Collier's

NOVEMBER 2, 1946
TEN CENTS

THE VICTOR
—a story of betrayal



FORGOTTEN BOY

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

FOOTBALL

JEHOVAH'S TRAVELING SALESMEN

BY BILL DAVIDSON

Sometime, between now and 1984, Gabriel's trumpet will blow reveille for Judgment Day. That's the firm belief of some three million of your world neighbors, Jehovah's Witnesses, the amazing sect whose members refuse to vote, do jury duty, salute the flag

IN THE otherwise peaceful city of Cleveland, Ohio, August, 1946, is now remembered as The Month of the Great One-Two Punch. The second half of this punch was delivered late in August when the Ohio American Legion convention descended on the city with its horn-blowing, cab-stealing, water-squirting and other inanities. The first half was considerably more awesome. For from August 4th to August 11th, tens of thousands of members of the doorbell-ringing, tract-peddling religious organization known as Jehovah's Witnesses poured into town from all over the world. They came by jalopy, bus, boat, train and plane for their first international convention since before the war.

On the afternoon of August 4th, at the Municipal Stadium, the Cleveland Indians were playing a Sunday-afternoon double-header with the New York Yankees. The Jehovah's Witnesses were sprawled around outside the stadium waiting for the game to end so they could start their convention. They were getting restive.

A single game was all right, but a double-header was enough to try even the most canonical of Witness patiences. Suddenly, however, the skies grew dark and a thundershower burst on the stadium. The second game was postponed and the Witnesses filed into the stadium. Strangely enough, ten minutes later the sun was shining again.

Another miracle was that in a city suffering from an acute housing and food shortage, the Jehovah's Witnesses were able to find shelter and meals for a population totaling more than that of Cleveland Heights, the city's largest suburb. Before the convention opened, an advance guard of Jehovah's Witnesses swept through the town, block by block and house by house, until more than 60,000 rooms had been obtained. Then they took over an old government trailer camp in the western outskirts and began to construct their own tent and trailer city, complete with water, electricity, sewers and latrines.

By the time the convention had opened, they had set up an incredibly efficient cafeteria in Cleveland's huge underground Exposition Hall, in which 50,000 Witnesses were served two meals a day. When food ran short in Cleveland, they brought in their own from out of town—by the carload. They had their own cooks, carpenters, bakers, plumbers, policemen, firemen, lawyers, tinsmiths, doctors, nurses, auto mechanics and barbers—all Jehovah's Witnesses and all lending their $10 to $50 a day talents to the faithful for nothing.

The Witnesses divided greater Cleveland into 11,733 districts, organized platoons and squads for each district and covered every single doorstep and street corner in the city with Witness literature. When the convention was in its last day, they set up an assembly-line bathhouse arrangement at Edgewater Amusement Park on Lake Erie, and mass-baptized 2,602 new converts. This service was complete with nurses to watch babies, special receptacles for the temporary storing of false teeth, and bottles of port wine as an antidote for the chilling waters of the lake.

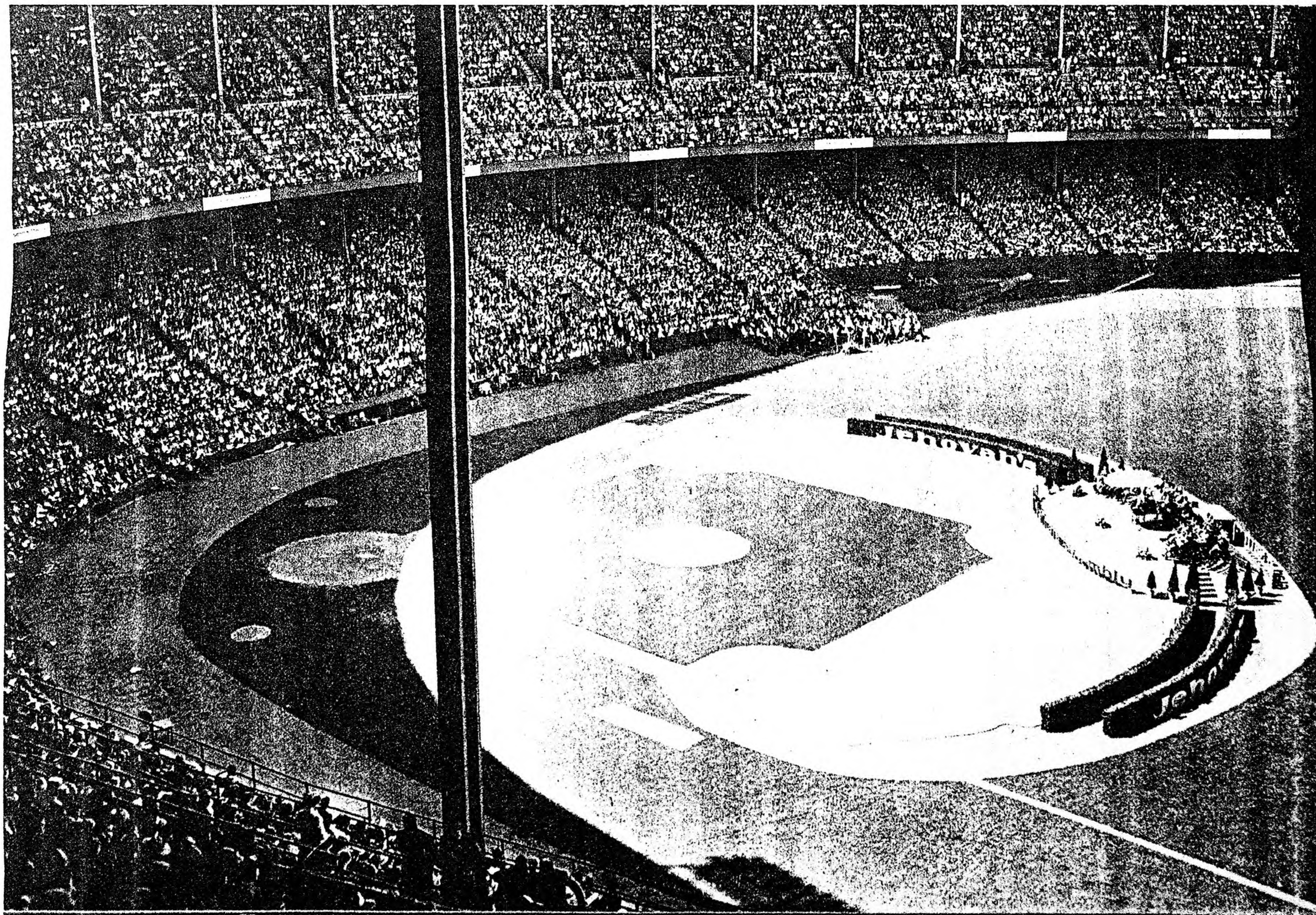
When the convention ended, the city gave the Witnesses a month to clean up their area. The Witnesses were gone inside of three days.

All these, however, are minor miracles. The most wondrous things of all were (a) the attendance figures—*83,000 delegates by actual count*, probably the largest religious conclave in the history of the United States; and (b) the fact that this convention was held at all.

To refresh your memory, the Jehovah's Witnesses' record of persecution for their religious beliefs was unequaled during the war and the years immediately preceding the war. Because they believe that they owe allegiance to the Kingdom of God first, and the governments of men second, they refuse to vote, serve on juries or perform any other of the normal duties of citizenship.

When a baseball game was rained out in the Cleveland Municipal Stadium some 83,000 delegates poured into the stands at the convention of Jehovah's Witnesses

CLEVELAND PLAIN DEALER



Because the Bible to them supersedes any man-made laws, and because the Bible says, "Thou shalt not make unto thee a graven image . . . thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them," they refuse to salute any flag, raise their arm in any *heil* or their fist in any symbol of the class struggle.

As a result the Jehovah's Witnesses were accused of being pro-Axis in the Allied countries, and of being pro-Allied in the Axis countries. In Germany, they were among the first to be thrown into Hitler's concentration camps in 1933, and in 1945, when U.S. troops found them in Dachau and Oranienburg, still refusing to *heil,* they were in pitiful physical and mental shape.

In Canada, the organization was outlawed completely. In England, some of its leaders were thrown into jail. In South Africa nearly the entire membership was sent to labor camps in southern Rhodesia. In Finland, the Witnesses first underwent German concentration camps and starvation diets, and then a Russian hostility which forced them to congregate by candlelight in underground meeting halls.

