

SEPTEMBER 22, 1978

Awake!

ARGENTINA

Champion of Freedom

—or of Intolerance?

NEW YORK, N.Y.

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HOW
REMINISCENT
of the
great
American
novels
of the
1920s and
30s

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FEATURE ARTICLES

Reports from Argentina tell of men and women dismissed from their jobs, some detained for weeks in prison, children deprived of schooling, meetings invaded by the police—all because of their religious beliefs. The following series of articles provides details and tells what you might do to help them.

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WHY THIS MAGAZINE IS PUBLISHED

"Awake!" is for the enlightenment of the entire family. It reports the news, tells about people in many lands, examines religion and science. But it does more. It probes beneath the surface and points to the real meaning behind current events, yet it stays politically neutral and does not exalt one race above another. It also shows how to cope with today's problems. Most importantly, "Awake!" builds confidence in the Creator's promise of a peaceful and secure new order within our generation.

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ARGENTINA: CHAMPION OF FREEDOM —OR OF RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE?

“JEHOVAH’S WITNESSES BANNED IN ARGENTINA!” That was the news carried across the Argentine nation and around the world by newspapers, television and radio during the first week of September 1976.

Time-consuming legal proceedings followed as Jehovah’s Witnesses appealed the ban through the Argentine court system. At last, in February 1978, the result of this legal action became known, as news sources declared: **“SUPREME COURT UPHOLDS EXECUTIVE DECREE BANNING JEHOVAH’S WITNESSES.”**

In nations of the Western world where the Christian activity of the Witnesses is well known, this shocking news brought forth protests—and questions. Many asked: ‘Why this religious persecution and discrimination in Argentina?’ Others wondered: ‘Does not the Argentine Constitution guarantee freedom of worship?’

official response

How were such questions answered by official spokesmen for the military government? These officials, and many newspapers too, were quick to reply that freedom of conscience and of religion *continued* to prevail as cherished traditions in Argentina—this in spite of the fact that a total ban had just been upheld on the Christian activities of Jehovah’s Witnesses!

An example of this amazing official response was noted in a form letter issued by the Argentine Embassy in Pretoria, South Africa. The letter stated, in part:

“Freedom of conscience has been and continues to be fully guaranteed under the Constitution and Laws of Argentina. ‘Jehovah’s Witnesses,’ in common with other religious bodies, have found . . . complete freedom for the practice of their beliefs.” Yet the Witnesses were at the time under ban!

The embassy form letter added: “It has never been the intention of the Argentine Government to curb or deny individual freedom of conscience, and much less to persecute any person for his religious convictions.” But these very curbs, denials of individual freedoms and persecutions were already inflicted on Jehovah’s Witnesses!

contradictions abound!

La Nación, a leading Argentine newspaper, in an editorial of February 17, 1978, asserted: “The Argentine Nation can exhibit before the world, with legitimate pride over its history, the tolerance of its laws and of its people for the practice of religion.” It added: “As in few places in the world . . . the law protects and permits [other religions] ‘to freely practice their religion,’ according to the wise Constitutional prescription.”

It is claimed that religious tolerance is ‘prescribed by the Argentine Constitution.’ Yet, let us examine these facts:

The September 1976 ban, together with the February 1978 Supreme Court ruling, has deprived Jehovah’s Witnesses in Argentina of their freedom to worship God;

The meeting places for Christian worship and Bible study of Jehovah's Witnesses have been closed *by law*;

The publication and distribution of Bibles and Bible literature by Jehovah's Witnesses have been prohibited;

Hundreds of the children of Jehovah's Witnesses have been expelled from primary and secondary schools. Similarly, adult Witnesses in the employ of the government at federal, provincial and municipal levels, as well as in public utilities and schools, have been dismissed without pay;

A growing number of police raids have taken place on the private homes of Jehovah's Witnesses. They have been arrested and detained for hours, days and even weeks;

Jehovah's Witnesses have been victims of insults, blows and attempted intimidation on the part of the constituted authorities. On some occasions even the basic elements for their physical needs have not been provided.

Now, then, is all of this the religious tolerance 'prescribed by the Argentine Constitution'?

what does the constitution say?

Just what does Argentina's Constitution say about the rights of its citizens relative to freedom? Note some of the following articles incorporated in the law.

Article 14 states: "All of the inhabitants of the Nation enjoy the following rights, in conformity with the laws that govern their exercise; . . . to publish their ideas in the press without previous censorship; . . . to associate together for worthwhile purposes; *to freely practice their religion*; to teach and to learn." [Italics ours]

Article 19 states: "The private actions of men that in no wise offend the public order and morals, nor injure a third party, are reserved only for God, and exempt from the authority of the Magistrates."

Then Article 20 declares: "Foreigners . . . can . . . freely exercise their religion."

what have they done?

In the face of such clearly established freedoms, why the total ban on Jehovah's Witnesses? What have they done to incur such government opposition? What have they been teaching in Argentina for the past 54 years? Let us examine the record.

In all these years, Jehovah's Witnesses in Argentina, and everywhere else too, have carefully adhered to the principle set down in God's Word at Titus chapter 3, verse 1. There it says: "Continue reminding them to be in subjection and be obedient to governments and authorities as rulers."

Do those words sound like a revolutionary manifesto with intent to destroy the established order? On the contrary, they clearly tell Bible believers, such as Jehovah's Witnesses, to obey the laws of all governments. They are not to search out ways to overthrow established governments by human means.

Such thoughts are part of the teachings that Jehovah's Witnesses have been spreading throughout Argentina since 1924. It was in that year that Juan Muñiz, who had recently arrived from Spain, began to preach the "good news" to the people who were praying and looking for God's kingdom to come in accord with the words of the Lord's Prayer taught by Jesus Christ. —Matt. 6:9, 10.

From that year on, as the Founder of Christianity commanded, the making of "disciples of people of all the nations" prospered in Argentina. (Matt. 28:19, 20) Large quantities of Bibles and Bible study aids in many languages were eagerly received by the Argentine people. In addition, free Bible lectures were delivered in person and by radio transmission. And in 1946, the legal entity called *La Torre del Vigia* (*The Watch Tower*, in Spanish) was organized and, later, officially recognized by the Argentine government.

legal recognition revoked in 1950

In 1949, the government formed a department of cults or religion within the Ministry of Foreign Relations. All religions were required to register with this newly formed agency. However, on May 26, 1950, this registration was denied to Jehovah's Witnesses! And on July 12 of the same year their legal recognition was revoked!

Since then, during all these past 28 years, Jehovah's Witnesses have repeatedly appealed to the authorities. They have appealed to ministers of Foreign Relations, to governors and even to presidents. Part of their appeal has been that they at least be given the opportunity to explain their position. Yet, all these appeals have fallen on deaf ears! *Jehovah's Witnesses have been judged and condemned without even a hearing!*

What reason has been given for such treatment? They have been told that their organization "is against the sacred principles of the Magna Charta due to teaching a doctrine contrary to the Armed Forces and to the respect that should be paid to the symbols of the Nation."

questions of conscience

In all parts of the world, Jehovah's Witnesses do not take part in such ceremonies as the saluting of the flag and the singing of national anthems. Why not? Because to them this would constitute an act of worship in direct violation of the first and second of the Ten Commandments.—Ex. 20: 3-5.

They take a stand similar to that of the three Hebrews in Babylon. (See Daniel, chapter 3.) During such ceremonies, Witness schoolchildren stand quietly and respectfully. And they never interfere with others participating in such ceremonies.

Also frequently questioned is the conscientious objection to compulsory military training by male members of Jehovah's Witnesses. Yet, Witness youths are neither deserters nor anarchists. They present themselves to the military authorities on the date that they are called up. But they request exemption because of their Bible-based beliefs. And such exemption is granted to them in many countries, particularly in the Western world.

This refusal to bear weapons of war is based on numerous Bible principles. One of these is found at Matthew 22:39, where Jesus said to his followers: "You must love your neighbor as yourself." Another command is given at Matthew 5:21, where Jesus said: "You must not murder." Similarly, in the Bible book of Isaiah, chapter 2, verse 4, God's people are told: "You must beat your swords into plowshares and not learn war anymore."

history and the Bible speak

History and the Holy Bible show that the first-century Christians had beliefs identical to those of Jehovah's Witnesses today. They refused to perform what they considered acts of worship toward the emperor and his state emblems. And they would not participate in military service or in war.

This stand of the early Christians has been verified by many historians down through the ages. One of these is Juan Bautista Alberdi, who shared in framing the Argentine Constitution. In his work *El Crimen de la Guerra* (*The Crime of War*), he said: "Present society is a mixture of two types: warring or pagan [type], peaceful or Christian [type]."

Because of this "mixture," opposition is not unexpected by Christians. Jesus Christ clearly forewarned that the "Caesar" gov-

ernments of the world would try to encroach upon the worship of true Christians. That is why the Christian apostle Peter said: "We must obey God as ruler rather than men."—Acts 5:29.

positive balance

The small band of Christians in the first century were misunderstood, maligned and persecuted. Yet they left a positive balance of benefits for humankind.

Without resorting to violence and war weapons, true Christianity transformed the very lives of those who embraced its teachings. It resulted in people's replacing practices that hurt themselves and their neighbors with beneficial practices of the highest moral and spiritual caliber.

RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE INTENSIFIES

THE time: July 9, 1976. The place: a small rural school in northeast Argentina. The event: an Argentine national holiday.

Reporters for the weekly news magazine *Gente* were visiting the school. Why? They were interested in the precarious conditions of the school, especially because it was near the Brazilian border. Reporters had written that many people were entering the country illegally. So they visited the school to see what the situation was.

