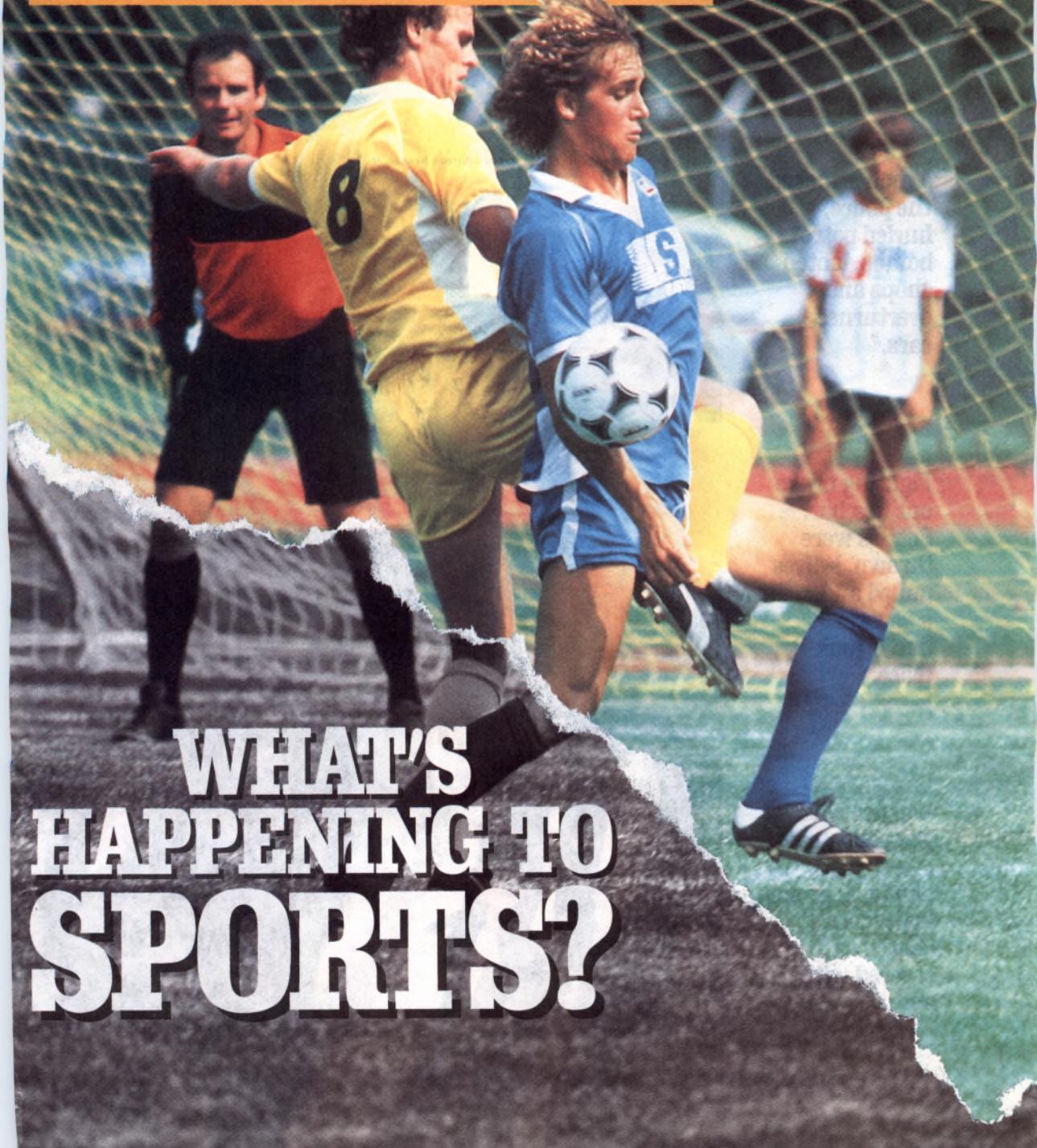


Awake!

November 8, 1989



**WHAT'S
HAPPENING TO
SPORTS?**

**"The vicious,
bloody encounter
between British
and Italian fans . . .
left at least 38 dead
and 350 injured."**

**"A mob attacked
the police,
hurled petrol
bombs, looted
shops and
overturned
cars."**

**"Fighting broke
out in a bar.
Bottles were
thrown, knives
pulled and
a general
battle took
place."**

**"Clashes with
the police, cars
overturned,
windows broken,
foreigners
beaten and
covered with
spit."**

European Cup, Brussels, Belgium, 1985, Reuters/Bettman News photos



What Is Happening in the Sports World?

By Awake! correspondent in Italy



D

O THE reports on the opposite page describe the latest coup d'état in a Latin-American country or another terrorist attack somewhere on European soil? No, these and other similar reports are, as one Italian daily put it, of a "terribly ordinary day of sport."

Sports and violence seem to go hand in hand these days. For example, many still recall the evening of May 29, 1985, when 39 people died and 200 were injured in incidents between fans before the final of the European Champions' Cup soccer championships.

However, episodes of violence caused by participants and spectators are not restricted to just one sport, such as soccer, but they erupt in all types of sports—baseball, boxing, hockey.

The sayings, "May the best man win" and, "It is more important to participate than to win," have become the dinosaurs of the sports world. Why do players and spectators give vent to their baser instincts, to uncontrollable aggressiveness, at competitive sporting events? What is behind the violence in sports? And how serious is the problem?

Violence in Sports

Why the Increase?

SPORT means health" is an old adage. In ancient times Greek doctors claimed that moderate sporting activity could bring good health.

Today, however, many sporting events are anything but healthy for either participants or spectators. Violence in sports has reached such proportions that an authoritative agency, the European Parliament, has approved a lengthy resolution "on vandalism and violence in sport." Alarmed by the ferocity of clashes before and after sporting events, both between the players and between the fans of opposing teams, the members of the European Parliament examined the phenomenon in its various features, its causes, and possible measures to stem it. What did they find, and what forms has violence in sports taken?

'A Widespread Phenomenon'

Soccer, the world's favorite sport, comes in for most of the criticism, but almost all other kinds of sport are involved in the problem. In 1988 violence flared during the European international soccer championships held in Germany. After a game involving their national team, British fans started a raging battle that ended up with wounded policemen, damaged property, and 300 persons arrested. After a victory of the Italian team during the same championships, three people died in a frenzy of enthusiasm.

In Britain infamous hooligans sow panic wherever they go, helping "to destroy the image of English football at home and abroad," as *The Guardian* said. And several times during one sports season, the Monday editions of

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Italian sports newspapers spoke of "black" Sundays—sporting events that erupt into a fracas of death, injuries, and mayhem. Sports facilities have become, as one daily newspaper put it, "guerrilla stadiums." But such conditions are not confined to Britain and Italy. The Netherlands, Germany, the Soviet Union, Spain, and many other countries are having to tackle the same problem.

The "War of the Fans"

Certain fans, their aggressiveness whipped up by the mass media, give vent to their baser instincts at sporting events. In soccer the Italian *ultra* or the British hooligans gather together behind banners bearing titles such as "Red Army" or "Tiger Command." The soccer fan, as one hooligan said, "wants to fight, to conquer the territory of the opposition." In the stands of the stadiums, the conditions are very much like those in the ancient Roman arenas, where the spectators incited the gladiators to slaughter their adversaries. And the chorus of incitement of the fans is punctuated by obscenities and racist slogans.

Fans often carry dangerous weapons. Searches made by the police before the start of some matches have brought to light full-scale arsenals—knives, flare pistols, billiard balls. Clouds of steel-tipped darts have rained down on the stands of British stadiums!

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

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Government Intervention

The resolution of the European Parliament exhorted governments to take strong measures to stem the violence in sports. The British government, for example, has taken such steps under the direction of its prime minister, Margaret Thatcher. Mrs. Thatcher has insisted on the adoption of more stringent laws, such as compulsory identity cards for access to stadiums. If their holders are found guilty of acts of violence, the cards will be withdrawn. Additionally, in Britain there are plans to build or restructure sports facilities to equip them with closed-circuit television cameras for surveillance of the fans, to erect barriers to separate opposing supporters, and to eliminate any inflammable material whatsoever. Policemen have infiltrated gangs of hooligans, the most violent fans, in order to identify their ringleaders and arrest them.

