

Awake!

April 22, 2000



A UNITED WORLD

WILL EUROPE
BE THE FIRST STEP?

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A UNITED WORLD

Will Europe Be the First Step?

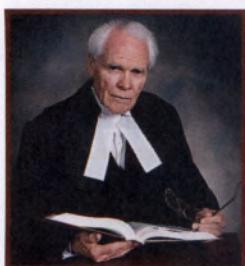
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In a divided world, European unification is big news. But how realistic is the hope for a united Europe? Is there any real hope for world unity?



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A UNITED EUROPE

Why Would It Matter?



CHAMPAGNE corks popped. Fireworks lit up the skies. What was the occasion? A new millennium? No, this event was arguably more significant than a mere change of digits on the world's calendars. It was January 1, 1999. The new single currency for the European Union (EU)—a type of money called the euro—was officially launched on that day.

Many Europeans see the introduction of a common currency as a historic step in Europe's long quest for unity. The Dutch newspaper *De Telegraaf* hailed the launch of the euro as the "crown upon European unification." Indeed, after decades of dreams, diplomacy, and delays, European unity seems closer than ever.

Granted, people living outside of Europe may wonder what all the hubbub is about. The arrival of the euro and the efforts toward European unification may seem to have little effect on their daily life. However, the unification of Europe would bring about one of the world's largest economic blocs. So a united Europe would be hard to ignore—no matter where one lives.

For example, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Marc Grossman recently told a North American audience: "Our prosperity is linked to Europe." Why? Among the reasons he noted was that "one out of every 12 U.S. factory workers has a job in one of the 4,000 European-owned businesses in the U.S." It is reported, too, that Europe's new currency may affect the price of imported goods—and even mortgage rates—in countries far from Europe.

Developing countries may benefit. How? One study notes: "The replacement of the various European currencies by the euro will simplify the developing countries' commercial relations with the EU." Additionally, some predict that Japanese and U.S. firms doing business in Europe will benefit. With the euro in place, there will be no fluctuating exchange rates between European countries. Doing business in Europe could well become more economical.

If you are planning to travel in Europe, you may likewise feel the benefits of European unity. Soon you will be able to purchase goods and services in different European countries with one currency, the euro, which has about the same value as the U.S. dollar. Gone will be the days of puzzled tourists juggling guildens, francs, lire, deutsche marks, and pocket calculators.

However, Europe's move toward becoming a unified continent offers something even more appealing—hope. Just think, a few decades ago Europe was engulfed in war. From that perspective, European unification is an amazing phenomenon. People all over the world are taking note.

Many cannot help but wonder if world unity may be a realistic expectation after all. This is a tantalizing prospect indeed! Will Europe's steps toward unity bring man closer to a united world? Before addressing that question, we need to take an honest look at European unification. What obstacles on the road to unity still need to be removed?

Euros and euro symbols on pages 3, 5-6, and 8: © European Monetary Institute

UNITY IN THE MAKING?

The idea of European unity is not altogether new. There was a measure of unity during the time of the Roman Empire, then under the rule of Charlemagne, and later under Napoléon I. In such cases unity was based on force and conquest. After World War II, though, a number of war-ravaged countries felt the need for unity based on cooperation. These countries hoped that such cooperation would lead not only to their economic recovery but also to the banning of war. The following are some of the historic steps leading to the current situation:

- **1948** Hundreds of European political leaders gather together in The Hague, the Netherlands, and vow: "We will never war among ourselves again."
- **1950** France and Germany begin to cooperate in order to protect their coal and steel industries. More countries join them, and this leads to the formation of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). The ECSC begins operating in 1952 and includes Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and West Germany.
- **1957** The six ECSC members form two other organizations: the European Economic Community (EEC) and the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom).
- **1967** The EEC merges with the ECSC and Euratom to form the European Community (EC).
- **1973** The EC admits Denmark, Ireland, and the United Kingdom.
- **1981** Greece joins the EC.
- **1986** Portugal and Spain join the EC.
- **1990** The EC is further enlarged when West and East Germany merge, bringing the former East Germany into the organization.
- **1993** Efforts toward greater economic and political union of EC members lead to the creation of the European Union (EU).
- **2000** The EU consists of 15 member countries—Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, and the United Kingdom.

Awake!®

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 always stays politically neutral and does not exalt one race above another. Most important, this magazine builds confidence in the Creator's promise of a peaceful and secure new world that is about to replace the present wicked, lawless system of things.

Unless otherwise indicated, *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures—With References* is used.

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Will Europe REALLY UNITE?

If you find it hard to believe that Europe is serious about unification, you need only cross a few of its internal borders. People now move freely within the European Union (EU). Waiting time at border crossings has virtually disappeared. Travelers, of course, are delighted—but they are not the only ones to benefit. Now citizens of EU countries can easily study, work, and set up businesses anywhere within the EU. This, in turn, has led to economic progress in the poorer areas of the Union.

The ease of crossing borders is certainly a major change. Should we conclude, though, that Europe is already unified and that there are no roadblocks to unification? On the contrary, obstacles loom ahead, some of them quite daunting. But before we discuss these, let us look into one of the greatest strides toward unity that has been made so far. In that way we may better understand why people entertain so much hope for unity.



It has already become far simpler to cross borders in Europe

Steps Toward Monetary Unification

Maintaining borders can be expensive. Customs formalities among the 15 member countries of the EU once cost those nations some 12 billion euros a year. Not surprisingly, the new situation at Europe's borders has spurred economic growth. When you think of the 370 million inhabitants of the EU moving freely from country to country within a single common market, it is clear that the economic potential is outstanding. What made such progress possible?

Back in February 1992, government leaders took a big step on the road toward unity by signing the Treaty on European Union, or the Maastricht Treaty. That treaty laid the basis for establishing a unified market within Europe, a central bank, and a single

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currency. Yet, another important step needed to follow: the removal of exchange rate fluctuations. After all, tomorrow's exchange rate can throw a whole new light on today's transaction.

This obstacle on the road to unity was removed by setting up the Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) and introducing the euro as a common currency. Exchange costs have now disappeared, and businesses

Here Comes the Euro!

Although present national coins and bank notes of European Union members will not disappear until 2002, noncash transactions are already taking place in euros. This monetary transition has been a huge undertaking for banks. However, exchange rates between the national currencies of member countries and the euro are now fixed. Stock exchanges also show prices in euros. Many shops and businesses now price their products in both euros and the local currency.

Such commerce calls for drastic adjustments—especially for many older people, who will no longer be able to use their familiar deutsche mark, franc, or lira. Even cash registers and automatic teller machines need to be modified. To make the transition as smooth as possible, official information campaigns have been organized to inform people about the arrival and use of the euro.

Whatever the remaining obstacles, the euro is coming. In fact, coining and printing of the euro has already begun. And it is quite a task. Even in a small country like the Netherlands, with some 15 million inhabitants, coining and printing presses will be running for three years straight to produce 2.8 billion coins and 380 million bank notes by January 1, 2002. If all these new bank notes were put in a pile, they would make a stack about 12 miles high!

no longer have to protect themselves against exchange rate risks. The result is lower business expenses and more international trade. In turn, this may lead to more jobs and increased spending power—which would benefit everyone.

The founding of the European Central Bank in 1998 marked another important step toward adopting a single currency. This independent bank, located in the German city of Frankfurt, holds monetary sovereignty over the participating governments. It strives to keep inflation low in what is termed the euro zone, consisting of 11 participating countries,* and to stabilize exchange rate fluctuations between the euro, the dollar, and the yen.

So when it comes to money, great strides toward unity have been made. However, money matters also illustrate the profound disunity that still exists among European nations.

More Monetary Matters

The poorer nations in the EU have their grievances. They feel that the richer member nations are not sharing enough of their wealth with them. None of the member nations deny the need to offer the poorer European partners extra financial support. Yet, the richer nations feel that they have valid reasons for holding back.

Take Germany as an example. That country's enthusiasm to act as paymaster for European unification has clearly waned now that its own financial burden has mounted. The price tag of unifying East Germany and West Germany alone has been enormous—almost a hundred billion dollars a year. That is a quarter of the national budget! These developments have caused the German national debt to skyrocket to such

* These countries are Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal, and Spain. For various reasons, Denmark, Great Britain, Greece, and Sweden are not yet included.

"A Euromassacre"?

Early in 1999 the European Commission, the executive body of the European Union (EU), barely survived a serious setback. The commission was charged with fraud, corruption, and nepotism. A committee was formed to investigate the charges. After a six-week-long investigation, the committee found that fraud and mismanagement by the European Commission had taken place. However, the investigative committee found no evidence that commissioners had enriched themselves.

After the committee's report was published, the entire European Commission resigned in March 1999—an unprecedented move. It sparked a deep crisis for the EU. *Time* magazine called it "a Euromassacre." Only the passage of time will tell what effect this crisis will have on the process of European unification.

The European Central Bank, in Frankfurt, Germany, was established in 1998

heights that Germany had to make great efforts to meet the admission criteria set by the EMU.

New Members Knocking on the EU Door

In the short term, advocates of a single currency hope that the EU countries not yet in the EMU will overcome their obstacles before the year 2002, when euro coins and notes are supposed to replace today's European currencies. If Britain, Denmark, and Sweden shed their reluctance, even the people in those lands may see their pounds, kroner, and kronor replaced by the euro.

Meanwhile, six other European countries are knocking on the EU door. They are Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Poland, and Slovenia. Five more countries are awaiting their turn, namely, Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, and Slovakia. Their entrance will not come cheap. Estimates are that between the years 2000 and 2006, the EU will have to provide 80 billion euros to help the ten newcomers from Eastern Europe.

