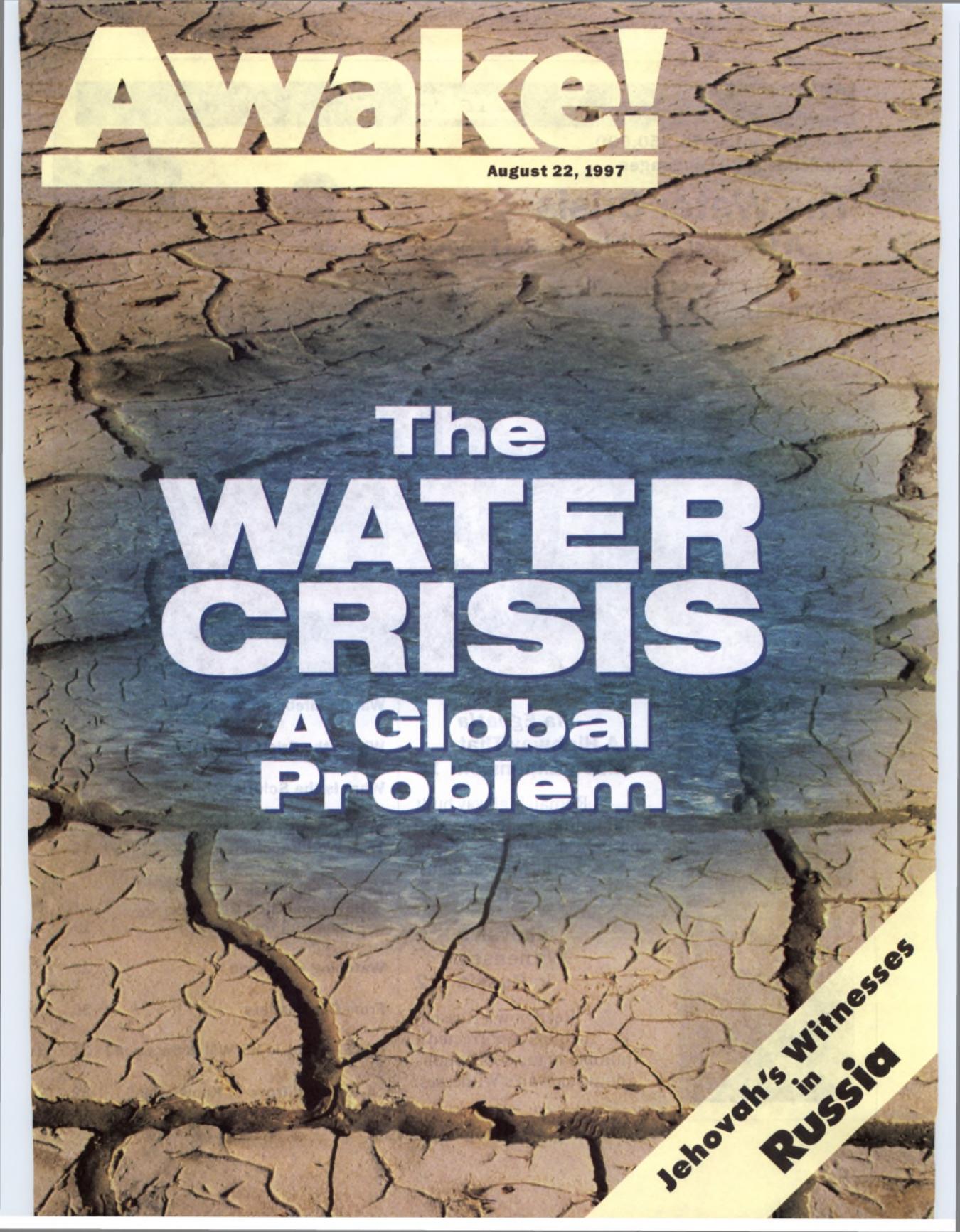


Awake!

August 22, 1997



The **WATER CRISIS** A Global Problem

Jehovah's Witnesses
Russia

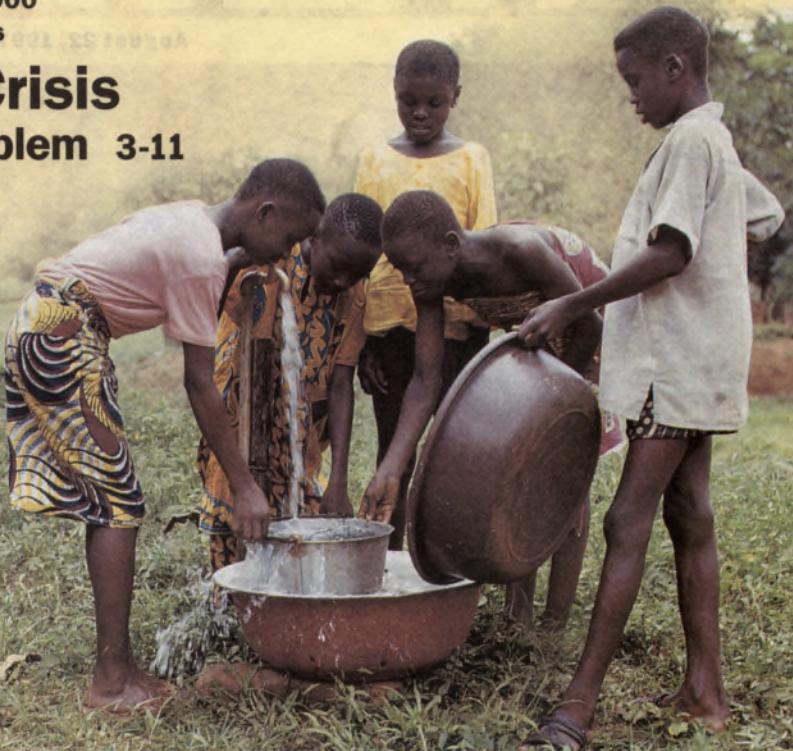
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What is the solution?



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WATER

Lifeblood of the Planet

COLORLESS, odorless, tasteless, and calorie free, water is vital to all life on earth. No human, animal, or plant can live without it. From elephant to microbe, water is essential; and there is no substitute. Each of the more than five billion people on earth needs to consume, in liquids and food, about two and a half quarts of water every day to keep healthy. No water, no life.

Without water, it is impossible to grow crops or to raise livestock. No water, no food—no food, no life.

Fortunately, there is plenty of water. When photographed from outer space, our beautiful blue planet looks as though it should be called Water, not Earth. Indeed, if the world's water evenly covered the surface of the planet, it would form a global ocean 1.5 miles deep. All of the earth's land surfaces could fit into the Pacific Ocean, with room to spare.

Of course, most of the earth's water is in the seas, and seawater is salty. If a person drank only seawater, he or she would soon perish of thirst and dehydration while the body tried to flush out the excess salt. Seawater is not a good choice for agriculture or industry either—it kills most crops and quickly rusts most machinery. So, for the most part, humans can use seawater only if they remove the salt, and that is an expensive process.

A mere 3 percent of the world's

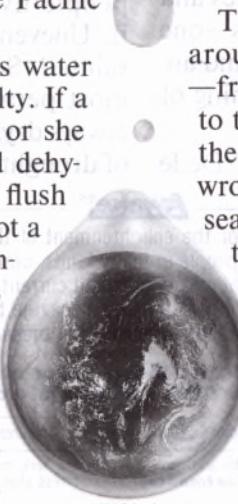
water is fresh, not salty. Almost all of that fresh water—about 99 percent of it—is locked up in glaciers and ice caps or is deep underground. Only 1 percent is readily accessible to humankind.

One percent does not sound like much. Are we likely to run short of fresh water? Probably not. States the magazine *People & the Planet*: "Even this [1 percent], if evenly distributed around the world and rationally used, would be enough to sustain twice or three times the world's current population."

Basically, the total amount of water on earth neither increases nor decreases. *Science World* states: "The water you use today may have once quenched the thirst of a dinosaur. That's because all the water we have on Earth now is all we've ever had—or will ever have."

This is because the water in and around the world endlessly circulates—from the oceans to the atmosphere, to the land, into the rivers, and back to the oceans again. It is as the wise man wrote long ago: "All streams run into the sea, yet the sea never overflows; back to the place from which the streams ran they return to run again."—Ecclesiastes 1:7, *New English Bible*.

Despite the abundance of fresh water on the earth, however, many regions are in crisis. The following articles look at the problems and the prospects for resolving them.



NASA photo

Where the Crisis Is Greater

MARY, who lives in the United States, begins her day with a shower, brushes her teeth with the water running, flushes the toilet, and then washes her hands. Even before sitting down to breakfast, she may use enough water to fill the average bathtub. By the end of the day, Mary, like many others who live in the States, has used over 100 gallons of water, enough to fill a bathtub two and a half times. For her, a clean, plentiful water supply is no farther away than the nearest tap. It is always available; she takes it for granted.

For Dede, who lives in West Africa, it's another story. She gets up long before dawn, dresses, balances a large basin on her head, and walks five miles to the nearest river. There she bathes, fills the basin with water, and then returns home. This daily routine takes about four hours. For the next hour, she filters the water to remove parasites and then divides it into three containers—one for drinking, one for household use, and another for her evening bath. Any washing of clothes must be done at the river.

"Water hunger is killing us here," Dede

says. "Having spent almost half the morning fetching water, how much of the day is left for farming or other activities?"