Measures are being taken in other countries too. The Italian sports authorities, in collaboration with the Ministry of the Interior, have decided to use barbed wire in the stadiums as well as protective netting, helicopters, swarms of policemen, and closed-circuit television cameras. The militarization of stadiums has even been considered. During preparations for the Olympic Games held in Seoul, Korea, in 1988, the authorities had policemen trained to combat terrorist attacks.

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Then there are acts of violence aimed at referees. During a recent soccer season in Italy, 690 referees were victims. A referee at a boxing match at the Seoul Olympics was savagely attacked by trainers and even by policemen who did not agree with the decision.

Apart from the danger to people's lives, there is also considerable economic cost to sports violence. It is not just the doling out of hundreds of thousands of dollars for losses caused by thefts, ransacking, and vandalism but also the costs of prevention. On a normal day on the British soccer calendar, about \$700,000 is spent on just police protection.

Why such animalistic aggressiveness?

Violence—"Intrinsic" in the Way Sports Are Played Today

Today, violent aggressiveness has become linked to sports. Interestingly, the same commission that prepared the resolution adopted by the European Parliament pointed out that "violence is not an essential part of sport, but it is intrinsic in the conditions in which sport is played and in the fact that the rules of the game, if such they can be called, cannot adequately prevent it." Why is this?

**Often the
TV camera
lingers on
violent play,
repeating it
again and
again by
means of
instant
replays**

Well, apart from the violent acts of the fans, it is the way in which sport is played that has changed. In society itself, there is "growing violence," as the European Parliament acknowledged. Also, the sporting world no longer emphasizes only the physical activity. For example, in Athens in 1896, at the first Olympic Games held in modern times, a group of British athletes were disqualified because they had trained before the start of the game. The very act of training before a sporting event was considered contrary to the amateur spirit that was championed at that time. Such an episode today would make most people smile.

After the first world war and especially following the second world war, people living in the so-called developed countries have had increasingly more free time. Recreation has quickly become a lucrative activity for the business world. Financial interests have taken their place alongside national and social interests. Today's sporting events are "a scenario in which financial, political, and social factors dominate." In other words, sport has become a "phenomenon of the masses." Winning often means millions of dollars for the victors! Television has also contributed to the popularity of sports and may have added to sports viciousness. Often the TV camera lingers on violent play rather than on those episodes that are judged mild, repeating it again and again by means of instant replays. Thus TV may inadvertently magnify the effects of sports violence in the minds of future fans and players. Amateur sport hardly exists, and in its place there is "professional amateurism," as one periodical called it, speaking of the tens of thousands of dollars earned by athletes in Seoul during the 1988 Olympics.

Nationalism makes athletes, trainers, managers, and spectators attach an exaggerated sense of importance to victory. Following



Nancie Battaglia

Nationalism attaches an exaggerated sense of importance to victory

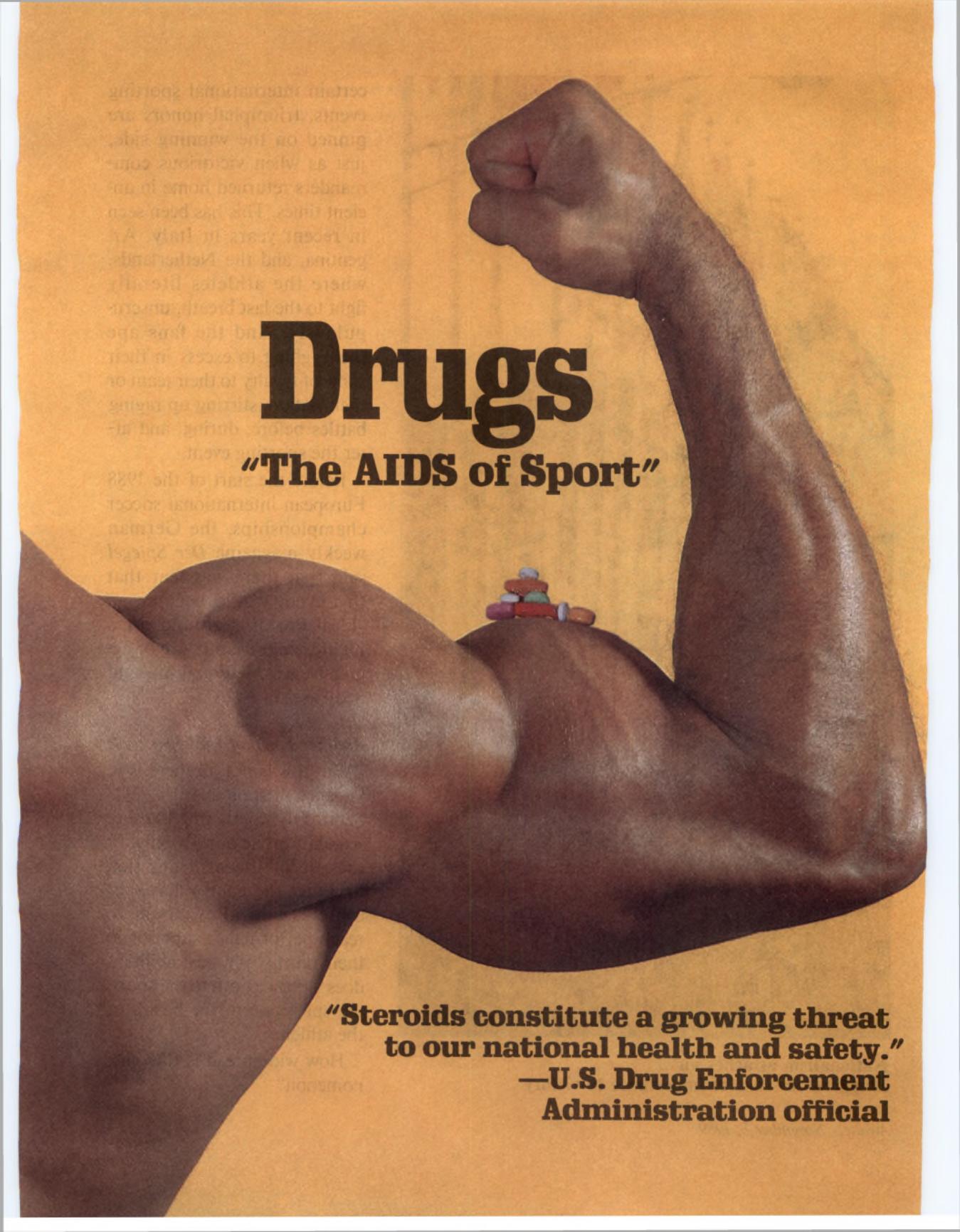
certain international sporting events, triumphal honors are pinned on the winning side, just as when victorious commanders returned home in ancient times. This has been seen in recent years in Italy, Argentina, and the Netherlands, where the athletes literally fight to the last breath, unscrupulously. And the fans ape them, going to excess in their show of loyalty to their team or their nation, stirring up raging battles before, during, and after the sporting event.

Before the start of the 1988 European international soccer championships, the German weekly magazine *Der Spiegel* said that there was fear that this event would become an "ideal breeding-ground for a highly explosive mixture of aggressiveness, nationalism, and neo-Fascism."

Another Form of Violence

But this is not all there is to violence in sports. At the 1988 Seoul Olympics, the "doping scandal" broke out. Doping, or the use of illegal drugs that heighten the energy levels of athletes and allow them to reach performance superior to their normal physical abilities, does violence both to the sporting spirit and to the health of the athletes.

How widespread is this phenomenon?



Drugs

"The AIDS of Sport"

**"Steroids constitute a growing threat
to our national health and safety."**
**—U.S. Drug Enforcement
Administration official**

MILLIONS of spectators watching the Seoul Olympics were shocked. Their hero, the athlete who ran the world's fastest 100-meter race, was stripped of his gold medal, disqualified for the use of prohibited substances.

Thus another plague has infected sports—doping, so difficult to root out that it has been termed “the AIDS of sport.”

“The Medicine Olympics”

It seems that it was mainly after the second world war that some athletes began using drugs in sports. Now, though, according to experts, the use of drugs among athletes is so widespread that it necessitates “complicated and costly organizations, often founded by the sports federations themselves, with the clear aim of obtaining prestigious results, attracting sponsors, making money, gaining power.” The phenomenon is so widespread that *Corriere Medico*, an Italian medical periodical, called the 1984 Los Angeles games “the Medicine Olympics.”

