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Editorial

The Burial of Conviction

The word conviction, in our circles, as understood to mean a strong, productive belief. This is correct. It also means, "The judgment of a jury or judge that a person is guilty of a crime as charged." It is in this sense that the word conviction will be used in this article.

The 20th century has seen some of the most spectacular happenings of all times, as well as some terrible events, such as two world wars. Much of this has been duly recorded in numberless volumes and countless feet of film. The greatest disaster, however, is slipping by virtually unnoticed—the burial of conviction, which has been taking place especially during the last 50 years.

Through the ages man was aware of spiritual gravity which inexorably exerts a downward tug on human nature. While many surrendered to this force, they nevertheless recognized, at least to a degree, that this placed them under divine censure, if not condemnation.

Without the knowledge of this conviction, of this divine condemnatory sentence, there can be no repentance. Without this conviction, five thousand would not have gotten converted in one day under Peter's preaching. Without this conviction men and women, during some fifteen hundred years, would not have gotten converted as they saw the martyrs pay for their faith with their lives. And without this conviction a hundred and some souls would not have gotten converted at Lone Tree during one revival under Frank Haynes' preaching.

We sit down with our Financial and Activities Report booklet and hope to have an evening of inspirational reading. The facts stare us in the face. Mission outposts that were started 25 years ago, or more, bleakly announce: Membership, 5; Attendance, 7— or whatever.

We read about millions of tracts that are sent out in so many different languages at

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a cost of tens of thousands of dollars. That sort of makes one feel better. But where are the results?

It's easy to blame the people, the missionary, the mission or tract board. But let's face facts. Every member of the church can become a missionary, but if the people we preach to have buried their conviction, there won't be any converts. We can send out 10 million tracts a day, but if there isn't conviction, people won't even read them, and much less get converted.

Not only have the heathen, the worldlings, buried conviction. The principal activity of modern Christianity is to conduct a mass funeral for conviction.

Conviction, the knowledge that without a work of regeneration, man is condemned, is indeed becoming rare.

We see a carload of men traveling down a busy interstate. One dozes. Several converse. The driver pays attention to the road. Suddenly he sees a sign, which he reads aloud: "Sanitation Stop —one mile."

"What could that mean?" asks the one who moments before was sleeping.

"I'm sure I don't know, but right ahead there is a line-up of cars. Let's find out."

They park their vehicle on the shoulder of the highway, get out and begin walking to where a line is forming. They are amazed to see that most are dirty, unkempt creatures. Not only dirty, but positively filthy. Their long hair is matted with an accumulation of grime. If they are offensive to the eye, much more so to the nose.

Seeing a policeman along side the road, our four men stop to get some more information.

Our men: Hi. What's going on here?

Policeman: We've set up some facilities just ahead to clean people up.

Our men (their faces lighting up): Hey, that's great! Look at that old goat over there. Man, does he look awful! This will be the best thing that ever happened to him. (Looking at the policeman again, chuckling) Do you give those guys a haircut too?

Policeman: You better believe it! OK fellows, keep moving.

Our men: You mean we can get up closer and watch the action?

Policeman: You're going to see everything firsthand. (He smiles maliciously to himself as our men happily move ahead.)

Our men (among themselves): The government should have done this long ago. I can't stand to even look at these subhumans. I can hardly wait to see what these fellows will look like after being deloused, degreased and dehaired. (They laugh.)

Now there are policemen everywhere.

Our men (smiling broadly, walk up to a policeman): Right on, right on! You should have done this 20 years ago. We had about given up hopes that these subhumans would ever be run through a washing machine.

Policeman (showing no appreciation for their wit, points with his club): The line's over there. Move on!

Our men (still brimming with confidence): You don't understand. We're spectators.

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We've come to take some pictures. Folks back home will howl when we show them how you take care of subhumans over here.

Policeman (with a sharp edge to his voice): GET IN LINE!

Our men (still believing there has been a misunderstanding): Excuse us, sir, but we're, uh, exempt from this whole deal. See, our hair is neatly cut, we're clean. We all had showers this morning.

Policeman: MOVE ON!

Our men (by now becoming desperate): There has to be a mistake. Do we look like subhumans? Do we have long hair? Do we sound like subhumans? Do we smell like subhumans? No, no, this can't be. We're here to take pictures . . .

A half dozen lawmen now move in and swinging their clubs, none too gently herd our men into the line, where they are tightly jammed up against the subhumans. In a few minutes, they will enter an enclosure and have to strip. Their clothes, together with the subhuman's clothes, will be tossed into an incinerator. (Their camaras will have the same destiny.) Then they will be hosed down, together with the subhumans, with soapy water until everyone's skin is pink. Next comes the clippers. Finally they are issued identical coveralls and released.

As they return to their cars, our men and the subhumans look just alike. All are equally outraged.

Don't spend a lot of time chuckling about this little story. Really, it isn't funny at all.

