

The Medical Roundup

by *Walter Alvarez*

Emeritus Consultant in Medicine
Mayo Clinic
Emeritus Professor of Medicine
Mayo Clinic
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Disease Due To Lack Of Vitamins

During my long life in the practice of medicine, I have been impressed with the fact that although I have been on the watch for them, I have never seen a case of pellagra, beriberi, or scurvy (due to lack of vitamins). I have seen children who probably should have been getting more Vitamin D than they were getting, and who had mild symptoms of rickets.

Pellagra is a disease which used to be found mainly in our southern states where people lived to a large extent on corn. Beriberi used to be a common disease in the Orient where people got most of their calories out of polished rice, which contained no Vitamin B1. Scurvy, in the old days, was a terrible disease, afflicting and killing thousands of sailors who lived largely on salted meat and had no fresh food. Eventually, it was found that if they took each day a small amount of lime juice they didn't get the scurvy. In Mexico the people avoid scurvy by eating dried peppers which contain vitamin C.

What has fascinated me, however, as I read the story of many of the old voyages in which sailors were months at sea without getting much fresh food, is that a certain percentage of the crew would come down with a severe form of scurvy and some would die of it, but others of the sailors, and often the officers would not have any trouble, and would stay well throughout the long voyage. Evidently, some persons are practically immune to a lack of vitamin C.

Found in Most Foods

Anyone who knows anything about diet knows that vitamin B is to be found in most of our foods so that none of us are likely ever to get beriberi. Most of us take some fresh food every day, and many of us for breakfast take a glass of orange juice, which gives us plenty of vitamin C. A point which interested me much was that according to the extensive reports I have read of physicians who have studied the inmates of stockades in which men and women were starved terribly during World War II — both in Germany and in the East — the persons

who went down to skin and bones did not suffer so much from lack of vitamins as from lack of food in general, and lack of protein (meat, poultry, fish, eggs and milk).

Always through the years when I have remarked to some enthusiastic taker of vitamins, or enthusiastic dispenser of vitamins, that I never saw a patient who had symptoms typical of a known disease due to lack of vitamins, my friend would say, "But you're missing the sub-clinical cases." By this, he meant that people could be tired and feeling below par due to lack of vitamins, but they would be without any of the symptoms which would enable anyone definitely to make the diagnosis of an avitaminosis (disease due to lack of vitamins).

Always, of course, I have had to say to my friends who thought this way, "When you go off into that realm of theory, I can't follow you; I can't say you are right and I can't say you are wrong." Today, I am pleased to find in a splendid official report of the Council on Foods and Nutrition of the American Medical Association that Dr. William N. Pearson says that a physician "should think twice before treating a 'sub-clinical' deficiency disease." Before making this diagnosis, he certainly should talk to the patient a while to find out how he or she actually lives and eats. For instance, if I ask a patient if he takes any fresh fruit or fruit juice or salad during the day and he tells me, "yes," that he always takes a big glass of orange juice in the morning, and he always takes a salad with at least one of his meals, and he always eats some fruit, I can't worry about his lacking vitamin C. Also, if he tells me he takes an egg or two for breakfast I know he is getting many important chemicals he needs. Perhaps he tells me he eats liver a couple of times a week, and this gives him many essential chemicals.

Difficulty in Absorption

Even if he tells me that he drinks a glass of milk a day, and that he eats meats and vegetables in the usual amounts, I can't believe that he is suffering from an avitaminosis. About the only people who might suffer from a mild avitaminosis are those who have some disease which interferes with the absorption from their small bowel. For instance, there are some people who have difficulty in absorbing vitamin A (in butter) taken by mouth. Others with pernicious anemia may have difficulty in absorbing vitamin B12 from the bowel.

Others have so-called cystic fibrosis of the pancreas, or they have a mild form of a disease called sprue in which intestinal absorption is poor. Or a man might have trouble because he has a badly damaged liver, but even then, I have known for years people with a terribly damaged liver who had no difficulty in maintaining a good nutritional status, and who had no signs of disease whatsoever.

The most important point that I think is made by Dr. Pearson is that today there are methods of estimating some of the vitamins in the blood or in the urine, and hence one can test to see if the patient is absorbing his vitamins properly. It would seem that those persons who are fanatics in the prescription of vitamins ought more often to be using these tests.

If you've been having mysterious "hunger" pains, see your doctor about the possibility of an ulcer. Also, you'll want to read Dr. Alvarez' booklet, "Ulcers of the Stomach and Duodenum." To obtain it, send 25 cents and a stamped, self-addressed envelope with your request to Dr. Walter C. Alvarez, Dept. MMT, The Register and Tribune Syndicate, Box 957, Des Moines 4, Iowa.

