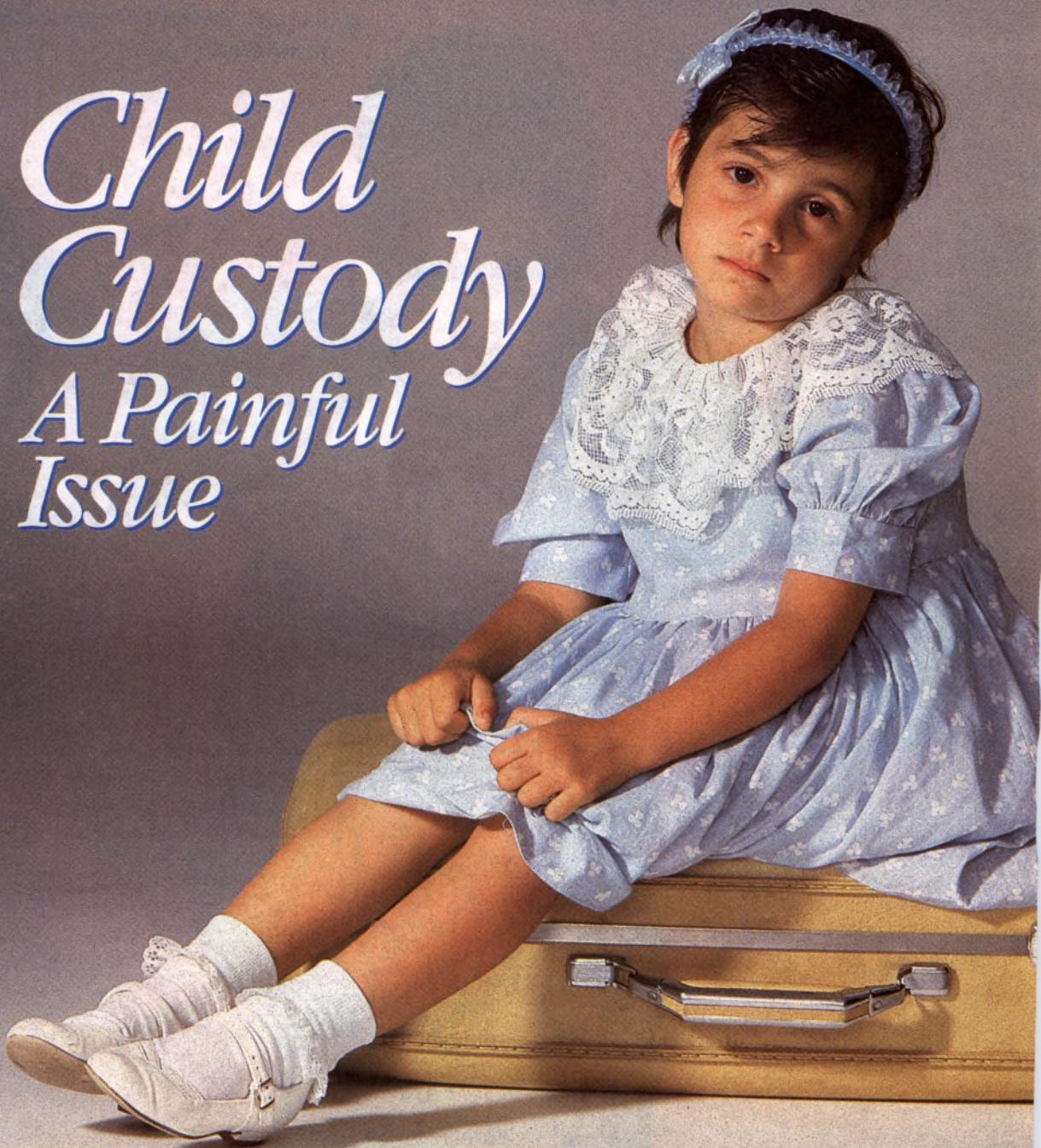


Awake!

October 22, 1988

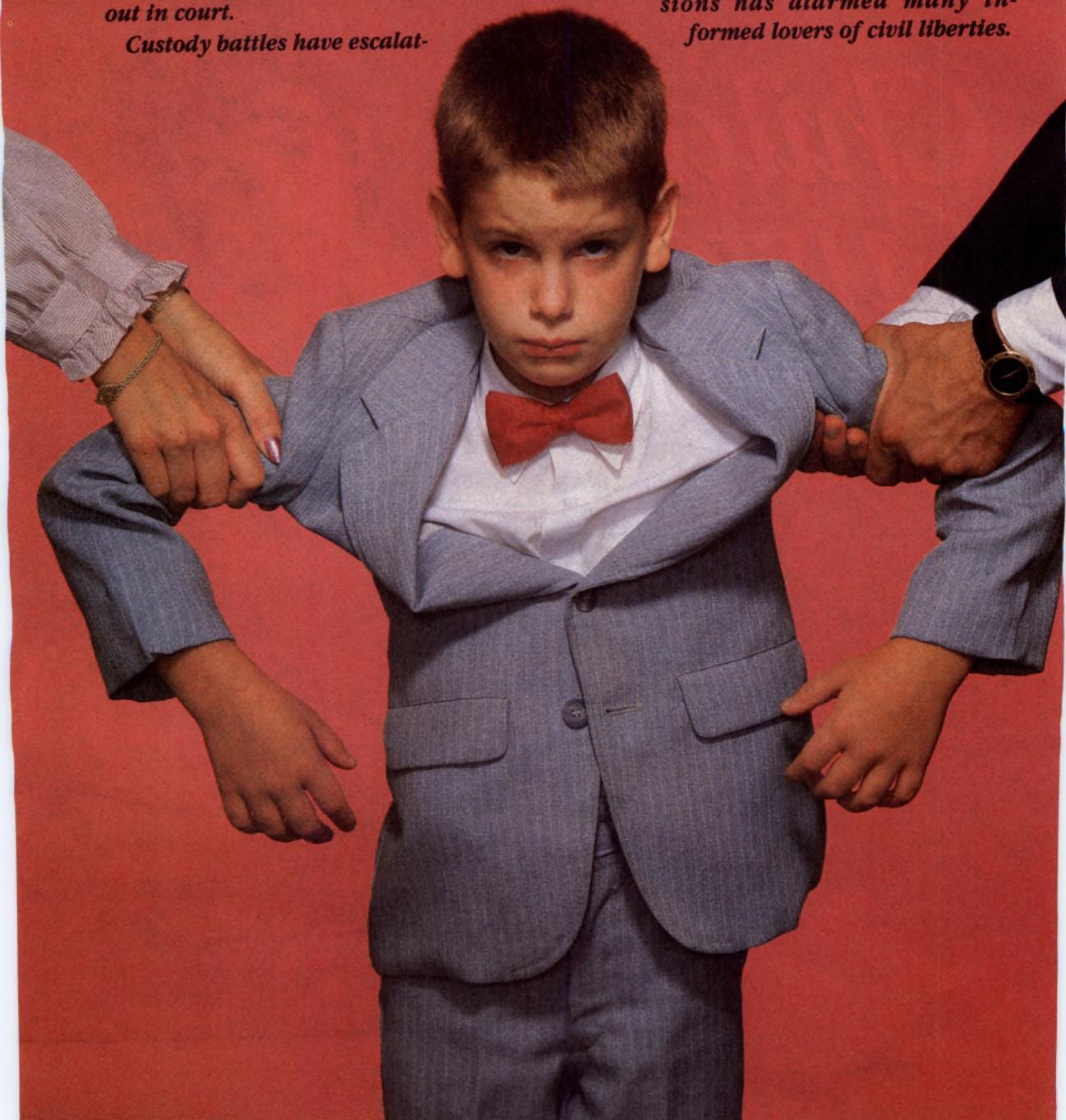
Child Custody A Painful Issue



Every hour there are hundreds of divorces worldwide. Each year millions of children are involved in an agonizing tug-of-war over which parent they will live with. In some places as many as 1 out of every 5 divorcing couples will fight it out in court.

Custody battles have escalat-

ed into front-page stories of murder and violence. What makes these cases so explosive? How can a child best be helped by both parents? Are the courts always fair in their decisions? A recent ominous worldwide trend regarding custody decisions has alarmed many informed lovers of civil liberties.



AS Paul waited his turn in the steamy New Hampshire, U.S.A., courtroom, his stomach cramped. Weeks earlier, his wife had hustled their two sobbing children from the home. Paul was not about to give up his 7- and 13-year-olds without a fight.

Finally, his court battle was about to end. "It's all so unfair," thought Paul as the judge decided one case after another. "This judge, a total stranger, is going to decide where my children are going to live."

Paul and his wife were one of 1,187,000 U.S. couples who divorced during 1985. This was triple the number of 1960. The surge in divorces is not limited to the United States but is worldwide. Roughly from 15 to 20 percent of divorces involve court battles over custody. In Paul's case, one court appearance followed another. Tensions mounted. "One day in court with all these things spinning through my head," explained Paul, "I felt as if I was going to go wild and start grabbing people. I was so frustrated."

Fortunately, Paul controlled his emotions. Front-page news reports, though, have detailed murder and mayhem spawned in the bitterness of custody disputes. Why do these cases often become such fierce conflicts?

Parental Warfare!

Laws regarding the awarding of child custody vary around the world. In most Western countries the mother and the father have equal rights before the court. In deciding who gets the child, the courts in recent decades have stressed "the best interests of the child." This allows each parent to contend that he or she is the one best suited for custody.

