

PASTOR GENERAL'S REPORT

TO THE MINISTRY OF THE
WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD



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Dear Ministers,

Greetings again from Pasadena! The pace here seems to be quickening almost daily, as I'm sure it is for most of you.

Since I last wrote I've had the opportunity to speak to a combined meeting of the churches around the Washington, D.C., area in the Daughters of the American Revolution Constitution Hall. On Thursday and Friday our party was able to tour the U.S. Capitol and other points of interest in the city, as well as have dinner on Thursday night with Dr. and Mrs. Mohammad Kamal, the Jordanian ambassador to the United States. Dr. Kamal also invited the ambassadors from Yemen, Lebanon and Tunisia with their wives, and the charge d'affaires from Syria, because he wanted them to meet us.

The evening was very enjoyable. The ambassadors seemed quite interested in the Work of the Church and the Foundation, and were especially appreciative of what we have done for physically and mentally handicapped children in Jordan. Mrs. Kamal had prepared a delicious informal buffet-style meal of various Arabic dishes. Since Moslem dietary laws are almost the same as those in the Bible, we did not have to be concerned about unclean food. Most of the dishes were of lamb or chicken and, as I said, quite delicious.

In touring the capital, I was deeply impressed by the powerful statements of America's founding fathers about freedom, commitment, personal sacrifice for a higher and greater cause and submission to God. While these ideals are inscribed in stone in Washington for any and all to read, they are in all practicality lost in today's "now" society, which is more than ever based upon greed, personal gain and the philosophy of "get."

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It struck me that, as part of the foundation of a future new government and society, we are lights in this world, maintaining in God's presence and by His power and will the otherwise lost godly ideals that those human leaders once proclaimed.

Our visit with the brethren and the ministry was the highlight

of the trip. I was able to meet with all the elders and deacons after services for about an hour, and then spend another two and a half hours with the full-time ministers. As always I was much encouraged by the many brethren I was able to meet and by the conversations with the ministry.

One subject I brought up in the deacons and elders meeting was a special building fund being established for purchase of the Office Facilities building. To explain it fully to you, I am going to include here an advance text of my "Personal" to appear in the next issue of "The Worldwide News." Please read every word carefully.

"Personal" from December 29, 1986 "Worldwide News"

Dear Brethren,

What a year of growth this has been!

In fact, the growth has been so rapid that our field ministers, along with the rest of the Work, are at the point that they are hard pressed to support it all.

To make sure that we don't outstrip our resources, I've had to make several decisions that involve the Church's publications. But before I tell you about these changes, which those of us here feel are very positive ones, let me bring an extremely pressing matter to your attention.

As I mentioned in the October member/co-worker letter, the option to buy the Office Facilities building is coming up, and brethren, we simply cannot afford NOT to buy it.

This building houses the multifaceted editorial operations of "The Plain Truth," "The Good News," "Youth" magazine, "The Worldwide News," the Bible Correspondence Course, Youth Bible Lessons and the scores of books, booklets, reprints and television brochures produced by God's Church.

Also located in that building are the entire Mail Processing Department, with its massive WATS operation, and the Spanish Department and the studios and offices of the Radio Department.

It could cost God's Church, when all factors are considered, up to \$2 million to move all of these departments to another building and could bring untold disruption in the Work.

We estimate the cost of purchasing the Office Facilities building to be about \$5 million. (After final appraisals we will know the exact figure.) That's money we don't have in the

budget for next year. Therefore, I'm asking all churches to earmark a portion of their local fund raising to help buy the building.

Many of our congregations are quite proficient in fund raising, and here is an opportunity to put those talents to work in direct service to God's Work.

I am not asking any to give what they don't have. All church-activity and YOU needs must be considered, but brethren, I know God will specially bless your efforts to provide this genuine need. As this special building fund grows, results will be reported in "The Worldwide News."

In this way, the purchase of this vital tool will not have to affect the overall budget during this rapid growth period God has given. As I've written you before, the pressing needs of the Television Department for updated equipment and additional personnel will also have a major impact on the 1987 budget.

We are relying on God's overall direction to carefully and prudently control the growth He is granting so that no one area of the Work outstrips our ability to support it with the resources God has made available.

Now let me tell you about some of the decisions made in the publications.

The tremendous growth in the Work has forced me to take a hard look at how we are accomplishing God's commission. Are we directing our efforts most effectively? Do we need to restructure and perhaps refocus in some areas? Are we using the resources God has given us to their greatest effectiveness?

To take some of the pressure off our hardworking television staff and presenters, the writers and researchers of Editorial Services are now preparing material to be used on the telecasts well in advance of scheduled programs. We will now be able to plan far enough ahead so that "The Plain Truth" and the telecasts can be more precisely coordinated in their approaches.

To allow Mr. Dexter Faulkner and the Editorial Services staff the flexibility to make this coordinated effort fully successful, I have directed that "The Good News" and "Youth 87" each be published six times a year, alternating monthly, instead of the 10 issues each we have been producing annually. This change will take effect next spring.

I will just say here, brethren, that I have been quite concerned for some time that many of God's people simply are not reading "The Good News" as they should and as a result are missing a wealth of the spiritual, Christian-living instruction about the application of God's law of love in their lives that they vitaly need! Outstanding, spiritually strengthening

instruction, IF READ AND APPLIED, is simply being missed by those who don't take the time to open those pages and drink it in!

"The Good News" regularly contains articles that directly address the basic, MAJOR problem areas in the Church and in the world--marriage, family, sex, finances, alcohol. It also contains articles about biblical events, personalities and teaching that either serve as examples for us today, or simply broaden our understanding of God's Word and His great master plan for mankind.

