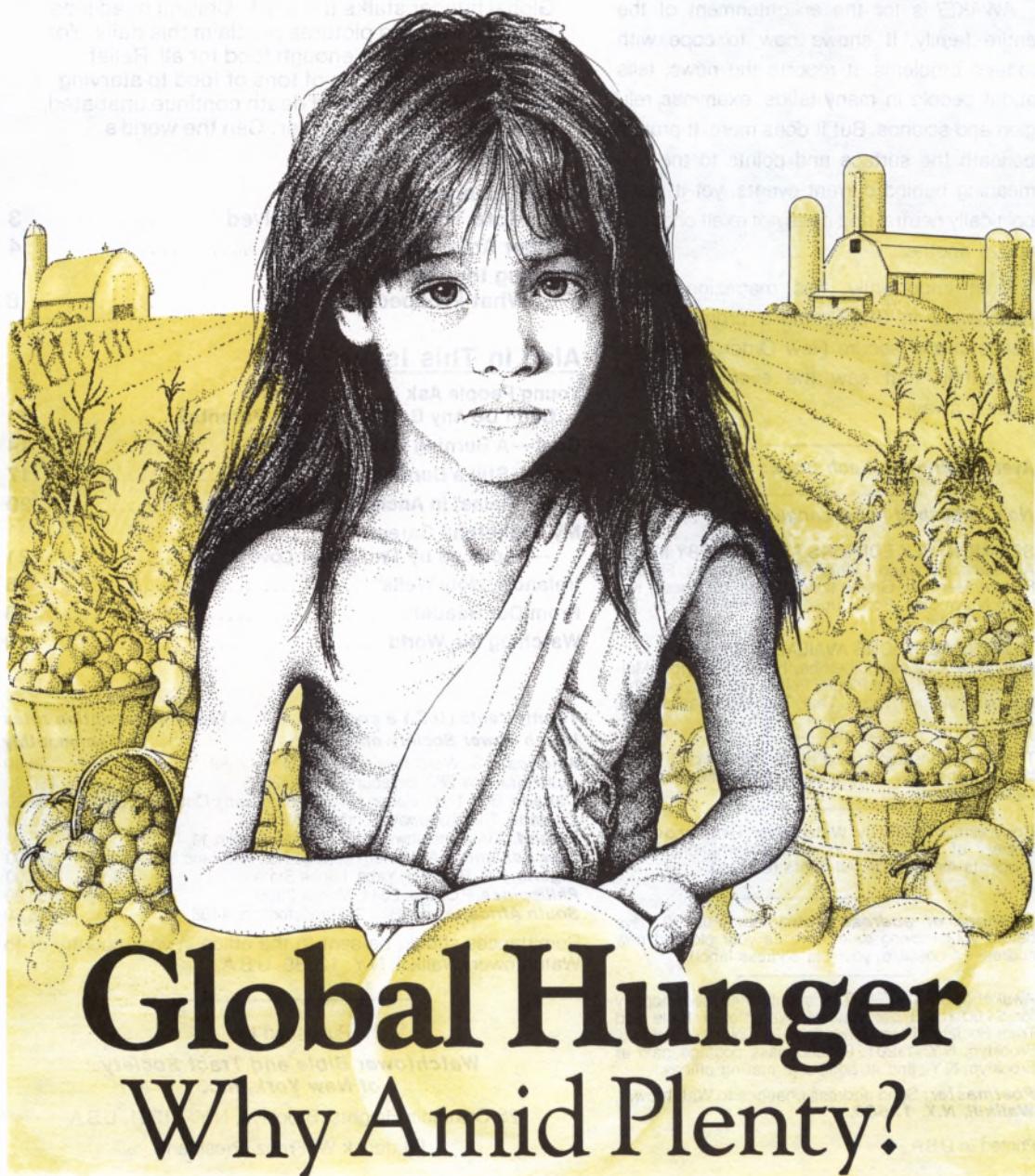


Awake!

MAY 22, 1985



Global Hunger

Why Amid Plenty?

WHY AWAKE! IS PUBLISHED

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.

Most importantly, this magazine builds confidence in the Creator's promise of a peaceful and secure New Order before the generation that saw the events of 1914 passes away.

Average Printing Each Issue: 9,800,000

Now Published in 54 Languages

SEMIMONTHLY EDITIONS AVAILABLE BY MAIL
Afrikaans, Cebuano, Danish, Dutch, English, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Iloko, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Norwegian, Portuguese, Spanish, Swedish, Tagalog, Yoruba

MONTHLY EDITIONS AVAILABLE BY MAIL
Chichewa, Chinese, Cibemba, Hiligaynon, Igbo, Malayalam, New Guinea Pidgin, Polish, Russian, Sesotho, Swahili, Tahitian, Tamil, Thai, Twi, Ukrainian, Xhosa, Zulu

The Bible translation used is the "New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures," unless otherwise indicated.

Copyright © 1985 by Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., and International Bible Students Association. All rights reserved.

Changes of address should reach us 30 days before your moving date. Give us your old and new address (if possible, your old address label).

Awake! (ISSN 0005-237X) is published semimonthly for \$4.00 (U.S.) per year by Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201. Second-class postage paid at Brooklyn, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices.

Postmaster: Send address changes to Watchtower, Wallkill, N.Y. 12589.

Printed in U.S.A.

Feature Articles

Global hunger stalks the earth. Chilling headlines and heartrending pictures proclaim this daily. Yet the earth produces enough food for all. Relief agencies ship millions of tons of food to starving nations. But famine and death continue unabated, until many begin to wonder: Can the world's hungry really be fed?

Global Hunger

—More Than Food Is Involved	3
Hunger Amid Plenty—Why?	4
Feeding the World's Hungry	
—What Prospects?	8

Also in This Issue

Young People Ask ...	
Can I Do Any Better Than My Parents?	11
Coal—A Burning Issue in the Past	14
Coal—Still a Burning Issue	17
"Good Rains" in Ancient Greece	20
My Basketball Career	
—Replaced by Two Other Loves!	21
Ireland's "Holy Wells"	26
From Our Readers	28
Watching the World	29

Twenty cents (U.S.) a copy

Watch Tower Society offices

Yearly subscription rates

Semimonthly

America, U.S., Watchtower, Wallkill, N.Y. 12589	\$4.00
Australia, Box 280, Ingleburn, N.S.W. 2565	A\$6.00
Canada, Box 4100, Halton Hills (Georgetown), Ontario L7G 4Y4	\$5.20
England, The Ridgeway, London NW7 1RN	£5.00
Ireland, 29A Jamestown Road, Finglas, Dublin 11	£5.00
New Zealand, 6-A Western Springs Rd., Auckland 3	\$10.00
Nigeria, P.O. Box 194, Yaba, Lagos State	N6.00
Philippines, P.O. Box 2044, Manila 2800	P50.00
South Africa, Private Bag 2, Elandsfontein, 1406	R5.60

Remittances should be sent to the office in your country or to Watchtower, Wallkill, N.Y. 12589, U.S.A.

Published by

**Watchtower Bible and Tract Society
of New York, Inc.**

25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201, U.S.A.

Frederick W. Franz, President

Global Hunger

More Than Food Is Involved

"35 million are starving in dry Africa"

"Famine and red tape starving a continent"

"Drought, death and despair"

YOU have probably seen many headlines such as these in recent years. Along with them, there are usually pictures of starving children with dazed eyes and swollen bellies, squalid refugee camps packed with people who are no more than skin and bones, parched landscapes strewn with carcasses of fallen animals—all haunting sights that refuse to disappear from the mind's eye.

The reports are equally chilling. A special issue of the magazine *Courier*, an official United Nations publication, grimly points out that many people were optimistic ten years ago and adds: "Today,

however, it must be admitted that the plight of the world's underprivileged is steadily worsening. Nearly 500 million human beings, stagnating in poverty, are under daily threat of famine." The UN World Food Council estimates that "every year in developing countries, 15 million children die from malnutrition," which translates into an infant death rate 30 times higher than that in developed countries. And, according to The World Bank, 200 million Africans—more than 60 percent of that continent's population—eat less than a survival diet.

On the other hand, perhaps you have

Death by Starvation

"AN OTHERWISE healthy adult, given water but no food, will die in 50 to 70 days. Weakened by malnutrition, however, the victim almost always succumbs to other diseases. Death comes after a starving person's body has essentially consumed itself. The body stores at most about a day's supply of its prime energy source, glucose, and once this supply is exhausted it begins extracting energy by oxidation of fat, either as fatty acids or ketone bodies. Once body fat is gone, the body must break down the protein in muscle and other vital tissues, slowly destroying the heart, kidneys, spleen and other organs. The belly often becomes

edematous, or swollen and distended, because of an abnormal accumulation of fluids. As the flesh wastes away, the skin becomes dry, bones become fragile and hair falls out. Blood pressure falls. In children, the brain stops developing. The immune system begins failing, usually leading to fatal infection. The intestines atrophy. Vision, hearing and speech fail. As the body tries to reduce its energy needs, body temperature falls and hypothermia is frequent. Finally, the body system is overwhelmed and death comes from extensive organ failure."—Science Section, *The New York Times*, January 1, 1985.

also read optimistic reports hailing breakthroughs in genetic engineering, with promises of new strains of high-yield and disease- or drought-resistant crops on the way. New and revolutionary farming techniques are being developed to increase productivity. Governments and agencies around the world are launching aid programs of one kind or another. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN estimates that if all the food the world produces was evenly distributed, every person on earth would receive the equivalent of 3,000 calories per day, more than what most people actually need. In fact, in some countries, governments are even paying farmers to reduce their output so as to hold down

the stockpile of surplus food and to stabilize prices. All of this makes it appear as though hunger is about to be eliminated.

