

# ***Awake!***

NOVEMBER 8, 1983



**INTOLERANCE  
-A THING OF THE PAST?**

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

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## Feature Articles

Man's inhumanity to man has often been the result of intolerance expressed by individuals, groups or nations. It had been hoped that increased enlightenment and understanding would do away with such. But is intolerance a thing of the past? The following articles will present thought-provoking information on this subject

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# INTOLERANCE FROM PAST TO PRESENT

**T**HUD . . . thud . . . thud. The iron bar struck heavily on the limbs and chest of Jean Calas. His broken body was then exposed on a horizontal cartwheel in a public square of Toulouse, southern France. Thereafter it was burned to ashes.



Calas died on the wheel as a convicted murderer. The previous day, March 9, 1762, this Huguenot (French Protestant) was found guilty of murdering his son so as to prevent his conversion to Catholicism. A solemn burial service honored Calas' son as a Catholic martyr.

French philosopher Voltaire, however, suspected that Calas had been a victim of Catholic intolerance. After proving that Calas' son was actually a suicide, he launched a three-year campaign to arouse public opinion throughout Europe. Voltaire's strategy worked. He finally succeeded in getting the French authorities to review the case, and on March 9, 1765, Calas was declared innocent posthumously. This glaring case of anti-Huguenot prejudice became one of the world's *causes célèbres*. It prompted Voltaire to write his famous *Treatise on Toleration*.

## **Intolerance—Good or Bad?**

Few would try to justify such bigotry, prejudice and murderous intolerance. Nevertheless, under certain circumstances intolerance has its place. Murder, stealing, rape and kidnapping

are all things considered intolerable in most societies, and rightly so. And the same has been true in the past when it comes to religion. When giving the Ten Commandments to the nation of Israel, Jehovah God declared himself to be "a God exacting exclusive devotion." (Exodus 20:5) As a result, God's people 'tolerated no rivalry' of false gods. (Numbers 25:11-13; see also 2 Kings 10:16.) False worship was therefore a capital offense.

Bear in mind, however, that as Sovereign, God certainly has the right to decide what he will and will not tolerate in matters of religion. Humans do not have this prerogative. Thus when the Israelites executed the depraved, demon-worshiping Canaanites, they did so under a divine mandate. (Genesis 15:16; Exodus 23:23, 24) Nevertheless, God did not commission the Israelites to traverse land and sea to wipe out false worship in other lands. Nor was the Christian congregation given authority to execute nonbelievers.

The intolerance that led to the death of Jean Calas—and countless millions of others—is therefore not from God. 'But surely the world has outgrown such in-

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# TRAITÉ

S U R L A

## TOLÉRANCE,

A l'occasion de la mort de Jean Calas.

### CHAPITRE PREMIER

*Histoire abrégée de la mort de Jean Calas.*

**L**E meurtre de Calas, commis dans Toulouse avec le glaive de la Justice, le 1<sup>er</sup> Mars 1762, est un des plus sinistres événements qui marquent l'atmosphère de notre âge, & de la politesse. On oublierait cette huile de morts qui a péri dans des batailles sans nombre, non seulement parce que c'est la fatalité inévitable de la guerre, mais parce que ceux qui meurent

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Title page of first edition  
of Voltaire's *Treatise on  
Tolerance*, Paris, 1763

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tolerance,' some might reason. What does history teach? How did intolerance start? Is there reason to believe it will rear its ugly head again?

#### **The Persecuted Become the Persecutors**

The notions of "freedom of religion" and "separation of Church and State" hardly existed in antiquity. Ancient rulers were often considered to be either priests of the main divinity or gods themselves. Conquered peoples either adopted the gods of their conqueror or were allowed to continue worshiping their own gods. In fact, often people worshiped the same deities under different names.

Not so with the conquered Jewish nation, however. After their nation's fall in 607 B.C.E., dispersed Jews gave their host governments the problem of a re-

ligious minority that demanded freedom to worship God according to their own religious laws. The result? Often bitter persecution. Nevertheless, with the advent of Christianity, the Jews seemed to forget their own experiences and became avid persecutors of Christ's followers.—Acts 3:14, 15; 4:1-3; 8:1.

Christians, too, followed this sad pattern. At first, they were victims of Jewish intolerance. Soon they met up with opposition from other quarters. Their refusal to worship pagan gods or deified state rulers brought the early Christians in conflict with the central and local authorities of the Roman Empire.

In course of time it became a capital crime to bear the name of Christ, and large numbers of Christians were put to death. Waves of persecution continued until 313 C.E., when, for political reasons, joint Emperors Licinius and Constantine issued the Edict of Milan, establishing religious toleration within the Roman Empire. Constantine eventually made "Christianity" the privileged religion of the Roman Empire—a bold attempt to consolidate a disintegrating empire by syncretizing paganism and Christianity.

"Christianity," however, was split into rival sects. Two cities, Byzantium (later named Constantinople) and Rome, each claimed to be the home of the true church. Both were intolerant of those disagreeing on doctrinal points. The persecuted had again become the persecutors.

#### **Catholic Intolerance**

Catholic canon law states: "Most firmly hold and in no way doubt that every heretic or schismatic is to have part with the Devil and his angels in the flames of eternal fire, unless before the end of his life he be incorporated with,

and restored to the Catholic Church." And up to this day the oath of allegiance of Roman Catholic bishops states: "With all my power I will persecute and make war upon heretics." Thus intolerance was built into Catholic thinking. But justifying this attitude, the authoritative French *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique* states: "Being the guardian of revealed truth, faith and morals, the church cannot tolerate the spreading of any teaching that is harmful to the faith of the faithful."

Thus the Catholic Church has often hounded down "heretics," judged them and then handed them over to the secular authorities for punishment. *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica* writes: "In the imperial church [after Constantine]—especially after the emperor Theodosius in the late 4th century—heresy became a criminal transgression punishable by the state. The enemy of the church was likewise viewed as the enemy of the empire. Thus, bishops at the imperial synods of the 4th to 8th centuries attempted to declare as heretics the minority of dissenters and to eliminate them as enemies of the state."

The church also used the secular au-

thorities to show its intolerance toward the Jews, the Muslims, the Cathari and the Albigenses (massacred in a "holy war" in southern France in the early 13th century), heretics and European Protestants. True, most of this blood was shed by the "secular sword." But in his bull *Unam Sanctam*, issued in 1302, Pope Boniface VIII decreed that the "secular sword" must submit to the "spiritual sword" of the church and "be employed for the Church . . . under the direction of the spiritual power." (*The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Volume 15, page 126) So the Catholic Church cannot escape responsibility for the blood shed as a result of its policy of religious intolerance.

### **Protestant Intolerance**

The Catholic Church, however, did not hold the monopoly on religious intolerance. Led by theologian John Calvin, Protestants carried out their own reign of terror. Swiss-born Protestant historian Philip Schaff admitted: "To the great humiliation of the Protestant churches, religious intolerance and even persecution unto death were continued long after the Reformation. In Geneva the pernicious theory was put into practice by state and church, even to the use of

## **Intolerance Knows No Boundaries**

"Few Muslim nations . . . are models of toleration. But are they alone in this? The Inquisition and the wars of religion covered Christendom with blood, and the devout people who founded the United States viewed the Indians and the blacks as something less than human. The same is true today of their cousins in South Africa. As for the worshipers of Reason, unfortunately their reign coincided with the reign of the guillotine. 'Scientific socialism' [communism], when in power, has done no better."—French newspaper editor André Fontaine, writing in *Le Monde*.

torture and the admission of the testimony of children against their parents, and with the sanction of Calvin." And when his theology on predestination and

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## **'T**he legacy of Christian intolerance operates in the techniques of modern political revolutions'

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the Trinity was challenged by Jérôme Bolsec and Michael Servetus respectively, Calvin had the former banished from Geneva and the latter arrested and tried as a heretic. Servetus was burned at the stake. Other "heretics," too, were burned in Calvinist Geneva, with the approval of such Protestant theologians as Theodore Beza.

Martin Luther, too, showed great intolerance. He not only became "notoriously anti-Semitic [anti-Jewish]" but even had four "witches" burned in Wittenburg.

Soon France and Germany would be torn asunder by ferocious religious wars in the 16th and 17th centuries—atrocities being committed by Catholics and Protestants alike.

### ***The Rise of Secular Intolerance***

'But certainly man has learned from his past mistakes,' you might say. And, indeed, the churches of late have demonstrated a more tolerant attitude than in the past. Nevertheless, as *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica* says: "The legacy of Christian intolerance and the methods it developed (e.g., inquisition, or brainwashing) operates in the intolerance of the ideology and techniques of modern political revolutions."

Yes, whereas in some respects there is

a decline in religious intolerance within Christendom, our generation has seen an upsurge in political and racial intolerance. Such secular intolerance is indeed a "legacy of [apostate] Christian intolerance." The Nazi Holocaust, or extermination of some six million Jews, is one example of this. And Hitler is quoted as justifying his intolerance of the Jews by saying: "I am just carrying on with the same policy which the Catholic church had adopted for 1500 years." Other dictators since Hitler have used brainwashing and mental and physical torture in their fight against ideological "heretics." Jehovah's Witnesses, for example, have often taken the brunt of such intolerance because of their political neutrality. In Cuba one Witness was stripped naked, wrapped in barbed wire and placed on top of a roof as human bait for hungry mosquitoes. In yet another land, five Witnesses were arrested and subjected to severe threats and beatings over a period of days. One had to be hospitalized as a result of his injuries. In three countries in northeast Africa, Witnesses were subjected to arrest. (Up to 5 percent of them in one country!) Many were tortured, and three were even killed. Yes, fanatical political rulers have learned much from the churches about silencing dissidents.

But could it be, though, that the churches themselves will become the victims of secular intolerance? Just how deep rooted is the claimed tolerance of our day? And what about ecumenism? Is it a sign of greater tolerance or merely of greater indifference toward religion? Finally, how does all of this affect us as individuals? Is it possible to have strong religious convictions without being intolerant? These questions will be considered in the following article.