One man wrote in recently saying, "The Church is not being fed meat, only pabulum." Brethren, how blind some can be to the BLESSINGS God has given to us! Never before has so much meat been available to God's people. Yet it must be used. If this man had actually been READING "The Good News," "The Plain Truth," the Correspondence Course, the booklets, brochures, reprints, books and "Youth 86," I think he would have realized that there is plenty of meat, as well as easier-to-digest spiritual food for those who are not as spiritually mature.

Yet, as I say, all this, including the Bible itself, must be USED! What good is it just lying around on the coffee table? And even if it is read, what good is it if it is not put into practice?

Brethren, we are God's ELECT! He instructs us to be DOERS of the Word, not forgetful hearers only! Can I FORCE YOU? I can only admonish you! Are we going to be Christians, COMMITTED to overcoming and growing in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ, or just seat-warmers, "clinging with flatteries," mere pretenders?

Let's get our lives in perspective and remember that the suffering of this present evil world is swiftly coming to an end! Let's be about our Father's business in diligence!

Well, back to the subject at hand. Brethren, I realize that many may have had a problem reading all the excellent instruction the Church has made available simply because there is so much that it is hard to keep up with it all. That is one major reason I felt we should make this change with "The Good News" and "Youth 87." After all, why should we allow vital instruction to be wasted simply because of a lack of time to get to it?

By adjusting the amount of reading material the Church makes available each month, I hope we can help ensure that our brethren will not have to miss any of the important and helpful articles contained in the publications.

"The Worldwide News" will still come to you every two weeks, but the standard size will now be eight pages. Again, this should help you in not having so much to read that you miss important articles or information contained in each of the publications.

I have also directed that the circulation of "The Plain Truth" be held to a ceiling of seven million--including newsstand distribution--for at least the next year. Seven million is a very strong circulation figure, and even at that level it will still take a good deal of time for our field ministers and other areas of the Work to "catch up" so they can effectively support the growth that has already taken place.

I feel these changes show that we here at headquarters are seriously doing our part as God leads us to more effectively and efficiently use the resources He has given us. Now, I'm asking your ministers to look closely at how your local church resources are being used as well, and to come to the aid of the Work with this special fund-raising project.

God's Work surges ahead! Let's pull together in united prayer for His guidance and blessing as we move into a new year of opportunities and growth. When God is for us, who can be against us? Be sure to watch for regular progress reports in "The Worldwide News."

With love, in Jesus' name,

Joseph W. Tkach

Now I want to give you a couple of words of instruction and caution in implementing this program. I do not want the brethren to be overworked or made to feel in any way that participation in a fund raiser is some measure of their conversion.

You should, of course, be positive and supportive of the program. But--let me repeat it--don't make people feel pressured to participate. Let all participation be strictly volunteer and from the heart. Realize that there are those who for one reason or another really don't have the time to be involved.

Don't make anyone feel like a second-class citizen if he or she can't or doesn't become involved. And make absolutely sure that this does not become some kind of competition between congregations to see who can do the most. Each congregation has its unique talents and abilities, and I want no person or congregation to be made to feel this is a measure of their faithfulness.

God's Spirit will lead each of us to be wholehearted and do what we can. But it is not up to any of the rest of us to judge one another on how wholehearted we are. Let's get behind this project, but with love, patience and understanding. Don't let fund raising get out of hand or in any way become unbalanced with it.

If any of you pastors have fund-raising ideas that can be of value to other pastors, please let Church Administration know. In this way they can have those interested contact you for details.

Finally, thank you again, men and wives, for your faithful dedication to the calling God has placed on your shoulders. I pray for you daily. Keep up the good work!

Sincerely, in Christ's service,

Joseph W. Teach

P.S. Be sure to read the outstanding articles in the January "Youth 87"--especially the two entitled "For Girls Only" and "For Guys Only." And keep up your prayers for the writers and all at Headquarters and one another! God is doing a marvelous Work through each of us imperfect tools in spite of ourselves!

FROM CHURCH ADMINISTRATION

CENTRAL CLEARING ACCOUNT; SOCIAL SECURITY; DOUBLE DEDUCTION; Q & A; LITERATURE REVISIONS; INTERNATIONAL NEWS--Germany, Malawi, Nigeria, Ghana

What a year! I look back at 1986 and wonder where it went. Of course there is little time for that as we need to be looking at 1987. But as the society around us makes its "New Year's resolutions," most of which will evaporate on January 2, we in God's ministry have a much more sobering task. Though we generally measure ourselves from Holy Day to Holy Day, we in Pasadena are forced by the budget cycles, tax year, etc. to also reckon certain things by the Roman calendar. So right now we have an added opportunity to review our effectiveness of the past year and set goals and objectives for the year ahead. Here in Church Administration we are applying what we've learned about the needs of the local churches and the field ministry to decisions that will impact your work loads and ours in the months to come.

One of our major goals is to serve you in ways that make you more effective and efficient in your service to God's people. We have received several suggestions from the field ministry that have affected our decisions, programs and procedures. Please keep them coming, even if not all of them are adopted. You are on the firing line and often notice things that we can't see from our perspective. We are all in this Work together and must be helping each other. Iron sharpens iron. We certainly hope to improve our service to you in 1987.

Now I would like to ask you to take a little time to review your own work in 1986.

What did you accomplish? The answer to this question should provide reassurance and encouragement. It is not wrong to enjoy our successes. We learn and grow by reflecting on successful performance as well as by reviewing our mistakes. Of course, the credit and glory belong to God, but didn't we ask for His inspiration so that we could be effective instruments? Then surely God would want us to give thanks to Him and rejoice in a job well done.