However, the funds that the newcomers will have to raise in order to meet EU entrance requirements are many times more



than the amount they will receive in EU aid. For example, Hungary will have to spend 12 billion euros on developing its roads and railways. The Czech Republic will need to spend more than 3.4 billion euros on water treatment alone, and Poland must spend 3 billion euros to reduce sulfur emissions. Even so, the applicants feel that the benefits outweigh the costs. For one thing, their trade with EU countries will increase. Yet, the applicants may have to wait in line for a while. According to present public opinion, new member nations should be accepted only after the EU has straightened out its own financial matters.

Resentment, Nationalism, and Unemployment

Despite all the efforts that have been made toward greater unity, there is, both inside and outside Europe, concern over the developments on the Continent. There is also much uneasiness about how to deal with ethnic conflicts, such as those in the disintegrating Balkan region—first the war in Bosnia and then the conflict in Kosovo. EU member nations often disagree on how to handle such conflicts in Europe and beyond. Since the EU is not a federation of states and has no common foreign policy, national interests dominate all too often. Clearly, national interests are a huge obstacle to a 'United States of Europe.'

Europe has yet another pressing problem—high unemployment. On an average, 10 percent of the labor force is unemployed. This means that more than 16 million people are out of work. In many countries young people, who form almost one quarter of EU population, have put forth great efforts to find jobs but without success. No wonder many people feel that fighting mass unemployment is Europe's number one challenge! So far, efforts to reform the labor market have proved unfruitful.

However, there is a still greater roadblock to unity.

Who Is In Charge?

Sovereignty remains the biggest hurdle in achieving a united Europe. Member nations must agree to what extent they are willing to forgo national sovereignty. The aim of the EU is to establish a supranational form of rulership. If this is not realized, notes *Le Monde*, the introduction of the euro will be merely "a provisional victory." Some member nations, though, find the idea of letting go of authority hard to accept. For example, the leader of one EU member nation stated that his country was "born to be a leader of nations, not a follower."

Understandably, the smaller member nations fear that in the long run, the larger nations will call the shots and will refuse to accept decisions that could harm their own interests. Smaller nations wonder, for example, how it will be decided which countries will have the headquarters of the various EU agencies. This is an important decision because such agencies boost the job market in the host countries.

In the face of these daunting roadblocks to unity—economic disparity, war, unemployment, and nationalism—it might seem easy to feel disappointed on the subject of the unification of Europe. The fact is, though, that extraordinary progress has been made. How much more progress lies ahead is uncertain. The problems that beset those trying to unify Europe are, in the main, the same problems that beset all human governments.

Will it ever be possible to bring about a government that can solve such problems as ethnic strife, mass unemployment, poverty, and war? Is it realistic to think of a world where people live in true unity? The following article will consider an answer that may surprise you.

Will the WORLD UNITE?

IN RECENT years millions of people in Eastern Europe and elsewhere have suffered the consequences of divisive warfare. Yet, even while such cruel conflicts were going on, thousands of people in

Kiev, Ukraine



All around the world, Jehovah's Witnesses enjoy a remarkable unity



Zagreb, Croatia

these war-torn countries were able to cultivate and maintain true unity among themselves. Consider a few examples.

In 1991 an international crowd of nearly 15,000 met in Zagreb, Croatia. A policeman on the scene was moved to remark: "It would be good to show the mass media what is happening in this stadium, right here, where we see Serbians, Croats, Slovenians, Montenegrins, and others sitting next to one another in peace." What accounts for such unusual unity?

In 1993 an even larger international convention, with the theme "Divine Teaching," was held in Kiev, the capital of Ukraine. There was a peak attendance of nearly 65,000. The front page of the *Evening Kiev* reported: "Jehovah's Witnesses . . . are united not only by blue badges with 'Divine Teaching' written on them but by true faith."

Divine Teaching —A Force for Unity

Do you wonder why Jehovah's Witnesses enjoy unity while disunity is rampant around them? Polish Professor Wojciech Modzelewski identifies the reason by observing about the Witnesses: "The key

factor for their peaceful attitude is the idea to follow already now the principles revealed in the Bible." Indeed, the Witnesses are united worldwide through the divine teaching of the Creator, Jehovah God. What is that teaching?

Jesus Christ pointed to an important unifying principle when he said regarding his followers: "They are no part of the world, just as I am no part of the world." Yes, the position of neutrality taken by Jehovah's Witnesses everywhere unites them. This is

in line with Jesus' words when he prayed: "I make request . . . that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in union with me and I am in union with you, that they also may be in union with us."—John 17:16-21.

This position of neutrality is a force for unity because it moves Witnesses in all parts of the world to live up to what the prophet Isaiah noted about all those whom God "will instruct . . . about his ways." Isaiah stated that such ones would "have to beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into

pruning shears." The prophet continued: "Nation will not lift up sword against nation, neither will they learn war anymore."—Isaiah 2:2-4.

The unity and peace observed at the conventions of Jehovah's Witnesses in Eastern Europe during the last decade illustrate that Isaiah's prophecy is already being fulfilled on a small scale. In Europe and elsewhere, the Witnesses have figuratively beaten their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning shears. As a result, they enjoy peace and unity today in this disunited world. No wonder that a newspaper editorial once stated: "If all the world lived by the [Bible] creed of the [Jehovah's] Witnesses there would be an end of bloodshed and hatred, and love would reign as king"! Will that ever be the case?

How Worldwide Unity Will Come About

To bring about unity throughout the entire earth,

God's purpose is for mankind to become one united, global family

more is needed than a relatively small group of well-meaning people. There also needs to be a government that has the power to limit the influence of those who work against unity and peace. In fact, Jesus taught his followers to pray for just such a government: "Let your kingdom come. Let your will take place, as in heaven, also upon earth." (Matthew 6:10) Yes, Jesus indicated that only a government by God, "the kingdom of the heavens," can offer the solution to the world's problems—including the problem of disunity.—Matthew 4:17.

Jesus Christ is the King of this heavenly Kingdom. Under his rulership people on earth will experience an unprecedented time of peace and unity. This worldwide unity will not come about as a result of man-made economic reforms. Only a world government in the hands of the "Prince of Peace" can do such a thing.—Isaiah 9:6, 7.

Present injustices, often caused by poverty and abuse of power, will not be tolerated by the Prince of Peace. The Bible promises: "To him all the kings will prostrate themselves; all the nations, for their part, will serve him. For he will deliver the poor one crying for help, also the afflicted one and whoever has no helper. From oppression and from violence he will redeem their soul . . . There will come to be plenty of grain on the earth; on the top of the mountains there will be an overflow."—Psalm 72:11, 12, 14, 16.

Unemployment too will be a thing of the past under Christ's rulership. The prophet Isaiah states: "They will not build and someone else have occupancy; they will not plant and someone else do the eating. For like the days of a tree will the days of my people be; and the work of their own hands my chosen ones will use to the full." (Isaiah 65:22) Imagine, everyone on earth will be able to perform useful, satisfying work!

True Unity—When?

But when will Christ's rule over the earth begin? In answering that question, Jesus Christ pointed to a time characterized by wars, reports of wars, diseases, earthquakes, and other events. Yet, he also pointed to a positive aspect—a worldwide preaching of the good news of God's Kingdom. (Matthew 24:3-14; Luke 21:11) These events, said Jesus, will culminate in a "great tribulation" that will herald a complete change of rulership for the earth. (Matthew 24:21) Read his discourse recorded in Matthew chapter 24 and Luke chapter 21. Compare the conditions he foretells with what you observe in the world. You cannot help but see that we are now living on the eve of God's intervention in man-made rulership. His Kingdom, with Jesus Christ as King, will take over rulership. A united world is ahead!

The question remains, What should you do to see this promise come true? Since the Bible plays an important role in mankind's expectations for the future, it is wise to make an effort to get to know the Bible better. Therefore, Jehovah's Witnesses would be pleased to call at your home to conduct a free Bible study with you.* If you accept this offer, you will soon see that world unity lies within reach and that you too can share in it!

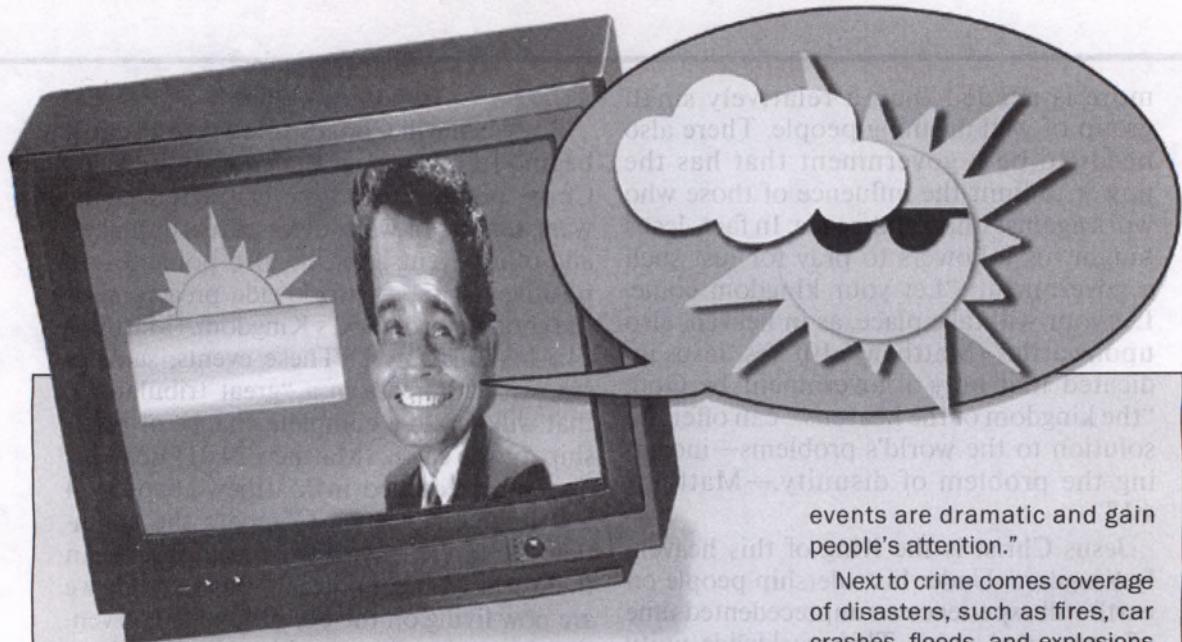
* If you wish to receive more information about this Bible study program, contact the publishers of this magazine or Jehovah's Witnesses in your community.

