Awake!

OUR AMAZING MIND

Also In This Issue

The Appeal of Honesty

DECEMBER 8, 1974

THE REASON FOR THIS MAGAZINE

News sources that are able to keep you awake to the vital issues of our times must be unfettered by censorship and selfish interests. "Awake!" has no fetters. It recognizes facts, faces facts, is free to publish facts. It is not bound by political ties; it is unhampered by traditional creeds. This magazine keeps itself free, that it may speak freely to you. But it does not abuse its freedom. It maintains integrity to truth.

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Awake!

"It is already the hour for you to awake."
—Romans 13:11

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The Appeal of HONESTY

SIMPLE, forthright honesty carries appeal. Strength of personal development seems to accompany it, even if the person in whom it is found is not highly educated or financially well fixed.

This is illustrated by what took place a couple of years ago. A well-educated doctor in the United States pointed to an example of honesty for his children—a taxicab driver! The doctor read that the cabby had returned to the owner two bags of jewels left in his cab. So he wrote to the cabdriver's children: "I have three sons. I hope that I will cause them to be as proud of me in the conduct of my business."

Such honesty is indeed pleasurable to behold and worthy of commendation. On the other hand, self-respecting persons are quick to condemn obvious violations of honesty. They detest stealing and find nothing at all appealing about such a practice.

If asked, they probably could not tell you exactly why stealing does not appeal to them—it just seems naturally wrong. But they know, too, that robbery, shoplifting, tax cheating and the like cost "honest" citizens billions of dollars every year in the form of police protection and added charges on products and services. Dishonesty creates a climate of fear where no one knows whom he can trust. Understandably, therefore, flagrant dishonesty does not appeal to decent people.

But is that all there is to be said on the subject of honesty—that one should not take other people's personal property without their permission, that it is wrong to defraud the government, and that a person ought to return to the owner any lost articles that he may find? Hardly. Much more is involved.

Reflected in One's Whole Life

A person may not steal someone else's belongings, but is he equally "honest" in other respects? For instance, is he open, "aboveboard," and genuine when he deals

with others? Or, is he deceitful? Does he use crafty, underhanded methods, perhaps spreading rumors and lies to discredit *others* as a means of advancing his own ambitions? Is he honest in his conduct with the opposite sex? A person who flirts with the feelings of others is not honest. So, honesty, it can be seen, takes in more than how one handles money and goods; it involves every part of an individual's life.

This fact is also indicated by the Greek word that is sometimes translated "honesty" in the Bible. The Christian apostle Paul says: "Carry on prayer for us, for we trust we have an honest conscience, as we wish to conduct ourselves honestly in all things." (Heb. 13:18) The Greek word used here literally means that which is 'intrinsically good,' beautiful and worthy.

The apostle Paul was scrupulous in dealing with his Christian brothers in money matters; only honest men were used by him in financial transactions, that no one might find fault with Paul's ministry. (2 Cor. 8:16-21) However, in writing to the Hebrews, Paul was commending his *whole course of life* to them. He had avoided deceit and craftiness. Because of this honest, faithful service, he felt confident that he could request their prayers in his behalf. Today, do we not still find people like that a pleasure to be with? Are they not the kind for whom we are inclined to "carry on prayer"?

If humans find a person desirable because he is free from deceit, genuinely honest, think how God must look upon such ones. The Bible writer David prayed to Jehovah: "Look! You have taken delight in truthfulness itself in the inward parts; and in the secret self may you cause me to know sheer wisdom." (Ps. 51:6) Yes, honesty or "truthfulness" must proceed from "the inward parts" or "secret self"; it must be representative of what a person really is. David here admits that even he had to learn to be truly honest from his "inward parts," for it was not an inborn trait.

When truthfulness, honesty, earmarks a person's life, the results are always favorable, bringing about lasting good. Understandably, David wanted this fine trait to reveal itself in a practical way in every aspect of his life and so he also prayed, according to the parallel expression, for "sheer wisdom." How today can one be transformed to an upright course and be genuinely "wise"?

Developing True Honesty

By study of God's Word the Bible, for one thing. Also by reflecting on the marvelous works and acts of God. As a consequence, deep inside a person, in his "inward parts," he becomes more sensitive to what is wrong. He takes to heart the Biblical injunction: "Let the stealer steal no more." (Eph. 4:28) Every part of him slowly becomes enveloped in a desire to be pure, genuinely honest.

This is a beautiful process. It has taken place in thousands of persons who were formerly dishonest. Some were outright thieves and shoplifters; others were more subtle, padding expense accounts, and so forth. But they came in contact with the Bible—and with those who really believe it, Jehovah's witnesses. Earth wide the Witnesses are known as a society of honest people from all walks of life; the cabdriver referred to earlier is a Witness in New York city.

A Seattle (Washington) *Times* reporter visited a convention of Jehovah's witnesses some time back and reported:

"Imagine, if you can, 40,000 visitors in a

city and all of them in the habit of being law-abiding citizens . . .

"I saw tens of thousands of people get up from their seats in the stadium at the noon lunch recess and reserve their same seats for the afternoon session by leaving on them their tape recorders, binoculars, umbrellas, purses, sweaters and cameras and walk away to be absent about 90 minutes with no worry or concern about theft. . . .

"By their high standards of morality, courtesy and honesty they bring nothing but good to any city they select for a convention."

Even away from home, when they are not observed by close associates, these Christians are honest. They are not among the one in three motel or hotel guests that steal from these establishments, as reports show. Says the New York *Times:* "The purloining of . . . 'souvenirs' from hotels and motels throughout the country has reached absolutely staggering proportions. . . . It [is] impossible to compute the exact value of the items taken."

It is not surprising, therefore, that a leading motel in San Bernardino, California, wrote to thank a woman, one of Jehovah's witnesses, after she sent back a towel that she had inadvertently packed with her belongings. The innkeeper's letter included:

"In all my experience I have never known anyone to return a towel. Our inventory denotes that over 500 were 'missing' during the last year. I am delighted to hear from you and look forward to seeing you again."

What a fine testimony to this Christian's honesty! Yet, thousands of true Christians have, like her, developed a desire to be honest in such respects.

In every part of his life, a person should let honesty be a controlling factor. And as a person becomes more sensitive in matters of honesty, he should also be learning something else. What is that? Balance.

A Balanced View

A self-respecting person does not want a reputation for being a thief—large or small. But, on the other extreme, he does not care to be known, perhaps even among his own Christian brothers, as a fanatic. Thus, he comes to learn that what constitutes "stealing" is not always a so-called open-and-shut case. In applying principles in his daily life he soon finds that there are many gray areas.

The Christian knows that the eighth of the Ten Commandments says simply: "You must not steal." (Ex. 20:15; Matt. 19:18; Rom. 13:9) In many parts of life those words are relatively easy to understand and apply, as in the case of the cabdriver and the jewels. But suppose a person is in a public telephone booth; when he completes his call his coin, instead of going down into the coin box, returns to him. Then what? Would it be dishonest to keep the coin?

Well, is any 'Yes' or 'No' going to cover all situations? Some persons may say that the coin should not be kept. But another may remember that several times the same telephone did not complete his call yet took his money. To keep the coin or not—would that not be something that the individual, knowing the circumstances, must decide for himself?

- ***The Spirit of Giving —in Ways That Count.***
- ***Do You Express Yourself Clearly?***
- ***Should History Be Rewritten?***

—In the next issue.

Or, consider another illustration. It would be easy to be critical of a person because he "takes" pencils from the office where he works. But certain companies encourage employees to spread pens and pencils bearing the company's name as a form of advertising.

And what about when a buyer and seller are bargaining? In some countries the person selling the merchandise, say, a blanket, sets a price on it that is purposely higher than what it is worth. The buyer, on the other hand, may believe that the blanket is worth a certain amount. But he knows it would be foolish to offer that price immediately, since the bargaining process requires give and take: the seller usually drops his price only as the buyer raises his until a mutually agreeable figure is arrived at.

If you were the buyer, would you consider yourself dishonest because your first offer is below what you know is the blanket's true value? Is it somehow "more honest" to start with the price you know it is worth and then be forced to pay more? Or, if you were the seller, should you be expected always to let people buy from you at a loss to you because you refuse to start with a higher price? That hardly seems reasonable. Ordinarily neither one, buyer nor seller, knows in advance what the final price acceptable to both parties will be. The bargaining process is simply the customary manner of determining it.

As these few examples show, balance is mandatory. A mature Christian knows that the Bible says: "You must not steal." At the same time he is aware of the circumstances that must be considered as he seeks diligently to apply that law in his life. He should know, too, that each one 'reaps what he sows.' (Gal. 6:7) If a person takes too liberal a viewpoint, some may incline to doubt his trustworthiness in a difficult situation. If he is too unbending, he may become unrealistic.

From his own life's experiences a Christian knows that factors that others cannot see may affect how he makes decisions in matters involving honesty. Thus, he will not be too quick to condemn what others do in similar personal circumstances. Rather, he will credit fellow Christians with having an earnest desire to carry on all their affairs in an honest way. This considerate course is consistent with what Jesus said: "All things, therefore, that you want men to do to you, you also must likewise do to them."—Matt. 7:12.

Jehovah's witnesses stand out in contrast with the world. While the world has a reputation for dishonesty, the Witnesses strive to be just the opposite. The overall picture that they present to the world is one of honesty. The fact that they, unlike most in the modern dishonestly inclined world, are even willing to weigh principles in their lives like those illustrated above is in itself a marvelous thing.