This must be balanced by a realistic appraisal of our shortcomings in order to ensure greater success in the future. It isn't pleasant to look the truth in the face when it reflects a failing on our part. God says to us, "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." So the peaceable fruit of righteousness is worth the price.

You who are pastors are in a position where it is very needful to let God show you your weaknesses. Physically you have a great degree of job freedom, yet spiritually you have tremendous responsibility for faithfully carrying out your ministerial duties. Do not become autonomous! Remember, your authority comes from our heavenly Father and Jesus Christ through their government in the Church. God is the only one who can give you the spiritual capacity to do your job. Not letting Christ work through you and keep you in the fullness of truth is a sure route to failure in the ministry. Notice John 15:5: "I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing."

This reminds me of a letter Mr. Herbert Armstrong wrote to the ministry back in 1964. It's a lengthy letter, but I will quote only a brief portion from which you should get a very clear message.

Neither Jesus nor the early apostles ever were thrown into jail for entering into and helping settle human controversy. Some of us will be imprisoned for doing as Jesus and the apostles did. But let's let that be enough, without asking for it! Therefore I set it as Church POLICY--confine your ministry to the spiritual realm of preaching, teaching, counseling as to THE BIBLE TEACHING--never even advising a person WHAT TO DO. Merely expound the Scriptures--impart the TRUTH--but let them make their own decisions (as to healing, medicine, hospitals, doctors, also) and let them take their own actions. Don't ask for trouble.

Teach WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS--but do not even advise what action to take--whether to call a doctor or not, or go to a hospital, or take medicine, or divorce a mate. DO NOT TELL THEM WHAT ACTION TO TAKE. Teach what the Bible says. The decision, and the action MUST BE THEIRS. Keep yourselves out of trouble of that kind. Jesus did. Paul did. That is the biblical teaching and example.

These same principles and policies were repeated by Mr. Tkach in a recent meeting. Are we living by them? It is so easy to get emotionally involved and try to help people by almost living their lives for them. That is not what God has called us to do. As you look into 1987 set some goals for yourself and your congregation and, while doing your best to achieve them, let Christ lead you to success.

Some of you may already know that Mr. Norvel Pyle suffered a fall in Big Sandy and has been in a coma since December 15. His condition is considered critical as there are increasing complications. I know that Mrs. Pyle and the whole family would appreciate your prayers.

Mr. Peter Nathan, Regional Director for New Zealand, called me last week after blacking out for several minutes. Extensive testing has revealed a small tumor in the lining of the brain. Peter continues to do his job but is restricted from driving.

Please continue to be fervent in your prayers for all of our brethren, especially those who are suffering. God will hear and answer in His wisdom and mercy.

U.S. Church Pastors--Central Clearing Account Policies In order to avoid compromising the integrity of the Central Clearing Account, it is vitally important that all of those who are authorized to sign on this account carefully follow the policies regarding its use.

The following are five different problems that need to be carefully avoided. These problems may seem like minor or "picky" items, but because they do occur regularly, they jeopardize our ability to continue to use the account and substantially increase the cost of administering this area of the Work.

(1) Checks issued for over the limit (\$300) for a single check.

On the face of the check directly below the space for the numerical amount is the statement "Not valid over \$300." This limitation protects the Church by not allowing any one check to be written for an excessive amount. Please stay within this limit. If an individual needs more than \$300 at any one time, more than one check will need to be written.

(2) Checks filled out or signed by someone other than an authorized signer.

This appears to be a problem that comes up when a pastor is away from his church area for a length of time. Do not presign checks before taking a trip or for any other purpose, leaving the checks for someone else to complete. Neither an associate pastor nor anyone else can sign checks on your behalf. Each check is assigned to a specific minister. He is responsible for how each check is used and only he can sign on his checks. It is for this reason that when a pastor is transferred, he is to take his checkbook with him and not leave it for the incoming pastor. If you are away from your church and a need arises that can't wait for your return, the pastor in a neighboring church may issue a check.

(3) Checks not signed.

This is an obvious mistake. Normally it is the result of a simple oversight. Since checks are not valid without an authorized signature, please double-check to make sure all checks are signed before being issued.

(4) Expense Records (yellow copies) not sent in promptly.

The Central Clearing Account checks regularly clear the bank three to four weeks before we receive the Expense Record forms for back-up. Delays in sending in the Expense Record forms create a substantial amount of extra work for those trying to account for these expenses. New checkbooks will not be issued until all checks that have cleared the bank have been accounted for.

(5) Expense Records incompletely filled out or lacking receipts.

Expense Records sent in without explanations, dates, signatures for individuals being helped through a third party or lacking receipts for Miscellaneous Church Expenses over \$25 create additional work because someone has to write to acquire this information after the fact. Please carefully fill out the Expense Record form immediately after writing the check while the information is still easily remembered. All Miscellaneous Church Expenses over \$25 must have a receipt sent in with the Expense Record.

The Central Clearing Account is a great convenience in that it allows ready access to funds to handle member assistance and other local church needs. We need your complete compliance with all the policies regarding its use so that this convenient method of administering these funds can continue to be available to everyone.

Social Security Coverage Available for U.S. Ministers The Tax Reform Act of 1986 provides a one-time irrevocable election back into the Social Security system for those who have previously elected out of it. This option will probably be available until you file your 1987 tax return on April 15, 1988. If you are thinking about this change, you will want to consider a number of items, the least of which is not the cost.