However, the reporters felt that they needed to make their article more sensational. So what did they do? They placed some children with their backs to the flag

Commenting on Jehovah's Witnesses in Argentina, the Buenos Aires *Herald* of March 31, 1978, observed: "However irritating their practices may be to government officials, the Jehovah's Witnesses have proven throughout the years to be hard-working, sober, thrifty and God-fearing citizens of the kind the nation manifestly needs." A high-ranking naval officer expressed it this way: "Regarding the morality and honesty of the Witnesses, there exists no doubt."

Yet, in spite of this fine record of honesty, morality, integrity and obedience to law, Jehovah's Witnesses have been singled out for cruel treatment. Intolerance against them has intensified. Some of the events that have taken place are noted in the following article.

while other pupils participated in the flag ceremony. With the students in these positions, the reporters took pictures.

Their article was published on July 15. It stated that the children with their backs to the flag were Jehovah's Witnesses! Was this so? Absolutely not! Why, the four children of Witnesses had not even attended school that day! And even if they had been there, it would have been contrary to their Christian training to show any such disrespect for the country's flag.

So this distorted story of Jehovah's Witnesses' apparent lack of respect for the flag appeared in the press. And it quickly spread across the nation.

a chain reaction

The following month another incident took place in the same province of Misiones. There, two high school students and a teacher, together with the parents of the students, were arrested and jailed for 16 days. They were charged with "[contemptuous] slighting" of the country's emblems.

Why was this charge made? Because the students had excused themselves from singing the national anthem and also the March of San Martín. Immediately, legal defense for these Witnesses was set in motion.

Meanwhile, many of their public meeting places in the provinces of Misiones, Entre Ríos and Formosa were being forcibly closed. These actions were taken by federal and provincial authorities.

The Witnesses contested this open obstruction to freedom of worship. On August 23 they filed for a writ of "amparo" (injunction) in the Federal Court in Buenos Aires.

justice triumphs — briefly

A few days later, on August 27, Federal Judge Francisco Kalicz issued a ruling. He ordered that the Misiones Witnesses who were charged with "slighting" the national emblems be released from prison. He also ordered that they be exonerated of all charges against them!

The judge observed that "contemptuous slighting is performed with material acts." Among these acts he listed "destroying, burning, breaking, cutting, soiling, spitting, tearing and trampling." He also noted that such contemptuous slighting is performed "verbally (whistling, hissing) or by writing and even with offensive gestures."

Were the Witnesses guilty of any of

these things? The judge noted that "no element of weight comes forth from the proceedings that any of the ones charged might have had that intention." He added: "To the contrary all are unanimous in asserting their respect for all the national emblems, as well as for the laws."

Certainly, on that day, justice gained ground. But the triumph was brief—very brief. It lasted only four days!

the blow falls

On August 31, 1976, the government issued its *coup de grâce*. It issued Presidential Decree #1867.

Part of this decree stated: "The freedom of religion consecrated by articles 14 and 20 of the National Constitution of course finds itself limited in the sense that religious ideas should not imply the violation of laws or an attempt against public order, national security, morals or good customs."

Yet none of those charges have ever been sustained against Jehovah's Witnesses, as Judge Francisco Kalicz indicated in his decision.

Nevertheless, the decree went on to say: "For this reason . . . THE PRESIDENT OF THE ARGENTINE NATION DECREES:

"ARTICLE 1: The activity of the religious association 'JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES' or 'THE WATCH TOWER BIBLE TRACT ASSOCIATION' and all groups, entities, or associations directly or indirectly related to said association is prohibited in all of the territory of the Nation.

"ARTICLE 2: Likewise are prohibited (a) the papers, magazines, and all publications that openly or otherwise contribute to the doctrine under consideration; (b) the acts of proselyting and indoctrination.

"ARTICLE 3: All places where the afore-mentioned association holds meetings

as well as the places where such material mentioned in Article 2 is printed, distributed or sold will be closed.

"ARTICLE 4: Through the Ministry of the Interior provisions will be adopted and instructions will be given for the carrying out of this decree."

In connection with the government's actions, the legal brief filed by the Ministry of the Interior's General Direction of Legal Matters asserted: "It has not been proven . . . that the sect is devoted to religious worship, that such worship is in accord with our morals and good customs."

Of course, the facts are just the opposite. It has been clearly proven throughout this century that Jehovah's Witnesses are intensely devoted to religious worship. And that worship is of the highest moral caliber. Nor does it interfere with the way anyone else chooses to worship or the customs they may want to practice. Authorities all over the world, including the United States Supreme Court, have long ago established the truth of these matters.

The legal brief also contained this amazing statement: "Liberty cannot be thought of in the case of a religion that admits cannibalism, ritual murder, or polygamy, and, by the same token, a religion such as is present in this case cannot be admitted regardless of the form it takes."

The wording of that statement might make it appear to the uninformed that somehow Jehovah's Witnesses are connected with such things as cannibalism, ritual murder or polygamy. But that is totally false. Yet, such insinuations as these do damage, as many who are not familiar with Jehovah's Witnesses may feel that there is some basis for these innuendos.

legal fight continues

Legal proceedings initiated by Jehovah's Witnesses proceeded through the courts.

On March 10, 1977, Federal Judge Dr. Jorge E. Cermesoni rendered a decision. He declared illegal the first article of the ban. He showed that the Executive Power had gone beyond its jurisdiction in issuing the decree. Yet, he also declared that "the sect is already prohibited . . . as a result of not being inscribed in the Registry of Cults."

The Ministry of the Interior appealed the decision; so did Jehovah's Witnesses. The Ministry claimed that the Executive Power does have the right to regulate constitutional guarantees. The Witnesses appealed the ruling because it had not removed the ban against them.

The matter was taken to the court of appeals. On June 23, Federal Judges Alberto Azcona, Juan Carlos Béccar Varela and Valerio R. Pico modified the decision of the lower court. They declared null and void the presidential decree!

The reason these judges gave was reported in the publication *La Nación* of June 24th, as follows: "Religious liberty is one of the most important human rights . . . in consequence, in the case of Jehovah's Witnesses, their cult . . . cannot be validly restricted, unless its exercise affects the morals or public order." The judges noted that "the statutes of the [Jehovah's Witnesses] state that its purpose is 'public Christian worship of the Most High God and Christ Jesus.'"

Thus the noble ideals expressed in the Argentine Constitution were respected and applied! However, the law allows 10 days for registering an appeal. The question was: Would the State appeal?

to the supreme court

Just under the deadline, the government's appeal motion was presented to the Supreme Court. The case aroused much interest on the part of persons concerned with freedom and human rights, both in

Religions in Argentina Ordered by Government To Register or Face Ban

BUENOS AIRES, Feb. 14 (AP)—All religions except Roman Catholicism must register with the state or be banned in Argentina, the military Government declared in a decree published by newspapers today.

The decree says the Government can turn down a group's registration, thus providing effectively for more religious bannings. The two-year-old regime has already outlawed three sects.

The law, partly reproduced by the

newspapers, will take effect in a month, when it is published in the Government's official bulletin, the newspapers reported.

Religious sects will then have 90 days to register on an official list to be run by the Foreign Ministry, the decree said. Those considered "injurious to the public order, national security, morality or good habits" can be kept out of the register.

Catholicism, the official religion in this nation of 25 million people, was not affected, the decree said. Argentina and the Vatican signed an accord in 1966 reaffirming the church's right to function here.

Last year President Jorge Rafael Videla's military regime, which seized power in a 1976 coup, banned the Jehovah's Witnesses and two India-oriented sects, the Divine Light Mission and Hare Krishna.

Foreign diplomats said they were puzzled by the new decree, and it appeared to take religious leaders by surprise. "We don't know anything about it," said Rudolph Vallis, a Mormon churchman.

The Foreign Ministry has had a list of religions since 1950. However, the new decrees says faiths already registered must register again. It said the move was to establish "effective control" by the authorities over non-Catholic religions.

Argentina and abroad. Such persons confidently felt that the nation's highest court would champion constitutional freedom.

On February 8, 1978, the five justices of the Supreme Court issued their decision. They refused to set aside the ban!

The decision was shrouded in legal terminology that, to the layman, frequently bordered on pure contradiction. The justices claimed: 'Decree 1867 did not show arbitrariness nor apparent illegality.' Yet, the decree was arbitrary and illegal because it flatly contradicted the Constitution.

The justices said that 'the Witnesses had other administrative and judicial avenues for the defense of their rights, namely, inscription in the Registry of Religions.' But on nine previous occasions Jehovah's Witnesses had petitioned the government to be included in this Registry of Religions and had been turned down!

Additionally, the judges asserted that they did not 'pass judgment on the legality of the pretensions substantiated by the Witnesses nor on the legality of the measures adopted in the decree banning them;

the Court simply declared inadmissible the legal avenue used by the Witnesses'! And yet the courts are the legal avenue, properly used by Jehovah's Witnesses!

Why did the Supreme Court resort to such argumentation? For 15 months the case had been under close study by the State's experts in law, including the attorney general, and by the federal judges who heard the case. Yet, NOT ONCE was the legal recourse invoked by the Witnesses called into question or disputed!

Was the High Court simply 'washing its hands,' as did Pontius Pilate in the case of Jesus? Was it seeking to avoid the responsibility of defining a constitutional issue?

How different was the attitude expressed by the renowned Argentine educator and statesman Domingo F. Sarmiento a century ago. He had said: "If there is a minority of the population, and I say even one person who honestly and sincerely disagrees with the sentiment of the majority, the law protects him if he does not try to violate the laws." Sarmiento further de-

clared: "For the protection of his thinking the . . . Constitution has been constructed."

Thus, the Supreme Court, shirking its duty, had rendered a heavy blow against freedom, and against Jehovah's Witnesses.

What it did was to give its seal of approval to the many acts of intolerance that had already taken place when the ban was first imposed in September of 1976, and that would yet take place. And what were some of those acts?

