



Messages from Jesus or Dad are denoted by bold type. Notes from the editors are either in italics or are preceded by "Editor." Short quotes from the Letters are preceded by a bullet and are followed by the reference.

More and more, faster and faster

BY CRAIG MCMILLAN, *WORLDNETDAILY*

"Man is flying too fast for a world that is round. Soon he will catch up with himself in a great rear-end collision, and man will never know that what hit him from behind was man."—James Thurber, writer and cartoonist

"In the next twenty-five years, the world's system will produce more goods than all of previous history of the world combined."—Barry Asmus, economist

"A man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."—Jesus, Luke 12:15

So, how is Christmas this year? Is your most vivid memory of Christmas this year that you have already run out of time, energy and money? Is Christmas something that has happened to you, despite your best protests?

If so, maybe it's time to buy yourself a gift. I suggest *The Overload Syndrome*, by Dr. Richard Swenson. In his book, Dr. Swenson explains why we are "hitting the wall" in record numbers.

The "wall" that Dr. Swenson refers to depicts our built-in limits as human beings. The underlying premise of his book is that if you haven't hit your limits this Christmas, you probably will at the next one, or the one after that. The reason is that change in our lives is no longer linear, but exponential. Things don't just go a little faster—they double in speed, and then double again the next year, and the year after that.

As human beings, we have physical limits: We have to eat, we have to sleep, and we have a host of other biological limits that we have never before come up against in such record numbers. The culprit, Dr. Swenson points out, is progress, which always gives us "more and more of everything faster and faster."

While progress has been with us for a long time, it has never before approached our human limits. Now it does, on a daily basis.



Dr. Swenson is not anti-progress, nor does he believe that we can turn back the clock. But as he points out, progress does have a down side. That down side is most often when progress exceeds our limits. The result is more and more of us who suddenly "hit the wall," where we crash and burn, oftentimes taking our families, friends and co-workers with us. The solution,

Dr. Swenson asserts, is to pick and choose from among progress what is truly beneficial to our individual circumstances, and to erect boundaries around that which is harmful, which will reduce our overloaded condition before we hit the wall.

Dr. Swenson writes: "We are not very adept at knowing where our limits are, and most of us have never seriously thought about them. Often, the first [warning signal] we have is pain. When overloaded, joy has a tendency to disappear. We might develop a variety of physical symptoms. We begin resenting people for needing our help. Irritability, often directed at those we love the most, further damages our attitude. Overload reminds us of two important truths: (1) We are only human. It is best not to forget it. (2) God, the author of our limits, will use these same limits freely to remind us that we have need of Him."

Dr. Swenson was wise enough to provide a variety of prescriptions to bring about healing from exposure to toxic overload in our

personal, family, and work lives. Here are a few brief examples:

We can simplify choices: "During college, I studied in Switzerland for a year, living with a Swiss physician's family. Although enjoying the highest standard of living in the world, it was interesting to witness how simply the Swiss often chose to live compared to the average American family.

"Take mealtime. Every morning, we had plain homemade yogurt and dense German bread ... the kind that if it fell off the table, it would break your foot. For the evening meal, we had the same dense bread with cheese or jam.

"For the noon meal, we all sat leisurely around the dinner table for two hours (the phone never rang, and they did not own a television), while my Swiss mother served the meal. She prepared and rotated only six or seven menus. Why have more? We loved each of the options she provided."

And consider keeping "good enough" over "better": "We often decide against something simply because fashion dictates tell us it is outmoded. Furnishings, equip-

ment, clothes. Why place the extra burden of decision upon us in this arena when we should be saving our strength for decisions of greater import? Unless they are really important to you, forget about the bells and whistles. Do we really need that new car simply because it has a new option?"

In the end, Dr. Swenson comments: "When I lie on my deathbed, I don't want to hide behind the excuse of overload. I want to be



Thots

"Determination and perseverance move the world; thinking that others will do it for you is a sure way to fail."—Marva Collins, educator

"Too much sanity may be madness. And maddest of all, to see life as it is and not as it should be!"—Miguel de Cervantes, writer (1547–1616)

able to look my family in the eye, each one, and say, 'I love you.' And I want the experience of my life to confirm those words."

Overload distracts us from the true meaning of life. Overload distracts us from love. And in the end, excuses don't hold up. The choice, it turns out, has always been ours.

(Jesus:) Yes, My beloved children, the choice is always yours. When you feel overloaded and overwhelmed, make the choice to come to Me, you who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Cast your burdens

and cares on Me and I will help you bear them.

I can also help you to establish your priorities, for when I allow pressure in your life, it is to help you to grow and to draw closer to Me, not to drive you to hit the wall. So you must distinguish between those pressures that are of Me, that I allow to bring forth good in your life, and those that you place upon yourself or allow others to place upon you, which are not always of Me. Come to Me and I can show you which is which, and what needs to be done when, or not

at all, and what sort of priorities and perspective you should have, even on a daily basis.

Seek My strength rather than your own. Claim the power of the keys rather than trying to operate in the power and energy of the flesh. I know you are weak, but My strength can be manifested and made perfect in your weakness. In fact, I have chosen the weak things of the world to confound the mighty! But they must do it with My strength, My help, and My guidance, by coming unto Me.

◆ Wars and rumors of war
Israel planning to attack nuclear sites in Iran?

BY NATHAN GUTTMAN, HAARETZ CORRESPONDENT, AND REUTERS

Israel is prepared to launch an attack on Iran's nuclear sites in order to prevent them from becoming operational, the German weekly magazine *Der Spiegel* reported.



ISRAELI SUB—NOW ARMED WITH NUCLEAR MISSILES?

The *Los Angeles Times* meanwhile reported that Israel has the capability to fire nuclear warheads from submarines.

Basing its disclosure on U.S. government officials and Israeli sources, the report claimed that Israeli submarines are armed with U.S.-made Harpoon cruise missiles. Israel has modified nuclear warheads to fit these Harpoon missiles, and the missiles have been modified so that they can hit land targets, the report added.

The *Der Spiegel* report said that Israel is prepared to launch an attack in Iran against facilities used in that country's nuclear weapons development program. According to this report, Israeli officials fear Iran's nuclear program has reached an advanced stage, and a special Mossad unit has been ordered to formulate an attack plan against the nuclear weapons program sites in Iran.

The magazine quoted an Israeli fighter pilot as saying that the mission was complicated but technically feasible.

According to the report, Israel has information on six nuclear sites in Iran, three of them previously unknown to the rest of the world, and plans to have F16 fighter planes attack the sites simultaneously.

The deployment of the modified Harpoon cruise missiles, the *Los Angeles Times* said, completes Israel's nuclear program. Israel now has the capability of launching nuclear missiles from the land, air and sea, the report claimed.

Israel has never formally acknowledged possession of nuclear weapons. Experts in the West believe Israel's arsenal contains between 100 and 200 advanced nuclear bombs.

Some U.S. public figures claimed that Israel's nuclear capability complicates international efforts to stop Iran's nuclear weapons procurement efforts. A senior U.S. official said Israel's nuclear capabilities are a "magnet" spurring Arab countries to develop nuclear weapons of their own.

(Dad:) Israeli leaders always say they want peace—and Bush even called Ariel Sharon "a man of peace"—but Israel is the most aggressive and belligerent nation in the Mideast! Its motto seems to be, "Do it to our neighbors before they can possibly do it to us!" So now they want to nip Iran's nuclear pro-

gram in the bud by blowing it up, just as they did Iraq's when they bombed their nuclear reactor back in 1981.

Well, the Iranians took note of what happened back then, and they've spread their nuclear program all over the country rather than concentrating it in one place, as the Iraqis did. They also got the Russians to help them work on it, because the Russians have plenty of nuclear know-how and technology but little money, and the Iranians have plenty of money but little nuclear technology or know-how.

So it's going to be interesting to see what choices the U.S., Israel, Iran and Russia all make—and it's something to keep in your prayers, that the Lord will continue to give us peace to keep doing our work as long as possible.

We know how it'll all end, of course. In the Last Days Iran will join with Russia and other nations in attacking Israel (Ezekiel 38:5). They'll remain bitter enemies till the very end!