The rates a minister would pay are those of a self-employed person, not those of an employee. The self-employed rate for 1986 is 12.3% of all income up to \$42,000. This rate is scheduled to increase in the future. And, don't forget that this is figured on your salary PLUS the amount of the housing allowance. The allowance is excluded from income tax but not from Social Security. It will be a big bite out of your income if you elect to go on the Social Security system.

Good News for U.S. Ministers Who Own Homes The Tax Reform Act of 1986 has reinstated the "double deduction" provision for ministers who own their homes and itemize deductions on their income-tax returns. As most of you realize, this means that mortgage interest and real-estate taxes can continue to be deducted from taxable income even though they have been paid with the tax-exempt housing allowance.

In addition, this provision has been made retroactive for those who have purchased homes since January 3, 1983. If you are in that situation, you would be well advised to consider refiling tax returns for the years during which you owned your home. This could be applicable to the 1983, 1984 and 1985 tax years. Some ministers are eligible for substantial income tax refunds.

Question and Answer

Q. Why are so many people in God's Church becoming ill, and some dying prematurely?

A. This question is being asked more frequently as we announce requests for prayer in the "Pastor General's Report" and "The Worldwide News." Especially at this time of year, a few months after the Feast, Satan attempts to discourage God's people.

The noticeable difference is that we are requesting prayers for those people much more than was done in the past. As the Church is drawing closer together as a family we see clearly that when one member suffers we all suffer. In times past we did not call for the prayers of the entire Church for the extremely sick ones as frequently as we do now. Of course, now that we do, it has focused an awareness on the number of people who are ill.

We have reviewed the death-rate statistics in the Church for the last 10 years. The rate has remained fairly constant over the last 10 years. In 1985 there were 58,293 baptized members in the United States and 493 died in the faith. For 1986 there are 60,831 U.S. baptized members and 473 have died in the faith. This is a drop in the death rate from .84 percent to .78 percent. It is interesting to note that the national U.S. death rate is at .86 percent. In other words, the fact is we have no more people dying now than before. In fact, less died this year than last year, but our focus on praying for the afflicted has tended to cloud the view for many people.

Another real problem is that too many people have mistakenly equated health with spirituality. Some erroneously feel your state of health is an indication of your spiritual maturity. This is utter nonsense. This concept is a tool that Satan uses to discourage.

Some of the Old Testament patriarchs, the apostle Paul and Mr. Armstrong all suffered with physical maladies. This did not diminish their spiritual level.

There can be little doubt that some are sick due to the times in which we live. The air, water and food may be polluted. We suffer from these conditions just as ancient Israel suffered from the first three plagues on Egypt. God says He visits iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation. Doctors even say 85 percent of sickness involves hereditary factors.

It is also true some are sick for spiritual reasons. In I Corinthians 11:27-32, Paul does indict all who do not acknowledge the continual need for repentance and discernment of Christ's sacrifice in one's life. This is a problem at the individual level. Collectively, as the Church, we have grown in grace and knowledge, and properly emphasize the need for personal examination annually.

Literature Revisions As we have mentioned in past "Pastor General's Reports," when it becomes necessary to reprint a piece of our literature, it is standard procedure to reedit it as instructed by Mr. Armstrong years ago. This ensures a regular review and updating.

We will give you these updates in the "Pastor General's Report" as they are available. Please review them.

● "What do you mean--"The Unpardonable Sin"?

The pagination of the new edition begins the body of the text with page 1 rather than with page 7 as in the 1984 and earlier editions. This is a stylistic matter in conformity with the recommendations of Publishing.

The following edits have been made in the text (with the pagination noted according to the 1984 edition): Under the subhead "Believers Seek to Kill Jesus," a deletion begins with the third sentence (page 8) and continues through five sentences. The new wording now smoothly reads: "...But were they really Christians? To these same people, who 'believed on Him,' Jesus said...."

On page 10 of the 1984 edition, the fifth paragraph, the second sentence is edited to read: "It says the Holy Spirit of God must be 'dwelling in you'...." On page 11, under subhead "Must Bear 'Fruit,'" the last sentence of the first paragraph reads: "But God the Father and the living Christ are alive...."

On same page, last line has the clause "which produces the fruit of righteousness" added for greater clarity just before "... (God's Holy Spirit--God's love)...."

On page 19, under the subhead, the second paragraph has been entirely deleted. The intent of the Greek is not to say that Paul wrote in an obtuse manner, but that the subjects he talked about were often difficult topics to understand. Some misunderstood the intent of this paragraph.

On page 22 just above midpage the expression "[are perishing]" has been added to the Bible quote to complete the parallelism "[being saved]." The paragraph now ends with this added sentence: "That is exactly the meaning of the original Greek--'are being saved' and 'are perishing.'"

A definition on page 30 has been clarified in the first paragraph. The wording now is "...the Greek present tense which denotes a continuous or habitual state or action in the present time."

● "Has Time Been Lost?"

This is the only booklet we publish for which we do not hold a copyright. It was written by Herbert W. Armstrong for "The Bible Advocate" in the Depression years, and "The Bible Advocate" in which it first appeared was never copyrighted. It was legally agreed years ago that both the Church of God (Seventh Day) and the Worldwide Church of God may freely print this enduring booklet.

On page 8, the fifth paragraph, the first sentence now reads: "Jerusalem is to be God's headquarters for the earth." And the last, long sentence of this same paragraph now ends as follows: "...in the middle of the Pacific where it affects few people and is nearly opposite from the land mass in which Jerusalem is located."

On page 11, in the paragraph above the chart, the second sentence reads: "The Bible calls it 'a whole day' and specifically says...."