The Bible says that all of our righteousness is like filthy rags. Even for us, this concept is becoming alarmingly elusive. Like our four men, we find it difficult to understand that without a cloak of righteousness furnished by the Savior, we are totally depraved. Instead of getting a hosing-down together with the smelly subhumans, we would like to spruce up and then go through customs. We'll let them go through our luggage and even take out some objectionable item. But not the hosing-down. Just stamp our passport and we'll move on.

This humanistic approach to salvation has reached epidemic proportions in the world today. That is why we have outposts with five members after 25 years. People no longer see themselves as lost sinners, and consequently when they hear the gospel preached they hold out their passport to have it stamped. When we tell them to get in line with the sinners and be cleansed, they look at us blankly and then go to the church of their choice. All day we hear the thud of passports being stamped.

Decidedly it is not popular to get in line with sinners for a hosing-down.

What has happened?

Man no longer sees himself as intrinsically wrong. He refuses to admit that, together with Adam and Eve, he too was expelled from Eden. So long as he lives a relatively moral life, he sees no need for a further commitment. After all, he isn't a filthy subhuman. In a word, man fails to recognize that he has been judged and pronounced guilty—convicted as charged.

When man loses his vision of the first death in the Garden, he loses his fear of the last death in hell. Christ's death on the cross is mistakenly seen as a substitute for the

death of flesh. This is the natural consequence of not understanding that the wages of sin is death.

Almost all major Christian religions today have elaborate fire escapes which give a second chance for redemption after death. Some p[r]ay their dead out of purgatory, some hope to redeem themselves through reincarnation, some believe that during a supposed one thousand year reign there will be a second chance, and others believe that after the soul has suffered sufficiently in hell, it will be destroyed. Down deep many believe that a loving God simply won't condemn anyone to eternal punishment.

Is it any wonder that man today is reluctant to be washed in the same fountain where the grossest of sinners wash?

And so, do we quit printing our Financial and Activities booklet so that people don't get discouraged? Do we shut our mission and tract programs down? Are we fighting a losing battle?

The answer to every question is a resounding NO. Every soul saved today is just as precious as the souls that were saved on the day of Pentecost. The fact that there are less doesn't change the Great Commission. The challenge is greater than ever. There are still those souls who are feeling the weight of their sins. These we cannot fail. We cannot lose those who have been washed in the blood—even if it's only two or three here and three or four there.

So long as there is one lost soul feeling the weight of sin and wanting to repent, we have work to do. God forbid that we be pallbearers in the burial of conviction. ▲

Brazilian Wildlife

By Dan Kramer

Sorriso, Mato Grosso

A Tall Tale Told Truthfully

The following tale came about through a physical fitness plan initiated by Franklin Coblenz.

Frank, together with John Kramer, had for some time already been getting up at 5:00 a.m. and jogging 1.5 kilometers down to our spring. They would do some exercises, take a dip in the spring and walk back home for breakfast.

Antônio Carlos and Kevin Hibner soon got the idea that they would like to join the fun. So it was made out that Frank and John would jog the three kilometers to the bridge and meet Antônio and Kevin, who had come two kilometers.

The bridge crosses a small river between our place and Glenn Hibner's place. On the bottom side there is a nice swimming hole where we bathed and washed clothes in the early days of our move here. On the top side a small platform has been built by the neighbors, on which they place gasoline powered pumps which are used to fill their

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water wagons. On the bottom side, the stream and banks have been cleaned up real nice, but the top side is still full of brush.

Now for the tale.

On Monday, March 24th, the second week of this new physical fitness program, the boys met as planned at the bridge. Kevin, who had come barefoot, sat down on the little platform and swished first one foot, and then the other, in the water to remove the sand, in preparation for undressing for a swim.

Remember it's 5:30 in the morning and barely getting light. Even so, reflexes already work. Proof of this is that when something grabbed Kevin's foot, he jerked it out of the water, yelling like he was losing his mind.

Those who were nearby and saw what happened claim that something about four inches in diameter was hanging onto his foot. With a few violent kicks, he was able to free himself from whatever was hanging on to him. Other than for several minor cuts on his foot and a set of frayed nerves, Kevin was in good shape.

But what was it? It was too dark to really tell. A fish . . . a snake . . . ?

Franklin, the swiftest runner, took out running for home. He rushed into our house and yelled, "Uncle! (huff, puff) Get the gun! (Huff, huff) There's a snake by the bridge—an anaconda. (Puff, puff) Don't tell the rest."

Once in the pickup and heading out toward the bridge, he continued his story. "It bit Kevin on the foot, but he doesn't want his mom to find out about it."

When we arrived at the bridge, it was daylight. As can be imagined, there was no snake to be seen anywhere. All that we had for sure was a lot of questions and one sore foot.

