

Overtone of Defeatism Hindering Country's Bid to Solve Problems

AN overtone of defeatism is showing up in our efforts to overcome national problems, a strange attitude for Americans.

The proposal to solve our energy crisis by dividing up shortages instead of developing additional resources to meet needs is only one circumstance among many.

Fears that have been translated into laws, regulations and court rulings keep us from fully utilizing offshore petroleum reserves, vast coal supplies and nuclear power. We face defeat by our own apprehensions and governmental actions.

Businessmen know that costs must be kept low, but successful ones also realize that they can't economize their businesses up to a profitable level. They must improve products or services and seek new customers in order to get ahead.

The automobile, which has contributed so greatly to our American standard of living, seems to have become an object of hate by some groups. It is our most essential means of transportation, but defeatism can result in disastrous breakdowns.

Defeatism already has helped to minimize mass transportation systems. Instead of meeting needs by improved services and greater frequencies, they have cut back, intensifying the present energy crisis instead of solving it.

Much of the distrust that exists between citizens and government may be attributed to attitudes of

defeatism. Many voters feel that they are helpless to stop centralization of authority and grabbing of power by professional officeholders, who have learned how to derive big "profits" from government.

Most people know that we can't continue spending more money than we take in without eventual economic disaster. Yet we don't have the courage to stop the government's spending spree, which is widely recognized as a major cause of inflation.

Millions of Americans deplore the obvious decline in morality that has occurred, but an attitude of defeatism will not change things. Morality is an acquired trait, rather than a system of laws. Unfortunately, a great many people seem to have given up the practice and teaching of ethics and integrity.

This, in turn, contributes to a complex of fears. We are afraid to walk city streets because society is reluctant to remove habitual criminals from its environs. We are afraid to walk in the woods because we might damage the environment or destroy some species of plants or animals.

Business, industry and agriculture leaders frequently display attitudes of defeatism, as they despair of trying to figure out what government will do to "help" them next.

The traditional American way of doing things is to solve problems, not surrender to them. It's a pretty good way.