How many persons do you know who are sincerely striving to be honest in all matters? Just imagine associating with 50, 100, or 200 persons that are. That is the happy experience of Jehovah's witnesses who come to know one another at their local Kingdom Halls around the world. They view one another as brothers and sisters and have the same confidence as though they were members of a single warm family. Does that not appeal to you?

If so, why not associate with them at their Kingdom Halls. Observe for yourself what it is that makes them different.

SAFEGUARD YOURSELF against BEING CHEATED

WITH dishonesty so prevalent in the world, everyone needs to exercise more than the usual wariness to safeguard himself against being cheated. The following are some suggestions that may prove to be of value to you.

● Many persons who buy things by mail complain that they never receive the items for which they paid. So if you buy by mail, deal with a reputable organization. Also, keep copies of all correspondence, as well as a record of your order. Pay by check or money order, not cash.

● When buying in stores, shop with care. For instance, if you are buying meat or produce that must be weighed, stand where you can watch both the scale and the clerk's hands. This will often exert a strong influence toward honesty on the person doing the weighing.

● If you are paying for many items, let the cashier see you count the number of items you have purchased. He will be doubly alert not to make a mistake. Count your change before leaving the cashier. Shortchanging is one of the commonest ways to cheat customers, accidentally or deliberately.

● If you want a piece of top-quality beef and want it ground, buy the meat and have it ground where the grinder is in full view. The butcher that takes the steak into a windowless refrigerator might bring you in return a cheaper grade of meat.

● When it comes to repair work, it pays to deal with a firm or person that has a good reputation. Also, get an advance estimate on what is needed and have it put in writing for you. This estimate should include the statement that no additional charges will be made without your prior consent.

● Do not put much reliance on verbal promises where major work, such as home repairs and improvements, is to be done. Get competitive bids and insist that any contract contain a description of the repairs or improvements and the total cost of the work. Also, never sign a completion certificate until the work is actually finished the way the contract calls for.

● Be very cautious about signing anything. It can legally obligate you. Read carefully before you sign. If the language in a contract gets complicated and you start wondering what it means, consult someone who knows. Another thing to watch for are blank spaces in a contract, or illegible writing or figures that can be doctored up later. Keep a copy of all signed documents in your personal file.

● Many persons experience a financial tragedy because of failure to read the fine print carefully. Beware of anyone who explains, "Pay no attention to that clause because we never enforce it," or, "This clause doesn't apply to you." Do not accept such explanations. Have the contract changed before you sign it.

● With major purchases, ask questions to find out about any hidden costs. Find out whether you must pay additional fees for delivery, installation, service, and so forth. When credit is involved, be sure you know what the total cost will be. If you rent an apartment, ask about painting, repairs and utilities. But do not leave any promises in verbal form.

● Salesmen often make guarantees of a verbal nature, but these are almost never accepted in a court of law. Some say, "If anything is unsatisfactory, a refund will be promptly given." A refund in money is something seldom, if ever, given.

● If credit cards are used, make sure that all receipts you sign are clear as to total price and cannot readily be fraudulently changed. If you lose one, report it immediately—you will be held responsible until you do. Save all your receipts and compare them carefully with your monthly statements.

● When paying for services in a hospital or elsewhere, to avoid possible future complications, many persons find it advisable to ask for a receipt marked, not just "Paid," but, "Paid in full."

In these days of rising prices and increasing dishonesty, it pays to be alert, if you would safeguard yourself against being cheated.

THE POOR NATIONS WHAT ARE SAYING

NO ONE wants to be poor. Yet today there are great masses of poor people everywhere. In many countries *nearly all the population* lives in poverty!

World leaders call such nations "underdeveloped." But what they really are is poor. These lands are also called the "Third World," being ranked below the wealthy countries and those nations that have some degree of wealth.

Centuries ago limited communications kept most people in poor countries from observing how those in wealthier lands lived. But today it is different. Poor people everywhere, because of newspapers, magazines, radios and television sets, are observing how "the other half" lives. They want to live that way too.

Many authorities say that the world situation could get very explosive because of the rising expectations of poor nations. It is felt that if their situation does not improve, they may be willing to accept radical solutions to their problems. And it is also generally agreed that the day has passed when the poor nations could be convinced that their condition was simply "fate," which they should accept passively.

"Impeachment Trial"

In the spring of 1974, the "underdeveloped" countries sponsored a special session of the United Nations General Assembly. This three-week session was devoted to their problems, especially the use of their raw materials by the richer countries.

Of these meetings, James Reston of the New York *Times* said: "There is a kind of impeachment trial going on here at the United Nations too—not of a man but of a civilization. The poor nations are drawing up the articles of impeachment every day against the rich nations."

What were the poor nations saying? Their 'articles of impeachment' are shown on the next page.

These are some of the grievances that the poor nations present. They also point out the tremendous overconsumption or even waste in the wealthier nations. For instance, the world now spends over $200 billion a year on armaments, mostly by the industrial lands. The poor nations think of the many things that could be done to help their situation with all that money. And yet, it is a fact that a sizable part of the yearly budgets of most poor nations is also devoted to arms expenditures!

The poor countries can also point out that if Americans ate only one less hamburger a week, the grain saved would be more than India is expected to import in a year. It is also estimated that the fertilizer Americans lavish on their lawns, shrubs and flowers would go a long way

toward making up Asia's fertilizer deficit, helping Asians to feed themselves. Also, according to agriculture experts, the amount of grain used each year to produce alcoholic beverages in the United States could keep 500,000 people in South Asia alive for that same year.

But is it realistic to expect that people in the richer nations would deprive themselves of such things to help poorer lands? James Reston asks: "Can the rich and poor nations go on like this? Can the advanced nations consume and waste and charge for labor as they are, and ignore the misery of the majority of the human race in the poor countries?" He then notes that the poor countries ask: "Will the big countries even listen?" "The answer," Reston says, "obviously is 'not yet.'"

And so, as the international debate continues, pessimism increases. Why? Because the problems of most poor nations are not getting solved. They are growing worse.

Problems Mounting

In spite of all the talk and effort toward "progress," the number of poor people in the world increases. Today, when men travel to the moon and the power of the atom is harnessed, there are far more hungry, poorly clothed, inadequately housed and illiterate people in the world than ever before in history! How many? United Nations Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim answers:

> "The single most devastating indictment of our current world civilization is the continued existence of stark, pervasive poverty among two-thirds of the world population.
>
> "It permeates every phase of life in developing countries: in the malnutrition of children, in the outbreaks of diseases, in widespread unemployment, in low literacy rates, in overcrowded cities."

The present world population is almost four billion. Two thirds, according to Waldheim, are in stark poverty. That is about 2,600,000,000 people! Yet the world's population, especially in the poor nations, grows explosively. At the present rate, it will double in only thirty-five years. Thus, Swedish food scientist Georg Borgstrom says:

> "The explosive growth in human numbers is threatening to wipe out the advances mankind has made and to undermine all human values, sinking a growing portion of mankind into abject poverty.
>
> "Contrary to general belief and despite

'ARTICLES OF IMPEACHMENT AGAINST THE RICH NATIONS'

1. About one out of three babies born in poor nations dies before it is five years old;

2. For the children who do survive, says Dr. Mubashir Hasan, finance minister of Pakistan, "it is a life of deprivation, desperation and degradation. It is an intense but, mercifully, a short struggle, as their life expectancy is no more than thirty years";

3. The growing catastrophe engulfing many African nations due to drought and mismanagement is beyond the imagination of the advanced nations. It is also a rebuke to the United Nations, which promised in its Charter to promote "a higher standard of living, full employment, and conditions of economic and social progress and development";

4. The nations of what used to be called the Christian West and now is called the Industrial West or the Developed or Advanced World are cheating the poor countries. How? By buying the raw materials and other products from the poor nations very cheap, and selling manufactured products back at a very high price;

5. The rich nations pay their workers from ten to twenty times as much as workers in poor countries are paid. If the pay were roughly equal, the poor countries would receive about $250 billion more each year for their work and products.

our countermeasures, the number of hungry, thirsty, poor, and illiterate is relentlessly increasing, both in relative and absolute terms."

India, the second-most-populated country in the world, has nearly 600 million people and adds 13 million more each year now. A cabinet minister in that country estimates that now nearly two thirds of India's people live "below the poverty line." That is about 400 million people! According to the report, these people have an average income of about six and a half dollars a month. The number of unemployed in the countryside has gone up sixfold in twenty years, from over three million to over eighteen million now. And India's condition continues to worsen owing to poor crops and the dramatically higher cost of what she must import, such as oil and fertilizer.

The number of illiterates, people who cannot read or write, is increasing. About three quarters of all the people in African nations are illiterate. Half of Asia is. And about a quarter of all Latin Americans are illiterate.

In some countries poverty has become so severe and seemingly hopeless that "it has given the word 'poverty' new dimensions," says *Atlantic* magazine. Of one Asiatic nation, this publication says:

> "One might even say that it is too far gone to be listed among the struggling Third World nations; it heads an emerging Fourth World of young and destitute states kept alive only by heavy transfusions of foreign aid. . . .
>
> "They would sink like stones without international handouts . . . Nobody needs them, or wants them."

Gap Widening

What alarms many authorities is that most poor nations are falling farther behind the rich ones. The incomes of people in Europe and North America have been much larger than the incomes of people in poor lands. And the gap is growing, not narrowing.

For example, statistics kept by the United Nations show that in a recent eight-year period, the income of the average person in the United States increased by an amount 25 times as large as that for the average person in Africa, 16 times as large as incomes in Asia, and 9 times as large as those in Latin America.

The same is true of food production. In a recent six-year period average food production per person grew by 9 percent in western Europe. But during that same time, it decreased by 5 percent in Africa. Latin America and the Near East showed no increase per person at all. And these figures were released before the disastrous food shortages of the recent past in Africa and parts of Asia.

