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19 1983

Too Much to Know, So Why Worry?

CIRCUSES always have provided thrills and fun but we can't keep up with everything that's going on in all three rings.

News is pretty much the same. A considerable part of each day is devoted to reading newspapers and magazines but we can't keep up with local happenings and major events elsewhere.

U.S. News & World Report recently reported that "even in peacetime 40 wars are going on." It mentioned eight wars between nations and more than 30 revolutionary or separatist insurgencies.

In addition, news items tell how "have not" nations are organizing to demand equal participation in the production and wealth of "have" nations, either by force or by world government.

Closer to home, national and state government problems worry us. Taxes, trivia like the purloining of party secrets by political blocs, bureaucratic regulations, subsidies, Supreme Court ruling, deficit, defense and a thousand other things demand attention.

On a personal basis, employment, business conditions, health care, housing, repairs, inflation, transportation, education, shopping, crime and computers are among almost daily concerns. Food and money, too.

Recreation is complicated with umpteen football teams in almost year-around activity while baseball, basketball, family vacations, tennis, golf or other participation interests may demand a little of our time. What's the score, anyway? Workers in a number of occupations claim their jobs result in extraordinary stress, which can be alleviated only by extra pay and more leisure time. Stress results from a lot of things.

Just trying to keep up with the world may cause trouble. In his excellent personal newsletter Dave R. McKinnon related how he had his first heart attack taking the world's worries to bed with him every night could disrupt pleasant dreams. Some of us prefer to face the bad news early in the morning.

People generate a lot of their own tensions, too, such as being too hot

or too cold. A research firm hired by electric utilities aimed TV cameras on thermostats in 150 homes and found occupants engaged in "guerrilla warfare," running the thermostat up and down all day.

Before he died a Harvard economist named Edward Dewey collected more than 500 examples of cycles in biology, economics, sociology, astronomy, and other fields. He concluded:

"There may be hitherto unsuspected environmental forces which affect terrestrial affairs and determine the time of the ups and downs of many phenomena of interest to mankind."

We take that to mean our lives are influenced by non-material forces and that what has happened may happen again.

Whether things are going well or otherwise, changes are coming. When cares and anxieties disturbed him, an ancient philosopher offered this wisdom: "Even this shall pass away." So why worry?