WHAT HAPPENED AFTER THE BAN

THE ban against Jehovah's Witnesses went into effect at the beginning of September 1976. At dawn on September 7, the federal police, acting on orders from the Ministry of the Interior, arrived at the branch headquarters of Jehovah's Witnesses in Buenos Aires.

The police sealed off the printery, office, shipping and storage areas. Police guards were posted. And on that same day, about 600 Kingdom Halls of the Witnesses were systematically closed down in all of Argentina.

freedom disappears

Since the ban, religious intolerance has flamed up in some 38 cities and towns from the far northern provinces of Misiones, Formosa and Salta to the southern provinces of Río Negro, Chubut and Santa Cruz. To date, over 320 persons have been arrested, many of them elderly men and women, and small children. Other people have been detained merely because of being relatives or friends of the Witnesses.

Do these actions befit a nation that professes to champion freedom? A courageous answer was given by the Buenos Aires

Herald in its editorial "Religious persecution." It said: "These reports [of arrests of Jehovah's Witnesses] suggest that Argentina is now in the midst of the biggest outbreak of religious persecution in its history as an independent nation. This is deplorable in itself and will do nothing whatever to enhance Argentina's reputation in the outside world."

The newspaper's editorial also stated that the government's actions were "treating the world to the loathsome spectacle of armed police breaking up prayer meetings, the sort of thing one might accept as normal in Soviet Russia but which should have no place at all in pluralist Argentina."

But this "loathsome spectacle" has taken place. Following are but a few of the cases that will help you to determine for yourself the reality of religious intolerance in Argentina.

the facts speak

"30 Witnesses Captured." So read a news account on March 29, 1978, from Andalgalá (Catamarca province). Ramón Alvarez, members of his family and invited guests were arrested following the

closing prayer of the annual Christian celebration of the Lord's Supper. They were detained six days. Men and women alike passed the first night in the open-air patio of the police station. Their personal copies of the Bible and Bible literature were confiscated.

At the seaside resort of Mar del Plata, a group of 19 adults and three minors were studying the Bible. Suddenly, some 15 policemen stormed in and ordered all to leave with their hands above their heads. Hector Mariño and other adults were held for 45 hours. When four other Witnesses came with food and clothing for their friends, they too were arrested! One man, though not a Witness, declared: "I am proud that my father is one of Jehovah's Witnesses." For saying this, he was arrested also.

A notorious case took place in Puerto Rico (Misiones province). There 16 adults, parents of students expelled over the flag-salute issue, were jailed. They were kept for 55 days in the company of every sort of lawbreaker. Those who were fathers were thus deprived of working for the support of their families. The jailed mothers were forced to leave their small children in the care of other Christian families!

In another locality of the same province, soldiers searched the homes of Witnesses and confiscated their literature, including non-Witness translations of the Bible. The police arrested 15 persons, one of whom was not a Witness but merely had their literature. Other homes nearby were visited by soldiers who threatened to arrest anyone who did not burn the Witness literature that they may have had.

The chief of police in Pirané (Formosa) picked up Witness Mosconi at his home, took him to the edge of town, and warned him that he would go to prison if he dared to return to his own home. In the same

province, armed soldiers invaded a private home, resorting to blows and foul language, and arrested the seven members of the family, holding them for three days.

In Villa Constitución (Santa Fe), a private home was searched. Literature was confiscated, including Bibles printed by other religions. All present were ordered to appear at the police station. They were warned that it could mean 10 years in prison if they were again found with literature of the Witnesses.

In Córdoba a Witness was jailed for 13 days. He was questioned at great length, many times blindfolded so that he would not recognize his interrogators.

Señora Luisa Moretti and a woman companion were held in custody by the police of Bahía Blanca for 10 days. Their crime? Talking to other persons about the Bible!

To the far south, in Pico Truncado (Santa Cruz), the home of a Witness was searched. His Bible literature was confiscated. After that he was held in isolation for five days.

In Las Catitas (Mendoza) a Witness was taken from his place of work for questioning by the police. When his answers did not satisfy the police, he was hit in the face until he bled.

no subversive elements

What evidence did the police find when they raided private homes or closed the branch office and meeting places of the Witnesses throughout Argentina? NOT ONE WEAPON WAS FOUND, NOT ONE PIECE OF SUBVERSIVE LITERATURE!

In addition, none of the Witnesses offered resistance. Nor did they evidence any lack of respect toward the police and other authorities.

Among the 33,000 active Jehovah's Wit-

nesses in Argentina there has yet to be found EVEN ONE SUBVERSIVE!

But this is not surprising to anyone who is familiar with Jehovah's Witnesses. Their lives have been patterned after the *Christian* principles set forth in the Bible, the basic textbook of the Witnesses in all countries of the world. Living by Bible principles certainly is not subversive. Yet, to study and talk to others about this Sacred Book is now considered a crime in Argentina!

loss of employment

Dozens of Witnesses have been dismissed from their jobs since the ban. Public-school authorities were instructed to suspend immediately any member of the teaching staff who did not participate in ceremonies such as the flag salute.

In the province of Buenos Aires, Señora Enriqueta Domínguez, an auxiliary third-grade teacher, was suspended on a 48-hour notice. In another school, Señora Elcida DaCosta was relieved of her position as vice-principal.

Señora Beatriz Muñoz was a kindergarten principal with 24 years of seniority as a teacher in the western province of Mendoza. She is a widow with two children. Yet, she was dismissed on the spot when she inserted a conditional clause in a patriotic oath she signed.

Señora Mercedes D'Alesandro was dismissed from her job at the national telephone company. Witnesses Román and Fernández lost their employment in the municipality of Buenos Aires. Ernesto Navarro and Jorge Brun, civilian employees in the provincial penitentiary of Tucumán, were likewise suspended, without any compensation for their many years of service. And to this list many more cases could be added.

deprived of schooling

Over 300 children have been expelled from or simply denied admittance to public and private schools. However, in some localities federal judges have condemned this notorious discrimination and have ordered the reinstatement of the Witness children. And recently the Supreme Court ruled illegal the expelling of a student on the mere grounds of religious affiliation.

Legal briefs filed in defense of Witness youths have included this most interesting citation from an eminent Argentine authority on constitutional law: "If each person has the right to express himself, he has the corresponding [right] to abstain from an expression that does not answer to his convictions or desires . . . At times the requiring of the mere presence of a person in an act can mean an arbitrary compelling of the person to participate, even though passively, in a ceremony or circumstance that is not to his liking; this violates the freedom to not express oneself. To impose the obligation of an oath that violates religious convictions and the conscience of the person results in the same and is an arbitrary principle."—*Manual de Derecho Constitucional (Manual of Constitutional Law)*, pages 220/221:355.

After their expulsion, some Witness students hoped to take their final examinations before a special board. But this right also was denied them, because a note from the General Council of Education, Misiones province, declared: "Such examination is not authorized if the pupils profess the religion of 'Jehovah's Witnesses.'"

Ironically, public schools across the nation carry the motto: "*DIOS, PATRIA, Y HOGAR*" ("GOD, COUNTRY, AND HOME"). Yet, Witness children are de-



Argentina

CITIES (AND PROVINCES) MENTIONED WHERE
ARRESTS HAVE TAKEN PLACE

1. Salta (Salta)
2. Pirané (Formosa)
3. Puerto Rico (Misiones)
4. Tucumán (Tucumán)
5. Andalgalá (Catamarca)
6. Santiago (Santiago del Estero)
7. Córdoba (Córdoba)
8. Concordia (Entre Ríos)
9. Villaguay (Entre Ríos)
10. Villa Constitución (Santa Fe)
11. Las Catitas (Mendoza)
12. Mar del Plata (Buenos Aires)
13. Bahía Blanca (Buenos Aires)
14. Pico Truncado (Santa Cruz)
15. Buenos Aires, Capital

nied schooling because they DO put God in first place as the slogan states!

more severe punishment

Most democratic nations include provisions in their laws to exempt conscientious objectors from military training.

But on February 17, 1977, Argentina incorporated a new article into its military code. In addition to the existing penalty for refusing to bear arms (Witnesses usually receive a sentence of three and a half years in prison), such objectors may now be subject to permanent disqualification from holding government and public employment, as well as to the loss of all civil rights, including Argentine citizenship.

This means that the punishment is greater for a person who does not want to learn to kill than for common criminals who kill, destroy property and commit other heinous crimes!

"crime of apology"

In May 1977, Charles Eisenhower, resident of Argentina since 1948 and branch coordinator for the Watch Tower Society, and Argentine-born Lucio Antonuccio, an elder of Jehovah's Witnesses, were summoned to appear before Military Judge Alberto Martínez. The judge questioned

them about a young Witness who refused military training. Later they were summoned before a Federal Court to make statements concerning the beliefs of Jehovah's Witnesses.

As a result of these hearings, they were found guilty of the "Crime of Apology," and could be sentenced to a term of from three months to three years in prison. And an appeals court upheld the decision.

What is this "Crime of Apology"? *Webster's Third New International Dictionary* defines "apology" as: "Something said or written in defense or justification of what appears to others to be wrong."—Italics ours.

Thus, in Argentina, it appears to have become a crime to defend one's Bible-based beliefs in a court of justice!

It must be noted that Charles Eisenhower had never met the Witness objector until the day he met him at the military camp. Lucio Antonuccio, cousin of the prisoner, had studied the Bible with him, but had never counseled him about military service.

In view of all the evidence, can there be any doubt that Jehovah's Witnesses in Argentina are victims of intense, vicious religious intolerance?

What can be done about it? Indeed, what can YOU do about it?

WHAT CAN BE DONE

WHAT can be done to correct religious intolerance in Argentina? The authorities themselves need to pay heed to questions such as the following:

WHEN will it no longer be a crime in Argentina just to be one of Jehovah's Witnesses?

Must we wait months or years until the slow-moving wheels of justice turn out a just decision?