Though some parents fight in the interests of the children, others are motivated by spite and animosity toward the former mate. The child becomes "the ultimate instrument of pain" by which a parent unleashes anger or frustration. The children can become, as one judge stated, "footballs to satisfy the 'I'll show you' attitudes with which estranged spouses too frequently are imbued."

Some parents even take the law into their own hands.

Who Gets the Child?

In the United States, as many as 40 percent of all families with children may be affected by divorce or separation in the next decade

Parental child snatching has become an international problem. According to estimates, there are as many as a hundred thousand cases in the United States *each year!* One agency has found that the number of cases doubled during the five years leading up to 1983. The emotional trauma to the children is often great. In her book *Children in the Crossfire*, Sally Abrahms says: "Child stealing is the heartbreak of the Eighties."

Justice in the Courtroom?

From ancient times, parents have appealed to the government to intervene in such custody disputes. Wise King Solomon is remembered for his famous decision in settling a child-custody dispute between two mothers. (1 Kings 3:16-28) But wielding the proverbial "sword of Solomon" is not easy for judges today.

When a family is shattered by divorce and both parents want custody, the court must decide. Judges consider such factors as the mental stability of each parent, the wishes of the child, the quality of the relationship between each parent and the child,

and their respective abilities to provide a secure environment.

In most cases, however, the child wants and needs a warm relationship with both parents. Thus, the goal of most courts is "to assure minor children of frequent and continuing contact with both parents." In the case mentioned earlier, the judge considered that Paul's "life revolves around his children," whereas his wife preferred "to spend her free time at a local restaurant talking with her mother and friends." Paul was given physical custody. Still, the need of the children for their mother was recognized in that she was given "liberal visitation rights."

Recently, however, an ominous trend has developed. To win a case, some lawyers have turned custody disputes into religious controversies. This unethical practice has diverted some courts from their true function of focusing on the best interests of the child. Instead, judges have embroiled themselves in a religious evaluation that is beyond the mandate of the secular court. But what are the consequences?

Some lovers of civil liberties believe that the intrusion of religious issues into child-custody disputes jeopardizes the rights of *every* child and parent. Since so many families will be shattered by divorce or separation in the years to come, your life may be affected.

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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Child Custody

Should Religion Be an Issue?

KARON "has love for the children and attempts to properly provide for them. However, her beliefs as a Jehovah's Witness come first, and by her actions and beliefs she is jeopardizing the health, welfare and best interests of the children."

This statement by a circuit court judge hit Karon like a thunderbolt. It meant that she had lost custody of her two small children—one an 11-month-old infant. Her husband, who before their divorce had taunted, "It's Jehovah's Witnesses or me!" now had custody. Karon could see her girls only every other weekend.

"My lawyer had assured me that my children could not be taken away from me because of my religion but that I had to be proved an unfit mother," explained Karon, a housewife in the state of Missouri, United States. "I was devastated." And no wonder, since undisputed testimony was presented

in court that she was a loving mother who 'regularly spent quality time with her girls.'

To visit her girls, Karon now had to travel to a city a hundred miles away. "Each time I left from the visits, my ex-husband's parents, who were keeping the girls, literally had to drag them off my legs so that I could go," recalled Karon. "They were kicking and screaming, 'Why can't we go home with you?' There were times I had to pull over on the roadside on the way home because of my tears and pray that Jehovah give me strength." Karon appealed to a higher court.

In a unanimous decision, the six judges of the Missouri Supreme Court gave her girls back to her. Appellate judge John Bardgett expressed the "firm conviction that the trial court was wrong" in concluding "that the members of the Jehovah's Witnesses religion, as a class and because of the tenets of

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that faith, are unfit to have custody of children.”*

Some lower courts in Australia, the Federal Republic of Germany, Japan, Canada, South Africa, and other countries have also denied parents custody because of their beliefs. Though many of these decisions have been reversed by higher courts, such injustices have continued.

Noncustodial parents too have been victims of religious bias. One Massachusetts lower court judge went to the extreme of ruling that a father during his visitation “was not to read [the] Bible with the children or take them to church services (or even cite to them the Ten Commandments).”# One journalist commented: “The whole affair might strike you as ludicrous —unless the beliefs involved are your own.”

Yes, what if they were *your* beliefs? The implications of a court’s judging a parent’s religious ties are ominous. “Some who care little for Jehovah’s Witnesses still wonder whether a court has any business telling a father he cannot cite the Ten Commandments or read the Bible to his children,” stated the *Los Angeles Times*.

The question that this raises is, How far should the State involve itself in the private affairs of its citizens? In fact, one law commentator warned that such practices could “end in adoption of judicial standards for orthodox child raising for all families.” Would you want a judge, perhaps of a different religious persuasion, deciding this for you?

The Court and Religion

Courts themselves have recognized the narrow scope properly available for judicial inquiry into religious beliefs and practices.

* *Waites v. Waites*, 567 S.W.2d 326 (Mo. 1978).

Felton v. Felton, 383 Mass. 232, 418 N.E.2d 606 (1981).

Commenting on one case, Justice Jeffers of the Supreme Court of the State of Washington explained: “We do not doubt the right of the state to suppress religious practices dangerous to morals, and presumably those also which are inimical to public safety, health and good order, but so far as appears from the testimony in this case, the teachings of Jehovah’s Witnesses cannot, in our opinion, be classed in any one of these categories.”*

Thus, when religious practices do not injure “public safety, health and good order” or there is no “factual determination that the child’s temporal well-being is immediately and substantially endangered by the religious practice,” then the court properly should not favor the religion of either parent. The Court of Appeal of Ontario, Canada, succinctly stated: “It is not for the Court to decide as between the two religions.” To deny custody because of such favoritism is “a heavy penalty [for a parent] to pay for the exercise of a religious belief, neither illegal nor immoral.”#

At times, religiously biased “experts” have introduced discrimination. Consider the testimony of one psychologist: “I say it is unhealthy for this child to be raised as a Jehovah’s Witness. . . . Living in this society, she needs to adapt herself to the mainstream of culture. She is growing up and it is not a country of Jehovah’s Witnesses. If the majority of the country was Jehovah’s Witness, we would not have any problem.”

If such advice were followed, it would mean that any parent of a minority faith should be denied custody of his or her children! It is shocking that some judges in the

* *Stone v. Stone*, 16 Wash. 2d 315, 133 P.2d 526 (1943).

Osier v. Osier, 410 A.2d 1027 (Me. 1980); *In re Custody of Infants Bennett*, (1952) 3 D.L.R. 699 (Ont. Ct. App.); *Quiner v. Quiner*, 59 Cal. Rptr. 503 (Ct. App. 1967).

Are the Beliefs of Jehovah's Witnesses Harmful?—The Law Speaks

■ "There is no basis on the evidence to conclude that the religious upbringing of the two children in the Jehovah's Witnesses [faith] has proven to be detrimental to their health or emotional status."—Koerner v. Koerner, No. 002793 (Conn. Superior Court, October 2, 1979).

■ "I cannot find that they will suffer from being with their father on his field ministry. . . . I have not been able to find evidence in this case which convinces me that a Jehovah's Witness, by the practice of his religion, tends to destroy our social order."—Evers v. Evers,

19 F.L.R. 296 (Supreme Court of New South Wales, Australia, 1972).

■ "To deprive Mrs. Ayers of custody . . . would be tantamount to finding that the life style espoused by non-Jehovah's Witnesses is preferable to that of Jehovah's Witnesses; that Jehovah's Witnesses are not proper parents. Such a suggestion is patently preposterous and would be an intolerable restriction of religious freedom."—Ayers v. Ayers, (Provincial Court of British Columbia, Canada, Family Division, April 8, 1986).

state of Florida were persuaded by that very testimony to deny the mother residential custody of her four-year-old daughter despite undisputed testimony that the girl was "extremely attached to her mother."

Significantly, Judge Baskin refused to endorse this unjust decision reached by the other two judges on the Florida District Court of Appeal (Third District). Judge Baskin explained: "What does emerge from the record is a demonstration of the experts' personal biases against the mother's religion. Their disdain for the mother's religion induced them to speculate as to the possibility of harm to the child in the future even though no evidence of harm existed. The trial court was obviously persuaded by their less-than-objective considerations . . . and its judgment should not stand."*

What was done by this court in the United States parallels what was done in a totalitarian country during the regime of Hitler. In 1937 a district court in Nazi Germany

removed the children from a family of a religious minority. How was this justified? The court stated: "If parents through their own example teach their children a philosophy of life which puts them into an irreconcilable opposition to those ideas to which the overwhelming majority of the German people adheres, then this constitutes an abuse of the right of guardianship . . . [so] the evil educational influence of the parents [must be] eliminated and broken."*

Children Prosper

Are children psychologically damaged by association with a minority group? In the case of Karon, mentioned earlier, the trial judge speculated that her daughters' "development as productive citizens" and 'adjustment to school and community' would be hindered by being raised in their mother's minority religion. Was he right? Consider the situation now ten years later.

* District Court, Waldenburg, Silesia, September 2, 1937. (VIII, 195) Extract from *Deutsche Justiz* (Official Gazette of the German Administration of Law) November 26, 1937.

* Mendez v. Mendez, 85-2807 (Fla. Dist. Ct. App. April 28, 1987).

The school report cards for the girls, now active Witnesses, speak loud and clear. Eleven-year old Monica's card, which contained high academic marks, reported that her "Personal/Social Development" was "satisfactory." Her teacher wrote on the card: "Monica is a sweetheart and is very dependable. I'm glad she is in my class." Karon's other daughter, 13-year-old Shelly, received an award from the president of the United States for "Outstanding Academic Achievement." She also was selected "Citizen of the Month" because of her good "personal relationships with staff and students, and good study habits." Do these sound like maladjusted children?