On Tuesday morning, at 4:15, on his way to Glens to catch a ride to Sorriso, Frank stopped by the bridge to check things out. Sure enough, there it was—an enormous snake! So he ran the rest of the way to Glens and told them what he had just seen. Quickly they all headed out to the bridge. And there the creature was. Someone managed to squeeze off one shot, but it was the snake's lucky day, so all it had to do was duck under the water and everything was OK. It's debatable whether it was poor light or poor aim that saved its life.

How big was it? Someone thought maybe three meters in length.

That evening Frank invited me to go the next morning to see if the snake had come back. I didn't really expect to see it, but did accept the offer to go along.

We arrived at the bridge about 5:20 the next morning, armed to the teeth. Once more, there it was. We brought along a spot light to solve the lighting problem. We had good hopes of solving the other problem too.

Careful aim and—Bang! A hit! The water roiled as the snake contorted, apparently fighting its last enemy. After a short time the activity in the water ceased and the monster turned belly up. What a scene! Who would have even imagined it would be this size?

Now all we had to do was get it out of the water, take it home and show it to the others. Simple.

Or so we thought.

Suddenly the snake came back to life. In a rapid movement it righted itself and slid under water, headed downstream. Our weapons were useless in this type of situation.

We too headed downstream. When it surfaced below the bridge, we managed to turn it back by shining the light in its eyes. Before we could get off another shot, it submerged again.

We wanted to try and follow the snake upstream, but we had a problem. Our light had to be hooked to a 12-volt battery. There was no way we could take our pickup upstream, so we quickly removed the battery, improvised a sling to carry it on the back, and then resumed our hunt.

Hacking a trail through the dense vegetation, we made our way up one bank of the river. Nothing. We crossed over to the other side and repeated the process. The results were the same.

In the meantime Kevin had shown up. It was most fitting that he, the one whom the snake had sought to devour, should spot it. Ready, aim, fire! This time it was riddled by more than one chunk of lead. Finally, not wanting to have a replay of act one, we ran it through with a handmade harpoon and drug it to shore.

How big was the big snake? A bit over 16 feet long. And so it was that the would-be man eater was eaten by man.

Was it Dangerous?

Was that big snake dangerous? Yes.

If it would have managed to drag Kevin into the river, could he have freed himself?

Very unlikely.

Remember that an anaconda in water is on home turf. Beside its powerful muscles that can crush bones like matchsticks, it has time in its favor. And while all this is going on, the snake is simply doing a day's work, but its victim is terrorized. Several minutes underwater, at the most, and the struggle is over.

Fortunately, documented cases of humans being devoured by anacondas are extremely rare. Likely it's not because they're up on human rights. Maybe it's because they are a bit picky on what kind of meat they eat. ▲

Linguistics

How Do We Sound?

I suspect that not all of you good readers are especially interested in linguistics. But those of you who have learned a second language, have doubtlessly many times asked yourselves: How do I sound to others?

Recently, Shirley, Mrs. Paul Koepl, loaned me a copy of *The Education of HHYHMHAAHN KHAHPHLHAAHN*, by Leonard Q. Ross. After a few minutes of reading, it was easy to see that I had hit upon a real jewel. Anyone who has learned

a second language will feel like he is slipping into a pair of old shoes as he listens to Hyman Kaplan express himself. It proves graphically that it is possible to become fluent in incorrect Portuguese, Spanish, German, Russian—you name it. Once that happens, the die is cast. As the tongue learneth, so shall it speak.

The stars which Mr. Kaplan places in his name (with colored crayons) are but one of his very distinctive trademarks, as you will soon see.

“O Kaplan! My Kaplan!” from *THE EDUCATION OF HYMAN KAPLAN*, by Leonard Q. Ross, copyright 1937 by Harcourt Brace & Company and renewed 1964 by Leo Rosten, reprinted by permission of the publisher.

O Kaplan! My Kaplan!

Mr. Parkhill was not surprised when the first three students to participate in Recitation and Speech practice delivered eloquent oration on “Abraham Lincoln,” “Little George and the Sherry Tree,” and “Wonderful U.S.,” respectively. For the activities of the month of February had injected a patriot fervor into the beginners’ grade, an amor patriae which would last well into March. There was a simple enough reason for this phenomenon: Mr. Robinson, principal of the school, did not allow either Lincoln’s or Washington’s Birthday to pass without appropriate ceremonies. On each occasion the whole student body would crowd into Franklin Hall, the largest of the five rooms occupied by the school, to commemorate the nativity of one of the two great Americans.

At the Lincoln assembly, Mr. Robinson always gave a long eulogy entitled “The Great Emancipator.” (“His name is inscribed on the immortal roll of history, in flaming letters of eternal gold!”) A “prize” student from the graduating class delivered a carefully corrected speech on “Lincoln and the Civil War”—a rather short speech. Then Miss Higby recited “O Captain! My Captain!” to an audience which listened with reverently bated breath.

