

Awake!

OCTOBER 22, 1985

The UN God's Way to Peace?



Awake!

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AWAKE! is for the enlightenment of the entire family. It shows how to cope with today's problems. It reports the news, tells about people in many lands, examines religion and science. But it does more. It probes beneath the surface and points to the real meaning behind current events, yet it stays politically neutral and does not exalt one race above another.

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Feature Articles

Millions of people look to the UN as the best means for establishing permanent peace on earth. Some may even view it as God's approved way for peace and security. But is it God's way to peace? Or is there a better way than the UN? Our opening series covers these and related questions

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Frederick W. Franz, President

The UN —One Man's Vision

THE *Albertina*, a four-engined DC-6B aircraft, flew in low over the African bush. It had just made a pass over the Ndola airport in Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia). Its 16 occupants included one of the most important men in the world at that time.

In the black of the night, the pilot turned to make his landing. "Moments later the propellers cut the treetops . . . The wing tip was torn off, and, in the next few seconds, more and more of the wing was ripped away. . . . Nearly eight hundred nightmare feet beyond the initial brush with the trees, the stub of the *Albertina's* left wing hit the base of an anthill. The aircraft swung around, cartwheeling leftward until it came to fiery rest facing the way it had come."

When rescuers finally reached the plane, they found in it the bodies of 14 persons who had been burned to death. The single survivor lived for five days. A few yards away from the wreckage was the broken body of the secretary-general of the United Nations—Dag Hammarskjöld. The world's top civil servant, Mr. UN as some called him, was dead.—*The Mysterious Death of Dag Hammarskjold*, by Arthur L. Gavshon.

The UN and the Churches

Dag Hammarskjöld's death took the world by surprise. Some wondered how the UN would function without the leadership of this aloof, intelligent man who had stamped his style on the role of the secretary-general.

Hammarskjöld has been described as a Christian mystic. His writings seem to imply that he believed he was called by God to his destiny at the United Nations. In speaking to church groups, he said that faith in God and the UN should be parallel. On one occasion he stated: "The [UN] Organization and the churches stand side by side as participants in the efforts of all men of good will, irrespective of their creed or form of worship, to establish peace on earth." He also claimed: "In spite of all differences in character and responsibility, the churches and the United Nations have an aim in common and a field of action where they work side by side."

Hammarskjöld also designed the Meditation Room that is in the public lobby of the UN building. It was built with funds collected by a mixed group of Muhammadans, Jews, Catholics, and Protestants. In the middle of the austere room is a polished block of iron ore illuminated by a narrow shaft of light.

How did Hammarskjöld view that iron

UN photo



Dag Hammarskjöld
sought the support of
the churches for the UN



stone? He wrote: "We may see it as an altar, empty not because there is no God, not because it is an altar to an unknown god, but because it is dedicated to the God whom man worships under many names and in many forms."

Billions of people believe in God. Many of them have seen Popes John XXIII, Paul VI, and John Paul II as well as Protestant clergy lend their support and blessing to the peace organization. The Vatican even has

its permanent observer to the UN. Because of this religious support, some believe that the UN might really be God's way to bring peace and security to the earth. Even now they are looking to 1986 as the UN "International Year of Peace."

Do you believe that the UN is really God's way to peace on earth? Do you think that the 40 years of history of this organization gives evidence of God's blessing on it? Has the UN really united the nations in peace?

The UN —Has It United the Nations?

"**W**HOMO will establish the enduring peace, and when?" Jehovah's Witnesses asked those questions in the booklet called *Peace—Can It Last?* published in 1942. Because of World War II the League of Nations was in a state of suspended animation, or 'abyssed,' as the Bible puts it. (Revelation 17:8) Thus the question was also raised, Will the League remain in the pit of inactivity?

Even at that early date, the Witnesses found the answer in the Bible. In the midst

of World War II, the *Peace* booklet predicted: "The association of worldly nations will rise again." Did that forecast come true?

In April 1945 a conference was held in San Francisco to adopt a charter for the United Nations. In the book *The Great Design*, Cornelia Meigs describes what occurred when the meeting was due to open: "There was held a great and inspiring service in the Washington Cathedral, to pray for God's help in the new undertaking. . . . It was notable at the Conference itself how many of the principal speakers, in their opening and closing addresses, invoked the aid of God in what they were setting their hands to do."

Some wanted the Deity to be mentioned in the Charter. Others did not. The nations were not united, so "God" was left out. That division of opinion should have been an early warning of what was to follow. Nevertheless, the 51 founder nations signed the UN Charter, and the defunct League ascended from its ashes.

How has the UN differed from the

Trygve Lie asked, 'Why has this awesome task fallen to me?'



League? And has it had more success in keeping the peace? Has it really united the nations?

The Secretary-General

The groundwork for a stronger and more effective organization was laid by Franklin D. Roosevelt, Winston Churchill, Joseph Stalin, and their advisers. Those men represented the Big Three—the United States, the United Kingdom, and the Soviet Union—in conferences held in Moscow, Tehran, Yalta, and Dumbarton Oaks (Washington, D.C.). In fact, it was President Roosevelt who finally chose the name United Nations.

The UN's General Assembly held its first session in January 1946. By February 1 the UN had appointed its first secretary-general, the Norwegian Trygve Lie. How did he view his appointment? "I had been nothing less than catapulted into the Secretary-Generalship of this new international organization, to preserve peace and promote progress in a world beset by unrest, poverty, and great-power rivalry. It was a challenge beyond my wildest dreams; but it was a nightmare as well.... I asked myself again and again, Why had this awesome task fallen to a labor lawyer from Norway?"

As with the old League, originally not too much was expected from the secretary of the organization. According to writer Andrew Boyd, the founders of the UN did not perceive how far reaching the secretary-general's powers would be. As Boyd states in his book *Fifteen Men on a Powder Keg*: "They [the Big Three] never even glimpsed the possibility that the new world organisation's chief official would have to run its international forces." He adds: "They saw him as their creature, and a timid creature at that."

Yet article 99 of the UN Charter clearly stated: "The Secretary-General may bring

to the attention of the Security Council any matter which *in his opinion* may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security." (Italics ours.) As Trygve Lie wrote: "This Article confers upon the Secretary-General of the United Nations world political responsibilities which no individual, no representative of a

UN photo



U Thant commanded three simultaneous UN peace-keeping forces



single nation, ever had before." Therefore, he was going to be a force to be reckoned with.

In fact, the influence of the secretary-general as a troubleshooter grew to the point that during the Congo crisis in 1961 Dag Hammarskjöld, who succeeded Trygve Lie, raised 20,000 troops and technicians from 18 countries to help end that conflict. In 1964 U Thant, who then held the position, was responsible for three simultaneous UN peace-keeping forces.

The present secretary-general, Peruvian Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, commands UN peace forces that still operate in Cyprus and the Middle East. He also heads the Secretariat that now has a staff of about 7,400 at the UN headquarters in New York. Some 19,000 more work under the auspices of the UN in other countries. Yet, with all these human resources at its disposal, has the UN been effective in preventing wars over the last 40 years?

The UN Secretary-General and Some of His Problems

Trygve Lie (1946-53) War in Korea; Middle East; the Berlin Blockade

Dag Hammarskjöld (1953-61) War in the Congo; Soviet intervention in Hungary; the Middle East

U Thant (1961-71) War in Vietnam; civil war in Nigeria/Biafra; crisis in Rhodesia; India/Pakistan war; Soviet intervention in Czechoslovakia; the Middle East; Cyprus; Cuban crisis

Kurt Waldheim (1972-81) War in Vietnam; Kampuchea; Afghanistan; the Middle East

Javier Pérez de Cuéllar (1982-) War in Lebanon; Afghanistan; Iran and Iraq

It Barks But Cannot Bite

The answer to that last question has to be yes and no. Twenty years after the League of Nations was founded in 1919, it went into its death throes when World War II erupted. Forty years after its founding, the UN is still on its feet. But while a third world war has not yet broken out, certainly many terrible wars have been fought and millions of people have suffered the consequences. The wars in Korea (1950-53), the Middle East (1948-49, 1967, and 1973), and Indochina/Vietnam (1945-54 and 1959-75) immediately spring to mind. Logically the question is, Why was the UN incapable of preventing those wars?