As we consider the facts, one thing becomes clear. The problem of feeding the world's hungry is not what it appears to be. Scientists and farmers may have the technological know-how to produce more food. Governments and world agencies may have plausible proposals and programs to tackle one problem or another. Yet, there seem to be some hidden factors that block any real success, and the battle against hunger is losing ground. Why is this so? What are some of these hidden factors? And, really, can the world's hungry be fed?

Hunger Amid Plenty

Why?

- "It is a matter of fact that if one adds up the total amount of grains produced, plus the total amount of other food crops, plus the total of all other foods produced, then there is enough to supply an adequate quantity and quality of food for all the world's five billion persons."
—*The Gazette of Montreal*.

- "Since 1974, developing nations as a whole increased total food production by 3.4% annually and created a significant net gain in food availability. Food production in Latin America and Asia increased more than 32% during the last decade."
—*Los Angeles Times*.

THE problem of hunger is far from being solved. Nevertheless, more and more experts in the field have come to recognize that shortage of food is not the real culprit. The consensus appears to be that something other than the availability of food is responsible for the fact that masses of people around the world are suffering from hunger and malnutrition.

Indeed, what we have is a contradiction: hunger amid plenty. Why? Though the problem is very complex, there are a number of basic factors that have contributed to this paradox.

Misplaced Priorities

To develop an efficient agricultural system is expensive. Fertilizers, pesticides,

modern farm equipment, and improved seeds are costly. Storage facilities, transportation, and irrigation systems take time and money to build. Obviously, for a developing nation to make any headway in these areas, it must be willing to commit a substantial portion of its resources to them. Nations that have done this, such as China and India, the two most populous nations on earth, have made significant progress toward feeding themselves.

Unfortunately, this has not been the case in most Third World nations, particularly those in Africa, where severe food shortage is becoming a constant, and increasing, problem. A report by FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization) on the 13th regional conference held in Zimbabwe last July bluntly points out: "At the root of the food problem is the fact that member states have not usually accorded the necessary priority to agriculture." Why is this so?

Observers point out that governments of many of the newly independent nations in Africa and elsewhere often equate agriculture with colonialism and backwardness. They believe that the way to move ahead is to industrialize their nations. To promote such policies, governments tend to favor the developing industries in the towns and cities, to the neglect of the farmers out in the rural areas. Instead of using funds to develop and improve the irrigation and transportation systems, or to provide farmers with the incentive to produce more, some governments arbitrarily hold down food prices to help the urban workers and the new industries. Such policies have reduced the countryside to subsistence farming and have

Desperate Africans Forage for Food

TENS of millions in at least 20 African nations are hungry, malnourished, or starving. Millions of them are children. They scurry beneath the feet of the market women, sifting through the dirt for the few grains or beans that may have fallen to the ground. What little they find either goes into their mouth or is put into their begging bowl. Occasionally a stringy stalk of vegetable thrown out as inedible is chewed to extract the juice in it, and the remains are spit out.

Anthills are combed in search of pieces of grain. Women spend entire days hacking apart the large, hard termite mounds to get the wild grains the insects have stored. Many gather up the droppings of goats to extract the undigested kernels of palm seeds the animals had swallowed without chewing. Women pound dried leaves and grasses into a powder that has no nutritional value—the only food for many. Others salt and cook leaves scavenged from trees. Often farmers have had to eat the seed they bought for planting.

Children are clothed in rags—some are naked except for goatskins draped over their thin frames. Nights often get cold, and the malnourished are quickly chilled and become susceptible to pneumonia, coughs, and fever.

Food-distribution centers have been set up by various relief agencies, but supplies are limited and only a minority of the hungry and starving can get food. At one relief center, a hundred children who won't get fed stand behind a rope watching others eat. A four-year-old child, weighing only ten pounds, too weak to walk, is carried by her mother.

In another food-distribution center, a mother carried her three-year-old daughter who weighed only six and a half pounds. The report said: "The child's ribs and breastbone seemed at the point of bursting through skin stretched taut by hunger and uncushioned against the severity of her bones. Her arms and legs were sticks."

In such cases as these, starvation has reached a state called marasmus, an illness where the starving body begins to devour itself. The children's faces take on the expression of the very old. They are to be seen everywhere in the famine-ravaged nations of Africa.

turned nations that were once self-sufficient, and that were even exporters of food, into food-deficit and food-importing nations.

Changing Way of Life

The neglect of the rurals led to mass migration of people from the countryside into the cities to look for jobs. Studies show that in 1960 one African in ten lived in a town, but in 1980 one in five did so. The projection is that if the trend continues, half of Africa's population will be living in cities by the end of the century. This, of course, means further setbacks for the agricultural sector and in food production.

But that is not all. Lack of adequate storage and transportation facilities makes it difficult to bring what is produced in the countryside into the cities to be sold. Besides, local crops, such as millet and cassava, are no longer in demand because city dwellers want foods that are easy to prepare, like bread and rice. Thus, the farmers have no incentive to produce more, and the city folk turn to food imports. Records show that between 1960 and 1982 cereal imports into Africa increased nearly four-fold, while local production of food slipped further behind the population growth.

In addition to the expensive food imports, the high cost of energy needed to fuel their newfound industries also adds to the food problem in many Third World nations. Reports from Nairobi, Kenya, show, for example, that "sixty percent of the country's foreign exchange goes for oil imports." Neighboring Uganda "spends all its foreign earnings, \$10 million a month, to pay its monthly petroleum bill."

To lighten this burden, governments of developing nations frequently adopt policies that only deepen the hunger problem.

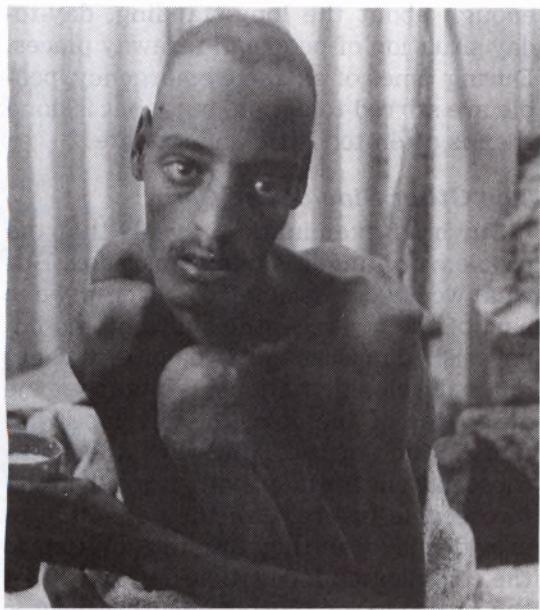


There is enough food for everyone . . .

For example, one study shows that about half the farmland in Central America is used to produce exportable cash crops such as sugar, coffee, and tobacco rather than to produce sorely needed food crops. Similarly, many countries in tropical Africa grow strawberries and carnations to sell in Europe, or they raise cattle, sheep, and goats for export to the Arab nations while their own people do not have enough to eat.

The Politics of Hunger

Social and political instability in many of the developing nations also aggravate the food problem. According to one count, since 1960 Africa has seen more than 12 wars, 50 coups, 13 assassinations of heads of state, and widespread refugee movements. The situation is similar in other areas of the world. All of this not only damages the fragile agricultural system but also saps the already strained economy due to heavy military spending.



yet millions starve

FAO Photo / B. Imevbore

The nations appear to be more concerned with stocking their arsenals than with filling empty stomachs.

Recently, for example, it was much publicized that one East African nation, which received \$2 billion (U.S.) in military aid, spent some \$100 million celebrating the tenth anniversary of its revolution, while six million of its people were facing starvation due to severe drought and famine.

The Grip of Poverty

Of all the hidden factors causing widespread hunger, however, poverty is perhaps the most deeply entrenched. "You need more than surplus grain to feed the world's hungry," says Barbara Huddleston, an authority on international food aid. "The world already has surplus grain. It's an outright transfer of purchasing power to places like Africa that must happen." How this will happen, not even the experts can say.

Meanwhile, even where food is available, many of the poor simply cannot afford it. A report from Ghana, for example, shows that "feeding three square meals a day to a typical family of six would cost six times the average income of a couple of adults, both working." While the rich lavish expensive imported foods on themselves, the poor are having difficulty just getting by. In areas where jobs are not available, or are nonexistent, the situation can be desperate. "Nothing less than a wholesale re-examination and re-ordering of social and economic priorities . . . will get the world back on an economic and demographic path that will reduce hunger rather than increase it," says Lester Brown of the Worldwatch Institute.

Aid and Relief—Do They Help?

If the poor nations have neither the agricultural facilities to grow enough food nor the funds to buy it on the competitive international market, how do they manage to feed themselves? The answer is that few of them do. Many of them depend on international food aid and, in extreme cases, emergency relief. Currently, the total amount of food aid, including emergency donations, is about 45 million tons a year, theoretically enough to fill the gap between what the poor nations are able to produce and buy and what they actually need. But whether those who are truly in need of aid are getting it is quite another matter.

Food is a powerful weapon on the international scene, and the food-surplus nations are well aware of it. "With resources limited, more of your aid goes to your friends," said a U.S. government official. "The same standard is applied by every government I know about," he continued. Thus, the political alignment of the struggling, developing nation has much to do

with what and how much aid it gets. Even then, the lack of adequate transportation facilities in such countries usually means that much of the aid never gets distributed to those really in need in the rural areas.

Important as it is, food aid is at best a stopgap measure. "Regular food aid to poor countries," reports Canada's *Globe and Mail*, "has caused many to become dependent on developed nations, has sapped their initiative to become self-sufficient food producers and has left huge tracts of farmland underused." Although donor nations usually stipulate that the receiver nations institute certain economic reforms and other long-range plans, such measures are often viewed as interference with another nation's internal affairs and frequently lead to riots and violence. Besides, human nature being what it is, few people know or really care

Feeding the World's Hungry

IN A 160-acre (65-ha) underground vault in Missouri, U.S.A., there is a wall-to-wall and floor-to-ceiling stockpile of 2.6 billion pounds (1.2 billion kg) of butter, cheese, and dried milk. It is part of a nationwide storage of surplus food that the government buys off the hands of farmers at a cost of about \$3 billion a year. It costs another \$58 million a year just to operate the storage facilities. In addition, the government spends billions of dollars each year to subsidize farmers in exchange for their putting aside as much as 20 percent of their land in fallow in order to reduce farm output.

enough about the long-standing, day-to-day situation of people in faraway places. During times of extreme emergency, people are stirred to action, but what is done then is often too little and too late.