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Telling kids to say “no” to war

BY MARJORIE COEYMAN,
THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR

John Grant and Frank Corcoran have both been restless this summer, eagerly awaiting the reopening of school.

Yet the two men are not students. They are Vietnam vets with a message they long to bring into schools and share with a younger generation.

The essence of that message: Don't be sucked into believing in notions of war as glorious and patriotic. War is an evil to be avoided at all costs.

Military recruiters and government advertising often dominate access to schools and tell teens the opposite, Mr. Grant says. That's why servicemen who have fought need to tell them the truth.

Grant and Mr. Corcoran are both members of the Veterans For Peace. It sees its purpose as debunking false notions of war as glorious, and alerting the world to what they see as the stark and horrible reality of combat.

Part of its credo reads: “We find it sad that war seems so delightful, so often, to those that have no knowledge of it. We will proudly and patriotically continue to denounce war despite whatever misguided sense of euphoria supports it.”

Governments want young people to believe that war is necessary, the group believes, but that is rarely—if ever—true.

Corcoran enlisted in the Marines at age 18, at the height of the Vietnam war. What he saw when he arrived overseas to begin his service he can only characterize now as “slaughter.” His notions of patriotism and glory faded almost instantly, he says.

(Dad:) War is rarely necessary and never glorious. That's one thing Americans should have learned from their experiences in Vietnam, and from seeing the daily horror and carnage of that war televised in their living rooms every night.

The U.S. government sure learned from it. They learned not to allow TV cameras to show so many dead or wounded GIs, or even enemy soldiers. They learned it's safer to restrict photographers and TV crews to shots of awesome artillery barrages, powerful tanks, aircraft carriers, and modern bombers taking off with their lethal payloads—the weapons of war, not their effects.

They don't show the death and devastation in the little rural villages once full of farmers, the crippled children who happened to pick up cluster bombs, the charred corpses that are now called “collateral damage.” After all, showing such things would detract from the glory of war.

But the soldiers see it all, and those who survive are often the most fervent anti-war advocates of all, like these veterans. God bless them for telling the truth about war. It's anything but glorious. It's hell on earth.

“9-11 every day”

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Which war has claimed the most lives since World War II? Korea? Vietnam? Not even close.

The answer is the continuing conflict in Congo. There are no firm figures on the death toll, but the range is believed to lie between 2 million and 4.7 million. Assuming the low-end estimate, that's equivalent to a 9-11 every day for 666 days. The International Rescue Committee estimates that 3.3 million people have died throughout Congo, most of them from war-induced famine and disease.

And there is nothing resembling a weapon of mass destruction in the conflict. The weapons of choice for the most part are bows and arrows, machetes, assault rifles and rocket-propelled grenades.

◆ Famine and drought

The hottest for 2,000 years

BY IAN SAMPLE, THE GUARDIAN



THE HOTTEST IN 2,000 YEARS

The earth is warmer now than it has been at any time in the past 2,000 years, the most comprehensive study of climatic history has revealed.

Professor Philip Jones, a director of the University of East Anglia's climatic research unit, teamed up with Professor Michael Mann, a climate expert at the University of Virginia, and set about reconstructing the world's climate over the past 2,000 years.

Direct measurements of the earth's temperature do not exist from such a long time ago, so the scientists had to rely on other indicators. The scientists looked at tree trunks, which keep a record of the local climate: the rings spreading out from the center grow to different thicknesses according to the climate a tree grows in. The scientists looked at sections taken from trees that had lived for hundreds and even thousands of years from different regions and used them to piece together a picture of the planet's climatic history.

“What we found was that at no point during those two millennia had it been any warmer than it is now. From 1980 onwards is clearly the warmest period of the last 2,000 years,” said Professor Jones.

“It just shows how dramatic the warming has been in recent years,” he said.

The drought next time

BY PATRICK J. MICHAELS, THE WASHINGTON POST

Here's a disaster script that might interest the film industry: Three hundred thousand acres, including much of Shenandoah National Park, go up in smoke; downtown D.C. hits 110 degrees day after day; mega-drought costs Virginia \$1 billion, sending state finances into a death spiral; the president declares a national emergency; and hordes of thirst-crazed snakes attack a turkey farm.

This isn't the storyboard for the next global warming flick. It's a scene from a much more fearful genre: reality. Welcome to the summer of 1930.

Most of the time, one person's drought can be a mere inconvenience for someone else. But the most severe droughts, like 1930's, touch everyone.

For example, dry ground produces spectacular heat. Normally, a lot of the sun's energy goes toward the evaporation of water, contributed by the vegetation.

In really dry years, the soil becomes so arid that trees stop transpiring and the sun finds no water to evaporate. When things get this dry, all the sun's energy goes toward heating the surface and temperatures bump into the 100s.



Shade temperatures reached 107 on July 19, 1930, 109 on July 27 and Aug. 3, and 110 on July 20 and Aug. 9. Thousands of Washingtonians slept in the District's parks. On Aug. 7, *The Post* headlined a story, "30 Thirsty Snakes Die for Attacking Turkeys." (Farmers reported that the reptiles were after blood.)

It is impossible to predict exactly how many deaths would result from such a scenario today. If the power stayed on, research suggests maybe 50 to 100. But it's not at all clear that the air conditioners would continue to run. And soon after the power goes out, deaths begin. We know this from the Chicago heat wave of July 1995, when a thundershower caused a major outage. About 740 died. [Editor: In Europe's recent heat wave, an estimated 30,000 died.]

Droughts are also expensive. The 1930 drought remains the most costly natural disaster in the modern Virginia record, totaling close to a cool \$1 billion. But a repeat of 1930 could easily hit the multibillion-dollar threshold.

If people think conditions are bad now, they need to look back to 1930. How will we adapt to the inevitable repetition? (Patrick Michaels is state climatologist for Virginia.)

(Dad:) As the AC and evil men turn up the heat on God's children, waging war with the saints, God's going to turn up the heat on them! The fourth angel will come along with his vial of wrath and pour it directly on the sun, scorching men with such great heat that it's like fire! (Revelation 16:8,9).

So the heat waves of the past or the present are nothing when compared to the heat waves the Lord will unleash on the wicked in the future!

◆ Pests and pestilences

AIDS becoming "a young person's disease"

THE GUARDIAN; ASSOCIATED PRESS

AIDS has become a disease of young people, with half of all new infections occurring in 15- to 24-year-olds, the United Nations warned.

According to a new UN report, an estimated 6,000 young people around the world every day—or one every 14 seconds—become infected with the disease. The majority of them are young women, the study revealed.

In sub-Saharan Africa, where the spread of HIV/AIDS among youths is fastest, about 8.6 million have HIV/AIDS—67 percent of them female. South Asia follows, with 1.1 million youths infected—62 percent of them female.

(Dad:) That's a sobering warning for you young people—and you older



INDIAN FARMER EXAMINES HIS DROUGHT-STRICKEN FIELD. HEAT AND DROUGHT HAVE DEVASTATING EFFECTS.

ones, for that matter: Sex with outsiders may be exciting, but it may also be lethal. If you avoid the act, you avoid the consequences.

Bedbugs are back

BY DANIEL DENOON,
WEBMD MEDICAL NEWS

More and more Americans don't sleep tight. Not when the bedbugs bite. Once known only from bedtime rhymes, blood-sucking bedbugs are making a comeback.

It's happening all across the country, says Cindy Mannes, director of public affairs for the National Pest Management Association.

Not in my house, you're saying. But don't be so sure, says entomologist Frank Meek, BCE, national pest control manager for Atlanta-based Orkin Inc.

You can find bedbugs in the best of places. And its tendency to hide in suitcases makes it a world-class hitchhiker. International travelers report bedbug bites from the best hotels in the world.

For the uninitiated, bedbugs are flat and oval, about 1/4 inch in diameter. They look like a small lentil. The vermin are brownish in color, but take on a rusty mahogany color after a blood meal. Newly hatched bedbugs are harder to see—they are light tan and translucent.

Most people don't feel the animal feeding. The first sign that you've been a bedbug's breakfast is an itchy red dot with a lighter red ring around it. There's often one or more straight lines of these wheals, marking where your body met the bed.