The answer given by UN officials is that the organization is only as effective as its members allow it to be. Mr. Stefan Olszowski, Polish Minister for Foreign Affairs, stated in a letter dated May 9, 1985: "Even perfect decisions of the Organization cannot yield expected practical results unless and until they have the response and support in the political will of Member States. I trust that mankind will succeed in halting and reversing the course towards the precipice."

Therefore, the UN can only be a *persuasive* force, not a *police* force with pow-

ers of arrest. It is really a world forum, a debating arena wherein the nations present their grievances—if it suits them. As former Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim wrote: "If they are not prepared to bring a problem to the [Security] Council, the United Nations can be of little help . . . The side-tracking or ignoring of the Security Council erodes its prestige and weakens its position . . . I regard this as potentially one of the most dangerous trends in the history of the United Nations."

However, if nations do bring their problems to the UN, it is often to accuse and counteraccuse. The UN becomes a forum for political propaganda. That being so, you might ask, 'How can the UN use its influence for peace?'

The answer given by UN officials is that the UN publicizes issues and tries to sway world opinion so that governments will respond. But in itself, it cannot take any armed action to prevent or impede a war. In that case, what about its own armed UN forces?

A UN publication answers: "These forces [if empowered by the Security Council or the General Assembly] typically assist in preventing the recurrence of fighting, restoring and maintaining order and promoting a return to normal conditions. To this

end, peace-keeping forces are authorized as necessary to use negotiation, persuasion, observation and fact-finding. . . . While they are armed, they are permitted to use their weapons *only in self-defence.*" (Italics ours.) Thus their purpose is to dissuade others from conflict and avoid it themselves.

So, in reality, what does that make the UN? It turns it into a watchdog that is allowed to bark but not to bite. But at least a barking dog gives warning of trouble. Then why does the UN appear to be ineffective?

Where the Real Power Lies

According to Andrew Boyd, the problems of the UN were built into the Charter by the Big Three. He explains: "They bluntly told the smaller fry that they had already decided on a UN security structure which would be entirely controlled by the great powers. . . . There had been full agreement between Roosevelt, Churchill

UN photo



Javier Pérez de Cuéllar heads a staff of some 26,000



rendering any part of their vast military might to the control of the whole body of smaller states; or to that of the UN Secretary-General . . . or to the International Court or anybody else." So how did they protect their monopoly of power and control?

Boyd explains: "The Three did not trust each other. The veto was to be their shield against each other as well as against the nose-count power of the lesser states." What is the veto? It is the right to block a decision by a negative vote. It is reserved to the 5 permanent members (China, France, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, and the United States) of the 15-member Security Council. Thus, for a major Council decision to get through, it must have at least nine favorable votes including the concurring votes of the five. However, an abstention is not counted as a veto.

Thus, with the veto included, the UN Charter "reflected an expectation that the great powers were likely to quarrel." With this kind of beginning, the "united" nations did not get off to a good start.

Nevertheless, here we are in 1985, and so far World War III has been avoided. The UN is still playing an active role in world affairs. Therefore, is it reasonable to believe that the UN could still be God's way to peace?

Sixty years ago, Kurt Waldheim wrote out "one of the most dangerous trends in the history of the United Nations"

UN photo



and Stalin that the proposed United Nations organisation was to be an instrument for the execution of decisions jointly made by the Big Three (with China and France as their privileged associates)."

Boyd continues: "Obviously, a system shaped by the Three themselves was not going to be one that involved them in sur-

The UN —God's Way to Peace?

"I am convinced that the United Nations provides the best road to the future for those who have confidence in our capacity to shape our own fate on this planet."

THAT conviction was expressed by former Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim in his book *The Challenge of Peace*. While admitting the UN's shortcomings, he also explained: "One should realize that the United Nations is, after all, the world in microcosm. Its weaknesses must consequently be ascribed primarily to the contradictions that characterize the world community itself." He adds: "I should point out that it [the UN] is no more than a mirror of the world it serves. That world is a conglomerate of extremely varied, often intractable, passionate, and antagonistic nations." But not all commentators see the UN in such a favorable light.

In their book *A Dangerous Place—The United Nations as a Weapon in World Politics*, Professors Yeselson and Gaglione argue that from its earliest days the UN has been a forum for expressing belligerence, and that it is a tinderbox of antagonisms and political manipulations that can only fan the flames of international conflict. And what about the world in which it operates? "A perverse yet simple truth is that world politics is very much like a jungle. National behavior is fundamentally grounded in self-interest and survival. Obsession with the latter imparts to the nation-state system not only the law of the jungle but its morality as well." As a conse-

quence, "war has become a permanent feature of international relations."

What a contrast with the high hopes they had when the Charter of the United Nations was signed in 1945! Its preamble stated: "WE THE PEOPLES OF THE UNITED NATIONS DETERMINED to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind . . . HAVE RESOLVED TO COMBINE OUR EFFORTS TO ACCOMPLISH THESE AIMS."

Forty years later it sounds a little hollow. Instead of combining, the nations divide. Even now war is the daily fare of millions in one part of the earth or another! Every day people suffer and die as war victims—despite the existence of the UN.

Who Is Really Behind the UN?

Although having differing viewpoints, the two books previously quoted converge in an unusual detail. Waldheim says that the UN 'is a mirror of the world it serves,' and Yeselson and Gaglione compare that political world to a jungle. Thus the UN must inexorably reflect the same law of the political jungle that its members inhabit.

With this in mind, it is of great interest to note symbolisms used in the Bible. The Bible speaks of a "wild beast" and also its "image," described as "a scarlet-colored wild beast." (Revelation 13:1, 2, 14; 17:3, 8, 11) The first wild beast represents the entire worldwide political organization that has evolved over the past 4,000 years and that has culminated in the political

diversity seen in the world today.* Then what must the "image" of that beast represent?

According to the sources quoted above, which organization mirrors the present political system? Obviously, the UN with its 159 member nations, these constituting almost universal representation. (See page 11.) And the Bible symbols of wild beasts harmonize well with the 'political jungle' image. It is sad but true that many politicians have implemented and are still implementing their political philosophies

* For further explanation of these Bible symbols, see the book "*Then Is Finished the Mystery of God*," chapters 22 and 23, published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.

like wild beasts—savagely killing off millions of people, combatants and civilians, in their wars and political purges. Torture and death squads have been and still are tools of political coercion. And most of these same governments and philosophies have their respectable representation at the UN.

In view of the foregoing, is it reasonable to believe that the UN could be God's way to peace, especially when, by the simplest definition, "God is love"? (1 John 4:8) But if the UN is not God's answer to the problem, who is really behind the UN?

The Bible leaves no doubt as to the origin of the "wild beast" political system and its UN "image." In Revelation 13:2 we read:

"And the dragon gave to the beast its power and its throne and great authority." Who does "the dragon" represent? The same Bible writer clarifies that "the dragon" is "the one called Devil and Satan, who is misleading the entire inhabited earth." But in what way is Satan misleading the world?—Revelation 12:9.

By every possible political scheme and philosophy, including the UN, Satan, the original liar, is diverting mankind's attention away from the only true pathway to peace and security—the rule of God's Kingdom over this earth. (John 8:44) For nearly two thousand years,



The flags of 159 member nations are on display in front of the UN



Who have already 'beaten their swords into plowshares'?

see the organization's weaknesses, but like Kurt Waldheim and others, they believe that it is man's only hope for lasting peace and security. They are not aware of any better solution. Yet there is an alternative that they have perhaps overlooked—God's Kingdom rule.—Revelation 11:15.

The Only True Way to Peace

The Bible shows that the Kingdom of God refers to heavenly rulership, or government of the earth from the spirit realm. (Daniel 2:44; Revelation 21:1-4) This Kingdom government by Christ is already functioning worldwide and is preparing a supranational people for everlasting life under its rulership. This completely united body of people from all nations and of all languages is known as Jehovah's Witnesses. They are the truly "united nations" who have already 'beaten their swords into plowshares.' They have also broken the shackles of racism and of parochial nationalism, which has been called "the most powerful and destructive force in international politics." Those very shackles still bind and impede the UN.—Isaiah 2:2-4.

