

Seeds of Terrorism Nurtured in U.S.

Americans have been warned that terrorists may strike in this country as they have in Europe, South America and Africa.

If it happens, pleas of insanity or maniacal dedication to "a cause" might be adequate defense to avoid conviction of murder.

The California Court of Appeals has ordered a new trial for Juan Corona, convicted in the killing of 25 farm workers. The court said Corona's lawyer made "a farce and a mockery" of his defense because it didn't claim mental incompetency and show that he was suffering from psychosis, schizophrenia and paranoia.

Laws which turn insane killers loose on society time after time might also be termed "a farce and a mockery."

Newsweek tells of Thomas Vanda of Chicago, who was convicted of stabbing a neighbor as she lay on her bed. While on probation and under psychiatric care, he killed a 15-

year-old girl.

Vanda was declared mentally unfit to stand trial and was found not guilty by reason of insanity. Within a year, psychiatrists at a mental hospital declared that Vanda's psychosis had cleared up. Now he is charged with killing a 25-year-old woman.

"Through centuries of Anglo-American common law, it has always been accepted that a civilized society should not punish a person mentally incapable of governing his actions," said the item in Newsweek. This includes the ambiguous term "temporary insanity."

Dr. Robert DeVito, director of the Illinois Department of Mental Health, says "There is no person I have ever seen who is 100 percent psychotic." Nobody is completely insane.

On the other hand, just last month President Carter's Commission on Mental Health stated that on any given day "fully 15 percent of the

U.S. population needs mental health care."

By no means are all of those who suffer mental illness given to violence. Many simply become withdrawn and reclusive. But insane people who commit violent crimes certainly require confinement.

It might be argued that some degree of mania is evident when a group resorts to kidnapping or murder for political reasons.

In the recent incident in Houston, when policemen and newsmen were among those injured during a bloody riot in a park, evaluation of the mad frenzy was stated by one of the leaders.

The head of an organization called People United to End Police Brutality said his group didn't start the riot, but he added that the riot "was a glorious and proud day in the history of the American people."

When group leaders hold such an attitude, seeds of terrorism are being nurtured in this country.