For the Washington convocation, the order of things was much the same. Mr. Robinson’s address was entitled “The Father of His Country.” (“First in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen—his name burns in the hearts of true Americans, each letter a glowing ember, a symbol of his glorious achievement!”) The prize student’s speech was on “Washington and the American Revolution.” And Miss Higby recited “My Country, ’Tis of Thee.” (Miss Higby often remarked that it was a sad commentary on our native bards that there was no poem as perfectly appropriate for Washington as “O Captain! My Captain!” was for Lincoln.)

The result of these patriotic rites was that for weeks afterward, each year, the faculty would be deluged with compositions on Lincoln, even little poems on Lincoln or Washington. Night after night, the classrooms echoed with the hallowed phrases “1776,” “Father of His Country,” “The Great Emancipator,” “The Civil War,” “Honest

Abe,” “Valley Forge.” Mr. Parkhill found it a nerve-sapping ordeal. He thought of this annual period as “the Ides of February and March.”

“I will spik ona Garibaldi,” announced Miss Caravello, the fourth student to face the class.

Mr. Parkhill felt a surge of gratitude within him. It was, however, short-lived.

“Garibaldi—joosta lak Washington! Firsta da war, firsta da peace, firsta da heartsa da countrymens!”

In the middle of the front row, Mr. Hyman Kaplan printed his name aimlessly for the dozenth time on a large sheet of foolscap, and sighed. Mr. Kaplan had been sighing, quite audibly, throughout each of the successive historico-patriotic declamations. Mr. Parkhill felt a distinct sense of comradeship with Mr. Kaplan.

“Hisa name burns, like Mist’ Principal say. Da ‘g,’ da ‘a,’ da ‘r,’ da ‘i’...” Miss Caravello articulated th;e letters with gusto. Mr. Norman Bloom sharpened his pencil. Miss Schneiderman stared into space, vacantly. Mrs. Moskowitz rounded out the latest of a lengthy series of yawns. Mr. Parkhill frowned.

“Hooray Washington! Viva Garibaldi!”

In a fine Latin flush, Miss Caravello resumed her seat. Mr. Kaplan sighed again, rather more publically. eHnHnHuHi was stamped on Mr. Kaplan’s features.

“Corrections, please,” Mr. Parkhill announced, trying to be as cheery as possible.

The zest of competition animated the class for a few brief moments. Miss Mitnick began the discussion, commenting on Miss Caravello’s failure to distinguish between the past and present tenses of verbs, and her habit of affixing mellifluous ‘a’s to prosaic Anglo-Saxon words. Mr. Pinsky suggested, with a certain impatience, that it was ‘foist in war, foist in peace, foist in the hots his countryman.”

“How you can comparink a Judge Vashington mit a Gary Baldy?” Mr. Kaplan remarked with icy scorn. “Ha!”

Mr. Parkhill quickly spread oil on the troubled nationalistic waters. To avoid an open clash (Miss Caravello had long ago allied herself with the Mitnick forces in the Kaplan-Mitnick vendetta), and in an effort to introduce a more stimulating note into Recitation and Speech, Mr. Parkhill said, “Er—suppose you speak next, Mr. Kaplan.” Mr. Parkhill had learned to respect the catalytic effect of Mr. Kaplan’s performances, oral or written.

Mr. Kaplan’s ever-incipient smile burst into full bloom. He advanced to the front of the room, stuffing crayons into his pocket. Then he buttoned his coat with delicate propriety, made a little bow to Mr. Parkhill, and began, “Ladies an’ gantleman, faller-students, an’ Mr. Pockheel.” He paused for the very fraction of a moment, as if permitting the class to steel itself; then, in a dramatic voice, he cried, “judge vashington, abram lincohen, an’ jake popper!”

The class was galvanized out of its lassitude. Other students, less adventurous students, might undertake comments on Lincoln or Washington, but only Mr. Kaplan had the vision and the fortitude to encompass Lincoln and Washington—to say nothing of “Jake Popper.”

“Er—Mr. Kaplan,” suggested Mr. Parkhill anxiously. “It’s George Washington,

not ‘Judge.’ And Abraham Lincoln, not Abram Lincohen.’ Please try it again.” (Mr. Parkhill could think of nothing revelant to say in regard to “Jake Popper.”)

“jawdge vashington, abraham lincollen, an’ jake popper!” Mr. Kaplan repeated, with renewed ardor. “Is dat right, Mr. Pockheel?”

Mr. Parkhill decided it might be best to let well enough alone. “It’s—er—better.”

“Hau Kay! So foist about Jawdge Vashington. He vas a fine man. Ectually Fodder fromm His Contry, like dey say. Ve hoid awreddy, fromm planty students, all abot his movvellous didds. How, by bein even a leetle boy, he chopped don de cherries so he could answer, ‘I cannot tell lies, Papa. I did it mit mine leetle hatchik!’ But ve shouldn’t forgat dat Vashington vas a beeg ravolutionist! He was fightink for Friddom, against de Kink England, King Jawdge Number Tree, dat tarrible autocrap who—”

“ ‘Autocrat!’ ” Mr. Parkhill put in, but too late.