Dede's situation is hardly unique. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the total time spent each year by multitudes of women and children fetching and carrying water from distant, often polluted, sources amounts to over *ten million years!*

Some Have, Others Have Not

So while there is plenty of fresh water worldwide, it is not evenly distributed. That is the first major problem. Scientists reckon, for example, that while Asia has 36 percent of the water filling the world's lakes and rivers, that continent is home to 60 percent of the world's people. In contrast, the Amazon River contains 15 percent of the world's river water, but only 0.4 percent of the world's people live close enough to make use of it. Uneven distribution likewise applies to rainfall. Some regions of the earth are almost permanently dry; others, though not always dry, occasionally suffer from periods of drought.

Awake!

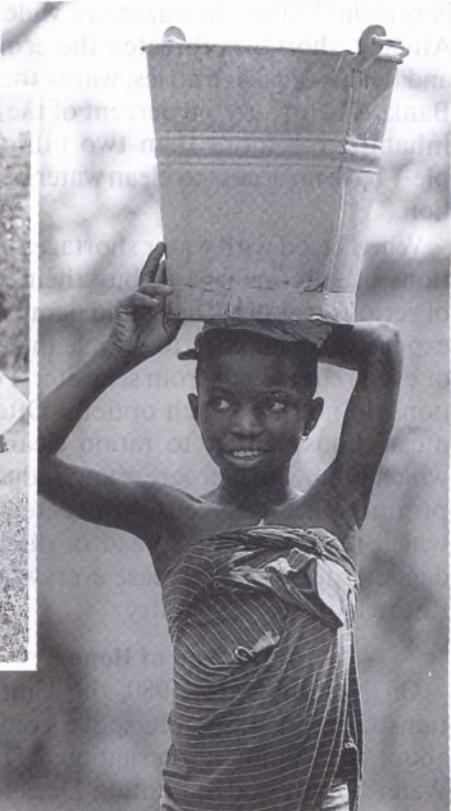
Why Awake! Is Published *Awake!* is for the enlightenment of the entire family. It shows how to cope with today's problems. It reports the news, tells about people in many lands, examines religion and science. But it does more. It probes beneath the surface and points to the real meaning behind current events, yet it always stays politically neutral and does not exalt one race above another. Most important, this magazine builds confidence in the Creator's promise of a peaceful and secure new world that is about to replace the present wicked, lawless system of things.

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Obtaining water can take four hours each day



A number of experts believe that humans may cause some changes in climate involving rainfall. Deforestation, overcultivation, and overgrazing all strip the soil bare. Some reason that when that happens, the earth's surface reflects more sunlight back into the atmosphere. The result: The atmosphere becomes warmer, clouds disperse, and rainfall decreases.

Barren land may also cause a decrease in rainfall, for a great deal of the rain that falls on forests is water that first evaporated from the vegetation itself—from the

leaves of the trees and undergrowth. In other words, vegetation acts like a huge sponge that absorbs and holds rainfall. Remove the trees and undergrowth, and less water is available to form rain clouds.

Just how dramatically human actions affect rainfall is still a matter of debate; more research remains to be done. But this much

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is certain: Water shortages are widespread. Already, shortages threaten the economies and health of 80 countries, warns the World Bank. And already, 40 percent of the earth's inhabitants—more than two billion people—have no access to clean water or sanitation.

When faced with water shortages, rich nations usually manage to buy their way out of serious trouble. They build dams, employ expensive technology to recycle their water, or even remove salt from seawater. Poor nations do not have such options. Often they must choose either to ration clean water, which might curb progress and reduce food production, or to reuse untreated water, which results in the spread of disease. As demands for water increase everywhere, the future looks very, very dry.

A Decade of Hope

On November 10, 1980, the United Nations General Assembly spoke confidently about the coming "International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade." The goal, proclaimed the assembly, was to provide, by the year 1990, full access to safe water and sanitation for all those living in the developing world. By the end of the decade, about \$134 billion had been spent to bring clean water to over a billion people and sewage-disposal facilities to over 750 million—an impressive achievement.

However, these gains were offset by a population growth of 800 million people in developing countries. Thus, by 1990, there remained over a billion people who lacked safe water and adequate sanitation. The predicament seemed to echo what the queen said to Alice in the children's story *Through the Looking-Glass*: "You see, it takes all the running you can do, to keep in the same place. If you want to get somewhere else, you must run at least twice as fast as that!"

Since 1990, overall progress in improving the lot of those without water and sanitation has been, according to WHO, "poor." Sandra Postel, when vice president of research at the Worldwatch Institute, wrote: "It remains a grave moral shortcoming that 1.2 billion people cannot drink water without risking disease or death. The reason is not so much a scarcity of water or inadequate technologies as a lack of social and political commitment to meeting the basic needs of the poor. It would take an estimated \$36 billion more per year, equal to roughly 4 per cent of the world's military expenditures, to bring to all of humanity what most of us now take for granted—clean drinking water and a sanitary means of waste disposal."

Rising Population, Rising Demand

The uneven distribution of water is complicated by a second problem: As populations grow, so does the demand for water. Rainfall worldwide remains roughly constant, but populations soar. Water consumption has doubled at least twice this century, and some estimate it could double again within the next 20 years.

Of course, growing numbers of people require not just more drinking water but also more food. Food production, in turn, requires ever greater amounts of water. Agriculture, however, must compete with the water demands of industry and individuals. As cities and industrial areas expand, agriculture often loses out. "Where's the food going to come from?" asks one researcher. "How can we possibly meet the needs of 10 billion people when we can barely meet the needs of 5 billion and are actually taking water away from agriculture?"

Most of the population increase occurs in developing countries, where water is often already scarce. Sadly, those countries are least able, both financially and technically,

A Molecule on the Move

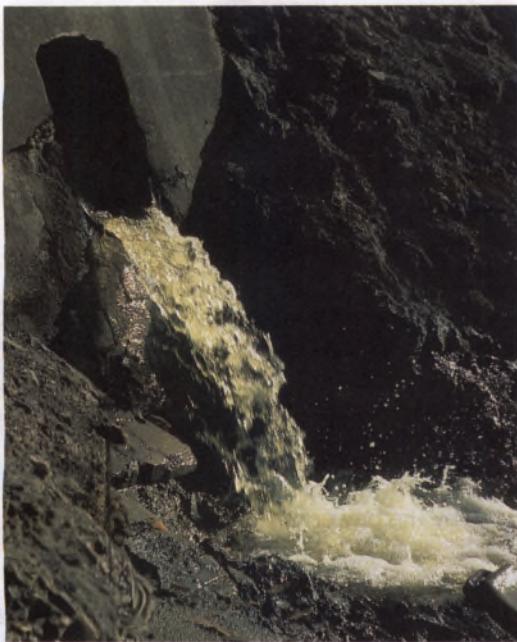
Let us follow the travels of a single water molecule on its endless journey. The series of accompanying pictures, numbered to correspond to the written text, illustrates just one of the myriads of paths that a single molecule of water could take to return to the place from which it came.

—Job 36:27; Ecclesiastes 1:7.

We will start with a molecule on the surface of the ocean.(1) As water is evaporated by the power of the sun, the molecule rises until it is several thousand feet above the earth.(2) Now, it joins with other water molecules to form a tiny droplet of water. The droplet travels with the wind for hundreds of miles. In time, the droplet evaporates, and the molecule rises again until, finally, it joins a raindrop big enough to fall to the ground.(3) The raindrop falls on a hillside with billions of others; the water rushes downward into a stream.(4)

Then a deer drinks from the stream, taking in our molecule.(5) Hours later the deer urinates, and the molecule passes into the ground where it is picked up by the roots of a tree.(6) From there, the molecule travels up the tree and eventually evaporates from a leaf into the air.(7) As before, it drifts upward to help form another tiny droplet. The droplet glides with the wind until it joins a dark, heavy rain cloud.(8) Our molecule falls yet again with the rain, but this time it reaches a river that carries it to the ocean.(9) There, it may spend thousands of years before it reaches the surface, evaporates, and becomes airborne once more.(10)

The cycle never ends: Water evaporates from the seas, travels over land, falls as rain, and runs back into the seas. In doing so, water sustains all life on earth.



Some 110 cubic miles of wastewater pours into rivers each year

to deal with water problems.

Pollution

Add to the problems of water shortages and the demands of growing population a third related problem: pollution. The Bible speaks of "a river of water of life," but many rivers today are rivers of death. (Revelation 22:1) According to one estimate, the amount of wastewater—domestic and industrial—that pours into the world's rivers every year amounts to 110 cubic miles. Many rivers and streams are polluted from their beginning to their end.

In the world's developing nations, raw sewage pollutes nearly every major river. A survey of 200 major Russian rivers showed



that 8 in 10 had dangerously high levels of bacterial and viral agents. The rivers and water tables of highly developed countries, while not flooded with sewage, are often poisoned by toxic chemicals, including those that come from agricultural fertilizers. In just about all parts of the world, seaside countries pump raw sewage into shallow waters off their coasts, seriously contaminating beaches.

Thus, water pollution is a global problem. Summarizing the situation, the Audubon Society booklet *Water: The Essential Resource* states: "One-third of humanity labors in a perpetual state of illness or debility as a result of impure water; another third is threatened by the release into water of chemical substances whose long-term effects are unknown."