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

Land Mines—What Can Be Done?

Loida's Journey Out of Silence

How to Cope With Despair



TV NEWS

How Much of It Is Really News?

After analyzing 102 local TV newscasts from 52 metropolitan areas in the United States for content and presentation, a media-watch group found that only 41.3 percent of the programs contained news. What makes up the rest of the newscast?

On an average, 30.4 percent of airtime of local TV news consists of commercials. In fact, some of the stations surveyed devoted more time to commercials than to news. In addition, news airtime is often filled with fluff, states the report summarizing the findings of the study.*

* The report *Not in the Public Interest—Local TV News in America* is the fourth annual national survey examining what is in the news. It is compiled by Dr. Paul Klite, Dr. Robert A. Bardwell, and Jason Salzman, of Rocky Mountain Media Watch.

Under the heading "Fluff," the report groups "the cumulative air-time given to chit-chat between anchors, promotions and previews of upcoming stories, the 'soft' or silly news and the items about celebrities." A sample of some fluff stories: "Terrible Tenors Contest," "Reporter Takes 'Awesome, Incredible, Astounding' Ride on Roller Coaster," and "More People Buy Sandwich Spread at Supermarkets."

What stories make up the actual news? Crime stories dominate the TV news, comprising 26.9 percent of the news airtime. "If it bleeds, it leads" remains a truism on local TV news Crime rates may be down across the U.S. over the last few years, but not on local television news." Why? According to the authors of the study, "crime

events are dramatic and gain people's attention."

Next to crime comes coverage of disasters, such as fires, car crashes, floods, and explosions (12.2 percent of the news), followed by sports news (11.4 percent). Then comes coverage of health (10.1 percent), government (8.7 percent), and the economy (8.5 percent). Such topics as education, the environment, the arts, and science receive little attention (from 1.3 to 3.6 percent). Weather reports, on the other hand, average 10 percent of all newscasts. "Everyone likes to talk about the weather and TV news is no exception," comment the researchers. They add: "Any type of weather, good or bad, hot or cold, wet or dry, can elicit extensive TV news coverage."

On a positive note, the report states that a growing number of journalists and viewers see the need for change. However, the study admits that such a change will not come easily because "market forces and greed may always threaten quality journalism."

YOUNG PEOPLE ASK . . .

"I know quite a few [guys] who say, 'I got a daughter who lives over here and a son who lives over there,' and the way they say it, it seems like they don't care."

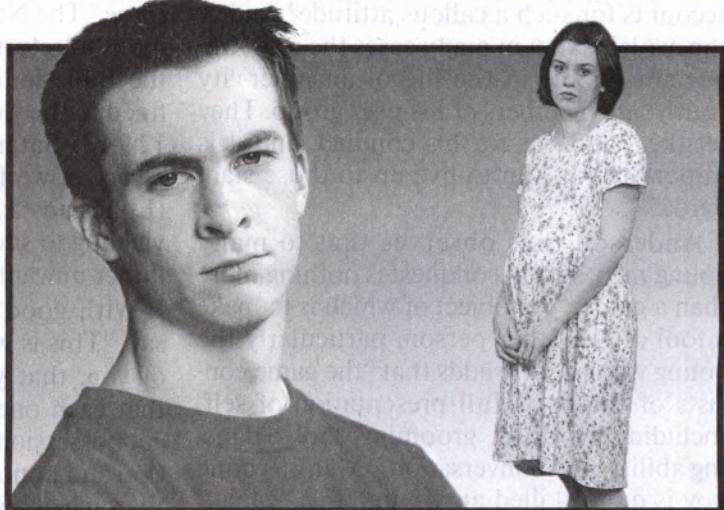
—Harold.

EVERY year nearly a million teenage girls in the United States become pregnant. The vast majority of children born to such mothers are born out of wedlock. Of these teenage mothers, 1 out of 4 will end up having a second child within the next two years. Says the *Atlantic Monthly* magazine: "If current trends continue, less than half of all children born today will live continuously with their own mother and father throughout childhood. Most American children will spend several years in a single-mother family."

Although the United States has a far higher teen pregnancy rate than other developed nations, the problem of out-of-wedlock births is global. In some European lands, such as England and France, the rates of such births are comparable to those in the United States. In some African and South American countries, the birthrate among teenage girls is nearly double that of the United States. What is fueling this epidemic?

Behind the Epidemic

To a great extent, this situation reflects the moral degradation of the "critical times" in which we live. (2 Timothy 3:1-5) In recent



Fathering Children Does It Make One a Man?

decades divorce rates have skyrocketed. Homosexual and other alternative life-styles have entered the mainstream. Young ones have been the target of a barrage of media propaganda—suggestive music and music videos, lurid magazine articles and ads, TV shows and movies that glorify casual sex. The easy availability of abortion services and birth control has also contributed to the prevalent belief among young ones that sex has no consequences. One unwed father says: "I want sex without responsibility." "Sex is fun and games," says another.

Such attitudes may be particularly widespread among poor youths. Researcher Elijah Anderson conducted extensive interviews with inner-city youths and observed: "To many boys, sex is an important symbol of local social status; sexual conquests become so many notches on one's belt." Indeed, one unwed father told *Awake!* that

sexual conquests are widely viewed as "trophies that you can put on the mantle." What accounts for such a callous attitude? Anderson explains that in many cases the most important people in the life of an inner-city youth "are members of his peer group. They set the standards for his conduct, and it is important for him to live up to those standards."

Anderson thus observes that to many young men, sexual conquest is nothing more than a game, "the object of which is to make a fool of the other person, particularly the young woman." He adds that "the game consists of the boy's full presentation of self, including his dress, grooming, looks, dancing ability, and conversation." Many a young boy is quite skilled at winning this "game." But Anderson notes: "When the girl becomes pregnant, the boy tends to retreat from her."—*Young Unwed Fathers—Changing Roles and Emerging Policies*, edited by Robert Lerman and Theodora Ooms.

God's View

But does fathering a child really make one a man? Is sex merely a game? Not according to our Creator, Jehovah God. In his Word, the Bible, God makes it clear that sex has a lofty purpose. After telling about the creation of the first man and woman, the Bible says: "God blessed them and God said to them: 'Be fruitful and become many and fill the earth.'" (Genesis 1:27, 28) It was never God's intention that children be abandoned by their fathers. He brought the first man and woman together in the permanent bond of marriage. (Genesis 2:24) It was therefore his will that every child have both a mother and a father.

Before long, though, men began taking on multiple wives. (Genesis 4:19) Genesis 6:2 tells us that even some angelic creatures "began to notice the daughters of men, that they were good-looking." After materializing as

humans, these angels "went taking wives for themselves," greedily taking "*all whom they chose*." The Noachian Flood forced these demons to return to the spirit realm. However, the Bible indicates that they are now confined to the vicinity of the earth. (Revelation 12:9-12) Satan and his demons thus exert a very powerful influence on people today. (Ephesians 2:2) Young men are unwittingly yielding to such wicked influence when they father unwanted and unloved children.

With good reason, then, the Scriptures say: "This is what God wills, the sanctifying of you, that you abstain from fornication; that each one of you should know how to get possession of his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in covetous sexual appetite such as also those nations have which do not know God; that no one go to the point of harming and encroach upon the rights of his brother in this matter, because Jehovah is one who exacts punishment for all these things."—1 Thessalonians 4:3-6.

"Abstain from fornication"? Many young men might scoff at this idea. After all, they are young, and their desires are strong! But notice that fornication involves '*harming* and encroaching upon the rights' of others. Does it not harm a girl to leave her with a baby but without the support of a husband? And what about the risks of infecting her with a sexually transmitted disease, such as genital herpes, syphilis, gonorrhea, or AIDS? True, it is sometimes possible to avoid such consequences. Even so, premarital sex still encroaches upon a girl's right to preserve a good reputation and enter marriage as a virgin. Abstaining from fornication, then, makes sense and displays maturity. True, it takes self-control and determination to 'get possession of one's own vessel' and abstain from premarital sex. But as Isaiah 48:17, 18 tells us, by means of his laws, God is 'teaching us to benefit ourselves.'



"Carry On as Men"

How, though, can a young man prove himself to be a real man? Certainly not by fathering illegitimate children. The Bible exhorts: "Stay awake, stand firm in the faith, carry on as men, grow mighty. Let all your affairs take place with love."—1 Corinthians 16:13, 14.

Notice that 'carrying on as men' involves being alert, firm in the faith, courageous, and loving.

Of course, these principles apply to men and women with equal force. But if you develop spiritual qualities like these, people will have good reason to respect and admire you as a true man! Take a lesson from the greatest man who ever lived—Jesus Christ. Just think of his manly, courageous demeanor in the face of torture and even death. But how did Jesus conduct himself with the opposite sex?