# TODAY'S WORLD—

## TOLERANT OR INDIFFERENT?

SOME feel we live in an Age of Tolerance—a world where in most lands killing or torturing people for their religious beliefs is unthinkable. Nevertheless, how deep do the roots of toleration really run? Could it be that the much-vaunted Age of Tolerance is merely an Age of Indifference?

### **The Fight for Toleration**

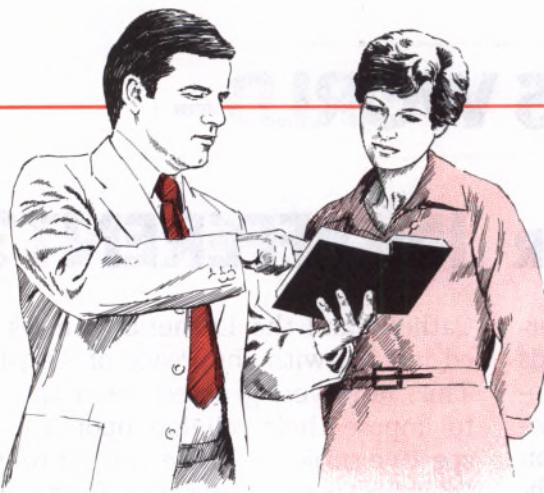
Actually, tolerance is a relatively recent acquisition, even within Western civilization. According to Webster's *Third New International Dictionary*, the English word "tolerance" is of French origin. Says the French *Vocabulaire de la Philosophie* by André Lalande: "The [French] word tolerance was born in the XVI century as a result of the religious wars between Catholics and Protestants. The Catholics ended up tolerating the Protestants and vice versa."

In France the Wars of Religion ended in 1598 by the Edict of Nantes, a law by which King Henry IV granted limited freedom to Protestants. But freedom of religion was still not secure in France. In 1685 King Louis XIV revoked this edict and the Huguenots faced another century of being imprisoned, sent to the galleys or killed outright. It was only after the French Revolution got under way in 1789 that freedom of religion began to be legally guaranteed in France.

In Germany the wars between the

Catholic and the Lutheran princes ended in 1555 with the Peace of Augsburg. This, however, granted them the right to impose their religion upon their respective subjects. There was no religious freedom for dissidents. The Thirty Years' War between European Catholics and Protestants came to an end in 1648, and the Peace of Westphalia extended religious freedom to Calvinists. But it was not until 1781 that the German Edict of Toleration granted freedom of worship to all non-Catholics, and even that freedom was limited.

England, too, had a long and bitter fight for toleration. Catholics, Anglicans and Puritans took turns persecuting one another as they successively came to power. In 1689, under Protestant King William III, the British Toleration Act was published, but it forbade any preaching against the Trinity, and dissenters were barred from political office. In the 18th century various acts were passed that progressively granted religious freedom to those who were not members of the Church of England. But Catholics, Jews and dissenters were deprived of certain civil rights. It was not until the 1820's that most of these restrictions were removed, and it was not until 1880—only a century ago—that religious dissenters in England were allowed to bury their dead according to their beliefs.



**Jehovah's Witnesses use Bible truths, not violence, to combat error**

### **Ecumenism—Tolerance or Indifference?**

It can therefore be seen that today's seeming toleration has very shallow roots in history. What, therefore, motivates the tolerant attitudes prevailing today? Sincere recognition of the rights of others, or religious indifference?

The Roman Catholic Church is of the latter opinion. *The Catholic Encyclopedia* states the matter bluntly: "Tolerant came in only when faith went out." Says this same work: "The Church would therefore seem to be strangely inconsistent, for while she claims toleration and liberty for herself she has been and still remains intolerant of all other religions."

To illustrate this, at the Ecumenical Council Vatican II, which ended in 1965, the Roman Catholic Church for the first time in history recognized the need for religious freedom. But a careful

reading of Paul VI's official declaration on such freedom reveals that he was more concerned about freedom for the Catholic Church in countries where it is threatened than about freedom for non-Catholic religions. And the present pope's insistence on Mary worship and clerical celibacy indicates that his concept of ecumenism is for Protestants to come back to the bosom of the Church of Rome.

As to the present-day ecumenism, in which the Protestant and Orthodox World Council of Churches is prominent, *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica* states: "The ecumenical movement of the 20th century has been attempting to contribute to overcoming church division precisely through clarification of the *nontheological* factors." (Italics ours.) In other words, the ecumenic movement is seeking to unite the churches on all matters except spiritual ones. It deals with social and political questions. The World Council of Churches allegedly provides funds for "liberation movements" in various countries. Recently the Salvation Army withdrew from the WCC, accusing it of being guided "by politics rather than the gospel" and of providing financial support to guerrilla movements. It is therefore quite evident that the doctrinal tolerance of the ecumenical movement is, in fact, a sign of doctrinal *indifference*. On the other hand, its political involvement is certainly not helping to endear it to certain political governments.

## **Strong Convictions Without Intolerance**

In M'Clintock and Strong's *Cyclopaedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature*, we read: "The Church of Christ, in her *purity*, knows nothing of *intolerance*, and therefore can *never* be guilty of persecution." (Italics theirs.) The *Cyclopaedia* quotes John Jortin, an 18th-century English Protestant, born of French Huguenot parents, who said: "Where persecution begins, Christianity ends." It further states: "It was after Christianity had been established as the religion of the [Roman] empire, and after wealth and honor had been conferred on its ministers, that the monstrous evil of persecution acquired gigantic strength, and threw its blasting influence over the religion of the Gospel."

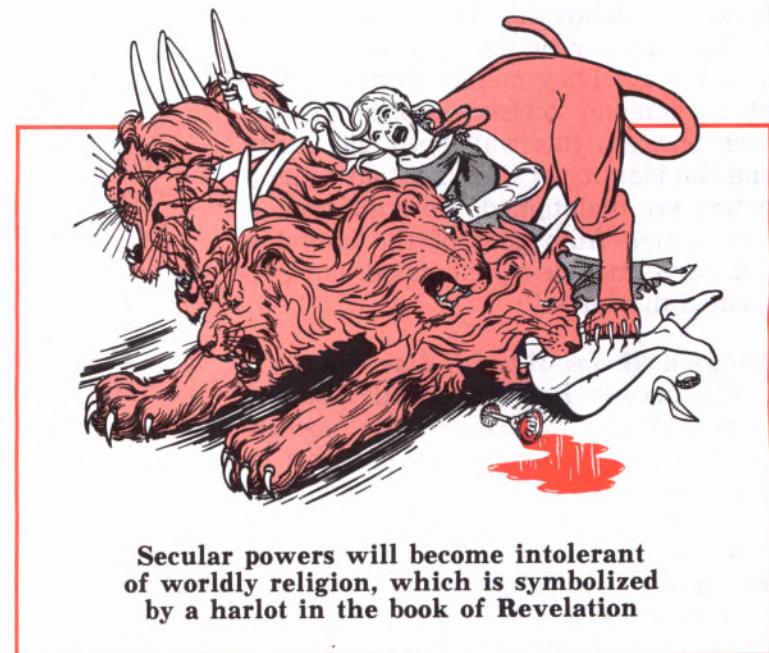
Yes, it was only after the apostasy set in that "Christians" became intolerant persecutors. Foretelling this apostasy, the apostle Paul wrote: "The time is coming when men will not tolerate wholesome teaching . . . They will no longer listen to the truth, but will wander off after man-made myths." (2 Timothy 4:3, 4, *The New Testament in Modern English* by J. B. Phillips) The creeds of Christendom's churches contain many man-made myths, and it was precisely over such myths that apostate Christians became persecutors. For example, the myth of

"three divine Persons in one God" gave rise to violent dissension and persecution among so-called Christians in the fourth century C.E. Anti-Trinitarians continued to be persecuted throughout the centuries.

True Christians, though, are not persecutors. This does not mean, however, that they do not have strong religious convictions, nor that they do not combat error. The apostle Paul stated the true Christian position: "For the weapons of our warfare are not fleshly, but powerful by God for overturning strongly entrenched things. For we are overturning reasonings and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God; and we are bringing every thought into captivity to make it obedient to the Christ."

—2 Corinthians 10:4, 5.

Jehovah's Witnesses likewise use the Bible truths as their only weapons for



**Secular powers will become intolerant of worldly religion, which is symbolized by a harlot in the book of Revelation**

overturning strongly entrenched man-made religious myths. But they never use coercion, nor do they persecute those who disagree with them, although they themselves have been the victims of cruel persecution by religious and political powers. They follow Paul's advice: "Return evil for evil to no one. Provide fine things in the sight of all men. If possible, as far as it depends upon you, be peaceable with all men. Do not avenge yourselves, beloved, but yield place to the wrath; for it is written: 'Vengeance is mine; I will repay,' says Jehovah.'" —Romans 12:17-19.

Some would argue, however, that Jehovah's Witnesses are, in fact, intolerant because they expel from the congregation wrongdoers and individuals who do not conform to their religious beliefs. However, this practice is not due to some human standard or personal prejudice. It is God who commands Christians to expel wrongdoers. (1 Corinthians 5:9-13) However, Jehovah's Witnesses do not malign, slander or harass expelled ones in any way. They merely follow the Bible's command to cease associating with such ones. In this way both the purity and the identity of the Christian congregation are maintained. How different is such action from that of the churches that have mercilessly hounded and persecuted dissenters!

### ***Religion 'Reaps What It Has Sown'***

The apostle Paul once said: "Do not be misled: God is not one to be mocked. For whatever a man is sowing, this he will also reap." (Galatians 6:7) This certainly applies to religious organizations that over the centuries have practiced intolerance toward others.