Bad Water, Bad Health

When Dede, mentioned earlier, said that "water hunger is killing us," she was speaking figuratively. Yet, the lack of clean, fresh water does kill, quite literally. For her and millions like her, there is lit-

tle choice but to use water from streams and rivers, which are often little more than open sewers. Small wonder that, according to WHO, a child dies of a water-related disease every eight seconds!

In the developing world, according to *World Watch* magazine, 80 percent of all disease is spread by the consumption of unsafe water. Waterborne pathogens and pollution kill 25 million people every year.

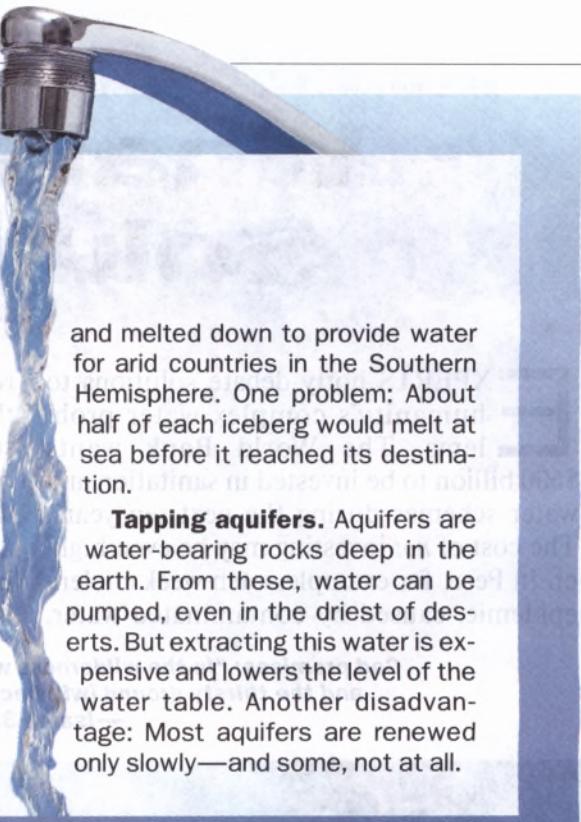
The water-related killer diseases—including diarrheic disease, cholera, and ty-

What Has Been Proposed

Building desalination plants.

These remove salt from seawater. Usually this is done by pumping the water into low-pressure chambers, where it is heated until it boils. The water evaporates and is directed elsewhere, leaving behind the salt crystals. It is an expensive process, beyond the reach of many developing countries.

Melting down icebergs. Some scientists believe that massive icebergs, which contain pure, fresh water, could be towed from the Antarctic by large tugboats



and melted down to provide water for arid countries in the Southern Hemisphere. One problem: About half of each iceberg would melt at sea before it reached its destination.

Tapping aquifers. Aquifers are water-bearing rocks deep in the earth. From these, water can be pumped, even in the driest of deserts. But extracting this water is expensive and lowers the level of the water table. Another disadvantage: Most aquifers are renewed only slowly—and some, not at all.

phoid—claim most of their victims in the Tropics. Yet, waterborne diseases are not limited to the developing world. During 1993, in the United States, 400,000 people fell ill in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, after drinking tap water containing a microbe that was resistant to chlorine. In the same year, dangerous microbes found their way into the water systems of other cities in the United States—Washington, D.C.; New York City; and Cabool, Missouri—forcing residents to boil the water that came from their faucets.

Rivers to Share

The interrelated problems of water shortages, the demands of growing populations, and pollution leading to ill health are all factors that can lead to tension and conflict. Water, after all, is hardly a luxury. Said a politician in Spain who was grappling with

a water crisis: “It’s no longer an economic struggle, but a fight for survival.”

A major area of tension is the sharing of water from rivers. According to Peter Gleick, a researcher in the United States, 40 percent of the world’s population lives in the 250 river basins whose water is competed for by more than one nation. The Brahmaputra, Indus, Mekong, Niger, Nile, and Tigris rivers each flow through many countries—countries that want to extract from those rivers as much water as possible. Already, there have been disputes.

As the demand for water spirals, such tensions will increase. The World Bank’s vice president for Environmentally Sustainable Development predicts: “Many of the wars in this century were about oil, but wars of the next century will be over water.”

What Is the Solution?

EXPERTS hotly debate solutions to humanity's complex water problems. The World Bank wants \$600 billion to be invested in sanitation and water schemes during the next ten years. The cost of *not* investing may be even higher. In Peru, for example, a ten-week cholera epidemic, caused by contaminated water,

recently cost about \$1 billion—three times the money invested in the country's water supply during all of the 1980's.

Yet, despite the good intentions of those who promote them, water projects often do little to help the very poor. Growth in the megacities of the developing world is explosive and chaotic. The poor live in

God promises: "In the wilderness waters will have burst out, . . . and the thirsty ground [will become] as springs of water."

—Isaiah 35:6, 7



overcrowded, poor-quality shacks with no piped water or sanitation. Having no access to publicly subsidized water services, they must pay private vendors high prices for water, often dirty water.

Clearly, the global water crisis is complex and involves interrelated factors: shortages, pollution, poverty, disease, and the rising demands of growing populations. It is likewise clear that humans cannot solve these problems.

Basis for Optimism

The future, however, is not as gloomy as many predict. Why? Because the solution to the world's water crisis does not rest with humans; it rests with God. He alone has both the ability and the will to solve all water problems.

That Jehovah God can solve these problems is unquestionable. He is the Designer and Creator not only of the earth but also of the waters on it. It was he who put into motion the marvelous water cycle along with all the other natural cycles that make life on earth possible. Revelation 14:7 identifies Jehovah as "the One who made the heaven and the earth and sea and fountains of waters."

Jehovah has the power to control the world's water. He is "the One giving rain upon the surface of the earth and sending waters upon the open fields." (Job 5:10) Of him the Bible says: "He converts a wilderness into a reedy pool of water, and the land of a waterless region into outflows of water."—Psalm 107:35.

Time and again he has proved his ability to provide water. For example, he supplied water for the Israelites during their 40 years in the wilderness, sometimes miraculously. "He went bringing forth streams out of a crag and causing waters to descend just like rivers," the Bible says. "Look! He struck

a rock that waters might flow and torrents themselves might flood forth."—Psalm 78:16, 20.

What God Will Do

God will not allow the water crisis to continue forever. The Bible foretells that the time is coming when he will act in behalf of all those worldwide who wish to live under the loving rulership of his heavenly government, which will soon take control of the earth.—Matthew 6:10.

That government, or Kingdom, will bring an end to waterborne diseases, along with all other illnesses. The Bible assures God's loyal ones: "[God] will certainly bless your bread and your water; and [he will] indeed turn malady away from your midst." (Exodus 23:25) Moreover, the polluters of the earth's waters will be done away with as he 'brings to ruin those ruining the earth.'—Revelation 11:18.

All the earth will flourish under God's loving care. Never again will people endlessly struggle to find fresh, clean water. Almighty God, who always speaks the truth, inspired his prophet to write concerning the future: "For in the wilderness waters will have burst out, and torrents in the desert plain. And the heat-parched ground will have become as a reedy pool, and the thirsty ground as springs of water."—Isaiah 35:6, 7; Hebrews 6:18.

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

**Why So Much Hate?
Why So Little Love?**

Kilimanjaro—The Roof of Africa

RSD—A Puzzling, Painful Disorder

Something Better Than World Acclaim

Years after I became a well-known sculptor in Europe, a fellow artist told me accusingly: "You have let art down!" Before relating why he made that accusation, let me explain how I came to be a sculptor.

IN THE village of Aurisina, where I was born, most of the men worked in an ancient stone quarry. Aurisina is located in northern Italy near Trieste and close to the former Yugoslavia. When I was 15, I too began working in the village quarry. That was in 1939, the year World War II began. Working with stone made me want to become a famous sculptor. I also wanted never to die. Both of these desires seemed unreachable.

When the war ended in 1945, I moved to live with my sister in Rome. There, I hoped to enroll in the academy of art. How thrilled I was when my wish came true and I was accepted for three years of studies!

My studies were financed with the help of various charity organizations.

Spiritual Hunger

I also sought to satisfy my spiritual hunger by attending religious services, including those of the Salvation Army and the Waldenses. I even took courses at a Jesuit university, and once I attended a three-day seminar taught by a bishop. During this course we were not permitted to converse with one another, but we devoted ourselves to prayer, meditation, confession, and the bishop's presentations.

Afterward, I realized that my faith had not been strengthened. "Why," I asked the bishop, "had I not developed a strong faith?"

"Faith is God's gift," the bishop answered, "and he gives it to whom he wants." His answer so disappointed me that I stopped searching for God and began to devote myself exclusively to my art studies.

Winning International Acclaim

After finishing school in Rome in 1948, I received a one-year scholarship to study at the academy of art in Vienna, Austria. I graduated from there the following year and accepted a one-year scholarship to pursue my studies in Ljubljana, Slovenia (formerly part of Yugoslavia). My goal then was to move to Paris, France, the center of the fine arts.

However, in 1951, I was given the opportunity to work in Stockholm, Sweden. I moved there with the intention of saving up funds to help me pursue an art career in Paris. But then I met Micky, and we were married in 1952 and made our home in Stockholm. I got a job in a little workshop where I made sculptures of stone, marble, and granite. Some of these are exhibited at the Millesgården, a park and museum in the town of Lidingö, near Stockholm.

