THE ELIXIR OF LIFE 1

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American Can Company, New York

It is appropriate you hold your first joint meeting of the International Association of Milk & Food Sanitarians, the New York State Association of Milk Sanitarians and the Cornell Dairy Conference, at the Hotel New Yorker. For, three centuries ago the land on which this hotel is located was being used for that purpose you are dedicated to foster and improve. This was part of the farm and dairy land of the Mayor of New Amsterdam, Peter Stuyvesant. He prided himself in his farm's productivity and in the quality of his products. He wanted his farm to be—just like his silver peg leg—brilliant and spotless and conspicuous.

Had it not been for an incident some 294 years ago, this hotel would no doubt have been called the New Amsterdam, but, you will recall, in 1664 the British fleet suddenly appeared in the harbor and Captain Richard Nicolls rudely announced to Stuyvesant they were not only taking over his domain but they were changing the name of the honor of the new Duke of York.

But, that decade of the 1660's was one of compounded disaster for the British. In 1665 the Black Plague swept over London leaving in its wake 68,596 dead, every family felt the grim finger of death. Then came the holocaust of the Great Fire of 1666 destroying four-fifths of London with 272,000 acres burned; 13,200 houses and 87 churches destroyed.

Two famed authors wrote of these tragedies—Samuel Pepys, man of the world, realist, agnostic, viewed the destruction and wrote in his diary—“All is death and despair. I do not believe we shall ever recover from this double tragedy.”

Bishop Thomas Ken, man of God, witnessed the heroism, the courage, the faith of the people and wrote those words so well known to us today—

"Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him, above, ye heavenly hosts;
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost."

Today we view the world with many divergent attitudes, many philosophies and we describe the world with many words, in many ways. There are those who continue to express fear, distrust, pessimism and concern. Yet, this fact is indisputable, that with mankind's sacred human abilities, no year, no day, no hour passes but what technological progress is being made, leading inevitably to that time when it will be physically possible for all people everywhere to live a full and healthful life.

To such an end is your organization dedicated, and to this end you have made your contribution handsomely, a contribution which, the papers being presented at this convention indicate, is being further accelerated.

With such a world in prospect, it behooves us to ask ourselves what we can do as a neighborhood of nations, as associations, as corporations, as thoughtful individuals to make sure this world of manifold blessings, also offers the satisfactions of living that come from peace of mind, freedom of spirit, thrill of accomplishment and the tranquility of love.

It seems that eternally there are three challenges—that our goals be the highest, that we share our knowledge, that we remember the God-given worth of the individual.

That our goals be the highest — — — !

In 1905 President Theodore Roosevelt wrote to his son, Kermit, these words—"Tell me a man's plans, let him demonstrate his willingness and ability to fulfill those plans, and I will prophesy the measure of his success."

In 1901 there came on the American scene the greatest city planner of this century, Daniel H. Burnham. (Robert Moses will deny this in the morning!) Daniel H. gained his first prominence in Chicago when he submitted the Burnham Plan for the Windy City. It called for an esplanade along the Lake Michigan waterfront, for the reversal of the Chicago River, for throughways to the outskirts of the city—plans which in that day everyone said were visionary, plans which today are a reality.

The greatest success Daniel H. had was in my native city of San Francisco in the years 1905 and 1906, when, at the cost to the citizens of $100,000 he sat high atop Twin Peaks, preparing the Burnham Plan for the City by the Golden Gate. He had four assistants and one 14 year old boy whose responsibility it was each morning to come charging up the hill with the provisions for the day, go down again, and come back again at evening to take the finished documents to be duplicated.

For better than ten months Daniel H. worked and then on April 13, 1906 he submitted his plan to the citizens, and they saw it was a magnificent document. Inside the front cover he put his philosophy

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of city planning, he said —

"A plan is not just houses, and streets and parks. A plan is rather the outer manifestation of the needs of people."

On the first page he put his classic formula for successful planning, he said this —

"Make no little plans. They have no magic to stir men's blood and of themselves may not be realized. Make BIG plans, set your aims and objectives high, remembering that a logical and noble diagram once recorded will continue on with ever growing intensity. Make BIG plans!"

Then, he gave his plan—367 pages—and on the last page one word of warning —

"No plan is static we must ever be ready to meet the constancy of change."

And on the back cover his only bit of whimsy —

"The best laid plans of God, and mice and men, need a whale of a lot of selling now and then."