Nor is it realistic for people in poor nations to think that someday they will have the material goods that wealthier nations have. If all nations were to produce the goods that the United States does, it would require world production of raw materials to increase at a fantastic rate. For instance, iron and zinc production would have to grow to about 75 times the present amount. There would have to be 200 times as much lead and 250 times as much tin. In view of the fact that even now the earth's resources are under a strain to sustain the enormous and growing appetites of the industrial world, such an output to bring poor nations on a par with richer nations is presently beyond the realm of possibility.

Recently the oil-producing nations increased their prices for oil fourfold. This has proved to be a severe blow to the industrial nations. But to the poor nations

it has proved to be a catastrophe. These nations were not paying their way even before that increase. That is why Chancellor Helmut Schmidt of West Germany said: "The developing countries are in danger of being left high and dry. Their very existence is threatened by increasing oil prices."

These grim prospects for poor nations were noted by authors Paul Ehrlich and Dennis Pirages in their recent book *Ark II*. They pointed out:

> "It is clear that cherished beliefs that the [poor nations] can some day catch up with the industrial countries are nothing more than myths propagated by the 'haves' to keep the 'have nots' in line.
>
> "The data show that the gap between the rich nations and the poor nations is widening, not narrowing."

Changing Attitude

The widening gap is also producing serious consequences for the richer nations. This is because of their growing dependence on the raw materials of the nations of the "Third World." But now these nations have changed their attitudes about how their resources will be used, and paid for.

An example of this was the action taken by the oil-producing underdeveloped nations, sending shock waves throughout the industrial lands. For many decades the poorer oil-producing nations had to sell their oil at a relatively cheap price. But recently, these nations banded together and agreed to quadruple their prices. The shah of Iran voiced the changed attitude of such nations by saying: "The era of cheap oil is finished. We must add that the era of exploitation is finished."

After observing what happened to oil prices, Chancellor Schmidt of West Germany stated: "The struggle over oil prices may be followed tomorrow by a similar struggle over the prices of other important raw materials." That view was reinforced by the prime minister of Jamaica, which land is rich in the bauxite ore that produces aluminum. He declared:

> "The underdeveloped nations can no longer continue to supply raw materials to developed countries on the old basis and, in an inflationary world, it is important to link the value of raw materials to the value of finished products."

The poor nations have laid down a clear challenge to the rich nations. They will no longer passively accept what the industrial nations have assumed for more than two centuries. That assumption was that there would always be cheap raw materials available from the poor nations. No longer is this the case.

However, the dilemma of the poor nations is that most of them are not blessed with abundant raw materials. Most of them lack abundant mineral and oil resources. They are largely agricultural lands, and in bad years they have nothing to fall back on to sell to other nations. So they will not have the money to buy the food and other things they need to help them in bad years. That is just what is happening now to various countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Thus, in one poor nation an angry poet wrote: "How do we bear the hot sun? By being burned by it. How do we shield ourselves from the rain? By being drenched in it. How do we keep hunger away? By Starving. How do we cure diseases? By Death."

How obvious it is that the system of things on earth today is not working! Mankind sorely needs a new system, one that can bring benefits to people of all nations. Only God's incoming new order can, and will, do that.

THE LAUSANNE CONGRESS

—Pentecost or BABEL?

"NOTHING quite like Lausanne has ever happened before," observes *Eternity* magazine. "This—the International Congress on World Evangelization—was a missionary conference that was different."

'It was like Pentecost' is the way others described the kaleidoscope of varying nations, cultures and backgrounds represented at the July 16-25 congress at Lausanne, Switzerland. Its avowed aim was to discuss ways and means to "Let the earth hear His Voice," that is, how they might preach their view of the message of Jesus Christ world wide by the year 2000.

While many observers would not go so far as to call Lausanne another "Pentecost," most would probably agree that it was indeed "different." There has been a rash of evangelism and missionary conferences in recent months. Lausanne, however, in a sophisticated manner, reached across sectarian bounds and drew 2,700 select representatives from a number of evangelical groups and 150 countries. Dozens of languages were represented; seven official tongues were spoken at the sessions.

Special effort was made to invite a broad cross section of the evangelical world—not only those of different nations and cultures, but women, clergy, laity, evangelists, missionaries, educators, younger and older people. Many of the more than one thousand delegates from the 'Third World nations' used the equivalent of several weeks' salary just to pay the registration fee.

The Lausanne congress was also different in that it was made up of working sessions. Detailed reports were prepared in advance explaining the extent of Christendom's missionary endeavors in every part of the earth. Emphasis was also placed on how to contact usually inaccessible people of the "Christian" world such as those living in apartments or working in large office buildings. So determined were the organizers that the congress would consist of more than just theology and theory that delegates were styled "participants."

A great deal of public relations fanfare was also given this particular congress. Widespread interest in it was generated by Billy Graham's early promotion of the congress, and he later served as its honorary chairman and a principal speaker. Months of planning went into the event, which eventually cost in excess of three million U.S. dollars.

Why Now?

Suddenly the need to evangelize in earnest seems to have dawned on these religious leaders. Just four years ago an earth-wide poll revealed that most were not

then in favor of such a conference. They changed their view less than two years later and work began for the Lausanne Congress. "The tide is in for evangelical witness around the world," said one of the directors, "and the consensus was we should move on that tide toward the goal of world evangelization in this century." Why the change of attitude in just a short time?

No one at Lausanne seemed to know for sure. But numerous speakers noted that 'world conditions are pregnant for the witness about Christ.' Os Guinness of Switzerland voiced the opinion that people are uniquely open to the Christian message now because of the "bankruptcy of secular thought." Another key speaker, Britain's Malcolm Muggeridge, seconded Guinness, saying: "It has long seemed to me clear beyond any shadow of doubt that what is still called Western Civilization is in an advanced stage of decomposition, and that another Dark Age will soon be upon us, if, indeed, it has not already begun."

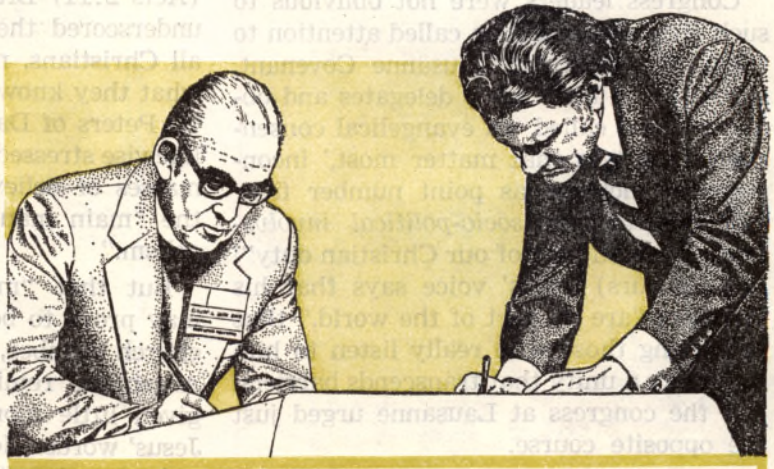
But, of course, the pressing question for the evangelicals of these numerous religions is—regardless of the cause of the apparent sudden interest in the Biblical message of Christ—can *they* be expected to evangelize the whole world?

Can "Evangelicals" Evangelize the World?

A desire to do so cannot be criticized, since Jesus instructed: "Go and make disciples in all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and then teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you."—Matt. 28:19, 20, *The Living Bible.*

But more than a realization that this should be done is necessary. Those attempting to go to "all the nations" must themselves be obeying "all the commands" Jesus gave. They themselves must be listening to Jesus' voice. Further, since Jesus' commands are not contradictory, all those obeying him should necessarily be united with one another. Recall those followers of Jesus at Pentecost in the first century. Were they not all at peace with one another, of the same mind? Of course they were.—Acts chapter 2.

But, at Lausanne, was true unity, based on real obedience to Jesus' words, in evidence among the delegates? To find out, why not compare what was said and done there with Jesus' actual teachings.



Anglican Bishop Jack Dain (left) and evangelist Billy Graham sign the Lausanne Covenant. Its first point says: "We confess with shame that we have often denied our calling and failed in our mission, by becoming conformed to the world or by withdrawing from it."

Jesus said of his followers: "They are no part of the world, just as I am no part of the world . . . that they may all be one." (John 17:16, 21) He obviously did not intend for national and racial boundaries to put barriers between his followers. Yet, at Lausanne, worldly nationalistic and racial wedges were very much in evidence.

Delegates from one Asian country became upset over the presence of another Asian country's flag left outside from an earlier convention. Certain African delegates complained that they had mostly been assigned to segregated housing. Other Africans suggested a possible 'missionary moratorium'—that foreigners should stay out of their country. "In a number of instances," says *Christianity Today,* a strong supporter of the gathering, "participants brought to Lausanne the divisions that exist back home, and the national strategy periods were often tense and stormy."

Congress leaders were not oblivious to such rivalries, and even called attention to them. But then the Lausanne Covenant, signed by at least 1,900 delegates and observers, and called 'an evangelical consensus on matters that matter most,' inconsistently included as point number five: "Evangelism and *socio-political involvement* are both part of our Christian duty"! (Italics ours) Jesus' voice says that his followers "are no part of the world," thus prompting those who really listen to him to display a unity that transcends barriers. But the congress at Lausanne urged just the opposite course.

Now, add to these problems the *religious* disunity represented in the Congress. Jesus calls for his true followers to "remain in union" with him. (John 15:4) Were the delegates at Lausanne in union with Jesus? How could that be?