The United States, shamefully enough, was no better than any of these. On June 29, 1941, for instance, Charles Jones, C. A. Cecil and eight other young Jehovah's Witnesses from Mt. Lookout, West Virginia, drove to near-by Richwood, West Virginia, "to distribute literature of the said religious sect." Three of the Witnesses stopped off at the Town Hall to inform the mayor of the nature of their work and to request police protection.

Instead of the mayor, they were met by an angry reception committee from the Richwood American Legion Post, among whom were Martin L. Catlette, a deputy sheriff, and Bert Stewart, the chief of police. A mob of 1,500 persons gathered outside the Town Hall, in the meantime, and soon other members of the American Legion post, headed by one Louis Baber, had rounded up the other seven Witnesses and brought them to the mayor's office.

Catlette then took charge. He produced several quart bottles of castor oil, and in the best Mussolini tradition, forced the Witnesses to drink eight ounces each. One Witness, who *(Continued on page 72)*



CLEVELAND PRESS

There was no racial problem at the immersion ceremonies in the waters of Lake Erie during the convention

Crowded into jail cells at Monessen, Pa., are dozens of Witnesses who protested the closing of a sect school

INTERNATIONAL

Varied dunking uniforms appear in the mass baptism

CLEVELAND PRESS





Stuffy Nose of Head Cold



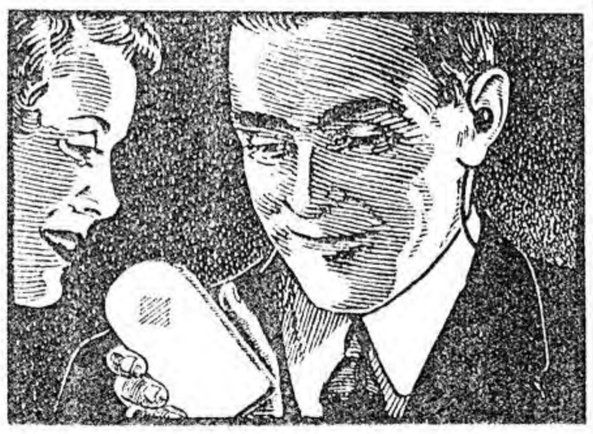
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JEHOVAH'S TRAVELING SALESMEN

Continued from page 13

protested, was made to drink a double dose. While the Witnesses squirmed in agony, they were then tied to a long rope and marched by the hoodlum mob to the Richwood post office. In a touchingly patriotic ceremony, Catlette thereupon recited the preamble to the American Legion Constitution, and everybody present was forced to salute the flag. An hour or so later, as the resultant circuit court decision goes on to say, "the Jehovah's Witnesses were marched through the streets of the town of Richwood and out of its corporate limits, yet attached to the rope."

This case was unique in that it was the only one in which the perpetrators were punished. Catlette was haled before a federal court and sentenced to twelve months in jail plus a thousand-dollar fine, while Stewart, the chief of police, was fined $250. In hundreds of other cases, however, Witnesses attempting to preach their Gospel were beaten, shot, tarred and feathered; their literature and meeting places burned; their children expelled from public schools; and approximately 4,000 of them sent to prison because they claimed they were ministers of the Gospel and therefore not subject to Selective Service.

A reporter of the Little Rock, Arkansas, Arkansas Gazette watched a mob attack a Jehovah's Witness meeting hall and mercilessly beat men and women senseless with blackjacks and screw drivers. In Imperial, Pennsylvania, on July 11, 1942, the volunteer fire department clubbed seven Witnesses nearly to death, and were loading the limp bodies into the fire truck for a lynching party, when the Pennsylvania state police came along to break up the festivities.

In West Jefferson, Ohio, a Mayor Stone turned several Witnesses over to a mob and said, according to an affidavit filed with the United States Justice Department, "We don't care for the Supreme Court, and the Constitution don't apply here."

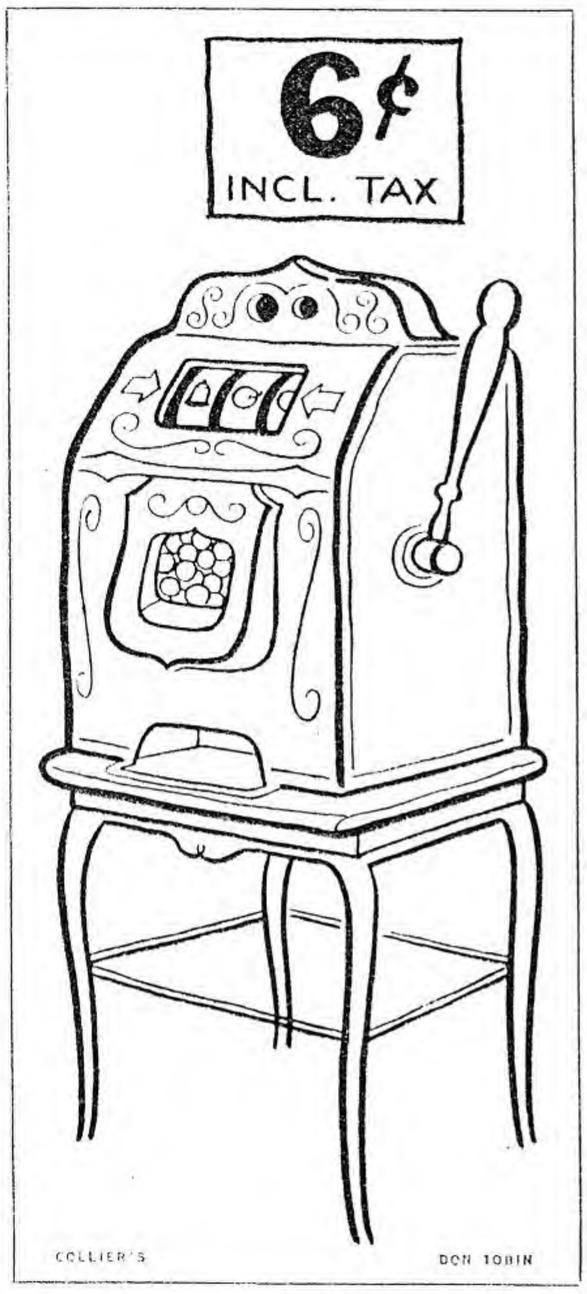
Methods Compared to Hitler's

This nation-wide violence became so widespread that on June 2, 1941, Attorney General Francis Biddle had to excoriate state and county officials all over the country. "Where these officials should have been active in preventing this cruel persecution," he said, "they have in many instances permitted it to occur and in some have been the leaders of the mob. And this betrayal of the rights of citizens," the Attorney General went on, "is done in the name of patriotism, and failure to salute the flag is made an excuse to desecrate the principles of which the flag is a symbol. Hitler's methods cannot preserve our Democracy."

This world-wide persecution makes the recent Jehovah's Witnesses' Cleveland convention a remarkable event. Instead of being wiped out by the persecution, the Witnesses have thrived on it. Where 25,000 delegates turned up for the last prewar convention in Detroit in 1940, more than 83,000 attended the conclave in Cleveland. The 1940 American membership was estimated at a rather insignificant 44,000 and the world membership at well under a million. Today, the unofficial figures (no official membership records are released by the organization) are something like 500,000 in the United States and nearly three million all over the world.

The Jehovah's Witnesses' doctrines are basically very simple. Like most doctrines, they become complicated in their interpretation and application. The name of the society (they never refer to themselves as a sect) comes from the 43d Chapter of Isaiah which says, "Ye are my witnesses, saith Jehovah, and my servant whom I have chosen . . . therefore ye are my witnesses . . . that I am God."

The Witnesses therefore are down-to-earth fundamentalists, which means that they believe and follow only what is written in the Bible. For this reason, they go from door to door selling their pamphlets and playing their religious phonograph records, since this house-to-house method is the only one Christ and His disciples originally used to spread Christianity (Acts 20:20 and Luke 8:1). For this reason, too, they are against all organized religion, since they can find no justification for a church or a hierarchy of any kind in the Bible. One of their chief slogans is "Religion is a racket" and they fire it indiscriminately



at the Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, Hindu and Moslem churches alike.