A common myth is that bedbugs are invisible. They're not—but they only come out at night. During the day they hide in bedding; in creases in the mattress, box springs, and bed frame; behind pictures on the wall or in tears in the wallpaper; behind baseboards; and just about anyplace nearby. How far they get depends on how soon you discover them.

The earliest sign of bedbugs—other than wheals on your body—is tiny dots of blood on the sheets. That's because wounds from bedbug bites bleed a little. And bedbug poop appears as darker dots on the sheets. If you've got lots of bedbugs—and the little suckers are prolific breeders—your bed will have the distinctive sickly-sweet, soda-pop-syrup smell that the bugs give off.

Speaking of breeding, a single female bedbug lays 10 to 50 eggs every three to 15 days. The sticky eggs are laid near the bugs' hiding places. If they

feed regularly, bedbug nymphs become adults in two to six weeks.

Who you gonna call? Bedbug busters, say the professionals. "This isn't something homeowners can do themselves," Mannes says. "They hide so well. Even with professionals it often takes two or three calls. You have to keep checking that they're really gone. They can be under the carpet, the baseboards, in picture frames, electrical outlets. They can live for a year—and multiply—without a blood meal."

To prevent getting bedbugs in the first place, Mannes offers a few tips to travelers:

At the hotel, pull the bed covers down at night. If you see something moving, or if you see spots on the sheets, move to another room. Vacuum your suitcases before bringing them into the house.

(Dad:) That's good advice to avoid getting infested with the Devil's pests! Like the Devil himself, they like to do their dirty work in the dark, so make it difficult for them to get at you. Use preventive measures, just as you would against spiritual attacks of the Devil.

These little critters and varmints like bedbugs, mosquitoes and others are a physical illustration of the Devil in some ways. They "bug" you, just as the Devil does, and they can



DON'T LET THE BEDBUG BITE.

make you sick sometimes, but if you call for the Great Exterminator—the Lord—they'll soon be squashed or gone! They can't handle heavenly pesticide!

◆ Earthquakes

Measuring an earthquake by Hail Marys

BY PETER N. SPOTTS, THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR

Scientists at the University of California at Irvine say they have uncovered geophysical and biological evidence for a temblor that rocked the Los Angeles Basin between 1635 and 1855. The team estimates that the quake, centered on a hidden fault beneath Orange County's coastal San Joaquin Hills, may have reached a magnitude of 7.3 and lifted Orange County's coastline by 3 to 11 feet.

The team's favored date, July 31, 1769, comes from the diary of Capt. Gaspar de Portola, who led a 64-member expedition from Baja California to conquer what is now California for Spain. His party camped along the Santa Ana River; three days later a violent quake struck.

Someone on the expedition had the presence of mind to measure the duration of the quake by the number of "Hail Marys" other members repeated during the shaking.

◆ Cloning

The cloned die young

THE WEEK

Three cloned pigs have dropped dead of heart attacks, again highlighting the limits of this controversial field of biology. Taiwan-based researchers created the pigs with



CLONED PIG SUCKLING

a variation of the technology used to create the sheep Dolly. Four piglets were born. One died immediately and the other three have now died of heart failure after less than six months. "It was totally shocking," Jerry Yang of the University of Connecticut tells *Nature*.

The pigs' premature deaths are the latest reminder of how imperfect cloning technology remains. Most cloned animals have suffered from severe health problems and died young; Dolly herself only lived to 6. The recent animal deaths also raise doubts about the idea of transplanting hearts or livers from cloned pigs into humans, since those organs do not appear to be stable.

(Dad:) Cloning slips up again. It's because the cloners themselves are on a slippery downhill slope!

The new eugenics

BY NICHOLAS D. KRISTOF, NY TIMES NEWS SERVICE

One of the most profound questions raised by recent genetic advances is this: Do we as a species still want babies born with genetic disabilities?

Science is scoring great successes in combating the 7,000 genetic ailments that can strike our children—and that sounds great. Yet it's difficult to draw a line where we stop "improving" our species. Many disability activists argue that we're moving toward a new eugenics, and I'm afraid that they could be right.

The first step toward upgrading our descendants will come in the treatment of disabilities because the benefits are so obvious. And so I sat down in London with an expert on disability and genetics, someone whose struggle with the issue is not just scholarly but also personal—to me as well as him.

It all began when my British great-uncle, Sir Geoffrey Shakespeare, had a son, William. That's right: he became Sir William Shakespeare. William was born with a genetic mutation that results in achondroplasia, a kind of dwarfism. William became a fine doctor, and his eldest son, my cousin Tom, was also born with achondroplasia.

Tom Shakespeare inherited the title and is formally Sir Thomas, as well as a leading scholar on genetics and disability.

As we sat down at a London coffee shop to talk about these issues, Tom attracted attention because he's not only the shortest person around but also the most self-confident and charming, with earrings and tremendous presence.

"Society sees disability as the worst thing that can happen," Tom says. "It's one thing that can happen, but not the worst."

Tom says many disabled people feel threatened by genetic advances and are hurt by cheerful talk about engineering a world without people like them.

"That's very difficult," Tom says. "To hear people discuss a world in which you don't exist can be very hurtful."

"People ask me all the time, 'Wouldn't you rather have been not short?' But that's almost like saying, 'Wouldn't you rather have not been born?'"

The question we face as a species is that it may eventually become possible not just to cull embryos associated with dwarfism, but also to screen out baldness or pug noses, or even to choose the embryo most likely to get into Yale.

My guess is that germ-line gene therapy will arrive initially to fix "bad genes" that cause disease, and then move on to enhance intelligence and performance. I'm afraid we may be slipping, without any conscious decision or even awareness of the implications, toward a future in which our descendants quickly diverge from all that has been human for millennia.

Bill McKibben, in his cautionary new book about genetic science, *Enough*, articulates the dangers as he recalls a childhood friend, Kathy, who died of cystic fibrosis:

"Why not at least let the germ-line engineers go to work on the Kathys of the world? As even proponents acknowledge, the line between repair and enhancement is too murky to be meaningful. Soon you're headed toward a world where Kathy's lungs work fine, but where her goodness, her kindness, don't mean what they did. Where someone's souping up her brain or regulating her temper, not just clearing up her mucus."

(Dad:) Man has never done a very good job of it when he's tried to play God. He always makes a mess of things, just as Adam and Eve did in the Garden when the Devil tempted them with the opportunity to "be as gods, knowing good and evil."

Well, the forbidden fruit led to the fall of man, not to him becoming as gods, and man's dabbling in genetic enhancement would have a similar disastrous effect. Man simply doesn't have the wisdom of God when it comes to meddling with God's creations.

In their well-meaning but misguided attempts to improve or enhance man, scientists would just degrade and handicap him. "Curing" one thing might well negate something else, or lead to a great many other things getting worse!

◆ Big Brother

Euro scheme makes money talk

BY JANIS MARA, WIRED

Euro cash could be embedded with radio frequency identification tags if a deal between the European Central Bank and Hitachi becomes reality.

The bank is working on a hush-hush project to embed RFIDs, wireless transponders the size of a grain of sand, into the fibers of euro bank notes to foil would-be counterfeiters. The bills currently have a number of security marks, including threads that glow under ultraviolet light, but as the euros wear thin, these are less perceptible.

If embedded in the euro, the chips could make it possible to track information such as when and where transactions take place, according to Paul Lee of Deloitte Research in London.

"There is a worry in our field as to how these things will be used, given the lack of coherent privacy regulations," said Dan Moriz, staff technologist for San Francisco's Electronic Frontier Foundation.

"It would be easy to establish a system where intelligence agencies track how money is spent. What if I'm an ethnic Turk in Germany, where there is a long-standing conflict between the Turkish and German populations, and I buy books on establishing a Turkish state?" Moriz asked.

"The German police could start tracking me. If I go to France or another country that is part of the 12 member nations using the euro, the German police could notify the French police, and they could keep track of me," Moriz said.

Until now, Moriz pointed out, the only truly anonymous form of payment has been cash. "If you write a check, the instrument itself bears your name and other data. Credit cards have an obvious audit trail; traveler's checks have one as well. But always, until now, cash payments have been mostly untraceable."