“—who vas puddink stemp on tea even, so it tasted bed, an’ Jawdge Vashington trew de tea in Boston Hobber, drassed op like a Hindian. So vas de Ravolution!”

The class, Mr. Parkhill could not help observing, hung on Mr. Kaplan’s every word, entranced by his historiography.

“Jawdge Vashinton vas a hero. A foist-class hero! In de meedle de coldest vedder he crossed de ice in a leetle boat, he should cetch de Bridish an’ de missionaries—”

“ ‘Mercenaries,’ Mr. Kaplan, ‘mercenaries!’ ”

“—foolink around, not mit deir minds on de var!” Mr. Kaplan, having finished the sentence, said, “Podden me, Moisinaries’ I mant!” and, with scarcely a break in his stride, continued. “So efter de ravolution de pipple said, ‘Jawdge Vashington, you our hero an’ lidder! Ve elactink you Prazident!’ So he vas elected Prazident U.S.—anonymously!”

Mr. Parkhill’s “ ‘Unanimously!’ ” was lost in Mr. Kaplan’s next words.

“An’ like Mr. Robinson said, ‘In Vashington’s name is itch ladder like a coal, boinink ot his gloryous achivmants!’ ”

Mr. Kaplan ended the peroration with a joyous sweep of the arm.

“Mr. Kaplan!” Mr. Parkhill took the occasion to interrupt firmly. “You must speak more slowly, and—er—more carefully. You are making too many mistakes, far too many. It is very dificult to correct your English.” Mr. Parkhill was aware that “Abraham Lincollen an’ Jake Popper” were still to come.

Mr. Kaplan’s face fell as he recognized the necessity of smothering the divine fire which flamed within him. “I’ll try mine bast,” he said. In a gentler mood, he continued. “Vell, I said a lot of fine tings abot Jawdge Vashington. But enyho, is Abraham Lincollen more close to me. Dat Abraham Lincollen! Vat a sweet man. Vat a fine cherecter. Vat a hot—like gold! Look!” Mr. Kaplan pointed dramatically to the lithograph of the Great Emancipator which hung on the back wall; the heads of the students turned. “Look on his face! Look his ice, so sad mit fillink. Look his mot, so full goodness. Look de high forehat—dat’s showink smotness, brains!” Mr. Kaplan’s invidious glance toward Miss Caravello left no doubt that this high quality was missing in “Gary Baldy.” “Look de honest axpression! I esk, is it a vunder dey callink him ‘Honest Abie?’ ”

“ ‘Honest Abe!’ ” Mr. Parkhill exclaimed with some desperation, but Mr. Kaplan, carried away by the full, rich sweep of his passion, had soared on.

“No, it’s no vunder. He vas a poor boy, a voodchopper, a rail-splinter like dey say. He made de Tsvivil Var! Oh my, den vas tarrible times! Shoodink, kiillink, de Naut Site U.S.A. aganst de Sot Site U.S.A. Black neegers aganst vwhite, brodder fightink brodder, de Blues mit de Grays. An’ who von? Who? Ha! Abraham Lincollen von, netcherally! So he made de neegers should be like vwhite. Ufcawss, Lincollen didn’t change de collars,” Mr. Kaplan footnoted with scholarly discretion. “Dey vas still black. But free black, not slafe black. Den”—Mr. Kaplan’s voice took on a pontifical note—“Lincollen gave ot de Mancipation Procklimation. Dat vas, dat all men are born an’ created in de same vay! So he vas killed.”

Exhausted by this mighty passage, Mr. Kaplan paused. Mrs. Moskowitz chose the opportunity to force down a yawn.

“Vell, vat’s got all dis to do mit Jake Popper?” Mr. Kaplan asked suddenly. He had taken the question out of the very mouths of Miss Mitnick, Mr. Bloom, et al. It was a triumph of prescience. “Vell, Jake Popper vas also a fine man, mit a hot like gold. Ve called him ‘Honest Jake.’ Ufcawss, Jake Popper vasn’t a beeg soldier; he didn’t make Velley Fudges or free slafes. Jake Popper had a delicatessen store.” (The modest schrug which accompanied this sentence made it live and breath: “Jake Popper had a dalictassen store.”) “an’ in his store could even poor pipple mitout money, always gat somting to eat—if dey vas honest. Jake Popper did a tremandous beeg business—on cradit. An’ averybody loved him.

“Vun day vas ‘Honest Jake’ fillink bed. He had hot an’ cold vaves on de body by de same time; vat ve call a fivver. So averybody said, ‘Jake, lay don in bad, rast.’ But did Jake Popper lay don in bad rast? No! He stayed in store, day an’ night. He said, ‘I got to tink abot mine customers!’” Dat’s de kind high sanse duty he had!”

Whether from throat strain or emotion, a husky tone crept into Mr. Kaplan’s voice at this point.