In fact, the use of drugs and other illegal therapies to gain, unfairly, the competitive edge plagues many sports in all countries. Each country wants to surpass the others, so no one wants to stop giving drugs to athletes. In a timely way, the European Parliament pointed out that “the ambitious expectations and frequent sporting events keep an athlete under such pressure as to increase the temptation to make use of more or less legal means of maintaining good physical and psychological form. The temptation is also made greater by the fact that sports trainers have few scruples.” Doping is even practiced on young boys.

Various Forms of Doping

Various forms of doping exist. For example:

Steroids, the drugs involved in what has been defined as “the most serious event in Olympic history,” the disqualification at Seoul of the 100-meter record holder, Ben Johnson. These are substances that, by influencing the production of amino acids, contribute to the increase of muscle mass and strength as well as to an increase in aggressiveness. It is said, for example, that all the world weight-lifting records set in the last ten years can be attributed to the use of these substances.

Stimulants, such as caffeine and strychnine, used to increase alertness and delay fatigue.

Narcotic analgesics, to kill pain and to induce calmness.

“If I could give you a pill that would make you an Olympic champion but that would kill you within a year, would you take it?” Of U.S. athletes interviewed, 50 percent said yes

Beta blockers, substances that, by slowing the heartbeat and steadyng the body, are used particularly by archers and marksmen.

Diuretics, for rapid weight loss and for masking the presence of other prohibited substances at the time tests are made.

These are just some of the well-known substances used in doping, but the Interna-

tional Olympic Committee has drawn up a list of about a hundred prohibited drugs. The problem is that as soon as one of them is banned or methods are developed to detect its presence, whole teams of doctors and chemists set to work to produce others.

However, there are still other ways in which athletes try to improve their performance dishonestly. In order to better their position in the water, some swimmers have had their intestines filled with helium gas.

Many athletes have admitted receiving

blood transfusions to improve their endurance. According to some, by means of a transfusion of their own red blood cells, drawn from them some time previously, the flow of oxygen to all parts of the body, muscles included, is improved.

Press sources have recently revealed that some women athletes have used pregnancies as a form of doping. Pregnant women experience an increase in blood volume, and this in turn increases the conveyance of oxygen to the muscles. Some women athletes, especially those taking part in sports where great physical strength is required, have taken advantage of the initial stages of pregnancy in order to improve their performance. After the games, they have an abortion.

A Serious Problem

But how widespread is the problem? Judging by the rare occurrences in which athletes are disqualified for the use of drugs, some fans might think that only a small percentage of athletes resort to doping, and certainly their idols would never do anything of the sort. But those who are acquainted with the sports world see things differently.

"The use of anabolics is much more widespread than is commonly thought," said a former discus thrower from Italy. And according to Professor Silvio Garattini, an expert in pharmacology, the problem of doping is probably much more serious than has been thought. According to some sources, 50 percent of the more physically endowed athletes make use of prohibited substances.

The Risk to Athletes

But the problem of doping does not lie simply in that better performance can be obtained by unfair means. Today's athlete,

**In the
Soviet Union, 290
athletes and
trainers were
penalized for
drug use
between 1986
and 1988.
—Leninskoye
Znamya,
a Soviet
magazine**

10

and especially the one who takes drugs, is part of a much larger, though hidden, team, which includes doctors able to prescribe forbidden substances if necessary. However, it is the athlete who pays the consequences—the shame of being found out or disqualified and, more important, the serious health risks.

It is believed that anabolic steroids cause damage to the liver and to the cardiovascular system as well as produce various other secondary physical effects. These drugs are also held responsible for damage to the urogenital system, and for the violent personality of some athletes.

The abuse of other drugs, such as stimulants, provokes a "state of confusion, toxic dependence, visual hallucinations." As for blood transfusions, the scientific periodical *Doctor* points out that the infusion of an athlete's own red blood cells is not without risks. One of these is the "overloading and the reduction of the blood flow in certain areas caused by the increase of the viscosity of the blood" and the accumulation of iron

"with negative consequences for the parenchyma (liver, kidneys, heart, endocrine glands, etc.)."

The victims of doping, at least those who are known, are numerous. A few of the more well-known cases are Danish cyclist Jensen, who died during the 1960 Rome Olympics; British cyclist Tom Simpson, who died during the 1967 Tour de France; the Dutch middle-distance runner Augustinus Jaspers, who died right after a race at the Los Angeles Olympics in 1984; the West German Birgit Dressel, a heptathlete who died, was poisoned by the drugs prescribed to her for years by a sports doctor.

"Sport has no pity," said Carl Lewis, several times an Olympic champion. "Doping has already claimed its victims. The organizers know about it and say nothing."

And yet, even though aware of these disturbing facts, how do athletes answer the question: "If I could give you a pill that would make you an Olympic champion but that would kill you within a year, would you take it?" Of U.S. athletes interviewed, 50 percent said yes. And this same answer would probably be given by many athletes in other parts of the world.

Can it be expected that antidrug measures will succeed in combating this plague? Well, according to the experts, very few centers are equipped to do the proper testing, and the tests themselves are very expensive. Also, test results have often been falsified. Furthermore, in spite of what was achieved at the recent Korean Olympics, new doping methods are always one step ahead of the means of detecting them. Yet, there is good reason to hope that doping and violence in sports will end.

**"Athletes
on steroids
become
mean and
aggressive."**

**—Dr. Robert Voy,
chief medical
officer of the
U.S. Olympic
Committee**

When Will It All End?



ENGAGING in refreshing physical activity is pleasurable and healthful. But unfortunately, being participants or even only spectators at a sporting event often means

being sucked into an extremely violent, and oftentimes drug-filled world.

Modern-day sport is merely one expression of that violent world. Speaking of the

incidents in Belgium in 1985 that caused the deaths of 39 persons in the stands of a football stadium, philosopher Emanuele Severino said: "It is generally agreed that events like the one at Brussels occur because of people's growing lack of belief in certain fundamental values of our society." Then he added: "The violence of our time does not originate with the absence of values but with the presence of new values."

New Values in Sports

What are these new values mentioned by Professor Severino? One is the narcissism of the athletes that makes champions "demi-gods."

Then there is nationalism and the resultant political implications. The magazine *L'Espresso* states: "Sport has become a great vehicle for social promotion. The more victories it wins, the more a nation is considered."

Money is also one of the new values that has become part of the sporting world. Considerable financial and commercial interests—television-transmission rights, publicity, lotteries, and sponsorships—ensure "unscrupulous competition," even among the sportsmen themselves. A former soccer player said that soccer "is no longer a game. It's just a business."

The prevailing principle is victory at all costs, and according to the new values of today, this means everything—from violence both on the field and in the stands to the violence caused by fans before and after the game, from doping and its lethal effects to unfairness and unscrupulousness. The sporting spirit, so-called fair play, seems to have become a thing of the past. Will it ever return? Judging by what is said, people

hope so, but the facts are anything but encouraging.

Drugs and Violence—Will It Ever End?

As Professor Severino admits, violence in sports is only one aspect of a more generalized violence that torments modern society. What is the cause of so much violence? A Bible prophecy helps us to understand the problem. Speaking of the last days of this wicked system of things, the apostle Paul listed the following traits: 'Men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, disloyal, without self-control, fierce, without love of goodness, betrayers, headstrong, puffed up with pride, lovers of pleasures.' And he added: 'Wicked men and impostors will advance from bad to worse.'—2 Timothy 3:1-5, 13.

This present world, the Bible explains, "is lying in the power of the wicked one." (1 John 5:19) Satan the Devil is "the wicked one" who corrupts good things, such as wholesome sporting activities. He is the one responsible for the violent spirit. He also foments the nationalism, the selfishness, and the greed that have ruined society and sports.

But as individuals, we do not have to give in to that demonic spirit. We can, through application of Bible principles, "strip off" our old personality with its wrong practices, including violent manners, and put on "the new personality," which produces peaceful fruit.—Colossians 3:9, 10; Galatians 5:22, 23.