Standing up for one's beliefs builds good character and strong minds. Chief Justice Struckmeyer of the Arizona Supreme Court, in another custody case involving a Witness, commented: "We are not unaware that deviation from the normal often brings ridicule and criticism. . . . Criticism is the crucible in which character is tested. Conformity stifles the intellect fathering decadency."^{*}

Indeed, children who are trained from a young age to give reasons for their beliefs learn to use their minds. Rather than 'stifle their intellect,' this training is very beneficial, as is shown by the surprising results of a study of 394 12-year-olds. "A disproportionately large number of highly creative children were Jehovah's Witnesses," re-

vealed the Australian researchers. "The girl who gained the highest total score on the [creative potential] tests, and the girl who was the only child, male or female, to be included in the top 20 percent of all five performance measures, were both Jehovah's Witnesses."—*Journal of Personality*, March 1973.

It is because of their religious beliefs that parents who are Jehovah's Witnesses take seriously the need to "love their children" and to encourage high moral standards. (Titus 2:4, 5) Many courts have noted such quality care. For instance, in a 1986 custody case at Muscatine, Iowa, U.S.A., the father and the so-called expert called to testify began to malign the religion of the Witness mother. Judge Briles remained impartial, stating: "The Court cannot take sides."

Though Judge Briles gave the father generous visitation rights, she gave custody to the mother because, as she said: "The Court is satisfied that these children will not grow up to be anything other than happy children if left with the [mother], even though her religion may seem to be out of step with the American mainstream. The Court is also satisfied that to remove these children from the love, security and consistency of such quality care would be harmful to

* *Smith v. Smith*, 90 Ariz. 190, 367 P.2d 230 (1961).

**Because of her religion,
Karon was at first
denied custody of her
two daughters**



Are the Children Deprived?

In Quebec, Canada, a father claimed that his children were deprived and emotionally abused by the beliefs of his ex-wife, who was a Witness. He asked the court to intervene. The children had to testify.

Notice the answers of his 16-year-old daughter:

Q.: What kind of life do you have as a Witness?

A.: I consider that I lead the same life that all teenagers do. I am not deprived of anything. I don't consider myself different from anybody else.

Q.: What do you get out of those meetings at the Kingdom Hall?

A.: First of all, it gives me a goal in life. I know what to base my future on according



to my beliefs. Second, I have many friends there, with whom I can associate.

Q.: Do your meetings help you at school?

A.: Yes, because at our meetings we give five-minute talks in front of people. At school when we have oral presentations to give, many of the students are very nervous. But because I already give talks, I have a sort of apprenticeship.

"What is the impact of such a religious practice?" asked the judge in his decision. "The court found positive things rather than the evidence that [the father] wanted to present in his argumentations." After ruling in favor of the Witness mother, the judge said privately to both lawyers, "I wish I had children like that!"

the best interests of the children." This decision was confirmed by the Iowa Court of Appeals.*

Do Religious Differences Confuse Children?

In another custody dispute, the experience of Julie confirms the wisdom of the above decision. Julie maintained access to both parents, who were divorced when she was six. Now at age 20 she explains: "I feel it was a definite advantage. I got to see for myself the difference between Catholicism and the Witnesses. My brother and I went to the Kingdom Hall with Mom, but on Sundays we went to church with Dad because we spent the weekends with him."

Even though exposed to conflicting religious views, such children have been found

to experience few, if any, ill effects. A study by Canadian researcher James Frideres concluded: "Little difference is evident between children of [religiously] mixed and homogamous marriages. The data relevant to this point does not substantiate previous research which suggested that children from mixed marriages would be more psychologically 'unstable.'" —*Jewish Social Studies*, 1973.

A child has the right to understand the religious views of both parents. When he becomes of age, he can make his own choice. In Julie's case, the court maintained its proper neutral position on religion and focused on the best interests of the child. Justice is served when courts permit the children to have input from both parents and ultimately to make their own decision in religious matters. How fine if courts will maintain this position!

* *In re Deierling* No. 36651, (Scott County Dist. Ct. Nov. 12, 1986), affirmed, 421 N.W.2d 168 (Iowa Ct. App. 1988).

Acting in Your Child's Best Interests

REGARDLESS of how a custody dispute turns out, the children still need the love and guidance of both their parents. After the judge gives his decision, the parents are still left with the task of helping their children cope with the consequences. Though a court proceeding is difficult for the parents, it is an even greater emotional strain for the children.

For instance, when Mary Ann was six years old, the court awarded custody to her father. But in the ten years that followed, her mother fought relentlessly to get the girl back. Emotionally drained after more than 40 court appearances, Mary Ann explained *her* solution. "Why don't they cut me in half," she proposed. "My mother can have my front and my father my back."

Obviously, a lengthy legal fight is not always in the best interests of a child. The director of the clinic that helped Mary Ann explained: "Chronic litigation is costly in both economic and human terms."

One child said: "You have one parent at home that you really love, and you love the other one too"

Children Still Have Ties to Two Parents

While there are divorced mates, there are no divorced children. The blood ties of children can never be dissolved by a judge. To appreciate a child's dilemma, imagine how you as a parent would feel if asked to choose between your children. Which child



would you pick? Which would you discard? Neither parents nor children should be confronted with such a decision. Usually, children love both parents, so the pressure to make a choice creates a painful conflict of loyalties.

In a leading text on this subject, *Beyond the Best Interests of the Child*, the authors showed that such loyalty conflicts "may have devastating consequences by destroying the child's positive relationships to both parents." For instance, Julie, a child from a broken home, explained: "You have one parent at home that you really love, and you love the other one too. It was so hard when Dad would come to pick us up for the weekend. I would have to look at him, and then also look at Mom, and I knew that he hated her. I was afraid to show any of my feelings to either one."

Recognize your child's emotional ties to both parents. Each parent must respect and honor the other parent's position in the child's life for the healthy development of the child's personality. Try to see positive areas where both of you can contribute to the child's welfare. Do not conclude that everything an ex-mate does is automatically wrong. It is "the duty of each to enhance the image of the other parent in the eyes and mind of the child, or at least to avoid criticism which might impair it," explained one Texas court. This requires parents to minimize their personal conflict to make room for the child's needs.

Strive for Settlement

Before going to court, explore all avenues of negotiation and possible settlement. Lawsuits are like war; they leave deep wounds and emotional scars that may never heal. Recourse to law should be taken only when all avenues of reasonable negotiation and accommodation have been

tried and have failed. In his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus Christ gave a basic legal principle that has practical value: "Be about settling matters quickly with the one complaining against you at law."—Matthew 5:25.

The outcome of a trial is never certain. Judges have found that between 80 and 90 percent of their custody cases involve two caring parents, neither of whom is unfit. This often makes a satisfactory resolution all but impossible. "It's no wonder that occasionally such a magistrate will throw up his hands in horror," explains *The Custody Handbook*, by Persia Woolley, "and ask the parents why . . . they don't settle the matter between themselves."

Many divorce courts have provisions for a couple to work out between themselves the care of the children. Parents surely know best the needs and circumstances of the children and can decide what arrangements would allow each parent still to have a reasonable influence in the children's lives. With some legal help, many parents have worked out together an acceptable custody arrangement, including joint custody in instances where custody can be shared. In fact, 90 percent of custody cases are settled before the parents actually go into court.

A trained mediator may help work out even the most difficult of situations. For instance, one extremely bitter couple planned to live 3,000 miles apart after divorcing. Yet, each wanted custody of their two children. The mediator told them: "There must be a spark of cooperation here. You both did like each other once, so let's see what we can work out so your kids don't lose one of you completely." An arrangement was worked out so both parents could still have meaningful roles in their children's lives.

Mediation is, of course, only one of several ways by which to settle child-custody disputes short of a court battle. The focus should be on working out the present instead of dredging up the past. The primary goal of mediation is to help the couple achieve a mutually fair agreement (with neither feeling like the winner or the loser) that will be of benefit to the children. While this is not a panacea in all cases, it is a process that can save the huge cost—financial and emotional—of a court battle. Genuine effort to settle can prevent bitter disputes and allow children to maintain their attachment to both parents.

How to Reach an Agreement

Obviously, when a family is broken and marriage partners are separated, neither can have exclusive control of the child. Both parents must be reasonable and willing to make some concessions. Mediation requires negotiation. Negotiation means neither parent gets everything he or she wants.

Never forget that the child has a right to receive input from both parents. Therefore, it would be shortsighted for one parent to demand prohibitions on a child's attendance at or participation in the religious, cultural, or social activities of the other parent when the child is with that one. Likewise, it would be inappropriate for a parent to take an absolute position on a child's school and extracurricular activities, association, recreation, or post-secondary education without due consideration for the other parent's input and the child's individual choices.

For example, in a number of custody disputes in which a parent is one of Jehovah's Witnesses and the other is not, the couple have reached an amicable settlement by

agreeing that the non-Witness parent will have generous time with the children throughout the year, including holidays and other times that are of special importance to the non-Witness. The parents have agreed to allow each other to have an active input into the educational, social, and medical issues affecting the children. After all, both parents brought the child into the world and thus have a natural right to have a say in his upbringing.

The Witness parent should encourage the child to respect the right of the non-Witness parent to have his own religious views and to express appreciation for that one's kindnesses and gifts. If both parents consider what is best for the children, restraint and reasonableness can prevail over emotion and bruised pride.

In most cases these negotiations are emotionally draining. Thus, it may be well to have legal or other representatives conduct the settlement discussions. This assistance can often eliminate most misunderstandings about the specifics of the settlement.

