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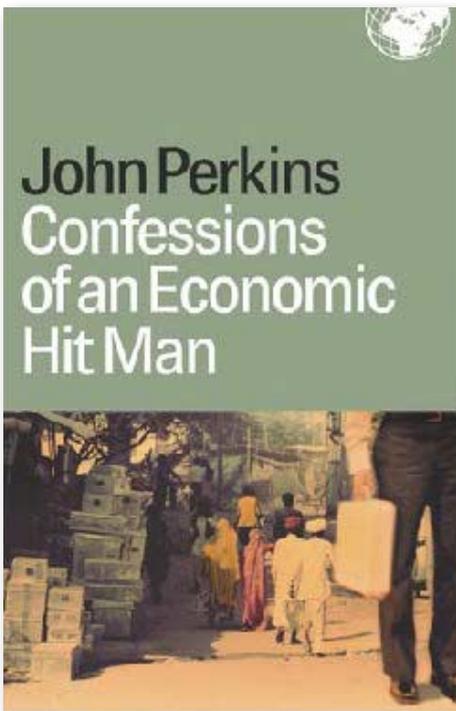
Endtime News Digest

March 2005

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ENDTIME ECONOMICS

Confessions of an Economic Hit Man



BY AMY GOODMAN, DEMOCRACY NOW

We speak with John Perkins, a respected member of the international banking community. In his book *Confessions of an Economic Hit Man* he describes how, as a highly paid professional, he helped the U.S. cheat poor countries around the globe out of trillions of dollars by lending them more money than they could possibly repay and then taking over their economies.

Amy Goodman: Explain this term, “economic hit man.”

John Perkins: Basically what we were trained to do and what our job is, is to build up the American empire—to create situations where as many resources as possible flow into this country, to our corporations, and our government, and in fact we’ve been very successful. It’s been done over the last 50 years since World War II with very little military might. It’s only in rare instances like Iraq where the military comes in as a last resort. This empire, unlike any other in the history of the world, has been built primarily through economic manipulation, through cheating,

through fraud, through seducing people into our way of life, through the economic hit men. I was very much a part of that.

I was initially recruited while I was in business school back in the late sixties by the National Security Agency, the nation’s largest and least understood spy organization; but ultimately I worked for private corporations.

The first real economic hit man was back in the early 1950s, Kermit Roosevelt, the grandson of Teddy, who overthrew the Mossadegh government of Iran, a democratically elected government, and replaced it with the Shah of Iran. At that point, we understood that this idea of the economic hit man was an extremely good one. We didn’t have to worry about the threat of war with Russia when we did it this way. The problem with that was that Roosevelt was a C.I.A. agent, a government employee. Had he been caught, it would have been very embarrassing. So, at that point, the decision was made to use organizations like the C.I.A. and the N.S.A. to recruit potential economic hit men like me and then send us to work for private consulting companies, engineering firms, construction companies, so that if we were caught, there would be no connection with the government.

The company I worked for was Charles T. Main in Boston, Massachusetts. We had about 2,000 employees, and I became its chief economist. But my real job was deal-making. It was giving loans to other countries, huge loans, much bigger than they could possibly repay. One of the conditions of the loan—let’s say a \$1 billion loan to a country like Indonesia or Ecuador—was that this country would then have to give ninety percent of that loan back to a U.S. company or companies to

build the infrastructure. Those companies would then go in and build an electrical system or ports or highways, and these would basically serve just a few of the very wealthiest families in those countries. The poor people in those countries would be stuck ultimately with this amazing debt that they couldn’t possibly repay. A country today like Ecuador owes over fifty percent of its national budget just to pay down its debt. And it really can’t do it.

So, we literally have them over a barrel. So, when we want more oil, we go to Ecuador and say, “Look, you’re not able to repay your debts, therefore give our oil companies your Amazon rain forest, which is filled with oil.” And today we’re going in and destroying Amazonian rain forests, forcing Ecuador to give them to us because they’ve accumulated all this debt. So we make this big loan, most of it comes back to the United States, the country is left with the debt plus lots of interest, and they basically become our servants, our slaves. It’s been extremely successful.

Amy Goodman: In your book, you talk about how you helped to implement a secret scheme that funneled billions of dollars of Saudi Arabian petrodollars back into the U.S. economy, and that further cemented the intimate relationship between the House of Saud and successive U.S. administrations. Explain.

John Perkins: In the early seventies OPEC exercised the power it had and cut back on oil supplies. We had cars lined up at gas stations. The country was afraid that it was facing another 1929-type of crash—depression; and this was unacceptable. So the Treasury Department hired me and a few other economic hit men. We went to Saudi Arabia and we worked out this deal whereby the House of Saud agreed

THOTS

“The object of a new year is not that we should have a new year. It is that we should have a new soul.”—G.K. Chesterton

“Conscience is the e-mail your head gets from God.”—Billy Graham

to send most of their petrodollars back to the United States and invest them in U.S. government securities. The Treasury Department would use the interest from these securities to hire U.S. companies to build Saudi Arabia—new cities, new infrastructure—which we've done. The House of Saud would agree to maintain the price of oil within acceptable limits to us, which they've done all of these years, and we would agree to keep the House of Saud in power as long as they did this, which we've done, which is one of the reasons we went to war with Iraq in the first place.

In Iraq we tried to implement the same policy that was so successful in Saudi Arabia, but Saddam Hussein didn't buy it. When the economic hit men fail in this scenario, the next step is what we call the jackals. Jackals are C.I.A.-sanctioned people that come in and try to foment a coup or revolution. If that doesn't work, they perform assassinations, or try to. In the case of Iraq, they weren't able to get through to Saddam Hussein. So the third line of defense, if the economic hit men and the jackals fail, is our young men and women, who are sent in to kill and die, which is what we've obviously done in Iraq.

Amy Goodman: Can you explain how Torrijos died?

John Perkins: Omar Torrijos, the president of Panama, had signed the Canal Treaty with Carter—and, you know, it passed our congress by only one vote. It was a highly contended issue. Torrijos then also went ahead and negotiated with the Japanese, who wanted to finance and construct a sea-level canal in Panama. Torrijos talked to them about this, which very much upset Bechtel Corporation, whose president was George Schultz and senior counsel was Caspar Weinberger. When Carter lost the election and Reagan came in and Schultz became Secretary of State, and Weinberger came from Bechtel to be Secretary of Defense, they were extremely angry at Torrijos—tried to get him to renegotiate the Canal Treaty and not to talk to the Japanese. He adamantly refused. He had his problems, but he was a very principled man. I was there. I had been working with him. I knew that we economic hit men had failed. I knew the jackals were closing in on him, and the next thing, his plane exploded with a tape recorder with a bomb in it. There's no question in my mind that it was C.I.A. sanctioned, and many Latin American investigators have come to the same conclusion. Of course, we never heard about that in our country.

Amy Goodman: How closely did you work with the World Bank?

John Perkins: Very, very closely. The World Bank provides most of the money that's used by economic hit men,

and the I.M.F. But when 9/11 struck, I had a change of heart. I knew the story had to be told because what happened on 9/11 is a direct result of what the economic hit men are doing. The only way that we're going to feel secure in this country again is if we use these systems we've put in place to create positive change around the world. I really believe we can do that. I believe the World Bank and other institutions can be turned around and do what they were originally intended to do, which is help reconstruct devastated parts of the world. There are twenty-four thousand people starving to death every day. We can change that.

(Jesus:) Now, My dear ones, you see a very small part of what goes on behind the scenes, in the dark corridors of power and the back rooms where the fates of nations are decided. It is in these places where the most important and far-reaching decisions are made, rather than the White House or Congress or other governmental bodies. It may appear that presidents or congressmen or other officials make these decisions—and they do make some of them—but often they simply implement policies that have already been decided on.

There is a connection between the men of politics and the men of business and the men of war, and they work together to achieve their aims, which is to gain as much power, money and influence as they can—mainly for themselves, although there are many who will piously and patriotically claim to be doing it for the sake of their country.

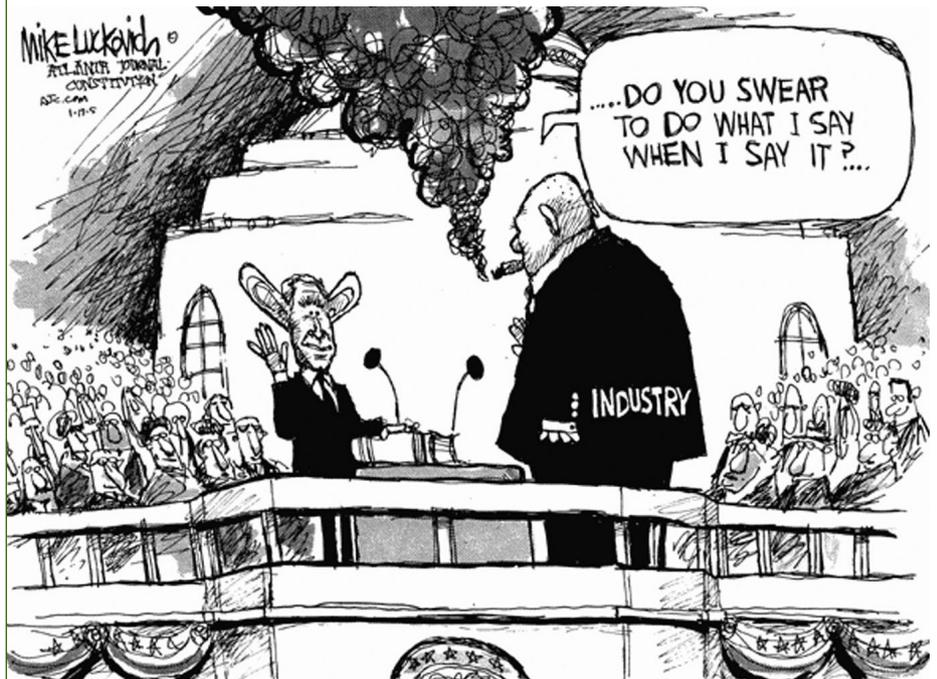
The top politicians or bankers loan out the money, as this man says

and as David has long taught you, knowing that the nations which borrow it will have a hard time paying it back. The borrower is then servant to the lender, as My Word explains (Proverbs 22:7).

Not only that, but these funds are not truly loaned out, for they come with many strings attached—development loans which specify that U.S. companies must do or manage the work, at a high cost; military loans which specify that U.S. weapons must be purchased, or, in cases where the weaponry or equipment is secondhand and is donated, the spare parts are costly; agricultural loans which specify the purchase of U.S. seeds or crops or farm equipment. In many of these cases, these "loans" are spent in the U.S., so the money was not really loaned out at all. The borrowers do get some benefit, it's true, but more than anything else they get debt, which equates to outside control of their economy and their country.

So the politicians or bankers arrange the loans, knowing that these funds will be returned and will be invested in the businesses of their country, which will profit. The men of business are thus eager to support the government so that they can get a share of this business, and they funnel gifts to various politicians or political campaigns. The politicians are happy to get these funds, for they help them to get elected, and they reciprocate by helping these businesses, knowing that the favor will be returned—and remembering that they will not be in politics forever, but will someday have to return to business themselves. Thus they pad the nests that they prepare for themselves in unrighteous mammon.