I had learned an old method of bronze foundry in Rome—the lost-wax method—and I taught bronze foundry at the Art Vocational Training School and at the Academy of Art in Stockholm. Later, I was given access to a bronze foundry at the Skansen open-air museum in Stockholm. There, often in front of audiences, I would create sculptures in bronze or lead. I also was hired to restore antique sculptures belonging to the then king of Sweden, Gustav VI. These are on display at the Royal Palace as well as at the castle of Drottningholm in Stockholm.

Between 1954 and 1960, my work received praise in the press and from art critics. Many of my sculptures were exhibited in major cities of Europe, including Stockholm, Rome, Ljubljana, Vienna, Zagreb, and Belgrade. In Belgrade, Marshal Tito bought some of my sculptures for his private collection. I am represented at the Modern Gallery in Rome by a large female torso in granite, and my art is on display at the Albertina Museum in Vienna. The Modern Museum in Stockholm has one of my bronze and lead sculptures, and the Modern Gallery in Ljubljana has a sculpture in bronze.

Interest Again in Religion

After we were married a few years, Micky noticed my reawakening interest in religion. I kept wondering, ‘Where is the faith for which the first Christians were willing to die?’ Again I began attending religious services, such as those of Pentecostals and Adventists. I even examined Islam and Buddhism.

In 1959, before attending an art exhibi-



Working on a sculpture in 1955

tion in Milan, Italy, I visited my village of Aurisina for a few days. Villagers told me about a man who they said knew a lot about the Bible. He was one of Jehovah’s Witnesses. When I had opportunity to speak with him, he showed me things in the Bible that I had never seen before. I learned that man *is* a soul—he does not *have* a soul separate from his body—and that the human soul is mortal, not immortal as other religions taught.—Genesis 2:7; Ezekiel 18:4.

Further, the man showed me that God’s purpose when he created Adam and Eve was, not that they should die, but that they should live forever in happiness on earth. The first human couple died because they were disobedient. (Genesis 1:28; 2:15-17) I learned that by giving his Son as a ransom, God made provision for humans to enjoy

the prospect of everlasting life, which had been lost by Adam's disobedience. (John 3: 16) It brought me great joy to learn these things.—Psalm 37:29; Revelation 21:3, 4.

A Turning Point

Shortly thereafter, I returned to Sweden, and Micky and I tried to locate Jehovah's Witnesses. But we could not find an address for them. A few days later, however, our doorbell rang, and there they were at our door! I began reading the literature they left with me, and soon I was convinced that it contained the truth. Yet, I wanted to confirm my opinion by talking with an old friend, a Catholic archbishop, with whom I had become acquainted during my studies in Rome during the latter part of the 1940's. So, in January 1961, I went to see him.

My friend was then in charge of all Catholic missionary activity worldwide. What a surprise awaited me! I was amazed to learn that the archbishop lacked even elementary Bible knowledge. When we spoke about what happens at death, he said: "What we believe now may turn out to be completely the opposite." And when we discussed the apostle Peter's reference to the Bible promise of "new heavens and a new earth," he was not sure what was meant by this promise.—2 Peter 3:13; Isaiah 65:17-25.

Upon my return to Stockholm, I began to study the Bible regularly with one of the Witnesses with whom my wife and I had become acquainted. I was delighted to see Micky's increasing interest in the study. Eventually, on February 26, 1961, I symbolized my dedication to Jehovah by water baptism, and Micky was baptized the following year.

Making Adjustments in Employment

We had a baby girl in 1956 and a little boy in 1961. Since we now had a family to sup-

port, I was in need of steady employment. I was delighted to receive an invitation to build a large monument in the village where I was born. It was to be in memory of partisans who died in World War II. The monument would have been a lucrative project for me. But after considering various factors—including the fact that for months I would be away from my family and the Christian congregation and that I would be dwelling in a land where Communism was thriving and where it would not be easy to pursue spiritual interests—I turned down the offer.

Another job created a problem of conscience for me. I was asked to make a large ornament for a new crematorium in Sweden. When I finished it, I was invited to the inauguration. But after learning that the bishop of Stockholm was going to unveil my work, I decided not to share in the ceremony with people whose teachings and customs were in direct conflict with God's Word.—2 Corinthians 6:14-18.

Because of the uncertainty of obtaining regular employment as a sculptor, I began to find it difficult to care adequately for my family's material needs. (1 Timothy 5:8) I prayerfully considered what I might do for a living. Afterward, an architect came to me with a model of a building that he had designed. He asked me to photograph it. Since I knew photography well because of experience in photographing my sculptures, I was happy to accept the job. During those years a great deal of construction work was going on in Sweden, and there was a need for photographing models. Thus, I got a lot of work from many architects and could support my family well.

It was during this time that I visited the Italian Cultural Institute in Stockholm to

share the good news of God's Kingdom. (Matthew 24:14) I knew the director of the institute and was able to arrange to speak with him. It was after he learned I was no longer working as a sculptor that he exclaimed: "You have let art down!" I explained that I had prior obligations to God and my family.

I must admit that for a time art was the most important thing in my life. However, I came to realize that for me, continuing to pursue my career would be comparable to trying to serve two masters. (Matthew 6:24) I was convinced that the most important thing I could do was preach the good news of God's Kingdom. So I made the personal decision to give up my work as a sculptor, and Jehovah God has in a grand way blessed my decision.—Malachi 3:10.

Privileges of Christian Service

During the early 1970's, many immigrants to Sweden from southern and eastern Europe began to manifest interest in Bible truth. Thus, beginning in 1973, I had the privilege of studying the Bible with immigrants who spoke Italian, Spanish, and Serbo-Croatian, and I was able to help form new congregations and study groups for these language groups. I was appointed to arrange Christian conventions in Italian and to direct Bible dramas at them. On occasion, I also had the privilege of serving congregations in Sweden as a traveling overseer.

As a result of helping to arrange Italian conventions in Sweden, I had contact with the Watch Tower Society's branch office in Rome. The Italian brothers told me that there was a shortage of congregation elders in Italy because of the explosive growth of the preaching work there. So in 1987, Micky and I moved to Liguria, near Gen-



With my wife

oa, Italy. By then our children were grown and on their own. We spent two wonderful years in Italy and had a part in forming a new congregation in Liguria. We experienced fully the truth of Proverbs 10:22: "The blessing of Jehovah—that is what makes rich."

Micky and I sometimes try to sum up our blessings from Jehovah, and the list becomes long. Besides taking part in forming new congregations, we have been able to help several people, including our own children, to the point of dedication and baptism and then on to becoming mature Christians. I do not regret my decision to give up my life as a well-known sculptor, for I have chosen the much more rewarding career of serving our loving God, Jehovah. My loved ones and I have thus received a solid hope for eternal life, thanks to Jehovah.—*As told by Celo Pertot.*

VIA EGNATIA

A Highway That Aided Expansion

BY AWAKE! CORRESPONDENT IN GREECE

IN 50 C.E., a group of Christian missionaries first set foot on European soil. They had come in response to an invitation received by the apostle Paul in a vision: "Step over into Macedonia and help us." (Acts 16:9) The message about Jesus Christ that Paul and his companions brought had a dramatic impact on Europe.



An important aid to the spread of Christianity in Macedonia was the *Via Egnatia*, a paved Roman highway. After landing at the seaport of Neapolis (now Kaválla, Greece) at the northern end of the Aegean Sea, the missionaries evidently traveled on

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**On the road
to Neapolis**



that highway to Philippi, the principal city of the district of Macedonia. The road led on to Amphipolis, Apollonia, and Thessalonica, the next stops of Paul and his companions.—Acts 16:11–17:1.

Parts of this ancient highway survive to the present and are still used daily. Now there are plans to construct a modern highway that will follow the route of the ancient road and bear the same name.

Who built the original highway? When was it constructed, and for what purpose?

Why Needed

As Rome continued its conquest eastward, Macedonia became a Roman province in 146 B.C.E. This acquisition, however, created a new need for the empire—the ability to deploy military forces to the new territories quickly. The *Via Appia*, or Appian Way, on the Italian Peninsula already connected Rome to the southeast Adriatic Coast. But now the empire needed a similar highway on the Balkan Peninsula, so the *Via Egnatia* was conceived. It was named after the chief engineer of the project, Roman proconsul Gnaius Egnatius.



**On the road
to Philippi**

Starting from the seaport town of Dyrrachium in the province of Illyricum (Durres, Albania), the *Via Egnatia* extended all the way to the ancient city of Byzantium (Istanbul, Turkey), measuring over 500 miles. The construction began in 145 B.C.E. and took



some 44 years to complete. As intended, the *Via Egnatia* soon became a very useful instrument for Rome's expansionist policy in the East.

Difficult Terrain for a Road

The terrain, however, made the construction of the highway challenging. In its initial stage, for example, the roadway meets Lake Ohrid, which it skirts to the north. Then, after winding through mountain passes and making its way eastward across an inhospitable terrain of punch bowls, denuded mountains, and valley basins partly occupied by lakes, the road eventually reaches the central Macedonian plain.

As the highway approaches the city of Thessalonica, it follows level and open countryside. But the terrain on the east side of the city is hilly. Curving through these hills, the *Via Egnatia* descends into a valley occupied by lakes with ill-defined, marshy edges. Continuing on, it winds its way through valleys and marshes till it reaches the ancient town of Neapolis.

From there the route follows the Aegean seacoast eastward and crosses into the region of Thrace. In its final segment, the highway takes a rather straight and level course to its destination, Byzantium.

