

*adoption*

# SC's Growing Shortage Of Babies For Adoption

Editor's Note: This is the first of a two-part series dealing with the diminishing supply of adoptable babies and the growing demands for adoption.

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Eleven young couples, cleared for adoption, await their babies.

Thirty-two couples currently are going through the clearing stages.

Seventeen more have made preliminary inquiries.

They will have a one- to two-year wait, for the availability of adoptable infants now averages one per month, through the adoption office of the Santa Cruz

County Welfare Department.

Times have changed.

A few years ago, there were too many babies. Parents interested in taking them as their own were hard to come by.

The life-style of young couples has directed the turn-about on both sides of the picture.

On the one hand, The Pill is preventing pregnancies among the casual sex ilk; the slips of genuine love, the growing acceptance of abortion, the increasing practice of unwed mothers keeping their babies are reducing the supply of newborn for adoption.

On the other hand, young married couples, responding to the

danger signals of over-population, are wanting to adopt, even though they are capable of having children of their own.

The other evening four couples sat in a meeting with Ivy Rand, adoption worker for the welfare department.

They are interested in adopting and the meeting was to orient them to the procedures.

Whatever the reason — religion, moral, lateness of pregnancy, a feeling — it is the mother's decision concerning the status of her child.

During the pregnancy, say of an unwed teenager, she may

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have had the intentions of giving the child away.

But after birth — after she has touched it, felt it, maybe breast fed it — the maternal instinct may become too strong and she will change her mind, or stall a decision.

"That's all right, too," said Miss Rand. "It is her baby."

However, she is counseled as to the importance of getting the baby into the hands of new parents as soon as possible for the baby's sake, if this might be her ultimate decision.

The mother must sign a re-

lease if she decides in the affirmative, and this is usually done shortly after she leaves the hospital.

If she signs, the papers go to Sacramento for processing and by this time the child is placed in a special foster home.

For it may take three to six weeks before the baby is medically cleared and released to the new parents, she said.

Most couples want a perfect infant as young as possible so that its first recollections will be of them.

Miss Rand stressed that it is vitally important that both sides be honest, for what is being dealt with is a human being and not a product.

The prospective parents must be open about their life-style, their hang-ups, their personalities, good and bad.

The welfare department does not hide defects, mental or emotional or medical. The match is for life.

Some five meetings between potential parents and the agency are held before a match is made.

If the wait seems too long in this county, the couple can apply on a statewide basis and take their chances with a "computerized" baby.

This June, said Miss Rand, a new system went into effect feeding the characteristics of both infants and potential parents into a computer.

It is still in the pioneering stage and there are still faults aplenty in the system, she added.

The fee for adopting is \$500 per child.

However, she said, the state will subsidize the fee or waive part of it, according to the couple's ability to pay.

Once the new parents sign the adoption paper, the child is theirs and it cannot be taken away by the original mother who, once she relinquishes her child, does not know who has adopted it.

Unfortunately the lack of children does not mean there are none available.

There are the unwanted and the children in limbo.

The crippled, the emotionally disturbed, those not living with their natural parents, yet not released for adoption.

These kids remain in foster homes, sometimes for years.

Always waiting.

Part II will deal with these children in limbo.

## Highway 17 Resurfacing Under Way

Resurfacing of a mile of Highway 17 near Holy City will begin today.

Paving of all four lanes is expected to take at least two days, according to the state Division of Highways.

On Wednesday, immediately following the paving, traffic stripes will be repainted and the placement of reflectorized pavement markers will be done.

During the work it will be necessary to restrict traffic to one lane in each direction.

This will be the last temporary lane closure for construction work on 17 between Los Gatos and Scotts Valley until after the Labor Day week end.

## Chemists Attend UCSC Conference

Academic and industrial cooperation in chemistry research is being highlighted at a Conference on Potential Energy Surfaces in Chemistry which opened today at UCSC.

Many top chemical theoreticians and experimentalists throughout the world are attending the session, jointly sponsored by UCSC and International Business Machines Corporation's San Jose Research Laboratory. It will continue through Thursday.

Some 150 chemists were greeted this morning by Chancellor Dean McHenry and Dr. Andrew H. Eschenfelder, director of the San Jose laboratory.