Through personal study of the Bible, Jehovah's Witnesses know that only God's Kingdom can bring true and lasting peace to this earth and that the time is very near for God's Kingdom to take action. (Luke 21:31-33; Revelation 16:14, 16) 'What action?' you may ask. The destruction of those who are willfully ruining the earth.

professed Christians have prayed, "Let your kingdom come." Yet most have had no clear concept of what is meant by God's Kingdom. What does it mean to you? Now when that Kingdom is so near it is vital to get a proper understanding of it.—Matthew 6:9, 10.

Awake! correspondents know from personal contact that many sincere and dedicated people are working to further the aims of the UN. These sincere people also

(Revelation 11:18) This includes the crushing of all divisive political elements. (Daniel 2:44) Thus Jehovah's Witnesses reject as inadequate Satan's counterfeit solution—the UN. But why is it inadequate?

The 17th-century Dutch philosopher Spinoza defined peace as "not an absence of war" but something much more all-embracing. He said: "It is a virtue, a state of mind, a disposition for benevolence, confidence, justice." That can only be achieved by educating people in love and harmony rather than in hatred and division. As the Bible writer James recorded:

"The fruit of righteousness has its seed sown under peaceful conditions *for those who are making peace.*" (James 3:18) By their worldwide educational work Jehovah's Witnesses are teaching God's ways of peace, for his Word states: "All your sons will be persons taught by Jehovah, and the peace of your sons will be abundant."—Isaiah 54:13.

If you would like to know more about God's Kingdom government, feel free to contact Jehovah's Witnesses in your area. They will be glad to help you get to know God's way to peace.

Major Problems Affecting the UN

A partial list of current major world problems that concern many of the UN member nations.

1. Nuclear arms race and the U.S.A.-U.S.S.R. confrontation
2. North-South world economic imbalance; foreign-debt crisis in developing countries
3. Hunger and poverty in Africa, gradual desertification of the continent
4. Drugs, international traffic
5. International terrorism
6. South Africa's apartheid policy and relations with neighbor states
7. Namibia's independence from South Africa
8. Israel and the Palestinian question
9. Turmoil in Lebanon
10. Iran-Iraq conflict
11. Southeast Asia, Vietnamese occupation of Kampuchea
12. Central America, guerrilla warfare in El Salvador and Nicaragua
13. Afghanistan, intervention by Soviet Union
14. World refugee problem, with more than ten million people affected
15. Human-rights abuses

This listing is based on the speeches presented at the 39th session of the UN General Assembly in 1984 by 150 representatives, including 16 heads of state or government. (See *UN Chronicle*, Volume XXI, Number 8/1984.)

How UN Membership Has Grown

1945 51 nations: Central and South

America 19; Europe 14; Asia 2; Middle East 7; Africa 3; Pacific 3; North America 3

1950 60 nations: Central and South

America 19; Europe 16; Asia 7; Middle East 9; Africa 3; Pacific 3; North America 3

1960 100 nations: Central and

South America 19; Europe 27; Asia 13; Middle East 10; Africa 25; Pacific 3; North America 3

1970 127 nations: Central and

South America 23; Europe 28; Asia 16; Middle East 12; Africa 41; Pacific 4; North America 3

1980 154 nations: Central and

South America 29; Europe 30; Asia 19; Middle East 16; Africa 50; Pacific 7; North America 3

1985 159 nations: Central and

South America 32; Europe 30; Asia 20; Middle East 16; Africa 50; Pacific 8; North America 3

Young People Ask...

How Can I Get Along With My Teacher?

A GOOD teacher," says high-school teacher Barbara Mayer, "can challenge you to reach down and find talent and ability you never knew existed, and he can become a guide and even a friend who understands and really wishes the best for you."

On the other hand, a teacher can also be what writer Theodore Clark called "an object of fear and anxiety." Explains Clark: "Schoolteachers are very powerful. They can grade students, embarrass them, humiliate them, and create anxiety at will." Fortunately, *most* teachers are genuinely concerned for their students and are reasonably fair. However, there are a few teachers who at times can be harsh, unreasonable, and unfair. Such ones can make life miserable for you.

A previous article helped us appreciate that teachers face unique pressures and problems that at times can affect their classroom behavior.* What, though, if a teacher seems to single you out *repeatedly* for ridicule or to give you what you feel are undeservedly low grades?

The Golden Rule in Class

Observes *The Family Handbook of Adolescence*: "Students who . . . seem by their behavior to belittle teachers' beliefs are usually belittled in return." Yes, the hostile teacher is often molded by his students!

* See the article "Why Is My Teacher So Unfair?" appearing in the August 22, 1985, issue of *Awake!*

Consider the effects of cruel classroom pranks. The book *Listen to Us!* tells of the cruel and unusual punishment sometimes handed out to substitute teachers, giving a glimpse of just how sadistic students can be. "You know what [substitutes] go through?" 13-year-old Valerie asks. Answering her own question, she speaks of "the torture, the torment," kids nowadays put substitute teachers through.

Valerie exaggerates little. Says Roland Betts: "Substitutes are hounded unmercifully by their classes, often pushed to the point of cracking and breaking." Certain that they can get away with it, students delight in having sudden attacks of clumsiness—dropping their books or pencils on the floor in unison. Or they may try to frustrate their teacher by playing dumb

If disrespectful treatment can bring out the worst in a teacher, will not respectful treatment bring out the best?

and acting as if they cannot understand a word he says. "We sabotage for fun," explains young Bobby.

Nevertheless, if you sow classroom cruelty, don't be surprised if you reap a mean, hostile teacher. (Compare Galatians 6:7.) "One of the most basic tenets of human nature," explains *The Family Handbook of Adolescence*, "is that people treat others in

If you feel that some injustice has occurred, respectfully approach your teacher

the manner they feel they are being treated."

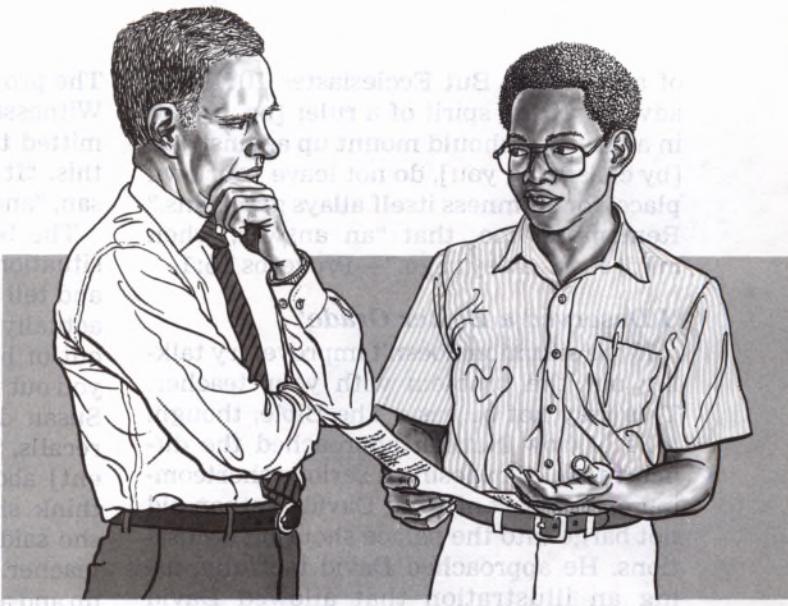
Besides, teachers have properly been placed in a position of authority for your benefit. And you owe them respect, even though their exercise of authority may not always be just. (Compare Luke 6:40.) Yet consider: If disrespectful treatment can bring out the worst in a teacher, might not respectful treatment bring out the best?

So remember the golden rule: "*All things, therefore, that you want men to do to you, you also must likewise do to them.*" (Matthew 7:12) Then refuse to join in classroom pranks. Be attentive to what your teacher says. Be cooperative. Perhaps in time he will feel a little less hostile—at least toward you.

'My Teacher Doesn't Like Me'

The authors of the book *Options* admit "that teachers—and parents—are human, and they are apt to make mistakes and dislike a student every so often for purely emotional reasons." At times a clash of personalities causes the problem. Or some sort of misunderstanding sets your teacher against you; inquisitiveness is confused with rebellion or a touch of whimsy with foolishness.