The Divorce Mediation Center in Charlotte, North Carolina, compared the couples who chose to mediate their cases with those who went into court as adversaries. Fully 93 percent of the mediated group expressed satisfaction with the results, as compared to only 56 percent of those who battled in court!

But what can be done if your ex-mate refuses to negotiate in good faith or demands religious restrictions that are not negotiable? Then it may be necessary to prepare to go to court.

When You Must Go to Court

In most cases, having a competent lawyer trained in custody cases is essential

Advantages of Parents, Rather Than the Courts, Settling

- No one knows the needs of the children better than the parents; thus, they are in the best position to decide what is in the children's best interests.
- Children are less inclined to feel that they must "take sides" and, hence, have to choose between parents.
- Mediation usually provides improved op-



portunities for communication, thereby making it possible to hear more fully the concerns and needs of both children and parents.

- Reaching a mutual agreement prevents much of the resentment that can come when the court imposes an arbitrary decision with which both parents must live.
- There are much lower legal expenses.

to a successful conclusion.* Having experienced legal counsel at the outset can often prevent costly mistakes. Also, a competent lawyer may even be influential in bringing about a pretrial settlement. Even during the trial, a mate may be moved to negotiate a settlement. An equitable agreement at any stage of the procedure is better than a dragged-out battle.

Knowing what most judges look for in making their decision is helpful. A 1982 survey of 80 magistrates found that at the top of the list were (1) mental stability of each parent and (2) each parent's sense of responsibility to the child. To assist courts in determining the facts, a mental-health professional may interview the parents and the children. His psychological assessment has often shaped the court's decision.

Such evaluations are nothing to be feared. Even if a Christian's beliefs are under scrutiny, there is no reason to become defensive or uncooperative. "Let your re-

sonableness become known to all men," recommends the Bible.—Philippians 4:5.

Remember, during such evaluations it is not the time to give a Bible sermon. It is a time to describe the full range of your activities with your child, including recreation, secular education, vacation time, arrangements for contact with the other parent, and social activities with friends and relatives. Answer questions honestly and clearly. Think the matter out carefully so that you can explain in positive and simple terms how you care for your child's emotional and physical well-being.

The same principles apply when you are questioned in court. By thorough preparation you will be able to describe, without trying to preach or give a sermon, the many ways that "the healthful teaching" of God's Word enables you to be a responsible parent.—2 Timothy 4:3.

Making the Best of the Situation

At times, despite your best efforts, a judge may rule against you. Christians are urged to "be obedient to governments and authorities as rulers" and "not to be belligerent, [but] to be reasonable." (Titus 3:1, 2) Hence, a Christian does not disregard the orders of a court.

If you are dissatisfied with a court order,

* If you are not accustomed to choosing a lawyer, see "I Need a Lawyer," in the *Awake!* of March 8, 1979. When religious freedoms are at issue, many of the branch offices of the Watch Tower Society can provide helpful information. Individuals confronted with divorce proceedings who live in the United States or in other countries governed by the Common Law may obtain additional material from the U.S. and Canadian branch offices of Jehovah's Witnesses.

you can review your options with legal counsel. You may wish to appeal the decision to a higher court. In some instances, you can seek modification of the order from the court after a period of time if circumstances change. But you will have to live with the order as long as it is in place.

Even an adverse judgment does not mean that all is lost. The lives of both parents and children change. There may be favorable, though unexpected, developments. Your patience can be richly rewarded.

Although your time with your child as a visiting parent is limited, you still can be a valuable influence in your child's life. Children who continue to have close regular contact with *both* parents not only suffer less from the divorce but are also more likely to grow into mature and balanced adults. So work to nurture your relationship with your child.

You can influence the religious and moral values of your child by your own fine example. "The righteous is walking in his integrity. Happy are his sons after him." (Proverbs 20:7) Even without words, you can do much to shape your child's heart and mind. He will notice the way you treat others, your major goals in life, and your feelings about God.

Indeed, acting in the best interests of your child requires genuine love. Love "does not look for its own interests," says the Bible. "It does not keep account of the injury . . . [but] hopes all things, endures all things. *Love never fails.*" (1 Corinthians 13:4-8) Such unselfish love can be richly rewarding. One 11-year-old girl whose divorced parents had learned to put her interests above their own disagreements said: "Thank goodness my parents love me enough to let me love both of them!"

Children Do Benefit!

As the following two experiences show, children really benefit when their divorced parents rise above their own differences and consider the best interests of their children.

"I always had a good time when I saw my dad," said one young woman in her early 20's. "It wasn't what we did so much, as just getting out to see him. . . . The weekends when he came I looked forward to, because I knew that whatever was going wrong at school we could talk about, and he would help me. This was much easier than with mom, although, of course, I love my mom very much. Some things were easier to talk about with mom—I guess you can imagine what—but there were other things I wanted to talk to him about. Like my mom's second husband, for instance. We just don't get on.

Dad gave me some good advice about how to be tactful, and I needed that. . . . I owe him a lot, because thanks to him I always had two parents, even if they were divorced."

A young man named Donald explained: "I think that being able to see my dad just once a week built up my craving to be with him. So whenever I did see him, I was careful to listen and pay attention. I always wanted to imitate my father. I noticed that he loved Jehovah God, and I always wanted to do what he did. Yet, I benefited from the good qualities of my mom. She's extremely friendly, and she'll go out of her way to be sociable, to converse with people. She's outgoing and open. This helped me to get over my shyness."

Young People Ask...



Why Don't Others Want to Learn?

JOAN had always done well in school. She was interested in learning and was thoroughly involved in her classes. But when her family moved to another area, Joan made new friends who were not into reading and schoolwork.

"They were proud of the fact that they could scrape by academically and never have to pick up a book," Joan says. "They made fun of the kids who studied and got good grades." Feeling pressure to conform, Joan allowed her schoolwork to suffer. "I didn't want any of them to think I was trying to be better than they were," she admits. "At the time, deep down inside, I knew that I was only hurting myself, but I was too afraid of losing their friendship."

This incident, related in the August 1983 issue of *'Teen* magazine, is by no means unique. A European girl named Ana Paula recalls that she too was discouraged from learning, but not quite so subtly. Says she: "At times those who do not want to learn gang up on one who answers the teacher's questions in class, threatening or actually striking the good student for doing the right thing!" The hostility, though, is not always directed at students. Continues Ana Paula: "Once a girl actually hit the teacher with her fist in front of the entire class."

Schools Where It Is Tough to Learn

In *Today's Education*, Kenneth A. Erickson laments the alarming number

of "students who refuse to do work, use obscene or abusive language, threaten peers with physical harm, initiate false fire alarms, carry concealed weapons, phone in bomb threats, and assault both fellow students and teachers." Concludes Erickson: "The disruptive student denies the majority of students their right to an educational climate conducive to learning. . . . The educational effectiveness of schools today is being sabotaged."

Writer Vance Packard similarly reports: "A general rise in pandemonium is the most conspicuous change that has occurred in our public schools, especially urban schools, in the past two decades. Many teachers report that violence, mass disobedience, or resistance in the classroom are problems. . . . Along with vandalism there

"A general rise in pandemonium is the most conspicuous change that has occurred in our public schools, especially urban schools, in the past two decades. Many teachers report that violence, mass disobedience, or resistance in the classroom are problems." —"Our Endangered Children," by Vance Packard.

are on many large school grounds fellow students peddling drugs to classmates." Many believe that illegal drugs, such as marijuana, make a large contribution to student apathy.

You, though, may be interested in getting as much as you can out of school and yet find yourself surrounded by peers who poke fun at your good grades and do everything they can to disrupt class discussions. 'Why don't they want to learn?' you wonder? Yes, why the indifference—even hostility—toward learning? Is there anything you can do about it?

Behind the Classroom Chaos

Adolescent rebellion against school is just another manifestation of the spirit, or mental attitude, pervading the whole world. (Ephesians 2:2) Widespread disrespect for all types of authority thus prevails. During early adolescence, youths are particularly vulnerable to infection by this rebellious spirit. Educator James Marshall says that "this period becomes a flash point of hostility." Because school tends to get in the way of their growing desire for independence, some youngsters feel "deprived of power over their own lives. They counterattack. It is not surprising that this group has the highest rate of school crime such as vandalism."—*The Devil in the Classroom*.

A longtime public-school counselor in New York City told *Awake!*: "From ages 11 to 13, many youngsters just seem to go crazy. They may act and react very irrationally because they are still trying to get a grip on the thoughts and feelings generated by their rapidly changing bodies."

Why, then, do not schools simply discipline unruly youngsters? Often this is much easier said than done. In the United States, for example, the courts have taken an increasingly dim view of interfering with the "rights" of students. Schools thus administer discipline at their own risk. As a result, classroom chaos often goes unchecked.

Current Social Trends

The declining interest in learning is also a product of the changing 'scene of the world.' (1 Corinthians 7:31) Because of rising divorce and illegitimacy rates, record numbers of youths are raised in one-parent homes. Furthermore, record numbers of mothers have secular jobs. The result of these global trends? A breakdown of family life and home discipline, say many experts.

As another school counselor told *Awake!*: "There are more and more matriarchies [families ruled by mothers], and children are seeing and experiencing increased violence in the home. It can only be expected that these things will have their effects in the classroom." The authors of *To Save Our Schools, To Save Our Children* say: "Schools are asked to introduce authority and disciplining to children who have no authority and discipline." It is thus understandable why many of your classmates may rebel at the idea of quietly sitting through class.

