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FOR MEDIATORS / FACT FINDERS

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HAROLD NEWMAN'S CLOUDY CRYSTAL BALL

"I saw a man pursuing the horizon;
Round and round they sped.
I was disturbed at this;
I accosted the man.
"It is futile," I said,
"You can never" _____

"You lie," he cried,
And ran on.

Stephen Crane (1871-1900)

"Stephen Crane's desperate symbol might well be the American consumer chasing the CPI circa 1974. We are frequently reminded that the United States is not as badly off as, for example, Japan or the United Kingdom with regard to inflation. I find that comforting to a very small degree. (We may be reminded soon that in the terrible inflation in Germany in the 1920's the housewives brought their deutschmarks to the market in wheelbarrows. I occasionally have nightmare visions of American housewives bringing their dollars to the supermarket by station wagon. Like most nightmares it has no relation to reality. Where would they get the gas?)

"Now that our case load will begin its seasonal escalation in a few weeks, I am quite concerned not about the quantity but about the "quality" of the impasses. The diminution of real wages caused by the ever climbing cost of living will certainly create major problems for unions and for governments. For while it is true that teachers, bus drivers, sanitationmen, cafeteria employees, etc., are paying more and more for everything from groceries to gasoline to postage stamps, so indeed are their employers. Heating buildings, fueling trucks, buying anything, costs governments (and other employers) more. And so two parties - unions and management, both hard-hit by the cruel lash of inflation will require more wisdom and innovation from mediators and fact-finders than has ever been demanded of them before. We look upon the panel and are almost tranquil...."

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I was reckless enough in the last issue of this periodical to quote Goethe without first checking on the accuracy of my memory. As I told Alice Cook who caught the error that I had quoted "Wer Fremde Sprache nicht Konnte...." when it should have been "Wer Fremde Sprachen nicht kennt....", nothing escapes her eagle eye or her erudition. But curiously, there was no outcry from Egon Plager or Bruno Stein or others for whom German was the language they knew before they learned