Their most persistent target for many years has been the Roman Catholic Church. The Witnesses always hasten to point out that they have nothing against individual Catholics as such, but only the Roman Catholic hierarchy. For a long time, the Catholic Church bitterly opposed the Witnesses from the pulpit. Now, however, the official policy is to ignore them—presumably the old psychology that if you leave a buzzing fly alone, eventually it will go away.

The Jehovah's Witnesses' concept of history explains many of their inflammatory practices. They believe that shortly after the Biblical Creation, Satan and God began the struggle for men's bodies and souls. At first, the tussle was pretty evenly matched, with Abel "witnessing" for Jehovah, and the Devil in Cain's corner. But men being what they are, the evil ones became more and more in the majority until God finally had to start over again with the Flood and Noah. This didn't stop the Devil, however, and he immediately bounced back with Nimrod—the father of all earthly governments, which like religion, the Witnesses classify as demonism and pure instruments of Satan.

The Witnesses prophesy that suddenly, on some day between now and the year 1984, Gabriel's trumpet will blow. Christ's voice then will announce in loud tones that the final end is at hand, and God's hosts will descend from the heavens to fight the Battle of Armageddon with Satan's overwhelming numbers. God, of course, will win this battle and the "Great Theocracy" will then be established on earth. God will rule instead of men, and the only human beings left to enjoy this rule will be Jehovah's Witnesses.

The Witnesses feel that the atomic bomb may be the instrument with which Satan's hosts will be eliminated from the earth.

It is their exclusive claim to real estate in the impending Kingdom of God that gets the Witnesses into so much trouble. They consider that they are the sheep and all others in the world are the goats. They believe that their mission in this period just before Armageddon is to do as much "goat-gathering" as possible, so that the population of the next world will not be too sparse for comfort. That's why they devote endless hours every week, ringing doorbells, politely playing phonographs, and handing out tracts on street corners.

Goats—Benevolent and Hopeless

For purposes of identification, all w goats are split up into a Jehovah's Witness caste system. There are (a) men-of-good-will goats and (b) goats who are considered hopeless. The men-of-good-will goats are those whom the Witnesses are instructed to seek out in juries and on the bench, when they are haled into court. They also are those who show the slightest friendliness or interest when the phonograph gospel plays on the front porch. Such goats are noted in a little book for a return visit. The utterly hopeless goats include priests, newspapermen, general cynics, and the strong-arm men who bounce the Witnesses around.

The Witnesses do not believe in purgatory, paradise, or the immortality of the soul. When you are dead, they say, you're dead. But on the close-at-hand Day of Judgment, all of the faithful Witnesses from Abel on down will be resurrected to enjoy the fruits of the Kingdom of God.

That's what the Witnesses' late leader, Joseph F. Rutherford, meant when he coined their most popular slogan, "Millions now living will never die."

This doctrine, from the point of view of popular appeal, is a sort of spiritual Communism. Like the Communists, they hold out a picture of better things to come to the ragged, underprivileged peoples of the earth.

Roger Baldwin, distinguished head of the American Civil Liberties Union, developed this analogy. Baldwin, with the aid of some of America's best-known lawyers, has helped defend the Witnesses in court since the last war and probably knows them better than any other outsider.

"Together with the Communists," says Baldwin, "the Jehovah's Witnesses are a gauge of the world's despair and disgust with civilization. The Communists promise despairing people immediate reform and privileges here on earth. The Witnesses promise them immediate reform and privileges in a Next World which is just around the corner. That's what draws in the converts."

There are other analogies to Communism as you go down the line. In order to advance their doctrine, the Jehovah's Witnesses own and run radio station

WBBR in Brooklyn, and turn out more than 1,500,000 books, 11,000,000 pamphlets, 12,000,000 magazines and 150,000 phonograph records every year, all in 88 languages.

During the period from 1919 to 1946, the Witnesses claim they printed and sold the incredible total of 468,000,000 books and pamphlets.

All this printing, recording and broadcasting is done in a modern eight-story factory in Brooklyn. This plant is staffed by every conceivable type of technician and executive, all of whom are Jehovah's Witnesses and all of whom live in a seven-story modern apartment building owned by the society on a pleasant Brooklyn street overlooking New York's East River.

These "headquarters servants"—and there are nearly a thousand of them—work for exactly ten dollars a month, which is labeled "expense money." All their other needs are filled by other Witnesses living at the headquarters. They have their own chambermaids, their own dining room, their own laundry, their own tailor shop. Their food is produced by Jehovah's Witnesses working on farms owned by the society and scattered around the country. There are also the Gilead Bible School of advanced training for full-time ministers at South Lansing, New York, and the 39 branch offices of the society in other countries all over the world.

Food and Expenses—$5

Missionaries to lands where there are no branch offices are given five dollars a month for food and other expenses. They are allowed to keep the "contributions" they receive for the literature they hand out.

Jehovah's Witnesses have no churches. Their local societies are called "company organizations" and their meeting places, whether an elaborate ex-hospital as in Little Rock, Arkansas, or a grass hut in the Mysore jungle, are called "kingdom halls." On Sunday nights, and sometimes on weekdays, all the "servants" gather to discuss a Bible lesson, as handed down to them by the Brooklyn headquarters, and to sing their own hymns.

In the daytime, the "publishers," as they are called, go around from house to house "witnessing" or "exchanging for a contribution" the pamphlets and books which they have already bought from the society at five cents per pamphlet and twenty cents per book. The ideal work week for "publishers" according to the society is "five days devoted to God, and one day to secular work."

A fairly typical Witness is thirty-nine-year-old Michael Kusek, a Schenectady, New York, farmer who was born in Poland and came to this country at the age of five. For years, Kusek was a pious Roman Catholic. His family was studded with priests and nuns, and he himself served as a regular choirboy in his parish church. Then one day he happened to pick up a copy of the Watchtower, the Jehovah's Witnesses' weekly magazine. That's when the fireworks started. Kusek got into one religious argument after another with his mother, and finally he had to leave his home and his church. He met and married a Glens Falls, New York, music teacher who came from a solid Presbyterian family.

For years, Kusek's wife, Joyce, tried to get her husband to forget his fanatic devotion to Biblical prophecy. She took him to see minister friends of hers. She sat in on all of Kusek's arguments with the ministers, and as a result, she seems to have become converted herself. The Kuseks thereupon brought up their two sons to be Jehovah's Witnesses like themselves.

For a while, the Kuseks continued to live as they did before, on their comfortable 40-cow dairy farm. Witnessing was an afternoon and evening side line. But suddenly, in 1941, Kusek deliberately sold all but a few of his cows, and now the family devotes nearly all of its waking hours to the cause. Kusek grows his own vegetables on his farm now, but that's all. The rest of the time he's at the local kingdom hall or out witnessing. He hires himself out to neighboring farmers for a few weeks each year and the family subsists on the few hundred dollars that brings in.

Kusek's once-prosperous farm is now a tourist camp for all passing Jehovah's Witnesses—for free. They set up housekeeping there, grow their own gardens, and stay as long as they like.

Of all the Witnesses I met, most were as poor or poorer than the Kuseks. When 83,000 of them descended on Cleveland in their jalopies and beat-up trucks, the inevitable comparison with an Okie migration was made. Moreover, Department of Justice figures indicate that less than one per cent of the group has had a college education while fifteen per cent have *less* than grammar schooling. Yet at the Cleveland convention, there were hundreds of well-dressed, beautiful girls, dozens of Witnesses in Cleveland's finest hotel suites, 100 doctors, 250 nurses, a Mrs. Dodd who left her 16-suite apartment house in London to fly to the convention by Clipper, and the senior engineer at a leading Middle West radio station. Mixed in with this heterogeneous mass was a goodly sprinkling of Negroes and hundreds of converted Jews.

Once a year, all of these conglomerate Witnesses (providing they have made a contribution of at least ten dollars) are allowed to vote for the board of directors, who in turn select the society's officers. No one is ever elected to the board of directors but the previous board of directors, or any newcomers the board of directors might designate. Only once was there a revolt on the board of directors, and those insurgent gentlemen were purged and excommunicated so fast that their personal belongings were out on the street before the meeting ended. There was a minor revolt of the rank and file at the Cleveland convention. A group of eight old-time pioneer Witnesses, led by fifty-nine-year-old Roy D. Goodrich, of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, a member since 1919, tried to get up on the floor and accuse the board of directors of hypocrisy and of "setting up a dictatorship to rule the Witnesses," and of "establishing the same sort of religious hierarchy as the Roman Catholic hierarchy they condemn."