The Other Side of the Coin

Our brief examination reveals that the problem of hunger is truly a paradox. But what we have considered so far is only one part of the picture—the starving and impoverished masses in Africa or elsewhere in the developing nations. What about the other side of the coin, the developed nations? Much of the Third World looks to these nations for help, both now and in the foreseeable future. Can they continue to provide aid? Can they find the solution to the complicated food situation? How does the future look? Indeed, what prospect is there for feeding the world's hungry?

What Prospects?

Does this picture of abundance imply that if, somehow, some means of equitable distribution was found, such abundance would spell the end of hunger in the world? Can the world's food-deficit nations count on this apparently unlimited supply of food indefinitely?

The answer to these questions is vitally important because not only do the starving masses in the Third World look to the few food-surplus nations for aid but even many developed nations are heavily dependent on purchases from these nations for their food supply. In fact, reports show that it is the developed countries such as

the Soviet Union, Japan, and some in the European community that are buying up most of the surplus because they can afford to pay for it. As long as the food-surplus nations can produce the surplus and command a good price for it, the supply will continue. However, there are indications that this situation is not going to last forever.

Threatening Outlook

Looking ahead, the majority of the analysts see demand outstripping supply. Many of them point out that world food supply has been leveling off during the last decade, while demand has steadily moved ahead. They see the gap between supply and demand closing. What contributes to this decline?

Bad weather is admittedly a factor. The long, hot summer of 1980 in the United States and the frequent bad weather in the Soviet Union have indeed brought serious crop failures. However, environmentalists claim that such failures are really the result of the drive for higher yields and efficiency in farming. Back when farms were smaller and less efficient, a greater variety of crops was planted, and farmers did not count on good weather so much. With modern commercial farming, thousands or even millions of acres are planted with the same crop.

Intensive farming coaxes every last ounce of productivity from the soil but puts very little back into it. The soil is worked year after year with the same crop, and the nutrients and organic matter in the dark, rich topsoil are not replenished. Along with this, wind-and-water erosion is ruining cropland in the world's major growing areas at an alarming rate. In Iowa, for example, an average acre loses ten tons, or one tenth of an inch (0.25 cm), of topsoil each year. Soil Conservation Service study shows that ero-

sion of one inch (2.5 cm) of topsoil reduces corn production by about 6 percent. It warns that if the current rate of erosion is not checked, corn production in the United States could decline by as much as one third in the next few decades.

Productivity is declining for another reason. Productive farmland is rapidly disappearing. The inflated value of real estate, the high cost of fuel, chemicals, labor, and equipment, and the low produce prices due to abundant farm output all add up to tremendous pressures for small farmers to sell out. As a result, as many as one million acres (0.4 million ha) of cropland is being converted into housing developments, shopping centers, reservoirs, and highways each year in the United States.

"With the big surplus, world hunger and no profit in farming, it's perfectly clear the present system is not working," said a U.S. Agricultural Department economist.

What Are the Prospects?

Having examined both parts of the picture—the situation in both the food-deficit Third World nations and the food-surplus developed nations—what can we conclude about the prospect of feeding the world's hungry? "Of all the ills afflicting the human race, none seems more solvable—and at the same time more intractable—than hunger." That was the conclusion made by *The New York Times* in an extended series of articles on the subject of hunger. Pointing to "income inequality and poverty" as the real cause of world hunger, the article continued: "Until these stubborn social and economic problems are solved, no amount of tinkering with relief programs or population control will eradicate world hunger."

The obvious question is: Who can solve these "stubborn social and economic problems" and bring about genuine improvement? Is any scientist, economist, farmer,



"The earth itself will certainly give its produce"



or political leader so wise and powerful that he can break through all the social, economic, and political barriers and remove the greed, selfishness, and ambition in order to come to the aid of the world's hungry? "The means to produce much more is at hand," said the above *Times* article. "But no one is sure about how to get it to those who need it."

This perplexing situation was foretold by Jesus Christ in these words: "There will be food shortages . . . in one place after another," and "on the earth anguish of nations, not knowing the way out." (Matthew 24:7; Luke 21:25) While not describing in detail how and why such food shortages occur, Jesus' words accurately describe the reality as we see it today.

Of course, it is one thing to foretell these difficulties, but it is quite another to come up with a workable solution. As we have seen, the solution to the problem of hunger is not just to produce more food. What is needed is fair and just administration by a righteous government. Jesus Christ taught his followers to pray for such a government: "Let your kingdom come."—Matthew 6:10.

Under that righteous Kingdom, the productive powers of the earth will be restored: "For in the wilderness waters will have burst out, and torrents in the desert plain. And the heat-parched ground will have become as a reedy pool, and the thirsty ground as springs of water." (Isaiah 35:6, 7) The result will be that "the earth itself will certainly give its produce," and "there will come to be plenty of grain on the earth; on the top of the mountains there will be an overflow." —Psalm 67:6; 72:16.

And no one will be hungry for lack of purchasing power. Everyone, rich or poor, can share in the bounty of the earth. The invitation will be to all mankind, in the spirit of Isaiah 55:1, which reads: "Hey there, all you thirsty ones! Come to the water. And the ones that have no money! Come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk even without money and without price."

What a blessing it will be to live in God's New Order of things in which "righteousness is to dwell"!—2 Peter 3:13.

Young People Ask...

Can I Do Any Better Than My Parents?

BE IT ever so humble, there's no place like home." So goes a popular song of former years. Today, however, while many youths do enjoy a happy and stimulating family circle, others do not. For those enduring troubled homes—family arguments, divorce, an alcoholic or a mentally ill parent—life is no fond song.

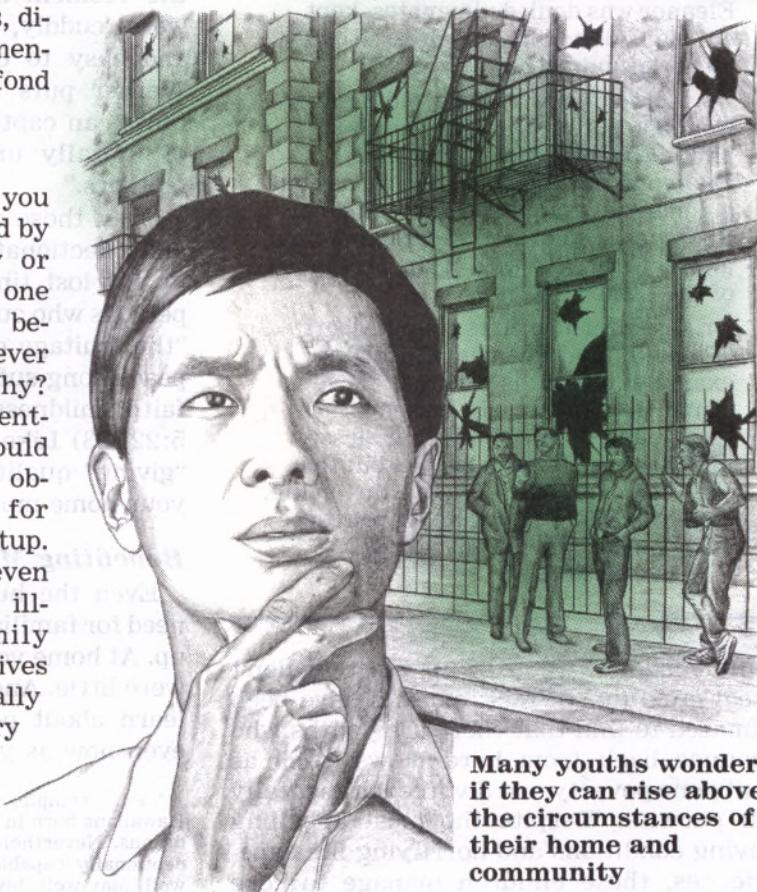
Getting Out of the Rut

It's tough to feel that you are in a rut, almost doomed by circumstances of family or community. "At age 14," one young woman relates, "I became convinced I could never have a happy marriage." Why? Her parents argued violently over trifles. They would scream, curse, and throw objects around the house for hours at a time without letup. "My younger sister and I even feared inheriting mental illness! We made a family tree, tracing which relatives seemed to have been mentally ill. We were afraid to marry and become like our folks."

But what actually occurred? Both are grown and happily married. Realizing

now that they overreacted to their parents' situation, they have come to see value in their parents.

So how crucial is the kind of start you get in life? True, our families greatly



Many youths wonder if they can rise above the circumstances of their home and community

Eleanor, Albert, and Thomas Surprise the Experts!

'Eleanor was a homely child rejected by her mother,' Dr. Victor Goertzel would tell his audiences of graduate students in education. In addition, her father, an alcoholic, separated from her mother. As a child she was known to steal sweets and to lie—on one occasion even swallowing a coin to attract attention to herself. After her father died, she was placed with her widowed grandmother. Living there were four young uncles and aunts. One uncle drank and ran away from home. One aunt, heartbroken over a love affair, locked herself in her room. Eleanor was denied playmates, kept out of grade school, and dressed oddly by her grandmother.

'Now predict how 16-year-old Eleanor would do in five years,' research psychiatrist Dr. Goertzel would challenge the audience. She turned out much better than expected—Eleanor Roosevelt, celebrated American writer and lecturer, and wife of the president of the United States.

