

A PLANET IN DISTRESS

“And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. All these are the beginning of sorrows.”(Matt 24:6-8).

How much difference can five years make in the life of a planet? In the case of this planet, they make an enormous difference. What happened on the earth since we published the first edition of *The Christian Herald* can only be described in catastrophic terms.

The earthquakes have increased in frequency and devastation; the weather has become more unpredictable and more virulent around the world; the environment is reeling from the stress of population explosion; disease epidemics are out of control in many parts of the world; and the greenhouse gases are already warming the planet.

At the national and international level, genocidal wars are raging out of control from Africa to the Balkans, and from the Indian subcontinent to the former Soviet empire. The United Nations, with which rested the hope of mankind for a better world, has proven that it cannot take care of itself, let alone of the affairs of the world.

Never in the history of the world has humanity faced so many dangers from so many quarters, yet never has there been more ignorance about the real solutions to the world's problems. In 1992, in our No 2 edition of *The Christian Herald*, we wrote:

“What were considered alarmist predictions a few decades ago, not only have been fulfilled, but exceeded many times over. We are now learning about world problems which only a few years ago were unheard of. A decade ago no one knew about AIDS. Half a decade ago there was no talk about the thinning of the ozone layer. These problems alone pose catastrophic dangers. AIDS is threatening to destroy the regenerating power of many nations. The thinning of the ozone layer is posing a threat to the vegetation and the microscopic marine organisms - the very support of life on earth - in addition to whatever harm they may do directly to human beings.

In February this year, scientists raised the alarm when they discovered that the depletion of the ozone layer is much worse than previously thought. ‘New findings of ozone depletion were so alarming, the scientists said, that they decided to release them before completion of the data analysis in late March.’ ‘Everybody should be alarmed about this,’ said Michael Kurylo, a research manager at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). ‘We’re seeing conditions primed for ozone destruction. It’s in a far worse way than we thought.’” (*Sydney Morning Herald*, Feb. 5, 1992).

Compare this with the following statement made only three years later in Australia's national newspaper:

“If we are to keep the wolf of famine from the world's door, a new food source must be found. Slashed nets, captured ships, loaded guns and international charges of piracy on the high seas - these are the alarm warnings of the latest world conflict, the battle over the Earth's dwindling fish stocks. Fish wars like the recent row between Canada and Spain are likely to escalate. Australia has so far clashed with five nations over fishing and our waters face an annual invasion by 500 foreign vessels. The oceans, once deemed inexhaustible, are approaching their limits. Thirty years ago, the World Food Congress in Rome issued a grave warning about the capacity of humanity to feed its growing population. The outcome - the “green revolution” - changed the face of global agriculture.

But 25 years on, the food machine has run down. More people are impoverished and malnourished, and more children are dying than at any time in history. The world faces a potential food crisis greater than envisaged in 1966. The reason is that international political support for raising food output has waned. No where is the crisis more acute than in the seas: two-thirds of the great fisheries are in trouble. Despite a trebling in the number of fishing boats, the global catch has

stagnated. Yet fish are the primary source of animal protein for half the world's population. The poor half... The goal of the international agricultural research centers is not to provide aid, but to give people the technologies to feed themselves. Only that can avert a never-ending sequence of crises. The big question vexing many researchers and food planners is: where is the next great leap in food output to come from? The earth is running out of arable land and fresh water to grow more crops and livestock." (*The Australian*, May 23, 1995).

Julian Cribb, the author of this article, went on to suggest that large scale fish farming on coastal areas may be the solution to feeding the world's population, but he acknowledged that this could create yet more problems. The fish farms could "pollute the coastal waters where fish breed or make poor people the economic losers".

When the alarm bells were first heard about the depletion of the ozone layer and the danger coming from warming of the planet, a number of scientists raised their voices in protest saying that the earth is not warming, but cooling, and that, in any case, this is a natural phenomenon no different than the periodic "ice age" cycles the earth has experienced in the past.

They were wrong; deadly wrong. There is nothing natural about what is happening in the world at present. It is all man-made, it is universal, and it is irreversible. Only God can stop the world from annihilation now, but He will not do it until humanity has learned its lesson to the full. It is a lesson humanity did not need to learn if only the first humans obeyed God's instruction and revelation. But they wanted to experiment and find out the truth for themselves. That started humanity on its current road to oblivion. For six thousand years, human beings have been searching for truth, peace and prosperity, yet all they achieved is universal deception, never ending wars and widespread poverty. *Time* magazine wrote:

"CAN JUSTICE EVER BE DONE?" "Around the world, the horrors of history continue to haunt the present and act as an engine driving modern politics. Is forgetting possible? The sins of the fathers beget wrath in the sons. Down the generations, blood exacts blood. During the Second World War, Serbian Chetniks allied with Fascist Italy carried out systematic raids across the river Drina to murder Bosnian Muslims. Guerilla propaganda painted the Slavic Muslims as hated Turks, who had ruled the Balkans for 500 years... Fifty years later, the Drina bridges again served as makeshift Golgothas of 'ethnic cleansing' by guerilla Serbs. Vesehrad's Hasija Kesner, 24, described how she and 10 other Muslims were led to a bridge in May of 1992. Her cousin Hamet, 50, was tortured and beheaded. One Serb 'took the head as if it were a ball, and kicked it with his foot,' she recalled. 'The head flew down into the Drina. The killer went off into fits of laughter as he watched the blood drip from his knife.' "This is the stuff nightmares are made of. More to the point, the nightmares repeat themselves for one overriding reason: because the hideous sins of the past were never properly addressed..." "Civilization is not supposed to work this way, but all too often it does. Around the world, horrors of history continue to haunt the present and act as an implacable engine driving modern politics. From the streets of Buenos Aires to archives in Berlin, from the highlands of Ethiopia to the hills of El Salvador and paddy fields of Bangladesh, demands to redress injustices of yesteryear - or sometimes yesterday - bedevil public life still. Victims of oppression in one time communist regimes struggle to cope with ruthless social engineers who continue to live among them. Many Asians still burn with rage today over atrocities committed by imperial Japan two generations ago and longer. Everywhere, scarred societies strive for an elusive balance..." "Although a balancing of moral accounts so far has eluded long-suffering Cambodia, where the 1975-79 Khmer Rouge reign of horror resulted in at least 1 million deaths, more recent orgies of epic bloodshed both in Bosnia and in Rwanda have been appalling enough to prompt the establishment of special UN-sponsored international tribunals in the Hague..."

"Whether these Nuremberg-like proceedings will achieve a semblance of their aims is open to question. International courts are not above politics. Because France had helped prop up the old Hutu-led regime in Rwanda - where wholesale massacres last year killed more than 500,000 people, most of them minority Tutsi - Paris has been lukewarm in its support of the UN panel. On the other hand, critics of the Ethiopian trials have charged the Tigrean-dominated government with singling out the country's traditionally dominant Amhara people for revenge and 'victor's justice.' "What seems beyond doubt, though, is that unsettled and unforgotten grievances do not simply go away. They rankle, divide and remain nearly impossible to put to rest. Amnesties can help wipe the slate clean, but more times than not the blood stains, like those on Lady Macbeth's hands, cannot be so easily

scrubbed into invincibility. Says Mariano Grondona, a prominent Argentine law professor: 'It's like a person with a childhood trauma. It reappears as nightmares and neuroses until he brings it out in the open and looks at it. That is the therapeutic quality of truth.'" (*Time*, May 22, 1995).

It is as if this passage has been taken from the Bible. Indeed, there is no more therapeutic quality than truth (and repentance), yet fewer things are more lacking in the world today than truth (and repentance).

"Your word is truth" said Jesus Christ referring to the Word of God - the Bible. Yet, this is the most maligned book in the world today. Why? Why have academic establishments all over the world targeted this book? What does it contain that makes them rage with fury when it is mentioned in their forums? And why are the scientists who are turning back to the truth of the Bible being ostracized from their midst? What does the Bible contain that your leaders do not want you to know?

You will be surprised and gladdened to know the whole truth. So stay tune and prepare yourself for what could be the revelation of your life.

THE TRINITY - RESTORING THE TRUTH

"And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free"(John 8:32)

One of the most important biblical concepts, which has been a topic of debate among theologians for nearly two Millennia, is again the focus of major controversy. In the last few years, a number of books, booklets and articles have appeared on the market, mainly from the Churches of God, which claim to "prove" that the view held by traditional Christianity (Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant Churches) about the Trinity - Father, Son and Holy Spirit - is wrong, that the correct view is Father and Son only; a Duality, in other words, rather than a Trinity.

This controversy can be summarized by the way in which each camp has defined the Holy Spirit. Traditional churches have been speaking of *hypostases* - a triune God of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, or three distinct individuals sharing a "*community of substance*" - three in one and one in three - "*unseparated, uncreated and ungenerated*".

The Churches of God, on the other hand, have rejected this explanation on the pretext that not even its proponents understand it, let alone the average person. But they resolved this mystery by doing to the Holy Spirit what they have done to the soul long ago - they dispensed with them both.

It is a well known fact that the Churches of God resolve difficult theological concepts by ignoring, discarding or giving them an interpretation which has little or nothing to do with the Bible. Unless they have changed again - they have the habit of changing their doctrines often and unexpectedly, and incorporating other people's ideas without due recognition - they hold the view that human beings have no soul, that their bodies are their "living souls", that the Holy Spirit is not a distinct personality within the Trinity, but an undefined "force", "power" or "will" emanating from the mind of God which He uses to carry out His purpose.

If they are right, it means that there are people who are soul-less and Spirit-less creatures - walking corpses - a frightening prospect. They may well be right for Jesus Christ did say that there are people who appear to be alive but who are in fact dead.

Mat 8:21 Then another of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father."

Mat 8:22 But Jesus said to him, "Follow Me, and let the dead bury their own dead."

Since the Churches of God still believe in the resurrection, we would like to ask what is it that survives the body after death that could be resurrected if there is no soul apart from the body?

We would also like to know if they have ever read or heard of these Scriptures:

1Ki 17:20 Then he cried out to the LORD and said, "O LORD my God, have You also brought tragedy on the widow with whom I lodge, by killing her son?"

1Ki 17:21 And he stretched himself out on the child three times, and cried out to the LORD and said, "O LORD my God, I pray, **let this child's soul come back to him.**"

1Ki 17:22 Then the LORD heard the voice of Elijah; **and the soul of the child came back to him, and he revived.**

Mat 10:28 And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy **both soul and body** in hell.

Should they say that they know these Scriptures well, we won't ask them to explain them to us. We know perfectly well that they are capable of explaining everything - in their own peculiar way.

There are many examples in the Bible which indicate that the soul and the body are different entities, but these should be enough to show that the Churches of God do not let facts get in the way of their preconceived ideas. The fact is, with all the fanfare about their new theology, they have not been able to produce a single biblical example to substantiate it. This is not unexpected, for the Scriptures never portray God as having anything coming out of, or sitting on, His head except a crown. If what they say is true, the Holy Spirit is invisible not only to human beings, but to angels and heavenly personalities too.

The examples they give indicate that they have confused the Holy Spirit's personal characteristics with His manifestations. In the Bible, He has manifested Himself as a dove, a breeze, a human being, etc., but that did not prevent Jesus Christ and His Apostles speaking of Him in personal terms. Their theology says more about their knowledge and understanding of the Scriptures than what the Bible says about the Holy Spirit.

“CALLED AND CHOSEN”

Unlike other religions, Christianity operates on two levels. First, people are called to repentance and given a chance to change their way of life, then they are judged and, according to their achievements, are granted a place in the Kingdom of God. Those who refuse to repent and continue to live in sin are disposed of in a great lake of fire at judgment time. This is what Jesus Christ meant when He said, "many are called, but few are chosen" (Matt. 20:16; 22:14). We are all called to repentance once, then wait in hope and expectation that at judgment time we will also be chosen. The calling comes before repentance and the choosing after judgment.

Persistent effort in overcoming one's own weaknesses, prayer, study of the Scriptures, meditation on the law of God, understanding God's plan for mankind in general and for oneself in particular and, ultimately, spiritual union with God, are absolutely necessary if one is to be granted eternal life in the Kingdom of God.

No one is assured of salvation simply by being a member of one church or another. A church can facilitate one's spiritual growth, but can never vouch for his salvation. No one knows what is in the heart of man except God. That is why no one can be said to be "called and chosen" while still in this world. Except, that is, if one is a member of the modern day Churches of God.

Not long ago, Garner Ted Armstrong, the most prominent leader in the Churches of God, told his followers that those who have given "cheerful generous support" to his church are "called and chosen" (*The International News*, Vol. XIII, No. 1, Summer 1992, p.1). Thus, he is now able to play God to his followers.

They no longer need to worry about tribulations and perseverance, about developing character, hope and faith, or about waiting to be resurrected and judged by God - they are already "called and chosen" now.

Like the Pope, who plays the role of God to his followers by promising them a place in "heaven" after death, Garner Ted Armstrong is now able to guarantee a place in the Kingdom of

Heaven for his followers too. And, as one might have expected, all leaders in the Churches of God have followed suit. All their followers are “called and chosen”. Which explains why, in spite of their horrendous burdens, most are fiercely loyal to their leaders. Wouldn’t you give everything if one “guaranteed” you eternal life in the Kingdom of Heaven?

The ecumenical spirit of the world has well and truly caught up with the Churches of God. All that remains for them now is to sanctify the dead and their conversion is complete. Some people are already doing it. For them, Herbert W. Armstrong, the founder of modern day Churches of God, could do no wrong. He is their saint and savior, he brought them to the knowledge of the “truth” and, like his son, he “called and chose” them.

About two and a half decades ago, I too was among the lucky “called and chosen” ones, but I blew my chance when I questioned some of their doctrines and practices. That is a no, no in the Churches of God. You cannot question the ministers of the “Government of God” and still be among their privileged followers.

For their own reasons, the leaders in the Churches of God believe that they are the “Government of God” on earth; which, presumably, gives them the right to take on the prerogatives of God. Yet, while they have no compunction about playing the role of God to their followers, they fiercely deny them the right to be called children of God.

Since all Governments need income to remain in power, the “Governments of God” have imposed on their subjects the ancient Israelite taxation system known as the tithing principle; this on top of their normal obligations to the “Governments of men” of the countries in which they happen to live. This is what we mean by ‘horrendous burdens’ on their followers.

There never was a “Government of God” on this earth and never will be until Jesus Christ returns to establish His rulership over the whole world. Such claims are as spurious as the tithing system they have imposed on the New Testament Churches.

It was the Catholic Church which popularized the idea that God has a government on earth and an all-powerful, “infallible” leader. Their example proved too powerful and tempting for the Worldwide Church of God, and so they adopted it as the model for their hierarchical ministry. Herbert W. Armstrong even assumed the prerogatives and infallibility of the Pope. No one dared to tell him that he was wrong in anything he did or said. No one, that is, except this writer.

When I perceived that he was wasting the church money on expensive and inappropriate gifts to the world leaders, I sent him a letter suggesting that it would be more appropriate to take along a Bible and preach from it to those leaders. Not long after that, at their first opportunity, they disfellowshipped me. What happened with the WCG afterwards can only be described as an unmitigated disaster. The Church simply began to fall apart.

They did not take note of what happened to ancient Israel when its leaders committed iniquity by condemning an innocent man. Because they had the numbers they thought that “might is right”, so much so that when Pilate washed his hands and said he could find no fault in Jesus Christ, they cried out defiantly: “His blood be on us and on our children” (Matt 27:25). His blood was on them and is on their children to this day, and will remain so until they get on their knees in heartfelt repentance and acknowledge their error. Then, and only then, will His blood cease to be on them and on their children, and their sin will be atoned for.

As a result of the sin of their leaders, God nullified the covenant He had with the entire nation of Israel. He did the same when the leaders of the Churches of God committed iniquity in His name. One cannot break the law of God with impunity and still retain the guidance, inspiration and protection of the Holy Spirit. Now the wheel of fortune is turning again, and those who were once outcasts are about to be grafted in and become leaders in God’s congregations once more.

When the leaders of the WCG disfellowshipped innocent people from the church, they did not realize that in so doing they put themselves out of the Church of God. But since “all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose” (Rom. 8:28), their lawlessness worked out to the advantage of their victims. These days, whatever truth and new insights are revealed, it always comes through people who were once members of the Churches of God.

IN THE NAME OF...THE HOLY SPIRIT OR OF A “SPIRITUAL PRESENCE”

One of the “luminaries” in the Church of God, International, Vance Stinson, wrote in his recently published booklet “God is Not a Trinity!”:

“Trinitarians argue that the phrase “in the name of...the Holy Spirit” proves that the Spirit is a Person (hypostasis) just as the Father and the Son are Persons (hypostases), and that “He” is one of three “personal distinctions” within God...”

“In Matthew 28:18-20, Jesus spoke of the work His disciples were to accomplish on this earth, and of His involvement in that work. He mentioned the Holy Spirit because the Spirit is His (and the Father’s - John 14:23) spiritual presence - the ever-present power, or authority, by which His disciples were to preach the gospel and baptize repentant believers. It is the means through which the disciples experience the presence of God as they go about doing His work. In effect, Jesus said, “The Father has given me all authority in heaven and on earth; therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in recognition of the authority of the Father, who is in heaven, and of the Son, who is in heaven, and of the Holy Spirit, which is my spiritual presence with you as you do the work I have given you to do on this earth...” “If we restrict the definition of the Holy Spirit to “force” or “power,” then we might have difficulty in explaining why Scripture speaks of the Spirit as having attributes associated with personality. But once we understand that Scripture presents the Holy Spirit as the power of God as well as the spiritual presence of God in the minds of His people and in the natural world, no such difficulty exists.” (pp. 39, 40, 42).

There is no fear in these people that they will incur the wrath of God for twisting the Scripture and for contradicting the very words of Jesus Christ. This is what Matthew 28:18-20 says:

Mat 28:18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

Mat 28:19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

Mat 28:20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age." Amen.

And this is what He said about those who dare to modify the Scriptures:

Rev 22:18 For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book;

Rev 22:19 and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and *from* the things which are written in this book.

They not only added to the Scriptures, but put words in the mouth of Jesus Christ which entirely changed the sense of what He said. Vance Stinson quoted John 14:23 as saying that “the Spirit is His (and the Father’s...) spiritual presence on this earth”. We have become used with these people misquoting the Scriptures to “prove” their ill conceived ideas, so we were not surprised to find that they did it again. This is what John wrote.

Joh 14:23 Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.

No such words or attributes in this verse, yet they made it the pivot of their theology. Every single biblical example they give to justify their denial of the Trinity and personality of the Holy Spirit, is either a misquotation or an outright modification of the Scriptures. Jesus Christ said that:

Mat 12:31 "Therefore I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy *against* the Spirit will not be forgiven men.

Mat 12:32 Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the *age* to come.

People cannot commit blasphemy against an object or an abstract entity. The reason the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit cannot be forgiven is that those who offend Him cannot be "born again" and cannot grow spiritually. But the Churches of God do not worry about being "born again" for they tell their members that they will be "born again" when they are resurrected into the Kingdom of God, again a contradiction of the words of Jesus Christ: "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is **born again, he cannot see** the kingdom of God." (John 3:3). People have to be "born again" first, before they can "see" the Kingdom of God. After being "born again" they begin a life of overcoming the many trials and tribulations needed for the development of right character, essential for a place in the Kingdom of God:

Rev 3:21 To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.

Those who wait for the resurrection to be "born again" will never make it into the Kingdom of God. They will be resurrected not to eternal life in the Kingdom of God, but to eternal damnation in the lake of fire.

The Churches of God have confused being "born again" with being resurrected. To be "born again" means to repent, be baptized, receive the Holy Spirit and begin a new life. This is what Jesus Christ meant when He promised His disciples the "Helper" (John 14:2), and when He told them to go out into the world and baptize people in the name of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. But since the Churches of God deny that the Holy Spirit has a name, they have to deny that the purpose of baptism is to be "born again" and receive the Holy Spirit. It is only with the help of the Holy Spirit that people can develop the right character and grow to true spiritual maturity.

Being immersed into a watery grave at baptism represents a symbolic death of the old self and the birth of a new person. After repentance and baptism, people receive the Holy Spirit and are confirmed into the Church of God by the laying on of hands. From then on, they no longer belong to themselves, but to Christ. They become His representatives, His witnesses on earth and are expected to behave accordingly.

Who can baptize you? Those whom you believe to be the servants of Christ and have the Holy Spirit! Those who deny the name and personality of the Holy Spirit cannot have the Holy Spirit, therefore should not be in the business of preaching and baptizing people. For them this is a "business" since they are also the ones who extract a heavy price from those who become victims of their preaching. Is a previous baptism valid? You have to decide that for yourself. If in doubt, you may need to be baptized again. The Holy Spirit does not create doubt, but confidence and understanding. When you are baptized, you receive the spirit of the church into which you are baptized. That is why being baptized into a church which does not have the Holy Spirit cannot be regarded as adequate. God knows, there are many of these churches around.

What if the minister who baptized you has fallen away? You are not responsible for the actions of your minister after he baptized you. His falling away does not affect you. What you need to understand is that your membership into the Church of God is in heaven not on earth. Once you receive the Holy Spirit, your name is written in God's Book of Life.

Luk 10:20 Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven."

Rev 20:11 Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them.

Rev 20:12 And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is *the Book of Life*. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.

Rev 20:13 The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works.

Rev 20:14 Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

Rev 20:15 And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

When you are baptized and your name is written in God's Book of Life, you take a great responsibility upon yourself. You are then embarking on the struggle of your life, the struggle for salvation. There can be no turning back and no second chance if you do so. There are powerful forces against you, some visible some invisible, but if you bear in mind that, "He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world" (I Jn. 4:4), you never need to worry about the outcome of your battle.

Eph 6:10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.

Eph 6:11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

Eph 6:12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*.

Eph 6:13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

Rev 3:5 He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.

Apostle Paul said that it is possible for people to **quench the Spirit**.

1Th 5:16 Rejoice always,

1Th 5:17 pray without ceasing,

1Th 5:18 in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

1Th 5:19 Do not quench the Spirit.

1Th 5:20 Do not despise prophecies.

1Th 5:21 Test all things; hold fast what is good.

1Th 5:22 Abstain from every form of evil.

1Th 5:23 Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole **spirit, soul, and body** be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

(Notice how he, like Jesus Christ, made distinction between **spirit, soul and body**). How can one quench the Spirit? To understand this, consider an analogy with a pregnant woman. She can quench the baby in her womb by not providing proper food for herself and her baby. In like manner, the Holy Spirit - the seed of God in us - can be quenched if we do not feed Him proper food. What is the proper food for the Holy Spirit?

Gal 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

Gal 5:23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

Gal 5:24 And those *who are* Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

Gal 5:25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

Gal 5:26 Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

These are as much the fruits of the Spirit as are the fruits God expects from us. It is a reciprocating act: God fills our heart with love and the Holy Spirit, and expects from us love and the fruits of the Holy Spirit. Jesus Christ received the seed of God - the Holy Spirit - from conception. As He grew, the Holy Spirit grew with Him and in Him until it produced a fully grown Son of God - the very first Son of God. By the time He was baptized by John the Baptist and began His work of ministry, He was full of the Holy Spirit, the mind of God was in Him, He thought like the Father, and His consciousness was the consciousness of the Father.

After He rose to heaven, the Holy Spirit became available to all who follow Him and keep His commandments.

Joh 14:15 "If you love Me, keep My commandments.

Joh 14:16 And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—

Joh 14:17 the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.

The difference between Jesus Christ and us is that while He had the Holy Spirit from conception, we only receive Him after we are “born again”. The end result is little different for we too become sons of God just like Him.

1Jn 3:1 Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.

1Jn 3:2 Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

But the Churches of God deny that we can become sons of God like Jesus Christ, just as they deny that human beings have a soul, can be “born again”, receive the Holy Spirit and become part of the divine Trinity. Yet, while they deny these things, they insist on observing the Old Testament restrictions about food and marriage. They unashamedly disregard the teachings of the Apostles of Jesus Christ.

Eph 2:10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Eph 2:11 Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands—

Eph 2:12 that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

Eph 2:13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

Eph 2:14 For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation,

Eph 2:15 having abolished in His flesh the enmity, *that is*, the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man *from* the two, *thus* making peace,

Eph 2:16 and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity.

Eph 2:17 And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near.

Eph 2:18 For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.

Eph 2:19 Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,

Eph 2:20 having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief *cornerstone*,

Eph 2:21 in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord,

Eph 2:22 in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

Apostle Paul equated the law of “ordinances” with the enmity characteristic of human nature. By abolishing one, Jesus Christ abolished the power of the other. How did He do it? Through the

power and presence of the Holy Spirit! Those who insist on observing the Old Testament “ordinances”, are ruled not by the Spirit, but by the flesh.

- Heb 9:6 Now when these things had been thus prepared, the priests always went into the first part of the tabernacle, performing *the services*.
- Heb 9:7 But into the second part the high priest *went* alone once a year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and *for* the people's sins *committed* in ignorance;
- Heb 9:8 the Holy Spirit indicating this, that the way into the Holiest of All was not yet made manifest while the first tabernacle was still standing.
- Heb 9:9 It *was* symbolic for the present time in which both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make him who performed the service perfect in regard to the conscience—
- Heb 9:10 concerned only with foods and drinks, various washings, and fleshly ordinances imposed until the time of reformation.
- Heb 9:11 But Christ came *as* High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation.
- Heb 9:12 Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.
- Heb 9:13 For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh,
- Heb 9:14 how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?
- Heb 9:15 And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.

Since the law “**concerned only with foods and drinks, various washings, and fleshly ordinances imposed until the time of reformation**” was abolished when Christ offered His blood and His body as a sacrifice once and for all, anyone who insists on going back to these “dead works” dishonors His Savior and crucifies Christ again.

- Heb 6:1 Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary *principles* of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God,
- Heb 6:2 of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.
- Heb 6:3 And this we will do if God permits.
- Heb 6:4 For *it* is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit,
- Heb 6:5 and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come,
- Heb 6:6 if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put *Him* to an open shame.

During the reign of Herbert W. Armstrong, the Worldwide Church of God used to be identified with one of the seven Churches of God from the book of Revelation - the Philadelphia Church. The passage describing that church speaks of two kinds of people within its ranks: some of little strength who had not denied the name of Christ, and others who claim to be Jews (Christians) but lie and are a synagogue of Satan.

- Rev 3:8 "I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name.
- Rev 3:9 Indeed I will make *those* of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie—indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you.
- Rev 3:10 Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.

The words “I will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world” indicate that this church will be in existence at the end of this age just prior to the return of Jesus

Christ. It is then that this “hour of trial” - the great tribulation - will take place, which means that H.W. Armstrong may well have been right. But what neither he nor anyone else have ever explained, is who is who in this church. Who are the people of little strength, who have kept the name of Christ and persevered to the end, and who are those of the synagogue of Satan who say they are Jews but lie? Apostle Paul again:

2Th 2:1 Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you,

2Th 2:2 not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come.

2Th 2:3 Let no one deceive you by any means; for *that Day will not come* unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition,

2Th 2:4 who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.

1Ti 4:1 Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons,

1Ti 4:2 speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron,

1Ti 4:3 forbidding to marry, *and commanding* to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.

1Ti 4:4 For every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving;

1Ti 4:5 for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.

In the end time, the Churches of God will fall away from the truth of God and be led by a man who acts like God: “speaking lies in hypocrisy” and “forbidding to marry and commanding to abstain from foods”. In the Churches of God they are already doing such things: they do not eat “every creature of God”, do not allow interracial marriages, do not believe that the Holy Spirit is a person, do not believe in the Trinity, etc.. They do not believe a lot of things that are in the New Testament, yet they believe that they must circumcise themselves, keep the Old Testament dietary laws, keep themselves racially pure, and persecute those who disagree with them. And still they call themselves Christians. Any wonder that Jesus Christ says they are liars and a synagogue of Satan? In regard to the “son of perdition” who calls himself God, we have proven that this is the leader of the Catholic Church, the man who has appropriated for himself God’s title of “Holy Father” (See the No 3 edition of *The Christian Herald*). How then do we explain the fact that there are now two people who play the role of God, two “men of perdition” - one in Rome and one in America? Simple! The Catholic “God” has the preeminence. He has claimed to be “God” from the beginning of history. No one really knows when Pontifex Maximus acquired for Himself the title of “Holy Father”. People have been calling him by that title throughout history without realizing what that meant, or that they were committing blasphemy by doing so. He used to be called “Holy Father” in the time of Jesus Christ too. That is why He admonished His followers never to call anyone on earth father: “Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven” (Matt 23:9). But now, in the end time, another “God” arose in the very midst of the Churches of God. The book of Revelation makes it clear how this can be explained:

Rev 16:13 And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs *coming* out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.

The dragon is Satan, the “beast” refers to the one who has been identified with the “beasts” of Revelation (See the No 4 edition of *The Christian Herald*), and the false prophet is the one who makes his appearance in the last days in the Churches of God.

THE POWER OF GOD

Since the Churches of God say that the Holy Spirit is the “power of God”, let us see how God exercises His power. A revealing incident occurred in the life of Jesus Christ just prior to His crucifixion:

Mat 26:50 But Jesus said to him, "Friend, why have you come?" Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and took Him.

Mat 26:51 And suddenly, one of those *who were* with Jesus stretched out *his* hand and drew his sword, struck the servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear.

Mat 26:52 But Jesus said to him, "Put your sword in its place, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword.

Mat 26:53 Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels?

Mat 26:54 How then could the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must happen thus?"

More than twelve legions of angels? Why did He not say, “My Father could use the power of His mind and crash My enemies”? The Father uses His angels to carry out His purpose, not some ethereal mind power.

In Old Testament times, when the king of Syria was at war with the king of Israel and his troops surrounded the city in which the prophet Elisha lived, this is what happened:

2Ki 6:15 And when the servant of the man of God arose early and went out, there was an army, surrounding the city with horses and chariots. And his servant said to him, "Alas, my master! What shall we do?"

2Ki 6:16 So he answered, "Do not fear, for those who *are* with us *are* more than those who *are* with them."

2Ki 6:17 And Elisha prayed, and said, "LORD, I pray, open his eyes that he may see." Then the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw. And behold, the mountain *was* full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

How clear and how wonderful: human beings are surrounded by the angels of God at all times. They protect us, guide us, teach us, communicate with our Father in heaven about our condition, etc. The angels are God's eyes and ears on the earth. Jesus Christ said that every child has his own angel:

Mat 18:10 "Take heed that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that in heaven their angels always see the face of My Father who is in heaven.

Now, what happens to the angels of God when children grow into adulthood, do they abandon them? Of course not! But because people like to exercise their “freedom”, they loose the protection and guidance of God's angels and expose themselves to the influence of Satan's angels. We saw earlier how, “we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.” (Eph. 6:12). The Bible gives us the following revealing examples:

Psa 104:4 Who makes His angels spirits, His ministers a flame of fire.

Psa 35:1 A Psalm of David. Plead *my cause*, O LORD, with those who strive with me; Fight against those who fight against me.

Psa 35:2 Take hold of shield and buckler, And stand up for my help.

Psa 35:3 Also draw out the spear, And stop those who pursue me. Say to my soul, "I *am* your salvation."

Psa 35:4 Let those be put to shame and brought to dishonor Who seek after my life; Let those be turned back and brought to confusion Who plot my hurt.

Psa 35:5 Let them be like chaff before the wind, And let the angel of the LORD chase *them*.

Psa 35:6 Let their way be dark and slippery, And let the angel of the LORD pursue them.

Psa 35:7 For without cause they have hidden their net for me *in* a pit, *Which* they have dug without cause for my life.

Heb 1:7 And of the angels He says: "WHO MAKES HIS ANGELS SPIRITS AND HIS MINISTERS A FLAME OF FIRE."

Heb 1:14 Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?

It is the "angel of the Lord" who protects God's people and chases their enemies. The Bible gives us other examples in which God discusses the fate of human beings with His angels (1 Kings 22:16-24; Job 1:6-12). But there are no examples in the Bible which show God using any other power to carry out His purpose. Even the creation of the world was achieved through the agency of His angels:

Job 38:3 Now prepare yourself like a man; I will question you, and you shall answer Me.

Job 38:4 "Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell *Me*, if you have understanding.

Job 38:5 Who determined its measurements? Surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it?

Job 38:6 To what were its foundations fastened? Or who laid its cornerstone,

Job 38:7 When the morning stars sang together, And all the sons of God shouted for joy?

The expressions "**the morning stars**" and "**the sons of God**", in this case, denote God's angels for there were no human beings in existence then. The angels are as much the sons of God as we are, only on a different plane. Even Satan was called the son of God (Job 1:6-7), and rightly so for he was created by God too. Not as Satan, but as a beautiful and powerful angel - a "covering cherub" in charge of one third of God's angels. But he rebelled against God and became Satan (Ez. 28:12-19; Rev. 12:4).

God used the power of His mind to devise and plan the creation of the world, just as we humans use the power of our minds to devise and create things. We are, after all, made in the image of God (Churches of God preaching notwithstanding): we have body, heart, mind and will, the same as God has body, heart, mind and will.

1Sa 2:35 Then I will raise up for Myself a faithful priest *who* shall do according to what is in **My heart** and in **My mind**. I will build him a sure house, and he shall walk before My anointed forever.

Jer 15:1 Then the LORD said to me, "*Even* if Moses and Samuel stood before Me, **My mind** *would* not *be* favorable toward this people. Cast *them* out of **My sight**, and let them go forth.

Act 13:22 And when He had removed him, He raised up for them David as king, to whom also He gave testimony and said, 'I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after **My own heart**, who will do all **My will**.'

The will of God is being carried out by the angels at present and it will be carried out by them and us when we are resurrected as God's children in His Kingdom. At present, God's angels carry out His will for our benefit. That is why human beings ought to be respectful towards them. Respectful not worshipful. But the Churches of God have excelled themselves again by speaking of God's angels in terms that we would rather not print. Take note of what God's angel told Apostle John when he wanted to worship him, and do like wise:

Rev 22:9 Then he said to me, "See *that you do not do that*. For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God."

THE IMPORTANCE OF RIGHT BELIEF

Apostle Paul urged his followers to, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil 2:5). Now, what mind was in Jesus Christ? The mind of God, obviously! What does it mean to have the mind of God? It means to think and react like Jesus Christ would, if faced with similar circumstances.

The Bible encourages us to let the Holy Spirit take over our thought processes so that we can be molded into a God-like creature. God will not entrust human beings with eternal life in His Kingdom until they have the right character. He cannot allow them to do in heaven what they have done on earth. The current emphasis in the world on absolute freedom and "human rights" is not compatible with the Christian way of life. One cannot be a Christian and still be free to do what he wants. As Jesus Christ said, one cannot serve God and mammon (riches) at the same time (Matt. 6:24).

We are required to "come out of the world" (Rev. 18:4; 1John 2:15), to bring under control our desires and impulses, and learn to live within our means. An ancient Greek philosopher said that people become poor not by diminishing their possessions, but by increasing their desires. Jesus Christ said that unless we become as contented and obedient as little children, we cannot enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

Luk 18:15 Then they also brought infants to Him that He might touch them; but when the disciples saw *it*, they rebuked them.

Luk 18:16 But Jesus called them to *Him* and said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God.

Luk 18:17 Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it."

Throughout history, people have attempted to create utopia on earth, but without exception they have failed. Even the early Christians began by living in a utopian commune:

Act 4:31 And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.

Act 4:32 Now the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul; neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common.

Act 4:33 And with great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And great grace was upon them all.

Act 4:34 Nor was there anyone among them who lacked; for all who were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the proceeds of the things that were sold,

Act 4:35 and laid *them* at the apostles' feet; and they distributed to each as anyone had need.

The reason all such attempts have failed is that internal harmony is not enough to create a lasting utopia. You also need a world free from outside threat and interference, and that cannot be achieved in a world ruled by Satan. He is not renowned for love and tolerance towards his neighbors, or for humility, love and submission towards God. He likes to think that he himself is God. He even tried to entice Jesus Christ to worship him.

Luk 4:5 Then the devil, taking Him up on a high mountain, showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.

Luk 4:6 And the devil said to Him, "All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for *this* has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish.

Luk 4:7 Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours."

Luk 4:8 And Jesus answered and said to him, "Get behind Me, Satan! For it is written, 'YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND HIM ONLY YOU SHALL SERVE.' "

Jesus Christ did not deny Satan's claim that he can do what he wants in this world, even though He knew that this was not entirely accurate. Satan is responsible to God for what he does

too, although he does not like to admit it. Instead, he decided to compete with God by creating his own counterfeit utopian kingdom. When I grew up in communist Romania, they used to tell us that they were building a society based on the principle of “from everyone according to his abilities, to everyone according to his needs”. What ensued was a society with no principles and no morals in which everyone acquired what they could at the expense of everyone else. Lies, deceptions, subversion and exploitation were the norm. Those who wanted to achieve something had to learn to lie ‘convincingly’ early in life.

When I studied the Bible later in life, I was struck by the similarities between the Christian notion of the Kingdom of Heaven and the communist notion of the ideal State. The communist founders had borrowed heavily from the Bible, yet they decided to build their utopia without God. Now that that Satanic Empire had collapsed, everyone thinks that communism is finished. Far from it; now is the time for real communism - one based upon biblical principles.

What happened with communism is no different from what happened with religion: Satan caused people to hate them both by creating obnoxious counterfeits. During the 17 years that I spent in communist institutions - primary, secondary and vocational education, plus army and navy - not a year passed in which I was not subjected to a heavy dose of communist propaganda and indoctrination. They were creating in me a “new man” for a new society. That meant acquiring the thoughts (the mind!) of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and other communist luminaries. Several times a year, we were put on parade and told to sing odes to them, and to praise the “glorious achievements of triumphant communism”.

When I was conscripted into the army, I had to swear that I would hate the enemies of communism and fight to death to defend the fatherland. Their utopia was to be built on people full of hatred. How ironic that after all that atheist indoctrination, I should find myself now preaching not the gospel of Marx, but the Gospel of Christ. If this is not a miracle, I’d like to know what it is. If my communist teachers could see what I am doing now, they would squirm in their graves.

It has been my luck, if I may call it that, to know the rigors of both Satan’s counterfeit kingdom and Jesus’ Kingdom of Heaven. Both required trials that would take a person to the limits of human endurance. Few understand better Apostle Paul’s words that: “We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God” (Acts 14:22).

Was I set aside from my mother’s womb, like Jeremiah, for a purpose which was to expose me first to the horrors of communism then those of religious exploitation and brainwashing, before I was placed on a collision course with the religious leaders of the whole world? God knows! All I know is that my life took a course which is contrary to what I planned and expected.

Communism collapsed because its leaders had total disregard for human life and because its edifice was built on deception, hatred and exploitation. What else could one expect from the father of lies?

Joh 8:44 You are of *your* father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him.

When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *resources*, for he is a liar and the father of it.

Joh 8:45 But because I tell the truth, you do not believe Me.

Do people know why there is so much strife and suffering in the world today? Do they know who the lord of this world is?

2Co 4:3 But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing,

2Co 4:4 whose minds **the god of this age** has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.

People no longer know what it would be like to live in a world that values honesty, meekness, love, peace, charity, cooperation, etc. Nor do they believe that a society built on such virtues will ever be established. But establish it will, but only for those who believe in it. That is why it is so important that people hold on to the right beliefs. Jesus Christ and the Apostles never tired of telling people about the importance of right belief. The word “belief” is found nearly one hundred and fifty times in the New Testament. Jesus Christ began His ministry by urging people to believe in the Gospel:

Mar 1:14 Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God,

Mar 1:15 and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel."

The Kingdom of God has been at hand ever since for those who believe the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Unfortunately, there are many false gospels in the world today too. The Apostles urged their followers to learn to discern truth from falsehood and the true Gospel from the false ones. That can be achieved only through the knowledge of the Scriptures, through faith, and the ability to test the spirits:

2Ti 2:15 Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

Heb 11:6 But without faith *it is* impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and *that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

1Jn 4:1 Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

These days most people do not even believe that there is a God, let alone believe that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. Our leaders and educators have done a good job in making people believe that there is no God.

Jesus Christ could perform no miracles among the people who did not believe in the power of God.

Mar 9:17 Then one of the crowd answered and said, "Teacher, I brought You my son, who has a mute spirit.

Mar 9:18 And wherever it seizes him, it throws him down; he foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth, and becomes rigid. So I spoke to Your disciples, that they should cast it out, but they could not."

Mar 9:19 He answered him and said, "O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him to Me."

Mar 9:20 Then they brought him to Him. And when he saw Him, immediately the spirit convulsed him, and he fell on the ground and wallowed, foaming at the mouth.

Mar 9:21 So He asked his father, "How long has this been happening to him?" And he said, "From childhood.

Mar 9:22 And often he has thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But if You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us."

Mar 9:23 Jesus said to him, "If you can believe, all things *are* possible to him who believes."

Mar 9:24 Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!"

When the father of the child realized that he could miss out on the only opportunity he had to save his child from that horrible torment because his faith was weak, he cried out, "Lord I believe, help my unbelief!" How many people are prepared to get on their knees before God and pray: "Lord, help my unbelief".

Few know that faith and belief do not come naturally to human beings, that they are gifts from God. "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God" (Eph. 2:8). God grants faith to those who are willing to let Him work with them and create in them a real "new man."

Eph 2:14 For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation,

Eph 2:15 having abolished in His flesh the enmity, *that is*, the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man *from* the two, *thus* making peace,

Eph 2:16 and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity.

So, believe in God and in His power of salvation, and let Him create a new man in you as He created in Jesus Christ.

THE TRINITY - HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

Mircea Eliade, the famous academic theologian, wrote in his *Encyclopaedia of Religions*:

"Trinity touches on virtually every aspect of Christian faith, theology, and piety, including Christology and pneumatology, theological epistology (faith, revelation, theological methodology), spirituality and mystical theology, and ecclesiastical life (sacraments, community, ethics)... The doctrine of the Trinity is the summary of Christian faith in God, who out of love creates humanity for union with God, who through Jesus Christ redeems the world, and in the power of the Holy Spirit transforms and divinises (2 Cor. 3:18)."

An excellent summary of the doctrine of the Trinity, yet in the very next breath he wrote:

"Exegetes and theologians today are in agreement that the Hebrew Bible does not contain a doctrine of the Trinity, even though it was customary in past dogmatic tracts on the Trinity to cite texts like Genesis 1:26, 'Let us make humanity in our image, after our likeness' (see also Gn. 3:22, 11:7; Is. 6:2-3) as proof of plurality in God. Although the Hebrew Bible depicts God as the Father of Israel and employs personifications of God such as Word (davar), Spirit (ruah), Wisdom (hokhmah), and Presence (shekhinah), it would go beyond the intentions and spirit of the Old Testament to correlate these notions with later trinitarian doctrine. Further, exegetes and theologians agree that the New Testament also does not contain an explicit doctrine of the Trinity." (*Encyclopedia of Religion*, Vol. 15, Trinity, p.53).

How could this doctrine have such an important bearing on every aspect of "Christian faith, theology and piety" if it is not contained in either the Old or the New Testaments? To be sure, the word "Trinity" is not found in the Bible, but just because the term is not there it does not mean that the concept is not there either. The New Catholic Encyclopedia says this about the Trinity (Vol. XIV, p. 295 ff.):

"It is difficult, in the second half of the 20th century, to offer a clear, objective, and straightforward account of the revelation, doctrinal evolution, and theological elaboration of the mystery of the Trinity."

Why should it be more difficult in this "age of enlightenment" to find an "objective and straightforward" answer to this question? One would have thought that with the passage of time and the understanding gained through centuries of Christian dialectics, we would be in a better position to understand this doctrine now than at any other time.

"Trinitarian discussion, Roman Catholic as well as other, presents a somewhat unsteady silhouette [*a what?*]. Two things have happened. There is the recognition on the part of the exegetes and Biblical theologians, including a constantly growing number of Roman Catholics, that one should not speak of Trinitarianism in the New Testament without serious qualification. There is also the closely parallel recognition on the part of historians of dogma and systematic theologians that when one does speak of an unqualified Trinitarianism, one has moved from the period of Christian origins to, say, the last quadrant of the 4th century."

The Trinity became a major point of controversy after the Romans became dominant in the church. They found it difficult to reconcile their pagan concept of the Trinity, common to virtually all ancient religions, with the Christian Gospel. The difficulty came from their failure to understand the position and role of the Holy Spirit. In all other Trinities there is a major figure in the middle, playing more or less a neutral role, and two opposing personalities: one on the right and one on the left, representing the positive and negative forces of the world. In the Christian Trinity, all three members - Father, Son and Holy Spirit - play positive roles.

"But current preoccupation and current emphasis is far less preoccupied with the subsequent development of Christian dogma than with the primitive sources, chiefly Biblical. It is this contemporary return to the sources that is ultimately responsible for the unsteady silhouette..."

They call the Bible a “primitive source” and the “contemporary return to the sources”, an “unsteady silhouette”. Any wonder that their followers are scripturally illiterate?

“This blurring of the focus, moreover, is by no means solely a phenomenon of theological academics. On the strictly pastoral level of instruction in Christian doctrine, there is likewise something to record. From the highly authoritative 16th-century Catechism of the Council of Trent (1.1.4) to the early-20th-century Catechism of Cardinal Gaspari (3.3.31), the 4th-century dogmatic formulation “one God in three Persons” stood forth as the central datum of Christian revelation and the point of departure for the exposition of Christian doctrine. Besides, Catholics the world over are still familiar with the prayer, the summational act of faith: “O my God, I believe that you are one God in three Divine Persons.”

Their “highly authoritative” source is not the Bible, but the 16th and 20th-century “Catechisms”. Catholics the world over may be familiar with their summation of faith: “O my God, I believe that you are one God in three Divine Persons”, but the true Christians are not, because it is not biblical. Not in the sense that the Catholic Church preaches it.

“Origen, Clement’s successor, envisioned the universe of being along Neoplatonist lines of hierarchical extrapolation. At the utterly transcendent apex, there is God the Father (De princ. 1.1.6), alone source without source or, to use Origen’s favourite term (e.g., In Ioan. 2.10.75), ungenerate. But (De princ. 1.2.3) the Father has from all eternity generated a Son, and (In Ioan. 2.10.75) through this Son, the Word, He has brought forth the Holy Spirit. “The three, Origen maintains in the same passage, are three distinct individuals or hypostases. “On the other hand (Frag. in Hebr.), with explicit reference here to Father and Son, they share together a community of substance. For the Son, he adds a moment later, is of the same substance (homousios) as the Father.”

“At this point, however, a problem arises, and it sets the stage for a 100 years’ distance for the decision at Nicaea I. For if Origen did not fail to include a oneness of substance, his emphasis was nevertheless on the otherness and plurality of the three as really distinct Persons or hypostases. The oneness of substance may even be subordinationist, may indicate that the Word and Spirit, while not strictly creatures, are nevertheless separated from the Father by an essential inferiority. For only the Father is “God from Himself” (In Ioan. 2.2.17); and in Origen’s mind Christians rightly refer to the Son as a “secondary” deity [*Which Christians?*]. Nor is affirmation of coeternity decisive, since Origen (e.g., in De princ. 1.2.10) postulated eternal creation. Still, theological idiom in the pre-Nicene period was far from established. Justin, to take but one example, had spoken similarly. “In any case, the need for clarification soon began to be felt. By the middle of the [second] century, Dionysius of Rome, locked in a controversial exchange with his namesake the bishop of Alexandria, demanded (apud Athan., De decr., Nic.syn.26), and to some extent received (apud Athan., De sent. Dion. 14-18), assurances that the Origenist insistence on three hypostases neither implied separation nor compromised coeternity...” (underlining added).

They engaged in lengthy debates about the nature of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, yet, as this quotation shows, they never once referred to the Bible. None of their quotations and references are from the Bible, but from their church “fathers” or from other Catholic sources. Inevitably, this had to lead to blasphemy. Their definition of the Son and of the [Holy] Spirit as “**essentially inferior**”, “**secondary deities**” and “**creatures**” is nothing short of blasphemy. Such downgrading of the Son and the Holy Spirit strikes at the very heart of the New Testament Gospel. For unless Jesus Christ was a true God, on a par with the Father, the New Testament is not valid. But more on this later.

Now, have a look at the following statements and see if you can guess where they might come from.

“Various sources acknowledge that the Bible does not support the idea that the holy spirit is the third person of a Trinity. For example:

“*The Catholic Encyclopedia*: ‘Nowhere in the Old Testament do we find any clear indication of a Third Person.’

“Catholic theologian Fortman: ‘The Jews never regarded the spirit as a third person; nor is there any solid evidence that any Old Testament writer held this view... The holy spirit is usually presented in the Synoptics [Gospels] and in Acts as a divine force or power.’

“The *New Catholic Encyclopedia*: ‘The Old Testament clearly does not envisage God’s spirit as a person... God’s spirit is simply God’s power. If it is sometimes represented as being distinct from God, it is because the breath of Yahweh acts exteriorly.’ [A *breathhtaking statement in its absurdity*.]. It also says: ‘The majority of New Testament texts reveal God’s spirit in the parallelism between the spirit and the power of God.’ “A *Catholic Dictionary*: ‘On the whole, the New Testament, like the Old, speaks of the spirit as a divine energy or power.’ Hence, neither the Jews nor the early Christians viewed the holy spirit as part of a Trinity. That teaching came centuries later. As *A Catholic Dictionary* notes: ‘The third Person was asserted at a Council of Alexandria in 362... and finally by the Council of Constantinople of 381’ - some three and a half centuries after holy spirit (sic) filled the disciples at Pentecost!

“No, the holy spirit is not a person and it is not part of a Trinity. The holy spirit is God’s active force that he uses to accomplish his will. It is not equal to God, but is always at his disposition and subordination to him.”

This author listed no less than four Catholic sources to “prove” that the Holy Spirit “is not a person and not part of the Trinity,” but “God’s force that he uses to accomplish his will.” Familiar words. The Church of God, International uses almost identical words to describe its view of the Holy Spirit and the Trinity. From this quotation, one would be excused for thinking that the author is a Catholic, but here is the surprise. The booklet from which we took this passage was published by the Watch Tower Bible and Track Society (*Should you believe in the Trinity? 1989*). This is an euphemism for the Jehovah’s Witnesses. The surprise comes from the fact that Jehovah’s Witnesses, like the Churches of God, proclaim loud and clear that they are not only different from, but very much against, the teachings of the Catholic Church. Yet, here they are using Catholic sources to back up their anti -Trinity and anti - Holy Spirit theology. But while Jehovah’s Witnesses acknowledge that they took many of their ideas from the Catholic sources, the Churches of God do not even have the decency to do that. They plagiarize both Jehovah’s Witnesses’ and Catholic sources. We saw what the Church of God, International says, now let us have a look at the writings of the Worldwide Church of God:

“When we express the biblical truth that God is one and at the same time three, it is helpful to use words that do not imply three Gods, or three separate God Beings. God’s oneness cannot be compromised. The problem is, all words that refer to created things tend to mislead by their very context in ordinary language. Most words, including the word Persons, tend to confuse God’s nature with the created order... So it is important to know what we do mean, and what we do not mean, when we use any word in reference to God ...

“*Hypostasis*, or in plural form, *hypostases*, is a good word to use of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is a biblical term, and it does not so easily confuse God’s nature with the created order. Of course, the word Person is also a good word to use if (and the if must be strongly stressed) one understands that Person must not be confused with the way humans are persons... God is personal, but he is not a person in the way humans are persons.” (*God Is...*, WCG, 1993, pp. 40, 43).

Remember, we found the concept of *hypostasis* in the New Catholic Encyclopedia. Now it is part of the WCG theology too. During the reign of Herbert W Armstrong, the WCG, like the CGI, was fully in tune with the Jehovah’s Witnesses’ view, but lately they have also incorporated the Catholic notion of *hypostases* in their theology. Then they go on to say that:

“Since God is one, and not three separate beings, the Holy Spirit is not a separate God doing separate things on its own. God has one will, the will of the Father, which is also the will of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. It is not a matter of two or three separate God Beings deciding to be in perfect agreement with each other. It is a matter of one God, one will. The Son is the very expression of the will of the Father. Similarly, the Holy Spirit constitutes the will of the Father at work in the world.”

Not very different from Stinson’s notion that, “the Holy Spirit is the power of God as well as [His] spiritual presence... in the natural world”, or Jehovah’s Witnesses’ concept that, “the holy spirit is God’s active force that he uses to accomplish his will in the world”, only that this time God is “one will”, Jesus Christ is “the very expression of the will of the Father”, and the Holy Spirit is “the will of the Father at work in the world”. A lot of “wills”, but no separate beings. The New

Catholic Encyc. also said this about the relationship between the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit:

“The Father alone, Arius argued (apud Athan., De syn.16), up to this point echoing the best Oringenist tradition, is ungenerate, source without source, self existent. Therefore the Father alone is truly eternal, all-wise, all-good. The divine being, moreover, utterly immaterial and indivisible, cannot be communicated. Hence it follows that whatever else has come into existence from this uniquely transcendent source, beginning with the Word, is necessarily made, created. In short, there was a time when He was not. And if He is yet to be called God (apud Athan., Or.I C. Arian. 6), this is in the improper, extended sense based on His extraordinary prerogatives of creation and grace. The plurality, the real otherness of Father, Son and Spirit, was considered beyond challenge. But so also was the unique transcendence of God the Father... If the Son and Spirit can be called "God," therefore, it must be an improper sense; or to put it bluntly, they must be creatures.” (Vol. XIV, pp. 295, 297).

They turned Jesus Christ into an “improper” God because He was “created,” and downgraded the position of both the Son and the [Holy] Spirit to the status of “creatures” because “the Father alone is truly eternal, all-wise, all-good.” Now, if Jesus Christ Himself is not a “proper” God, then neither could His followers be gods in the “proper” sense. This is exactly the position of the Worldwide Church of God too. Should we be surprised then that Jehovah’s Witnesses hold similar views?

“The Bible is clear and consistent about the relationship of God to Jesus. Jehovah God alone is Almighty. He created the prehuman Jesus directly. Thus, Jesus had a beginning and could never be coequal with God in power or eternity... “The fact is that Jesus is not God and never claimed to be. This is being recognized by an increasing number of scholars. As the Rylands *Bulletin* states: ‘The fact has to be faced that New Testament research over, say, the last thirty or forty years has been leading an increasing number of reputable New Testament scholars to the conclusion that Jesus... certainly never believed himself to be God.’” (*Should you believe in the Trinity*, pp. 16, 20).