FACE TRIAL AS SPIES
Cairo—UPI—The trial of 13 Greeks and one Egyptian, all charged with spying for Israel will open in Alexandria on June 12, according to an official announcement here.

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By Jimmy Hatlo



Your Money's Worth

By SYLVIA PORTER
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CENTRAL BANKERS AMONG WORLD'S MOST POWERFUL MEN

In the ancient Altieri Palace in Rome for four days recently, about 120 of the globe's most powerful men conferred behind closed doors on ways to stem the outflow of gold from the United States, erase this peril to our currency's stability and thereby maintain the U.S. dollar as the pivot for the currencies of the free world.

Among the 120 were the top Central Bankers of Europe and the United States. Heading our delegation to this International Monetary Conference were Chairman of the Federal Reserve Board Martin, Secretary of the Treasury Dillon, Under Secretary of the Treasury and world-respected authority on central banking, Robert V. Roosa. Heading Britain's delegation was the Earl of Comer, Governor of the famed Bank of England. Heading Germany's were Hermann J. Abs, chairman and Karl Blessing, president of the Deutsche Bundesbank. Also there were Per Jacobsson, managing director of the International Monetary Fund, and Guillaume Guindeguy, general manager of the Bank for International Settlements at Basle. This suggests the calibre of the men at this conference—only the number one and two financiers of each nation were invited, even number three men were barred as not up to the level of this meeting.

What they agreed or disagreed on in their private meetings will profoundly affect your financial life and the lives of hundreds of millions around the globe in coming months. The problem of safeguarding the mighty U.S. dollar has become of paramount importance in view of the fact that we are continually spending far more abroad than we are earning abroad and our foreign creditors have built up enormous claims against our dwindling gold reserve. The problem must be solved if the financial structures of the entire free world are not to topple.

But the purpose of this report is not to give you additional details on the defenses being created for the dollar. Suffice it to say here that the defenses are being devised and so far, crisis has been successfully averted. Rather, the purpose of this column and tomorrow's is to tell you what these men at the Rome meeting represent, why they are so influential, where they get their awesome power.

Without hesitation, I'll wager that not one in 100,000 of you could properly explain what a Central Bank is. As the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond put it in a most timely discussion of this just last month, while "In every major country of the world the central bank is the central arch of the monetary and financial system," and its activities are "indispensable," the "Central Bank is usually taken for granted."

Even among those who frequently come into contact with its operations, only a very small minority has a full understanding of what a Central Bank is, what it does, and why. The Richmond Federal Reserve Bank is a part of the U.S. central banking organization—formally known as the Federal Reserve System. If it feels it necessary to explain to its sophisticated group readers what a Central Bank is, you need not apologize for your confusion, misunderstandings or scanty knowledge.

Before going any farther, here's capsule definition:
A Central Bank is first, a bankers' bank. It performs for the commercial bank on your corner the same basic functions which that corner bank performs for you. For instance, it holds your bank's reserves, collects its checks makes loans to your bank under certain conditions.

A Central Bank is second, the banker for the Government. For instance, as the fiscal agent for the U.S. Government, our Federal Reserve System receives and pays out the funds of the Federal Government.

A Central Bank is third and most important, the manager of a country's money and credit system—and there, of course, is the heart of its awesome power. Our Federal Reserve System can and does create money, pour it into the economic stream to finance all business activities. It can, and does at times, withdraw money from the economic stream to put a brake on business activities.

The men who were at Rome to discuss our dollar's future were the world's leading Central Bankers. They could, if they so decided, stage a run on our dollar, bring about a worldwide financial crash. Or they could agree to cooperate to an unprecedented degree to rescue our dollar from the trap dug by our own generosity over the years. This is power indeed.

Next: A primer on what a Central Bank is.

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Farm Interest Costs Expected To Show Increase

Washington — UPI — Agriculture department economists report farm interest costs this year likely will be about 6 per cent higher than in 1961 because of an increase in farm debt.

The increased interest costs would reflect an estimated increase of \$1 billion in the amount of debt outstanding, the economists said. Farm debts on Jan. 1, 1961, totaled \$25.4 billion, up \$1.3 billion from the previous year.

Interest rates charged on farm loans have changed little during the last year, and probably will continue around present levels through the remainder of 1962, the economists said. Rates in the central money markets have been generally stable since mid-1960, except for some increase in short-term rates in 1961.

Farmer and farm landlords paid an estimated \$1,390,000,000 in interest charges on their farm debts during the calendar year.