How could Anglicans, Baptists, "Disciples of Christ," Free Methodists, Lutherans, Mennonites, Reformed Presbyterians and the others represented at Lausanne, each of whom has different and contradictory teachings, *all* be in union with Jesus? That is just not possible. (1 Cor. 1:10) So, religiously as well as otherwise, there was little Christlike unity at Lausanne.

But even if they had been united, how can the "evangelicals" hope to "make disciples in all the nations"? In just the ten days of their meeting, earth's population burgeoned by almost two million more persons—in other words, 650 people for every official delegate at Lausanne. Evangelical leaders admit their need for assistance in preaching to the world. Where are they turning for help? To the "laity."

Can the "Laity" Help?

Holy spirit moved all the men and women, young and old, who were in attendance at Pentecost in the first century to speak about "the magnificent things of God." (Acts 2:11) Brazil's Professor H. Snyder underscored the obligation that rests on all Christians, not just the clergy, to tell what they know about the Gospel. George W. Peters of Dallas Theological Seminary likewise stressed the same need to tap "the masses of believing church members" as the "main manpower resource for evangelism."

But that "main manpower resource" may prove to be a dry well. The average church member, Baptist Rene Padilla from Argentina reminded the delegates, has given little more than mental assent to Jesus' words. Most, he said, have accepted a shortened or "truncated gospel," adding: "Half-gospels have no dignity and no future. Like the famous mule, they have neither pride of ancestry nor hope of posterity."

In other words, as made clear by numerous speakers, the churches must first convert their own people before they can

ever hope to evangelize the rest of the world. The "laity" is not made up of "committed Christians," as was well illustrated by an incident at Lausanne. One participant recalled that "Irish missionaries to India have been told to go home and evangelise Ireland" because of the internecine warfare between Catholics and Protestants in that country. The Irish, though trying to defend themselves, could not deny the charges, admitting: "Perpetrators of the violence are not committed Christians—though they may claim some nominal denominational adherence." Apparently there are not enough "committed Christians" to stop the war! However, what other nation claiming to be "Christian" can honestly say that its people are any more 'committed to Christ'?

Why are church members so often deaf to the words of Christ? Because the clergy have not taught them. The clergy themselves do not believe the teachings of Jesus. Some at Lausanne, like Peru's Samuel Escobar, said laymen must be encouraged to "apply the teaching and example of Christ in their family life." But did the report on preaching to those whose religion allows polygamy indicate that its compilers really believe that? Suppose a man with several wives 'accepts Christ.' Then what? The report advises: "It is a very delicate matter, but most of those who prepared this report believe that he should not leave his wives; at the same time they insist he should not acquire new ones." This amounts to an endorsement for allowing polygamy to come into the Christian congregation.

Yet Jesus said of marriage: "The *two*" —one man and one woman—"will be one flesh." (Matt. 19:5) The official congress report was willing to try to smother Jesus' words; is it surprising that the average church member, if he even knows Jesus' teachings regarding family matters, does not apply them to his life? How can such ones possibly be the "main manpower resource" for evangelizing the world?

Look Elsewhere for Christ

Many honest people around the world are listening for the voice of Jesus. They desperately want the truth that sets men free. But, frankly, that message will not come as a result of the congress at Lausanne.

Lausanne was not, as some of its supporters boasted, 'another Pentecost' with people speaking many languages holding to the common message of Jesus. It was a Babel of differing sectarian, political, racial voices uttering the same old creeds that have divided men for centuries. It was an admission by evangelical leaders that their rank and file members, just like those in the more "liberal" church groups, have not really heard Jesus' voice. Yet at the same time it was an almost pleading 'hope against hope' expression on their part that somehow, in some way, these same church members would help them to evangelize the whole world.

Many confusing, unsure voices were heard at Lausanne. But Jesus' voice was not among them. God-fearing persons must turn their ears elsewhere to hear his clear message.

Influenced by the World

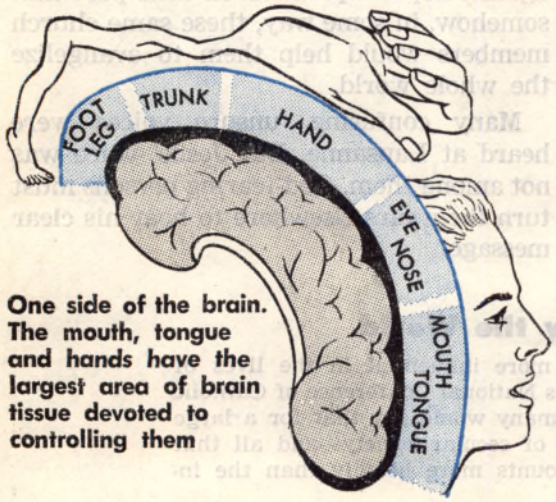
■ The world—not the Church—is more influential in the lives of many Catholics. So the United States National Conference of Catholic Bishops notes: "At the very least, many would say that for a large number of Catholics, the influence of secular society—and all that implies, for good as well as ill—counts more heavily than the influence of the Church."

Our Amazing MIND

"MARY, where did you put my fishing reel?"

"On the top shelf of the cabinet in the garage," the fisherman's wife replied without hesitation. Though she had put the reel there six months ago, she answered immediately, as if the information were right in front of her, a part of her present consciousness.

Although she was unaware of it, uncounted numbers of impulses from her senses of sight, hearing, touch, and so forth, had bombarded her nervous system *every waking second* of that past six months. Of that total, eight hundred million of these impulses were important enough to get through to her higher brain center, according to researchers. Yet out of that tremendous mass of information in its "files," her mind was able to sort out the answer and put it into speech.



One side of the brain. The mouth, tongue and hands have the largest area of brain tissue devoted to controlling them

While she was doing this, the bombardment of more millions of bits of information continued. At the same time her mind was guiding her in cooking a special dish for her husband's supper—all this with ease, a routine matter.

It is impossible to describe the many-faceted activities of the housewife's mind as she did all these things at once. How was it possible? What was involved? Actually, scientists know a few of the things involved but practically nothing about how the mind's memory "file" works with such speed and precision. Let us look for a moment at the brain, instrument of the mind.

The Human Brain

The human brain, on the average, weighs about three pounds. Brain sizes vary, but the old theory that brain size determines intelligence is a fallacy. Another false idea is that man uses only a small percentage of his brain. There is apparently no part of the brain that is never used. However, this does not mean that anyone's brain *capacity* is ever *fully* used. The question appears to be, How well does he use it, by exercising his mind and storing worthwhile memories in it?

The brain is made up of a soft, jellylike tissue. Encased in the skull, it is surround-

ed by protective membranes and is cushioned against shocks by the cerebrospinal fluid, which is a plasma that "leaks" from certain blood vessels. Large arteries carry to the brain a richer supply of blood than to any other part of the body, for it uses about one fourth of all the body's oxygen consumption. However, the brain is extremely efficient. One investigator says that half a peanut provides enough power for an hour of intense mental effort.

The brain is composed of several parts, each having special functions, performing connectedly and interdependently. The part that we are most concerned with at present is the "higher" section, which takes in primarily the cerebrum, with its external layer of gray matter, the cerebral cortex. However, the other parts of the brain cannot be ignored in considering any function of the mind.

Learning

We start learning from infancy. A baby must learn nearly all but the most elementary things. A baby's brain can be likened, in a way, to a road map that has been roughly "sketched out," having main outlines, but few interconnecting roads. The general mental organization has been inherited, but most other connections have to be made as the child takes in information from a world that is all new to him.

What does the learning process involve? How, for example, did the wife put into her mind the location of the fishing reel so that it "stuck" and could be recalled as needed?

Researchers have suggested certain possibilities. One is that learning, which involves memory, does not increase the number of cells in the brain, but stimulates the nerve fibers to grow extra branches, which communicate chemo-electrically with other nerve cells. Other changes may also be made, as discussed later. Exercise of the brain is therefore essential for mental growth. A brain neuron (nerve cell) has to be used. Otherwise it tends to "wither," much as an unused muscle does. Not that it completely dies so that it cannot be used at all, but a brain not exercised has a much harder time learning. It will remain immature, not developing the "connections" that it should.

A brain little used is like a library that has only a few books. There is a real scarcity of information. The individual is poorly equipped to face the challenges of life. On the other hand, one who has been brought up in a criminal environment may have put wrong things in his mind and may be very shrewd in the ways that bring "success" criminally, but lacking in the qualities of honesty, mercy and love. And the person who has hate or jealousy in his heart and mind—what does he have to draw upon for guiding his actions? A person who thinks negatively all the time and who sees only the faults and mistakes of others has excluded all the good "books"

What a person dwells on is stored up in his memory "library." Which library would you prefer for proper guidance?

from his memory "library," and so has only "books" that feed his hate and critical attitude. Such an individual may be very clever in creating trouble, justifying himself, and so forth, but he should change and begin to develop good patterns of sincere interest in others and in the good things around him.

All of this demonstrates the importance of using our minds on profitable things, really *learning*. When a person spends his time in idle pursuits, his mind is also "idling." It is, in a sense, "wasting," just as his time is also wasted. The Bible recommends keeping the mind on good things. (Phil. 4:8) And the apostle Peter wrote to Christians: "The time that has passed by is sufficient for you to have worked out the will of the nations when you proceeded in deeds of loose conduct, lusts, excesses with wine, revelries, drinking matches, and illegal idolatries."—1 Pet. 4:3.

Some people will excuse themselves from mental activity with the expression, "I'm too old to learn." This is not true. It is found that people continue learning at a high rate until their late forties and, actually, learning ability in many persons continues at a high level until the end of their lives.

