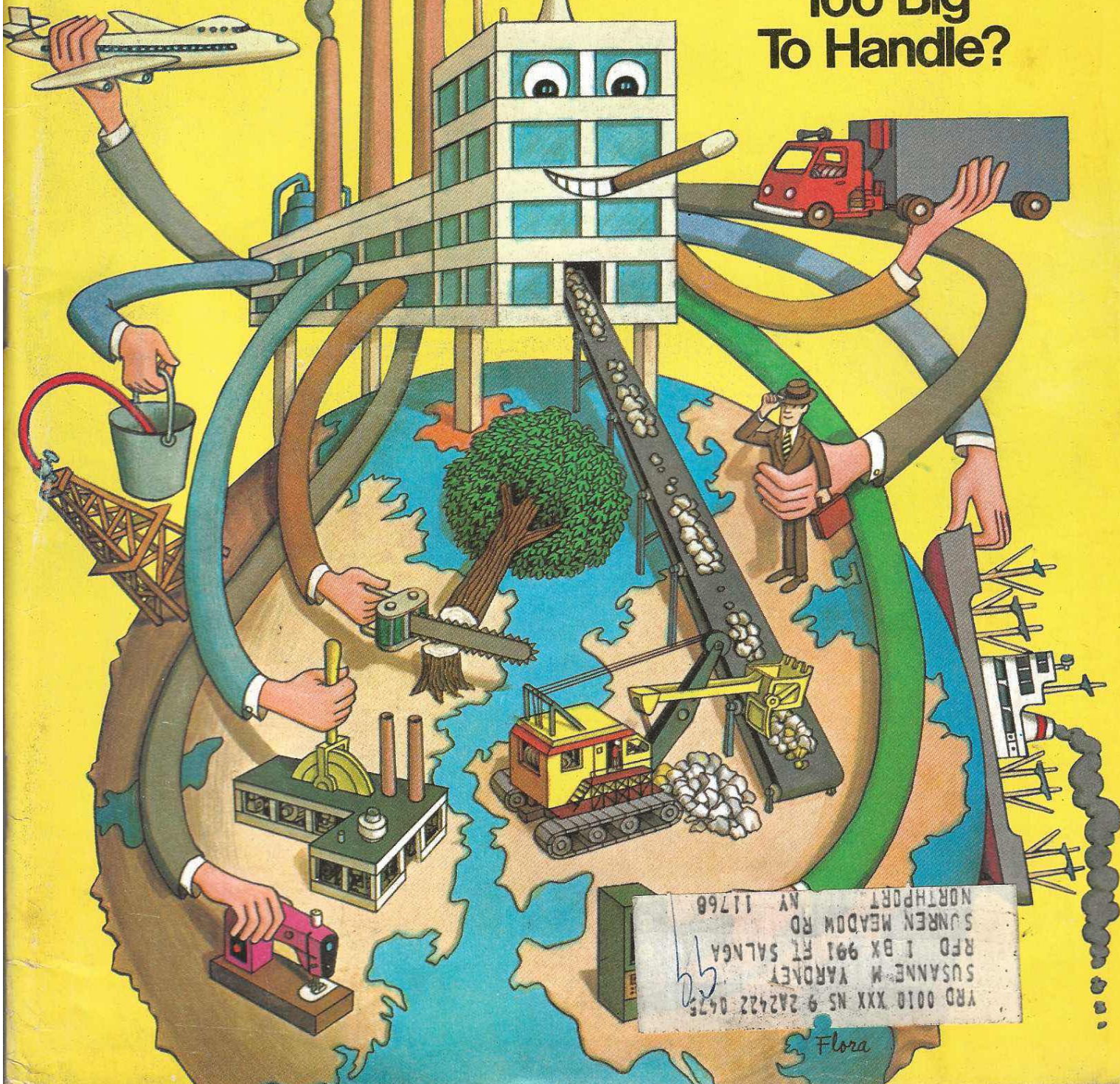


November 20, 1972 / 50 cents

# Newsweek

## GLOBAL COMPANIES

Too Big  
To Handle?



YRD 0010 XXX NS 9 2A2422 0475  
SUSANNE M. YARDNEY  
RFD 1 BX 991 RT SALNGA  
SUNREN MEADOW RD  
NORTHPORT NY 11768

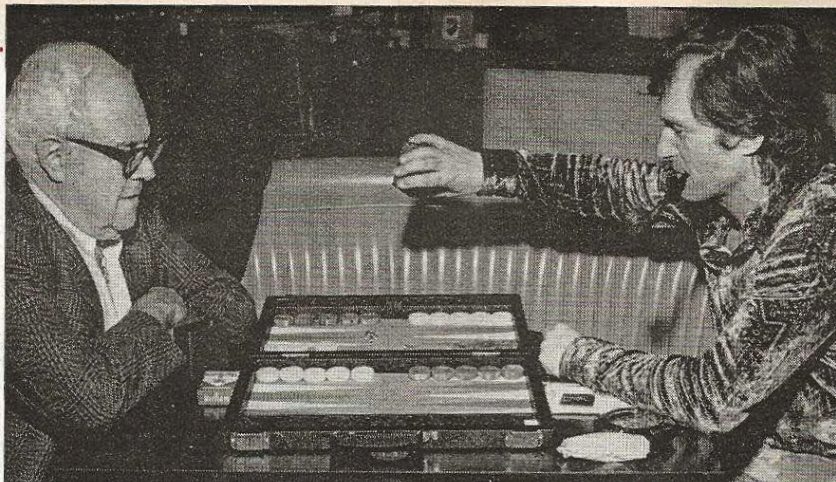
Flora



## MONEY GAME

Humorist Robert Benchley once described backgammon as "something you played only when you had tonsillitis, and didn't think it was so hot even then." Backgammon is an antique pastime that dates back to the heyday of Ur and Babylon, but among the beautiful people of today it has become very hot indeed.

