

Family Council

Copyright, General Features Corp. Editor's Note: The Family Council consists of a judge, a psychiatrist, a women's editor, and two writers. Each article is a summary of an actual case history. The Council reports on problems that have been dealt with by responsible agencies and counselors.

M. L. F. — Senior clubs aren't enough. I want a job. **Mrs. L. F.** — He turned down a job. He's too fussy.

Mr. L. F. — I'm a retired railroad worker, in good health, and I have at least 10 years' worth of good hard work in me yet, even though I'm 66. My father kept going to 87 on his farm and, if I'd been in business for myself I wouldn't have kept track of my birthdays at all. Senior centers bore me to death.

But when I start to look around, answering ads and asking my friends, I'm either offered something ridiculous to do, like walking dogs or picketing a movie house, or I'm told that the unions and the bosses don't want such as me because of their pension plans, the group insurance arrangements and other complex matters.

My wife thinks I should grab any job and shut up. I think I can afford to be choosy. We're not broke yet.

Mrs. L. F. — Len seems to have an idea that a new railroad may turn up, offering positions to retired passenger agents like him. He turns down anything else he hears of.

I'm very sympathetic with his need for work. In addition to being restless, he can use some extra money. Our children are married and have blessed us with six grandchildren. It's a great joy to be liberal with gifts and treats for them. And we'd like a few modest luxuries for ourselves that the extra dollars would pay for, like a concert subscription or a cabana at the shore.

But the way things are, Len must be more adaptable. I'd like an outside job myself. I'd register at an agency with him if he'll agree to take what comes. I'll walk dogs if that's what the call is for.

The Council: Time was when medical journals were filled with esoteric papers on groups and surgical techniques. But look, Ma! The doctors are now regarding us — the community — as medicine, as a source of treatment and healing. In fact, almost every issue of the major professional weeklies, monthlies and quarterlies describe the fine results fellowmen can make possible for each other. In the American Geriatrics Society reports, for example, we find a possible answer for Mr. F.

Using a pair of spectacles as their trademark, a White Plains, N.Y. group of volunteers runs SPEC, standing for "Senior Personnel Employment Service." They match up people like Mr. F. with the odd job, the part-time job, the seasonal job or the after-hours job which is okay with the unions, jolly for the boss and gravy to the senior citizen.

Instead of bucking the regular agencies, Mr. and Mrs. F. might write to this one, 50 Quarropas St., White Plains, N.Y., for help in starting a SPEC in their own community. The main work is usually done by volunteers, retired workers themselves — including housewives — who lend sympathetic ears five mornings a week to the over-65s who want positions.

What makes Mr. F.'s quest (and Mrs. F.'s, too) more likely of success is that the majority of retired people are not like him. Most studies reveal the demand for paid work, for second careers, to be slight. The average ex-worker is satisfied with senior centers, with continuing spare-time interests started long before, with restful relaxation. Only about one in four is a job hunter, most of them for the money, a few for the status and a few more for lack of other satisfactions.

But Mrs. F. points to the essential change at this stage of employment — adaptability. The above-mentioned report tells of openings as companion to a grandpa, alone at home during a family's vacation tour, as desk clerk in a funeral parlor, as an extra hand to an accountant at tax-due times. Let's hope the right agency can show Mr. F. he's right for more jobs than he realizes.

GETS U.S. AID

Washington — The State Department has announced the United States has provided \$250,000 to finance a new inter-American police academy in the Panama Canal Zone. The academy will train police officials from Latin American countries.

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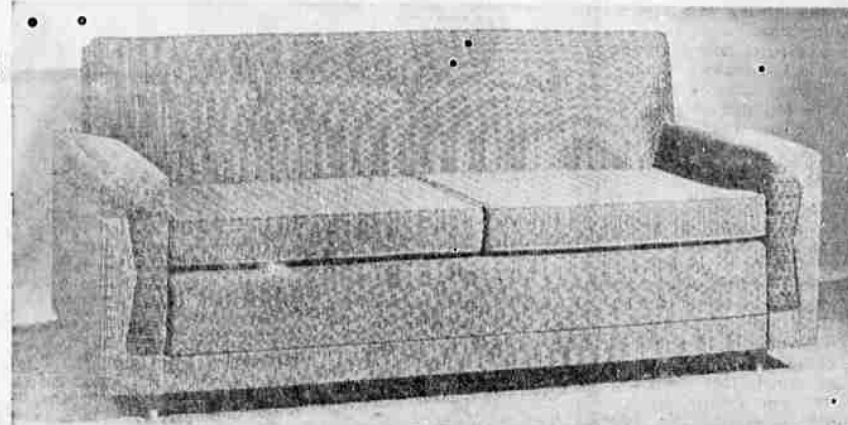
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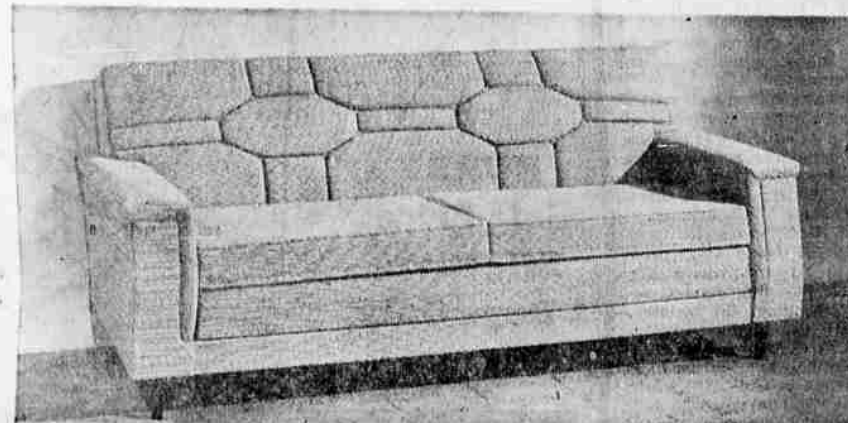
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