Will there ever be an end, though, to violence and doping in sports? Most certainly! When? When the violence and drug abuse in society come to an end. The present increase in wickedness indicates that the time is at hand!—Psalm 92:7.

Terror on Flight 811

February 24, 1989.

The day was just one hour old. Along with my wife, Linda,

I hoped to be back on our home soil in Australia in 12 hours or so.

Flight 811 to New Zealand, the first leg of our trip home, promised to be little more than a routine flight.

Twenty minutes into our journey, we were startled by a loud thud on the plane's right-hand side. A section of the plane's interior caved in, just a row away from us. Debris and fiberglass were blown about the cabin. A wind of incredible strength roared through the aircraft. Little did we know then that nine passengers had been blown out of the aircraft —one of them drawn into one of the aircraft's right-hand engines!

The hysterical screams of passengers were all but drowned out by the sounds of the howling wind and the shaking fuselage. Linda and I simply gazed at each other. Words were not necessary. We knew we were about to die!

Facing Sure Death

I looked behind me and noticed that oxygen masks had dropped from the ceiling for

most of the passengers but not for Linda and me. I stood up in an attempt to pry the mask compartment open but was dragged back into my seat by my wife.

Still, we managed to pull our life jackets from beneath the seats and assumed the crash position. For all we knew, we were about to crash into the Pacific!

Again Linda and I looked at each other. "I love you, Linda," I said. "I love you too," she replied. Resuming the crash position, I put my head down, and I began praying to Jehovah God.

You often hear that people close to death have scenes from their lives flash before them. Both of us experienced that. We were also assaulted by 'if onlys.' My wife and I are both Jehovah's Witnesses. I had hoped to qualify some day as a ministerial servant in the local congregation. But it now seemed sure that I would never reach that goal. Linda was tormented by regrets over never having entered the full-time preaching work as a pioneer, which she had often talked about doing.

Again I called upon Jehovah, this time aloud, with my right hand clutching Linda's. One of the hostesses issued a frantic plea for all passengers to remain seated. Outside,



there was nothing but darkness. Inside, total terror.

'What would happen should Linda die and I survive?' I thought. 'What would her parents think of me for taking their daughter away and failing to bring her home?' The resurrection hope had never been so crucial to us as at that moment.

Contemplating the slim chance of surviving the crash, I started thinking about ditching into the sea and contending with sharks. I looked down at my feet and reached for my shoes under the seat in front of me. 'If a shark is going to have a go at me,' I thought, 'he'll have a tougher time biting through my shoes!' Irrational? Yes. But rationality is scarce at such times.

Touchdown!

Suddenly, an announcement: "Two minutes to touchdown!"

"Two minutes to touchdown?" I was puzzled. 'You don't touch down in the ocean—you crash,' I thought. 'Could we be heading back to Honolulu?' Within moments I had my answer. The lights came on, and we had the smoothest of landings. Wild applause broke out among the passengers as the plane came to a halt! I remained slumped in my seat. But not for long. Soon came a call to evacuate the plane. We headed for the exit doors and slid down chutes to the safety of the runway below.

A safe distance from the crippled aircraft, I surveyed the reason for our half hour of horror: A 30-foot section of the fuselage had ripped away, exposing six rows of the business-class section, a portion of the cargo hold, and a small area of first class. I

remember noticing that an entire section of business-class seating remained intact and felt relieved that everyone must have survived. How wrong I was! It turned out that some six rows had indeed been blown out of the jet, carrying nine passengers to their terrifying death.

As a shuttle bus began taking us back to the main terminal, the passengers began consoling one another. It was apparent that more and more of them were succumbing to shock. Arriving at the terminal, all available telephones were immediately seized. Stunned passengers tried to reach family members before such ones would be shocked by radio and television reports.

I will never forget the next six hours: Bloodied and emotionally stunned passengers strewn about the floor of the airport lounge. News teams and lawyers congregating outside. Airline personnel trying to shield us from them. Constant passenger counts as officials scrambled to determine who was, in fact, missing.

Later, each passenger was questioned by U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation agents, keen to establish as soon as possible whether

terrorist activity was responsible for the disaster. It appeared unlikely, but airline authorities were understandably on edge. Just two months earlier, a terrorist bombing had downed a jet over Lockerbie, Scotland. We later learned, however, that structural failure was the likely cause of the flight 811 tragedy.

Home at Last!

After a brief rest and a hot meal at a Waikiki hotel, we were told that the flight was being rescheduled for later that night. While a few opted to remain in Waikiki to recover, Linda and I and dozens of others decided we wanted this nightmare behind us as soon as possible. Nevertheless, our flight out of Honolulu was one nerve-racking experience. The slightest movement of the plane sent shivers up and down our spines. One of the crew dropped a plastic cup of ice and the sound was startling. Rows of passengers, myself included, jumped out of our seats.

In due time, however, we arrived safe and sound in Australia. A relative, one who does not share our faith, observed that our faith probably helped us to cope with the midair drama. And thinking back to that terror-stricken flight, Linda and I have no doubts that our relying on Jehovah God and our sure faith in his promise of a resurrection were a great comfort to us.

Although we cannot claim that our survival was in any way miraculous, we are certainly grateful to be alive. In fact, the experience has helped us to appreciate more than ever that life is a precious gift from God. And we are more determined than ever to use it to the full to his praise.—*As told by Roger White.*



ARE you a do-it-yourself enthusiast? More and more people are. So popular has the do-it-yourself trend become that recent attempts in Britain to enforce a ban on Sunday trading met with stiff resistance from the owners of the proliferating supermarkets stocked with supplies for the home enthusiasts.

Is do-it-yourself for you? What will help you reach a wise decision?

Count the Cost

Before ever starting a job, how wise it is to figure out its cost. You will find that a comparison of the charges of a skilled professional with the cost of materials for what you would need to do it yourself will be revealing. But do not forget the hidden extras. What are they?

Many professionals guarantee that their work will meet a certain standard at a specified time. If they fail, you can often seek some type of compensation. In the long run, to pay a little more and benefit from the services of a professional may be to your advantage.

Another factor to reckon with is the cost of your time. Does your do-it-yourself project leave you so drained physically that you resume your regular work tired out? Does your do-it-yourself work rob you of time needed to maintain and strengthen the family bond? If

Is Do-It-Yourself for You?



you are married, what does your mate think of your projects and the time you spend on them? And your children, do they derive happiness from what you do? Being "married" to do-it-yourself work can sow seeds of discord with family and friends.

It is possible, nevertheless,

to maintain good family relationships and still work on do-it-yourself projects. How? By enlisting the help of your family. Your marriage mate can join you, either in planning or in actually doing the work, perhaps even taking care of some of your other duties while you concentrate on the

work to be done. Surely, your family and friends deserve consideration.

You may work things out well, planning the project and enlisting the cooperation of your family, but do you have the right tools?

The Value of Tools

Are you inspired by glossy brochures that show successful projects? But do you know what tools were used, and how much they cost? Is purchase of such tools within your family's budget? On occasion, you may find renting some of the larger power tools a viable option if their purchase price is too great but the need vital. You can manage many a do-it-yourself project with very basic tools. However, for these to be of lasting value, care for them well.

Where will you keep your tools? When deciding on a storage area, make sure the tools are protected and treated properly so they remain in

good condition. Throwing tools together in a drawer can damage them. Arrange a designated place for each tool. You will find that tracing the outline of the tool onto a flat board is helpful. Fasten this board on the wall of your workshop or tool cupboard. Then clasp and hang the tools there. You can thus easily see whether the tool is in its place or not.

Some tools that are used under tension, such as fretsaws, may require release before storage. Most tools will require cleaning and oiling to maintain their value. Make tool maintenance a part of whatever do-it-yourself project you undertake.

You have figured out the cost and opted to do it yourself. You have all the tools ready and in good condition. 'But there is something missing,' you say. 'I am not experienced.' Does this mean that do-it-yourself work is ruled out?

HOW TO CARE FOR YOUR TOOLS

- Use them properly
- Clean them thoroughly
- Store them correctly



Success Without Experience?

Success on a first-time job does not come automatically. A helpful guide, though, is to apply the maxim: Follow the instructions carefully. But whose instructions?