No doubt you have all heard about the “Rylands *Bulletin*” and the increasing number of “reputable New Testament scholars” who found no proof in the New Testament that Jesus believed He was God? We will prove to you otherwise, but before that let us go again to the Worldwide Church of God:

“Many people have only a hazy idea of what the Bible teaches about the oneness of God. Most do not really think about it. Some imagine three separate Beings. Some picture one Being with three heads. Others think of one Being who changes from Father to Son to Holy Spirit whenever he wills. It is easy to make such mistakes.” “Many people use the word *Trinity* as a definition of the biblical teaching about God. However, if asked, most would not be able to explain what the Bible actually teaches about *how* God is one. In other words, what many people envision when they speak of the Trinity is not really biblical. Some of the confusion lies in the use of the word *Persons* ... The word *Persons*, which is normally included in English-language definitions of the Trinity, causes people to think of three Beings. “One God who is three Persons - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,” is a common way the Trinity is explained. But the ordinary meaning of the word *Person* is *misleading* when it is applied to God. It gives the impression that God has limits [*It does not give us that impression*], and that his threeness lies in his being three separate individuals [*Wasn't Jesus separate from the Father?*] - which is not the case... [*which it is*]” . “When most English-speaking people think of one God who is three *Persons*, they cannot help but think in some way of three separate divine Beings. In other words, the terms *persons* and *beings* are usually thought of, in English, as meaning the same thing. But that is not how God is revealed in the Bible. There is only one God, not three.”

What Bible do these people read that does not show the Father and the Son as separate divine Beings? They say that the word “Person” as applied to God, “must not be confused with the way humans are persons.” Why not? Doesn’t their Bible show that human beings have been created in the image of God? Or have they also adopted the Jehovah’s Witnesses’ Bible? (The Jehovah’s Witnesses have produced their own Bible - a most astonishing document which has little in common with the accepted translations of the original Scriptures).

Now, what happens when people take away the personalities of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, what are they left with? Nothing! That's right, they are left with nothing. Or, better said, they are left with evolution.

"But we are not like God in every respect. 'Certainly not in bodily form, the upright position, or commanding aspect of the man, since God has no bodily form... Adam and Eve's bodies did not image God... Adam and Eve's bodies were what they had in common with animals.'" (*The Plain Truth*, May/June, 1994).

This is the new theology which runs through the Worldwide Church of God and virtually through all other churches in the world today. The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are no longer identifiable personalities, the Son and the Holy Spirit are secondary, inferior "creatures" or undefinable, unfathomable "wills" or "forces", and human beings are not created in the image of God, but in the image of animals.

Why the Churches of God should have embraced such a theology lately is difficult to understand - aside from the fact that the Bible speaks of a great falling away. In the early 1970s, when I was a member of that church, there were still many errors in their theology, but they had a genuine spirit of enthusiasm for the Word of God and a desire to search out for the truth of God, but everything has changed now. They seem to be more preoccupied with synchronizing their beliefs and doctrines with those of other churches than with remaining faithful to the teachings of the Bible. Since the establishment of the first New Testament Churches, no one has had the whole truth of God. All churches had as much truth as they needed to maintain their momentum and spiritual growth. [*The question is not whether one has the whole truth but the pure and unadulterated truth, or one mixed with falsehoods - the trademark of Satan and his preachers*].

God does not condemn people for not knowing everything, unless they willingly choose to be ignorant. Once in the Spirit, people cannot remain stagnant: they either grow with the Spirit, or loose Him and go backwards. The Worldwide Church of God has fallen so deeply into Satan's clutches, it has now become a "heaven for homosexuals." Do you know why the sin of homosexuality was not mentioned among the Ten Commandments? It is because God regards this as such an abomination that those who practice it place themselves outside of the human realm. Apostle Peter simply called them "brute beasts":

- 2Pe 2:1 But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, *and* bring on themselves swift destruction.
- 2Pe 2:2 And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed.
- 2Pe 2:3 By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words; for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber.
- 2Pe 2:4 For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast *them* down to hell and delivered *them* into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment;
- 2Pe 2:5 and did not spare the ancient world, but saved Noah, *one of eight people*, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood on the world of the ungodly;
- 2Pe 2:6 and turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes, condemned *them* to destruction, making *them* an example to those who afterward would live ungodly;
- 2Pe 2:7 and delivered righteous Lot, *who was* oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked
- 2Pe 2:8 (for that righteous man, dwelling among them, tormented *his* righteous soul from day to day by seeing and hearing *their* lawless deeds)—
- 2Pe 2:9 then the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment,
- 2Pe 2:10 and especially those who walk according to the flesh in the lust of uncleanness and despise authority. *They are* presumptuous, self-willed. They are not afraid to speak evil of dignitaries,
- 2Pe 2:11 whereas angels, who are greater in power and might, do not bring a reviling accusation against them before the Lord.
- 2Pe 2:12 But these, like natural brute beasts made to be caught and destroyed, speak evil of the things they do not understand, and will utterly perish in their own corruption,

2Pe 2:13 *and* will receive the wages of unrighteousness, as those who count it pleasure to carouse in the daytime. *They are* spots and blemishes, carousing in their own deceptions while they feast with you,

2Pe 2:14 having eyes full of adultery and that cannot cease from sin, enticing unstable souls. *They have* a heart trained in covetous practices, *and are* accursed children.

2Pe 2:15 They have forsaken the right way and gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness;

2Pe 2:16 but he was rebuked for his iniquity: a dumb donkey speaking with a man's voice restrained the madness of the prophet.

2Pe 2:17 These are wells without water, clouds carried by a tempest, for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.

2Pe 2:18 For when they speak great swelling *words* of emptiness, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through lewdness, the ones who have actually escaped from those who live in error.

2Pe 2:19 While they promise them liberty, they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage.

2Pe 2:20 For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning.

2Pe 2:21 For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known *it*, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them.

2Pe 2:22 But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: "A DOG RETURNS TO HIS OWN VOMIT," and, "a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire."

Yet, Jesus Christ gave hope to those who truly want to free themselves from this sin:

Mat 11:20 Then He began to rebuke the cities in which most of His mighty works had been done, because they did not repent:

Mat 11:21 "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.

Mat 11:22 But I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you.

Mat 11:23 And you, Capernaum, who are exalted to heaven, will be brought down to Hades; for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.

Mat 11:24 But I say to you that it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for you."

Mat 11:25 At that time Jesus answered and said, "I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from *the* wise and prudent and have revealed them to babes.

Mat 11:26 Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight.

Mat 11:27 All things have been delivered to Me by My Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son, and *the one* to whom the Son wills to reveal *Him*.

Mat 11:28 Come to Me, all *you* who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Mat 11:29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

Mat 11:30 For My yoke *is* easy and My burden is light."

If Jesus Christ said that it would have been possible for the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to repent of their sins if they had known the truth and seen His miracles, then it is certainly possible for individual beings to turn to God, change their way of life, repent, be baptized and receive the Holy Spirit, when they know the truth of God and are called to repentance. We give them that chance. But the leaders of the Worldwide Church of God preach a different gospel these days. After turning their church into a "heaven" for homosexuals, they have been asking other churches to do the same. These are the people who say that human beings are not created in the image of God, but the image of animals, that Jesus Christ and the Father are not distinct personalities within the Godhead, but undefinable "wills" or "forces".

The denigration of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit - in its various forms - is a common theme running from the theology of the Catholic Church to that of Jehovah's Witnesses and that

of the Churches of God. Let us now see what the Bible says about the images of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

THE IMAGE OF THE FATHER, OF THE SON, AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Our readers may remember the controversy we had in the past with the evangelists of the Worldwide Church of God over the question of the images of the Father and of Jesus Christ. They wrote: "We do not believe that the Bible teaches that the Father and the Son are persons. Neither do we believe that the Father created Jesus" (*The Plain Truth*, Jan. 1993).

If anyone believed that this was an inadvertent mistake, a statement out of character with their normal preaching, the following quotations from their new booklet *God Is ...*, should dispel that:

"When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God.' [Genesis 5:1]. How, then, are we to understand what God means when he tells us we are made in his image and likeness? God's creation of humans in his image and likeness, recorded in Genesis 1:26-27, may be linked with the dominion God gave humans over the earth. In a sense, we act for God on earth when we exercise responsible lordship over the creation. "The context suggests that humanity is the image of God in the dominion it exercises over the result of creation,' notes *Harper's Bible Commentary* on Genesis 1:3-31." (*God Is...*, p.14).

The Worldwide Church of God evangelists again rely on other people's commentaries to tell them what is in the Bible. You may remember how, in their May/June, 1994 edition of the *Plain Truth*, they quoted Keil and Delitzsch as saying that we are not like God in every respect because "God has no bodily form." Now, they quote *Harper's Bible Commentary* to support the statement that we have the image of God only in the sense that we exercise dominion "over the result of creation." And what might the "result of creation" be according to the wise men of the Worldwide Church of God? For this, they quote the *ABC's of the Bible*:

"Before undertaking his supreme creation, God announced his intention to make man in his image and likeness. The Hebrew word for 'image' usually refers to a statue..."

What more can one say? God did not create Adam and Eve, He created statues. By this we know that the end cannot be too far away. God certainly must find it difficult to tolerate such blasphemies for much longer. Now, take a look at the following biblical passage and see if you can distinguish individual personalities for the Father and the Son:

Heb 1:6 And again, when He brings in the First-born into the world, He says, "And let all *the* angels of God worship Him."

Heb 1:7 And of the angels He says, "Who makes His angels spirits and His ministers a flame of fire."

Heb 1:8 But to the Son *He says*, "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever. A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom."

Heb 1:9 You have loved righteousness and hated iniquity, therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness above Your fellows."

Heb 1:10 And, "You, Lord, have laid the foundation of the earth in the beginning, and the heavens are the works of Your hands."

Heb 1:11 They shall perish, but You will remain. And *they* shall all become old as a garment,

Heb 1:12 and as a covering You shall fold them up, and *they* shall be changed. But You are the same, and Your years shall not fail."

Heb 1:13 But to which of the angels, did He say at any time, "Sit on My right hand until I make Your enemies Your footstool?"

Heb 1:14 Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for those who shall be heirs of salvation?

The words "Your throne, *O God*, is forever and ever" refers to Jesus Christ and His throne. God the Father calls Jesus Christ "God". Then, in the expression "*Your God*, has anointed You", the term is applied to the Father. So, both the Son and the Father are referred to as "God". The fact that Jesus Christ sits at the right hand of God indicates that God the Father is a person with hands, and that God the Son is separate from Him.

The image of Jesus Christ is vividly described in the following passage from the book of Revelation:

Rev 1:12 Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands,

Rev 1:13 and in the midst of the seven lampstands *One* like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band.

Rev 1:14 His head and hair *were* white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire;

Rev 1:15 His feet *were* like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters;

Rev 1:16 He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance *was* like the sun shining in its strength.

Rev 1:17 And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, "Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last.

Rev 1:18 *I am* He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death.

Rev 1:19 Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this.

Rev 1:20 The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands which you saw are the seven churches.

In the Old Testament, the prophet Micah gave us this description of God:

1Ki 22:19 Then *Micaiah* said, "Therefore hear the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD sitting on His throne, and all the host of heaven standing by, on His right hand and on His left.

1Ki 22:20 And the LORD said, 'Who will persuade Ahab to go up, that he may fall at Ramoth Gilead?' So one spoke in this manner, and another spoke in that manner.

1Ki 22:21 Then a spirit came forward and stood before the LORD, and said, 'I will persuade him.'

1Ki 22:22 The LORD said to him, 'In what way?' So he said, 'I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.' And the LORD said, 'You shall persuade *him*, and also prevail. Go out and do so.'

1Ki 22:23 Therefore look! The LORD has put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these prophets of yours, and the LORD has declared disaster against you."

And the prophet Isaiah gave us this description of God and His throne:

Isa 6:1 In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His *robe* filled the temple.

Isa 6:2 Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew.

Isa 6:3 And one cried to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy *is* the LORD of hosts; The whole earth is full of His glory!"

Isa 6:4 And the posts of the door were shaken by the voice of him who cried out, and the house was filled with smoke.

Isa 6:5 So I said: "Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I *am* a man of unclean lips, And I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; For my eyes have seen the King, The LORD of hosts."

Isa 6:6 Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a live coal *which* he had taken with the tongs from the altar.

Isa 6:7 And he touched my mouth *with it*, and said: "Behold, this has touched your lips; Your iniquity is taken away, And your sin purged."

Isa 6:8 Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying: "Whom shall I send, And who will go for Us?" Then I said, "Here *am I*! Send me."

Isa 6:9 And He said, "Go, and tell this people: 'Keep on hearing, but do not understand; Keep on seeing, but do not perceive.'"

Isa 6:10 "Make the heart of this people dull, And their ears heavy, And shut their eyes; Lest they see with their eyes, And hear with their ears, And understand with their heart, And return and be healed."

Isa 6:11 Then I said, "Lord, how long?" And He answered: "Until the cities are laid waste and without inhabitant, The houses are without a man, The land is utterly desolate,

Isa 6:12 The LORD has removed men far away, And the forsaken places *are* many in the midst of the land.

Isa 6:13 But yet a tenth *will be* in it, And will return and be for consuming, As a terebinth tree or as an oak, Whose stump *remains* when it is cut down. So the holy seed *shall be* its stump."

Aside from the fact that this passage gives us the image of God and His throne, it also has a great significance for the end of this age - the times in which we live. The desolation which will take place during the great tribulation will leave behind only a tenth of the world's population. The "stump" representing the "holy seed" refers to the people who have repented and are allowed to survive into the Millennial Kingdom. Divine deliverance is the only way by which people may survive this imminent catastrophe. Those who have prepared for themselves bunker shelters in the American mountains have it awfully wrong about the way of salvation. Many are probably members of the Churches of God, for if they do not believe that God is a divine person with an identifiable image and personality, how could they believe that He can save them from such a worldwide desolation? Another image of God is found in the book of Ezekiel:

Eze 1:26 And above the firmament over their heads *was* the likeness of a throne, in appearance like a sapphire stone; on the likeness of the throne *was* a likeness with the appearance of a man high above it.

Eze 1:27 Also from the appearance of His waist and upward I saw, as it were, the color of amber with the appearance of fire all around within it; and from the appearance of His waist and downward I saw, as it were, the appearance of fire with brightness all around.

Eze 2:1 And He said to me, "Son of man, stand on your feet, and I will speak to you."

Eze 2:2 Then the Spirit entered me when He spoke to me, and set me on my feet; and I heard Him who spoke to me.

Eze 2:3 And He said to me: "Son of man, I am sending you to the children of Israel, to a rebellious nation that has rebelled against Me; they and their fathers have transgressed against Me to this very day.

Eze 2:4 For *they are* impudent and stubborn children. I am sending you to them, and you shall say to them, 'Thus says the Lord GOD.'

Eze 2:5 As for them, whether they hear or whether they refuse—for *they are* a rebellious house—yet they will know that a prophet has been among them.

Eze 2:6 "And you, son of man, do not be afraid of them nor be afraid of their words, though briars and thorns *are* with you and you dwell among scorpions; do not be afraid of their words or dismayed by their looks, though *they are* a rebellious house.

Eze 2:7 You shall speak My words to them, whether they hear or whether they refuse, for they *are* rebellious.

Almost every time God makes His appearance in the Scriptures He calls in a prophet to deliver a message to His people. There are many other examples in the Bible which show that God has our image, yet, in spite of all this the Worldwide Church of God continue to spread its convoluted theology of denial.

“A helpful word, and one that was used by Greek-speaking Christians in expressing the oneness and threeness of God, is found in Hebrew 1:3. This passage is helpful in several ways. It states: ‘The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word.’ From the description of the Son as ‘the radiance of God’s glory,’ we learn a number of things. The Son is not a separate Being [*How, pray tell, would one learn this from that verse?*]. The Son is not less divine than the Father. The Son is eternal, just as the Father is [*You learned all these things from that verse? Imagine what you could have learned if you read the whole Bible*]. In other words, the Son is to the Father as radiance or brightness is to glory ... “Now, let us look at the Greek word translated ‘being’ in this passage. Other versions translate it ‘person’. The word from which ‘being’ and ‘person’ in this passage are translated is *hypostasis*”... “*Hypostasis*, or in plural form, *hypostases*, is a good word to use of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit [*Why? Because no one understands it?*]. It is a biblical term, and it does not so easily confuse God’s nature with the created order. Of course, the word Person is also a good word to use if (and the if must be strongly stressed) one understands that *Person* must not be confused with the way humans are persons.” (*God Is...*, WCG, 1993, pp. 39, 40, 43).

See how devious they are? They use a Greek word instead of a plain English one because they don’t like its translation. When the word is correctly translated to reflect the meaning required by the context as intended by the original writers, and as virtually all Bible translators have done, people have no problem understanding the nature of God. But in its Greek form, they can give it whatever meaning they want, no one can argue with them. Then they have the gall to say that “it is a biblical term”. For people who use Greek translations of the Bible it may be biblical, but for those who use English or other translations it is certainly not biblical. When I read my English or Romanian Bibles, I have no difficulty understanding that I have been created in the image of God, that God has my image and I His, that Jesus Christ was a man like I am, and that now He lives in heaven with the Father, the angels and other heavenly personalities.

Jesus Christ is no longer a human being, He is a Spirit Being, but a Being nevertheless. Being a Spirit Being means that He is made of a different substance, one that no longer ages and decays. The Scriptures tell us that we shall be like Him when we are resurrected to eternal life, if we believe in God’s promises. But Satan does not want us to believe God. He knows that if he can deceive people to believe the blasphemies preached by the Churches of God, Jehovah’s Witnesses, the Catholic Church and virtually all other churches, denominations and religions, they lose their salvation. Never forget the importance of the right belief.

One of Jesus’ disciples once asked Him to show them the Father. This is what He replied:

Joh 14:8 Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us."

Joh 14:9 Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

Since the image of God the Father is the same as that of Jesus Christ, and since Jesus was a human being, is it really all that difficult to understand that God has the image of human beings? This is to put it in reverse, because the right way is to say that we have the image of God just as the book of Genesis says:

Gen 1:26 Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

Gen 1:27 So God created man in His *own* image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

This brings us to the final question. We know what the images of the Father and the Son are, but what is the image of the Holy Spirit? We already pointed out that when we repent and are baptized, we receive God's Holy Spirit, who then grows in us and brings us to spiritual maturity. Since human beings resemble God, what could the Holy Spirit resemble if not God also? Why else do the Scriptures say that the Holy Spirit transforms us into children of God and heirs to the promise of eternal life?

Joh 7:39 But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet *given*, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

Joh 20:22 And when He had said this, He breathed on *them*, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit.

Joh 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:

Joh 1:13 who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

1Jn 5:1 Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves Him who begot also loves him who is begotten of Him.

1Jn 5:2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments.

1Jn 5:3 For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.

1Jn 5:4 For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.

1Jn 5:5 Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

If you want to see what the Holy Spirit looks like, look in a mirror. If He dwells in you, then you see the image of the Holy Spirit. If the Holy Spirit is not in you, then you see the image of the Adversary. Externally, you could not tell the difference, they are identical, but on the inside they are poles apart. One is kind, loving, sharing and helpful, while the other is egotistical, hateful, lustful and aggressive. Sometimes they co-habit in the same person. Notice:

Mat 16:13 When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, "Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?"

Mat 16:14 So they said, "Some *say* John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets."

Mat 16:15 He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"

Mat 16:16 Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

Mat 16:17 Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed *this* to you, but My Father who is in heaven.

Mat 16:18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

Mat 16:19 And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."

Mat 16:20 Then He commanded His disciples that they should tell no one that He was Jesus the Christ.

Mat 16:21 From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day.

Mat 16:22 Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!"

Mat 16:23 But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men."

One moment Peter was inspired by the Holy Spirit, and the next by Satan. One moment he was in heaven, and the next in hell. First he must have felt like a holy man, then like a piece of dirt. When we, humans, embark on the road to holiness, an intense battle takes place inside us between the forces of good and the forces of evil. The forces of evil have an advantage because by

our very nature we stray away from God. But through the power of the Holy Spirit, we bring under control our carnal impulses and are able to withstand Satan's temptations.

DIVINE MARRIAGE

Few people know or understand that the notion of salvation is connected with a mystery of which Apostle Paul said has been kept secret since the beginning of the world.

Rom 16:25 Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery kept secret since the world began

Rom 16:26 but now made manifest, and by the prophetic Scriptures made known to all nations, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, for obedience to the faith—

Rom 16:27 to God, alone wise, *be* glory through Jesus Christ forever. Amen.

Eph 5:30 For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones.

Eph 5:31 "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh."

Eph 5:32 This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

Eph 5:33 Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife *see* that she respects *her* husband.

Elsewhere he said:

1Co 12:12 For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also *is* Christ.

1Co 12:13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.

1Co 12:14 For in fact the body is not one member but many.

1Co 12:15 If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body," is it therefore not of the body?

1Co 12:16 And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body," is it therefore not of the body?

1Co 12:17 If the whole body *were* an eye, where *would be* the hearing? If the whole *were* hearing, where *would be* the smelling?

1Co 12:18 But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased.

1Co 12:19 And if they *were* all one member, where *would* the body *be*?

1Co 12:20 But now indeed *there are* many members, yet one body.

Those who have been baptized and received the Holy Spirit are forming the body of the true Church of God which is to become the bride of Christ at the end of this world.

Rev 19:5 Then a voice came from the throne, saying, "Praise our God, all you His servants and those who fear Him, both small and great!"

Rev 19:6 And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, "Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns!"

Rev 19:7 Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready."

Rev 19:8 And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.

Rev 19:9 Then he said to me, "Write: 'Blessed *are* those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!' " And he said to me, "These are the true sayings of God."

To be a member of the true Church of God, the Spirit of Christ must be in you, which means that you must make a commitment to Christ and be baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit (not in the name of a “will”, a “force” or a “spiritual presence”).

Rom 8:5 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those *who live* according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.

Rom 8:6 For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

Rom 8:7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be.

Rom 8:8 So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

Rom 8:9 But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.

Rom 8:10 And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

Rom 8:11 But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

Rom 8:12 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors—not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh.

Rom 8:13 For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

Rom 8:14 For **as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.**

Notice how the terms “Spirit of God” and “Spirit of Christ” are interchangeable. Notice also that those in whom the Spirit of God dwells are the **sons of God**. Now, if the Spirit of God in us forms the Church of God, and the Church of God is the bride of Christ, then the bride of Christ is none other than the Holy Spirit. Collectively therefore we will be forming the third member of the Trinity. Jesus Christ placed Himself on an equal foot with the Father:

Php 2:5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,

Php 2:6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God.

Joh 5:17 But Jesus answered them, "My Father has been working until now, and I have been working."

Joh 5:18 Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God.

He also elevated the Holy Spirit to equality with Him and the Father by revealing that both He and the Holy Spirit proceeded from the Father:

Joh 15:26 "But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me.

Joh 16:28 I came forth from the Father and have come into the world. Again, I leave the world and go to the Father."

The Christian Trinity therefore will be a family affair formed by three equal members - Father, Son and Holy Spirit; the Holy Spirit being God's daughter and Christ's wife. How then do we explain the following statement?

Joh 14:28 You have heard Me say to you, 'I am going away and coming *back* to you.' If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, 'I am going to the Father,' for My Father is greater than I.

When Jesus Christ made that statement, He was in this world and He was a human being. In that condition, the Father was infinitely greater than Him. But when He rose to heaven and received the honor which He had with the Father before the world was, He regained His position of equality with God. "And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was." (John 17:5). A son can be equal with his father but that does not mean he does not honor his father. Jesus Christ and His bride are equal with the Father, but They will still honor Him as Their Father. Yet, there is more to the relationship of the three members of the Trinity. The Scriptures tell us that Jesus Christ was the very God of the Old Testament.

JESUS CHRIST - THE GOD OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

The book of Hebrews tells us that both the Old and the New Testaments had the same author:

Heb 8:6 But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises.

Heb 8:7 For if that first *covenant* had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second.

Heb 8:8 Because finding fault with them, He says: "BEHOLD, THE DAYS ARE COMING, SAYS THE LORD, WHEN I WILL MAKE A NEW COVENANT WITH THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL AND WITH THE HOUSE OF JUDAH—

Heb 8:9 NOT ACCORDING TO THE COVENANT THAT I MADE WITH THEIR FATHERS IN THE DAY WHEN I TOOK THEM BY THE HAND TO LEAD THEM OUT OF THE LAND OF EGYPT; BECAUSE THEY DID NOT CONTINUE IN MY COVENANT, AND I DISREGARDED THEM, SAYS THE LORD.

Heb 8:10 FOR THIS IS THE COVENANT THAT I WILL MAKE WITH THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL AFTER THOSE DAYS, SAYS THE LORD: I WILL PUT MY LAWS IN THEIR MIND AND WRITE THEM ON THEIR HEARTS; AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE.

Heb 8:11 NONE OF THEM SHALL TEACH HIS NEIGHBOR, AND NONE HIS BROTHER, SAYING, 'KNOW THE LORD,' FOR ALL SHALL KNOW ME, FROM THE LEAST OF THEM TO THE GREATEST OF THEM.

Heb 8:12 FOR I WILL BE MERCIFUL TO THEIR UNRIGHTEOUSNESS, AND THEIR SINS AND THEIR LAWLESS DEEDS I WILL REMEMBER NO MORE."

Heb 8:13 In that He says, "A NEW COVENANT," He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.

The author of the book of Hebrews knew of the promises God made to ancient Israel through the prophet Jeremiah:

Jer 31:31 "Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah—

Jer 31:32 not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day *that* I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the LORD.

Jer 31:33 But this *is* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

Notice that the Person who made the Old Covenant, who promised to make a New Covenant, identified Himself as "the Lord" and "God". Since we know that Jesus Christ was the author of the New Testament, it means that He was the God of the Old Testament too. Jesus Christ had to die in order to nullify the Old Covenant. Why? Because that was a marriage covenant:

Heb 9:16 For where there *is* a testament, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator.

Heb 9:17 For a testament *is* in force after men are dead, since it has no power at all while the testator lives.

Jer 3:14 "Return, O backsliding children," says the LORD; "for I am married to you. I will take you, one from a city and two from a family, and I will bring you to Zion.

If Jesus Christ was not the God of the Old Testament, then we are still under the Old Covenant. If that is the case, the Holy Spirit is not available and we are still under sin and not under grace. But we know that the Holy Spirit is available to those who believe in Jesus Christ.

Joh 16:7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you.

Joh 16:8 And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:

Joh 16:9 of sin, because they do not believe in Me;

Joh 16:10 of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more;

Joh 16:11 of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

Joh 16:12 "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear *them* now.

Joh 16:13 However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own *authority*, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.

Joh 16:14 He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare *it* to you.

Joh 16:15 All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare *it* to you.

The prophet Isaiah wrote:

Isa 9:6 For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Isa 9:7 Of the increase of *His* government and peace *There will be* no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

Whom do these words refer to if not to Jesus Christ? The "Child" is none other than the "**mighty God**", the "**everlasting Father**", the very God of the Old Testament.

Consider also the meaning of the following passages:

Isa 7:14 Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.

Isa 7:15 Curds and honey He shall eat, that He may know to refuse the evil and choose the good.

Isa 7:16 For before the Child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land that you dread will be forsaken by both her kings.

Mat 1:18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit.

Mat 1:19 Then Joseph her husband, being a just *man*, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly.

Mat 1:20 But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.

Mat 1:21 And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins."

Mat 1:22 So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying:

Mat 1:23 "BEHOLD, THE VIRGIN SHALL BE WITH CHILD, AND BEAR A SON, AND THEY SHALL CALL HIS NAME IMMANUEL," which is translated, "God with us."

Mat 1:24 Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife,

Mat 1:25 and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name JESUS.

The prophet Isaiah also expanded on the theme of God's marriage to Israel:

Isa 54:1 "Sing, O barren, You *who* have not borne! Break forth into singing, and cry aloud, You *who* have not labored with child! For more *are* the children of the desolate Than the children of the married woman," says the LORD.

Isa 54:2 "Enlarge the place of your tent, And let them stretch out the curtains of your dwellings; Do not spare; Lengthen your cords, And strengthen your stakes.

Isa 54:3 For you shall expand to the right and to the left, And your descendants will inherit the nations, And make the desolate cities inhabited.

Isa 54:4 "Do not fear, for you will not be ashamed; Neither be disgraced, for you will not be put to shame; For you will forget the shame of your youth, And will not remember the reproach of your widowhood anymore.

Isa 54:5 **For your Maker is your husband, The LORD of hosts is His name; And your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel; He is called the God of the whole earth.**

Isa 54:6 For the LORD has called you Like a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, Like a youthful wife when you were refused," Says your God.

Isa 54:7 "For a mere moment I have forsaken you, But with great mercies I will gather you.

Isa 54:8 With a little wrath I hid My face from you for a moment; But with everlasting kindness I will have mercy on you," Says the LORD, your Redeemer.

How remarkable that after divorcing "backsliding" Israel, God should marry the new spiritual Israel - the Church of God. For just as the Old Testament was a marriage covenant, the New Testament is also a marriage covenant. Only that this time the law of God is no longer written on parchments and wrapped around people's arms or pasted on their foreheads, but on their hearts where it stays forever.

ETERNAL, CREATED, OR BOTH

As we've seen, contrary to the views held by the Catholic Church, Jehovah's Witnesses, the Churches of God and other churches, the Bible says not only that Jesus Christ was God, but that He was the very God of the Old Testament. In the book of Revelation, He made these statements after He rose to heaven:

Rev 1:8 "I am the Alpha and the Omega, *the* Beginning and *the* End," says the Lord, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."

Rev 1:11 saying, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last," and, "What you see, write in a book and send *it* to the seven churches which are in Asia: to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea."

Rev 3:14 "And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, 'These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God:

Since Jesus Christ was the "Beginning of the creation of God", the "Beginning and the End" and the "First and the Last", it means that although He was the First spiritual Son of God in this particular world, He was the Beginning of everything that ever existed long before this world was brought into existence. In a discussion with the Jews, He said that He existed long before this world was created and before He became a human being:

Joh 8:56 Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw *it* and was glad."

Joh 8:57 Then the Jews said to Him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?"

Joh 8:58 Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM."

Before He was crucified, He prayed, "And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was". How then can we explain the apparent contradiction between the fact that Jesus Christ believed that He was both created and eternal? Simple! When the mind of God becomes our mind and we begin to think like God, His consciousness becomes our consciousness.

Jesus' consciousness transcended human existence. As a human being He was created, but the Holy Spirit in Him gave Him the consciousness of the Father who had no beginning of time nor end of days. It is for this reason that He told the Jews, "Before Abraham was, I AM". Clearly, He linked Himself with the One who said to Moses:

Exo 3:14 And God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And He said, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.' "

Exo 3:15 Moreover God said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: 'The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is My name forever, and this is My memorial to all generations.'

From the moment of conception - the time He received the Holy Spirit - there was a spiritual element in Him who linked Him to the Father and a time before the world was. But as a human being, His genealogy took Him back to the time of Adam (See Luke 3:22-38). In that, He was no different from us. We too have in our bodies cells which have lived continuously through regeneration since the time of Adam. When we repent and are baptized, however, God implants His seed - His Holy Spirit - in us and we begin to grow spiritually until the mind of God takes over our thought processes just as it did with Jesus Christ. This is how we grow to become not only sons of God, but one with Him too.

Joh 17:15 I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one.

Joh 17:16 They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.

Joh 17:17 Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.

Joh 17:18 As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.

Joh 17:19 And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth.

Joh 17:20 "I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word;

Joh 17:21 **that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us**, that the world may believe that You sent Me.

Joh 17:22 And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are

Joh 17:23 one: **I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one**, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.

Joh 17:24 "Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the

Joh 17:25 world. O righteous Father! The world has not known You, but I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me.

Joh 17:26 And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare *it*, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them."

It is in this context that Jesus Christ attributed personal characteristics to the Holy Spirit. It is through His presence that we can become one with the Father and the Son. It is through His presence also that we inherit eternal life.

Joh 14:16 And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that **He may abide with you forever—**

Joh 14:17 the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.

HEAVENLY IMAGES

One of the best known biblical parables is that of Lazarus and the rich man. It may surprise many people to know this, but the message it conveys is the very opposite of the one most people think it does. Let us have a look at it.

Luk 16:19 "There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day.

Luk 16:20 But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate, desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table.

Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores.

Luk 16:22 So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried.

Luk 16:23 And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

Luk 16:24 "Then he cried and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.'

Luk 16:25 But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented.

Luk 16:26 And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us.'

This parable is often used to justify the belief that when people die they go to heaven or to hell. But this is not what Jesus Christ wanted to convey because elsewhere He said something which nullified this belief:

Joh 3:12 If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things?

Joh 3:13 No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, *that is*, the Son of Man who is in heaven.

Neither Lazarus nor Abraham were in heaven because if they were, they would have gone there before Jesus Christ Himself. What message then did He want to convey through this parable? When He said that Lazarus went to "Abraham's bosom", He put Abraham in God's place. The question is why? Why did He not say "God's bosom" when this would have been far more accurate and to the point? This is one of many heavenly images in the Bible which direct people to the Scriptures to search and find out the truth about their meaning. Lazarus was an imaginary person, but Abraham was not. He lived in the past and his life is well documented in the Bible. We should therefore be able to discover the symbolism behind this parable by looking at his life. Before we do that, we will have a look at another incident in Jesus' life which also directs us to Abraham. Before He was crucified, Jesus prayed to the Father and said:

Mat 26:39 He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You *will*."

Luk 22:41 And He was withdrawn from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and prayed,

Luk 22:42 saying, "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done."

It is generally assumed that Jesus Christ knew all the time that He would be crucified. The Bible tells us that He was ordained to die for our sins before the world was created (1 Pet 1:17-21). Why then did He pray, "if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me" if He believed that this was not

possible? He did so for two reasons. First, because He knew that with God everything is possible (Gen. 18:14; Matt. 19:26). Second, because there was a biblical example which showed Him that there was indeed a possibility He could be spared that death at the last minute. He learned it from the following incident in the life of Abraham and Isaac:

- Gen 22:1 Now it came to pass after these things that God tested Abraham, and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am."
- Gen 22:2 Then He said, "Take now your son, your only *son* Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you."
- Gen 22:3 So Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son; and he split the wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him.
- Gen 22:4 Then on the third day Abraham lifted his eyes and saw the place afar off.
- Gen 22:5 And Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey; the lad and I will go yonder and worship, and we will come back to you."
- Gen 22:6 So Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid *it* on Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife, and the two of them went together.
- Gen 22:7 But Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, "My father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." Then he said, "Look, the fire and the wood, but where *is* the lamb for a burnt offering?"
- Gen 22:8 And Abraham said, "My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering." So the two of them went together.
- Gen 22:9 Then they came to the place of which God had told him. And Abraham built an altar there and placed the wood in order; and he bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, upon the wood.
- Gen 22:10 And Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son.
- Gen 22:11 But the Angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" So he said, "Here I am."
- Gen 22:12 And He said, "Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only *son*, from Me."
- Gen 22:13 Then Abraham lifted his eyes and looked, and there behind *him was* a ram caught in a thicket by its horns. So Abraham went and took the ram, and offered it up for a burnt offering instead of his son.
- Gen 22:14 And Abraham called the name of the place, The-LORD-Will-Provide; as it is said *to this day*, "In the Mount of the LORD it shall be provided."
- Gen 22:15 Then the Angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time out of heaven,
- Gen 22:16 and said: "By Myself I have sworn, says the LORD, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only *son*—
- Gen 22:17 blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which *is* on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies.
- Gen 22:18 In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice."

Now compare this with the following statement in the New Testament:

- Heb 11:17 By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten *son*,
- Heb 11:18 of whom it was said, "IN ISAAC YOUR SEED SHALL BE CALLED,"
- Joh 3:16 For God so loved the world that He gave **His only begotten Son**, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.
- Joh 3:17 For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

There is an obvious parallelism between the sacrifice required of Abraham and Isaac, and the one God performed in Jesus Christ. Isaac was Abraham's "**only begotten son**", Jesus Christ was God's "**only begotten Son**". Abraham was to offer Isaac as a "burnt offering" for sin, Jesus Christ was offered as a type of "burnt offering" for our sins.

But once Abraham showed willingness to go on with the sacrifice, God put an end to it and spared Isaac's life. There was no longer a need for Isaac to die. That was the beginning of God's marital covenant with Abraham and his descendants.

When that covenant was broken, there arose a need for a new covenant. This time Jesus Christ was to become the sacrificial "burnt offering" for a new covenant. But because He had never sinned, He did not need to die for His sins and so He qualified to atone for the sins of the whole world (for His creation, as it were). This is what He did when He showed willingness to die on the cross.

The knowledge that Isaac's life was spared gave Him hope that His life might be spared too at the last minute. This is why He prayed "if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me." But, as an obedient Son, He added, "nevertheless not My will, but Yours be done".

It would have been too much of a burden to carry all His life the knowledge that there was no escape from that horrible death. Jesus was the Son of God, but He was also a human being and, as such, He had to cope with all the human frailties and weaknesses. He needed reassurance that everything will be fine in the end, though He did not know how. As it happened, the Father's will was that He goes on with the sacrifice, but sent an angel to strengthen Him. Then, for a brief moment, as He was hanging on the cross, pouring out His life, God abandoned Him altogether. In His deepest agony, He cried, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" (Mark 15:34). Did you ever think why God forsook Him? The answer is found in another powerful heavenly image:

Num 21:5 And the people spoke against God and against Moses: "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For *there* is no food and no water, and our soul loathes this worthless bread."

Num 21:6 So the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and many of the people of Israel died.

Num 21:7 Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, "We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD and against you; pray to the LORD that He take away the serpents from us." So Moses prayed for the people.

Num 21:8 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Make a fiery *serpent*, and set it on a pole; and it shall be that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, shall live."

Num 21:9 So Moses made a bronze serpent, and put it on a pole; and so it was, if a serpent had bitten anyone, when he looked at the bronze serpent, he lived.

Joh 3:14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up,

Joh 3:15 that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

Joh 3:16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Joh 3:17 For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

By taking the sins of the world upon Himself, Jesus Christ became the symbolic serpent on the pole. Since God hates sin, Jesus endured God's wrath for a brief moment of time before He died. Another symbolic heavenly image is found in the lives of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Exo 6:6 Therefore say to the children of Israel: 'I *am* the LORD; I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, I will rescue you from their bondage, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments.

Exo 6:7 I will take you as My people, and I will be your God. Then you shall know that I *am* the LORD your God who brings you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.

Exo 6:8 And I will bring you into the land which I swore to give to **Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob**; and I will give it to you *as* a heritage: I *am* the LORD.' "

Mat 8:11 And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with **Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob** in the kingdom of heaven.

Mat 8:12 But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

In the first example, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were named in connection with Israel's earthly promises and inheritance. In the second, they are named in connection with the promise of the New Testament - eternal life in the Kingdom of Heaven. Notice how the people from the east and west do not sit down with God and Jesus Christ in the Kingdom of Heaven, but with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Here again, Jesus placed Abraham in God's place. From the previous example, we know that Issac represented Jesus Christ, but who did Jacob represent? In order to find this out, we need to look first at Abraham, Isaac and Ishmael. This is because Jacob was not Abraham's son, he was Isaac's son. The natural representative trio should have been Abraham, Ishmael, and Issac. Ishmael was Abraham's firstborn, not Issac. Why then was Ishmael sidetracked in favor of Jacob? It is clear that there has been a realignment in the position and power relationship between these people. But why? To find this out, again we must look at the life of the respective personalities. We begin with Ishmael:

Gen 16:1 Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no *children*. And she had an Egyptian maidservant whose name was Hagar.

Gen 16:2 So Sarai said to Abram, "See now, the LORD has restrained me from bearing *children*. Please, go in to my maid; perhaps I shall obtain children by her." And Abram heeded the voice of Sarai.

Gen 16:3 Then Sarai, Abram's wife, took Hagar her maid, the Egyptian, and gave her to her husband Abram to be his wife, after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan.

Gen 16:4 So he went in to Hagar, and she conceived. And when she saw that she had conceived, her mistress became despised in her eyes.

Gen 16:5 Then Sarai said to Abram, "My wrong *be* upon you! I gave my maid into your embrace; and when she saw that she had conceived, I became despised in her eyes. The LORD judge between you and me."

Gen 16:6 So Abram said to Sarai, "Indeed your maid *is* in your hand; do to her as you please." And when Sarai dealt harshly with her, she fled from her presence.

Gen 16:7 Now the Angel of the LORD found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, by the spring on the way to Shur.

Gen 16:8 And He said, "Hagar, Sarai's maid, where have you come from, and where are you going?" She said, "I am fleeing from the presence of my mistress Sarai."

Gen 16:9 The Angel of the LORD said to her, "Return to your mistress, and submit yourself under her hand."

Gen 16:10 Then the Angel of the LORD said to her, "I will multiply your descendants exceedingly, so that they shall not be counted for multitude."

Gen 16:11 And the Angel of the LORD said to her: "Behold, you *are* with child, And you shall bear a son. You shall call his name Ishmael, Because the LORD has heard your affliction.

Gen 16:12 He shall be a wild man; His hand *shall be* against every man, And every man's hand against him. And he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren."

Being a "wild" man, Ishmael represented a "wild" heavenly creature whose "hand shall be against every man, and every man's hand against him". Who might that be? Satan, obviously! Now take a look at what Apostle Paul said about Hagar and Ishmael:

Gal 4:22 For it is written that Abraham had two sons: the one by a bondwoman, the other by a freewoman.

Gal 4:23 But he *who was* of the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and he of the freewoman through promise,

Gal 4:24 which things are symbolic. For these are the two covenants: the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar—

Gal 4:25 for this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children—

Gal 4:26 but the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all.

Gal 4:27 For it is written: "REJOICE, O BARREN, YOU WHO DO NOT BEAR! BREAK FORTH AND SHOUT, YOU WHO ARE NOT IN LABOR! FOR THE DESOLATE HAS MANY MORE CHILDREN THAN SHE WHO HAS A HUSBAND."

Gal 4:28 Now we, brethren, as Isaac *was*, are children of promise.

Gal 4:29 But, as he who was born according to the flesh then persecuted him *who was born* according to the Spirit, even so *it is* now.

Gal 4:30 Nevertheless what does the Scripture say? "CAST OUT THE BONDWOMAN AND HER SON, FOR THE SON OF THE BONDWOMAN SHALL NOT BE HEIR WITH THE SON OF THE FREEWOMAN."

Gal 4:31 So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman but of the free.

Putting the first trio together, we come to the first representation of a heavenly Trinity in which Abraham stood for God, Ishmael for the Adversary, and Issac for the Word. Remember, there were at least three heavenly figures present at the moment of creation: God, the Word, and the Adversary. "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness" (Gen. 1:26), tells us that there was more than one person. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1-3), tells us that the second person was the Word. "And the woman said, 'The serpent deceived me, and I ate'" (Gen. 3:13b), tells us that the third person was the "serpent" - Satan, the Adversary.

But Ishmael lost his position in favor of Jacob in the second representation of the Trinity. Abraham, Issac and Jacob are listed together nearly one hundred and fifty times in the Bible. It is an extremely important and meaningful biblical combination. Which forces the question, since Jacob replaced Ishmael in the heavenly representation of the Trinity, who did he stand for? The answer is, whoever replaces Satan after he is cast out of heaven.

Is it not remarkable that at the precise time when Satan will be cast out of heaven, immediately afterwards the bride of Christ - the Church of God - will be resurrected to take her place alongside Him and the Father in the new heaven and the new earth? (Rev. 21). In other words, the Holy Spirit will replace Satan in the new Trinity. Jacob stood for the Holy Spirit. This is what differentiates the Christian Trinity from all other Trinities. While the biblical Trinity began as all the others, with a hostile figure in its midst, it will end up with three figures bound by a relationship of love and harmony. There are several representations of the heavenly Trinity in the Bible. We cannot discuss them all here, but there is another one which has a particular relevance for our case:

Mic 6:4 For I brought you up from the land of Egypt, I redeemed you from the house of bondage; And I sent before you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam.

When God sent Moses to free his brethren from the Egyptian slavery, he complained that he was not a good speaker.

Exo 4:10 Then Moses said to the LORD, "O my Lord, I *am* not eloquent, neither before nor since You have spoken to Your servant; but I *am* slow of speech and slow of tongue."

Exo 4:11 So the LORD said to him, "Who has made man's mouth? Or who makes the mute, the deaf, the seeing, or the blind? *Have* not I, the LORD?

Exo 4:12 Now therefore, go, and I will be with your mouth and teach you what you shall say."

Exo 4:13 But he said, "O my Lord, please send by the hand of whomever *else* You may send."

Exo 4:14 So the anger of the LORD was kindled against Moses, and He said: "Is not Aaron the Levite your brother? I know that he can speak well. And look, he is also coming out to meet you. When he sees you, he will be glad in his heart.

Exo 4:15 Now you shall speak to him and put the words in his mouth. And I will be with your mouth and with his mouth, and I will teach you what you shall do.

Exo 4:16 So he shall be **your spokesman** to the people. **And he himself shall be as a mouth for you, and you shall be to him as God.**

Moses was to be as God to Aaron, and Aaron was to be his spokesman. Isn't this a remarkable similarity with God and Jesus Christ, Jesus having been the Word - the spokesman - for God at the moment of creation? Since Moses stood for God, and Aaron for Jesus Christ, who do you think Miriam stood for if not the Holy Spirit, the Church of God and the bride of Christ? But there is more to it. At one time Miriam led a revolt against Moses:

Num 12:1 Then Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married; for he had married an Ethiopian woman.

Num 12:2 So they said, "Has the LORD indeed spoken only through Moses? Has He not spoken through us also?" And the LORD heard *it*.

Num 12:3 (Now the man Moses *was* very humble, more than all men who *were* on the face of the earth.)

Num 12:4 Suddenly the LORD said to Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, "Come out, you three, to the tabernacle of meeting!" So the three came out.

Num 12:5 Then the LORD came down in the pillar of cloud and stood *in* the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam. And they both went forward.

Num 12:6 Then He said, "Hear now My words: If there is a prophet among you, *I*, the LORD, make Myself known to him in a vision; I speak to him in a dream.

Num 12:7 Not so with My servant Moses; He *is* faithful in all My house.

Num 12:8 I speak with him face to face, Even plainly, and not in dark sayings; And he sees the form of the LORD. Why then were you not afraid To speak against My servant Moses?"

Num 12:9 So the anger of the LORD was aroused against them, and He departed.

Num 12:10 And when the cloud departed from above the tabernacle, suddenly Miriam *became* leprous, as *white as snow*. Then Aaron turned toward Miriam, and there she was, a leper.

Num 12:11 So Aaron said to Moses, "Oh, my lord! Please do not lay *this* sin on us, in which we have done foolishly and in which we have sinned.

Num 12:12 Please do not let her be as one dead, whose flesh is half consumed when he comes out of his mother's womb!"

Num 12:13 So Moses cried out to the LORD, saying, "Please heal her, O God, I pray!"

Num 12:14 Then the LORD said to Moses, "If her father had but spit in her face, would she not be shamed seven days? Let her be shut out of the camp seven days, and afterward she may be received *again*."

Num 12:15 So Miriam was shut out of the camp seven days, and the people did not journey till Miriam was brought in *again*.

Miriam was to spend seven days outside the camp as a leper. In biblical prophecies, a day stands for a thousand years (Ps. 90:4; 2 Pet. 3:8). The seven days represent seven thousand years during which the world would be isolated from God because of rebellion. Miriam represented the first wife of God, the sinful rebellious world. But in the end she is transformed into a new person. She becomes a new wife, a holy wife - the Holy Spirit. The people of Israel, as in fact all people of the world, are about to be granted repentance and converted to God's true religion, and become part of the Church of God, the bride of Christ. We need to point out that the symbolic representations which Ishmael and Jacob stood for have nothing to do with the way their descendants evolved in this world. The descendants of Ishmael are no more and no less good or evil than the descendants of Jacob. If that representation was true in real life then all children of Jacob would have been godly and holy people, but notice what Jesus Christ told the Jews who sought to kill Him:

Joh 8:31 Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed.

Joh 8:32 And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

Joh 8:33 They answered Him, "We are Abraham's descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How *can* You say, 'You will be made free'?"

Joh 8:34 Jesus answered them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin.

Joh 8:35 And a slave does not abide in the house forever, *but* a son abides forever.

Joh 8:36 Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.

Joh 8:37 "I know that you are Abraham's descendants, but you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you.

Joh 8:38 I speak what I have seen with My Father, and you do what you have seen with your father."

Joh 8:39 They answered and said to Him, "Abraham is our father." Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham.

Joh 8:40 But now you seek to kill Me, a Man who has told you the truth which I heard from God. Abraham did not do this.

Joh 8:41 You do the deeds of your father." Then they said to Him, "We were not born of fornication; we have one Father—God."

Joh 8:42 Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and came from God; nor have I come of Myself, but He sent Me.

Joh 8:43 Why do you not understand My speech? Because you are not able to listen to My word.

Joh 8:44 You are of *your* father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *resources*, for he is a liar and the father of it.

Joh 8:45 But because I tell the truth, you do not believe Me.

Joh 8:46 Which of you convicts Me of sin? And if I tell the truth, why do you not believe Me?

Joh 8:47 He who is of God hears God's words; therefore you do not hear, because you are not of God."

Now, let us have a look at another powerful heavenly image - the twelve tribes of Israel. We begin by going back to Ishmael and his children:

Gen 17:18 And Abraham said to God, "Oh, that Ishmael might live before You!"

Gen 17:19 Then God said: "No, Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, *and* with his descendants after him.

Gen 17:20 And as for Ishmael, I have heard you. Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly. He shall beget twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation.

Gen 17:21 But My covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this set time next year."

Ishmael begat **twelve princes**, just as Jacob begat **twelve tribal leaders**. From this we can conclude that the figure twelve represents the twelve spiritual tribes of the new Israel (See Rev. 7:4-8). From the book of Revelation, we learn that Satan drew one third of God's angels after him.

Rev 12:1 Now a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars.

Rev 12:2 Then being with child, she cried out in labor and in pain to give birth.

Rev 12:3 And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads.

Rev 12:4 His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born.

Rev 12:5 She bore a male Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. And her Child was caught up to God and His throne.

The Devil had rulership over one third of God's angels, which is what we would expect if he were part of the Trinity. Since Ishmael, who represented him, had twelve princes and consequently twelve tribes, Satan must have had twelve legions of angels under him too. But how many legions of angels did Jesus Christ have rulership over? We saw this earlier when we quoted this passage for a different purpose.

Mat 26:50 But Jesus said to him, "Friend, why have you come?" Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and took Him.

Mat 26:51 And suddenly, one of those *who were* with Jesus stretched out *his* hand and drew his sword, struck the servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear.

Mat 26:52 But Jesus said to him, "Put your sword in its place, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword.

Mat 26:53 Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels?

Mat 26:54 How then could the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must happen thus?"

More than twelve legions of angels? This causes a problem. Why more than twelve legions, and how many more? Here is the astonishing answer. Satan tipped the balance in his favor by surreptitiously adding one extra legion to his rebellious angels. We know this from another symbolic representation of the Trinity: Issac, Esau and Jacob, where Issac represented the Father, Esau represented Satan and Jacob represented Jesus Christ. Notice the relationship between the brothers Isaac and Jacob:

Gen 25:23 And the LORD said to her: "Two nations *are* in your womb, Two peoples shall be separated from your body; *One* people shall be stronger than the other, And the older shall serve the younger."

Gen 25:24 So when her days were fulfilled *for her* to give birth, indeed *there were* twins in her womb.

Gen 25:25 And the first came out red. *He was* like a hairy garment all over; so they called his name Esau.

Gen 25:26 Afterward his brother came out, and his hand took hold of Esau's heel; so his name was called Jacob. Isaac *was* sixty years old when she bore them.

Gen 25:27 So the boys grew. And Esau was a skillful hunter, a man of the field; but Jacob was a mild man, dwelling in tents.

Gen 25:28 And Isaac loved Esau because he ate *of his* game, but Rebekah loved Jacob.

Gen 25:29 Now Jacob cooked a stew; and Esau came in from the field, and he *was* weary.

Gen 25:30 And Esau said to Jacob, "Please feed me with that same red *stew*, for I *am* weary."
Therefore his name was called Edom.

Gen 25:31 But Jacob said, "Sell me your birthright as of this day."

Gen 25:32 And Esau said, "Look, I *am* about to die; so what *is* this birthright to me?"

Gen 25:33 Then Jacob said, "Swear to me as of this day." So he swore to him, and sold his birthright to Jacob.

Gen 25:34 And Jacob gave Esau bread and stew of lentils; then he ate and drank, arose, and went his way. Thus Esau despised *his* birthright.

Esau, the first born, lost his birthright to his brother Jacob in the same way that Satan lost his birthright to Jesus Christ. Although the older brother was stronger, the younger brother was smarter. This is why the older brother ended up serving the younger one.

In the contest between Satan and Jesus Christ, Satan was stronger and older, but God decreed that their contest should not be one of physical strength but one of intellect. After forty days of fasting, Jesus could hardly have been in a position to fight a physical battle. Their contest came down to who knew the Scriptures better and who showed the correct relationship with the Father. In this regard, Jesus' mind was sharper than ever, not the least because fasting and prayer provide spiritual nourishment and wisdom, and He passed everything Satan threw at Him with flying colors. In the end, when Satan promised Jesus the world if He would worship him, Jesus said: "Get behind Me, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.' " (Luke 4:8). From then on, Jesus became ruler over Satan, and Satan began to obey Him. In the heavenly representation of the Trinity, formed by Isaac, Esau and Jacob, where Esau stood for Satan and Jacob for Christ, we would expect to find a balance in the number of children and tribes, just as there was a balance between Ishmael's and Jacob's children and tribes. But here comes the surprise: Genesis 36:9-19, lists thirteen "chiefs" of Esau.