In the last book of the Bible, false religion is pictured as a harlot that com-

mits "fornication" with "the kings of the earth." (Revelation 17:1, 2; 18:9) This refers to religion's selling herself to politics rather than remaining "no part of the world" in obedience to Jesus' command. (John 17:16) The Bible foretells that anti-religious political elements will tire of religion's interference and will turn against her. By means of them, Jehovah God will 'execute judgment upon the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication' and will 'avenge the blood of his slaves at her hand.'—Revelation 19:2; 17:16, 17.

With this unexpected turn against religion, intolerance will surface as never before in history. Even true Christians will not escape the wrath of the anti-God society that false religion's destruction will usher in. But the ensuing attack on God's faithful people will provoke God's intervention. He simply will not tolerate such "kings," "military commanders" and "strong men" who attack his people on earth!—Revelation 19:17-21; 17:14.

All goatlike, intolerant persecutors "will depart into everlasting cutting-off." But to his sheeplike disciples, many of whom have been victims of intolerant persecution, Christ will say: "Come, you who have been blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the founding of the world." (Matthew 25:31-46) At long last, the prayer of true Christians will be answered, namely: "May your kingdom come, and your will be done on earth as it is in Heaven." —Matthew 6:9, 10, *Ph.*

Where will you stand when intolerance toward religion reaches its climax? You cannot afford to remain indifferent. As the apostle Paul explained, at Romans 9:22, 23: "God, although having the will to demonstrate his wrath and to make

his power known, tolerated with much long-suffering vessels of wrath made fit for destruction, in order that he might make known the riches of his glory upon vessels of mercy." Yes, God's 'toleration' of wickedness has served a good purpose: It has given righteously inclined individuals time to take their stand for what is right. Yet, God has placed a time limit on this tolerance. (Acts 17:30, 31) All the evidence indicates that this period of toleration has about run out. The

Bible therefore urges you to get out of false religion before it is too late!—Revelation 18:4, 5.

Jehovah's Witnesses will be happy to help you free yourself from false religion, which has shown so much intolerance over the centuries. Study the Bible with the Witnesses. They can help you discover therein a wonderful hope, that of living forever in a Paradise earth where man's intolerance against his fellowman will be a thing of the past.

## **"I Was a Witch Doctor"**

"I was a witch doctor," wrote a Xhosa woman from the Transkei. Her letter, sent to the branch office of the Watch Tower Society in South Africa, continues: "I had my own patients or students whom I had to train as witch doctors. I was working very hard to help them, although my health was deteriorating. My hands, feet and knees were swollen and very painful. I had to go to see a European doctor, but a car had to be brought right in front of my door and then I was carried into it, like a graven image that has limbs but cannot use them. While I was sick, Jehovah's Witnesses came to my house. They discussed with me Deuteronomy 18:9-12 and Ecclesiastes 9:5, 6, 10."

As a result, this woman began to accept the Bible truths regarding witchcraft and the condition of the dead, and she understood why her

former beliefs were of no value in relieving her suffering. She accepted a Bible study and was later baptized as one of Jehovah's Witnesses. This, however, required some changes, as she goes on to explain: "Realizing that Jehovah is against witchcraft, I burned all the clothing I wore as a witch doctor, all the medicines and everything that went along with the practice. Jehovah's Witnesses were present on that day when I poured kerosene on these items and set them alight. (Acts 19:19, 20) Now healthwise I am much better and, thankfully, 'I will sing to Jehovah throughout my life.'—Psalm 104:33."

Some two years have passed since this former witch doctor sent this letter. Today she continues to show her thankfulness to Jehovah God by having a zealous and regular share in helping others to understand his Word.

# Practical Jokes

## How Funny Are They?

A WORKMAN was busy at his job, suspended outside a hotel window high up on the 11th floor. Of course, he was properly secured with a safety belt. He called to a friend inside the hotel to come into the room where he was. Upon entering the room and looking out the window, the friend saw a horrifying sight. The safety belt came unfastened, and with a scream, the workman disappeared from view.

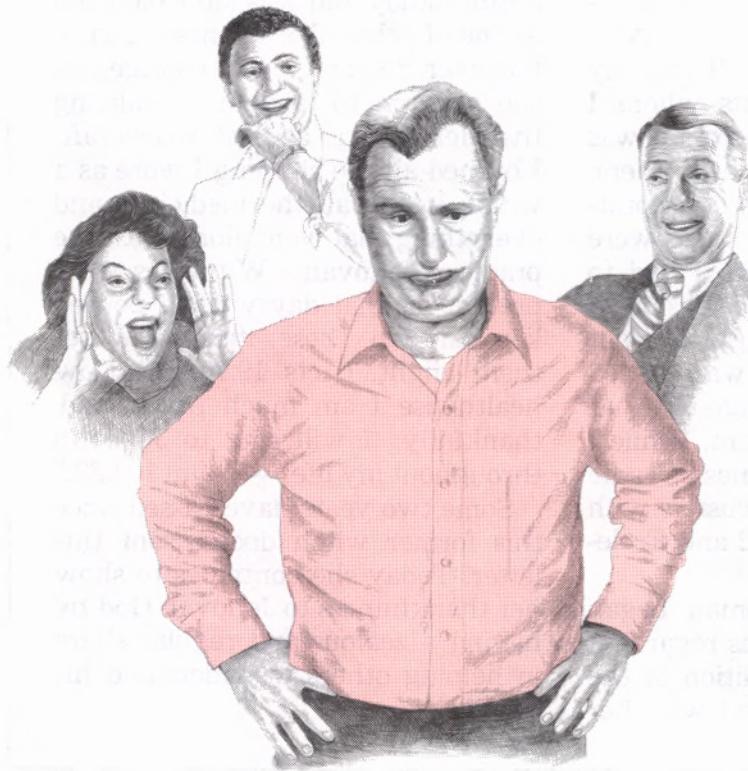
A ghastly tragedy? No, a practical joke.

There was a wide ledge just beneath the place where the workman was suspended, and cushions had been put there so that he could "fall" on that ledge without hurting himself. Funny? Not to the one who thought he had just seen someone hurtle 11 floors to his death.

One Saturday morning a man went back to the machine shop where he worked to put his tools away. He was going to a wedding that afternoon and was dressed in his best suit.

His workmates knew he was coming. So, for a laugh, they waylaid him and threw him into the shower, suit and all. Another practical joke, but was it funny? Not to the man whose suit was ruined.

The Bible speaks about practical jokes. It says: "Just like someone mad that is shooting fiery missiles, arrows and death, so is the man that has tricked his fellowman and has said: 'Was I not having fun?'" (Proverbs 26:18, 19) Yet practical jokes are not uncommon, even among Christians. Why? Perhaps because some feel that they make people



laugh and inject a little fun into their life. Do you feel that way? If so, consider a few real-life experiences from the victim's point of view.

### **When Things Go Wrong**

Not long ago a prankster in a darkened movie house shouted "Fire!" There was panic, a stampede. Five people were killed and 50 injured.

A young husband went to work one morning but found the firm closed because of bad weather and returned home. His wife was in the shower when she heard him return. Suspecting a burglar, she wrapped herself in a towel, took a gun and went to investigate. The husband, wanting to play a practical joke, hid. When she approached, he jumped out shouting "Boo!" His terrified wife shot him.

True, not all practical jokes end in tragedy. But any joke can go wrong, as Fred discovered. He planned to borrow a small motorcycle on his vacation. So he had to adjust his driving license. This involved taking a written and a practical test. Afterward, he waited for the results. Soon a letter arrived—telling him in emphatic and uncomplimentary terms that he had failed.

Fred was dejected. He had worked hard, and now some of his vacation plans were ruined. He was also frustrated, since he knew he had done quite well in the tests. And he was irritated with the authorities because their letter was so unkind. Later, a close friend, seeing him downcast, revealed that the letter was a forgery. The friend had written it himself! He thought that Fred would immediately see that it was just a joke. But Fred had not. Instead, he had a frustrating experience that was not funny at all.

Ron was another victim. One Sunday morning he received a telephone call inviting him to address a local church group. Given time to consider the invitation, he rearranged his schedule, discussed the invitation with others and did research on what to say. When he phoned back to accept, he found that the invitation was a practical joke—played on him by someone he had never met, since he was new in the area.

Ron's reaction? "I felt frustrated that my time and energy had been wasted," he said. "I felt keenly that the 'joke' was irresponsible and unkind. I also felt embarrassed that I had wasted other people's time on an imaginary project. And I determined to be careful in the future in my dealings with the prankster."

Does this mean that Ron and Fred take themselves too seriously, or that they cannot take a joke? What do you think? Do you enjoy being deceived? Should a busy person view it lightly when his and other people's time has been wasted irresponsibly? Can you see any humor in being depressed and disappointed, even if only for a few hours? Or what if one of your relatives had been killed or injured

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**Laughing with others is fine. Laughing at them can be very unkind**

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in that movie-house stampede? Surely, such practical jokes violate the important command: "Just as you want men to do to you, do the same way to them." —Luke 6:31.

You may say, 'But those jokes just got out of hand.' That is true. But Al, who works with a group of lively young

people, says that practical jokes often do get out of hand. He mentions how some youths hazing a newcomer to the job badly bruised his breastbone, so that he had difficulty breathing for a while and had to miss some days of work. Others used spray bottles to douse one another with water, resulting in eye irritations. They had forgotten that those bottles had previously contained chemicals. "Practical jokes are just not worth the trouble," says Al. "Where I work, most people are considerate enough not to play them anymore."

### **Why Do People Play Practical Jokes?**

There are many answers to this question. Some people have an overdeveloped or even distorted sense of fun and find it difficult to restrain themselves. Fred does not feel that the joke on him came from any bad motive. His friend was simply out for a bit of fun. Ron feels that the prankster who victimized him "was just trying to liven things up a bit." And Al sees practical jokes as an expression of youthful exuberance.