Perhaps, though, the seeming indifference of your fellow students results from their simply being too tired for school! An article in the journal *Educational Leadership* speaks of "the enormous increase in the number of adolescents who have jobs. . . . Not only do more adolescents work, but they now work more hours." The article then refers to a research study that "found that working leads to a decline in school performance and diminishes adolescent involvement in school."

Why do so many teenagers wear themselves out with after-school jobs? At times it might be economic necessity. However, the article further says: "Most adolescents feel that they must acquire as many possessions as their peers, forcing them into the



workplace." But when failing grades result, it well illustrates the truthfulness of the words at 1 Timothy 6:10: "The love of money is a root of all sorts of injurious things."

Bored Students, Boring Teachers

Could it be, however, that students are bored because their teachers are boring? Said one educator: "The ineffective teacher is immediately punished by the children in the room. They are restless and inattentive, willfully disobedient, often noisy and unruly." On the other hand, a survey of 160,000 teenagers in the United States confirms that "an interesting instructor rarely has discipline problems."

Admittedly, competent and interesting teachers are often in short supply. But in all fairness to teachers, many must work under the most difficult of conditions. Some are frustrated by bureaucratic procedures that interfere with teaching. "There's just so much paperwork," complained one haggard New York City teach-

er to an *Awake!* reporter. And though "the workman is worthy of his wages," many teachers feel that they are not adequately paid for their services. (1 Timothy 5:18) Besides, teachers are only human. Is not a classroom full of yawning—or menacing—students enough to squelch anyone's enthusiasm?

At any rate, for a variety of reasons, school turns many youths off. So if you are one who really *enjoys* learning, others might view you as odd or weird. Since "the man of thinking abilities is hated," you may even feel hostility from peers who are underachievers. (Proverbs 14:17) They may mock you for studying or try to undermine your efforts to concentrate in class.

What should you do? Obviously you can do little to change their attitudes toward learning. And to let your grades slip just to please your peers would defeat the whole reason you are in school—to learn! You should value this opportunity. How, then, can you learn when others do not want to? That will be the subject of a future article.

SURVIVING PERSECUTION *in Nazi Germany*



Konstantin Weigand, seen here with his family, survived Nazi Germany's persecution of Jehovah's Witnesses

LET me take you back to post-World-War-I Germany where the stage was being set for a dramatic period of persecution of Christians.

In 1919 my parents were married, and that same year they dedicated their lives to serve Jehovah. I was born the following year, my brother Johannes in 1921, Eva in 1922, and finally George in 1928. We were the only children of Bible Students, as Jehovah's Witnesses were then called, in our city of Wittenberge.

When the National Socialists, or Nazis, took power in 1933, many teachers became members of the party. When I refused to say the greeting "*Heil Hitler!*" I was constantly harassed by Hitler Youth classmates. The climax came for me when I did not participate in the summer-solstice festival during which literature outlawed by the Nazis, including Bibles, was publicly burned.

About the same time, in front of the entire class, my brother Johannes was slapped across the face for refusing to say "*Heil Hitler!*" Mother challenged the teacher's right to do this, citing the law on freedom of worship and speech, which, at that early stage of Nazi rule, was publicly supported by Rudolph Hess and Reichsminister Dr. Frick.

Ignoring what she said, the teacher screamed: "How dare you speak like that! The Führer has taken power and everybody had better hurry and get in line!" Then he snarled: "I will see to it that you and your family end up in the gutter!"

Looking him right in the eye, Mother replied: "That, Herr Sienknecht, Jehovah the God of the heavens and earth will decide, and not you!"

Persecution of Our Family

Not long afterward Father came home and, without any introduction, said: "We are in the lions' den of Daniel!" He had without notice been dismissed from his job. This meant, in effect, being left without any visible means of support. What would we do now?

Well, people whom we least expected would do so brought us food, some coming to our home cautiously at night. Father later began selling vacuum cleaners, at the same time distributing the now outlawed Watch Tower literature.

In 1936 our Christian brothers outside Germany adopted a resolution that warned the Hitler government to stop its mistreatment of Jehovah's Witnesses. We Witnesses in Germany distributed the resolution throughout the country on December 12, 1936, between 5:00 and 7:00 p.m. That is when I started to participate in the field ministry.

In December of that year my parents were served with a summons to appear before the *Sondergericht* (Special Court) in Berlin. The charge: distributing the literature of a banned organization. A few days later another summons came for all four of us children to appear in the local court in Wittenberge. Why? It was claimed we were being spiritually neglected by our parents. How preposterous!

Court officials were amazed when they heard us youngsters, now 16, 15, 14, and 8 years of age, defending our faith by using the Scriptures. We noted that "*Heil Hitler!*" means "Salvation comes from Hitler," and that since salvation comes only from Jeho-

vah God through Christ Jesus, we could not use that slogan. Nevertheless, the court ruled that we be taken from our parents and be sent to a reform school in Strausberg near Berlin.

Before we could be picked up, my parents took us children to the railway station and sent us to Wolfenbuttel to our grandmother. They did this because their court case was pending, and they feared the outcome. On the station platform Mother, with tears in her eyes, said very firmly: "Jehovah is a better Protector than we are." Hugging us for what they felt might be the last time, our parents quoted Isaiah 40:11: "Like a shepherd he will shepherd his own drove. With his arm he will collect together the lambs; and *in his bosom* he will carry them." We felt greatly comforted.

To the total surprise of our parents, the case against them was dismissed for lack of evidence.

Escaping the Nazis

Soon the Nazis were again on the trail of us youngsters. They arranged immediately to see us so as to check our "views." To avoid them, we left our grandmother in Wolfenbuttel and separated, each of us taking up residence in a different place. I took a job as a front-desk clerk in the Duisburger Hof, a hotel in the Rhineland.

One day the hotel was excitedly awaiting a visit by Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels and his staff. When they arrived, everybody in the lobby saluted and shouted the customary "*Heil Hitler!*"—except me. One of the officials of high rank noticed that, and later, in a back room, confronted me. I thought: "This is it this time!" But suddenly he was called away. Apparently Dr. Goebbels needed him right away. I quickly disappeared in one of the

many corridors of the huge hotel, not to be seen for the rest of the day.

Toward the end of 1943 the Allied air raids on cities intensified, and for the first time concentration camp inmates were used to help in the cleanup and repair work following bombing attacks. The hotel needed repairs on some windows and doors, so prisoners were assigned to do this work. I was excited when I saw purple triangles on their striped jackets, identifying them as Jehovah's Witnesses! Unfortunately, when I tried to speak to them, the SS guards raised their rifles, aimed at me, and shouted: "Keep moving!" I felt sick at heart.

The terrible world conditions at the time caused many of us to feel that this would all end up in Armageddon. But then information began leaking through that the Allied forces were on their way into Germany. We started to rejoice because we knew that the Nazi tyranny was near its end.

The Postwar Period

After the dust clouds of Allied conquest settled, the brothers started eagerly to participate in the reorganization of the public

preaching work. By now our family was reunited—having been separated for ten long years—and we were living in Hannover in northern Germany. In that first post-war year, 1946, we held the Memorial celebration in our home, which was big enough for all the some 50 brothers in Hannover. What a memorable celebration, associating with brothers who had recently been released from concentration camps and seeing the anointed partaking of the emblems! It made an unforgettable impression on me.

In 1946 we also held our first large postwar convention in northern Germany. Many tears of joy were shed. Even the speakers had to stop from time to time during their talks to give way to their feelings. It was just too much for them to bear when they saw so many of their dear brothers sitting peacefully and enjoying the instruction without barbed wire surrounding them! After this I entered the pioneer ranks and was assigned to the nearby city of Lehrte.

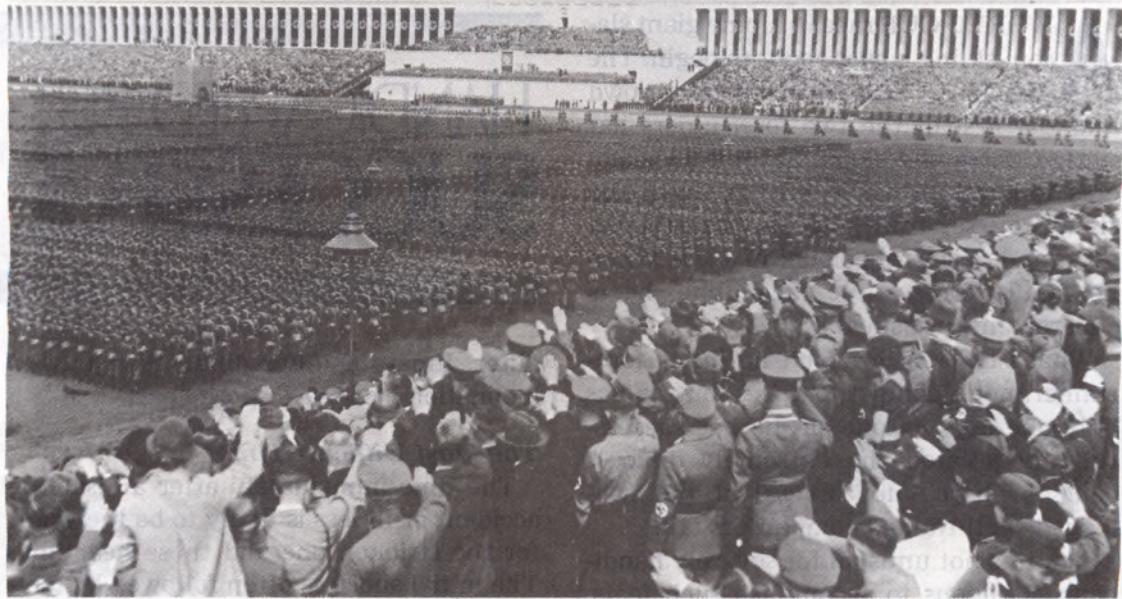
From there I was called to serve at the German branch office in Wiesbaden. When I arrived in 1947 the number in the Bethel family was less than 20. We temporarily worked in a large villa, and space was limited. From Bethel I was called in 1952 to attend the Watchtower Bible School of Gil-ead and graduated with the 19th class. Afterward I was reassigned to Wiesbaden to continue work as a translator.

