

EDITOR'S NOTE  
The Poets' Corner and the Communications column, which usually appear on this page in the Sunday Mail Tribune, will be found on Page 10A today only.

**FAMILY COUNCIL**

Carl J.—With a large family, we still have nowhere to turn now.

Harriet N.—They turn down the help that's available. They want deluxe service.

Carl J.—My wife and I have a 14-month-old son. We expect a second child in two months. Despite the fact that we each have plenty of relatives, believe it or not, we're at our wits' end to find someone to take care of Bobby while his mother is away.

I'm on a new job, and we will be in a peak period. I can't stay home. We've never used a baby sitter because we can't afford one. When we go out, we take the baby along. My mother lives in Florida, my sister in Mexico. That lets them out. Bea's mother lives a few miles away, but she has no patience with her grandchildren. And Bea's sister is a block away, but she can't stand to look at a diaper! A cousin of mine is willing to take Bobby, but she has a mean daughter who always teases and hits him when we visit there, with not a word from the mother.

Harriet N.—I'm Carl's sister-in-law, Bea's sister. They are making a mountain out of nothing. There are plenty of people in the family who can take care of Bobby when Bea gives birth. But you'd think he's made of eggshells from all the orders they give to any of us who try to hold him or play with him. No one can satisfy them. They're too fussy.

My mother can mind a baby without stopping everything else. But no, Carl and Bea expect her to push him to the park and amuse him on the swing, or else play peek-a-boo with him all day at home. As for me, I'd have to sign on the dotted line that I'd bathe and powder the kid every time he perspired. If those two could stop expecting the fancy services of a British "nanny," they'd have nothing to worry about. Their son would live through it okay.

The Council: Carl's predicament puts us in mind of the Depression when in 1934 an ex-Secretary of the Treasury Ogden L. Mills described "the paradox of want in the midst of plenty." The J's had been going along feeling rich and secure with "plenty" of relatives to fall back on in case of emergency. Yet, here's the emergency, and they find themselves falling back on thin air which doesn't cushion or stop the fall. Their "wealth" has turned to nothingness.

Harriet's protestations are not reassuring to the parents of a cherished toddler who's never been parted from his mother. It's not asking too much to expect the mother-substitute to fondle and cuddle the baby "in the manner to which he is accustomed"—that is, ungrudgingly and joyously. Evidently Bobby has had a better deal, thus far, than even the wards of the expensive governesses who attend to their feeding, play and sleep schedules. He's been asleep in TLC—the warm responsiveness from parents which has been deemed as important as oxygen to an infant's optimum development. Why risk subjecting Bobby to a week of careless attention which may confuse him and, worse, may add up to a traumatic experience?

There's still time to try for an alternative. Carl, Inquire of the Social Service department of the hospital where Bea will be delivered. They will have some suggestions. Bobby may be too young for a Day Nursery (most of them do not accept children under 2), but an infant-care center may be found where Bobby can stay during the day and be called for by Carl in the evening. Also, your clergyman may have some leads. A motherly homemaker might be provided, paid for by welfare funds for a week or so, to attend to the baby's needs in his own home while you are away.

Also, isn't there a friend or a neighbor living in the same community for a length of time, you may know another family in the same fix. Perhaps a tit-for-tat deal may be worked out, with Bea able to provide the same peace of mind for another expectant mother.

When is a family not a family? When, like this one, they converge with bells on for the parties and fun but run as from Armageddon from the problems.

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