The men of war profit as well, for they are needed to help keep the



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borrowing nations in line, whether through the threat of force or through actual force, or to extend the power and authority of the men of politics and business, invading nations which will not cut a deal. They too are hit men, offering a deal that the target nation cannot refuse, lest it be invaded and subjugated. And, since the men of war need weapons, they turn to the men of politics to appropriate the money, who do so, knowing that it will go to the men of business. Naturally, when

the men of war retire, they often find places for themselves among the men of business or the men of politics, and they then continue the cycle of deal-making, profit-making, and conquest that enriches them all.

This is a simple explanation of many complicated connections. Your world calls it the military-industrial complex, and it is that, and it is complex indeed on the surface, with many strings running here and there, some to people being controlled and others to the controllers and puppeteers. But I simplify this for your sakes.

The losers are the poor of the world, for they are left with the burdensome debts which they and their children and their children's children must pay off, which means that their governments can offer them less in the way of services—less food aid, fewer jobs and lower-paying ones when they are available, less medical care and education, and less of almost anything other than debt and taxes.

So now you see part of the role which the economic hit men, the political hit men and the military hit men play, and how they work together. And this they will continue to do even into the rule and reign of the Antichrist, for these men are not generally as loyal to any nation as they are to their cause and to their profits. Those who reach the tops of these professions—politics, business, or war—have for the most part had their consciences seared as if with a hot iron because of the compromises they have made along the way, and some had little in the way of conscience even before that. The man who revealed this is one

of those few with a tender conscience, and will be blessed for it.

As for the others—those who ride the black horse or the red horse—they will someday learn that the white horse will be the one who is victorious, for I have gone forth conquering and will conquer. Now I conquer the hearts of men with My love and truth, but there will come the day when I will return to conquer physically on that same white horse, and those who were unwilling to yield their hearts to Me now will yield in that day, one way or the other. And the poor of the world will at last receive righteous rule, and the meek will inherit the Earth and delight themselves in the abundance of peace and prosperity. That's the happy ending.



KERMIT ROOSEVELT (1916–2000). "I OWE MY THRONE TO GOD, MY PEOPLE, MY ARMY—AND TO YOU," SOBBED A GRATEFUL SHAH OF IRAN TO KERMIT ROOSEVELT IN AUGUST 1953, AFTER THE CIA-BACKED COUP WHICH OVERTHREW THE COUNTRY'S INDEPENDENTLY-MINDED PRIME MINISTER, MUHAMMAD MOSSADEGH, AND RESTORED THE SHAH TO THE PEACOCK THRONE. (FROM THE *LONDON TIMES* OBITUARY)



FORMER PANAMANIAN PRESIDENT OMAR TORRIJOS

◆ Wars and rumors of war

Wars and their aftermath

BY FRED REED

We do not see much of the casualties in Iraq, ours or theirs. Yet they are there, somewhere, with missing legs, blind, becoming accustomed to groping at things in their new darkness, learning to use the wheelchairs that will be theirs for fifty years. Some face worse fates than others. Quadriplegics will be warehoused in VA hospitals where nurses will turn them at intervals, like hamburgers, to prevent bedsores. The less damaged will get around.

For a brief moment perhaps the casualties will believe, then try desperately to keep believing, that they did something brave and worthy and terribly important for that abstraction, country. But there will be no thanks, or few, and those quickly forgotten. It will be worse. People will ask how they lost the leg. In Iraq, they will say, hoping for sympathy, or respect, or understanding. The response, often unvoiced but unmistakable, will be, "What did you do that for?"

The years will go by. Iraq will fade into the mist. Wars always do. A generation will rise for whom it will be just history. The dismembered veterans will find first that almost nobody appreciates what they did, then that few even remember it. If—when, many would say—the United States is driven out of Iraq, the soldiers will look back and realize that the whole affair was a fraud. Wars are just wars. They seem important at the time. At any rate, we are told that they are important.

Yet the wounds will remain. Arms do not grow back. For the paralyzed there will never be girlfriends, dancing, rolling in the grass with children. The blind will adapt as best they can. Those with merely a missing leg will count themselves lucky. They will hobble about, managing to lead semi-normal lives, and people will say, "How well he handles it."

For others it will be less good. These men will come to hate. It will not be the Iraqis they hate.

It is hard to admit that one has been used. Some of the crippled will forever insist that the war was needed, that

they were protecting their sisters from an Islamic invasion, or Vietnamese, or Chinese. Others will keep quiet and drink too much. Still others will read, grow older and wiser—and bitter.

Hatred comes easily. A friend of mine spent two tours in Asia in that war now little remembered. He killed many people, not all of them soldiers. It gnaws at him. One is wise to stay away from him when he is drinking.

People say that this war isn't like Vietnam. They are correct. Washington fights its war in Iraq with



WOUNDED U.S. SOLDIER BEING HELPED BY HIS COMRADES



U.S. ARMORED VEHICLE PATROLS THE RUINS OF FALLUJAH

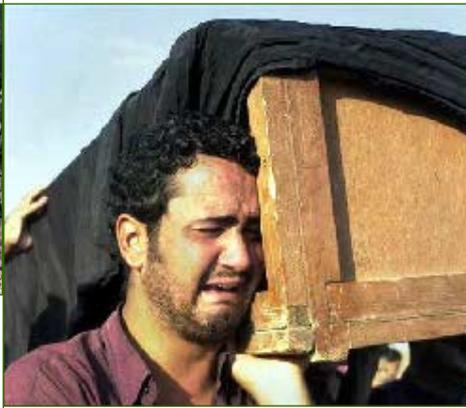
no better understanding of Iraq than it had of Vietnam, but with much better understanding of the United States. The Pentagon learned from Asia. This time around it has controlled the press well. Here is the great lesson of Southeast Asia: The press is dangerous. So we don't much see the caskets—for reasons of privacy, you understand.

The war in Iraq is fought by volunteers, which means people that no one in power cares about. No one in the mysteriously named "elite" gives a damn about some kid from a town in Tennessee that has one gas station and a beer hall with a stuffed buck's head. If conscription came back, and college students with rich parents learned to live in fear of The Envelope, riots would blossom as before. Now Yale can rest easy.

The nearly perfect separation between the military and the rest of the country, or at least the influential in the country, is wonderful for the war effort. It prevents concern.

In fifteen years in Washington I knew many, many reporters and intellectuals and educated people. Almost none had worn boots. Those who count do not have to go, and do not know anyone who has gone, and don't interest themselves.

There is a price for this, though not one Washington cares about. Across



IRAQI MAN CARRIES THE COFFIN OF A LOVED ONE KILLED IN THE CONFLICT

America, in places where you might not expect it—in Legion halls and VFW posts, among those who carry membership cards from the Disabled American Veterans—there are men who hate. They don't hate America. They hate those who sent them. Talk to the wounded from Iraq in five years.

(Dad:) War has so many terrible fruits. It destroys the bodies of those who fight it. It destroys their minds, as they remember the atrocities they saw or were forced to commit. It often destroys their wives and children and marriages, for their husbands or fathers came back wounded physically or mentally or both.

And that's just among the victors of the war. What about the vanquished, the losers? Their soldiers suffer the same, or worse. Their civilians suffer too—sometimes physically as they lose life or limbs to war, sometimes mentally because of all the horrors inflicted upon them or their loved ones or their city or country, sometimes economically as they lose their jobs or their means of livelihood. And the hatred and bitterness lives on in them as well, those who survive the ordeal,

and they hate their conqueror, for whom all too often they were just "collateral damage"—someone who happened to get in the way of the conquest, a mistake, a statistic that can be tabulated and filed away and forgotten about. But the vanquished don't forget easily, and don't usually forgive.

So the U.S. will pay a horrible price for its wars one of these days, either at the hands of its enemies or in the hands of an angry God. You do reap what you sow; that's God's law.

◆ **Famine and drought**

This parched earth

BY JULIETTE JOWIT, *THE OBSERVER*

Most of us turn on our taps, flush our lavatories and water our plants with barely a thought. Yet our seas, rivers and even rainfall are under siege from pollution, waste and man-made destruction, a catastrophe that claims the life of one child every 15 seconds.

Water makes up 70 percent of the surface of the globe. That sounds like a lot of water. Unfortunately, however, only 3 percent is fresh. The vast majority of that is locked in the polar icecaps or too deep underground to reach. Less than 1 percent of all water is both fresh and accessible.

Human use of fresh water has quadrupled since the 1940s and is still growing fast. One-fifth of humanity—1.1 billion people—has no access to safe drinking water. This, together with lack of sanitation for 2.4 billion people, causes a child to die every 15 seconds and five million deaths a year.

The human impact is shocking: Billions of people—normally women and children—walk an average of six miles a day to fetch water. And the water they collect often carries disease.

"It doesn't have the impact of starvation—which is visible and terminal—but this is one of the silent emergencies at the roots of everything," says Ravi Narayanan, WaterAid's director.

And still it is getting worse: In less than 25 years, says the UN Environment Program, two-thirds of the world's population will live in countries where there is not enough water per person to be sure in future of secure supplies and healthy rivers and lakes.



PARCHED RICE FIELD IN CAMBODIA. IN LESS THAN 25 YEARS, TWO-THIRDS OF THE WORLD'S POPULATION WILL LIVE IN COUNTRIES WHERE THERE IS NOT ENOUGH WATER PER PERSON.



(Dad:) For those of you who live in more developed countries, that's one more thing you can thank the Lord for—running water. It helps to tally up the simple blessings you sometimes take for granted—running water, electricity, heat or fans, a roof over your heads, plentiful food, and many more things. If you pause and think about these things sometimes, you'll have lots of reasons to praise!

But don't praise too long when you're running the water or taking your shower! If you do, you're likely to waste water and be part of the problem. Conserve all you can, Family, even if you're in a city or area or country that has a more bountiful supply. Be a good steward rather than a wasteful one. It might seem a little thing, inconsequential, and something that doesn't matter in the midst of multitudes in the world who are wasting water like crazy. But it matters to the Lord, and He's watching.

◆ Pests and pestilences

The virus that strikes once a year

THE WEEK

What causes the flu? A virus that is one-millionth of an inch long. Viruses are not, strictly speaking, alive; they're bundles of proteins programmed to reproduce themselves. They can only do this by invading a living host. Flu viruses are constantly circulating in people and in animals. They spread most easily when the weather grows cold and people spend more time indoors, in close quarters. You can become infected through direct contact with someone who has the flu, through inhaling airborne viruses expelled in sneezes, or by touching surfaces previously touched by an infected person. In any given year, from 10 percent to 20 percent of the population comes down with the flu.

What happens to these poor souls? For a week to 10 days, they

become very miserable human beings. First, the flu virus burrows into individual cells in the respiratory system. There, the virus commandeers the cells' enzymes and begins churning out copies of itself. When an infected cell is full of virus particles, the invaders burst out of the cell, spreading the infection to other cells. Soon, the spreading infection triggers a massive immune system response: Your temperature soars to 102 to 106 degrees (viruses replicate less effectively in a warmer body). Your nose fills with mucus, and your throat reddens and becomes sore. You cough and sneeze in an attempt to expel the virus. Your muscles ache. You shiver. As the battle between the virus and the immune system rages within you, you become so weak you can barely stand.