He himself had only five sons: Eliphaz, Reuel Jeush, Jaalam and Korah, but for reasons which are not explained, probably because Eliphaz and Reuel died early, their sons are listed as Esau's sons. The result is that Esau ended up with thirteen tribal "chiefs": Amalek, Teman, Omar, Zeph,

Gatam, Kenaz, Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, Mizzah, Jeush, Jaalam and Korah. Faced with the new reality, Jacob had to do something to restore the balance. So what did he do? He split one of his tribes in two - Joseph became Ephraim and Manasseh. This answers the question of why Jesus said "more than twelve tribes" instead of just twelve tribes. But what about the twelve Apostles? Jesus Christ selected twelve of His disciples to become Apostles and leaders over the twelve tribes of the new Israel:

Mat 19:27 Then Peter answered and said to Him, "See, we have left all and followed You. Therefore what shall we have?"

Mat 19:28 So Jesus said to them, "Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

Now where does the thirteenth tribe stand in this scheme of things and who is their Apostle? Here is the astonishing answer:

Eph 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, To the saints who are in Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus:

Eph 1:2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Rom 11:13 For I speak to you Gentiles; inasmuch as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry,

1Co 15:3 For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,

1Co 15:4 and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures,

1Co 15:5 and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve.

1Co 15:6 After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep.

1Co 15:7 After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles.

1Co 15:8 Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time.

1Co 15:9 For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.

1Co 15:10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God *which was* with me.

Apostle Paul became the thirteenth major Apostle of Jesus Christ. He is not going to be ruler over a tribe of Israel, but over a tribe formed from among the Gentile nations. Numerically speaking, this tribe will be larger than all the tribes of Israel put together, which means that Satan's deception turned out to our advantage. Satan has not realized it, but all along everything he did served God's purpose in the end.

In conclusion, the Trinity is not only a fact, but one that permeates the Bible throughout. Belief in the correct Trinity is essential for one's salvation. Denying the Trinity, means denying the Holy Spirit, means denying one's own salvation.

When Jesus Christ gave His disciples the command to go out into the world and make disciples of all nations, He sealed that command with the authority that God gave Him in heaven.

Mat 28:18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

Mat 28:19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

Mat 28:20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even* to the end of the age." Amen.

Jesus Christ acknowledged that the Holy Spirit has a name and authority which His disciples can use and rely upon. You would be making a grave mistake by believing those who tell you otherwise.

ON BEING A WITNESS OF GOD

“And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands standing before the God of the earth. And if anyone wants to harm them, fire proceeds from their mouth and devours their enemies. And if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this manner.” (Rev. 11:3-5).

In most people's minds the word “witness” conjures up a person who gives testimony in a court of law. Funk & Wagnall's International Edition Dictionary gives the following definition of “witness”: “A person who has seen or knows something, and is therefore competent to give evidence concerning it; One who has knowledge of facts relating to a given cause and is subpoenaed to testify.”

What then does it mean to be a witness of God? It means to know something about God and to be competent to give evidence concerning Him; it means to have knowledge of facts about the Kingdom of God and be subpoenaed to testify about it.

There are many ways in which people obtain knowledge about God and His Kingdom. Ancient people had visions and dreams or, as in the case of Moses and many prophets of ancient Israel, God spoke directly to them. These days, the most common way of obtaining such knowledge is by reading the books inspired by God. The question is, how do people know which books are inspired and which are not, which religions are right and which are not?

For most people this is determined by their birth. The religion in which they have been born, the religion of their parents, is the right religion and its books are the inspired ones. Thus, we have all been born in the right religion. My religion is right, your religion is right, everyone's religion is right; so why bother with other people's books and religions when all are right and inspired? The problem is, God does not think so. He says that there is only one Book which is inspired by Him and only one religion that is right.

Eph 4:4 *There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling;*

Eph 4:5 *one Lord, one faith, one baptism;*

Eph 4:6 *one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.*

Eph 4:7 *But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift.*

To find out which religion is this, you are guided by the words of Jesus Christ. “Your word is truth” (John 17:17), said He referring to the Bible. “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Tim 3:16-17), said Apostle Paul. “Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven [beside Jesus Christ] given among men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12), said Apostle Peter.

The right religion then is the one that follows the teachings of the Bible. Yes, but other people make similar claims about their books and religions. That is true, except that there is one big difference: fulfilled prophecy. Biblical prophecies that have been written thousands of years ago have been fulfilled exactly as the Bible said they would. Some are being fulfilled right before our eyes, as our readers would very well know. No other book in the world and no religion can make such a claim.

How important then is it that people follow the right religion, and what chance do people of other religions have of being saved? Jesus Christ gave us the answer when He spoke to a Samaritan woman:

Joh 4:19 The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet.

Joh 4:20 Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and you *Jews* say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship."

Joh 4:21 Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father.

Joh 4:22 You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews.

Joh 4:23 But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him.

Joh 4:24 God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

Joh 4:25 The woman said to Him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When He comes, He will tell us all things."

Joh 4:26 Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am *He*."

"You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews." Could anything be clearer? Later, Jesus and His Apostles qualified this statement by pointing out that there are two kinds of Jews in the world: those who are Jews by birth, and those who are Jews by faith. It is to the Jews by faith that salvation belongs to. Here is the passage that describes the Jews by birth:

Joh 8:37 "I know that you are Abraham's descendants, but you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you.

Joh 8:38 I speak what I have seen with My Father, and you do what you have seen with your father."

Joh 8:39 They answered and said to Him, "Abraham is our father." Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham.

Joh 8:40 But now you seek to kill Me, a Man who has told you the truth which I heard from God. Abraham did not do this.

Joh 8:41 You do the deeds of your father." Then they said to Him, "We were not born of fornication; we have one Father—God."

Joh 8:42 Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and came from God; nor have I come of Myself, but He sent Me.

Joh 8:43 Why do you not understand My speech? Because you are not able to listen to My word.

Joh 8:44 You are of *your* father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him.

When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *resources*, for he is a liar and the father of it.

Joh 8:45 But because I tell the truth, you do not believe Me.

Joh 8:46 Which of you convicts Me of sin? And if I tell the truth, why do you not believe Me?

Joh 8:47 He who is of God hears God's words; therefore you do not hear, because you are not of God."

And here is a passage that describes the Jews by faith:

Gal 3:26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

Gal 3:27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

Gal 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Gal 3:29 And if you *are* Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

What does it mean to belong to Christ, to be the seed of Abraham and have God as our Father? It means to accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, to be faithful to God as was Abraham, to love and fear God, to keep His Commandments, to repent, be baptized and receive the Holy Spirit, and to wait patiently for God's salvation. This is what Jesus Christ told His followers:

Joh 14:15 "If you love Me, keep My commandments.

Joh 14:16 And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—

Joh 14:17 the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.

Joh 14:18 I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.

Joh 14:19 "A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. Because I live, you will live also.

Joh 14:20 At that day you will know that I *am* in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.

Joh 14:21 He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him."

The presence of the Holy Spirit is the major difference between the Jews by faith and the Jews by birth. The first have the law of God written in their heart; the second have it written on parchments. You may have seen the Jews at worship wearing little boxes on their forehead or tied around their arms. It is a custom retained by them from Old Testament times. It was a command given to them by Moses.

Deu 6:1 "Now this *is* the commandment, *and these are* the statutes and judgments which the LORD your God has commanded to teach you, that you may observe *them* in the land which you are crossing over to possess,

Deu 6:2 that you may fear the LORD your God, to keep all His statutes and His commandments which I command you, you and your son and your grandson, all the days of your life, and that your days may be prolonged.

Deu 6:8 You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes.

Eze 36:21 But I had concern for My holy name, which the house of Israel had profaned among the nations wherever they went.

Eze 36:22 "Therefore say to the house of Israel, 'Thus says the Lord GOD: "I do not do *this* for your sake, O house of Israel, but for My holy name's sake, which you have profaned among the nations wherever you went.

Eze 36:23 And I will sanctify My great name, which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst; and the nations shall know that I *am* the LORD," says the Lord GOD, "when I am hallowed in you before their eyes.

Eze 36:24 For I will take you from among the nations, gather you out of all countries, and bring you into your own land.

Eze 36:25 Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols.

Eze 36:26 I will **give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you**; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.

Eze 36:27 I will put **My Spirit** within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do *them*.

The Jews who accepted Jesus Christ as their Lord, received the Holy Spirit and had the Law of God written in their hearts. Those who did not, still carry it on their arms and as "frontlets between their eyes." They blame Jesus for supposedly destroying the Law that God gave Moses, when He did no such thing. They failed to understand the difference between the Law of Commandments, which both Jesus and His Apostles fulfilled and preached, and the ritualistic law that became redundant after Jesus' sacrifice.

Mat 5:17 "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.

Mat 5:18 For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.

Mat 5:19 Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does and teaches *them*, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Mat 5:20 For I say to you, that unless your righteousness exceeds *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.

Rom 13:7 Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes *are due*, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor.

Rom 13:8 Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law.

Rom 13:9 For the commandments, "YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY," "YOU SHALL NOT MURDER," "YOU SHALL NOT STEAL," "YOU SHALL NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS," "YOU SHALL NOT COVET," and if *there is* any other commandment, are *all* summed up in this saying, namely, "YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF."

Rom 13:10 Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.

Heb 10:1 For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect.

Heb 10:2 For then would they not have ceased to be offered? For the worshipers, once purified, would have had no more consciousness of sins.

Heb 10:3 But in those *sacrifices there is* a reminder of sins every year.

Heb 10:4 For *it is* not possible that the blood of bulls and goats could take away sins.

Heb 10:5 Therefore, when He came into the world, He said: "SACRIFICE AND OFFERING YOU DID NOT DESIRE, BUT A BODY YOU HAVE PREPARED FOR ME.

Heb 10:6 IN BURNT OFFERINGS AND SACRIFICES FOR SIN YOU HAD NO PLEASURE.

Heb 10:7 THEN I SAID, 'BEHOLD, I HAVE COME— IN THE VOLUME OF THE BOOK IT IS WRITTEN OF ME— TO DO YOUR WILL, O GOD.' "

Heb 10:10 By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once *for all*.

Heb 10:11 And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins.

Heb 10:12 But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand

Heb 10:13 of God, from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool.

Heb 10:14 For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.

Heb 10:15 But the Holy Spirit also witnesses to us; for after He had said before,

Heb 10:16 "THIS IS THE COVENANT THAT I WILL MAKE WITH THEM AFTER THOSE DAYS, SAYS THE LORD: I WILL PUT MY LAWS INTO THEIR HEARTS, AND IN THEIR MINDS I WILL WRITE THEM," then He adds,

Heb 10:17 "THEIR SINS AND THEIR LAWLESS DEEDS I WILL REMEMBER NO MORE."

Heb 10:18 Now where there is remission of these, *there is* no longer an offering for sin.

Heb 10:26 For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins,

Heb 10:27 but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries.

Heb 10:28 Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses.

This then is the right religion: love God and keep His Commandments, love your neighbor as yourself, believe in Jesus Christ, and believe the Gospel of the Kingdom of God. These are the things by which the witnesses of God are recognized. Anyone who preaches and practices otherwise could not be a witness of God. In the last couple of years, after we published the No 3 edition of *The Christian Herald* in 1993, in which we said that anyone could be a witness of God, a number of people immediately declared themselves to be witnesses of God. That is wonderful news except that, for reasons of their own, some decided to keep us in ignorance about the work they do. So we cannot tell whether they preach the right Gospel or not. But since Apostle Paul did not mind that his adversaries preached Christ, neither do we.

Php 1:15 Some indeed preach Christ even from envy and strife, and some also from goodwill:

Php 1:16 The former preach Christ from selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my chains;

Php 1:17 but the latter out of love, knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the gospel.

Php 1:18 What then? Only *that* in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is preached; and in this I rejoice, yes, and will rejoice.

Whether they preach Christ in pretence or in truth, we rejoice that He is being preached. Whether they preach the right Gospel and the truth of God is for God to judge.

EYES ON JERUSALEM?

In the early 1970s, members of the Worldwide Church of God, of which I was also a member, were quietly encouraged to believe that the two leaders of the Church, Herbert W Armstrong and his son Garner Ted, were the two end time witnesses of God spoken of in the book of Revelation. Everyone's eyes were on Jerusalem in the belief that the two witnesses would begin their work of prophesying to the world from that city anytime.

Herbert W Armstrong even committed large sums of the Church's money on archaeological diggings at the site of the Great Temple in Jerusalem with the intent of rebuilding the temple as soon as possible. There was a sense of urgency in the air and the belief that Jesus Christ could not return before the temple was rebuilt and the holy place, which was supposed to be located inside the temple, was defiled by the "abomination of desolation".

Archaeological diggings were normally undertaken by Universities, but the Worldwide Church of God was no ordinary church. This was the one and 'only true Church of God in the world', and, as such, it had a role to play in paving the way for the return of Jesus Christ.

A minister once explained to the assembled church that after we gave our tithes and offerings to the church, it was no longer up to us to determine how the money was spent. We did not understand why that explanation was necessary. We all knew that "the Government of God" would spend the money wisely, but apparently some people questioned the wisdom of spending the money on projects that were better done by academic institutions. What these people did not understand was that Herbert W Armstrong was getting on in age, and the Israeli Government was dragging its feet about rebuilding the Great Temple. They needed a little prodding, and he was only too willing to help them by putting the Church's money at their disposal. That greatly endeared him to the Jewish leaders. When they realized that his religion was little more than ancient Judaism in Christian guise, they received him as one of their own. That gave him virtual monopoly over who would do the work of the two witnesses. It would have been impossible for anyone else to receive permission to do that work from Jerusalem. That work was reserved for him and for his son, Garner Ted, and for no one else. In effect, he gave God no choice but to choose them for that job.

But God did not seem to appreciate his help and did the unthinkable. He delayed the return of Jesus Christ, postponed the end of the world, looked for someone else less presumptuous to do His work, and sent a "distressing spirit" on him, as He sent on Saul, the first king of Israel, when he took upon himself prerogatives which did not belong to him.

1Sa 16:13 Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel arose and went to Ramah.

1Sa 16:14 But the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and a distressing spirit from the LORD troubled him.

1Sa 19:9 Now the distressing spirit from the LORD came upon Saul as he sat in his house with his spear in his hand. And David was playing *music* with *his* hand.

1Sa 19:10 Then Saul sought to pin David to the wall with the spear, but he slipped away from Saul's presence; and he drove the spear into the wall. So David fled and escaped that night.

The result was disastrous for the house of the Armstrongs and for the Worldwide Church of God. The two leaders fell apart, Garner Ted was expelled from Church, and the Church began

disintegrating. In a lasting gesture of spiteful defiance and complete disregard for those who maintained his monarchical lifestyle for so long, he anointed as heir over his religious empire a little known figure who proved to be woefully inadequate for the job. It is as if Herbert W Armstrong avenged himself for not being chosen as God's witness by giving over to Satan the Church which he had built. In a reversal that must have shaken heaven itself, never heard of in the history of the world, the Church which once maintained a modicum of decency and pretence of searching for the truth of God, was then openly given over to demonism and homosexuality.

The hatred which developed between the father and the son grew so strong that Herbert Armstrong died without reconciling himself with the son "in whom he was [once] well pleased". The two great leaders, "ministers of Christ" and "witnesses of God", could not fulfill in themselves the most basic tenet of Christianity, let alone the role of God's witnesses.

Mat 5:43 "You have heard that it was said, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR and hate your enemy.'

Mat 5:44 But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you,

Mat 5:45 that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.

Mat 5:46 For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?

Mat 5:47 And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more *than others*? Do not even the tax collectors do so?

Mat 5:48 Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.

Mat 5:23 Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you,

Mat 5:24 leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.

During his heyday, H. W Armstrong used to preach that the Worldwide Church of God was doing the work of Elijah - a prophecy that was to be fulfilled concomitant with the work of the two witnesses. It was a convenient arrangement: he and his son were to do the work of the two witnesses and the church as a whole, the work of Elijah. Nothing was left to happenstance or for other churches to do. It all belonged to the W. C. G. and to the Armstrong family. But, once again, the two leaders could not fulfill in themselves what Elijah is to fulfill in the world in the end time.

Mal 4:5 Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD.

Mal 4:6 And he will turn The hearts of the fathers to the children, And the hearts of the children to their fathers, Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse.

Since they could not turn their own hearts to each other, it means that if they were the two witnesses and the church was doing the work of Elijah, the earth will be struck with a curse; unless, of course, they were impostors, and God prepared other people to do His work. It is interesting to note that almost every "Church of God" that sprung up from the Worldwide Church of God, believes that it is doing the work of Elijah. Presumably, their leaders also believe that they are, or would be, doing the work of the two witnesses. But they have not counted on the cunning and wit of Garner Ted Armstrong. He may have been castigated by his father and expelled from the church, but that was not going to prevent him from fulfilling his destiny. He established his own "Church of God" and selected someone more worthy for the job of second witness. Who better could fulfill that role than the man who keeps his church coffers full with his tithing doctrines? For years, he and Ronald Dart have been touring the feast sites like monarchs, in the manner of the good old days when he and his father used to do it.

But something rather distressing has happened lately: since we pointed out that the Scriptures require that the two witnesses be a husband and wife team, Dart's fortune nose-dived. He no longer features as prominently and as often in the church's literature. Other people have caught up with him and even surpassed him - Vance Stinson is only one of a number of rising stars - all thoroughly versed in the Scriptures.

But, as a man of destiny, Garner Ted Armstrong cannot be faulted in his judgment. Clearly, he knows what he is doing and where he's heading. When, in 1993, we criticized him and his evangelists for going to Jerusalem to ask the Jewish leaders when they are going to rebuild the temple, he wrote in his church's tabloid that, "Yitzac Rabin, is a personal friend of mine." (*The International News*, Vol. XV, No.2, 1994).

Being the son of Herbert W. Armstrong, he learned a thing or two about the importance being a friend of those who count. Like his father, he too gives God no choice but to choose him and his companion for the work of the two witnesses. His followers must have been thrilled to hear that their leader is a personal friend of the Jewish Prime Minister, thus being well positioned to prevent anyone else from doing the job of the two witnesses from Jerusalem. Now, some people may well ask, what is wrong with being a friend of the Jewish leaders? Nothing wrong, unless, of course, you are a Christian, in which case everything is wrong.

Jas 4:4 Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

Now no one is accusing Garner Ted Armstrong of being an adulterer, everyone knows that he not an "adulterer," but being a friend of those who persecute the Christians, takes the notion of "enemy of God" to new heights. Take a look at this:

"An 81-year-old man, sent to jail 31 years ago for refusing to grant his wife a divorce, could go free soon because he is no longer capable of saying yes, an Israeli newspaper said. The stubborn husband, Mr. Yehi Eliahu, has become senile and a rabbinical judge has recommended his release, the daily Yedioth Ahronoth reported yesterday. He was jailed by a rabbinical court, which handles divorce in Israel, nine years after he spurned his wife's request. Under ritual Jewish law a marriage can be ended only with the husband's consent. Rabbinical judges sometimes jail husbands for unlimited terms in an attempt to force them into agreeing to a divorce." (*SMH*, Jan. 8, 1994).

We do not know whether this man was a Christian or not, but we do know that Christians are the only people in the world who do not divorce their wives because their Lord commanded them not to do so, except in cases of sexual immorality:

Mat 5:31 "Furthermore it has been said, 'Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.'

Mat 5:32 But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality causes her to commit adultery; and whoever marries a woman who is divorced commits adultery.

A Christian in Israel could spend his life in jail for obeying his Lord's command of not divorcing his wife. Jewish Christians are also being denied Israeli citizenship by the same diabolical rabbinical courts. One would have thought that 1900 years of trials and sufferings in the Diaspora taught them the value of tolerance, love and charity, but nothing seems to have changed with these people all this time. Imran Khan, the famous Pakistani cricket player, said this about Islam when controversy arose about his marriage to a girl whose father is a Jew:

"Since Islam is normally painted as such an uncivilized and backward religion, most journalists cannot understand how an eligible, intelligent and educated young lady could convert to Islam and actually consider living in an Islamic society." (*SMH*, May 29, 1995).

Who can say which religion is more "uncivilized and backward"? A true Christian cannot. His chances are equally dismal under both.

WOULD THE REAL WITNESSES PLEASE STAND UP?

This brings us to the question of who are the real two witnesses and what is their message? No one wants to deny Garner Ted his ambition, but if he wants to be God's witness he will need to have a thorough revision of the gospel he is preaching. First, he would follow Zacchaeus example of restoring to the people what he obtained with those phony tithing doctrines:

Luk 19:8 Then Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold."

Luk 19:9 And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham;

Luk 19:10 for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."

Then he would get himself a decent job and follow Apostle Paul's example:

Act 20:33 I have coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel.

Act 20:34 Yes, you yourselves know that these hands have provided for my necessities, and for those who were with me.

Act 20:35 I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' "

He would stop playing the role of God to his followers by telling them that they are already "called and chosen" for the Kingdom of God. He would stop telling people that they are empty shells, having no soul apart from their bodies. He would also stop preaching doctrines of demons (abstaining from meats, forbidding to marry interracially, etc.). And, of course, he would stop blaspheming against the Holy Spirit and denying the Trinity. Then, as a perfect witness, he would move to Jerusalem and start preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom of God from there to all nations for three and a half years. Everyone would then know that the end of this age is near and the return of Jesus Christ imminent. Those who would not listen would be struck with all sorts of plagues, droughts, earthquakes, tornadoes, floods, fires, epidemics, and scorching heat - very much like what we've had in the world in the last few years, only more so.

As people realize that the end is near, they begin to panic, cash in their assets, quit their jobs, and live their life to the full, in abandon. As the panic spreads, more people do the same, the financial institutions collapse, industry and communications come to a standstill, governments loose authority, and chaos and lawlessness become the norm. In a final act of madness, a Russian leader, seeking vengeance on the West for not rescuing his country's economy from collapse, thus rendering its nuclear arsenal obsolete, unleashes a preemptive strike against the "Zionist" West. The world is plunged in a nuclear nightmare which threatens the very survival of life on earth. Human beings would have learned the final lesson that without God they can neither survive nor govern themselves. Jesus' prophecy that "unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved", would have been fulfilled. All these things may well be true, except for one thing. With all the disasters, the suffering, and the warnings and preaching of the two witnesses, the Bible says that no one will know when the end comes.

Mat 24:3 Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be? And what *will be* the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"

Mat 24:4 And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you.

Mat 24:5 For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many.

Mat 24:6 And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all *these things* must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

Mat 24:7 For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places.

Mat 24:8 All these *are* the beginning of sorrows.

Mat 24:9 "Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake.

Mat 24:10 And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another.

Mat 24:11 Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many.

Mat 24:12 And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold.

Mat 24:13 But he who endures to the end shall be saved.

Mat 24:14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.

Mat 24:32 "Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer *is* near.

Mat 24:33 So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near—at the doors!

Mat 24:34 Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place.

Mat 24:35 Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.

Mat 24:36 "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only.

Mat 24:37 But as the days of Noah *were*, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.

Now, how could the world be taken by surprise by these events, as it was taken by the flood of Noah, if everyone is aware of the work of the two witnesses? Something isn't right. Could it be that we have been sold another fib by those who tell us to keep our eyes on Jerusalem? There is only one way to find that out, and that is by going to the Bible. Here is the entire story of the two witnesses from the book of Revelation:

Rev 11:1 Then I was given a reed like a measuring rod. And the angel stood, saying, "Rise and measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship there.

Rev 11:2 But leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles. And they will tread the holy city underfoot *for* forty-two months.

Rev 11:3 And I will give *power* to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth."

Rev 11:4 These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands standing before the God of the earth.

Rev 11:5 And if anyone wants to harm them, fire proceeds from their mouth and devours their enemies. And if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this manner.

Rev 11:6 These have power to shut heaven, so that no rain falls in the days of their prophecy; and they have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to strike the earth with all plagues, as often as they desire.

Rev 11:7 When they finish their testimony, the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit will make war against them, overcome them, and kill them.

Rev 11:8 And their dead bodies *will lie* in the street of the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.

Rev 11:9 Then *those* from the peoples, tribes, tongues, and nations will see their dead bodies three-and-a-half days, and not allow their dead bodies to be put into graves.

Rev 11:10 And those who dwell on the earth will rejoice over them, make merry, and send gifts to one another, because these two prophets tormented those who dwell on the earth.

Rev 11:11 Now after the three-and-a-half days the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them.

Rev 11:12 And they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up here." And they ascended to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies saw them.

Rev 11:13 In the same hour there was a great earthquake, and a tenth of the city fell. In the earthquake seven thousand people were killed, and the rest were afraid and gave glory to the God of heaven.

Rev 11:14 The second woe is past. Behold, the third woe is coming quickly.

Did you notice that the word "Jerusalem" is not found anywhere in this passage? But what about "Sodom and Egypt, where our Lord was crucified", doesn't this refer to Jerusalem? Herein lays another of the great biblical mysteries: this sentence does not refer to Jerusalem. We cannot

have Jerusalem referred to as “holy city” in one place, and as “Sodom and Egypt” in the next. The word “Sodom” refers to homosexuality - no question about that. The word “Egypt” refers to idolatry - no question about that either. This means that the city in which the bodies of the two witnesses will lie for three and a half days is a city given to homosexuality and idolatry. Jerusalem, in its present condition, may not be exactly a holy city, but it is by no means one given to homosexuality and idolatry as are New York, San Francisco, Sydney, and a dozen other major cities around the world. But what about the sentence, “where our Lord was crucified”, could that refer to any other city than Jerusalem? This astonishing mystery had thrown everyone off the right track for nearly two thousand years. Take a look at this:

Heb 6:4 For *it is* impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit,

Heb 6:5 and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come,

Heb 6:6 if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since **they crucify again** for themselves the Son of God, and put *Him* to an open shame.

Those who have fallen away after they have “tested the good word of God... **crucify again** for themselves the Son of God”. They could be anywhere in the world, not just in Jerusalem. Which means that if we want to find the city from where the two witnesses will take the Gospel of the Kingdom to all nations, we must look for a city in which homosexuality is rampant, idolatry widespread, and Jesus Christ is being “crucified again” by those who ought to know better. There are probably a number of cities around the world, but we can’t speak about them. We can, however, speak about the city of which we have first hand experience, from where we have been sending these magazines to all nations, and that is Sydney.

Our readers would know about the homosexual festival called “Gay and Lesbian Mardi Grass” which takes place in this city annually, and of which we have written in the past. It is an open display of vulgarity and obscenity that would make any decent person sick just by watching it. This is only one aspect of a wide range of homosexual activities that take place in this city all year round. Regarding idolatry, Sydney resembles Egypt more than any other major city in the world. Those who have visited Sydney may have noticed a figure, like the Sphinx of Egypt, in the very heart of the city. Flanking one side of the famous Sydney Harbour Bridge, the ugly face of a woman more than four stories high - the Luna Park mascot - stares wanly towards the city center. In other parts of Sydney, and around Australia, there are similar monstrosities in the shapes of humans, animals, fruits, and other things, advertising produce or identifying local communities. As for those who crucify Christ, all our leaders - political, religious and academic - have done it. The political leaders have done it by turning this State from Christianity to paganism. The official religion of New South Wales now is homosexuality. One can say anything he wants about Christianity, or blaspheme against God, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, and nothing will happen to him. But if he speaks in public against homosexuality, if he “vilifies” homosexuals, he could lose his property and spend twenty years in jail. Earlier this year, we had an election in this State. The Coalition government, formed by the Liberal and National Parties, lost the election. That is the good news. This was the government that gave New South Wales the “gay anti-vilification law” which in effect turned Christians into outlaws. The bad news is that Labour Party won the election. This party has been described by a Member of Parliament as the homosexual party. One of the first acts of Parliament, signed by the new Premier, enshrined into legislation the “right” of gay couples to be regarded as families. Then on June 22, 1995, the *Sydney Morning Herald* carried the following headline: “Hayden backs euthanasia and gay marriages”. It went on to say that, “In a radical and wide-ranging speech, the Governor-General, Mr. Hayden, last night declared his strong support for active euthanasia and the right of homosexuals to marry and adopt children.” Hayden, our current Governor-General, is Her Majesty’s representative in Australia. He is a former Foreign Minister in a Federal Labour Government. He wants to extend this law to all of Australia, not just in NSW. Any wonder that the monarchy is in such deep trouble.

The “right” of homosexuals to marry and adopt children? Who gave them this “right”, the United Nations? The Creator says that this is not “right” but wrong, so wrong that they will pay with their lives for it. Unfortunately, other people suffer as a result of their abominations too. Our leaders would never accept that the current disastrous draught, the astronomical national debt, the unemployment, the epidemic of youth suicides, the decay of cities and many other social evils, have anything to do with their policies, their attitude to, and especially their legislation on homosexuality. First, it was the law against homosexual “vilification”. Then gay couples received the rights to be regarded as normal families. Now, our highest office demands that homosexuals have the right to “marry” and adopt children. What next? Are they going to pass a law that everyone becomes a homosexual? Thank God they won’t have time to do

that. Those who want children should exercise their “right” to conceive and rear children, not adopt them after other people have labored with them, and then inculcate them with their vile ideas. All these “rights” are being granted to homosexuals while Christians are being denied the right to speak against such abominations and against the offensive vulgarities that pass as cultural events in this city. This is how our political leaders “**crucify again**” for themselves the Son of God.

Our religious leaders have also crucified Christ again by supporting the Government’s legislation on homosexuality. We have not heard anyone speak against it publically.

As for our academic leaders, you may have heard of a book by Dr Barbara Thiering about Jesus Christ. It is the most foul, blasphemous and offensive book ever written about our Lord. The book became a best seller in its category as soon as it was published. Dr Barbara Thiering was a lecturer in Religious Studies at Sydney University - the oldest and, once, the most prestigious in the country (which is embarrassing for I am an alumnus of that University too). If such a book was written about Mohammed, a lot of people would have lost their heads, or be running for cover, but the book is about Jesus Christ, and He is a fair game. Well, not for much longer. For the time to reward people according to their deeds is at hand.

This is the kind of world from which the two witnesses will conduct their mission: a world of homosexuality, idolatry, blasphemy, lawlessness, unbelief, violence, hopelessness – a world that pays little attention to their work and message. Which means that of all the Christians in the world and of all the preachers, priests, ministers, evangelists and church leaders, not one will know who the two witnesses are or when they are fulfilling their mission. The world has been so saturated with false gospels that when they hear the true Gospel they will neither recognize it, nor believe, it. Not only that, but because the two witnesses will preach a different Gospel, they will be hated by all those who “dwell on earth”. In the end, they will be killed and their enemies will exchange gifts and pleasantries, thinking perhaps that they have killed the Antichrists. Their joy will be short lived, for after three-and-a-half days they will see them revive and rise up to heaven.

What greater witness can there be against a sinful world than the fact that two people “clothed is sackcloth” (meaning poor people), who are taking the Gospel of God, the Gospel of love and truth, to the world (God only knows how, seeing that they are so poor), are hated by the very people whom they try to save from annihilation. For if the two witnesses, one of whom also doing the work of Elijah (the other being a female - his wife - could not preach), are not successful in their mission, the world will be destroyed.

Jesus Christ said that, “unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect’s sake those days will be shortened”. What single event could threaten the survival of life on earth if not nuclear war? But since 1990, after the collapse of the Soviet Union, our leaders and the media have been reassuring us that the threat of nuclear war is over. Then, suddenly, this year the nuclear powers started testing their weapons again. Have the world leaders finally realized that far from heading towards an era of “peace, progress and prosperity” the world is in fact heading towards catastrophe? And do they think that they enhance their chances of survival with nuclear weapons?

They foolishly seek means of survival when they should seek means of salvation. It will be a long time before this planet will offer conditions for an enjoyable and meaningful life after the Great Tribulation. Therefore seek to be among the elect who will be saved, rather than among those who will merely survive for a little while longer. Here is a good description of what follows after the great tribulation:

Rev 19:1 After these things I heard a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, “Alleluia!

Salvation and glory and honor and power *belong* to the Lord our God!

Rev 19:2 For true and righteous *are* His judgments, because He has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication; and He has avenged on her the blood of His servants *shed* by her.”

Rev 19:3 Again they said, “Alleluia! Her smoke rises up forever and ever!”

Rev 19:4 And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sat on the throne, saying, “Amen! Alleluia!”

Rev 19:5 Then a voice came from the throne, saying, “Praise our God, all you His servants and those who fear Him, both small and great!”

Rev 19:6 And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, “Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns!

Rev 19:7 Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.”

Rev 19:8 And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.

Rev 19:9 Then he said to me, "Write: 'Blessed *are* those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!' " And he said to me, "These are the true sayings of God."

Rev 19:10 And I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, "See *that you do not do that!* I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

Rev 19:11 Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him *was* called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war.

Rev 19:12 His eyes *were* like a flame of fire, and on His head *were* many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself.

Rev 19:13 He *was* clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God.

Rev 19:14 And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses.

Rev 19:15 Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

Rev 19:16 And He has on *His* robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

Rev 19:17 Then I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in the midst of heaven, "Come and gather together for the supper of the great God,

Rev 19:18 that you may eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them, and the flesh of all *people*, free and slave, both small and great."

Rev 19:19 And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army.

Rev 19:20 Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone.

Rev 19:21 And the rest were killed with the sword which proceeded from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse. And all the birds were filled with their flesh.

Rev 20:1 Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.

Rev 20:2 He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is *the* Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years;

Rev 20:3 and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while.

Rev 20:4 And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then *I saw* the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received *his* mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

Rev 20:5 But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.

Rev 20:6 Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.

Rev 20:7 Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison

Rev 20:8 and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number *is* as the sand of the sea.

Rev 20:9 They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them.

Rev 20:10 The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet *are*. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

Rev 20:11 Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them.

Rev 20:12 And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is *the Book* of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.

Rev 20:13 The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works.

Rev 20:14 Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

Rev 20:15 And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

Isn't this a wonderful passage? What great hope it offers to those who trust in God for their salvation! Great news to know that he who deceived the world with so many false gospels, and his servants, will come to their appropriate end. Talking about the "marriage supper of the Lamb", and connecting that with the following parable, and we get an idea of what is happening in the world right now:

Mat 22:1 And Jesus answered and spoke to them again by parables and said:

Mat 22:2 "The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son,

Mat 22:3 and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding; and they were not willing to come.

Mat 22:4 Again, he sent out other servants, saying, "Tell those who are invited, "See, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and fatted cattle *are* killed, and all things *are* ready. Come to the wedding."

Mat 22:5 But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his business.

Mat 22:6 And the rest seized his servants, treated *them* spitefully, and killed *them*.

Mat 22:7 But when the king heard *about it*, he was furious. And he sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.

Mat 22:8 Then he said to his servants, "The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy.

Mat 22:9 Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding.'

Mat 22:10 So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding *hall* was filled with guests.

Regarding the 1260 days - the length of time for the work of the two witnesses - no one will know when that time begins and ends, except they themselves. If the people knew, they would not be taken by surprise by the events of the end, as those who lived at the time of Noah were taken by the flood. Noah gave his contemporaries a witness during the many years he and his family built the Ark. Building the Ark in the middle of the desert must have made them the laughing stock to their neighbors. But when they entered the Ark and sealed it, and the flood came, it was no longer a joke. Those who mocked, laughed and ridiculed them could not even say sorry for their effrontery.

It is no different with the work of the two witnesses. They are laughed at and ridiculed for talking about impending catastrophe when everybody else is having a wonderful time. People just don't want to hear about bad news if this calls for a change to their lifestyle. Now, in the face of such hostility, what chance could two seemingly insignificant people have of convincing the world that they are right and all other religions and their prophets are wrong? Remember, in the time of Jesus Christ, He alone was right and everybody else wrong, but no one believed Him. He came to tell people that He was the Son of God and that they too could become sons of God if they kept God's Commandments and believed in Him. But the religious leaders were at the forefront of revolt against His message. They accused Him of blasphemy and condemned Him to death.

It will be no different with the two witnesses. They too will tell people that they are sons of God, and that all human beings could become spiritual sons of God if they believed in Jesus Christ and kept God's Commandments. But the religious leaders will, once again, be at the forefront of revolt against this message. They will accuse the two witnesses of blasphemy and condemn them to death in the end. Perhaps it is already happening. When this happens, would you know which side to take? Remember, when Jesus Christ was crucified, none of His disciples understood what was going on. When you see two people being killed for preaching the true Gospel - a different Gospel from the one heard in the churches these days - would you know it and understand what is happening? You may be called to take a stand. It could be a costly decision, but remember the words of Jesus Christ:

Mar 8:34 When He had called the people to *Himself*, with His disciples also, He said to them,

"Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.

Mar 8:35 For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it.

THE TIME OF THE GENTILES

Chapter eleven of Revelation begins with the following statement:

Rev 11:1 Then I was given a reed like a measuring rod. And the angel stood, saying, "Rise and measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship there.

Rev 11:2 But leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles. And they will tread the holy city underfoot *for* forty-two months.

It is generally assumed that the treading under foot of the court of the temple and of the holy city will be done by the Gentiles after the temple is rebuilt. Not true. Forty-two months represent not 1260 days, but 1260 years.

In our No 4 edition, when we revealed the identity of the beast of Revelation 13, of which the Bible says that "it was given authority to continue for forty-two months" (Rev 13:5), we demonstrated that, according to the biblical principle of a day for a year (Nu. 14:34; Ezek. 4:4-6), this represents approximately 1260 years. When prophetic lengths are given in months, as opposed to days or hours, they require a certain degree of approximation. That is because a month is less precise than a day, and a day less precise than an hour. The lengths of time represented by each of these terms must be treated accordingly. Forty-two months represent approximately 1260 years, give or take a few years. This is how long the Roman Empire lasted (counting from the foundation of Rome in 750 BC until the collapse of the empires in the sixth century AD). Since the Gentile nations are said to trample under foot the court of the temple and the holy city for the same length of time, we must look for the people who had been in control of Jerusalem for about 1260 years. When Jesus Christ was on earth, the Romans had dominion over Jerusalem. But the Bible does not refer to the Romans as Gentiles. The Roman Empire, alongside the Greek, Persian and Babylonian Empires, are referred to as "beasts". Besides, the Romans did not have control over Jerusalem for that length of time. But what happened after the Roman Empire collapsed? In the West, the Popes created the Holy Roman Empire, and in the East, the Muslims took control of Jerusalem.

If we calculate 1260 years from the conquest of Jerusalem by the Muslim forces (history books put that date at 655 AD), we come to the year 1915 - right in the middle of the First World War. What happened with Jerusalem during the First World War? The city was liberated from the Ottoman Empire by the British forces. The Muslims were the Gentiles who trampled Jerusalem underfoot for the forty-two prophetic months.

What about the sentence: "Rise and measure the temple of God, the altar, and those who worship there, but leave out the court which is outside the temple"? Why was only the court given to the Gentiles and not the temple, the altar and those who worship there? Is it because the Muslims were so pious they decided to spare the temple, the altar and those who worship there? Certainly not! Mind you, the Christians seem to have had an easier time under the Muslims than under the Romans, but that is not why the temple was not given over to the Muslims to tread under foot. The reason is simply that there was no longer a temple and an altar in it when Jerusalem was under the Muslims. The Romans had razed that temple to the ground, just as Jesus Christ had prophesied.

Mat 24:1 Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple.

Mat 24:2 And Jesus said to them, "Do you not see all these things? Assuredly, I say to you, not *one* stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down."

The question is why did the temple have to be destroyed? Some people would say that it happened because the Jews condemned Jesus to death, but that does not explain the connection

with the temple. Why destroy a building because of that? The Jews could have been punished in a thousand different ways. There was another important reason why that temple had to go. If you remember Jesus' discussion with the Samaritan woman, He told her that "the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, [will] worship the Father... But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him." (John 4:21, 23).

True Christians do not worship God in temples or altars made by human hands. They must worship God "in truth and in spirit", wherever they are. But in the book of Acts we find that for the early Christians, Jerusalem and its temple were still very much central to their faith. Apostle Peter even set up the first communist state in the heart of Jerusalem. They were making themselves ready for a long and comfortable life in Jerusalem, forgetting that their Lord had told them to go out and make disciples of all nations. So God taught them a lesson by destroying the temple and scattering them among all nations. After this, whenever the temple and the altar are mentioned in the book of Revelation, they are always located in heaven. A case can be made that those who follow Jesus Christ and worship God in truth and in spirit are, symbolically speaking, in heaven too.

Php 3:20 For **our citizenship is in heaven**, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,

Rev 8:1 When He opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour.

Rev 8:2 And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and to them were given seven trumpets.

Rev 8:3 Then another angel, having a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense, that **he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.**

The Muslims could trample under foot the court of the temple and the holy city, but not the temple, the altar and those who once worshiped there because they were no longer there. The Christian temple and altar are in heaven. Christian prayers are offered on the golden altar before the throne of God Almighty. Yet, there is another important dimension to the temple of God. The Bible says that Christians themselves are the temple of the Holy Spirit and of the "living God":

1Co 3:16 Do you not know that you are the temple of God and *that* the Spirit of God dwells in you?

1Co 3:17 If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which *temple* you are.

1Co 6:17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit *with Him*.

1Co 6:18 Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body.

2Co 6:14 Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?

2Co 6:15 And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever?

2Co 6:16 And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I WILL DWELL IN THEM AND WALK AMONG THEM. I WILL BE THEIR GOD, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE."

2Co 6:17 Therefore "COME OUT FROM AMONG THEM AND BE SEPARATE, SAYS THE LORD. DO NOT TOUCH WHAT IS UNCLEAN, AND I WILL RECEIVE YOU."

2Co 6:18 "I WILL BE A FATHER TO YOU, AND YOU SHALL BE MY SONS AND DAUGHTERS, SAYS THE LORD ALMIGHTY."

Notice how Christians, by virtue of being temples of God, must abstain from sexual immorality and idolatry. Yet our leaders are telling us to get used to the idea of a world characterized by homosexual "families" and "marriages". Any wonder that the world finds itself on the brink of catastrophe. God has not left the world without a witness about the right way of life. Throughout history there have been people who maintained that witness, some to their own peril. We have done our best to proclaim that witness for our time.

STATE OF THE WORLD

A round-up of news and commentaries from around the world
highlighting the state of the world as this age nears its conclusion.

POLITICS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

"Bernie recalls ideal of a lifetime" "One of the nation's most famous communists, Bernie Taft, says his life is laced with bitter irony. A member of the Communist Part of Australia for 52 years, he was devoted to the utopian ideal of creating a better, more socially just world where 'every cook would be able to run the State'. But the event that symbolised the ideals, the Russian Revolution of 1917, turned into a disaster that poisoned the original concept, Taft said yesterday on the eve of the launch of his autobiography, *Crossing the Party Line*. A German born Jew, Taft, 76, said yesterday one of the biggest motivations for penning his memoirs was to explain, especially to young people, that the Communist Party he was so engrossed in did not represent the corruption and oppression the term inspires today. "The term communism I think is dead because it's identified in the public mind with the flawed model, the disastrous model that was established in the Soviet Union", he said. "The idealism that inspired the people who led the first Russian revolution was that they thought it would lead to a better world, free of oppression, free of misery, free of inequality", he said. "That turned into something quite different. It turned into a disaster. But now it is very difficult for a young person to understand why one hung on to that". He is not optimistic about achieving a better world but he said the cause was not lost. "I am not optimistic but neither do I regard it as hopeless. It's in our hands", he said." (*The Australian*, October 12, 1994).

"UN IS BROKE: BOUTROS-GHALI" "The Secretary of the United Nations, Dr Boutros Boutros-Ghali, warned yesterday the United Nations was almost bankrupt and would find it hard to achieve its goals without financial support. But Dr Boutros-Ghali, in San Francisco to head celebrations of the 50th anniversary of the signing of the UN Charter, said he was optimistic about the future. "Unless we obtain real financial support from the member States, it will be very difficult for the UN to achieve the goals of the organisation," he said. "The member States owe the UN more than \$US2 billion, and practically the UN is bankrupt... The biggest debtors are the United States and Russia. The Secretary-General said the UN was now in such deep financial difficulties it would have to stop paying member States for peacekeeping troops and equipment." (*SMH*, June 26, 1995).

"Iraq vows to wipe out Israel" "Baghdad: Iraq vowed yesterday to wipe out Israel, killing off its population one by one. In one of Iraq's most bitter verbal attacks on the Jewish state, a newspaper published by President Saddam Hussein's eldest son Uday said the Iraqi leader was preparing generation after generation of men who would set the Jewish state ablaze. "Our role and ultimate conviction...is that an end must be put to Israel and its men one by one", the paper said. Its front page editorial said throwing the Israelis into the sea, as demanded by the late Egyptian leader Gamal Abdul Nasser, was not good enough as the Jews who could swim might survive. The newspaper flatly denied reports of covert contacts between Baghdad and Tel Aviv. Israel said last month it had rejected an offer of trade talks from Baghdad. The paper said there was no way for Iraq, which fired 39 Scud missiles on Israel during the 1991 Gulf War to come to terms with the Jewish state. The commentary was signed by Abu Sarhan, widely assumed to be Uday. The attack was made as 300 Arab representatives of 50 political parties and unions gathered in Baghdad, attacking any peace pacts between the PLO and other Arab states with Israel. In a separate article, the paper said the Gulf War and continuing UN trade sanctions had not dissuaded Saddam from his aim of "liberating Palestine, as is the case with some Arab rulers who send delegations to Israel". Iraq and Israel are still theoretically at war with each other." (*The Daily Telegraph Mirror*, June 5, 1995).

"Saddam Hussein defiant" "Hundreds of Iraqis paraded today to mark the fourth anniversary of the Gulf War, with President Saddam Hussein vowing never to bow to the US-led coalition which defeated Baghdad in 1991. Young Iraqis burnt US and British flags as they marched through the city's main streets bearing aloft portraits of Saddam and chanting anti-US slogans. The parades, which began late yesterday, marked the start of the Mother of all Battles (Um al-Maarik on January 17, 1991, when the US-led coalition launched an offensive to drive Iraqi occupying forces out of Kuwait. Saddam said in a nationwide address: "Iraq's enemies have failed in their bid to prevent the people of Iraq from keeping on, or to weaken their resolve. "Iraq and its army have emerged strong despite all the wounds or the loss of life of sons and brothers." (*The Telegraph Mirror*, Jan. 18, 1995).

"Iraqi lives ruined, but Saddam is safe" "Baghdad: Children lie on filthy hospital beds, murmuring in pain as they die of diarrhoea and pneumonia. Some of the Arab world's finest artists peddle their work for as little as \$A22 a painting. A 50 year old retired policeman, victim of a stroke a year ago, limps from merchant to merchant in a food market looking for what he can afford on a pension driven down by inflation to the equivalent of \$3.60 a month, barely enough to buy one chicken or a handful of rice." (*SMH* Oct 29, 1994).

"Syria warns of regional nuclear weapons race" "Syria yesterday warned of a nuclear arms race in the Middle East unless Israel signs the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)." (*The Australian*, February 7, 1995).

"Amnesty condemns Iran's 'appalling' rights record" "Tens of thousands of suspected government opponents have been executed in Iran in the past 16 years, Amnesty International revealed yesterday in a damning report denouncing the country's 'appalling' human rights record. "(There is) a persistent pattern of imprisonment, political executions, and suspected extra-judicial killings' in Iran, the London-based human rights watchdog said in a 17-page report. "In addition, a number of political prisoners who have been sentenced to death - some after grossly unfair trials by the Islamic Revolutionary Courts in previous years - are still on death row", Amnesty said." (*The Australian*, June 1, 1995).

"A UN withdrawal is no solution to Bosnia" "The United Nations and European powers are facing agonising decisions in Bosnia. In recent years during the post-Cold War crisis, the UN has not distinguished itself. The Somali operation was a humanitarian success but a political disaster. In Rwanda, no attempt has been made to establish a government that might represent all Rwandans. There, the next civil war has begun, with the main antagonists merely having changed sides. The Tutsi Government is being attacked by Hutu insurgents from Zaire. The tragedy of what was once Yugoslavia continues and escalates. Here, the UN has made a real effort to broker a peace. Despite this, the UN has suffered great humiliation." (*The Australian*, June 7, 1995).

"New World disorder" "Blood and fire in the heart of Europe - that is just one warning of what will come if modern societies do not rise to the challenges of the new century. National identities have long been defined by lines drawn in the sand, or on maps. But in the post-Cold War era, deadly conflicts within and across territorial boundaries are challenging 20th century concepts on nationhood. International forums such as the just-concluded Global Cultural Diversity Conference in Sydney are increasingly asking the question: Will the end of the millennium see the death of the nation-State as we know it? At the cultural diversity conference, Boutros-Ghali lamented the 'new and troubling phenomenon' of micro-nationalism, which is characterised by ethnic, religious and cultural separatism. This phenomenon is reflected in Swedish statistics which show that of the 90 armed conflicts in the world between 1989 and 1994, 86 occurred within State boundaries. Other figures show that the 34 armed conflicts recorded in 1993 were all intrastate in character." (*The Australian*, May 1, 1995).

"UN accuses Serbia over chopper flights" "United Nations troops witnessed what they described yesterday as the most flagrant violation yet of Serbia's pledge to stay out of the war in Bosnia. Peacekeepers said 15 to 20 Serbian government helicopters landed just outside the eastern Muslim enclave of Srebrenica on Saturday evening, apparently to resupply the Bosnian Serb forces there."

(*The Australian*, February 6, 1995).

"NAFTA handed blame for Mexico's malaise" "The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), once hailed by the former Mexican president, Mr Carlos Salinas de Gortari, as his country's ticket out of the Third World, is under renewed attack for rattling the Mexican economy and spurring violence within the business community." (*SMH*, January 9, 1995).

"Lebanese fear advancing Israeli tanks" "Beirut: the Lebanese Government called for a day of mourning yesterday following a devastating Israeli raid on a Hezbollah training camp and as families began fleeing their homes in southern Lebanon amid fears of further attacks."

(*The Weekend Australian*, June 4-5, 1994).

"World shifts to internal wars" "Thirty-four wars raged in the world last year and all were domestic conflicts, reflecting a trend to internal strife that has evolved since the Cold War, researchers said yesterday." (*SMH*, June 18, 1994).

"Moscow's barnstorming Bonaparte" "Many Russians see Zhirinovsky as the embodiment of the traditional dictator figure who will lead them out of chaos." (*Time*, Aug 1, 1994).

"Peace plan unpopular in Israel" "On the eve of the Yom Kippur fast, the Israeli crisis over a potential peace with Syria deepened yesterday after publication of a poll showing that more than two-thirds of the population opposes a complete evacuation of the Golan Heights, occupied since 1967." (*The Australian*, Sept 16, 94).

"Liberians flee as civil war reignites in a wave of senseless slaughter" "The Liberian civil war, which shocked the world with its barbarity in 1990, has in the past two months reverted to the depths of savagery with civilians the main victims, be it by gunfire, starvation or sickness. Inter-factional fighting has gradually built up again since late 1993 after two years of relative calm." (*The Australian*, Oct 11, 1994).

"Copy Hitler, Japan's party urged" "Tokyo: An official of the opposition Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) urges in a new book that his party try to regain power by adopting a new role model: Hitler. The book, Hitler Election Strategy: A Bible for Certain Victory in Modern Elections, says the Nazi leader's process for 'unifying public opinion in a short period of time and snatching power' provides 'very important teachings for contemporary elections.'" (*SMH*, June 9, 1994).

"Communists 'plotting' to restore Soviet empire" "Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk, facing an election this month, said yesterday that communists in the former Soviet Union were plotting to push the founders of the Commonwealth of Independent States out of office."

(*The Sun-Herald*, June 5, 1994).

"Solzhenitsyn finds a new mission" "After 20 years of exile and a two-month rail trip across the troubled country that expelled him, Alexander Solzhenitsyn, Russia's mournful sage, returned to his nation's capital last night... As a result, he is a man whom all factions wish to claim - at least in part - as theirs. Nationalists see in him the true believer for a greater Russia; again, last night, he advocated a Slavic State that would include Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and the large part of Kazakhstan that is ethnically Russian. Religious leaders see a man who has never retreated from his devotion to God. And despite his denunciations of them, reformers see a man who can help the citizen understand the value of democracy." (*SMH*, July 23, 1994).

"Israel, Jordan end 46 year state of war" "Israel and Jordan formally agreed on an unexpectedly broad package of measures towards normal relations and the creation of a Middle East common market yesterday after ending a 46 year old state of war at a White House summit. The Washington Declaration signed by the Prime Minister of Israel, Mr Rabin, and King Hussein of Jordan falls short of an official peace treaty but marks a historic change in a region torn apart for almost half a century by war, hostility and mutual suspicion." (*The Australian*, July 27, 1994).

"Gays, lesbians show support for Labor" "Gays and lesbians are 5 times more likely to vote for Labor than the Coalition at the next federal election, the most comprehensive survey of Australia's 1 million-strong homosexual population reveals." (*The Australian*, July 29, 1994).

"Gaddafi denounces 'Arab surrender'" "Libyan leader Colonel Muammar Gaddafi condemned the Middle East peace process as surrender by the 'defeated Arab nation' in a speech to mark the 25th anniversary of the revolution which brought him to power."

(*The Weekend Australian*, Sept 3-4, 1994).

"Yeltsin warns of new, tough US policy" "The Russian President, Mr Boris Yeltsin, warned his top military officers yesterday to steel themselves for 'a certain toughening' in United States foreign and military policy towards Russia in the wake of Republican mid-term election gains." (*SMH*, November 16, 1994).

"Clinton 'unfit' to run US military forces" "Washington: Jesse Helms, incoming Republican chairman of the powerful Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said yesterday that President Bill Clinton was not up to the job of Commander-in-Chief of the military."

(*The Sun-Herald*, Nov 20, 1994).

"NATO begins fight for new identity" "Caught in the ebb and flow of Bosnia's parochial savagery, a conflict that resembles the 30 years' war more than any conventional prediction of modern conflict, NATO is at a sudden loss. Relegated to the status of subcontractor for the UN, the old alliance is desperately seeking an identity, a role and some respect. At the end of the cold war, an adviser to Mikhail Gorbachev warned the West: 'We will do something terrible to you. We will take away your enemy.'" (*The Australian*, Dec 5, 1994).

"Gaddafi blasts Arabs" "Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi blasted Arab countries for giving up land to the Israelis. "If this year we have seen the Arabs offer themselves and their lands to the enemy, next year we will see them give up their wives and daughters", he said."

(*Daily Telegraph Mirror*, Jan. 2, 1995).