“Den de doctor came an’ said, ‘Popper, you got bronxitis!’ So Jake vent in bad. An’ he got voise an’ voise. So de doctor insulted odder doctors—”

“ ‘Consulted’ other—”

“—an’ dey took him in Mont Sinai Hospital. He had double demonia! So dere vas spacial noises, an’ fromm all kinds maditzins de bast, an’ an oxen tant, he should be able to breed. Even blood confusions dey gave him!”

“ ‘Transfusions,’ Mr. Kaplan!” It was no use. Mr. Kaplan, like a spirited steed, was far ahead.

“An’ dey shot him in de arm, he should fallink aslip. Dey gave him epidemics.” Mr. Parkhill estimated his speed and made no protest. “An’ efter a vwhile, ‘Honest Jake’ Popper pest away.”

Mr. Kaplan’s face was bathed in reverence, suffused with lofty dignity. Mrs. Moskowitz yawned no more; she was shaking her head sadly, back and forth, back and forth. (Mrs. Moskowitz wore her heart on her sleeve.)

“So in Jake Popper’s honor I made dis leettle spitch. An’ I vant also to say for him somting like ‘O Ceptin! My Ceptin!’—dat Miss Higby said abot Abraham Lincollen. I got fromm her de voids.” Mr. Kaplan took a piece of paper out of an inner vest pocket, drew his head up high, and, as Mr. Parkhill held his breath, read:

“O hot! hot! hot!
O de bliddink drops rad!
Dere on de dack
Jake Popper lies,
Fallink cold an’ dad!”

Celestial wings fluttered over the beginners’ grade of the American Night Preparatory School for Adults, whispering of the grandeur that was Popper.

“Isn’t dat beauriful?” Mr. Kaplan mused softly, with the detachment of the true artist. “My!”

Mr. Parkhill was just about to call for corrections when Mr. Kaplan said, “Vun ting more I should say, so de cless shouldn’t fill too bed abot Jake Popper. It’s awreddy; nine yiss since he pest away!”

Mr. Moskowitz shot Mr. Kaplan a furious look: her tender emotions had been cruelly exploited.

“An’ I didn’t go to de funeral!” On this strange note, Mr. Kaplan took his seat.

The class hummed, protesting against this anticlimax which left so much to the imagination.

“Why you didn’t?” cried Mr. Bloom, with a knowing nod to the Misses Mitnick and Caravello.

Mr. Kaplan’s face was a study in sufferance. “Becawss de funeral vas in de meedle of de veek,” he sighed. “An’ I said to minesalf, ‘Keplen, you in America, so tink like de Americans tink!’ So I tought an’ I didn’t go. Becawss I tought of dat dip American idea, ‘Business bafore pleasure!’ ” ▲

Perdigão

Things Are Moving

Nearly 30 years ago, when the Colony came into existence, the average tract of land purchased by the first families was something like a thousand acres. Enough land was cleared to get the ball rolling. Gradually the entire place was cleared and as the children went on their own, they each got their tract of land. It worked very well.

Now these children are grown men and women with children who are going on their own. But for them land isn’t as readily available as it was for their parents. To purchase land on or near the Colony they will have to pay nearly a thousand dollars

an acre. With no real estate financing available, that pretty well rules out buying land in this area.

There is the option of relocating where land is cheaper. But that should be done by a group so that there can also be a church. Mato Grosso has such a group. Fairly cheap land can be bought near the Pirenópolis congregation. But the truth of the matter is that not everyone is wanting to leave the comforts of Rio Verde.

As we have reported before, today we have another option—raising hogs or broilers for Perdigão.

On May 21, Perdigão officials had a meeting on the Colony to explain what they have in mind. While they didn't say this openly, in a private conversation it was mentioned again that the Colony had a very definite influence in their choice of Rio Verde. They want people who live on the farm and who will work together as a family.

There are three options for working together with Perdigão.

Broilers. The barns will hold 23,500 birds and will cost a maximum of \$85,000. They recommend that only 75% be financed, although the bank will finance 100%. The World Bank, working through the Banco do Brasil, will give 12-year financing on these barns.

They calculate that with reasonable care, farmers should make 13 cents profit per bird. With really good care this can go up another two or three cents. Possibly even more. I understand that by N American standards this would be very little. But our investment here is considerably less than there. Maybe it all sort of evens out in the end.

Hogs. This is divided into two stages. In the first the piglets are raised from birth to two months, or to approximately 50 pounds. It is in this first stage where the money is—in both investment and profits. For a setup with 520 sows, the investment is \$522,000.

In the second stage, which takes the 50 pound pigs and raises them to 265 pounds, the investment is \$132,000. This operation can handle 1,006 pigs at a time, divided into two barns.

On these investments, the people from Perdigão believe that if we do our own building, the price can be dropped somewhat.

Are the people on the Colony interested. Some are. Some aren't. At this point it is hard to say how many will get involved.

This even presents opportunity for you folks in N America. Since 75% of the investment can be financed at low interest, it certainly will take less money than to buy a farm and get into farming. Perdigão has good relations with officials in Brasília and has offered to help with any visa problems.