"This private data can be used against you," said Katherine Albrecht, founder and director of Consumers Against Supermarket Privacy Invasion and Numbering. Albrecht said she shares EFF's concerns. "It will essentially eliminate the anonymity of cash." She outlined a nightmare scenario in which "it would be possible to track all the cash issued to an individual and invalidate it with a couple of keystrokes"—a literal case of "your cash is trash."

(Dad:) That's another step towards the Mark of the Beast, the system in which "no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark" (Revelation 13:17). After all, for the Antichrist to implement his system, he won't want anyone to be able to buy and sell outside of it—he'll want to be able to monitor every transaction, if necessary.

Up until this time he's only been able to do it through credit and debit cards, checks, etc. But with chips in cash itself, he'd be upgrading his abilities. And, of course, when the day comes that he can get chips in people to tie their identity to their cash, then he can really start putting his evil system in place!

That day is coming. The signs are springing up like the leaves on a fig tree in springtime (Matthew 24:32).

Big Brother is watching you 24/7

BY BRIAN GILMORE, THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR

Christian Parenti, a historian and author, has hit a nerve with his analysis of America's culture of surveillance: *The Soft Cage: Surveillance in America—From Slave Passes to the War on Terror*.

"Consider this," Parenti writes ominously at the beginning. "More than 111 million Americans carry mobile phones, each of which creates a rough electronic account of the user's location in time and space."

A harmless little detail, right? Not exactly. During the first year of the second intifada, the government of Israel assassinated six Palestinian militants "by first locating the target's cell phone and then directing fire at the coordinates of the phone," Parenti writes.

Cell phones are just one example of how all of us are easily traced every day through the convenience of modern technology. Credit cards, Internet accounts, gym memberships, library cards, health-insurance records, and workplace identification badges are some of the other routine technological conveniences that daily record our every move.

He also analyzes surveillance at work in the social-welfare system, and through the economy in which the proliferation of "digital cash" (debit and credit cards) has "caused an unplanned, unexamined extension of state power."

The Soft Cage concludes with a discussion of Sept. 11 and the current battle in America over privacy, civil liberties, and security. Though Parenti makes it clear that "even before the terrorist attacks of 9/11, the routine surveillance of everyday activity was expanding rapidly," he claims the horror of that day has been "seized, even hijacked, by the worst elements of the political class who seek to steer fear and anger towards the destruction of traditional American liberties."

Parenti defines a concept he calls "the right to illegality." He asks, "Are the rules and laws of this society all rational, benevolent and just? If they are not, and if many of them serve to reproduce racism, stupidity, exploitation, environmental devastation, and general brutality, then should we not resist them?"

Soon, in light of the world Parenti describes, we will all have to give an answer.

(Dad:) As that title indicates, surveillance is a "soft cage" for most Americans. Actually, I wonder if a padded cell might be more appropriate for some of those folks, ha!

But the concept of a soft cage fits the U.S. very well, where the surveillance and monitoring are becoming a normal part of life, and one that doesn't affect most Americans very much. They don't see that they're being caged in; in fact, they think that the bars are to keep the bad guys out. Well, they do that too, but they also cage in the inhabitants, even if the cage is a plush, comfortable one.

And cage conditions can change from soft to hard very quickly. Look at how hard things have become for the Palestinians, for whom using a cell phone can result in death by guided missile if they're wanted by the Israelis! That demonstrates one way technology can be

put to terrible use in the hands of evil men.

Big Brother Briefs

Tracking junior with a microchip.

(Julia Scheeres, *Wired*) A Mexican company has launched a service to implant microchips in children as an anti-kidnaping device.

Solusat, the Mexican distributor of the VeriChip—a rice-size microchip that is injected beneath the skin and transmits a 125-kilohertz radio frequency signal—is marketing the device as an emergency ID under its new VeriKid program.

The service has even garnered the backing of Mexico's National Foundation of Investigations of Robbed and Missing Children, which has agreed to promote the service.

The company envisions placing walk-through scanners—similar to metal-detector portals used in airports—in malls, bus stations and other areas where a missing child may appear.

VeriChip manufacturer Applied Digital Solutions said it plans to roll out the VeriKid service in other countries, including the United States, in the future.

(Dad:) The camel's nose is getting deeper into the tent—or under the skin. The "camel" has a good and noble purpose, and one that most people would agree with. It's what follows when he takes over the "tent" that most people won't like.

Spying on your teens via satellite. (Danielle Teutsch, *Sydney Morn-*

ing Herald) Tracking units to monitor children and teenagers—disguised as watches, mobile phones and belts—have hit Australia, to the outrage of civil libertarians and parent groups.

Australian company Internav's mobile phone-sized Global Positioning System (GPS) tracking device has an emergency alarm button and software so parents can zoom in on a child's whereabouts using a home computer.

Geoff Day, from Kid Safe System Locators, said his GPS devices, which will be in stores by Christmas, would help find children in cases of abduction or accidents such as drowning. They can be hidden in watches, belts and jewelry and cost from \$600 to \$700.

Mr. Day said, "Parents can rest assured that, if their child goes missing, they will be able to pinpoint where they are straight away."

Libraries eye RFID to track books.

(AP) A civil liberties watchdog group is expressing concern over the San Francisco Public Library's plans to track books by inserting computer chips into each tome. Library officials have approved a plan to install tiny radio frequency identification chips, known as RFIDs, into the roughly 2 million books, CDs and audiovisual materials patrons can borrow.

The microchips send out electromagnetic waves to a device that converts them to digital data containing a host of information. In libraries, the system is primarily designed to locate books in branches and speed up the checkout process.

Library officials say the "passive" chips would be deactivated as materials are taken from the library, thus preventing any stealth tracking of books—and by extension, people—off premises.

But Lee Tien, a staff lawyer for the Electronic Frontier Foundation, is concerned that the chips may have information that would remain accessible and trackable, whether by ingenious hackers or law enforce-

ment subpoena. That, he says, would be a threat to privacy rights. "If there's a technology for temporary deactivation, then presumably there's a system for reactivating it," Tien said.

(Dad:) The chips are on the march by their millions these days. God bless the dear folks who are pushing for more privacy, but really, books being trackable are the least of their worries. You have to check them out anyway, so the library knows you have them. It's the tracking of people that's dangerous.



A CELL PHONE CAN ALSO BE A TARGET IN THE MIDEAST.



BOOKS WITH RFID CHIPS IN LABELS

French home secretary announces chip ID card. (Estelle Dumont, *Silicon.com*) A “perfectly secure” electronic identity card will be in use in France by 2006, French Home Secretary Nicolas Sarkozy has announced.

The card will carry a chip which will combine “the standard type of personal data you get in this type of document and an electronic certification system.” A digital authentication system with a public key infrastructure (PKI) will be used to guarantee the authenticity of the holder.

New Zealand customs goes high-tech to check eyes and faces. (Scott MacLeod, *NZ Herald*) A high-tech camera that can spot faces in a crowd is being used by Customs staff at Wellington Airport as part of a trial to increase security.

The camera is linked to a computer which recognizes people from facial characteristics, and is part of a system becoming widely used to secretly screen for terrorists. Customs is also

testing a machine that scans the irises in a passenger’s eyes to produce a type of human bar code.

Spy in the sky to sink illegal construction. (Lachlan Heywood, *Brisbane Courier-Herald*) Two-thirds of Brisbane pool owners are in breach of the law and are set to be caught in a council blitz using satellite imagery.

Brisbane City Council has also turned to the spy technology to crack down on riverfront land owners who have built fences, tennis courts and other structures on public land. The satellite images are accurate to within 90 cm.

Actual images of land and buildings from the satellites will be overlaid with lot and street numbers using the council’s mapping system. Council officers will then use the information to guide inspection programs.



NZ CUSTOMS STARTS SCANNING IRISES.

(Dad:) Now there’s a program that’s going to be popular with local and national governments all over the world, and one you’ll hear about more in the future—putting spy satellites to work scrutinizing their own citizens to

make money off of them! Then the inspectors show up at the door with a photograph.

“G’day, mate. We have evidence that you built a pool”—or an addition to your house or whatever—“without a permit. That’ll be a fine of \$500, please—if you want to keep the pool.”

It’ll not only be profitable for governments, but it’ll keep at least some of their people scared to do anything wrong in public. They’ll never know when that spy in the sky will be watching them and photographing them!