The city fathers were amazed by the plan and the press reported it, they said —

"Daniel H. this is a commendable plan. We notice you call for a 10 block civic center at the confluence of Van Ness Avenue and Market Streets, for tearing down all the slum areas South of the Slot, through Chinatown and throughout North Beach, you call for terracing Telegraph Hill and Nob Hill; an Athenaeum on the top of Twin Peaks; bridge to the north shore and to the east shore; an elevated structure around the periphery of the city! Mr. Burnham this is a commendable plan but tell us just one thing—how do you propose to tear down all the buildings to put the plan into effect?"

The thing they didn't know was that Daniel H. had the whole thing wired with the Almighty and just 5 days later at 5:12 in the morning the earth shook and all the buildings fell down — and those that didn't fall down, burned up. The Burnham Plan could have gone into effect except for one thing; Daniel H. had gone off to do the Burnham Plan for New Orleans and there was no one to read the back cover — "The best laid plans of God, and mice and men, need a whale of a lot of selling now and then."

No one to read it except one 14 year old boy who, with his own personal, precious copy tucked under his arm, watched his own home burn to the ground.

The years went by and the young man grew in stature

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The city planners went to work, they recommend-
ed five things —

1. A continuing Master Plan.
2. An agency to administer it.
3. A bond issue to activate it.
4. A highway through the heart of the city so transient traffic could by pass it.
5. Urban re-development legislation.

Perhaps you know the story of what happened. In 1947 the Master Plan was adopted; a planning commission was authorized to administer it; a bond issue of $212,000,000 was passed to activate it; any of you who have driven from San Francisco Airport to Oakland have gone on the by-passing highway; urban redevelopment legislation went up to the Supreme Court and back and the Western Addition is being cleared and free enterprise rebuilding, giving the city needed modern housing.

The Burnham Plan has become a reality—because it was a BIG plan and because there were those who realized that within a democracy you don't do things by compulsion but rather by persuasion and perseverence.

That our goals be the highest, that we share our knowledge — — — — !

In the year 1900 the Editors of the Atlantic Monthly wrote to the Professor of Jurisprudence and Political Science of Princeton University asking, "Could you write a dozen articles on the objectives and ideals of modern education?" Woodrow Wilson wrote back and said, "Yes, I could write a dozen articles on the ideals and objectives of modern education, but I could not state them any better than the Master did in just a dozen words when he said, 'Ye shall know the Truth and the Truth shall make you free.' He said, "I could write a dozen books on the techniques of modern education but the one article that should be written is that which challenges all of our people at all times of the importance of the translation and transmission of information and inspiration to our neighbors."

On Kingshighway in the city of St. Louis stands Southwest High School. It stands on the top of a green knoll. It is a four-story red brick building, a magnificent structure. Across the facade are the statues of the five philosophers and the inscription, "Ye shall know the Truth and the Truth shall make you free."

One day in the spring of 1950 Raymond Brisbane walked through the portico of Southwest High just at twilight feeling a new sense of responsibility. He read the twelve words with new meaning for he had become Principal of Southwest High School — 1600 youngsters his personal responsibility to guide into the wonderment of the American way of life. His academic soliloquy swept over him.

But all of a sudden his reverie was disrupted by his awareness of an irritating noise, a sound like a
metallic mosquito. He looked across Kingshighway and there stood the little noisemaker itself—a modern industrial plant. It had the traditional U-shape design—administration here—manufacturing at the apex—warehousing there—the trains and the trucks came to the far extremity—there were no garish signs, it was well landscaped, but nevertheless it made this continuous cacophonous noise 24 hours a day. In irritation he walked back into the school building, his reverie broken.

His irritation would have continued had it not been for the fact that in the spring of 1954 the proprietors of the establishment wanted to extend the warehouse just 150 feet. They made application to the City Council, confident it would go racing through. After all, they were good neighbors in the community; they employed, with ideal working conditions, 600 people; they made a product essential to the economy of St. Louis; why, during the war they even made all the torpedoes that sank the entire Japanese fleet. Why, this petition would go right on through!

But when the Plant Manager went to the City Council, he received that shock that layman so often get, there was a great and vocal group of irate citizens, all in righteous indignation. Not only should the extension not be granted, the entire building should be torn down—it was a public nuisance.