Total interest payments were about 5 per cent of all farm production expenses. Interest payments in 1961 were 50 per cent higher than five years earlier, and double those of 10 years before. These increases reflected some increase in interest rates, but chiefly the expansion of farm debt.

The economists said the average interest rate undoubtedly will increase in the future, because the new loans being added to the aggregate mortgage debt carry higher interest rates than the old loans being paid off or renewed.

COACHES IN DEMAND
Washington — UPI — Peace Corps Director R. Sargent Shriver has urged athletic directors, particularly basketball coaches, to join the corps.

Ostertag (R-N.Y.) said Sunday athletic directors are "in great demand" around the world. Shriver, appearing on a radio program with Rep. Harold C. World.

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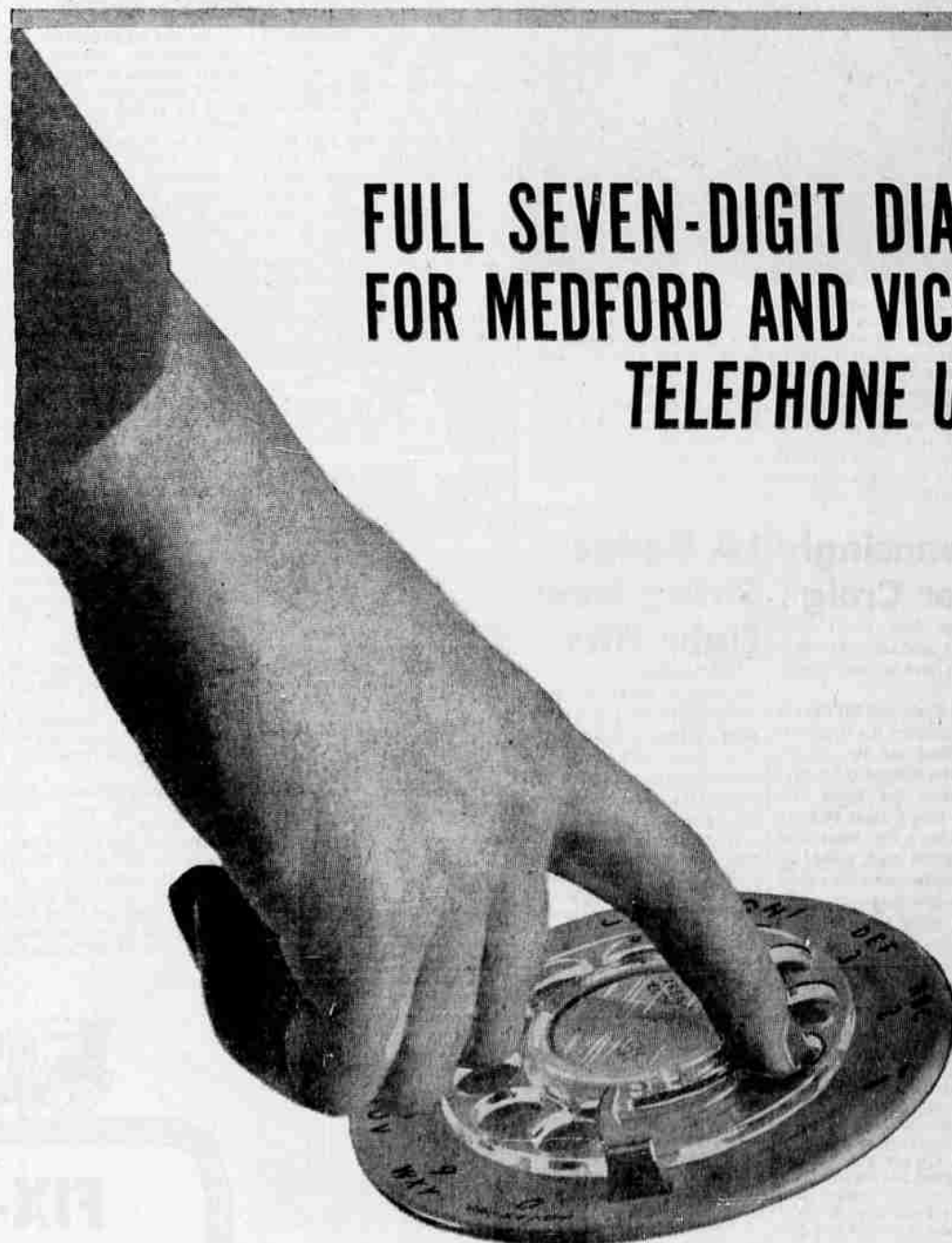
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