Is it a serious illness? Not for most people. Given a week or so, a healthy immune system manufactures antibodies that hunt down the invaders, attach themselves, and render the virus harmless. But infants, the elderly, and people with compromised immune systems can suffer complications. Mucus released by the body as it fights the flu provides fertile ground for bacterial infection. Pneumonia can arise in lungs weakened by the viral attack. The flu kills about 36,000 Americans every year, about one in every 1,000 infected.

Do all flu strains cause the same symptoms? No. Some varieties of the flu make people far sicker. The biggest threat comes from strains created when one form of the virus jumps from an animal species to a human already infected with a more common type of flu. Inside the human host, the two viruses combine to create a brand-new strain to which no one on the planet has any prior immunity. That virus can then race through the population like a fire through dry tinder. This, scientists now think, is what happened during the "Spanish flu" pandemic of 1918 and 1919—the most deadly flu of all time.



FLU SUFFERER: A VIRUS THAT IS ONE-MILLIONTH OF AN INCH LONG CAUSES LOTS OF SUFFERING

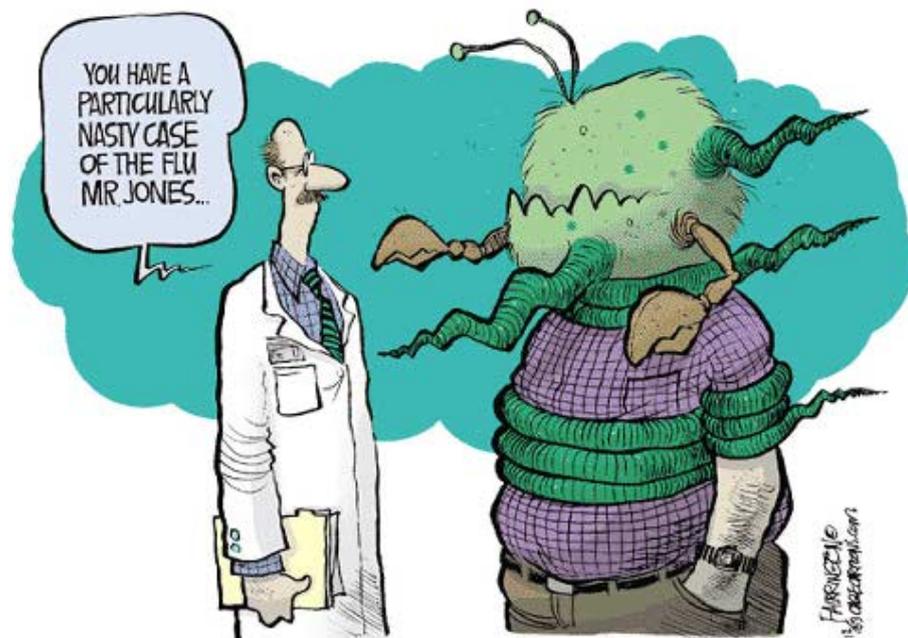
How many people became sick?

Throughout the world, the Spanish flu killed an estimated 50 million people—more lives than were claimed by the Black Death in the 1300s. "It was a plague so deadly," Gina Kolata says in her book *Flu*, "that if a similar virus were to strike today, it would kill more people in a single year than heart disease, cancers, strokes, chronic pulmonary disease, AIDS, and Alzheimer's disease combined." One American in four was stricken, and between 500,000 and 675,000 died in the U.S. alone. By the time the disease had run its course, life expectancy in the U.S. had fallen from 51 years to 39. "The only way we could find room for the sick," one doctor said years later, "was to have undertakers waiting at the door, ready to remove bodies as the victims died."

Could that happen again? The death toll would probably not be that great, but another pandemic is inevitable. "Pandemics come in cycles and we're overdue for one," says Dr. Donald Perlman, an immunologist at the University of Medicine and Dentistry in New Jersey. Scientists particularly worry about avian flu viruses common in Asia, where people often handle live chickens and ducks in markets and can become infected. In 1997, a chicken flu virus broke out among the population of Hong Kong, and authorities slaughtered 1.2 million birds to stop its spread. An avian flu outbreak in Thailand and Vietnam this year killed 31 of the 43 people who contracted it. Tens of millions of birds were killed to keep the infection from spreading, but scientists still worry that a deadly new pandemic could be brewing in Asia. "If this avian flu gets loose in the world," says Perlman, "it could be a huge disaster."

Warding off flu. (AP) Doctors and nutritionists say careful hygiene, a balanced diet and plenty of rest and fluids can go a long way toward keeping people healthy during the influenza season. People who are run down or overworked, not getting proper rest or proper nutrition, increase their risk of illness.

Besides getting enough sleep—at least seven hours a night for adults and more for youngsters—managing stress is important, because too much can weaken one's immune system.



Frequent hand-washing, using soap and hot water and rubbing vigorously, also is crucial. Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth, because germs on your hand could infect you.

Don't skip drinking water, because eight glasses of fluid a day is essential to health, aiding in almost every process in the body.

People also should avoid crowds and people who are coughing or sneezing.

Regular exercise helps boost our immune system, so that's important, too.

It's essential to eat a healthy and substantial breakfast, about one-fourth of the day's calories.

Variety in the diet is important, but people should emphasize plant foods, including whole grains and at least five servings of fruits and vegetables a day.

People can help keep their immune system strong by eating foods rich in vitamins A, C and E: milk, eggs and fish oil; citrus fruits, melons and red peppers; and nuts, spinach, peanut butter and corn oil.

(Dad:) Be sure to wash your hands, Family—and especially you kids. As the Lord said a long time ago, it's not what comes *out* of a man that defiles him but what goes *in*—dirty fingers, junk food, and even stress and strain, which often leads to a lower resistance. Keep clean, calm, prayerful, praiseful, and claim the keys, and that'll go a long way toward keeping you healthy!

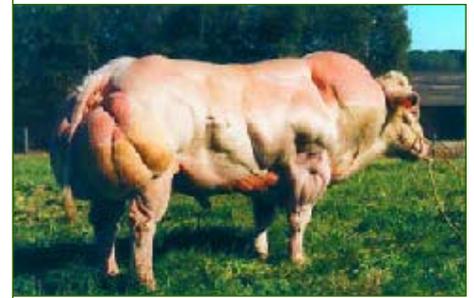
◆ Cloning/genetic engineering

Building better bodies

BY NICHOLAS D. KRISTOF, NY TIMES NEWS SERVICE

For a glimpse of what post-human athletes may look like beginning in the 2012 or 2016 Olympics, take a look at an obscure breed of cattle called the Belgian Blue. Belgian Blues are unlike any cows you've ever seen. They have a genetic mutation that means they do not have effective myostatin, a substance that curbs muscle growth. A result is that Belgian Blues are all bulging muscles without a spot of fat, like bovine caricatures of Arnold Schwarzenegger.

These mutants may also point to the future of humans, particularly athletes. Gene therapies are being developed that would block myostatin in humans, and they offer immense promise in treating muscular dystrophy and the frailty that comes with aging. But once this gene therapy becomes available for people who really need it, it'll only take about 10 minutes before athletes are surreptitiously using it, particularly



BELGIAN BLUE: ALL BULGING MUSCLES WITHOUT A SPOT OF FAT

because, in contrast to today's doping, gene therapy leaves no trace in the blood or urine.

The standard human shape would become different, and anyone with money could look like a body builder. As H. Lee Sweeney, chairman of physiology at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine, writes in a fascinating article in July's *Scientific American*, "The world may be about to watch one of its last Olympic Games without genetically enhanced athletes."

Even more important, gene therapy goes to the heart of an issue that will turn our species upside down in the coming decades. We are beginning to understand our own operating system—genes—and we're gaining the ability to try to "improve" our genetic endowment. If we do so, the ramifications could be enormous.

Genetic tinkering gives me the willies. My concern is not so much the details of blocking myostatin as with the possibility that we will irreversibly change what it is to be human.

Geneticists have tried to improve apples over the last 50 years, producing larger, prettier species that just aren't as tasty or as interesting as they used to be; it would be a tragedy if we did to humans what we've done to apples.

Perhaps the most important and complex decision in the history of our species is approaching: In what ways should we improve our genetic endowment? Yet we are neither focused on this question nor adequately schooled to resolve it. So we desperately need ... to figure out if we want our descendants to belong to the same species as we do.

(Jesus:) In tinkering with their bodies in this way, men go far outside the bounds of what I ordained in the beginning. I made man in My image, an image of perfection and purity in the original creation. Some of that perfection was curtailed and put on hold, put into the realm of potential, with the fall of man and his departure from the Garden, but it is still there.

So man has many things waiting for him in his new supernatural body—victory over death and disease, great strength without bulging muscles, travel at the speed of thought, great mental power and intellect and aptitude—all of it available without gene therapy or tinkering with the way I made



North Pole "was once subtropical"

BY ALEX KIRBY, BBC

An international scientific team which has been drilling beneath the bed of the Arctic Ocean says it enjoyed a subtropical climate.

The Arctic Coring Expedition has recovered sediment cores from nearly 400m (1,300ft) below the sea floor.

It says fossilized algae in the cores show the sea temperature was once about 20°C instead of the average now, -1.5°C.

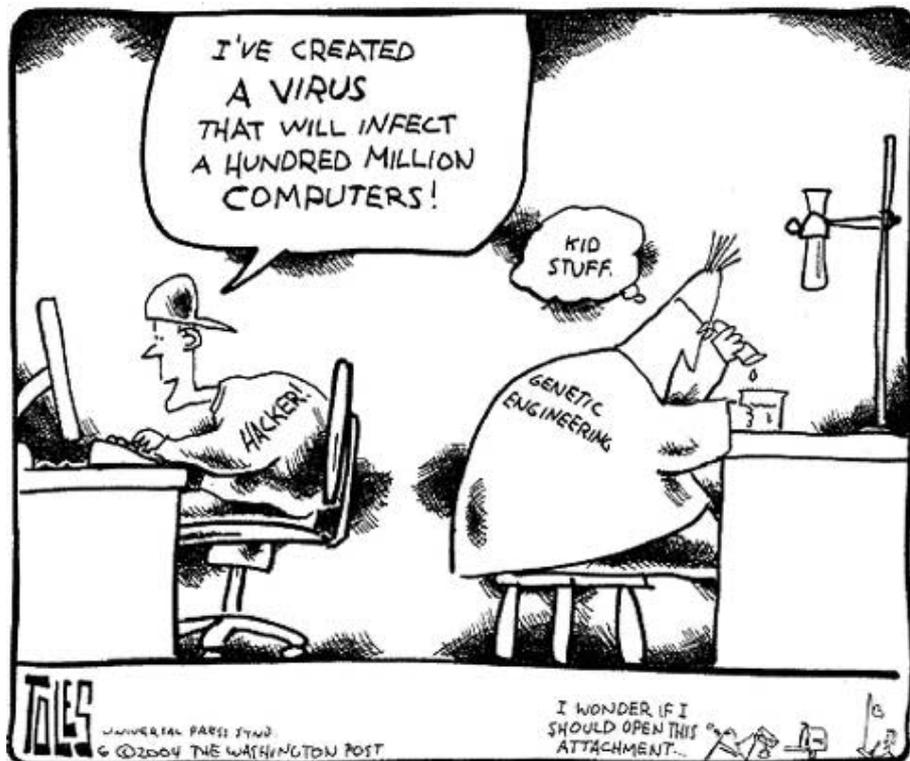
The cores they have extracted show the Arctic Ocean was once a subtropical, shallow sea. The evidence is in the form of tiny algal fossils found in the cores, which were once marine plants and animals.