Dr. Goertzel also cites young Albert [Einstein] and Thomas [Edison] as examples of youths who rose above dismal childhoods. The lesson is not that young people should mindlessly imitate these famous people, but that they *can* overcome a shaky start in life. Says the Bible: "Even by his practices a boy makes himself recognized."

—Proverbs 20:11.

influence how we grow up, but they don't seal our fate. In fact, experts have been amazed to find that there are youths who bounce back from hard blows, such as extreme poverty and divorced or mentally ill parents. 'Despite the most appalling living conditions and horrifying life experiences, these children manage to cope

with an excellence and flexibility that seem to come out of nowhere,' says one psychiatrist.

Researchers now recognize and study resilient children.* And the secret of these so-called superkids may amount to little more than the Biblical principle, "There is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving." (Acts 20:35) It seems that responsive, giving children—even infants—bring out the best in their parents. Such youngsters get better parenting than others in the same family who may be unresponsive, self-centered, or difficult to handle.

To illustrate, one study revealed that the 'resilient babies' were the ones that were 'cuddly, affectionate, very active, and easy to deal with.' As Dr. Emmy Werner puts it, "Responsive active infants can capture the love and attention of initially unresponsive or depressed mothers."

Even those of us who were not cuddly and affectionate as babies can now make up for lost time by being happy, giving persons who cultivate what the Bible calls "the fruitage of the spirit . . . love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, mildness, self-control." (Galatians 5:22, 23) Like money in the bank, these "giving" qualities let you "draw out" of your home more than you might expect.

Benefiting More From Home

Even the humblest home fills a basic need for familiar surroundings as we grow up. At home you learned to talk when you were little. And there you can continue to learn about people and how they cope, even now as you grow older. As one au-

* For example, a 20-year study was made of 300 Hawaiians born in 1955 under severely deprived conditions. Nevertheless, about 10 percent became exceptionally capable adults. Reportedly, they "work well, play well, love well and expect well."

thority writes: 'Home is the place to which one brings the everyday run of social experiences, to sift, to evaluate, to appraise, to understand, or to be twisted, to fester, to be magnified, or ignored, as the case may be.'

What you learn at home depends, though, on how well you employ those "giving" qualities—love, joy, peace, long-suffering, and self-control. Dr. E. James Anthony found that resilient children of even psychotic parents could create an oasis of normalcy in a disrupted household. "They can make something out of very little," he says. "They're the type who could find a flower in the desert." —*Parents*, November 1983.

Learning to Do Better

The ability to find that "flower in the desert" can be acquired. "I was anything but a 'superkid,'" Warren admits. "I had to learn to enjoy my family. Can you believe that?" Warren came from a very poor, racial-minority family that lived in a wealthy community. His alcoholic father, when employed, was a poorly paid laborer. No surprise, then, that Warren's oldest brother became delinquent, landed in jail, and became subject to mental depression. Or that his younger brother was recommended for psychiatric help.

How could Warren rise above all of this? Several things helped. First, Warren showed a liking for school. When his teachers saw his good grades, they encouraged him. At age ten he became more outgoing, less introverted. He got interested in playing a musical instrument. Significantly, he and his mother became interested in the message of the Bible. At the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, they developed a stimulating circle of friends of all ages who accepted them as equals. Warren thus managed to break

out of his family's rut. And with Warren's assistance, his younger brother, still at home, has done very well without professional attention. Says Warren, "It's great to be able to help people, and the future looks good."

Building Your Confidence

So why be plagued with self-doubt? Rid yourself of doubts by taking on challenges. Broaden your interests, both in things and in people. Pursue a hobby. Cultivate good friends by being helpful. Proverbs 17:17 says: "Friends always show their love. What are brothers for if not to share trouble?" (*Today's English Version*) Each accomplishment, however small, will increase your skill and self-confidence.

True, your parents and other adults have imperfections, but they also have much to offer. Learn to approach adults rather than withdraw from them. If you show interest in teachers, relatives, and parents of friends, they will more than return your investment. And at the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, you can tap a valuable reservoir of helpful, mature Christians who are interested in youths.

In Our Next Issue

- *Nazism—Could It Happen Again?*
- *Can a Boy and a Girl 'Just Be Friends'?*
- *A Productive Life Despite My Handicap*
- *Who Said It Was an Apple?*



COAL

A Burning Issue in the Past

THE predawn mist hangs heavy in the mountains as the rising sun fights to make its appearance in the eastern sky. The flickering glow of oil lamps can be seen through the dingy-paned windows of row after row of dilapidated shanties lining the mountainside. In the semidarkness within, wives and mothers try desperately to scavenge food for lunch-box dinners to feed the male members of their family.

Minutes later, the weary males emerge from their houses. Dim lights glowing from their helmets, giving them the appearance of hundreds of giant fireflies, they descend en masse to the rocky road below. Slowly, as if on parade, they march—the old, the middle aged, the young, and the very young. They are Americans, English and Blacks, Irish and Welsh, Czechs and Slovaks. They are Italians and Hungarians, people from Poland and Greece—a potpourri of almost every nationality in Europe—coal miners all.

The marching parade stops. The wait begins for the rickety elevator to take them down hundreds of feet into the bowels of the earth. The musty smell of rotten timbers that support the tons of weight above their heads and the noxious scent from mildew fills their nostrils. The sound of dripping water is constant. The popping and cracking sound of settling earth they must get used to.

Thus begins each miner's day of ex-

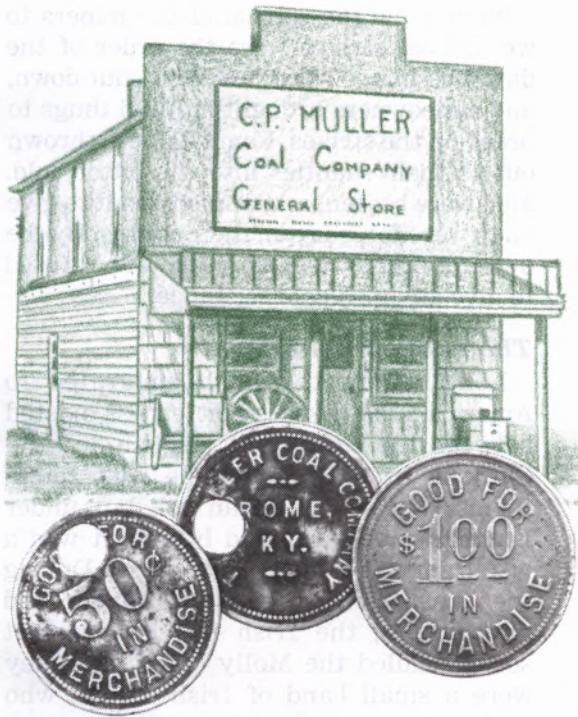
tracting 16 tons of coal from deep within the earth.

The Demand for Coal Felt Worldwide

The Industrial Revolution of the 1800's had begun. New factories were springing up across the land, and old ones were expanding to fill the needs of a growing nation. Coal was the needed commodity to fire the boilers and generate the energy to keep the industry alive. The demand for coal was being felt around the world, and from America the cry for men to work in its mines was heard across the seas.

The experienced coal miners of England and Wales heard the distant cry for help across the sea. Considering the "colonies" to be a land of opportunity, they emigrated to America. The cry for mine workers was also heard in Ireland where coal-mine owners had sent salesmen to peddle the "American dream" of a land of plenty—high wages, fine homes, churches and schools, and a system based on equal rights for all. The fact that their transportation would be paid for by the mineowners only underscored their belief that America indeed was a land flowing with riches and opportunities.

If there were those who felt that their Emerald Isle was too beautiful to leave and the nine-week journey across the sea too long even for a better life, their thinking was soon to change—the potato fam-



A company store with some scrip used for money

ine! The potato was the staff of life for the Irish. An average adult consumed 9 to 14 pounds a day. In 1845 a mysterious blight, which was to last for six death-dealing years, struck the potato crops. Over a million people in Ireland died from the famine. Those peddling the American dream were suddenly besieged with cries for ship passage. Every available ship was pressed into service, often with inadequate accommodations and sanitary facilities for the hundreds that crowded into the ships. Many died. Entire families were wiped out. It is estimated that 5,000 perished on the way to America, their dead bodies thrown into the sea. Nevertheless, during the years of the potato famine, 1.2 million Irish immigrants reached American shores.

There the bubble burst for many. The dream turned into a nightmare. The "fine homes" were poorly constructed shanties with no plaster, no ceilings or wallpaper, and where cold wind made its presence felt in the winter. The furniture consisted of crudely made beds and tables and rough chairs. The "high wages" were a few cents an hour—less than a dollar for a very long day's work. There were none of the promised schools. Children grew up unable to read or to write their own name. Many of the miners and their families ended up as good as slaves, with little means of escape.

For example: The shantytowns were owned and operated by the mines. So were the company stores. Most mineowners refused to allow another store to operate within its limits. Consequently, the miners were forced to buy all goods from the company store—food, clothing, and tools—at prices substantially higher than at other stores, sometimes three times higher. If other stores operated nearby, then the miners were not paid in cash but in coupons and tokens, called scrip, which could be redeemed only at the company store. If the miner refused to buy from the store, he was fired and blacklisted, and other mine operators refused to hire him.

It was not uncommon for children to have to work off the company-store debts inherited from their father. Note, for example, a part of an editorial, appearing in a New York newspaper in 1872: "Sometimes generation after generation works to pay back debts begun by their grandfathers. Those who have a few coins in their pockets earn them by menial labor after working long hours in the earth."

So it was that with no other place to go

and no money to leave, the miners became slaves to the mineowners.

Since child-labor laws were not then known, mine operators took advantage of young males, sending them into the mines at a very early age to work long hours in cramped spaces where only their small bodies would fit. Some as young as five would work topside separating coal from the slate as it moved along on conveyor belts, their fingers and hands often crushed out of shape. Others, exhausted from 14 hours of work, fell into the conveyors and were crushed to death. Other tiny tots were left sitting alone in dark passageways underground for 12 hours a day opening trapdoors for the mules to pass through—the mules were better cared for than the humans.