In 1954, at 34 years of age, I decided to marry. Edith was a pioneer and also still had some contract obligations as an opera singer. In time, however, we were sent as special pioneers to Lohr, a medieval town.

Soon there came another change in assignment. Edith became pregnant with our son Markus, so we had to leave the full-time service. Later we moved to Canada.

In Our Next Issue

- Mary—The Answer to World Crisis?
- Pride Was My Worst Handicap
- Moorish Spain
—A Remarkable Legacy



U.S. National Archives

Nazis saluting Hitler in 1937. In 1946, Jehovah's Witnesses used this Nuremberg stadium for a convention while Nazi leaders were being sentenced

There another son, Reuben, was born. These sons are now 34 and 30 years old. One serves as an elder and the other as a ministerial servant in the Thornhill Congregation, Ontario, north of Toronto, where I serve as the presiding overseer.

Jehovah Blesses Enduring Ones

With Jehovah's help his people survived the horrors of the Nazi regime and were reorganized for increased theocratic service. In contrast, note what took place with the Nazis. They had celebrated their early victories during the early prewar years on the Zeppelinwiese in Nuremberg. But now we obtained that very location for a memorable convention in September 1946. The real climax came Monday, September 30. The offices, stores, and restaurants in the city were closed all that day.

But why were businesses closed that particular Monday? Because the death sentences of the Nazi war criminals were to be

pronounced in Nuremberg. Originally, the pronouncement of sentences was to have been made on September 23, but it was postponed to September 30. Thus, at the very time when our former persecutors were in custody hearing the verdicts, yes, *on the same day, on what were formerly the Nazis' own parade grounds, here we previously persecuted ones were happily celebrating before our God!*

Looking back, I can confidently say that we should never be concerned with a seeming "delay" in the foretold impending destruction of this unjust and oppressive system. "It will without fail come true," just as God has promised. "It will not tell a lie." Jehovah is loyal. He is in full control of time. Thus, the "appointed time" must arrive when he will "without fail" annihilate his enemies, to his own glory and for the salvation of those worshiping him. "It will not be late"! (Habakkuk 2:3)—*As told by Konstantin Weigand.*

A WORLD CUP race in alpine giant slalom skiing is just about to begin. The announcer tells the expectant crowd that the first of the two forerunners has started down the slope. Several TV cameras follow him as he hurtles down the steep course, rounding the flag-topped gates and raising big clouds of snow. When he finally crosses the finish line, he is cheered enthusiastically.

What's the reason? Isn't he just a forerunner, not a competitor? Yes, but he has only one leg! On one ski he has successfully negotiated the extremely difficult course, where later several of the two-legged, well-trained competitors fall.

Yet, it is not unusual for severely handicapped persons to accomplish such feats. Many handicapped men and women, young and old, do weight lifting, engage in horseback riding, sailing, marathon races by wheelchair, and share in many other challenging sports.

Handicapped persons have achieved great things in other fields as well. Ludwig van Beethoven composed some of his greatest masterpieces while totally deaf. Franklin D. Roosevelt was president of the United States from 1933 to 1945, although severely handicapped by polio. Helen Keller, blind, deaf, and mute from childhood, became a prolific author and educator. The Greek statesman Demosthenes is called one of the greatest orators of all times. Yet, as a young man, he was an inarticulate stammerer and extremely weak physically.

While such great achievements may spur many disabled people to try to do something extra themselves, it must be remembered that every handicap is individual, and one handicapped person cannot be compared with another. Interests in life

HANDICAPPED BUT SUCCESSFUL

differ. Innate abilities differ. And mental inclination also plays a large part.

The Most Difficult Time

The time immediately after a disabling accident or illness is likely to be the worst for the stricken one and those near him. The initial shock is often followed by feelings of despair and hopelessness. "There are times when you're not ready for any pep talk, when all you want to do is crawl into your misery like a wounded animal, when encouragement seems like an assault," said a mother of a disabled child.

A mixture of mourning, anger, self-pity, and despair may seize a handicapped person completely during that time. Therefore, the shorter this period is, the better for all involved. "It passes, because it has to," the mother added.

Jimmy, a handsome young Swede who was stricken by an illness that made him stiff from head to foot, told about the initial shock and the terrible period that followed. "But," he said, "as soon as I accepted my handicap and stopped pitying myself, I began to forget about it. Then I began to live again. Now I train myself to think not of what I lack but of what abilities I still have, and I try to make the best of them."

Maximizing One's Possibilities

By mobilizing a strong willpower for practice and training, some disabled per-



sons have achieved more than they could ever have imagined. One example is Maj, a woman from Lapland in northern Sweden. When only 22 years old and newly married, she lost the use of her legs.

"The first time they put me in a wheelchair at the hospital, I broke down," she said. "I saw ahead of me a life of passivity, stagnation, and complete dependency on my husband and others. But little by little I began to realize that my handicap still gave me certain possibilities. So I decided to maximize them."

"First, I learned to crawl on the floor like a baby. It made me happy just to be able to move about on my own. Then I practiced standing upright, leaning against a wall. I felt it was great progress to be able to do so. Then I learned to walk with crutches. Soon I was able to do some housekeeping."

"I decided that each morning I would try to add something new to my repertoire. I managed to serve breakfast, do the beds, vacuum, clean windows, go shopping, and so forth. My husband would assist me when I asked for help, but he also cooperated by not insisting on helping. Instead, he let me

try. Slowly, I became more independent, which gave me self-respect and made me happy.

"My husband and I are Jehovah's Witnesses, and he decided to volunteer his services to help in building the new branch office and printing factory for Jehovah's Witnesses in Sweden. Our volunteer applications were accepted, and we spent more than four years there. I was able to work almost full-time in the laundry, serving a staff of up to 200 workers. My able-bodied workmates considered me an equal worker. True, it was sometimes difficult, and repeatedly in prayer I asked for God's help. But it was a happy time too."

"Of Course You Can!"

For a handicapped person to be successful, it is important that family members and others cooperate in the right manner. That does not always mean to assist. It may mean to refrain from assisting. Telling a handicapped person facing a certain task, "Of course you can!" and then letting him try, is often of greater help and encouragement than saying, "I don't think you can. Let me do it for you."

Handicapped people should be dealt with as naturally and seriously as any other persons. They do not want others to underestimate their ability to handle everyday situations by being overly helpful. It may be just a small matter that may hinder more than help, such as buttering a slice of bread for the one who only asked for the butter to be passed to him.

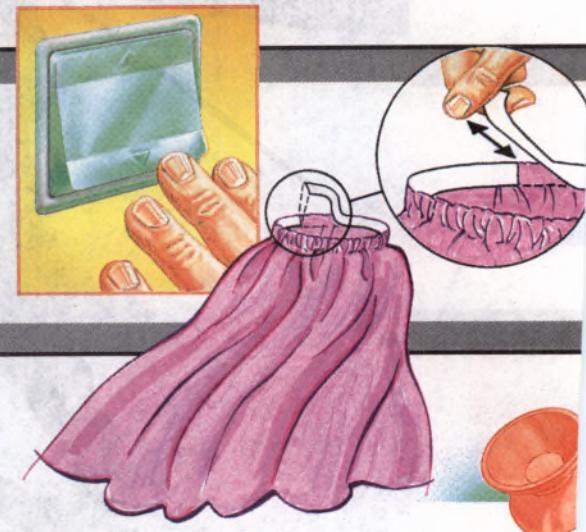
"What hurts me most of all," explains Jimmy, "is when able-bodied persons treat me as if I were somewhat mentally retarded. Sorry to say, some people talk and act as if they think that every person in a wheelchair is mentally retarded."

Rehabilitation efforts should give the individual self-reliance and the inspiration to take hold of his situation and learn to live with his handicap as independently as possible. Most disabled persons get along best when they can decide for themselves when and how services should be performed. Overprotective services from others can bring apathy and annoyance.

Ann-Mari, a severely handicapped Swedish woman who uses a wheelchair, says: "I am handicapped as to ability to move but not as to ability to think. That is why I want to use that ability to make the best of my situation on my own."

Adjusting the Environment

To help disabled persons maximize their possibilities, basic adjustments can be made in their homes, their outdoor surroundings, and in their means of transportation. Some 500 million persons in the world are estimated to have a functional disability affecting movement, vision, or hearing. To make life more comfortable for them, the social-welfare authorities in many countries submit design guidelines to architects and designers. This has led to



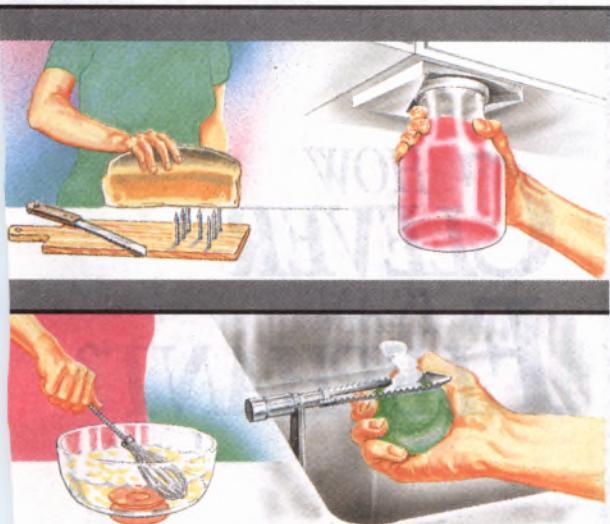
Specialized devices such as these are a great help to handicapped persons

helpful adjustments that have benefited handicapped persons.

