

PASTOR GENERAL'S REPORT

TO THE MINISTRY OF THE
WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD



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FROM MINISTERIAL SERVICES

International News

1983 Summary From the British Isles Excellent responses to the late 1983 advertising program have made a fitting end to a year of circulation growth. The overall response to date has surpassed the most optimistic expectations. Already over 33,000 new subscribers have been added to the U.K. list. The READER'S DIGEST advertisement has drawn 13,889 responses up till January 18th--0.94% of the circulation. The ad in the SUNDAY TIMES color supplement has reached a remarkable response rate of 1.11%, while response to the OBSERVER insertion distribution is almost 5,000. The result of all this promotion is that for the first time in 10 years, subscriber circulation has passed the 100,000 mark, having reached 102,000.

A further effect of the advertising program has been the dramatic upsurge in mail received. Up until the end of November, mail was down three percent over 1982, but at the end of December this had changed to a 19% increase.

The total increase in income in the U.K. for 1983 was 17% over 1982.

Middle East: December was a record month for mail received from the Middle East. The count was 34% up for November and 65% up for December. PLAIN TRUTH circulation in the Middle East is now at an all-time high of 8,700. Interest in The PLAIN TRUTH and other Church literature has been steadily increasing, and incoming mail is up 24.1% over 1982. The number of booklets mailed is up 51.5%. The general increase in interest from this critical area probably reflects the tension and trouble that exists there.

Canadian Year-end Report 1983 is now history for God's Church in Canada. With income picking up as the year drew to a close, the month of December finished with a 4.4% increase. Early indicators during the month seemed to point to a minus for December income, but needless to say, it was a pleasure to see the negative trend reversed. This increase brought the year-to-date increase to 11.8%. Considering the state of the economy and high unemployment still prevalent in Canada, everyone was grateful to God for this increase.

A total of 487,658 pieces of mail were received in 1983 (down 7.6% over 1982), but 1,721,100 pieces of literature were mailed out, an increase of 7.6%.

During the past year, over four million magazines (French and English) were distributed through the newsstand program. Added to the subscription copies, the total circulation each month is over 700,000. 96,775 new subscribers were added to the English file and 24,676 to the French, bringing the total subscribers to 223,489 and 77,138 respectively.

Church attendance increased 6.5% over 1982; baptisms were up 16.8% (452 in 1983); membership went up 4.9% to 6,346 (of which 498 are French speaking). 1,137 new visit requests were received for an increase of 4.5%.

1983 saw good steady growth for God's Church in Canada and the same is anticipated this year.

Netherlands Year-end Summary 1983 was a very good year for the work of God's Church in the Netherlands. Some 16,000 new subscribers were added to the list of De ECHTE WAARHEID, an increase of 34.6% compared to 1982. Ads were placed in the Dutch and Belgium Automobile Association magazine and in TV guides, and flyers were placed in De TELEGRAAF, a national newspaper. The average response was 1.5% at a cost of \$3.50 per response.

Twelve new booklets were translated in 1983, bringing the total number of Dutch-language booklets to 40--40% more than in 1982.

In 1983, 12 people were baptized, bringing the membership total to 201. Church attendance went up from 277 to 294 in the Dutch-language area, which consists of four church areas. Weekly Sabbath services are held in the Dutch language in Zwolle, De Bilt and Tilburg. The De Bilt Church (just outside Utrecht) offers simultaneous translations into English for visitors. Twice-a-month services are held in Antwerp, Belgium, also in Dutch.

Several outdoor and indoor social activities were held in all four congregations. The Dutch-language area has a healthy and active YOC consisting of 25 members, of which 18 were able to attend the SEP camp in Scotland.

Financially, the year ended with a small increase of 0.17% at an inflation rate of 2.4%. While the number of co-workers dropped slightly, the increase in donors was a fine 30.6%.

The Feast of Tabernacles will again be held in Hoogeveen, "De Tamboer" in the beautiful province of Drenthe, with adequate bungalow and motel accommodations within driving distance.

Mr. Armstrong has approved a spring 1984 advertising campaign; we are looking forward to being a blessing to the descendants of Jacob in this part of the world.

Comments From Monthly Church Reports

From the United States

VISALIA, CA--GLEN WHITE: The PMs who are attending Church are actively seeking baptism. We've had several dramatic interventions in healing and other encouragement among several of our PMs. Overall growth is good and solid.

BETHLEHEM, PA--RAY LISMAN: I seem overloaded with counselings! My evenings are booked up at least two weeks in advance all the time. I am very encouraged that the members are wanting to talk about their problems and trials, which shows that there is a desire to change.