In the third paragraph under the subhead, on page 15, the first sentence now reads: "About 42 years after this the Jewish people were driven out of their land."

- "Who or What Is the Prophetic Beast?"

This booklet, brought into print again in the early 1980s was expanded to include "The Mark of the Beast" as part two. Some edits in the latest edition, not made when the booklet was first expanded, now occur to avoid repetition and to update the booklet. The second, third, first half of the fourth, and the ninth paragraphs have been deleted from the beginning of the text in part one.

The first two paragraphs of part two--"The Mark of the Beast"--have been deleted and the whole section titled "Who Is the Beast?" on pages 30 and 31 is deleted. In addition all references to the "Roman Catholic Church" or "Roman Church" or "great whore" have been edited to read "traditional Christianity" or "woman riding the beast" at the request of our foreign-language offices and to avoid needless criticism from the new television audience.

- "Why Were You Born?"

The correct definition of Elohim has again been included on page 3 in the last paragraph under "Emphatic Answers." The corrected sentence now reads: "The English word 'God' is usually translated from the Hebrew Elohim--a noun, plural in form, but with either singular or plural usage."

The definition of Buddhism in last paragraph on page 25 is greatly improved and now reads: "One religion believes that the end result of human life after countless rebirths is extinction of individual consciousness."

On page 26 the second sentence of the second paragraph under subhead "Now Understand Why..." reads: "Elohim in this and similar passages means one God--not many gods." The sentence before correction failed to include the thought that idol gods are also designated elohim in Hebrew.

- "Life After Death?"

A clarification seemed necessary on the middle of page 4, where the word "Millennium" occurred. The sentence at midpage now reads: "They, and any such living at the end of the second resurrection, will then die the second death...." This is clearly a reference to the second resurrection or Great White Throne Judgment, not the 1,000 years.

On page 7 the third paragraph under the subhead "What Is the Kingdom of God?" has been completely deleted. There is no need to bring up the question of Esau and Turkey, which is not further explained. Some of the descendants do live in Turkey, but most are Arabic speakers, not Turkish speakers.

● "Your Awesome Future"

This booklet, taken from the book "The Incredible Human Potential," previously had a subhead on the cover reading "How Religion Deceives You." This was unsuitable for television. The new subhead reads: "The Missing Dimension in Knowledge." Accordingly, the drophead has been edited to read: "It's positively astounding! The awesome purpose of human life has remained undiscovered by science. Higher education has never taught it. And organized religion has failed to announce it." The text of the booklet from the beginning to the middle of page 17 has been entirely deleted.

Part one now begins with page 17, using the old subhead as the new title. Personal references to the author in three paragraphs on page 19 have been deleted in keeping with the fact that Mr. Armstrong is no longer alive. The same is true for pages 22 and 25.

On page 27 of the earlier edition of this booklet new copy is added which is taken from the end of chapter III of "The Incredible Human Potential," pages 32 and 33. Then comes part two of what is now the new edition of the booklet. Here copy from chapter IV, pages 34 to 48, is added, as well as copy from chapter V, pages 55 to 59, with edits.

The booklet as it now is advertised on television is entirely new in its emphasis, though taken from the same book. It is suggested that the new booklet be read by each of you to familiarize yourselves with the different content.

International News

From Germany Preparations for the 1987 Feast of Tabernacles in Brno began early in November with a visit to Czechoslovakia.

On Wednesday, November 5, my wife Esther and I flew to Prague, Czechoslovakia to negotiate the 10th Feast of Tabernacles in Czechoslovakia. Festival Coordinator Winfried Fritz and his wife Carola met us in Prague to discuss the 1987 Festival with Dr. Jaroslav Macourek, Foreign Travel & Congress Department Manager of Cedok.

On Wednesday evening Dr. Macourek invited us all to dinner in the Golden Prague Restaurant. During dinner we discussed the past nine years of celebrating the Feast of Tabernacles in Czechoslovakia and how we have never tried to proselyte or solicit members during this time. Dr. Macourek replied that we nevertheless do advertise by the way we live and that we have had a big influence on him, his wife and his family, as well as the members of Cedok and even other people throughout Czechoslovakia.

Next on the agenda for November was the Regional Directors Conference in Pasadena. This was the best organized and most productive conference of this type that we have ever had. Mr. Karlson also felt that "the conference and the guidelines coming from it may very well prove to be a milestone in the future activities of the Work in the German-speaking area."

A major breakthrough came in the last week of November which allowed us to double newsstand circulation overnight. The company Bahnhofshandels-

GmbH (Railway Station Trading Co., Inc.) in Berlin, which owns and operates 40 of the best newsstand outlets in the Berlin subway system, one in Berlin's main train station and two at the International Airport, agreed to distribute our magazine. Funds at this time only allow us to use 17 of their outlets, but this alone gives us an estimated circulation of 10,000 per month. Up until now, after one and a half years of working with the program, circulation had just reached the 10,000 mark.

(Submitted by Frank Schnee, Regional Director)

From Malawi Mr. and Mrs. Ken Buck left Monday evening, December 8, to take up their assignment in Blantyre, Malawi. Over the last few weeks they have been very busy making final arrangements for their trip.

One of their first assignments is to oversee the construction of a Church building in Blantyre, which will double up as a Feast of Tabernacles site. Permission has been granted for this building by the Planning Committee and details are presently with the Lands Committee before being moved on for final permission by the Lands Officer. We hope to be able to begin groundbreaking early in the new year and anticipate completion by the summer.

I am sure you would all like to join with me in wishing Mr. and Mrs. Buck all the best for a successful stay in Malawi. I am sure the Church in Malawi will benefit greatly from their presence there.