Many who are handicapped have worked out ways to make life easier for themselves. Wheelchair users, for example, have seen to it that their homes are more convenient for them by having certain doors and thresholds removed, or by having door hinges moved to the opposite side. Some have had cabinets fixed on the wall at waist level, electric switches changed to the large rocker type, and electrical sockets positioned higher on the wall.

A disabled person is sometimes the best inventor of his own aids. Bo, a young man in Sweden whose legs were *paralyzed in a car accident*, worked out how to make his wheelchair more comfortable and easier to maneuver. He constructed a wheelchair that even enabled him to climb stairs! Now he is working as a wheelchair designer at a local factory.

However, it is usually wise that the need for physical effort not be eliminated. Oth-



an ordinary coat. Also, she replaces buttons and zippers in skirts with elastic. In fact, the need for comfortable clothing that she can manage has turned Siw into a skilled stylist and dressmaker.

Some simple adjustments may help one-handed persons or persons with weak arms and hands get along better in the kitchen. For example, fastening can and bottle openers to the wall will make them rigid and accessible. Driving stainless nails through a cutting board will help a handicapped person keep items such as a loaf of bread in place while slicing it. And a double suction disk can keep flat-bottomed pots and plates in place while the handicapped is beating and stirring ingredients in them.

Hope Aids Success

Hope is something everyone needs, not least the handicapped. One of the best hopes they can have, of course, is that of recovery. Yet most blind, deaf, and crippled persons are given no hope of recovery by qualified medical men of this world. Their situation, however, is not hopeless.

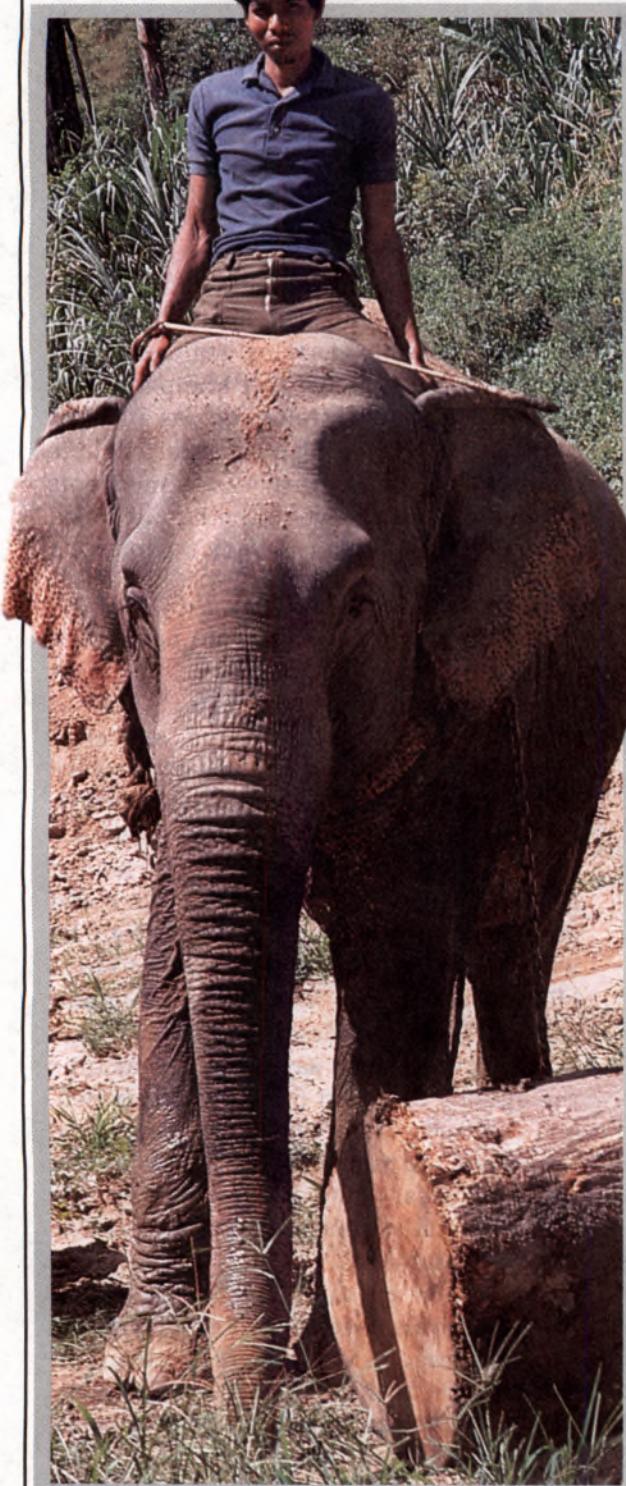
While on the earth Jesus Christ healed sicknesses that no medical doctors could cure. Under the rule of God's Kingdom, he will exercise his God-given powers to heal all who are in any way ailing or handicapped. The Bible describes the situation that will then exist, saying: "At that time the eyes of the blind ones will be opened, and the very ears of the deaf ones will be unstopped. At that time the lame one will climb up just as a stag does, and the tongue of the speechless one will cry out in gladness."—Isaiah 35:5, 6.

Spurred on by this hope, many handicapped persons have been of great comfort and encouragement to others. With a positive attitude, making the best of their abilities, they feel successful in life even now.

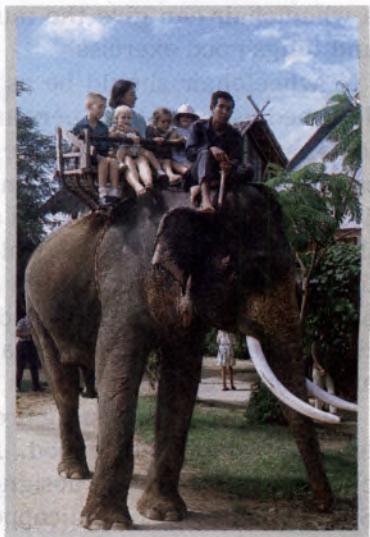
erwise a disabled person's lack of exercise may lead to such problems as stiff knees, swollen legs, and weakened muscles. Thus, while using an electrically propelled wheelchair may be an excellent aid at times, using one's own arms to power a wheelchair can give the muscles, heart, and lungs good exercise.

A wheelchair should be as individually designed as possible. A person handy with tools can help in adjusting the seat, height, balance, weight, and function of it to best fit the user. "I have found that a wheelchair should be as narrow as possible to be practical," says a young man after having completed a trip around the world on his own. He traveled by air, train, bus, and ship in an arm-propelled wheelchair.

Dressing and undressing are often problems for the handicapped. Ready-made clothing is usually not designed for them. Siw, a middle-aged handicapped woman in Stockholm, Sweden, says that she finds it easier to wear a sleeveless cape instead of



HOW CLEVER IS AN ELEPHANT?



I don't believe that 'an elephant never forgets,'" wrote one authority, Jim Williams, in his book *Elephant Bill*. Nevertheless, Jim deeply respected the intelligence of these beasts that were used by a teak company in Burma where he was employed. He found out that an elephant can be taught to respond to 24 different verbal commands as well as numerous silent commands given by movements of the rider's body. The following incident concerns an elephant named Bandoola and a Burmese rider named Po Toke:

"Po Toke was only too glad to show off Bandoola's prowess . . . He laid down ten articles in front of him—an axe, a saw, three different sizes of chains, a hammer, etc.

"'Give me the saw,' he said in Burmese. "Bandoola looked along the row of implements and immediately passed up the saw, with his trunk, to Po Toke.

"'All right, put it down,' he said. 'Now pass me the hammer.' This too was picked out without a moment's hesitation; and then the rest of the articles were passed up in turn without a mistake.

"'You're a fine big gentleman,' said Po Toke, and Bandoola seemed to take it as the compliment it was meant to be.

"Po Toke then climbed down from the elephant's head, took up one end of a chain in his hands and told Bandoola to tie it in a knot. This he did with great vigour, twisting it with his trunk into a knot that no human hand would have had the strength to untie. However, when Bandoola was told to loos-

en it, he did so as if it were a piece of string. Treve [Williams' son] was delighted.

"'Oh, he can do more than that,' said Po Toke with pride. 'You come and watch what he can do with a tree.'

"He rode him a few paces to where some young trees were growing. This time all the orders were carried out without a word of command—there was no saddle, no whip—just the pressure of the inner thigh against the animal's neck and a touch of the [oozie's] big toe behind his ear.

"Each time, Po Toke indicated to us what he was going to ask Bandoola to do, then silently conveyed his wishes to the animal, whose powers of differentiation were quite remarkable. We saw him respond to a series of unspoken instructions. Turn left—turn right—put his head back—put his head down—pull a branch down—push a tree down—pull up a sapling, or simply protect a sapling."—From *The Footprints of Elephant Bill*, by Susan Williams.

What qualities are needed in training an elephant to respond like that? Cruelty or kindness? "As the elephant's obedience is largely the result of affection," explains the above authoress, "his training has to be done with great gentleness and kindness."