Brother Goodrich and company were excommunicated by personal letter before the hour was out. They tried to plead their case by distributing handbills outside the stadium. The rebels were immediately surrounded by 200 Witnesses who deliberately cut the canvas bags of Watchtowers from the insurgents' shoulders—very much like the public stripping of buttons and insignia from the uniform of a disgraced and court-martialed French army officer.

The board of directors of Jehovah's Witnesses live in unpretentious suites at the Brooklyn headquarters, and eat in the barely furnished common dining hall with the headquarters servants. They hand down instructions and interpretations of the Bible to the Witnesses, and they are responsible for running the radio station, the printing of the millions of publications, the fifty-two branch offices in the United States and foreign countries, the society's missionaries in countries where offices are not yet established, the society's farms and the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead, where Witnesses are schooled for positions of command in the organization.

A Home for the Prophets

The board of directors also run a $75,000 mansion in San Diego, California, which was constructed during the regime of Judge Rutherford for the exclusive occupancy of King David, Moses, Samuel and the other prophets when they return to earth. This mansion is called Beth Sarim (the House of the Princes) and it is complete with Middle Eastern architecture and palm trees so that the prophets will feel completely at home. In the meantime, to prevent Beth Sarim from becoming moldy with disuse, the board of directors use it as their own winter vacation rest spot.

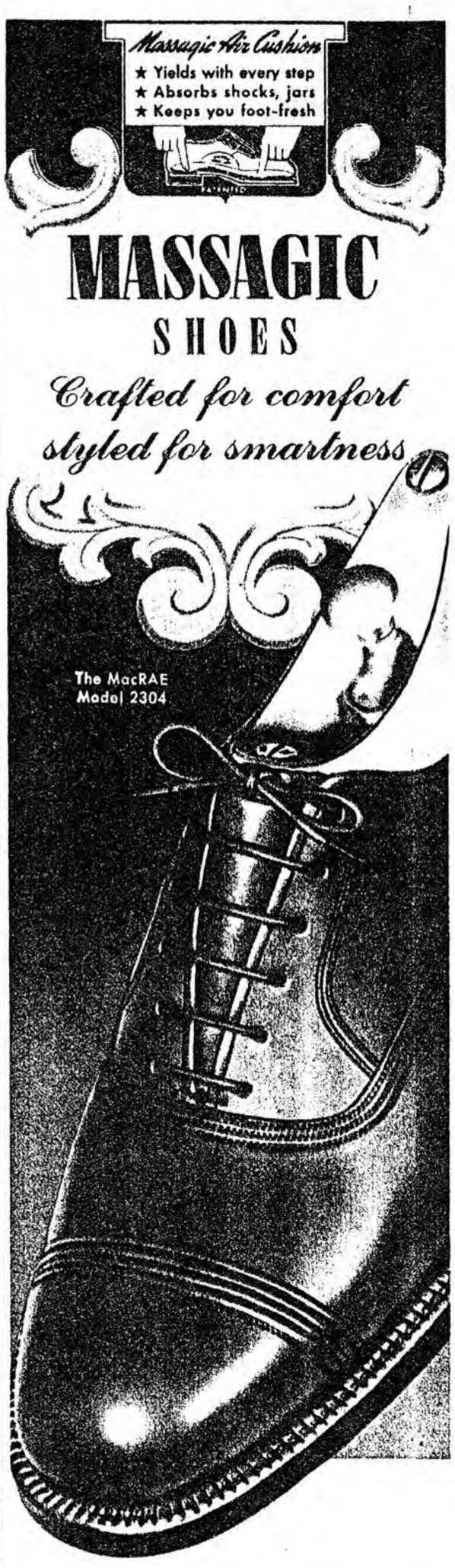
Because of outward signs like this, and because of the obviously huge income from the millions of publications every year, the board of directors have often been accused of using Jehovah's Witnesses as a personal racket. There is no evidence to support these charges. The leaders actually live in lower middle-class simplicity, and the first president of the society, Charles Taze Russell, left exactly $200 in his will when he died in 1916. He had been the owner of a chain of haberdashery stores and a very wealthy man at one time.

The same thing is true of Judge Joseph F. Rutherford, the second president. A few years ago, Roger Baldwin of the American Civil Liberties Union became one of the few men outside of the board of directors to get some official notion of the organization's finances. Baldwin is convinced that the million-dollar profit of that particular year was almost completely eaten up by foreign publication losses, administration expenses and the tremendous legal expenses necessary to



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defend the Witnesses in courtrooms.

Russell and Rutherford were the two outstanding figures in the history of Jehovah's Witnesses, which got under way in 1872, when Russell, then a fairly prosperous young Pittsburgh haberdasher—and a Presbyterian by religion—organized a Bible class in Allegheny, Pennsylvania, to "begin a thorough study of the Scriptures and come to a clearer understanding of many fundamental doctrines of Christianity which have been lost sight of since the days of organized religion, A.D. 325 and thereafter." From this obscure beginning developed Zion's Watchtower Tract Society, the corporation name of Jehovah's Witnesses.

Russell's personal interpretations of the Bible now have become Jehovah's Witness dogma. In addition, he organized the system of "witnessing" from door to door, the local Kingdom Hall and company organization setup, the Brooklyn headquarters from which traveling representatives went forth to keep the company organizations in line, and the Witnesses' foreign branches which still are officially known as the International Bible Students' Association.

When "Pastor" Russell djed suddenly in 1916, it looked for a while as if the organization would fall apart. But after just a few months of confusion, the mantle dropped onto the broad shoulders of "Judge" Joseph Franklin Rutherford, an obscure Missouri lawyer, who, after his conversion in 1909, had become the attorney for the organization.

Tall, portly, senatorial-looking, stentorian-voiced Rutherford gave the movement the personality it needed. Soon Russell was all but forgotten, and his followers, who had called themselves "Russellites," were expressly forbidden to use that term. Everything was done in the name of Judge Rutherford, the tracts were all his personal messages, the Watchtower became filled with his personal opinions and the newly acquired radio station WBBR spent 90 per cent of its broadcasting time propelling his booming voice into the metropolitan New York ether.

Like Russell, Rutherford quickly seized upon technological developments to advance his doctrine, and as early as 1927, the Judge had a coast-to-coast network of 53 stations to carry his basso profundo pronouncements to the goats. This network grew to the astonishing number of 403 stations in 1933.

But the Voice Wasn't Silenced

When protests from the clergy forced most of these stations to drop Rutherford's lectures, he embarked on a new project—phonograph records and sound trucks. Rutherford made portable phonographs and recordings of his lectures in the Brooklyn factory and sold them to the servants, to assist them in witnessing. The sound-truck equipment cost the disciples $140 each, the phonographs $10 and the recordings seventy cents. Thus a whole generation of Americans became familiar with the booming voice of Judge Rutherford on the front porch.

Rutherford first instituted the name, "Jehovah's Witnesses" in 1931. He also set the Witnesses' pattern of refusing to serve in the army of any government but God's, when he was sentenced to the Atlanta penitentiary for counseling draft evasion in World War I. Judge Rutherford died at Beth Sarim on January 8, 1942, after twenty-five years as president of the society.

When Rutherford died, the current president, quiet, colorless Nathan Homer Knorr was elected to fill his place. Knorr, who was converted to Jehovah's Witnesses when he was a schoolboy in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, came to the Brooklyn publishing plant as a downy-cheeked, eighteen-year-old shipping clerk in 1923, and rose to be general manager of the vast enterprise. He is *not* the new Great Personality. That distinction seems to belong to a fairly recent convert named Hayden C. Covington, an ex-San Antonio lawyer who now functions, as Rutherford once did, as the society's legal counsel.

Hayden Covington is a tall, drawling, handsome, wise-cracking, back-slapping Texan in a wide-brimmed felt hat, whom Roger Baldwin describes as one of the most resourceful lawyers in the country today. The thirty-five-year-old lawyer joined up in San Antonio and, because of his already glowing legal reputation there, he was immediately whisked to the Brooklyn headquarters to take over the legal department which Rutherford had dominated for so many years.