They date back to a period ... characterized by an extremely warm climate that created a natural greenhouse effect, which caused massive amounts of carbon to be deposited in both sea and air.

(Dad:) The fact that they dug up those mastodons and giant horses clear up in northern Siberia and Alaska and places like that, proves that those places at one time even had green grass and weren't so frozen! It looks like it just hit so suddenly that they were standing there eating and froze when the great catastrophe occurred, which most of the scientists who are Christians believe happened at the time of the Flood. So there must have been green grass up there then and the climate must have been milder then. ("What Did Adam Do In The Garden?" ML #1917:35, Vol.15) **(Editor:** And one day the climate will be mild again. See "A Millennial Dream Trip," ML #1447, GN Book 3, for Dad's dream about traveling across a melted Arctic Ocean by boat.)



POLAR BEAR AND CUB. THE NORTH POLE IS COLD NOW, BUT ONCE HAD A SUBTROPICAL CLIMATE



A FINGER SCAN TO PAY FOR GROCERIES

Instead of using his credit or debit card to pay for his food, he uses the index finger of his right hand, which he places in a fingerprint reader at the register. After punching in his access code, the register asks him from which account he would like to pay—checking, credit card or debit card. Without pulling out his wallet, he indicates his choice. The amount is properly debited and he gets a receipt.

If this sounds like a scenario from the future, think again. It's one of the many ways biometrics is reshaping the way consumers will do everything from paying for groceries to securing their financial transactions at the bank or online. Kapioski says that some 4,000 of his customers have also opted to pay for their groceries the same way since 2001.

Biometrics is the term for the technology used to capture and encode any human characteristic in order to identify people during financial or other transactions. While still in its infancy, biometrics is a growing market. Companies across all industry sectors are expected to spend about \$800 million on biometric technology in 2004. That number is expected to leap to \$4.3 billion by 2006.

Singapore deploys more cameras on streets. (UPI) Singapore, already

man's body. In fact, all of these things are free to those who believe in Me. I only ask to dwell in their heart, so that they may dwell with Me, and we'll dwell happily ever after!

◆ **Big Brother Briefs**

Testing ID chips on foreign visitors. (Alorie Gilbert, CNET News) The U.S. is eyeing a controversial tracking technology to aid tightened immigration controls at border crossings to Mexico and Canada.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security plans to begin issuing special identification devices to foreign visitors arriving by foot and by car by July 31. The devices will contain microchips storing a unique identification code that's linked via government computers to document holders' names, countries of origin, dates of entry and exit, and biometric data.

The goal of using the technology is to more easily track visitors' arrival and departure, and to catch those who overstay their visas, the agency said. It should also speed up inspection procedures at checkpoints. Border officials can simply scan the chips, which signal their ID numbers via radio frequency,

from a distance and automatically gather the data they need.

As part of a separate but related program, the State Department is experimenting with embedding the ID devices, also known as radio-frequency identification (RFID) chips, in American passports to deter fakes and theft. The government is urging other countries to do the same.

(Dad:) "Welcome to the U.S., the land of the free! Here's your ID chip so we can keep an eye on you." Ha!

Biometrics make transactions secure. (Jeremy Quittner, ABC News) For Paul Kapioski, owner of a Thriftway gourmet grocery store franchise in Seattle, paying for groceries has gotten a lot easier.



NEW IMMIGRATIONS DOCUMENTS AT THE U.S. BORDER

one of the world's safest big cities, is installing more closed-circuit television cameras in public areas to combat terrorism and crime. Home Affairs Minister Wong Kan Seng said every school will be patrolled by security guards and fitted with as many as 12 cameras during the next few months. Wong said the cameras enable authorities to immediately dispatch officers to defuse potential terrorist activities if they are caught on tape.

Cameras to keep watch in Hollywood. (Jessica Garrison, *Los Angeles Times*) In a new step for crime fighting in Los Angeles, the Police Department plans to start installing surveillance cameras on city streets, beginning with Hollywood Boulevard. If all goes according to plan, there will eventually be 64 cameras on Hollywood, Santa Monica and Sunset boulevards and Western Avenue. Los Angeles already has some cameras observing public places, but these, which can pan, tilt and zoom at the flick of a joystick controlled by an officer, are capable of seeing every inch of a block. Police will also have the capability of searching recordings kept on file.

Across the country and around the world, cameras are becoming an ever more prevalent tool of law enforcement. New Orleans and Chicago recently installed cameras, as have Palm Springs and Washington, D.C. Across the Atlantic, England has embraced the concept, with more than 150,000 cameras throughout London.

(Dad:) Remember when the idea of cameras all over the place, monitoring your every move, would have seemed bizarre, Orwellian, or like something out of the Soviet Union? How things change!—And the way they change is little by little, with a camera here and there in some necessary spot, until any uproar dies down and the

public gets accustomed to seeing them. Meanwhile, they're told how "secure" they now are and what an asset all this surveillance technology is.

Then the cameras spread, and before you know it, they're all over the place, from the mean streets of Los Angeles to the peaceful streets of Singapore. It doesn't seem unusual anymore, and hardly even makes the news. People have been programmed to accept them and almost ignore them, because they're part of modern life. And so the cameras spread and attitudes change more and more, and the world is prepared for the surveillance society of the Antichrist.

◆ Techno Topics

The real world doesn't use a joystick

BY DANIEL TERDIMAN, WIRED

After a recent three-day binge of playing the Japanese hit video game *Katamari Damacy*, Los Angeles artist Kozy Kitchens discovered that walking away from the game was not as easy as putting down her joystick.

In the game, players push around what amounts to a giant tape ball, attempting to make the ball bigger by picking up any and all objects in its path. Kitchens found that her urge to keep picking things up was not so easy to shake.

"I was driving down Venice Boulevard," recalled her husband, Dan Kitchens, "and Kozy reached over and grabbed the steering wheel and for a moment was trying to yank it to the right.... (Then) she let go, but kept staring out her window, and then looked back at me kind of stunned and said, 'Sorry, I thought we could pick up that mailbox we just passed.'"

While motorists and pedestrians shouldn't worry too much about rogue *Katamari Damacy* players, Kozy Kitch-



COMPUTER JOYSTICK

ens' experience with having a difficult time separating her real-life consciousness from that of her game playing is all too common among hard-core gamers. It's so common, in fact, that game publishers might want to consider warning their customers that they may soon be unable to tell the difference between the game and reality.

Chris Taylor, a staff writer at *Time* magazine and a regular game reviewer, said he thinks driving games and first-person shooters are particularly likely to make players lose track of reality.

"I just knew the first time I played *Burnout 2*, the crash part, that I probably shouldn't get behind the wheel of a car for an hour or so afterwards," Taylor said, "because you're expending so much effort on deliberately trying to make your car crash."

Taylor also said that after reviewing *Quake III* he had trouble getting his mind out of the game. "I'd play it, then walk out into the office corridor and realize I was looking at my co-workers as potential targets," said Taylor. "I was so used to killing anything that moved."

Any addictive game can have a similar effect: The more someone plays, the more likely they are to stay mentally inside even afterward. And immersive games like Electronic Arts' *The Sims* are frequently to blame, given the countless hours players put into them.

"When I played (it) a lot," said Laura Martin, a devotee of the game, "I remember thinking, 'What percent of my bladder is full?' to decide if it was time to head to the bathroom."

The phenomenon of having difficulty defining reality after hours in front of the screen isn't at all limited to games.

Martin reported similar experiences after four days on an intensive Photoshop project.

"By the time I turned the project in, I was so sleep-deprived and delusional," she said, "that everywhere I looked I had the impulse to correct things, to move the world around in layers."

And Lisa Hoffman, a graphic designer who spends endless hours using various software packages, lamented finding it



hard to determine where her computer ends and real life begins.

"I've been using the computer for so long, and control-Z works for undo in all the software programs," Hoffman said. "So whenever I find something in my life that I want to undo, I reach for the control-Z keys and I find it weird that it doesn't work."

(Dad:) I know that some of you folks find computer games entertaining and relaxing, and that's fine, as long as you can keep them in check and

they don't occupy too much of your time and your mind, to the point that you start dwelling on them too much or even forget what's reality and what's fantasy, or you start wishing the fantasy was the reality.

Remember, reality is love and life for the Lord, loving Him and sharing His love with others, witnessing, fellowship, family, children, and work—often lots of hard work, but fulfilling work, to raise funds, make ends meet, keep a marriage or a relationship going, raise children, and help others. That's reality!

Don't let the dream world of computer games, movies, System books or music or anything else push it aside or claim a higher priority. Don't let Pan lead your mind off into dreamland or fantasy world. The more you dwell there, the unhappier you'll be with reality. Pan's paths of pleasure lead to pain rather than happiness! So pray before you play, and if the play starts becoming too important to you, cut back and get help and prayer and the Word!

◆ Religion in the News

A boost even from negative news

BY PEGGY KREIMER, THE CINCINNATI POST

It doesn't matter what you say; just spell my name right.

That Hollywood maxim is getting a religious twist as developers of the Creation Museum in northern Kentucky find themselves featured more and more in national and international media reports—many of which mock the museum's contention that the Biblical version of creation is scientifically, as well as theologically, correct.

The latest mention of Answers in Genesis' Creation Museum project in Petersburg, Ky., came from nationally syndicated columnist Maureen Dowd. In a column titled "Inherit the Windbags" on the opinion page of the *New York Times*, she derided the Creation Museum and President George Bush's actions as signs America is regressing.

Dowd poked mild fun at the museum's contention that the Bible's version of creation is the absolute, literal truth, down to the exact number of 24-hour days that God used to create the earth; the belief that earth is much younger than mainstream scientists believe; and that Adam was not only alive to see dinosaurs, he named them.

"We've been blessed with a lot of publicity," said Answers in Genesis vice president Mark Looy. It's frustrating, though, to see inaccurate information and to be mocked, he said, citing a *London Telegraph* story that he described as "a horrible bit of journalism."

The more Answers in Genesis has been mocked and openly attacked, however, the more people have rallied to the support of the organization, he said.

"Three years ago we got a phone call from a businessman who said, 'I really don't know who you are, but I've been watching the press accounts attacking the ministry.' He said, 'You must be doing something right to get all that opposition,' and he sent us a million dollars," Looy said.

The international notoriety a full two years before the museum opens bodes well, even if the reports aren't all supportive.

BBC television flew a crew in last week. "The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer" will

be here next week. The Australian version of "60 Minutes" is planning a feature, and organization officials have been quoted in a number of papers in Britain and Japan. ABC's "Nightline" program filmed a segment before Christmas that has yet to be aired. The list goes on and on.

(Dad:) It just goes to show that there's no such thing as bad publicity! This little museum in an out-of-the-way corner of Kentucky isn't even open yet and might have been ignored if it hadn't been for all the publicity and controversy. But now it's world-famous, which means the Lord's message of creation rather than evolution is famous as well. Nevertheless, the Gospel is preached, even if it's by contention. The Lord causes even the wrath of man to praise Him and draw attention to Him! His sheep hear His voice even in the midst of all the negative publicity.