Al also mentions another factor: competitiveness. "Somebody starts something," he says, "and his victim has to get back at him at all costs. Then everyone gets excited, and things get out of hand. For example, someone might squirt a little water at a friend. To get back at him, the friend has to empty a bucket of water over the prankster. Then the prankster, to stay even, has to push his victim, fully clothed, into a swimming pool!"

Stan, who used to be a carpenter, remembers how one of his fellow workers who was quite naive became a natural target for practical jokes. Two workmates particularly enjoyed playing them

on him. Why? Stan can think of two possible reasons. "It may be because he was very naive and it was an easy way to get a laugh," he says. "Or it may

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## **H**ow Christian is it to humiliate, scare or embarrass others, so that you can laugh at them?

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be they were trying to make him more sophisticated."

If the latter was their motive, did it succeed? "No," says Stan. "He became nervous and suspicious of everyone. It had a very negative effect on his personality, as well as having an unhealthy effect on the other workers."

Remember the words of the apostle Paul: "As long as we have time favorable for it, let us work what is good toward all, but especially toward those related to us in the faith." (Galatians 6:10) Do practical jokers follow this counsel? Hardly.

### **Can We Get a Better Viewpoint?**

Humor in the right place is fine. The world would be a dull place without it. A joking remark can ease tension or help to dispel nervousness. Joking with people, even gently teasing them, can be a sign of affection. But humor can also wound. When teasing calls attention to someone's weaknesses or failings, it is spiteful. Moreover, practical jokes that leave people confused, humiliated, deceived, scared, suspicious of others or embarrassed—even if only for a short time—are clearly unkind. The same can be said of practical jokes that damage another's clothing or other possessions,

or that greatly inconvenience the other person by stealing valuable time or that hinder or delay a person in carrying on some planned activity. And the Bible says: "Become kind to one another." —Ephesians 4:32.

A joker may protest: 'But I don't mind having jokes played on me. Why should others mind when I play jokes on them?' Well, it is true that we should all be able to laugh at ourselves sometimes. And we should find pleasure in laughing *with* one another. But to laugh *at* someone because he has been put into an embarrassing position is unchristian. Besides, we can never be sure in advance how our victim will feel. One man played a little joke on the girls he worked with. The first few took it quite well and laughed with him. The last one, who was not feeling too well, took it badly. She was angry and hurt, and the joke was not funny anymore.

Remember, the Bible encourages us to show "fellow feeling, having brotherly affection, tenderly compassionate, humble in mind." (1 Peter 3:8) Even if you do not mind being the butt of practical jokes yourself, most would prefer not to be. "Fellow feeling" will help you to

consider their feelings. The fact that you may enjoy playing practical jokes does not make it right. Being "humble in mind" will help you to realize that. And

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## E xperience shows that practical jokes often get out of hand

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'tender compassion' will surely prevent you from wanting to victimize your fellow human.

If others around you play practical jokes, it may take moral courage to refuse to get involved. If someone plays a joke on you, it may take self-control not to retaliate. (Galatians 5:22, 23) And if someone is a habitual prankster, it may be wise just to avoid his company. Others might say you take things too seriously. But all too often, practical jokes become serious.

Fred, the victim of the forged letter, learned his own lesson about practical jokes some years ago. He visited a married couple he knew well, and since the wife was still out, he hid from her in the bedroom. When the wife came home, she looked around for him, suspecting he was there. Not finding him, she went into the bedroom. She was standing in front of a dresser when Fred reached out from under the bed and grabbed her ankle. She screamed and stood there petrified. She was so frightened that Fred himself was scared. "I learned my lesson," he said. "I will never play that kind of joke again."

What a wise decision! It is a decision that everyone with consideration and concern for his fellowman would do well to make.

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## In Our Next Issue

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- *We Are Being Deluged by Epidemics!*
  - *Is Religion for Me?*
  - *Killer From the Sky*
-

## Young People Ask...

# Are Romance Novels Harmless Reading?

**R**EADING romances is an escape," said one avid reader. "Losing myself in a romance refreshes me, makes me better able to face my own problems." Her comments are rather typical of those who regularly devour romance novels.

Some claim that the stories are an effective stress tonic. Youths view them as a harmless peek at adult pleasures. And for some they are a way to add excitement to a drab existence. Since the novels are generally short and inexpensive, reading them has become an addictive habit for millions. Rivaling the audience for most popular television shows, 20 million in the United States alone are estimated to be readers. And young people number prominently among this total. But should *you* read them? In answer, let us investigate what some of these novels are like.

### ***And They Lived Happily Ever After***

The subject of romance has fascinated readers throughout the ages. Of course, this is only natural, since God placed in man and woman the desire to fall in love and marry. (Genesis 1:27, 28; 2:23, 24) It is not surprising, then, that romance is an ingredient of most fiction. And this is not necessarily objectionable. Some romance novels have even attained the status of fine literature. But since these older novels are considered tame by modern stan-

dards, writers have found it profitable of late to churn out a new breed of romance novels. Some still utilize historic or medieval settings to add drama and mood to the story. Others are contemporary in style and setting. Nevertheless, with a few minor variations, these modern romance novels follow a fairly predictable formula: Heroes and heroines hurdling formidable obstacles that threaten their budding romance.

Typically the hero is a strong, even arrogant, man who oozes self-confidence. The heroine, however, is likely to be delicate and vulnerable, often the hero's junior by 10 or 15 years. She needs the hero's attention to validate her beauty and self-worth. And though he often treats her contemptuously, she is still irresistibly attracted to him. Why, his very presence can send the blood pounding through her veins and affect her equilibrium, her thinking and her speech.

Often there is a rival suitor. Although kind and considerate, he fails to excite or interest the heroine. So she uses her beguiling charms to mold her stoic hero into a tender soul who now openly declares his abiding love. All previous misgivings cleared and forgiven, they blissfully marry!

### ***Cloaking Effect***

Understandably, such stories have appeal. But referring to "Gothic-style" ro-

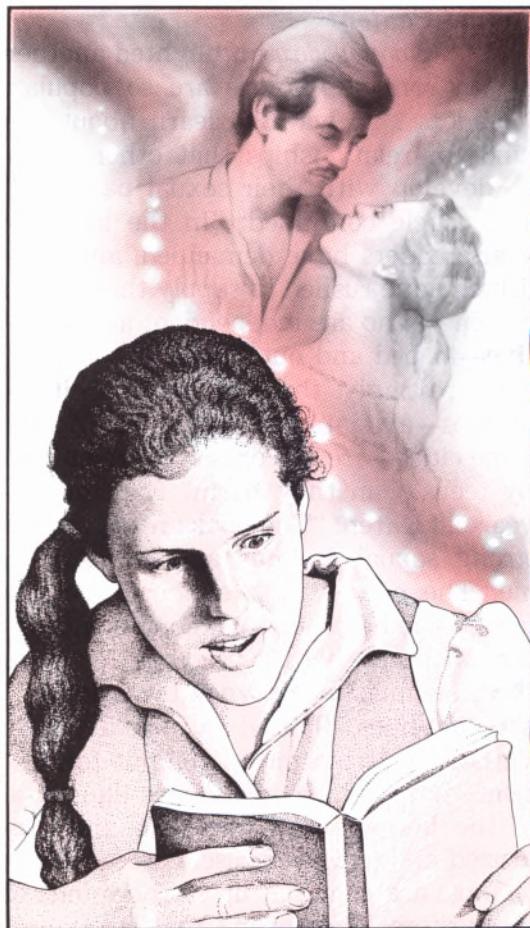
mance novels, one writer objects: "The basic premise of these . . . stories is that a good man is hard to detect . . . and the man who had seemed above suspicion . . . is the villain." The heroine interprets the calloused, inscrutable demeanor of the hero thusly: "If my man treats me badly, that's because he's masculine, not because he's bad." Or, "Men may appear moody, cynical, scornful, and bullying, but they nevertheless provide romance and excitement."

Could accepting such fanciful notions cloud your vision of the important qualities necessary for a successful, enduring marriage? Bonnie, who started reading romance novels at age 16, recalls: "I looked for the young man that was tall, dark and handsome; one that was exciting, with a domineering personality." She confessed: "If I dated a young man and he didn't want to kiss and touch, he was dull, even though he was considerate and kind. I wanted the excitement I'd read about in the novels." It is therefore easy to see how reading these stories could result in one's becoming infatuated with a person most undesirable as a marriage mate. A desire for "excitement" could cloak what this person really is at heart.

Bonnie continued to read romances after her marriage and says: "I had a nice home and family, but somehow it wasn't enough . . . I wanted the adventure, excitement and thrills so enticingly described in the novels. I felt something was wrong with my marriage." The Bible, though, helped Bonnie to appreciate that a husband must offer his wife more than charm or "excitement": "Husbands ought to be loving their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself, for no man ever hated his own

flesh; but he feeds and cherishes it." —Ephesians 5:28, 29.

And what about the Utopian endings and easy resolution of differences so common to romance novels? Well, they are far from realistic. Bonnie recalls: "When I had a disagreement with my husband, instead of talking it out with him, I'd copy the gimmicks used by the heroine. When my husband didn't respond the way the hero did, I sulked." One writ-



**Romance novels may make absorbing reading, but do they teach a wholesome view of love and marriage?**

er similarly observed that these novels "gloss over and obscure complex social relations . . . They offer a comfortably fixed image of the exchange between men and women at the very moment when the social actuality is confusing, shifting, frightening." Is not the Bible's counsel for wives therefore more realistic and practical when it says, "You wives, be in subjection to your husbands"?—Colossians 3:18.

### ***Sexual Content***

*Psychology Today* highlighted another reason romance novels are so popular: "Readers . . . want to learn about the kinds of relationships that other women develop with their sexual partners." The article continued: "In the last few years readers have demanded, and publishers have rushed to supply them with, heroines who are independent and assertive—in bed and out."