Serving Its Purpose

The *Via Egnatia* became the most direct and convenient route between Rome and the Roman conquests to the east of the Adriatic Sea. It facilitated the formation of Roman colonies in Macedonian towns and strongly influenced the economic, demographic, and cultural development of the area. The highway made possible the easy transport of copper, asphalt, silver, fish, oil, wine, cheeses, and other items.

Prosperity resulting from such trade made certain towns along the road, such as Thessalonica and Amphipolis, some of the greatest urban centers in the Balkans. Thes-

salonica, in particular, developed into an important commercial center, rich in artistic and cultural activities. True, the cost of maintaining this road fell partly on the communities through which it passed. But, in return, these communities enjoyed the rich benefits of international trade.

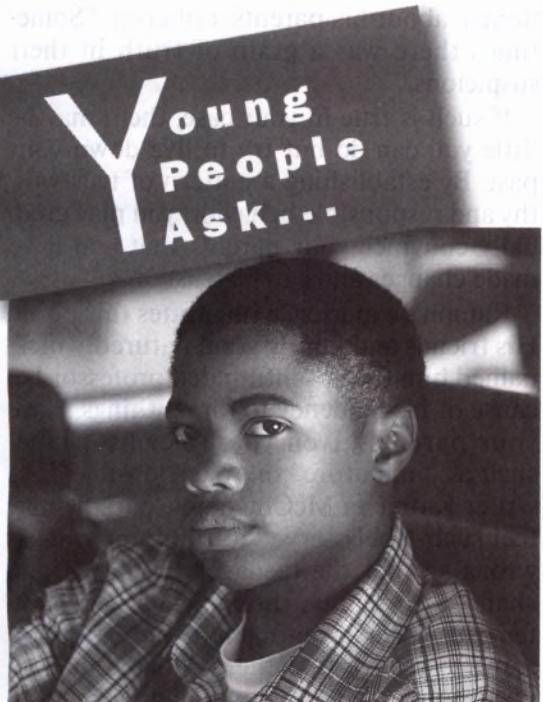
Role in Spread of Christianity

The *Via Egnatia*, however, brought to the people living in the area a benefit far superior to material prosperity. Take, for example, the prosperous businesswoman Lydia. She lived in Philippi—the first city in Europe to hear Paul preach the good news. After landing at Neapolis in 50 C.E., the apostle Paul and his companions traveled ten miles northwest along the *Via Egnatia* to Philippi.

"On the sabbath day," Luke wrote, "we went forth outside the gate beside a river, where we were thinking there was a place of prayer; and we sat down and began speaking to the women that had assembled." Among the women who listened to Paul was Lydia. On that very day, she and her household became believers.—Acts 16:13, 14.

From Philippi, Paul and his associates moved on along the *Via Egnatia* through Amphipolis and Apollonia to Thessalonica, a total of some 75 miles. (Acts 17:1) To preach the good news in Thessalonica, Paul made use of the Sabbath-day gatherings of the Jews in the local synagogue. Thus some Jews and a multitude of Greeks became believers.—Acts 17:2-4.

Likewise today, Jehovah's Witnesses in Albania and Greece use segments of this same highway to reach people living in these territories. Their goal is to spread the good news of God's Kingdom, just as the apostle Paul and his missionary companions did. (Matthew 28:19, 20; Acts 1:8) Indeed, the *Via Egnatia* is a Roman highway that has aided spiritual expansion, both in the 1st century and on into this 20th!



How Can I Stop Getting Blamed All the Time?

"I always got blamed for things. If the house was unlocked or the stove was left on or anything was out of place or undone, it was Ramon's fault!"—Ramon.

WHEN you are a teenager, it can sometimes seem that you are blamed for just about anything and everything that goes wrong. In a previous article, we acknowledged that parents sometimes are too quick to blame their children.* The reasons

* See the article "Young People Ask . . . Why Is It Always My Fault?" appearing in our July 22, 1997, issue.

for this can range from normal parental concern to deep emotional distress. Whatever the reason, being held responsible for things that are not your fault can be painful and humiliating.

Of course, as an imperfect human, you will make mistakes from time to time. (Romans 3:23) Additionally, because you are young, you are relatively inexperienced. (Proverbs 1:4) You are bound to make occasional errors in judgment. So when you err, it is only right and fair that you be held accountable.—Ecclesiastes 11:9.

How should you react, then, when you are blamed for something that you have actually done? Some youths try to act as if they were the victims of some gross injustice. They rant and rave that their parents are always blaming them for everything. The result? Frustrated parents use sterner measures to get their point across. The Bible gives this advice: "Wisdom and discipline are what mere fools have despised. Listen, my son, to the discipline of your father, and do not forsake the law of your mother." (Proverbs 1:7, 8) When you own up to your errors and make needed changes, you can learn from your mistakes.—Hebrews 12:11.

"Confidential Talk" With Parents

It is entirely another matter, though, when you are blamed for things that are *not* your fault or when blame is unrelenting. Understandably, you may feel angry and resentful. You might even be tempted to misbehave, figuring that you're going to get blamed anyway. (Ecclesiastes 7:7) However, spiteful actions hurt everyone. (Compare Job 36:18.) Proverbs 15:22 points to a better way of dealing with matters, saying: "There is a frustrating of plans where there is no confidential talk." Yes, one way to change the way you are treated by your parents is to let them know how you feel.

First, look for what the Bible calls the "right time." (Proverbs 15:23) Writer Clayton Barbeau suggests: "Pick a time and place when heads are cool and you're all feeling pretty good." Further, the Bible warns: "A word causing pain makes anger to come up." (Proverbs 15:1) So try to be kind and respectful in your approach, not belligerent. Avoid losing your temper. (Proverbs 29:11) Instead of attacking your parents ('You are *always* blaming me for everything!'), try to explain how their constant blaming makes you feel. ('I feel bad about myself when I get blamed for things that aren't my fault.')—Compare Genesis 30:1, 2.

The same can be said for those times when your folks are angry because of some misunderstanding. The parents of young Jesus once became upset when his whereabouts were unknown. But Jesus did not whine or complain. Calmly, he clarified the situation. (Luke 2:49) Why not try dealing with your own parents in an adult manner when you are in trouble? Realize that they are upset because they care for you! Listen respectfully. (Proverbs 4:1) Wait until things have settled down before venturing your side of the story.

'Proving What Your Own Work Is'

Why, though, are some parents prone to jump to wrong conclusions about their children in the first place? To be frank, sometimes young ones give their parents reason to be suspicious. Says Proverbs 20:11: "Even by his practices a boy makes himself recognized as to whether his activity is pure and upright." What reputation have you established with your folks? Have your "practices" shown you to be "upright" and serious or careless and irresponsible? If the latter is the case, don't be surprised if they often jump to wrong conclusions about you. "I had to be honest with myself," admitted Ramon, the young man previously men-

tioned, about his parents' criticism. "Sometimes there was a grain of truth in their suspicions."

If such is true in your case, there may be little you can do but try to live down your past. By establishing a pattern of trustworthy and responsible behavior, you may gradually convince your parents that you have made changes and can be trusted.

Ramon's experience illustrates this point. His friends and family good-naturedly nicknamed him the absentminded professor because of his tendency to forget things. Have your parents given you a negative label such as "immature" or "irresponsible"? As writer Kathleen McCoy notes, parents may feel such labels serve "to pinpoint what is wrong so that the teenager can see it and change." In reality, though, such labels often cause deep resentment. Even so, Ramon came to realize that the nickname made a valid point. "My mind was always fixed on one thing, so I was losing things like keys or my homework and forgetting chores," he admits.

So Ramon began making changes. "I started to learn about responsibilities and priorities," he recalls. "I made a schedule and began to take personal Bible study more seriously. I learned that Jehovah places importance on little things as well as on big things." (Luke 16:10) By applying Bible principles, Ramon eventually shed his reputation for forgetfulness. Why not try to do the same? And if a label or nickname really bothers you, discuss it with your parents. Maybe they'll see things your way.

When It Looks Like Favoritism

Sometimes favoritism seems to be behind the blame. Recalls Ramon: "My older brothers or sisters would come home late and get away with it. I'd come home and get in trouble for it." A Guyanese man named Albert recalls having similar feelings when he

was growing up. It seemed to him that his mother disciplined him more harshly than she did his brother.

However, things are not always the way they seem. Parents often extend greater freedom to older children, not because of favoritism, but simply because they feel that they will act responsibly. Or there may be special circumstances involved. Albert admits that his brother was spared physical disciplining because he was "small and sickly." Is it favoritism for parents to recognize the special needs or limitations a particular child might have?

Of course, parents do sometimes have their favorites. (Compare Genesis 37:3.) Says Albert of his sickly brother: "Mom had a special affection for him." Fortunately, Christian love is expansive. (2 Corinthians 6:11-13) So even if your parents have "special affection" for one of your siblings, it doesn't mean that there is no love left for you. The real issue is, Are they treating you unfairly, blaming you because of blind affection for a sibling? If that appears to be the case, by all means let them know how you feel. In a calm, reasonable manner, give them specific examples of how you feel they have shown favoritism. Perhaps they will listen.

Problem Families

Admittedly, not all situations are easy to change. For some parents, shaming and blaming are ingrained habits. This may be especially so among parents who have emotional problems or are battling addiction. Under such circumstances, little good may come from attempts to talk matters out.