"In the multitude of counselors there is accomplishment," states an ancient proverb. (Proverbs 15:22) Consequently, before you start to do it yourself, consult the experts. You can draw on the accumulated wisdom of the experts by reading their suggestions in many do-it-yourself manuals. Or if one of your friends has already successfully done a similar job, ask him how he managed it and what tips he can offer.

Safety Essential

Remember the need for safety. Use the tools *only* in the way they are intended to be used. If your children help you, teach them respect and proper care for tools, especially for those that are sharp and dangerous.

The variety of projects that you can undertake for yourself is great. But to avoid being unbalanced in such jobs, take into account other people's advice. Then adapt the suggestions to your own circumstances. Whatever the proposed project, study it carefully before you decide to do it yourself.

any conflicts of belief had until then been mostly below the surface. But now the religious spiritual and social changes taking place

and the global nature of man's life in 1900 could bring home to him that spiritual leadership and spiritual guidance were no longer available. Man must therefore

RELIGION'S FUTURE IN VIEW OF ITS PAST

Part 21: 1900 onward

Skirts Splattered With Blood

"There is no sure foundation set on blood."

Shakespeare, English poet and dramatist (1564-1616)

DO YOU remember the Jonestown, Guyana, tragedy of 11 years ago this month? Over 900 members of the religious group known as People's Temple committed mass suicide, most of them willingly, by drinking a cyanide-laced fruit drink.

Shocked, people asked: 'What kind of religion is it that sacrifices the lives of its own members?' Yet, innocent blood has been shed in the name of religion for almost 6,000 years. In the 20th century, however, blood has been shed more often and in more ways than at any other time in history. Consider just a fraction of the evidence.

Human Sacrifices to a False God

Since 1914, two world wars and over a hundred smaller conflicts have spilled an ocean of blood. A century ago, French writer Guy de Maupassant said that "the egg from which wars are hatched" is patriotism, which he called "a kind of religion." In fact, *The Encyclopedia of Religion* says that patriotism's cousin, nationalism, "has become a dominant form of religion in the modern world, preempting a void left by the deterioration of traditional religious values." (Italics ours.) By

failing to promote true worship, false religion created the spiritual vacuum into which nationalism was able to pour.

Nowhere was this better illustrated than in Nazi Germany, whose citizens at the beginning of World War II claimed to be 94.4 percent Christian. Of all places, Germany—birthplace of Protestantism and praised in 1914 by Pope Pius X as home of "the best Catholics in the world"—should have represented the very best that Christendom had to offer.

Significantly, Catholic Adolf Hitler found readier support among Protestants than among Catholics. Predominantly Protestant districts gave him 20 percent of their votes in the 1930 elections, Catholic districts only 14 percent. And the first absolute majority for the Nazi Party in state elections was in 1932 in Oldenburg, a district 75 percent Protestant.

Apparently, the "void left by the deterioration of traditional religious values" was greater in Protestantism than in Catholicism. Understandably so. Liberalized theology and higher criticism of the Bible were mainly the product of German-speaking Protestant theologians.

Equally significant is what finally solidified lagging Catholic support behind Hitler. German historian Klaus Scholder explains that "by tradition German Catholicism had especially close ties with Rome." Seeing in Nazism a bulwark against Communism, the Vatican was not averse to using its influence to strengthen Hitler's hand. "Fundamental decisions shifted more and more to the Curia," says Scholder, "and in fact Catholicism's status and future in the Third Reich was finally decided almost solely in Rome."

The part Christendom played in both world wars led to a severe loss of prestige. As the *Concise Dictionary of the Christian World Mission* explains: "Non-Christians had before their eyes . . . the evident fact that nations with a thousand years of Christian teaching

behind them had failed to control their passions and had set the whole world ablaze for the satisfaction of less than admirable ambitions."

Of course, religiously motivated wars are nothing new. But in contrast with the past when nations of different religions warred with one another, the 20th century has increasingly found nations of the same religion locked in bitter conflict. The god of nationalism has clearly been able to manipulate the gods of religion. Thus, during World War II, while Catholics and Protestants in Great Britain and the United States were killing Catholics and Protestants in Italy and Germany, Buddhists in Japan were doing the same to their Buddhist brothers in southeast Asia.

Nevertheless, in view of its own blood-

**False religion's bloodguilt of the past, as depicted
in this 15th-century woodcut of the mass burnings of heretics,
is far overshadowed by its record during the 20th century**



German church bells were melted down for war purposes during World War I



Bundesarchiv Koblenz

stained clothing, Christendom cannot self-righteously shake its finger at others. By advocating, supporting, and at times electing imperfect human governments, professed Christians and non-Christians alike must share responsibility for the blood these governments have shed.

But what kind of religion would put government above God and offer its own members as political sacrifices on the altar of the god of war?

"They Kept Spilling Innocent Blood"

Those words, said of apostate Israel centuries ago, apply to all false religions and to those of Christendom in particular. (Psalm 106:38) Do not forget the millions of lives snuffed out in the Holocaust, a tragedy in which Christendom's churches were not guiltless.—See *Awake!* April 8, 1989.

German clergymen also remained silent on another issue, less known, but just as tragic. In 1927, two years after Hitler outlined his thoughts on race in *Mein Kampf*, Catholic editor and theologian Joseph Mayer published a book bearing the episcopal imprimatur that said: "Mental patients, moral lunatics, and other inferior persons have no more right to propagate than they do to set fires." Lutheran pastor Friedrich von Bodelschwingh found sterilization of the handicapped compatible with Jesus' will.

This religiously supported attitude helped pave the way for Hitler's 1939 "euthanasia decree," which led to the death of more than 100,000 mentally deranged citizens and to the forced sterilization of an estimated 400,000.*

Not until 1985, 40 years after the end of the war, did Lutheran Church officials in the Rhineland publicly admit: "Our church did not strongly enough oppose forced sterilization, the murder of sick and handicapped persons, and the performance

* This is somewhat reminiscent of the estimated 300,000 to 3,000,000 "witches" who, beginning in the 15th century, were murdered with papal blessing.

"Religion has, in many parts of the world today, become the handmaiden of revolution . . . It continues to inspire killing in Northern Ireland as much as on the Indian subcontinent and in the Philippines."

—The Encyclopedia of Religion

of cruel medical experiments on humans. We beg forgiveness of the victims still alive and of their surviving relatives."

It is true that the government's euthanasia campaign slowed considerably after the Catholic bishop of Münster delivered a sharply worded attack on August 3, 1941, calling the policy murder. But why did it take 19 months and 60,000 deaths before a public condemnation was heard?

Religion's Bloodguilt

Most religions claim to respect life and to be interested in protecting people from harm. But do the clergy consistently warn their flocks of the physical dangers involved in smoking; in the abuse of drugs, including alcohol; in the taking of blood into the body; and in sexual promiscuity? More important, do they condemn these works of the flesh as the Bible does, explaining that they can rob us of God's approval?—Acts 15:28, 29; Galatians 5:19-21.

Of course, some do. And the Catholic Church as well as many Fundamentalist churches show respect for life to the extent of denouncing abortion as the shedding of innocent blood. Yet, Catholic Italy's abortion law is one of Europe's most liberal.

Buddhism also condemns abortions. But in Japan in a single year, 618,000 were reportedly performed, even though 70 percent of the population adheres to Buddhism. This raises the question: On what basis should we judge a religion, by what its official organs and some of its clergymen say or by what a great number of its members in good standing do?

Another example of failing to warn the wicked one has to do with Bible chronology and the fulfillment of Bible prophecy. Both

indicate that in 1914 God's heavenly Kingdom was established in the hands of Jesus Christ.* Although Christendom celebrates Christ's supposed birthday every December, the clergy no more proclaim him as ruling King than the leaders of Judaism accepted him as King-Designate 19 centuries ago.

Clergymen, of whatever persuasion, who fail to warn of the consequences of disobeying God's laws on morality and of refusing to submit to God's ruling Kingdom are, according to Ezekiel 33:8, heaping bloodguilt upon themselves. Their silence amounts to nothing less than standing idly by as millions of their flock become bloodguilty.

Thus, by splashing its skirts with innocent blood, false religion has negated the life-giving shed blood of Christ Jesus. (See Matthew 20:28 and Ephesians 1:7.) For that reason, the blood splattered on false religion's skirts will soon—very soon—be its own!—Revelation 18:8.