And that's the way it'll be this time too, dear Family. Media smears separate the sheep from the goats, drawing the sheep toward you and driving the goats away and making your witnessing easier at the same time as they make your message well known. The Enemy just shoots himself in the foot and limps around while you fly higher than ever.

So keep these attacks in perspective, remembering the benefits of persecution down through history. When His enemies killed Jesus, that's when the Church took off! When the Romans persecuted the Christians, that's when Christianity exploded and eventually took over the Roman Empire! When we were attacked and smeared for FFing decades ago, that's what made us into the Family of Love! When we were persecuted in Spain, Argentina, Australia and France, that strengthened us rather than weakened us! So trust in the Lord and keep bad publicity in the right perspective, knowing that there'll be a happy ending!

◆ Men's Corner

Sex really is all in the mind for women

BY ELIZABETH DAY, ELECTRONIC TELEGRAPH

It is the confirmation that men have long dreaded. Scientists have concluded that women achieve most sexual satisfaction through the stimulation of their brain and not any other organ.

After eight years of tests involving 3,000 women, Pfizer, the company behind Viagra, the little blue pill that has transformed men's sex lives, has abandoned efforts to prove that the drug works for females too.

Its exhaustive research has concluded that men and women have a fundamentally different relationship between arousal and desire. A women's arousal is triggered by a network of emotional, intellectual, and relationship-based factors rather than the simple physical response required by a man, it says.

Dr. Mitra Boolel, the leader of the company's sex research team, admitted: "The brain is the crucial sexual organ in a woman."

Pfizer, the world's largest private medical research and development organization, spent hundreds of thousands of pounds on its research.

Their conclusion that the earth only moves for women if they think it does came as little surprise to broadcaster Anne Atkins. She said the Pfizer findings were "blindingly obvious." "I'm surprised we needed scientists to tell us this," she said.

"Women get satisfaction from something much deeper—from relationships involving romance and love. While men also desire that, they are not programmed for it in the same way."

(Dad:) Yes, men, women really are different! Most men don't need much even physically to get turned on—just



the sight of a pretty girl will do it! But it takes more for women, and much more intangible things: a bouquet of flowers, a little act of love and kindness, a smile, a note or poem, a walk in the park, romance and loving affection, true love and consideration. If you're looking for something to spice up your love life, the best place to start is often outside the bedroom and throughout the day. Woo her sweetly and tenderly, and love her always, and you'll share both spiritual and sexual satisfaction!

◆ Words for the wise

Hazards of modern English usage

BY RICHARD ALLEYNE, *ELECTRONIC TELEGRAPH*

Will defusing a bomb diffuse the situation? Is it correct to pedal a bicycle or pedal ideas? According to the editors of the new *Concise Oxford Dictionary*, up to half of us do not know the answers.

As part of compiling the 11th edition of the reference book, researchers discovered an increasing confusion over simple words and phrases.

One in five believes we should tow the line when we should toe the line. A further 10 percent pour over a book when we should pore over it.

The increase in "mass dyslexia" was picked up by the dictionary's 100 researchers across the world on the lookout for new words.

As they searched (or, perhaps, pored over) the Oxford English Corpus, a database of 400 million written words, they discovered that while spelling remains reasonably strong, more and more writers are mixing up like-sounding words and phrases.

The most common error was the use of the phrase diffuse the situation when it should be defuse the situation. Similarly, a large number confused pedaling ideas with the correct peddling ideas.

Angus Stevenson, the dictionary's co-editor, said: "They are not so much spelling the words wrongly but using the wrong words."

◆ The Asian Tsunami

Outracing the sea, orphans in his care

BY JOHN LANCASTER, *WASHINGTON POST* FOREIGN SERVICE

NAVALADY, Sri Lanka—Two hundred yards from the beach, in the orphanage he had built, Dayalan Sanders lounged in his bed early Sunday morning, thinking about the sermon he was due to deliver in the chapel in half an hour. A few yards away, most of the 28 children under his care were still in their rooms.

Then he heard the pounding of feet in the corridor outside his room, and his wife burst through the door, a frantic look on her face. "The sea is coming!" she said.

But the children did not die when the sea came. This is their story, and



SRI LANKAN MISSIONARY DAYALAN SANDERS

the story of their chief rescuer, Sanders, a Sri Lankan-born missionary and U.S. citizen. A member of the country's Tamil ethnic minority, Sanders, 50, studied to be an accountant before founding a missionary group. In 1994, he founded the Samaritan Children's Home in Navalady, a small fishing village that occupies a narrow peninsula on Sri Lanka's economically depressed eastern coast.

With ocean on one side and a lagoon on the other, the four-acre orphanage was a strikingly beautiful place, set in a grove of stately palms.

It was a busy, happy time at the orphanage. On Friday, the children sang, danced and performed the Nativity scene at their annual Christmas pageant, followed the next day by Christmas services and dinner for 250 guests, many of them Hindus from the nearby village. Sanders was so exhausted by his duties as host that he went to bed early on Saturday night. He also forgot to check, as he usually does, on whether the outboard motor had been removed from the orphanage launch, as it was supposed to be each night as a precaution against theft.

It proved to be the luckiest mistake he ever made.

On Sunday morning, Sanders rose at his customary hour of 4 a.m. to wander the grounds and pray, then went back to bed. He woke up again about 7:30.

He recalled the stillness. "The surface of the ocean was like a sheet of glass. Not a leaf moved." Two young men on his staff wandered down to the ocean for a swim.

It isn't clear who saw the wave first. Sanders's wife, Kohila, said she was alerted by one of the orphans. Kohila ran into the brilliant sunshine and saw the building sea.

Kohila ran to inform her husband, who told her not to panic, he recalled. "I said, 'Be calm. God is with us. Nothing



REMAINS OF THE SAMARITAN CHILDREN'S HOME AFTER THE TSUNAMI

will ever harm us without His permission." Wrapped in a sarong, he ran outside and looked toward the ocean. There on the horizon, he said, was a "30-foot wall of water," racing toward the wispy pines that marked the landward side of the beach.

With barely any time to think, let alone act, he ran toward the lagoon side of the compound, where the launch with its outboard motor chafed at a pier. By then, many of the children had heard the commotion and run outside, some of them half-dressed. Sanders shouted at the top of his lungs, urging them all toward the boat.

Desperate, he asked if anyone had seen his daughter, and a moment later one of the older girls thrust the 3-year-old child into his arms. Sanders heaved her into the boat, along with the other small children, as the older ones, joined by his wife and the orphanage staff, clambered aboard on their own. One of his employees yanked on the starter cord and the engine sputtered instantly to life—something that Sanders swears had never happened before. "Usually you have to pull it four or five times," he said.

Crammed with more than 30 people, the dangerously overloaded launch roared into the lagoon at almost precisely the same moment, Sanders said, that the wall of water overwhelmed the orphanage, swamping its single-story buildings to the rafters.

"It was a thunderous roar, and black sea," he said.

The orphans' ordeal did not end when their boat pulled away from the shore. Not only was water cascading over the lagoon side of the peninsula but it was pouring in directly from the mouth of the estuary about two miles away. Sanders feared the converging currents would swamp the small craft. At that point, Sanders said, he recalled a line from the Book of Isaiah: "When the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall raise up a standard against it."

He raised his hand in the direction of the flood and shouted, "I command you in the name of Jesus—stop!" The water then seemed to "stall, momentarily," he said. "I thought at the time I was imagining things."

"The children were very frightened," recalled Kohila Sanders, 30. "We were praying, 'God help us, God help us.'" Eventually the boat made it to the opposite shore, about a mile and a half distant in the city of Batticaloa.

The scene at the orphanage was one of utter devastation. Surveying the wreckage, Sanders broke down and cried. But later he said, "If there was anyone who should have got swept away by this tidal wave, it should have been us. We were eyeball to eyeball with the wave."

(Jesus:) My guardian angels and protecting spirits were closer yet, and this man and the little ones in his care were under My care and protection. So, although thousands fell at their side, the destruction did not come nigh them. They were shielded and kept through this flood of great waters.

Let this also serve as a lesson to you, My children, of the importance of calling on Me in time of need, of exercising your faith and of expecting miracles. This man ordered the flood to stop and it did stop. He knew My Word, he held Me to My Word, and I fulfilled My Word.

Will you do the same in your own time of need? Do you know My Word and expect Me to fulfill it? Will you claim the keys and make use of them? If you do, you too will see My promises come to life!

Tsunamis: Facts about killer waves

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC NEWS

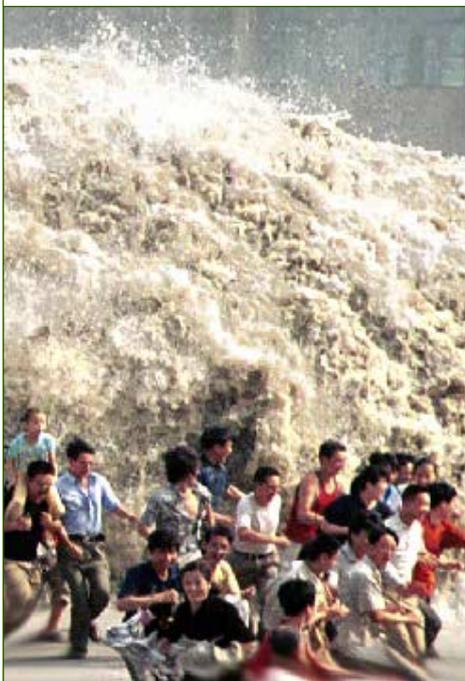
- A tsunami (pronounced soo-NAH-mee) is a series of great sea waves caused by an underwater earthquake, landslide, or volcanic eruption.

- A tsunami is not a single wave but a series of waves, also known as a wave train. The first wave in a tsunami is not necessarily the most destructive. Tsunamis are not tidal waves.

- Tsunami waves can be very long (as much as 60 miles, or 100 kilometers) and be as far as one hour apart. They are able to cross entire oceans without great loss of energy. The Indian Ocean tsunami traveled as much as 3,000 miles (nearly 5,000 kilometers) to Africa, arriving with sufficient force to kill hundreds of people and destroy property.

- When the ocean is deep, tsunamis can travel unnoticed on the surface at speeds up to 500 miles per hour (800 kilometers per hour), crossing the entire ocean in a day or less.

- A tsunami may be less than a foot (30 centimeters) in height on the surface of the open ocean, which is why they are not noticed by sailors. But the powerful shock wave of energy travels rapidly through the ocean, as fast as a commercial jet. Once a tsunami reaches shallow water near the coast, it is slowed down. The top of the wave moves faster than the bottom, causing the sea to rise dramatically. Flooding can extend inland for miles.



TSUNAMI WAVE: HEAD FOR THE HILLS IF THE WATER RECEDES UNUSUALLY RAPIDLY OR FAR

- Witnesses have reported that an approaching tsunami is sometimes preceded by a noticeable fall or rise in the water level. If you see the ocean receding unusually rapidly or far, it's a good sign that a big wave is on its way. Go to high ground immediately. Many people were killed by the Indian Ocean tsunami because they went down to the beach to view the retreating ocean exposing the seafloor.

- Remember that a tsunami is a series of waves and that the first wave may not be the most dangerous. The danger from a tsunami can last for several hours after the arrival of the first wave.