The big opportunity, though, at this point is to build barns. On the hog end of things, there will be 60 first stage modules and 272 second stage modules. In the poultry operation, there will be 478 modules. That's a heap of building. So if anyone wants to come down and build for several years, now is the time.

Keep tuned in. This project may produce some interesting news yet. ▲

Life in Brazil

Moto Táxi

In N America you shorten the word motorcycle by using the last half—cycle. Here we do the opposite. Motocicleta becomes moto.

So then moto táxi, very obviously, would be a motorcycle taxi. They're the rage in Brazil. I suspect we'll see them around for quite some time.

In developing nations, not everyone can afford a car. That usually means going to work, or any other place for that matter, on the bus. While relatively inexpensive, it is anything but a pleasant way to travel. In Goiânia sister Isabel spends two hours on the bus, or waiting for the next bus, to get to church on Sunday. And two hours to go home. In a car it would take maybe 15 minutes.

Needless to say, anyone who can afford to have his own cycle or vehicle, or is able to pay a normal taxi, won't very likely be seen on a moto táxi. Not too many years ago girls and women would have thought twice before using this mode of transportation. Today it isn't unusual to see a mother with a baby in her arms riding on a moto táxi.

I don't know what the moto táxi charge in other cities, but in Rio Verde they will take you anyplace within city limits for one real—approximately one dollar. Since a bus fare is 55 cents, and it doesn't usually stop exactly where the passenger is wanting to go, to pay not quite double that on a moto táxi really is a tremendous bargain.

That's on the positive side. On the other side, imagine what it is to ride on one of these things on a rainy day, or a cold day. Worst of all, they are dangerous. Many of the cyclists apparently see themselves as exempt from normal traffic rules. I suspect that one of these days authorities will be clamping down on these Formula 1 drivers.

What do the regular taxi drivers think about this new breed of taxis? Nothing. Someone who has money to ride in a conventional taxi won't be seen on a moto táxi. That's about the long and the short of it. ▲

This Month on the Colony

Auction Sales

You readers will probably have noticed by now that sales here on the Colony are quite a social event. Not only for us, but for neighbors and people from town who come out too.

Our sale manager is Glenn Hibner. The fact that he is now living in Mato Grosso makes it a bit more complicated for him. Even so, it works.

This year we had two sales. On May 3, Wayland & Rita Loewen sold their belongings. They are moving to Georgia, where he bought a farm. On May 10, Paul & Shirley Koepl sold out. They are moving to Oregon to be with his mother.

With both Americans and Brazilians present in the auctions, in what language is the auctioning done? In a dialect of Portuguese. You see, it's not the way Brazilians auction, but it is understandable. Judging by the price some things bring, it can't be too bad. Brazilians love it. Occasionally, when only Americans are bidding on an item, the auctioneer switches to English. Brazilians love that too.

Very few people enjoy an auction sale more than a fellow by the name of Pedrão—Big Pete. He is one of these fellows who just naturally is the center of attention no matter where he goes.

Big Pete feels for an auction sale what a fisherman feels for a river. When items are being sold which he considers to be of no value, you will find him out in the food section getting something to eat, or under a shade tree talking to friends.

But when the items being sold are to his interest, then Big Pete comes alive. He'll be right up front, close to the auctioneer, with a malicious grin smeared all over his face. This grin becomes especially intense when an item is held up that he sees as a fish worthy of being caught.

Contrary to the conventional sale-goer, Big Pete doesn't believe in giving just a tiny little bid to see how cheap he can get an item. "What am I bid?" That's Big Pete's cue. "FIFTY!" he will yell for all to hear, deep contentment stamped on his face as he sees the shocked looks of others. That's maybe ten times more than what someone more timid would have quietly called out. The effect is electrifying. Suddenly others realize how badly they want that exact item. The auctioneer senses what is happening and ups the graduation of the bids.

Big Pete is now in the height of glory. He knows against whom he is bidding and regards each one as a fencing partner. There can be only one victor. After loudly announcing his bid, he smugly awaits his adversary to come in with the next thrust (which usually takes just a bit). And then, while the next bid is still between the auctioneer's tongue and teeth, Big Pete has already raised his hand, nodded his head, smiled, and yelled his acceptance.

Does Big Pete ever come out the loser? Never, never. All of a sudden, just when he should erupt with a new bid, he will cross his arms and give his adversary a condescending smile which so clearly says: Man, what ever ailed you to pay such an outrageous price for that item? You've got to be sick.

And when Big Pete ends up with an item at an outrageous price? There is no such thing. When the last bid is his, his enormous smile leaves no doubt but what he has just made a tremendous deal. He holds out his hand to take possession of the item just purchased with the same fervor that Napoleon showed when he snatched the crown out of the pope's hands and crowned himself. He is total victor, no matter what.