A delay in action was granted and, the Plant Manager, went back to the City Council—Whoooh! Right on through. No opposition—only their leader who came up to him afterward and said, “Pardon me, sir, I don’t believe you have a clear title to that property. I think the Navy still has an easement across it. You had better have your deed checked.” The deed was checked, the title was cleared, the extension was built.

Maybe that sounds like the end of a good public relations story, except for the fact that one of the 1017 was Raymond Brisbane, Principal of Southwest High. As he came up to the door of the plant, he was greeted by the Plant Manager who said, “My name is Val Verhunce. I have the honor, sir, of being the father of the shortstop of Southwest High.” He came to the District Sales Manager, who said, “My name is James Rayburn.” The Principal said, “Let me see . . . Rayburn . . . that sounds familiar. The District Sales Manager replied, “It should. You’ve got two of my girls now, and I want to warn you. There are three more coming.”

Mr. Brisbane continued on down the line, saw his friends and his neighbors working, and then, to his amazement, he saw seventeen members of his staff working the swing shift in order to earn enough money to support their families and still enjoy the luxury of teaching. He read the signs. He saw revealed the importance of this segment of our American economy.

After the meeting was over, he came up to the Plant Manager and said, “Mr. Verhunce, in the senior year we give our students a course we call “American Problems.” We try to expose them to the cold, cruel facts of the economic world that lies ahead of them. I think the course is poorly named, I think we do a poor job of teaching it for we do it academically, out of the textbooks, an occasional visitation. Yet, right here across Kingshighway from our school, is a plant that represents all segments of our economy—agriculture and industry, labor and management, international and local operations—a perfect example of our
American economy in action. Could we use your plant as our laboratory?”

The Plant Manager checked with the New York Office, the Principal checked with the Superintendent of Schools, and starting in September of 1954, for 30 days, the senior class was exposed to the American economic system predicated upon this one industry.

The Plant Manager told of his five-fold responsibility—to his customers, to his employees, to the community, to management, to the shareholders. The District Sales Manager pointed out that his responsibility began when a sale was consumated, for then he had to be sure to keep a satisfied customer. There came the whole battery of those who represent the complex structure of a successful business; the purchasing agent, the master mechanic, the shipping foreman; people from the research laboratories, the agronomist, the technicians, the home economist; representatives of the labor unions, the personnel director; processors, packers, transporters, wholesalers, retailers—and on the last day came the Comptroller of the Company who pointed out, how, after all this, the corporation was still able to make a profit. Even after taxes. For 36 days the youngsters were exposed to our American way of life as demonstrated by one industry.

Then they were given three tests. First, a test on the history and significance of the processing industry; second, the 69 questions of the Public Opinion Survey of Princeton University on the American economic philosophy; and third, they were given their choice of the job they wished to occupy on Student’s Day when they were going to take over the plant.

On the processing industry, of the 92 students, only 2 got 100%. Not good, except for the fact that we gave the test to the Plant and to the New York Head Office—nobody got 100%. On the 69 questions, it showed a 37% improvement on their comprehension of our American economic philosophy. On the 46 jobs to be occupied on Student’s Day, we thought every one of them got to be a Shipping Foreman. The Plant Manager, District Sales Manager, only 2 wanted to be Plant Manager, and nobody wanted to be District Sales Manager. We had to draft one of the youngsters. Fourteen wanted to be the Shipping Foreman.

Then, on November 12 the youngsters took over, 46 in the 46 key jobs, the other 46 acting as guides for the Mayor, the representatives of the City Council, for the labor leaders, for the Board of Education, for visiting can makers, for the press and radio. They saw young America successfully operating a great industrial plant.

After the demonstration, there was a luncheon. It was a love-feast! The Plant Manager said, “I’ve never seen such cooperation as we got from the Principal of the school.” The Principal said, “I’ve never seen such cooperation as we got from the corporatation.” The Superintendent of Schools said, “We’re going to do this in every school we have” — the Vice President of the corporation said, “We’re going to do this in every community we have a plant.” — And then the Mayor summed it all up by saying, (as Mayors always seem to say,) “You have proved yourselves to be Good Neighbors.”

All this was happily conclusive in itself, except for the fact that the M.C. called extemporaneously on one of the students, Louis Fritzby. Louis shuffled up to the microphone, St. Louis’ answer to the zoot-suit. He was wearing a turtle-neck sweater, with red and white horizontal stripes, he wore jodhpurs and paratrooper boots with the laces tied around his legs; his hair was combed like the south end of a north-bound duck. As he went, all the girls gave him the whistle, all the guys screened, “Looee!”