Working conditions for young and old

Explosions, fires, cave-ins, poison gases—these were the day-by-day perils

were a constant threat to their life. Underground explosions, mine fires, cave-ins, floodings, death by poison gases or suffocation, being trapped for days without light, food, and water—these were the day-by-day perils that played havoc with their sanity.

The miners decided that conditions must improve, both above and below ground. Attempts were made to form unions, and grievances were taken to the mineowners, asking for improvements and safer working conditions, higher pay, the abolition of the company-store policy, the exclusion of children working in the mines, all of which the mine lords ignored.

Next came the refusal of the miners to work. Coal strikes were the order of the day. The mines were forced to shut down, and mineowners brought in hired thugs to break up the strikes. Families were thrown out of their shanties into the bitter cold. Men were beaten, and women about to give birth were forced from their houses. By the owner's orders, company doctors refused to give any medical assistance.

The Molly Maguires

Long before the Irish emigrated to America, a deep-seated bitterness existed between the Protestant English and the Catholic Irish. So when the Irish found themselves on American soil but under English mine lords and bosses, it was a bitter potion for them to swallow. During the great conflict between miners and mineowners, the Irish formed a secret society called the Molly Maguires. They were a small band of Irish miners who took revenge on the mineowners, bosses, and operators, killing them in their homes, on the streets, and in the mines.

A reign of terror spread through the mining towns. Mines were bombed, railroad cars that carried the coal were blasted off the tracks and destroyed. The English mine officials suffered badly. After a long period, after a spy had infiltrated their ranks, the Molly Maguires came to a disastrous end—20 of its members were hanged, 10 in one day.

The "Mollies" were just one tooth in the gear of the miners' uprising machine that sounded the death knell of the dictatorial rule by the mineowners over the miners. A strong union was eventually formed that governed the miners throughout the nation, ensuring better pay, safer working conditions, abolition of child labor, and so on. Today, mining is a respected occupation with benefits that lure thousands into the earth looking for coal.

COAL

Still a Burning Issue



DESPITE improvements in the closing years of this 20th century, underground coal mining is still considered to be the country's most hazardous occupation. Working hundreds of feet below the earth's surface, with thousands of tons of coal, rock, and earth ready to break through the ceiling and volatile gases undetectable by smell ready to explode—these conditions make it so. It has been determined that in America alone over 114,000 men have been killed in the mines since the year 1910. In excess of 1.5 million disabling injuries have been suffered by miners since 1930. The number of mine-related deaths is reported to be over a thousand yearly. One of the causes is the dreaded black lung, a disease caused by coal dust.

"Men Are Cheaper Than Coal"

Although working conditions below ground have greatly improved over the past years, safety conditions continue to be a burning issue. "The mine operators," said one writer, "have traditionally fought the added expense of greater safety measures as a threat to their production and profit." "To the operators, men are cheaper than coal," charged some critics. "The big corporations would rather waste our lives than their money," added one disgruntled miner.

In addition to the strides made in making deep mining safer than in the past, even greater strides have been made in the

mining of the coal itself. Instead of men and boys being sent into the earth with picks and shovels, huge, grotesque machines gouge out from the mine walls as much as 12 tons of coal a minute. They scoop up the loose coal and put it on conveyor belts that take it topside.

To prevent the ceiling from collapsing on the miners as the machine eats its way through the earth, powerful, earsplitting pneumatic drills bore deep holes in the ceiling rock, into which expansion bolts are screwed to prevent cave-ins. To keep down coal dust and to prevent, as far as it is possible, black lung and the dangers of explosion, miners spray the tunnels and work sites with powdered limestone.

For every modern convenience developed and every new machine designed to make coal extraction easier and safer, however, miners have suffered a devastating side effect—unemployment. Where five miners were employed to produce one ton of coal, now with more powerful machines operating in the earth, four of these men could be dropped from the payroll. In certain sections, deep poverty struck. Mining communities became impoverished.

To the remaining employed miners a new issue arose. These huge mechanical monsters were expensive, and mineowners grimaced at the thought of seeing them idle even for a moment. They wanted the miners operating them 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The miners rebelled,

refusing to work on Sundays. It became one of the key issues in the coal miners' strike in 1981. This time the mineowners remembered the strike three years earlier that had lasted for 111 days and gave in.

As the year 1984 came to a close in England, it saw that nation in the throes of the worst outbreak of industrial violence in her postwar history—all coal related. Seven thousand striking coal miners fought a pitched battle with three thousand British police in the city streets in what was declared "open war." Behind barricades of uprooted power poles, the miners threw rocks, bricks, and bottles, and even laid booby traps to maim police horses. They threw smoke bombs, ball bearings, chunks of metal, and nail-studded potatoes, and they watched flames engulf cars they had torched.

"There were scenes of brutality that were almost unbelievable," said the president of the National Union of Mineworkers, who had called the strike. Hundreds were injured in these confrontations. From the middle of March 1984, the strike plagued the nation. During that year, work was crippled at 132 of Britain's 175 coal mines and caused a work stoppage for 130,000 miners, costing the government over 1.4 billion dollars. Finally, in March 1985 the strike was called off.

Enter strip-mining. Geologists in the United States have known for a long time that tremendous reserves of coal, billions

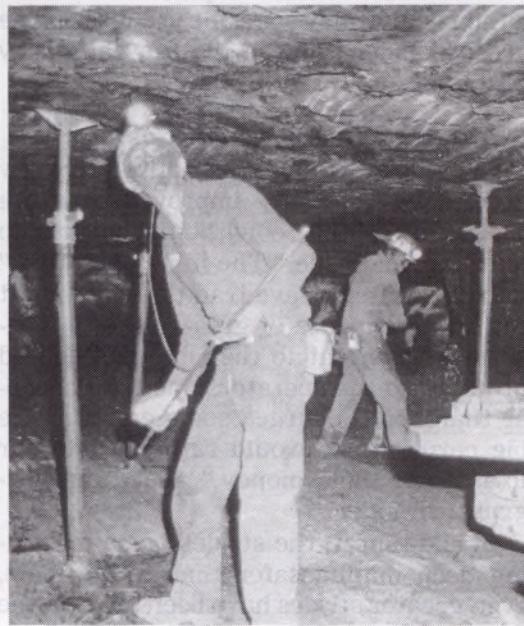
of tons of it, lie in vast sheets just 50 to 200 feet (15 to 60 m) below the surface. As the Industrial Revolution accelerated following World War II, and the need for coal to power industry became more important, strip-mining flourished. Blasts loosened the ground above the coal seams, and then huge trucks rolled in and hauled the dirt and coal away.

The people who lived in these regions, however, remembered when the mountains and hillsides were lush and green.



**Huge machines
gouge out 12
tons a minute**

**Inserting
expansion bolts
to prevent
cave-ins**



But now large, powerful machines, so big that they could scoop up 325 tons of earth with one bite, were eating into the mountainside, devouring great chunks of earth. Underground streams were diverted. Wells were running dry. Wild animals were looking for new forest ranges, and soil erosion developed with the speed of an avalanche as strip miners left to find new reserves, leaving deep, ugly, gouged-out chasms in the earth.

Laws were enacted that required the miners to leave the sites in the condition in which they were found. The dirt taken away to get to the coal must be put back and contoured to harmonize with the surrounding landscape. If trees were removed, trees must be planted. If pastureland was disturbed, grass must be sown. If water pumped from the ground now con-

dioxide and nitrogen oxides can be changed into sulfuric and nitric acids, which are borne aloft by the air currents and carried for great distances, sometimes thousands of miles, and then dropped to the earth in some form of precipitation.

"Many scientists," writes *U.S. News & World Report*, "are convinced that acid rain and acid fog leach essential nutrients from soil and tree leaves." The problem of acid rain is not limited to North America. "In Europe," the report continues, "the unprecedented decline of woodlands vitality is being called 'forest death.' . . . The devastation reaches throughout Germany, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary and Sweden. In Switzerland, the decline of forests has sparked fresh worries about avalanches on denuded slopes."

Anyone who has had a hobby of keeping fish in an aquarium well knows that water that is too acidic can kill fish. And when rains fall with over 700 times more acid than normal, as was measured a few years ago in one eastern state, the result will be devastation for fish. "Hundreds of lakes in New York State and thousands in Scandinavia and Canada are so acidic that fish can't live in them anymore," reports *Good Housekeeping* magazine of June 1984.

And so the hue and cry is being heard from around the world. Acid rain is a mounting problem. Environmentalists and industry are deadlocked on the issue.

Nevertheless, coal is now making a comeback as an energy source. Many industries are converting to coal to power their generators and turbines. Many things can be made from coal—oil, gasoline, dolls, perfume, aspirin, saccharin, nylon, plastics, and a host of other by-products.

Hence, it would appear that coal, with all its burning issues, will be around for a long time.

Then the rains came—acid rains. And in their wake dying forests, dead lakes

tained acid that would kill fish, the acid must be neutralized before the water was allowed to enter the streams. The requirements are many and the reclamation costly, but the majority of the strip miners obey the laws. Unfortunately, there are still those who hit and run, leaving tragically scarred land.

Coal—And Acid Rain

Then the rains came—*acid rains!* It is the most recent burning issue involving coal. When coal burns, sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides are released. When the smokestacks of power-generating plants and other coal-burning industries belch their emissions into the air, the sulfur

"Good Rains" in Ancient Greece



Rain dances and prayers in one form or another were found among practically every ancient people, and the Greeks were no exception. Of their many rituals, one that was especially popular among the peasants was *perperuna*, a petition to the gods for "good rains."

Perperuna is simply the red poppy that grows all over the countryside in springtime in Greece. But spring is also the time for rain to descend so that there will be a bounteous harvest in the fall. If the rain should fail to come, it could spell disaster for the villagers. To supplicate the gods for their favor and blessing—and their gift of rain—the peasants in the villages carried out their *perperuna* ritual.