"MEXICO CRISIS 'THREAT TO US'" "WASHINGTON: President Bill Clinton, seeking support for a US\$40 billion (\$52.6 billion) financial rescue effort, has called Mexico's economic crisis a danger not only to the economy of the United States but also to emerging markets in Latin America and Asia. "We are more secure if we help Mexico to remain a strong and stable model for economic development around our hemisphere and throughout the world," Mr Clinton said in a speech to business leaders. "If we fail to act, the crisis of confidence in Mexico's economy could spread to other emerging countries in Latin America and Asia." He said the financial crisis that had caused the Mexican peso to plummet by 30 per cent in three weeks was "plainly also a danger to the economic future of the United States." (*SMH*, Jan. 20, 1995). (*Who will rescue the US when its turn comes to pay the bills. Its debt is estimated at 5 trillion dollars. If only a fraction of the foreigners who hold their savings in dollars were to redeem their money all at once, the US would be bankrupt. When the Americans rescue other countries they don't take money out of their treasury, they don't have enough to cover their own debt, they simply print more paper money. The world is awash with dollars and many people believe that the US will always honour its currency. But if they knew the truth of what could happen they may be better off stashing pesos. Ed.*)

"G7 fears emerging Mexican wave" "The G7 gathering in Toronto is an extraordinarily important moment for the post-Cold War financial order. The lingering Mexico crisis, sparked when President Ernesto Zedillo devalued the peso, has exposed serious fissures in the global monetary arrangements." (*SMH*, Feb 7, 1995).

"RUSSIA'S MOTLEY MONARCHISTS PLOT A RETURN" "MOSCOW. If you think the House of Windsor keeps odd company, look what the Romanovs have put up with: the leader of the Communist Party, a KGB general, anti-Semites, Cossacks, Leonid Brezhnev's faith healer and a

plethora of feuding tsarists. All were on hand yesterday for the biggest monarchist gathering of its kind in Russia since 1917, packed into the Hall of Columns to celebrate tsars past - and argue over who should sit on the throne... On the agenda were issues royalists hope will gain a boost from the visit in less than a fortnight of Queen Elizabeth of Britain, the first by a reigning British monarch. Close to the front of the grand chandelied ballroom where Lenin, Stalin and their successors once lay in State, sat Mr Gennady Zyuganov, the burly head of a new look Communism more interested in nationalism than the *Internationale*. "Now people are so perplexed and poor they want a stable power. It will come about," said Mr Zyuganov. "If you want to build democracy, you must listen to different points of view, in particular what the priests say." The murder of Nicholas II's family in Yekaterinburg was not the work of the party, he said, but bad elements: "In the Communist Party there were always two movements. One is Russian, patriotic, nationalistic, honest and moral... the other belongs to Beria, Yezhov, Gorbachev and Yeltsin, those who do not care about their motherland." On podium stacked with Orthodox priests was Alexander Sterigov, a KGB veteran of 26 years who now champions the reconvening of a Zemsky Sobor, the conclave that put the Romanovs on the throne in 1613. "We don't need the American system or the European models. A person who abandons their own home is nothing, just dust of history." It was a theme applauded by Mr Alexander Rutskoy, the Afghan war hero and former vice-president who led last year's failed insurrection against Boris Yeltsin. "I am not here because I am a monarchist," said Mr Rutskoi, "but because I want to learn... what is the basis of a monarchy? It is autocracy, the majesty of the State, the greatness of the nation. I welcome all those who want to revive the great Russian State." The hall brimmed with candidates, from a would-be royal Ms Olga Kulikovskaya-Romanova, now resident in Canada, to General Robert Robertovich Witolniek-Tchartoryatsky, lobbyist for Mr Alexei d'Anjou de Bourbon-Conde, who claims direct descent from the tsar. Absent was the most determined claimant to Russia's defunct throne, a 13-year-old Madrid schoolboy, Georgy. His Moscow representative, Mr Alexander Zakatov, explained: "The people here are frauds. Georgy is the only heir. The others are all crazy." A Cossack selling anti-Semitic tracts in the lobby disagreed: "Georgy is Jewish ... we need a pure Russian. Some German blood is OK but not Jewish or Armenian." Sober voices tried to avoid such ugliness: "The most important thing is to affirm the idea of the monarchy," said Mr Gennady Ladyzhensky, chairman of the League of Nobility. "Who the monarch should be is a secondary issue to be decided later." But the Communist leader, Mr Zyuganov, complained it was already being decided by Mr Yeltsin: "We already have a person who sits where the tsar did - with more power than even a tsar." (*The Independent* in *SMH*, Oct. 8, 1994).

"RUSSIA TALKS AGAIN OF A 'GREAT' STATE: DON'T OPPOSE REINTEGRATION BY EX-SOVIET REPUBLICS, FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE HEAD WARNS WEST" "MOSCOW: The head of Russia's foreign intelligence agency warned the West yesterday not to stand in the way of economic and political reintegration among former republics of the Soviet Union. Mr Yevgeny Primakov, director of the Russian counterpart of the CIA, said negative attitudes in the West towards integration are "dangerous" and should be reconsidered. He said they stem from an "unwillingness to see Russia strengthen as a great State". Mr Primakov, releasing an External Intelligence Agency report on the topic, said voluntary reintegration among some former Soviet republics is inevitable and beneficial. He said the West should accept this tendency rather than opposing it, which would lead to "a certain cooling" in relations with Moscow. The report, *Russia and the CIS - Does the Western Position Need Correction?*, outlined different scenarios for development in the former Soviet Union. One possibility, it said, was that sovereign CIS States would create a common economic space like even European Union, perhaps even opt for political integration and a single defence command. In such a case stability and reform would be guaranteed and the West would not need to have any fears about the threat of chaos in a State with nuclear weapons. But another scenario was that separatists would prevail in the republics, leading to growing authoritarianism, anti-democratic tendencies, and Islamic extremism. The report warned: "General destabilisation in the CIS space will pose a threat to the security of the world community." The integration processes did not stem from a resurgence of Russian imperialism, as some Western analysts contend, and "do not contradict Western interests," Mr Primakov said. "They would not want the revival of some anti-Western monster, critical or confrontational with the West." Mr Primakov released his report and gave a news conference to discuss it just days before Russian President Boris Yeltsin is due to leave for a summit meeting with the United States President, Mr Bill Clinton, in Washington. The report's release came amid growing nationalism here and suspicion of the West's true motives in dealing with Russia. Mr Primakov, an experienced player in Soviet foreign policy, has staked out a position as something of a hard-liner within Mr Yeltsin's Government in that debate. Earlier, his agency released a report opposing NATO's expansion into Eastern Europe. At the same time, many in the West have expressed growing concern about Russia's assertiveness in what it calls "the near abroad". Russian troops are increasingly active in the Caucasus and Central Asia, and Russia more and more is using economic levers to get its way with its neighbours. On Tuesday, a spokesman for the Russian Foreign Ministry said Russia would not recognise a \$A9.5 billion deal Azerbaijan signed with a consortium of foreign oil companies - including one from Russia - to develop oil fields in the Caspian Sea. Russia, which also borders on the Caspian, said it should have a say in any such deal... About 5 000 Russians marched through central Moscow today in angry commemoration of Mr Yeltsin's decision one year ago to dissolve the old Russian Parliament and call elections for a new legislature. The marchers, waving red Soviet-era flags and the white and red blue cross of Tsarist Russia, were accompanied by their own security guards, some wearing black uniforms and some dressed in camouflage gear." (*The Washington Post*, in *SMH*, Sept. 23, 1994)

"ZHIRINOVSKY WARNS OF MILITARY RULE" "SAN FRANCISCO: The Russian ultra-nationalist politician, Mr Vladimir Zhirinovsky, has warned that military rule was a threat in his country and called for early presidential elections. "Military rule is quite possible in Russia," Mr Zhirinovsky said in a speech sponsored by the World Affairs Council, a San Francisco-based forum for discussing international affairs. "We suggest speeded elections to elect a new president and we are sure we will win," said the Russian MP, who began his US visit on Sunday night. The Russian presidential elections are scheduled for 1996. At a press conference earlier, Mr Zhirinovsky said the situation in the Russian army was very difficult. "The army is at the edge of making some major decision, maybe some decisive action. We don't want to say in what it will end," he said, speaking through an interpreter... News reports saying he favoured reconstituting the Soviet Union within its former borders and incorporating Finland were "propaganda", and anti-Semitic remarks attributed to him were "a mistake," he said." (*SMH*, Nov. 9, 1994).

"KGB KILLING FIELD REVEALS LITHUANIA'S AMBIGUOUS PAST" "VILNIUS: A pleasant park on the outskirts of Vilnius, until recently a popular spot for picnics, is yielding one of KGB's most gruesome Baltic secrets. Investigators have found the remains of more than 500 people in the sandy brown soil of Tuskulenai Park, and are uncovering more each day. They work behind a discreet fence, while children play tennis on the other side. This park was a secret execution and burial ground in the crushing of one of the Cold War's hotter campaigns, the Lithuanian partisan rebellion of the late 1940s. The victims were shot after being guilty by summary tribunals of joining or supporting partisan groups... After Lithuania won its independence in 1990, the KGB agents here departed hastily. They left their files behind and Tuskulenai Park was identified... Stalin's counter-insurgency troops tracked the partisan rebels with brutal effectiveness. They pulled thousands of civilians from their homes and hustled them to killing grounds like Tuskulenai Park. They displayed the bodies of the dead partisans at village squares, then arrested passers-by who betrayed emotion or sympathy. And an effort to rob the movement of its base, they sent several thousand Lithuanians to Siberia."

(*SMH*, Oct 8, 1994).

"RUSSIA CITES BORDER INSTABILITY FOR NON-COMPLIANCE WITH ARMS TREATY" "RUSSIA has told Britain and America that it cannot comply with the terms of the Conventional Forces in Europe treaty. It claims that the security situation on its southern and western borders is so unstable that it must be allowed to keep any forces it wants there. It says its generals insist on retaining thousands of tanks, missiles and artillery pieces on the borders with the Baltic States and the Caucasus region bordering Turkey, which the treaty says should be removed within a year. These are areas of traditional influence that the Russians refer to as the "near abroad"; but, particularly in the Baltic, their continued muscle-flexing presence is deeply resented. The issue is going to be a test of the Clinton administration: will it insist on compliance or appease Moscow?"

(*The Australian*, Oct., 24, 1994).

"THE UNKNOWN DEATH OF A SOLDIER NIKOLAI, GRIST TO THE MILITARY MILL" "MOSCOW: It was the potato season when young Nikolai Pyasetski was drafted. So potatoes were central to his training as a Russian Army paratrooper - up at 7 am and working until 1.30 pm, digging in a potato field and loading the crop into the winter store. The store of summer potatoes was not used up and the winter was only half over when Nikolai was killed in Chechnya at the age of 20. He had been in the army six months. In the Russian Army, draftees are treated as another battle commodity, like bullets, shells and tanks - a replenishable supply. Nikolai's training was not so different from that of the

generations of peasants and workers drafted into bloody wars by Russian tsars through the long, violent reach of Russian history. On only two days did he have the chance to line up with the other draftees and try to use an automatic firearm. On two other days he had a turn driving an armed personnel carrier - there was not enough petrol for more time - and he had one parachute jump. The trainees spent some time inside stationary personnel carriers, going through the motions on control panels which were not switched on. And there was time on guard duty. In his last photograph, Nikolai is blond and serious, wearing camouflage, with the colours of the Russian flag behind him. You see Nikolai in his mother's face - the clear eyes, pointed cheekbones and high eyebrows. Anna Pyasetskaya's voice is low and firm when she tells how she feels about the men who sent her son into a tornado of violence with enough training only to die, not to fight and survive. "They're murderers. It is not just boys they are killing. Smaller children and women are being killed. It is genocide." (*SMH*, Jan. 13, 95).

"The honeymoon is over, Russia warns" "The Russian Foreign Minister, Mr Andrei Kozgrev, issued a warning yesterday that Moscow's relations with the West had entered a colder and more confrontational phase. Speaking after seven hours of fruitless talks with the American Secretary of State, Mr Warren Christopher, in Geneva, which failed to make headway on issues ranging from nuclear proliferation to the war in Chechnya, Mr Kozyrev said: "I would say that indeed the honeymoon has come to an end". He said that the United States and Russia had been able only to agree to disagree. His assessment appeared to cast a shadow over the coming summit in Moscow when President Clinton joins President Yeltsin for the 50th anniversary of VE Day." (*The Weekend Australian*, March 25-26, 1995).

"Russia signs key NATO accords" "Russia opened a new era in political and military cooperation with the West yesterday by formally accepting two key accords with NATO. However, immediately after the signing of the agreements, the Russian Foreign Minister, Mr Andrei Kozyrev, said Russia was still opposed to NATO's expansion plans and warned that the alliance could be jeopardised if enlargement went ahead. "We continue to believe that it does not meet either the interests of Russia's national security or the interests of European security as a whole", he said in a statement at a ceremony in which he approved Russia's individual membership program of the Partnership for Peace. Mr Kozyrev called for a radical redefinition of NATO's mission. "Preserving the current NATO as a purely military bloc would run counter to the trends of moulding a single Europe. In this case we would need to clarify whom NATO is going to defend itself against." (*The Australian*, June 1, 1995).

"MAO WAS AN IRRITABLE EGOTIST, SAYS HIS DOCTOR" "Mao Zedong, China's "Great Helmsman" whose brilliance - so the official doctrine insists - led a vast nation to restored greatness, was really an irritable, manipulative egotist incapable of human feeling, according to his private doctor. Mao surrounded himself with sycophants and refused even to be treated for a sexually transmitted disease, even though he knew he was spreading it to the many young women who shared his bed, Dr Li Zhisui said... "In outer appearance, Mao was very easygoing, easy to contact," Dr Li said at his home in Chicago. "But when you stayed longer with him, you found he was a merciless tyrant who crushed anybody who disobeyed him." "Mao was a man who had no friends. He saw everybody as a subject, a slave. The mistake of those who got purged was to see themselves as equal to him. He wanted everybody to be subservient." (*SMH*, October 3, 1994).

"Dole steps to the right in presidential race" "The temperature of the 1996 presidential election campaign edged up a degree yesterday as the Republican front-runner, Senator Bob Dole, joined the conservative outcry over the film *Priest* and threatened to block President Bill Clinton's pro-choice nominee for Surgeon-General... Later, he criticised the ban on assault weapons imposed by Mr Clinton last year in the face of strong opposition from the National Rifle Association and said he would support pending legislation to lift it. Throughout his many campaign stops, however, Senator Dole was silent on one of the key issues dividing the Republicans: abortion." (*The Sydney Morning Herald*, April 18, 1995).

THE ENVIRONMENT

"Greenhouse needs global initiative" "The scientific consensus that global warming is occurring unnaturally, primarily as a result of industrial development and deforestation, is no longer seriously disputed in the world. But, as the 130 signatory nations to the 1992 Framework Convention on Climate Change have shown in Berlin this week, the international community remains sharply divided over what to do about it." (*The Australian*, April 6, 1995).

"Lack of follow-up rains keep water storage levels low" "Eastern Australia's \$6 billion irrigated agriculture industry is under serious threat because water storages throughout the area are dramatically lower than at this time last year and there have been no decent follow-up rains to falls in January... "Six billion dollars worth of irrigated agriculture is at risk. A further \$40 billion of the Australian economy depends on that. Growers are in a desperate situation now but the next season looks worse." (*The Australian*, April 11, 1995).

"Priest slates Pope over environment" "The papacy and the Vatican had become myopic on the question of contraception and lacked the ability to look at the far more reaching ethical problem of rapidly increasing world population. This is the view of a Sacred Heart Catholic priest, Paul Collins, who said yesterday the moral energy of the leaders and thinkers in the Catholic Church was being diverted into questions which centred on human kind. "We have become so focused in on ourselves we have lost any sense of responsibility for the wider world", he said. Last year's conference on world population had been hijacked by the Vatican delegation to focus on abortion. The preservation of nature and other species and a sense of the natural world was absolutely central for humanity's health, culture and civilisation. "With no nature we would end up as people whose outlook would become mad", he said." (*Canberra Times*, May 16, 1995).

"The Town killer" "Struggling as it is with the human legacy of a collapsed communist credo, Russia could have done without a murderous side-swipe from nature. But on May 28, the oil town of Neftegorsk on the island of Sakhalin, just north of Japan, was flattened by an earthquake that measured 7.5 on the Richter scale - the largest ever recorded in Russia. Perhaps it was sheer coincidence, but even as rescuers clawed through the wreckage late last week - pausing in silence at intervals to listen for any cries from the trapped - back in Moscow, Russia's first congress on environmental problems got under way. From the evidence presented at that gathering, it was hard not to imagine the Sakhalin quake as the Russian earth rebelling against so much damage inflicted upon it." (*Time*, June 12, 1995).

"Killerquake hits Quito" "An earthquake measuring 5.2 on the Richter scale left two Ecuadorean soccer fans dead and 50 others injured yesterday, after part of a stadium collapsed." (*The Australian*, March 28, 1995).

"Rains fail to break drought" "Despite good rain in most areas during the past two weeks 66 per cent of NSW remains severely affected by drought, according to the latest drought declarations. Many farmers remain in a critical financial position - able to sow grain crops but unable to generate incomes to service debt or bolster bank balances for at least six months." (*The Sydney Morning Herald*, May 31, 1995).

"Attitude 'risk' to environment" "It could take an environmental crisis to change people's attitudes about global warming, according to a lecturer in environmental policy and politics. Michael Gabriel said a University of Queensland study had found that deep-seated attitudes towards the environment held by people in industrial societies must be challenged before a solution to global warming could be found.

Dr Gabriel said global warming raised a difficult moral question when western nations demanded that developing nations rein in development. Development was particularly related to consumption of fossil fuels, and the wealth of western nations was generated by the same patterns of behaviour. Many Asian nations were experiencing rapid economic growth. "However, their developments based upon the traditional industrialist model complete with unbridled exploitation", he said. "If this issue is not dealt with, the growing consumption of fossil fuels in developing countries could render largely irrelevant moves by western countries to reduce emissions". Dr Gabriel said he had analysed negotiations leading to the 1992 signing of the climate convention at the Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The conference was attended by representatives from more than 170 nations around the world, including developed and developing countries. "While many blamed the United States for this failure to agree to a tougher convention, careful analysis of negotiations revealed a reluctance by most industrial nations to take tougher actions", Dr Gabriel said.

"The climate convention does little more than recognise that a problem exists and sets modest targets that are not legally enforceable". Global warming or the greenhouse effect are terms used to describe climatic changes that will occur over coming decades because of the impact of human activities on the atmosphere. In particular, rising carbon dioxide levels associated with the burning of fossil fuels such as coal and oil-based fuels, and to a lesser extent de-afforestation, will trap more of the heat produced by the sun. This is expected to cause average temperatures to rise significantly and climate patterns to change. Dr Gabriel said attitudes towards the environment were shaped by changes in European society more than 400 years ago. In the late medieval period, Christianity began to portray nature as God's gift to humankind. Science demystified nature and portrayed human beings as separate from and dominant over nature. "This paved the way for the conquest of nature as people came to believe they had the right to exploit nature as they saw fit in the pursuit of wealth", Dr Gabriel said. From this stemmed a belief that the world was effectively limitless and capable of sustaining unbridled exploitation." (*Courier Mail*, April 3 1995).

"The new ice age cometh sooner than we think" "The world's climate could change dramatically in as little as a year, getting hotter or colder by an average of five to 10 degrees, climate experts say. New evidence shows that such abrupt and large changes have occurred routinely for hundreds of thousands of years.

"A sudden drop of five degrees would be an enormous change" said Dr Graeme Pearman, acting director of the CSIRO Institute of Natural Resources and Environment. "It would plunge the world into a glacial period, not in a period of a thousand years, but in several years", he said. An increase of five degrees would exceed the most pessimistic projections of greenhouse warming for the next century." (*SMH*, Feb. 24, 1995).

"Australasian air not fresh" "The air over eastern Australia and South East Asia is highly polluted compared with the air over the Southern Ocean and Antarctica, a scientist has found. Peng Hanchang, a researcher with the Chinese Bureau of Oceanography on a voyage to the Antarctic, used filters to collect 46 samples of airborne dust which showed that the air over the East China Sea, Papua New Guinea, eastern Australia and the Indonesian islands was heavily affected by industrial pollution. But in southern Oceania and the areas near Antarctica the air was cleaner. Mr Peng found that the Antarctic continent, in particular, had scarcely been affected by human pollution.

(*Daily Telegraph-Mirror*, April 1, 1995).

"Carr calls on Canberra to boost drought relief." "The Premier has announced a \$15 million rural assistance package to aid hard-hit farming communities, describing the State's worsening drought as the 'biggest social problem in Australia'... January rainfalls were insufficient to pull NSW safely out of its worst drought in more than a decade and follow-up rains are desperately needed to assist the planting of winter cereal crops and provide fodder for malnourished stock." (*The Sydney Morning Herald*, April 7, 1995).

"Tales of doom backfire on greens" "In contrast to the enthusiasm which Western politicians and the media displayed at the Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit in July 1992, the mood is now one of scepticism and caution. One reason for the change of sentiment is that many people are fed up with alarming prophecies which fail to happen. Green politics would have had an easier time if the shortages of food and energy forecast in the 1970s had come about. In the case of global warming, scientific knowledge is still incomplete. Scientists agree that concentrations of carbon dioxide and other 'greenhouse' gases are increasing in the atmosphere. But they are, far from agreed about the possible consequences, and some respected predictions of the degree of warming and of the rise in sea levels have been revised down several times."

(*The Australian*, April 5, 1995).

"Antarctic greenhouse evidence" "Flowers and grasses are spreading rapidly in Antarctica and British scientists say that global warming is responsible. Researchers at the British Antarctic Survey - the body which discovered the ozone hole over the continent a decade ago - will shortly report on the 'greening of Antarctica', as the ice recedes, summers lengthen, and the climate warms up. A paper to be published later this year will say that a flowering grass is now 25 times more common than it was 30 years ago. Other research has found that new species are appearing in the area as long-frozen seeds are freed from the melting ice." (*The Age*, Sept. 12, 1994).

"Giant iceberg to make waves" "A giant iceberg measuring 78km by 37 km that has carved from an Antarctic ice-shelf, is set to have a devastating impact on the region. Images from a weather satellite, relayed from the British Antarctic Survey's ice base at Rothera, confirm recent warming of the Antarctic peninsula is having a major impact on ice sheets in the region. As more ice melts, global sea levels could rise. The regional climate has warmed by 2.5 deg. since the 1940s - the greatest average change in temperature anywhere on the surface of the planet."

(*SMH*, Feb. 23, 1995).

"Greenhouse Effect unstoppable: CSIRO" "An increase in carbon dioxide levels will be unstoppable for at least a century, no matter how drastic attempts are to curb greenhouse gas emissions, according to a new CSIRO study. Pre-industrial levels of carbon dioxide would also double to 560 parts per million by 2070 if rates of CO2 emissions continued to rise, leading to a rise in average global temperature of between one and three degrees, said Dr Ian Enting, of the CSIRO Division of Atmospheric Research. "Any measure [to control emissions] that's really practical won't be able to prevent climate change", Dr Enting said. "Even with quite drastic changes we will still have climate change through the next century". The report combines the work of 18 groups of scientists from around the world and will contribute to the upcoming report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change." (*SMH*, February 27, 1995).

"Berlin deal under fire" "Non-governmental organisations campaigning for climate and environment protection were scathing about the meagre outcome of the Berlin conference on climate change. The United States, Canada and Australia, and oil producers Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, were all blamed by these organisations for the dilution of firm proposals on measures against heat-trapping gasses. The Sierra Club, the oldest and one of the largest of these in the United States and Canada, said yesterday: "The weak Berlin mandate only postpones action that world leaders should have taken." (*Sun-Herald*, April 9, 1995).

"Ozone threat spreads to the North Pole" "An international authority on our ozone layer has raised dramatic and immediate new global alarms with evidence pointing to first threats of a north polar ozone hole and worldwide thinning of the ozone shield of 25 per cent within 50 years. In world terms, the thinning of northern hemisphere ozone is more ominous than the southern ozone hole, which continues to grow, because the UV radiation-shielding ozone layer is at its most stable over the North Pole. The north polar ozone layer is also more critical because populations and crop production are more dense near the North Pole, as is industrial pollution which could cause any hole to widen much faster than in the south. The latest evidence indicates the international Montreal Protocol restricting chlorine-based compounds, of which the most recent urgency amendment was signed by Australia in July last year, may still be 20 years behind the pace of pollution. Worse, the northern hemisphere ozone expert bearing the renewed warning believes Montreal chlorine alternatives may be as bad as CFCs and that it is 'debatable' whether Montreal controls can reverse the ozone damage. Politicians and industry were also warned the cure for the ozone layer's cancer would be difficult and expensive, the imperative being immediate and intensive upscaling of research. Oxford University Professor Fred Taylor told *The Australian* yesterday latest evidence indicated weak ozone holes were starting to appear in the northern hemisphere and that the ozone layer was thinning around the globe. At the same time, the southern hemisphere ozone hole seemed to be trending towards becoming larger each year and this year extended right up to the southern tip of New Zealand's South Island." (*The Australian*, March 17, 1995).

"World Bank report warns of African population crisis" "Africa's population will more than double in the next 35 years, despite successful efforts to bring down the birth rate on the continent, the World Bank said in a report released yesterday. The Earth's population will increase by 50 per cent to 8.5 billion people by 2030 if current trends continue, the bank said, but more than 90 per cent of that growth will come in the poorest nations, with Africa's population soaring 116 per cent from 720 million to 1.6 billion inhabitants." (*The Australian*, August 10, 1994).

"Official herbicide linked to cancer" "The Australian Government has become the first in the world to recognise officially that there is scientific and medical evidence linking prostate cancer to exposure to herbicides such as Agent Orange." (*SMH*, March 16, 1995).

"Snakes snacked" "China yesterday urged its greedy consumers not to eat up all the nation's snakes. The Economic Information Daily said with increased incomes, Chinese have become more diet-conscious and eating better foods, including rare snakes and other endangered animals considered to have medicinal powers." (*The Sydney Morning Herald*, July 8, 1994).

"Twelve die in mountain wildfire" "Flames trapped scores of United States firefighters battling a quick-moving wildfire yesterday in Colorado, killing at least 12. About 50 firefighters were trapped and overtaken by flames as they fought the 800-hectare fire on Storm King Mountain, police said. Fires were also burning in Nevada, Montana, Utah and Wyoming. Conditions were hazardous in California, Idaho, Arizona and New Mexico. Meanwhile, at least 15 people have died in the south-east of the US since early on Tuesday from floodwaters caused by Tropical Storm Alberto that cut off whole communities and threatened drinking-water supplies for nearly 250,000 people." (*SMH*, July 8, 1994)

"Forests action" "World environment ministers, meeting in Rome, yesterday called for urgent action to save the planet's dwindling forests, and for the forest conservation plans discussed at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 to be implemented." (*Sun-Herald*, March 19, 1995).

"Blue-green algae outbreak likely to be worst" "Victoria is preparing for its worst outbreak of blue-green algae on record as levels of the toxic slime climb in the Murray and other northern rivers. Several lakes in Victoria have already been closed to the public because of dangerous algal blooms and the flow has slowed, such as the Loddon and Campaspe, are being closely monitored. Farmers in the north of the state, already stricken by drought, now fear that the remaining stock water in their irrigation channels, rivers and lakes may be contaminated. Livestock can die from drinking water containing the algae, which can release high concentrations of toxins. Human contact with contaminated water can cause skin and eye irritations, or severe sickness if it is drunk." (*The Age*, January 16, 1995).

"Toxic algae thriving on our household detergents" "Too many Australians use household phosphate detergents that pollute waterways and cause toxic blue-green algae to thrive, Landcare Australia has warned. Almost 40 per cent of the phosphate that enters rivers and the sea from the sewerage and drainage systems comes from detergents containing phosphate." (*The Age*, February 28, 1995).

"Must all the Earth's wilderness be taken?" "Humanity is reaching for the stars. We will begin to colonise planets within a century or two. But nowhere else in the cosmos is another Earth: this is our cradle, our point of origin. Now the Earth nest, as we prepare to set sail from it, is being torn apart by its human nestlings. The wild human experience, shaping our bodies and brains, is largely destroyed and that which is left is going at the greatest rate in history." (*The Age*, March 1, 1995).

"The land's own crown of thorns" "Bitou bush, a South African shrub, is threatening the whole sandy coastline of NSW and has already degraded 20 national parks. It moves like an army, consolidating itself on bare ground, then moving forward, securing itself with each advance by dropping millions of seeds and spreading an unknown poison from its roots to kill native plants. Over 20 years, 300 bitou plants can become six million. Already it is the dominant plant in 70,000 hectares - 90 per cent of the coastal sands. In much of that country, which once supported hundreds of native species, it is now the only plant." (*The Australian*, March 1, 1995).

"Global warming a threat to wildlife" "Even a conservative increase in global warming will devastate Australia's threatened species and could render national parks and nature reserves almost useless for conserving wildlife, according to a report prepared by the Australian Nature Conservation Agency." (*SMH*, Feb. 23, 1995).

"Warning on microscopic killer" "At least 10,000 people die in Britain every year from breathing microscopic specks of soot and chemicals, a researcher said yesterday. Dr Joel Schwartz, of Harvard Medical School, told the BBC the dust specks, known as 'particulates', penetrated deep into the lungs, causing heart attacks, breathing problems and lung cancer. "Among environmental-related problems in Britain, this is likely to be the biggest one", he said. Diesel engines are the main source of particulates in Britain, but this fuel is heavily promoted as 'green.' (*Herald Sun* (Vic), March 1, 1995).

"Canada fears fishing collapse" "Twenty years after the Cod War - the bizarre dispute played out between British trawlers and Icelandic gunboats in the North Sea - get ready for another turbot-charged fishing brawl. It is more or less in the same ocean and involves another pair of NATO allies. This one pits Canada against Spain in an altercation that appears to be turning as bitter and squally as winter in Nova Scotia. Like the Cod War, it is over fishing rights in the North Atlantic, in this case over the rapidly declining numbers of a fish known as turbot." (*SMH*, March 16, 1995).

"Poisoned rivers devastate fish stocks" "The most extensive fish kills and outbreaks of fish red spot disease on record - both caused by pollution - have struck every major river between Sydney and the Queensland border." (*The Sydney Morning Herald*, March 16, 1995).

"Pilchard killer mystery over" A glutinous algal bloom and a lethal, 'phantom' micro-organism were both identified yesterday as the mystery killer of millions of pilchards in Australia's southern waters. Victorian and Tasmanian scientists announced divergent conclusions after conducting separate investigations into the fish deaths, the worst in Australian history. Masses of dead fish have been found floating along a 5000 kilometre stretch of the continent's southern coastline, from Albany in Western Australia to New South Wales... The marine scientists said the algae was not toxic and for an unknown reason only killed adult pilchards over three years old. It created a gelatinous mass that clogged the pilchard's gills and caused them to suffocate." (*The Age*, May 17, 1995).

"Surfing snakes rattle lifeguards" "If skin cancer wasn't enough, weary Californians buffeted by an apocalyptic quartet of fire, flood, riot and earthquake, now face a new menace - a plague of surfing snakes. Over the past week, scores of reptiles, including venomous rattlesnakes, washed out of hillside homes into the Pacific Ocean by flash floods, have drifted or swum ashore from Malibu to San Diego. The result is Baywatch meets the Book of Revelations as lifeguards, armed with long poles, try to trap the critters before anyone is bitten. On some of the beaches, storm debris, used by the intrepid snakes as life rafts, has been cordoned off by yellow police tape, normally seen at crime scenes." (*The Australian*, March 16, 1995).

"New warning in California storm havoc" January's storms caused at least \$US1.3 billion (\$1.75 billion) of damage and led President Bill Clinton to declare much of the State a major disaster area." (*The Sydney Morning Herald*, March 13, 1995).

"Dutch flee as dikes near collapse" "Emergency crews in 5 countries were fighting yesterday to control some of northern Europe's worst flooding this century as the Dutch Government, worried that the country's dikes might collapse, began mass evacuations." (*SMH*, February 2, 1995).

"Columbia's worst quake in 20 years kills 27" "A strong earthquake shook cities and towns across western Colombia yesterday, reportedly killing at least 27 people, injuring more than 200 and destroying scores of houses and offices, radio reports said. The quake, measuring 6.4 on the Richter scale, was the most deadly in Colombia for more than two decades." (*SMH*, February 10, 1995).

"Indonesia floods" "Floods triggered by incessant rain have inundated homes across wide areas of Sumatra and Java islands, and media reports yesterday said at least 14 people had been killed. In central Java, fears are growing of a major eruption of Mount Selamat, which has been spewing smoke 150 metres into the air and casting a pall over a wide area." (*SMH*, February 7, 1995).

"Moscow admits to ecological disaster" "Northern Russia has been transformed into a gigantic ecological wasteland, harbouring dangerous underwater nuclear fuel canisters, massive oilspills and burning gas, according to figures and official studies released in Moscow." (*West Australian*, Nov. 16, 1994).

"China calls for help to combat fatal floods" "Beijing: China appealed for international help last night to combat floods that struck the south of the country with the loss of more than 400 lives, and contemplated desperate measures to protect the wealthy province of Guangdong."

(*The Australian*, June 21, 1994).

"Thirsting for water in wettest place on Earth" "Cherrapunji, India: In the wettest place on Earth, villagers walk kilometres to find drinking water. They limit baths to once a week and can't irrigate their crops. The town was drenched with 1.3 metres of rain last year - more precipitation than any other spot in the world..." Deforestation is taking place in a big way", said Suchendra Nath Deka, the director of the regional meteorological centre in Guwahati, 160 kilometres north of Cherrapunji. "When the trees and plants are removed, the water runs off immediately, and water shortages become a serious problem. As a result, excessive rainfall is both a boon and a curse to them." (*SMH*, October 17, 1994).

"Severe drought affects us all" "A drought of almost unprecedented intensity has overtaken large tracts of Australia, the driest continent. The only other drought to match its length was in 1916. But the economic and social problems this time are more crippling, because it has struck farmers at a time when they were already weakened by other factors over which they had little control. In parts of Queensland, many on the land have had to face eight crop failures in succession. The wool industry was confronted by the drought shortly after world prices had collapsed. Wheat farmers had been battling unfair trade practices by the US and European Community, and almost everyone on the land had faced high interest rates of 20% or more during the late 1980s. None were prepared for so severe a drought." (*The Australian*, September 7, 1994)

"Drought now defined as the loss of all hope" "The Macquarie Dictionary defines drought thus: 1. dry wether; lack of rain 2. scarcity. In the Australian context, drought is most precisely defined as a trigger for government relief. Despite the fact that the Federal Government has spent at least \$250 million on this drought and State governments have spent tens of millions of dollars more, Australia has no scientific definition of drought. It is a situation that appalled the Federal Primary Industries Minister, Senator Collins, who took on the portfolio as the big dry gripped the east coast. He responded by commissioning the most precise and comprehensive definition of drought ever drawn up. A copy of a draft of that definition, which is still subject to a highly confidential interdepartmental process, has been obtained by the Herald. It is not so much the outline of severe drought, as a portrait of catastrophe." (*SMH*, Nov 21, 1994)

"Water shortages" "Tokyo: More than 12.5 million Japanese are suffering serious water shortages after a drought that threatens to become the worst this century, government officials have said. Supply cuts are in force in 40 of Japan's 47 prefectures." (*SMH*, Sept 1, 1994)

"Spain in century's worst drought" "Other parts of Europe are sinking under flood waters, but the earth in Andalusia is dry and cracked, and Spanish shepherds watching their flocks nibble the sparse grass cannot remember a worse drought this century... That there is little rain in Andalusia is nothing new, but such a lengthy dry spell is rare." (*The Australian*, February 7, 1995).

"The heat is really on, warn experts" "A Federal Government report to the United Nations on climate change has painted a bleak picture of Australia next century, predicting temperature increases of up to five degrees, health problems and possible native species extinction." (*The Age*, Sept 14, 1994).

"Big dry made worse" "El Nino can no longer take sole credit for the blistering drought in eastern Australia. A peculiar 'cold spot' in the Indian Ocean is making dry El Nino conditions even worse, claim a team of Australian scientists. The cold spot is implicated because it prevents the formation of rain clouds which normally blow across the continent to eastern Australia, says teamleader Dr Gary Meyers of the CSIRO Division of Oceanography in Hobart. The spot itself is the product of a complex interaction between winds, ocean currents and the troublesome El Nino which is presently gripping Australia's east coast." (*SMH*, October 12, 1994)

"Science helps drought puzzle" "A visit to northern Kenya where there has been no rain for 5 years and the desperately poor local people are surviving entirely on deliveries of food and water by aid agencies, prepared me for the sudden discovery by politicians that an especially bad drought has gripped much of Australia." (*SMH*, October 16, 1994).

"Collins warns of thirsty continent" "Australia's population is likely to reach 23 million by 2020, yet our developed water supplies are barely enough to cope with the demand of the current population of 18 million, according to the Federal Industry Minister, Senator Collins." (*SMH*, October 22 1994).

"Volcano calming" "Mexico City: The rumbling volcano, Popocatepetl, 64 kilometres south of Mexico's capital, was calming down on Sunday, but officials said it was too soon to send home about 50,000 people in shelters." (*SMH*, Dec 27, 1994).

"New quake hits Japan" "An earthquake measuring 6.9 on the Richter scale rocked northern Japan early yesterday, injuring 18. The quake was felt most strongly at Hachinohe in Aomori Prefecture and Morioka in Iwate Prefecture in the northeast of the Honshu main island. The tremor was believed to be an aftershock of the quake on December 28 which measured 7.5 on the Richter scale." (*The Sun-Herald*, January 8, 1995).

"1,000 feared dead in Colombian quake" "Neiva, Colombia: President Cesar Gaviria declared a state of emergency yesterday in a remote mountain valley devastated by an earthquake and mudslide after government officials said the tragedy had claimed up to 1,000 lives." (*SMH*, June 11, 1994).

"Earthquake hits Sydney" "Power cuts blacked out wide areas of NSW, including Sydney, last night in the wake of an earthquake which was almost equal in magnitude to the one that devastated Newcastle in 1989. Initial reports indicated the quake, which struck at 9.04pm, caused little serious damage. Police from Wollongong to the Central Coast were deluged with calls from people reporting their houses shaking. The head of the Australian Geological Survey's Seismological Centre in Canberra, David Denham, said the quake had an intensity of about 5.0 on the Richter Scale compared with 5.6 for the one which devastated Newcastle in 1989." (*The Sun-Herald*, August 7, 1994).

"Floods kill 50" "Hanoi: Flash floods have killed 50 people, most of them children, in areas upstream from Vietnam's Mekong River delta, officials said. The flooding submerged more than 74,000 homes and destroyed more than 17,000 tonnes of rice in two provinces." (*SMH*, Sept 27, 1994)

"Algeria disaster" "Algiers: At least 32 people have died and 70 have been injured with dozens of others reported missing in floods and torrential rain in Algeria." (*SMH*, Sept 27, 1994).

"30,000 villagers ordered out" "Manila: Philippines President Fidel Ramos has ordered the evacuation of about 30,000 people from villages threatened by mudflows from Mount Pinatubo volcano, officials said today. People who refuse to leave despite the imminent danger to their communities will be evicted forcibly, he said." (*SMH*, Sept 27, 1994).

"Philippines quake" "More than 60 people died and at least 130 were injured yesterday after an earthquake and tidal waves ravaged the central Philippines island of Mindoro. The quake struck at about 3am, cutting off power and water supplies and splitting open the base of a mountain in the tourist resort of Puerto Galera, about 140 kilometres south of Manila." (*SMH*, November 16, 1994).

"Car pollution controls: Sydney's catalytic disaster" "Sydney's efforts to clean up its air are being hampered by a high failure rate and illegal tampering with anti-pollution equipment on cars, the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) has warned. The problem may affect as many as one in seven cars sold in Australia since 1985 and is probably responsible for between 5 and 10% of the city's air pollution, it estimates." (*SMH*, Nov 22, 1994).

"Acid threat to Sydney's future water supply" "Sydney's proposed future water supply, the Shoalhaven River, is sitting on an acid time-bomb, according to fishermen, conservation officials and farmers. Millions of tonnes of soil on the South Coast may turn into equivalent amounts of sulphuric acid, according to a senior soil survey officer with the Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM), Mr Mitch Tulau. 'Anything that lowered the water table in the Shoalhaven needed to be closely monitored', he said yesterday. 'If the water table moves up or down even ten centimetres it will make the difference between a problem and no problem.'" (*SMH*, Sept. 11, 1994).

"Southern Australia escapes as ozone hole enlarges" "The Antarctic ozone hole, at its worst this year, still kept clear of southern Australia, but its depth and extent has surprised some scientists who hoped they might see more improvement. Last year, the constantly changing hole reached Macquarie Island, 800 nautical miles south-east of Tasmania, said Dr Paul Lehmann, a senior ozone physicist at the Bureau of Meteorology. Perturbed, but not depleted, ozone was even detected over Tasmania." (*SMH*, November 4, 1994).

"Indonesia quakes" "Three big earthquakes, ranging from 5.7 to 6.4 on the Richter scale, had rocked Indonesia but there were not immediate reports of casualties or damage, the Geophysical Agency said yesterday. The epicentres of two of them were in the Java Sea, between 50 and 85 kilometres north-west of Semarang, and the third struck Bengkulu province, in western Sumatra." (*SMH*, September 30, 1994).

"Drought risk to economy" "The Big Dry will strangle the nation's economy with 'diabolical' consequences unless there is substantial rainfall by early next year, the Federal Government warned yesterday. The spreading drought has already wiped \$1.5 billion off exports, and yesterday the Government was forced to revise economic growth down from 4.5 to 4.25% for this financial year." (*Daily Telegraph*, September 23, 1994).

"Scientists' grim news for future of Rabaul" "Port Moresby: The volcanoes that have made 30,000 people homeless and devastated Rabaul, one of Papua New Guinea's most prosperous towns, would continue to erupt for several days, scientists warned yesterday" (*The Sun-Herald*, Sept. 25, 1994).

"Typhoon Fred toll to 900" "Beijing: More than 900 people were reported dead or missing yesterday as a result of Typhoon Fred's murderous passage through China's eastern Zhejiang province. A Zhejiang government spokesman said the storm had caused damage estimated at 10 billion yuan (\$1.15 billion). The coastal region near the city of Wenzhou was worst affected. About 510 people were already confirmed dead, with 412 missing and 1853 injured." (*The Australian*, Aug. 25, 94).

"Drought in China" "Beijing: More than 27 million people in seven Chinese provinces are suffering from severe drought and two regions are battling their worst dry spell in 60 years, the China Daily said yesterday." (*SMH*, August 23, 1994).

"Rice harvest hit" "Jakarta: Indonesia's rice output is forecast to fall by as much as 4% this year because of a severe drought which has devastated part of the main rice growing belt on Java, the Antara news agency said yesterday. But a senior official of the Agriculture Ministry declined to say if Indonesia needed to import rice." (*SMH*, August 25, 1994)

"Tree concerns" "Nearly one in four trees in Europe has been damaged by air pollution or other causes, and in the Czech Republic the figure is 53%, a United Nations-backed study has revealed." (*The Sun-Herald*, August 14, 1994)

"Spain burns" "Madrid: Forest fires were again raging in Spain yesterday, soon after a spate of blazes that destroyed more forest in a week than fires did in the whole of 1993. In Aragon and Navarra in northern Spain, fires started by lightning have razed 14,000 hectares since Friday and are burning on several fronts." (*SMH*, July 19, 1994).

"Vancouver fires" "Vancouver: Forest fires raging across British Columbia worsened yesterday, forcing the evacuation of hundreds of homes. The forest service said 60 new fires had started in the past day for a total of 168." (*SMH*, July 27, 1994).

"Fires rampage" "Portland: Wildfires had rampaged across nearly 24,000 hectares of Oregon and Washington, forcing the evacuation of several hundred people and burning at least seven homes, officials said." (*SMH*, July 29, 1994).

"Big dry threatens elephants" "Harare: A critical water shortage has hit Zimbabwe's premiere national park Hwange, threatening to kill thousands of the country's elephants, wildlife officials said yesterday. "Water is running out very fast and animals, particularly elephants, could die of thirst", the head of Hwange's safari operators, Mr John Burton, said." (*The Australian*, August 3, 1994)

"Rain pounds Asia" "Up to 3,000 families have been forced from their homes by floods in Kompong Speu province in Cambodia, while others have had to be rescued by helicopter. Meanwhile, monsoon rain pounded much of the Philippines yesterday, flooding cities and towns still reeling from six storms in July that killed more than 60 people. And at least nine people were drowned or buried by landslides after a storm hit central and northern Thailand." (*SMH*, August 3, 1994).

"Heatwaves" "Temperatures hit a record high of 39.1 degrees in Tokyo yesterday as Japan's heatwave continued after the hottest July on record. Much of Europe baked in the sixth week of a heatwave, with the temperature expected to hit 37 degrees in eastern Germany and Poland later this week." (*SMH*, 08/08/1994).

"Temperatures rise" "Tokyo: Automobile breakdowns doubled, air-conditioner sales tripled, and carp gasped their last in the Kandagawa River as the mercury hit an all-time high of 39.1 degrees in Tokyo last Wednesday. Since the heat wave began in early July, 79 of Japan's 153 meteorological stations have registered record temperatures. Says Kazuo Kimura, 36, an ad-agency employee: "When I visit my clients, I have to arrive 10 minutes early to cool down in the lobby because I drip with sweat." (*Time*, August 15, 1994).

"Unstoppable global warming will bring starvation: scientists" "Global warming was now virtually unstoppable and would bring with it widening starvation and rising food prices, two of Australia's most distinguished scientists told senior federal ministers yesterday." (*The Australian*, August 4, 1994).

"China quake" "Beijing: One person died in a stampede and hundreds of people were injured in China when a strong earthquake rocked the Taiwan Straits yesterday. Chinese officials said the quake measured 7.3 on the Richter scale." (*SMH*, September 19, 1994).

"Floods kill 180 and threaten rice exports" "Tam Nong, Vietnam: Small wooden boats have replaced bicycles as the only way to get around in areas of the Mekong Delta hit by floods that killed at least 180 people and could hurt Vietnam's dollar-earning rice exports." (*SMH*, October 14, 1994).

"Babies drowned" "Washington: Some of the worst floods to strike the US for hundreds of years continued to surge through Georgia, Alabama and northern Florida yesterday, drowning 28 people. The floods have brought gruesome images to television screens, with scenes of babies trapped in cars being swept to their deaths." (*The Australian*, July 13, 1994).

"Seven die, 10,000 evacuated in flood" "Houston: Intense rains pounded Houston today, paralysing America's fourth most populous city, as the death toll rose to seven in flash flooding across south-eastern Texas. All the south-eastern part of the State remained under a flood warning as up to 50cm of rain inundated parts of the region in the past 36 hours. Texas Governor Ann Richards declared 17 counties in the region disaster areas, although Houston - located in Harris County - was not among them because it has not yet formally requested the designation. Damage estimates were unknown, but losses were believed to be well into the millions of dollars. More than 10,000 people were evacuated yesterday from counties north of Houston, with other evacuations expected today." (*The Daily Telegraph Mirror*, October 19, 1994).

"Flood disaster" "Atlanta: President Bill Clinton has declared a major disaster in 31 Georgia counties where flooding has killed 17 people in 3 days. The declaration enables residents stricken by floods, high winds and tornadoes to qualify for Federal aid." (*SMH*, July 9, 1994).

"Houston flood victims hit by floating oil fires" "Houston: A pair of major pipelines ruptured today near the Texan oil capital of Houston, sparking raging fires and evacuations in a region where people had been forced earlier this week from their homes by severe flooding." (*SMH*, October 22, 1994).

"Global threat looms" "A British scientific research body has discovered evidence of a rapid rise in temperature in Antarctica that could cause a global disaster - with several major cities, including Sydney, threatened by rising seas." (*The Sun-Herald*, June 26, 1994).

"Scourge of the rivers" "It has been branded an ecological and recreational disaster for Tasmania. It is ricegrass, which breeds like wildfire and chokes the life from river banks and flats, turning fertile estuaries into green deserts. There is no inexpensive and safe way to kill the weed and some sections of the state's rivers are being written off as too far gone." (*Sunday Tasmanian*, August 28, 1994).

"The deadly drought: at last we learn the truth" "State Cabinet has been given a devastating picture of the drought - towns running out of drinking water from next week, farmers shooting more than half their animals, and small communities dying. The bleak news prompted the Premier to announce a \$65 million drought relief package, saying the situation was worse than he had realised." (*SMH*, October 14, 1994).

"Famine poses serious threat" "The growing imbalance between population and the natural resources needed to sustain it was the world's most formidable challenge, the Australian ambassador for the environment to the United Nations, Ms Penelope Wensley, said yesterday. She was addressing the 1994 Landcare conference in Hobart, attended by about 600 delegates to assess the decade of Landcare since the program's launch in 1989 and its future. "Let me assure you what is happening internationally has profound implications for Australia and in the effort of ordinary Australians to shape their future", she said. "We are in the midst of a period of most extraordinary change and the entire international community, not just Australia, must find a clear vision for the future and the way ahead." (*The Australian*, September 9, 1994).

"Drought in NSW" "93% of NSW was declared drought stricken yesterday, making this drought the most devastating in the State's history." (*The Telegraph Mirror*, October 1, 1994).

"Heat down in New Delhi" "New Delhi: Residents of this Indian capital rejoiced this week in a welcome cool wave: the mid-afternoon high on Monday reached only 36 degrees. For the past week, northern India has endured its worst heat in half a century, with temperatures that have soared to 46 degrees in the city and 49 degrees in the nearby Rajasthan Desert, leaving more than 400 people dead from heat-related illnesses, causing outbreaks of cholera and stomach ailments, creating power and water shortages and generally making life hellish. After one particularly brutal night last week, when the low temperature was 33 degrees, 18 people were found dead on the streets of New Delhi. Near the Rajasthan town of Dholpur, and elderly woman and 6 year old girl died of heatstroke walking from the village bus stop to their rural hut. "It's been a very bad summer", said Vinod Kumar, 25, a builder's labourer who was carrying bricks on his head in the heat. "It is especially difficult for labourers. Sometimes everything goes hazy before my eyes. I get dizzy. I constantly have to keep watch on myself." (*SMH*, June 18, 1994).

"Inferno on Jupiter" "A comet's violent encounter with the giant planet is proving more spectacular than many predicted."

(*Time*, July 25, 1994).

"Bushfire pollution smothers SE Asia" "Singapore: Singapore's skyscrapers disappeared into a pall of smog again this week, cars were rained with finely powdered ash, the sun emerged only as an orb behind the murky haze, and the Environment Ministry said air pollution levels were way over the safety limits. It is a distressing pattern of extraordinary air pollution which has plagued Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia for almost three months, the result of huge fires raging in the tropical rain forests on the Indonesian islands of Kalimantan and Sumatra. While Sydney experienced a day or two of similar conditions during the January bushfires, the South-East Asian haze has endured so long that millions have been forced to adjust their lifestyles to air quality readings far exceeding international safety standards." (*SMH*, October 26, 1994).

"Summer smog on rise" SYDNEY: "Air pollution during the summer months has been steadily rising since 1992, according to a report by the Government's environmental watchdog." (*The Telegraph-Mirror*, August 26, 1994).

"Unleaded petrol still toxic, says expert" "Motor vehicles would continue to pump toxic chemicals into the atmosphere despite the decision to phase out leaded petrol, delegates attending a conference on air pollution warned yesterday. Mr Graham Johnson, a principal scientist at the CSIRO's Centre for Pollution Assessment and Control, said little was known about the environmental impact of many volatile organic compounds contained in car emissions." (*SMH*, August 27 1994).

"Pesticides kill 40,000 a year: UN" "At least 40,000 people are killed each year by misuse of pesticides and up to one million are made ill or permanently damaged, according to Mr Jan Huismans, of the United Nations environment program." (*The Age*, May 2, 1994).

"Russian oil spill threat to Arctic" "New York: A ruptured pipeline in the Russian Arctic has spilled 2 million barrels of hot oil, soaking the fragile permafrost and posing potentially major environmental damage to the region, according to reports received by the US Department of Energy. The volume of the spill is roughly 8 times the amount lost when the Exxon Valdez ran aground in Alaska in 1989, but the actual magnitude of the damage will be difficult to determine until more information is available." (*SMH*, October 26, 1994).

"Communists bequeath environmental time bomb" "The huge oil spill in the Russian Arctic is part of a legacy of ecological disaster inherited from the old communist State that also includes industrial and radioactive pollution on a devastating scale. Pollution was a strictly taboo subject under the Soviet regime as soil was ruined by millions of tonnes of heavy metals and nuclear waste; sulphur and other pollutants saturated the atmosphere; and lakes and rivers turned into depositories for sewage. An estimated 22 million square kilometres of territory across the former Soviet Union were hit by pollution in one form or another during more than 70 years of communist rule. This makes the oil spill in the far northern region of Komi only the latest in a long list of such problems." (*The Australian*, October 28, 1994).

"Dry kills pelicans" "Tehran: More than 200 pelicans have died because of a severe drought which has hit swamps in south-eastern Iran, the official agency, IRNA, said yesterday. Regional environmental protection officer Mr Zabiollah Akrami said the pelicans had arrived from central Asia to Lake Hamun, close to the border with Afghanistan." (*The Australian*, October 12, 1994).

"An economic argument for preserving the fly" "The single most important reason for the loss of species is changing land use - taking land in its 'natural' form, be it bog, forest or coast, and converting it into land which is either grazed or cropped. But the value of this land may actually be greater in its original state than after it has been transformed. Its value as farmland may be less than the medicinal value of its plants and its use as a tourist venue. Add to this that chopping down a forest will cause floods elsewhere and will tend to exacerbate global warming and the change in land use frequently makes no economic sense. Yet it is still happening. Why? The explanation lies in two distortions. Countries frequently subsidise changes in land use for domestic political reasons. Even when they do not, it is difficult for them to extract the full value of the land in its existing form. There is no easy way of ironing out the second distortion, but simply eliminating distorting subsidies would help. We do not need to know what the fly is for: all we need to know is that it is economic nonsense to subsidise insecticides to kill it."

(*The Age*, Sept. 27, 1994).