Will the highest authorities of the nation of Argentina personally listen, **JUST ONCE**, without prejudice, to Jehovah's Witnesses' side of the issue?

The invested authorities now have the opportunity to demonstrate before the world which role Argentina really represents on the world scene: that of a champion of freedom—or of religious intolerance.

Fair-minded people throughout the world hope that Argentina's leaders will decide on the side of freedom.

Argentine public opinion

Many Argentine people feel the same way. Indeed, on the whole, Argentine people in all walks of life are at a loss to explain *why* their government has taken such unjust actions against the Witnesses. Friends and relatives, neighbors, business and professional associates, and others whom the Witnesses meet in their daily routines, express themselves sympathetically.

Some ask: "Any news on how your case is coming along?" And they quickly say: "*¡Dios quiera que salga bien!*" ("God will that it work out well!") Others comment: "Why doesn't the government apprehend all the criminals rather than pick on you people who are doing good?" "What an injustice!" "Why don't they prohibit some of the trash that is sold on the newsstands instead of banning the clean, instructive articles your magazines always carry?"

Worthy of special mention are the kind acts of many non-Witness neighbors and business people. On their own initiative and in goodwill, they have promptly donated food and covering for those in jail, realizing that the police would not provide such things. And they have regularly visited the imprisoned Witnesses to inquire about their needs.

True, most news media in Argentina have chosen to parrot the government's hostile attitude toward the Witnesses. But

there have been notable exceptions. The Buenos Aires *Herald*, *La Opinión* (Buenos Aires) and *El Territorio* (Misiones) are among the newspapers that have sought or granted interviews with Witness representatives and then honestly published their statements.

Nor should it be concluded that *all* police, judges and other officials have abused their authority and shown prejudice toward Jehovah's Witnesses. That has not been the case. On many occasions the chiefs of police and other officers have expressed regret to the Witnesses, lamenting the circumstances that forced them to take action. And a number of prison officials, on releasing the Witnesses from confinement, have wished them well.

what the future holds

Jehovah's Witnesses earth wide await true justice. They know that such will inevitably come soon through the kingdom of the righteous Judge and King, Jesus Christ.

Meanwhile, they put themselves under the protection of the same Being to whom the framers of the Argentine Constitution appealed when they penned these words in the Preamble to the Constitution:

"To assure the benefits of freedom for us, for our posterity, and for all the men of the world that want to live on Argentine soil: invoking God's protection, Fountain of all right and justice."

what can you do?

What is your reaction to the trampling underfoot of religious freedom in Argentina? Is there anything you can do about it? Yes, there most certainly is.

If you deplore such unjust action, you will want to write your appeal for justice. Respectfully, you can encourage the invested authorities to take the necessary steps

to restore freedom to the Christian minority, Jehovah's Witnesses.

You may write or telegraph any of the **Argentine** authorities listed below:

Addresses of officials:

Jorge Rafael Videla
President of the Nation
Casa de Gobierno
Balcarce 50
1064 Buenos Aires, Argentina

Admiral Emilio Eduardo Massera
Casa de Gobierno
Balcarce 50
1064 Buenos Aires, Argentina

Lieutenant General Roberto Eduardo Viola
Casa de Gobierno
Balcarce 50
1064 Buenos Aires, Argentina

Brigadier General Orlando Ramón Agosti
Casa de Gobierno
Balcarce 50
1064 Buenos Aires, Argentina

Minister of Foreign Relations and Religion,
Vice-Admiral Oscar Antonio Montes
Arenales 761
1061 Buenos Aires, Argentina

Minister of the Interior,
General Eduardo Albano Harguindeguy
Casa de Gobierno
Balcarce 50
1064 Buenos Aires, Argentina

Minister of National Defense,
Brigadier Major José María Klíx
Paseo Colón 255
1063 Buenos Aires, Argentina

Minister of Culture and Education,
Doctor Juan José Catalán
Avda. Eduardo Madero 235
1106 Buenos Aires, Argentina

Minister of Justice,
Brigadier Julio A. Gómez
Av. Gelly y Obes 2289
1425 Buenos Aires, Argentina

Supreme Court of Justice,
Doctor Horacio H. Heredia
Talcahuano 550
1013 Buenos Aires, Argentina

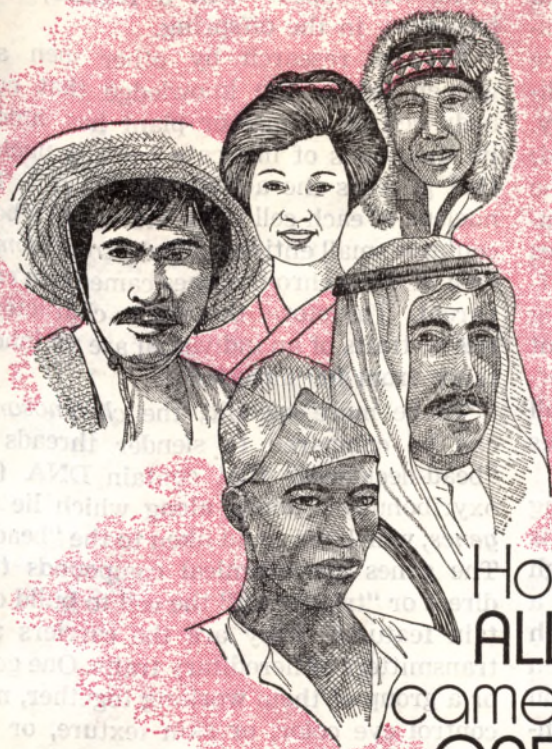
Supreme Court of Justice,
Doctor Adolfo R. Gabrielli
Talcahuano 550
1013 Buenos Aires, Argentina

Supreme Court of Justice,
Doctor Abelardo F. Rossi
Talcahuano 550
1013 Buenos Aires, Argentina

Supreme Court of Justice,
Doctor Pedro J. Frías
Talcahuano 550
1013 Buenos Aires, Argentina

Supreme Court of Justice,
Doctor Emilio M. Dairea
Talcahuano 550
1013 Buenos Aires, Argentina

Also, in harmony with 1 Timothy 2:1, 2, you may petition God in prayer that those "in high station" in Argentina may take a tolerant view of Jehovah's Witnesses in that land, so that again they may lead a quiet and calm life, without the burdensome oppression of this unjust ban.



How ALL MEN came from ONE MAN

WHEN the apostle Paul was talking to a group of philosophers in ancient Athens, he declared: "[God] made out of one man every nation of men, to dwell upon the entire surface of the earth." (Acts 17:26) This harmonizes with the Genesis account of creation, which tells us that Adam and Eve were directly created by God, and were commanded to "become many and fill the earth." (Gen. 1:28; 2:7, 20-22) Eve was to become "the mother of every-one living." (Gen. 3:20) When we view the billions of persons on earth, with their striking differences in appearance and personality, we may say, 'How could this be true?'

All over the earth we see a multiplicity of *kinds* of plant and animal life. By *kinds* we refer to created kinds, not what are commonly called varieties. The term "species," originally referring to kinds, is sometimes loosely used with reference to varieties. These *kinds* are unrelated—for example, cats, dogs, horses. There are barriers that prevent their cross-mating or, more specifically, prevent their re-

productive cells from uniting and functioning to bring forth a new *kind*. This is in harmony with the law that God established at the time of creation, that everything must reproduce "according to its kind." (Gen. 1: 11, 12, 21, 25) The Bible writer James, in an illustration, expressed the principle very simply, asking: "A fig tree cannot produce olives or a vine figs, can it?"—Jas. 3:12.

However, within the boundary of each *kind*, there is a great proliferation of variety. There are dogs and cats of all colors and sizes; and among flowers there is the begonia, which has so many varieties resembling other flowers that it is called the "mocking-bird" flower. The orchid has some 4,000 varieties. These varieties have come about in the course of time because of the almost limitless number of combinations possible in plant life and among

domestic animals, and many are brought about by human efforts through careful selection and mating. These humanly assisted types generally would not continue unless maintained under special conditions or in a greenhouse or a laboratory. None of these varieties is another *kind*; that is, it is not separated so far from the original that its reproductive cells are unable to combine with cells of other varieties within the same kind and produce offspring. However, difference in size among animal varieties may sometimes prevent mating naturally and may also cause difficulty in bringing the offspring to full term and birth. Nonetheless, such varieties are genetically of the same *kind*.

An illustration of what selective breeding may accomplish, and of its limitations, is found in cattle raising. In herds where high milk production is sought, cows with a good record of production are mated with a bull from a high-producing strain, often a bull from the same herd. The production is gradually raised from generation to generation. But eventually a serious weakness shows up, such as the cows' beginning to lose their calves prematurely. The limit in selective breeding has been reached.

Heredity-Carrying Factors

What is the basis for the producing of such a great variety within each kind? One of the first researchers to provide a partial answer was Gregor Mendel, an Austrian monk living in the 19th century. Biology was of absorbing interest to him. He discovered by experimentation that plants and animals had factors in their genetic makeup that passed on certain traits from parent to offspring. Some traits are formed in a relatively simple manner, only a few genetic factors being involved. Others require the interplay of many factors. But there is a mathematical

exactness in the probability that certain traits will appear with a regular, fixed frequency in the offspring.

Further research by other men and women led to the knowledge that each body cell of animal or plant has, among its thousands of intricate parts, a nucleus that governs the activity of the cell. The nucleus of each cell in an individual's body contains small entities called *chromosomes*. Half of these chromosomes came from each parent. Therefore the basic characteristics or traits of an individual are an inheritance from his ancestors.

To be more specific, the *chromosomes* can be compared to slender threads or "bead-necklaces" that contain DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid), along which lie the *genes*, which we could liken to the "beads." The genes are chemical compounds that direct or "trigger off" the cell to build certain features. They are the carriers and transmitters of hereditary traits. One gene, or a group of them working together, may control eye color, or skin texture, or the making of a certain digestive juice, and so forth.