Certainly Jesus had opportunity to enjoy the company of women. He had many female followers, some of whom "were ministering to [him and his apostles] from their belongings." (Luke 8:3) He was particularly close to the two sisters of Lazarus. In fact, the Bible says that "Jesus loved Martha and her sister." (John 11:5) Did Jesus use his wit, charm, or attractive physical appearance, with which he was no doubt endowed as a perfect man, to lure these women into immoral acts? On the contrary, the Bible says

of Jesus that he "committed no sin." (1 Peter 2:22) He did not behave improperly even when a woman who was widely known as a sinner, perhaps a prostitute, "wept and started to wet his feet with her tears and she would wipe them off with the hair of her head." (Luke 7:37, 38) Jesus did not even think of taking advantage of this vulnerable woman! He demonstrated the ability to control his feelings—the mark of a true man.

He treated women, not as sex objects, but as individuals worthy of love and respect.

If you are a young Christian man, following the example of Christ—and not that of some of your peers—will prevent you from 'harming and encroaching upon the rights' of someone. It will also protect you from experiencing the sad tragedy of fathering an illegitimate child. True, others may tease you for abstaining from fornication. But in the long run, gaining God's favor will benefit you more than gaining the temporary favor of your peers.—Proverbs 27:11.

What, though, if a youth has lived an immoral life in the past but has already turned away from his immoral course and truly repented? If so, like repentant King David, who also engaged in sexual misconduct, he can be assured of God's forgiveness. (2 Samuel 11:2-5; 12:13; Psalm 51:1, 2) But if an out-of-wedlock pregnancy has resulted, a young man may still have some serious decisions to make. Should he marry the girl? Does he have any responsibilities toward his child? A future article will deal with these questions.



Christian Love Versus a Volcano

BY AWAKE! CORRESPONDENT IN CAMEROON

A GIANT exploded in fury last year in the West African country of Cameroon. Mount Cameroon is a volcano towering 13,353 feet above sea level. This eruption—the mountain's fifth during the 20th century—was reportedly its most violent and serious to date.

The disaster first struck on Saturday afternoon, March 27, 1999. Eyewitnesses in the town of Buea, located at the foot of the mountain, reported that walls, houses, and even trees shook violently. The following evening, about half past eight, the strongest, most violent tremor shook the region. It was felt 40 miles away in Douala. The headline of *Le Messager* of Tuesday, March 30, 1999, declared: "Eruption of Mount Cameroon—250,000 Persons Face Fire." It continued: "The earth trembled 50 times in two days; already 4 craters have appeared; hundreds of houses destroyed; the presidential palace in Buea in fragments."

Some 80 of Jehovah's Witnesses live in Buea. Many homes were damaged beyond repair, including one used as a Kingdom Hall. However, no lives were lost.

Christian Love In Action

Christian love quickly went into action to offset the devastation caused by this furious giant. A relief committee was appointed, the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses arranged to provide some much-needed funds, and hundreds of Witnesses readily made loving sacri-



Rivers of molten lava caused much devastation

fices of their time, energy, and money.

Congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses sent food supplies. One Witness donated 1,000 cement blocks. Another arranged for the purchase of aluminum roofing at a low cost. Yet another walked ten miles to obtain lumber. A young man who had saved money to pay the bride-price to his prospective in-laws postponed his wedding and used the money to repair his chain saw. Off he went into the forest, where in three weeks he cut enough logs for an entire house! Strong young Christian brothers carried the timber on their heads to a place three miles away, where a truck collected it.

The reconstruction got under way on April 24 when 60 volunteers converged on the disaster site.



During the following weekends, that number swelled to a peak of 200. Three Witnesses with full-time jobs came at the end of their regular workday and built until well past midnight. A Witness from Douala worked at his secular job all morning; then he rode his motorcycle 40 miles and worked until midnight before returning home. Six houses were completed in less than two months. Meanwhile, the Buea Congregation continued to hold meetings in a private home, although meeting attendance was about double the number of congregation members.

During this same period, the relief committee distributed more than 40,000 tablets to purify contaminated water and provided hospital care for about ten persons suffering from respiratory ailments caused by toxic gas and volcanic ash. What was the reac-

tion of those who witnessed this Christian love?

Christian Love Wins Out

After observing one of the houses built by the brothers, a man from the Provincial Delegation of Agriculture said: "The house is a great witness in itself . . . , an indication of love." A teacher commented: "I have never seen such a thing in my life. . . . This is indeed a sign of true Christianity."

Those who benefited personally were equally eloquent. Timothy, aged 65 and sickly, wrote: "Each time we look at our new house, tears of joy fill our eyes. We keep thanking Jehovah for what he has done for us." A widow who is not one of Jehovah's Witnesses was left destitute along with her four children when their home collapsed. Then, those hired to help her stole her roofing material. The Witness volunteers came to her aid. She said: "I do not know how I can say thanks. My heart is full of joy." Elizabeth, the wife of a Christian elder, observed: "I am happy that there is love in Jehovah's organization. It shows that we are serving the living God."

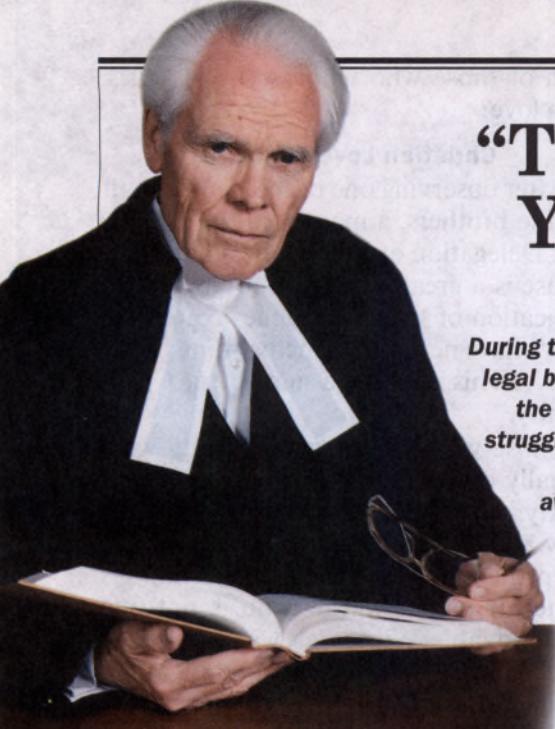
The volcano's blast was a mighty one, but it could not extinguish the Christian love of this brotherhood. As the apostle Paul was inspired to write, "love never fails."—1 Corinthians 13:8.



Volunteers worked hard to restore damaged homes

Mount Cameroon





"THE BATTLE IS NOT YOURS, BUT GOD'S"

AS TOLD BY W. GLEN HOW

During the past six decades, Jehovah's Witnesses have fought many legal battles in Canada. Their victories have not gone unnoticed by the legal community. For the part that I played in some of these struggles, I was recently presented with the Award for Courageous Advocacy, by the American College of Trial Lawyers. At the award ceremony, it was stated that cases involving Jehovah's Witnesses "formed important bulwarks against state excess . . . , for they created a judicially recognized implied bill of rights, one that recognized and protected the freedoms of all Canadians." Let me share with you details of some of these court cases and tell you how I came to be involved in law and with Jehovah's Witnesses.

IN 1924, George Rix, a Bible Student, as Jehovah's Witnesses were then called, visited my parents in Toronto, Canada. My mother, Bessie How, a tiny woman, invited him in for a discussion. I was five years old, and my brother, Joe, was three.

Mother soon began to attend meetings of the Bible Students in Toronto. In 1929 she became a pioneer, or full-time minister, and continued in that activity until 1969, when she finished her earthly course. Her determined and tireless ministry set a fine example for us and helped many to come to a knowledge of Bible truth.

My father, Frank How, was a quiet man who at first opposed Mother's religious activities. However, she wisely invited traveling ministers, such as George Young, to visit and talk with him. In time, Father's attitude mellowed. As he observed the beneficial effect of Bible truth on his family, he became very supportive, although he never did become a Witness.

Making a Decision to Serve God

In 1936, I graduated from high school. During my teen years, I was not very interested in spiritual things. We were in the midst of the Great Depression, and job prospects were bleak. So I went to the University of Toronto. In 1940, I decided to go to law school. This decision did not surprise my mother. When I was a child, she had often said in exasperation: "That little rascal will argue about anything! He will probably turn out to be a lawyer!"

On July 4, 1940, just before I began law school, the Canadian government banned Jehovah's Witnesses without warning. This was the turning point in my life. When the full power of government targeted this tiny organization of innocent, humble people, it convinced me that Jehovah's Witnesses were Jesus' true followers. Just as he had prophesied, they were "objects of hatred by all the nations on account of [his] name." (Matthew 24:9) I resolved to serve the Divine Power

behind this organization. On February 10, 1941, I symbolized my dedication to Jehovah God by water baptism.

I wanted to get right into the pioneer work. However, Jack Nathan, who was then taking a lead in the preaching work in Canada, encouraged me to complete my legal training. So I did, and I graduated in May 1943, after which I started pioneering. In August, I was invited to serve at the Watch Tower Society's branch office in Toronto and assist with the legal problems that Jehovah's Witnesses were facing. The following month I was admitted to the bar in Ontario, Canada.

Legally Defending the Good News

World War II was raging, and the Witnesses were still banned in Canada. Men and women were being imprisoned simply for being Jehovah's Witnesses. Children were being expelled from school, some even being placed in foster homes. This was because they refused to engage in nationalistic forms of worship, such as saluting the flag or singing the national anthem. Professor William Kaplan, who wrote a book entitled *State and Salvation: The Jehovah's Witnesses and Their Fight for Civil Rights*, said that the

"Witnesses were publicly reviled and the object of both state action and private attacks by an intolerant government and an openly hostile citizenry caught up in the passions and patriotism of the war."

