

IF YOU CAN'T SOLVE A PROBLEM, APPOINT A GROUP TO STUDY IT*

One of the ways to solve acute problems in the United States is to study them. At this writing there are probably more committees making more studies of more problems than at any time in our history.

Professor Heinrich Applebaum has just completed a study on people who make studies, and the results are fascinating.

Professor Applebaum said, "I discovered that the average person making a study today has had five years of college, is married, has 1.6 children, earns \$15,650 a year, lives in the suburbs, plays tennis or golf on weekends and believes in God."

"That's truly amazing."

"He will spend an average 8.9 months working on a study, 2.6 months discussing it in committee, 3.9 months writing a report which will be typed up by 5.6 secretaries and then it will be printed up and distributed to 1250 people, of which 5.9 persons will read it in its entirety."

"That isn't too many people."

"It's a lot considering that only one out of every 23.6 reports are ever acted upon."

"What happens to the rest of them?"

"They're filed away and used as reference for other people who will be asked to make a future study on the same subject."

"That sounds rather discouraging."

"On the contrary, the main purpose of a study is not to solve a problem, but to postpone the solution of it in hopes that it will go away. If it doesn't go away, at least people will have forgotten about it by the time the report comes out."

"A study group's work is never done."

"I should say not. Making studies is now the third largest industry in the United States. Not only are large monies spent in making studies, but great sums are spent attacking studies that people don't agree with."

"Professor Applebaum, your report will make a great contribution to the study of studies. Can you tell me why you decided to do it in the first place?"

* From: Art Buchwald, The Washington Post, October 3, 1967.

"I work for a foundation, and everything we wanted to study was being studied by somebody else. This was the only subject left that no one had made a study on."

"Has anybody read it?"

"My wife think it's the best thing I've ever done."

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BIBLIOGRAPHY OF TRANSLATIONS IN THE NEUROSCIENCES

A "Bibliography of Translations in the Neurosciences" covering the period 1950 through 1966, has been published by the National Institute of Mental Health. Copies are available on request from: Office of Communications, Information Services Branch, National Institute of Mental Health, 5454 Wisconsin Avenue, Chevy Chase, Maryland 20203.