Mendel did not know all these things, but through his experiments came to the conclusion that all inherited characteristics are due to what he called "unit factors" or "elements" (now called "genes") in the cells of all living things. He found that inheritance follows an orderly rule.

Mathematical Laws Govern the Genetic Process

Mendel found that some characteristics seem to depend on only one factor, or gene, transmitted by each parent. For example, in the flower called the "four-o'clock" a mating of red and white parents brought forth a second generation of all pink flowers. Then, by cross-pollinating, or mat-

ing, this pink generation among themselves, he produced a third generation composed of 50 percent pink, 25 percent red and 25 percent white flowers.

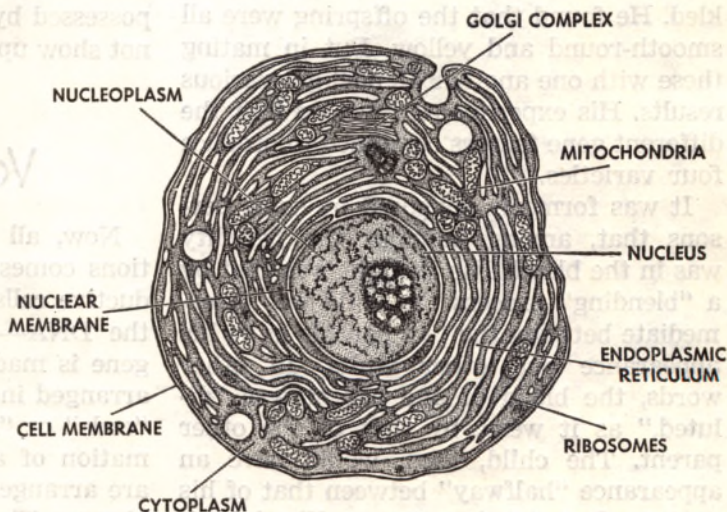
In plants and animals, some traits are "dominant." That is, if one parent possesses a genetic factor, or gene, that produces a given trait in the offspring, it dominates over or overshadows the factor, or gene, contributed by the other parent. The submerged or repressed gene is called "recessive." In the body cell of every human, for example, there are two genes, or factors, for hair color. (It is not quite that simple, but the principle can be illustrated here in an understandable way.) The gene for dark hair is dominant; the one for blonde is recessive. If one parent contributes a gene for dark hair and the other parent one for blonde hair, the "dark" gene will dominate, according to the mathematical proportion shown in the diagram on page 20. If both genes in an individual's body cell are for dark, the person himself will have dark hair. If one is a "dark" gene and the other is "blonde," the person will have dark hair, though it may be somewhat lighter, or possibly red. To be blonde, the person would have to possess in his or her body cells two genes for blonde hair.

Now, while the *body* cells contain two genes for hair color, in each parent's *reproductive* cells one gene for hair color will appear, because the reproductive cell is a half-cell. Each parent, therefore, contributes a half-cell with its gene for hair color, to make up the baby's body cell. There are four possible arrangements of the genes from the fa-

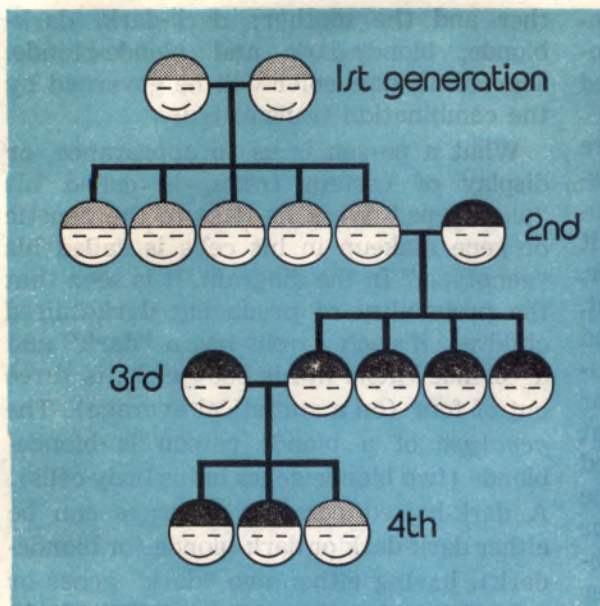
ther and the mother: dark-dark, dark-blond, blond-dark and blond-blond. The child's hair color will be governed by the combination transmitted.

What a person is as to appearance, or display of certain traits, is called his "phenotype." What he is as to the genetic or gene makeup in his cells is called his "genotype." In the diagram, it is seen that the probability of producing dark-haired children, if each parent has a "dark" and a "blond" gene in his *body* cells, is three out of four (on a statistical average). The *genotype* of a blonde person is blonde-blond (two blonde genes in his body cells). A dark-haired person's *genotype* can be either dark-dark or dark-blond (or blond-dark), having either two "dark" genes or a "dark" and a "blond" gene. The dark-haired person would not know for sure what his genotype is unless one of his parents was blonde, or if he had a blonde child.

THE CELL



The cell—unit of life. Trillions of these make up our bodies. They differ in size, shape and function, but all have the same 46 chromosomes. (Most of these structures are enlarged for easier identification.)



1st Generation:

Father and mother are blonde, possessing genes for blonde only

2nd Generation:

All children are blonde, each child receiving a blonde gene from each parent. One of 2nd generation marries a person with genes for dark hair only

3rd Generation:

All dark hair; dark dominates, but all carry the recessive gene for blonde. One of the 3rd generation marries a person with genes for dark and blonde

4th Generation:

Dark dominates, but recessive factor asserts itself when two blonde genes come together

Mendel also experimented with garden peas in which there are genes in one parent plant for producing smooth-round yellow peas and in the other parent genes for producing green wrinkled peas. The color yellow dominates over green and the smooth-round shape dominates over wrinkled. He found that the offspring were all smooth-round and yellow. But in mating these with one another Mendel got various results. His experiments revealed that the different gene factors combined to produce four varieties.

It was formerly supposed by some persons that, among humans, the heredity was in the blood. The thought was that by a "blending" process the child was intermediate between the two parents as to his appearance and other traits. In other words, the blood of one parent was "diluted," as it were, by that of the other parent. The child, then, would have an appearance "halfway" between that of his parents. But this is not true. The inheritance is in the reproductive cells and not in the blood, so that, in a group of offspring, there are not only "in-between"

types, but also types definitely having the same trait as one of the originals. Also, some types will resemble grandparents or great-grandparents more in certain respects than they resemble their parents. A child might, for example, display a characteristic or a talent that had been possessed by his grandfather but that did not show up in his father or mother at all.

Why Such Variety Exists

Now, all this heredity with its variations comes from the DNA in the reproductive cells. A gene is a small section of the DNA—in itself very complex. Each gene is made up of a string of chemicals arranged in a certain sequence, forming a "code" or "message" that directs the formation of a specific trait, just as words are arranged in various sentences to form phrases. There are thousands of genes—no one knows how many thousands—in the human cell. But let us assume, to be conservative, that there are only 1,000 genes

(far fewer than the actual number) and that each gene has only two variants (producing different eye colors, and so forth). Then the number of different gene combinations possible in humans would be 2^{1000} . This number—two to the one-thousandth power—is beyond comprehension. It is far greater than the estimated number of electrons and protons in the known universe!

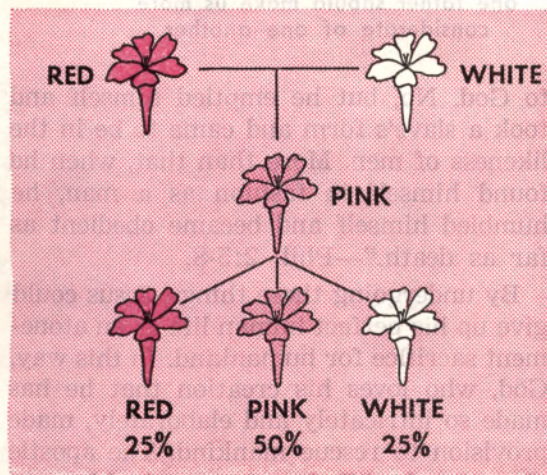
Contributing to the almost limitless variety is the following process: Each of the living cells in the human body contains 46 chromosomes. The reproductive or sex cells are formed by certain of the 46-chromosome cells splitting to form half-cells (called "haploid" cells), each containing 23 chromosomes. During the splitting or dividing process, the 23 chromosomes received from one's father and the 23 from one's mother pair up, or mate up. Each of the 23 chromosomes from one parent, bearing along its length genes that direct the building of the many specific characteristics in the offspring, lies alongside the corresponding chromosome from the other

parent. Then, when the cell divides, one chromosome goes into one newly formed reproductive cell (actually, a half-cell) and its mate goes into the other half-cell. But in the process, they not only separate but often cross over and *exchange parts*. This makes the possible number of different combinations practically infinite. These processes account for the fact that a person may have a "double"—one who greatly resembles him in appearance—although major differences will be found in many respects. Only in *identical twins* can the same genetic makeup be found.

All Humankind One Family

Understanding the genetic principle, knowing how millions of variations occur, we can see why these variations exist, and that all, nevertheless, comprise *one human race, one family*. There are great differences in some respects, minor differences in most respects. But there is a sameness in human nature everywhere, and all can intermarry and have children. They are all of one *kind*.