The Witnesses had been seeking to get the ban removed but without success. Suddenly, on October 14, 1943, it was lifted. Yet, Witnesses were still in prisons and labor camps, children were still denied access to public schooling, and the ban continued against the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society and the International Bible Students Association, a corporation that held title to our property in Toronto.

In late 1943, I traveled to New York with Percy Chapman, who was the Canada branch servant, to consult with Nathan Knorr, then president of the Watch Tower Society, and Hayden Covington, the Society's vice president and legal counsel. Brother Covington's legal experience was immense. He eventually won an astounding 36 out of 45 appeals before the Supreme Court of the United States.

Relief came slowly to the Witnesses in Canada. In 1944 the branch property in Toronto was restored, and those who had been serving there before the ban were able to



**Hayden Covington,
legal counsel**

**With my younger
brother and
our parents**

With Nathan Knorr

return. In 1945 the highest court for the province of Ontario declared that children may not be forced to share in exercises to which they have conscientious objections. It ordered that the expelled schoolchildren be readmitted to school. Finally, in 1946 the Canadian government released all Witnesses from labor camps. Under Brother Covington's guidance, I learned to fight these issues with courage and determination but, above all, with reliance on Jehovah.

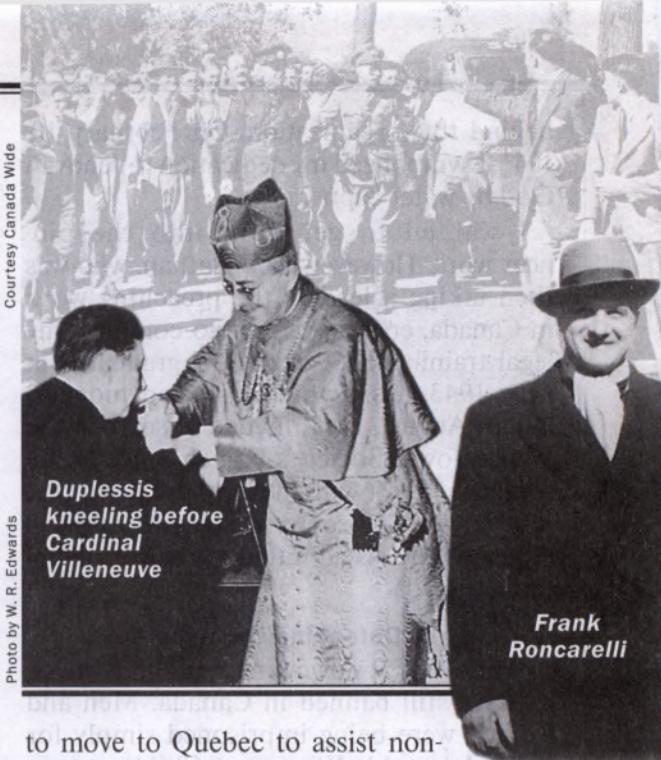
The Battle of Quebec

While the religious freedom of Jehovah's Witnesses was now respected in most parts of Canada, there was one exception—the French Catholic province of Quebec. This province had been directly controlled by the Roman Catholic Church for more than 300 years. Schools, hospitals, and most public services were either run by the clergy or controlled by them. There was even a throne for the Catholic cardinal beside the speaker's chair in the Quebec legislature!

The premier and attorney general of Quebec, Maurice Duplessis, was a dictator who, according to Quebec historian Gérard Peltier, inflicted upon the province "a twenty-year reign of lies, injustice and corruption, the systematic misuse of power, the sway of small minds and the triumph of stupidity." Duplessis consolidated his political power by working hand in glove with Roman Catholic Cardinal Villeneuve.

By the early 1940's, there were 300 Witnesses in Quebec. Many, including my brother Joe, were pioneers from other parts of Canada. As the preaching work increased in Quebec, the local police, under pressure from the clergy, retaliated by harassing the Witnesses with repeated arrests and by misapplying commercial bylaws to our religious activities.

I was traveling between Toronto and Quebec so often that I was eventually assigned



to move to Quebec to assist non-Witness lawyers who were representing our Christian brothers and sisters. Every day my first job was to find out how many had been arrested the day before and hurry to the local courthouse to arrange bail. Fortunately, a well-to-do Witness, Frank Roncarelli, supplied bail in many of these cases.

From 1944 to 1946, the number of prosecutions for alleged bylaw violations soared from 40 to 800! Not only were public authorities arresting and harassing Witnesses continuously but unruly mobs, incited by the Catholic clergy, were also attacking them.

On November 2 and 3, 1946, a special meeting was held in Montreal to address this crisis. Brother Knorr gave the last talk, entitled "What Shall We Do?" All in attendance were delighted to hear his answer—he read aloud the now historic document *Quebec's Burning Hate for God and Christ and Freedom Is the Shame of All Canada*. It was a sizzling four-page tract—a detailed exposé with names, dates, and places of clergy-instigated riots,

QUEBEC'S

Burning hate

For God and Christ and Freedom
Is the shame of all Canada



Aimé Boucher



police brutality, arrests, and mob violence against Jehovah's Witnesses in Quebec. Distribution began across Canada just 12 days later.

Within days, Duplessis announced publicly a "war without mercy" against Jehovah's Witnesses. But unwittingly he worked in our favor. How so? By directing that anyone distributing *Quebec's Burning Hate* be charged with sedition—a very serious crime that would lead us out of the Quebec courts and into the Supreme Court of Canada. In his rage, Duplessis recklessly ignored that consequence. Then he personally ordered the cancellation of the liquor license of Frank Roncarelli, who had been our main source of bail. With no wine available, Brother Roncarelli's fine restaurant in Montreal was closed in a matter of months, and he was financially ruined.

Arrests multiplied. Instead of 800 prosecutions, we soon faced 1,600. Many lawyers and judges complained that all these cases of Jehovah's Witnesses were clogging the Quebec courts. In response, we would suggest an

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easy remedy: Let the police arrest the criminals instead of the Christians. That would solve the problem!

Two courageous Jewish lawyers, A. L. Stein of Montreal and Sam S. Bard of Quebec City, assisted by acting for us in many cases, especially before I was admitted to the Quebec bar in 1949. Pierre Elliott Trudeau, later prime minister of Canada, wrote that Jehovah's Witnesses in Quebec had "been mocked, persecuted, and hated by our entire society; but they have managed by legal means to fight Church, government, nation, police, and public opinion."

The attitude of the Quebec courts was manifest in the treatment of my brother, Joe. He was charged with disturbing the peace. Recorder Jean Mercier sentenced Joe to the maximum penalty of 60 days in jail. Then, losing control completely, he shouted from the bench that he wished he could send Joe to prison for life!

One newspaper said that Mercier gave orders to Quebec police to "arrest on sight every known or suspected Witness." Such behavior only proved the truthfulness of the accusations in our tract *Quebec's Burning Hate*. The following are some typical headlines of Canadian newspapers outside Quebec: "The Dark Ages Return to Quebec" (*The Toronto Star*), "Return of the Inquisition" (*The Globe and Mail*, Toronto), "The Stench of Fascism" (*The Gazette*, Glace Bay, Nova Scotia).

Defending the Charge of Sedition

In 1947, I assisted Mr. Stein in our first sedition case to be tried, that of Aimé Boucher. Aimé had distributed some tracts near his home. At Aimé's trial we proved that *Quebec's Burning Hate* contained no falsehoods but that it only used strong language to complain about atrocities against Jehovah's Witnesses. We showed that no charges had ever been laid against those who had

committed these atrocities. Aimé had been convicted simply for publicizing them. The prosecution's position came down to this: It had become a crime to tell the truth!

The Quebec courts had relied upon a vague, 350-year-old definition of "sedition," which suggested that anyone criticizing the government could be convicted of a crime. Duplessis too relied on that definition in order to suppress criticism of his regime. But in 1950 the Supreme Court of Canada accepted our submission that in a modern democracy, "sedition" requires incitement to violence or insurrection against the government. *Quebec's Burning Hate* contained no such incitements and was therefore a lawful form of free speech. With this one momentous decision, all 123 sedition cases evaporated! I saw firsthand how Jehovah gave the victory.

Battling Censorship

Quebec City had a bylaw that prohibited distribution of literature without a permit from the chief of police. This was direct censorship and therefore a violation of religious liberty. Laurier Saumur, then serving as a traveling overseer, had been jailed for three months under this bylaw and faced several other charges under it.

In 1947 a civil suit was filed in Brother Saumur's name to enjoin Quebec City from enforcing its bylaw against Jehovah's Witnesses. The Quebec courts ruled against us, and again we appealed to the Supreme Court of Canada. In October 1953, after a seven-day hearing before all nine judges of that Court, our request for an injunction was granted. The Court recognized that the public distribution of printed Bible sermons is a fundamental part of the Christian worship of Jehovah's Witnesses and therefore is constitutionally protected from censorship.

Thus the *Boucher* case decided that what Jehovah's Witnesses were saying was lawful;

but the *Saumur* decision established *how* and *where* it could be said. The victory in the *Saumur* case led to the dismissal of over 1,100 bylaw charges in Quebec. More than 500 charges in Montreal were also withdrawn for total lack of evidence. Soon the slate was clean—there were no prosecutions left in Quebec!

Duplessis' Final Attack

Having no laws left to use against Jehovah's Witnesses, in early January 1954, Duplessis introduced into the legislature a new law, Bill No. 38, which was described by the media as the 'anti-Jehovah's Witnesses law.' It provided that those who *suspected* that any person *intended* to make a statement that was "abusive or insulting" could file a complaint without the need to provide any evidence. As attorney general, Duplessis could then get an injunction to prohibit the accused person from making any public statement. Once the injunction was issued against one individual, all members of that person's church were equally prohibited from speaking. In addition, all the Bibles and religious literature belonging to that church would be seized and destroyed, and all of its places of worship would be closed until the case was decided, which might take years.