Sad to say, people still tend to be like the ancient Corinthians, who looked at things "according to their face value." (2 Corinthians 10:7) And if a teacher dislikes you, he may be inclined to embarrass or humiliate you. As a result, it is understandable that mutual animosity may flourish.



How to Keep Peace

The counsel of the Bible is: "Return evil for evil to no one.... If possible, as far as it depends upon you, be peaceable with all men." (Romans 12:17, 18) In other words, try not to antagonize your teacher. Avoid needless confrontations. Give your teacher no legitimate cause for complaint. In fact, try to be friendly. 'Friendly? To him?' you ask. Yes, show manners by respectfully greeting your teacher when you come to class. Your persistent politeness just might change his opinion of you.—Compare Romans 12:20, 21.

High-school teacher Joyce Vedral recalls: "One day I was really in a bad mood. I was picking on everyone for the most minor offenses. Finally I yelled at a student who had not opened his book. I was about to threaten to lower his grade when suddenly I stopped, disarmed by the big, beautiful smile on his face. He smiled at me and kept smiling, and looking at my tense, somber face, he said, 'Let's just be happy.' I had no choice but to break out into a smile too. Soon the whole class was smiling and laughing."

True, not everyone can smile his way out

of a situation. But Ecclesiastes 10:4 does advise: "If the spirit of a ruler [or, person in authority] should mount up against you [by chastising you], do not leave your own place, for calmness itself allays great sins." Remember, too, that "an answer, when mild, turns away rage."—Proverbs 15:1.

I Deserved a Better Grade'

If the situation doesn't improve, try talking out the problem with your teacher. This may not be easy. The Bible, though, tells of how Nathan approached the difficult task of exposing a serious shortcoming on the part of King David. Nathan did not barge into the palace shouting accusations. He approached David tactfully, using an illustration that allowed David to draw the proper conclusions himself.—2 Samuel 12:1-7.

You might likewise humbly, and *calmly*, approach your teacher if you feel that some injustice—such as giving you an unfair grade—has taken place. Former schoolteacher Bruce Weber reminds us: "Rebellion in a student provokes obstinacy in a teacher. If you rant and rave or claim gross injustice and vow revenge, you'll get nowhere."—*Seventeen* magazine.

Try a more adult approach. Maybe you can begin by asking your teacher to help you understand his grading system. Then, says Weber, you can "try to prove yourself the victim of an oversight or miscalculation rather than of bad judgment. Use your teacher's own grading system; show her where you see the error in your grade." At the very least, you are learning to negotiate tough issues. Your maturity may leave a positive impression upon your teacher.

Let Your Parents Know

At times, though, mere talk proves fruitless. Take Susan's experience. As an honor student, she was shocked when one of her teachers started giving her failing grades.

The problem? Susan was one of Jehovah's Witnesses, and her teacher as much as admitted that she disliked Susan because of this. "It was really frustrating," says Susan, "and I didn't know what to do."

The book *Options* recommends that in situations like this you "go to your parents and tell them that the teacher in question actually seems to dislike you, that he goes out of his way to punish you or to single you out for blame or ridicule." This is what Susan did. "I gathered up courage," she recalls, "and told my mother [a single parent] about this teacher. At first I didn't think she was going to understand. But she said, 'Well, maybe I can talk to your teacher.' And during open house she went up and asked my teacher what the problem was. I thought my mother was really going to get upset, but she didn't. She just calmly talked to her." The teacher realized that Susan was backed by her mother and arranged for Susan to have a different teacher.

Admittedly, not all tangled affairs have such neat endings. Sometimes you just have to endure a difficult situation. But a school term is not forever. And if you can coexist peacefully with your teacher this term, there is always next year, when you'll have a fresh start, perhaps different classmates—and perhaps even a new teacher to learn to get along with.

In Our Next Issue

- *The Catholic Church—Its View of Sex*
 - *God—Does He Care About Me?*
 - *Staying Chaste—Is It Really Best?*
 - *A Celestial Visitor Returns*
-



Bettmann Newsphotos



VIETNAM—

Enduring Nearly 30 Years of War

As told by Nguyen Thi Huong

It was September 18, 1950, in Vietnam. The French army of occupation launched an attack against our resistance force of about a hundred combatants. We had just returned from a battle and had stopped to rest for a few days in the small village of Hoa Binh.

BORN in January 1923, I had grown up under French domination that had existed nearly a century. Now we were ready to sacrifice our lives for the liberation of our mother country. Our war for independence from French rule began soon after World War II ended in 1945. It had neither a front nor a specific battleground but was fought everywhere. Combatants took refuge in homes of villagers, where they were nurtured, loved, and cared for.

Now, fighter planes circled the village where we were, raking it with machine-gun fire. The inhabitants fled their homes, escaping to the rice fields. Others jumped into the river or into holes that the combatants had dug. As planes roared and bullets hissed, death was everywhere.

When the planes left, French gunboats circled in the rivers and fired on the embankments. They provided cover for the army coming to ransack the homes and to

uncover the combatants' hiding places, which were everywhere. Bursts of gunfire from all directions slaughtered the villagers, who fell in the fields, in the canals, in the gardens, their blood seeping into the earth of their mother country and fertilizing the rice fields, which the belligerent army trampled upon.

During the night, our fellow combatants dug holes along the embankments of the rivers. There they hid and waited. Early in the morning, the enemy boats patrolled, raking the embankments with gunfire and moving ever closer to the ambush. Suddenly, bursts of fire from guns of all kinds cut down the French soldiers in the boats. Their guns and munitions were quickly confiscated. Then the combatants fled in haste through the gardens and between the houses to escape the cannon fire that was sure to follow. We combatants would always run before our enemies but remain close enough to be ready to kill them, to drive them from our land.

A Promise to God

After six days of hide-and-seek encounters with the enemy, our resistance force was ordered to dissipate. My husband, his two brothers, and I discussed our situation. Since I was five months pregnant, I could not keep up with the combatants in their long and perilous escape. So we decided to hide ourselves separately the next day, with whoever survived taking care of the children.

That night was probably the longest and scariest of my life. Under cover of darkness, the inhabitants of Hoa Binh returned to their homes and collected their belongings, piling them in their sampans. The cry of fowl and pigs blended with the cries of children. I watched the sampan convoy move out like a long serpent. Pushed by the fast current, it was quickly out of sight. In the menacing silence, I thought of my

three children far away with their grandparents. I placed a hand over my belly and felt the baby's life in my womb. I could not restrain a shudder. The thought that certain death seemed imminent was like a dagger in my heart.

Early the next morning my husband left, saying he would return. But he didn't. The sun was already high in the sky, and bullets clattered against the brick walls of the house we occupied. We fled into the nearby rice fields, but my brothers-in-law, fearing capture, left me far behind. Bullets struck

I feared what would become of me in the brutal hands of the soldiers

everywhere around me, and I feared what would become of me in the brutal hands of the soldiers.

"My God, have pity on me!" I cried. "I am pregnant, and I have lost my husband. Show me the way out of this hell!" As I prayed, tears ran down my cheeks, bitter on my lips. When I raised my eyes, they were drawn to a hut a long way off. "Oh, my God, give me strength to walk," I prayed, "because I am exhausted."

With great effort I made it to the hut. As I sat on the ground inside the hut, my hands crossed over my bosom, my head lowered, I swore to God: "I offer my life to serve you, oh, God, if you will help me to get out of this hell so that I can see my husband and children again."

Deliverance

In the afternoon, as the bullets struck with more and more regularity, other people ran toward the hut. There were now seven of us. In the distance, we could see smoke rise from burned houses. The French were not far from us.

Late in the afternoon, as the cannon explosions came closer and closer and the machine-gun fire became more intense, those in the hut fled to the rice fields and scattered in all directions. But what did I see? A single person running toward the hut. In spite of the bullets, I stood there trying to identify the silhouette. It was my husband! "How do I thank you, God?"