Interestingly, the sexually explicit romances—available in public libraries in some cities—are the ones most requested by teens. Can they harm? Explains 18-year-old Karen: "The books really stirred strong sexual feelings and curiosity in me. The ecstasy and euphoric feelings felt by the heroine in passionate encounters with the hero caused me to desire those feelings too. So when I was dating," she continues, "I tried to recreate those sensations. It led me to commit fornication." But was her experience like those of the heroines she had read and fantasized about? Karen discovered: "These feelings are conjured up in the minds of the writers. They aren't real."

Creating sexual fantasies is indeed the intent of some authors. One publisher instructs authors of romance novels: "Sex-

ual encounters should concentrate on passion and the erotic sensations aroused by the hero's kisses and caresses." The writers are further advised that love stories "should evoke excitement, tension and a deep emotional and sensual response in the reader." Obviously, reading such material would not help one to follow the Bible's admonition to "deaden, therefore, your body members that are upon the earth as respects fornication, uncleanness, sexual appetite, hurtful desire."—Colossians 3:5.

### ***Alternatives***

In view of the foregoing, many will wisely conclude that it is best to avoid novels that arouse unwholesome feelings or that engender unrealistic expectations. True, reading fills the need for relief from the pressures of life for many. But there is value in being *selective* in what you read. We are to a great extent products of our environment. And in reading, we create an environment that can influence our lives for good or for bad. Why not branch out and try reading other types of books, such as history or science books? The Bible and Bible-related publications are particularly rewarding.

Remember, too, that there are other profitable ways to relax or find diversion. Why build your life around imaginary adventures? The Bible says, "There is . . . happiness in giving." (Acts 20:35) So learn to give by helping other people. A youth (one of Jehovah's Witnesses) who devoted 60 hours one month to helping people learn about the Bible said: "It was the happiest time of my life." And when your life is happy, busy and satisfying, who needs the shallow "escape" of romance novels?

# Word-Search Game

## Facts From Acts

In the letter maze shown at the right you should be able to locate 25 words or expressions referred to in the Bible book of Acts. To determine the word or expression, complete the sentences shown below under "Manhunt!" "Hospitality" and "A Prisoner." Then locate these words on the letter maze and encircle them. (Answers found on page 27.)

### **Manhunt! (Acts, chapter 10)**

- To find a man named — — — — — (1).  
At the house of Simon the — — — — — (2).  
Located — — — — — — — (3).  
In the city of — — — — — (4).  
To bring him to the house of — — — — — — — (5).  
Who was an — — — — — (6).  
In the city of — — — — — — — (7).  
To use the — — — — — — — (8).  
To open the door to people of all — — — — — — — (9).

### **Hospitality (Acts 16:10-15)**

- From a lady named — — — — — (10).  
Her occupation — — — — — — — — — — — (11).  
Who heard — — — — — (12) preach.  
By the — — — — — — — — — — — (13).  
After she was — — — — — — — — — — — (14).  
She invited the brothers to her home.  
Luke writes: "She just — — — — — — — — — — — (15).

### **A Prisoner (Acts, chapters 25-28)**

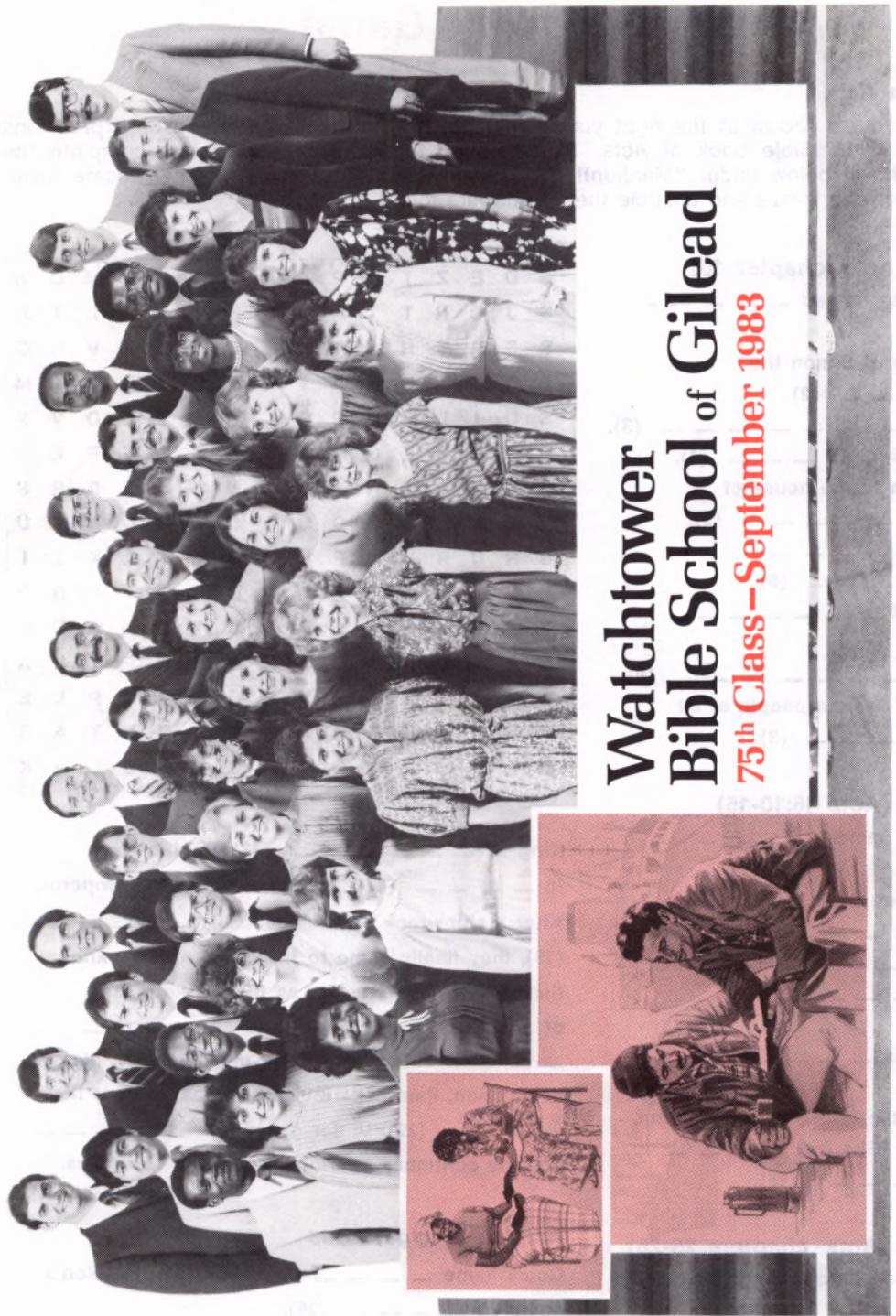
- After a hearing before Governor — — — — — (16) and



- King — — — — — — — — — — — (17), Paul is sent to — — — — — (18) to appear before the emperor. After a shipwreck on the island of — — — — — (19), they finally come to the coast of Italy, and the brothers come as far as the marketplace of — — — — — — — (20) and — — — — — — — — — — — (21) to meet Paul. At his destination, Paul calls in the principal men of the — — — — — — — (22). Under guard in a — — — — — — — (23), he continues bearing witness for two years.

### **For the younger ones**

- God's name — — — — — — — — — — — (24). His Son's name — — — — — — — — — — — (25).



## Watchtower Bible School of Gilead

**75<sup>th</sup> Class—September 1983**

In the list below, rows are numbered from front to back and names are listed from left to right in each row.

- (1) Schavers, L.; McLeod, G.; McLenithan, S.; Kardell, K.; Eaton, T.; Shewkenek, S. (2) Schenik, E.; Nelson, J.; Hobby, M.; Maves, V.; Van Doorn, A.; Aho, L.; Burnett, B. (3) Saakwa, K.; Longa, R.; Johansson, T.; Speege, J.; Mulford, D.; Johansson, E.; McCray, K.; Dawson, P. (4) Curiel, J.; McLenithan, M.; Aho, H.; Shewkenek, G.; Eaton, W.; Young, B.; Schavers, I.; Burnett, M.; (5) DiGregorio, M.; Schenik, T.; Speege, G.; McLeod, J.; Maves, G.; Reed, G.; McCray, C.; Van Doorn, H.; Tagliabue, D.

# GILEAD—The School Students Love!

**I**DIDN'T like school all that much," said Curtis, reflecting on his high school days. "I didn't like college, either." He continued: "But that was before I became one of Jehovah's Witnesses." Explaining why, his wife Kathy added: "In high school they give you information that doesn't seem to be useful at the time. And a person who is shy, like me, is left to fend for herself. I really felt cheated going to school for 12 years."

Yet Curtis, 31, and Kathy, 32, are recent graduates of another school—the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead. "Gilead is different," says Kathy. "The teachers really cared and they took a personal interest in each student. It was most beneficial in helping me realize my goal in life."

Similar is the case of two other students of Gilead, Michael and Sheryl, both 27. "High school is very competitive," says Michael, "and not really conducive to learning. I had a hard time in school and I was glad when it was over." "The reason," says Sheryl, "is that many people in school today really don't care. Often teachers want to be like the students, and anyone who is different just doesn't fit in." "Now, with Gilead," added Michael, "you have a purpose. It's designed to help you do the work you love. You learn how to help people better—to care for them. I've always wanted to be involved in the full-time preaching work, and the Gilead course stressed how to serve Jehovah fully despite what others do."

For both couples, their Gilead schooling was a most recent memory. They

were among the 38 students who graduated on Sunday, September 11, during the graduation ceremonies held before an audience of 2,023 at Jehovah's Witnesses Assembly Hall in Queens, New York. The sessions were beamed by microwave to Brooklyn Bethel so that hundreds more heard and saw the program on television.

But just what is Gilead? And why is it the school that students love?