He soon had plenty to do. From 1941 to 1946 Covington personally handled over 4,200 Jehovah's Witness cases in the state and federal courts, 35 of them before the U.S. Supreme Court itself. Nearly all the higher court cases were a one-man Covington show. According to Roger Baldwin, Covington files brilliant briefs spiced with Scripture, conducts a rapid-fire defense of the Witnesses involved, and immediately takes off by train or plane for the next case which might be a thousand or so miles away. His schedule sometimes involves as many as six cases a week. He argues all the Supreme Court cases personally and he is famed as one of the few lawyers consistently able to sass Supreme Court justices and get away with it.

SHORT CUT

Mothers have been known to find
They often can improve the mind
Of children quicker if they spend
Some effort on the physical end.

—W. E. Farbstein

Because of his work in the courts these past five years, Covington has done much for the society. In 1942, for instance, three West Virginians, named Walter Barnette, Paul Stull and Lucy McClure, were threatened with prosecution by the state authorities if they did not force their children to salute the flag in school as required by state law. This was just another of the hundreds of flag-salute persecutions which had plagued the Witnesses, and in a world-publicized case, the Supreme Court had ruled against them. Hopeless as the case looked, Covington spotted an opening.

He knew that in that Supreme Court ruling, the decision had gone against the Witnesses by an overwhelming eight to one vote. But he knew that Justices Jackson, Black and Murphy had openly changed their minds and now felt that they had wrongfully oppressed a minority. That would close the eight to one down to five to four. Then Wiley Rutledge replaced James F. Byrnes on the bench, and because of Rutledge's past record as a judge, Covington knew he now had that vital vote. He immediately slammed through the Barnette case, as it is now known in history books.

The victory came even sooner than he expected. Circuit Court of Appeals Judge John F. Parker reversed the original Supreme Court eight to one decision and when the astounded school board appealed to the Supreme Court, positive of a reversal in their favor, the Supreme Court upheld Covington five to four just as he had figured. This was the final word on flag saluting. It is now illegal for any school board anywhere in the country to force children to do anything against their religious principles.

After many years of defeats on the question of distributing the Jehovah's Witness literature without interference from the local gendarmerie, Covington spotted the same sort of opening and settled another vital point once and for all. A Witness named Murdoch was arrested in Jeannette, Pennsylvania, for violating an ordinance against peddling religious pamphlets without a license.

In the most recent decision on this matter, the Supreme Court had upheld a similar ordinance in Opelika, Alabama, by a vote of five to four. But now Wiley Rutledge was on the bench and Covington knew that Justice Rutledge had vehemently ruled against just such an ordinance when he was a circuit court judge in Washington, D. C. Covington rushed the Murdoch case up through the federal courts until it hit the Supreme Court, and surely enough, he got the expected five to four decision in his favor. The court ruled that distributing tracts is as much a part of freedom of religion as going to church, and that closed the issue once and for all.

Other Rights Legally Upheld

Little by little Covington cleaned up the side issues. He got a Supreme Court decision upholding the right of the Witnesses to ring doorbells, another upholding their rights to "witness" in company towns, and another enabling them to distribute pamphlets on government property. In one case, he got several Witnesses reinstated to their jobs in a plate-glass factory in Pittsburgh, after their fellow workers had walked out because the Witnesses refused to salute the flag.

Most of Covington's cases involved the 4,000 or so Witnesses who went to prison because their draft boards refused to classify them as full-time ministers, which they insisted they were, and tried to send them into the Army instead. These Witnesses were a problem to the government because few of them would even go to conscientious objector camps. "We're not against war," they said. "We just want to keep on witnessing for Jehovah, which is our only function on this earth." Covington at least was able to get a decision making the draft board's classifications reviewable by the federal courts.

And with the help of 33 of America's leading clergymen (including Bishops McConnell, Hartman and Baker) who were lined up by the American Civil Liberties Union to back the plea, he also seems to have wrung paroles and maybe a general amnesty from President Truman for the thousands of Witnesses still in jail a year after V-J Day.

Covington has suffered just two defeats in all these cases. He was licked in the Sarah Prince case when the Supreme Court ruled that child labor laws superseded freedom of the press when the Witnesses sent a nine-year-old child onto a rainy Brockton, Massachusetts, street to peddle tracts. And in the Chaplinsky case, the Court ruled that it was *not* freedom of speech for one Walter Chaplinsky to inform a Rochester, New Hampshire, cop that he was a "damned racketeer and a damned Fascist and the whole government of Rochester are Fascists and agents of Fascists." Not even Covington could do anything about *that*.

In the entire Jehovah's Witness picture, however, the momentous court decisions are the important thing. They probably will be remembered long after Jehovah's Witnesses become extinct, which might very well happen if too many Armageddons fail to arrive on schedule. As Roger Baldwin put it, "By contesting in the courts every restriction on them, these Jehovah's Witnesses have rendered a great service to American liberties. They've won for you and me a degree of freedom we've never had before. In serving what they conceive to be the cause of God, they have served the cause of their fellow men, whom they abhor."

THE END



It's no good putting in anti-freeze if it's going to boil off or leak away! When the radiator isn't properly serviced for winter, *down* goes cooling efficiency and *up* goes engine temperature—even to the point of serious engine damage!

Be sure your car is *completely* ready for winter. See your service man today and insist on Warner products.

Here's what Warner Service does for the cooling system of your car:

Warner Radiator Cleaner *cleans it thoroughly*—stops overheating and "hot-spots." Warner Cooling System Protector *keeps it clean*—prevents rust and scale accumulations. Warner Liquid Solder *repairs leaks*—non-metallic, deposits tiny fibers to repair leaks anywhere in system.



WARNER-PATTERSON COMPANY

From the November 2, 1946 issue of Collier's magazine

Collier's is an American magazine, founded in 1888 by Peter Fenelon Collier, which went by the title Collier's Weekly during its early years. With the passage of decades, the title was shortened to Collier's. The magazine ceased publication with the January 4, 1957 issue and was revived in February 2012 (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Collier%27s_Weekly).

An abridged version of this article appeared in the January 1947 issue of Reader's Digest

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JEHOVAH'S TRAVELING SALESMEN

BY BILL DAVIDSON

From the November 2, 1946 issue of Collier's magazine

Sometime, between now and 1984, Gabriel's trumpet will blow reveille for Judgment Day. That's the firm belief of some three million of your world neighbors, Jehovah's Witnesses, the amazing sect whose members refuse to vote, do jury duty, salute the flag

IN THE otherwise peaceful city of Cleveland, Ohio, August, 1946, is now remembered as The Month of the Great One-Two Punch. The second half of this punch was delivered late in August when the Ohio American Legion convention descended on the city with its horn-blowing, cab-stealing, water-squirting and other inanities. The first half was considerably more awesome. For from August 4th to August 11th, tens of thousands of members of the doorbell-ringing, tract-peddling religious organization known as Jehovah's Witnesses poured into town from all over the world. They came by jalopy, bus, boat, train and plane for their first international convention since before the war.

On the afternoon of August 4th, at the Municipal Stadium. the Cleveland Indians were playing a Sunday-afternoon double-header with the New York Yankees. The Jehovah's Witnesses were sprawled around outside the stadium waiting for the game to end so they could start their convention. They were getting restive. A single game was all right, but a double-header was enough to try even the most canonical of Witness patience. Suddenly, however, the skies grew dark and a thundershower burst on the stadium. The second game was postponed and the Witnesses filed into the stadium. Strangely enough, ten minutes later the sun was shining again.

Another miracle was that in a city suffering from an acute housing and food shortage, the Jehovah's Witnesses were able to find shelter and meals for a population totaling more than that of Cleveland Heights, the city's largest suburb. Before the convention opened, an advance guard of Jehovah's Witnesses swept through the town, block by block and house by house, until more than 60,000 rooms had been obtained. Then they took over an old government trailer camp in the western outskirts and began to construct their own tent and trailer city, complete with water, electricity, sewers and latrines.

By the time the convention had opened, they had set up an incredibly efficient cafeteria in Cleveland's huge underground Exposition Hall, in which 50,000 Witnesses were served two meals a

day. When food ran short in Cleveland, they brought in their own from out of town--by the carload. They had their own cooks, carpenters, bakers, plumbers, police-men, firemen, lawyers, tinsmiths, doctors, nurses, auto mechanics and barbers—-all Jehovah's Witnesses and all lending their $10 to $50 a day talents to the faithful for nothing.

