ysis. When restricted to genetically identical monozygotic twins, as we prefer to use it, interpretation of the results is straightforward: all associations between the dependent and independent variables must be due solely to nongenetic influences.

We were aware of Dr. Cohn’s use of this method, but her work never served as the foundation of our efforts. Viewing the technique as a routine application of matched-pair methods, we did not feel it necessary to refer to all previous studies that used the same statistical approach on twin data in our more recent paper. We chose not to discuss the limited findings from women twins mentioned by Dr. Torfs—including our own analyses as well as Dr. Cohn’s—in the interest of brevity. At no time did we intend for this omission to imply that we are the only investigators to use this analytic approach.

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References


It’s Only Oil, It’s Only Money!!!

From the public health point of view, it is recognizable that the hostilities in the Middle East are a major threat to health and safety. The threat to the health and lives of combatants is obvious. Less recognizable, but of greater impact, are the thousands of refugees, already poor by anybody’s standard, who are becoming poorer and sicker as a result of their flight from the area of hostilities. It is not likely that these poor will view the efforts of the United States with applause. The poor of that area, indeed, the poor in this country, would be better served by attention to the basic public health problems of food, shelter and medical care, than the deployment of arms and military personnel.

The threat of chemical and nuclear war has escalated, placing both civilian and military populations at great risk, physically and psychologically. The stockpiling of these weapons threatens the safety of us all at every stage of production, shipment and storage. The public health risks extend to the dismantling and destruction of nuclear and chemical weapons when they become “outmoded.”

Just when “peace was about to break out” and there was a genuine need for conversion of military-industrial resources to badly neglected civilian and public health problems, we find the nation’s resources squandered on a senseless military action. One cannot condone Sadam Hussein’s actions; neither his invasion of Kuwait, nor his use of poison gases, but for the United States to lead the charge into this volatile region is folly. Until the world’s citizens are housed, fed and provided with basic medical care, squandering of scarce resources to bolster oil-based industries will only increase people’s sense of cynicism.

Why are we expending billions of dollars in resources, sending men and women to the Middle East to fight over oil? The US gets but 20 percent of its oil supply from the Mid-East. Can we not do without that? Is this military incursion a matter of control? Will the world find the price of oil products lowered if the United States gains control of the oil production? What will happen if the United States “wins”? Who then will control the oil supplies, and the costs and effort of “protecting” those supplies?

What would have happened if President Bush and his advisors had understood that the United States already uses too much oil and other fossil fuels? The public health would have been served by decreasing pollution, promoting conservation and decreasing the amount of oil-based products produced, while secondarily decreasing the amount of pollution from the production and disposal of these products. Why hasn’t money and effort been spent to subsidize solar and wind power generation, recycling efforts, better efficiency of vehicles, education in conservation of all of our resources, even rationing?

We speak of cost-benefit analysis. What has been the total cost of sending troops and material to the Middle East as compared to a thoroughly planned program of self-sufficiency and conservation?

Where are the voices of the opposition to this war? Does everyone agree with President Bush about the need for American intervention in the Middle East? Barbara Tuchman put it succinctly in her book The March of Folly: “Limited war is basically a war decided on by the Executive, and ‘without arousing the public ire’—meaning the public notice—means parting company with the people, which is to say discarding the principle of representative government. Limited war is not nicer or kinder or more just than all-out war, as its proponents would have it. It kills with the same finality. In addition, when limited on one side but total for the enemy, it is more than likely to be unsuccessful . . . ” (pp 326–327).

What can the members of American Public Health Association do to redirect this country’s efforts toward promoting the health of the world’s inhabitants and the world’s resources?

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