Admitting our errors helps us learn from our mistakes

If this seems to be true in your case, realize that your parents' problems are beyond your control and can likely be solved only with outside help. The best you may be able to do is give them appropriate honor and respect and try to avoid unnecessary conflict. (Ephesians 6:1, 2) Proverbs 22:3 says: "Shrewd is the one that has seen the calamity and proceeds to conceal himself."^{*}

At the same time, get some outside support. Talk with a mature adult, perhaps a Christian elder. Loving attention from such a person could do much to counteract the feeling that things are always your fault. At the same time, "draw close to God." (James 4:8) While others may unfairly blame you, "[God] will not for all time keep finding fault, neither will he to time indefinite keep resentful. . . . For he himself well knows the formation of us, remembering that we are dust." (Psalm 103:9, 14) Knowing that you are precious in God's eyes can help you put up with unfair blame.

^{*} See the article "Young People Ask . . . How Can I Cope With Verbal Abuse?" in our June 8, 1989, issue. See also the series "From Words That Hurt to Words That Heal," in the October 22, 1996, *Awake!*

Jehovah's Witnesses in Russia

A THEOLOGIAN'S VIEWPOINT

In Rome, Jewish community leaders in the first century noted concerning Christianity: "As regards this sect it is known to us that everywhere it is spoken against." What did those leaders do? commendably, they went to the apostle Paul, who was then under house arrest, and stated: "We think it proper to hear from you what your thoughts are." (Acts 28:22) They listened to an informed Christian rather than to those who spoke against Christianity.

Sergei Ivanenko, a respected Russian theologian, did similarly. Although he believed many of the negative reports about Jehovah's Witnesses that were circulating in Russia, he decided to call the branch office of the Witnesses, located just outside St. Petersburg, for information. He accepted an invitation to visit there, ask questions, and observe the Witnesses firsthand.

When Mr. Ivanenko arrived in October 1996, the facilities that accommodate the nearly 200 members of the branch staff of Jehovah's Witnesses in Russia were nearing completion. For the following three days, he was given the opportunity to observe the construction site, eat meals in the dining room, and interview any whom he wished.

An article that Mr. Ivanenko wrote about the Witnesses was published in the popular Russian weekly *Moscow News* of Fe-

bruary 16-23, 1997. The article, entitled "Should We Be Afraid of Jehovah's Witnesses?", also appeared in the English edition of *Moscow News*, dated February 20-26. Since many *Awake!* readers are keenly interested in the activity of Jehovah's Witnesses in Russia, we here reproduce, with permission, most of this article. Mr. Ivanenko began with the following experience, which appeared in prominent type:

"Sectarians, get out of Russia!" read the poster being waved by members of Zhirinovsky's LDPR party picketing a Jehovah's Witnesses meeting. 'What don't you like about this organization?' I asked one of those picketing. He handed me a copy of *Megapolis-Express* with the headline 'Religious Syphilis Outbreak in Kamchatka.' The paper said that in order to fill the organization's cash boxes, Jehovah's Witnesses were pandering and running prostitution rings, spreading venereal disease among sailors. 'Are you also one of their victims?' I asked sympathetically, 'Do you believe this information?' 'It doesn't matter,' came the answer. 'The main thing is that this American sect is destroying Russia's spirituality and culture, and we must stop it.' "

The article Mr. Ivanenko wrote followed beneath the byline: "By Sergei Ivanenko, theologian, candidate of philosophy."

Part of the branch office complex in Russia

"Honesty like this is rare indeed, although it is true that many Russians do not think very kindly of Jehovah's Witnesses. Just one mention of this organization leads to a string of comments about its dismal fanaticism, its American origins, about the blind faith of ordinary members in the organization's leaders, and the belief that the end of the world is upon us. In many Jehovah's Witnesses provoke fear mixed with curiosity.

"What is This Religion, and Should We Fear It?

"In order to figure this out for myself, I visited the village of Solnechnoye in Kururtnoye district, St. Petersburg, where the administrative center of the Russian Jehovah's Witnesses is located.



"[This is] on the site of a former summer camp. By 1992 the [original] building had become catastrophically dilapidated, and the children were replaced by vagrants and hordes of rats. Apparently it was the run-down condition of the area that helped Jehovah's Witnesses receive the seven hectare plot of land to use for an indefinite period of time. They renovated the old structures and also started building new ones, including a four-story administrative building, a [Kingdom Hall] that seats 500, and a dining hall. Jehovah's Witnesses are also planting new grass (specially ordered from Finland) and various kinds of rare trees. The work



MN File

(The following information from the files of the Moscow News was printed along with this article by Sergei Ivanenko.)

"The Russian Jehovah's Witnesses are part of a world-wide Christian organization functioning in 233 countries and having 5.4 million members. Jehovah's Witnesses follow the spiritual guidance of the Governing Body located in Brooklyn, New York. The modern-day organization of Jehovah's Witnesses developed from a Bible study class formed in 1870 by Charles Taze Russell in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The organization came to Russia in 1887. One of the first Russian Jehovah's Witnesses, Semyon Kozlitsky, was exiled from Moscow to Siberia in 1891. In spite of the persecution the organization endured, in 1956 there were 17,000 Jehovah's Witnesses in the Soviet Union. It was not until March 1991 that Jehovah's Witnesses were recognized in Russia, after passage of the law 'On Freedom of Religion.' Today there are over 500 communities with approximately 70,000 members active in Russia. The organization distributes copies of the 'Watchtower' (published in 125 languages, circulation 20 million) and 'Awake!' (in 81 languages, circulation 18 million)."

is expected to be completed this coming summer. The main task of the administrative center is organizing preaching activity and delivering literature to local congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses. Solnechnoye does not have its own printing facilities, so the Russian literature is printed in Germany, then delivered to St. Petersburg, from where it is distributed to the regions. Approximately 190 people work at the center. They work on a voluntary basis and although they do not receive salaries, they are provided with all of the basic necessities, such as a place to live, food, and clothing.

"The center's work is guided by a committee of 18 elders. Vasily Kalin has been the administrative center's coordinator since 1992. He was born in Ivano-Frankovsk. In 1951, at the age of four, he and his parents were exiled to Siberia (in 1949 and 1951 about 5,000 families were persecuted by the authorities for being Jehovah's Witnesses). He was baptized in 1965 and lived in the Irkutsk region. He worked as a foreman at a lumber processing plant.

"Apart from the administrative center volunteers there are also 200 volunteer construction workers from Russia, Finland, Sweden and Norway living in Solnechnoye: Most of them took time off from their regular employment. There are also plenty of Jehovah's Witnesses from Ukraine, Moldova, Germany, the United States, Finland, Poland and other countries. (Jehovah's Witnesses have no racial prejudices. In spite of the fact that Georgians, Abkhazians, Azerbaijanis and Armenians live side by side at the center, in four years there has not been a single conflict.)

"Most of the construction material and equipment was supplied by Scandinavian countries, and much was also provided free of charge by fellow believers. I was shown a bulldozer which a Swedish Jehovah's Witness brought to Solnechnoye in 1993. He worked on it the whole time he was there, and before going home he gave it to his brothers in the faith. The construction workers are housed in comfortable



***The Kingdom Hall where
the branch family in
Russia meets for Bible
study***

Witness families study and enjoy recreation together

boarding houses and cottages. Their day goes something like this: 7:00 a.m.—breakfast and prayers; they work from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. with an hour for lunch. On Saturdays they work until lunch time, and Sunday is a day of rest.

"They eat well and there is always fruit on the menu. The religion does not observe any fasts or strict food restrictions whatsoever. After work, many go to the sauna and then grab a beer and just sit around listening to music. There are no drunks among Jehovah's Witnesses, but alcohol is not forbidden either. Believers are allowed to drink moderate amounts of wine, cognac, vodka and so on. However, Jehovah's Witnesses do not smoke.



"Three times a week there are Bible-study classes, which are mostly attended by young people. However, it is not uncommon to find those who have been Jehovah's Witnesses for 30-40 years. Almost all of the older ones have spent time in prisons, labor camps and in exile. After the period of repression ended, many doctors, lawyers, engineers, teachers, businessmen, and students joined the ranks of Jehovah's Witnesses.

"The congregations try to preserve an atmosphere of equality among their members. For example, even the coordinator of the administrative center washes dishes in the evening when it is his turn. Jehovah's Witnesses address one another in an informal manner and will also add 'brother' or 'sister' when calling someone by their name.



"When a Jehovah's Witness violates the Bible's teachings and refuses to repent, he is subjected to the most serious form of punishment—he is expelled. The person can still attend meetings, but he is no longer greeted by his fellow believers. A less severe measure would be a reproof.



"I spent a long time observing Jehovah's Witnesses trying to figure out what it is that brought so many different people to this religious organization. With all of the differences in their personalities, levels of education and personal likes and dislikes, [Jehovah's Witnesses do not share in worship with] religions that compromise with the sinful world. They feel uncomfortable in places where [people] must blindly believe in authority, where there is room for mysticism, where the people are divided into the hierarchy and the obedient masses.

"Jehovah's Witnesses are distinguished by their steadfast belief in living according to the Bible. They try to substantiate their every move with this or that Biblical principle, or by citing a passage from the Old or New Testament. Jehovah's Witnesses believe that the Bible and only the Bible contains the answers to all questions. To Jehovah's Witnesses, the Bible is the constitution, the civil code and the highest expression of truth.