The Witnesses divided greater Cleveland into 11,733 districts, organized platoons and squads for each district and covered every single doorstep and street corner in the city with Witness literature. When the convention was in its last day, they set up an assembly-line bathhouse arrangement at Edgewater Amusement Park on Lake Erie, and mass-baptized 2,602 new converts. This service was complete with nurses to watch babies, special receptacles for the temporary storing of false teeth, and bottles of port wine as an antidote for the chilling waters of the lake.

When the convention ended, the city gave the Witnesses a month to clean up their area. The Witnesses were gone inside of three days.

All these, however, are minor miracles. The most wondrous things of all were (a) the attendance figures--83,000 delegates by actual count, probably the largest religious conclave in the history of the United States; and (b) the fact that this convention was held at all.

To refresh your memory, the Jehovah's Witnesses' record of persecution for their religious beliefs was unequaled during the war and the years immediately preceding the war. Because they believe that they owe allegiance to the Kingdom of God first, and the governments of men second, they refuse to vote, serve on juries or perform any other of the normal duties of citizenship.

Because the Bible to them supersedes any man-made laws, and because the Bible says, "Thou shalt not make unto thee a graven image . . . thou shalt not bow down thyself unto them," they refuse to salute any flag, raise their arm in any heil or their fist in any symbol of the class struggle.

As a result the Jehovah's Witnesses were accused of being pro-Axis in the Allied countries, and of being pro-Allied in the Axis countries. In Germany, they were among the first to be thrown into Hitler's concentration camps in 1933, and in 1945, when U.S. troops found them in Dachau and Oranienburg, stilt refusing to heil, they were in pitiful physical and mental shape.

In Canada, the organization was outlawed completely. In England, some of its leaders were thrown into jail. In South Africa nearly the entire membership was sent to labor camps in southern Rhodesia. In Finland, the Witnesses first underwent German concentration camps and starvation diets, and then a Russian hostility which forced them to congregate by candlelight in underground meeting halls.

The United States, shamefully enough, was no better than any of these. On June 29, 1941, for instance, Charles Jones, C. A. Cecil and eight other young Jehovah's Witnesses from Mt. Lookout, West Virginia, drove to near-by Richwood, West Virginia, "to distribute literature of the said religious sect." Three of the Witnesses stopped off at the Town Hall to inform the mayor of the nature of their work and to request police protection.

Instead of the mayor, they were met by an angry reception committee from the Richwood American Legion Post, among whom were Martin L. Catlette, a deputy sheriff, and Bert Stewart, the chief of police. A mob of 1,500 persons gathered outside the Town Hall, in the meantime, and soon other

members of the American Legion post, headed by one Louis Haber, had rounded up the other seven Witnesses and brought them to the mayor's office. Catlette then took charge. He produced several quart bottles of castor oil, and in the best Mussolini tradition, forced the Witnesses to drink tight ounces each. One Witness, who protested, was made to drink a double dose. While the Witnesses squirmed in agony, they were then tied to a long rope and marched by the hoodlum mob to the Richwood post office. In a touchingly patriotic ceremony, Catlette thereupon recited the preamble to the American Legion Constitution, and everybody present was forced to salute the flag. An hour or so later, as the resultant circuit court decision goes on to say, "the Jehovah's Witnesses were marched through the streets of the town of Richwood and out of its corporate limits, yet attached to the rope."

This case was unique in than it was the only one in which the perpetrators were punished. Catlette was haled before a federal court and sentenced to twelve months in jail plus a thousand-dollar fine, while Stewart, the chief of police, was fined $250. In hundreds of other cases, however, Witnesses attempting to preach their Gospel were beaten, shot, tarred and feathered; their literature and meeting places burned; their children expelled from public schools, and approximately 4,000 of them sent to prison because they claimed they were ministers of the Gospel and therefore not subject to Selective Service.

A reporter of the Little Rock, Arkansas, Arkansas Gazette watched a mob attack a Jehovah's Witness meeting hall and mercilessly beat men and women senseless with blackjacks and screw drivers. In Imperial, Pennsylvania, on July 11, 1942 the volunteer fire department clubbed seven witnesses nearly to death, and were loading the limp bodies into the fire truck for a lynching party, when the Pennsylvania state police came along to break up the festivities.

In West Jefferson, Ohio, a Mayor Stone turned several Witnesses over to a mob and said, according to an affidavit filed with the United States Justice Department, "We don't care for the Supreme Court, and the Constitution don't apply here."

Methods Compared to Hitler's

This nation-wide violence became so widespread that on June 2, 1941, Attorney General Francis Biddle had to excoriate state and county officials all over the country. "Where these officials should have been active In preventing this cruel persecution," he said, "they have in many instances permitted it to occur and in some have been the leaders of the mob. And this betrayal of the rights of citizens," the Attorney General went on, "is done in the name of patriotism, and failure to salute the flag is made an excuse to desecrate the principles of which the flag is a symbol. Hitler's methods cannot preserve our Democracy."

This world-wide persecution makes the recent Jehovah's Witnesses' Cleveland convention a remarkable event. Instead of being wiped out by the persecution, the Witnesses have thrived on it. Where 25,000 delegates turned up for the last prewar convention in Detroit in 1940, more than 83,000 attended the conclave in Cleveland. The 1940 American membership was estimated at a rather insignificant 44,000 and the world membership at well under a million. Today, the unofficial figures (no official membership records are released by the organization) are something like 500,000 in the United Stales and nearly three million all over the world.

The Jehovah's Witnesses' doctrines are basically very simple. Like most doctrines, they become complicated in their interpretation and application. The name of the society (they never refer to themselves as a sect) comes from the 43d Chapter of Isaiah which says, "Ye are my witnesses, saith Jehovah, and my servant whom I have chosen . . . therefore ye are my witnesses . . . that I am God."

The Witnesses therefore are down-to-earth fundamentalists, which means that they believe and follow only what is written in the Bible. For this reason, they go from door to door selling their pamphlets and playing their religious phonograph records, since this house-to-house method is the only one Christ and His disciples originally used to spread Christianity (Acts 20:20 and Luke 8:1). For this reason, too, they are against all organized religion, since they can find no justification for a church or a hierarchy of any kind in the Bible. One of their chief slogans is "Religion is a racket" and they fire it indiscriminately at the Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, Hindu and Moslem churches alike.

Their most persistent target for many years has been the Roman Catholic Church. The Witnesses always hasten to point out that they have nothing against individual Catholics as such, but only the Roman Catholic hierarchy. For a long time, the Catholic Church bitterly opposed the Witnesses from the pulpit. Now, however. the official policy is to ignore them—-presumably the old psychology that if you leave a buzzing fly alone, eventually it will go away.

The Jehovah's Witnesses' concept of history explains many of their inflammatory practices, they believe that shortly after the Biblical Creation, Satan and God began the struggle for men's bodies and souls. At first, the tussle was pretty evenly matched, with Abel "witnessing" for Jehovah, and the Devil in Cain's corner. But men being what they are, the evil ones became more and more in the majority until God finally had to start over again with the Flood and Noah. This didn't stop the Devil, however, and he immediately bounced back with Nimrod-—the father of all earthly governments, which like religion, the Witnesses classify as demonism and pure instruments of Satan.

The Witnesses prophesy that suddenly, on some day between now and the year 1984. Gabriel's trumpet will blow. Christ's voice then will announce in loud tones that the final end is at hand, and God's hosts will descend from the heavens to fight the Battle of Armageddon with Satan's overwhelming numbers. God, of course, will win this battle and the "Great Theocracy" will then be established on earth. God will rule instead of men, and the only human beings left to enjoy this rule will be Jehovah's Witnesses.

The Witnesses feel that the atomic bomb may be the instrument with which Satan's hosts will be eliminated from the earth.

It is their exclusive claim to real estate in the impending Kingdom of God that gets the Witnesses into so much trouble. They consider that they are the sheep and all others in the world are the goats. They believe that their mission in this period just before Armageddon is to do as much "goat-gathering" as possible, so that the population of the next world will not he too sparse for comfort. That's why they devote endless hours every week, ringing doorbells, politely playing phonographs, and handing out tracts on street corners.

Goats—Benevolent and Hopeless

For purposes of identification, all we goats are split up into a Jehovah's Witness caste system. There are (a) men-of-good-will goats and (b) goats who are considered hopeless. The men-of-good-will

goats are those whom the Witnesses are instructed to seek out in juries and on the bench, when they are haled into court. They also are those who show the slightest friendliness or interest when the phonograph gospel plays on ithe front porch. Such goats are noted in a little book for a return visit. The utterly hope-less goats include priests, newspapermen, general cynics, and the strong-arm men who bounce the Witnesses around.