◆ Religion News Briefs

Faith fades in Europe. (Frank Bruni, *NY Times News Service*) Pope John Paul II is celebrating his 25th anniversary as the head of the Roman Catholic Church, which is both Europe’s and Christianity’s largest denomination. But Europe seems more and more like a series of tourist-trod monuments to Christianity’s past.

In France, which is predominantly Catholic but emphatically secular, about one in 20 people attends a religious service every week, compared with about one in three in the United States. “What’s interesting isn’t that there are fewer people in church,” said the Rev. Jean François Bordarier of Lille, in northern France, “but that there are any at all.”

While France is an extreme case, its drift from Christian institutions hold true throughout much of Europe, where faithful attendance at Christian services, be they Catholic, Protestant or Orthodox, is the province of a small minority of people. They show up to mark crucial milestones in their and their loved ones’ lives. But they pay minimal heed, between those visits, to their churches’ exhortations and admonitions.

The preamble of a new, unfinished constitution for the European Union omits any mention of Christianity or even God among the cultural forces that shaped Europe.



SPARSE ATTENDANCE AT A SUNDAY MASS IN ROME. IS EUROPE “NO LONGER CHRISTIAN”?

“In Western Europe, we are hanging on by our fingernails,” wrote the Rev. David Cornick, the general secretary of the United Reformed Church in Britain, in the June-July edition of *Inside Out*, a religious journal. “The fact is that Europe is no longer Christian.”

Last month Cardinal Dionigi Tettamanzi, the archbishop of Milan, said at a news conference, “At the elementary schools, they don’t know who Jesus is.”

(Dad:) Europe once sent missionaries around the world to evangelize the third world, and now the third world is sending missionaries to Europe to evangelize them! Pastors and missionaries from Africa, Asia and Latin America are going back to Europe to try to convert the heathen, ha! But it’s hard, and they often find a more receptive audience among their own countrymen in Europe, who are more open to the Gospel.

Those folks—the immigrants to Europe, even foreigners who have lived there for years—might be more receptive to you too, dear Family. If you’re having a hard time with the hard Europeans, try the immigrants instead.

Government threatens religion, Toronto cardinal warns. (*CWN*) Toronto’s Cardinal Aloysius Ambrozic has warned that “religion will soon need to be protected from the state.”

At an annual mass for jurists and lawmakers, the cardinal said that Catholics who serve in public office must be willing to suffer for their faith. As a Catholic in public life, he said, “you risk your neck for an absolute. There are things greater than ourselves for which we must be ready to die. If nothing is worth dying for, then I am not truly free.”

The cardinal argued that the Canadian public has slipped into an improper understanding of the role of religious faith in a democratic society. “Separation of church and state now means the separation of conscience from politics,” the cardinal said. He noted that under current circumstances it is absurd to think that the state needs protection from religious power. On the contrary, he said, “religion will soon need to be protected from the state.”

(Dad:) For hundreds of years, religion and the state were virtually one and the same in many countries. Now that many states want no part of religion, they’ve made laws to replace it, to take the place of the principles in God’s Word. But those laws often conflict with the Word, because the laws are politically correct, designed to offend no one, which the Word certainly isn’t! So the laws that were supposed to take the place of the Word are now often in direct opposition to it—and will be even more so in the days to come as the “falling away” speeds up and the Man of Sin is revealed (2Thess.2:3-4).

Bible might be the most subversive book. (Steve Gushee, *Palm Beach Post*) A provision of the Patriot Act allows the [U.S.] government to examine the

records of readers, book buyers and library patrons.

The aim is to identify terrorists by their reading habits. The result is to threaten anyone who reads anything that government personnel deem dangerous to their

idea of patriotism, national loyalties and allegiance to the flag.

The Bible is guilty on all counts. Jehovah's Witnesses and more than a few other Christians will not swear allegiance to the flag on Biblical grounds that they believe forbids taking an oath.

The New Testament specifically identifies followers of Christ as citizens of another kingdom that has authority over all the nations of the Earth.

Churches, according to St. Paul, are embassies in a foreign land. Church members are ambassadors whose job is to lobby for their kingdom, attempt to influence the country in which they temporarily live and, ultimately, overthrow its leadership for the rule of God.

The New Testament does direct Christians to honor local authorities, but only to prevent a crackdown on the religious sect.

Christianity has become so tame and domesticated over the years that few see the subversive nature of its handbook, the Bible.

(Dad:) Yes, Christianity today has come a long way from Jesus and His band of bedraggled dropouts who lived solely to preach the good news of the Kingdom of God, who told people: "Follow Me and I will make you fishers of men." "Whosoever will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me." "Ye cannot serve God and mammon." "And all that believed were together, and had all things common."

It's a revolutionary handbook, and those who live its teachings will have the same effect that Jesus' Own disciples did, with people saying, "Those who have turned the world upside down have come hither also" (Acts 17:6).

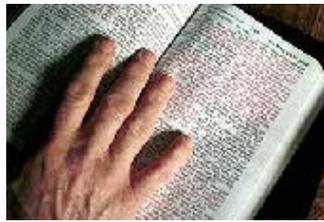
How are you doing in living the handbook? Are you following the Word all the way—all the Biblical principles repeated in our Letters—or have you consigned part or all of it to the past, as the churches have?

◆ Men's Corner

"Hey, honey, what's for dinner?"

BY BARTON GOLDSMITH,
SCRIPPS HOWARD NEWS SERVICE

I overheard two women chatting in the market. One asked the other, "Does your husband talk to you?" Her companion answered: "Of course he talks; he has to ask me what's for dinner, doesn't he?"



SUBVERSIVE LITERATURE

than they feel and, much of the time, many men don't even know what or how they are feeling.

It is interesting to note that, physiologically, women think and feel at the same time, while men can only think or feel.

So when a woman wants to talk, and the guy realizes he has to think and feel at the same time, just the idea becomes a challenge. So it's easy to understand why men have a harder time talking about feelings; it's because they have to switch gears from their head to their hearts. Sometimes when they have to do it very quickly, they may feel like the life is being sucked out of them.

Most of the time when a man wants to talk, it's to ask, "What do you want to do this weekend?" When a woman says, "Let's talk," guys worry—as if their relationship is being threatened just because the woman in their lives wants to talk. You know, guys, this could be a slight overreaction.

What men need to understand is that when a woman says she wants to talk, she's saying, "I want to be closer." Unfortunately, when a man hears that, he thinks something's wrong.

There are some other interesting facts that can enlighten us as to why it seems that men don't talk; for example, women have twice as many words as men.

Women speak at a rate of 250 words per minute; men speak at 125, and, according to Gary Smalley, author of *Making Love Last Forever*, in the course of a day, women on average speak 25,000 words, compared to a man's average 12,000.

By the end of the day men are talked out, and women still have a day's worth of conversation in them.

Men and women also have different conversational styles. Women tend to talk faster when they get excited and may interrupt their partners, who are struggling to find the right words. When this happens, the men may lose track or shut down because they feel cut off and were unable to express what they were feeling.

Understanding how men and women differ when it comes to talking will give everyone more empathy when

I totally understand where they are coming from. Most men have a hard time communicating anything that remotely resembles an emotion.

Why? Because emotions are scary to men, who think much more

it comes to discussing emotional issues. And understanding each other is a big step toward creating and maintaining an emotionally fit and loving relationship.

(Dad:) Men and women are different and often really have to work at understanding each other and accommodating each other's differences. It's as if men were from Mars and women were from Venus, as one author put it!

Fellows, you need to understand that your dear wife is programmed to be a helpmeet—to want to be more than a wife. She wants to be your lover, your best friend, your constant companion, your confidante, a caring and concerned mother, and more! The Lord has made her to want an intimate, communicative, heart-sharing relationship with you. When she wants to talk, even if you may not think it's necessary or you feel like it's too much, it's necessary to her. Be sweet, be gentle, and don't get upset, impatient, or cutting and sarcastic in your comments or speech.

Do your best to listen and to care, because often she wants your total attention, your concern, your understanding, more than you trying to fix



BE UNDERSTANDING WHEN WOMEN WANT TO TALK.

all the difficulties of her day or the problems in her life that she's talking about. Just knowing that you want to hear her out, that you love her, that you care, that you're committed to her, is often a solution

in itself. Then later, of course, you can take the problems or difficulties to the Lord together and claim the power of the keys for real lasting solutions and victories.