In the celebration the young girls in the village were gathered to the local square. One of them was chosen and dressed up as the *perperuna*. As an appeal to the mercies of the gods, usually a poor orphan girl was chosen. An old garment was then slipped

over her head and adorned with wicker twigs, leaves, flowers, and green grass until she was literally covered from head to foot. The covering was so thick that she could barely see through it. In fact, the *perperuna* was led about the village looking something like a walking plant.

According to tradition, *perperuna* was the symbol of the parched land. For her thirst to be quenched so that she would give her yield, the villagers led her from house to house, with the other girls following close by, singing as loud as they could this song:

*Perperuna walks around
Praying to God in great sound.
Lord, do make some rain to fall
And revive us all,
That our sowings thus may grow,
And the crops equally so.*

When the procession came to a home, the housewife greeted the *perperuna* by pouring water over her while calling out: "Good rains! Good rains!" After a good soaking, the *perperuna* responded by shaking her body violently so that water caught in the grass and leaves would splatter and fall like rain.

Finally, after making the rounds in the village, the villagers led the *perperuna* to a stream. There they plunged her into the water three times, all the while shouting: "Good rains! Good rains!"

Until about the first world war, the custom of *perperuna* was widely practiced throughout Greece. It was observed in different areas under a variety of similar names, such as *paparuna*, *perperitsa*, *ververitsa*. Though this custom is now said to have died out except in remote villages, in many areas it is merely replaced by church-approved religious processions for the same purpose. The interweaving of magic, superstition, and religion is deep-rooted in the lives of people even in so-called Christian lands.

My Basketball Career —Replaced by Two Other Loves!

I WAS seven years old when I started liking basketball. I used to go down to a driveway in the neighborhood and shoot baskets a couple of hours a day. By my senior year in high school, I was 6' 5 1/2" tall and weighed 185 pounds. That year our team won the title in our division. I got a scholarship to go to UCLA (University of California at Los Angeles), played under coach John Wooden, and two out of my last three years there, we won the national title.

My first year out of college, 1975, was a busy one. I signed a contract with the Los Angeles Lakers—at 1.6 million dollars or thereabouts, for five years. A week after that I was traded to the Milwaukee Bucks. A month later I married Linda, and a month after that she was pregnant.

Well, anyway, I found out in a hurry how different it was playing in the NBA (National Basketball Association)! At UCLA we had a winning streak of 88 games, but in my first year with the Milwaukee Bucks we lost 44 games! I was playing every other night, against talented professional players. It was a business. It was your life. Especially so during the playing season, on the road a lot—it gobbled you up! But I loved it!

Soon, however, two other things intervened that I was to love more—things not compatible with my career in professional basketball.

You might say that the seeds for this tug-of-war were sown back in 1972 when I first met Linda. I immediately fell in love



with her. She had been baptized earlier that year as one of Jehovah's Witnesses but had become inactive. Still, she frequently brought up religion.

"How do you feel about the Bible?" she would ask.

"It's a good mythology book," I would answer.

I had been brought up a strict Catholic, but now I was in college and very tolerant and philosophical. The discussions never got too involved or very prolonged.

Then something happened in 1974 that got me into a Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses. There was a boy—Brian Good was his name—that I went to high school with. He hated me. It was a rivalry-type thing, competitors in sports. His parents were Witnesses, but he would have nothing to do with their religion. He got into drugs, grew long hair, was really obnoxious. A few years later I came into Linda's house, and there was Brian. Married, short hair, necktie on, really clean-cut looking. He had become one of Jehovah's Witnesses.

Later on he and his wife were preaching full time in Kansas, and while driving cross-country to an assembly both were killed in an automobile accident. The funeral was held in the Kingdom Hall. I went, out of respect for Brian.

It was the strangest thing. The speaker

Witnesses were suddenly popping up everywhere in my life!

stood there talking about everybody seeing Brian again. It was almost as if he wasn't even dead, as I heard it. His family sat in front quietly weeping, but I didn't even feel sad! It was unusual. Here's this speaker talking about positive things, and I'm sitting there thinking: 'Boy, this is really a nice talk! They're going to see Brian again, and they're going to be doing this and that with him!'

A year later, 1975, I was playing with the Milwaukee Bucks. One of my teammates was Elmore Smith, also traded to the Bucks that year. And in that same year he had been baptized as one of Jehovah's Witnesses! His wife, Jessica, had been a Witness for three or four years. It seemed like Witnesses were suddenly popping up everywhere in my life! Elmore and I became close friends, since neither of us drank or partied around. Well, he was always after me to study the Bible with him or go to the Kingdom Hall with him. I wasn't ready for this. One day after practice—we had a real good practice, and Elmore and I were walking up the corridor—and Elmore says:

"Dave, I'm giving my first talk in the Theocratic Ministry School. I'd like you to come." I hemmed and hawed, made an excuse, went home—and felt terrible!

The next day at practice I told Elmore: "Now, Elmore, look. I really apologize. I tell you what, Linda and I will come to another meeting." And, oh, he just loved that!

So later Linda and I went to a public talk and *Watchtower* Study at the Kingdom Hall. The Witnesses were very friendly. I was not, however, impressed with the talk, and the *Watchtower* Study was on the Bible book of Haggai or Habakkuk. I didn't know what was going on. I'm sitting there thinking, 'What is this? What am I doing here?'

Soon after that the basketball season ended, and we returned to California. We began drifting apart. I was worried about my career. I'd played most of the year with an injured knee, and now X rays showed that the kneecap was broken. The first year of my NBA contract, four more years to go, and now I don't even know if I'm going to play! An operation on my knee was scheduled, and when I left for the hospital I took along the *New World Translation*.

I thought, 'It says that in the Bible? That's going to happen?'

"You're going to take the Bible with you?" Linda asked, surprised.

"Yes. It's a good mythology book. I'd like to read it."

That night in the hospital I read several chapters but got bored when I got into a long section of genealogies. I became sleepy and put the book down. The next morning my surgery was successfully performed. Linda came to see me, but I was in pain and doped up—didn't even know she had been there. She wasn't

there when I did come to, and that made me mad.

I got out of the hospital in a few days, and by a week later Linda and I had practically stopped talking to each other.

Then something happened that brought us together. One night I went to a movie with a friend. It was called *The Omen*. One of those scary science-fiction-type movies. It involved the demons. When I walked out of that movie, I was scared to death. It was about Satan's child. Two scriptures from the book of Revelation were flashed on the screen. As I read those scriptures, I thought, 'It says *that* in the Bible? *That's* going to happen?' One was about the number of the beast, 666; the other about a great light flashing from one end of the earth to the other end. It really scared me. Driving home, I kept looking over my shoulder expecting some demon to jump on me.

I went into the house, into our bedroom, and turned on the light. It was about 1:30 in the morning. Linda said:

"What do you have the light on for?"

"I'm nothing, I'm nothing." I mumbled it over and over again.

Linda jumped out of bed. "What's wrong, Dave, *what's wrong?*"

"I'm scared!" I told her about the movie. She got the Bible, and we both lay in bed. She read Matthew 7:13, 14 about the broad way to destruction and the narrow way to life. She kept reassuring me: "Dave, you don't have to be afraid of Satan. You don't have to fear him. Fear Jehovah. He's the one who holds our life in his hands." She kept on reading, and all of a sudden it seemed as if I had been in a dark room and someone turned a light on.

That night I didn't sleep. The next morning I sat in bed and read in the Bible. First, Revelation, then First and Second Timothy, and First and Second Thessalo-

nians, and Romans. All those little books. They started to make sense. As I was reading, I was thinking, 'How come I've never read this before? Why didn't I ever look at these things before?' It was as if Jehovah opened my heart.

That evening Linda's brother-in-law came over. He was a baptized Witness. For four hours I asked him questions, and he answered everything from the Bible. No issue became an issue for me. No blood transfusions, no Trinity, no immor-

That summer I made a decision . . . I would retire from professional basketball

tal soul—all proved from the Bible. That settled it for me. It was as if a light went on in that month of September 1976. I called Elmore Smith and his wife and said:

"Guess what?"

"What?"

"I'm going to have a Bible study with the Witnesses!"

They couldn't believe it. Elmore couldn't get over it. There had been one of Jehovah's Witnesses in the NBA, now there would be two, and both on the same team!

I got baptized the next year, in August of 1977. I loved the door-to-door preaching work. In 1978 I auxiliary pioneered—which means I averaged 60 hours or more a month in preaching the good news of God's Kingdom. It was also during the 1977-78 season that I had my greatest year in the NBA. But I was beginning to begrudge the time basketball was taking from my preaching work! I still loved the game of basketball, but I was beginning to love the preaching work even more!

I was also drawing closer to my family.

The sports editor of the Milwaukee Journal, Bill Dwyre, wrote: "The thought of Meyers giving up a potential \$500,000 a year for playing basketball so he can go door to door as a Jehovah's Witness is mind boggling. . . . But before everybody lines up to drive the bus with the straitjacket out to Meyers house, a deeper look at the man behind the decision is warranted. . . .

"He loved to talk about his family—his wife, Linda, and his young son and daughter. Conversations about basketball [his exploits in a game] invariably led to a quick change in the subject to praise of

Linda and I were very close now. We had a two-year-old daughter, Crystal. A year later, in 1979, our son Sean was born. A ruptured disk in my back kept me from playing basketball. It was painful, but it was a blessing in disguise. I was with my family every day, going to all the meetings, doing personal study, and again auxiliary pioneering. It was that summer that I made a decision in my heart—I

The tempting offers began pouring in

would retire from professional basketball. I would fulfill my contract, but I would retire after the 1979-80 season.

That decision was all I needed! My strength started coming back, both my legs started to come back, and I won back my starting position in camp! So, after missing an entire year, I'm back in the starting line, and I'm playing. We made it to the playoffs. We won the division.