Bill No. 38 copied a law devised in the 15th century during the Spanish Inquisition under Torquemada. The accused person and all his associates lost all civil rights without any proof of wrongdoing. Regarding Bill No. 38, the press announced that the provincial police had been instructed to close all the Kingdom Halls of Jehovah's Witnesses and to seize and destroy their Bibles and other literature. Faced with this monstrous threat, Jehovah's Witnesses removed all their religious publications from the province. They did, however, continue their public preaching work but with just their personal copies of the Bible.

The bill became law on January 28, 1954. On January 29, at 9:00 a.m., I was at the courthouse door to file an action on behalf of all of Jehovah's Witnesses in the province of Quebec, seeking a permanent injunction against this law before Duplessis could even use it. The judge did not grant a temporary injunction because Bill No. 38 had not yet been used. But he said that if the government tried to use it, I could come back to him for protection. The judge's action thus had the same effect as a temporary injunction, for as soon as Duplessis even tried to use this law, he would be stopped!

During the next week, we waited to see whether the police would take any action under this new law. Nothing happened! To find out why not, I arranged a test. Two pioneers, Victoria Dougaluk (later Steele) and Helen Dougaluk (later Simcox), went from house to house with *literature* in Trois-Rivières, Duplessis' hometown. Again, no reaction. While the sisters were so engaged, I sent Laurier Saumur to telephone the provincial police. Without identifying himself, he complained that Jehovah's Witnesses were preaching and that the police were not enforcing Duplessis' new law.

Sheepishly, the officer in charge said: "Yes, we know that the law was passed; but the next day Jehovah's Witnesses got an injunction against us, so there is nothing we can do." Immediately, we moved our literature back into the province, and during the ten years that this case worked its way up through the courts, our preaching work went ahead successfully.

In addition to the injunction, we also sought to have Bill No. 38 declared unconstitutional. To prove that this law was aimed squarely at Jehovah's Witnesses, we decided on a bold move—to send Duplessis himself a subpoena, compelling him to attend the trial and give evidence. I cross-examined him

for two and a half hours. I repeatedly confronted him with his public declarations of "war without mercy on the Witnesses of Jehovah" and his statement that Bill No. 38 would be the end of Jehovah's Witnesses in Quebec. Enraged, he attacked me personally: "You are a very impudent young man!"

"Mr. Duplessis," I replied, "if we were discussing personalities, I might have a few remarks of my own. But since we have business to attend to, would you please explain to the court why you did not answer the last question?"

In 1964, I argued the Bill No. 38 case before the Supreme Court of Canada. But they declined to rule on its constitutionality because the law had never been used. However, by that time Duplessis was dead, and no one cared about Bill No. 38 any longer. It was never used against Jehovah's Witnesses or anyone else.

Shortly before Duplessis died in 1959, he was ordered by the Supreme Court of Canada to pay damages to Brother Roncarelli for having illegally canceled his liquor license. Since that time many of the people of Quebec have become very friendly. The number of Witnesses there has grown from 300 in 1943 to over 33,000 today, according to a government census. Jehovah's Witnesses are now listed as the fourth-largest religious group in the province. I do not regard these legal victories or the success of the ministry of Jehovah's Witnesses as achievements of any human. Rather, it has proved to me that Jehovah gives the victory, for the battle is his and not ours.—2 Chronicles 20:15.

Changes of Circumstances

In 1954, I married a charming pioneer from England, Margaret Biegel, and we took up the pioneer work together. I continued to conduct court cases on behalf of Jehovah's Witnesses in both Canada and the United States and to serve as consultant on some

cases in Europe and Australia. Margaret became my secretary and was an invaluable support for many years. In 1984, I returned, along with Margaret, to live at the Canada branch, and I helped to reestablish a Legal Department. Sadly, in 1987, Margaret died of cancer.

After my mother's death in 1969, my brother Joe and his wife, Elsie, who had both been trained as missionaries in the ninth class of the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead, took my father into their home and cared for him until his death 16 years later. In this self-sacrificing way, they enabled me to stay in the full-time service, and for this I shall always be grateful.

Continued Battles

Over the years, the legal battles of Jehovah's Witnesses have changed. Many cases involved securing property and permits for Kingdom Halls and Assembly Halls. Others were child-custody disputes in which non-Witness parents used religious bigotry either to gain sole custody or to restrict Witness parents from sharing beneficial religious beliefs and practices with their own children.

An American lawyer, Linda Manning, came to the Canada branch in 1989 to provide temporary legal assistance. In November of that year, we were married and have been happily serving together here since then.

In the 1990's, John Burns, a fellow lawyer here at the Canada branch, and I were in Japan together and helped our Christian brothers there to win a constitutional case involving the freedom of a student not to



With fellow lawyers John Burns and my wife Linda

participate in martial arts classes required by his school. We also had a victory in a case regarding the right of an adult to refuse a blood transfusion.

Then in 1995 and 1996, Linda and I were privileged to spend five months in Singapore because of the ban

against Jehovah's Witnesses in that land and the resulting prosecutions. I defended 64 men, women, and youths facing criminal charges for attending Christian meetings and possessing Bibles and religious literature. We did not win any of these cases, but we saw how Jehovah strengthened his faithful servants to endure with integrity and joy.

Grateful to Have Had a Share

At the age of 80, I rejoice to be in good health and to be able to continue to have a share in fighting the legal battles of Jehovah's people. I am still ever ready to go to court and make a stand for what is right. It is my pleasure to have seen the number of Witnesses in Canada grow from 4,000 in 1940 to 111,000 at the present time. People and events come and go, but Jehovah keeps moving his people constantly forward, ensuring that they prosper spiritually.

Are there problems? Yes, but the Word of Jehovah reassures us: "Any weapon whatever that will be formed against you will have no success." (Isaiah 54:17) Based on the more than 56 years I have spent in the full-time ministry 'defending and legally establishing the good news,' I can testify to how true Isaiah's prophecy is!—Philippians 1:7.

GENETICALLY MODIFIED FOOD Is It Safe for You?

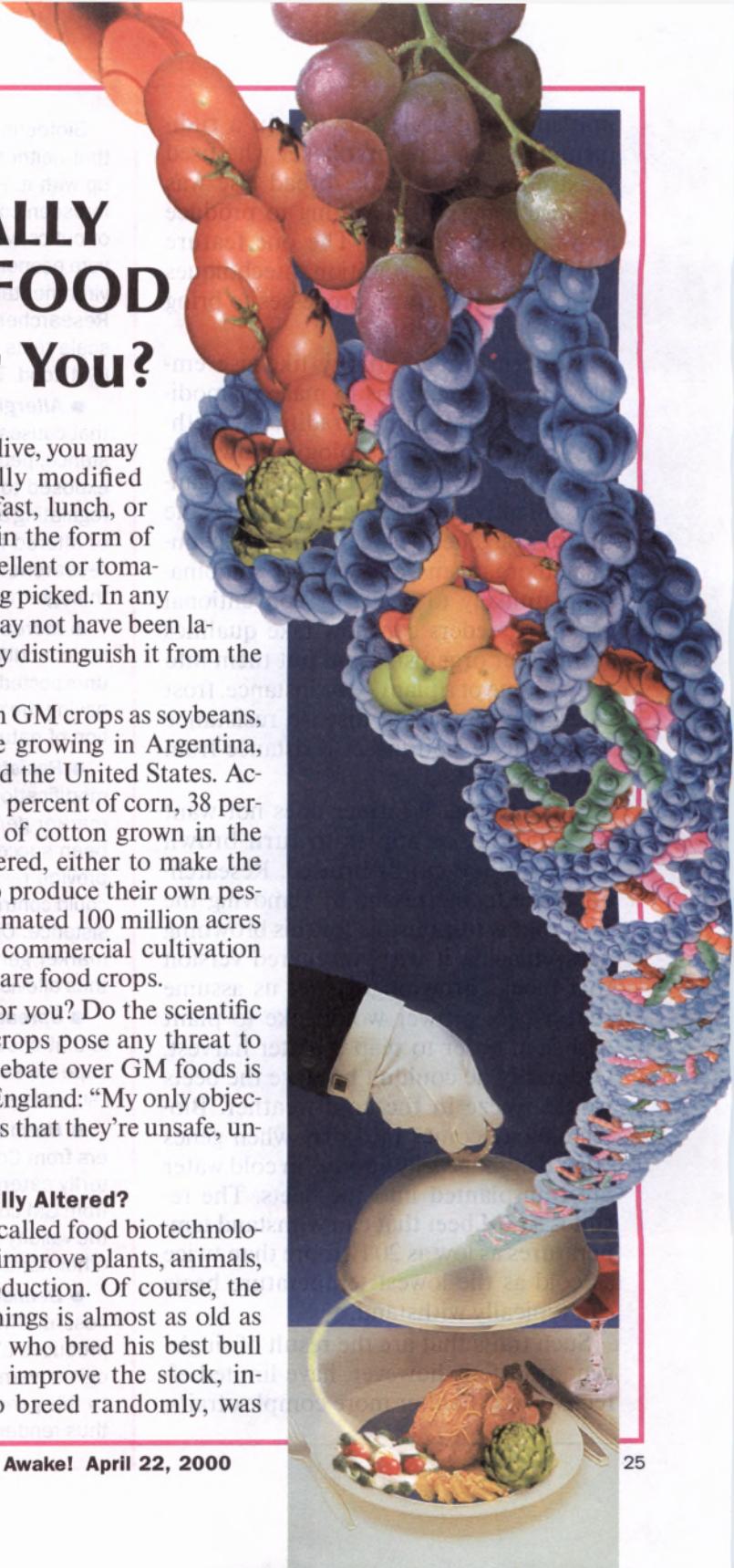
DEENDING on where you live, you may have had some genetically modified (GM) food in your breakfast, lunch, or dinner today. It might have been in the form of potatoes with a built-in insect repellent or tomatoes that stay firm longer after being picked. In any case, the GM food or ingredient may not have been labeled, and your palate could hardly distinguish it from the natural one.