God bless you—and keep you understanding!

Forsake foot odor

ESQUIRE

Tips on how to avoid foul-smelling feet:

- * Keep your feet clean. A basic hygiene regimen eliminates the bacteria that are the source of your stench.

- * Dry off. Blot gently in the delicate area between your toes after bathing.

- * Wear clean socks. In other words, change them daily.

- * Alternate pairs of shoes.

- * Apply antiperspirant deodorant. In works as well on the bottom of your feet as it does in your armpits.

- * Take tea. If you're uncomfortable slathering your soles with deodorant, try nonherbal tea. Brew some, let it cool, then soak your feet in it. The tannic acid contained therein acts as an antibacterial agent.

◆ Health matters

The metric way to sweeten up America

THE GLOBALIST

The U.S. has long rejected the metric system. So why is it, when you check American food labels, you see grams and not ounces? Who knows how big a gram is, anyway?

That's just the point. Food companies are required to disclose the ingredients of foods, but using the metric system guarantees Americans won't be put off by large doses of sugar or fat.

Take a look at your average soda pop bottle. A 12-ounce can of Mountain Dew contains 45 grams of sugar. Is that



WHAT'S WITH THE GRAMS AND MILLIGRAMS?

a lot—or a little? Most Americans have no idea.

In reality, 45 grams is a huge—even obscene—amount of sugar. A serving

size of sugar is one teaspoon, an equivalent of just 4 grams.

This means that a can of Mountain Dew your kid knocks down without even thinking contains more than 11 standard servings of sugar.

The actual sight of 45 grams of sugar would be even more shocking. It is, believe it or not, one-tenth of the standard 1-pound box of sugar you buy at the supermarket, which in the average household lasts at least a month.

(Dad:) That's truth in advertising for you, ha! And that's the truth about soda, too. It's liquid sugar, and has a very toxic effect on your teeth and the rest of your body over time. Watch out for sugar addiction!

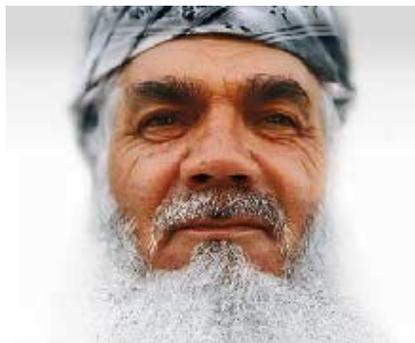
◆ Ask Dad!—No.20

Subject: Current Comments

■ Benevolent dictators

After more than 23 years of war and chaos, Afghanistan is really a mess.

Despite all the American aid and promises to rebuild the country, it's a wreck. The capital, Kabul, is becoming more prosperous, but only because that's where most of the U.S. and coalition troops are based to provide security, and because that's one of the few places the aid organizations



AFGHAN WARLORD ISMAIL KHAN

feel safe enough to operate. Outside Kabul, the country is still full of poverty, potholes, devastation, bandits, guerillas, and anarchy! Those who have the most guns run things, just as they have for hundreds of years—the warlords. Most of the warlords have their own private armies, complete with tanks, artillery, and other heavy weaponry!

One warlord, the governor of a western province bordering Iran, has 50,000 men in his forces, more than ten times as many men as the so-called national army of Afghanistan that the U.S. is trying to cobble together! His name is Ismail Khan, and he's quite a colorful fellow—and for an Afghan warlord, a pretty good one as well. He even holds a public assembly every week for his people, and hundreds of the poor and needy show up to ask his help in legal matters, property disputes, or just for things they desperately need, like a bag of rice or some oil for their lamps. And dear Ismail Khan, just like the kings or caliphs of old, pronounces judgment and gives the poor what they need.

He's one of the few warlords in Afghanistan who has anything to give. In fact, he's wealthier than the central government, because he runs

the city of Herat. It's on what was known as the Silk Road, an ancient route that linked China and a lot of Asia to Europe. It got its name from its main commodity—silk, which used to be transported by horse or camel from China to the West. Now it's mostly a smuggler's route, plied

by trucks, but it's still very well used and therefore very profitable. Ismail Khan charges truckers a tax and they estimate he makes more than \$1 million a day, most of which he keeps for himself and his province! Of course, some of it goes to pay his troops that guard the roads, and it's put to good use. His area of Afghanistan is one of the few places where people can travel by day or night without worrying about bandits and robbers.

He spends a lot of the rest of his income on his city and his people, and his part of Afghanistan is thriving in comparison to the rest. The roads are being paved, irrigation canals are being dug, schoolhouses have been restored, drinking water is available, as is round-the-clock electricity, and Herat even has parks with swimming pools! There's a pretty efficient local government, run by him and his aides, that's rebuilding his part of Afghanistan, while the rest of the country is crumbling and decaying.

Even though he's a warlord, he's what you might call a benevolent dictator, so he's very different from the rest of the rulers of Afghanistan. Most of the other warlords are just plain dictators, and benevolence isn't their hallmark! They're mostly well-armed thugs. So they spend most of their time squabbling with each other, terrorizing their people, or trafficking heroin, while pretending to try and stamp out the drug trade! And the president, a fellow named Hamid Karzai, is sort of an American fig-

urehead with very little real power and support.

So Ismail Khan combines the strong hand of a warlord with a heart for his people, and he really gets a lot accomplished. A benevolent dictatorship can be a very good and efficient form of government, sort of like the good kings of Biblical days. People need direction and purpose. Sheep need shepherds—and goats (like some of the Afghan people) especially need shepherds! After all these years of war and anarchy, the Afghans need the strength of the iron rather than the weakness of the clay (Daniel 2:41-42), the firmness of a strong hand without the grip of a tyrant or the wishy-washiness of do-your-own-thing democracy. They need someone strong enough to stop them from killing each other and yet who won't feel like killing them himself!

Of course, the problem with benevolent dictators is that they often lose their benevolence and just become dictators. As the old saying goes, "Power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely." When it does, then things can get pretty nasty. But for the time being, at least, a little benevolent dictatorship is working better in that corner of Afghanistan than the so-called democracy that the U.S. has imposed on Kabul! It's not that it's perfect; it's just more functional.

America's trying to remake the world in its own image with its own form of government, but different peoples and nations simply need different forms of government. When you've got a good king, you've usually got a pretty good government, even if it's not a democracy. That's a principle that has held true down through history, and one that will endure even to the New Heaven and the New Earth! When Space City descends, the kings of Earth will bring their glory and their honor into it, to pay homage to the King of kings! The Lord's going to let at least some kings continue to rule their people, with your assistance, guidance and counsel! (Rev.1:6).

■ **How China has changed**
If there's any place that shows how much the world has changed in the last 100 years, it's China. Less than 100 years ago, it was still ruled by an emperor, and imperial officials would be paraded through the streets on litters while most of the rest of the people lived a primitive life of absolute poverty. There were a few very, very rich, and multitudes of very, very poor.

But since that time China has seen the emperor abdicate, watched warlords rise and fall, suffered invasion by Japan, undergone decades of upheaval under Mao and the Chinese Communist Party, and now fallen in love with capitalism! There are still many poor, but there's been a huge increase in the middle- and upper-class, the wealthy, and a lot of progress. Now Chinese are surfing the Internet, building skyscrapers, and sending astronauts into outer space! How things have changed!

China's largest city, Shanghai, has built so many high-rise buildings and skyscrapers in recent years that the city is actually sinking at the rate of one and a half centimeters a year under the weight of all the steel and concrete. In the last decade they've constructed 3,000 big buildings, and another 2,000 are on the drawing boards. Chinese are joking that the crane is their national bird—the construction crane!

So China is becoming the superpower of the East, with 1.3 billion people and so much industry and manufacturing that American economists are starting to write articles asking, "What happens when everything is made in China?"

Of course, there's a big difference between Chinese cities and the Chinese countryside, where a lot of poor farmers still live in mud and stone huts without plumbing or running water. Many peasants probably aren't much better off than they were 50 or 100 years ago. And one thing that hasn't changed in many years is that you don't speak your mind when it comes to politics—unless you have it on your mind to praise the Communist Party! You can make all the money you want, but when it comes to dissent, forget about it!