- A tsunami surge may be small at one point of the shore and large at another point a short distance away. Do not assume that because there is minimal sign of a tsunami in one place, it will be like that everywhere else.

- It's always a good idea to keep a store of emergency supplies that include sufficient medications, water, and other essentials sufficient for at least 72 hours. Tsunami, earthquake, hurricane—an emergency can develop with little or no warning.

- Use your common sense. If you live by the sea and feel or hear of a strong earthquake, do not wait for an official tsunami warning. Head for high ground.

Land of penny pinchers

BY NICHOLAS D. KRISTOF, NY TIMES NEWS SERVICE

So is the U.S. "stingy" about helping poor countries? That accusation by a U.N. official provoked indignation. After all, we're the most generous people on earth ... aren't we? No, alas, we're not. And the tsunami illustrates the problem: When grieving victims intrude onto our TV screens, we dig into our pockets and provide the massive response that we're now displaying in Asia; the rest of the time, we're tightwads who turn away as people die in far greater numbers.

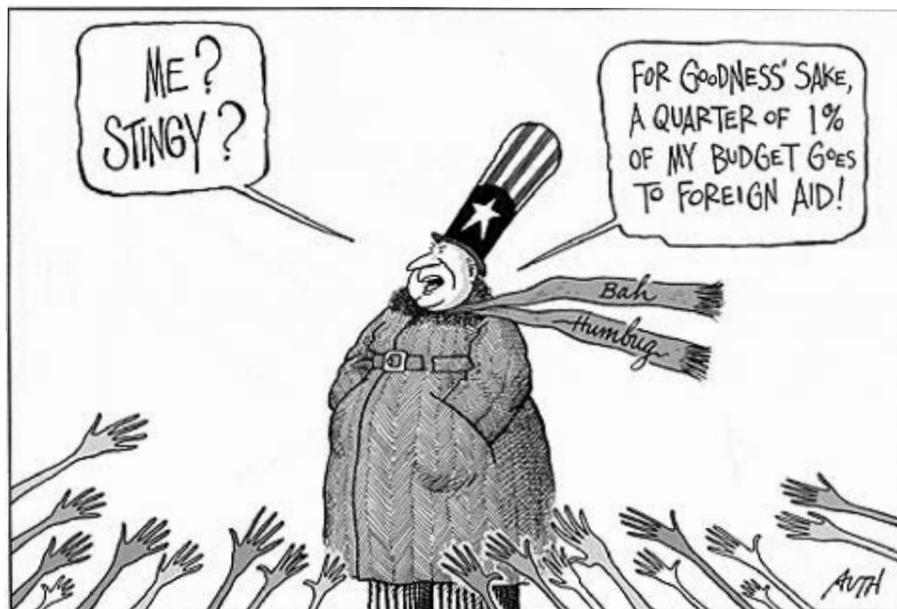
This month and every month, more people will die of malaria (165,000 or more) and AIDS (240,000) than died in the tsunami, and almost as many will die because of diarrhea (140,000).

And that's where we're stingy.

Americans give 15 cents per day per person in official development assistance to poor countries. The average American spends four times that on soft drinks daily.

As a share of our economy, our contribution ranks us dead last among 22 top donor countries. We give 15 cents for every \$100 of national income to poor countries. Denmark gives 84 cents, the Netherlands gives 80 cents, Belgium gives 60 cents, France gives 41 cents.

It is sometimes said that Americans make up for low official aid with private charitable donations. Nope. By OECD calculations, private donations add 6 cents a day to the official U.S. figure—meaning that we still give only 21 cents a day per person.



Jeffrey Sachs, the Columbia University economist, estimates that spending \$2 billion to \$3 billion on malaria might save more than one million lives a year. "This is probably the best bargain on the planet," he said.

The outpouring of U.S. aid, private and public, for tsunami victims is wonderful. But, frankly, the affected nations will get all the money they can absorb for the moment, and Thailand, Indonesia and Sri Lanka are far from the worst off in the world.

"The really big money can be better and more usefully absorbed by developing good health and education programs in the poorest countries," noted Nancy Birdsall, president of the Center for Global Development. "But that's not as visible or heroic."

The best response to accusations of stinginess is not to be defensive, but to be generous. And the measure of generosity is not what you offer when the spotlight is upon you, but what you do when the spotlight moves on.

(Dad:) As a people, Americans are usually pretty generous and decent—at least the poor and middle class are. When you hit the rich and the upper crust, the wallets and purses are a lot more tightly clutched, and the generosity goes down quite a bit, as a rule. And when it comes to the U.S. government itself, yes, they really are stingy, although they like to play the role of being the greatest givers on Earth!

Politicians love the spotlight, the chance to stand before the media with the world's attention upon them, and pompously proclaim that they'll give so much to help this or that needy situation, to feed the poor, help the homeless, heal the sick, or whatever the cause of the moment is. The president does this all the time, pledging to give millions or billions of U.S. aid to the victims of one disaster or another, one noble cause after another.

Usually, though, these pledges are no more than hot air! You see, the president can say whatever he wants, but the U.S. Congress has to actually appropriate the money, to authorize the payment, and that's where the rub comes in. Sometimes Congress doesn't feel like authorizing that money, so it doesn't, or it only authorizes a fraction of it. So the president can blame Congress for the lack of funds, and often Congress has something about the situation it can blame the president for, and amidst all the finger-pointing and the name-calling, the needy are neglected.

The earthquake in Iran a little over a year ago is one typical dandy bad example of this. More than 43,000 people died and tens of thousands were wounded or left homeless, and the world, including the U.S., rushed in with glowing pledges of aid and reconstruction. A year later, the U.S. government has given precisely nothing—zilch! Other nations didn't do much either—the world as a whole

pledged a billion dollars, and so far only \$17 million has actually made it to the scene of the quake, where a lot of the poor refugees are still living in tents.

Of course, you rarely hear about what's not done! You hear about the government's pledges and the promises while the spotlight is on and the media is watching, but once the lights are off, the media is gone, and the public's attention has shifted to other things, then the money dries up, the reconstruction stops, the relief agencies have to leave, and the poor continue to suffer.

So governments, like actors, are very good at playing a role, but unlike actors, it's a hypocritical charade. And the U.S. government is the star of the show, proclaiming before both their own people and the people of the world that they are great humanitarians when often they're not at all! They're willing to spend billions on war, but peanuts on peace and on aid!

"Many shall come in My name, saying, I am Christ" (Mark 13:6).

(From a Home in Russia:) There is a man here in Russia who is a member of the Russian president's team. He works on predicting any problems with the president's airplanes or vehicles or those of other prominent political figures, and gives predictions about disasters or other emergency situations for the Ministry of Emergency Situations. His name is Grigory Grabovoy (grah-buh-VOI). He is a professor and teaches about eternal life and resurrection. Here is a statement he made which is posted on the Web, translated from Russian by us.

I, Grigory Petrovich Grabovoy, born November 14, 1963, in Kazakhstan, proclaim that I am the second coming of Jesus Christ! I make this statement based on the Word of God and it's the Word of God. I have known about it ever since I was born. It's simple for me to make this statement, which is meant to move people into action to gain salvation. People who know that I am the second coming of our Lord God Jesus Christ can be saved through the knowledge that I give, the knowledge of my teaching, and they can spread the good news to all right away!

This man claims to have resurrected the dead on many occasions. He also claims to have healed people from cancer, AIDS, and other sicknesses. In his book he tells how he grew missing organs in people's bodies. He gives predictions on how to solve many present-day problems of the world. His predictions prevented a crash of the president's airplane, and an accident at a nuclear power station. Thousands of people have signed up as volunteers to spread his teachings "about salvation and harmonious development." He gives his teachings scientific explanations and

says that it's all from God, about God and His ways, and the sooner people learn about it, the sooner all the world's problems will be solved.

This man sure sounds like a false prophet, maybe even the false prophet.

(Jesus:) This man is a false prophet, a false shepherd, a false worker of miracles, and a false Christ. His power comes from below rather than from above. This is the source of his miracles, of his supposed wonder-working power, and this is not only the source of his power but his destination, for all who say they are Me and would lead My sheep astray shall taste of My wrath and My judgment, of Hell itself.

He is but one of many who have gone out into the world in these Last Days, coming in My name, saying he is Me, attempting to deceive many. But My true sheep are not deceived, for they know My voice when they hear it, and the voice of the false shepherd and false prophet they will not follow—at least not for long.

This charlatan is but a fulfillment of My Word, for I said that in the Last Days false christs and false prophets would arise, showing great signs and wonders, insomuch that, if it were possible, they would even deceive the very elect. This is why I was very clear and specific in telling My disciples exactly how I would return, making it clear that they should commit the signs to memory and write it down for those yet to come.

But some of My children of the churches have wrested My Word, twisting it to indicate a secret coming and a secret rapture, and others are ignorant of My Word, and like the Jews of old, seek a sign or a miracle and are led astray by the performing of them. They do not know My Word either because they have not read it or because the false shepherds they call their pastors and priests have withheld it from them or misinterpreted it for them, so they do not know the signs of My coming, nor that the Evil One can even appear transformed into an angel of light when it suits his purposes.

Many Russians are easily led astray by such people, because they are a spiritual people and they seek a savior, someone to rescue them from their physical and spiritual plight. Yet at the same time their priests have withheld the Word of truth from them and have substituted icons, traditions, and incense, a form of godliness and a manner of righteousness, for the truth. So these poor sheep are easily led astray, spurred on by their eagerness for a savior, and yet ignorant of what their savior should be like. Thus many false saviors have arisen in Russia, and many will yet arise. But be not troubled in heart or in mind, for all shall come to naught, even the greatest pretender of all, the Antichrist.

The power of such people is puny in comparison to the power I have given you, My dear loves, and infinitesimal compared to My own power. If I were to show what I think of this false prophet, there would hardly be a grease spot left on the ground, but for the present he is allowed to exist both as a fulfillment of My Word and a test of those who know My Word, to present them with a choice and see if they will be deceived and be led astray. Unknowingly, he purifies My church and strengthens My sheep at the same time as he fulfills My Word! So for the time being he is allowed to operate, just as many other evildoers and workers of iniquity are. But the time will come when I will put a stop to such, and he and his will receive their just deserts.

As for you who know Me and who know My Word, you have but to lift Me up and I will be glorified. And the light and truth and beauty and power that I spread through My presence and My salvation will chase away every shade of darkness of every false prophet, for darkness cannot exist when exposed to the light! Continue to spread My Word and lead My sheep to Me, and leave the false prophets to Me. Each will receive according to the works of his hands, and for some, it would have been better if they had sought out a millstone and the depths of the sea rather than that they had led My little ones astray.

Terrorism and the ultimate terrorist

Editor: The following question from the field led us to ask the Lord about terrorists and the prophecies of Nostradamus, and the Lord had some very interesting replies about these topics and more.

(Family:) There have been a lot of terrorist acts performed by radical Muslims. Recently I saw a video about Nostradamus, and he said Islam would infiltrate Europe with terrorism, destroy the Catholic Church, and bring chaos. It would be nice to know what the Lord has to say about this.

