

Editorial

A New Great American Pastime

Whenever anything goes wrong in this blessed country of ours we need not worry. Like children in the bliss of their fantasies, we, too, believe that "Daddy" will mend all our hurts and fix all our troubles, if not with a kiss then at least with a check. An uncle, whose name is Sam, is taking Daddy's place, but as fortunate children knew from time immemorial, we too know that we can count on him to always bail us out.

If a problem needs to be solved, let "government" simply allocate more funds! The problem, naturally, will soon disappear.

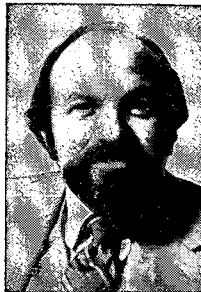
Heart disease and strokes and cancer, too, take a heavy toll every year. That's bad. It must be changed, and fast! A crusade is mounted with Federal funds to "combat" these illnesses. Juvenile delinquency, alcoholism and drugs continue to plague us. We must do more about them, and without delay! Foundations and funds join the battle to "conquer" these maladies—and birth defects, too.

Death better beware, for well-meaning politicians and columnists might soon start the greatest campaign of all, to "overcome" its widespread crippling effects. Woody Allen's jest in "Sleeper" may soon have serious-minded lobbyists in Washington extracting a piece of the national pie for cryogenic research and experimentation. And, so it goes.

Physicians and editorial writers, even in our own little bulletin, may protest governmental intervention and control of medical practice—but they do not mind demanding more public money for their own pet projects. If only we educate more doctors, appoint more policemen, build more clinics, hospitals and housing, buy more and better supplies and raise the minimum wage more frequently—all will soon be well, and all our social maladies will disappear forever.

Many sophisticated, intellectual and "concerned" friends, not only those in academia, use the adjective "crass" before mentioning the term "materialism." It is such an ugly concept that all good people must naturally dissociate themselves from it, especially if they are the children of the well-to-do. Decrying materialism makes the jealous protection of our material possessions seem so much less "gross" and allows us to maintain the purity of our "liberal" labels. Champagne simply tastes better when we sip it as we look down upon the unrefined who always chase the dollar.

Holier-than-thou hypocrisy is, more or less, evenly and democratically distributed on all sides of the political spectrum. "Conservatives" who advocate financial responsibility and restraint for others find it impossible, inadvisable and impractical to apply



DR. BAR-LEVAV

An uncle, whose name is Sam, is taking Daddy's place . . . we too know that we can count on him to always bail us out.

belt-tightening measures to their own projects. Those who love to call themselves "liberal" dogmatically hold that happiness always is simply a function of having "more." And let reason be damned.

A child-like naiveté and optimism based on unreality characterize the thinking of many American adults and influence policy decisions on all levels of government. In matters of energy conservation or the protection of our vital national interests, we are the subject of sneers in other parts of the world. The various National Health Insurance schemes are similarly promoted without regard to cost or reason. Politicians promise and the population believes. Wide-eyed "innocence" turns to hurt and anger only when the ever-increasing bills are presented. But little is learned for tomorrow.

The mental health of the "community" is not one bit better after hundreds of millions of dollars have been spent on Community Mental Health Centers. Heart disease and cancer have not been "conquered." Strokes still kill. Let us, at least, not join the insane clamor for ever "more."

R. Bar-Lev M.D.