CHAMPAIGN, IL--RANDY HOLM: Baptismal counselling among the youth in my congregations is increasing greatly. There were many positive comments from members about wanting to fulfill their responsibilities more fully after Mr. Kelly's sermon tape.

YOUNGSTOWN, OH--EUGENE NOEL: New PMs continue to come along well. The Church is growing spiritually and in numbers as well. The economy is still bad with 14% unemployment, which has affected several families. Three families have recently moved south as a result.

CLARKSBURG, WV--STEVE SCHANTZ: Even though unemployment has affected many families physically, the overall attitude of the brethren is very positive and involved in the Church. We had ten new PT newsstand locations open up in one week! Some of the men who have been Church members for years are participating in Spokeman Club for the first time.

FORT WORTH, TX--BOB SMITH: We have been thrilled with the response to the Dallas/Fort Worth Airport PLAIN TRUTH display stands. Incredibly, it seems we will be making available to the rushing airline traffic the staggering number of 10,000 PLAIN TRUTH magazines per month. And that is through only four display islands.

--Joe Tkach, Ministerial Services

AMBASSADOR COLLEGE UPDATE

(Pasadena Campus)

The second semester of the college year has gotten off to a good start here at Pasadena--and also at Big Sandy. Mr. Greg Albrecht, Pasadena Dean of Students, just returned from spending a week at Big Sandy, where he taught certain classes, spoke at the Forum, and gave a sermon in Dallas on the Sabbath. He had a busy, productive and profitable week at our sister campus in Texas.

Mr. Rod Meredith is scheduled to spend a week on the campus in Texas in the not-too-distant future. Then, I plan to be there for a week in late March. These faculty exchanges have proven to be very profitable. Later, Messrs. Les McCullough and Larry Salyer each plan to spend a week on the campus here in Pasadena.

The January 24, 1984 issue of the AMBASSADOR PORTFOLIO was one of the very best ever. Page one featured a large picture of the student body waving to Mr. Armstrong, along with an open letter to the Founder and Chancellor of the College, in recognition of the Work's fiftieth anniversary.

On page three of this same issue of the PORTFOLIO, we read: "Last week started the long and detailed process of reviewing applications for Ambassador College. So far this year there have been 1,184 application forms sent out. Add to that 141 forms that are already on file from last year that will be reevaluated this year, and there are a total of 1,325 forms in circulation. Of these, however, only 164 have been returned. These added to the original 141 makes a total of 305 active applications, of which 80 are completed and ready for review."

We don't yet know for sure just how many freshmen we will be able to enroll at Pasadena next college year, but if we can send about 20 sophomores to Big Sandy (last year we sent about 40), we may be able to accept approximately 130 new students. Some of the details are yet to be worked out concerning

how many 1984 graduates of the two-year program at Big Sandy will be accepted to Pasadena next fall. We also hope to accept a few more of the 1983 graduates from Big Sandy--graduates who were not accepted on the four-year program for the present college year at Pasadena.

I am sure that all of you are aware that Ambassador accepts a number of international students from Third World countries. In all instances such students have been recommended by their Regional Directors. Also, some of them have been assisted financially by their Regional Offices, or by Ambassador College.

Since Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong put Ambassador College back on track, we are having some very good results and comments from the international students. Unfortunately, in past years some of the international students who attended Ambassador became cynical and "turned off toward the Work" by the doctrinal and other problems which formerly existed at Ambassador College in Pasadena. But thanks to God we no longer have such unfortunate problems.

I would like to quote a portion of a letter which I recently received from Mr. and Mrs. Lateef Edalere who live in Lagos, Nigeria. Mr. and Mrs. Edalere were shining examples of true Christians while they were in Pasadena. We certainly did enjoy having them with us at the College here--even if it was for only one year. I don't think any of us here will easily forget their good cheer and smiling faces. They really did radiate gratitude for being able to attend Ambassador.

Here are a few quotes from Mr. Edalere's recent letter to me:

Dear Mr. and Mrs. McNair:

Greetings from Lagos, Nigeria! It is unbelievable that six months have passed since our departure from Pasadena....

Yvonne and I believe our exposure to AC was well timed by God. Apart from being a "breather" after nine years in Nigeria, it strengthened and encouraged us spiritually.