Many of the more marked differences and combinations of distinctive traits are due to isolation of groups for long periods of time. This has come about because of barriers or segregation of certain groups due to geographical isolation or to artificial boundaries created by religious, social, national or linguistic differences. This isolation has caused certain characteristics or traits to be paired with others—for example, the dark skin and hair with the heavy facial features of many blacks, and the "yellow" skin and almond-shaped eyes of the Orientals. But these traits do not necessarily go together. For example, many blacks have small, delicate facial features. Occasionally one sees the above-mentioned features in other persons, but not so often



Mathematical laws govern the four o'clock flower. When the pink blossoms' seeds are planted, flowers always appear in the proportion of one red, two pink and one white

paired together as among those who have kept within certain boundaries in their marriages for a long period of time, intermarrying with persons of their own area, tribe, and so forth.

Understanding the process of heredity, we can see why we all are imperfect—why all of us sin and die. How so? Adam, the father of all humankind, turned away from God, sinning and damaging himself. In Bible terminology, Adam “missed the mark,” fell short of the mark or standard of perfection he originally had. (Rom. 3:23) Having lost perfection, he could not pass it on to his children. The heritage he transmitted was not complete, but was weakened, damaged, an inheritance, not of life, but of death. The result is that “through one man sin entered into the world and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men because they had all sinned.” (Rom. 5:12) Knowing that we all sprang from one father, inheriting imperfection through no fault of our own, should make humans more considerate and kind toward one another. However, this is not the general attitude.

A more important fact connected with this knowledge is that, since we all inherited sin and death from one common father, we can be delivered by the substitutionary sacrifice of *one man*. This one is Jesus Christ. God was his Father, with whom he had lived in heaven before coming to earth. He became a man by being born of a woman, miraculously.—Gal. 4:4.

About this, the apostle Paul writes: “Although [Jesus Christ] was existing in God’s form, [he] gave no consideration to a seizure, namely, that he should be equal



Knowing that we all sprang from
one father should make us more
considerate of one another

to God. No, but he emptied himself and took a slave’s form and came to be in the likeness of men. More than that, when he found himself in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient as far as death.”—Phil. 2:5-8.

By undergoing these things, Jesus could give up his perfect human life as an atonement sacrifice for humankind. In this way, God, who loves his creation that he has made so intricately and elaborately, made provision to rescue mankind. The apostle also stated: “God recommends his own love to us in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” (Rom. 5:8) Never having sinned and lost his perfection as did Adam, Jesus Christ is em-

powered by his Father to transmit this perfect inheritance of life to all who come to him in faith and obedience. He said: "For just as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted also to the Son to have life in himself. And he has given him authority to do judging, because Son of man he is."—John 5:26, 27.

Jesus Christ, endowed with this authority and power, can regenerate all who

exercise true faith in this arrangement. Millions who will live on earth under his Kingdom rule will receive regeneration, including those then resurrected from the memorial tombs. That is why he taught his followers to pray to the Father: "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." (Matt. 6:10, *Douay Version*) Thus death inherited from Adam the sinner will be wiped out.—Rev. 21:4.

A Return to the Bible Brings Satisfaction

A WIDE variety of challenges can be successfully met when one applies Bible wisdom in daily events. This is noted in the following letter:

"When I was going to high school in Honolulu, Hawaii, I studied the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses for a short time but did not act on what I had learned. I decided to pursue a college education and went to Eastern Washington State College in Cheney, Washington, to major in anthropology.

"While attending college, I met my future wife, and we were married three years later. When we had been married for about nine months, we started looking around and could see that the conditions were really bad. This was in the early 1970's when the stock market started to go down a lot. Frankly, we began getting depressed about the conditions. Often when I was reading the newspapers I would think back to what I had studied in the Bible, and I could relate what I saw in the papers about the conditions in the world to what God's Word had prophesied about these things.

"When we did our laundry at the laundromat, there were some copies of 'The Watchtower' and 'Awake!' lying on the table, and one day I pointed out one of them to my wife and mentioned that they had some interesting articles about the conditions in the world today. She didn't really seem interested at the time and she wasn't too familiar with Jehovah's Witnesses either, because of indoctrination that she had experienced in Sunday school. She had gone to the Pentecostal Sunday school and they had given her some inaccurate information, saying, for example, that the Witnesses did not believe in Christ.

"But one day, about three weeks later, she came home from the laundromat with two or three magazines, saying that she thought I might want to read them. This was in September of 1974.

"When I got home that night from my part-time janitorial job, I sat down and started reading the magazines and knew that I had to make a decision right away. So, when my wife got home from her job, I said: 'Theresa,

you just have to read these magazines.' She read them and could see that there was a ring of truth to what they said. We were aware of the Kingdom Hall in Cheney, as it is easily seen from the road coming into town, and Theresa asked me when the Witnesses held meetings there. I told her that they had a meeting on Sunday.

"Although I was not yet ready to go to the Kingdom Hall, my wife went that very Sunday. She listened and talked to some of the people there. A nice lady asked her if she would like to have a personal Bible study, but she declined because I was not with her. She came home and asked if I would go to the next meeting with her, and I said, 'Sure.' I had long hair at the time, but I thought that I would go anyway. So we went the next Sunday and really enjoyed the meeting. Since then we have regularly attended all the meetings at the Kingdom Hall. A Bible study was offered again and, as we were together this time, we accepted.

"A close friend from school was starting to look into the Bible at the same time. He didn't know anything about Jehovah's Witnesses. So we invited him over and shared with him what we were learning. As a result, he started coming to the meetings, participated in our discussions and shared with others the things he learned.

"My training in anthropology was based on the evolution theory and was in direct conflict with the Bible. I had just blindly accepted what the professors told me. But I read the book 'Did Man Get Here by Evolution or by Creation?' and I couldn't argue with it. There was just no question in my mind. That little book showed all the fallacies, loopholes and gaps in the theories contained in the best textbooks the college had. It has been a big help to me in talking to other people about evolution. After studying and accepting the evolution theory for three years, and then learning the facts against evolution and in support of the Bible account of creation, I can assure all who believe God's Word on this matter that they do not need to be apologetic about their belief. The facts are on their side."

ON December 26, 1977, Law No. 6515 made Brazil leave the dwindling group of nations that do not allow divorce on any basis. The Senate already had approved a constitutional amendment. But now the moment of rejoicing had arrived for the *divorcistas*. On the other hand, it was a moment of defeat for the *antidivorcistas*.

But why did some object? Also, what is the Bible's view on the matter of divorce? Consider the following answers.

Objections to Divorce

The *Brazil Herald* put its finger on the leaders of the opposition, declaring that Brazil is "the largest predominantly Catholic country in the world," and stating: "Church opposition has been strident. Dom Ivo Lorscheiter, head of the Brazilian Bishops Association, . . . said that [the] church would continue its opposition to divorce."

No wonder the 1977 Corpus Christi processions in Brazil turned into manifestations against the divorce bill! In Belo Horizonte about 100,000 persons met in a huge football stadium. Fifteen thousand gathered in Curitiba, and some 10,000 in Rio de Janeiro. But, bearing in mind that these cities are teeming with millions of nominal Catholics, the very turnout was a sign of failure. A popular magazine summed up the campaign by stating that "the Church pitched her whole weight and prestige against divorce . . . and lost."

Also, the press showed up some of the faults in the arguments against divorce.

By "Awake!" correspondent in Brazil



Said an editorial in *O Estado de S. Paulo*: "Although we sincerely regret the breakup of the family institution, we hold that the temporal State which rules

a spiritually pluralist society such as the Brazilian is not entitled to impose . . . on all citizens, even non-Catholics, agnostics, atheists, Protestants and non-practicing Catholics, a matrimonial legislation of but one religion."

Referring to the situation before legal divorce was introduced, this newspaper called the "multiple and pharisaical forms of divorce among us, a source of social chaos." Previously, it was customary for married couples to separate, often without obtaining a legal separation, and

to go on living with other partners, thus, in fact, creating two families without legal recognition. But what about the objections raised by the Catholic Church?

The National Conference of Brazilian Bishops came out with the statement that "whoever defends or practices divorce puts himself in opposition to the divine orientation and cuts his communion with the [Catholic] Church." Reference was made to these words of Jesus Christ: "Therefore, let no man separate what God has joined." (Matt. 19:6, *The New American Bible*) Hence, the church leaders objected to the dissolubility of the marriage bond, while closing their eyes to widespread concubinage and immorality. But did Jesus mean that all divorce is improper?

The Bible, Marriage and Divorce

Let it be stated that the Bible does not advocate divorce on just *any* grounds. God made man and woman to enjoy each other's company indefinitely, without any provision for divorce. "That is why a man will leave his father and his mother and he must stick to his wife and they must become one flesh." (Gen. 2:24) After sinful man lost his position as God's son and was put outside the Garden of Eden, he began to introduce his own regulations and traditions. The Mosaic law recognized existing patriarchal marriage customs, but regulated wedlock and divorce. Nevertheless, the prophet Malachi presented this as God's viewpoint: "He has hated a divorcing." (Mal. 2:16) Then Jesus Christ re-emphasized the validity of the original marriage arrangement, as recorded by historian Matthew in Matthew 19:3-9.

According to *The New American Bible* (in a rendering similar to that of other Catholic versions), Matthew 19:9 reads: "I now say to you, whoever divorces his wife (lewd conduct is a separate case) and marries another commits adultery, and

the man who marries a divorced woman commits adultery." A footnote explains the words in parentheses, stating: "Literally 'except for porneia,' i.e., immorality, fornication, even incest." But theologian-priest Alcides Pinto da Silva reiterated the common Roman Catholic interpretation, saying: "If after the contract, but before living together with her husband, a girl has illicit relations with someone, then she can be sent away without there being adultery."

Of course, Jesus did not say that this was the only situation meant; nor does the context contain implication to this effect. The Jews permitted divorce, the sending away of a marriage mate on *any* grounds. However, Jesus stated that 'only on the ground of *por-nei'a*' could this be done acceptably before God, who instituted marriage. So, what does *por-nei'a* mean? It designates all forms of immoral sexual relations, perversions and lewd practices. The verb *por-neu'o* means "to give one's self to unlawful sexual intercourse."