(Jesus:) A terrorist does seek to destroy the Church, the ultimate terrorist—the Devil. My Church and My children are under attack at all times by the Enemy and his evil forces as they seek to further their goals, to take over the world and to capture the souls of men and thwart My will and My ways. The Devil is the chief destroyer of the lives of innocent men and women, and he strikes without mercy or compassion, not only trying to snuff out their physical lives but to withhold the gift of eternal life and love and happiness from them. This is true terrorism, true evil, and the major foe of not only the world in these Last Days, but of My Church.



NOSTRADAMUS

My servant Nostradamus foresaw these dark days and wrote of them, sometimes clearly and sometimes with words hard to be understood, with cryptic words, riddles and rhymes, to preserve his life, for there were those of his day who would have slain him if they had clearly understood what he was saying. So there is truth in his writings, but there is greater truth in My Words, for I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. Look to My Word for the clearest and best guide to the future, for there you will find what you seek and there you will find life and strength and power as well. Let My Word and My voice be your primary source of revelation and insight into the future, for My Word will never fail you.

Regarding Muslim terrorists, yes, there are some, just as there are Christian and Jewish terrorists. There are Muslim terrorists who hate Christianity and attack Christians, and there are other Muslims who attack Western countries and Westerners because they hate them for what they have done to their people. It is a cycle of violence, for Christian armies have often occupied or devastated their lands or their peoples, with contempt for their faith, and they seek revenge. And Israel has schemed against and killed Palestinians and other Arabs for decades, with the support of many Western Christians, who see them as an obstacle to “God’s people.”

My true people are the meek, the merciful, the peacemakers, those who love Me and love others and seek peace, not violence. Many Christians are so, as are many Muslims, but there are terrorists among both. And just as I love My children who love Me and love peace, I abhor those who love war and

shed innocent blood, no matter what religion they call themselves. Some Christian or Jewish nations employ their armies in terrorist causes, while some Muslims employ themselves in terrorist causes. Either way, the blood of the innocents is shed, hearts are broken, husbands and wives are torn apart, children are made fatherless, and lives are shattered. I will judge those who do such things, no matter what their religion is.

But remember, My dear loves, that I am the judge, and I render to every man his just reward or his just punishment. Beware of taking on the attitudes of the world, the attitudes promoted by their media, that one religion or race or another is evil and must be judged. The Western world and its media demonizes Arabs in many ways, while the Arab media demonizes the West and the Jews. Neither is correct, but each tries to shape and mold your attitudes, your viewpoint. In reality, the heart of any man without My presence is evil, even desperately wicked, as My Word says, because all men are sinners and do evil. So all men are bad, and if it had not been for My love and My sacrifice, all would deserve to die, terrorist and non-terrorist alike.

But I took upon Myself the sins of the world and died to save the world, for I love you. So, just as I love you, look upon each other with eyes of love and compassion and mercy, and go out to gather in those who do not know Me, who are lost and lonely and wandering in a world of violence and bloodshed and horror, without hope, without strength to go on, without motivation and a reason for life. Bring them to Me, dear ones, and they will never be lost again. They’ll be found forever, new creatures in Me. And they will inherit the Earth, while the men of war will perish.

“I have seen the wicked ... spreading himself like a green bay tree” (Psalm 37:35).

Editor: We received a prayer and prophecy from a Family member in the Mideast which addresses a question many of you might have as well: Why doesn’t the Lord put a stop to the injustices the Palestinians suffer on a daily basis? Following are excerpts of the prayer and the Lord’s answer:

(Prayer:) Many times I have prayed for You to intervene to protect the poor Palestinians. Many times I have called out in desperation for their protection and for someone to help them. I have called, but it seems You have not answered, or at least not in the way I felt You could or should.

I don’t want to think that I could possibly know better than You what needs to happen and what is good for all concerned, what will accomplish Your will. Please forgive me for the times I have let this get to me. Who am I to even think I might know better than You?

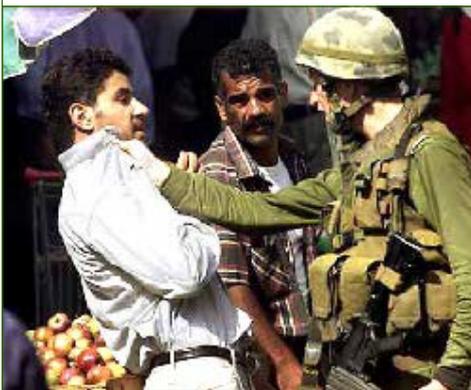
I know also in Your Word You have clearly laid out what is going to happen, and it doesn't make for very pleasant reading. It is going to be pretty horrific, with so much death and destruction. So I shouldn't get upset or let this get to me, and yet it does. The Palestinian people are much more than just statistics or nameless faces on a TV report to me. They are precious people who really do not deserve what they are getting.

Please help me to understand Your will in all this. I want to have faith, and I don't want to get upset and discouraged at this flood of evil I see. Please give me faith that You will help and strengthen and ultimately deliver the oppressed and persecuted Palestinians from the hands of their oppressors. Help me to have Your eyes to see all this as You see it.

(Jesus:) Yes, these are precious people, and in many ways they are more deserving of My blessings, My help, and protection than those who profess to know Me and who claim to be Mine. I see their pain and I feel their suffering. I too suffered at the hands of the same people who are persecuting and oppressing them. I know the pain, for I too walked that path.

But you must know and understand that the path of following Me is not an easy path. The Enemy fights them with a vigor, for well he knows that their faith and their determination to stay the course and to not surrender to the forces of tyranny and evil will ultimately make them some of his strongest foes when he claims his place as the king of this world. They know and understand the face of evil. They know that there is a time when you just have to stand firm and not give up or give in, no matter how bad things get and how difficult it becomes, and no matter how many times your home, your farm, and even your family is destroyed and scattered. You just have to pick up the pieces and start all over again. How rich these ones are in the true treasures of the Kingdom! How strong is their faith in Me and My ability to save them and bring them through every battle and test.

Surely the ones who have so much seem to be so strong and



ISRAELI SOLDIER MAKING A POINT TO PALESTINIANS IN HEBRON



PALESTINIAN MAN WITH BABY WOUNDED IN ISRAELI SHELLING RUNS FOR MEDICAL CARE

victorious. They exercise authority upon all they see, and there is none to challenge them, none to delay them or halt them in their course as they carve out their path of death and destruction. They spread themselves like a green bay tree, the shadow of their evil works casting darkness over the entire globe. And yet as the Psalmist once saw, he looked again and lo, they were not; their place was gone and they were removed.

Have faith, for so shall it be here. You will look for those who seemed so mighty and so powerful, and you will not see them, at least not in might and power. They will be there, at least some of them, but not in power and not in wealth, but in brokenness and in humility, for I the Lord will take from them their strong towers, their mighty weapons of war, and these shall be turned on them. Their wealth shall be as nothing and their mighty cities shall fall into ruin. This once mighty one shall be brought to her knees, for that which is proud I humble and that which is humble I raise up.

Fear not for these upon whom the ends of the world are come. Reach out to them with the love I have placed in your heart for them; reach out with the words of love and comfort I have placed in your hands to give them. How they cling to them and treasure them, as a dying man holds on to that which will give him life. These words and the truth they contain will do much to strengthen these forces that shall rise up in resistance to the Evil One.

Have you considered how receptive they are to the words I have given you to give to them, and not only them, but to all across the region?—How hungry they are to receive these words? Where else on earth is there such a vacuum for Me and My Words? In what land or among what people is there such a vacuum for the truth? There is not another people like unto these people who are so hungry and so desirous of My truths, and who not only receive it but believe it and act upon it!

How they hunger for the words of truth I give! How they thirst, as a man lost in the desert, for the water I

have for them. They have water from other cisterns, but it does not satisfy like the water I give to them. There are many among them who know and recognize this and who will come to you more and more to seek out the words, that they might have the faith and strength to continue in their struggle.

Know that all things will come to pass. Not one of the words I have given to you shall fail. The Phoenix shall rise and shall once again take her rightful place among the kingdoms of man. Those that usurp My will and who place heavy hands upon My anointed shall find their place taken from them. Fear not, for I do all things well. It is well with these ones, for I am with them. I the Lord do strengthen them, and I the Lord will be their helper. I will not betray these who have put their lives and their trust in Me. I will honor their faith and I will deliver all that are Mine.

So fear not for these upon whom the ends of the world are come, for they are prepared, and their hearts are made ready by reason of the faith that is in them and by reason of the words I have given you to give to them. Surely these have gone far and wide throughout the land, and surely many have been fed and strengthened by them.

I understand how you are affected by the suffering and the pain, the injustice and oppression, the lack of sincere concern of others, the imposition of the will of the strong upon the weak. I am full of wrath with those who seek out the poor and needy and prey upon them, taking from them the few possessions they have to enrich their own dreams and desires. There is not a day that passes that I am not angry with them. Yet all I have spoken must be fulfilled. The evil days must come, and how sore and how heavy shall these days be upon those who have not embraced Me, but rather have been instruments of death and destruction in the earth.

The earth shall be cleansed. I will take from it all who hate, all who sow mischief and deceit, all who seek to corrupt the minds and hearts of men, and all who seek to rule and reign and to bring all men under their control, but who are not of Me and are not Mine. All the world of men shall fall and I will rebuild and recreate that which was, but first the old world, so corrupted and dirty, must go. With great violence and great wrath shall the earth be cleansed of all who contaminate and sully that which I have made good and pure and clean.

So do not be dismayed at all you see, for these are the beginnings of sorrows, and there is much to come. I will visit the sins of all men in this day, for these are the days of judgment, the days of accountability, when all men shall come before Me and be judged, each according to his works.

◆ Tidbits

Why the sorcerer changed his mind. (Paul Otremba, DAWN Friday Fax) "While visiting a missions school in Venezuela, we met an ex-sorcerer," writes missionary Paul Otremba. "He had become a spiritist as a child, and he had become quite used to dealing with demons. He had been permanently accompanied by one demon, which gave orders to lesser demons according to the young man's commands. One day, the young man wanted his demons to harm a Christian. The demons returned with the news that they could not harm the Christian, because he had more power. The demons were burned when they tried to touch him. The news worried the sorcerer, because he had always thought that he had been working with the strongest power. He started experimenting, trying to find out who he could harm and who not. He had no problem with nominal Christians who had no real relationship with Jesus, but he could not touch faithful followers of Jesus. Then someone told him more about Jesus. The young man is now a disciple, and asked me, 'Why didn't anyone tell me about Jesus before?'" **(Dad:) You should see what happens to demons who try to interfere with Christians protected by the keys! Zap some demons today by claiming the keys!**

Getting over it. (*US News & World Report*) Forgiving someone is at least as beneficial for your health as wearing a seat belt or taking vitamins or losing weight. Walking around with anger and resentment raises your blood pressure and heart rate. It reduces the potency of your immune system. Prolonged anger is very bad for you. Since 9/11, the world seems saturated with vengeance and aggression. But forgiveness is much better because, with it, we become much more clever and effective negotiators and peacemakers.—Excerpts from an interview with Edward Hallowell, author of *Dare to Forgive* (Health Communications).

Dolphins prevent shark attack. (*BBC*) A group of swimmers has told how a pod of dolphins protected them from a great white shark off New Zealand's coast.

The lifeguards were training at a beach near Whangarei on the North Island when they were menaced by a 3-meter (9-foot) shark, before the dolphins raced in to help.

The swimmers were surrounded by the dolphins for 40 minutes before they were able to make it safely back to the beach.