We were able to witness God's love in action through the vehicle of His Apostle and his personal aides and advisers. We have seen and imbibed in the beauty and joy of working in harmony with the students and ministers. Just as the Church is the only life-giving organ in this dying world, so AC is an oasis of knowledge with which to feed that organ. The desire at AC to achieve excellence in all areas has afforded us much knowledge--both by observation and listening. Our children also gained a great deal from attending Imperial School and continually talk about the experiences they had in Pasadena.

Mr. McNair, we would like to thank you most sincerely for your...wholehearted devotion to God's Work. Although all the subjects taught were extremely useful and important, I found "Marriage and the Family" a necessity! Mr. Armstrong continually reminds us that God is a family. Certainly, Satan has attacked the concept of family life in all nations--but even more so here in Africa! The way of God cuts across cultures and traditions and when the families in the Church are totally healed of the

wound of Satan, then the commission in Malachi 4 and Matthew 24 will have been accomplished....

We continue to pray daily for you all on the HQ team and thank God that He has given us such fine examples....

Lateef and Yvonne Edalere

P.S. 4th January 1984

We are now getting over the recent coup and are happy to report that all the members are well and happy.

It is very gratifying to receive such letters from those international students who have been able to attend Ambassador College in recent years. We sincerely hope all are as inspired and encouraged by their study at Ambassador as are Mr. and Mrs. Edalere.

While here at Pasadena, such students not only enroll in the classes, but also attend clubs, Forums and Assemblies, dances and other socials and really seem to enjoy themselves. Also, they get to hear Mr. Armstrong speak at the Forums, Bible studies, Sabbath services, etc. This truly gives them a "charge" which I believe they will never forget!

--Raymond F. McNair, Deputy Chancellor

PUBLISHING SERVICES UPDATE

"Price Chopper" Supermarket Distribution Takes Off!

A few weeks ago, we mentioned in the PASTOR GENERAL'S REPORT that distribution of The PLAIN TRUTH newsstand magazine would begin shortly in over 60 Price Chopper supermarkets, located mostly in eastern New York State.

Considered to be one of the finest supermarket chains in the area, we expected to distribute between 500-600 copies per store per month. We are pleased to report that it is running much higher--3,000 per store per month! In just the first five days in 48 stores in Albany, New York, over 15,000 magazines were taken.

Mr. Lyle Welty, pastor of the Albany, New York and Springfield, Massachusetts Churches, has requested an additional 10,000 copies above his regular allocation, and an additional 25,000 surplus back issues in order to maintain this distribution level.

Although distribution will probably drop over a period of time, we are extremely pleased with this initial development. Mr. Welty has informed us that all the Price Chopper store managers are very cooperative and helpful. He also reports that the brethren are excited, enthusiastic and very busy!

--Ray Wright, Publishing Services

UPDATE FROM MAIL PROCESSING

New All-time Record for Phone Response

A new all-time record of 13,873 calls was received in response to the telecast "Revelation: Catastrophic Event" which aired on January 21-22.

This surpassed the previous record by 2,269 and was more than double the average weekend response! During the peak period of response when 46 stations were airing the program, 95 WATS operators answered 2,140 calls in just one hour.

The previous record was set November 13, 1983 when "Revelation: End-time Prophecies" received 11,604 calls for the weekend.

Undoubtedly the growing fears many have of a nuclear holocaust cause them to sit up and take notice when Mr. Armstrong expounds the prophecies of the great tribulation and wonderful world tomorrow.

Many callers comment on Mr. Armstrong's powerful delivery and express great interest in the program. They are especially appreciative of the fact that the message comes straight from the Scriptures, as the following comments show:

I loved the program! He was talking about Revelation and reading the Bible and had the verses on the screen--I've never heard of a preacher doing that. I really got interested.

E.A. (Washington, D.C.)

The program was dynamic! It was very good that Mr. Armstrong quoted from so many scriptures. Most programs give you only one or two scriptures and their personal opinions--whereas Mr. Armstrong keeps going back to the Bible with quotes--it's very enjoyable!

J.S. (Cincinnati, OH)

I just love hearing Mr. Armstrong and watch him every Sunday. I'm blind but have my sister read to me. I'm concerned about the second coming. Mr. Armstrong explained it from Daniel and Revelation. He puts things from the Bible all together.

C.H. (Bryan, TX)

I like the grasp that he has of the Bible--he has a chapter and verse for everything he said. I sure hope he's wrong, and that we can find a way out of this.

E.N. (Florida)

He tells the truth and he reads it from the Bible. He doesn't have a bunch of choirs and doesn't ask you to send him money. I just like him.