"False Religion—Overtaken by Its Past!" will find no escape. Let our next issue explain.

* See *You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth*, chapters 16-18, published in 1982 by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

Do the Stars Really Control Your Life?

Oil—Do We Have Any Alternatives?

Why Do Mom and Dad Always Fight?



How Could They Do That to Me?

"I looked up to Gina as my older sister.* She used to take me to the movies and help me with my homework. I didn't know she was having problems until one night it was announced that she was expelled from the Christian congregation. I was in shock. I couldn't believe it. She didn't tell me she was having problems."—Terry.

"Bill was my older brother. I looked up to him a lot. He was very likable—charming, funny. When we'd eat as a family, he could have us all screaming with laughter! But Bill was always a very angry person. He started hanging out with some spoiled rich kids and got into drugs. That just got him madder and madder. Soon he even started getting into fights with our parents. I even saw him push Mom around once! One week we planned our first family camping trip. I was really looking forward to it! And then Bill ran away, giving us no hint as to where he had gone. I was scared for him, worried. But I was also mad at him; mad because Dad had to cancel our trip, mad because Bill was always messing everything up."—Don.

* Some of the names have been changed.

IT HURTS when an older brother or sister rebels, runs away, gets arrested, or in some way disgraces your family.

Often you have looked up to that older sibling (brother or sister) as a model. Watching that one tumble from a pedestal can be a shattering experience. It may even arouse fears regarding yourself. 'Will this happen to me?'

Resentment may be yet another powerful emotion to contend with. You resent your rebellious sibling for all the hurt and pain he is causing you and your family. "Mom and Dad were at a loss as to what to do," recalls Don. "They were just sick over the matter." You may further resent that your wayward sibling has become the focus of your parents' attention—as if you no longer exist! You may even be tempted to act up a little yourself so as to flag your parents' attention.

On the other hand, you may also feel resentment toward your parents as they begin to take severe disciplinary action toward the rebellious one. You wonder: 'Did they have to be so hard on him?' You may also tire of hearing your parents reprimand him. Some youths even secretly feel envy, wondering if they would enjoy the free life-style their brother or sister now seems to relish. Or you may simply be embarrassed to have to explain the distressing situation to your friends.

Why, then, do older brothers and sisters sometimes let us down? And how can you prevent it from unduly affecting your life?

Why Older Siblings Sometimes Fail

The Bible makes it clear that "all"—even much-looked-up-to brothers and sisters—"have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:23) And youths are particularly vulnerable to wrongdoing, as they have often not learned to control their emotions and impulses. The Bible thus says that "foolishness is tied up with the heart of a boy [or, youth]." (Proverbs 22:15) So as much as their failure no doubt hurts you, there is probably no reason for you to believe that your sibling's wrongdoing was in any way directed at you personally, nor is there any reason for you to be unduly embarrassed, as if the wrongdoing were your own.

It is possible that there has been some failure on the part of your parents in their raising of your brother or sister. Perhaps they were too lenient and failed to discipline him properly. (Proverbs 13:24; 29:15, 17) Perhaps, too, they failed in some way to set a proper example. Even so, little would be accomplished by getting into bitter arguments with your parents, attempting to pin the blame on them for your sibling's problems.

More than likely there has been, not so much a failure on the part of your parents to provide training, but a failure on the part of your brother or sister to respond to parental training.

How Parents Feel

This may help you appreciate why your sibling's deflection is particularly devastating to your parents. They have put much time, effort, and emotion into the raising of your brother or sister. Seeing that one does wrong, they can't help but be filled with doubts

and guilt about the way they raised him or her.

Little wonder, then, that when the crisis is at its peak, your parents may seemingly neglect you. The book *How to Survive Your Child's Rebellious Teens*, by Myron Brenton, explains: "The rebellious child is so much the center of the parents' world and takes up so much of their emotional energy that the other children are ignored. 'I was so blind, so focused in on this one older daughter that I wasn't even aware that I had another daughter or husband,' is the way one mother of a drug-addicted child put it."



A rebellious brother or sister often becomes the focus of parental concern. The innocent child may feel neglected as a result

Granted, it is not fair if parents react in this way. But is it not understandable? The Bible tells us that King David was so distraught over the rebellion and subsequent death of his son Absalom that he temporarily lost his balance and could do little more than cry out: "My son Absalom! Absalom my son, my son!" (2 Samuel 19:4-6) Be assured that as things calm down—and they will in time—your parents will gradually regain their balance and be in a position to care for your needs better.

'Will I Do the Same Thing?'

This question greatly concerns many youths, especially if they find themselves a bit curious about the "freedom" their older brother or sister is tasting.

First of all, realize that while you may have looked up to your older sibling, you are still responsible before God to do what is right. "If one knows how to do what is right and yet does not do it, it is a sin for him," says James 4:17. (Compare Galatians 6:5.) To envy the seeming freedom he or she now has is sheer foolishness. The psalmist Asaph felt such envy himself for a while. But after carefully examining the outcome for rebellious sinners, he concluded that such ones were "on slippery ground"—a heartbeat away from disaster! (Psalm 73:18) You do not need to experience wrongdoing personally to know that it leads only to heartache.—Galatians 6:7, 8.

Realize, too, that what your older brother or sister does in no way predicts what you will do. As Terry (quoted at the outset) put it: "I'm not going to do what my sister did. I'm nothing like her. We're separate persons."

Consider, for example, the Bible's account regarding Joseph. Not one of Joseph's ten older brothers provided Joseph with a good example to imitate. Yet Joseph did not let their poor example influence him. He showed a devotion to righteous principles and became

"one singled out from his brothers" to receive many privileges and blessings.—Deuteronomy 33:16; Genesis 49:26.

You can likewise endeavor to "become an example to the faithful ones in speaking, in conduct, in love, in faith, in chasteness," regardless of the course your older brother or sister has taken. (1 Timothy 4:12) Your faithful efforts may even move your older brother or sister to straighten out his or her own life.

Learn From Their Mistakes

Try to gain some benefit from this difficult situation. Did your brother or sister, for example, seek out "bad associations"—youths who use bad language, take drugs, abuse alcoholic beverages, or engage in immoral conduct? (1 Corinthians 15:33) Perhaps you need to take a closer look at those you associate with.

Think, too, about the way your older sibling responded to counsel from your parents. Was he argumentative, stubborn, rebellious? If so, do you find yourself occasionally talking back to your parents or dragging your feet when it comes to carrying out what they ask you to do? Could you be more conscientious about "honoring your father and your mother"?—Ephesians 6:2.

It will not be easy, but you and your family will survive this sad experience and perhaps see some good come out of it. In the meantime, never lose hope that your older sibling will realize the error of his or her way and take steps to change. (Compare Luke 15: 11-24.) Never forget that while family members may let you down, Jehovah will *never* "leave you nor by any means forsake you." (Hebrews 13:5) Loyalty to Jehovah must therefore come first. Your desire to please him will motivate you to live a clean and chaste life—even when a beloved brother or sister has chosen to do otherwise.

Smoking—The Risks

IN THE 1950's, one cigarette company advertised its brand as "just what the doctor ordered." Oozing confidence, such slogans once promoted cigarettes as aids to health and vitality—but no more! These are the days when governments require cigarette packs to display labels warning about serious health risks.

Nevertheless, some smokers cling to the idea that 'a cigarette helps me think and work better.' They may dismiss the health threat as no worse than that of eating candy bars for quick energy or drinking coffee to get started in the morning. Or they may limit the risk of smoking to the physical body. Could they be right? Is there a case for the argument that a cigarette—for all its risks—might help them perform better?

A High Price to Pay!

Whether a cigarette really rewards the smoker with greater alertness and competence or only creates the illusion of doing so, there is no doubt that the reward comes at a terrible price. Besides the risk of eventual cancer and heart disease, consider the more immediate result: Within seven to ten seconds of each

puff, the smoker feels the kick of a drug, nicotine: "It's self-administered," says University of California psychopharmacologist Nina Schneider, "and it controls mood and performance. That's what makes it so powerfully addicting."

As addicting as heroin and cocaine? Yes, said the surgeon general of the United States in a warning issued May 16, 1988. This physical addiction, he explained, is why some smokers will "persist despite adverse physical, psychological or social consequences."