Sometimes old persons do not answer questions as readily or react as quickly as young people. Why? This is not always due to a slowing down in the nervous system, but is often because older persons are more conservative and cautious. They are more hesitant to make choices under pressure. They have had more experience and often know more, therefore have more things to choose from. While youth may incline toward "snap judgments," the older person's conclusions are usually more complete, with greater depth. This is true particularly if the older person has made good use of his mind from youth up.

How Spacious Is Our Memory?

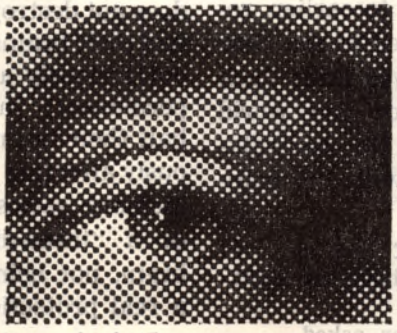
A person's memory is prodigious, containing untold millions of items of importance to the individual and many more things that are relatively unimportant. Therefore the ten thousand million cells in the cerebral cortex are not enough for storing this, if we view each cell as a little container holding one memory of a particular point or scene. They would all be "full" in a week, considering the constant barrage of information that comes to the brain through the various senses, primarily the eyes.

However, the brain contains one thousand billion billion protein molecules (one followed by twenty-one zeros). Each of these molecules can undergo many changes in its structure and afterward retain the changed shape. This changed structure may represent a new memory impression. As the molecules are replaced by wear, they duplicate themselves so that the replacement molecules are the same. But this is not all. The increase of branches of the nerve cells as the memory grows makes millions of new combinations by their increased "contacts." By this the possible number of memories becomes indefinite, beyond comprehension. Additionally, other unknown factors seem to exist, to multiply the number even more.

To illustrate how just the one factor, namely, the different combinations of the ten thousand million cells in the cerebral cortex can make an inconceivably high figure: In a deck of only fifty-two cards there are more than 635,000,000,000 different possible bridge hands of thirteen cards each. But this is nothing compared to the multiplied billions of billions more combinations in the brain!

Giving even added capacity to all of this is the way in which memories seem to be stored. When we look at something, say a mountain scene, it is not stored in our

brain as an intact image. It is broken up into parts, electrically or chemically coded bits, forming a sort of coded "mosaic." Then, when we see another scene, certain bits of one scene compare with the other. Cross-comparisons help memory and allow the mind to "experiment" by making these comparisons and contrasts. It might be a comparison of sizes, shapes, colors, of parts of conversations, of Bible passages, of ideas and principles. This greatly enlarges and strengthens memory. It also leads to imagination, reasoning, arriving at new ideas and conclusions. In this process the mind is not doing a mechanical work, or the "drudgery" of mere remembering, but something in which the person takes great pleasure.



When we view an object, our brain does not "see" it as a whole. Thousands of nerve cells in the retina of our eye transmit the information in coded "bits" in a sort of mosaic pattern to the brain

George Leonard, author of *Education and Ecstasy,* amazed at the staggering possibilities of the brain's neuron interactions, said: "A brain composed of such neurons obviously can never be 'filled up.'" Some researchers say that everything you have ever seen, heard or experienced is somewhere, somehow, in your memory. Others say that you discard or forget about 90 percent—things of little importance, things you casually see only once or consider unimportant. Your eye may take in a view of a building. The details are there—the number of windows, the names on the offices, and so forth. But your mind does not try to retain these details. Yet the mind sometimes performs feats that seem to belie this idea that it forgets. For instance, you may be able to recall a store you saw in a little town you passed through on your vacation trip. You may see the store clearly, a car standing in front of it, though you had no interest in it at the time.

Nevertheless, the mind generally seems to register impressions, not merely for the purpose of being a large storehouse of facts, but primarily to be useful for future needs. John Pfeiffer, in his book *The Human Brain,* says: "The word 'stored' may be too tame. The brain is a dynamic system of cells. It never stops using and reusing its memory traces, adding new items, or trying new combinations. The abstractions it makes are used, among other things, to help us predict." Forecasts of weather or business trends, our actions in everyday life, such as buying clothing, are based on our memory of what happened yesterday, or last month, or last year.

An example of how memory serves your immediate, present purpose and is not merely a storage space of past events is this: You may be in a variety store looking for a certain item, say, a spool of red thread. In passing by the counters you pay no particular attention to other items, but look only for thread. However, days later you may need another item —a child's schoolbook bag. You remember that you saw one in the store. Or it may have been a sign "Book Bags," which you really paid no attention to at the time. You may not remember exactly where the item is displayed, nor any of the other items nearby. But now you have a *need,* and memory of this specific item comes flashing to your aid. The memory was there,

recalled when there was an "emergency." Had it not been for the need, it might never have been recalled from your memory "files."

Memory's Stability

Memory is so valuable to the individual that to destroy it completely would be a disaster. It would wipe out a large portion of his personality. But there is an unknown "safety factor" that usually prevents such a calamity. Most persons who lose their memory, due to an accident or injury, lose only the recent past. The book *The Human Brain,* referred to earlier, recounts a report that appeared in the New York *Times* years ago. It was when Jack Sharkey was contender for the world heavyweight championship. He was walking past Yankee Stadium with his manager. Sharkey remarked:

"I don't like the looks of that sky. It might rain and I'd hate to have my fight postponed."

"What fight?" his manager asked.

"Are you my manager or aren't you?" Sharkey retorted. "I don't want to surprise you but I'm fighting Jack Dempsey in the Stadium tonight."

"This may be news to you, but you've already fought Dempsey. He knocked you out in the seventh round."

The book then says:

"Complete blackouts of past episodes are typical of damage to the temporal lobes of the cortex [under the temples on each side of the head]. When the regions are hurt, no memory traces may be formed. Sharkey knew exactly what he was doing during the fight. He recognized his manager, followed advice and put up a good battle. He was completely conscious and had access to past memories. But his brain was not producing records of current events. In other words, the immediate past was represented by short-term memory only, eddying currents in nerve-cell circuits. The eddies stopped after the knockout. Although the previous memories of the boxer were left intact, there was a gap—a 'hole' in his past—for the time of the fighting."

This incident demonstrates that memories very recently made, called "short-term" memories, can be erased. Much more rarely, persons have been known to lose also their earlier, more permanent memory as well, but this has often been restored in time. An enigma as to the location of memory is this: When a person's brain is stimulated at a certain point by an electric current, he may recall an entire experience of many years ago in sharp detail. Yet, strangely, a brain injury affecting exactly that same part of the brain does not destroy that memory. People have had their brains damaged extensively without seriously affecting their stored (more permanent) memory. Animals have had half their brain disconnected without seriously affecting the things they had learned. Memory seems to have alternate routes, or a "three-dimension" location in the brain, not being restricted to one part—a real protection.

It is important to remember that the mind does not function by itself. The entire body contributes to its operation. All the organs of the body being interrelated, are interdependent, in harmony with the Bible explanation that man is a *unit,* a *soul.* (Gen. 2:7; 1 Cor. 12:14-20) Each organ has its effect on the personality. The brain gets its information through the senses. These senses are essential to the brain's function. They also supply "feedback," without which the brain would be of little practical use. When you pick up a fruit, perhaps a peach, your eye relays to your mind the position, direction and speed of your hand, constantly making corrections. Your sense of touch tells the mind when the fingers touch the peach, the strength of your grip on it, enough to hold it but not so much that you crush it.

At the same time the saliva and other digestive juices may begin to flow in anticipation of eating it.

Developing the Mind for Life and Happiness

What are some factors involved in developing the mind? Language is an important one. It makes memory and the recall of things learned much easier. The importance of the use of language in speech is seen in the brain's constitution. How? In that an unusually large area of the brain is reserved to control the expressions of the face, especially the mouth, tongue and lips. Speech helps the mind to store up a lot of information in a compact way. Words are "coded" information. Think of all the meaning and associations brought to mind by the word "house."

Consequently, developing our use of language develops our mind. Use of right speech, expressive words, avoiding vulgarity and obscenity, builds up the memory "library" for profitable use.—Eph. 4:29; Col. 3:8, 9.

Of most vital importance to the development of our mind is our attitude. It governs to a great extent the things we put into our permanent memory. If we love exclusively the things that merely entertain the mind, we may never rise beyond the mental level of a twelve-year-old child. We will not have in our memory the things that our mind needs to be able to piece together to reach serious conclusions on important matters of life. If we focus our love and attention on unessential or degrading things, our memory will be filled with "trash," and trash is all we will get out of it.

Repetition of good or bad conversation or actions develops in the individual a "spirit" or dominant mental inclination one way or the other. But even if we have let our mind be unused or have dwelt on wrong things to a large extent, we should not despair. It is not too late to get busy and make a recovery, no matter what our age. The apostle Paul said that we can 'be made new in the "spirit" or dominant attitude that actuates our mind,' and can "put on the new personality." (Eph. 4: 23, 24, *Kingdom Interlinear Translation*) Sincerely studying God's Word, the Bible, will help us to get assistance from God. Thinking about and putting to work the things we learn will arouse our minds to activity and bring them vigor, along with happiness and real purpose in life.

This points inevitably to one feature of the mind that scientists have been unable to observe functioning as they study the brain, but many acknowledge that it is there. That is the capacity for spirituality, the need for a relationship with God. In fact, the mind was created with this capacity. (Gen. 1:26) All men have the desire to worship, and even efforts by atheistic governments have been unable to submerge it completely. If this capacity or need is not satisfied, a man cannot be happy. Jesus Christ repeated God's words to ancient Israel: "Man must live, not on bread alone, but on every utterance coming forth through Jehovah's mouth," and, "It is Jehovah your God you must worship, and it is to him alone you must render sacred service."—Matt. 4:4; Luke 4:8; Deut. 6:13; 8:3; 10:20.