He stood in front of the microphone embarrassed for a minute, and then he said, “My old man didn’t want me to take this course. He said, ‘You’re nothing but a bunch of big shots that get rich out of the blood of little guys.’ ” “But,” he said, “I hope you’ll forgive me, Mr. Verhunce, Mr. Rayburn, I don’t think any of you are big shots. I think that you’re just average men trying to do a better than average job, and the higher the job gets, the tougher it gets.”

He said, “I don’t know why my old man looks down on big shots—used to be one himself, used to play tackle for the Old Chicago Bears. Wanted me to go out for football, all 98 pounds of me. I tried, broke my arm trying! Then Mr. Brisbane said, ‘Lou, why don’t you try for yell leader?’ I ran for yell leader, I was elected yell leader, and I’m the best yell leader Southwest ever had.” And all the youngsters cheered to tell him that he was. Then, he said, “And when I graduate from High School, I know what I want to be. I want to be a Shipping Clerk. And then maybe one day I can get to be Shipping Foreman, like Dick Curran, the man whose job I held today.” Then he said, “Well, I guess that’s about all.”

He shuffled back to his seat and that was all except for the fact there were no derisive cat calls, no whistling; 91 youngsters, looking at Louis, just a little starry-eyed, realizing as he did that in America you can set your goal in life and have the hopes of achieving that goal. There were 92 representatives of the press, and politicians, and can makers, looking admiringly, realizing that Louis had gotten the message of the wonderment of America.

After the luncheon was over, Raymond Brisbane took Mike Cortilet, the Vice President of the corporation, over to the window of the cafeteria. Mr. Bris-
bene put his arms around Mike Cortilet's shoulder as they looked across Kingshighway, up the knoll to Southwest High, and Raymond Brisbane read the words, "Ye shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall make you free."

Unfortunately, since that day both Mike Cortilet and Raymond Brisbane have joined Woodrow Wilson in the land where all Truth is known, but I'm sure they would join with him in his admonishment of the importance of "The translation and transmission of information and inspiration to our neighbors." Particularly, our neighbors of tomorrow who shall one day inherit our world.

*Our goals the highest, we share our knowledge, we remember the worth of the individual — — — !*

On each coin that jingles in our pocket is the inscription "E Pluribus Unum" — — — "Out of Many One." But, in this heterogeneous world of today with all of its complexities we say, "But what can one man do?"

Knowing that just across town from us is the headquarters of the United Nations, my thoughts race back to 1945 —

In 1945, I had the greatest experience of my life— I had the privilege of attending all of the sessions of the founding convention of the United Nations.

I saw, on April 24, 1945, 1500 of the world's greatest minds come together seeking the common denominator to the world's problems and they didn't even have a common God to whom to pray. Yet, after being together for two months they found they had common problems, common goals, common fears, and on June 25, they were able to adopt the great United Nations Charter bringing the entire world closer to peace than at any time in history.

I attended all those sessions for, representing the United States Junior Chamber of Commerce, I had a high-falutin title. I was "Associate Consultant to the United States Delegation to the United Nations Conference on International Organization." I saw many things because of that title and because I had shown a little foresight—and if by chance the next session of the United Nations should come to your town and you wish to get in on the inside workings all you have to do is this—about three years prior to the conference marry a beautiful blond then the week before the conference, have her go to work for the State Department. It's that easy. I know.

I could tell you about each session but let me tell you about the last evening, June 25, 1945, the night of the ratification of the Charter. It was part of the newspapers and newsreels then. It's part of the world's history book now.

The scene, the San Francisco Opera House, the pale blue cyclorama around the back of the stage, four tall gold columns, the 50 United Nations flags standing at parade rest before the columns, the pale blue velour across the stage, down into the orchestra pit.

On the main floor the 1,500 delegates, jammed up to the rafters every visitor that could get into the place. Movie cameras were grinding away for history, photographers clamoring all over, nobody's portrait was sacred.

Presiding over the meeting was the epitome of Britannia's dignity, the Earl of Halifax. He stands six feet five inches tall, his left arm is off above the wrist giving him a rather awkward stance, his hair is combed from where it is—over to where it ain't! For the life of me, he looked like Frankenstein. But as he stood there so tall and so haughty you could kind of hear "Pomp and Circumstances" playing in the background.