From Nigeria The following report was received from Mr. Lateef Edalere, our minister in Nigeria.

Locusts from the neighboring countries of Niger and Chad invaded the northern states of Nigeria. Current reports from Borno, Sokoto, Kano and Kwara States said that the destruction of this year's crops was total. Before long millions of people may have to migrate to the south to avoid starvation. The 2nd-Tier Foreign Exchange Market, on the other hand, has sent the Naira crashing into oblivion. This past two weeks, costs have gone up 500%. We live to see what happens next!

Good news from Nigeria is that the need to have import licenses has now been removed. We are able to send in the necessary supplies of booklets, stationery, home and office supplies needed by the Work. We are also able to import motor vehicles. This has been almost impossible for the last couple of years and has meant that our vehicles in Nigeria have not been able to be replaced, since none are available locally, and are now in a sorry state of repair.

From Ghana From David Stirk: On my recent trip to Ghana I had the opportunity of visiting our farm project, which is moving ahead with leaps and bounds. The dam has now been completed and stocked with fish, together with a couple of mud fish in order to keep the population down! Also, from the dam, irrigation works have been laid to enable rice paddies to be developed in order to cultivate rice. This project was already well under way and will provide a great source of food and revenue for our members. An area in front of the bungalows has been cleared and is used as a sports area for Church socials. We have also added a piece of equipment. This is a multipurpose hand-guided tractor.

This has transformed our approach to the use of land. I watched our operator plough an area of land in two minutes that would normally have taken him half an hour with a spade. This machine is a great boon to our members and relieves them of a great deal of back-breaking work.

While I was in Pasadena for the Regional Directors' Conference Mr. Brown asked me to speak to Dr. Kermit Nelson about the S.E.P. camps in Africa. Dr. Nelson was very encouraged and excited at the prospects of an S.E.P. site on the farm project in Ghana and gave the go-ahead to develop this area with a view to holding a regular S.E.P. each year. This will come as very good news to our youth in Ghana, most of whom have never attended an S.E.P. camp.

(Submitted by Frank Brown, Regional Director)

--Larry Salyer, Church Administration

FROM FLEET ADMINISTRATION

Passing Safety In any passing situation, there are four questions to ask yourself:

1. Is the pass necessary?
2. Are you maintaining a safe following distance?
3. Will the car in front of you jump out to pass as well?
4. Is there someone else in the process of passing you?

Neglecting one of these questions can easily cause a two-car accident, the most prevalent and deadly on our nation's roads.

A head-on collision at 20 miles per hour with another vehicle going the same speed is the same thing as hitting a concrete barrier at 40 miles per hour. That's the equivalent of four tons of pressure. Imagine the same forces working at 55 miles per hour or 110 miles per hour.

--Dean May, Fleet Administration

MAIL PROCESSING UPDATE

CHRISTMAS PROGRAMS DRAW MORE THAN 71,000 CALLS; UPDATE ON FALL SEMI-ANNUAL; THREE DECADES OF FAITHFULNESS; MEMBERSHIP PACKETS; STUDENTS AND TEACHERS USE PT

Christmas Programs Draw More Than 71,000 Calls Mr. Richard Ames' presentation of "The Plain Truth About Christmas" brought in 42,017 calls on the weekend of December 13-14. This was the third-highest response to any program. His second telecast on this seasonal subject--"What Christmas Doesn't Tell You!"--drew 29,232 calls for December 20-21, which brought the combined total for both telecasts to 71,249. This controversial, hard-hitting subject has traditionally drawn large responses.

We had 196 requests for a ministerial visit over the two weekends.

The following breakdown shows the Christmas telecast responses since the first program on this subject in 1981. It should be mentioned that, from 1983 to the present, two separate telecasts have been produced each year on this subject.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Combined Response</u>	<u>Percentage Increase Over Previous Year</u>
1981	8,297	---
1982	10,948	32%
1983	16,536	51%
1984	24,632	49%
1985	47,769	94%
1986	71,249	49%

On the lighter side, more than 1,800 people wished us a Merry Christmas after ordering the literature. Some habits die hard.

Update on Fall Semiannual As of December 21, we received 434,705 replies to the latest semiannual letter, which was mailed to 3,377,316 people on our mailing list. This represents a 12.9 percent response. The only other letter which produced this many replies was Mr. Armstrong's last semiannual in 1985, which brought in 596,000 requests for his new book "Mystery of the Ages."

Considering that the literature offer in the current letter is a brochure, "Why Does God Allow Suffering?", rather than a book, the response to this semiannual is exceptional, especially from donors and co-workers.

We expect another 30,000 replies to come in before the normal 60-day tabulation period (for semiannual letters) is completed.

Three Decades of Faithfulness In addition to the "Plain Truth" magazine and the "World Tomorrow" telecast, another powerful witness of God's way of life has been the positive example of long-time Church members. According to our records, more than 750 brethren have been active members of God's Church for 30 years or more. Each one probably has touched hundreds, if not thousands of lives. They have been pillars in their local churches and communities, serving God's Work for more than three decades.

Interestingly, five members have been in God's Church for more than 50 years.

Membership Packets It has been some time since we reported on the membership packets which are sent out to newly baptized members. We thought you would like to know how the program is doing.