So the mind that does not take in spiritual things is not operating fully according to the way it was made to function. Improper functioning of the mind, in turn, affects the entire person, with deterioration resulting. (Jas. 1:13-15) But we can make our minds over so that they are operating the way their Maker designed them. (Rom. 12:2) There is great satisfaction in life when we do so.

THE NETHERLANDS Frees Imprisoned Witnesses

BACK in 1936 Johan Akkerman was the first Witness to hear the gates of the Veenhuizen Penal Institution close shut behind him. As one of Jehovah's witnesses, he had conscientiously refused to do military service. Thirty-eight years later, on July 19, 1974, the last of Jehovah's witnesses was released from that same prison.

This was 'big news' for the press. Headlines like "JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES GO HOME" made the front pages of prominent papers of the land.

To many officials this marked the end of a problem that had bothered them for a long time—that of putting decent, clean-cut young men into prison alongside hardened criminals simply because they refused to violate their Christian conscience. To Jehovah's witnesses it was another victory in the fight for the freedom to worship God in the way the Bible commands.

Background for This Decision

What led up to this sensational news? To understand, one must realize that when a Netherlander turns eighteen he must submit to a medical examination. Should he prove to be physically and mentally sound, he is subject to call for military training when he turns twenty. If he conscientiously objects to the use of weapons he may apply for noncombatant service.

But Jehovah's witnesses in the Netherlands have refused, not only military service, but also any noncombatant work offered as a substitute. The Scriptural reason for their stand will be considered later in this article.

By "Awake!" correspondent in the Netherlands

Before World War II, the problem of conscientious objection involving Jehovah's witnesses was small. But during the war the problem grew, and it continued afterward. Since Dutch law provided exemption from military service for those who held the office of a regular minister of religion and for those preparing for that office, it was deemed wise to enter the courts of law to try to obtain this right.

Such exemption was granted to the ministers of those organizations whose names appeared on a special list. However, the name of Jehovah's witnesses was not included on this list. But the law provided also that the Minister of Defense could grant exemption to ministers of a religion whose name was not listed if he chose to do so. Jehovah's witnesses, therefore, tried to move the Minister toward granting exemptions in some cases.

For about ten years, beginning in 1949, scores of cases were argued before the Council of State, whose duty it was to counsel the government on the advisability of granting exemption. But in time it became clear that exemption would depend on the personal willingness of the Minister

and not on proving a legal right. So these efforts were abandoned.

This decade of effort was not altogether without some good results, however. Favorable comments appeared from time to time in the press. For example, a public prosecutor stated: "I have committed the accused to the house of detention, but I realize he does not belong among criminals."—*Het Vrije Volk,* November 11, 1955.

During this period it was chiefly the Ministry of Justice that took steps to ease the conditions of imprisonment. From 1950 on, an overseer of Jehovah's witnesses from the Amsterdam branch office was permitted to visit the imprisoned once a month. Then in 1956 permission was granted to visit the prisoners without the presence of a guard. Also, the duration of the visits was lengthened.

From 1958 on, Bible literature for private study was permitted to enter the prison. In time, the imprisoned Witnesses were moved to barracks adjoining the Veenhuizen Penal Institution and given comparative freedom of movement. Finally, they were allowed to visit their homes on weekends and were also allowed out to attend conventions of Jehovah's witnesses. But still the Witnesses were being sent to prison, a fact that stirred the conscience of many in the nation.

Authorities Begin to Listen

On March 26, 1971, three representatives of Jehovah's witnesses met with a forum representing the ministries of Defense and Justice. The discussion lasted two and a half hours.

One of the first points of discussion presented by the forum was this: "That you wish no part in performing military service is clear and needs no further explanation. But what really is your objection to civil, alternative service?"

The Witnesses explained that it is not that they are opposed to civil service as such, but, rather, it is a matter of strict neutrality. Therefore, any work that is merely a substitute for military service would be unacceptable to Jehovah's witnesses.

Other questions narrowed the issue down still further. "When a person objects to military service," the government's agents declared, "he passes from military jurisdiction on to civil jurisdiction and from that moment has nothing at all to do with the military. Why, then, is the accepting of such civil service still so objectionable?"

Willingly accepting such work is objectionable to the Christian because of what God's law says about the matter: "You were bought with a price; stop becoming slaves of men." (1 Cor. 7:23) Civilian servitude as a substitute for military service would be just as objectionable to the Christian. In effect, he would thereby become a part of the world instead of keeping separate as Jesus commanded.—John 15:19; 17:14-16.

The discussion now took a new turn. "What suggestion would you like to give as to the handling of cases involving Jehovah's witnesses?" the committee asked. The answer: Exemption for the full-time as well as the part-time preachers of the Gospel, as the law provides. It was pointed out that members of certain religious orders in the Netherlands enjoy exemption, yet they do nothing more than live in an institution and brew beer.

The committee voiced its concern over this suggestion by the Witnesses. It feared that this would open the gates for all kinds of persons whose only purpose was to avoid military service. But Jehovah's witnesses assured the committee that it would be nearly impossible for pretenders to get

by the screening process that takes place in the local congregations of the Witnesses.

Parliament Member Asks Questions

Less than four months later a witness of Jehovah was sentenced to twenty-one months in prison on the military issue. His lawyer, Mr. Spermon, pleaded the case on the ground that his client was a minister of the Gospel. Then he issued a public statement in which he said, among other things: "Catholic and Protestant theology students obtain exemption from military service as well as alternative civil service simply due to the fact that they attend a recognized theological school. Because Jehovah's witnesses in the Netherlands do not have a theological college and, moreover, their religion does not enjoy legal recognition as a religious denomination they do not come in line for the possibilities provided for in the law governing conscientious objection."

To this Mr. Spermon added: 'This criterium does not please me much. It reeks too much of the authorities' meddling in the internal matters of church societies. According to the Law on Religious Societies of 1853, the regulation of church society is taboo for the state because that is left up to the religious society itself.'—*De Tijd*, Thursday, July 22, 1971.

These statements triggered off other action. A member of parliament, Mr. D. A. Th. van Ooijen, wrote to the ministers of Defense and Justice, asking: "Are statesmen willing to voice their opinion as to the following statement by Mr. W. Spermon to the Supreme Military Tribunal . . . ?" He then set out the substance of Spermon's above-quoted statement.

Then the parliamentarian asked other pointed questions: "Is it true that Jehovah's witnesses in the United States, Sweden and Germany enjoy exemption from military and alternative service if they can provide evidence that they spend a sufficient amount of time in the preaching work?" "Are statesmen willing to expedite matters so that the Law on Church Societies which leaves it up to the church society to determine who should be recognized as its minister of public religious service, also thus applies to the witnesses of Jehovah?"

Now the Ministry of Defense Takes Action

On October 25, 1973, the three representatives of Jehovah's witnesses were sitting at a table with the committee representing the Ministry of Defense. The committee took time to be thoroughly informed on the organizational structure of Jehovah's witnesses and their procedure in appointing their "full-time ministers."

As this meeting progressed it became quite apparent that internally the Ministry of Defense had already taken steps toward recognizing "full-time ministers" as such. Then, unexpectedly, one of the members of the committee posed the possibility of also exempting those who were preparing to be "full-time ministers." Since it was seemingly only a suggestion, the representatives of Jehovah's witnesses treated the proposal rather cautiously. However, the committee pursued the subject and even insisted on it.

The result of this meeting was that the Netherlands headquarters of Jehovah's witnesses was authorized to pass this information on to the congregations. In this way all those preparing for the "full-time ministry" would know of these new developments. From now on, all those in this category would receive indefinite postponement from military and alternative service, pending a final passage of law in this regard.

You can imagine how welcome this good news was after so many years of

effort! And it was thought that this would be the end of the matter. But yet another chapter was to be written into the history of the fight for freedom of worship in the Netherlands. On June 11, 1974, the same representatives of Jehovah's witnesses met with the same committee from the Ministry of Defense. This proved to be the shortest session to date, but one with far-reaching consequences.

On this occasion the Defense representatives announced that in the future all baptized witnesses of Jehovah, on recommendation by the body of elders in their respective congregations, would be exempted from military service pending the definite passage of law. The procedure for handling these cases was then satisfactorily worked out. The plea for exemption in each case, signed by the congregation's body of elders, would be routed through the branch office of Jehovah's witnesses. There the signatures of the elders would be certified before being forwarded to the government. In this way the credibility of each plea would be confirmed for the Ministry of Defense.

The Ministry of Justice, in harmony with this decision of the Ministry of Defense, acted quickly by releasing all the Witnesses then imprisoned. Twelve days after the last Witness had been released, on July 31, 1974, people in all parts of the country were surprised to read in their daily papers such headlines as "JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES GO HOME."

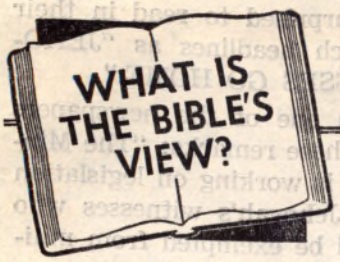
The report in one of the newspapers concluded with these remarks: "The Ministry of Defense is working on legislation whereby all of Jehovah's witnesses who are baptized will be exempted from military service. In anticipation of the processing of this law by the States General all prosecution of objecting Jehovah's witnesses has been suspended. The Ministry of Justice deemed that under the circumstances it was not just to hold in prison any longer those of their co-members who already had been prosecuted."

