



Hearings have been scheduled by the Constitutional Rights Subcommittee, of which I am Chairman, to review the operation of the 1964 Act for the Hospitalization of the Mentally Ill in the District of Columbia.

While the Federal Government's responsibility in this area of the law is limited to the District of Columbia, these hearings will be in the nature of a national accounting of procedures relating to the liberty and hospitalization of the mentally ill. The 1964 Act was a model code for the mental health procedures in this country. I am pleased that it resulted from the investigations and hearings conducted during my tenure as Chairman of this Senate Subcommittee.

Those investigations pointed up some acute problems arising out of the cumbersome laws and procedures surrounding the treatment of those suffering from mental illness. While our investigation disclosed some serious "due process" of law problems involving such persons in many states, its primary purpose was to modernize procedures to protect the medical and legal rights of the mentally ill who reside in the District of Columbia.

A major source of the problem was found to lie in the prevalent attitude concerning mental illness. Most individuals suffering from this illness have been faced with archaic laws based upon the popular conception that to admit to such an illness carried a social stigma which was often impossible to erase in the community.

Another major problem was that it was often impossible to gain admission to a public hospital for treatment on a voluntary basis. On the other hand,

judicially ordered hospitalization meant an automatic loss of the basic rights of a citizen.

Under that system, the District of Columbia law assured the mentally ill but one right, the right to be forgotten. The subcommittee findings from those hearings became the basis of a new law, Public Law 88-597, which was enacted on September 15, 1964. Its passage represented a step forward for the civil liberties of these often forgotten individuals.

Primarily, the 1964 Act was designed to encourage voluntary hospitalization to define and protect the rights of a patient once he was in the hospital; and to ensure, as far as legally possible, that no stigma was attached to the fact that he had been hospitalized for mental illness. Under the Act the judicial finding of a need for hospitalization was separated from the finding of legal incompetence. Thus Congress recognized that mental illness does not necessarily mean that one lacks the ability to exercise his rights.

The law also carefully defined for civil patients such rights as communication privileges; visitation rights; the capacity to seek release under certain conditions; and more important, the right to medical treatment, and not just custodial care.

Sufficient time has now elapsed to see how well the Act is functioning here in Washington. We shall now attempt to discover to what extent the constitutional rights of the mentally ill, the prospective mentally ill, and their families are being respected in the District of Columbia and elsewhere. I trust that these hearings will give a much needed accounting upon this important subject.

If At First You Fail

Luther L. Byrd of Kinston route 3 apparently subscribes to the old axiom: "If at first you fail; try, try again." He was arrested by the sheriff department over the weekend and charged with assault with a deadly weapon upon a neighbor Joe Nobles Jr. The officers report that either the range was too extreme or his aim was very bad when he shot at Nobles with a 12 gauge shotgun, but both range and aim were better when he then took the shotgun and clubbed Nobles over the head. Both head and gun reportedly suffered slight injury.

Kinston Belatedly Named Safest City In N.C. for 1968

This week the belated acknowledgement came from the state motor club that in 1968 Kinston was the safest town in the state for drivers and walkers.

Kinston was the town with the largest motor vehicle registration to get through '68 without a traffic death.

Traffic officials have their fingers crossed, hoping the city will be as lucky for '69.

Some bitter "traffic expert" commented that traffic moved to slow in most areas of Kinston to kill anybody, but police recognize that while speed is always a major contributor to the traffic death toll there are other hazards that also claim many lives each year.

STEVENS IN PACIFIC

Postal Clerk Third Class Wilbert L. Stevens, son of Mr. and Mrs. William W. Stevens and husband of the former Miss Elizabeth Swenson, all of 120 S. Orion St., Kinston, is serving aboard the destroyer USS Ramsey in the Western Pacific.

DAVIS PROMOTED IN TURKEY

Ronnie E. Davis, son of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph H. Davis of Route 2, Kinston, has been promoted to airman first class in the Air Force. Airman Davis is a radio operator with a Air Force support unit at Incirlik AB, Turkey. The airman, a graduate of North Lenoir High School, attended Brigham Young University. His wife, Denise, is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. M. E. Hardy Jr., Route 3, La-Grange.

North Carolina is a state rich in history. More than 1,000 highway markers designate the sites of important historical happenings. Such as significant battles in the American Revolution and Civil Wars or the birthplace of some of the country's great statesmen including three U. S. Presidents.



Prune with a purpose. This is my annual reminder about proper pruning methods. Because, of all horticultural operations, both commercial and around the home, pruning is the one operation that is most likely to be neglected, poorly done or overdone.

Wise pruning of trees and shrubs improves the general appearance and neatness of a home landscape by: maintaining, as nearly as possible, the natural growth habits of the plants; correcting damage caused by acci-

Not Guilty, Guilty, Appeal
Last week in district court Edward McKeel of La Grange route 3 had a drunken driving charge dismissed when the blood test showed his alcoholic content to be just .03 per cent. Then he was convicted of reckless driving and fined \$25. Then he appealed to superior court.

As Kipling Put It

"The female of the species is more deadly" proved correct again in a weekend encounter between Mr. and Mrs. George Smith of La Grange route 1. Mrs. Smith told investigating officers that her husband hit her on the head with a brick, which act irritated her more than somewhat. She confessed that she then took a .22 caliber pistol and shot him in the left side. The bullet lodged just under his heart and she lodged in jail charged with assault with a deadly weapon with intent to kill.

There are more than 300 golf courses, including some of the nation's finest and most beautiful layouts, in North Carolina. Here, four major golf tournaments are staged each year. They are the Azalea Tournament at Wilmington, the Greater Greensboro Open at Greensboro, the Kemper Open at Charlotte and the Raleigh Ladies Invitational Tournament at Raleigh.

dental injury or ice breakage; confining plants to a desired space, if necessary; stimulating the growth of flowers, fruits, and foliage; and shaping plants to some desired pattern. Remember that every plant has character all its own represented by growth habit; and leaf, stem, bark, flower or fruit color.

An understanding of the fruit or flower bearing habits of the plant is essential before one can prune intelligently. The spring blooming ornamental woody plants produce their flowers from buds already formed on wood produced in 1969 and remain dormant over winter. This is true of lilac, forsythia, wisteria, weigela and deutzia. The proper time to prune these plants is just after they bloom because early spring or late fall pruning would remove the bloom buds.

The summer blooming plants such as hybrid perpetual roses, crepe myrtle, bunch and muscadine grapes will produce their flowers on shoots produced early in 1970 and frequently referred to as the current season's growth. Such plants require pruning in winter or early spring in order to produce strong new shoot growth.

Try to avoid "dehorning" or heavy cutting back. It is much better to practice what I call deep pruning. This is the removal of carefully selected entire limbs or branches. If you use this method, it is much easier to control growth and maintain the general growth characteristics of your plants. Ilex cornuta Burfordi (Burford's Chinese Holly) is a good example of the type plant that responds well to this type of treatment.

Except for the early spring flowering plants, the best time to prune is during the winter or dormant season. However, light corrective pruning can be done at any time of the year on both evergreen and deciduous plants.

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