And what consequences? By 1985 smoking was responsible for 100,000 deaths a

year in Britain, 350,000 a year in the United States, and a third of all deaths in Greece. This record as a public health problem is hard to excuse. The villain, tobacco smoke, is not only useless to the body as a food or a beverage but inherently harmful.

So, then, is the nicotine in tobacco smoke any worse than the caffeine in coffee, tea, or chocolate? From a medical standpoint, there is no comparison. Says Dr. Peter Dews, caffeine researcher from Harvard University: "Overall, caffeine is not a significant factor in ill health in the nation in the way that ciga-



Vincent van Gogh, *Skull With Cigarette*, 1885. Courtesy of the National Museum, Amsterdam, Holland

rette smoking is." But this medical indictment of smoking is only the beginning.

Anatomy of a Bad Excuse

To see why smoking is in a totally different category from food and beverages, consider the design of your body. Ecclesiastes 7:29 says that "God made mankind upright, but they themselves have sought out many plans." While eating is a God-given natural function of your body, the abuses of nonmedical drugs are of human invention. There can be no natural, moderate use of these addictive substances. Whether smoked, taken as pills, or injected by needles, they stimulate and pervert bodily functions in ways contrary to nature.

In contrast, nearly any food or drink will supply some of your body's normal needs for fuel, growth, and tissue repair. Granted, people with certain health problems must avoid food with preservatives, saturated fats, or caffeine. (To a diabetic, ordinary sugar is dangerous.) But to most people, even these foods have some nutritional value and, in moderation, are harmless. Smoking is an entirely different story.

Even one or two cigarettes, like one use of cocaine for pleasure, is dangerously seductive. A British government study found that when youths smoked as few as two cigarettes, they had only a 15-percent chance of remaining nonsmokers.

Being at Your Best Spiritually

Surely you cannot be at your best as a helpless victim of physical drug dependency—the "irresistible urges" of nicotine as the U.S. surgeon general described it. Rather than have your body lead you as its slave, the Bible calls for self-control, the power "to lead your body as your own slave."—1 Corinthians 9:24-27.

Tobacco not only attacks the smoker's flesh—risking cancer, emphysema, and cardiovascular disease—but also attacks his will. Thus, by its subtle pollution, the habit virtually enslaves the smoker's personality, or mental disposition. "For 26 years," admitted a writer in *Time* magazine, "I've been a slave to cigarettes. For at least ten, I've been trying to emancipate myself. Only nicotine freaks who have tried repeatedly to kick the habit and failed can fully appreciate how difficult it is to give it up."

The Bible obliges us, as those whom God loves, to "cleanse ourselves of every defilement [pollution] of flesh and spirit."—2 Corinthians 7:1; *Kingdom Interlinear*.

Why should God care whether we abuse our own bodies and mental faculties? Simply because he is our loving Creator, who is concerned that we live up to our full potential as his creation. Appealing to our reason, he says: "I, Jehovah, am your God, the One teaching you to benefit [not harm] yourself."—Isaiah 48:17.

The real challenge, then, is to be honest with ourselves for our own good. It is useless to defend smoking for its calming effect or other "advantages" that amount to little more than avoiding the agony of nicotine withdrawal. Medically, smoking has been a calamity to public health; but religiously, this human invention for taking nicotine into the bloodstream via the lungs has ignored our Creator's clean standards and pollutes and degrades the human body. So why invite trouble? How much better to heed the proverb: "Shrewd is the one that has seen the calamity and proceeds to conceal himself, but the inexperienced have passed along and must suffer the penalty."—Proverbs 22:3.

WATCHING THE WORLD

CHURCH SEX SCANDAL

"For years, Roman Catholic priests and other church workers in Newfoundland parishes had repeatedly abused dozens of children, most of them young boys, many of them orphans in the care of their attackers," reports Canada's newsmagazine *Maclean's*. "Nor is the scandal limited to Newfoundland: at least six more cases of sexual abuse of children by Catholic churchmen have turned up elsewhere in Canada, and more than 20 in the United States." With reports of sexual abuse mounting each month—a total of 17 priests and others affiliated with the church have already been charged—faith and trust of many Catholics in their priests have been shaken. Most disturbing is the accusation that sexual abuse in the church not only has been long-standing but has usually been covered up and the offending priest simply moved to another parish where new offenses were sometimes committed. Parents have reacted by refusing to allow their sons to become altar boys or even to permit their children to enter a confessional. "The Roman collar, once worn with pride, has become a source of embarrassment and suspicion," says Paul Stapleton, vice-chairman of the St. John's Catholic school board. "The recent events put all priests under a cloud of spoken or silent suspicion. The message seems to be: You cannot trust anyone but yourself and God."

"HURTLED TOWARDS EXTINCTION"

"The African elephant is hurtling towards extinction, victim of a voracious global trade in ivory," states *Science* magazine. The number of African elephants has declined about 40 percent in the last ten years—dropping to 750,000 from 1.3 million. At the current rate of slaughter, the complete extinction of elephants will come within 50 years. But more is involved. "The quest for ivory has distorted the species' demographics and



social structure," says *Science*. In some areas less than 5 percent of the elephants are bulls, so that females in estrus may not be mated, thus further reducing the population rate. And with more of the big males gone, more elephants have to be killed to produce the same amount of ivory. Over one quarter of the elephants that die are orphaned infants who starve to death after their mother is killed. While a complete ban on the commercial ivory trade is proposed, it is feared that news of an impending ban will lead to a frantic last-minute slaughter of the remaining elephants by poachers.

HUNGER AMID PLENTY

At least half a billion people are hungry, participants at the 15th annual conference of the World Food Council, a UN agency, were told. Although the world produces about 10 percent more food than it needs, millions are left hungry because of complacency, neglect, and incompetence. According to the council chairman, Eduardo Pesqueira of Mexico, "peace is a basic prerequisite" to bringing an end to worldwide starvation; many nations at war "make their scarce resources go to arms rather than food programs." Most of the malnourished live in Asia and Africa. About 14 million children under five years of age die each year because of malnutrition combined with diarrhea and infectious diseases, the council said.

UNDERGROUND "SEA" DISCOVERED

One of the major problems of Australia's outback has always been the securing of fresh water. So it was good news when a large underground "sea" of fresh water was recently discovered below this southern region of Western Australia. The water is contained in a huge layer of porous sandstone, said to be a minimum of 820 feet thick with an area of at least 1,200 square miles. This sandstone aquifer is estimated to hold at least ten times as much water as any similar reservoir yet discovered. It is a natural reservoir for the "sea"

and lies from 650 feet to 5,000 feet below the surface.

POPE'S LEADERSHIP CHALLENGED

"As divisions inside the Roman Catholic Church appear to deepen, dissident theologians across Western Europe have begun openly challenging the conservative teachings and highly centralized leadership of Pope John Paul II," reports *The New York Times*. In January, 163 theologians from Austria, the Netherlands, Switzerland, and West Germany issued a statement that the pope should expect opposition rather than obedience if he "does what does not belong to his office." One sore point has been the pope's habit of overlooking the recommendations of local Catholic leaders when naming bishops, choosing instead conservatives. This, together with the pope's frequent foreign trips, has been viewed as a means of imposing the Vatican's authority over the church. Of some 3,000 bishops worldwide, about 1,400 have been selected by Pope John Paul II.

WORTH MORE UNCUT

"More than 28 million acres of forest and other woodlands are lost annually around the world," notes *The New York Times*. "And at the current rate of deforestation it is projected that several countries, including El Salvador, Costa Rica, Nigeria and the Ivory Coast, will have destroyed all their forests in 30 years." Environmentalists have been concerned because widespread deforestation contributes to the warming of the atmosphere and increases the greenhouse effect, as well as triggers widespread

flooding, such as has occurred in Bangladesh, India, the Sudan, and Thailand. Therefore, environmentalists have welcomed a recent study by scientists that shows rain forests to be worth more if left standing. According to the study, revenues from harvesting edible fruits, cocoa, oils, and rubber in the forests are almost two times greater than that produced by selling the timber and using the land for cattle grazing. It is hoped that the economic advantage will be a more persuasive inducement for poorer countries to save their forests.