"River of fire kills hundreds of Egyptians" "Hundreds of charred corpses littered the ruins of southern Egyptian town yesterday, where spilled oil caught fire and sent rivers of flame through its streets. Several houses in Dronka, 400km south of Cairo, were still ablaze nearly 24 hours after oil, spilling out of an overturned tanker train near a depot, was struck by lightning and caught fire. Other witnesses said the oil was ignited when it came in contact with electricity pylons. The blazing oil was then carried through the town of 20,000 inhabitants of flood waters that had formed following torrential rains in the region." (*The Australian*, November 4 1994).

"Quake toll hits 65" "Manila: Filipino rescuers today found the bodies of three more young children killed by an earthquake and tidal wave as they slept. The discovery took the death toll from yesterday's quake to at least 65. The three, aged between three and five, were found 150 metres from their homes in Baco, a small town on the central Philippine island of Mindoro which bore the brunt of the disaster, a senior official

said. Rescuers were still searching areas along the east coast where roads and bridges were destroyed. President Fidel Ramos, who has declared Mindoro a calamity area, cut short his trip to Indonesia for the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation forum to visit the stricken area."

(*The Daily Telegraph Mirror*, November 17, 1994).

"Tornado ravages village" "Miami: A tornado spawned by tropical storm Gordon ripped through a retirement community killing at least one person and turning hundreds of mobile homes into mangled aluminium and asbestos. "It's pure hell out there", sheriff's officer Dallas Durr said. The storm was nearly stationary in the Gulf of Mexico today, with maximum sustained winds of 80km/h. The centre was about 185km south of Sarasota. The deadliest tropical storm of the season hit Florida after wreaking havoc in the Caribbean. At least 100 people were confirmed killed in Haiti, and the independent Radio Signal FM reported the death toll was at least 400." (*The Daily Telegraph*, November 17, 1994).

"Battle to save Pharaohs' tombs" "Experts are battling to save the tombs in the Valley of the Kings at Luxor from the ravages of this month's floods, the worst in Egypt this century. They have devastated large areas in the south, causing at least 730 deaths. The disaster began shortly before the 77th anniversary of Howard Carter's discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb, which had lain untouched for almost 3,000 years. The tomb was filled with water in the storms that started lashing Upper Egypt earlier this month. Workers have been suctioning out the water flooding the tombs of Tutankhamun and Seti I and the paintings have been cleaned." (*The Australian*, November 16, 1994).

"Winemakers expect to reap rich harvest from drought" "Revised estimates of this year's wine-grape harvest are expected to show a huge increase to a record of about 750,000 tonnes despite the drought, taking winemakers closer to their \$1 billion annual exports target. The Winemakers Federation of Australia said yesterday that 1994 had been 'an unusual year' and 'both quality and quantity are up'. The drought, which took hold in South Australia later than in NSW and Queensland, would actually produce greater-flavoured and higher-quality premium wines in the State because dry grapes produced wines with more intense flavour, it said." (*The Australian*, November 14, 1994).

"Algae threat to ravaged farmers" "Drought-stricken farmers could soon be dealt another cruel blow from outbreaks of blue-green algae blooms in NSW rivers and water storages. The warm, mild winter, coupled with rivers barely flowing, has created ideal conditions to trigger the growth of the toxic weed. Blue-green algae are microscopic single-celled organisms which can kill animals and cause skin rashes, ear and eye irritations, asthma-like symptoms and gastro-intestinal problems in people. Three years ago the world's largest recorded blue-green algae bloom stretched for more than 1,000 km along the Barwon-Darling river system from Mungindi, on the Queensland border, to Wentworth, on the Victorian border, killing more than 1,600 sheep and cattle which drank the poisoned water." (*Sun-Herald*, Oct. 30, 94)

"Four disasters a day" "Jakarta: Indonesia, home of many of the world's active volcanoes and host to some of its worst earthquakes, bushfires and tidal waves, said today that it averaged at least four natural disasters a day. The official Antara news agency quoted the Social Affairs Minister, Ms Endang Kusuma Suweno, as saying Indonesia had faced 1,641 disasters this year, an average of 4.5 a day. She told a parliamentary commission yesterday that poor communications and inadequate data only hindered cataloguing the numbers of those affected by such disasters - 772 killed, 2.2 million hurt and 15,000 buildings destroyed this year. "This poses difficulties to relief efforts", she said. In Indonesia's latest tragedy, 48 people were killed by a volcanic eruption from which the flow of debris and hot gases last week burnt a trail of destruction through central Java." (*SMH*, December 1, 1994).

"Australia worst greenhouse gas emitter in industrialised world" "Australia is the highest per capita greenhouse gas emitter in the industrialised world, according to a report released yesterday by the Australian Conservation Foundation. The report found that due to population growth and land clearing in the past two decades, Australia has become one of the worst greenhouse gas emitters in the world. Compared to other Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development countries, Australia's greenhouse gas emissions per capita in 1990 were 33 tonnes of carbon dioxide, while Canada produced 21 tonnes, USA 23, Germany 16 and Norway 11." (*The Australian*, December 6, 1994).

"What on Earth? It's hotter" "The Earth is getting hotter, according to new data on climate change from the United Nations. The findings, which are part of research being done by 130 scientists world-wide for the UN's inter-governmental panel on climate change, shows the rate of global warming has increased by up to 30 per cent over the past two years. The UN update said the rate of warming of the atmosphere, had increased by between 10 and 30 percent since 1992. Carbon dioxide emissions also increased in the past 18 months, after a period of stabilisation between 1991 and mid-1993. Environment groups used the findings to put further pressure on the Federal Government to introduce a carbon tax to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The Australian Conservation Foundation said Australia had already fallen behind its interim targets to reduce gases under an international agreement. Its executive director, Ms Tricia Caswell, said Australia had the worst levels of greenhouse gas emissions per capita among OECD member nations. Federal Cabinet is due to consider measures to tackle greenhouse emissions, but industry groups have campaigned against a carbon tax, saying it would severely damage the economy." (*SMH*, January 13, 1995).

"Arab States seek fresh strategy on environment" "The Middle East and North Africa are in environmental crisis, with one-quarter of the Arab world living without access to safe water supplies and a fifth in cities with 'unacceptable' levels of air pollution, the regional vice-president of the World Bank, Mr Ciao Koch-Weser, said yesterday. He was presenting a 78 page World Bank environmental strategy plan to an annual meeting of Arab League ministers responsible for the environment. The bank was ready to double lending for environmental projects in the region to \$US 1 billion (\$1.29 billion) a year, he said. The report paints a grim picture of pollution in the Arab world, which it says costs Arab League nations \$US 10 billion a year, or about 3% of their combined gross domestic product, half of which is accounted for by the health costs of respiratory and other pollution related diseases. It says 60 million Arabs have no access to safe water, nine Arab countries are annually consuming more than 100% of their renewable water resources, and 45 million people live in cities with air pollution at least five times World Health Organisation-accepted levels. The bank said that since 1991 it had provided loans of more than \$US1.8 billion to Middle East and North African countries for mainly environmental projects. Nearly 44% was invested in projects to develop water resources and environmental protection, with the rest going to energy and transportation, agriculture and pollution control. Such projects would receive \$US3 billion in the next 3 years. The report urges Arab nations to increase institutional structures to deal with environmental problems (few States have ministries for the environment, for instance), to cut energy and water subsidies, which it says amount to \$US25 billion a year and to substantially increase information and awareness about the levels and dangers of pollution." (*The Australian*, December 7, 1994).

"Taipei - a city choking on its own success" "TAIPEI: The sunset over the river outside Taipei used to be one of the wonders of this island, once so famous for its beauty that it was called Formosa. Now you will be lucky to get a smeary glimpse of the sun and the outlines of the mountains, the whole region is so thickly covered with a permanent grey pall. Welcome to Taiwan. It has a population of 20 million, mostly squeezed into a comparatively small area between mountains and sea. The results are cities such as Taipei which, as one businessman commented wryly, 'is not fit for human habitation'...

Most Taiwanese are strangely phlegmatic, even fatalistic, about how their wealth is literally choking them. This is despite the gray smog, despite the rising incidence of asthma, despite the traffic jams - which on holidays can stretch halfway way across the island and have given Taiwan the dubious fame of having invented an adult nappy to cope with a 360 kilometre journey that takes 12 hours." (*SMH*, January 17, 1995).

"OZONE RESCUE. A 10% drop in the level of stratospheric ozone could cause a 25% increase in cases of some forms of skin cancer." It's spring time in Antarctica, and that means the ozone hole is back, right on schedule. Just as in every year since it was first reported in 1985, the concentration of this protective stratospheric gas has temporarily plummeted, allowing more of the sun's harsh ultraviolet rays to penetrate to the earth's surface. This year's hole is worse than ever: the UN's World Meteorological Organisation says a record 70% of Antarctica's ozone blanket has disappeared. Things are much better in the temperate latitudes, but the ozone is thinning to some degree all over the world, leaving animals, plants and people more susceptible to the skin cancers, damaged systems and stunted growth that excessive exposure to ultraviolet rays can cause." (*Time*, November 7, 1994)

"WHERE THE TAPS ARE RUNNING DRY" "Up to 48,000 people in drought-stricken areas of country NSW may run out of water if there are no significant rainfalls by next March. Public Works Minister and Deputy Premier Ian Armstrong yesterday released figures showing the number of towns without water supply and those in danger of running out of water. Towns which have run out of water are Tiboburra, Clare, Hatfield, Nymagee, Crawin, Tomingley, Caragabal, Quandialla, Bimbi, Rowena, Eumungerie, Mogriguy, Brocklehurst, Ballimore, Wongarbon, Windeyer, Stuarttown, Hargraves, Cooks Gap, Wollar, Lue, Croppa Creek, Old Bonalbo, Mallanganee, Rappville, Torrington, Emmaville, Red Range, Glencoe, Woolbrook, Nowendoc and Barraba." (*The Sun-Herald*, December 11, 1994).

"FLOOD TAXES" "Rome: Floods that killed 64 people in northern Italy last month caused \$12.2 billion damage and the Government will have to raise a special tax levy to find the money, the Treasurer, Mr Lamberto Dini, said." (*SMH*, December 3, 1994).

"BUSHFIRES FLARE IN RECORD HEATWAVE" "Dozens of people collapsed, thousands of homes were blacked out and bushfires flared yesterday as Sydney sweltered through its hottest December day in 37 years. At 1pm the temperature at Observatory Hill, near the Harbour Bridge, reached 40.7C - 105.2 on the old Fahrenheit scale - the hottest December day since 42.2C was recorded on December 20, 1957. At Richmond, the temperature soared to 43.7C. An ambulance spokesman said 34 people who collapsed from heat exhaustion in the metropolitan area were taken to hospital, including a child found locked in a car in a Chatswood car park. At least six major bushfires were reported around the State as most of NSW was covered by fire bans. One blaze, at West Gosford, was still out of control last night, threatening industrial properties. The heat caused chaos for commuters throughout the day. The NRMA reported more than 900 breakdown calls an hour in the metropolitan area, compared with the normal rate of 400 to 500. Most calls were triggered by overheating radiators or fuel that had vaporised." (*SMH*, Dec 22, 1994).

"WORLD BANK WARNS INDONESIA ON RAINFOREST LOGGING" "In Kalimantan, the Indonesian part of Borneo, seemingly endless forests cover the landscape, creating the impression of an infinite resource. It is difficult to picture this vast and sparsely populated region stripped of most of its trees. Yet, the World Bank warns that harvests from Indonesia's tropical forests, the world's largest after Brazil's, are running about 50 percent higher than the estimated sustainable cut." (*The Weekend Australian*, November 26-27, 1994).

"INDIA'S BIHAR STATE PLUNGES INTO ABYSS OF TERROR, DECAY" "Patna, India: For some Indians, a journey into Bihar State is like travelling back to the Dark Ages, to a time of lawlessness and chaos. But others see Bihar as a nightmare just beginning to unfold, one in which the hierarchy of caste, which has cemented Indian Hindu society together for thousands of years, is crumbling and being replaced by an anarchy that could spread throughout India. "There's a reign of terror in Bihar", said Mr Saibal Gupta, a sociologist in Patna, the capital of Bihar, in northern India. "Castes are fighting castes. The State has withered away and the things that one counts on from the State - police, the postman, hospitals, even basic salaries - have vanished." (*SMH*, Dec. 3, 1994).

"SPARE OUR LAND FROM BEING DENUDED" "I have recently completed an extensive tour of Kenya. During those several thousand kilometres, I was shocked by the denuding of the landscape of any sizeable trees. Following flash floods, the swollen rivers were chocolate-red and erosion was widespread. To the north, the Sahara Desert, like a great cancer, continues its relentless move to the south through Ethiopia into Kenya. This parlous state of affairs has been brought about by sheer desperation. Desperation by incredibly poor people cutting the trees for firewood. Here in Australia - a rich, lucky country with a Prime Minister extolling us on our outstanding growth - we are being told to chop down our few remaining old-growth forests, not for firewood, as a result of dire poverty, but for a few dollars to assist our 'outstanding growth'. One cannot criticise the Kenyans for what they are doing, just as one cannot criticise foresters wanting their jobs. But can we not, as a rich nation, stay the hand of destruction and relocate and re-employ these people at a tiny cost in our overall budget? Can not those responsible for this vandalism and lunacy get on a plane and visit northern Kenya for a week and see what they are prepared to do to our country, which is already suffering massive high salinity and soil degradation problems?" (*SMH*, Dec 26, 1994).

"FOOD SHORTAGES HIT NORTH KOREA" "Tokyo: North Korea was suffering from grain shortages due to bad weather and had asked Japan for food aid, Japanese Mps said yesterday after talks with a North Korean official. Shortages of food, fuel and other goods are believed to be serious in North Korea after the collapse of its benefactor, the Soviet Union." (*SMH*, May 27, 1995).

"SCIENTISTS LEAVE CAUTION TO ILL WINDS" "Finally, science agrees that the earth is warming, that humanity is responsible and that there are solutions, but the will of the people is needed to make governments clean up their acts. SCIENTISTS are a cautious bunch. They study, ponder, discuss, publish and then, if pressed, use careful phrases like "preliminary studies show" or "our work suggests". Few absolutes or sexy headlines slip past their collective lips. But earlier this month, researchers got down and got definitive. A team of 10 scientists from a wide range of disciplines told colleagues attending the Australia-New Zealand Conference on Climate Change in Wellington that there was no doubt: temperatures in our little part of the planet are going up. "The warming is real," said a group spokesman, Dr Neville Nicholls, of the climate research group at the Bureau of Meteorology in Melbourne. In other words, climate change is upon us now. No ifs, ands or buts."

(*Sydney Morning Herald*, October 22, 1994).

"BLUE-GREEN ALGAE POISONS LIVESTOCK" "LETHAL nerve poisons normally associated with marine shellfish have for the first time been linked to livestock deaths in NSW resulting from blooms of toxic blue-green algae. The discovery has raised concern over the safety of water supplies and the food chain as Australia faces what scientists fear may be its worst blue-green algae season on record as the drought intensifies. BGA blooms have been reported already from the Darling River near Bourke, the Fitzroy River near Rockhampton in Queensland, a water storage near Bundaberg, and Chaffee and Wyangala dams in NSW. It is now clear that one form of BGA, *Anabaena circinalis*, contains nerve toxins which cause paralytic shellfish poisoning, capable of killing within minutes by paralysing the breathing. The discovery was made by Dr Michael Hindmarsh, a vet with the NSW Department of Agriculture, and Dr Gary Jones and Dr Andrew Negri of the CSIRO Division of Water Resources. Investigating the deaths of 51 sheep near a farm dam near Walcha, they found algae in the dam which contained nerve toxins, as well as high toxin levels in the dead animals. Previously the algae had only been definitely linked to chronic forms of poisoning causing liver damage and risk of cancer. The sheep had died from three types of nerve poison: the so-called C-toxins, the more deadly gonyau-toxins and the extremely lethal saxitoxins. These poisons act as sodium channel-blockers, preventing signals being transmitted up and down the nervous system, leading to a tingling sensational collapse and respiratory failure within minutes or a few hours at most. "The sheep drank directly from the dam with a blue-green algae loom on it, and then died either right beside it or within 150 metres. Dr Jones said there was also concern about the longer term safety of water which had contained blue-green algal blooms. The poisons could remain in the water, becoming more and more deadly for up to three months after the bloom itself dispersed." (Julian Cribb, *The Australian*, Oct. 1, 1994).

"VOLCANO ERUPTS" "MOSCOW: A volcano in Russia's sparsely populated far-east Kamchatka peninsula spewed ash and dust 12 kilometres into the sky on Saturday in an eruption that could hamper air travel through the region, ITAR-TASS news agency reported."

SMH, October 3, 1994).

"ARCTIC HIT BY NEW 13 000-TONNE SPILL" "MOSCOW, Monday: Greenpeace has estimated that a further 13 000 tonnes of crude oil has spewed into the fragile Arctic environment in a massive new oil spill in far northern Russia. According to a Greenpeace spokesman, Mr Mark Warford, Greenpeace activists visited the area after receiving a tip-off from local oil workers on Saturday. Mr Warford said the activists found huge clouds of black smoke and flames burning from an oil slick two kilometres long. He said the company was still pumping oil through the pipe and onto the ground at the area of the spill. The water pumped with the oil also contained chemicals highly toxic to the environment... He said Greenpeace estimated the first oil spill at much higher than 14 033 tonnes, probably closer to the estimates of the American oil sources who reported a spill of 270 000 tonnes to authorities in the United States. The Russian Ministry for Nature initially estimated the first spill at 60 000 tonnes, but reversed its decision and endorsed the company estimate after flying over the scene by helicopter just over a week ago...

Mr Warford said that before finding the new spill, Greenpeace representatives had visited a river 60 kilometres from the original spill area where banks were clogged with a slick a metre deep, all covered by snow. "Come spring, when the snow melts, the whole area will be a disaster zone," he said. Another Greenpeace representative who visited the spill, Mr Paul Horsman, said in a statement that the oil slick was two kilometres long and two metres deep. The Russian Ministry for Emergency Situations yesterday denied any knowledge of a new spill."

(SMH, November 8, 1994).

"EVACUATIONS AS WINDS FAN NEW BLAZES" "Winds of up to 100 km/h/h created havoc for firefighters around NSW last night, forcing the evacuation of several towns and threatening dozens of properties... In the State's north, a fire active for over a week in Guy Fawkes National Park was fanned by the warm, windy conditions, and was now burning across 38 000 hectares." (SMH, October 5, 1994)

"FREAK WEATHER RAVAGES STATE FOR THIRD DAY" "GALES, floods, hailstorms and a blizzard struck Victoria yesterday as freak weather caused a third day of destruction across the State. Workers at the energy commission Citipower, reported more than 470 000 power blackouts across metropolitan Melbourne since midnight Saturday." (The Australian, November 8, 1994)

"NZ BATTERED" "WELLINGTON: Helicopters rescued dozens of hikers from flooded national parks, and the city of Wanganui declared a state of emergency yesterday as storms lashed New Zealand for the fourth day." (SMH, November 9, 1994).

"BUSHFIRES RAGE AS GALES HIT EAST COAST" "VIOLENT winds battered the east coast of the continent yesterday, fanning major bushfires in Queensland and NSW and bringing heavy snow to the Victorian and NSW alpine regions and parts of Tasmania."

(The Australian, November 8, 1994).

"US TO FIGHT INDON FIRES" "Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim said yesterday the US will help South-East nations fight forest raging in Indonesia. Thick smoke from fires raging in Indonesia's Sumatra and Kalimantan islands since August has blown across region, shrouding Malaysia, Singapore and parts of Indonesia." (The Sun-Herald, October 9, 1994).

"FLOOD DEATHS" "At least 172 Vietnamese, most of them children, have died in flooding in the southern Mekong Delta as rising waters continue to threaten lives and property." (The Sun-Herald, October 9, 1994).

"NINE DEAD AS FLOODS RAVAGE ATHENS" "ATHENS: Nine people died in and around the Greek capital as torrential rains lashed the region at the weekend, causing damage of "biblical" proportions and bringing a nation-wide halt to the traffic. Public Works and Environment Minister Mr Costas Laliotis said the city "looked as if had been ravaged by a biblical catastrophe." (The Australian, October 24, 1994).

"FLOODS HIT EGYPTIAN BURIAL SITES" "LUXOR, Egypt: Several ancient sites damaged by torrential rain in Egypt last week are among the finest and most important Pharaonic tombs in the Valley of the Kings in the southern province of Luxor... Heavy rains hit southern Egypt on Wednesday, killing more than 350 people, most of them water carrying burning oil swept through the village of Dronka, north of Luxor. Water also thundered down the mountains above the Valley of the Kings on the west side of the Nile, 700km south of Cairo, crashing into thousand-year-old tombs which figure among Egypt's top tourist attractions." (The Australian, November 7, 1994).

"FLOODS SWAMP SOUTHERN EUROPE" "MILAN: Heavy flooding cut off entire villages in southern Europe yesterday, killing at least 63 people and leaving hundreds reported missing. Schools, hotels and even a train opened doors to the thousands of people rendered homeless. Many people were plucked from their rooftops by helicopters or rescued by motorboat. The flooding swept away bridges and pieces of highway, cut off hundreds of villages and forced the closing of Nice's international airport. Italy's Piedmont region suffered the worst. About 60cm of rain fell over 60 hours from late on Saturday. Flooding also hit the northern regions Liguria, Lombardy and Val d'Aosta, which had 3m of snow in Alpine sections. Heavy rain fell over much of central Italy, Sicily and the Naples area. Italian officials said an army of 20 000 firefighters, police and volunteers was deployed." (The Australian, November 8, 1994).

"DEVASTATING RAINS KILL 63 IN EUROPE, MOROCCO" "Torrential rains swept southern Europe and North Africa at the weekend, cutting off villages, knocking out bridges and closing Nice's international airport... Much of Asti, a city of 70 000 people, was under three metres of water, and large areas of the city were without gas, electricity or phone services... In France, where seven people died since the weekend, floods forced the Nice-Cote d'Azur international airport to close today and tomorrow... Rains falling several days in Morocco killed at least 15 people, the newspaper L'Opinion reported today. Flooding rivers destroyed homes, swept away livestock and destroyed bridges and roads."

(SMH, Nov. 8, 1994).

"CYCLONE TOLL 192" "MADRAS, India: At least 192 people died in flash floods and collapsing buildings as a cyclone lashed the southern Indian State of Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh over the past week, officials said yesterday." (SMH, November 8, 1994).

"QUAKE INJURES 20 INDONESIANS" "JAKARTA: More than 20 people were injured when an earthquake measuring 6.3 on the Richter scale rocked a small Indonesian island early yesterday, the local Meteorological and geophysical Agency said. The quake struck 220km south of Ternate, off the island of Halmahera, part of the Moluccan chain." (The Australian, Oct. 10, 1994).

"DUTCH FLEE AS FLOODS THREATEN CATASTROPHE" "Emergency services and army of volunteers struggled to plug weak points in flood defences as water levels reached critical levels in The Netherlands but began receding in Germany, Belgium and France. Thousands more people were ordered to abandon their homes in central Netherlands. Huge tracts of the country braced for catastrophe as sodden dikes threatened to collapse after days of intense pressure from rising rivers. A quarter of a million people have fled as dikes threatened to dissolve, battered by waters overflowing from bloated rivers and canals after heavy rains. Floods across north-west Europe, which have already claimed 16 lives in France, six in Belgium, three in Germany and one in The Netherlands, are likely to be the costliest this century. Early Dutch estimates said the cost was already above \$2 billion, but economists said this could rise dramatically to as much as \$47 billion if dikes gave way. In northern England, dozens of people were evacuated from their homes as rivers swollen by the heavy rains continued to rise." (SMH, February 3, 1995).

"THOUSANDS GATHER IN SOUTH AMERICA TO CELEBRATE ECLIPSE" "LA PAZ, Bolivia: The moon blocked the sun's rays across a wide expanse of South America yesterday, delighting tourists and scientists who came from around the world to watch the rare solar eclipse... This event is not only for scientists but for all people," said a pharmacist in La Paz, Oscar Salas Guzman. "We are amazed by this event." A total eclipse raced over a remote section of the Bolivian Andes at an altitude of 4000m to 6400m for two to five minutes. From there, the shadow continued across northern Paraguay, Brazil and Argentina before disappearing over the Atlantic... The capital, La Paz, came to a standstill as schools, banks, businesses and government offices closed so people could watch. The last total eclipse visible here was in 1966, and the next one will not be until 2113. The Bolivian Government issued official statements to reassure members of several religious sects that the solar eclipse did not mean the end of the world was approaching." (The Weekend Australian, November 5-6, 1994).

"WORLD WEATHER CHAOS: A WEEK OF CRAZY WEATHER"

- 1 - SUNDAY: Eastern Texas hit by vicious storms. Baby killed and 18 people injured in town of Henderson.
- 2 - SUNDAY: 37 killed, 200 evacuated in flash floods on Indonesian tourist islands of Lombok.
- 3 - SUNDAY: 506 bodies recovered from ruins of homes burnt by flaming oil which leaked from a depot and was carried on floodwaters through Dronka, a village 400km south of Cairo, Egypt.
- 4 - SUNDAY, MONDAY: In Morocco, 15 people died when flooded rivers destroyed homes.
- 5 - Floods also hit Spain and the island of Corsica.
- 6 - In southern France, seven people died in floods in Nice and Lozere region.
- 7 - In Italy, 59 people died and 45 were missing in floods in northern region on Piedmont, around Turin, and Lombardy. City of Asti (40km south-east of Turin) was under three meters of water. 5 000 people were left homeless.

- 8 - MONDAY: 192 people died in flash floods as cyclone lashed southern Indian States on Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh.
 9 - TUESDAY: Mass evacuations in Wanganui, New Zealand, after four-day storm. Flooding in Wairarapa in central NZ.
 10 - In Australia, wild winds of up to 140km/h left trail of havoc across South Australia, Victoria, Queensland, Tasmania and NSW. Snow swept across Snowy Mountains, and Blue Mountains. 61 bushfires raged across NSW.
 11 - TUESDAY: 22 bushfires raged across NSW and Queensland.

"MOTHER Nature vented her anger at the world last week, sending a deadly mix of cyclones, violent storms, bushfires, floods and hurricanes across five continents, including Australia. Across the globe more than 700 people died, hundreds were injured and thousands left homeless in three days of disaster caused by freak weather conditions. In NSW, the weather hit both ends of the scale, with snow sweeping across the Snowy Mountains while only 300km away a major bushfire fanned by gale-force winds raged south of Campbelltown, threatening Sydney's outskirts. Overseas, vicious storms pounded Texas while torrential rains caused death and destruction from floods in Italy, Spain, southern France, north Africa, Egypt, southern India, Indonesia and New Zealand. Many armchair meteorologists were quick to blame the Greenhouse Effect, the depletion of the ozone layer and the El Nino effect for the crazy weather around the world. Sun-Herald expert weatherman Don White played down the roles of these phenomena although he acknowledged they were contributing factors to the global havoc. Mr White, director of Australia's Weatherwatch organisation, said the extreme conditions were triggered by the change in seasons in both hemispheres. "Undoubtedly the El Nino, which describes the ocean temperatures currents across the Pacific, does have some effect on overall rainfall patterns but it can't be used to explain everything." ... "Greenpeace in Sydney said last week's severe windstorms in Australia were just a glimpse of what would be common in the future unless governments legislated against greenhouse gas emissions. Greenpeace climate change campaigner Keith Tarlo said State and Federal governments' greenhouse gas emissions policies were "totally ineffective". (*The Sun-Herald*, November 13, 1994).

"JAPAN BRACES FOR \$80 BILLION ECONOMIC AFTERSHOCK" "TOKYO, Wednesday: The greatest aftershock of the Great Kobe Quake may be felt by the Japanese economy, just dragging itself slowly out of its worst recession since World War II. The vice-president and senior economist at Deutsche Bank in Tokyo, Mr Shunsuke Motani, told *the Herald* that it would be "not surprising" if the final toll of the earthquake came to \$80 billion. This would be double the latest estimate of \$40 billion for damage done by the devastating Northridge earthquake in California just a year ago... The Osaka-Kobe area, Japan's second most important economy after Tokyo, accounts for 12.6 per cent of the economy, 15 per cent of its bank lending and 16 per cent of its wholesale and retail trade. Already, the smokestacks and computer systems of some of Japan's most important industries are idle. Companies closed by damage include three of the world's biggest steelworks, the Sumitomo chemical factory, Mitsubishi and Sanyo electrical goods plants and Minolta's camera assembly operation at Itami. A liquid crystal display plant is shut, as is a Toshiba computer factory, a Mazda car plant and a Matsushita electronics plant... Japan's Industry Minister, Mr Ryutaro Hashimoto, has warned that other industries not directly hit by the quake may also be forced to close because of the collapse of transport and other infrastructure. Highways and rail links, phones and computer networks will be out for months." (*SMH*, January 19, 1995)

"KOBE QUAKE TO IMPACT GLOBALLY" **"WITH** damage estimates from the Kobe earthquake rising as high as \$US100 billion, US economists believe the Japanese focus on internal reconstruction will have an enormous impact on the global economies. The need for liquidity at home will limit Japan's continued investment in international capital markets, experts say. While there was doubt the Japanese would divest themselves of current international assets, they would however redirect new funds for domestic purposes" (*Sunday Telegraph*, January 22, 1995).

UPDATE: ABC TV reported on January 24, 1995 that Japanese authorities estimate the cost of rebuilding after the Kobe earthquake will reach \$400 billion. The number of the dead has surpassed 5000.

"QUAKE HITS COLOMBIA" "BOGOTA: An earthquake centred in eastern Colombia's sparsely populated plains but felt nearly, 1,000 kilometres away has killed at least three people and injured 40. The quake, with a preliminary magnitude of at least 6.5 on the Richter scale, was felt as far away as Caracas, Venezuela." (*SMH*, January 21, 1995).

"Gases study clears the air on cars" "Without the invention of the car, the greenhouse gas problem might be worse and it is a myth that people were better off in the 'old days' before cars, a new study says. The study, Greenhouse Gas Emissions in Australian Transport in 1900 and 2000, by Dr Leo Dobes, from the Bureau of Transport and Communications Economics, employed by the Federal Transport Department, is the first analysis of the greenhouse gas emissions of transport in 1900 compared with today's. "It was surprising that the motor car comes out looking reasonably good. Animals emit greenhouse gases that have a much higher greenhouse warming potential - nitrous oxide has 320 times the global warming potential of carbon dioxide (the main greenhouse gas produced by cars). But Dr Dobes found that if we were using electric cars today, greenhouse emissions would be 10 per cent lower." (*SMH*, May 19, 1995).

"Nature hitting its limit: report" "Humanity is on the boundary of nature's limits and is facing a worldwide crisis in fish stocks, grain production, over-population and deforestation, according to a report by the Worldwatch Institute. *State of the World 1995*, founded by the Rockefeller Foundation, paints a picture of a world about to fall into economic, social and environmental chaos unless major changes are made to the structure of society. According to the Worldwatch Institute report, the world fish catch, which has quadrupled over the past 40 years, is no longer rising. 'Seventeen oceanic fisheries are now being fished at or beyond capacity... Three of the Earth's natural limits are already slowing the growth in world food production, the sustainable yield of oceanic fisheries, the amount of fresh water produced by the hydrological cycle and the amount of fertiliser that existing crop varieties can effectively use.' The reported collapse in the populations of nearly two-thirds of the world's 9,600 bird species is more subtle evidence that the environment is in trouble." (*SMH*, February, 13, 1995).

SOCIETY AND CULTURE

"Spelling is not a moral virtue" "So, there is to be no hiding place in Britain's schools for Dan Quayle, the American Vice-President who recently revised the dictionary by appending an 'e' to potato. This innovation prompted his Democratic rival Al Gore to suggest ditching the traditional pre-election debate between the two presidential running mates and to challenge Dan Quayle to a spelling bee instead. But do Quayle's unconventional ways with tubers make him less qualified to be the man just one heartbeat away from the White House? William Shakespeare spelt his name three different ways. Is Hamlet any less of a play? Shakespeare's texts were thick with spelling mistakes until pedagogues got hold of them in the last couple of centuries and primped them up. John Clarke couldn't spell, nor could Blake, George Orwell was not a great speller. He had more important things to say. Given a choice between "I before e except after c" and "All animals are equal but some animals are more equal than others", few would rate the former as a sharper insight than the latter. Spelling has been turned into a moral virtue, which it is not. Just because you cannot spell, does not mean you are not a good historian or novelist."

(*The Weekend Australian*, August 22-23, 1992).

"Militias ponder: guerilla war against Big Brother" "It is bizarre talk to hear the remote and tranquil mountains of Montana. In their camouflaged headquarters last week, a group of right-wing extremists sat earnestly pondering how to win a guerilla war. But it was not a communist invader they were preparing to repel. They are spoiling for a fight with a United States Government. It is not quite what the Republican leader of the House of Representatives, Mr Newt Gingrich, intended when he advocated taking on big government. Members of the so-called Montana Militia Movement, one of several survivalist organisations across the US, say they have stored large quantities of weapons and food in the mountains in readiness for a hit-and-run guerilla war. They might have preferred to use them against the Red Army, but now they are eager to take on their own government... Their grievances against Washington seem more rooted in paranoia than reality. The Oklahoma bombing, they believe, will be used by the Government as a pretext to clamp down on their activities. "We know that at some point an incident would take place which they would use to try to stop this movement," said the group's head of intelligence, Mr Bob Fletcher. In this scenario, the Government

would gradually erode constitutional rights, introduce martial law and bring United Nations troops on to US soil in preparation for a single world government. Even more bizarrely, the group believes the Government can bring about earthquakes; that 47 prison camps have been built on military bases to prepare for the martial law; that Washington can implant barcodes in people to control them. They also claim to have documentation showing Russian bombers tanks and troops carriers on US soil.

It may be rampant lunacy, but the movement has gathered an extraordinary momentum and discipline." (*The Australian*, May 1, 1995).

"McVeigh 'talked of city bomb attack guilt'" "Timothy McVeigh, arrested in connection with the bombing of the federal office building in Oklahoma City, has admitted responsibility for the blast that killed 167 people, according to a report in the New York Times... The sources said McVeigh told them planning for the bombing began about nine months ago and that Oklahoma City was one of several potential targets, from Denver to Kansas City and from Texas to South Dakota... As to his motivation, the sources said Mc Veigh was angry at the Government's action in the 1993 raid on the Branch Davidian religious cult's compound in Waco, Texas, and the 1992 killing of the wife and son of white supremacist Randy Weaver by federal marshals in Idaho." (*The Australian*, May 18, 1995).

"Our world 'in chaos'" "Man's culture of frenzied mass-production and consumption would soon lead to the death of civilisation if it continued unchecked, Japan's environment agency warned in a new document. 'We can learn from ancient civilisations which, like the civilisation of Crete, died because of damage inflicted by humans to their environment', Seiji Ikkatai, director of the agency's office of policy planning and research, said." (*The Daily Telegraph*, June 5, 1995).

"Economic cycle at sixes and sevens" "In the seven good years after the global recession of the early 1980's, the US grew at an average annual rate of 3.7 per cent, Japan by 4.2 per cent and Europe by 3.0 per cent. Australia did well with seven years of growth averaging 4 per cent; helped, it should be acknowledged, by heavy borrowing from abroad. A few short months ago it looked as though we would (just) beat the biblical cycle of seven bad years following the seven good ones. There was a near universal consensus that the recession, which began rolling through the industrialised economies from 1990, would be well and truly over by 1995... This developing international slowdown carries short-term political implications... that flow from the question of whether the advanced nations now have such structural sclerosis that a very low growth environment becomes more or less a permanent condition." (*SMH*, June 14, 1995).

"Undercurrent" "We're a contrary race. The more choice we have, the less we want. The more technology we get, the more do-it-yourself we become. And the more magazines we can buy, the more we just want to make our own instead. In the midst of this booming Information Age, in bedrooms and kitchens around the world, schoolchildren, students, artists, writers, fanatics and disgruntled people of all kinds are taking the media into their own hands. Thanks to the desktop publishing revolution and the ubiquity of photocopiers, we're seeing an explosion of cottage-industry magazines, known as 'zines'. It's estimated that there are up to 200 operating in Australia, 10 times more than there were at the start of the decade. There's still a long way to go to catch up with the US though, which has an extraordinary 20,000". (*SMH*, June 3, 1995).

"A backward, inefficient country, dragged down by protected third-world industries?" "Now they tell us! Television showed us, just after dawn on January 17, the collapse of Japan's glossy high-tech facade, along with 96,000 homes, bridges, motorways, cranes, warehouses, schools and hospitals, leaving 5,273 dead at the latest count (bodies are still being found) in the ruins of the once-flourishing port city of Kobe... A good third of Japan's workers toil in wooden shacks and sheds, in narrow alleys, just like those of the burnt-out battlers of Kobe..."

(*SMH*, February 11, 1995).

"Ignoble way to nobility" "Sir Paul Condon, Commissioner of London's Metropolitan police (Scotland Yard) told The Guardian of March 11: "I have never known a time where, within policing, there was so much unease with the criminal justice system. Condon's views on defects in the legal system were supported by the Kent Chief Constable, David Phillips, who said: "The search for truth [in criminal trials] is not an objective; rather, the trial often turns on clever argument testing the prosecution case". And they were supported by the Thames Valley Chief Constable, Charles Pollard, who told the BBC: "I have lost my faith in Britain's justice system. Many trials are not concerned to search out the truth. They are about one side winning and the other losing." (*Sun-Herald*, March 26, 1995).

"Publishers lusting after lurid crimes" "Crime does pay - according to rumours circulating in Britain's publishing world the autobiography of serial killer Fred West may be auctioned and that Nick Leeson, who broke Barings Bank, has signed a...\$2.18 million...book deal."

(*Sun Herald*, March 12, 1995).

"Sydney's sexual revolution" "The notion of the ABC televising more than 10,000 'out' homosexuals parading up Oxford Street on Saturday night to the voluptuous sound of Abba's Dancing Queen is seen by some seasoned members of the lesbian and gay community as one of life's smaller ironies. It wouldn't have happened in the 70s, when the song was first popular. Most homosexuals weren't public about their private lives. Straight-acting was the unwritten prerequisite for survival in the workplace, on the streets and, frequently, within families. The election of a Labor NSW Government in 1976 was greeted with great optimism. While in Opposition, Premier Wran had promised a wide range of social reforms including the decriminalisation of male homosexuality, anti-discrimination legislation and a clean-up of corruption. Out in the suburbs, there were several discreet social groups and less organised networks of friends. In Glebe was CAMP NSW (Campaign Against Moral Persecution), and there were gay and lesbian organisations associated with Sydney University. It was from these more political groups that the pressure came for the Labor party to keep its promises." (*The Sydney Morning Herald*, March 1, 1995).

"Sexual harassment" "A sexual harassment suit brought by a Christian student against his lesbian professor has fuelled debate about political correctness on United States campuses. When Craig Rogers walked into a lecture room at his northern California university just before Christmas, his only intention was to notch up enough credits to complete a psychology degree. Expecting a 75 minute discourse on issues in society, he instead heard what he considered was a diatribe from a lesbian professor about empowering women to masturbate so they could overcome the 'hardship' of sex with men. Rogers, a 33 year old Christian, married with two young children, was disgusted by Joanne Marrow's lecture, in which she made scathing comments about male genitalia and dismissed childbirth as being ruinous to female sexuality. He has filed a \$2.5 million sexual harassment suit against Marrow and California State University, Sacramento." (*The Australian*, March 14, 1995).

"Sexual harassment" "There is a new mood in the Australian workplace. It is one of caution and confusion as men and women navigate largely untested rules about how to act and what they can say to each other. It is, experts say, a revolution in the way men and women deal with each other. The cause of this angst is the cloud which now shadows office dynamics - sexual harassment laws. Unlike any other gain by the women's movement, sexual harassment has rocked the already delicate new relationship being forged between the sexes."

(*Herald Sun* (Vic) March 25, 1995).

"Short steps to a brave new world" "Western society has an insidious inability to distinguish right from wrong, and act on it..."

(*The Australian*, March 8, 1995).

"Sexually explicit gay cards banned" "Sexually explicit gay swap cards were yesterday banned in Queensland after the State censor ruled they were 'pornographic' and posed a danger to children. The 24,000 Queensland "Bubble Boy" swap cards show photographs of naked men performing 13 sexual acts, including anal and oral sex and sadomasochism. Each carries a safe-sex message on the reverse side."

(*The Australian*, March 9, 1995).

"Anti-gay students targeted via literature" "A recommended reading list of fiction and non-fiction books providing positive images of homosexuals and lesbians is being distributed to NSW schools." (*The Sydney Morning Herald*, March 7, 1995).

"You want to go the Sleaze Ball? Sorry, you've gotta be in the club" "Getting a ticket for tomorrow night's Sleaze Ball has been likened to trying to obtain a United States Green Card. The 17,000 people who attend one of the most popular gay and lesbian dance parties of the year have to be, or become, members of the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Ltd. To join, applicants must fill out a form asking them which

sexuality they identify with most strongly - lesbian, gay, transgender, bisexual or heterosexual. An existing member must sponsor each application. Applications are then considered by the Mardi Gras Board... The organisers of the ball say the strict policy is intended to protect the integrity of the gay and lesbian party." (SMH, Sept. 30, 1994).

"Thousands show their gay pride" "Paris: Thousands of gay men and women took to the streets in cities across Britain, Switzerland and France yesterday to mark the 25th "Lesbian and Gay Pride" day. Organisers said 60 000 people assembled for the Paris events, marching under a banner which proclaimed "Together against exclusion", Police put the figure at nearer 18 000. In London 50 000 people attended a demonstration with the theme of lesbian rights. The march organiser, Ms Emma Slack, said the figurehead - a huge pregnant model with "lesbian" written across its stomach - was intended to show lesbians could be mothers if they wanted." (SMH, June 26, 1995).

"Equality for gay couples" "It is not so long ago that Australians thought of a family as a man and a woman, legally married, with children and often surviving parents living together under the same roof. Over time, it has become more common for elderly parents to live out their years in aged persons' homes rather than with one of their children. As divorce became easier, so have single parent families become more common. And as marriage has become less fashionable, de facto relationships (frequently including children) have become more acceptable. The family, in other words, is not a static concept but one which has changed as society continues to change. When the Chief Justice, Justice Alastair Nicholson, called last week for legal recognition of homosexual couples and their children, he was simply recognising this evolution."

(SMH, Jan. 9, 1995).

"US RULING BACKS GAYS AS REFUGEES" "Washington: The United States Attorney-General, Ms Janet Reno, issued an order yesterday that would allow homosexuals from other countries to seek political asylum in the US if they could prove they were victims of government persecution solely because of their sexual preference." (SMH, June 18, 1994).

"GAY PARENTS THE CUTTING EDGE OF A SOCIAL EXPERIMENT" "The role of Chief Justice of the Family Court is surely to administer and interpret law, not to seek to make it. Those who form part of the federal judiciary are not elected but are appointed by the Federal Government to become, in effect, a form of permanent government - an oligarchy that answers to no-one. Besides possessing immense powers, the bench now possesses it without an absolute moral base. Instead of pontificating on what or what should not be done in the family structure, Justice Nicholson should be addressing what is wrong within the Family Court system. (John McNichol, National coordinator, Network for Christian Values). Surprise! The gay and lesbian lobby supports a judge's view that gay couples should have the same legal standing as straights (Herald, January 5). This report was just another of your almost supportive daily pro-gay and lesbian stories. Why no other views? Maybe with increasing pressure from the gay lobby on politicians it will soon be compulsory to be homosexual." (Joe Payne, SMH, Jan. 12, 1995).

"GAY COUPLES WIN FAMILY STATUS" "Gay couples in NSW are for the first time to be recognised as 'family' following a landmark deal hammered out between employers, unions and the State Government over the Easter weekend. The agreement has major repercussions for the rights of gays and lesbians in the workplace as well as expanding the rights of ethnic and Aboriginal families by providing a broader definition of the family than has so far existed in any State." (SMH, April 18, 1995).

"GAY GRANTED ASYLUM" "LONDON: A former Romanian soldier who is homosexual has been granted asylum in Britain in a landmark ruling that may trigger a flood of applications from gay men and women, *The Times* reported. The unnamed man convinced an immigration tribunal that he faced persecution and imprisonment if he were to be deported to Bucharest." (SMH, Dec. 15, 1994).

"MEAT MARKETING" The naked man has become the ad industry's answer to selling everything from soft drinks to scents. Pecs flexed, Louis Nowra ponders the effects on the male psyche. It was when I heard he was going to get liposuction that I realised my friend was perfectly serious in trying to rid his body of "love handles". I still don't think he is overweight. He is nearly 40 and has decided that age has wearied him; although he exercises, it is not enough. The excess weight will have to be artificially removed. He thinks that if it isn't, he won't be attractive to women any more. This attitude towards the male body is becoming increasingly common. When I was young, male athletes were expected to tone and sculpt and worry about their bodies, but as a man got older he was allowed to go to seed. Women were expected to try to withstand the ravages of gravity and time, but men were different.. My stepfather was a seaman and he was fanatical about his body. When he was home he'd vigorously work out in the backyard. His obsession with his body was considered suspicious by our neighbours and there were rumours that he was a poofster, because only poofsters would worry about their body after 30... The huge influence on male body image in the past 15 or so years has been the gay world. In moving away from the sissy image of earlier decades, gays cultivated an image of body that was the epitome of macho... But above all, this new sense of male body image was narcissistic. Just as the ancient Greeks thought the male body was the ideal compared with a woman's body - which was emphasised as a child-bearing container - so it is with the ideal modern male body. It is also a fascist ideal. You just have to look at Leni Riefenstahl's documentary about the Berlin Olympic Games to realise it was a Nazi celebration of the male body as the basis of physical perfection. The gay sense of male image gradually filtered into the straight community through music and advertising. By becoming more macho than heterosexual men, gays became the ideal. It is difficult to think of a movie that does not have as its ideal a hard, muscular body. If the macho body became the religion, the gym became the place of worship... There is a new and increasing pressure on men: the female gaze. Women are viewing men as sexual objects. Men can be hunks or spunks, or, conversely, ugly and blobs. Power, intelligence and money are no longer enough. The male must have a good body. Now he is beginning to understand, as women have, the basic terror of words like "beautiful", "ugly", "plain", "fat", and "old", and in the future he will fully comprehend the horror of those two initials: FB (Faded Beauty). In his desire to be more attractive he is exploring that female world of last hopes: liposuction and plastic surgery... Ego and attractiveness are a devastating combination. Like a beautiful woman who knows she is gazed at and loved, rather than having to make the effort to love someone other than herself, so for some men the pleasure of achieving an ideal physique will be a narcissistic pleasure that will only include those who gaze adoringly at him." (SMH, Oct. 3, 1994).

"INDUSTRY DISCOVERS TRAVELLING GAY IS A WAY TO GO" "THE Australian tourism industry's treatment of gay travel as a small and insignificant niche market is due for a jolt this week when more than 2 000 people converge on Sydney for a major gay and lesbian travel expo. Organised by the Australian Gay and Lesbian Travel Association (AGLTA), the expo will feature about 65 exhibitors - including airlines, tour operators, hotels, resorts and guesthouses - all promoting a range of products and services exclusive to the gay and lesbian travel market. It will be a stepping stone to Australia's hosting of the 1996 International Gay Travel Association World Congress, the first time the event has been held outside North America. The message to Australia's tourism industry is clear: the gay and lesbian travel market is a genuine force. As one agent commented: "Australia is firmly on the international gay and lesbian travel map. The pink dollar is starting to talk and the industry is starting to listen"... Mr Barry Stevenson, the manager of Travelcall, Double Bay, said: "Many of our clients are professionals, doctors, lawyers, teachers and retired gays, who come from all over Sydney and NSW, and all walks of life." (SMH, Sept. 27, 1994).

"Genetics link with petty crime claimed" "London: Pimping and petty theft appear to be genetically conditioned - but a person's genes have little influence on their propensity for committing crimes of violence, according to research unveiled at a controversial scientific meeting in London yesterday. Two American studies comparing identical twins, who share the same genes, with non-identical twins, have supported the contentious suggestion that some criminals may be born, not made." (SMH, Feb 15, 1995).

"School computer linked to porn 'supermarket'" "As Australians rush to connect their schools to the Internet global information network, they are discovering that they are also entering the world's biggest pornography 'supermarket'. With a personal computer linked to the Internet through a modem, the Herald yesterday downloaded X-rated photos of nude children, orgies, video clips from on-line brothels, a 'bill of rights' for people wishing to have sex with animals - and information on how to join a masturbation 'chat-line'. Passwords or proof of age were not required - just an ordinary dial-up connection, which is available to anyone who takes out an access account with a local Internet access provider."

"Millions hitch a ride on global freeway" "Victims of sexual abuse, philosophers, the aged, students and the chronically ill are some of the people hitching a ride on the Internet information highway creating a new global community..." "Confidential information will need to be protected and people will want to maintain their traditional moral standards and censor some information..." (*Herald Sun* (Vic), November 21, 1994).

"This industry's warped, says [IBM chief]" "Mr Louis Gerstner, a self-described technology 'rookie', said the information technology industry's most important mission is 'to make the darned stuff easier to use'. ...More than 500 northern California business leaders laughed as Mr Gertner described the 8 computers in his office, all powerful machines that boot up differently and basically do not work together...But people who used the technology must demand that the industry opened its standards and made products that did not take a technoid to figure out, he said." (*The Australian*, Feb. 7, 1995).

"Territory to consider euthanasia Bill" "Terminally ill patients will be given the right to take their own lives under a plan by the Northern Territory Chief Minister, Mr Perron. His private members Bill, to be introduced this month, will allow patients from other States to take advantage of the legislation and will protect healthcare professionals from criminal prosecution." (*The Australian*, Feb. 1, 1995).

"Scared to death" "Australia has the highest rate of teenage suicides in the world... Surveys show that teenagers in Australia increasingly suffer from low self-esteem and are being abused and neglected by their families. One in 200 females have eating disorders; 70 000 teenagers are homeless at any one time. Most disturbing of all, Australia has the world's highest suicide rate among teenagers and according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics there has been a steady increase in youth suicides during the past 10 years." (*The Sun-Herald*, July 2, 1995)

"China opens up on sex problems" "Beijing: Faced by widespread ignorance about sex, rising prostitution and permissiveness and venereal disease, China has inaugurated its first national sex study organisation, the *China Daily* newspaper said." (*SMH*, Dec. 27, 1994).

"Killer children stun US cities" "As murders go, it seemed brutal but routine. The killer had beaten an 84 year old woman with her walking stick and slashed her throat, leaving her to bleed to death with her hands bound. What is shocking is that the murderer was a boy of 10. The boy, known as Frog, has just confessed - a year after the killing. He lived next door to his victim, but police had eliminated him as a suspect because of his age. It is an assumption they are less likely to make as they take in the latest US crime statistic: an unnerving rise in the number of children who kill. Since 1985, the number of black children who have become killers, has risen three-fold; the number of whites is up to 50 per cent." (*The Australian*, Sept 12, 1994).

"Classifieds become a legal minefield for real estate agents" "Lynn Duffy has been writing real estate ads for so long, she could compose them in her sleep. A spacious home in an up-market, secluded setting near jogging trails conjured up phrases such as 'executive living', 'sports enthusiasts take note', quiet neighbourhood. But that was before the 'red light words'. Duffy Real Estate now avoids the term 'executive'; it may be racist, since most corporate executives are white. Singling out 'sports enthusiasts' could discourage the disabled. 'Quiet neighbourhood' could be a code for 'no children'. Ms Duffy knows of firms which are even avoiding 'master bedroom' (it suggests slavery), 'walk-in' closet or 'spectacular view' (some home buyers cannot walk or see). Real estate agents in Philadelphia's affluent main line suburbs are not suffering an attack of political correctness. Like their counterparts in many States, they are afraid of being charged with housing bias by increasingly vigilant, local fair-housing groups and individuals who are filing more and more discrimination cases over real estate ads in newspapers." (*SMH*, June 4, 1994).

"Royal war confession shocks Japan" "Tokyo: Prince Takahito, the uncle of Emperor Akihito, has broken half a century of silence and stunned Japan by denouncing his country's wartime aggression, and admitting its army committed atrocities during World War II." (*SMH*, July 7, 1994).

"World Bank pushes US tertiary model" "Sweeping reform of higher education, including development of private colleges and universities and the injection of large sums of private money, is called for in a new World Bank report. Higher education around the world - but particularly in developing countries - was in crisis according to the world's biggest development agency. It was inefficient, too reliant on government money and declining rapidly in quality. What is needed is a shift from dependence on one source of funding - the State - towards diversity, says the report, with more money coming from student tuition fees, consultancy contracts and donations. In short, higher education should resemble the United States model more closely." (*The Australian*, July 27, 1994).

"Boys do worst at breast" "Baby boys are less likely to be breastfed in the crucial first three months of life than baby girls, according to a survey of nursing mothers that raises concerns about the long-term negative effects on males" (*The Australian*, July 28, 1994).

"America's trigger happiness" "Americans are the most unstoppable, over-the-top-pable, energetic, creative, vibrant, vulgar and friendliest of people. They are also very, very, very violent. And the sooner they're all on Prozac the better. Violence lies at the core of American culture... in America, reaching for the gun is the culture. America has more of them than citizens. It has the world's highest murder rate. With 1 million people in the slammer, it jails far and away the highest percentage of any population." (*The Weekend Review*, August 6-7, 1994).

"Battered by her son" "When we think of domestic violence, most of us think of husbands as the problem. But there is another kind of family violence which many Australians suffer in silence and shame - the problem of teenagers who hit and abuse their parents." (*Herald Sun* (Vic), April 26, 1994).

"The 90s family in crisis" "The traditional Australian family is under siege. Increased poverty, breakdowns in marriages, domestic violence and homelessness could undermine the relatively solid fabric of Australian society... One in three marriages is ending in divorce - and the rate is rising. One baby in four is born out of wedlock, one child in three can expect to spend at least part of its childhood in a one-parent family, and one child in five will experience the trauma of divorce." (*The Sun-Herald*, August 21, 1994).

"Third World population soars" "Only 3 of every 100 babies being added to the world's population are born in a developed country, as Third World population grows at record rates. The latest worldwide data, issued yesterday by the private Population Reference Bureau, indicate that the spread of family planning has had little impact on worldwide trends." (*The Age*, May 4, 1994).