Even as you read these lines, such GM crops as soybeans, maize, rapeseed, and potatoes are growing in Argentina, Brazil, Canada, China, Mexico, and the United States. According to one report, "by 1998, 25 percent of corn, 38 percent of soybeans, and 45 percent of cotton grown in the United States were genetically altered, either to make the crops resistant to weedkillers or to produce their own pesticides." By the end of 1999, an estimated 100 million acres were covered with GM crops in commercial cultivation worldwide, though not all of these are food crops.

Is genetically altered food safe for you? Do the scientific techniques used to produce GM crops pose any threat to the environment? In Europe the debate over GM foods is heating up. Said a protester from England: "My only objection to genetically modified foods is that they're unsafe, unwanted and unnecessary."

How Is Food Genetically Altered?

The science behind GM food is called food biotechnology—the use of modern genetics to improve plants, animals, and microorganisms for food production. Of course, the concept of tinkering with living things is almost as old as agriculture itself. The first farmer who bred his best bull with the best cow in his herd to improve the stock, instead of allowing the animals to breed randomly, was



Potential Dangers?

Biotechnology has moved at such a dizzying pace that neither the law nor regulating agencies can keep up with it. Research can scarcely begin to prevent unforeseen consequences from arising. A growing chorus of critics warn of unintended results, ranging from severe economic dislocation for the world's farmers to environmental destruction and threats to human health. Researchers warn that there are no long-term, large-scale tests to prove the safety of genetically modified (GM) food. They point to a number of potential dangers.

implementing biotechnology in a rudimentary sense. The first baker who used yeast enzymes to make bread rise was likewise using a living thing to produce an improved product. The one feature common to these traditional techniques was the use of natural processes to bring about changes in foods.

Modern biotechnology likewise employs living organisms to make or modify products. But unlike traditional methods, modern biotechnology allows for modifying the genetic material of organisms directly and precisely. It enables the transfer of genes between completely unrelated organisms, allowing for combinations unlikely to occur by conventional means. Breeders can now take qualities from other organisms and put them into the genome of a plant—for instance, frost tolerance from fish, disease resistance from viruses, and insect resistance from soil bacteria.

Suppose that a farmer does not want his potatoes or apples to turn brown when they are cut or bruised. Researchers come to the rescue by removing the gene that is responsible for this browning and replacing it with an altered version that blocks browning. Or let us assume that a beet grower would like to plant earlier in order to reap a better harvest. Ordinarily he couldn't because the beets would freeze in the cold weather. Biotechnology comes into play when genes from fish that easily survive in cold water are transplanted into the beets. The result is a GM beet that can withstand temperatures as low as 20°F, more than twice as cold as the lowest temperature beets can typically withstand.

Such traits that are the result of single-gene transfers, however, have limited effectiveness. To alter more complex traits,

● **Allergic reaction.** If a gene producing a protein that causes allergic responses ended up in corn, for instance, people who suffer from food allergies could be exposed to grave danger. Despite the fact that food-regulating agencies require companies to report whether altered food contains any problem proteins, some researchers fear that unknown allergens could slip through the system.

● **Increased toxicity.** Some experts believe that genetic modification may enhance natural plant toxins in unexpected ways. When a gene is switched on, besides having the desired effect, it may also set off the production of natural toxins.

● **Resistance to antibiotics.** As part of the genetic modification of plants, scientists use what are called marker genes to determine if the desired gene has been successfully embedded. As most marker genes provide resistance to antibiotics, critics fear that this could contribute to the growing problem of antibiotic resistance. Other scientists, however, counter that such marker genes are genetically scrambled before use, thus alleviating this danger.

● **Spread of "superweeds."** One of the biggest fears is that once modified crops are planted, genes will escape via seeds and pollen to weedy relatives, creating "superweeds" that are able to resist herbicides.

● **Harm to other organisms.** In May 1999, researchers from Cornell University reported that monarch butterfly caterpillars that ate leaves dusted with pollen from GM corn sickened and died. While some question the validity of this study, there is still some concern that other nontargeted species could be harmed.

● **Demise of safe pesticides.** Among the most successful GM crops are some that contain a gene that produces a protein toxic to insect pests. However, biologists warn that exposing pests to the toxin produced by this gene will help the pests develop resistance and thus render pesticides useless.

such as growth rate or drought resistance, is quite another matter. Modern science is still unable to manipulate whole groups of genes. After all, many of these genes have not even been discovered yet.

A New Green Revolution?

Even the limited genetic modification of crops fills biotechnology's proponents with optimism. They say that GM crops promise a new green revolution. A leader of the biotechnology industry declares that genetic engineering is "a promising tool in the effort to provide more food" to a global population that grows by about 230,000 people every day.

Already, such crops have helped to hold down the cost of food production. Food plants have been fortified with a gene that produces a natural pesticide, eliminating the need to spray clouds of toxic chemicals over acres of crops. Modified crops in the works include beans and grains with much higher levels of protein—of no small benefit to poorer parts of the world. Such "super-plants" could pass their useful new genes and traits on to succeeding generations, yielding more bountiful harvests on marginal land in poor, overpopulated countries.

"There is certainly much to be said for improving the lot of the farmers of this world," said the president of a leading biotechnology firm. "And we'll do that—by using biotechnology to do on the molecular and single-gene level what plant breeders have been doing with 'whole plants' for centuries. We will create better products, that meet specific needs and will do it faster than ever before."

However, according to agricultural scientists, the rush to promote genetic engineering as a solution to world food shortages is undermining current research on crops. Although it is less exotic, this research is more

effective and could also benefit the poorer parts of the world. "We shouldn't be driven by this unproven technology when there are many more efficient solutions to food problems," says Hans Herren, an expert on fighting crop diseases.

Ethical Concerns

On top of possible public-health and environmental risks, some feel that the genetic modification of crops and other living organisms presents moral and ethical challenges. Scientist and activist Douglas Parr observed: "Genetic engineering crosses a fundamental threshold in the human manipulation of the planet, changing the nature of life itself." Jeremy Rifkin, author of the book *The Biotech Century*, put it this way: "Once you can cross all biological boundaries, you begin to see a species as simply genetic information that is fluid. That brings us into a whole new way to conceptualise not only our relationship with nature, but how we use it." He therefore asked: "Does life have intrinsic or just utility value? What is our obligation to future generations? What is our sense of responsibility to the creatures with which we coexist?"

Others, Prince Charles of England included, argue that transferring genes between utterly unrelated species "takes us into the realms that belong to God, and to God alone." Students of the Bible firmly believe that God "is the source of life." (Psalm 36:9) However, there is no real evidence that God disapproves of the selective breeding of animals and plants, something that has helped our planet to sustain the billions of people living on it. Only time will tell if modern biotechnology will harm humans and the environment. If biotechnology really does encroach upon "the realms that belong to God," then—out of love and concern for humankind—he can reverse such developments.

WATCHING THE WORLD

Tobacco Company Admits Smoking Causes Cancer

After decades of disputing the findings of various medical authorities, Philip Morris, the largest cigarette manufacturer in the United States, now acknowledges that smoking causes lung cancer and other deadly diseases. A company press release says: "There is an overwhelming medical and scientific consensus that cigarette smoking causes lung cancer, heart disease, emphysema and other serious diseases in smokers." *The New York Times* notes that "previously, the company had contended . . . that smoking was a 'risk factor' or a 'causal factor' in diseases like lung cancer, not that it caused the diseases." Yet, despite this admission, the company says: "We are very proud of our cigarette brands and the advertising campaigns that have supported them over the years."

Vanishing Landmarks

Grain elevators are slowly disappearing from Canada's western prairies. The peak number of grain elevators was reached in 1933 when there were 5,758 dotting the countryside. Since then the number has plummeted to 1,052. The reason? One person who witnessed the demolition of a grain elevator lamented: "Times have changed so much. Agriculture is now agribusiness. The family farm is dying. So are the elevators." "Prairies without eleva-

tors would be a little like Venice without canals, New York without skyscrapers or Britain without pubs," reports *Harrowsmith Country Life* magazine. Special-interest groups are working to preserve what is considered to be an architectural symbol of the Canadian plains. One grain elevator was converted into a museum and another into a dinner theater.

Never Enough Time



Throughout Europe more and more people are feeling pressed for time, reports the German newspaper *Gießener Allgemeine*. The same is true whether people are working outside the home, doing housework, or enjoying leisure time. "People sleep less, eat faster, and feel more rushed on the job than 40 years ago," says sociologist Manfred Garhammer, of Bamberg University. He found that daily life has accelerated in all the European nations that he has studied. Laborsaving household devices and a reduction in hours at work have not brought about any "leisure society" or "time prosperity." Instead, on average, time for meals has been reduced by 20 minutes and for a night's rest by 40 minutes.

Australia's Gambling Addiction

"Gambling is now a serious health issue in Australia, directly affecting at least 330,000 chronic gamblers," reports *The Australian*. According to the paper, more than 1 out of every 5 electronic gambling machines worldwide is located in Australia, where 82 percent of the adult population gamble. A commission investigating Australia's gambling industry found that 2.3 percent of adult Australians have a serious gambling problem. Of these, 37 percent had contemplated suicide, more than 11 percent had attempted suicide, and 90 percent said that they were severely depressed as a result of their gambling. The commission called for an overhaul of gambling operations and has suggested that warning signs be posted in gambling lounges.