WORLD'S LANDMARKS ERODING

"Acid rain and dry air pollution called acid gas are destroying the facades of some of the world's most cherished landmarks," reports *The Toronto Star*. "Up to 3 centimetres of stone has been eaten away from the exterior of London's St. Paul's Cathe-



dral . . . [London's] Westminster Abbey and The Parthenon in Athens are also dissolving under a drizzle of pollutants." But the solution is not as simple as just cutting down the acid emissions. It is now believed that the pollutants already in the pores of the rock will continue their destructive work even after emissions are reduced, and that even with zero pollution, the decay will continue for some time.

ELDERLY SUICIDE

The suicide rate among the elderly in the United States rose by some 25 percent between 1981 and 1986. The overall national average is 12.8 suicides per 100,000 people. But the rate for those over 65 years old is 21.6 per 100,000. Experts blame the unexpected rise on changing attitudes, particularly an increased acceptance of suicide as an alternative to suffering through long and expensive illnesses. As *The New York Times* notes, "some experts speculate that the technological advances extending the lives of the elderly sometimes bring a quality of life that they cannot accept." One expert on suicide puts some of the blame on children who fail to protest when an ailing parent expresses feelings of being a burden on the family.

CRACK IN EUROPE

Crack, the cocaine derivative that has spawned so much crime in Britain and the United States, has begun to show up in Western Europe. Over a thousand people have been added to the forces of the British police and the customs officers in an attempt to stem the problem there. While widespread prevalence of crack use has not yet been found, authorities fear that it will not be long in coming, as the availability of cocaine in Europe has recently risen sharply while its price has dropped. "It's an eye-opener when you know there were 15 arrests for crack in New York City in 1985 and there were more than 18,000 arrests in the first six months of 1988," a foreign narcotics expert said.

FROM OUR READERS

Scientific Illiteracy I was curious about the claim that only 6 percent of Americans are scientifically literate. ("Watching the World," June 8, 1989) So I conducted my own minisurvey of 12 middle-class-income adults.

All but three thought that the sun revolved around the earth! When asked how long "it" takes to revolve, I got answers like "every 18 hours," "24 hours," "48 hours," "365 years," and "many light-years." The topper was one who told me: "The earth doesn't revolve anymore . . . It's fixed in orbit."

J. W. H., United States

Fighting Crime As a protection from muggers, your readers were advised to lock all car doors when driving. (April 22, 1989) This can be dangerous. If an accident occurs or the car goes into the water, the rescuers will find it difficult to reach the victims.

C. M., Netherlands

The Auto Club of America told "Awake!" that only one tenth of 1 percent of auto accidents in the United States involve water submersion. Therefore, in high crime areas, the dangers of driving with an unlocked door greatly outweigh the risk of being trapped in an automobile. Even at that, rescuers are usually able to free trapped victims by smashing the car windows.—ED.

Homosexuality I must express my thankfulness for the instruction and encouragement in the article "Homosexuality—Why Not?" (July 8, 1989) It was not an attack on the person but on the person's way of acting. I am inclined to homosexuality. I used to think, 'You are either like that or you are not.' But about five years ago, I began studying the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses. At first I kept my problem secret. But finally I spoke with two Christian elders, and they helped me qualify for baptism.

I recognize the need for a marriage mate, but first I will have to cultivate self-control. With Jehovah's help and the upbuilding instruction of his organization, I will be able to persevere.

R. T., Netherlands

Verbal Abuse Thank you for your article on verbal abuse. (June 8, 1989) My parents never praised me or showed me that they loved me, except for providing material things like food, clothing, or money. I realize now that holding my tongue could have improved the situation. The article was really timely.

S. M., Australia

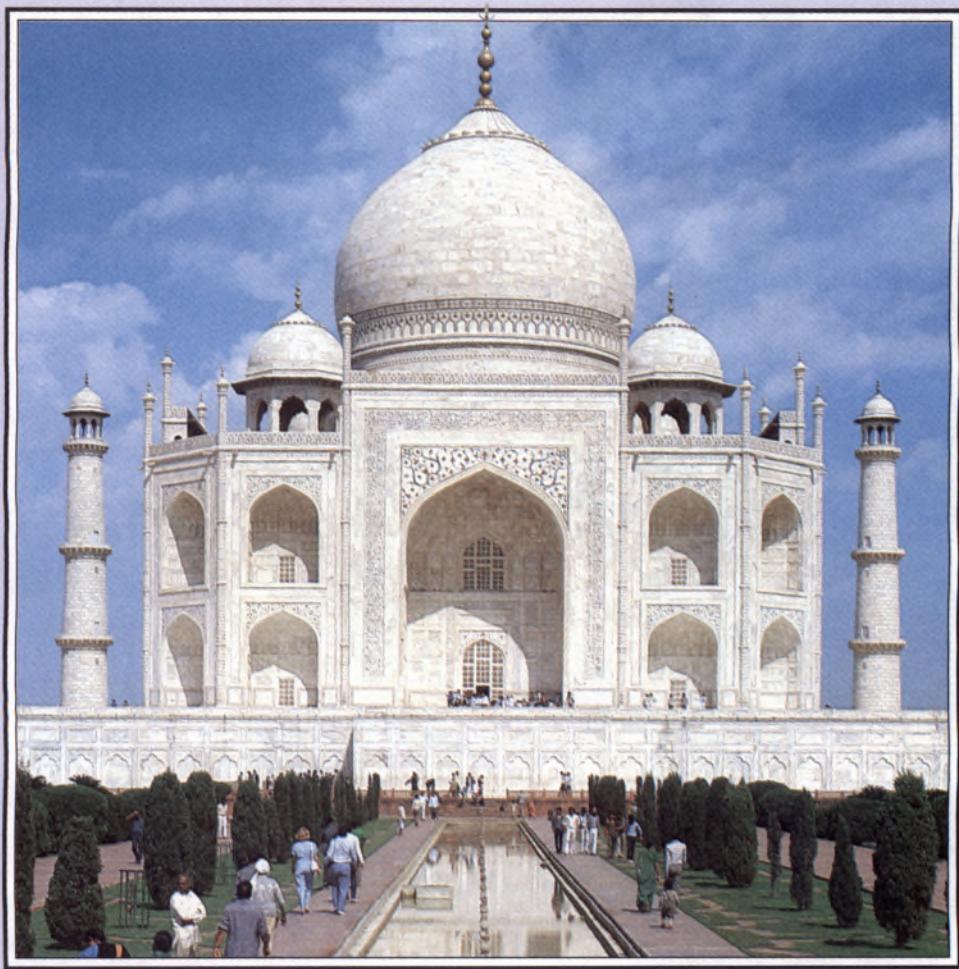
I was disappointed by the article. No matter how hard a day a parent has, he has no right to take it out on the child. Instead of an article saying that the victims must change, please give us an article that gets to the root of the problem: the parents.

M. W., United States

Your comments are well-taken. However, the article was not intended to get 'to the root of the problem' but was written to help youths cope with a difficult situation. The article further said: "There is no excuse whatsoever for abusive speech." Victims of parental abuse therefore need not feel that they are responsible. Nevertheless, by acting prudently, young victims may be able to make the best of this bad situation.—ED.

The article was truly encouraging, and I wish I had had it when I was growing up. My stepfather verbally abused us in many ways. He'd yell at me and say things that would really hurt. I'd go to sleep crying. Jehovah has helped me to forget the past, cool off my resentment, and live my life for Him.

Y. M., United States



The Taj Mahal

Monument to Love

It has been described as a delicate jewel, as a love song in stone, as the exquisite epitaph of a mourning husband to his lost wife.

A hundred miles east of Delhi, in northern India, is the city of Agra, where this prize of Muslim architecture stands—the Taj Mahal. Designed by a Turkish architect and made of white marble, this beautiful building stands as a monument to the love of Shah Jahan for his favorite wife, Mumtaz Mahal, who died in 1631. The tomb took about 20 years to build and involved some 20,000 workers.

The Muslim influence is clearly seen in the slender minarets that rise to a height of 133 feet and by the texts taken from the Qur'an that decorate the outside walls. A serene pool lends a romantic reflection to the mausoleum, especially in the moonlight or with the rising and setting of the sun.

The Shah's deep love for his wife reminds one of King Solomon's expressions of love for the unattainable Shulammite shepherd girl, found in the Bible in the Song of Solomon.