"For this reason Jehovah's Witnesses are known throughout the world as impeccably law-abiding people and particularly for their scrupulous attitude toward paying taxes. The tax in-

spection office regularly checks on them and is amazed each time to find no violations whatsoever. Of course, Jehovah's Witnesses could, like many others, try to find a reason not to pay taxes, but the Bible says that one must be honest in paying taxes, and for Jehovah's Witnesses this is the last word.

"However, their uncompromising attitude toward the Bible is often the source of some serious clashes between Jehovah's Witnesses and the government. Their absolutely apolitical stand is a major bone of contention, and it manifests itself in their refusal to serve in the army.

"Jehovah's Witnesses literally interpret Jesus' words about how his disciples and his kingdom are no part of this world, and for this reason they refuse to participate in politics and war, no matter where and for what reason it is being waged. Because Jehovah's Witnesses refused to cry out 'Heil Hitler' and serve in Hitler's army, many thousands of believers were sent to Nazi concentration camps, and thousands died. Each German Jehovah's Witness who paid with his life for refusing to take part in the aggression against the Soviet Union, is regarded by Russians as a person who committed a highly moral act. At the same time, how-



They share Bible knowledge with others

ever, many Russians are not inclined to feel compassion for those [Russian] Jehovah's Witnesses who were executed for refusing to take up arms and take part in World War II, or who were condemned for refusing to serve in the army during times of peace. But in both cases Jehovah's Witnesses were acting according to their religious beliefs and not political convictions.

"Not long ago a similar problem arose in Japan, where some students who were Jehovah's Witnesses refused to study martial arts and ran the risk of being expelled from the university. In 1996 Japan's Supreme Court passed a ruling supporting the rights of these students and allowed them to take alternative classes.



"What is it about Jehovah's Witnesses that astounds modern thinkers? Above all it is their persistent preaching that the end of the world is upon us (they conduct missionary work on the streets and from door-to-door). Lately elders have advised preachers not to place so much emphasis on the 'end of the world' and the lamentable fate that will befall sinners, but rather that they explain to listeners that Jehovah is offering them the opportunity to have 'eternal life in paradise on earth.'

"Another sore spot is the negative attitude of Jehovah's Witnesses toward inter-religious contact, and their denial of ecumenism. They believe that the Christian world has betrayed God and the Bible, and that all other religions are a disastrous mistake. Jehovah's Witnesses compare these religions to the 'harlot of Babylon,' and maintain that the same fate will befall them. A recent issue of 'Awake!' states that the end is near for various religions, and that the only religion that will remain is the one being preached by Jehovah's Witnesses.

"Incidentally, Jehovah's Witnesses acknowledge each person's right to freedom of conscience.



"A number of countries have already expressed concern about whether or not the teachings of Jehovah's Witnesses are a threat to society. The Supreme Court of the state of Connecticut, United States (1979) and New South Wales, Australia (1972), the Provincial Court of British Columbia, Canada (1986) and other courts have declared that there is no evidence that Jehovah's Witnesses are a social threat, or that they are a threat to people's health or emotional state. The European Human Rights Court (1993) defended Jehovah's Witnesses right to freedom of religion, which was limited in Greece and Austria. Today Jehovah's Witnesses experience persecution in 25 countries . . .

"Jehovah's Witnesses can be regarded as an example to their fellow citizens for their devotion to Biblical truth and their willingness to stand up for their beliefs so selflessly. But the question arises: Is our society prepared to provide constitutional guarantees of freedom of conscience to organizations that assert their Biblical approach to all aspects of life in such a radical and uncompromising manner?"

In this last sentence, Mr. Ivanenko raised an important question. In the first century, the apostle Paul, chosen directly by Christ to serve as his representative, suffered unjust "prison bonds." Thus, Paul wrote to fellow believers about his efforts in "the defending and legally establishing of the good news."—Philippians 1:7; Acts 9:3-16.

Jehovah's Witnesses today welcome all to examine their activities closely, as did Mr. Ivanenko. We are confident that if people do, they will find that the negative reports about the Witnesses are untrue, just as such reports about early Christians were also untrue. Outstandingly, the Witnesses obey the "new commandment" that Jesus gave his disciples: "Love one another; just as I have loved you."—John 13:34, 35.

WATCHING THE WORLD

Dying Young

Compared with children in 25 other industrialized countries, children in the United States are 12 times as likely to die by gunfire, 5 times as likely to be victims of homicide, and twice as likely to commit suicide, reports *The Dallas Morning News*. "We were expecting the U.S. would have higher rates, but we were surprised by the magnitude of difference," says Etienne Krug, coordinator of the report for the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta, Georgia. Among the factors associated with violent death among children are drugs, poverty, broken families, and limited opportunities for education.

Foodborne Infections

Increased consumer demand for "a variety of fresh produce year-round" coupled with "a global market that can move products around the world overnight" is contributing to the emergence of new foodborne illnesses in the United States, reports *JAMA (The Journal of the American Medical Association)*. Based on studies conducted over the past ten years, scientists estimate that foodborne microbes "sicken from 6.5 million to 81 million people and cause some 9000 deaths in the United States annually." Some experts also believe that increased consumption of organically grown foods (foods fertilized with animal manure) may contribute to the problem. According to the *JAMA* report, "*E. coli* can survive in cow manure for 70 days and can multiply in foods grown with ma-

nure, unless heat or additives such as salt or preservatives are used to kill the microbes."

"Holy" Monkeys—A Nuisance

Rhesus monkeys have lived in Vrindavan, India, for as long as anyone can remember, says primatologist Iqbal Malik. The monkeys are considered sacred by many and have been free to roam the Hindu holy city without fear of capture—until now, that is. According to *New Scientist* magazine, the rhesus population has risen sharply there in recent years because the number of pilgrims feeding them has increased. Feeding the monkeys is thought to bring prosperity. Over the years,



however, the monkeys have become almost totally dependent on handouts because there is very little greenery. "They have begun to steal bags and enter houses to look for food." Residents have agreed to have as much as 60 percent of the monkey population captured and relocated to rural areas. Says Malik: "The gods have become pests."

Tight Fit?

Even though the bones of our feet stop growing in late adolescence, our feet change throughout our lives. Neil Koven, president of the Canadian Podiatric

Medicine Association, says: "As we age, our feet tend to flatten a bit and splay so they lengthen and widen. It's because our ligaments become a little bit more loose or lax." Footwear experts estimate that up to one half of adults wear wrong-size shoes—width size being the most common problem—which contribute to corns, calluses, bunions, and toe deformities. Are your shoes too tight? "Stand on a piece of paper in your bare feet and trace around both feet. Then place your shoes on top of the paper and draw around them. By comparing the outlines, you'll be able to see how much you are funneling your feet into your shoes," says *The Toronto Star* newspaper. For the best possible fit, get your feet measured each time you buy shoes, and make your purchase in the afternoon or evening after being active on your feet.

Hunting "Unknown Enemies"

In 1997, allergies or hay fever began two months earlier than usual for people living in Rome, Italy, says *Corriere della Sera*. The early pollen assault is thought by one allergist to have been caused by "the general increase in the planet's average temperature, which has noticeably reduced winter's duration." The newspaper notes that "the fine days have brought unknown pollens, which experts in the field are unable to counter." The "hunt for the unknown cause" has thus already begun, but in the meantime, "patients are suffering from allergies, the causes of which cannot be determined."

Wafer Watchers

St. Charles Catholic Church in Picayune, Mississippi, has begun posting guards to make sure nobody walks out without swallowing the Communion wafer. This step was taken following a number of instances in which people walked out of church with the wafer, or Host, which Catholics consider to be sacred. According to *The Dallas Morning News*, clergyman John Noone claims that "Satan worshipers want to get their hands on the host" in order to "desecrate" it. The Communion guards' job is to watch parishioners and see if they actually swallow. If they don't, the churchgoers are politely asked either to consume the Host or to give it back.

Video Flashback

According to a statement published in *Pediatrics* magazine, "a handful of experimental studies indicate that music videos may have a significant behavioral impact by desensitizing viewers to violence and by making teenagers more likely to approve of premarital sex." Of greatest concern to parents are the lyrics in heavy metal and gangsta rap. "For a small subgroup of teenagers, music preference may be highly significant. Numerous studies indicate that a preference for heavy metal music may be a significant marker for alienation, substance abuse, psychiatric disorders, suicide risk, sex-role stereotyping, or risk-taking behaviors during adolescence." The report, which was compiled by eight medical doctors between 1995 and 1996, says: "If viewers hear a song after having seen the video version, they im-

mediately 'flash back' to the visual imagery in the video."

Elephant-Dung Paper

When neighbors observed Mike Bugara boiling pots of elephant dung in his yard, understandably they were quite worried. Some thought he was practicing witchcraft, but, in reality, he was making paper. Mr. Bugara first made paper



from banana, maize, and eucalyptus leaves. But plentiful supplies of high-fiber dung from Kenya's elephant population got the ardent conservationist wondering about using it to make paper. He decided that it would be a good way to raise "people's awareness about the value of keeping the species alive," reports *New Scientist* magazine. Now his elephant-dung paper is being used for invitation cards for the Kenya Wildlife Service's 50th anniversary this year.