So, some things in China change and others remain the same—at least for a while. One 75-year-old man who'd been up and down a number of times, going from a 10-bedroom mansion with

40 servants to poverty and then back to plenty again said that if there's one thing his experiences had taught him, it's how quickly good times can end and how fast bad times can return. That's a lesson many people would do well to keep in mind.

■ **The Arnold effect**
Californians seem to have a penchant for electing movie stars as governors! They elected Reagan

as governor back in the late '60s, and now they've elected another actor as governor—Arnold Schwarzenegger, the body-builder and action hero! Apparently their last governor, a fellow named Gray Davis, was a catastrophe,

so they held a recall election and booted him out. It seems like many people figured that at least Schwarzenegger couldn't be worse and might well be better. I think they hope he'll get rid of the state's problems like he does the villains in his movies, and blow them all away instead of sitting around just talking about them, like most politicians do. They want solutions, not more talk and politics!

Europeans are saying the same thing, and they're calling it the "Arnold effect." They're tired of wimpy politicians and they want a strong leader who can take action. They head of one European polling institute said, "The dissatisfaction is growing every day.

Germany and Europe are ripe for the same sort of phenomenon [as Arnold]. People feel they're being messed with. They want simple language and simple remedies."

One 19-year-old in Berlin said he liked the idea of a Schwarzenegger-type chancellor for Germany. "We need someone like that to clean up the mess and blow away the lousy politicians!" Many others feel the same way, not just in California or

in Europe, but all around the world. There's a lot of discontent and disgust with politicians, who promise so much and then deliver so little year after year, election after election.

So the yearning for someone like the Antichrist is building, and when he makes his appearance, the people

of the world will be thrilled. He'll be a charismatic speaker, with a mouth speaking great things in simple words that people can understand and relate to. He'll be a man of action, working signs and wonders. And he'll certainly be a strong leader—the strongest one they've ever had! He'll make Hitler and Mussolini look like pusillanimous wimps, because he'll be full of the Devil himself—and the Devil will be full of fast, strong action, knowing he's only got a few short years left and has to make the most of it while he can! He'll have lots of new, unconventional ideas to turn the world around. After all, he's the false messiah, the phony savior, and he'll even seem to be able to work miracles, like Jesus did!

I'll tell you, you in the Family live in exciting times, and many great men and prophets of God would love to have lived in the times you do! Events in the world are building up to the climax of the End, and there's great warfare in the spirit world as the forces of God and the Devil maneuver and face off for the showdown. We all know who the winner will be, but it's thrilling to see the action take place—much more thrilling than any action movie on Earth!

Our hero, Jesus, will not only blow away all the bad guys at Armageddon, but He'll then throw the biggest victory celebration the world has ever seen, the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, and hand out unimaginable rewards—on top of new indestructible bodies that will live forever in Heaven with Him! Hallelujah! That'll be one action movie you won't want to miss—and

you won't, because you'll be playing a role in it as well, helping the Lord bring in His Kingdom on Earth! Study your lines now—the Word—so you'll know your parts well in the days to come. Then you'll not only be a star, but you'll shine like the stars themselves, forever and ever! I love you!

◆ Words for the wise

BY EVAN MORRIS, THE WORD DETECTIVE

Today we use "filibuster" to mean a procedural tactic used in the U.S. Congress to delay or obstruct passage of legislation by making endless speeches, but that meaning is actually a derivative of the original definition of "filibuster."

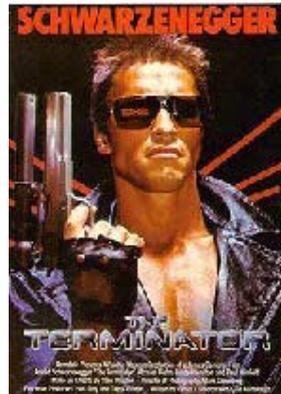
The story of "filibuster" begins with the Dutch word "vrijbuit," a combination of "vrij" (free) and "buit" (plunderer), which was borrowed into English as the word "freebooter," meaning "a pirate or adventurer." But French and Spanish also borrowed "vrijbuit" from the Dutch, and in the 19th century we



SHANGHAI STREET IN THE EARLY 1900'S



THE CENTER OF MODERN SHANGHAI—SLOWLY SINKING FROM THE WEIGHT OF THE HIGH-RISE BUILDINGS.



THE TERMINATOR BECOMES THE GOVERNATOR. VOTERS YEARN TO BLOW AWAY THE PROBLEMS.

borrowed the word into English again, this time from the Spanish form “filibustero,” as “filibuster.”

The North American “filibusters” of the 1850s were not simple pirates, but profiteering adventurers who, in contravention of international law, ran guns and fomented revolution against the European colonial powers throughout the West Indies, Central and South America. Perhaps the most famous “filibuster” was William Walker, who began by attempting to seize part of Mexico, proceeded to invade and take over Nicaragua, was tossed out after a few years, and was eventually captured and shot while trying to mount another invasion of Nicaragua. Other equally colorful “filibusters” conducted campaigns against Cuba and several other nations in Central America and the Caribbean.

The exploits of these “filibusters” were a subject of great debate in the U.S. in the first half of the 19th century, so it wasn’t long before one U.S. Senator in 1853, outraged by the delaying tactics

of his opponents, termed such stalling a “filibuster,” equivalent to an attempt to seize the United States Congress, and the modern sense of “filibuster” was born.

(Dad:) How very American, a word based on the overthrow of other countries!

◆ Tip for “professionals”

BY HAL URBAN, PH.D., THE BOTTOM LINE

Set goals. Goals help us take charge of our lives. Don’t confuse goals with wishes. Wishes are vague thoughts that we hope will happen. Goals are dreams with deadlines.

Write down your goals. Also write down the steps needed to accomplish them: obstacles to overcome, people who can help, what you need to learn.

Balance your goals. Divide them into categories that reflect life in all its variety—career, family, adventure (things I want to do), educational (things I want to learn), athletic, spiritual. Set goals in each area.

Review your goals. Look at your list every week. This keeps you motivated and alert to opportunities. At least once a year, revise your goals to be sure they still reflect what is most important to you. This annual review is also a good time to observe how you’ve changed—and to celebrate what you have achieved.

In his book *Time Tactics of Very Successful People*, Eugene Griesman writes that “the one common thread of really successful time tacticians is that they write down what they intend to do. They don’t just keep it in their heads.”—Zig Ziglar, Creators Syndicate.

(Dad:) Setting specific goals and writing them down helps to energize you, and sets an actual spiritual process in motion. Making that sort of commitment moves your spirit to move your body and mind to do its best to accomplish those goals, all with the Lord’s help. So pray, set your goals, write them down, take action, and pray all the way, and you’ll hit new heights!

◆ Tidbits

Lord’s mail gets special delivery. (AP) Try sending a letter to God and chances are it will end up, as many do each year, at an Israeli post office in Jerusalem, where they are read and sent on to the Western Wall.

The letters come from all over the world in a host of languages. “We have hundreds and thousands of letters sent to either God or Jesus Christ, and for some unknown reason they all come to Jerusalem,” said postal spokesman Yitzhak Rabihiya.

The postal workers’ favorite anecdote is about an Israeli man who, years ago, wrote a letter to God describing his crippling poverty and asking for 5,000 shekels (\$1,000). Postal workers were so moved they collected 4,300 shekels and mailed it back.

“After a month the same person writes again to God,” Rabihiya recalled, “but this time he writes, ‘Oh, thank you, God, for the contribution, but next time please don’t send it through those postmen. They’re thieves; they stole 700 shekels.’”