"SYDNEY: 'JAMES PACKER - THE INTERVIEW'" "He's Australia's billionaire-in-waiting, and this week he stepped firmly into the public arena. But how does it feel to be James Packer - with huge wealth ahead, but also the pressure of being a Packer? In his first major interview, he talks to Peter Fitzsimons. It was James Packer's debutant ball. At a packed-out press conference held last week at the Park Grand Hotel, the Packer consortium fired yet another shot in the ongoing war as to who will build and control Sydney's Casino, and for the first time James himself took a leading public role in the struggle... With his father overseas for the past four months, it has fallen to James to keep the home fires raging, and while he has been formally working in the Packer organisation since he was 18, this was an appearance that effectively kick-started the public business life of the young man who is to inherit the most powerful and wealthy dynasty in the country. Four years ago, it really seemed as if James's public beginnings were going to be a far more dramatic circumstance. For he was there, "just 15 feet away", when Kerry Packer fell off his polo horse after a massive heart attack, clinically dead. As he recalls that event in his interview with the *Herald*, a brief wave of horror seems to pass over the younger Packer's face... The pressures on James, when he does take over at some time in the future, are considerable. His grandfather, Sir Frank Packer, built up the family fortune in his lifetime to an estimated \$100 million in 1974 terms. So far, Kerry Packer has turned that into something like \$5.5 billion, give or take a few hundred million... {James'} secondary education took place at Cranbrook, the exclusive boy's private school in the eastern suburbs. "I knew from the age of 14 or 15 that I wasn't going to go to university, and therefore I didn't put the emphasis on school work that I otherwise might have. I'm not a particularly academic person, and Dad always had the view - and looking back I think he was right - that university is fantastic for people who don't have the opportunity to get a job without it... We took the attitude that if I had an opportunity of learning about our company from an inside basis, learning about how business actually worked, then that was going to be more

beneficial to me than going to university and partying, and being lectured to by professors who may or may not know how business works in reality. At the moment, James Packer's business life is focused on the Packer consortium's bid to wrest away from the Leighton/Showboat venture, which received the initial nod in May this year." I've no doubt about that if our name was not Packer," he says, "and if you had a preferred applicant who'd been charged by the Federal Government, under the rules by which the Casino Control Authority was established, they would be and would have had to have been tossed out..."

Kerry was treated by the press incredibly unkindly and wrongly and unfairly. The press has an expectation that they can treat people however they want to. And whether or not press proves to be correct or incorrect, the subject matter should forgive them, and Kerry's not that sort of person. And good on him for not being that sort of person. He holds a grudge. I like people who hold grudges. I think if you get kicked and you don't want to kick someone back, you're a wimp... Is that the way he was raised? Absolutely!" (SMH, Sept. 10, 1994)

"WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR" "WHEN you meet Bill Gates, you realise computer billionaires are different. It's near the end of his two-day visit to Australia this week, and he's just spoken to a couple of thousand people at the Darling Harbour convention centre. They were too far away to notice that he hasn't shaved for at least two days, his blue-rimmed glasses are covered with grease, and his fingernails look as if he's just been doing a bit of gardening in his suite at the Inter-Continental Hotel. Maybe Gates is so rich he doesn't care what people think. To update a formula once put forward by a United States commentator, if you or I earned \$5 million a year, it would take us 2,340 working years to equal the 39-year-old Gates's net worth of around \$11.7 billion. The scary thing is that if the founder and chairman of software company Microsoft manages to convince the world that it should use his software on the coming digital highways, he could become richer than some medium-sized economies. But the overwhelming impression Gates gives you is that he's so focused on his work that he's oblivious to life's little chores, even if it's just to clean some of the grease off his glasses. Gates seems to have little time for some of life's pleasures as well, like gourmet food. Though he was briefly a vegetarian, the billionaire now eats mostly fast food, and in Sydney his standard meal was two cheeseburgers and a Big Mac. It's when discussing technology that Gate's formidable intellect and recall of detail come to the fore. He's renowned for putting down opponents or employees who do not measure up intellectually, or people who ask him what he believes are boring questions, like the reporter from the ABC who asked him in Sydney on Wednesday whether uninformed consumers could be ripped off by the new wave of on-line technology that Gates was preaching. After a heavy pause, Gates replied: 'I guess your question is, is capitalism a good thing or not?' and everyone at the press conference laughed as if on cue. But didn't those who questioned the blind acceptance of the information superhighway have a point? I asked Gates afterwards. They did, said Gates, surprisingly, but it seemed their sin was that he'd heard their litany of fears before.

Deadpan, he recited it: 'Is privacy a problem, does it exclude all people, rural people, poor people, dumb people, is it too much change, do I lose my job, will people stay inside all the time, will guys like you have too much control over the world?' The fears were unfounded, he said, but to reject them he'd have to take me through them one by one, so I went on to my next question, about the people that he found stimulating. These included Andy Grove, the maverick head of chip manufacturer Intel, but mostly they were dead ones, like Napoleon. 'I mean, you try and be born in Corsica, be a little short guy, he's not really even French, and everything's in turmoil, and you take over all the civilised world,' Gates said, laughing. 'That's not easily done. It's not that I'd like to do it.'

'Napoleon also made some colossal mistakes, but you know, he's most interesting in that he did personally have a great effect on the laws that still exist in Europe, the way he supported the scientific institutions, and his very crisp thinking about strategy. He's a clever guy.'

Gates said Leonardo da Vinci was his inspiration, his role model. 'You have his scientific thought, which is rather amazing.' (Gates recently paid \$US30.8 million [\$A41 million] for an illustrated manuscript by da Vinci.) When Gates married Melinda French, a Microsoft employee, last year, observers said he would stop working 16-hour days. It hasn't happened, though he now plays more golf and tennis. He has also eased up on his James Dean-style addiction to fast cars. 'My first car, which I bought when I was 19, was a Porsche. It was a fantastic car,' Gates said, before explaining how he drove it at ridiculous speeds on the highways and twisting roads around Microsoft's headquarters in Seattle, where he was regularly fined for breaking speed limits. To stop himself, he traded one of his early Porsches for a slower Mercedes, went back to the Porsches. It's become legend that in one drive, in a Porsche 959 supercar, he was fined three times, twice by the same policeman. 'Somehow it's become less of a hobby of mine in the last 10 years.' Gate's vision of the future is that within two years most homes will connect to on-line services to do electronic shopping and banking, with the same enthusiasm with which many are now buying CD-Rom-drive-equipped PCs. But he wasn't sure that the public would soon turn to portable computer screens to read electronic versions of their newspapers, because of the many advantages of paper. For classified advertisements, it might be a different story. Let's say we got a lot of public information kiosks [like ATMs, except dispensing information], and PCs with access to electronic classifieds. If you wanted to buy a car or rent an apartment, we could let you browse the information so much more easily; we could put a richer set of information up there. Within five years a very successful electronic world could start to cut into the classified revenue.' Gates, of course, wants the newspapers to put their classifieds on his on-line services, or ones which use his software. If he succeeds on the information highways as he has in the PC market, it will make his task of giving away his fortune even harder. He plans to give away virtually all of it when he reaches retirement age, keeping only a few million for any children of his. 'It would have corrupted me if I'd had that [money as a child], that's for sure. When you have so much money there's the whole notion of people you meet: do they really like you. And do they want a donation?'" (SMH, Jan. 21, 1995).

"MITTERAND AFFAIR ENDS PRIVACY FOR POLITICIANS" "THANKS to the year's hottest book, Mitterand and the 40 Thieves, the current bestseller by Jean Montaldo, most of France already knows that President Mitterand maintains a secret second household. The taboo that shields politician's private lives crumbled further yesterday when Paris Match published photographs of Mazarine, the President's 20-year-old daughter by his longstanding mistress. The pictures would have been unthinkable until the scandals that have afflicted Mr Mitterand, 78, in the past couple of years, and their appearance still prompted indignation from opposition figures. 'I'm sad about this,' said Mr Valéry Giscard d'Estaing, the previous president. Mr Charles Pasqua, the Gaullist Interior Minister, said: 'I deplore this.' The French Press Federation warned of 'falling in the gutter inhabited by certain Anglo-Saxon newspapers.'" (The Weekend Australian, Nov. 5-6, 1994).

"FREE TRADE DILEMMA - EXPLOIT OR PERISH" "THE idea that an expanding global market place might encourage countries to compete in a "race to the bottom" is not high on the agenda at this week's Asia Pacific Economic Conference (APEC) summit meeting in Indonesia... There is growing concern that some countries will be forced into a "race to the bottom" when it comes to environmental, health, and labour standards. The fear is that standards will be lowered as countries with tougher pollution rules try to compete against those offering investors an open slate... There is plenty of scope for countries to try to attract investment by letting mining companies dump mercury in rivers or by letting woodchippers clear fell forests. Countries which impose tougher conditions run the risk of scaring off potential investors who will go to countries where there are almost no costs in meeting environmental standards. Similar conditions apply to attempts to maintain "working" conditions which include hard won safety standards or a ban on child labour. While some foreign investors in third world countries balk at directly employing child labour, they can take advantage of sub-contractors who have no qualms about exploiting children... A twelve-year-old Iqbal Masih worked chained to a loom in a Pakistani carpet factory for six years from the age of four." (The Sun-Herald, Nov. 13, 1994).

"CHILD LABOUR SET TO BECOME MAJOR ISSUE" Bangkok: Child labour in Asia's workforce is set to become a major issue over the next decade, according to the leader of an Australian parliamentary delegation in Thailand. Mr Laurie Ferguson, chairman of a six member foreign affairs' subcommittee carrying out a major review of Australia's links with Thailand, made the comments at the end of a two week assessment. Many in the Labor Government see child labour as one of the bigger issues in the next decade, Mr Ferguson told a press conference. It has already been raised as a key issue in the recent round of international trade liberalisation talks and debate covering the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. It has become a focus in countries such as the United States and Australia, which consider the low cost of child labour as unfair competition against the higher-paid adult workers in the West. "It is an issue internationally that is on the lift", said Mr Ferguson. Moves to introduce codes of conduct for Australian companies operating overseas have also been put in place with increasing international attention on countries such as Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Nepal." (The Sydney Morning Herald, Dec 2, 1994).

“THE GROWING POPULATION DEBATE” “Why should we care about future generations? What have they done for us? - Sam Goldwin.

‘Professor Jonathan Stone, convenor of the Australian Academy of Science’s Population 2040 Working Party, told the committee that most Australians had yet to learn to adapt to our environment... Australia’s soils were impoverished, he said. Our wide semi-arid zones, for example, contained about half the nitrates and phosphates of comparable soils in other countries. And even with our present population, water resources were facing a crisis, as evidenced by the increase of toxic blue-green algal blooms in the Hawkesbury and Murray-Darling river systems.’ The CSIRO also warns that improving water quality is a major challenge. The Sydney Water Board, for example, recently estimated costs of up to \$19 billion for improving the disposal or re-use of sewage effluent. In most State capitals, at least 20kg of hazardous waste was produced per person per year, usually entering the sewage or stormwater systems and, ultimately, the ocean. The CSIRO believes that Australia can only carry its existing population - or a higher one - if we as a nation are prepared to change the way we do things. ‘Australia lacks the necessary knowledge and understanding to manage effectively its current population at current living standards,’ it said. ‘Every extra person increases the need to rectify this situation.’ In other evidence, Professor Roger Short, Professor of reproductive biology at Monash University, said that for Australia to achieve zero population growth in the foreseeable future, every child born must be a *wanted* child. In view of Australia’s large immigrant population, there will always be humanitarian and political pressures to accept migrants who are close relatives of Australian citizens,’ he said. If we are to move to a situation of zero population growth and still permit immigration, the fertility rate must fall to well below the 2.1 children per woman normally regarded as replenishment fertility. We need to ensure that education about family planning becomes an essential part of the curriculum in every school, and that the best modern contraceptives are made available to Australians. But many Australian schools continued to shirk their responsibilities; 15 per cent of first year medical students at Monash in 1994 said they had received no information about contraception while at school. However, any recommendations by the committee along these lines would be rejected outright by the Catholic Church. The Australian Catholic Social Welfare Commission submission said that national interests must be subservient to the inherent right of parents to plan the size of their own families. ‘Informed, free and responsible choice regarding family planning is a fundamental human right and a function of human dignity,’ it said. ‘The Catholic Church endorses the use of natural methods of birth control and believes that chemical birth control methods, abortion and coercive population policies are an affront to the dignity of the individual.’ But Professor Short warns that population growth in Asia makes it almost inevitable that, within the next 100 years, Australia will have to contend with a massive immigration of millions of environmental refugees. ‘The major issue facing Australia in the 21st century is not whether it becomes a republic, but whether it can continue to survive as an independent state, surrounded as it will be by an overpopulated, starving Asia, he said.’” (*The Sun-Herald*, Nov. 13, 1994).

“Increasing alarm over mistreatment of girls” “BEIJING: Wife-swapping, abandoning girl babies, forcing wives to sleep with other men - these are just some of the extremes to which some Chinese couples go in their quest for a son, the official *Legal Daily* said yesterday. The result was a serious imbalance in China’s sex ratio, with 30 million more males than females by the year 2020, the newspaper said. The paper decried the traditional Chinese preference for boys over girls, arguing: Without women, how can there be any men?” The report offered some sobering statistics to illustrate what is happening to China’s infant girls. In a single county in coastal Zhejiang province, Government officers reported 250 abandoned babies in a four-year period. All but two were girls, and the two boys were deformed. Because of China’s strict family planning policy, which limits couples to having only one or two children, many girl babies are abandoned before their births are reported. The 1990 census found that the mortality rate among girl infants was 15.1 per cent higher than boys - the opposite of the rest of the world, with the mortality rate of girls 18.5 per cent lower than boy infants.” (*SMH*, Jan 23, 1995).

“SCIENCE AND EDUCATION. PONDERING TIMELESS MYSTERIES” “‘FRONTIERS of ignorance’ may seem a bold headline for a challenging review of the future of science. However, it was used last week to illustrate the point that after a century of scientific discovery, there are just as many questions unanswered as solved. Scientists are still searching for clues to the three major puzzles: how the Universe really began, how life began and whether there is life elsewhere in the Universe. One man who has been in an exceptional position to judge the state of scientific knowledge and what still needs to be discovered is John Maddox. For 21 years, Maddox has been editor of the weekly journal *Nature*, published in London, which is celebrating its 125th year of reporting scientific discovery. Maddox says ‘the scientific enterprise has had a marvellous century (and) transformed our understanding of the world’ but he stresses there are as many questions unanswered as solved. Maddox warns that, because science has been so successful, even scientists can convince themselves that, in some fields of research, ‘almost everything there is to learn has been discovered’. . . Here is a short selection of the big questions Maddox identifies in ‘the endless frontier’ of research (with my comments in brackets): **How did the Universe really begin?** (Only two weeks ago there were reports of findings by the Hubble space telescope which cast doubts on details of the cosmology represented by the Big Bang theory.) **Is there life elsewhere in the Universe?** (Australian astronomers begin a concerted search from the Parkes radio telescope next January.) **What are the ultimate building blocks of matter?** (Last year the Americans abandoned their research by stopping construction of their \$US8 billion atom smasher, the Superconducting Supercollider, but the Europeans are pressing on with building their Large Hadron Collider near Geneva to find the predicted “Higgs boson”.) **How did life begin?** (With the oldest fossil remains of primitive life found - about 3.5 billion years old - Australian researchers are at the forefront of this search.) **How, when and where did humans evolve from the apes?** (This year, new and conflicting evidence has emerged from dating of skulls of early humans in Java and China. The “out of Africa” theory is under challenge). **Can human evolution be reconstructed from the genes?** (Sequences of human DNA are giving clues but new interpretation of the data by New Zealanders, supporting the “out of Africa” theory, is controversial.) **How did the Earth form 4,500 million years ago?** (The puzzle is how tiny “planetesimals”, formed by aggregation of dust grains from the Sun’s cloud, became much larger. Did the Earth grow to its present size from a battering of meteorites at the same time as the Moon’s craters were formed?) **Is the brain like a computer?** (While we can measure the electrical activity on individual brain cells, we cannot yet record from whole groups of neighbouring cells to identify how they perform in concert. “Neutral networks” in computers might resemble some tasks done by the brain.) **How many genes are there in a complete sequence of all human chromosomes?** (First estimates of 100 000 may be too big. Many genes seem to have no function.) Other burning questions include: How did sexuality evolve? Why are human beings predominantly right-handed? (Oddly, the physical world is predominantly left-handed).

(*The Sun-Herald*, Nov. 13, 1994).

“ON THE ROAD TO DEMOCRACY, NOTHING SUCCEEDS LIKE SECESSION.” “The evidence that democracy almost never works in societies that are highly divided along linguistic and cultural lines is overwhelming. Examples of multinational countries that have failed are numerous: Cyprus, Lebanon, Sri Lanka, Sudan, the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia. India increasingly looks like another failure. Nevertheless many persist in arguing that multinational democracy not only is possible, but represents the wave of the future.”

(Peter Pockley, *The Australian*, June 10, 1994).

“GIRLS SUFFER ‘CONSTANT’ CLASSROOM SEX TAUNTS” “Sex taunts by schoolboys against underprivileged teenage girls are rife in Australian schools, with many subjected to constant verbal abuse as “stupid birches, whores, sluts and losers”. A disturbing picture of sexual harassment in the classroom has been painted by a six-month Federal Government study on how teenage girls from disadvantaged grounds cope with secondary school... The girls described the boys’ behaviour in class as “almost out of control” and complained that continual sexual harassment affected their school work... The girls said they didn’t do anything in class because the boys wouldn’t shut up and said if the boys were taken out of class they’d be able to get on with learning,” Prof Gilbert said. “Time and time again the girls offered examples of how much harder it was to get on with school work because of the inability of teachers to control boys’ behaviour.” Prof Gilbert said the girls found it hard to negotiate the tricky path between being labelled promiscuous and frigid, felt pressured into having sex but uneasy about initiating the use of condoms. “The level of unsafe sex was frightening. Very few of them were using contraception although a lot of them were sexually active. It was almost like a lottery,” Prof Gilbert said. But they seemed resigned to the possibility (of pregnancy) because a lot of the boys refused to use the condoms and called the girls paranoid or frigid - when you’re 15 this is difficult stuff to deal with when you’re looking for peer acceptance. Three of the girls became pregnant during the survey and despite attempts to continue their studies they felt pressured to leave school by staff, students and parents.” (*The Sun-Herald*, Oct. 2, 1994).

"SCHOOL: THE NEW FRONTIER" "In many Sydney schools the classroom has become a battleground where children are insolent to teachers and fellow students. Karen Davey reports." "When retired high school teacher Ellen O'Connell was offered a stint of relief work at a school in Sydney's inner west she declined because she knew it would be 'hell' despite her 35 years' experience. Mrs O'Connell is one of a growing number of teachers who are disheartened - to the point of taking stress-related leave or even resigning - by the burden of teaching undisciplined students." (*Sun-Herald*, May 15, 1994).

"TERROR OF GUNS IN THE CLASSROOM" "The new school year was only four days old when 16-year-old David Estrada arrived late for classes at Sheepshead Bay High School in Brooklyn, New York. But Estrada had timed his arrival perfectly. Safety officers carrying hand-held metal detectors had stopped their random searching of students at 1.30 pm. By 1.40 pm Estrada fired his .32 calibre handgun, hitting and critically injuring a fellow student. Only two days before, in Newark, New Jersey, a 19-year-old gunman shot two students at another local high school. He had also managed to sneak a handgun past metal detectors and on to the playground... Two years ago, 25 per cent of schools in the nation's biggest school systems used detectors. This year the figure is 70pc." The problem of weapons in schools is probably one of the most severe concerns of school administrators and the greatest fear of parents," said Ron Stephens, executive director of the National School safety centre.

"Youngsters are more and more willing to bring guns to school and the fist fights of years ago have been replaced by gun fights." Statistics paint a frightening picture of school life for many American students. In the 1993-94 school year, the center confirmed 45 violence-associated deaths across the country's schools. The number of actual shootings may have been five times higher than that, but no official records of injuries are kept." (*The Sun-Herald*, Oct. 9, 1994).

"ONE IN SEVEN ILLITERATE" "LONDON: One in seven Britons can barely read, write or do sums, a survey has found. An adult literacy and basic skills unit, a Government-funded charity, showed very poor results for 15 per cent of the 3000 people tested, with about 4 per cent experiencing serious reading difficulties and 11 per cent having only limited competence." (*SMH*, Jan. 20, 1995).

"SCHOOL BULLYING LEADS TO ANOTHER STUDENT SUICIDE" Tokyo: The suicide of a third student in a month has come to light just two days after Japan's Cabinet called for urgent action to stop bullying in schools. The parents of a 15 year old boy attending Ishikawa Junior High School, north-west of Tokyo, discovered his body hanging from a tree in a wood behind their home yesterday. He left two suicide notes - one thanking his parents and apologising, the other naming three classmates he said had been bullying him and said: "I am full of hatred". Police said they would investigate. On Tuesday, the Prime Minister, Mr Tomiichi Murayama, called an emergency Cabinet meeting to discuss strategies to rid Japan's schools of ijime, institutionalised bullying that has become endemic in recent years. The victims are children who are seen to be 'different' in Japan's conformist society - including those who are handicapped, weak or foreign-educated. Critics of the system claim teachers turn a blind eye to the bullying. The Education Ministry revealed that 21,000 cases of bullying had been reported at government-run primary, junior and senior high schools last year. One in seven schools had reported 'violent incidents' in the classroom or playground. As well, reported assaults by teachers on students increased to nearly 1,000 - 344 teachers were sacked or otherwise disciplined - and in at least three highly publicised incidents the student either died as a result of injuries or committed suicide. Corporal punishment is illegal in Japanese schools. Japan's child suicide rate showed an alarming jump to 527 last year - with many linked to bullying. Two-thirds were boys and five were under 10 years old, according to Health and Welfare Ministry statistics. The ministry said there had been 177 suicides of students at government schools so far this year. Eleven were primary students aged 12 and under and 52 were junior high school students aged between 13 and 15. After the Cabinet meeting, Mr Murayama said counselling services at schools would be improved and he urged teachers to be more alert and bullying victims to speak out. "We should commit ourselves to eradicating bullying at school", he said. Tuesday's death followed the suicide of two 13 year olds in three weeks. Last week, a student at a school near the car-making city of Nagoya, hanged himself from a hook in his father's factory. Last month, the suicide of Kiyoteru Okochi, a student at a nearby junior high school, shocked the nation. He hanged himself from a persimmon tree in his parents' backyard after enduring a year of being beaten, half-drowned in a river and made to act like a dog. Up to 13 of his classmates took part the he torture, extorting \$15,000 from him to buy video games. His father released his heart-rending five page suicide note to the media, claiming his teachers knew about the bullying but failed to act.

"He lived in fear. The teachers should have done something", Mr Yoshiharu Okochi said." (*The Sydney Morning Herald*, Dec 16, 1994).

"HEAVY TOLL EXACTED ON YOUNG" "A report obtained by the Herald earlier this month indicated that the employment outlook was grim for young people, and that young men had "failed to obtain any advantage from the employment growth that occurred between 1983 and 1990". Here, BARRY MALEY argues that there is a strong correlation between unemployment in young men and increasing rates of suicide. IT HAS LONG been noticed that increased rates of suicide accompany social and personal calamities, such as economic crises, drought and bereavement. For example, in November, a NSW parliamentary committee on social issues completed an eight-month inquiry into the increase in rural suicide rates, particularly among young men. The inquiry no doubt was prompted by the suspicion that drought and other social or economic factors were involved. It recommended measures that might relieve the distress of drought-affected farmers who are forced to kill their stock and urged that the school curriculum should teach adolescent students to better understand depressive illness. While deep depression and other mental illnesses may be the immediate cause of many suicides, we have to ask ourselves what are the deeper causes of the suicidal depression itself. In some cases there may be a purely organic or chemical cause of the depressive mood, ultimately traceable to a bodily imbalance and the genetic endowment of some people that predispose them to depression. But for most other suicides, the deeper cause is to be found in major changes in circumstances that make life intolerable for otherwise mentally sound people. It is therefore to changing social, economic or interpersonal circumstances that we must turn for an explanation of sudden or significant changes in rates of suicide. One of the most disturbing features of present suicide rates is the rapid and substantial increase among young men in the 15- to 24-year-old age group. In 1975, the suicide rate for males in this group was 14.8 per 100,000. By 1990 it had almost doubled to 26.5 per 100,000. In the same period, the rate for females in the same age group remained steady at about 4.7 per 100,000. Why has the rate for young males changed so dramatically, and why is it more than five times higher than the rate for young females? What is it in the circumstances of young men that has brought about this major increase in suicides? In order to answer these questions we must first ask a more fundamental one about the connections between life circumstances and suicide in general. Almost 100 years ago, the great French sociologist Emile Durkheim, as a result of his study of suicide across many countries, suggested that the common underlying feature was a failure, or breakdown, of social and interpersonal "integration" among those who killed themselves. He meant by this that the "integrated" person is one who is strongly embedded or involved, meaningfully and purposively, in his or her society and in fulfilling relationships with others, such that important emotional and social needs are effectively met. These are the conditions we expect to find, for example, in societies or groups where social, religious or family affiliations are traditionally strong and through which individuals may find support and meaning in their lives. Durkheim noted, in this connection, that Jews and Catholics had lower suicide rates than Protestants; that the married had lower rates than the unmarried or divorced; that the native-born had lower rates than immigrants, and so on. If, then, weak integration or the sudden loss of integration (for example, in an economic collapse, or bereavement) is a crucial factor in suicide, how could this be true of young men in Australia today, and more so today than it was 20 years ago? There is considerable evidence that for a great many young men the key factor is unemployment especially in the 20-24 age group. A few moments' thought suggest to us a number of reasons why employment may be a crucial element in an integrated way of life for young men. Research confirms what common sense would suggest about the positive effects of employment on the wellbeing of those of working age. It has been shown that earned income enhances self-esteem and a sense of control over one's circumstances. The magnitude of these effects increases with the extent to which the persons concerned identify themselves and their sense of self-worth with bread-winning roles and responsibilities. Most would agree that male identity continues to be more deeply attached to bread-winning capacity and roles than female identity, despite the great changes for women over recent years. If that is true, we would expect a stronger association between unemployment and suicide for young males than for young females. This might diminish over time as young females come to identify themselves more strongly with non-maternal and non-domestic careers. But the fact remains that

maternity and domesticity continue to be either central, or alternative, sources of social identity and self-esteem for the great majority of women in a way that simply cannot be true for young men. Also, as Durkheim was among the first to note, the married state helps protect against suicide. However, marriage (or a stable de facto relationship) is effectively ruled out for unemployed young men in their twenties, but not for unemployed women of the same age. What I am suggesting is that unemployment represents for young men a serious failure of social integration in itself. But it also exacerbates the further failure of integration represented by non-marriage or an unstable substitute for marriage at an age when this (and perhaps forming a family, too) is expected. One might further suggest that a high proportion of males in the 20 to 24 age group would no longer live with their parents, brothers and sisters and would therefore be deprived of their emotional and other supports at a stressful time, thus reinforcing the isolation and social detachment characteristic of unemployment and the socially unintegrated state. So, there are powerful reasons for believing that unemployment is a hazardous state for men in their early twenties and may lead to suicide, especially in the absence of other social and interpersonal networks of support. Given that unemployment can generate a suicidal motive, the crucial question is whether it can be shown that the suicide rates for such young men have risen in tandem with their unemployment rates. The answer is a resounding "yes". In a careful piece of research reported in the *Journal of Social Sciences and Medicine* last year, Stephen Morrell and his colleagues in the Department of Public Health at the University of Sydney analysed the Australian data and statistics on suicide and unemployment for the 83-year period between 1907 and 1990. Their results showed a clear and significant correlation between suicide and unemployment for men in general. But what was especially remarkable was the very strong statistical correlation (80 per cent) between unemployment and suicide for young men aged 20 to 24 in the period 1966-90. It is usually impossible to prove, in individual cases, what caused a suicide, but the evidence is highly persuasive that unemployment will tip the balance for many men. And there is something especially poignant in the thought that the uncertainty and mismanagement that have characterised our labour market for the last 20 years may underlie the increased rates of suicide of young men in the prime of life. *Barry Maley, senior fellow at the Centre for Independent Studies and director of its "Taking Children Seriously" program, is joint author of 'Shaping the Social Virtues', recently published by the centre.* (SMH, Jan. 23, 1995).

"KUDOS TO TIME FOR SUMMARISING THE University of Chicago sex survey of Americans [Oct.17] and presenting the facts about what we clergy have long known to be our parishioners' bedroom habits. Finally, sex statistics for the rest of us! This study will go a long way toward allowing us to reassure people that their sexual urges are normal and healthy, and to tell them that the sexual activity of TV characters in Beverly Hills, 90210 is not what people necessarily practice in real life. Many will decry the accuracy of this survey because it does not validate their life-style, but those of us who preach monogamy as the best form of sexual practice applaud the Chicago study." (The Rev.) Ray L. Bailey, Redlands, California. "IT IS REALLY SAD WHEN PEOPLE HAVE TO rely on so-called research to determine how they fit with other Americans' bedroom activities. Is it not sad enough that virtually every phase of our lives is in competition with others? Does competitiveness have to apply to our sexual habits as well? People should be more concerned about what is comfortable for them, not how they compare with others." Lilian A. Kennedy, Garden City, New York" (*TIME*, Nov.7, 1994).

"INTUNE with G. Lloyd" "A recent *Time* magazine editorial is quoted as saying that "Americans have developed a nasty intolerance and a desire to blame everyone for everything". In short they have become a nation of finger pointers. What almost certainly began as small personal problems a couple of generations ago, has now become recognised the world over as a normal part of American culture. From the "only in America" file comes the story of a 20 year old man in Colorado who tried to commit suicide. Neighbours who heard the gun shot called emergency services and he was consequently taken to hospital, where staff managed to save his life. Upon being released the young man sued the hospital for "wrongfully living". A few weeks later the young man died from a more successful suicide attempt. One year after his death the case now being pursued by his estate, was thrown out of court. It all raises a multitude of questions but in the final analysis there's an expectation that others should be responsible for the state his life was in. Not surprisingly similar expectations are at the core of many of our social problems. Expectations that are really quite unrealistic. We've all known people who are actively involved in "The blame game" - compulsively complaining about everybody and everything. It's a road that leads to misery. Often the most respected people are those who take responsibility for their own mess before laying blame elsewhere, and it does have interesting spin offs. For one thing your perception of the world slowly changes from blaming others to understanding them, and understanding is the road to peace." (*The Berowra Telegraph*, Sept. 22, 1994).

"CRUISE TUCKS INTO A RAT" FILM REVIEW: "Interview With The Vampire (MA)" "THE entertainment value of watching people run around trying to sink their teeth into someone's neck has always struck me as suspect. Unless the dramatic tension has been brilliantly constructed and you care about the potential victim and the loony with the long teeth is a serious threat it's most often pretty pointless. Interview With The Vampire, despite a stellar cast, large and impressive period sets and lots of flourish, fails to deliver either on the good, old-fashioned scale of movie terror or as an intelligent and witty revisitation to one of the classic modern myths. It falls somewhere in the middle with the potential to scare, if that's what director Neil Jordan had intended, never quite realised and other scenes prompting embarrassed laughter. He achieved an interesting double within the first 20 minutes of the movie when the two lead characters, Cruise and Pitt, casually caught rats and munched and sucked on them satisfyingly. Presumably it was to show how insatiable their bloodlust was when they ran out of human victims. It served only to make people in the cinema feel repulsed and, in some cases, laugh at the silliness. Others at the screening I attended got up and left." (*Hornsby Advocate*, Jan. 18, 1995).

"PRISCILLA WINS GOLDEN PASSPORT TO THE OSCARS" The Australian hit movie about drag queens, *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*, has entered the Oscar race by being nominated for two major Golden Globe awards in the United States. The Globes, the annual awards of the Hollywood Foreign Press Association, are regarded as a reliable pointer to the Academy Awards, having predicted the Oscar winner for best film 12 times over the past 14 years. *Priscilla's* two nominations are for best picture (musical or comedy) and best actor for Terence Stamp, who plays a transsexual crossing the Australian desert with two drag queens played by Hugo Weaving and Guy Pearce. The film's Sydney-based writer-director Stephan Elliott said he didn't rate its chances, especially against 'more wholesome' movies like *The Lion King* (the Disney animation also nominated for best musical or comedy), but added, "let's see how it goes - we might just surprise everybody, you never know". *Priscilla* is one of two comedies in the Globes with a cross-dressing theme, the other being the Tim Burton-directed *Ed Wood*, about a transvestite movie director." (*The Weekend Australian*, Dec 24-25, 1994).

"STUDY BLAMES LAZY JAPANESE MEN" "Tokyo: Going forth to multiply with a loafer who never helps around the house is such a dismal prospect for Japanese women that they are staying single, delaying marriage and bringing down the nation's birth rate. Working women, the Government's Economic Planning Agency said today, are loath to marry the stereotypical male whose role is little more than bringing home the pay cheque. In its annual report on the national lifestyle, the agency said that to improve their shoddy image, Japanese men should participate more around the house and especially in their children's education. The report, which focuses on the causes, trends and problems of Japan's aging population, cites late marriages and the increasing number of single people as the main causes behind the relentless drop in the nation's birth rate. But for Japanese men, old habits could be hard to break. Another recent government survey said 85.8 per cent of men, including those who are unmarried, have never lifted a finger to help with household chores. Similar surveys in the US and Britain showed that 37.9 and 31.7 per cent of men, respectively, were as uncooperative." (SMH, Nov 19, 1994).

"WORKED TO DEATH" Tokyo: For the second time in a month a Japanese company has agreed to pay compensation to relatives of an employee who died of overwork or 'karoshi'. The family of Mr Satoru Kiraoka, 48, received \$510,000. He died of heart failure in 1988 after working an average of 71 hours a week for 51 straight days." (*The Sydney Morning Herald*, Nov 19, 1994).

"GIVE A BOY A FAIR CHANCE TO BE FATHER TO THE MAN" Every week there is more evidence that boys are in trouble. Why is this so? When a boy is a couple of days old, we take him away from his mother and tie him down so he cannot move. His penis is cut and he is left alone to scream. From this moment on, he is given the message that pain doesn't matter. People like him only as long as he is tough. People tell him 'don't be a wuss', "only girls cry". Is it surprising that some boys hurt themselves, other boys and girls? Garrison Keillor comments in *The Book*

of Guys: "Girls were allowed to play in the house, where the books were and like adults, and the boys were sent outside like livestock. Boys were noisy and rough, and girls were nice, so they got to stay and we had to go. Girls stayed inside and played with dolls, creating complex family groups and learning to solve problems. Which gender is better equipped to live an adult life, would you guess?"

Fathers are not as available as they were: there are 636,000 single-parent families in Australia; there are no fathers in 84 per cent of them. Sport is king, books are for women; this attitude appears in a 100 different forms, especially among working class boys. Castro, a student teacher who is a personal trainer in a gym, says: "When I walk into the school yard the guys crowd around me". Boys are turning to bodybuilders and football stars for their heroes. The proportion of men in teacher training has fallen from 34 per cent to 27 per cent in 10 years; when boys eventually get a male teacher they don't know what to do with them. Some boys in McKillop Senior College at Port Macquarie identified their problems as lacking good role models, having poor self-esteem and feeling it wasn't cool to achieve. Peter Ireland, campus principal of the school, agrees. He says boys need to be more deeply involved with men than just by playing sport and says schools must look after boys' emotional and spiritual needs. Meanwhile, boys have been doing badly in English, and well in maths and science. These were the courses which got them into law and medicine. But decisions now made in medical faculties will change all this: students wanting to be doctors will be given tests of general knowledge. Ambitious boys will be forced to move into the humanities. They will have to find out about relationships and not before time. Boys are going to become lovers and fathers and husbands." (SMH, Dec 2, 1994).

HERESIES: IF THIS IS INTELLIGENCE WE'LL STAY DUMB "IN what sort of publication would you expect to read: "Those people who are so mentally defective that they cannot live in society should, as soon as they are identified as defective, be humanely dispatched." Or that Adolf Hitler's greatest offence was not the killing of six million Jews in the Holocaust but "the fact that his actions prevent a rational discussion of the creation of the master race". The *Los Angeles Times* reports that these articles recently ran in the monthly newsletter of the LA chapter of the high-IQ society Mensa. The publication circulates to a readership that claims IQs in the top 2 per cent of the public. In defending her decision to publish the articles, newsletter editor and Mensa member Nikki Frey was surprised that anybody would be offended. "I would not print anything I thought was truly harmful or offensive," she said. "I didn't think it was harmful; I don't think it's even that offensive. Nobody wants to have a deformed child. I personally wouldn't hurt a fly. Well, maybe a fly. I am the most sensitive person." In the issue, Jason G. Brent, a lawyer, wrote that "society must face the concept that we kill off the old, weak, the stupid and the inefficient". The other writer, Jon Evans, said: "It is not clear to me just exactly why anyone would expend time and effort and money on the homeless. What good are they? The vast majority are too stupid, too lazy, too crazy, or too anti-social to earn a living. Granted, there are a few people who have fallen beneath the blows of circumstances and are unable to afford any place to live, but they are few and far between. The rest of the homeless should be humanely done away with, like abandoned kittens." The articles caused outrage among the chapter's 2 000 members. "We have these Nazi ideas being published in a publication that goes everywhere," said Mensa member Betty Schneider. "This is fascism carried to the 'nth' degree. I don't want to be identified with an Organisation that condones this type of thing. Alan Stillson, puzzle editor of the newsletter, wrote a letter threatening to quit unless an apology was printed. "As a Mensa member who enjoys the Organisation and most of the members and as a stepfather of a Down's Syndrome child who loves him and is incensed at the thought of advocacy of his extermination, I insist on an immediate written apology and a retraction of the policy of printing hate articles," Stillson wrote in his letter, printed in the December newsletter. Editor Frey said of Jon Evans, who proposed the creation of a master race: "He's such a blowhard; the things he says are ... complete garbage." So why print it? "I don't get that many submissions, so I have to print whatever comes in," Frey said. Brent, who wrote about population control, said, "I don't want to be portrayed as some weirdo person, though nobody else agrees with me. We cannot continue to have population explosion. Growth has to stop. We better face that we have to kill people." All of which may suggest there is a difference between intelligence and common sense." (SMH, Jan.13, 1995).

"Cracks appear in PC's shaky edifice" "The upcoming 1995 Global Cultural Diversity Conference is, we are advised, part of Australia's contribution to celebrations of the 50th anniversary of the United Nations. One might believe that the New Diversity - the diversity being sponsored by government - means at last some acknowledgment that enlightened Australians are not all exactly the same opinion on the evils of racism, sexism, homophobia, woodchipping and privatisation, or the goodness of old-growth greenies, republicans, arts bureaucrats and the ABC. But no. Caution is called for. New Diversity, it soon becomes clear, encourages all kinds of diversity except diversity of opinion. This is what seems to have happened. Distortion of the ideals of multiculturalism has brought the very word into some disrepute. It always was, for the ordinary person, a bit of a turn-off. It never commanded popular assent... Government sponsored diversity does not mean diversity in ordinary language, that is, tolerance, pluralism, a pleasure in variety. The new diversity means conformity, enforced by the opinion formers or network managers of the media, academia, the political parties, the thought police. In the age of diversity, a gay mardi gras is free to ridicule Christianity but Christians are not permitted to ridicule a gay mardi gras. That would offend the principle of diversity. A conference on population may demand the liberalising of laws on abortion but calls for laws restricting abortions are not permitted. You may criticise discrimination but not affirmative action. You may call for more attention to 'community languages' but not to English. You may discuss ethnic traditions but not ethnic gangs."

(*The Australian*, April 4, 1995).

HEALTH

"TB SWEEPS THE WORLD" "Australia cannot remain isolated from the tuberculosis epidemic sweeping the world and faces a catastrophe, an expert on the disease has warned. If new vaccines to improve TB protection are not developed by 2000, Professor Tony Basten predicts Australia "won't have a very happy Olympics or conversion to an Australian republic - we shall be faced with a catastrophic situation". Professor Basten told the Horizons of Science Forum at the University of Technology, Sydney, last week that worldwide deaths from TB could grow from four million a year today to "tens of millions a year" in five years. According to the World Health Organisation, 1,900 million people are infected with TB. To date, TB in Australia has been confined to about 5,000 HIV sufferers but exposure by Australians to the increasingly drug-resistant TB is inevitable due to their extensive travel, Professor Basten said." (*The Sun-Herald*, June 18, 1995).

"Malaria may spread via global warming" "Epidemics of the most virulent form of malaria could sweep much of Australia, Europe and North America within the next few decades because of global warming, research reported in the *New Scientist* magazine warns. The study says there is concern that malaria could spread to millions of people with no built-in immunity and is likely to cause 'widespread debilitation and increased mortality.'" (*The Australian*, May 12, 1995).

"Owning a pet is good for you" "If you own a pet (or even if you don't), you've probably heard that pets help patients in hospital to recover from illness, and that in nursing homes they provide friendship and companionship to the elderly. But if you're relatively healthy, what does your household pet do for you? Your pet, if it's a cat or dog, improves your general well-being, so a recent study concludes. The study, by James Serpell of the University of Pennsylvania, surveyed the overall health of a group of 'average' people before and after becoming dog or cat owners. The subjects' health was compared to that of non-pet owners over the same period. The differences were striking. Owning a pet dog, it seems, is best for you. The people who became dog owners sustained improved health over the whole ten months of the study. Cat owners initially fared as well but the improvement didn't last. Non-pet owners were worst off. Why are pets good for us? This question was not addressed in the study but Serpell and others speculate on some possible answers. For one thing, interacting with pets lowers blood pressure. Also, pets are good listeners - they don't interrupt, question or argue. Our pets' mute acceptance of us often contrasts with our interactions with humans. Pets make us feel wanted. And for dog owners, taking our pets for a walk gives us exercise we may not otherwise get. The exact answer to why pet ownership can make us healthy is complex, and is likely to be found in the fuzzy boundaries between mental and physical health."

(*Nature Australia*, Winter 1995).

"UN cites poverty as biggest single cause of death" Poverty is the biggest single cause of death, disease and suffering worldwide, the United Nations said in its first survey on the state of the world's health...

- * More than 2 billion people are sick in the world at any one time.
- * Infectious diseases and parasites kill more than 16 million each year.
- * More than half of the world's women now use contraception. There were fewer than 10 per cent in 1960.
- * Cancer kills 6 million people each year.
- * Twenty million women undergo unsafe abortions each year and 70,000 die as a result.
- * More than 7,000 adults die each day from tuberculosis.
- * 700 million people suffer from some sort of mental illness such as neurotic disorders and manic depression.
- * Every day, 600 people die and 33,000 are injured because of unsafe working conditions.
- * Diarrhoea kills about 3 million children a year.
- * In the next five years, more than 5 million children will be infected with HIV, the AIDS virus.
- * Sexually transmitted diseases are most common in people aged 15 to 24.
- * More than 12 million children in the developing world die each year before their fifth birthdays, most from preventable causes.

"Diesel fuel gases linked to asthma" "One of the worst types of asthma - spring allergic asthma, which afflicts animals and people - may be caused by the increasing use of diesel fuel, according to a paper to be presented to a conference next week. The tiny particles contained in the smoke that belches from buses and trucks and any other diesel-operated machinery are highly efficient gatherers of the grass pollen allergens that are released in spring, said Professor Bruce Knox, a pollen expert from the University of Melbourne." (SMH, May 20, 1995).

"Gene makes flies gay" "By transplanting a single gene into male fruit flies, researchers have been able to induce homosexual behaviour, adding to the growing body of evidence that there may be a genetic component to sexual orientation. But environment may also influence sexual orientation, at least among male fruit flies. In a related experiment, the researchers found that when a group of 'heterosexual' male fruit flies was mixed with a larger group of genetically altered 'homosexual' male fruit flies, the straight flies acted gay - at least for a while." (SMH, June 6, 1995).

"Doctors 'intervene too much in births'" "Nearly half of all Australian women who give birth have their babies delivered by caesarean section or forceps. The Associates in Childbirth Education association claims a large percentage of these women could have given birth naturally without the use of medical intervention." (SMH, April 5, 1995).

"NZ deer hold clues to TB" "Research aimed at defending New Zealand's lucrative deer farms from disease has opened the way to using the animals as unique models for testing vaccines to protect humans against rampant tuberculosis. When tuberculosis was known as consumption, it was one of the most feared diseases. Once the bug causing it - Mycobacterium tuberculosis - took hold in the lungs, there was little medicine could do but prescribe long convalescence in sanatoria to give the body's natural defences a chance to overcome it... Now TB is on the march again - and not only in developing countries - and health authorities are alarmed. The global death rate of three million last year is tipped to quadruple in the next 10 years. At the same time, Mycobacterium bovis, closely related to the human TB bacterium, has been spreading through cattle and other animals. Only the most strenuous efforts by farmers and scientists are keeping bovine TB at bay in Australia and New Zealand to allow beef to pass inspection for export." (Sun-Herald, May 28, 1995).

"Black death invades villages" "New Delhi: Bubonic plague has broken out in a region of central India that a year ago was devastated by an earthquake which killed more than 30,000 people. It is thought that the tremors in Maharashtra State drove swarms of rats carrying fleas with the disease out of the forests and into the villages being rebuilt after the quake." (SMH, Sept 21, 1994).

"Pollution blamed for sperm count decline" "Male sperm counts have declined by more than half in the past 50 years, prompting warnings yesterday from scientists that infertility among men could rise dramatically. Professor Ted Keogh, from the Reproductive Medicine Research Institute in Western Australia, said scientists were unsure what was causing the decreasing sperm counts among normal males. But he told an international fertility conference in Brisbane that pollution and stress were considered likely reasons for the decline." (The Australian, October 8, 1994).

"Seed of an idea" "London: Organic farmers who eat pesticide-free food produce a significantly higher number of sperm, according to a Danish study into the effects of chemicals on human fertility. The findings are likely to fuel a debate over whether pesticides and food additives are to blame for a decline in male fertility over the past 50 years." (SMH, June 11, 1994).

"Red wine gets health green light" "New research has confirmed the popular belief among wine drinkers that a glass or two of 'red' is good for you. In particular, the researchers at the department of medicine at Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Birmingham, in the UK believe it is the first time that the beneficial effects of red wine in the blood have been seen on human digestion." (SMH, July 16, 1994).

"Study casts doubt on water safety" "Drinking water supplied to more than 400,000 people in Melbourne contains a toxic chemical suspected of causing dementia, Alzheimer's disease and body cell damage, according to medical scientists. Alum, also known as aluminium sulphate, is added to water at Melbourne Water filtration plants at Tynong, Wineke and Yan Yean." (Sunday Herald Sun, September 25, 1994).

"Race to beat new diseases" "Drug companies are racing against time to outsmart life-threatening bacteria which are infecting hospital patients and resisting antibiotics. A new breed of drug is needed to replace penicillin, which is losing the war against killer bacterial infections. Uncontrolled, a multi-resistant strain of golden staph infection would kill as many as 80 per cent of the patients it infected." (The Sun-Herald, October 23, 1994).

"AIDS case worldwide up 60 per cent in past year, says WHO" "Geneva: The estimated number of full-blown AIDS cases worldwide increased from 2.5 million to 4 million in the past 12 months - a rise of 60 per cent - the World Health Organisation (WHO) said today. Sub-Saharan Africa had the highest number of cases, with 2.5 million, the United Nations health agency said." (SMH, July 2, 1994).

"Now killer bug attacks US" "New York: A 'flesh-eating' bacteria that created panic in Europe, where it killed at least 11 people, is now causing alarm across the United States, with cases reported in at least five States. It kills up to 2,000 people a year in the US and can mean amputations for those who survive. "It's like a fast-moving gangrene", said Dr Stephen Baum, chairman of the Department of Medicine at New York's Beth Israel hospital." (SMH, June 11, 1994).

"The dead kill the living in hellish Goma" "Two things strike you about Goma: the great number of dead and the far greater number of living. In a way, the dead are killing the living: an estimated 4000 people die daily of cholera and dysentery, epidemics aggravated by the slowness in burying bodies." (The Australian, 29/07/94).

"Tuberculosis epidemic predicted in Asia" "Yokohama: The World Health Organisation (WHO) has warned that the rapid spread of AIDS in Asia threatens to unleash an even bigger epidemic of tuberculosis. "The HIV epidemic is a nightmare come true for TB control", Dr Arata Kochi, the tuberculosis program manager for WHO, said at a news conference yesterday at the 10th International Conference on AIDS. The collision of the two diseases would 'bring about a co-epidemic that will surpass what is now taking place in Africa and other parts of the world.' (SMH, August 12, 1994).

"Diseases return to waste Russia" "All travel to and from Izberbash in the republic of Dagestan in southern Russia has been forbidden. The town is one of 104 districts with cases of cholera... But this is not a new outbreak: the latest pandemic of Vibrio cholera - which severely dehydrates victims - has been festering in Asia since 1961, and may have claimed over three million victims. But the nightmare is compounded by the return of another old enemy, Mycobacterium tuberculosis. This wasting disease is believed to have infected more than two million in Russia and eastern Europe in the past 5 years, and caused 29,000 deaths." (SMH, August 27, 1994).

"Ebola virus" "The horrific Ebola virus makes even AIDS look tame. The emergence of new and increasingly deadly diseases has shocked the scientists charged with checking their spread." (*The Weekend Australian*, October 1-2, 1994).

"Virulent cancer challenges research" "Of all the cancers afflicting humans, there is none more deadly - and less well known - than the disease of cells of the liver known as hepatocellular cancer, responsible for a million deaths each year... For most Australians of Caucasian origin this cancer is mercifully very rare (only 3 cases each year per 10,000 of population), but for black Africans living south of the Sahara it is a terrible scourge afflicting up to nearly 40 times as many per head... Unlike most other cancers, HCC is unresponsive to any form of medical treatment. Current anti-cancer drugs have no effect; radiation treatment produces no response and the chance that surgery can cut it out is only one in a 100... There is a mortality of 100 per cent." (*The Sun-Herald*, September 25, 1994).

"Mystery epidemic - hundreds of birds dying" "The Wildlife Rescue Service is investigating a theory that insecticides are killing off one of the North Shore's most unusual native birds. More than 130 tawny frogmouths have been reported dead to WIRES offices in and around Sydney during the past 6 weeks - about half recorded on the North Shore." (*Hornsby & Upper North Shore Advocate*, Sept 21, 1994).

"Plague reaches Indian cities" "New Delhi: The plague has spread to India's three largest cities, with confirmed cases in New Delhi, Bombay and Calcutta, all metropolises of more than 10 million people. The Prime Minister, Mr Narasimha Rao, in his first public statement since the outbreak was detected a fortnight ago, called on Indians not to panic and to mobilise in cleaning up the cities' sprawling slums." (*SMH*, September 29, 1994).

"Youth suicides soar" "Australia has the highest suicide rate in the world for 15 to 24 year olds, a new Australian study has revealed. More than 16 in every 100,000 young Australians commit suicide each year - higher than the United States and double the rate in Japan, according to the report by Sydney psychologist Dr Ray King." (*Sun Telegraph* (NSW), October 23, 1994).

"Study links alcohol with youth suicide" "Suicide rates were higher for young Queenslanders and alcohol was involved in 39 per cent of cases from 1990 to 1992, a report commissioned by the State Government has found." (*Herald Sun* (Vic), October 18, 1994).

"Lead warning on fruit, veges" "A NSW parliamentary Lead Task Force report last week warned that... home-grown fruit and vegetables - particularly in inner Sydney, Broken Hill, Port Kembla and North Lake Macquarie regions - should be washed and peeled to remove any trace of lead. Children under 5 can suffer nerve damage, stunted growth and lower IQs as a result of exposure to high lead levels according to the report, which was compiled by 150 researchers and approved by Cabinet." (*The Sun-Herald*, Nov. 13, 1994).

"We have region's highest rate of reported AIDS" "Australia has the highest rate of reported AIDS cases in the western Pacific region, according to World Health Organisation figures to be presented to the Paris AIDS summit today." (*The Australian*, December 1, 1994).

"Miscarriages linked to father's exposure to toxic chemicals" "A woman's chances of miscarriage increase by about three times if the baby's father is regularly exposed to oil-based paints, and more than double if he frequently uses strong glues or oven cleaners, according to new research." (*SMH*, Jan. 4, 1995).

"Dutch move to permit euthanasia" "The biggest hospital in Amsterdam said yesterday it planned to let patients refuse life-prolonging treatment in certain circumstances. The AMC university hospital said it would allow patients to sign a declaration in which they could set out conditions in which they would not wish to be kept alive." (*The Daily Telegraph Mirror*, January 2, 1995).

"Pain, depression linked to insomnia" "New research has shown sleeplessness is not linked to ageing. Instead the study found insomnia was more common in people who suffered depression and pain." (*The Daily Telegraph Mirror*, January 2, 1995).

"Margarine linked to child asthma" "The increased consumption of polyunsaturated margarines and oils over the past 20 years may be to blame for the big jump in childhood asthma cases, researchers say. The campaigns against heart disease encouraging greater use of polyunsaturated fats from sunflower and safflower seeds may have had the unexpected side-effect of increasing childhood asthma, according to researchers at the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital's Institute of Respiratory Medicine." (*SMH*, January 5, 1995).

"Visiting the tanning salon can cause deadly skin cancer" "Frequent tanning-salon visits can greatly increase the risk of a potentially lethal skin cancer, according to a new report. The study found that people under age 30 who used a tanning bed or sunlamp more than 10 times a year were almost eight times as likely to develop malignant melanoma as people who avoided exposure to the artificial rays." (*Medi Scene*, January, 1995).

"Fatty food stimulates overeating says expert" "Fatty meals such as hamburgers and fries can stimulate overeating in overweight people, according to clinical research by an international weight loss expert. A professor of human nutrition at the University of Copenhagen, Professor Arne Astrup, said many overweight and obese people had an abnormal metabolic response to a fatty meal, which caused them to store the calories as fat rather than converting the food into energy." (*The Australian*, October 9, 1994).

"Fibreglass not listed as carcinogen despite link" "Worksafe Australia has not made any move to declare fibreglass home insulation as a cause of lung cancer, more than 6 months after fibreglass was listed as a suspected carcinogen in the United States." (*SMH*, Jan 9, 1995).