G.B. (Pittsburgh, PA)

Highest Year Ever for Television Response

"The WORLD TOMORROW" telecast brought in 502,848 phone calls and letters in 1983--another new record. Phone calls accounted for more than three-fourths of the total response. The highest previous year was 1975, when 454,291 letters and calls were received.

Record Income for Semiannual Letter

We are pleased to report that the November 1983 semiannual letter set a new all-time record for income from semiannual letters. The letter also drew

one of the best literature responses in the past five years. Interestingly, there were slightly more requests for the booklet YOUR AWESOME FUTURE than for DID GOD CREATE A DEVIL?, although most readers asked for both.

Only the semiannual letters offering the books TOMORROW--WHAT IT WILL BE LIKE and THE MISSING DIMENSION IN SEX drew higher percentages of response.

--Richard Rice, Mail Processing Center

ON THE WORLD SCENE

EUROPE CAUGHT BETWEEN THE SUPERPOWERS

Dateline: Stockholm, Sweden

The first phase of the 35-nation Conference on Confidence- and Security-building Measures and Disarmament in Europe is over. The chill between East and West and its two leading superpowers, the Soviet Union and the United States, is as cold as the weather outside the Kulturhuset conference building in the center of this Nordic capital.

The conference was convened to deal with rather small and technical items, such as the notification of troop maneuvers on both sides of the Iron Curtain. It is hoped that such so-called "confidence-building measures," if agreed upon by the delegations that are to carry out the task over the next two to three years, can lead to implementing solutions to more significant East-West issues.

The way the conference started, however, one wondered what the delegations, locked into their conflicting national interests, would be able to achieve. The best example was the shockingly blunt and accusatory speech delivered on the second day of the conference by Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko. The top-ranking Soviet official, his country's foreign minister for 27 years, accused the Reagan Administration of "thinking in terms of war and acting accordingly."

Mr. Gromyko's speech was littered with references to the Reagan Administration's "maniacal plans," its "pathological obsession," its "piratical acts of terrorism" in Grenada and "criminal and dishonest methods" elsewhere. He also claimed that the "U.S. war machine" is "sowing death and destruction" in Lebanon. With regard to Europe, Mr. Gromyko added that "militarism, enmity and war hysteria are being exported to Western Europe along with the missiles"--a reference to the new Pershing II and cruise missiles being delivered by the United States to its West European allies.

Overall, it was hardly the speech to encourage confidence-building measures. The tone of Mr. Gromyko's remarks showed that the Kremlin had totally rejected the olive branch extended to it by U.S. President Ronald Reagan on the eve of the CSDE meeting.

Stalemate Encourages Atlantic Rift

With the Cold War on again (and it was not thawed out in the subsequent five-hour private meeting between Mr. Gromyko and U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz), the nations of both Western and Eastern Europe find themselves being squeezed uncomfortably between the two superpowers.

This growing concern was reflected in the opening speeches by the foreign ministers from the larger countries, such as France and Britain, and the tiny ones, such as Liechtenstein, Monaco and the Holy See (the official government entity of the Vatican). Europe, noted British Foreign Secretary Sir Geoffrey Howe, finds itself squarely in the middle of superpower rivalry.

As a result of this frustration, there is a growing perception that the United States is equally to blame for the worsening conditions, especially in the aftermath of the deployment of the first of the new missiles. In reality, the United States is easier to push around. A furious Moscow, thwarted in its attempt to forestall the new missiles, is in no mood to compromise whatsoever. Perhaps this perception was best summarized by the lead editorial in the Jan. 3 FINANCIAL TIMES of London, which said: "The American shield now looks, to a significant and vocal minority, more like an American threat.... In military and economic terms...the Atlantic appears to be getting wider."

Just how wide the Atlantic is becoming was best displayed by the activities at another conference, this time a private, three-day (Jan. 13 to Jan. 15) closed door meeting in Brussels, Belgium immediately preceding the far more publicized Stockholm affair. Delegates to the Brussels meeting consisted of former government officials who are highly influential in their respective countries. At this meeting, the diplomatic niceties gave way to "let me really tell you what's on my mind." In summarizing the contents of the largely secret Brussels conference, the headline in the Jan. 16 TIMES of London said it all: "Bitter Speeches Betray a Mutual Loss of Trust by Europe and America."

The Brussels conference was entitled "The Future of NATO and Global Security." But, said France's former Foreign Minister Jean Francois-Poncet, "every one of us knew that the real title was 'Atlantic Disagreements' and...we got it."