When my husband reached me, I asked: "Why did you abandon me?" He replied that he had found a man seriously hurt, and he had to look for a place to hide him and take care of him. Bullets continued to strike all around us, but since darkness was fast approaching, we knew the French would soon discontinue their attack.

The moon lighted our path in our flight across the rice fields and through the water and the mud. At about two in the morning, we arrived at the village and saw the burned and ransacked houses. Two months after this series of attacks, we read in a report: 'Of the more than one hundred women and girls taken captive and retained by the French on their gunboats, more than 20 became pregnant.'

Two years later my husband was killed by the French. Our infant daughter was then 20 months old. After my husband's death, I left our native village of Binh Phuoc to get established in the nearby city of Vinhlong.

I looked for work to support my four children, all of whom were now with me again, the oldest being nine. I became an elementary-school teacher. Independence from France was won shortly thereafter, in May 1954.

I Did Not Forget

I always remembered the debt I owed to God, and I searched for him. When I was a child, I had often gone to a pagoda near our house. My younger sister and I found amusement in looking at the great belly of the Buddha seated there. He was laughing with his mouth wide open. How many times I had poked my finger in his mouth and withdrawn it just in time for my sister to say, "He bites!"

Now I returned to that pagoda as a suffering creature who was indebted to God. I was hoping to find something higher, mightier, and more sacred; something that I had perhaps ig-

nored during my youth. Here believers bowed before the image of Buddha, and priests and priestesses recited incomprehensible prayers in a monotonous tone. I felt completely disappointed. But I returned to talk with a priestess, who spoke about Buddhism and the restrained life at the pagoda. I did not feel encouraged. The books she gave me to read had a Hindu flavor that I did not understand at all.



I had often gone to a pagoda in Vietnam where believers bowed before the happy Buddha, similar to this one

Catholicism, introduced to Vietnam by French missionaries in the 1600's, was another prominent religion of the country. But it did not attract me at all. The repulsive behavior of representatives of the church, their mixing in politics and seeking power and riches, turned me away.

During sleepless nights, I would pray to God for help to show me the way to know him. I remembered my parents' teaching about the Creator. They had an altar in their front yard to show their respect for and fear of him. It consisted of a pillar with a piece of wood on it that was big enough for a jar for rice, one for salt, and a bowl for burning incense each evening and morning. Whenever they had good food, they offered it to him and prayed to him to accept it.

We called the Creator Troi, which means "the Most Powerful." To warn disobedient children, people would say to them, "Troi will kill you." There were no documents about the Creator, but we feared him and kept doing good. We prayed to him for help in time of distress and thanked him after being helped. Surely, the God that I was looking for should be the Creator! But how could I find him? How? How? This question obsessed me. Oh, I felt so guilty for not being able to find the true God so that I could serve him and pay my debt!

Civil War

After our independence from the French, our country was divided once more. This



People bringing food to prisoners of war, just as we did to our sons imprisoned after the war

gave the superpowers a chance to intervene again, and a war between the North and the South of the country began that lasted nearly 20 years, until April 1975. With the advanced technical warfare capabilities of the intervening superpowers, the destruction was beyond human comprehension.

Almost daily, thousands of soldiers and civilians were dying—in rice fields, at work, at the market, at school, in their beds. Children in their mothers' arms were condemned to starvation in their hiding places. About two million Vietnamese combatants were killed, as well as countless numbers of civilians. The corpses, if they had been piled up, would have reached to the tops of the mountains. Many millions more were wounded and maimed. Some ten million South Vietnamese, or about half the population, were made refugees by the war.

My children had grown up and were

forced to take up military duties to fight their brothers in the north. During sleepless nights, when the cannons' echoes could be heard as far as the city, my heart pained and I would pray for my country's peace and for my children's safety.

In 1974, when the war was nearing its end, one of my sons and his troop of more than a hundred were surrounded and forced to live underground for three months. Only five of them survived, including my son. After five years of combat, my three sons came back alive and well. My daughter also survived the fighting. When the war was over, it was a complete victory for the communist North over the South.

Under Communist Rule

Then came the communists' revenge on all who had served the government of the South. They, according to the communists, were responsible for the nearly 20 years of war between the North and the South. A million were put in prisons. These were built in the forests by the prisoners themselves, who were condemned to the harshest of treatment. Many died from lack of food and medicine, and especially from overwork. They were given only a little rice each week, with very little meat. And the work assigned was beyond their capacity.

If the work was not done, the prisoners had to stay until it was finished. Sometimes their work area was about five miles (8 km) from the camp. So it would be very late when they returned. They got only a few hours' sleep and then had to return to work the next day. As time passed, their health deteriorated and many died. Many others committed suicide. My sons underwent these same hardships.

Since the communist government could not provide the needs of a million prisoners, under a cloak of humaneness, they allowed the families to visit each month and bring food. We, the parents, the wives, and the

children of the prisoners, doing what was expected, thanked the communist government for allowing us to feed them, to prolong their lives. With a million men imprisoned, some five million people were directly affected.

I had given up my job in order to care for my sons, and my daughter was a help to me. The boys were constantly being trans-

My son and his troop were forced to live underground for three months

ferred from one camp to another—farther and farther away. So by all means of transportation—by foot, by automobile, by sampan—I brought to the camp each month about 33 pounds (15 kg) of dried food. I often carried it, walking in mud or over slippery roads.

When I reached the camp, I could see my sons for only two hours. We didn't talk very much. The words would hardly come from our lips, since we were in such distress. We had to hold back our tears. Their poor physical appearance revealed their hardships. Despite our efforts, they were always hungry because they shared their food with those whose relatives had died, had fled the country, or were too poor to bring anything.

For more than 30 months I brought food to my sons, and many others did the same for theirs. We looked like a great crowd of beggars, with dirty clothes, a big basket in our hands, and our big hats made of palm leaves almost hiding our faces. In the heat and the rain, we stood at bus stations and at boat stops. I sold all that I possessed, including our property, to buy food. In extreme poverty, I called to God to save my children from such a hell. Finally, after nearly three years, they were liberated.

The Price of Freedom



ALTHOUGH freed from the concentration camp, my sons were still prisoners within the boundaries of the village. There was no future for us in Vietnam. So, after a few months, in May 1978, two of my sons, my daughter, and I made our escape. Since our home was quite far from the sea, we traveled the river in a small boat, fearful the whole way of being stopped by a communist patrol and sent to prison.

Finally, at night we set out to sea—53 of us, the majority women and children—in a small, overcrowded boat built to navigate on rivers. It had an engine but was steered by a helm. We were heading south for Malaysia over 400 miles (640 km) away. A light wind rippled the surface of the sea and refreshed us, as the full moon, in all its brightness, lighted our route. Overjoyed at making a successful escape, we sang.

During the next two days, the sea was relatively calm and we made good headway. The third day was the most beautiful, with the sea perfectly calm, like a gigantic mirror. We dropped anchor and took time for some personal hygiene in the sea. But the activity attracted a great number of sharks, and since our boat was so small that they could damage it, we lifted anchor and left.

We were hoping to meet a foreign ship on the international route and perhaps to be asked aboard, or at least to be given food and water. Then, at about ten that morning, our men spotted a large vessel. Our hearts beat faster, hoping we would be helped, maybe saved. But, as it came closer our worst fears were realized—it was a Thai pirate ship! We had heard about how they preyed on helpless refugees fleeing our country, ruthlessly raping the women.

In the Hands of Pirates

The pirates waited on deck with knives in hand and their faces painted to resemble different grotesque animals. Terrified, we pushed the young women into the compartment in the front of the boat and barricaded it just in time. The pirates jumped onto our boat and, like a rushing wind, tore away everything they wanted—gold chains, bracelets, earrings. They confiscated our bags and looked into our purses, searching for gold and silver. They threw everything they did not want into the sea, including clothes, and milk and flour for the children. Then, as suddenly as they had come, they left, leaving us dumbfounded.

The pirates' chief, a tall man of large build, without a hair on his head, wore around his neck a chain with a skull that hung to his belly. He laughed loudly, with his face turned to the sky, happy at the results of his piracy. Then, with a motion of his hand he freed our boat.