Jesus was against adultery and any other form of illicit relations. (Matt. 5:27-32; 15:19, 20) But if one marriage mate committed a gross sexual sin against the other, the marriage bond could be broken because of the adulterating of the union of 'one flesh.' Therefore, marital unfaithfulness could result in dissolving the marriage vows, union and contract. For this reason, the innocent and wronged mate would be free to get a divorce and marry again. Of course, he or she might want to forgive the erring mate and maintain the marriage bond. That would be his or her privilege.

Brazil's New Law on Divorce

However, none of these Scriptural considerations moved the Brazilian legislators to pass their new law on divorce. In fact, ever since the establishment of the republic, in 1889, Brazil recognizes only civil

marriage. Nevertheless, for many years, the Catholic Church's powerful influence blocked the introduction of the divorce law. Liberal-minded men, like *divorcista* leader and Senator Nelson Carneiro, spent 20 years or more fighting for the new law. How is it applied?

Legal separation, either by mutual consent or through litigation, is required before divorce is granted. An application for divorce may be filed three years after obtaining a legal separation. The divorce will be granted within 10 days, if it is not contested. For cases pending when the law was introduced, divorce can be granted if the couple can prove that they have been separated *de facto* for at least five years. On the other hand, a legal separation will be granted only to those who have been married for more than two years. Moreover, divorce is granted just once in a lifetime. Since the clause covering the latter point is ambiguous and, some say, unconstitutional, it is being contested.

Bible Truth Restored My Respect for Marriage

THIS experience was related at a convention of Jehovah's Witnesses in Madison, Wisconsin:

"As a young boy of Irish Catholic background, I had always wanted to serve God. Therefore, I entered a Catholic seminary for my high school education. At the seminary, I found the Bible was not stressed. Rather, the emphasis was placed on philosophy, theology, church law, ritual and external garb. All of this quickly wore off.

"Soon some great changes began to take place in my life. After high school I went to a large university, was married and then fell away from the Catholic faith.

"After falling away from Catholicism, my wife and I returned to 'nature' for religion. I also became engrossed in acquiring wealth and decided to divorce my wife and free myself of marital responsibilities. During this time I was working for a real-estate firm. It was customary at this office for parties to be held on every occasion

The Christian's Position

No doubt this new law on divorce in Brazil will help persons interested in living according to God's standards as set out in the Bible. It will enable them to straighten out their marital affairs before God and "Caesar," or the governmental authorities. (Matt. 22:21) It will also permit those whose mates become unfaithful to get a divorce and marry again honorably, if they wish to do so. As already shown, marital unfaithfulness is the only Biblical grounds for such action.—Matt. 5:32; 19:9.

However, rather than encouraging divorce and the splitting up of homes and families, the Bible is the only book on earth that points out thoroughly how to avoid this extreme. It offers sober counsel and clear direction for those who wish to enter into marriage, to keep it honorable and to make it successful. (Eph. 5:21-33) The Bible, therefore, is the only reliable guide to true marital harmony and happy family life.

—on birthdays, on Halloween, on Christmas; or they were just plain summer parties.

"I noticed that one worker who had recently become one of Jehovah's Witnesses no longer participated in the parties, although at one time she was the 'life of the party.' I chided her about this change. She kindly informed me that it was her new religion that *caused such* a change for her, and she immediately offered me an opportunity to study the Bible with her. I accepted, and we had our first discussion after work that afternoon.

"Compared to my former religion, in which almost anything goes, I could see how the Bible changed this woman's life. She was always considerate and would meet at my convenience, and she tactfully helped me to understand Bible principles. As a result, I changed my plans for divorcing my wife and later became one of Jehovah's Witnesses. These changes for the better have been based on the truth of the Bible and will not quickly wear off."

The Bible's View



Is There a Defense for Judas Iscariot?

IN AN address to a Protestant church group during the 1977 Easter celebrations, a Swiss professor spoke out in defense of Judas Iscariot's betrayal of Jesus. He said that a betrayal can be either "harmful" or "wholesome," and claimed that Judas' act of betrayal was "wholesome," because it set "the wheels of salvation in motion." In the opinion of that professor, Judas "should be freed from his role as scapegoat."

Similarly, during the 18th century, writer Johann Wolfgang von Goethe of Germany theorized that Judas acted in faith so as to force Jesus into asserting himself against the Roman rulers and into laying claim to his rightful position as king of the Jews. It was claimed that Jesus' reluctance to take advantage of the opportunity held out to him by Judas caused the betrayal to turn out in a negative way.

Others say Judas cannot rightfully be condemned for fulfilling what the inspired Hebrew Scriptures had foretold. (Ps. 41:9; 55:12, 13; 69:25; 109:8; Acts 1:16-20) Would we be justified in defending Judas?

Before choosing his 12 apostles, Jesus "continued the whole night in prayer to God." (Luke 6:12, 13) The responsible positions of apostle-

ship logically were not to be entrusted to wicked men or to those weak in faith. Hence, the selection of Judas as one of the 12 would indicate that both God and Jesus viewed him favorably at that time. Furthermore, he was entrusted with caring for the common finances of Jesus and the 12. That points to his dependability at the time, especially since Matthew had experience with money and figures but did not receive this assignment. —Matt. 10:3; John 12:6.

But would not John 6:64 indicate that Judas had been unfaithful from the time that Jesus selected him as one of the 12 apostles? That verse states: "From the beginning Jesus knew . . . who was the one that would betray him." However, the Bible also describes the Devil as being sinful "from the beginning." (1 John 3:8) In the case of the latter, that does not mean from his creation as a faithful son of God, but from the start of his course of rebellion against God. Likewise in the case of Judas Iscariot, Jesus knew "from the beginning," or at the *outset of Judas' wrongful course*, that Judas was the one who would betray him. This went unnoticed by others, for we recall that shortly before the betrayal took place, the 11 faithful apostles still had not recognized Judas as the potential betrayer.—John 13:27-30.

Judas approached the chief priests and offered to hand Jesus over to them for 30 pieces of silver. When the priests agreed to this, Judas "began seeking how to betray him conveniently." (Matt. 26:15; Mark 14:10, 11) So the betrayal was planned ahead of time and was a deliberate act, not one committed impulsively in a moment of weakness. Luke 22:3 says that "Satan entered into Judas," likely in the sense that the traitorous apostle succumbed to the will of the Devil, allowing himself to be used as Satan's tool. While the foretold betrayal helped to identify the true Messiah, it was not needed to set "the wheels of sal-

vation in motion." Man's salvation depended on Jesus' blood being shed, not on his betrayal.

Judas later realized what he had done and, after unsuccessfully trying to return the 30 pieces of silver that he had received for betraying Jesus, threw them into the temple and committed suicide. Had Judas acted faithfully in the hope of accomplishing good, would he have allowed himself to be paid for his services? When giving instructions to the 12, Jesus stressed the principle of doing good without any expectation of monetary reward, saying: "You received free, give free." (Matt. 10: 8) Also, it is hardly likely that a person convinced that he had done something wholesome would kill himself. In fact, Judas even admitted to the chief priests: "I sinned when I betrayed righteous blood." —Matt. 27:1-5.

Were the Other Apostles Traitors Too?

The Swiss professor, mentioned at the beginning of this article, went on to play down the seriousness of Judas' act, saying that in actuality the other apostles were no better. He claimed that they, too, were traitors, because they betrayed the Jewish religion to become Christians. Is this true?

The apostles were Jews, born under the Mosaic law and under obligation to keep it. At no time did Jesus disregard the Law.

He said: "Do not think I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I came, not to destroy, but to fulfill." (Matt. 5:17) After Jesus' death and resurrection, the obligation for Jews to observe the Mosaic law would come to an end. (Col. 2:13, 14) The apostles did not betray the true religion that God gave to Israel; they simply strove to keep up with advancing knowledge.

Judas, on the other hand, *did* show disrespect for the law of Moses. The Law certainly did not condone his being a thief. Nor did it sanction his greediness, his accepting a bribe or his betraying an innocent man. (Ex. 20:15-17; Deut. 27:25) So it was Judas, not the other apostles, who was a traitor—even to the Jewish law.

The Bible does not give us all the details as to what was going through Judas' mind. Some say he may have had political aspirations and was disappointed that Jesus did not set up an earthly kingdom in which he, Judas, could have played a prominent role. Be that as it may, selfishness and greed must have been involved in some way. This is indicated by what took place two days before Jesus' death. On that occasion, Mary, the sister of Lazarus, anointed Jesus with perfumed oil worth 300 denarii, about a year's wages for a laborer. (Matt. 20:2) Judas strongly objected that the oil should have been sold and the money given to the poor. "He said this, though," states the Gospel of John, "not because he was concerned about the poor, but because he was a thief and had the money box and used to carry off the monies put in it."—John 12:2-6.

Judas' personality, as revealed in the Bible, shows him to have turned from being a faithful servant of God into a selfish, greedy, deceitful hypocrite. No wonder Jesus, on the final night of his earthly life, said about Judas: "It would have been finer for that man if he had not been born!" (Mark 14:21) According to the Bible, there is no defense for Judas Iscariot.

In Future Issues

- **What It Takes to Be Happy in Marriage**
 - **Birds in Flight**
 - **Shun Undesirable Habits and Practices**
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Watching the World

"Tomorrow's Epidemic"

◆ War on Want, a British agency, reports that the sale of cigarettes is booming in developing lands. Sales are said to be growing by 5 percent yearly in these countries. The agency's report, "Tobacco and the Third World: Tomorrow's Epidemic," also says that cancer and other smoking-related diseases will be the next epidemic to present a threat to Third World lands. Heightening the seriousness of matters is the fact that certain cigarettes being marketed in such countries "yield twice the amount of cancer-causing tar as the same brands sold in Europe and the U.S.," reports the magazine *To the Point International*.