Eating Rituals

The TV is the "focal point of much modern ritual behavior," says *The New York Times*. One example given is the practice of eating while watching television—now a ritual in countries around the world. In Mexico, for instance, many families eat their supper while watching soap operas. A recent survey in France revealed that "62 percent of meals are eaten with the TV on." In China, viewers

enjoy special TV events while munching on roasted watermelon seeds. These black seeds are also popular among TV viewers in Israel, along with sunflower seeds and pistachios. TV snacks in the Philippines include grilled chicken feet, pigs' ears, and skewered chicken intestines. A favorite snack is balut—"unhatched duck embryos boiled and eaten from the shell with a sprinkling of rock salt," says the *Times*.

Cost-Free Cholera Prevention

Scientists believe that they have found a cost-free method of preventing cholera—filtering drinking water through saris! Researchers at the University of Maryland, in the United States, and the International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, in Dacca, Bangladesh, found that cholera-producing bacteria inhabit the gut of copepods, planktonlike crustaceans that live in water. By pouring water through four layers of sari material, more than 99 percent of the cholera bacteria can be removed. The sari can then be decontaminated by exposing it to two hours of direct sunlight, or, during the monsoon season, by treating it with cheap disinfectant. London's newspaper *The Independent* reports that field trials will begin this year, when people who live in affected areas will be taught how to implement the procedure.

America's Love of Guns

"Four in 10 American adults live in households with guns, and those homes have an average of two firearms each, according to a national poll," reports New York's *Daily News*. "In the poll, 25% said they had a pistol, 27% a shotgun and 29% a rifle." Many households have more than one type of gun.

FROM OUR READERS

Hostages I am a prisoner with two more years to go on my sentence. Twice I read the article "We Were Hostages During a Prison Uprising." (November 8, 1996) Each time, it brought tears of joy to my eyes and a lump to my throat. I always look forward to the visits of Jehovah's Witnesses to this prison. They are so refreshing!

J. K., United States

I've never written to you about an article before, but the article about the hostages was very faith strengthening. It gave me renewed assurance that Jehovah does strengthen his people when they are in distress.

K. D., United States

Guidance I really enjoyed the article "The Bible's Viewpoint: Whose Guidance Can You Trust?" (November 8, 1996) It was very comforting and encouraging to me. Like so many others, I have been sorely disappointed in the past when those I leaned on for guidance let me down. The illustration of a child holding his father's hand just brought tears to my eyes. It is so heartwarming to know that at Isaiah 41:13, Jehovah says he will 'hold the hand' of his people.

M. S., United States

I am 17 years old and have been having a lot of problems lately. A friend told me to pray and read something spiritual. After reading the article "Whose Guidance Can You Trust?" I decided not to give up hope but to grasp my heavenly Father's hand even tighter!

C. G., United States

Sign Language Many thanks for the article "To Reach My Child, I Learned Another Language." (November 8, 1996) I am

a single mother with a deaf son who is now 24 years of age. So I know from personal experience what Cindy Adams has been through, and I have great respect for what she has achieved.

H. B., Germany

The article moved me to begin learning sign language so that I can share the Bible's message with deaf ones and also communicate with brothers in the congregation who are hearing-impaired.

B. L., Venezuela

I studied the Bible with a deaf teenage girl. We learned a lot from each other, despite the fact that both of us have only a basic knowledge of sign language. Reading of Cindy Adams' determination to learn the language for the sake of her son encouraged me to improve my skills in this beautiful language so that I can share the Bible's good news with deaf people in my community.

S. T., St. Martin, Netherlands Antilles

I too have a hearing-impaired child, and we chose the oral method of communication. This method focuses on speech development and lipreading. It has turned out to be a good choice for my son. In the beginning he got little benefit from the congregation meetings. But now he is able to follow along well as I and others oral interpret for him. He gives talks on the Theocratic Ministry School and is an unbaptized publisher. The many years of work have paid off. Our experience shows that either American Sign Language or the oral method can be beneficial as long as the parents and local congregation work hard to encourage the child and communicate with him.

M. T., United States

AFTER World War II, a power struggle arose between Western democratic capitalist countries and the Eastern Communist Soviet bloc. Each bloc developed its own security organization: the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in the

West and the Warsaw Pact in the East.

By 1975 the Cold War had thawed enough for 35 States, including the United States and Russia, to sign what came to be called the Helsinki Agreement. The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) was born. It was a multilateral forum for dialogue and negotiation between the two blocs.

At the Budapest Summit in 1994, the CSCE changed its name to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Today, it is composed of 54 participating States, including the United States, Canada, and all the countries of the former Soviet Union.

Its Objective

The objective of the member nations of the OSCE is to guarantee the security of Europe as well as to foster the implementation of human rights, disarmament, dem-

OSCE

What Is It? Will It Succeed?

By *Awake!* correspondent
in Portugal

ocratic freedoms and the management of regional conflict.

A summit meeting of the OSCE was held in Lisbon, Portugal, on December 2-3, 1996. At first, attention was focused on NATO, since several NATO members, including the United States, are in fa-

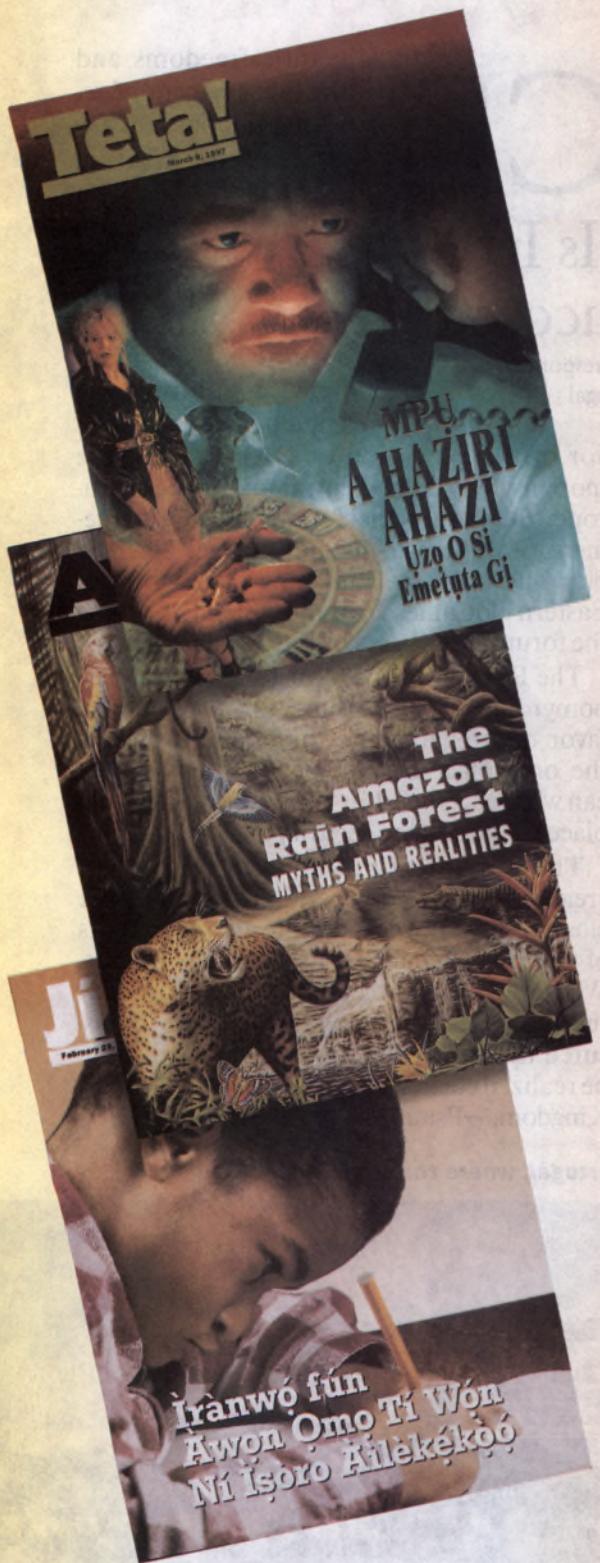
vor of the expansion of NATO to include more nations from Central and Eastern Europe. But rather than support the enlargement of NATO to include former Eastern bloc allies, Russia and some of her former Eastern bloc allies want the OSCE to become the forum for matters of European security.

The Russian prime minister, Viktor Chernomyrdin, said at the meeting: "We are in favor of strengthening the OSCE, which is the only place in Europe where all States can work together. It is the best international place for discussing security and defense."

The radiant afternoon sun seemed to create a climate of general optimism at the close of the summit, despite the comments of the press regarding its nebulous results. Whatever success or failure the OSCE may realize, peace lovers everywhere can be assured that true peace and security will soon be realized earth wide under the rule of God's Kingdom.—Psalm 72:1, 7, 8.

The Cultural Center of Belém, in Lisbon, Portugal, where the conference was held





"A Treasure Trove of Knowledge"

A man who works with *THENEWS* magazine of Lagos, Nigeria, wrote the branch office of Jehovah's Witnesses in that country and described *Awake!* in the above terms. He explained:

"Each time I read a copy of *Awake!*, I have the urge to write you. But often, when I was on the threshold of writing the letter, another equally good, in fact better, copy of the magazine would arrive and entrance me all over again.

"The bottom line of all this? *Awake!* is, to my mind, a treasure trove of knowledge. I have rarely seen a publication so rich, so beautiful, so balanced, and so skillfully packaged. It is an invaluable gift to mankind.

"From the bottom of my heart, I wish to say this: Thank you a million times. Keep up the wonderful work."