We continued on our route, but after only about an hour a storm began to raise enormous waves, bigger than the boat itself. We were mercilessly heaved to and fro. Soon almost everyone became seasick, filling the boat's interior with slimy vomit. Noting that my little niece, whom I was holding, had stopped breathing, I screamed. But using mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, I was able to revive her.

Then the boat began to advance more smoothly. My son had changed its direction to flow with the wind and the waves. But this would turn us in the direction of the pirate ship! Sure enough, eventually it came into view. On seeing us, it lifted anchor and headed our way. The terrified passengers on our boat screamed out accusingly against my son. But as he later explained,



U.S. Navy photo

"This was the only way to save the boat and the passengers."

Thankfully, the pirate chief's eyes now reflected a certain compassion. He gave signs for us to maneuver closer, and he threw a line so that we could attach to his ship. But the storm was so severe that our passengers could not endure much longer. At that moment, one of the pirates crossed over to our small boat and offered refuge. So one by one, all 53 of us were helped onto the much larger pirate ship.

It was late in the afternoon, and another woman and I fixed dinner from the rice and fish the pirates gave us. Afterward I sat in a corner holding my little niece, who was better now. The storm had slackened, but a cold wind blew and I had nothing but a sweater, which I wrapped around my niece. I trembled from the cold.

One of the men, whom I addressed as "fisherman" out of respect, befriended me.

We escaped in a boat like this

He said that as he looked at me he thought about his mother. We were about the same age. He loved his mother and was sad that he always was so far from her. Then he asked whether I had a place to spend the night, and without waiting for a reply, he said I could sleep on a deck above. He took my niece in his arms, and I followed him, but I was worried about being isolated from the rest below. I didn't forget that the man, although showing me kindness, was really a pirate.

From above, our boat below appeared so small in relation to the ship. I sighed. How could we traverse over 400 miles (640 km) of ocean in such a boat without the aid of God? I felt our insignificance compared to the grandeur and eternity of the universe. "Oh, God," I prayed, "if you supplied this ship to save us from the storm, please again protect us from the harm of the pirates."

The pirate led me to a large compartment and handed my little niece back to me. But I was afraid of being alone, and when he left, I returned below and led seven others back to share the compartment. During the night, I was awakened by cries and moans from below. Fear-stricken, I waked those with me, and although it was only about two o'clock, we decided to see what had happened below.

A pirate fought one of the men and raped his wife

Everyone was awake. Some of the women were crying, their shoulders shaking from their sobs. The men were assembled in the rear, near the kitchen. We learned that a pirate had fought one of the men and then had raped his wife. I asked permission to

prepare some food, and we all had something to eat. With the morning light, the pirate chief released us, and we continued on to Malaysia.

In Malaysia

When representatives from our boat went ashore to ask for a landing permit, it was refused. The officials threatened to throw all of us in prison if we landed. In the meantime, local inhabitants on the beach came and examined us curiously. They were amazed to see that such a boat could have crossed the ocean. They knew who we were, as there had been other refugees from Vietnam. We jumped into the sea to cleanse ourselves from a week's filth, laughing and enjoying ourselves before a growing number of spectators.

All of a sudden a tall blond foreigner called out to us from the beach, promising us food, drinking water, and medicine. "If the Malaysians don't allow you to go ashore," he yelled, "destroy the boat and swim to shore." The foreigner kept his word, for later in the afternoon a little boat brought us food and drinking water, as well as a nurse who took the sick to the hospital

and returned them that night. What joy! We were sure not to starve to death!

To make it impossible to leave, we secretly damaged the boat's engine. After the authorities examined it the next day, they said they would take us to where it could be repaired. They towed us into a river and up to a large lake and left us there. Three days passed, and our food ran out—the foreigner had not found us. So even though the boat's owner wanted to save the boat in order to sell it, we decided to sink it and swim ashore.

Oh, how warm was the inhabitants' welcome! They had been watching our boat, and when all of us had made it to shore safely, they ran toward us carrying bread, biscuits, and rice. We stayed a day at the site where we came ashore, and then we were transferred to refugee camps. There we learned that the kind stranger on the beach was none other than the High Commissioner for Refugees of Southeast Asia.

My three children and I stayed for more than six months in refugee camps in Malaysia, destitute of everything. But then we were able to emigrate to the United States of America, where we now live. But what about my promise to God?

Fulfilling My Promise to God

NEVER forgot the promise I had made to God almost 30 years earlier—that I would give my life to serve him if he would help me. And I felt that he had helped me many times. How guilty I felt for not paying my debt to God!

Life in America was so different from Vietnam. How fine to be able to enjoy freedom—going where you want when you want! Yet I was completely bewildered by the materialistic way of life with its scientific point of view. Moral values seemed so

rare! Daily the news was filled with reports of terrible crimes—children killing their parents or vice versa, abortion, divorce, violence in the streets. All of this frightened me. Why so much decadence in a country so favored with beauty and riches? I wondered.

Now old questions haunted me more than ever: Was it really God that created man? Are we really the children of God? If so, why is he so indifferent to these faults? Why not punish men now to prevent yet

worse things? Or is God waiting for man to repent from his sins? And as for man, if he was created by God, why does he not resemble his Father? Why not try to make Him happy?

From my own experiences, I was convinced that there is a God. Yet I wondered why he is so misunderstood. Does he not have some children who understand him, who love him, and who make him happy by their righteous deeds? Surely he must! But where are they to be found, and how? How can I get acquainted with them?

Such questions obsessed me, and not having the answers made me unhappy. Then one day in June 1981, while living in Pasadena, Texas, an older man and his grandson visited me. They spoke about God's having a Kingdom, a real government, and that it would bring blessings to the earth. The man then asked me whether I would like to live forever in Paradise on earth.

My response was, "No." My great desire was to know the true God, and living forever in Paradise was not then of interest to me. Yet their dignified manner engendered my respect and confidence, so I invited them in. I related my experiences of what I believed were God's protection and loving care. "I'm looking for the God who has these outstanding qualities," I said. "If your God is really this One, please show me the way to get to know him."

'Why so much decadence in a country so favored?' I wondered

For nearly an hour the older man read to me from the Bible about the great God, Jehovah. He explained, for example, how Jehovah dealt with his people, the Israelites, showing his love and concern for them. The following week the man re-

turned with the publication *My Book of Bible Stories*. He opened it and showed me the 33rd story, "Crossing the Red Sea." Without reading it, by the picture only, I guessed what had happened—God had mi-



With my niece whom I resuscitated during the storm

raculously delivered his people from the hand of oppressors.

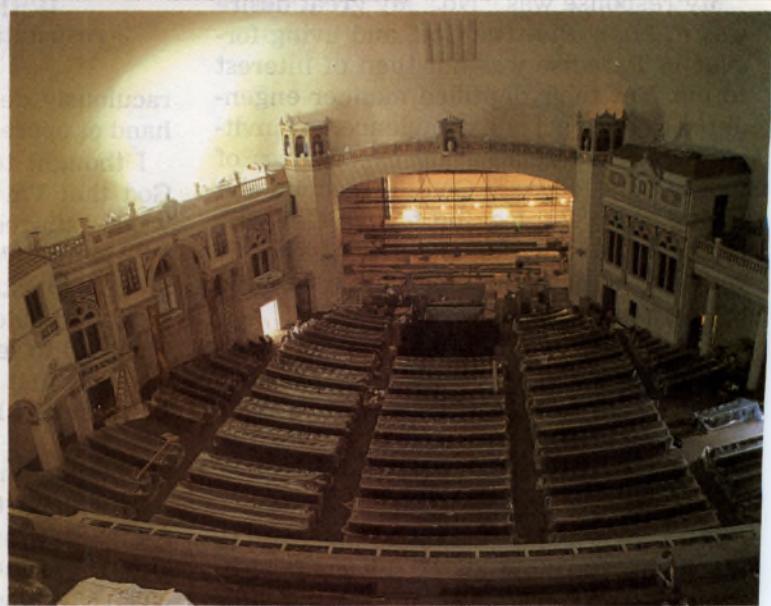
I thought to myself, 'This really is the God that I'm looking for.' The following week, I started a regular study of the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses, and as I studied, all my questions found logical answers from the Bible. Yes, I finally had found the true God to serve in order to pay my debt. To show that I had given my life to serve him forever, I submitted to water immersion.