Hiroshima Recalled

◆ Recently, the former Air Force pilot who served as target-spotter for the United States plane that dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima, Japan, on August 6, 1945, died at a veterans hospital in Houston, Texas. The Associated Press reported: "He was discharged from the service in 1947 after numerous psychiatric tests indicated a 'severe neurosis and guilt complex.' Doctors said he told them he felt responsible for the deaths of hundreds of thousands of Japanese at Hiroshima." After the burial, the brother of the

deceased man was quoted as saying: "He said his brain was on fire. He said he could feel those people burning."

Gasoline Consumption

◆ According to the Mobil Oil Corporation, trips of 10 miles (16 kilometers) or less account for almost half the gasoline used in the United States. Mobil also points out that if you cut your driving speed from 70 to 50 miles (112.6 to 80.5 kilometers) an hour, your automobile will average 25 percent more mileage per gallon (3.8 liters).

Soviet Clerics

◆ The position of Russian clergymen toward war and the Soviet system was cited by Pavel Kurochkin, director of the Institute of Scientific Atheism, during a recent interview published in the July 1978 issue of the journal *Soviet Life*. Kurochkin was quoted as saying that during the second world war (1941-1945) "the majority of clergymen and church officers proved to be patriots." He also stated: "The congregations of the Russian Orthodox Church collected funds to form the Dmitri Donskoi tank unit and the Alexander Nevsky air squadron. Both the muftis and rabbis prayed for the Red Army." Regarding the Church-State relationship in the U.S.S.R.,

Kurochkin said: "The Local Council of the Russian Orthodox Church held in 1971 to elect the present Patriarch, Pimen (Izvekov), declared that the church shall render political support to the Soviet state and social system. The council expressed satisfaction with the existing legislation on religion and the relations between the church and the state."

Concorde "Commuters"

◆ Since the British and French supersonic transport known as the Concorde began commercial flights across the Atlantic in January 1976, some passengers have become virtual "commuters." Forty-three percent of the customers using the Concorde on British Airways have flown in the plane more than one time. "Five have each made more than 50 trips," reports the journal *To the Point International*, adding: "The record is held by an American who has made 63 flights."

Cancer Statistics

◆ In Japan the death rate for stomach cancer is 46.6 persons per 100,000, compared with 7.2 in the United States. Nitrates in foods have been linked with the high figure among the Japanese. On the other hand, in Japan the death rate for cancer of the intestine is 4.8 per 100,000, whereas it is 18.3 in the U.S. Also, while breast cancer is only 5.4 per 100,000 in Japan, the U.S. figure is 29.6. So reports *Newsweek* magazine, listing data furnished by the World Health Organization.

Found: A Moon of Pluto

◆ According to a United Press International dispatch from Washington, D.C., astronomers of the Naval Observatory recently announced the discovery of the first known moon of the planet Pluto. The satellite was discovered by James Christy while studying photographic plates of the planet

that were made with the telescope at the observatory in Flagstaff, Arizona. In comparing plates made during April and May 1978 with photos taken in 1965 and 1970, Christy noted an elongated blur that had changed positions. This turned out to be the previously undiscovered moon. Pluto is the farthest planet from the sun, and the newfound moon is reported to be 12,000 miles (19,000 kilometers) from the planet.

Rise in Crime

◆ The results of a 66-nation study covering 1970 to 1975 reveal that there was a great increase in crime throughout the world during that period. These were the recently reported findings of Viennese researchers who have been making preparations for the United Nations Crime Prevention Conference to be held at Sydney, Australia, in 1980. The experts found that the drug crime rate had risen 114 percent from 1970 to 1975, compared with an increase of 179 percent in cases of theft during those years.

Tiny Croakers

◆ Possibly the world's tiniest frogs have been discovered in a jungle at Western Australia's northern tip. Although the adults are only a half inch (1.27 centimeters) long, they are able to jump as much as 100 times their body length. Reportedly, the frogs make a distinctive croaking sound.

Hair Transplants

◆ The transplantation of hair to cope with baldness has become "the most common cosmetic operation for men," reports *Modern Medicine*. But the clinical journal states that for a second time this procedure has resulted in what is known as arteriovenous fistula. Citing one case, the publication says that a year and a half after transplant treatments had been completed, "a 34-year-old man complained of

buzzing in his right ear, throbbing and swelling above the ear at the site from which the last graft was taken, and blurring of vision in his right eye." However, all these conditions vanished after the fistula was removed.

On Becoming Silent

◆ When a television station in Florence, Italy, presented an exercise program featuring a woman instructor unclad from the waist up, the monks at a local monastery protested, charging: "You are sending Satan directly into the home." But the monks became silent when the accused station cited the pornographic presentations of its competitor. "The manager of [that competing channel], it turned out, was a Catholic friar," reports *TV Guide*.

Plants Aplenty

◆ How many species of plants are there in Alaska, Canada, the continental United States and Greenland? A checklist published by Stanwyn Shetler and Laurence Skog contains 16,274 species. But "reports of additional plant types are already being sent in by botanists," says *Science News*.

Physicians' Fees

◆ The White House Council on Wage and Price Stability recently reported that in the United States doctors' fees have gone up 273 percent since 1950. Whereas U.S. residents paid \$2.7 billion for the services of doctors in 1950, this outlay is expected to be \$35 billion during 1978. Reportedly, 60 percent of this increase has resulted from higher fees alone. Medical doctors in the U.S. "earn four times more than other professional groups as a result of fee hikes," reports *Parade* magazine.

Vacation Time

◆ According to a recent study by the Union of German Doctors, for reduced stress, workers would be better off with two yearly vacations than they

would with a shorter workweek. "The study suggested that unions negotiate for a second vacation rather than a shorter week," reports the Associated Press, "since the worker is expected to accomplish the same amount of work in a shorter period of time."

India's Growing Population

◆ Today the population of India is estimated at about 634.2 million. According to the most recent census (in 1971), it was 548 million. Hence, the country's population has been rising about 13 million yearly. If that rate were to continue, India's populace would number 799 million by 1991.

Tax Paying

◆ In the United States, the average citizen works 124 days a year in order to pay his municipal, state and federal taxes. So reports the Tax Foundation.

Cement Raises Sugar Yield

◆ The Australian Bureau of Sugar has found that sugarcane yields improved by almost one half in Queensland when some portland cement was plowed into acid soil a month before the crop was planted. Iron and magnesium in the cement are thought to be responsible for the greater yield. "In one test," reports the British journal *New Scientist*, "four tonnes of cement applied per hectare [4.4 tons per 2.5 acres] increased yields by 44 per cent while a 33 per cent increase was shown by 2½ tonnes [2.8 tons]."

When Pets Meet

◆ Two very different pets—a black cat and a white rabbit—recently caused some unusual trouble at Eagan, Minnesota, U.S.A. The rabbit's owner claimed that her neighbor's cat scared her pet to death. She contacted the animal warden. The cat soon was picked up by the police, and it was shot about three hours later at their firing range. At that,

the owner sued the police because there was a local ordinance providing that animals be held for five days before disposing of them. The court awarded the owner \$40 for his pet and \$5,000 in the way of punitive damages.

England's Arabs

◆ Forty thousand Arab householders are now said to live in London, England, and its suburbs. According to *Parade* magazine, their numbers are sufficient for an Arabic newspaper there, as well as signs in both that language and English.

Wine Kills Fish

◆ The action of an angry worker of a French wine producer recently resulted in the death of thousands of fish.

When the employee poured some \$600,000 (U.S.) worth of Burgundy into the sewers of Nuits Saint Georges, France, the wine ultimately flowed into the Meuzin River. As a result, its waters became so polluted that fish were killed by the thousands.

Swimming-Pool Dangers

◆ A recent study by the Consumer Product Safety Commission in the United States has revealed that the majority of serious swimming-pool injuries occur in home or apartment pools, or those at motels and hotels. It was found that depth markings often were lacking, and that many injuries occurred when individuals dived into water under four feet (1.2 meters) deep.

No Charge for Air

◆ An Indiana company has marketed a device enabling gasoline station operators to charge persons 25c for using an air hose to inflate a tire. But apparently there will be no charge for air at the 500 stations in Hempstead, New York, for the town board unanimously voted against it.

Food Figures

◆ The Center for Science in the Public Interest has reported that United States residents are eating less candy and butter, but are using more refined sugar and fat than they did in the past. Also, whereas the average U.S. citizen ate 403 eggs in the year 1945, the number was down to 276 in 1976.

The owner sued the police because there was a local ordinance prohibiting that animals be held for five days before disposing of them. The court awarded the owner \$40 for his pet and \$2,000 in the way of punitive damages.

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Wine Kills Fish

The action of an angry worker of a French wine producer recently resulted in the death of thousands of fish.

When the employee poured some 200,000 (U.S.) worth of fish into the sewers of Nantes, France, the wine ultimately flowed into the Maine River. As a result, the water became so polluted that fish were killed by the thousands.

Swimming-Pool Dangers

A recent study by the Consumer Product Safety Commission in the United States has revealed that the majority of serious swimming-pool injuries occur in home or apartment pools, as those at hotels and resorts. It was found that death markings often were lacking, and that many injuries occurred when individuals dived into water under four feet (1.2 meters) deep.

No charges for air. An Indiana company has marketed a device enabling gas-fueled station operators to charge persons for using an air hose to inflate a tire. But apparently there will be no charge for air at the 500 stations in Hammond, New York for the town board unanimously voted against it.

Food Wastages

The Center for Science in the Public Interest has reported that United States restaurants are eating less candy and butter, but are using more refined sugar and fat than they did in the past. Also, whereas the average U.S. citizen ate 403 eggs in the year 1965, the number was down to 376 in 1976.