The swimmers said the dolphins were extremely agitated and repeatedly slapped the water with their tails, presumably to try to deter the predator as it cruised nearby.

Researchers have said they are not surprised. A marine biologist insisted that dolphins, which are considered to be one of the most intelligent mammals, "like to help the helpless."

"Collateral damage" from war on terror. (*Catholic World News*) The war on terrorism is having a "collateral effect" by increasing hostility toward Christians in the Muslim world, the Vatican's top foreign-policy official believes. Speaking at a conference on religious liberty, organized by the U.S. ambassador to the Vatican, Archbishop Giovanni Lajolo remarked that in some parts of the world, the political strategies of Western powers are linked with Christianity, rousing contempt for the faith—which he termed "Christianophobia." **(Dad:) The U.S. government is good at preaching some aspects of Christianity, especially when it comes to parts about "subduing the Earth and having dominion over it" (Genesis 1:28), but they're not so good when it comes to practicing "love thy neighbor" and verses along that line!**

Most dangerous sports. (Jeanie Lerche Davis, *WebMD Medical News*) Basketball and cycling are the most injury-prone sports, a new report shows. Football and soccer are close behind. The report from the Consumer Products Safety Commission (CPSC) shows that 1.6 million basketball-related injuries were treated last year. Bicyclists racked up nearly 1.3 million injuries; football scored 1 million; soccer tallied a little less than 500,000 injuries.

"The Olympic games may inspire people to try a new sport. ... But before they do, people need proper training and conditioning to reduce their risk [of sports injuries]," says Pietro Tonino, professor of orthopedic surgery at Loyola University Chicago Stritch School of Medicine.

Many sports injuries can be prevented by knowing and playing by the game rules, being physically fit, and wearing protective gear, he adds. "This applies to children as well as adults." Treatment is available for mild sports injuries, but preventing injuries in the first place is the goal, Tonino says. **(Dad:) Remember to pray before you play!**

Fools for Christ's sake. (Rob Moll, *Christianity Today*) "We are fools for Christ's sake ... We must pray for the courage to suffer the contempt of the sophisticated world," Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia told a group of religious lawyers.

A Catholic, Scalia was invited to speak to the St. Thomas More Society, where he said the "wise" and "sophisticated" of the world consider faith foolish. According to the *Chicago Tribune*, "The 'wise' consider Christian fundamentalists to be 'simple-minded' and irrational because they believe in miracles and the resurrection of Jesus Christ, he said. But it is more irrational to reject the possibility of both, he said."

British navy approves first ever Satanist. (*BBC*) The British Armed Forces has officially recognized its first registered Satanist. Naval technician Chris Cranmer, 24, will now be allowed to perform Satanic rituals on board his vessel. Mr. Cranmer is now lobbying the Ministry of Defense

to make Satanism a registered religion in the armed forces. Former Tory minister Ann Widdecombe said she was "utterly shocked" by the Royal Navy's decision. "Satanism is wrong. Obviously the private beliefs of individuals anywhere, including the armed forces, are their own affair, but I hope it doesn't spread." A spokesman for the Royal Navy said: "We are an equal opportunities employer and we don't stop anybody from having their own religious values." **(Dad:) The Lord isn't a proponent of "equal opportunity" for the Enemy and his imps!**

Pope speaks on vanity of riches. (*Catholic World News*) At his weekly public audience, Pope John Paul II remarked that man, when he becomes "preoccupied with accumulating material goods," sometimes falls into the "illusion that he can buy off even death." He reminded the 19,000 people who attended the audience in St. Peter's Square that "wealth is not an advantage; on the contrary, it is better to be poor and be united with God." The man who makes wealth the central purpose of his life shows a "profound stupidity," the Pope said. He lives under the mistaken assumption "that he can buy anything, even death—almost trying to corrupt it as he did with so many other things, to gain success, victory over other people in social and political affairs, the unchecked abuse of power, gluttony, comfort, and pleasure." But in the end, his fate is "unalterable," and his riches gain him nothing after his death. **(Dad:) Serving mammon doesn't pay any eternal dividends.**

Bankruptcy. Bankruptcy has become deeply entrenched in American life. This year (2003) more people will end up bankrupt than will suffer a heart attack. More adults will file for bankruptcy than will be diagnosed with cancer. More people will file for bankruptcy than will graduate from college. And, in an era when traditionalists decry the demise of the institution of marriage, Americans will file more petitions for bankruptcy than for divorce.—*The Two Income Trap*, by Harvard Law School professor Elisabeth Warren and Amelia Warren Tyagi (Basic Books, 2003)

Building below the water line. (Gordon MacDonald, *Leadership Journal*) I recently read a book about the building of the Brooklyn Bridge. In June 1872, the Chief Engineer of the project wrote: "To such of the general public as might imagine that no work had been done on the New York tower, because they see no evidence of it above the water, I should simply remark that the amount of the masonry and concrete laid on that foundation during the past winter, under water, is equal in quantity to the entire masonry of the Brooklyn tower visible today above the water line."

The Brooklyn Bridge remains a major transportation artery in New York City today because, 135 years ago, the Chief Engineer and his construction team did their most patient and daring work where no one could see it: on the foundations of

the towers below the water line. It is one more illustration of an ageless principle in leadership: The work done below the water line (in a leader's soul) determines whether he or she will stand the test of time and challenge. This work is called worship, devotion, spiritual discipline. It's done in quiet, where no one but God sees. Those who don't do it may be vulnerable to collapse in their character, their center of belief, because they never learned that you cannot (or should not anyway) build above the water line until there is a substantial foundation below it. **(Dad:) How's your foundation? If it's weak, you can always bolster it with the Word!**

A historic toilet. (*The Week*) Archaeologists digging under the medieval theologian Martin Luther's home in Wittenberg, Germany, have found his toilet, Germany's *Bild* reported. Luther, who launched the Protestant Reformation in 1517 by nailing his 95 theses of dissent against Catholicism to the Wittenberg castle church door, often said he composed his work while "in cloaca"—literally, "on the toilet." The phrase was often used at the time to mean "in a state of deep humility." Dr. Stefan Rhein, director of the Luther museum, said the new find was significant because "now we know what the great reformer really meant." The stone toilet, which has a drain leading to a separate cesspit, was advanced for its day.

◆ A few for fun

Sex, guys, and fruit flies

BY DAVE BARRY, MIAMI HERALD

Over the years I have been harshly critical of the scientific community for wasting time researching things nobody cares about, such as the universe. I don't know about you, but I'm tired of reading newspaper stories like this:

"Using a giant telescope, astronomers at the prestigious Crudwinkle Observatory have observed a teensy light smudge that they say is a humongous galaxy cluster 17 jillion light years away, which would make it the farthest-away thing that astronomers have discovered this week. However, astronomers at the rival Fendleman Observatory charged that what the Crudwinkle scientists discovered is actually mayonnaise on the lens. Both groups of astronomers say they plan to use these new findings to obtain even larger telescopes."

With all due respect to astronomers: We don't NEED to find any more stuff in the universe. We already have more stuff than we could ever use, right here in our garages. We need the scientific community to focus on a topic that is of far greater importance, yet remains a baffling mystery to humanity, or at least guys: sex.

Guys think about sex a LOT. But despite years of thinking virtually non-stop about sex, guys have made very

Never underestimate the value ... (Bryan Flanagan) Never underestimate the value of a handwritten note. Sure, e-mail may be more convenient. But a handwritten note goes a long way. It conveys that you cared enough to take time to purchase, write, address, seal, and mail the note.

Never underestimate the value of a nap. Most of us are up early and down late and tired in between. A nap is a great way to regroup and regenerate.

Never underestimate the value of praise. Find someone doing something right and give feedback to him/her. A pat on the back, although only a few inches removed from a kick in the pants, gets more valuable results.

Never underestimate the value of a smile. You are never completely dressed 'til you put on a smile! There are so many valuable benefits to a smile: it helps you connect with others; it reduces tension; it lightens the load; it will even increase your "face value." If someone is missing a smile, give them one of yours.

Never underestimate the value of good habits. Bad habits are like a comfortable bed, easy to get into and hard to get out of. Habits can control our lives. Therefore, we should develop good habits. If you eliminate bad habits, you'll have more room for the good ones.

Prayer changed flight patterns. (Bobbye Byerly, from *Miracles Happen*)

little progress toward answering such basic questions about human sexuality as: How can you obtain more of it? How much talking is required? How important is the size of a guy's, um, car?

For guys, these are uncharted waters. That's why I am so pleased by a recent *Reuters* article, sent to me by an alert reader concerning research being done by scientists at Stanford University into the sex life of fruit flies. This research is significant because fruit flies have many biological similarities to humans. For example, both species eat fruit.

According to this article, when a male fruit fly wants to have sex with a female fruit fly, he goes through a series of specific steps, the first one being to pound down approximately eight martinis.

No, wait, that's what a human guy would do if he were going to attempt to mate with a female who had six legs and 17,000 eyeballs, which trust me, is not out of the question for some guys. What male fruit flies do is engage in a courtship ritual, which according to the *Reuters* article includes "tapping the female, extending and vibrating a wing and singing."

The Stanford scientists found that these ritual mating actions are controlled by a sector of the fly's brain consisting of 60 cells. According to the article, when scientists mess up these cells,

When Women Pray) I remember the first time my older son Jim and I worked as counselors with the Billy Graham Crusade. It was at Shea Stadium in New York. The airplanes from La Guardia Airport flew over the stadium, dozens by the hour.

On the opening night of training, the Reverend Billy Graham started talking with us from the podium as the engines roared overhead. He paused, glanced up and quietly said, "We'll have to do something about this noise. This just won't do." He bowed his head and said a simple prayer to the effect: "Lord, we ask You to shift the wind and send these planes in another direction. Thank You. Amen."

Well, we were believers, but this was a tall order. We weren't sure what, if anything, to expect. But God did it—He answered our prayers in a wondrous way! The morning newspaper reported that the winds had changed during the night, and the airplanes over Shea Stadium had to be routed another way. For several days thereafter, thousands of people came to Christ under this anointed leader's preaching. At the conclusion of the crusade, the winds reverted to their normal flow, and the airplanes returned to their normal flight patterns. **(Dad:) If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believeth! Expect God to answer. Expect miracles, and you'll get them!**

the male flies rush through the mating steps—"essentially try to do everything at once"—which causes the females to become turned off and develop little fly headaches.

This, of course, is exactly the mistake that male humans make: We're always trying to rush through the mating steps. Stand next to any construction site, and when an attractive woman walks past, you'll hear guy construction workers suggesting that she go directly to, like, Step 74. This approach NEVER works. Construction workers have been trying it since they built the pyramids, and not once in all that time has a woman ever said: "That's a great idea! Let's have carnal relations right now on this pile of dirt!" And yet guys keep trying. Why? Because we're dumber than fruit flies.

That's why we need scientists to determine exactly what steps are required for successful human mating. And I don't mean some vague psycho-babble about "listening" or being "sensitive." I mean specific written instructions that we guys can understand, like "caress the target region in a clockwise pattern, applying 1.8 foot-pounds of torque." Wouldn't that be great? No, because we guys don't read directions. So I guess we're stuck with blundering around, learning what "turns women on" through trial and error.

Tonight, I will vibrate my wings.