland, 26, 330 Fletcher; Robert C. Hodges, 21, 1115 N. Franklin; Richard Charles Bogart, 20, 1428 (Idell) Beville; Betty Jean Matthews, 19, 410 N. Noble; Sally Walker, 17, 840 N. Fleming.
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FBI Agents Nab Man As Army Deserter

Arrest of Breneen J. Laborde, 38, of Johnson County, charged with Army desertion, was announced yesterday by Harvey G. Foster, special agent in charge of the Indianapolis FBI office.

Laborde is charged with deserting his tank destroyer battalion at Camp Shelby, Miss., April 6, 1942. He was arrested in his Johnson County home where he was living under the name of Robert Ray, according to Mr. Foster.



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TODAY AND TONIGHT—A small area of unsettled weather is expected to develop today in parts of the Middle West, including Indiana. Southern states will enjoy temperatures in the 70s, thanks to continued flow of warm air from the Gulf. Mean temperatures in the Middle West will be in the 50s.