"Foetuses may feel pain" "Unborn babies release stress hormones when doctors pierce their tissue for blood transfusions, suggesting that a semi-developed foetus may be able to feel pain, according to a report in the medical journal, *The Lancet*. The report questioned the view that a foetus could not experience pain until well into a pregnancy and suggested a baby's distress might be relieved if pain killers were given before a transfusion." (*SMH*, July 9, 1994).

"US studies high medical cost of smoking" "Washington: Smoking-related illness cost Americans about \$US50 billion (\$A69 billion) for medical treatment last year, or the equivalent of a \$US2.06 tax on a packet of cigarettes, according to a study released yesterday by the Federal Center for Disease Control. The CDC found the medical costs of smoking had more than doubled since 1988." (*SMH*, July 9, 1994).

"I've had my fill of advice about good eating habits" "40,000 people die every day from starvation and associated diseases. Because the nexus is more difficult to establish, there are no figures for the total number who die from illness associated with over-consumption. A technocrat might describe it as a distribution problem. In a sense it is. It's also a moral problem. And it's going to get worse; the world's population is expected to grow by 3 billion people over the next 30 years." (*SMH*, July 11, 1994).

"The mozzie zappers" "Malaria, that ancient scourge of humankind, is on the march, increasingly resistant to quinine-type drugs and killing millions of people each year." (*SMH*, *Good Weekend*, July 16, 1994).

"Disease strain resists common antibiotics" "The World Health Organisation said yesterday a cholera epidemic sweeping through Rwandan refugees in Zaire was of a strain resistant to the antibiotics most commonly used against the disease. But the United Nations health agency said another antibiotic that is effective against the strain, which has already killed about 14,000 refugees, could be used on serious cases costs \$US1 (\$1.35) per patient." (*The Australian*, July 28, 1994).

"Child cancer cure lowers IQ: study" "Children who survive the most common childhood cancer thanks to radiation treatment are likely to have a significantly reduced IQ, according to a new study. Survivors of acute lymphoblastic leukaemia (ALL) suffered a significant drop in

intelligence if given low-dose brain radiation, the study found. The problem did not become apparent until several years after treatment, when the IQ of children given radiation therapy was about 10 points lower than another group treated only with chemotherapy." (*SMH*, July 27, 1994).

"No coffins, no tears - yet" "For years Asians have dismissed AIDS as an epidemic afflicting immoral foreigners, namely gays and drug addicts. The Indonesians denied that their culture included gays, the Chinese claimed to have successfully outlawed prostitution and drug use, the Japanese suggested they were somehow immune to AIDS. Though these attitudes are changing slowly, many Asians may still be reluctant to listen as the 10th International Conference on AIDS opens this week in Yokohama, Japan. The conference is being held in Asia for the first time to drive home the point that AIDS is poised to sweep Asia with even more of a devastating impact than it has swept 'foreign' lands."

(*The Bulletin*, August 16, 1994).

"Country health woes exposed" "Rural dwellers are more likely to become sick and die early, according to a paper from the Australian National University, dispelling the myth that life is healthier in the country. Just as disturbing however is the finding that the Government spends less on rural patients than their urban counterparts, exploding another myth that city dwellers subsidise the rural population."

(*The Australian*, August 19, 1994).

"Doctor infected with HIV virus" A Victorian doctor was infected with the AIDS virus when a needle used on a HIV-positive patient pricked the doctor's finger, a physician reports in the latest Medical Journal of Australia." (*The Australian*, Sept 5, 1994).

"Heart drug makes men grow breasts" "12 men developed breasts after taking drugs for high blood pressure or heart problems, the Adverse Drug Reactions Advisory Committee reported. 8 of the men, aged between 31 and 70, had not yet recovered the committee reported in the latest Medical Journal of Australia. All 12 were taking verapamil, felodipine, or nifedipine, which belong to a class of drugs known as 'calcium antagonists' (*The Australian*, Sept 5, 1994).

"Hear today, gone tomorrow" "New research suggests young people are going deaf at least 3 times faster than previous generations. Mark Ragg finds out that loud music and possibly even antibiotics are to blame." (*The Bulletin with Newsweek*, Sept 6, 1994).

"Cholera plea" "Tirana: Albania has appealed to other States not to impose a quarantine on its citizens because of an outbreak of cholera which has killed at least 8 people. At least 5 have died in a simultaneous outbreak in Ukraine's Crimean peninsula." (*SMH*, Sept 22, 1994).

"Siestas make sense, study shows" "Mrs Mary Katis, 75, is never too tired to go ballroom dancing in the evening. Often she will go 3 or 4 times a week, and she attributes the spring in her step to regular afternoon naps. A new study into the underrated subject of napping among the elderly suggests that Mrs Katis, of Kingsford, has plenty of company as a napper and is doing the right thing by her body and mind."

(*SMH*, Sept 20, 1994).

"TB toll rising" "CHICAGO: "Tuberculosis is out of control in some parts of the world and may kill 30 million people this decade, according to a study published today by the World Health Organisation and the US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention." (*SMH*, Jan. 19, 1995).

"PESTILENCE BACK WITH A VENGEANCE" "The Indian plague is a reminder that old enemies are back with new power. And, worse, other maladies have joined them... Bubonic plague is always there, rattling round in colonies of wild marmots and gerbils, spreading from time to time to rats. Wherever public order breaks down - in war, after an earthquake, in political upheaval - so does the collection of rubbish. Rats then move in and, sooner or later, one arrives bearing 100 million *Yersinia pestis* in every millilitre of blood. Under the awful shadow of the plague, hundreds of millions have died in three great pandemics: in the Age of Justinian, during the Black Death of the 14th century and in the upheavals of the 100 years. But the plague may be among the least of the old enemies waiting to ambush modern man. Cholera, malaria and tuberculosis - all microbial infections - have taken more lives, and all these old nightmares are back, and advancing. Cholera was once endemic only in India but spread around the globe in the 19th-century. It, too, was controlled by public hygiene; but it, too, surfaces wherever sewerage systems collapse. It reappeared in the Americas in 1991 and is now present in southern Russia and eastern Europe. It is a revolting illness in which the sufferer excretes up to 20 litres a day, shrinking as he or she dehydrates. Antibiotics work, but only to a point. Humans change slowly but microbes mutate furiously under selective pressure, and *Vibrio cholerae* is one of the most protean, changing its nature in days, leaving the health workers grasping for a new range of drugs. Bubonic plague, for some reason, can be cured with the remedies that have worked for decades. Cholera, malaria and tuberculosis - all of them for a while in retreat against the post war antibiotic revolution - are back with a vengeance. Tuberculosis - the notorious "white plague" which once carried off one adult in four - was for a few decades successfully controlled by antibiotics, at least in the rich world. Last year, it killed 2.7 million people and infected another eight million. According to one set of calculations, one-third of the population of the planet - more than 1.7 billion people - was infected with its bacillus last year but without developing the disease. During this decade it is expected to kill 30 million people and it, too, has become resistant to treatment. The pattern is the same with malaria, which strikes 100 million people a year, killing two children every minute to notch up a "kill" of one million deaths a year, simply because programs to eradicate the carrier mosquito have collapsed in many countries and because the standard drugs no longer work so well. But malaria, too, is only one of a range of old killers back in business: measles, diphtheria and dengue fever are back, and so are other infections - salmonella, pneumococcus and listeriosis, all of them becoming ever more resistant to more and more antibiotics. The US National Institute of Health has called it "an epidemic of microbial resistance". It gets worse. In the past 20 years, entire new diseases have emerged. Lyme disease and Legionnaire's disease arrived from nowhere in 1975, campylobacteriosis in 1977, toxic shock syndrome in 1978 and HIV in 1980. Last year, US authorities identified a new type of dangerous hantavirus infection. Health authorities are drawing the obvious lesson: constant vigilance and care for public hygiene are the most important and sometimes the only successful weapons. But the population of the planet is growing by 93 million a year, and most of those people are born in the poorer nations. And many of them are moving to the cities which are swelling far more quickly than the capacity of already overstrained services. And, despite some successes, such as the elimination of smallpox and the near-elimination of polio, the picture looks gloomier than ever." (*The Guardian*, in *SMH*, Oct. 5, 1994).

"BREAD - THE BROKEN STUFF OF LIFE" "The ingredients label on a loaf of bread from an Australian supermarket reads like this: unbleached bakers flour, yeast, salt, vegetable oils, soy flour, emulsifiers (481, 472e), preservative (282), vitamin (thiamine), water added. Signs in the Murrumbidgee Resort in southern New South Wales are asking visitors not to feed bread to the kangaroos because it kills them.

"INDIAN STRAIN OF MALARIA 'KILLS MORE THAN PLAGUE OUTBREAK'" "NEW DELHI: A deadly strain of malaria that attacked its victims' brains had killed thousands people in western India, claiming many more lives than an outbreak of plague, health groups and newspapers said yesterday... Government health officials said more than 70 000 people had been struck by cerebral malaria in Rajasthan. But they said the volunteer health groups and newspapers, which gave differing figures, had exaggerated the number of dead." (*The Australian*, Oct., 24, 1994).

"Deadly potato blight fears rise" "LONDON: The fungus that started the Irish potato famine 150 years ago is coming back with a vengeance, with a new weapon - sex. Scientists fear this may enable it to attack crops earlier in the growing season and develop a greater resistance to the pesticides used to control it. *Phytophthora infestans* arrived in Europe's Low Countries from America in June 1845. By September, spores carried on wind and rain reached Ireland, whose rural population was uniquely dependent on potatoes. It wiped out the crop that year and the next, killing at least 1.5 million people. Since then it has been held at bay by large applications of fungicide. Attempts to breed more resistant crops have achieved only partial success. Until now, the blight had been reproducing through asexual spores but a new strain imported from Mexico has spread across Europe. As well its giving blight a better chance of surviving winter in the open, sexual reproduction enables strains to swap genes and so possibly develop fungicide resistance faster. Given warm and wet conditions, the blight can transform a lush green field of plants into a rotting mass in a few days." (*The Independent* in *SMH*, Jan. 24, 1995).

"Chloroform risk" "PEOPLE swimming in indoor pools may be exposing themselves to high levels of chloroform, a known animal carcinogen, according to a study published in America's Environmental Health Perspectives. The study conducted by researchers at the Quebec Health and Environment Service shows that chloroform is created by the breakdown of the chlorine used to disinfect the water. It was found swimmers had small but measurable levels of the chemical in their lungs and bodies after a 55-minute session. The chloroform came from both skin contact with the water and inhalation of the air around the pool. The researchers found that as they increased the amount of chlorine in the water, the level in the swimmers also rose." (*Sun-Herald*, Jan. 15, 1995).

"Danger parasite link to public pool" A parasite which can kill people with poor immune systems has been linked for the first time in Australia to a public swimming pool, in Sutherland. The parasite, cryptosporidium, causes chronic diarrhoea, abdominal cramps, vomiting and fever and can kill those with immune systems weakened from illnesses such as HIV/AIDS. A doctor alerted the South Sydney Public Health Unit last week to a high incidence of diarrhoea and the disease was traced to a pool at the Sutherland Leisure Centre. Nine days ago, a NSW Department of Health report found that about two-thirds of the State's public pools and spas were potential health hazards. The director of the South Sydney Public Health Unit, Dr Jeremy McAnulty, said yesterday that the pool would stay open but signs would warn people that they swam at their own risk. "Cryptosporidium is immune to chlorine, so it is particularly hard to kill. It causes a nasty, watery diarrhoea which can last for more than a month. For people with low immune systems, dehydration can be fatal. It is important that all people with diarrhoea see a doctor"

(*SMH*, Jan. 20, 1995).

"CANNABIS WARNING TO STUDENTS" "STUDY-stressed students were warned yesterday their examination results could suffer if they smoked cannabis to relax. The Australian Medical Association said it had been proved that cannabis affected short-term memory, a disadvantage to young people who smoked it at any time up to four weeks before exams. The warning was given by the AMA's Queensland branch which has been at odds with federal AMA policy supporting decriminalisation of cannabis. The chair of Cannabis Education Working Party, Dr Dana Wainwright, said the AMA was moving to educate teenagers about the drug to counter misinformation. "Most young people probably aren't aware that studies show the short-term memory defects of cannabis can persist up to four weeks after a single large dose," Dr Wainwright said. She said the AMA did not believe teenagers had been well-educated on the effect of drugs, but the working party had been formed after a recent report of the Queensland Criminal Justice Commission which recommended more liberal cannabis laws. "I think young people feel a relaxing joint will help to relieve some of the pressure they're feeling as they prepare for exams but it could affect their results with long-term consequences" she said."

(*The Australian*, Oct., 24, 1994).

"BEWARE OF THE SUN IF YOU HAVE BROWN HAIR, BLUE EYES" "Brown-haired, blue-eyed children, and not redheads, are the most likely to have cancer-bearing moles on their skin, a new study has found. The Victorian Melanoma Service's study of 1,123 children in Melbourne, Sydney and Townsville has found the first strong evidence that moles can be caused by exposure to sunlight during childhood. Head of the service, Dr John Kelly, said the average Australian had 100 moles on their body but up until now it had not been known if they were caused by sunlight or were hereditary. He said the more moles a person had the more likely it was they would develop melanoma, the main cause of cancer deaths among young Australian adults. 'Each year more than 8,000 people are diagnosed with melanoma in Australia and at least 800 die from it.' 'The rates of melanoma are increasing more rapidly than those of any other cancer. Melanoma kills more people in Australia than HIV [human immunodeficiency virus, the precursor of AIDS] but we are still not taking it seriously enough.' The study, which was carried out with the Sydney Melanoma Unit and the Queensland Institute for Medical Research, found six-year-olds tested in Townsville had twice as many moles as those tested in Melbourne. It also found that children with the most moles were those who burnt easily, rather than those who tanned, those which had dark hair - but not black and those with light-coloured eyes. 'Children with blue eyes had more moles than children with hazel eyes, while the lowest mole numbers were recorded for children with brown or black eyes,' he said. 'Children with brown hair had the most moles, followed by children with fair hair. Children with red hair, surprisingly, had fewer moles still, while black-haired children recorded the lowest number.' Dr Kelly said his research team would return to Melbourne, Sydney and Townsville every three years to study the development of the children's moles. The best protection was for children - especially those under the age of 12 - to stay out of the sun or wear clothing that covered the body."

(*SMH*, Jan. 13, 1995).

"Inside the female mind" "THE female brain works faster than that of a man, according to research by the University Eye Clinic of Tubingen, Germany. Early evidence presented by tests confirms what most women could have told scientists in an instant. Men are just off the pace. Female dominance of the NSW HSC results could be said to prove the point. Researchers attached electrodes to the scalps of volunteers who were asked to categorise letters - and found brain activity to be significantly faster in women." (*The Sun-Herald*, Jan. 15, 1995).

"Israeli academic spreads AIDS virus" "TEL AVIV: YESHAYAHU Demner was a respected engineering professor described by students as a reserved, kindly man. Now police suspect the 46-year-old bachelor led a double life, dedicating the last year of his life to spreading the AIDS virus until he was murdered last week. Demner's case has stunned Israel. Gay activists fear their struggle for acceptance in a conservative society has been set back years. Some lawmakers are pressing for a crackdown against people with AIDS. The story broke when police, alerted by colleagues that Demner was missing for two days, burst into his Haifa apartment last Monday to discover his naked body on the couch with marks on his head from being struck. Police said meticulous personal records found in the apartment revealed a dual identity. Mr David Tuval, the detective in charge of the case, said the documents showed Demner discovered he had HIV, the virus that leads to AIDS, in the autumn of 1993. After that, he had sex "with many dozens of men" on condition that no protection be used, Tuval said." (*The Australian*, Nov., 8, 1994).

"AIDS body urges euthanasia reform" "The peak AIDS lobby group, the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations, will add its political power to the movement for voluntary euthanasia, campaigning for law reform to allow such a course if requested by terminally ill patients."

(*The Weekend Australian*, November 5-6, 1994).

"CHINA, VIETNAM FEAR HIV EXPLOSION" "Fears of an AIDS explosion causing thousands of deaths in Vietnam and China, so far relatively unscathed, were voiced yesterday by world health officials as the first world AIDS summit opened in Paris. In Hanoi the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) predicted yesterday that 15,000 people would die of AIDS in Vietnam by 1998. In Beijing, the authorities warned its tiny number of AIDS cases could quadruple in the next decade through HIV contamination of its largely unscreened blood supply."

(*The Australian* Dec 2, 1994).

"War on creeping death that drops out of the night" "Tiltil, Chile. At night, it creeps out of walls and drops on its victims, biting them while they sleep and infecting them with a disease that has no vaccine and no cure. When they awake, the victims have a rash around the bite and a parasite in their blood that years later will weaken their heart, drain their strength and possibly kill them. Changa disease, a debilitating illness affecting up to 18 million people from Mexico to Argentina, is one of the worst of the range of maladies from cholera to malaria that afflict Latin America's rural poor. It is transmitted by the vinchuca, an insect the size of a cockroach that thrives in wooden or adobe homes, especially those with dirt floor and farm animals nearby. It affects people with a potentially lethal protozoan. . . . About a third of those infected would develop heart, digestive or brain damage up to 20 years after infection. Recent blood samples reveal very high infection rates. Up to 20 per cent of blood donors in Argentina test positive for the parasite, while rates in remote parts of Paraguay have reached up to 72 per cent, it said." (*SMH*, March 3, 1995).

"Smoking mothers warned" "Mothers who smoke cause the deaths of nearly 6,000 babies and 115,500 fetuses in the US every year, according to researchers who analysed scores of studies taken over a 40-year period. Their report, published in this month's *Journal of Family Practice*, also found mothers' smoking contributed to 53,000 annual cases of low birth-weight babies and 22,000 cases of babies who required intensive care at birth." (*SMH*, April 13, 1995).

"AIDS threatens world's military" "Washington: THE AIDS epidemic poses a strategic threat to the military in parts of Africa and at its present rate of infection also imperils South-East Asian armies, analysts say... One in 40 African adults is infected with the virus and in some East and Central African cities, the rate is one in three, according to the World Health Organisation." "Disease among the troops is an important intelligence issue and military forces are understandably reluctant to reveal their weaknesses." (*The Australian*, May 8, 1995).

RELIGION

"Aum Shinrikyo: the blind leading the blinded" "The bizarre rise and dramatic fall of Shoko Asahara and his fanatical religious cult, Aum Shinrikyo, is a tale rooted in bitter personal feelings of rejection and paranoia. It is also an allegory, some say, for the fast-lane society of modern Japan - and the deep-seated alienation among bright, sensitive youth who found strength in the psychological power and dark, apocalyptic visions of a self-styled guru." (*The Australian*, May 18, 1995)

"Religious sect runs hot on blood and denial" "Akitoshi Hirose was explaining why he had joined AUM Shinrikyo, the fanatical Buddhist sect which treats its leader, Shoko Asahara, as a demi-god and drinks concoctions of his hair and blood. "All religions seemed rotten and hypocritical to me, because they were all polluted by earthly desires", said Mr Hirose. "Then I visited one of AUM's communes. It was a very cold day, but the first man I encountered was wearing nothing but a cotton shirt and trousers, and no socks. I asked him if he felt cold, but he said he did not, because he had overcome all earthly desires." The very lunacy of the sect's beliefs - its followers expect to be the only survivors after the world comes to an end in 1997 - seem to appeal to young people alienated by the materialism of Japan's economic success. The cult promised its followers spiritual benefits missing in prosperous Japan: a purposeful life in rustic communes and ecstasy through yoga meditation."

(*SMH*, March 24, 1995).

"Islamic law splits married couple" "Cairo, Thursday: Pushed by Muslim fundamentalists, an Egyptian court ruled yesterday that a happily married couple must divorce because the husband's writings showed he had lost his faith and therefore could not stay married to a Muslim. An Egyptian human rights activist said the judgment meant the two must live apart until an appeal, and if they were caught together alone they could be considered adulterers and the man killed. The wife, Ms Ibtihal Younis, rejected the court's ruling as illegal, and human rights activists said the verdict was a serious precedent and posed a threat to the country's liberal intellectuals. "This verdict is a disgrace to the Egyptian judiciary. The court has submitted to the will of the Islamists...the Egyptian judiciary must redress the matter", said Ms Younis, the wife of Professor Nasr Abu Zeid, a Cairo University Arabic literature academic. She said she was not considering separating from her husband and would lodge a new appeal to have the case reconsidered. "The verdict has made my husband a target for militants", she said. Islamic fundamentalists say Muslims who renounce their religion should be killed if they do not recant, and their killers should go free. Fundamentalists took the case to court in 1993 without consulting the couple. Professor Abu Zeid won a lower court victory last year but the fundamentalists appealed. Yesterday, the Cairo Appeal Court for Personal Status reversed the earlier verdict and ruled for the fundamentalists. They claimed Professor Abu Zeid's writings on interpretations of the Koran, Islam's holy book, resembled atheism. What the fundamentalists found unacceptable was his combination of a secular outlook with deep knowledge of the Koran and Islamic theology. The case is the latest landmark in a campaign by fundamentalists to achieve a strict Islamic State in Egypt. More than 700 people have been killed since the campaign began in 1992." (*SMH*, June 16, 1995).

"Islamic laws just & effective" I am prompted to write in reply to Len Matthews' letter (Dec 11) under the caption, "Flog cowardly criminals". The letter obviously referred to capital punishment, but his denunciation of Islam and Islamic law, must not go unanswered. In Islam, contrary to Mr Matthews, guilt has to be established. Not just by hearsay, or by circumstantial evidence, but by fact - by eyewitness accounts and not just one eyewitness, but in most cases, four eyewitnesses. Perjury is discouraged by severe punishment. In offences such as thieving, it is true the hand is cut off. However, this cannot be done when the person has stolen to feed his family, or because of pressing need. In an Islamic society, the poor are taken care of by the government. If the government fails, then the government must take responsibility, not someone who has been a victim. However, for someone to steal for no purpose, other than to obtain ill gotten wealth, that is something else. Let us just note for a moment that to be able to take that which belongs to another person leads to other crimes. The person who would do this would have no compunction in dealing drugs to obtain wealth; would have no compunction in killing. This is not a minor problem, it is the tip of the iceberg. Fortunately, Islam recognises this, and recognises that the innocent must be protected, and this is maintained by having a strong law. Mr Matthews, if he has travelled where Sariah is carried out, would find the incidences of thieving, and other crimes, extremely low, likewise the number of people minus hands. One may say that this law protects would-be criminals from attempting such crimes." (*The Sunday Mail*, January 1, 1995).

"SHAKEN SADDAM TURNS TO PUBLIC SADISM" "As the Iraqi State television camera zooms in on the severed hand placed on a torn green jacket, the narrator intones two Koranic verses: "The thieves, cut off their hands for their ill gain and as punishment from God who is great and wise" and "There is life for you in punishment, O you who can reason, that you may follow the right path". On June 4, the Iraqi regime introduced the Islamic punishment for theft, amputation of the right hand, while decreeing that repeat offenders should lose a foot. Three months later, the hand of a thief, along with the man himself, were shown on Iraqi television. President Saddam Hussein has launched a new reign of terror intended to shore up his weakening grip on power. Although Islamic law does have provisions for cutting off the hand of a thief and the head of a murderer, many punishments being meted out have nothing to do with Islam. They are simply cruel and bizarre. The regime has decreed that dealing illegally in foreign currency and forging official documents are punishable by amputation of the hand. On August 18, it announced that those whose hands are cut off should also have an "X" tattooed between their eyes, although Islam strictly forbids such mutilation. Saddam has personally signed all the amputation decrees. But the decree that has had the greatest impact is the August 25 announcement that army deserters, or any sheltering them, will lose an ear and be branded. A second offence means losing the other ear. A third offence means death. In a stunning case of hypocrisy, the regime, also began selling exemptions from military service for about \$1 000, a staggering sum to most Iraqis." (*SMH*, Oct. 4, 1994).

"ISLAM NO BOGEYMAN, BHUTTO TELLS THE WEST" "PARIS: The Prime Minister of Pakistan, Ms Benazir Bhutto, warned the West yesterday against making Islam its new bogeyman because of what she called the shrill voices of a handful of extremists. "If you go to Muslim countries, you'll find many Muslims believe, now that communism is over, Western countries are looking for a new bogeyman. And for them, Islam is to replace what communism was... Muslim countries do not want to be recognised by the shrill voices of a handful of extremists, just as we do not recognise Western countries by the shrill voices of a handful of extremists," she said. Ms Bhutto is on a three-day visit to Paris, where officials said France had decided on a 400 million franc (\$104 million) aid package for Pakistan." (*SMH*, Nov. 5, 1994).

"Islam's bloody toll" "Minya, Egypt: Islamic militants shot dead a Coptic Christian and seriously wounded his brother yesterday in a village in the Minya region of southern Egypt. The attack raised to 495 the number of people killed since Islamic militants launched a violent anti-government campaign in March 1992." (*The Australian*, November 15, 1994).

"Government troops 'crucify Sudanese Christians'" "Christian men are being nailed to crosses in the Nuba mountains of southern Sudan by government troops, according to Anglican Bishop Seme Solmona. In the same area, young girls are forced into marriages in which they have no say and often have to change their religion. Bishop Solmona also confirms stories of the sale of children as slaves for amounts varying from \$US 10 (\$13.60) to \$US100 and their shipment to the houses of the wealthy in the capital, Khartoum." (*Weekend Australian*, October 29-30, 94).

"Muslim zealots reinterpret Scripture for holy war" "In Islam's most sacred book, the Koran, which was written more than 1300 years ago, the prophet Muhammad wrote: "Let not detestation for a people who barred you from the Holy Mosque move you to commit aggression... But in the Gaza Strip, in the bowels of one of the world's most impoverished cities, the voice of contemporary radical Islam calls for aggression, retaliation and annihilation of an enemy - Israel - which in 1948 stripped the Palestinians of their homes and made them refugees in their own land." (*The Weekend Australian*, January 28-29, 1995).

"Men told to cut foreign ties" "Tehran: Spiritual guide Ayatollah Ali Khamenei urged Iranian men to stop wearing ties, saying today they were a sign of a fascination with foreign cultures. In a religious judgment published by the conservative daily Resalat, Khamenei said wearing ties

or bow-ties was 'prohibited as it is an act of imitation and propagation of invading non-Muslim cultures'. Wearing ties, once enforced in government office, went out of fashion after the 1979 Islamic revolution which toppled the pro-Western shah." (*The Daily Telegraph*, July 1, 1994).

"Iran wages war on converts" "Tehran: The Islamic Government of Iran, which has often been criticised by human rights groups for its treatment of religious minorities, is mounting the fiercest campaign since the 1979 revolution against its small Christian minority, according to church leaders and Western diplomats. Three Christian leaders have been killed this year and churches have been shut. Scores of young Christians, many converts from Islam, have been imprisoned and tortured, especially in the cities of Gorgan and Kermanshah, and pastors have been expelled from parishes or put under surveillance, according to the diplomats. "Even by the standards of Iran, the current crackdown is extraordinary", a senior Western diplomat said. Iranian officials deny mistreating Christians or other religious groups." (*SMH*, August 2, 1994).

"Islam, dread and democracy in Algeria" "There was no doubting their courage. The women packed the theatre of Ibn Khaldoun to laugh, clap and ululate the mock trial of Abbasi Madani and Ali Belhaj, the Islamic Salvation Front leaders held under house arrest by the Algerian Government. Some of the women had been wounded; others had lost husbands, sons, daughters. One young woman had seen her husband kidnapped in front of her, then later opened her front door to be presented with his head on a stick. At the hotel entrance was a noticeboard covered in colour photographs - snapshot size - of decapitated bodies and severed heads, of girls with their throats slashed. One middle-aged woman stood in front of the pictures for three minutes, tears dripping from her face." (*SMH*, March 11, 1995).

"Fine Cut: Act of Love: Circumcision in The West (Netherlands)" "Each year 1,000 girls die in Egypt from complications caused by circumcision. 1.5 million girls are circumcised every year worldwide... A Somali woman does not feel any pain when circumcised. It is an honour for her. She becomes a woman...We are proud of it. It is a matter of honour... We hope it won't be forbidden in the Netherlands. Holland should not interfere with our culture and religion... We are Muslims, we have our tradition to uphold." [But another member of the discussion panel said this:] "Personally, I feel mutilated. I have a lot of pain. I cancelled my wedding the day before because I was afraid of pain. I'd like to be a complete woman... A woman has the right to satisfy her husband, but I am afraid because I have a lot of problems... It is a crime against humanity. It violates a woman's integrity. She is reduced to an inferior position." (Notes from a TV program from Holland on SBS, Jan. 23, 1995)

"Religions denounce female mutilation" "Condemnation by religious leaders of female genital mutilation and confirmation that the practice has no foundation in their religions has been welcomed by the federal Minister for Health, Dr Lawrence. In a joint statement, the religious leaders from the Islam and Coptic Christianity faiths yesterday denounced the practice and stated that female mutilation is not part of either religion." (*The Australian*, June 7, 1995).

"Power to beat mutilation horror" "Empowerment of women through education about their human rights is the first step towards halting violent traditional practices against women, such as female circumcision in Muslim countries and bride burning in India. That is the message from Ms Berhane Ras-Work, a guest speaker at this weekend's Women, Power & Politics conference at the Adelaide Convention Centre."

(*Advertiser* (SA), October 4, 1994).

"One woman's stand against cruel tradition" "Soraya Mire awoke in hospital surrounded by 20 doctors, none of whom had the slightest idea what was wrong with her. None, in the French mountain resort of Grenoble, had ever seen such a case. They had no idea why her vagina had been stitched together. Some of the doctors hypothesised she was in the process of a sex change. Eventually, an Egyptian doctor was brought in to examine Mire, who had fainted from menstrual pain while attending class at a local university. He recognised her condition immediately - he had seen many similar cases. Mire, like more than 100 million women living today, had undergone female genital circumcision, a practice common in a band of central African countries from Senegal in the west to Somalia in the east, where it is believed to control female sexual impulses and ensure chastity before marriage" (*The Australian*, April 11, 1995).

"Mystic accused of blasphemy" "When the well-known Indonesian mystic Mr Permadi Satrio Wiwoho, spoke at a seminar at Yogyakarta's Gadjadara University a year ago, he could not have anticipated that a casual observation would come back to haunt him. He is now under investigation by the intelligence branch of the Attorney-General's Department for alleged blasphemy, having become the target of strong criticism from official Muslim organisations. They assert during the seminar held at Gadjadara University in March last year, he called the Prophet a 'dictator' who had failed to create a just and prosperous society." (*The Australian*, March 22, 1995).

"6 wives on trial" "Kuala Lumpur: 6 Muslim women pleaded not guilty in a Malaysian court yesterday to charges of illegally marrying and having sex with a religious teacher who already had 4 wives." (*The Australian*, July 28, 1994).

"Polygamy drives PNG wives to murder" "Port Moresby: A breakdown in rules governing polygamous marriages was creating deadly jealousy in PNG society, with a growing number of women being jailed for murdering their husbands, new wives or girlfriends... The problem has complex roots, but is attributed in part to rapid social change and the influence of the cash economy which encourages men with jobs to take several wives for prestige." (*The Australian*, August 12, 1994).

"Hindu militant to kick out Muslim migrants" "Bal Thackeray, the undisputed powerbroker of the Hindu militant party Shiv Sena, has set the first task for his party's newly installed Government in Maharashtra, India's most prosperous State - kicking out Muslim immigrants. The 68 year old former political cartoonist says the Government in the west coast State should hunt and expel thousands of Muslim immigrants from Pakistan and Bangladesh living in Bombay, India's financial hub and Maharashtra capital." (*The Australian*, March 21, 1995).

"Australian good intentions drowned in an Indian cesspit" "What enraged the Indian slum lord was when the Australian social workers jumped into an oozing Madras sewer and set up a dinner table there with wine glasses and fine linen. "We did it to draw people's attention to the filth. We didn't eat off the fancy table setting. We're not that crazy", said Kevin Mackay who, along with 16 other Australians and a New Zealander, is trying to clean out the foulest sewer in this southern Indian city of 7 million people. However, what began as a simple good deed has backfired. Inspired by the film Gandhi, these Christians came from Australia to teach hygiene to the Indian poor and help in Madras's wretched slums. Now their efforts have led to death threats and they say the Australian High Commission in New Delhi no longer returns their telephone calls."

(*SMH*, Feb. 27, 1995).

"Buddhist cult a prime suspect" "For an organisation which claims to preach peace and the Buddhist way, the Aum Shinrikyo cult has been accused of some heinous crimes, including murder and kidnapping. The cult, whose name means Teaching of Truth, is one of Japan's multifarious 'new religions', and one of the leading suspects in today's terrorist attack on the Tokyo subway system. Six months ago, traces of sarin, the deadly nerve gas used in the attacks, were found at the sect's Mount Fuji commune." (*SMH*, March 21, 1995).

"Buddhism declines in the wake of a long-term loss of faith" "Three years into its deepest recession since the war, risotara - 'Jap-lish' for restructuring - has finally reached the country's soul, the Buddhist religion. Hit by declining congregations and revenues, overstaffing and vast under-utilised assets, the country's temples have followed Japan's banks, car factories and electronic industries in drastic economies. The root of the problem is Japan's long term loss of faith. The latest surveys by the cultural Affairs Agency show that only one in three of the 124 million Japanese believes in anything spiritual and fewer than one in 10 regularly practices a religion." (*SMH*, March 23, 1994).

"Privacy Bill may be incest defence" "The Commonwealth's most senior law officer acknowledged yesterday the Federal Government's sexual privacy legislation overriding Tasmania's anti-gay laws could provide a legal defence for consenting adult incest. The acting solicitor-general, Mr Dennis Rose QC, told a parliamentary inquiry into the Human Rights (Sexual Conduct) Bill that the effect of the proposed laws on unusual examples of incest was unclear. "It would be quite fantastic, I would have thought, to see this legislation as striking down incest between a father and a child", Mr Rose said. However, 'there could be questions as to... incest between adults, brother and sister of mature years, where

there is no question of a child being conceived', he said. "If two people like that were prosecuted it is certainly conceivable that they could raise the Commonwealth Act as a defence." (*The Australian*, Dec. 1, 1994).

"Family sect leader death report" The founder & spiritual leader of a controversial religious sect that was the subject of an Australia-wide police investigation into child sex abuse allegations had died, according to the group. David Brandt Berg, a dissident Pentecostal Christian missionary who called his group, Children of God, died earlier this month, aged 75, the group reported. However, the report has been greeted with scepticism by law enforcement officials and ex-cult members who say it may be an elaborate smoke screen put out by the Children of God to keep their leader underground." (*The Sun Herald*, Nov. 27, 1994).

"Amish life down under" "While other children play Nintendo games and dream about conquering the world, 12 year old Juda Weerheim sits quietly at home reading books and talking about becoming a missionary. Juda is one of 6 children who belong to the first Amish family in Australia. The Amish-Mennonite religious community received popular attention in the Peter Weir movie *Witness*, starring Harrison Ford, which focused on a group in the US where they drive horse drawn carriages, use mules to pull farm equipment and wear straw hats and plain clothes. They live simply and privately, without electricity and many modern amenities. It's a lifestyle they believe brings them closer to God because of its absence of worldly trappings. Television and radio present corrupt values and fast cars can generate pride." (*The Sun Herald*, May 8, 1994).

"Let us pray...in plain English" "The words to the one prayer most Australians know by heart are due to be changed by the nation's largest church. Australia's Catholic bishops have written to Rome to ask approval for a new 'plain English' version of the Lord's Prayer to be used in formal liturgy. In the alternative version, "Save us from the time of trial" replaces "Lead us not into temptation" - which some theologians argue implies that God is tempting people. The revised form of the prayer drops language such as the 'who art' and 'thy' uttered by millions throughout the 4.5 centuries since England's King Henry VIII decreed a uniform version." (*SMH*, August 18, 1994).

"Tyndale" "Friday October 6 1536 - 450 years ago - William Tyndale was garrotted on a cross. Then his body was burned. But it was his work which gave Genesis to the English people in a language they could understand, on a scale unprecedented in history."

(*Creation Ex Nihilo*, Vol 9, No 1).

"Actor accused of blasphemy" "Gay actor Sir Ian McKellen was accused of blasphemy last night after ripping a page from the Bible and urging a theatre audience to follow suit. The 55 year old knight drew cheers as he ritualistically removed the section of *Leviticus* which refers to male homosexuality as 'an abomination'. He denounced it as 'pornography'. Sir Ian staged his protest during a one man show at the Royal Lyceum Theatre in Edinburgh." (*The Telegraph Mirror*, Nov 30, 1994)

"Baptists apologise for slavery" "Atlanta, Wednesday: Members of the Southern Baptist Convention, the United States' largest Protestant denomination and one founded largely in defence of slavery, voted overwhelmingly yesterday to repent of its former racism, apologise to African-Americans and ask for their forgiveness. Their resolution on racial reconciliation was passed on a show of hands among nearly 20,000 "messengers", as Baptist delegates are called, who were attending a three-day annual meeting in Atlanta. The passage of the resolution was a dramatic move for the denomination, whose staunchly conservative leaders have turned sharply to the right politically and theologically in recent years, taking increasingly tough lines against abortion, homosexuality and the ordination of women as church pastors. The resolution comes at a time when the denomination, once a white southern bastion, is becoming more ethnically diverse, with missionaries establishing churches with primarily black, Hispanic and Asian congregations every year. The resolution was also striking because it addressed the very schism over slavery that created the denomination in the first place. In a move that foreshadowed the secession by southern States on the eve of the Civil War, the denomination was formed in 1845 by southern churchmen who broke from northern Baptists after a national Baptist agency refused to appoint a slave owner as a missionary. The resolution stated that "many of our southern Baptist forebears defended the 'right' to own slaves" and that in this century many in the denomination either failed to support or actively opposed efforts by black Americans to secure civil rights."

(*SMH*, June 22, 1995).

"Church apologises to Aborigines" "In a major breakthrough for national reconciliation, the Uniting Church's national assembly signed a 'covenant statement' yesterday apologising to Aborigines for past wrongs and promising to make reparations..." "We who are non-Aboriginal members of our Church grieve with you, our Aboriginal and Islander brothers and sisters. We grieve that the way in which our people often brought the Gospel to your people belittled and harmed much of your culture, and confused the Gospel with Western ways." (*SMH*, July 11, 1994).

"APARTHEID'S CHURCH TRIES TO CHANGE SPOTS" "PRETORIA: The former Moderator of the Afrikaans Dutch reformed Church, Professor Johan Heyns, was assassinated at the weekend after recently apologising for the Church's formerly pro-apartheid stance. Having once provided biblical justification for apartheid and worked diligently to preserve legalised racism, the Dutch reformed Church now says it wants to mend its ways. But it pleads for patience. At a recently concluded synod, Church elders committed themselves in principle to ending racial segregation of the flock and reuniting with their black brethren under one theological roof." (*SMH*, Nov.8, 1994).

"Church leaders rally around 'outed' bishop" "Anglican Church leaders last night rallied round the Bishop of London, Dr David Hope, after he was forced by hardline gay rights campaigners to admit his 'ambiguous' sexuality. Dr Hope, the third most senior figure in the Church of England, said his sexuality was a 'greyer' area than for most people, but he had chosen to live 'a single, celibate life'. He called a press conference at his home, London House, Westminster, yesterday to condemn the 'intimidatory' and 'profoundly disturbing' tactics of OutRage, which 'outed' 10 allegedly gay bishops last year." (*The Australian*, March 15, 1995).

"Support for vicar" "London: 22 Anglican priests have written to the Archbishop of Canterbury protesting at the sacking of a vicar who said he did not believe in God, and urging tolerance in the Church, the Guardian newspaper said yesterday." (*The Australian*, August 5, 1994).

"Charles may sever ties with Church" London: Prince Charles plans to end the monarch's role as head of the Church of England when he becomes king, The Sunday Times newspaper has said. The heir to the throne thinks the Church should be disestablished because Britain is a multi-racial, multi-faith society in which the Church of England has become a minority voice." (*SMH*, June 27, 1994).

"Christian beliefs and rituals:" "The Christian movement throughout its history has always been a crucial place to the Eucharist, and act of thanksgiving and of personal communion with Christ. The Body and the Blood of Christ are symbolised by consecrated bread and wine. This practice is generally accepted as originating in the Last Supper of Jesus with his disciples before the Crucifixion. In the Roman Catholic Church, the doctrine of the manner of Christ's presence in the Sacrament is known as Transubstantiation. This is the conversion of the bread into the whole substance of the Body (that is, Christ's real being) and of the wine into the Blood. Only the species (that is, the appearances of the bread and wine) remain, according to its doctrine. In the Protestant Churches, the Eucharist is usually known as the Lord's Supper. There is still believed to be the real presence of Christ as the communicant, reminded of Jesus' saving death through the loaf and cup, direct their confidence towards Christ and as a result enjoy His spiritual presence, both singly and in the congregation. In the Protestant Churches, many services are not sacramental but emphasise preaching and personal response. In the Roman Catholic Church, the centre of divine worship is the Mass." **"The Bible:"** "In both Protestant and Catholic Churches, the Bible plays an important basic part. To them, it is God's supreme revelation to man. Both Churches acknowledge the need for reading the Bible for inspiration. However, the Roman Catholic Church adds the need for tradition, dogma and obedience to the Church. Another major difference between Roman Catholic, Eastern and Protestant Churches is in the sacraments themselves. **"Sacraments:"** "In the Roman Catholic and Eastern Churches, there are seven sacraments - Baptism, Confirmation, the Eucharist, Penance, Matrimony, Holy Orders and Extreme Unction. In most Protestant Churches, Baptism and the Eucharist are sacraments, with other rites of a secondary nature. The Roman Catholic church honours the Virgin Mary and the saints. The Immaculate conception and the bodily ascension (Assumption) of Mary are dogmas. The faithful pray to the Virgin and the saints, seeking intercession either for spiritual and temporal needs or for

salvation with God. But prayers to Mary and the saints are always offered through Christ, who is the unique mediator between God and man, and through whom every Christian has direct access to the Father. In the Protestant Churches, this practice of intercessory prayers to the saints is not followed. The approach is direct to God without any intermediary except Jesus Christ. The different approach to images and relics is related to this. The Roman Catholic Church has many images, and candles are burnt in front of them. The faithful kneel in front of these images to pray, for example, to the Virgin or the saint represented. Relics, too, are important to Roman Catholics. Mass is celebrated within a church on an altar which can be fixed or movable. A movable altar no longer requires an altar stone. Nor is an altar stone needed when Mass is celebrated outside church on a table. The insertion of relics of the saints in or under the altar is, however, recommended.

In the Orthodox Churches there are large numbers of icons (pictures of Christ, the Virgin, a saint or a group of holy figures, often framed in a metal cover, leaving only the face and hands of the picture visible.) They are used in prayers and processions. Most Protestant Churches use little more than a cross. The Lutheran Church still has holy pictures but these are not for prayer. Non-conformist churches are notably bare."

"Discipline: Discipline is more centralised and authoritarian in the Roman Catholic than in Protestant Churches. Roman Catholics see the Pope as the successor to St Peter and thus as Christ's representative on earth. The freedom which is the basis of the Protestant Churches arises out of Martin Luther's first pamphlet "On Christian Freedom". However, the points of doctrine that unite the Catholic and Protestant Churches are far more numerous than those which divide." (SMH, October 14, 1969).

"Tears of blood enthrall Italians" "It has been two months since five year old Jessica Gregori first saw tears of blood running down the face of the statue of the Virgin Mary in her front yard on the outskirts of the down-and-out port city of Civitavecchia. Since then, all of Italy has been gripped by the mystery of the crying Madonna. At least 12 other statues have been reported shedding tears of blood around the country - more than in the past 10 years combined." (SMH, April 10, 1995).

"Pope is 'out of touch with life'" "Angry reactions ranging from 'monstrous' to charges that Pope John Paul was encouraging civil disobedience greeted the papal encyclical branding abortion and euthanasia as evils that Catholics must resist. Organisations promoting abortion and women's rights were vociferous in condemning the encyclical and some accused the 74 year old Pontiff of being out of touch."

(The Sun-Herald, April 2, 1995).

"Man of the year" "By choosing the Pope as Man of the Year; your magazine has surely qualified as top contender for 'Flop of the Year'".

(Time, Jan. 23, 1995).

"UN conference on population" "As a prelude to the forthcoming UN Conference on Population and Development, the Catholic church is once again preaching a more equitable distribution of the world's riches in order to sustain the rapidly increasing population of the developing world. That sermon does not seem to have borne fruit in the one region of the world where the Church has had special spiritual influence and considerable temporal power for half a millennium. Latin America is the only area of the world conquered, colonised and evangelised as a joint enterprise between Church and State. In fact, the links which were forged between the Catholic Church and the agents of imperial Spain and Portugal were inextricable. Today, after 300 years of colonial rule and another 200 of notional independence, there are everywhere in the hemisphere indicators of Catholicism's influence and prestige in the externals of Latin life. And yet, it is in this so "Catholic" region that one finds such startling contrasts in living standards between the materially comfortable minority and the impoverished majority. Apart from the woefully inadequate levels of nutrition, housing and employment available to millions, there is an even more insidious barrier to progress. That is the grievous lack of affordable health, education and welfare services for the poor; this perpetuates the misery of poverty generation after generation. Five hundred years of proselytising has merely achieved mute acceptance of the need for earthly suffering to obtain eternal reward."

(SMH, August 8, 1994).

"Why would women want to be priests?" "Why any woman would want to be a member of the Catholic priesthood is beyond me. It's like a Jew wanting to become a member of the Gestapo! Not only has the Catholic Church done everything in its power to stop women becoming priests... but it has spent the last 2000 years suppressing women in every way, and has had no use for us at all except as baby-makers (preferably virgin ones!). The Catholic Church is largely responsible for the overcrowding of the world today, preventing the spread of birth control throughout the world. They have destroyed women's knowledge of natural, herbal fertility control through their persecution of the witches and forced conversion of indigenous cultures. Right now the Church is attempting to pressure the Australian Government to not allow trials of RU 486 in this country. If these intelligent women really want to make a difference, and if they feel they must have a religion, then let them rediscover the goddesses. How could they possibly operate as leaders in a male-dominated, patriarchal, misogynist institution?"

(The Australian, August 9, 1994).

"Pope lets fathers be Fathers (if they defect)" "The Pope has given special dispensation to at least 6 married former Australian Anglican ministers - including a high profile talkback-radio host with 3 children - to become Catholic priests. As hundreds of Anglican priests opposed to the ordination of women pour into the Catholic Church in Britain and the US, the Sunday night host on Adelaide's 5AA, Dr John Fleming, has revealed that he and 3 other South Australians have received permission to be ordained. The convenor of the Ordination of Catholic Women, Dr Marie Louise Uhr, described the Vatican's dispensations as insulting to those ordained Catholic men who could no longer practise as priests because they had married." (SMH, November 30, 1994)

"Priest dies in gay sauna" "Dublin: A Roman Catholic priest died in a Dublin gay sauna and was given the last rites by 2 other priests who were there, police said." (SMH, November 15, 1994).

"Vipers in the bosom of Irish priesthood" "Two years after the Bishop Eamonn Casey affair rocked Ireland's Catholic Church, the faithful are facing a scandal far nastier and wide-spread than one illegitimate child of a wayward clergyman. Overwhelming evidence is beginning to emerge that the Catholic Church has been involved in a systematic cover-up to protect sex abusers within its ranks."

(The Australian, November 3, 1994).

"Church sets rules for modern times" "The Catholic Church has adopted a more compassionate attitude towards homosexuality in the first Catechism to be published in about 400 years, which has been updated to address modern issues including genetic engineering, in-vitro fertilisation and drug-taking. "The psychological genesis of homosexuality remains largely unexplained...(and) the number of men and women who have deep-seated homosexual tendencies is not negligible" the 800 page document says." (The Australian, May 26, 1994).

"The arduous 10 year process to beatification" "Church sources say Pope John Paul II has beatified 600 people and canonised another 250 - including 100 Korean martyrs. By comparison, during the papacy of Paul VI from 1963 to 1978, 31 beatifications (the second highest this century) and 21 canonisations were approved." (SMH, November 15, 1994).

"Nile pushes creationism" "The world was made in 6 days, according to the Rev Fred Nile, but the NSW Upper House conservative's plan to have creationist theory taught in schools is proving to take a lot longer. But he does not want the teaching of evolution theory banned from schools." (The Sun Herald, Nov. 20, 1994).

"Creation theories discredit church" A prominent church leader, Brisbane Anglican Archbishop Peter Hollingworth, has accused Christian fundamentalists of trying to infiltrate the education system with creationist theories that risk discrediting the church. And he urged the Federal Government to reconsider funding to "Christian schools" that teach creation 'science' - the literal biblical theory of creation - labelling it 'anti-knowledge, anti-religious and anti-science.'" (The Australian, November 2, 1994).

"Laughing for the Lord" "It's Sunday evening in London's fashionable Knightsbridge neighbourhood. Though pathetically tiny flocks of Londoners attend many Anglican services, Holy Trinity Brompton has a standing room only turnout of 1,500. Oblivious to the hot, airless sanctuary, the youthful throng buzzes with an anticipation more common at a rock concert or rugby match... This frenzied display has become

known as the 'laughing revival' or 'Toronto blessing', from the city that has popularised it. Though similar to the emotional outbursts found in some Pentecostal and Charismatic circles, the paroxysms of laughter are new, particularly for straitlaced Anglicans." (*Time*, August 22, 1994).

"Loving a God who allows tragedy" "After his sister was crippled in an accident, Richard Leonard found his faith under siege from doubt. I was studying for the priesthood at this time. God was my field of study. I was supposed to have a few clues about this. I had done courses in the problem of evil, and they did not let me down. I told my mother that I would not, and could not, believe in a God who actively wanted her daughter to be a quadriplegic. I would certainly refuse to serve a God like that." (*SMH*, August 2, 1994)

"Priest preaches right to avenge abortion" "Washington: Father David Trosch, a Roman Catholic priest in Alabama, teaches that God smiles on those who take a life to save the lives of the unborn. The local archbishop suspended him from his parish in Mobile last year after Fr Trosch tried to place advertisements in newspapers saying that murdering doctors who performed abortions was 'justifiable homicide.'" (*SMH*, August 6, 1994).

"MIAMI: Ex-clergyman convicted of killing abortion doctor" "A former Presbyterian minister has been found guilty of killing an abortion clinic doctor and his volunteer escort in violation of a new law that makes it a Federal crime to harm or interfere with those who provide legal abortions - the first time anyone has been prosecuted under the statute. As he had throughout the three day trial in a Pensacola, Florida, courtroom, defendant Paul Hill, 40, showed little emotion when the verdict of the 12-member jury was read yesterday. Later he smiled benignly... In January, Hill is to be tried on State murder charges and may get the death penalty in the July 29 shotgun slaying of Dr John Britton, 69, and the escort, Mr James Barret, 74. Acting as his own lawyer, Hill called no witnesses, nor did he cross-examine any of the dozen or so prosecution witnesses who placed him at the early-morning scene of the killings outside the Ladies Centre in Pensacola. Hill's terse closing statement was nearly a carbon-copy of his opening statement: "This Government is unjust because it does not protect human life. To the extent we take part in this evil, we must answer to God. May God help us all. Hill, a former minister well-known for advocating violence to stop abortions, was the first person to be charged and tried under the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances law, passed four months ago." (*SMH*, Oct.7, 1994).

"Sorry state of Presbyterianism" "What a mess the Presbyterian Church has become - divided, spiteful, antediluvian and faintly ludicrous. The expulsion of Peter Cameron for heresy (he disputed the Bible on women ordination) makes one wonder if some of the more passionate fundamentalists would like to see a good burning at the stake." (*The Bulletin*, August 16, 1994).

"Presence of mind" "Sir Mark Oliphant was once a giant of Australian science. He was a key player in the development of the atomic bomb during WWII and led the team of scientists which gave the Allies airborne radar. At 92, Sir Mark says he's now ready to die.

Though the title of his last written work comes from the Bible, Oliphant draws no comfort from religion in the face of death. "It's goodbye", he says. "Nobody's ever been able to describe an afterlife except in ridiculous terms. People sitting on either side of God playing harps and singing". He chuckles. "No, I don't believe in heaven or hell", he says. "But one might always be surprised." (*Good Weekend*, August 6, 1994).

"Bless this divorce" "Atlanta: An Atlanta couple whose marriage has already been dissolved by a judge is now seeking a blessing of the divorce from a higher authority - God. Yesterday, Adei Grenpastures and Tim Doty appeared before the altar of the First Christian Church in Decatur, Georgie, 5 years after their wedding, to ask for divine guidance... Grenpastures-Doty, a registered psychiatric nurse and ordained minister said: "This service must symbolise hope. It does not exalt divorce because we are devastated by that."

(*The Sun Herald*, September 18, 1994).

"Neo-pagan cult membership grows" "Neo-pagan cults - which share a range of beliefs with the Swiss suicide cult now making headlines - have been gaining membership around Australia, according to a concerned academic who has been investigating their activities for a decade. Bruce Wilkinson, who works with a voluntary group called the Institute for the Study of Religion, at Armidale NSW, says the neo-pagans are becoming intertwined with witchcraft. His investigations indicate there are about 800 members of neo-pagan sects in Australia, overlapping the New Age Movement, which influences perhaps hundreds of thousands of Australians." (*Canberra Times*, October 15, 1994).

"Teenagers lured into satanic cults" The violent deaths of 50 religious sect members in Switzerland and Canada sent shock waves around the globe. Now Australian experts point to an alarming growth of local cults, recruiting vulnerable teenagers and adults off the streets into criminal satanic groups. JULIE NANCE reports on allegations of drug enticement, sexual abuse and bizarre rituals. Welfare worker, psychologists and former group members paint a picture straight out of Hollywood of animal sacrifices, vandalism, drug and alcohol abuse and prostitution. They say your dabblers in seances and ouija boards are moving onto more dangerous activities as the belief in supernatural powers and their associated rituals take over their lives." (*The Sunday Telegraph*, Oct. 23, 1994).

"Bloodsuckers with bite" "The vampire is back. Five years into capitalism, Romania's dollar-hungry State tourism industry is going all-out for the Dracula trade. As part of that effort, the world's first Dracula congress has just ended, complete with a ghostly tour about the ghastly bloodsucking count. About 50 Dracula buffs from around the world descended on Roumania for the five-day government-sponsored congress. Yesterday, the celebrations reached an eerie climax with a masked ball on the mountain slopes stalked by Irish author Bram Stoker's mythical vampire, based on the 14th-century Romanian prince, Vlad the Impaler. For the Jews there is the Holy Land, for Muslims there is Mecca and for Dracula fans there is Transylvania," said one Dracula fan." (*The Australian*, May 30, 1995).