Big Pete is a salesman and has a natural knack at analyzing human nature. During the last sale he came up with the story that I am counterfeiting money in the shop. According to his version of things, he even ended up being the recipient of some of this money. He claimed that my brother-in-law saw him deposit the money in the Banco do Brasil.

So I told him, “Well, Pedrão, when we run across my brother-in-law, we’ll ask him about.” We both knew he wouldn’t lie.

Big Pete gave a boisterous laugh. “It won’t do any good to ask him. All he’ll do is ... and here he gave a most accurate demonstration of how my brother-in-law would laugh)... when you ask him.”

And so, a little while later when we ran across my brother-in-law, I told him the story, with Big Pete confidently gazing down at me.

I asked, “Leo, did you see Big Pete deposit some money in the Banco do Brasil on such and such a day?”

“Ha, ha, ha.” (Brother-in-law)

“Ha, ha, ha.” (Big Pete).

That was really quite a blow, but hoping that my brother-in-law would catch my desperate look, I repeated the question.

“Ha, ha, ha.”

“Ha, ha, ha.”

I think I’m going to try and sell a brother-in-law at the next sale. (Big Pete will be out eating a hotdog someplace while the bidding is going on.) ▲

This & That

May 1 is Labor Day here in Brazil. Laborers celebrate by not laboring. They ought to come up with Lazy Man’s Day. Then everyone who hates work would have to work like a slave for a day. That would be one greeeeat holiday.

On May 7 was the Monte Alegre School end-of-the-year program. There were nine graduates. Play day, which officially ends the school year, was on the 8th. This event is enjoyed by children and grownups alike. The schoolboard goes to a lot of work to make it an enjoyable time for everyone. Besides the games and prizes for the small children, there is a real McCoy churrasco at noon and ice cream cones later in the afternoon. The older children, together with the youth and some married men and women, play softball and volleyball. What we have just said would apply to the Rio Verdinho School too. One thing is sure, at the end of the day there are a bunch of tired people.

Eduardo Silva, a young brother from the Patos mission church spent nearly a month here.

Robson & Glauciene Gold moved to Rio Verde, where he is helping his brother in an ice cream store.

On May 8, Ike & Rosalie Loewen sort of moved back to the US.

Anthony & Wynelle Koehn moved into Ike’s house.

On May 12, the Rio Verdinho School had it’s end-of-the-year program. There were three graduates. The next day was their play day.

The Daniel Martin family spent some time in the Curitiba, Paraná area, visiting the Roberto Amorim family and the Mennonites who live in that area.

On May 14 was Sherilyn, Mrs. Roger Hibner's baby shower.

Carlinhos & Maria Ferreira moved to the Colony into the little house on what used to be Harold Dirks' place, which now belongs to Divino Cândido, from Goiânia.

Mark & Glenda Loewen spent several days in Pirenópolis visiting the congregation. They had one baptism.

On May 18, the Wayland Loewen family left for the US. Chris & Anita Stoltzfus bought the place and moved in several weeks later.

On May 20, the Schrock sisters (Rufus & Esther Schrock's daughters), who were teaching school here, left for the US. They flew together with the Daniel Holdeman, Paul Koepl and Lynn Schultz families.

On May 22, we celebrated our Colony Thanksgiving Day.

On May 22, Duane & Frances Holdeman left for the US.

Edinei & Janete Alves spent the May 25 weekend in Cachoeira Dourada, showing off their little boy to her mother.

The Stanley Schultz family and Ileen Koehn went on a trip to Mato Grosso.

The Jesse Loewen family is spending a few days in Curitiba visiting Roberto Amorim and other friends.

On May 28, the Literature Center trustees, together with the youth, had a work day at the Center. In the evening they had a picnic at Earl Schmidt's dam.

Carman & Celma Loewen and children spent a few days in Mato Grosso visting her sister who lives there.

Laura Costa and Jean moved into Paul & Shirley Koepl's house.

Fernando Henrique Cardoso, is the right man at the right time for the right job.

His biggest triumph so far is having tamed inflation. It appears we'll have an annual rate of something like 8%. For Brazil that is tremendous. The standard of living is definitely coming up for the poorer class.

But he has his problems. One of them is the sem terras—literally without land. In other words, people who don't own a piece of land, but think they should. Organized by professional agitators, these sem terra invade both farms and apartment buildings in construction and then refuse to leave. These invaders are dangerous men and with their crude weapons will put up a stout fight. Officials have tried to reason with them, but President Cardoso is finding out that these men aren't interested in reasoning. He has come to realize that it's going to take some determination to not let this thing get out of hand.

Another problem that he's having is quite common to top level public officials. Almost invariably these men have a henchman who does the behind-the-scenes work that they for moral or political reasons prefer not to do. These henchmen are usually highly intelligent and at times become the de facto president, ruling from backstage.

President Cardoso has such a man. I don't know what he would do without him. And at times I believe he doesn't know what he will do with him. But that is politics. Some politicians are more honest than others, but folks, never expect to find one who is totally honest.