## What Gilead Is

According to instructor Jack Redford, "Gilead is a school arranged and sponsored by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York for the training of those desirous of engaging in foreign missionary work. The basic textbook during the five-month course is the Bible, and the students, who are already experienced ministers well grounded in the Bible, receive intensive training in a deeper understanding of the Bible and how to teach the Scriptures, as well as practical subjects relating to everyday life in a foreign country." The students receive this training, as well as food and lodging, free of charge.

There are five basic courses: Hebrew Scriptures, Greek Scriptures, Theocratic Organization, Foundations of Bible History, and Missionary Service. "The courses on the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures give basic coverage of each book of the Bible," says Redford. "Foundations of Bible History covers the history of religion and background world history that will help students to understand Bible prophecy. Theocratic Organization traces the history of God's organization from its beginnings in ancient times until now.

Missionary Service deals with the common problems that missionaries have in living in a foreign country."

All together, 6,067 students have graduated in the 75 classes that have been held since the inception of Gilead School in February of 1943. Its students have been drawn from many lands and have been sent to countries where additional missionaries are needed. These missionaries have certainly heeded Jesus Christ's command: "Go therefore and make disciples of people of all the nations . . . teaching them to observe all the things I have commanded you."—Matthew 28: 19, 20.

Students of the recently graduated 75th class were drawn from Canada, Finland, France, Ghana, New Zealand, Sweden, the United States and Venezuela. Two students will return to their homelands, and the rest are being sent to 15 different countries for special missionary work. For instance, Curtis and Kathy have received an assignment to the Caribbean island of Dominica. Michael and Sheryl are anxious to take up their assignment in Taiwan, where they will have a crash course in Mandarin Chinese.

#### **Loved by Students Past and Present**

So much is Gilead loved that student Leena, from Finland, asked: "Couldn't you prolong the school for a few weeks more?" One thing she especially appreciated was being able to meet and talk to so many former graduates of the school, as they passed through Brooklyn on their way to and from recent district conventions of Jehovah's Witnesses. "It was so thrilling!" she exclaimed. "Just talking to all the missionaries coming through helped us to be more prepared for our own foreign assignments." And these former graduates of Gilead, many

of whom have been in their assignments for a considerable number of years, still look back fondly on the school they loved so much.

"I can still remember when we were in Gilead back in 1945," says Dora. She and her missionary partner, Dorothea, graduated from the fourth class of 104 students in February of that year. "The curriculum was a bit different then," Dora remembers. "But the teachers were just wonderful! They really took an interest in us individually." Did the course prove to be really practical during the nearly 40 years they have spent as missionaries in Chile? "Oh, yes," says Dorothea. "We learned how to get along better with people. We were trained in how to speak up and express ourselves, how to study and learn on our own. And we have used the same methods in teaching others the Bible."

"Gilead is a wonderful arrangement," says Jessica, a native of the Netherlands who has been serving as a missionary in Ecuador. "Everything in Gilead was beneficial. Gilead builds you up so much that you are prepared to accept any differences and handle any problems you may encounter." Ollie, whose assignment is Upper Volta, concurs: "It's a very real course," he said. "It gives you a lot of help and encouragement. Even though you are thousands of miles away, the Society is still very concerned and lovingly helps you to stay in your assignment."

Despite its demanding entrance requirements, hundreds of applicants are still waiting and hoping to get invited to attend Gilead School. Many graduates had applied several times over a number of years before finally being accepted. But, then, that surely is what one would expect in the case of a school that students love.

# How Accurate Are Bible Translations?

Sometimes people in their ignorance say that since the original Bible manuscripts no longer exist, our Bible translations of today are unreliable. It is therefore interesting to note the following opinion of a recognized authority on the matter. In his work *Auf Den Spuren Jesu* (*In the Footsteps of Jesus*), Gerhard Kroll says the following:

"Two of the leading English text critics, B. F. Westcott and J. A. Hort, estimate the number of textual variants as being 250,000; that is, for every two words of the original text there are three textual variants. Only laymen can be terrified by this fact. According to the results of the textual critic, seven eighths of the New Testament text is unquestionable; that is, we are unable by any scientific means to give the original reading of the remaining one eighth of the text. But many of the variants of this eighth part are insignificant, because they are mere ortho-

graphical discrepancies or transpositions of words that have no effect on the sense. Deducting these, there remains only one sixtieth of the text that could be labeled as being questionable. But from this sixtieth part most of it could be considered as being irrelevant as far as the content is concerned so that only one thousandth of the entire text could be said to contain significant differences. However, out of this one-thousandth part only a few passages are important as far as doctrine is concerned. And even these are not that important inasmuch as the Biblical testimony of these respective dogmatic teachings does not depend just on this one particular uncertain passage."

Therefore the final conclusion of this textual critic Kroll is: "In general, the scientific conviction is well established that, in essence, the textual arrangement has been preserved without error."

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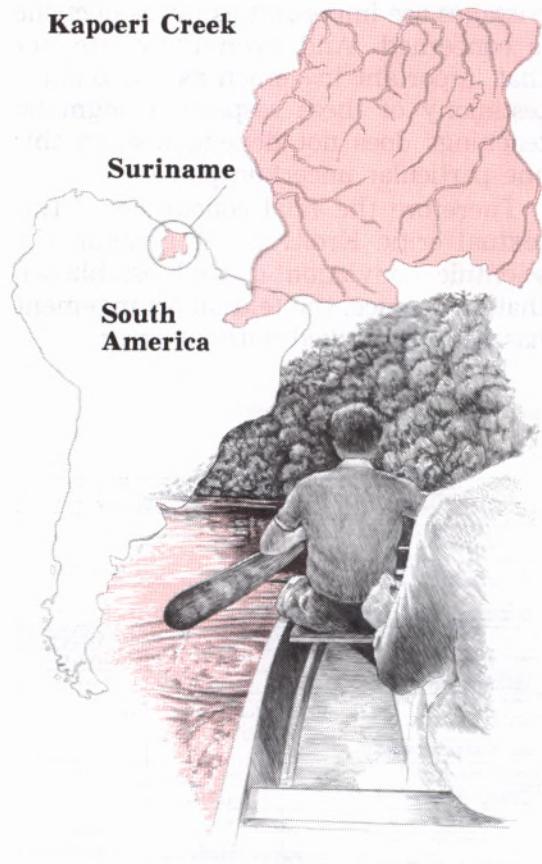
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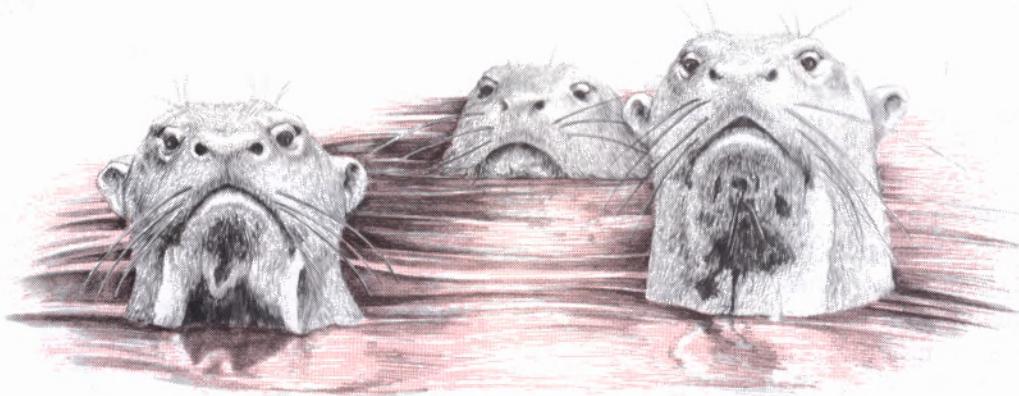
# Adventurous Quest for the Giant Otter

By "Awake!" correspondent in Suriname



IT IS dawn. Our paddles gently dip into the cola-colored water of the Kapoeri Creek. Delicate morning mist floats as a filmy gauze over the water and embraces the slowly awakening forest around us. As our *kroejara* (dugout canoe) slices through the narrowing stream, we use our machetes to hack away at the verdant jungle growth that at times threatens to block our path. Arms and legs sting from the razor-sharp grass that assails us.

Our quest is for an animal that man almost allowed to become extinct—the giant Brazilian otter, or *bigi watradagoe* (big water dog) as they are called locally. These curious creatures have been relentlessly tracked down for their luxurious fur. But in 1954 Suriname protected the otters by law, making this country one of the few places where a considerable number of them still dwell. "Kapoeri Creek hosts an estimated 20-30 otters," I was told some time ago by Mr. G. Plak, a game-warden superintendent. He explained that other areas had already been set aside to preserve this almost extinct animal. "We would like to see their number increase and at the same



### Very little is known about these fascinating creatures

time preserve a unique place where these interesting animals can still be observed in their natural habitat."

So that is what we wish to do today. But will we be able to see any? Our Amerindian guide, Marius, is optimistic. So are my friends Henk and Jacqueline, who are accompanying my wife and me. Nevertheless, the sooner we find them, the better. Long-legged Henk resembles a pretzel on his tiny wooden bench as he asks, "Do we have to paddle the full distance?" "I don't think so," assures Marius, "because it's dry season. The water is low and that keeps the *watradagoes* close by. And this pond is a favorite fishing spot for the otters." A relieved Henk shifts to a more comfortable position as we paddle on.

#### **Our First Encounter**

"A-a-a-ah, a-a-a-a-ah," is the startling cry that suddenly comes from Marius, our guide!

"Are you all right?" we ask, taking him for ill.

"A-a-a-a-ah," repeats Marius, frantically pointing to a high riverbank. We turn around so quickly that we almost

capsize the canoe. A chorus of "a-a-a-a-ah's" from the riverbank explains Marius' strange action. He was imitating the otter alarm call! So we join him in mimicking their cry.