What several participants described as "a growing crisis of mutual understanding" surfaced in speeches by two former U.S. cabinet members, Henry A. Kissinger and James R. Schlesinger, and West Germany's former Chancellor Helmut Schmidt. Mr. Schmidt lashed out at what he called the "self-contradictory behavior" of the U.S. government toward the Soviet Union. He warned that "egoistical economic policies" pursued by Washington could soon ruin the Alliance.

William G. Hyland, a Soviet specialist and former member of the National Security Council, said that Mr. Schmidt's speech was a prime example of "the growing gap between the United States and Europe that could end in catastrophe."

Mr. Hyland, who will become editor of the influential quarterly, FOREIGN AFFAIRS, told the Europeans that disenchantment was also mounting in the United States, where one now hears the argument that NATO may not necessarily be in U.S. interests. "There are questions from serious people about the wisdom of continuing with this alliance," Mr. Hyland said. He further referred to an unnamed American general, one known for extravagant talk, who has taken bets that the United States will quit NATO by 1990--just six years away--in revulsion against the Europeans' refusal to "take on" the Soviet Union.

It is just such a "moral crusade" that infuriates many Europeans when they look at U.S. foreign policy toward the Soviet Union. Nevertheless, Dr. Kissinger, former U.S. secretary of state, said the European governments would have only themselves to blame if they were "engulfed by creeping pacifism and neutralism."

Mr. Schlesinger, a former defense secretary, lectured the European NATO allies on what he said was their lack of support for the Alliance. He also said it was time for the European allies to read a bit of American history, which gives a warning against "entangling alliances"--advice offered to the fledgling American republic by its retiring first president, George Washington.

In conclusion to what has been revealed publicly about this remarkable conference, Mr. Francois-Poncet said there was "a strange but uncomfortable feeling of drifting apart between the United States and Europe. The mood is bad."

Five Fingers on Europe's Defense

The verbal cross fire in Brussels adds yet more fuel to the growing trans-atlantic disputes and the dangerous feeling of "let's go our separate ways."

Let Europe defend Europe, is the growing mood in the U.S.--our future lies in Asia anyway. (One little-known fact proves this point succinctly: In 1982-83, for the first time in history, overall U.S. trade with the Pacific rim nations exceeded that with the Atlantic nations.) Let Europe deal with the Soviets any way they want to, seems to be the U.S. attitude. If you need nuclear weapons to defend yourselves, we'll even sell them to you. (See "On the World Scene," Dec. 16, 1983.)

In this light, an amazing article appeared in the December 11, 1983 NEW YORK TIMES, written by Melvyn B. Krauss, a senior fellow at the conservative Hoover Institution in California. He argued for what he called the "de-Americanization" of European defense. It would be better, he said, for the new missiles now going to Europe to be controlled by the Europeans themselves. He feels there would be less public reaction in Western Europe against them.

"Such a 'de-Americanization' of European defense would be better for Western security," said Mr. Krauss. "Better for Europe and for the United States than the existing arrangement under which America subsidizes and controls European military capability."

But would it be good for American security in the future? Continued Mr. Krauss:

Far more credible to Moscow and the American nuclear umbrella would be for Europe to have its own nuclear deterrent. The obvious problems raised by a nuclear West Germany could be circumvented by the establishment of a European defense force so that instead of a single finger there would be a single hand with five fingers on the crucial red button.

How amazing. Some experts are talking about the future possibility of a closely confederated Europe of two parts, East and West. If the Soviets buy this idea, they and their East bloc members are already on record as advocating a nuclear-free zone for Eastern Europe. The Soviets wouldn't permit Western missiles there, but could conceivably permit a united defense force in the five-fingered Western hand of a confederated European third force to have nuclear weapons. How interesting in the light of the image described in Daniel 2.

In a rather surprise inclusion in his speech in Stockholm, Secretary of State Shultz said: "Let me be very clear. The United States does not recognize the legitimacy of the artificially imposed division of Europe. This division is the essence of Europe's security and human rights problems, and we all know it."

The United States is unwittingly encouraging the biblically prophesied end-time fusion of Europe. It will come about, and it is already in its formulating stage. When it does suddenly take shape, the world will be stunned (Rev. 17:8).

A British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) reporter, being interviewed in Stockholm by a Swedish television newswoman, replied to a question about whether the division of Europe could ever be overcome. He replied, "Unless there is a major political earthquake, it [a divided Europe] is a fact we will have to live with."

But not forever, according to your Bible.

--Gene H. Hogberg, News Bureau