Westerners pretty rich. (Leander Kahney, *Wired*) You may think your salary is paltry, but compared with most of the world’s population, you’re up there with Bill Gates. A new website, the Global Rich List, starkly illustrates the worldwide distribution of wealth. For example, individuals in the United States who make less than \$9,300 are officially poor, according to the U.S. Census Bureau’s definition of poverty. But compared with the rest of the world, their income is in the top 12 percent. An annual household income of \$42,200—the U.S. median in 2001—is

enough to land someone in the world’s richest 1 percent, according to the site. “The idea is to really make people think about how rich they are compared to the rest of the world,” said Nicolas Roope, one of the site’s creators. **(Dad:) That’s one reason many foreigners want to immigrate to the U.S.—even the poor there are rich when compared to the rest of the world. And since these poor immigrants know how to scrimp and save and make the most of every penny, they often wind up well off themselves.**

Brinkley on politicians and TV news. (William Falk, *The Week*)

“The American people tend to assume that whatever they are told by political leaders is a pack of lies,” newsman David Brinkley wrote in a book he completed shortly before his death. “And we have seen, and continue to see, remarkably often they are right.” In a long career, Brinkley was right about many things, including how his own profession had been corrupted by the frantic quest for ratings and profits. “Television news has become so trivial and devoid of content,” he said, “as to be little different from entertainment programming.”

Alcohol abuse costing Britain \$55m a day. (*Electronic Telegraph*) Binge drinking is growing and the consequences of alcohol abuse—criminal behavior, lost working days, and the drain on health services—costs Britain £55 million a day, says a government report. Hangovers and drink-related illnesses claimed 17 million working days a year.

The study defines bingeing as the equivalent of more than four pints of

beer being consumed by men, and three large glasses of wine by women, during any one session.

The group Alcohol Concern said the recently announced £250 million Smirnoff vodka [ad campaign] represented more than double the amount the government spent on alcohol treatment and counseling across the country.

(Dad:) Poor Britain has become a nation of drinkers and drunks, as many of her young people, not knowing the Lord, have turned to the bottle instead. Please, Family, when or if you drink, drink responsibly.

(See ML #856, Vol.7.)

Men lack specks appeal. (*The Telegraph*) Women accusing husbands of laziness for not doing housework are ignoring the simple truth that men’s brains do not notice dust in the same way.

Michael Gurian, a British social scientist and author, says the answer to many conflicts between couples lies in differences between the male and female brain.

Mr. Gurian, who is married with two daughters, says the male brain secretes less of the primary bonding chemical oxytocin and of the calming chemical serotonin. It takes in less sensory detail than a woman’s, so a man does not see or even feel the dust and household mess in the same way.

IMF warns trade gap could bring down dollar. (*The Guardian*) The International Monetary Fund warned that the colossal U.S. trade deficit was a noose around the neck of the economy, emphasizing that the once mighty dollar could collapse at any moment.



Arguing that the world's big economies were already too dependent on the willingness of American consumers to live beyond their means, the IMF said the US could not continue to run a current account deficit of 5% of GDP.

The IMF's chief economist Kenneth Rogoff said that it was just a matter of time before the gap closed, tipping the dollar into a potentially steep fall. "If we were looking at a poor developing country, the world gives them just enough rope to hang themselves. A country like the United States, they give them enough rope to tie the noose around their neck several times. But it does happen in the end," he said. **(Dad:) The dollar will crash and burn one of these days, as I've said, and it will come as quite a shock both to America and the world. It's sinking against the euro and the yen right now. But when the crash itself comes, it will be sudden, causing "a mighty widening of the eyes among those who have not discerned the signs of the times!"**

Ask not what your country can do for you... (*Chicago Tribune*) If the U.S. national debt of \$7 trillion were broken down on a per capita basis, every man, woman and child in the country would now owe \$24,000.

Attitude is everything, especially as you age. (Stewart Elliott, *Scripps Howard News Service*) I once had an old friend and co-worker who greeted me every morning with the question, "How is your attitude?"

Frequently how we perceive things to be is more important than the actual circumstances. Nowhere is attitude more important than here in a nursing home. We see so many examples that prove that, "Attitude is everything."

My friend Richard Bell is paralyzed from the neck down, but he greets nearly everyone who enters his room with a smile. I understand he has been here for 14 years. I try to visit him daily and offer him something new to think about, but I'm sure I gain more from these visits than does Richard. He reminds me to check my attitude!

Another resident, much older but physically strong, has grown bitter with the years—resents the situation and

declines to be helped. The difference is attitude.

Of course, a good attitude is easy to write about but very hard to maintain—especially if you are sick or in pain. It will be much easier if you have worked at and maintained the right attitude while you are well.

My own attitude has been patched, repaired, overhauled and adjusted many times. The longer I work at it the easier it becomes, and when it is cheerful and positive, the world is a wonderful place—no matter where I live. **(Dad:) How's your attitude? Remember, whatever your circumstances, you can still choose to be happy!**

A society where human warmth is suspect. (Crispin Sartwell, *Los Angeles Times*) Before you touch anyone, consult a lawyer. Teaches, coaches, priests, ministers, and managers must now avoid even the most casual laying of hands on any man, woman, or child, lest they be sued for sexual harassment or charged with molestation. Soccer coaches can't give kids an encouraging pat on the shoulder, especially if the players are girls. Counselors can't apply sunscreen on young campers. Hugs, of course, are out of the question.

At colleges where I've taught philosophy, I've been told that "under no circumstances" should I touch a student—even when they come to my office, crying, and confessing to thoughts of suicide. For those of us who minister to other human beings, this is a sad state of affairs. Molestation, of course, is a serious affair. But in the end, a society that attempts to prevent perversity by banning all touching is itself perverse. **(Dad:) The sad state of the U.S.! Kids need hugs, kisses, a pat on the back, an arm around the shoulder—normal, natural physical affection. And sometimes they need the physical contact of discipline, too. So in shutting off the avenues of both affection and discipline, America is doing just what it's trying to avoid—abusing its kids.**

We pay government for this? (*The Week*) New York City's new 16-page anti-terrorism preparedness

manual, produced by a consortium of 20 government agencies, advises that if you encounter radiation in your home or office, you should go outside. The manual also suggests that if you find yourself holding a mysterious substance, put it down.

Why worry? (Zig Ziglar, Creators Syndicate) Worry has been described as "interest paid on trouble before it comes due." Worry is like a rocking chair, it requires a lot of energy, and it gets you nowhere. Leo Buscaglia said, "Worry never robs tomorrow of its sorrow, it only saps today of its joy."

Americans take more pills to forget more worries about more things than ever before, and more than any other nation in history. That's bad. According to Dr. Charles Mayo, "Worrying affects the circulation and the whole nervous system."

Mathematically speaking, it really doesn't make sense to worry. Psychologists and much research tell us that roughly 40 percent of what we worry about will never happen, and 30 percent has already happened. Additionally, 12 percent of our worries are over unfounded health concerns. Another 10 percent of our worries involve the daily miscellaneous fretting that accomplishes nothing. That leaves only 8 percent. Plainly speaking, people are worrying 92 percent of the time for no good reason, and if Mayo is right, it's killing us.

One simple solution that will reduce your worry is this: Don't worry about what you can't change. Instead, take constructive action and use the energy that would have been wasted on anger, frustration or worrying. If you don't like your situation in life, don't fret or worry—do something about it. **(Dad:) Have faith—or ask the Lord for it! Trusting in Him not only gives you peace of mind, but it allows Him to work out the situation you're worried about. And, if it's something you need to help work out, you can then proceed with faith and trust instead of fear or worry.**



WHY WORRY?

◆ A few for fun

Guinness gathers the weird and wonderful

REUTERS

If you can pluck a chicken in under 4.4 seconds or swallow 95 worms in half a minute, your chance of glory awaits in the ultimate achievers' book.

Keep bell-ringing till you are 101 years old or unhook 17 bras with one hand in under a minute, and your place is assured in *Guinness World Records*.

"People really do the most remarkable things," said Guinness editor Claire Folkard, reflecting on the book that gets 60,000 record claims a year.

The breathtaking and the bizarre abound in the 2004 edition. Dutchman Niek Vermeulen makes his claim to fame with a collection of 3,240 airline sick bags. Switzerland's Jean Francois Verneti has the world's largest collection of hotel "Do Not Disturb" signs. The world's largest Santa gathering was in Bralanda, Sweden, when 2,685 Father Christmases paraded down the main

street, to the confusion of the town's children.

The book was launched in 1954, brainchild of Hugh Beaver, managing director of the Guinness Brewery.

He was out shooting in Ireland and got into an argument about whether the golden plover ranked as Europe's fastest game bird.

Believing that records sparked pub and bar disputes around the world, he decided the time was right to produce the ultimate reference book for superlatives.