Ten days after the last game, I went to the owner's office.

"Dave," he said, "You're going to become a free agent," and he started to talk to me

his teammates and talk about standings and referees. But conversations about his family, about subjects such as his daughter's learning to walk or his wife's quitting smoking, would light him up with an eagerness to communicate.

"A lot of people are going to think I'm crazy," he said Wednesday night, just hours after his formal press conference. "But all I really want to do is to get on to the more important things in my life, like my family and my religion."

"He ought to be admired for having the guts to live his beliefs."—May 1, 1980.

about money. He knew that as a free agent I could make much more money.

"Jim," I interrupted, "I'm not going to play anymore."

"What do you mean, you're not going to play anymore? You can't do that!"

"I'm doing it. My goals, my values, have changed, and basketball conflicts with them."

"But you love basketball!"

"That's true, I do."

"Well, now wait a minute," he brightened up. "You're a Jehovah's Witness, right? Your organization can use some money, right? We'll donate part of your contract to them."

"No," I said, "being a Witness is more than donating money. It's studying, going to meetings, preaching from door to door. Basketball, Jim, takes me away from that. Six months on the road isolates me from that. It also takes me away from my family responsibilities, and that's also an important part of worshiping Jehovah."

—Deuteronomy 6:6, 7; Ephesians 5:25, 28, 33; 6:4.

We had a press conference the next day. The Milwaukee papers were there, the TV station was represented. Many of the articles in Milwaukee were very favorable.

(See the box, opposite page.) But in Los Angeles they painted me as a little crazy. 'This religion, this cult, they've got Dave thinking funny, but he'll be back.' That type of thing.

Interestingly, as soon as my retirement was announced, the tempting offers began pouring in. The Bucks sent me a better contract for the next year. The Los Angeles Lakers called, wanting me to play for them. They would pay my moving expenses to California and would locate a house for me. Seattle contacted me too. It was all very tempting. I still loved basketball, but by now I loved my family and serving Jehovah much more. I felt that Jehovah was right there with me, helping me resist those offers involving millions of dollars.—Proverbs 3:13-18; Zephaniah 1:18; 1 John 2:15-17.

And ever since he has blessed me. I have time for personal Bible study and attendance at meetings. I'm an elder in the congregation, give public talks, and frequently spend my full time in the ministry telling others about the good news of Jehovah's

Kingdom under Christ. These spiritual activities are a source of happiness to me. (Matthew 5:3) I also have time to be with my son and daughter while they are growing up, and I can help them in true worship. And I have time now to devote to my wife and keep our marriage strong.

The future is bleak for the great masses of humanity in this nuclear age. But my hope is a glorious one. Concerning the Paradise earth under God's Kingdom, Revelation 21:4 says: "And he will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore. The former things have passed away."

With this blessing from Jehovah in view, I considered it no sacrifice at all to set aside my basketball career. My love for my family and for Jehovah—these are my happinesses now. Plus my hope for endless life in the Paradise earth.

The same blessed hope is also yours if you wish it. Revelation 22:17 says: "Let anyone that wishes take life's water free." —As told by David Meyers.

**My love for my family
and for Jehovah
—these are my
happinesses now**



Ireland's "Holy Wells"

By "Awake!" correspondent in Ireland

THE old man trembled slightly. His hand shook as he cupped it, scooped the water from the well, and rubbed it on his weakened ankle. He had come, like many others, to try to counteract the ravages of age by invoking the powers of this "holy well."

The well, situated among some peat bogs in Donegal, Ireland, is one of Ireland's 3,000 "holy wells." According to the guidebook, pilgrims come to this spot "hopeful, lifting and using the blessed water as a means of spiritual betterment." But they come for more than spiritual betterment. The booklet goes on: "Down the years countless stories have been told of cures effected to all sorts of ailments at the spot and of how disabled or crippled pilgrims were able to leave behind them their sticks, crutches and bandages."

We did not doubt that the pilgrims were both devout and hopeful. But the sight raised questions in our minds. How much "spiritual betterment" did a pilgrimage to a "holy well" really bring? If any miraculous cures really happened, were they from God?

Watching the old man praying at the well, we also wondered if he was aware that what he was doing had been done by his ancestors for thousands of years. Belief in "holy wells" is very old in Ire-

land, going back to the religion of the pre-Christian Celts.

The Pre-Christian Celts

The Celts came to Ireland centuries before the birth of Jesus Christ. They were very religious, and central to their worship was a belief in the sanctity of rivers, springs, and wells. They felt that their gods and goddesses could be called upon there to effect cures.

Anne Ross, a respected authority on the subject, describes the beliefs and practices of the Celts: "The priests, the Druids, were believed to have carried out their ritual practices and to have made offering to the gods only in natural places, without structures—in groves of trees made sacred by long association with the gods, for example, or beside sacred wells whose waters contained distinctive virtues and through which access to the patron deity could be gained."—*Everyday Life of the Pagan Celts*, page 136.

We could picture those pagan Celts gathered at such a spot seeking favour



from their gods. But the people we now saw considered themselves to be Christians. What were they doing here?

From Druids to "Christians"

Originally, the authorities of the early Catholic Church in Ireland tried hard to stamp out those old pagan beliefs. But eventually their approach changed. Anne Ross explains: "Later, under the aegis of the Christian Church, these local divinities were replaced by local saints, often bearing the same name as their pagan originals; and the well-worship continued undisturbed."

Another noted writer on Irish traditions adds this comment: "Many of these superstitions are so deep-rooted that centuries of opposition from the Christian Church have failed to suppress them, and while it has driven some practices into secrecy it has been forced to take others under its protection. This applies, for instance, to the cult of holy wells."—*Irish Heritage*, by E. Estyn Evans, page 163.

Thus, the Catholic Church ended up absorbing these ancient superstitions. Anne Ross explains: "The cult legends continued and the old gods and goddesses, now worshipped perhaps surreptitiously, or only commemorated in tales told about the fire-side, were converted by a [now] sympathetic Irish Church into heroes and heroines and the devils of the valleys and the air, and with these slight modifications the old cult legends were perpetuated."—*Pagan Celtic Britain*, by Anne Ross, page 384.

What Would They Think?

What, we wondered, would these present-day pilgrims make of all of this? Would they be shocked to know the pagan roots of what they were doing? Would these sincere pilgrims who left coins or other offerings in or near the well be surprised to know that they were copying

the ancient practice of leaving votive offerings to the Celtic gods?

What of the two middle-aged women who had travelled over 60 miles (95 km) to visit this spot—a trip they had made many times over the years? Were they aware that as they made their circuits of the well in a clockwise direction, following the direction of the sun, offering their prayers as they went, they were reenacting what their non-Christian Celtic ancestors had done for centuries before the birth of Christ? And the mother of a young child that we saw just a little distance from the well, saying her prayers as she walked around an old thornbush that was covered with pieces of clothing, bandages, and other mementos of previous requests by pilgrims—did she know that the thornbush was sacred to the pagan Celts?



Author Patrick Logan commented that such wells "often retain evidence of prechristian beliefs and practices, and sometimes the Christian veneer is thin." (*The Holy Wells of Ireland*, page 62) But the question arises, Does it matter? As one of the pilgrims said to us in his attractive Irish brogue: "I have come here for many years, and it hasn't done me any harm!"

If there was no harm in them, why did the church originally try to stamp out such practices? Perhaps church leaders in those days were familiar with Jeremiah's words when he spoke about the practices of pagan nations around Israel: "Do not learn the way of the nations at all." —Jeremiah 10:2.

From Our Readers

Honey Heals

I truly thank you for the item "Honey Heals." (November 8, 1984) I have been confined to a wheelchair for 18 years due to an auto accident. From time to time I get pressure sores and I am bed-ridden while being treated with different ointments. Along came your magazine, and having nothing to lose, I tried a little honey on a dry dressing. I am at a loss for words. What should have taken three to four weeks to heal was healed in eight to nine days. Why this treatment has remained hidden for so long I don't know.

V. M., Mexico

Fight to the Finish

I simply cannot hold back from expressing how much I enjoyed your article "My Fight to the Finish." (August 8, 1984) I am 18 years old and suffer from an ailment that has adversely affected my legs and lower back. At times the pain is very intense. When my legs buckle under me, I often fall to the floor in a crippled heap and have to crawl around on all fours. The doctors have been unsuccessful in finding the cause or the cure. I can identify with Monika Siebert—who refused to accept pity and who was determined to fight her disease—as I continue working toward my goal of the full-time ministry. Thanks so much for providing such encouraging and upbuilding articles. I hope that this letter will help to encourage other young people not to despair when confronted with hardship.

L. K., Denmark

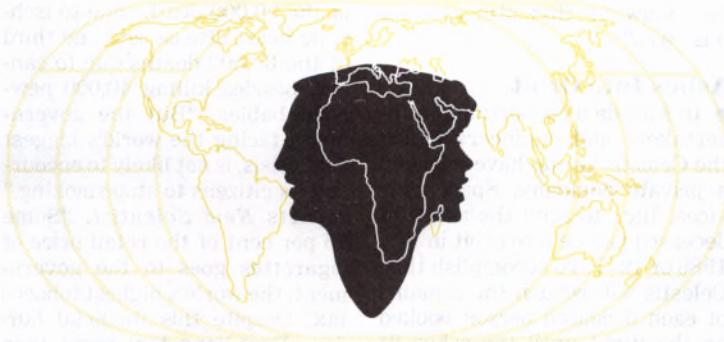
Helped by a Kidney Machine

Your article "Alive! With the Help of a Kidney Machine" (January 8, 1985) was very timely. My mother-in-law had total kidney failure just a little more than two months ago. She is now learning to operate her home machine. The article helped us to understand better what she is going through. The paragraph on diet was very helpful too. Now we know some things to avoid when eating with her or when choosing gifts.

