

Heaven Help Dollar If It Loses Motto

A NEW "gold rush" and investments in gems are being promoted as hedges against inflation and declining dollar buying power.

If these campaigns end as such promotions often have in the past, professionals will pocket nice profits and amateurs will buy some good experience. They may learn that it is hard to make a profit buying at retail and selling at wholesale.

The idea is to convert money into tangible objects which can be stored conveniently with minimum risk of deterioration. The value of such wealth rests largely in beauty and scarcity. Neither pure gold nor precious gems could be classified as necessities of life, in spite of their magnetic powers of attraction.

The Gold Information Center, New York, pictures all of the gold accumulated in the world over 6,000 years as amounting to about one-tenth the size of the Washington Monument. That would be about as big as a good-sized Oklahoma hay barn, but much heavier.

"Historically, gold hoarding has

been primarily an occupation of working and peasant classes who distrust their government's ability to manage paper money," said an item in Time magazine.

Laws against individual holdings of gold coins, now repealed, broke up this practice in the United States, but it goes on elsewhere.

Before the United States went off the "gold standard" as the basis for backing up paper money, gold was valued at \$35 an ounce. Recent commodity market quotations hit an all-time high of \$216 an ounce, with predictions of higher prices reported.

The situation is based upon our national failure to cope effectively with inflation. Put your trust in gold, gems, land or other tangible assets, instead of money, experts say.

Part of the apparently increased value of properties may be an economic illusion. Even government officials seem to think that making something worth more dollars increases its value.

An example was the action to re-issue \$2 bills as replacement for \$1 bills. The public noted that a \$2 bill might buy what a \$1 bill used to, but didn't go for the "twos." You seldom see one.

Metals used in manufacturing coins have been altered to reduce costs. This also seemed to lower public esteem for the coins.

While people are being encouraged to count upon tangible values in their struggles with inflation, the militant atheist Madalyn Murray O'Hair is continuing her 8-year-long fight to have the motto, "In God We Trust," stricken from U.S. coins and currency. She has appealed a dismissal of her lawsuit.

With the dollar low in consumer purchasing power, down in foreign exchange markets, off the gold standard, and being reduced in size of coin, what will Americans have to count on, moneywise, if some federal judge should bar "In God We Trust"?