The Witnesses do not believe in purgatory, paradise, or the immortality of the soul. When you are dead, they say, you're dead. But on the close-at-hand Day of Judgment, all of the faithful Witnesses front Abel on down will be resurrected to enjoy the fruits of the Kingdom of God.

That's what the Witnesses late leader, Joseph F. Rutherford, meant when he coined their most popular slogan, "Millions now living will never die."

This doctrine, from the point of view of popular appeal, is a sort of spiritual Communism. Like the Communists, they hold out a picture of better things to come to the ragged, underprivileged peoples of the earth. Roger Baldwin, distinguished head of the American Civil Liberties Union, developed this analogy. Baldwin, with the aid of some of America's best-known lawyers, has helped defend the Witnesses in court since the last war and probably knows them better than any other outsider.

"Together with the Communists," says Baldwin, "the Jehovah's Witnesses are a gauge of the world's despair and disgust with civilization. The Communists promise despairing people immediate reform and privileges here on earth. The Witnesses promise them immediate reform and privileges in a Next World

There are other analogies to Communism as you go down the line. In order to advance their doctrine, the Jehovah's Witnesses own and run radio station WBBR in Brooklyn, and turn out more than 1,500,000 books, 11,000,000 pamphlets, 12,000,000 magazines and 150,000 phonograph records every year, all in 88 languages. During the period from 1919 to 1946, the Witnesses claim they printed and sold the incredible total of 468,000,000 books and pamphlets.

All this printing, recording and broad-casting is done in a modern eight-story factory in Brooklyn. This plant is staffed by every conceivable type of technician and executive, all of whom are Jehovah's Witnesses and all of whom live in a seven-story modern apartment building owned by the society on a pleasant Brooklyn street overlooking New York's East River.

These "headquarters servants"—-and there are nearly a thousand of them—-work for exactly ten dollars a month, which is labeled "expense money." All their other needs are filled by other Witnesses living at the headquarters. They have their own chambermaids, their own dining room, their own laundry, their own tailor shop. Their food is produced by Jehovah's Witnesses working on farms owned by the society and scattered around the country. There are also the Gilead Bible School of advanced training for full-time ministers at South Lansing, New York, and the 39 branch offices of the society in other countries all over the world.

Food and Expenses—$5

Missionaries to lands where there are no branch offices are given five dollars a month for food and other expenses. They are allowed to keep the "contributions" they receive for the literature they hand out. Jehovah's Witnesses have no churches. Their local societies are called "company organizations" and their meeting places, whether an elaborate ex-hospital as in Little Rock, Arkansas,

or a grass hut in the Mysore jungle, are called "kingdom halls." On Sunday nights, and sometimes on weekdays, all the "servants" gather to discuss a Bible lesson, as handed down to them by the Brooklyn headquarters, and to sing their own hymns. In the daytime, the "publishers," as they are called, go around from house to house "witnessing" or "exchanging for a contribution" the pamphlets and books which they have already bought from the society at five cents per pamphlet and twenty cents per book. The ideal work week for "publishers" according to the society is "five days devoted to God, and one day to secular work."

A fairly typical Witness is thirty-nine year-old Michael Kusek, a Schenectady, New York, farmer who was born in Poland and came to this country at the age of five. For years, Kusek was a pious Roman Catholic. His family was studded with priests and nuns, and he himself served as a regular choirboy in his parish church. Then one day he happened to pick up a copy of the Watchtower, the Jehovah's Witnesses' weekly magazine. That's when the fireworks started. Kusek got into one religious argument after another with his mother, and finally he had to leave his home and his church. He met and married a Glens Falls, New York, music teacher who came from a solid' Presbyterian family.

For years, Kusek's wife, Joyce, tried to get her husband to forget his fanatic devotion to Biblical prophecy. She took him to see minister friends of hers. She sat in on all of Kusek's arguments with the ministers, and as a result, she seems to have become converted herself. The Kuseks thereupon brought up their two sons to be Jehovah's Witnesses like them-selves.

For a while, the Kuseks continued to live as they did before, on their comfortable 40-cow dairy farm. Witnessing was an afternoon and evening side line. But suddenly, in 1941, Kusek deliberately sold all but a few of his cows, and now the family devotes nearly all of its waking hours to the cause. Kusek grows his own vegetables on his farm now, but that's all. The rest of the time he's at the local kingdom hall or out witnessing. He hires himself out to neighboring farmers for a few weeks each year and the family subsists on the few hundred dollars that brings in.

Kusek's once-prosperous farm is now a tourist camp for all passing Jehovah's Witnesses—-for free. They set up house-keeping there, grow their own gardens, and stay as long as they like.

Of all the Witnesses I met, most were as poor or poorer than the Kuseks. When 83,000 of them descended on Cleveland in their jalopies and beat-up trucks, the inevitable comparison with an Okie migration was made. Moreover, Department of Justice figures indicate that less than one per cent of the group has had a college education while fifteen per cent have lees than grammar schooling. Yet at the Cleveland convention, there were hundreds of well-dressed, beautiful girls, dozens of Witnesses in Cleveland's finest hotel suites, 100 doctors, 250 nurses, a Mrs. Dodd who left her 16-suite apartment house in London to fly to the convention by Clipper, and the senior engineer at a leading Middle West radio station. Mixed in with this heterogeneous mass was a goodly sprinkling of Negroes and hundreds of converted Jews.

Once a year, all of these conglomerate Witnesses (providing they have made a contribution of at least ten dollars) are allowed to vote for the board of directors, who in turn select the society's officers. No one is ever elected to the board of directors but the previous board of directors, or any newcomers the board of directors might designate. Only once was there a revolt on the board of directors, and those insurgent gentlemen were purged and excommunicated so fast that their personal belongings were out on the street before the meeting ended. There was a minor revolt of

the rank and file at the Cleveland convention. A group of eight old-time pioneer Witnesses, led by fifty-nine-year-old Roy D. Goodrich, of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, a member since 1919, tried to get up on the floor and accuse the board of directors of hypocrisy and of "setting up a dictatorship to rule the Witnesses," and of "establishing the same sort of religious hierarchy as the Roman Catholic hierarchy they condemn."

Brother Goodrich and company were excommunicated by personal letter before the hour was out. They tried to plead their case by distributing handbills outside the stadium. The rebels were immediately surrounded by 200 Witnesses who deliberately cut the canvas bags of Watchtowers from the insurgents' shoulders—very much like the public stripping of buttons and insignia from the uniform of a disgraced and court-martialed French army officer.

The board of directors of Jehovah's Witnesses live in unpretentious suites at the Brooklyn headquarters, and eat in the barely furnished common dining hall with the headquarters servants. They hand down instructions and interpretations of the Bible to the Witnesses, and they are responsible for running the radio station, the printing of the millions of publications, the fifty-two branch offices in the United States and foreign countries, the society's missionaries in countries where offices are not yet established, the society's farms and the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead, where Witnesses are schooled for positions of command in the organization.

A Home for the Prophets

The board of directors also run a $75,000 mansion in San Diego, California, which was constructed during the regime of Judge Rutherford for the exclusive occupancy of King David, Moses, Samuel and the other prophets when they return to earth. This mansion is called Beth Sarim (the House of the Princes) and it is complete with Middle Eastern architecture and palm trees so that the prophets will feel completely at home. In the meantime, to prevent Beth Sarim from becoming moldy with disuse, the board of directors use it as their own winter vacation rest spot.

Because of outward signs like this, and because of the obviously huge income from the millions of publications every year, the board of directors have often been accused of using Jehovah's Witnesses as a personal racket. There is no evidence to support these charges. The leaders actually live in lower middle-class simplicity, and the first president of the society, Charles Taze Russell, left exactly $200 in his will when he died in 1916. He had been the owner of a chain of haberdashery stores and a very wealthy man at one time.

The same thing is true of Judge Joseph F. Rutherford, the second president. A few years ago, Roger Baldwin of the American Cavil Liberties Union became one of the few men outside of the board of directors to get some official notion of the organization's finances. Baldwin is convinced that the million-dollar profit of that particular year was almost completely eaten up by foreign publication losses, administration expenses and the tremendous legal expenses necessary to defend the Witnesses in courtrooms.