And there they are! A family of nine giant otters come into full view. How peculiar they look! About a third of their more than 1.5-meter (5-ft) length is tail—a well-designed appendage that starts out round at the base, flattens out in the middle and ends in a point like a spearhead. Their webbed feet are attached to short legs, which, in turn, support a streamlined body. But because of their narrow shoulders and drooping head, they look hunchbacked. Their strange physique makes them clumsy on land but graceful as seals in the water.

So into the water they go, sliding down the riverbank and diving headfirst. Moments later we see their heads popping out of the water as they dog-paddle. They survey us, and we are treated to a close-up look at them—round head, tufts of whiskers, small ears and expressive big brown eyes. On their lips, chin, throat and chest we see creamy-colored blotches of varying design that distin-

guish one otter from another. Their dark-brown velvety fur glistening in the sun reminds us of why man has hunted them down to the point that they are nearly extinct.

We stick out our paddles to see if they will bite or even break them as early explorers have reportedly seen them do at times. But, instead, the males emit explosive snorts and growls, summoning the other members to regroup, males in front, females and cubs securely behind them. Now feeling secure, they calmly retreat in the creek—diving and gracefully emerging, porpoise-style.

### ***Their Multipurpose “Table”***

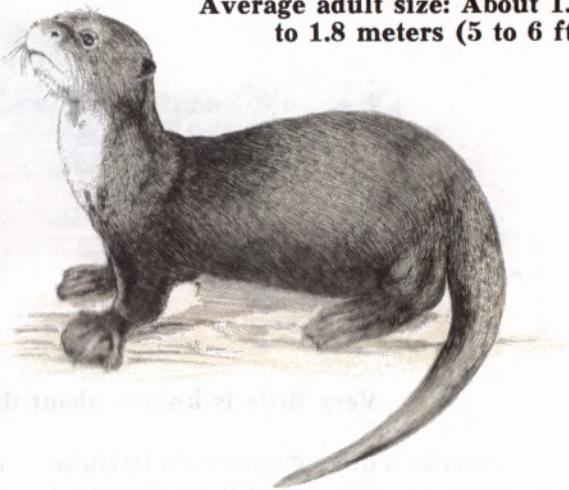
Onshore we come upon a clean semi-circle, measuring six meters (20 ft) long and four meters (13 ft) wide, cleared of jungle growth. I recalled that some name these areas water-dog tables. Eddie, an Arawak Indian from neighboring Guyana, had told me this on a previous trip. “These landings look so smooth and clean,” Eddie had said, “and the otters sometimes drag big fishes on these ‘tables’ to eat them there.” Hunting and fishing is serious business for the otters. They are occupied from dawn till dusk, gobbling some three to four kilograms (7 to 9 lb) of fish a day.

Eddie had further said: “The old people back home claim that if you step on these tables barefoot, you can get water itch—a terrible disease.” These words now strike home as we step into a bog of mud that gives off a musky and rank odor. “That’s their latrine,” explains Marius, a bit too late. We are glad everyone is wearing shoes.

Surveying their combination dining-,

### **GIANT BRAZILIAN OTTER**

Average adult size: About 1.5 to 1.8 meters (5 to 6 ft)



bed- and bathroom, I can't help but think of how fortunate it is for them that man's appetite for otter has diminished. At the beginning of this century, some felt that otter meat tasted good, and it was thus eaten frequently. “Why is it off the menu today?” I once asked several Amerindian hunters.

“The meat is no good,” said one.

“It tastes rank,” said another.

“It is too fishy,” said yet another.

One explanation, however, seemed more to the point: “They are water dogs, and we don't eat dogs!” The otter's nickname has thus proved lifesaving. There is also a 10,000-guilder (\$5,500, U.S.) fine or three months' imprisonment that the government imposes on anyone killing or catching an otter. “After all,” quipped one hunter, “you can buy a lot of beef for 10,000 guilders.”

### ***Family Bonds***

The otter has a family life that puts some humans to shame. Follow along as we try to locate one of their burrows,

or dens. Here, from one to three cubs per year are born and kept indoors the first three months of their life. Under the roots of a tree we see an opening measuring about 30 by 50 centimeters ( $12 \times 20$  in.) in the riverbank. Our flashlight illuminates a tunnel ending in an area just big enough for the mother to curl up in and feed her blind but fury **cubs**.

Pairs of otters view the training of their young as a joint project. Both father and mother will carry their cubs in their mouth and give them their first taste of swimming by plunging into the water. *Despite this rather harrowing training, the cubs seem to like their parents and live with them till next year's litter. Some even stay around longer, forming closely knit family groups that number from 3 up to 20.*

Close family bonds are evident even while the otters sleep. A mated pair sleeps parallel, head to tail or head to head. One often will drape a paw over the other in a friendly embrace.

### **Heading Back**

As the tide ebbs, our guide warns that we had better return or we risk being stuck out here. It starts raining as we push our canoe away from the den site. The way back is like a steeplechase as we haul, tug and pull the boat across the hurdles of fallen trees.

Finally the rain stops. We corner a bend and are suddenly eye to eye with a group of six otters taking a sunbath on a log. Canoe crew and sunbathers eye one another. One by one the otters dive into the creek. The male leader boldly comes very close to us. Heaving his body out of the water, he defiantly growls. Our canoe halts. He swims back and

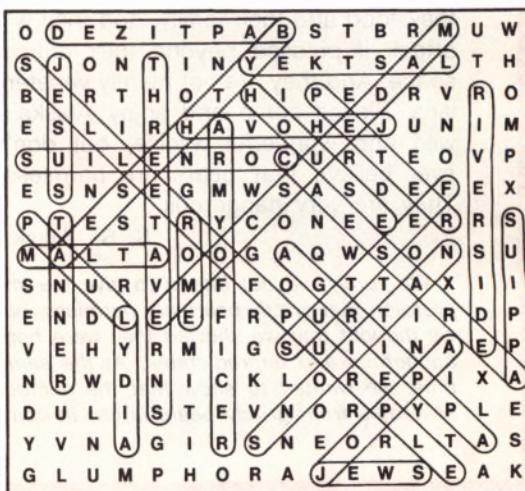
forth and suddenly dives under the boat, crossing underneath us. We turn around and there he is, facing the wrong way. His thick neck turns left, then right. In a startling reversal of roles, the otter is now in quest of people!

Spotting us, he backs up. And with an indifferent look on his face he coolly surveys us once more before disappearing under the water. We stare at the ripples he leaves behind and are thankful to our Creator for the opportunity of seeing this delightful inhabitant of the jungle. And we hope that man in his greed will not wipe him off the face of the earth.

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### **Word-Search-Game Solutions**

- |               |               |             |
|---------------|---------------|-------------|
| 1. Peter      | 10. Lydia     | 18. Rome    |
| 2. Tanner     | 11. Seller of | 19. Malta   |
| 3. By the sea | purple        | 20. Appius  |
| 4. Joppa      | 12. Paul      | 21. Three   |
| 5. Cornelius  | 13. Riverside | Taverns     |
| 6. Army       | 14. Baptized  | 22. Jews    |
| officer       | 15. Made us   | 23. House   |
| 7. Caesarea   | come          | 24. Jehovah |
| 8. Last key   | 16. Festus    | 25. Jesus   |
| 9. Nations    | 17. Agrippa   |             |



# **From Our Readers**

## **Pollution Illness**

I enjoyed your coverage of the problem of ecologically induced illness. (June 8, 1983) I was pleased to see a balanced view of the problem and appropriate emphasis given to what people can do other than simply cleaning up the external environment. The internal environment—that is, the human body—is an important factor and can be strengthened and made more resistant to the effects of poisons and allergens if it is in a state of nutritional balance.

S. M. B., M.D., Connecticut

## **The Mighty Grizzly**

Your article on "The Mighty Grizzly" (July 22, 1983) was very disturbing. I agree that the news media greatly blows out of proportion any man-bear confrontation, but please don't mislead visitors to my state. These animals are dangerous, they will defend to the death their food and their family, and they will attack if pressed beyond their critical space. And they are not merely vegetarians. Please come and enjoy Alaska's wild and wonderful wildlife, but don't ever believe that bears are harmless. They are very dangerous.

S. S., Alaska

*We surely did not intend to give the impression that grizzly bears are harmless, but we thought that we showed they were both dangerous and unpredictable. At the same time, we wanted to show that the number of deaths from grizzly bears is low in com-*

*parison to other death causes in the same area and that such are often the result of humans not understanding how dangerous grizzly bears are and not exercising proper caution. We are pleased to emphasize the need for caution.—ED.*

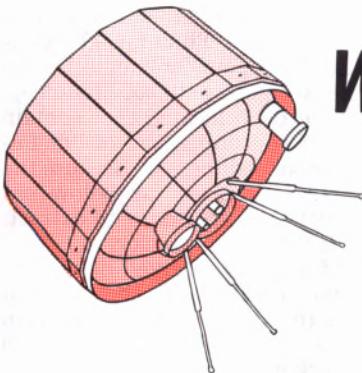
## **Ballet Dancing**

Many thanks for your article 'Ballet—The Beauty and the Beast of It.' (February 8, 1983) I've been dancing for 25 years and I can truthfully say that the pain never stops. My back is a wreck; my toes, well, I don't have to tell you; and my knees have had it. My moral life was perverted. But where was your article years ago when I could have pulled away and still had the use of my body? Yet, better late than never.

T. S., Pennsylvania

One of my best friends showed me your article on 'Ballet—The Beauty and the Beast of It.' I've always known the truth about the overkill practices and broken, bloody toes, the hypnotic trance just to live, eat and dance, dance, dance. And for what? I'm not yet 40 and already my body has broken down. I can't do anything about my body; it's too late. But it's not too late for our precious little daughters. Maybe they will see the physical, moral and emotional hurt that is definitely sure to come. Thanks for saying all the things I've always wanted to say. I am now going to take a deeper look into your religion.