As of November 24, 1986, we have sent out 2,848 of these packets. The packet contains: 1) a personal letter from Mr. Tkach welcoming new members to God's family, 2) a copy of "God's Sacred Calendar," 3) the articles "Should You Try to Convert Others?" and 4) the television brochure "The Authority of the Bible." In addition, we offer 15 pieces of literature that are of special interest to the newly converted. The seven most requested of these publications have been:

- "What Is Worldliness?"
- "You Can Conquer Your Fears!"
- "The Plain Truth About Fasting"

- "This Is the Life--Real Abundant Living"
- "The Answer to Unanswered Prayer"
- "The Plain Truth About Healing"
- "What You Should Know About Tithing"

Students and Teachers Use PT We have received letters from many students and teachers thanking us for "The Plain Truth." Students in grade school, high school and college say our magazine aids them greatly in research projects and gives them a better and more accurate understanding of current events. Teachers often comment that the clarity of the articles makes it easier for their pupils to grasp the meaning of world news and politics. Following are a few of their comments:

"The Plain Truth" has been a wonderful source of knowledge, understanding and inspiration to my students and to me. The articles are filled with pertinent information; this is profoundly needed in the world today.

North Carolina

I can't count the number of times I've used your magazine for reference while doing reports. I've found them useful for almost all of my classes. Your magazine is one of the best I have had the pleasure of subscribing to. Thank you for all the extra items available to me from every issue. Please keep this up.

North Carolina

I've been reading all of your magazines you have sent me. They're great for my school work, especially in Social Studies and Religion. "The Plain Truth" is one great magazine. I read it and can really get involved with it so much I can't put it down till I'm done.

New York

As a soldier in the U.S. Army, I am presently assigned as a JROTC instructor at St. John's College in Washington, D.C. Time after time, I find "The Plain Truth" to be an outstanding source of information as I prepare for my classes. Bits and pieces from many of the articles prove to be very helpful when used in the classroom.

Washington, D.C.

--Richard Rice, Mail Processing Center

ON THE WORLD SCENE

**IRAN-CONTRA SCANDAL SAPS AMERICA'S INFLUENCE AND PRESTIGE;
ANXIOUS EUROPE LOOKS ON; SOME EUROPEANS "THINK EAST"**

Iran-Contra Issue Saps Power of U.S. Presidency "How do you think I feel when I told the American people that I didn't know about the diversion of funds from the Iranian arms sales to the contras and they don't believe me?" President Ronald Reagan recently asked Republican Senator Alan K. Simpson of Wyoming. "It disappoints me. It hurts."

The President's associates tell differing stories of how Mr. Reagan is holding up to the biggest crisis of his long political career, but the consensus seems generally positive, and that the Chief Executive is anxious for facts to soon surface that he feels will vindicate him. But a quick solution is precisely what is not in the works. The controversy is, by all accounts, likely to drag on for many months, probably through all of 1987. Investigators are not likely to stop at the Iran-contra issue but probe every nook and cranny of activities of the administration's National Security Counsel, asking eyebrow-raising questions about whether this or that activity is on the up-and-up.

In sum, "Watergate II" is going to dominate headlines for the foreseeable future. The power and prestige of the office of the Presidency will be impaired and many important issues will not be given their due either by government or the media. In this report we present press commentary concerning the weakened presidency and a major foreign policy impact area--Europe. First of all, the Democratic governor of Arizona, Bruce Babbitt, wrote a column in the December 16 LOS ANGELES TIMES in which he said:

This prolonged self-flagellation may turn out to be almost as damaging to the national interest as the remarkable events that brought it on. The Iran-contra story has what insiders call "legs"--the incremental disclosures could well go on for months, demoralizing our allies and detracting from the President's capacity to govern.

To what end? The main point of the exercise, so far as Congress is concerned, cannot be the discovery and punishment of crime: We will have an independent counsel for that. The congressional agenda appears instead to be a reassertion to subject the President's national-security adviser to congressional confirmation. Others want new disclosure laws or a larger congressional role in foreign initiatives. These are not, I submit, appropriate answers to our troubles. We do not need new shackles on the presidency. Compared to any Western equivalent, it is shackled quite enough.... What we do need is a clear vision of what we stand for in the world. Only the President can provide it.... Only the President can establish clear lines of direction and responsibility. Someone must speak definitively throughout the world for the United States.

In the December 17 LOS ANGELES TIMES, Paul Craig Roberts, Assistant Secretary of the Treasury in the first Reagan term, took issue with the inability of elected, and increasingly narrow-minded, officials to see the harm being done to the power of the nation as a whole:

Whether the affair stops at the level of a political circus or develops into a criminal prosecution, the accomplishments and goals of the Reagan agenda could be unraveled, pulling down in the process the effort to restore American power and influence in world affairs. Ultimately at stake is the conservatives' challenge to the Establishment view that American power is a source of tension, hostility and instability in international affairs and cannot be exercised without broad-based consent in the world community....

Sen. Barry Goldwater told the WASHINGTON POST in his farewell interview last month, Congress has increasingly come to represent far narrower interests. When he was first elected in 1952, Goldwater said, members "put their country before their district or their state," but "the average member of Congress today puts more importance on his district or his state than he does on his country." The declining ability of representative government to act in the national interest is an ominous development for a country that, like it or not, is locked in a struggle with the Soviet Union....

If the Reagan presidency is unraveled, it might be the final defeat of presidential resistance to bureaucratic government.... There are other lessons to be learned. A country that flays itself before a world audience will not be taken seriously in world affairs, regardless of the size of its gross national product or the number of its warheads. We can rationalize that we are giving governments of men a lesson in the rule of law, but the lesson will be lost in the spectacle. Most governments prefer to be stronger rather than weaker. The rule of law will be observed chewing up American patriots....