The roster of celebrity backgammon freaks includes Aristotle Onassis, Hugh Hefner, Bernie Cornfeld, Joan Crawford and bridge expert Oswald Jacoby. At the Clermont Club, a posh gaming house in London, Princess Mary Obolensky organizes competitions for the likes of film director John Huston and the Dowager Duchess of Marlborough. At the Harvard Club in New York, devotees sometimes wager \$150 on a game, and at the ritzier Racquet & Tennis Club the stakes run higher. Last January, a world backgammon championship drew a glittering crowd to Las Vegas, and this week some 250 well-heeled enthusiasts will play a three-day tournament in New York for the benefit of the United Cerebral Palsy Fund. "Backgammon is becoming even more popular than gin rummy with the ultra-chic set," says Count Guy d'Arcaques, who staged a tournament this fall at his chateau near Biarritz.



Vogue: Jacoby and Hefner play backgammon in Las Vegas

"It's a very exciting game," enthuses Huston. "It's 50 per cent skill and about as much luck."

Backgammon is also a dandy way to gamble, which probably accounts for much of its popularity among the affluent. Two people play the game on a board, with each moving fifteen checker-like pieces according to a throw of dice. The first one to get all his pieces off the board is the winner. Not as complex as chess, backgammon nevertheless calls for enough cerebration to figure out a complex pattern of mathematical odds. During the action, bets made by each player may be doubled, redoubled and so on, which means that if the original stakes are high enough,

thousands of dollars may change hands after a single contest.

Some people are gauche enough to play backgammon on the triangle-patterned surfaces printed on the reverse sides of cheap checkerboards. But for the real aficionado, the Kenton Collection, a swanky mail-order service, sells a hand-tooled calfskin creation for \$250, while Karl Springer, Ltd., in New York offers a Parsons-style leather-surfaced backgammon table for a tidy \$975. At the more fashionable stores, business is purring along like a well-tuned Rolls-Royce. "Backgammon has taken off like wildfire," exclaims Mrs. Merlin Nuti, fashion director for Mark Cross. "It's the game to play."

## Discount Law

*Laws grind the poor, and rich men rule the law.*

—Oliver Goldsmith

The poor still have their complaints about the law, but today's middle class is also feeling a little ground down. The problem is the high cost of attorneys. Too affluent to qualify for Legal Aid but too poor to afford the fees charged by many lawyers, the middle-class citizen often has to do without needed legal services. In an effort to make the profession more accessible, the American Bar Association is urging its 153,000 members to adopt more efficient office procedures that should result in better service at lower cost. Judging by the work of an unorthodox new storefront law firm in Van Nuys, Calif., such streamlining may pay off for the nation's forgotten clients.

Known as the Legal Clinic, the firm was founded three months ago by two attorneys specializing in consumerism, Stephen Z. Meyers, 29, and Leonard D. Jacoby, 30. Operating much like a low-overhead retail business, the clinic cuts corners wherever it can. Most new clients are screened by a pair of "paraprofessionals" (both law students), who handle

such routine office procedures as research and filling out forms, thus saving the lawyers a good deal of time. The forms for a simple bankruptcy, for example, take about twenty minutes to complete. "After the forms are filled in," says Robert Poyourow, one of the screeners, "the lawyer needs only three minutes or so to advise the client whether he should declare bankruptcy and, if so, have him sign the forms. It's simpler all the way around."

**Divorce:** In cases requiring litigation, the clinic uses another time-saving device: systems analysis. Each of the situations most common to middle-class clients—divorces, bankruptcies, personal injuries, landlord-tenant disputes and consumer suits—are dealt with in large, loose-leaf binders containing forms, codes, precedents and typical defenses. After the client is screened, the paraprofessional turns to the proper chapter in one of the binders and hands the lawyer a ready-made dossier.

The fees for this supermarket service start with a \$15 consultation charge. Flat rates for routine cases are generally well below those charged by other lawyers in the area. An uncontested divorce costs \$100 (versus about \$400), and an individual bankruptcy case costs \$200 (compared with about \$350)—making it possible for some people to clean up

cases they previously couldn't afford to settle. Client Clifton Shepherd, 71, had been separated from his wife for 30 years but could not afford a \$350 divorce. The clinic set him free for \$100. For a \$30 fee, it got housewife Mickey Ormond out of a \$25-a-month contract for karate lessons, which she had discontinued for medical reasons. "If the clinic hadn't existed, I'd have been forced to pay," she says. "People need something like the clinic to back them up."

The California Bar Association is not quite so sure. It has been looking into the publicity the clinic has received, which to some local lawyers smacks of unethical advertising. "They're after us on the grounds of advertising and solicitation, but they're really worried about our restructuring of the legal profession and our lower fees," claims Meyers. "We're demonstrating," he adds, "that it is economically feasible to provide high-quality, low-cost services to the average person."

## The Toy Critics

"The skate-mobles looked like a great new approach to skates," a mother from Brookline, Mass. writes in the Christmas issue of *Toy Review*. "[But] what a disappointment when my 5-year-old put them on. They wouldn't fit over his shoes