

number of premature deaths from accidental injury or other causes, the average family size can, in fact, be slightly larger. Even so, this will put a heavier burden on the pair-bond mechanism. The lighter offspringload will mean that greater efforts will have to be made in other directions to keep the pair-bonds tightly tied. But this is a much smaller hazard, in the long term, than the alternative of suffocating overcrowding.

To sum up then, the best solution for ensuring world peace is the widespread promotion of contraception or abortion. Abortion is a drastic measure and can involve serious emotional disturbance. Furthermore, once a zygote has been formed by the act of fertilisation it constitutes a new individual member of society, and its destruction is, in effect, an act of aggression, which is the very pattern of behaviour that we are attempting to control. Contraception is obviously preferable, and any religious or other 'moralising' factions that oppose it must face the fact that they are engaged in dangerous war-mongering.

Having brought up the question of religion, it is perhaps worthwhile taking a closer look at this strange pattern of animal behaviour, before going on to deal with other aspects of the aggressive activities of our species. It is not an easy subject to deal with, but as zoologists we must do our best to observe what actually happens rather than listen to what is supposed to be happening. If we do this, we are forced to the conclusion that, in a behavioural sense, religious activities consist of the coming together of large groups of people to perform repeated and prolonged submissive displays to appease a dominant individual. The dominant individual concerned takes many forms in different cultures, but always has the common factor of immense power. Sometimes it takes the shape of an animal from another species, or an idealised version of it. Sometimes it is pictured more as a wise and elderly member of our own species. Sometimes it becomes more abstract and is referred to as simply as 'the state', or in other such terms. The submissive responses to it may consist of closing the eyes, lowering the head, clasping the hands together in a begging gesture, kneeling kissing the ground, or even extreme prostration, with the 156