"Devil slayings" The suspected leader of a Satanic cult told an Athens court yesterday that he and his followers kidnapped, raped and killed young women in sacrifices to the devil" (*The Sun-Herald*, June 25, 1995).

"DEVILISH DOINGS" "DEVIL worshippers in South Africa's Orange Free State had burned a candle of human fat in their latest offering. Police discovered the candle as they searched an underground storm drain where the cell gathered to perform rituals in Bloomfontain."

(*The Sun-Herald*, Sept. 11, 1994).

"Witches killed" "MAPUTO: Suspected witches were thrown alive and bound into a crocodile-infested river after tribal courts found them guilty of casting spells, a Mozambican paper reported yesterday." (*The Australian*, June 29, 1995).

"Red flag fades to pink in commercial Vietnam" "In Ho Chi Minh City, where faded red flags of communism dot the cityscape with surprising regularity. Westerners commonly meander through a downtown market largely devoted to war memorabilia. Stall owners at the 'war market' - located beside a pagoda which pays homage to the Buddhist goddess of mercy - happily clamber over surplus gas masks, helmets and belt buckles to reach a battle-scarred knife, US Army anti-fungal foot powder or some other trinket that has struck a potential buyer's curiosity." (*The Australian*, Dec 5, 1994). *The Buddhists say that they do not believe in God yet they have goddesses. [Ed].*

"APOCALYPSE NOW(ish)" "MINDFUL of the fear which sometimes grips his audiences, Paco Rabanne begins his public speeches with a warning. "Fasten your seatbelts," he tells them. "Hold on tight. You're going to get it full in the face." Rabanne, the leading couturier best known as the inventor of the metal mini-skirt, goes on to predict that his listeners have five years, at most, before the outbreak of a cataclysmic war which will be followed by the "vacuum-cleaning" of the planet. "I see nothing," the designer says, "but massacres and desolation everywhere." Rabanne - who recently published his alarming thesis in a book called *Has the Countdown Begun?* - is one of a number of authors who have been powerfully affected by the approach of the year 2000. The advent of the next millennium has not so far prompted the outbreaks of mass panic and lawlessness which greeted the close of the year 999, which was widely seen by Europeans as marking the end of time. But the nervous few point to the imminent expiry of prophecies such as those Malachy (the 12th-century Irish saint who said the next Pope the last) and the French visionary Nostradamus, whose 16th-century predictions, say most interpreters, suggest global conflagration before the end of the century. Esoteric bookshops, have identified the sudden extermination of all life on earth as a subject of interest to a wide readership, offer a large number of works allowing readers to choose their own apocalypse from a variety of scenarios involving floods, bombs, ice, deforestation and extra-terrestrial

invasion... In the Catholic Church, prophetic tendencies are not so easily accommodated. Father Neil Horan, who was until recently a Catholic priest, has experienced no visions or personal revelation, but was relieved of his duties when he started promoting his book, *A Glorious New World Very Soon to Come*, which argues that Armageddon is upon us, and will probably coincide with the year 2000. "I don't really know what will happen to me," said Horan. "My views on prophecy have led me into great difficulty with the Church. I am saying: look at the signs in the world. Christ said: 'When you see these signs, rejoice, because our salvation is at hand'". Horan who is 47, was persuaded to see a psychiatrist, who pronounced him sane. His Bishop has been taking him to another (though you wonder what a secular psychiatrist would make of millenarians such as Billy Graham and Ronald Reagan - or, come to that, of the Pope, especially if he happened to let slip that he drinks the blood of Christ and is the chosen representative of God on earth). Horan's Bishop has indicated that he might be permitted to return if he stops talking about Armageddon. However, as Father Neil points out, the conviction that all of humanity is about to be blown to smithereens is not the easiest thought to put to the back of your mind... "What have entered the mainstream of Australian thinking are the terrifying warnings of the environmental movement. I think there is a kind of secular apocalypticism, an increasing belief that the world can end, not by God's intervention, but by our own mucking it up," says Philip Almond, reader in religious studies at the University of Queensland - whose new book, *Heaven and Hell in Enlightened England*, is about notions of the end of the world. "Just when we finally got away from the traditional apocalyptic fear that the world would end in fire - nuclear fire in this case - suddenly we're going to be flooded by the greenhouse effect. It's almost as if two traditional ways of the world ending have been continuously playing out during last 50 years." (SMH, Oct. 12, 1994).

"CHRISTIAN SOLDIERS MARCHING TO TAKE THE WHITE HOUSE" "Fundamental Christians are trying to take over the Republican Party to gain an acceptable candidate for an attack on the White House in 1996, writes Jonathan Freedland. You can see only four children but their mother insists that there are six. The other two never appear because they are dead. They were both miscarriages. But Mary Jo Hudson refers to them as "her children" all the same. Mrs Hudson, an evangelical Christian, believes that human life begins at conception. She has all her children around her because she teaches them herself. Her faith is so passionate that she wants to mould her offspring into it, away from State schools... People such as the Hudsons have made themselves the backbone of a movement which, according to its enemies, is now the "single" most effective political organisation in America. They are the religious right and their influence is spreading. They control school boards, TV stations and chunks of the Republican Party. Their goal is to make America as God's country. They already have governor's mansions and State capitals in their grasp and now have their eye on the biggest prize of all: the White House itself. The program: a journey back to biblical basics. The enemies are the godless humanists who run the country, the women who rebel against their "essential natures" by seeking equal rights, the "baby killers" who abort their unborn children and the homosexuals whose love is an "abomination"... The Christian Right harbours extremists who want to abolish the State and replace it by Scripture. Several religious Right leaders have served on the board of the Coalition for revival, a group which advocates a return to a time when America was governed by the Bible. Televangelist John Hagae spelled out what that would mean. "A number of crimes warranted the death penalty in the Bible: murder, adultery, incest, sodomy, rape, kidnapping, witchcraft, blasphemy and disobedience to parents." (SMH, Oct. 3, 1994).

"Mum's fear: son 'hijacked by Moonies'" "MARK Rauch had been in the US for scarcely two weeks before he was "emotionally hijacked" by a sinister religious cult. Since the young man's introduction to the Moonies 18 months ago, his widowed mother, Maureen, has not seen him. She has no point of contact other than a post office box in California... Mark did not make it to see his aunt in Atlanta as planned. Instead he was waylaid by the Moonies or, as he knows them, the College of the Associate of the Research of the Principle (CARP), in San Francisco. Mrs Rauch recalled: "He told me he met these people on the street. They approached him and he thought they were lost and offered to help them with his map. They asked him to have a cup of coffee and then to have a look at a film. "In October (when he was due back) we went to Sydney to meet the plane and Mark wasn't on it. When we got home there was a message on the answering machine from Mark saying he was happy and had decided to stay for a year or so. I knew he was caught up." She now fears he will never return and wants to warn other parents and young travellers of the dangers of religious sects actively recruiting young tourists." (Sunday Telegraph, Jan. 22, 1995).

"SALVAN, Switzerland: Suicide pact leaves 50 dead" "Police in Switzerland have found 48 corpses, including at least one child, some burned and some shot, in a case that has shocked the nation. Two other bodies have been found by Canadian police in a burned-out semi-detached house in the town of Morin Heights, about 80 kilometres north of Montreal... All the deaths were believed linked to the apocalyptic cult, the Order of the Solar Temple, whose reported leader is 46-year-old homeopathic doctor Luc Jouret, a charismatic and self-styled new messiah. There was no immediate indication whether Jouret, who had won supporters in both Switzerland and Canada with charismatic speeches promising a fiery apocalypse, was among the dead...

His portrait was found gazing down from the walls of the basement "temple" in Cheiry where the dead were found arranged in a sun-like circle, their feet towards the centre... Jouret and his sect came to the attention of the authorities after they advocated stockpiling arms, including prohibited weapons such as machine-guns, in preparation for the end of the world. He lectured to groups in Canada and Europe - including Quebec's provincial utility Hydro-Quebec - on topics ranging from "the meaning of life and its realisation" to the "reign of fire" and world catastrophe. He left Quebec for Switzerland after being convicted of possessing illegal weapons in 1993... Former members, speaking to *Le Soleil*, described a steeply hierarchical and strictly compartmentalised organisation devoted to an uncertain vision involving medicine, higher awareness and apocalypse. The order's followers were reduced to servitude, some said. One described herself as a vegetable. The article said they were compelled to turn over thousands of dollars, giving up their jobs and property to keep Jouret and Dimembro travelling in style. "Jouret takes himself for Christ," said one embittered former sect member in *La Presse*, another newspaper." (SMH, Oct. 8, 1994).

"CULT DEATHS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD:"

1993: 80 people died in Waco, Texas, when federal agents raided David Koresh's Branch Davidian sect.

1987: 32 followers of a sect organised by Park Soon-Ja were found dead in Seoul, South Korea.

1986: Seven women found dead on a beach in Wakayama, in western Japan. All members from the Church of Friends of the Truth.

1985: 60 members of the Ata tribe on the Philippine island of Mindanao committed suicide.

1978: Mass suicide of more than 900 members of Rev. Jim Jones' People's Temple in Guyana." (SMH, Oct. 7, 1994).

"WHY NOT ALL WACKY CULTS LEAD THEIR FOLLOWERS TO DEATH" "LONDON: Three reasons are usually given when a cult implodes: isolation, apocalyptic fervour and a charismatic leader. However, if they were all that was needed, far more new religions would end in mass suicide like this week's in Switzerland. One additional factor is needed, which by its nature is unpredictable. What isn't a determining influence is a cult's wackiness. Experts stress that the apparent reasonableness or otherwise of a religious group's beliefs has very little to do with the development of sociopathic tendencies. That is one reason why few serious scholars will use the term "cult" in public, preferring the carefully neutral phrase "New Religious Movements". Many of the groups now characterised as eccentric religions could have been characterised as "cults" in their stages. Apocalyptic beliefs are more than anything what define Jehovah's Witnesses. Yet, paradoxically, their faith in the end of the world has given them stability, said Mr Joel Elliot, of the University of North Carolina, an expert on the group. The groups that have committed suicide have been less convinced of their own impotence. In the 1978 Jonestown massacre in Guyana, there was an expectation that the right human actions could hasten the millennium, according to Mr Elliot. Belief in a different apocalypse seems to be growing more common among evangelical Christians as the century nears its end. The Branch Davidians in Waco, Texas, who set fire to their compound last year, were an apocalyptic offshoot of the Seventh Day Adventists, from whom the Jehovah's Witnesses had split. An undated expectation of a fairly imminent end of the world among evangelicals since the apparent fulfilment of biblical prophecies about the return of Israel. The second factor that predisposes towards catastrophe is isolation. Some degree of alienation from the surrounding world is necessary for any religion to be considered odd or cultish. It need not be extreme physical isolation. The Plymouth Brethren could hardly be more exclusive, yet they are not given to mass suicides. Professor Eileen Barker of the London School of Economics, the foremost British authority on these movements, wrote: "Many of the

practices said to characterise a destructive cult have at some time or another been practiced by religions that are usually considered perfectly respectable." However, if the members of a community come to feel that they have been cut off or rejected by the outside world altogether, the normal mechanisms for checking their beliefs about reality broke down. The Jonestown commune in Guyana and the Branch Davidian compound were both fairly isolated physically, as was "Rajneeshpuram" on Oregon, where conspiracies to murder were alleged among the followers of the Bhagwan Rajneesh. The third thing necessary for catastrophe is a prophet. Apocalyptic beliefs must be articulated by a leader whose authority is almost absolute. Yet most religions have had single authoritarian founders. Joseph Smith, who established the Mormons, and his successor Brigham Young led their followers to Utah, not to mass suicide. The vital unpredictable factor is what the leader believes. He must conclude his best way out lies in suicide and mass murder. That, more than any other factor, explains why such massacres are so rare."

(*The Independent* in *SMH*, Oct. 8, 1994).

"FAITH HEALER: Ed Campion, St Mary's & the New Catholicism" "A new book about a Catholic priest's life in St Mary's Cathedral and the odd "sectarian bigot" cardinal is sure to create controversy in the Church. Ed Campion prays for the dead while running in Centennial Park. His first request to the Almighty is always on behalf of Patrick White [a highly regarded homosexual Australian writer recently deceased], who lived over the road from the park. Given recent evidence that St Paul's great trinity of Christian qualities - faith, hope and charity - were not foremost among White's character traits, particularly towards the end of his life, Father Campion is asking a lot of his God. Campion, however, has faith in abundance, and hope and charity. He will continue to pray for the great writer's soul. "Some cancer gets to White's soul in the final part of his life," says the priest historian. "The last episode of his life sadly demonstrates that. He didn't want a funeral; he just wanted to be put out with the rubbish. He was spitting in the face of our common humanity ... *odium humani generis*, hatred of humankind"... Writer Frank Moorhouse, who shares informal Friday literary lunches with Campion, Richard Hall and others, has said: "Ed Campion has been sent by the Vatican to go to lunch, so if any lapsed Catholic writers, artists or media persons drop dead at the table, Ed will be there to take them back into the bosom of the Church. Ed is the parish priest of Australia's literary and artistic community - we are all in Ed's pastoral care, courtesy of the Vatican"... Campion says that Catholicism, once alienated from much of Australian society, has become "the main game of religion". Ironically, while Catholicism has strengthened its position numerically, it has done so while adopting certain characteristics of Protestant faiths. "We are at a very interesting turning point in Australian society," says Campion. "The end of the 20th century is seeing the end of the enlightenment dream. The profits of secularism are men and women of the past." He says it is true that religion has been privatised but that it is a healthier Church than it was. "We feel much happier as Catholics now. It is a looser association but a very deep commitment."

Once you could tell the story of Christianity in Australia in one sentence: Anglicans made the laws, Presbyterians made the money, Methodists did the work and Catholics made the jokes. Now, says Campion, we are part of the first generation of post-reformation Christians. "More than anything, the protestantising of Catholicism has speeded this process. When Rome shows itself willing to learn from Geneva and Canterbury, then we are in a new age." He points to the changes: the Bible at the centre of Catholic practice, worship in English rather than Latin, "the love of God replacing fear of God as the dynamic of moral choice, a morality of striving for justice and mercy rather than a morality of guilt, the freeing of lay intelligence and the slow erosion of clerical control systems." These were some of the spiritual gains of the Reformation, now taken on board by Catholics. The real division in modern religion, says Campion, is not between Catholics and Protestants but between fundamentalists and pluralists... Catholicism spoke to the boy campion through his senses - incense and wax candles, rosary beads and medals, the denied taste of Lenten fasting, Friday abstinence, lush hymns and flowery prayers, the tinkling of sanctuary bells, statues, pictures, crucifixes. Now religion is more in the head than the body and Campion wonders how much of value might be lost." (*SMH*, Oct. 8, 1994).

"SECRET REPORT REVEALS ORDER KNEW OF SEX ABUSE" "Almost 50 years ago, the principal trustee of the Christian Brothers in Sydney was so concerned that sex scandals would rock the Australian branch that he wrote to the head of the order in Dublin, a secret report has revealed. 'The number of shameful betrayals of trust with reference to boys is very saddening and unfortunately they seem to be on the increase', he wrote in October 1946. The secret report allegedly details widespread sexual abuse by religious staff and clerics at orphanages around Australia from 1935 onwards, the Supreme court was told yesterday. The report, *A Secret Report for the Executive of the Christian Brothers - Sexual Abuse from 1930 to 1994*, was commissioned by the Christian Brothers and written by its official historian, Brother Barry Coldrey. It allegedly refers to the existence of a 'sex underworld' and 'sex ring' at the orphanages. Mr Peter Semmler, QC - representing six men who claim they were grossly abused at three orphanages in Western Australia between 1947 and 1953 - said the report revealed that the trustees who ran the orphanages were aware of the problem for at least a decade but did little to reduce or eliminate the risks faced by newly arrived immigrant children such as his clients. In another letter, written to the Superior-General in Dublin in December 1948, the principal trustee in Sydney wrote: "The congregation leaders were sometimes aware, sometimes not, of the permanent harm that sexual abuse could do to the students and that if one offence was committed similar falls were likely to occur. We had hoped that rehabilitation had taken place but generally the dog returns to his vomit, especially where the second vow is concerned". Mr Semmler told the court the latter reference related to the vow of chastity taken by all Christian Brothers." (*SMH*, Dec 10, 1994).

"ARCHBISHOP LINKED TO MAFIA" "Rome: A Mafia supergrass has accused Archbishop Paul Marcinkus, the former head of the Vatican bank, of laundering Mafia money, Italian newspapers said yesterday. Judicial sources said Rosario Priore, a Rome magistrate, had launched an investigation into the allegations, made to Palermo magistrates by Vincenzo Calcara some months ago and repeated at a trial in Rome last month. Mr Calcara claimed he had been part of a Cosa Nostra delegation carrying Mafia money from Palermo to Rome in early 1981 and had personally given one billion lire (about \$4 million) to Archbishop Marcinkus. The American archbishop, 72, was head of the Vatican bank, known as the Institute for the Works of Religion (IOR) until 1989. He is now a parish priest in America. The present head of the Vatican bank, Cardinal Rosalio Castillo Lara of Venezuela, dismissed the allegations as pure invention. "In 1981, I wasn't president of the IOR, but I feel I can say it is all untrue", he said." (*The Weekend Australian* Nov 19-20, 1994).

"POPE'S PLEA" "Vatican City: Pope John Paul II has lashed out against the exploitation of women, decrying that they are preyed on as 'mere objects of pleasure' and are frequent victims of rising violence in the world. In his message for the World Peace Day which is on January 1, he urged world leaders to promote the dignity of women and recognise their importance to society and the family. He was urging women to become 'teachers of peace with their whole being'" (*The Sun-Herald*, Dec 11, 1994).

"DAMPENED SPIRITS AT CEREMONY" "Last night's inter-faith ceremony at the Domain was more significant for what it concealed than for what it revealed... Archbishop Aghan Baliozian welcomed Pope John Paul II "most warmly to Australia" and to last night's ceremony on behalf of the National Council of Churches of Australia, of which he is president. In reply, John Paul II said: "Let us join our hopes and prayers for the grace and wisdom necessary to overcome the divisions of the past." Well wishes and good intentions. But apart from these, only banalities were exchanged and they will disappear without trace like yesterday's rain on parched soil... "None of this is to question John Paul II's sincerity about ecumenism (which involves only the Christian churches) or inter-faith dialogue (which can involve all religions). Indeed, throughout his pontificate, John Paul II has called repeatedly for all religions to respect one another, has reached out warmly and enthusiastically to the Muslim world, has initiated extraordinary inter-religious gatherings such as the one for World Peace held at Assisi in October 1986, and yearns to hold a symbolic summit of all the world's religious leaders to usher in the dawn of the next millennium." (*SMH*, Jan. 19, 1995).

"Blessed are some" "WHICHEVER way you look at it, the Pope's visit to Zagreb, the capital of Croatia, last weekend was misjudged, and mistaken. If, as originally intended, he had also visited Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia, and Belgrade, the capital of Serbia, it may have been acceptable. But by giving exclusive blessing to the Croatian State and its leaders, he has confirmed the belief that the Roman Catholic Church is in league with Zagreb. The reason for cancelling the visit to Sarajevo was "dangers to his personal security". The Serbian Orthodox Church was also the only Church in the region to boycott his visit to Croatia. Quick history lesson: Which State recognised the pro-Nazi Croatian State in World War II? The Vatican. Which State was the first in the world to grant recognition to Croatia when it broke away from Yugoslavia in 1991?

The Vatican. During the short-lived wartime dictatorship in Croatia, the total number of Serbs killed is the subject of fierce debate: Croats say "only" 300,000; Serbs say 800,000; my research concludes 600,000. In his outstanding book, the recently published *Tito And The Rise And Fall Of Yugoslavia*, author Richard West recalled the Franciscan priest who roused his flock with the appeal: "Brother Croats, go and slaughter all Serbs, and first of all slaughter my sister, who is married to a Serb, and then kill all the Serbs in a row. When you have finished, come to me and I'll hear your confession and give you forgiveness for your sins." (*The Sun-Herald*, Sept. 18, 1994).

"POPE FAILS TO PROVIDE ANSWERS" "There is nothing new about a pope sticking to old assertions; the last thing one expects from a pope is progress in theology." Six years ago Uta Ranke-Heineman wasn't talking about *Crossing the Threshold of Hope* - but she might have been. The Pope's offering is regarded as newsworthy. Why? It's not often a pope plays 20 Questions with a journalist; Vittorio Messori assures us that these written answers are without precedent and predicts theologians will have difficulty in classifying them. *What of the content?* The idea has potential: asking the Pope how he, as a human being, experiences God and the Church. Haven't you ever had problems with the truth of the Church's statement of faith, asks Messori? Who hasn't, we might respond. But don't expect a personal answer from the Pope, for it seems he is unable to stand aside from his position as locum for the "Second Person of the omnipotent God of the Trinity". Instead of a simple statement, the Pope delivers a dissertation based on the angel's words to Mary, "Be not afraid", a dissertation which includes the call to recognise one's sinful nature and the continuing presence of God; an account of the founding of the Church and the papacy by the risen Christ; a reminder that the priest, when he administers the sacraments, does so *in persona Christi*; the assurance that the Pope and the bishops are the Servants of the Servants of God; and a statement on the dignity of all believers. The Pope concludes his answers with a recommendation for further reading, Sermon 340:1 of Saint Augustine. Buried within Messori's ingratiating phraseology are some interesting questions. How does John Paul II bear the weight of his office? For whom and what does he pray? How can a person conclude that God exists? Why doesn't God reveal Himself (sic) more clearly? The perennial questions. Unfortunately the answers offer nothing new; rather, they're reminiscent of the booklets the Catholic Inquiry Office used to send out 20 years ago to people interested in the Catholic faith... There are five paragraphs that relate solely to women and in these the Pope notes that "the authentic theology of women" is being reborn, the "spiritual beauty" and "particular genius" of women is being rediscovered. It doesn't take much imagination to realise that the Pope isn't talking about the work of Uta Ranke-Heineman, whose Eunuchs for the Kingdom of Heaven was likened by New York's Cardinal O'Connor - sight unseen - to "scrawling dirty words about the Church on bathroom walls". But Ranke-Heineman, a professor of the History of Religion, and the Pope do have a common interest, the Mother of God, the Virgin Mary. The Pope decries that form of contemporary feminism which sees as rooted in an absence of "true respect" for women and commends instead the figure of Mary, devotion to whom will provide "a powerful and creative inspiration". Ranke-Heineman, however, regards Mariology, which is a teaching developed by celibate men whereby one woman is declared pure and the rest impure, as a besmirching of women and as a sign of the warped sexuality of those theologians... It may be unrealistic to hope that a pope will revolutionise theology, but is it not foolish for the Pope to hope that mere restatement of old assertions will sufficiently answer contemporary concerns?" (*SMH*, Nov. 5, 1994).

"Catholic divorce can be done by the book" "The lack of information on Roman Catholic divorce procedures has inspired a retired 83-year-old Melbourne barrister to compile what is believed to be the first definitive guide to the dissolution and annulment of marriage in the Church. Ms Eileen Stuart said many Catholics mistakenly believe they will be excommunicated if they divorce and remarry. "While the Church is now providing people with an opportunity to solve some of their problems (by allowing them to divorce and to receive mass), very few Catholics understand what annulment means. They can't understand how someone who has been married for 20 years and who has X number of children can possibly say their marriage invalid." Ms Stuart's 230-page book, *Dissolution and Annulment of Marriage in the Catholic Church*, was launched by the Chief Justice of the Family Court of Australia, Justice Alistair Nicholson, at Monash University yesterday. Ms Stuart, a devout Catholic, said the divorce rate of Catholics was slightly lower than for the rest of the community. An estimated one in three Australian marriages end in divorce but of the 28 per cent of Catholics who divorce, 15 per cent are annulled. While divorce for non-catholics is relatively simple, for Roman Catholics who want to divorce and remarry, the procedure is not so easy because they then have to apply to the church to have the marriage annulled. They are required to have their marriage terminated by the church through a set of specialist Catholic tribunals. In the majority of cases, they must seek an annulment by petitioning for a declaration that their marriage never existed." (*The Australian*, Dec. 1, 1994).

"MacKillop gives us all hope" "I believe Mary MacKillop's beatification is a defining moment for the culture of Australia. She deserves to take her place on the honour board of the greatest Australians. Whether Catholic or not, we, too, should be justifiably proud of the woman destined to be Australia's first saint. Mary MacKillop's beatification is, essentially, an other-worldly event. The Church is declaring that it knows her to be in heaven with God... It's a big move to go from an excommunication to a beatification in 100 years." (*SMH*, Jan. 17, 1995).

"WE SHOWED GREAT SPIRIT: Cardinal Clancy's view" "THE beatification ceremonies and activities of the past few days were successful beyond all expectations. John Paul II and Mother Mary MacKillop were a winning team. I was proud of my fellow Sydneysiders. As the Popemobile moved around the city, they spilled out of shops and side streets in their thousands and gave the Pope a warm and generous welcome as only we can. Each event in the packed program was a triumph in its own way ... But to my mind the most poignant and significant occasion of all was when the Pope visited Blessed Mary's tomb at North Sydney and then remained for half an hour totally absorbed in prayer. It was with difficulty that his secretary persuaded him to move on to his next commitment. The Pope had spoken of the beatification as a "new beginning" for Australian Catholics. So may it be... And of course, Pope John Paul is being credited with bringing the rain and breaking the drought - or was it Blessed Mary MacKillop?" (*Sunday Telegraph*, Jan. 22, 1995).

"ENLIGHTEN YOURSELF" "I read with interest the article "Preparations Almost Ready" (*Hornsby Advocate*, Nov 30). The preparations described are, of course, for the beatification of Mary MacKillop - Australia's first saint. I wonder how many people really know what a saint is? One suggestion is that anyone interested should spend about half an hour with a Bible and a few study aids such as Unger's Bible Dictionary, by MF Unger. A very interesting truth emerged from my reading. The New Testament refutes the notion of a special class of saints. The Greek word 'hagios' designates all who believe in Christ in every generation. When Paul wrote to the Phillipians he requested that they greet all the living saints there. Furthermore, he said that the living saints with him sent greetings to the Phillipians. Lovers of truth, do a little homework and you will be richly rewarded." (*Hornsby Advocate* Dec 21, 1994).

"SANTA SACKED" Santa Claus was banned from a Hornsby carols festivity last weekend because organisers felt he did not represent the true meaning of Christmas. The jolly red-suited man was scheduled to make a spectacular entrance from an aeroplane at Waitara Oval, for the Combined Churches of Hornsby Carols in The Park on Sunday, December 18. However, Santa, alias Hornsby businessman Richard Kelnack, was told a week before the event that he had been removed from the program, Master of Ceremonies and Hornsby Turning Point Senior Pastor Brian Banton told *The Advocate* the combined churches involved in the event, unanimously decided to cancel the appearance so that children did not confuse the Christian message of Christmas with receiving gifts from Santa. Pastor Banton said there was an obvious confusion in society between the Christian significance of Christ's birthday and the commercialism of the season. "If the combined churches get together and put on a Christian festivity our responsibility is to represent the Christian meaning of Christmas", he said. "Santa and gifts have nothing to do with that". Under the original plan, Santa was to hand out lollies and copies of the New Testament to children. The decision to ban Santa from the carols sparked strong community feedback. Hornsby Ku-ring-gai Radio stations' Shore Entertainment Program received a series of protest calls when it announced the decision on air before the carols event. Producer Shane Cook said he had broadcast three objecting calls and received a further eight responses from concerned residents." (*Hornsby Advocate*, Dec 21, 1994).

"Tradition meets St Nick in the marketplace" "HERE goes St Nicholas, striding into the Christmas market in his long white robe and tall bishop's mitre. But who's that short fellow skulking along behind him? Bent under a bundle of firewood, this shadowy figure wears a rough-hewn tunic and leather leggings, like a serf from the Middle Ages. He is St Nicholas's trusty servant, Knecht Ruprecht. He does Saint's duty work,

punishing children who have been naughty during the year. The first time I saw them they stood on a snow-covered street in Cologne, like two ancient figures who'd escaped from a Victorian Christmas card. Then I realised it was December 6, St Nicholas's Day. Knecht Ruprecht, cloaked in his dark medieval aura, is just one of the ancient traditions that pop up at Christmas markets throughout Germany. These days you also see St Nick in his more familiar red and white outfit. Each year, on the first Sunday of Advent, these markets sprout overnight in villages and cities alike. Some have just a few canvas stalls; others boast a town square jammed with wooden alpine huts, strung with lights and fragrant with evergreens. Their wares are rich with Christmas custom: toy soldiers, tinsel angels, candles, yuletide boxes and hand-made marionettes. Each town prizes the unique traditions of its market. Even the names are different. In Cologne, the markets are called Weihnachtsmaerkte. Weihnacht, which translates as consecrated night, is the word for Christmas. In Bavaria, they're known as Christkindmaerkte, which is a Southern-dialect word that means Christ child. But tradition has its shadowy side, just as St Nicholas has Knecht Ruprecht. It's called kitsch. The Germans caution against it. "You have to distinguish between the two kinds of Christmas markets," a German friend warned. "Some are really commercial, with cheap stuff from China sold at really high prices. The gifts really don't look handmade, and that was the original idea." When the first Christmas market sprang up in Munich in the 14th century, humble artisans sold items they'd crafted that year: things embroidered by midsummer's light or carved in front of winter's evening fire. Things baked or carpentered or cobbled. Today, even the kitschiest markets have some shred of tradition. After all, much of Christmas as we know it - from Santa Claus to the Christmas tree - first started in Germany. Germany's largest Christmas market, held in Nuremberg, is known for its traditional lebkuchen. This spicy gingerbread dates back 250 years, and is made by special gingerbread bakers called lebkuchner, who use recipes passed from generation to the next. Exotic ingredients evoke the days of ancient traders: candied orange and lemon peel from the Mediterranean, cocoa from Africa, cinnamon and cardamom and ginger from Asia. Tradition at the Munich Christmas market is rooted in the Christmas tree that's festooned with thousands of lights. Each year the tree is trucked in from a different Alpine slope: one year from South Tirol, another year from Algdud. Touch the tree and you touch one of Germany's most ancient holiday traditions. The Christmas tree stems from the ancient yule festival celebrated by German tribes at the winter solstice. Pagans honoured the sun god Fyrr, by decorating their homes with evergreen boughs and burning special logs. The bough evolved into a tree in the fourth century, when St Boniface converted the Germanic pagans and dedicated a fir tree to the Christ child as a substitute for the pagan's Sacred Oak of Wotan. In the 16th century, Martin Luther added candies to his fir tree. Gilded apples, nuts and streamers were added later. In the 17th century, German settlers brought their Christmas tree custom to the United States. Santa Claus is a German export. He traces his lineage back to the fourth century when, as Bishop Nicholas of Myra, he gave gifts to the daughters of an impoverished nobleman. Centuries later in Germany, St Nicholas was transformed into Father Christmas, the long-robed figure whose popularity quickly spread throughout Europe. In the 17th century, the Dutch brought their Father Christmas, called Sinter Claes, to New Amsterdam. New Amsterdam became New York and Sinter Claes became Santa Claus. In Christmas markets across Germany, St Nicholas is a popular figure for hand-made Christmas tree ornaments. Made of everything from wood to bread dough, he's always dressed in his fur-trimmed red robe, bent under that famous sack of toys. As with many German cities, Cologne has two holiday markets. The more commercial one is neumarkt, which means new market. The other one, known for its hand-crafted objects, is in alter markt, which means old market. Besides the best products, the alter markt also has the most historic ambience. Medieval-looking storefronts, painted pink and blue and yellow, tower over the square. Nearby runs the Rhine, down which medieval traders once sailed ships rich with spices and silk. Here in the square, from the dawn of Advent to the eve of Christmas, the rhythm of the season is rooted in rituals. Eating and drinking is a must. The first stop is invariably the almhuette, a pinewood hut with a long countertop stacked with glasses for gluhwein, the hot mulled wine that warms the hands on brisk winter nights. The air is a riot of smells: bratwurst, roasted chestnuts, gingerbread, sugar-coated almonds, chocolate-covered fruits and fried doughnuts. Everywhere are families. Carousel music floats by, and in the distance a school choir sings *Silent Night*, the Christmas hymn written in Germany by a village priest in 1818. The eye is assaulted with colour and movement: beeswax candles, Bavarian cuckoo clocks, Moroccan slippers, Christmas biscuits in tins painted with old-fashioned holiday scenes. In one booth, a Hungarian glassblower twists the stem of a tall blue vase. Nearby, a thin man in black clothes dances hand-made marionettes through a puppet show for open-mouthed children. But the crowd is always deepest around the krippen booth. For centuries, the nativity crib has been the heart of the German home at Christmas. It's still the most recognised symbol of Christmas for the Germans, with the family crib often handed down from family to family." (*The Sun-Herald*, Dec. 11, 1994).

"CARDS PROTEST" "Amsterdam: Exasperated by the annual avalanche of less-than-heartfelt season's greetings, a Dutch group has launched a national campaign, through newspaper advertisements urging people to return unwanted Christmas cards to senders."

(*SMH*, December 23, 1994).

"RELIGION HOLDS SWAY OVER MASSES" "MS Lee Tae-sun, 28, and a clerk with a Seoul accounting firm, is the embodiment of religion in South Korea. "I was born a Buddhist, and I still go to the temple every week," she said. "When I was in high school I decided that I also liked the Lutheran Church, and last summer I decided to become Jewish during a vacation in Israel. I consider myself to be all these religions." South Korea is unique among North-East Asian countries in its strong religious affiliations, and its earnest embracing of religions from the outside. Unlike its Chinese and Japanese neighbours, where religion has hardly been an issue through the ages, almost 90 per cent of South Koreans say they subscribe to one religion or another. And unlike many countries in South-East Asia, where religion divides people on political, ethnic and geographic lines, even within the same city, South Korean religions cohabit almost without notice. It is quite common to spot a group of Buddhist monks sharing the same bus or subway with a group of nuns from a nearby convent. Frequently, they even joke with each other. Traditional Korean holidays, such as a three-day thanksgiving festival in September, are landmarks on the calendar, as are Christmas, Easter and Buddhist holidays. While Buddhism is still far-and-away the most popular religion in South Korea, with more than 15 million followers, Christianity, a Western import, claims more than 12 million followers. Various forms of Shamanism, Taoism and Confucianism claim the rest."

(*The Australian*, Sept. 9, 1994).

"Sri Lankan Buddhists boycott Pope meeting" "COLOMBO: Pope John Paul II ended his 11-day Asian tour on a note of controversy yesterday when Buddhist leaders refused to attend a meeting with the Pontiff to protest his views of their religion. Six Hindu and six Muslim representatives greeted the Pope, but none of the invited Buddhist prelates showed up for the meeting with the leader of the world's 950 million Catholics, who returned to Rome late yesterday. The dispute with the Sri Lankan Buddhists came from the Pope's belief that the objective of Buddhist meditation is to reach "indifference" to the world, not to draw the believer nearer to God. He gave no answer to Buddhist monks who had demanded an apology, but went out of his way to sound a conciliation, note at the meeting. Departing from his prepared text, he added: "It is important that we are together. Not being together is dangerous." The Pope went from the meeting to a Mass on the shore of the Indian Ocean where, to the blowing of conch shells and the beating of drums, he declared a 17th century Indian missionary, Joseph Vas, "blessed", the final step before possible sainthood." (*SMH*, Jan. 23, 1995)

"Disillusioned Arabs rally to a new cause in Chechnya" BEIRUT: You do not have to guess which story dominates the front pages of the Arab press these days nor which pictures grip television viewers across the Middle East. The Russian battle for Chechnya is creeping into the editorials, even into the sermons and Friday prayers, just as Afghanistan did almost a decade-and-a-half ago, just as Bosnia did two years ago. Only, the perspectives are a little different out here. In the West our perception of the Chechen conflict has focused on the dangers to the Russian Federation, the internal struggle in Moscow, the history of the quaint "warrior people" who humbled the Tsar in the last century and have been doing the same to the troops of the former Red Army. But pick up a newspaper in Beirut or Cairo and the photographs are of Chechen men wearing Islamic headbands with "God is great" inked onto them in Arabic, of scarved women, of old Muslim men praying, of wooden grave posts with crescent moons on them. In Russia, and even in the West, Chechnya is an illegal breakaway State threatening the cohesion of President Boris Yeltsin's regime; in the Middle East, the Chechens are seen as a Muslim people fighting for survival.

The Islamic view of the Chechen struggle - a Muslim community fighting soldiers of the Christian Orthodox faith, just as Muslims are fighting Orthodox Serbs in Bosnia - has gone largely unrecognised. Perhaps the pain Arabs increasingly feel at the way the Middle East "peace process" is being meekly accepted by their governments lies behind the feelings of humiliation being expressed in the region. It would be easy to

exaggerate the effects of the Chechen and Bosnian wars. Officially, the Hezbollah's response to the Chechen conflict has been muted. The latest edition of its weekly Al-Ahd carries a remarkably restrained and largely objective account of the battle for Grozny, perhaps because the Hezbollah's Iranian paymasters have just signed an \$US800 million (\$1.04 billion) deal with the Russians for the completion of their war-damaged nuclear facilities on the Gulf. In some Arab States, coverage of the Caucasus and Balkan wars has been the subject of self censorship. "There was a time when our Government wanted to unify the country over Bosnia," a Saudi journalist said. "Now they just want to keep it off the screen because it's so inflammatory." But there is no mistaking the signs of anger. In Bangladesh this week, a million Muslims prayed for "victory" in Bosnia. A small group of Jordanian Muslims - descendants of Chechens who fled from Russian persecution in the 19th century - has already left for Chechnya in the hope of joining the last stages of the battle for Grozny. It is religion rather than ethnicity that is fuelling anger in the Middle East. When Mr Jimmy Carter, the former United States President, was trying to make a "quick-fix" deal in Bosnia over Christmas, the Islamic Conference in Casablanca was demanding action, help for the Muslims of Bosnia, a lifting of the arms embargo and - most ominous of all for Western nations - an international Muslim army to take the place of the United Nations in the event of a Western withdrawal. It is "within" the Middle East that the response to events in the Caucasus and the Balkans may prove to be more serious. Two years ago, Arabs had to listen as Christian Orthodox Serbs referred to the Muslims of Bosnia as "fanatics". Now they hear the Kremlin's Christian Orthodox leaders say the same thing of the Chechen Muslims. The West is again failing to protect a Muslim minority. And once more, Arab governments have proved impotent to protect their fellow Muslims. It would be difficult to think of anything more calculated to encourage the Islamic fundamentalists of the Middle East in their campaigns against the "moderate" Arab regimes upon whom the West depends." (*The Independent* in *SMH*, Jan. 12, 1995).

"Ultra-orthodox Jews flock to greet rebel rabbi" "Traffic chaos gripped Jerusalem yesterday as tens of thousands of black-hatted ultra-orthodox Jews turned out to welcome Rabbi Moshe Teitelbaum, one of the most bitter enemies of the Jewish State. The 80 year old rabbi, known as the Satmar rabbi, is leader of the Neturei Karta sect, for which Zionism is an abomination. Members believe the establishment of a Jewish entity must await the coming of the Messiah and that the secular State of Israel is a sin." (*The Australian*, June 9, 1994).

"US Jews grapple with right-wing tidal wave" "Washington: Stung by the Democratic debacle in last week's congressional elections, many Jews find themselves grappling with the right-ward tidal wave that has swept the US. For many of the defining issues of American-Jewry, an unclear and uncharted path lies ahead in the wake of the widespread Democratic losses across the nation. While Jewish Republicans rejoiced and some voiced little worry, others sounded a dire warning. With new Republican majorities in both the House of Representatives and the Senate, Jewish activists across the political spectrum predict a tumultuous time for Jewish domestic concerns on Capitol Hill beginning in January. Faced with the loss of many long-time supporters of Israel and other Jewish cause - including 9 Jewish lawmakers - many in the Jewish community have already begun to re-evaluate strategies and legislative priorities for the coming year."

(*The Australian Jewish News*, November 18, 1994).

"TOP TEAM TO INVESTIGATE SEVEN SYNAGOGUE FIRES" "The New South Wales Police Commissioner, Mr Tony Lauer, has appointed one of his most senior aides to oversee a high-level investigation into seven arson attacks on Sydney synagogues. Six synagogues, more than a quarter of all Jewish places of worship in NSW, have been torched in less than four years - one of them twice. Several prominent Sydney Jews noted yesterday that had a quarter of the State's Catholic churches been set ablaze, there would have been an outcry. Mr Michael Marx, president of the NSW Jewish Board of Deputies, said: "It is the largest number of synagogues attacked in one city anywhere in the world since World War II." (*SMH*, Oct. 8, 1994).

"RABBIS, LAWYERS, BANKERS HELD IN LAUNDERING RAIDS" "New York: "They were not the usual mix of suspects in a laundering scheme for drug money. There were a pair of Manhattan lawyers, two Brooklyn rabbis, a broker, an honorary consul in Los Angeles, a New York City police officer and bankers on two continents. But, according to police here, about 30 apparently upstanding professionals and clerics were part of an elaborate scheme to help Colombia's notorious Cali drug cartel clean cocaine money. It was, in essence, a white-collar operation to assist the purveyors of white powder. The only one missing is the candlestick maker", New York City's police chief, Mr William Bratton, said yesterday when announcing the arrest of 23 of the scheme's members." (*SMH*, December 2, 1994).

"IDOL THREATS IN APOCALYPTIC PANTOMIME" "In the wake of Rabbi Schneerson's death in New York, Howard Jacobson attacks a never-never cult of Messianism with fiddler-on-the-roof overtones. There are only two practicable ways of handling the coming of the Messiah, leaving aside not noticing it at all. The first is to assert that he has already been and gone, thereby channelling all the energies of expectancy into retrospective piety; the second is to treat the matter metaphorically, postponing his arrival indefinitely so that humankind will always look forward to. Put roughly, this describes the long-standing difference between Christianity and Judaism. "Messianism was always our idea," the Jew says. "Where you went wrong was to interpret it literal-mindedly. So who's the schmuck?" the Christian asks in return. "Who's the one who's still waiting?" Spend half a day in Crown Heights, the Brooklyn suburb where the Lubavitcher Hasidim have their headquarters, and you understand what a burden of fervency a Messiah who has already been and gone lifts from his followers. Convinced for some years now that their spiritual leader, Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson, was about to reveal himself as God's agent upon earth, the Lubavitchers have twitched and fretted around these medievalised American streets, their ears cocked for the sound of chariot wheels, their eyes forever on their stopwatches, indifferent to any conversation that wasn't about the how and the when of revelation. The shops have been half-heartedly stocked; why bother? Tomorrow goodness will have spread over everything, every Jew will have returned to Israel and God will be raining bagels down from the skies. In the meantime, if you were still determined to buy something, buy a key ring or an ashtray bearing a laminated portrait of the Rebbe; that, at least, may speed his coming... "Can you believe this - the Rebbe told me to cancel a flight to Warsaw, and you know what? The plane crashed. When a friend of mine said he was going to Western Australia, the Rebbe got out a map and showed him where to dig for diamonds, and you know what?... I don't mind admitting it - when I used to hear a fellow Jew, dressed for the heat of Brooklyn in the costume of an 18th-century Polish pedlar, discoursing in this manner about two penny-halfpenny necromancy, I felt shame for him and fear for me. Conspicuousness will always be a matter of anxiety for Jews. If half of us have to be schlemiels, the other half would rather the gentiles didn't have to notice. But there are further reasons why these proofs of the Rebbe's Messianic bona fides are objectionable to non-Lubavitchers. Magic, like idolatry, is inimical to Judaism. There shall not be found among you, sayeth the Lord, an enchanter or a charmer or a wizard or a necromancer. Because, the writer of *Deuteronomy* does not need to go on to say, all that does these things are trivial and triviality is an abomination. Fed upon fairy stories, curious only about supernatural outcome of this single drama, with no books to read except those that bear upon the laws of Jewish sexual modesty, the children of the Crown Heights ghetto have thought and acted entirely at another's behest. Nothing of the proud Jewish tradition of argument and inquiry has any place here, nothing of Jewish scepticism or Jewish wit or Jewish generosity, none of the grand, free Jewish citizenry of the world of thought. When it comes to Israeli politics and deciding who or who is not a Jew, the Rebbe always insisted on the most limiting definitions, lest one of us - horror of horrors - inadvertently marries one of them. So much for the universal harmony promised when the Messianic age finally dawns. Love between us all, but no marrying out... Jewishness - all that's best in Jewishness, all that's dignified and spiritual in it - is now in the hands of the determinedly secular. The Lubavitcher Rebbe has been the final proof that spirituality cannot be trusted to the religious."

(*The Australian*, June 14, 1994).

"JEWS CHOOSE NEW STANCE" In a rare move by a mainstream religion, American Jews are establishing new guidelines which implicitly accept sex outside marriage. The American Rabbinical Assembly, representing 1500 Conservative rabbis, is discussing guidelines that, though they still condemn casual or promiscuous sex, accept sex between unmarried adults in "an ongoing, loving relationship". It is, many say, a belated recognition of a vastly changed religious environment. Australian research has shown a consistent pattern of people marrying older - having had at least one live-in relationship before marriage. Contraceptive use is common; so is acceptance of homosexuality. Not surprisingly, perhaps, there's been a concurrent drop-off in religious involvement... Australia's estimated 25 000 Progressives generally fall between Reform and Conservative - and, say their rabbis, there is considerable merit in the American approach. The senior rabbi at the Progressive Temple Emanuel in Woollahra [Sydney] Rabbi Brian Fox, says the "highest ethic" for a sexual relationship is one which has a future for itself and for the

Jewish community - that is, a husband and wife who intend to have children. But, he adds, "beneath that is another level which can also have value and would not be rejected. Perhaps it would not have a future in children, as some [married] couples decide not to have children. But they're valid relationships and they're part of the Jewish community." The key is monogamy, and for that reason **he also accepts homosexual relationships: "I continue to support the right of homosexuals to adopt children,"** he says. Another rabbi at Temple Emanuel, Rabbi Jeffrey Kammins, has called for a reappraisal of masturbation. "We're dealing with people who are sexual beings," he says. "To expect people to be totally non-sexual is an incredibly big demand." (*SMH*, Oct. 4, 1994)

"KINGS OF THE DEAL" "Sixteen middle aged men wearing nylon anoraks, white socks and digital watches: it's time to meet America's new power elite. How strange though that, as William Cash writes, nobody wants to point out they're nearly all Jewish... The significance of this cannot simply be met by the inevitable, shrieks of "anti-Semitism". A rare glimpse of the feudal power structure of Hollywood at-work was given by the *Wall Street Journal's* front-page report of the new studio launch. Before any contracts could be signed, a private "blessing" was required from 81-year-old Lew Wasserman - the longtime chairman Of MCA (which owns Universal) and surviving Jewish founder-builder of a studio. To quote the *Journal*, he is treated in Hollywood like a tribal chieftain..." Turn now to pages 202-3 of last month's *Vanity Fair* and a curious, "group portrait" will grin back at you. Sixteen middle-aged men are decked out in a mixture of nylon jogging anoraks, fluffy white socks, digital watches and faded jeans. You'd probably guess they were a bunch of Californian dentists. They are in fact, the magazine reliably informs us, the New Establishment, "the leaders of the computer, entertainment and communication industries, whose collective power has eclipsed that of Wall Street and Washington". In his "Editor's Letter", Graydon Carter confidently boasts that his 30-page "Special Report" redefines the power centre of America ... as [it] has moved from its role as military/industrial giant to a new supremacy as the world's entertainment-information superpower". There again, bottom left, is Hollywood super-agent Mike Ovitz, the chairman of the Creative Artists Agency (presumably he won't sign non-creative artists); in the middle is his buddy David Geffen (interests listed as "AIDS, Israel and other causes"); behind them is another close pal, Barry Diller, another AIDS activist and chairman of the home-shopping network QVC. In a "Warner Bros Fitness Centre" T-shirt is Gerald Levin, chairman of Time Warner Inc; in a denim shirt is Jeffrey Katzenberg. Banker Herbert A. Allen - their host for this "Sun Valley Conference of Corporate Leaders" - has on his running shoes. Steven Spielberg, snapped by Annie Leibovitz a few pages on, is gazing out to sea his white sneakers and socks by his side. Throughout the report, the magazine is repeatedly troubled by the question: "Is there anything that binds this group of men?" According to Walter Isaacson, Time Inc's media editor, the old White Anglo-Saxon Protestant hegemony was linked through shared educational (that is, class) bonds and beliefs: "What binds these guys is a sense of interlocking ventures and relationships. The Old Establishment was a club. The New Establishment is a network. Up to a point. Again, there is something very obvious (apart from white socks) that does bind together most of the leading members of the so called "New Establishment" - or the Titans of Tripe, as Auberon Waugh recently called them - only no magazine in America (especially a Conde Nast publication owned by Si Newhouse) would point it out: they are predominantly Jews. While part of the blame for the fall of the eastern Establishment is placed on its exclusive "good-old-boy" network and elitist WASP mentality which excluded outsiders, a delicate question remains. Has the usurping of the white-shoe Establishment by the white-sock meritocracy anything to do with a similarly invidious and protective culture? Now that Jews govern the New Establishment (their official mouthpiece is The New York Times), does any sort of reverse form of class or racial discrimination operate against outsiders trying to get access to the entertainment highway - WASPs, blacks, Brits (there is only one Brit of any level of significance in all the major studios, and he is Jewish) and others not so favoured?... "If the Jews were proscribed from entering the real corridors of gentility and status in America, the movies offered an ingenious option," wrote Gabbler. "Within the studios and on the screen, the Jews could simply create a new country - one where they would not only be admitted, but would govern as well." And govern they always have. That every major studio head is Jewish today is no different from 60 years ago. "Of 85 names engaged in production, 53 are Jews," a 1936 survey noted. And the Jewish advantage holds in prestige as well as numbers. In a recent *Premiere* magazine Special Power Issue" ranking the 100 most powerful people in the "Industry" - the top 12 were Jewish. There were no black or British industry executives ranked. George Steiner once famously said that to be Jewish was to be a member of a club from which you could not resign... Feeling a bit left out of the loop, some non-Jews have been taking extreme measures to get on. Bill Stadiem, a former Harvard-educated Wall Street lawyer who is now a screenwriter in LA, told me that he recently came across an old WASP friend in an LA restaurant who had been president of the Porcellian at Harvard - the most exclusive undergraduate dining-club. His friend - a would-be producer - was dressed in a black nylon tracksuit and had gold chains on his wrist; dangling around his neck was a chunky Star of David. Stadiem asked: "Why the hell are you dressed like that?" The WASP replied: "I'm trying to look Jewish." **Just as in the '80s people were known to fake being homosexual or bisexual as a way of getting on in the entertainment business (it is estimated that about 35 per cent of the film community is gay), it has long been a standing joke in LA that the way to get on is to convert to Judaism.** Simon Kelton, an Eton- and Oxford-educated screenwriter friend with whom I used to share a house, and who was short-listed last year for the Samuel Goldwyn film-writing award, always stresses his Jewish "ancestry" whenever he gets a chance in LA, something few had ever heard about before. The extent to which this adds up to any sort of Jewish cabal behind the building of the 21st Century Entertainment Superhighway, is difficult to assess. Jews, always compulsive storytellers and talented negotiators, are extremely compatible with the executive side of the movie business. They are good at it..."

(William Cash, *London Daily Telegraph* in *SMH*, Nov. 5, 1994).

"HOLLYWOOD FURRY OVER JEWISH JIBE" "LOS ANGELES. Here is a tip for anyone thinking of pitching a script in Hollywood in the next few weeks: don't get caught whiling time in the studio's reception area chuckling over a copy of *The Spectator*. Until this month, many in the movie industry had never heard of the right-wing London-based magazine, which is edited by Dominic Lawson, the son of the former British Tory Chancellor of the Exchequer. But they have now... and they are seething. Fax lines between London and Los Angeles have been hamming with copies of an article by William Cash, a correspondent for The Daily Telegraph, which has been variously described by Hollywood players as "odious", "despicable" and "bigoted". As a shaken Cash admits: "All hell has broken loose." The article appeared in *The Sydney Morning Herald* last Saturday. His offence is to have written a piece claiming that Hollywood is controlled by a "Jewish cabal", and to suggest that it may operate reverse discrimination against outsiders, including blacks, WASPs, and Britons. Cash characterises Hollywood's Jewish leaders as vulgar (members of a "white-sock mediocracy"), and - in a comment which appears to have caused particular offence - "compulsive storytellers and talented negotiators". While no-one disputes that the industry has been dominated by Jews since the days of Adolph Zukor, Louis B. Mayer and Harry Cohn, there have been loud protests at the suggestion that its moguls practice discrimination." Few in Hollywood [can] recall such an anti-Semitic article in a mainstream publication," wrote Bernard Weinraub, the Hollywood correspondent of *The New York Times*. The writer-director Lionel Chetwynd said the article betrayed the hallmark of a "certain upper-class Brit. What they are saying is, we may not be as important and as powerful as you are, but we're more civilised. You're barbarians. Wouldn't it be wonderful if Hollywood were controlled by good, decent, upper-class British folks?" (*SMH*, Nov. 9, 1994).

"US Jewish outrage" "WASHINGTON: Jewish organisations voiced outrage yesterday at a decision to grant a United States visa to Russian ultra-nationalist Mr Vladimir Zhirinovsky, and vowed to turn out in droves next week to protest against his visit. Mr Elan Steinberg, executive director of the New York-based World Jewish Congress, said protests were planned during Mr Zhirinovsky's address to the World Affairs Council in San Francisco on Monday and at other appearances planned in New York. Mr Zhirinovsky, whose anti-Western rhetoric and neo-fascist views have repulsed many countries, spat at Jewish protesters during an April visit to the French city of Strasbourg where he attended a meeting of the European Council. Mr Steinberg said the council was "providing a platform for bigotry and hatred", a claim rejected by council president, Mr David Fischer. A State Department spokesman said the decision to grant the visa was "not an endorsement" of Mr Zhirinovsky's views." (*SMH*, Nov. 4, 1994).