So it was that a quarter of a century of struggle for freedom to worship God according to the dictates of one's own conscience ended with the release of twenty-eight Witnesses. And just in time —a few days before the "Divine Purpose" District Assemblies of Jehovah's witnesses this past summer in the Netherlands.

We hope and pray that as individuals the men responsible for this wise decision will, in harmony with the Bible's exhortation, "kiss the son [Jesus Christ]," acknowledging him as earth's King, and thus come in line to receive of the grand blessings that his glorious Kingdom rule, so near at hand, will bestow on all obedient mankind.—Ps. 2:12.

The Value of Translation

● Commenting on the value of translation, a Canadian writer notes: "It is commonplace to hear learned people say that such-and-such a book must be read in the original language to be appreciated, but Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote: 'What is really best in any book is translatable—any real insight or broad human sentiment.' " As proof of this point, the writer refers to the Holy Bible as the most translated book and adds: "No book has had so revolutionary influences or had such a world-wide effect as the *Bible*. . . . People of all races find through these translations the answers to the great problems plaguing the world: war, immorality, crime, juvenile delinquency, racial and religious prejudice, atheism and despair."



Mourning for the Dead

A MAN in India sets some rice before a cock at the crossing of two roads. A woman in Liberia shaves off all of her hair, and wears a black dress for several months. A man in Taiwan stands before a small table on which there are two images, some incense, and a picture of a woman; and he burns paper money. While mourning for dead loved ones, people throughout the earth practice these and many other customs.

What is the Bible's view of such practices? Do they really assist dead relatives? Would failure to follow such traditions bring harm upon us? Are they pleasing to God? What should a Christian's attitude be about mourning for the dead? Since our beliefs and customs regarding mourning for the dead involve our worship of God and our relationship with him, it is important for us to know the answers to these questions.

Many customs involved in mourning for the dead are based on the belief that when a person dies his soul continues living in "the next world." Many persons, believing this, desire to help dead loved ones to be comfortable and happy in their "afterlife." Therefore they may offer food or drink to dead relatives (in some cases this is later eaten by the living), or, like the man from Taiwan, they may burn money for their dead relatives to use. In the past, servants were even put to death with their master so that they could continue serving him after his death.

Are such efforts, though they may be well-meaning, really appreciated by the dead? Can the living help the dead? King David of ancient Israel did not think so. While his child was sick he wept and fasted; but when the child died, he arose, put on fresh clothes, and began eating again. To his surprised servants, David explained, "Now that he has died, why is it I am fasting? Am I able to bring him back again?" He realized that once the child had died there was nothing that he could do to help him.—2 Sam. 12:23.

Certain other customs are practiced because people are living in fear of the dead. To appease a person who has died, many persons in West Africa hold a wake over the dead body. For several days and nights friends and relatives stay with the body. Loud singing, beating of drums, and drinking are usually part of the wake. It is hoped that all this noise and attention will please the dead person, so that he will not trouble the living. To protect themselves from the dead, many persons in widely scattered parts of the earth engage in various rituals, seek for signs and use charms.

However, there is no reason to fear the dead nor to spend time and money to appease them. Why not? The Bible says: "For the living are conscious that they will die; but as for the dead, they are conscious of nothing at all, neither do they anymore have wages, because the remembrance of them has been forgotten. Also, their love and their hate and their jealousy have already perished, and they have no portion anymore to time indefinite in anything that has to be done under the sun." —Eccl. 9:5, 6.

What about the soul? Is it not something invisible and

immortal? No, according to the Bible, the "soul" is the person himself. At Genesis 2:7 we read: "Jehovah God proceeded to form the man out of dust from the ground and to blow into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man came to be a living soul." Since man is a soul, when he dies the soul dies. "The soul that is sinning—it itself will die."—Ezek. 18:4, 20.

Since customs designed to assist or appease the dead are based on a false concept about the soul, a devoted servant of Jehovah God should have no part in them. How, then, should he express his grief at the death of a loved one? Many persons believe that one should wear black for a certain period of time. But what do Bible principles indicate about this custom?

It is natural for humans to feel grief and sorrow over the loss of a dearly loved friend or relative. God's servants in the past expressed such sorrow. Abraham wept over the death of Sarah. The nation of Israel mourned the death of Moses for thirty days. Nevertheless, by his laws to the Israelites Jehovah separated them from the surrounding pagan nations with regard to their mourning customs. Those pagans used to shave their heads and make cuts on their bodies when a relative died (certain African tribes still do). However, Jehovah forbade the Israelites to do these things. (Lev. 19:28; Deut. 14:1) This served to protect them from being corrupted by false worship. While Christians are not under the Mosaic law, they are instructed by Jesus to be "no part of the world."—John 15:19.

The wearing of black for extended periods is used as an external sign of mourning. Although Jesus wept and 'groaned within himself' after Lazarus died, there is no indication in the Scriptures that he ever employed any of the outward expressions of sorrow that were common among the Jews at that time. (John 11:35, 38) Jesus foretold that his followers would fast out of grief after his death, but he also instructed them that they should fast so as to be noticed only by God and not by men. (Mark 2:20; Matt. 6:16-18) Thus the Scriptures reason against wearing black for extended periods or using other outward symbols to express sorrow over a death. So true followers of Christ would evidence grief in their 'hearts and not their garments.'—Joel 2:12, 13.

On the other hand, they certainly would not want to offend others by wearing clothing that is too gay or casual when it is 'a time to mourn.' (Eccl. 3:1, 4, *AS*) On one occasion relatives and friends went to the home of a deceased father to sympathize; but they were shocked, and some angered, to see the daughter in an old housedress and slippers, giving them the impression of passing off the death lightly.

Then, too, whenever death strikes a family, it is not a time for pursuit of pleasure or laughter. As wise King Solomon explained, "A name is better than good oil, and the day of death than the day of one's being born. Better is it to go to the house of mourning than to go to the banquet house, because that is the end of all mankind; and the one alive should take it to his heart. Better is vexation than laughter, for by the crossness of the face the heart becomes better."—Eccl. 7:1-3.

When an acquaintance dies it is the loving thing to go to the house that is in mourning and console the sad survivors. Often providing a meal or taking care of some errand would be appreciated at such a time. Visiting the mourners not only comforts the bereaved but also induces us to remember life's brevity. By reflecting on the fact that the death that came upon this house could come upon us soon enough, we will recognize the need to make a good name with Jehovah God now. If we have been spending too much time

in the pursuit of pleasure and laughter, reflection should sober us to change our heart for the better.

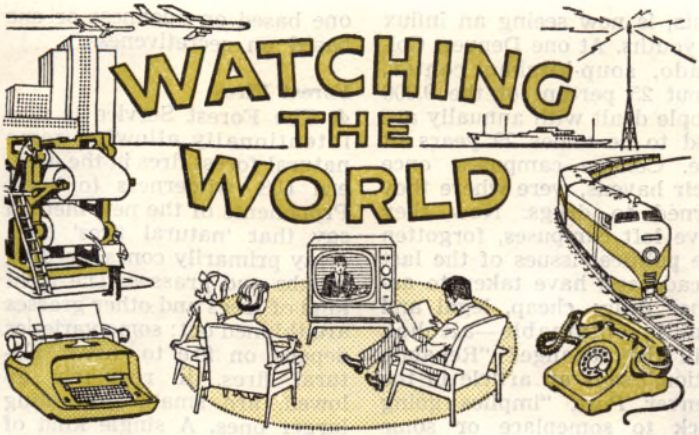
However, it is important to keep in mind that too much mourning and grief can have a weakening effect on us. While we will deeply miss a deceased loved one, we should avoid feeling unduly sorry for ourselves. Grief resulting from learning that Jesus was about to die caused his disciples to sleep instead of praying as he had instructed them to do on the night before his death. (Luke 22:45, 46) Consequently, they all abandoned him when he was arrested. After he proved to them that God had resurrected him from the dead by appearing to them on several occasions, their joy and zeal were restored.

This wonderful hope of the resurrection will prevent us from being overcome by sadness. The apostle Paul exhorts: "Moreover, brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant concerning those who are sleeping in death; that you may not sorrow just as the rest also do who have no hope. For if our faith is that Jesus died and rose again, so, too, those who have fallen asleep in death through Jesus God will bring with him." And he adds, "Consequently keep comforting one another with these words."—1 Thess. 4:13, 14, 18.

We do not need to be 'ignorant concerning the dead' like the majority of mankind who believe the false teaching of the immortality of the human soul. The fact that they really have no hope is often evident by the way that they carry on when mourning for their dead. One formerly Methodist couple saw clearly the contrast between the faith in the resurrection that Jehovah's witnesses manifest and the lack of genuine hope that they had experienced at Christendom's funerals. The daughter of relatives who were Jehovah's witnesses had died. The faith and strength of this Witness couple, and the Bible explanation of why man dies and of the resurrection that they heard at the Witness funeral deeply impressed them. By means of a study of the Bible with Jehovah's witnesses they have now gained that same faith and hope.

By taking in knowledge of what the Bible teaches about the resurrection of the dead, you, too, can enjoy that hope. After Jesus "poured out his soul to the very death," God resurrected him to immortal spirit life on the third day. (Isa. 53:12; 1 Cor. 15:3, 4) This serves as a guarantee to us that God will resurrect the dead from the grave. The members of Christ's bride-like congregation receive a resurrection as heavenly spirit creatures to share with Jesus in his Kingdom government. After the Kingdom removes this present death-dealing system of things from the earth, there will be a resurrection of "both the righteous and the unrighteous." (Acts 24:15) At that time Jehovah God, through Jesus Christ and his bridal congregation, will apply to mankind the sin-atoning benefits of Christ's sacrifice, thereby restoring mankind to perfection. Then the death that we all inherited from Adam will be brought to nothing. (1 Cor. 15:21-26) Thus "God . . . will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning . . . be anymore."—Rev. 21:2-4.