Combating Stress

Do you feel stressed? As reported in *El Universal*, the Mexican Institute of Social Security suggests the following guidelines to help combat tension. Sleep as much as your body demands—between six and ten hours a day. Eat a complete and balanced breakfast, an average-size dinner, and a light supper. Also, experts widely recommend that you reduce your intake of foods high in fat, limit the amount of salt you use and, after age 40, reduce your consumption of milk and sugar. Try to find time for quiet meditation. Reduce stress further by maintaining contact with nature.

Toxic Beauty

A cosmetic procedure that involves injecting the deadly toxin botulin is now being used to eliminate facial wrinkles, reports *The Toronto Star*. The toxin paralyzes selected facial muscles, which in a few days lose their tone, causing wrinkles to flatten out. The treatment lasts for about four months and leaves a patient with a more relaxed, youthful appearance. There is a toll exacted, however. The report cautions that "users lose their wrinkles, but they also lose their ability to raise their brows in surprise, to have a smile spread up to their eyes, [and] to frown." It is a matter of being prepared to "paralyze parts of your face for the beauty of youth," the paper says.

"Which Side Is God On?"

"I don't mean to demean anyone's beliefs," writes sports columnist Sam Smith, "but hasn't this public display of piety gone far enough in sports? Why are football players praying after scoring a [touchdown]?" The same players who huddle in prayer after a game can also be seen "cursing out reporters" in the locker room or "trying to injure players" during the heat of a sports contest, notes Smith. Thinking that God favors one team over another "seems to demean the belief in God," he says. Thus, his article concludes: "Let's not make sports into more than what they are."

Dangerous Occupations

What are the ten most dangerous occupations? According

to figures compiled by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, timber cutters topped the list with nearly 129 fatalities per 100,000 workers, while fishers and water transportation workers followed close behind with some 123 and 94 deaths respectively per 100,000 workers. Listed in descending order, other risky occupations are those of airplane pilots, structural metal workers, miners, construction laborers, taxi-cab drivers, truck drivers, and farm workers. However, "the overall rate of fatal occupational injuries—4.7 per 100,000 employed—has decreased by about 10 percent" in the last five years, reports *Scientific American*.

Clever Birds!



"Sparrows in Calcutta stay clear of malaria," reports the French nature magazine *Terre Sauvage*. Experts have noted that with the increase of malaria, sparrows are now flying farther afield to search for leaves of a tree known for its high concentrations of naturally occurring quinine, which is an anti-malarial medicine. In addition to using the leaves to line their nests, the birds apparently eat them. "Sparrows, fond of cities and afraid of malaria, seem to have found a way to protect themselves," notes the magazine.

Dirty Money

More than 99 percent of London's bank notes are tainted with cocaine, reports the *Guardian* newspaper. Experts tested 500 bank notes and found that 496 contained traces of the drug. Contamination begins when notes are handled by drug users. These notes, in turn, contaminate other currency when they are sorted by bank machines or stored together. Cocaine has become Britain's fastest-growing recreational drug among those aged 20 to 24. According to the London-based Youth Awareness Project, teenagers use cocaine because they feel that it enhances their reputation and increases their power.

"Most Common Blood-Borne Infection"

"At least 2.7 million Americans carry the hepatitis C virus, making it the most common blood-borne infection in the United States," says an Associated Press report. Hepatitis C is spread from person to person primarily by means of sexual contact or through infected blood. Those most at risk of contracting the disease are intravenous drug users who share needles and people who engage in unprotected sex. The infection can also be spread, however, by tattooists and acupuncturists who do not properly clean their equipment. People who have received blood transfusions are also at risk. Every year, about 1,000 people in the United States receive liver transplants as a result of liver failure caused by the virus.

FROM OUR READERS

Ecological Sanctuary Thank you for the article "The Pantanal—A Fascinating Sanctuary." (September 8, 1999) In my imagination I accompanied the writer to that fascinating location, enjoying the peace and serenity that exist there. I anxiously await the day when God will extend similar conditions to the whole planet.

M. A., Italy

Diabetes I have just finished reading for the second time the article "Your Daughter Has Diabetes!" (September 22, 1999) Ten months ago I learned that I have Type 1 diabetes. I had always been a healthy person, serving as a pioneer, a full-time evangelizer, since the age of 17. I have had to make many adjustments in my life during the past few months. I have to use an insulin pump, and the expense of caring for my illness has forced me to cease pioneering. But I thank you for printing such articles that remind us that others are going through similar trials.

B. F., United States

My four-year-old son has suffered from diabetes since he was two. The feelings that Sonya and her family expressed in the article are well-known to us. We are thankful for the loving Christian brotherhood that has helped us to cope.

C. R., Moldova

For some time I have been hoping for encouraging reading material on this subject. I am 17 and have been living with diabetes since I was 5 years old. At times, it has been very challenging to cope with this disease. But I was thrilled to have a simple article that I can show to my family and all my friends that will answer their questions and broaden their knowledge about diabetes.

K. W., Canada

Unsafe? I read a very nice article entitled "The Women Have Had a Large Share."

(June 22, 1999) I was a bit surprised to see that the women construction workers did not have on any eye protection.

R. L., United States

Our readers can rest assured that these volunteer workers wore protective eye wear when actually performing their work. They were asked to pose for these shots—without eye wear—so that their beaming faces could better be seen.—ED.

Injustice I want to thank you for the article "Young People Ask . . . How Can I Cope With Injustice?" (September 22, 1999) Even though I am young, I have suffered a lot of injustice and violence in my life, so much so that I have deep emotional wounds. This has made it difficult for me to carry out my activity as a pioneer, which I have shared in for the past eight years. I was reassured by the sentence that said: "Do what you can to cope." These words breathe love, and I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

A. G., Italy

Music I have been an elder in the Christian congregation for years and have always taken an interest in young ones. But recently I have felt frustrated, as the advice I have tried to give about the dangers of some modern music has fallen on deaf ears. Nevertheless, the series "Music—More Powerful Than You May Think" (October 8, 1999) was just what I needed. The quotations from outside sources about the negative effects of some music were excellent. I will share these thoughts with our young ones.

D. H., Bolivia

As a vocalist and an elementary-school music teacher, I found your recent articles on music to be of great interest. Thank you!

K. F., United States

Chinese Fishing Nets in India

BY AWAKE! CORRESPONDENT IN INDIA

ON India's western coast, 155 miles from the southern tip of the Indian subcontinent, lies the city of Kochi, formerly Cochin. Along both sides of the tidal inlet there, the shore is lined with unusual cantilevered Chinese-style fishing nets. How did they get there?

Chinese people were living in the region from the eighth century C.E. on, and it is thought that Chinese traders from the court of Kublai Khan first brought nets of this type to Cochin before 1400. Many fish can be caught close to shore in the waters around Cochin. Thus, these tall, man-powered fishing machines served well for more than a century, until the Arabs drove the Chinese out.

With the Chinese gone, the nets were removed. But early in the 16th century, the Portuguese displaced the Arabs. Evidently, it was the Portuguese who reintroduced such nets into Cochin, bringing them back from the then Portuguese island colony of Macao in southeast China.

Although the concept is centuries old, the Chinese nets still perform well with hardly any change in the original design or operation. And they continue to provide a livelihood for many fishermen and food for many people. In fact, the catch from one net can feed an entire village. But beyond being effective, the nets are also beautiful, especially when they are elegantly silhouetted against the golden morning or evening sky.

How Do They Work?

The mammoth Chinese nets use a fulcrum and counterweights to balance the load of the net and the catch. When not in use, the net and its supporting frame are suspended out of the water. Fishing begins early in the morning and lasts for four or five hours. The nets are gently lowered into the water. To do this, either the fishermen adjust the weights attached to the opposite end of the balancing system or the chief of the fishing crew walks down the net's central beam. The net is left under the water for from 5 to 20 minutes before it is gently raised, scooping up fish swimming close to shore. Through years of experience, the chief knows the exact moment to pull up the net.

At the chief's cue, the rest of the crew of five or six men raise the net by pulling down on the ropes to which the counterweight boulders are tied. As the net rises, the corners of the net come up first. Thus, the net takes on the shape of a bowl with the fish inside. What excitement for the fishermen! After a good catch, they pat one another on the back to show their happiness. Later the fish will be auctioned off to traders, housewives, and the occasional tourist.

The Chinese, the Arabs, and the Portuguese have come and gone. But the Chinese nets continue to bob up and down along the waterways of Kochi, just as they did more than 600 years ago.

Kochi

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"A Realistic and Practical Guidebook"

LAST summer the *Arkansas Democrat Gazette* reviewed several books published by the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society. Regarding one of them, it stated: "*Questions Young People Ask* is a realistic and practical guidebook for families, regardless of their religious affiliation....

"This book offers its readers a great deal of sound moral and emotional advice. For example, the authors understand that all young people desire freedom from parental constraint, but it gives the following advice to youngsters:

"Do you want more freedom and responsibility? Then prove yourself responsible. Take seriously whatever tasks your folks assign you."

"Few parents will fail to appreciate a work that consistently preaches the doctrine of personal accountability and constantly admonishes young people to be respectful of both themselves and others. Though the book always provides biblical support for its advice, it is largely grounded in good sense.... The section on self-esteem is especially impressive, since many young people have been misled into thinking that unbridled self-admiration is a good thing."

After quoting from the book, the article continued: "These gentle reminders that self-inflation is a form of pride and that humility is a cornerstone of Christian life are potential antidotes for some of the pop-psychology nonsense visited on young people by well-meaning friends and counselors."

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