

EFFECTIVE INSURANCE

There is a syndrome to which many of us succumb. Its symptoms are these:

New word comes by newspaper or newsletter about increased dangers to our families and ourselves. Nervously we scan all of our sources of information and conclude that the danger has in fact increased. Our anxiety rises higher; it reaches a critical stage; we must ACT!

First we turn to our favorite financial guru. Sure enough, he knows about the danger, too. He is telling us how to *profit* from it. Terrific, we can satisfy our need for action and make a little money in addition. We buy or sell as advised. Some of the anxiety is now gone. We thank the guru and resubscribe to his service.

For some of us, however, that is not enough. We have a nagging feeling that money alone won't get us out of this one. So, we pour through our survival catalogues. What do we still need? How about a compass? Suppose the place is bombed so flat we can't find our way out without a compass. Better buy two.

Freeze dried gourmet food, bicycle generators, exotic flashlights, books on how to forage for food and how to repair our gear, we might actually have to use this stuff. Better get an outside tire rack for the car, so that we can fit more supplies inside.

The closets are full, the garage is filling, and, as we buy each gimmick from our survival catalogue, our anxiety level is diminishing.

And yet, in all of this, we often have not taken the most essential actions. Really serious food and medical supplies for our whole neighborhood, a proper fallout or blast shelter, political action to do our part to reverse this mess, a reliable water supply and tested ventilation equipment, or an actual drill where we turn off the utilities for a day and actually test our preparations.

The investment advisor and the supplier of survivalist gimmicks may cost a little money, and they may even do a little good for us. The great danger, however, is that they serve as a substitute for the real actions which we should be taking, and they mitigate the emotions which stimulate us to action.

You don't have this syndrome, right? You have never been so foolish. Neither have I. That's why I understand it so well.