He was presiding and the entire evening was electric. Particularly when Carlos Romulo jumped to the podium to say, "Speaking for the little nations, we do not believe this is a perfect Charter but we believe the big nations will sense their responsibility to us."

Then Harold Stassen said, "Speaking for the big nations, we do not think this is a perfect Charter but we sense our stewardship of the little nations."

Then speaking for Russia, Andrei Gromyko said, "We do not think this is a perfect Charter — — period."

The discussion went on until 10:45 p.m. then Halifax said, "The time has come for voting on the Charter but before we do so, I want to pay tribute to this great United States for setting up this conference, making this entire thing possible. I want to pay tribute to this great city for the hospitality they've shown so I'm going to ask the Secretary of State to come forward!" And Edward R. Stettinius, Jr. came forward, all that wonderful white hair, and eyebrows, and teeth.

Halifax handed Stettinius a scroll about 3 feet long with a wide red ribbon on it. Uncle Ed leaned over to the microphone said a few well chosen words and went back and sat down.

Then Halifax said, "The time has come to vote. So important is this moment, I'm not going to just ask you to vote 'aye' as we've done in the past. I'm going to ask that when I rap my gavel all of those voting affirmatively will stand."

With a sense of the dramatic he slowly raised his gavel, waiting for the tellers to come on the stage, the photographers to get set, for the movie camera to start whirling, for the visitors to move forward to the edge of their seats, to the tip of their toes.

Then, he said, "All those voting affirmatively will stand." And he rapped his gavel and the 1500 delegates jumped to their feet proud to be endorsing the Charter and all the visitors jumped to their feet and
applauded — 5, 10, 15 minutes!

I saw the whole thing from the back of the main floor. I came in a little late, decided to lean against the south wall at the end of the aisle. But just as I hit the wall the little Red Cross usherette turned around, smiled, and said, “Pardon me, you can’t stand here. Fire ordinance. Would you kindly move over?” At my height you can take it. I moved over behind the last row and watched the proceedings from there; right up to the time Halifax was about to call on Stettinius.

Then I saw a little man come in. He too, leaned against the wall. I noticed his overcoat was turned up at the collar, his hair was a bit askew, a mole stood out high on his right cheek, his eyes behind thick glasses were very tired, he clutched in his right hand a manila folder and a gray felt hat, and he appeared a man completely exhausted.

He got a little more rest against the wall than I did because just as he hit the wall, Halifax called on Stettinius and when Stettinius marched, it was just time out for the ladies. The little Red Cross usherette just stood there, gaga! Stettinius walked up, got the scroll, came back, sat down. The usherette was right back on the job, started talking to the little man, he started nodding his head wearily, I knew what was going to happen. He came over and stood in front of me.

We stood there together while Halifax called for the vote, rapped his gavel, the delegates voted, the visitors cheered and the little man—walked out the back door.

He walked down the stairs of the Opera House, shuffled along the street, walked up four flights of stairs into a little room, where there was just a table, a few chairs, a mattress on the floor, an old army blanket. He threw his hat, his coat and his manila folder on the table, flopped down on the mattress to try to get a little sleep.

That sounds like someone ending up in a flop house, except for this —

He walked down the stairs of the Opera House, shuffled along the street to the adjoining Veteran’s Building, walked up the four flights of stairs into the library of the Veteran’s Building, threw his hat, his coat and his manila folder on the table around which had sat the five great powers while they argued out all the final details of the Charter. He went over to get a couple of hours sleep before he was to receive the beautiful blue bound document itself because on that manila folder it read, “Final Charter, Production Procedure.”

And the man was Dr. C. Easton Rothwell, the Executive Secretary to the Conference. The man who started before Dumbarton Oaks to set up the plans for the Conference, the man who had seen it through all of its legal ramifications, who had seen to the final production of the Charter itself.

Yet, when all the acclaim was up in front, he was the little guy standing in the back of the hall.

We plan, persuade, preserve; we translate and transmit information and inspiration to our neighbor, and whereas we recognize we can’t do everything, nevertheless that which we can do we should do, and that which we should do we determine we will do.

Then, we know we can leave it to the dictators and demagogues to despair but you who work with nature as she unfolds her mysteries and all who work with men and women as they demonstrate their abilities know that it can be truly said —

“PRAISE GOD FROM WHOM ALL BLESSINGS FLOW.”