Russell and Rutherford were the two outstanding figures in the history of Jehovah's Witnesses, which got under way in 1872, when Russell, then a fairly prosperous young Pittsburgh haberdasher—and a Presbyterian by religion —organized a Bible class in Allegheny, Pennsylvania, to "begin a thorough study of the Scriptures and come to a clearer understanding of many fundamental doctrines of Christianity which have been lost sight of since the days of organized religion, A.D. 325 and

thereafter." From this obscure beginning developed Zion's Watchtower Tract Society, the corporation name of Jehovah's Witnesses,

Russell's personal interpretations of the Bible now have become Jehovah's Witness dogma. In addition, he organized the system of "witnessing" from door to door, the local Kingdom Hall and company organization setup, the Brooklyn headquarters from which traveling representatives went forth to keep the company organizations in line, and the Witnesses' foreign branches which still are officially known as the International Bible Students' Association.

When "Pastor" Russell died suddenly in 1916, it looked for a while as if the organization would fall apart. But after just a few months of confusion, the mantle dropped onto the broad shoulders of "Judge" Joseph Franklin Rutherford, an obscure Missouri lawyer, who, after his conversion in 1909, had become the attorney for the organization.

Tall, portly, senatorial-looking, stentorian-voiced Rutherford gave the movement the personality it needed. Soon Russell was all but forgotten, and his followers, who had called themselves "Russellites," were expressly forbidden to use that term. Everything was done in the name of Judge Rutherford, the tracts were all his personal messages, the Watchtower became filled with his personal opinions and the newly acquired radio station WBBR spent 90 per cent of its broadcasting time propelling his booming voice into the metropolitan New York ether.

Like Russell, Rutherford quickly seized upon technological developments to advance his doctrine, and as early as 1927, the Judge had a coast-to-coast network of 53 stations to carry his basso profundo pronouncements to the goats. This network grew to the astonishing number of 403 stations in 1933.

But the Voice Wasn't Silenced

When protests from the clergy forced most of these stations to drop Rutherfurd's lectures, he embarked on a new project—phonograph records and sound trucks. Rutherford made portable phonographs and recordings of his lectures in the Brooklyn factory and sold them to the servants, to assist them in witnessing. The sound-truck equipment cost the disciples $140 each, the phonographs $10 and the recordings seventy cents. Thus a whole generation of Americans became familiar with the booming voice of Judge Rutherford on the front porch.

Rutherford first instituted the name, "Jehovah's Witnesses" in 1931. He also set the Witnesses' pattern of refusing to serve in the army of any government but God's, when he was sentenced to the Atlanta penitentiary for counseling draft evasion in World War 1. Judge Rutherford died at Beth Sarin on January 8, 1942, after twenty-five years as president of the society.

When Rutherford died, the current president, quiet, colorless Nathan Homer Knorr was elected to fill his place. Knorr, who was converted to Jehovah's Witnesses when he was a schoolboy in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, came to the Brooklyn publishing plant as a downy-checked, eighteen-year-old shipping clerk in 1923, and rose to he general manager of the vast enterprise. He is not the new Great Personality. That distinction seems to belong to a fairly recent convert named Hayden C. Covington, an ex-San Antonio lawyer who now functions, as Rutherford once did, as the society's legal counsel.

Hayden Covington is a tall, drawling, handsome, wise-cracking, back-slapping Texan in a wide-brimmed felt hat, whom Roger Baldwin describes as one of the most resourceful lawyers in the country today. The thirty-five-year-old lawyer joined up in San Antonio and, because of his already

glowing legal reputation there, he was immediately whisked to the Brooklyn headquarters to take over the legal department which Rutherford had dominated for so many years.

He soon had plenty to do. From 1941 to 1946 Covington personally handled over 4,200 Jehovah's Witness cases in the state and federal courts, 35 of them before the U.S. Supreme Court itself. Nearly all the higher motif cases were a one-man Covington show. According to Roger Baldwin, Covington files brilliant briefs spiced with Scripture, conducts a rapid-fire defense of the Witnesses involved, and immediately takes off by train or plane for the next case which might be a thousand or so miles away. His schedule sometimes involves as many as six cases a week. He argues all the Supreme Court cases personally and he is famed as one of the few lawyers consistently able to sass Supreme Court justices and get away with it.

Because of his work in the courts these past five years, Covington has done much for the society. In 1942, for instance, three West Virginians, named Walter Barnette, Paul Stull and Lucy McClure, were threatened with prosecution by the state authorities if they did not force their children to salute the flag in school as required by state law. This was just another of the hundreds of flag-salute persecutions which had plagued the Witnesses, and in a world-publicized case, the Supreme Court had ruled against them. Hopeless as the case looked, Covington spotted an opening.

He knew that in that Supreme Court ruling, the decision had gone against the Witnesses by an overwhelming eight to one vote. But he knew that Justices Jackson, Black and Murphy had openly changed their minds and now felt that they had wrongfully oppressed a minority. That would close the eight to one down to five to four. Then Wiley Rutledge replaced James F. Byrnes on the bench, and because of Rutledge's past record as a judge, Covington knew he now had that vital vote. He immediately slammed through the Barnette case, as it is now known in history books.

The victory came even sooner than he expected. Circuit Court of Appeals Judge John F. Parker reversed the original Supreme Court eight to one decision and when the astounded school board appealed to the Supreme Court, positive of a reversal in their favor, the Supreme Court upheld Covington five to four just as he had figured. This was the final word on flag saluting. It is now illegal for any school board anywhere in the country to force children to do anything against their religious principles.

After many years of defeats on the question of distributing the Jehovah's Witness literature without interference from the local gendarmerie, Covington spotted the same sort of opening and settled another vital point once and for all. A Witness named Murdoch was arrested in Jeannette, Pennsylvania, for violating an ordinance against peddling religious pamphlets without a license.

In the most recent decision on this matter, the Supreme Court had upheld a similar ordinance in Opelika, Alabama, by a vote of five to four. But now Wiley Rutledge was on the bench and Covington knew that Justice Rutledge had vehemently ruled against just such an ordinance when he was a circuit court judge in Washington, D. C. Covington rushed the Murdoch case up through the federal courts until it hit the Supreme Court, and surely enough, he got the expected five to four decision in his favor. The court ruled that distributing tracts is as much a part of freedom of religion as going to church, and that closed the issue once and for all.

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Little by little Covington cleaned up the side issues. He got a Supreme Court decision upholding the right of the Witnesses to ring doorbells, another upholding their rights to "witness" in company towns, and another enabling them to distribute pamphlets on government property. In one case, he got several Witnesses reinstated to their jobs in a plate-glass factory in Pittsburgh, after their fellow workers had walked out because the Witnesses refused to salute the flag.

Most of Covington's cases involved the 4,000 or so Witnesses who went to prison because their draft hoards refused to classify them as full-time ministers, which they insisted they were, and tried to send them into the Army instead. These Witnesses were a problem to the government because few of them would even go to conscientious objector camps. "We're not against war," they said. "We just want to keep on witnessing for Jehovah, which is our only function on this earth." Covington at least was able to get a decision making the draft board's classifications reviewable by the federal courts.

And with the help of 33 of America's leading clergymen (including Bishops McConnell, Harman and Baker) who were lined up by the American Civil Liberties Union to back the plea, he also seems to have wrung paroles and maybe a general amnesty from President Truman for the thousands of Witnesses still in jail a year after V-J Day.

Covington has suffered just two defeats in all these cases. He was licked in the Sarah Prince case when the Supreme Court ruled that child labor laws superseded freedom of the press when the Witnesses sent a nine-year-old child onto a rainy Brockton, Massachusetts, street to peddle tracts. And in the Chaplinsky case, the Court ruled that it was not freedom of speech for one Walter Chaplinsky to inform a Rochester, New Hampshire, cop that he was a "damned racketeer and a damned Fascist and the whole government of Rochester are Fascists and agents of Fascists." Not even Covington could do anything about that.

In the entire Jehovah's Witness picture, however, the momentous court decisions are the important thing. They probably will be remembered long after Jehovah's Witnesses become extinct, which might very well happen if too many Armageddons fail to arrive on schedule. As Roger Baldwin put it, "By contesting in the courts every restriction on them, these Jehovah's Witnesses have rendered a great service to American liberties. They've won for you and me a degree of freedom we've never had before. In serving what they conceive to be the cause of God, they have served the cause of their fellow men, whom they abhor."

THE END