Now my time is filled with helping others to learn about Jehovah, about his reasons for permitting wickedness till now, and about his means for soon eliminating earth's troubles. At last I feel a true sense of peace and security, serving Jehovah with his earthly organization of my loving brothers and sisters.

A Historic Landmark Becomes an Assembly Hall for Jehovah's Witnesses



Pictures taken as
refurbishing neared
completion.
To the left, the lobby



To the right, the
main auditorium as
seen from the
balcony

WHEN the new Stanley Theater was opened in Journal Square, Jersey City, on March 24, 1928, it was one of the largest in the United States. Its beauty drew high praises, particularly its exquisite interior with its Italian facade. "If you have ever traveled to Italy, . . . where the picturesque villas and colorful courts remind us of the artistic glory that was Rome's," noted one early reporter, "then you can have an inkling of the interior of this new Stanley Theatre."

But after many years of movies and live theater, the glamorous Stanley went into a decline. Plans to remodel it into five mini-theaters, even to raze it and construct an office building in its place, were never carried out. Then, on May 12, 1981, the Stanley Theater gained new status: It was put on the New Jersey Register of Historic Places.

By that time, however, the Stanley had fallen into disuse and was in crying need of repairs. Some basement sections of the stage

area were flooded under two feet (60 cm) of water. The original work in brass and copper on doors and windows was covered by layers of paint and dirt. The picturesque Italian facade was obscured by 50 years of nicotine and dust. The seats were stained, torn, and ripped. The huge chandeliers had lost their brilliance under layers of grime. In 1982 the Stanley was put up for sale. Recognizing the facilities as just what they needed for holding their circuit assemblies, Jehovah's Witnesses bought it in November 1983.

Trouble arose. City officials argued that the Stanley was not to be used for religious purposes. They did, however, allow the Witnesses to repair the roof and the boiler. But when the Witnesses wanted to replace old toilets, electrical wiring, and plumbing, permits for this work were refused. The case went to federal court in September 1984. The Witnesses alleged that the real bone of contention was that the city mayor did not want



Murals of Bible scenes, painted by members of the Watchtower headquarters staff, replaced ones that depicted scenes from mythology

Above is the scene of Jehonadab stepping up into Jehu's chariot. To the right are the horsemen of Revelation chapter 6





Chandeliers, stained-glass windows, and cornices were restored by volunteer workers. The 50-foot-high cherry picker was used for restoration work and painting of the ceiling



Jehovah's Witnesses in Journal Square. He had other plans for the property. The mayor and others were sued for infringement of the Witnesses' constitutional rights.

The carefully reasoned opinion by Judge Debevoise stated that the electrical and plumbing repairs should be carried out and that the Stanley's purpose "clearly comes within permitted convention hall use." Arriving at the major issue of the case, he wrote: "High in the pantheon of civil rights guaranteed by the United States Constitution is the right to be free of laws prohibiting the free exercise of religion or abridging freedom of speech. . . . Here plaintiffs [the Witnesses] seek to practice, teach and proclaim their religious beliefs using a facility they consider to be well adapted to that purpose."

Judge Debevoise added that if the city appealed the case, "plaintiffs are likely to establish at a final hearing that Jersey City's interpretation and application of its Zoning Ordinance unconstitutionally infringes upon plaintiffs' religious liberty interests." Thereafter, the city officials ceased their opposition.

The next challenge before the Witnesses: complete renovation of the Stanley for its dedication September 7, 1985, and for the graduation exercises for the missionaries of the 79th class of the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead on the following day. So

with only nine months to accomplish this prodigious task, it was "full speed ahead."

Thousands of volunteer workers swarmed into the Stanley and turned it into a beehive of activity. Skilled persons offered their services for the specialized painting, plumbing, plastering, carpentry, and electrical work. So many details have been carefully attended to that space does not allow us to cover all the work performed by these volunteers, who have put in long days and evenings over periods of weeks and months. The accompanying photos give an inkling of the tremendous transformation that has taken place.

The following program was arranged: August 17 and 18, 1985: a circuit assembly of Jehovah's Witnesses. August 30 and 31: open house for visitors from surrounding communities. September 7: dedication of this 4,300-seat theater as the Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses. September 8: graduation of the 79th class of the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead.

Jersey City can now pride itself in one of the most beautiful convention halls found anywhere in the United States. Not only has its former glory been restored but it has been enhanced. Its greatest function now will be its use to reflect the glory of the Sovereign Lord and Creator of the universe, Jehovah God.

A Letter From a Reader in *The Jersey Journal*

"The Jersey City contingent of Jehovah's Witnesses number over 4,000 strong. They are enthusiasts, extremely cooperative, self-dependent. They are all volunteers in a cause they deeply believe in. . . .

"As I watched the construction progressing at the Stanley Theater in Jersey City, I saw a determination that no price was too high to pay for their special ideals.

"The Stanley Theater will be a monument to a dedication born from fortitude forged from frequent adversity. The theater swamped of the caring feeling that rarely surfaces in this time of cynicism, materialism and suspicion.

"The Jehovah's Witnesses' Assembly Hall at the Stanley Theater in Jersey City is promised without fail to be a landmark. It should be a credit to the community.

"They are religious warriors of the first rank and a shining light in a world very frequently dismal.

"Jersey City should be proud of them; an asset to the city. [C. T. P., Jersey City]"—*The Jersey Journal*, July 25, 1985, page 21.

From Our Readers

Child Molesting

Thank you for the issue dealing with child molesting. (January 22, 1985) I am sure it will help many parents to protect their children in this rotten system of things. My parents never gave me any counsel on sex. On a certain occasion I was sexually abused by a schoolmate who was much older than I was. Even today at 28 years of age I still have psychological problems related to it. How I wish I had had the information from your articles then.

R. S., Brazil

Insensitive Articles?

I would like you to know how I feel about your article on female circumcision plus other similar articles that have appeared in the past. I wish to avoid the hurt I feel when reading horribly explicit articles. Must we read these things, such as the article just mentioned or the account of torture in the concentration camps? ("From Death to Life in Dachau," February 8, 1985) Is this not contrary to the counsel at Philippians 4:8, that we should continue considering things that are righteous, chaste, lovable, praiseworthy?

B. D., Canada

We do not wish to offend the sensitivity of any of our readers. We acknowledge that some articles are not necessarily pleasant reading, but there are some realities in the world that many people have had to face, are now facing, or will come to face. We feel that it is our obligation to present information on such subjects for their benefit. In none of such articles have we put in gratuitous, explicit details to appeal to the sensational, the violent, the lurid, or the prurient. We have endeavored to present a dignified, helpful treatment of such subjects, and always with a firm stand for what is right. We also endeavor to give encouraging and

upbuilding counsel. In our article on female circumcision, we provided sufficient information so that those who needed to know would understand what was being discussed and so that all would be repelled from engaging in the practice.

We have the example in God's inspired Word, the Bible, which is very open and specific when necessary. See Genesis chapters 19, 34, 38, 39; Leviticus 15:16-33; 18:19-24; Judges chapter 19; 2 Samuel chapter 13; Jeremiah 5:7-9; Ezekiel chapter 23. None of these descriptions have the purpose of titillating a prurient interest or offending the sensitivities of anyone, but they serve a necessary, useful, and upbuilding purpose.

—ED.

I am writing to express my appreciation for your article "From Death to Life in Dachau." I met a man who was very bitter about his own experiences in Dachau and also about the fact that there are those in Canada who claim that the holocaust was a hoax. He took that issue and read it. He agreed that what she had written was true, except that she left out a lot of the horror. He expressed great bitterness against his tormentors, so I pointed out Else's advice: "Do not hate them. You will not hurt them. You will only harm yourself!" Lately this man has become less bitter. Her account has helped many to find hope and encouragement once again.

D. R., Canada

I was especially moved when I read the article "From Death to Life in Dachau." My heart went out to her. I am glad that everything worked out well for her, thanks to Else! One can hardly wait for the day when God puts an end to all the wickedness on earth for which people wrongly blame him. Thank you for an interesting magazine.