The training must also start while the animal is young. Bandoola's training began in his sixth year. At first he was used as a pack animal, and only at the age of 20 was he considered mature enough for the heavier work of moving logs. Is such patient training worth it? Apparently so. An adult elephant can drag heavy logs for about 35 years. How many modern transport vehicles last that long?

From Our Readers

"Leap Second"

While reading the article "Leap Second" in "Watching the World" (May 22, 1988), I noticed that the affirmation of Dr. Dennis McCarthy that an airplane would miss the runway by 300 meters (330 yards) ["one-fifth of a mile"] in one second is not correct. For example, a fully laden Jumbo coming in to land is flying at about 150 knots, so the actual speed would be 78 meters (85 yards) per second.

Since I am an airline pilot and fly Boeing 747's, I thought it my duty to point out this error,

B. G., Italy

If Dr. McCarthy had landing speed in mind, then B. G. is correct. The aircraft would miss by about 1/20 mile rather than 1/5.—ED.

Bodybuilding

I had started to do muscle exercises so as to have a good physical appearance. I began to take hormones to develop faster (a common thing among weight lifters). I trained four hours a day. But as I developed physically, I became stationary mentally. Then I read that article ("Young People Ask . . . Should I Go In For Bodybuilding?" December 22, 1986). I never thought I would give up that sport, but now I realize the need to build my mind and not just my body. So I have given it up. Thank you very much.

G. P., Brazil

Safe Driving

My wife and I would like to express our deep appreciation to you for the

article "Safe Driving—The Urgent Need." (January 8, 1988) We own a driving school here in Ireland, and we, as driving instructors, are very interested in instilling in all our students the need to be not only a good driver but also a safe driver. This article helped us both greatly, and we are able to impart this valuable information to our students.

P. and A. B., Ireland

Glaucoma

I enjoyed reading your article on glaucoma in the May 8 *Awake!* But I did find one part to be inaccurate. The body does not replace vitreous humor solution. Oftentimes when people injure their eyes and this fluid escapes, eyesight is lost forever or is permanently impaired.

G. R., EMT Paramedic, United States

The article's reference was not to vitreous humor, about which G. R. is correct, but instead to aqueous humor, a watery fluid located in the front part of the eye around the iris.—ED.

I had occasion today to read the article on glaucoma, appearing in your May 8, 1988, issue of *Awake!* I wish to commend you on publishing such informative and very accurate information.

R. J. G., M.D., The Eye Institute of California, United States

I found the article on glaucoma to be accurate and most interestingly written. Easy-to-understand articles like this are a big help to patients, and I am glad to see this sort of article in magazines.

R. S. L., M.D., United States

Watching the World

Doomed Survivors

The BMA (British Medical Association) estimates that as much as half the population of Britain, 28 million people, would be killed during a major nuclear attack and that an additional 6 million would be seriously injured. However, instead of being treated, some seriously injured victims may be subject to mercy killing, according to the BMA report. The Association says: "We see no categorical solution to the problem of mercy killing of survivors who would otherwise experience great suffering followed by certain death." In its summary of the BMA findings, *The Times* of London noted that while "the elderly would have least hope of emergency treatment," as many injured children as possible "would be saved because denying them medical care would probably have 'disastrous' effects on the morale of other survivors."

Depression Relief

"Aerobic exercise such as brisk walking and jogging may offer an effective treatment for people suffering from moderate depression," reports *The Toronto Star*. Commenting on a study conducted by the University of Glasgow, Nanette Mutrie, lecturer with the university's physical education department, recommended that general practitioners who have patients with symptoms of de-

pression "may do well to advise them to undertake a program of exercise." The reason for the positive effects of aerobic exercise eludes researchers, but the *Star* report notes Mutrie's suggestion that "increased heart rate and oxygen intake may cause the release of mood-altering chemicals such as endorphins or that the rhythmic nature of aerobics may elevate a person's sense of well-being."

Taste the Difference

"Kiss a non-smoker, taste the difference." This motto has been



suggested by the European parliament in Strasbourg, France, as part of a planned campaign against smoking, highlighting "loss of social prestige." The parliament also recommended to its member countries the following additional antismoking measures: total prohibition of tobacco advertising in all forms of media; outlawing of the sale of the drug to juveniles under 16; removal of all cigarette machines; ban on smoking in all government buildings, schools,

and sports areas; and an information campaign on cancer prevention.

A Current Cause

Studies conducted in Sweden and the United States indicate that cancer cases are twice as frequent in homes near high-current power lines as in homes located in other areas. In the Stockholm area, for example, "3 percent of persons who had cancer lived within 150 meters [165 yd] of 200,000-volt power lines," notes the French magazine *L'Express*, while only 1.3 percent of the general population lived near such high-voltage lines. While there appears to be some connection between low-frequency electric fields and certain types of cancer, researchers do not know why. However, according to *L'Express*, it is known that this type of "radiation modifies the way in which brain tissues produce calcium . . . and accelerates the secretion of a certain enzyme . . . that furthers the development of already formed tumors."

Drawing the Line

Collisions between birds and aircraft can mean expensive accidents. However, for Tokyo's Haneda Airport, fishing line proved most effective in clearing

its runway approach of birds that rivaled airplanes for command of the air. Previous attempts using shotguns and recorded death screams of birds had not scared away the thousands of roosting sea gulls. An airport employee, hearing that fishing line had scared crows away from a garbage dump, suggested stretching fishing lines across the approaching light bridge where the birds were squatting. Amazingly, the flocks of sea gulls vanished. A researcher at the Japan Wild Bird Society noted that birds hate fishing line "because it gets tangled in their legs and wings."

Working Children

In many Third World countries, changing attitudes and worsening economic conditions have forced increasing numbers of children out of school and into the working world. According to figures published by ILO (International Labor Organization), a United Nations agency based in Geneva, Switzerland, at least 100,000,000 children under 15 (perhaps double that number) are working worldwide. Even if schools are free in their country, children do not attend because their parents feel that it will not change their children's future employment prospects. The ILO claims the exploitation of children can neither be "abolished nor kept under control in the immediate future."

Fatal Weekends

Rural areas in Germany have been experiencing a drastic increase in fatal weekend car accidents. "Those killed and seriously injured are mainly under 20 years of age, and few of them have had a driver's license longer than a

year," reports the German newspaper *Schweinfurter Tagblatt*. So serious has the situation become that the government has issued a paper entitled "Traffic Accidents Involving Juveniles Following Social Gatherings." In addition to inexperienced drivers, overloaded cars and driving under the influence of alcohol are cited as factors in the accidents.

Time Study

"Most people spend about five years of their lives standing in lines and six months sitting at stoplights," says a report in *The Express* newspaper of Easton, Pennsylvania. According to the report, studies done by the consulting firm Priority Management also



show that "the average person spends one year searching for misplaced objects, . . . eight months opening junk mail, . . . and two years trying to return telephone calls to people who never seem to be in." How can the time be saved and stress reduced? Among the suggestions given are: Plan travel times and routes in order to avoid delays; have reading material and other projects on hand for use when waiting; have a set place for all items, especially those used often; and make a list at the end of each day of the most important things to be done the next day. On the other hand, the study noted that 'the average married couple spends four minutes a day in meaningful conversation, and the

working couple spends 30 seconds a day talking with their children.' Says the firm's president, Michael Fortino: "Most people say their families are important, but they don't live that way."

AIDS Lawsuit

Contending that Navy doctors gave his wife a blood transfusion from a homosexual donor who had the AIDS virus, a U.S. Marine officer has sued the federal government for \$55 million. As reported in *The New York Times*, Chief Warrant Officer Martin Gaffney contended in the suit "that the Navy mishandled his wife's pregnancy by causing their baby to be stillborn, then giving her a transfusion that transmitted the AIDS virus to his wife, then to him and a son born later." John, the 13-month-old son, died in 1986. His wife, Mutsuko, died the following year. Gaffney says he filed the suit to provide for his four-year-old daughter, Maureene, who is likely to become an orphan.

Bible Addicts

According to official rules, every prisoner in Britain's jails is entitled to a free Bible upon request. Recently, prison chaplains in Leeds noted that more prisoners were asking for Bibles. An increase of spirituality among the inmates perhaps? Not at all. Many prisoners evidently use the Bible paper for rolling cigarettes, reports the Scottish *Daily Express*. In an attempt to save Bibles, chaplains bought a supply of cigarette paper for the prisoners. But apparently this alternative has not proved satisfactory. As one ex-prisoner explained: "The quality of paper in the good book is even better than cigarette papers."



POVERTY, WEALTH, and RELIGION

Through the ages the lavish wealth of religions that profess Christianity has disturbed many people. Popes, bishops, and other religious dignitaries have lived in splendor supported by their flocks, many of whom have existed in poverty. The situation has not changed in modern times.

"Christ," the *U.S. News & World Report* observed recently, "was a humble man who eschewed the accumulation of material wealth." Comparing his example with the life-styles of TV evangelists, this popular newsmagazine said: "The Bakkers, on the other hand, drove a Mercedes-Benz and a Rolls-Royce. Oral Roberts has homes in Oklahoma, Beverly Hills and Rancho Mirage, Calif. Swaggart wears a \$5,000 Rolex watch and lives on a 20-acre, \$2.4 million estate protected by a brick wall and hidden cameras. The master suite reportedly features a four-columned Jacuzzi."

—March 7, 1988, page 63.

When professed Christian leaders adopt opulent life-styles, might it not make others wonder about their credentials as Christ's true followers, especially since the apostle Peter said that Christ left his followers "a model for [them] to follow his steps closely"?—1 Peter 2:21.