L. K., Montana

Thank you so much for the article "Alive! With the Help of a Kidney Machine." When my wife and I got married (1979), we had the desire of continuing in the full-time ministry without letup. Seven months later, I was told I had chronic kidney disease. Eventually I had to have dialysis treatment. After two operations I was surgically fitted with a catheter to begin continual ambulatory peritoneal dialysis. To say the least, my wife and I have had some trying times. We have looked for articles in *Awake!* that would help us to deal with this disease. Then on returning home from our usual 160-mile (260-km) round trip to Lexington, Kentucky, for my two-month checkup, I received the issue of *Awake!* with the article. If you only knew how I felt when I saw it. I didn't feel so alone and different anymore. I felt that Dorothy Bull's experience was written just for me. Reading about her endurance has strengthened my own determination to continue to serve Jehovah in spite of my physical limitations.

W. R., Kentucky



Watching the World

40,000% Inflation Rate!

● "Bolivia's inflation rate is the highest in the world," reports *The Wall Street Journal*. "In 1984, prices zoomed 2,700%, compared with a mere 329% the year before. Experts are predicting the inflation rate could soar as high as 40,000% this year." Prices are going up by the day and by the hour. At last report, a bar of chocolate cost 50,000 pesos—a two-inch (5-cm) stack of bills that far outweighs the chocolate. A pharmacist said she bought a new luxury Toyota auto three years ago for the same price she now asks for three boxes of aspirin. "Planeloads of money arrive twice a week from printers in West Germany and Britain," says the report. "Purchases of money cost Bolivia more than \$20 million last year, making it the third-largest import, after wheat and mining equipment."

Famine Families

● Famine does more than threaten life. It also disrupts age-old traditions. In famine-stricken parts of Chad, the extended-family system, which obligates even distant relatives to care for those on the margin of survival, is threatened, reports *The New York Times*. Also, well-fed par-

ents accompanying starving children is no longer an uncommon sight, says Dr. Jan van Erps, a Belgian who has been living in central Chad for several years, and Catherine Joguet, a French nurse who works with him. They believe that some parents let their sick children die in order to give scant food to family members with a better chance of survival. "In the families, the men eat first, women second, then children," says Van Erps. "Cousins are no longer welcome when they come to share scarce food."

Lines, Lines

● Soviet citizens spend 65 billion man-hours each year standing in lines, 80 percent of that time in food lines, writes Vasily D. Patrushev in *Izvestia* of Moscow. Patrushev, who works for the Work and Leisure Time Department of the Institute of Sociological Research and who is an expert on lines, adds that the total waiting time is equivalent to the working hours of 35 million full-time employees. But "to think that lines are caused by shortages of goods is a typical misconception," he says. "The line that we all dislike does not look bad on the books of the store. The line, in fact, represents a living, un-

broken conveyor of buyers, and insures that the store fulfills its sales plan." *Izvestia* also printed a letter from an economist who stated that stores have no desire to overfulfill their monthly sales plan "for fear that a higher plan will be handed down in the future," thus creating more work for the store.

Depopulation Drive

● The Mexican government is trying to persuade people to move out of "Mexico's increasingly crowded and unlivable capital," reports *The New York Times*. Mexico City, with about 18 million inhabitants, is growing at a rate of about a hundred thousand per month. The poverty-stricken peasants who continue moving in add to the strains on the city's public services and facilities. Recently, President Miguel de la Madrid Hurtado announced that more than 50 government agencies and government-operated industries, involving 40,000 federal employees, will be moved out of the city into the countryside. Not only will the move get people out of Mexico City but it is designed to decentralize federal money and power and to make other areas more appealing.

Ocean Plastic

● "The world's seas and oceans, already polluted with spilled oil, toxic chemicals and radioactive waste, are now being fouled by a new and insidious form of pollution—plastic waste," reports *The New York Times*. According to the National Academy of Sciences, each year commercial fishing fleets—a major polluter—dump more than 52 million pounds (24 million kg) of plastic packaging material into the sea and lose more than 298 million pounds (135 million kg) of plastic fishing gear, including nets,

lines, and buoys. An estimated one to two million seabirds and more than a hundred thousand sea mammals die each year from eating bits of floating plastic or from becoming entangled in plastic nets.

Transplants Increasing

● "Doctors meeting at Stanford University [recently] forecast that up to 700 heart transplants will be performed annually in the US by the end of the decade," reports *New Scientist*. "This is about five times the current number." The operation was virtually abandoned in the 1970's because most patients died within a few weeks. But patients are now living longer due to the recent success of the drug cyclosporine A, which stops the body's efforts to reject foreign tissue. "More than 80 per cent of Stanford's patients are alive after one year and 67 per cent are alive after three years," says the report. The operation itself costs \$80,000. Add to this another \$45,000 for tests before surgery and for post-operative care. The government is now considering who will pay for these operations in the future.

Star-Naming Business

● Since 1979 a hundred thousand people have each paid \$25 to \$35 to a company in Illinois—one of a number of such companies in the United States—for the privilege of naming a star after themselves or loved ones. They are told that the names "will be listed in a book which will be copyrighted at a later date in the Library of Congress," says a Library of Congress press release. But a book copyright does not confer official status on star names, explains the release. Official names are designated only by the IAU (International Astronomical Union) based in Paris, France. Says an IAU official: "We take a

dim view of this star-naming business."

Ashes Into Orbit

● In Florida a consortium of undertakers and engineers called the Celestis Group have engaged a private company, Space Services, Inc., to send the ashes of deceased people into orbit in late 1986 or 1987. To accomplish this, Celestis will reburn the remains of each deceased person booked on the flight until the ashes fit into a capsule measuring a mere three eighths of an inch by one-and-a-quarter inches (1 cm by 3.2 cm). As many as 13,000 of these capsules will fit into Space Services' satellite. With telescopes, relatives of the deceased will be able to view the satellite as it passes overhead. Cost for the space burial is a sky-high \$3,900 per customer.

British AIDS Scare

● "The death . . . of a Church of England prison chaplain suffering from AIDS has precipitated a major health scare in Britain," reports *The Globe and Mail* of Toronto, Canada. The 38-year-old cleric was the 52nd AIDS victim in Britain. "We are getting phone calls from respectable church ladies who have sipped wine from the same cup" as the chaplain, says Dr. Anthony Kirkland, a district health officer. "They are worried they may have picked up the infection, but I can assure them there is absolutely nothing for them to worry about." Kirkland says the chaplain was a homosexual. But, he adds, "he kept the two sides of his life entirely separate."

Brazilians Going Up in Smoke

● Cigarette smoking is the leading avoidable cause of death in Brazil, says WHO (World Health Organization). In 1979 smoking caused an estimated one quarter

of the 90,000 deaths due to ischemic heart disease and one third of the 60,000 deaths due to cancer, besides killing 40,000 newborn babies. "But the government, facing the world's biggest debt crisis, is not likely to encourage its citizens to stop smoking," reports *New Scientist*. "Some 75 per cent of the retail price of cigarettes goes to the government, the world's highest tobacco tax. Despite this financial burden, Brazilians buy more than 370 million cigarettes a day, supplying 11.6 per cent of their country's tax revenue."

Drinking and Drugs

● A survey by the New York State Health Department has found that 20 percent of New York's teenagers smoke, 55 percent drink alcoholic beverages, and 65 percent have tried drugs. The survey, based on telephone interviews of 1,214 teenagers aged 13 to 19, was representative of the 2.1 million teenagers in the state. On this basis, of the 1,183,000 teenagers who drink alcoholic beverages, 36 percent drink at least once a week and 21 percent are heavy drinkers, having five or more drinks per sitting. According to the survey, 30 percent of New York's teenagers have tried marijuana.

Baby-Gate Warning

● Recently, six companies stopped making accordion-style baby gates under an agreement worked out with them by the Consumer Product Safety Commission, reports the *New York Daily News*. The gates, commonly used to keep youngsters from wandering, have been linked to the deaths of eight children in recent years. "Safety officials warned that as many as 10 million of the gates remain in American homes, and they urged parents to stop using them," says the report.

Eye Typing?

● Engineers in Ottawa, Canada, have developed a pair of eyeglasses that makes it possible to type by 'eye command,' reports *The Medical Post* of Toronto. How does it work? The glasses are connected to a computer and a printer. In one of the eyepieces is a display of 60 different characters—the alphabet, necessary punctuation marks, and a set of commands—with a sensor that can determine which character the user's eye is focused on. After a certain "dwell time," usually a half second, a red light illuminates the selected character to confirm the choice. After another half second, a computer beep assures the user that his choice has been stored in the computer's memory. The message can also be printed out on paper whenever the wearer eyes the character representing the printer. "The device is

expected to open up a whole new world for some severely handicapped persons," says the report.

Hazards in Paradise

● Automobile accidents are the major cause of injuries in most of the world's urban areas. Not so in remote areas. In sections of Papua New Guinea, for example, the main hazard is trees, reports the *British Medical Journal*. Researchers analyzing admissions to the Provincial Hospital in Milne Bay Province found that 41 percent of wounds and injuries were tree related. Accidents included falling off a tree while climbing and being struck by a falling tree limb or by a falling coconut—which could strike a person on the ground with a force of almost 2,000 pounds (900 kg). While a popular stereotype is that of the islander reclining under his trees,

the researchers conclude: "Most villagers work hard planting their gardens and often risk their lives climbing high to reap the produce of their tallest trees."

Drunk-Driving Sanctions

● The carnage caused by drunk drivers is producing severe reactions from various law-enforcement authorities. Quoting from *Health News Digest*, *The Medical Post* of Canada reports that in Turkey "police take drunk drivers 32 km (20 miles) from town, from where (under escort) they are forced to walk back." In Finland a "second drunk driving offence results in permanent revocation of driving licence." In Kentucky, U.S.A., drunk drivers must assist the police and transportation crews in clean-up of drunk-driving collisions. In El Salvador "they execute you by firing squad," says the article.