Therefore, having the Bible view of what pleases God, the person desiring His approval would certainly want to avoid mourning customs that are based on the false doctrine of the immortality of the soul, or that constitute an ostentatious display of sorrow, or mourning to a degree so as to betray lack of hope in the resurrection. Not superstitious customs, but accurate knowledge of God's provisions affords real comfort, as Jesus foretold: "Happy are those who mourn, since they will be comforted."—Matt. 5:4.



Auto Sales Fraud

◈ Some used-car dealers have been known dishonestly to change the odometer reading on an automobile they are trying to sell. The odometer records the mileage that a car has been driven. Now, one of the largest automobile dealers in Westchester County, New York, has been indicted for carrying on this deception. If convicted, the dealer could be fined about $150,000 as well as lose his sales license.

A Widow's Advice

◈ Few women, when they find themselves widows, are ready for the crushing emotional blows accompanying their new state. To their surprise, "grief" takes many forms: anger, bitterness, paranoia, loss of sleep, irritableness, among others. How can a woman cope with this problem? One, Lynn Caine, relates her experience in *Widow*, a recently published book. She says: "The best single bit of advice I can give to other widows may be—keep your job if you have one, and find one if you don't. . . . A part-time job, a volunteer job, anything that will provide you with a routine and stability. . . . You have to understand that your mind is not working properly. Even though you think it is."

Religion as News

◈ Currently changes come fast and steady in the world of religion. Now the president of the U.S. Religion Newswriters Association says that even these expert religion-watchers are baffled by the adjustments. He writes in *Theology Today:* "With Vatican Council II . . . and the social crusades of the 1960s, even the most isolated editors realized that religion was news. Today the nature of religious news is in transition. There are more downbeat pieces on the church establishment, more offbeat developments and new faiths. . . . Religion specialists themselves often admit confusion about where things are heading."

A "Psychic" Tested

◈ Scientists at California's Stanford Research Institute recently conducted controlled experiments with Uri Geller, a claimed magician and psychic. In one case the scientists consulted other magicians so as to make their tests "cheat-proof." Geller was sealed in a room with metal walls preventing him from seeing out or receiving radio signals. Outside, a dictionary was opened at random and the first word that could be graphically depicted was drawn. Inside the room Geller was to make the same drawing. Most of his pictures are said to have been remarkably similar to the original drawing, according to an item in Britain's conservative *Nature* magazine.

Business Debts

◈ U.S. business is a mind-boggling $1.1 trillion in debt! That is 1000 percent higher than at the close of World War II in 1945. "But," says a recent special issue of *Business Week*, "even that does not tell the whole story." Why not? The article continues: "Off those balance sheets, in footnotes that all too often are set in fly-speck type, is still more debt, representing equipment leased by companies." By the end of 1974, U.S. companies are expected to hold almost $90 billion worth of leased equipment.

African Drug Addicts

◈ The drug abuse problem has jolted the schools of Lagos, Nigeria. Why? Some students reportedly turn to narcotics as a result of "overpampering" by parents who give them too much money and freedom. Interestingly, however, others are said to become addicted after failure to measure up to academic goals. All schools, the local *Daily Times* reports, have the drug problem; it adds that the results of student addiction "in most cases have been very disastrous."

Marijuana and Driving

◈ Knowledge of the bad effects of marijuana is accumulating. Now a University of British Columbia professor reports in *Science* magazine on one area of real life where this drug can particularly cause problems: driving an automobile. He writes: "It is evident that the smoking of marijuana by human subjects does have a detrimental effect on their driving skills and performance in a restricted driving area, and that this effect is even greater under normal condi-

tions of driving on city streets. . . . Driving under the influence of marijuana should be avoided as much as should driving under the influence of alcohol."

Mormons Divided

◈ Mormons do not allow blacks to be ordained into their "priesthood." This causes many problems within the church. Of this situation, Lowry Nelson says in *Christian Century:* "I am one Mormon who finds that situation unfortunate indeed." He contends: "Intrachurch critics scoff at the official position as pure myth." Can church leaders change the teaching? Or, are they powerless? Nelson writes: "Even if they were to find a way to change the policy, a large majority of the members would no doubt suffer a severe shock. They have been told for generations that blacks are not worthy of the priesthood, and, it must be admitted, they have found a comfortable religious sanction for their 'natural' prejudices."

Language Changes

◈ Languages, as well as people's attitudes toward them, change. For instance, with the petroleum crisis a year ago, interest in Arabic soared. Language schools report that, in some cases, the number of students of Arabic has quadrupled. Part of the rise is due to businessmen hoping to get mid-East jobs. Over 100 million people, it is estimated, speak Arabic. Meanwhile, when the Vatican's Roman Catholic Synod of Bishops convened in September, most prelates felt compelled to use Latin. As the sessions ended, most were employing modern tongues—to the relief of speakers and listeners. Says a theologian: "The bishops speak awful Latin."

Youths on Skid Row

◈ Skid row, the hangout of alcoholics and other social outcasts, is now seeing an influx of youths. At one Denver, Colorado, soup-kitchen center, about 25 percent of the 9,000 people dealt with annually are said to be under 29 years of age. College campuses, once their havens, were where they turned to drugs. Now they have left campuses, forgotten the political issues of the last decade and have taken to another drug: cheap, legal and readily obtainable—alcohol. Will they change? "Rehabilitation," says an article in the Denver *Post,* "implies going back to someplace or some stage a person has experienced before. These men . . . have no place to which to return, and if they did return, it probably wouldn't help them."

God and Englishmen

◈ According to a recent poll, fewer Englishmen now believe in God. The study, made for the British Broadcasting Corporation, reveals that only 29 percent of those interviewed even claimed to believe in a 'personal God'; that compares with 38 percent in 1963. The pollsters also found that 42 percent admit that they never go to church at all, while another 11 percent go less than once a year.

Trust Missing

◈ There is a growing worldwide chorus calling for international disarmament control. Although there have been agreements signed, devices to detect banned nuclear tests constructed, and observation teams from opposing nations formed, weapons production continues to swell. What is needed? Swedish disarmament expert Alva Myrdal says "mutual confidence" is lacking, and adds: "Ultimately such confidence depends on the trustworthiness of the nations that are parties to the agreement. . . . It involves the question of what kind of world society one wants to foster for the future: one based on openness or one based on secretiveness."

Forest Fires

◈ The Forest Service is now intentionally allowing some natural forest fires in the western U.S. wilderness to burn. Proponents of the new method say that 'natural fires' burn away primarily cones, needles, shrubs and grasses. The right kind of trees and other grasses are thinned out; some varieties depend on fire to thrive. Natural fires, if regularly allowed, are small, preventing larger ones. A single kind of vegetation does not widely develop as fuel for a huge fire. Opponents of the idea say that the environmentalists are only guessing. They claim that soil cover in the Rockies is thin and fragile; by allowing fires to burn the soil is sterilized and humus is destroyed.

Pigeon Problem

◈ *Atlantic* magazine says that New York city, along with its 8 million people, has 5 million pigeons. Other major cities have similar high pigeon populations. Experts are baffled by what they consider the major problems these birds create. Their droppings coat statues and benches, infect food of vendors and are known to contribute to respiratory diseases. Worst of all, in the opinion of many, the pigeons just will not go away. Nothing—sticky coatings on building ledges, exploding carbide shells, poisoned bread crumbs or sharpshooters—will scare them off. However, it should not be forgotten that other people appreciate city pigeons, believing that they bring signs of natural life to cold concrete skyscrapers.

Biodegradable Plastics

◈ Plastics have not seemed to be biodegradable; that is, they do not appear to break down or disintegrate as do other substances, as, for in-

stance, paper. However, a recent British report says that nitric acid has been found effective in accomplishing the job. The product that results from the "oxidizing" of the plastic, according to the report, can be used to cultivate 19 species of fungi. It is thought that this fungi, in turn, can be made into a protein supplement to feed animals—and maybe man.

Desert Reefs

◈ The Soviet newspaper *Vechernyaya Moskva* reports that borehole drillers have found reefs well over a mile beneath the nation's largest desert, the 100,000-square-mile Kara-Kum in the Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic, just east of the Caspian Sea. It is said to have at one time been inhabited by fossil plants and animals. The paper concludes that the find confirms the theory that the Kara-Kum once "was the bottom of a tropical sea."

Bartenders Give Counsel

◈ Bartenders have always been known to listen as someone mumbled about problems over his beer. Now, in Racine, Wisconsin, as well as in some other cities across the U.S., bartenders can take a short course to show them how to spot people with emotional, personal, economic, or drinking problems and then how to direct them to professional help. Groups of taxi drivers, barbers, beauticians and others in a listening position are starting similar programs.

Gum Arabic Shortage

◈ The drought in Africa is bringing unforeseen consequences for the rest of the world. Gum arabic—an essential ingredient in gum drops and other candies—is in short supply. Why? It is given off by acacia trees in Africa; but the drought has resulted in a shortage of gum collection by tribesmen. Thus its price has gone up *ninefold* in one year, from $364 a ton to $3,172. More than candy is affected. Gum arabic is also used to make the adhesive on postage stamps and envelopes, and is employed in the offset printing process.

Now, What Are You Worth?

◈ The inorganic components of a person weighing 150 pounds are now worth about $5.60, according to Dr. Donald T. Forman at Northwestern University. In 1969 the value was $3.50. And in 1936, a mere 98 cents. However, the doctor points out, inflation, and not the rarity of any of the body's elements, is the reason for the increase.