S. V. A., Zimbabwe

Watching the World

Travel Warnings

To prevent traveler's intestinal afflictions, Western tourists in Third World countries are often told to lace the local water with alcohol or to avoid drinking water altogether. But these measures do not guarantee success, according to researchers from the University of Texas. One of the researchers, Dr. Herbert L. DuPont, says that "the concentration of alcohol has to be so high" to suppress diarrhea-inducing bacteria that adding alcohol to the water is "not really a practical recommendation." Besides, says DuPont, contaminated food rather than water is the major source of traveler's intestinal infections. He advises tourists to stick to steaming hot foods, citrus fruits, dry foods like bread and tortillas, and sugary substances like jelly.

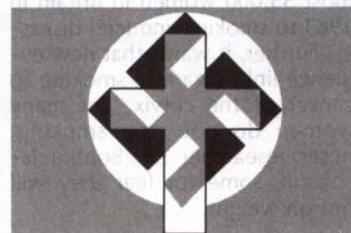
New Genetic Codes Discovered

"Ever since molecular biologists cracked the genetic code in the 1960s, they have taken a measure of satisfaction in finding that every organism they check uses the same code," reports *Science Digest*. But recently biologists in the United States, Europe, and Japan independently found two variations on the standard code in at least five species of one-celled organisms. "The fact that differ-

ences exist at all poses a major challenge to evolutionary theorists," says the report. Why? Because, says John Preer, Jr., leader of one of the American groups that made the discovery, "it's hard to imagine how one code could evolve into another without screwing up everything in the cell."

Failed Nazi Resistance

Representatives of the Catholic Church who met in Düsseldorf, Germany, for a panel discussion



on the subject of resistance to the Nazis during the Hitler regime were stunned by Düsseldorf's 83-year-old prelate, Dr. Carl Klinkhammer. He said, as reported in *Rheinische Post*, that he "knew exactly who in the church had failed to resist. Pulling no punches, he named the leading members of the German episcopacy at that time, Cardinals Faulhaber of Munich, Bertram of Breslau, and Schulte and Frings of Cologne as having been 'every-

thing else but members of the resistance.'" The newspaper's report of the discussion continued: "With the help of numerous quotations from sermons, pastoral letters, telegraphed greetings to Hitler, as well as other bulletins from German bishops, he succeeded in showing that, contrary to the wishes of many priests and some laymen, these leaders not only were against showing any opposition to the [Nazis] once they came to power but also saw in them 'the only hope of rescue from socialism and communism.'"

Egyptian Dirt Shortage

Prior to the completion of Egypt's Aswān High Dam in 1966, "there was always so much silt [from the river Nile's annual floods] that Egypt never had to build with anything else, unless it wanted something special, like pyramids," says *New Scientist*. Homes made of red brick—produced in small kilns from a mixture of topsoil, sand, and water—are a distinctive sight in Egypt. But now the government has launched a campaign against making mud bricks. Why? Because Egypt, with its burgeoning population, is losing too much farmland to brick production. Presently, farmers can make ten times more money by selling an acre of topsoil than by farming it. But the digging lowers ground

levels, interferes with irrigation, and contributes to increased salt levels in the soil. Egyptians have stripped an estimated 20,000 acres (8,000 ha) of topsoil since the Aswān High Dam was built.

Hacking Epidemic

"Computer hacking—which has come to mean using the computer for illegal purposes—is epidemic among teenage computer users," reports *New York Daily News*. "Youthful hackers need only a home computer, a modem (equipment that allows computers to talk over phone lines), a pushbutton telephone and 10 minutes of instruction from a friend in order to break into many data bases, to bill long-distance phone calls to someone else's number, or to charge purchases to a stranger's credit card." Adds the report: "Experts say few systems can withstand the onslaught of a kid with a computer and a weekend to kill." Authorities say that computer crime is epidemic among youths because many parents ignore what their children are doing.

"The Pope: Half Price"

That was the message in the window of a souvenir shop in downtown Montreal that reflected the vendors' plight after the pope's visit to Canada. The French-language newspaper *La Presse* said that vendors "encountered a wall of indifference" on the part of the public toward purchasing leftover T-shirts, key chains, calendars, playing cards, and pictures of the pope. Many vendors were left with large quantities of unsalable items. Although sales of official souvenirs

amounted to about \$4.6 million, the overall operation was not profitable, says *La Presse*.

Female Smokers

The pressure on women to take up the tobacco habit grows. Liverpool's *Daily Post* reports that women's magazines in Britain contain an average of 12 pages of cigarette advertising each issue. How dangerous, though, is the



habit? Lung cancer, very often smoking related, is now Scotland's chief killer of women over 55. The British Medical Association attributes the death of almost 33,000 women in Britain in 1983 to smoking-induced diseases. Further, it warns that new evidence links cigarette smoking to cancer of the cervix. Yet many women do not stop smoking, notes researcher Dr. Bobbie Jacobson, some for fear they will put on weight.

Surgery—Assembly-Line Style

Five eye surgeons, seated over microscopes in a shining stainless-steel room and dressed in surgical mask and gown, wait for the assembly line to start. A button is pushed, a glass door opens, and a steady stream of patients on operating tables glides out on rails to each work station. After 15 minutes the tables exit through another glass door, the patients' five-step operation for myopia, or

nearsightedness, completed. The scene for this unusual approach to eye surgery is at the Moscow Research Institute of Eye Microsurgery directed by Dr. Svyatoslav Fyodorov. "Since last autumn [1984] we are having five surgeons perform one operation," says Dr. Fyodorov in *Soviet Life*. "Each is responsible for one of the stages, which can take from three to five minutes. . . . Using this method, our ophthalmologists can perform about 100 operations a day." The clinic also does assembly-line-style cataract removal, glaucoma surgery, and lens implantations.

Zipping Up Surgery

"A University of Maryland surgeon has substituted ordinary skirt zippers for stitches in 28 pancreas operations, dramatically lowering the death rate for acutely ill patients," reports *New York Daily News*. The surgeon, Dr. H. Harlan Stone, said he used the 7-inch-long 60-cent zippers—the same kind found on women's polyester skirts—to facilitate changing internal bandages. The rate of recovery for critically ill patients undergoing such delicate operations jumped to 90 percent from 10 percent with the use of zippers, since it eliminated the need for repeated surgery to change bandages.

Water Beds—A Danger for Babies?

Do water beds pose a possible danger for infants? The death of five-and-a-half-month-old twins while they were sleeping on a water bed raises that question, says *The Globe and Mail* of Toronto, Canada. Autopsies confirmed that death was due to asphyxia-

tion. "If a baby's on his belly and he's choking, he can turn over if he's on something firm," a pediatrician explains, but "if he's on something soft, like a waterbed, he may have trouble." The coroner affirmed that these deaths were not due to the Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. Five such infant deaths on water beds have been reported in Canada in the last two years, said a government spokesman.

'Depth Charge' Treatment

Urologists at Tohoku University in Japan have developed a device to destroy kidney stones with shock waves. The patients are placed inside a tank with water coming up close to their chests. Then, over a period of several hours, 200 small explosive

charges are detonated under the water. The shock waves pass harmlessly through the body, but the energy from the waves concentrates in foreign objects inside the body and thus breaks up kidney stones and urinary deposits. Tests on 16 patients resulted in the destruction of most of their stones. However, the treatment is only used for stones in the kidneys and the upper section of the ureter, which are located far from the lungs and the pelvis, both easily affected by shock waves.

Cancer and Employment

After analyzing the vital statistics of 415,000 men whose occupations were known, the National Cancer Institute of Canada found a link between cancer and employment. For example, waiters

were seven times as likely to die from cancers of the oral cavity and pharynx as the general population. Butchers carried four times the risk of dying from cancer of the rectum. Epidemiologist Joan Lindsay feels that occupational exposure appears to be a factor in causing cancer. She suggests that waiters may be susceptible to bronchial cancers because of exposure to tobacco smoke. Similarly, cancers of the rectum, usually linked with high-fat diets, may be due to butchers' easy access to red meat. Nevertheless, the death rate for all Canadian workers combined is about 20 percent below that of the non-working population. That means, says Lindsay, "if you're healthy enough to hold a job you're healthier than the population that can't do that."