W. S., Pennsylvania



## Watching the World



### Church Property Seized

● Malta's Parliament moved to seize what is unofficially estimated as more than 75 percent of the Roman Catholic Church's property in that country. The church is Malta's largest property owner and 20 to 25 percent of Malta's children attend church schools. Prime Minister Dom Mintoff and the episcopate have had strained relations, and the Vatican, according to *The New York Times*, has issued a protest and formal condemnation of the proposed action. "In unusually grave language," the Vatican warned that "'religious peace' in Malta will be affected by Government seizure of most Roman Catholic Church property there," reports the *Times*.

### Literacy Progress

● Although one third of the world's adult population is still illiterate, according to a report in *The Toronto Star*, things are improving, particularly in the Third World. The World Bank Development Report shows that "the literacy rate in the developing world stood at only 33 percent in 1950. But it rose to . . . 56 per cent in 1979." Though some experts question the validity of these figures, others

note that in many Third World countries there is "an urgent awareness that literacy is the path to development." But there are seemingly insurmountable problems. For example, there are more than 100 languages in Nigeria alone. Many African countries have set the goal of wiping out illiteracy "by the year 2000," the article states.

### Coral Reefs Dying?

● Scientists headed by Peter W. Glynn, Smithsonian research biologist, are discovering in the Pacific Ocean and in some areas of the Atlantic what may amount to "the most extensive reef devastation in modern times," according to *The New York Times*. Why is this a cause for concern? Because these reefs and the algae they attract "provide shelter and feeding grounds for lobsters, fish and smaller creatures." They also protect coastal areas from waves and storms. Abnormal weather patterns, such as the notorious El Niño, and pollution are some of the causes of the devastation of the reefs, says the report.

### Married Priests

● "The Movement for Optional Celibacy claims that 70,000

of the more than 250,000 active priests in the world are married," wrote Jesús Infesta in *Las Provincias* of Valencia, Spain. Pope John Paul "looks askance at the practice, and has irreversibly rejected the abandonment of celibacy," says Infesta. The movement says that an eighth of the world's priests have left the clergy. A meeting of married Catholic priests who were legally released from their vows of celibacy by Pope Paul VI was arranged to seek "a basis for peaceful coexistence of married and celibate clergy."

### Death Tied to Blood

● Reporting on the death of Frank Reynolds, chief anchorman on the ABC-TV evening news, the *New York Post* disclosed that he was convinced that he contracted his fatal infection of hepatitis from a blood transfusion. Though the American Red Cross denied this, Dr. Paul McCurdy, director of the American Red Cross Blood Program in Washington, is reported as stating that Reynolds received blood products from more than ten donors in connection with his surgery in March. Such exposure dramatically multiplies the risk of hepatitis. Although Reynolds was suffering from bone cancer, Ted Koppel of ABC's "Nightline" remarked that the anchorman died from the hepatitis that was apparently caused by "a bad blood transfusion," as reported by the *New York Daily News*.

### Life Without the TV "Box"

● The *Daily Mail* of London recently reported the enlightening story of a family of four who discovered that there are other things in life besides "The Box." Recalling the way it was two years ago, the mother said: "We'd eat nearly all our meals

on our laps, and if anyone started talking the rest of us would immediately say 'Ssh.' It had a hypnotic hold on all of us." Realizing that "TV was not only dominating our living-room but dominating our lives as well," they decided there was only one thing to do—the TV must go. The result? "Now we wonder how we ever found time to watch the box."

### Cheap Energy

- Extracting energy from garbage is no longer just an idea. *Compressed Air Magazine* reports that "the world's largest landfill methane recovery facility" was opened last October on Staten Island, New York, and during the winter supplied pipeline-quality gas to heat the equivalent of 10,000 homes. On the 400-acre (160-ha) site more than 100 wells, 60 to 75 feet (18 to 23 m) deep, were drilled and gas is withdrawn through these. The report states that the plant cost \$20 million (U.S.) and "can process up to 10 million cubic feet [280,000 cu m] per day of raw landfill gas." It claims that methane gas, which is mixed with natural gas, has a heating value equivalent to natural gas.
- The Hawaiian island of Oahu will soon have the world's largest wind-turbine, according to *Industry Week*. The windmill-type generator, with a 400-foot (120-m) rotor, is expected to generate more than 30 million kWhr a year, which is enough to supply the needs of 3,500 homes.

### Technological Improvement

- An engineer at the International Livestock Centre for Africa in Addis Ababa invented a simple inverted V yoke that could result in "a dramatic improvement in agricultural productivity," reports *New Scien-*

*tist*. "For centuries, agricultural development in Africa has been held up by farmers' insistence that they need two oxen to pull a plough. . . . A simple new yoke . . . enables just one ox to do the job." Although Ethiopia has six million draft oxen, only about half the farmers own two, and more than 20 percent own none. "Thus farmers have to team up with others," either to rent a pair for a day or to borrow one, it is reported. Tests show that a single ox can cultivate about 60 percent of what two oxen can. One typical reaction to the single yoke when demonstrated was: "This is something our ancestors never dreamed of!"

### Pollution Detectors

- *New Scientist* reports that electric fish from West Africa are helping to keep the drinking water clean in three cities in the Federal Republic of Germany. Being very particular about clean water, these elephant-trunk fish signal their dislike when they sense that the water is polluted. "The fish normally emits 400 to 800 millisecond blasts a minute," says the article, adding: "When it smells something it does not like in the water, the frequency of impulses plummets." By this, scientists know pollution is high. The advantage? This fish testing is faster than chemical testing and is constant. So, "400,000 people in three towns can now rest assured that their drinking water is up to a fish's standards."

### Red Sea Riches

- Between 1969 and 1981, 605 corings were made in one area of the Red Sea known as Atlantis II. Its estimated reserves are "2-2.5mn tonnes of zinc, 500,000-600,000 tonnes of copper, 4,000-9,000 tonnes of silver and 80 tonnes of gold," to quote the Red Sea Commis-

sion set up by Saudi Arabia and Sudan. Thus far 17 volcanic "hot spots" or "deeps," some 2,100 meters (6,900 ft) deep, have been located that contain high concentrations of "metaliferous sediments." Because the deposits are so far below sea level they are costly to extract. Thus the commission says that if funds are received before the end of the 1980's they "might be the first to put metals from the sea bed onto the world market."

### Endangered Himalayas

- Even the "roof of the world"—the lofty Himalayas—is not immune from the ravages of exploitation by man. "Ecological degradation is threatening almost the entire range," says Rashmi De Roy in the *Times of India*. The cause? Deforestation and overgrazing. The results are that animals are on the decline and are retreating "to newer, more remote habitats," De Roy observes. Silt carried by soil-eroding floods discolors the Bay of Bengal for 400 miles (640 km) offshore. To reverse this trend, concludes the report, "conservation forestry is imperative."

### Exotic Foods

- "Monkey brains and meat, snake soup, tortoise and turtle soup, monitor lizard meat or the meats of flying foxes, flying squirrels, bats and deer" may not sound exotic as a tasty meal to Westerners, but they do to Malaysians, according to *New Scientist* magazine. A survey reveals that "although black market prices for exotic animals are rising, sales are still booming." Many pet shops not only openly sell such birds and animals but also supply restaurants with them. Some current Malaysian prices (expressed in U.S. currency) are: monkey at \$35, flying squirrel \$20, owl \$15,

python \$50 per meter. Some of these are on the endangered species list.

### Clearest Glass

● A windowpane made of a newly developed halide glass could be 1,000 kilometers (620 mi) thick—and still be transparent, reports *The New York Times*. Halide glass has about ten times the light-transmission capability of conventional silicon-based glasses. Thus it has great potential in fiber optic communications systems, in which pulses of light are sent through hair-thin glass fiber lines. Conventional glass fibers must have repeaters every 10 to 50 kilometers (6 to 30 mi) to boost the signal, but halide glass requires no repeating for several hundred kilome-

ters, allowing some underwater cables to get by without the use of repeaters, the report says.

### A "Sneaky" VD

● As if the threat of such horrible diseases as herpes and AIDS were not enough, 400 doctors at a conference of the International Society for Sexually Transmitted Disease Research, held at Seattle, were told of the need for "better diagnosis and public awareness of the most widespread and least-known venereal disease of them all: chlamydia," reports *The Seattle Times*. This little-known disease "infects 3 million Americans a year, or more than syphilis, gonorrhea, herpes and AIDS combined," says the report. Chlamydia is called 'a sneaky disease' because it is

easily ignored by patients and misdiagnosed by doctors. If left unchecked, it can lead to sterility, says the report.

### Blind Man Sails

● Using "Braille charts, a Braille compass, a 'talking' clock and a navigational system that reads his position aloud," Hank Dekker was the first blind person to sail alone from San Francisco to Hawaii, reports *The New York Times*. Dekker, 42 years old, began losing his sight in 1972 due to glaucoma, and he has only about 2 percent of his vision left. Yet, in his 25-foot (8-m) sloop, he arrived in Honolulu right on schedule. He said he made the trip to show handicapped people "they can do new things, learn to sail, learn a new trade, a new skill."

the world's largest religious organization, the Jehovah's Witnesses, has been identified as the most effective group in the world at spreading its beliefs.

The Jehovah's Witnesses are a religious group that originated in the United States in the early 1900s. They believe in the imminent return of Jesus Christ and the establishment of a new world government. They also believe in the resurrection of the dead and the creation of a new earth. They are known for their door-to-door preaching, their use of the Bible as their primary source of doctrine, and their strict adherence to a code of ethics. They are also known for their opposition to organized religion and their belief in the separation of church and state. The Jehovah's Witnesses have a large following in the United States and Canada, and they are also active in many other countries around the world. They are a controversial group, with many people both supporting and criticizing them. Some people view them as a cult, while others see them as a legitimate religious organization. The Jehovah's Witnesses have faced numerous challenges over the years, including legal battles and accusations of proselytizing. Despite these challenges, they continue to spread their beliefs and influence across the globe.