"Europe Fears Rudderless Reagan Administration, Looks to Shultz to Steady the Course" is the title of an article in the November 28 issue of THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR, written by the CSM's fine Bonn correspondent Elizabeth Pond:

The West Europeans are deeply concerned that the Iran fiasco may destroy President Reagan's authority and leave United States foreign policy rudderless for the crucial next two years. But at the same time, they are heaving a collective sigh of relief that George Shultz appears to be staying on as U.S. secretary of state. Asked in an interview about the importance to Europeans of keeping Mr. Shultz in office, the NATO secretary-general, Peter Carrington, eloquently looked toward heaven and made an imploring gesture....

A West German diplomat commented that if you remove Shultz, "you remove the man who has the most competence and experience in the Reagan administration in foreign policy. Shultz understands East-West relations." Concurring in his colleagues' judgment, a British diplomat noted, "If he goes, everything goes." And he continued,..."It's not over yet. It's just going down, down, down."

For Europeans perhaps even more than for Americans, the six weeks since the Iceland summit have been an emotional roller coaster.... The Europeans were alarmed by Mr. Reagan's impulsive summit target of abolishing all ballistic missiles in 10 years; for them this meant a casual willingness to give up the nuclear umbrella Washington has held over Europe for the past four decades--and to abandon Europe to the mercies of Soviet conventional superiority.

For Europeans, who attach supreme importance to stability and predictability, all this was uncertain enough. But worse came with the [Iran-contra revelations].... They recall the pattern of the Johnson administration (over Vietnam), the Nixon administration (over Watergate), and the Carter administration (over the hostages in Iran). This specter of disintegration is all the more distressing, since the quality Europeans have valued most in Reagan has been his phenomenal ability to restore American self-confidence. "Now begins the danger of a President that loses his authority; then you have no policy at all," a West German official summarized.

As the foregoing article stressed, the West Europeans are as much disturbed over Reykjavik and what could have happened, as they are dismayed over what is yet to occur as Iran-contra unfolds. Neither issue inspires confidence in Washington, as noted by Robert E. Hunter in the December 15 LOS ANGELES TIMES:

It is natural to expect that our allies share the angst over the muddle and misfeasance at the top of the U.S. government. Yet Western Europe remains far more concerned about something that seems to be ancient history here: What Ronald Reagan did two months ago at his summit meeting with Mikhail S. Gorbachev in Iceland.... The most obvious issue at Reykjavik was the so-called Euromissiles--Soviet SS-20s and U.S. Pershing 2 and cruise missiles. Before the summit, Gorbachev made significant concessions, and agreement seemed likely to reduce the weapons to 100 warheads on each side.... At Reykjavik, it seemed possible to scrap them altogether....

Far more significant, however, was President Reagan's apparent willingness to trade away major portions of the U.S. strategic arsenal, even toying with the idea of eliminating all nuclear weapons. The allies were shocked that an American President would discuss a step that would cede political dominance over the Eurasian land mass to the Soviet Union with its superiority in conventional military potential....

After Reykjavik, ...both France and Great Britain...reasserted their commitment to proceed with the modernization of their nuclear arsenals. As these arsenals swell in numbers and accuracy of warheads, they could complicate U.S. arms-control efforts with the Soviets. It is one thing for Paris and London to retain nuclear weapons as marginal re-insurance; it is quite another for them to do so because of emerging doubts as to America's strategic purposes.... Despite his current difficulties, Reagan must show the allies that he is in charge of U.S. strategic policy from doctrine to arms control. It is here, not in the Iran-contras scandal, that the credibility of the U.S. presidency is most at risk.

Under a dramatic title in the December 16 WALL STREET JOURNAL--"U.S. Muddle Stirs European Unity and Independence"--Melvin Krause (who consistently advocates a U.S. military withdrawal from Europe) wrote:

Anxiety about continued U.S. interest in Europe...has brought the European powers into closer cooperation with one another. According to a story in THE WALL STREET JOURNAL, "common security fears following the Reagan-Gorbachev meeting in Iceland have prompted West Germany, Britain and France into an unprecedented agreement to coordinate their nuclear-arms-control policies.... Bonn, London and Paris aim to speak with one voice in arms-control discussions with the superpowers."...

New European anxieties about the constancy of U.S. interest in Europe has moved the NATO allies into a more militaristic posture. It must be remembered that it was only a short time ago that there was a great deal of fashionable talk in Europe--and not only from the extreme left--about the desirability of a world free of nuclear weapons. Reykjavik, by putting an end to such talk, has delivered a weighty blow to Europe's "peace movement." According to a senior European official, "The question of a nuclear-free world raises a lot of problems--not for the Americans and not for the Soviets, but first for the Europeans."...

The lessons of Reykjavik and the Iranian-contra affair for U.S.-European relations are clear. So long as the Europeans feel secure about U.S. defense support, they are apt to fight among themselves, be drawn to anti-nuclear fantasies and ignore their conventional defense. On the other hand, the less sure the Europeans are of the U.S., the more they cooperate with one another and the more militant they become in their own defense.

The issue of "pulling the troops back home" continues to be discussed in top political circles in America, occasionally surfacing in public forums and debates. In the December 19 NATIONAL REVIEW, article "Losing Ground in Europe," Tom Bethel wrote:

About 150 people were gathered in the Harold R. Medina courtroom of Columbia University Law School...to hear a debate between Irving Kristol, co-editor of THE PUBLIC INTEREST and professor of Social Thought at New York University, and Eugene Rostow, former director of the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency and Sterling Professor of Law at Yale University. The motion before the house was: Resolved, that the United States should quit the North Atlantic Treaty Organization....

"I shall be arguing," Kristol said, "that NATO over the past ten years or so has become an organization with perverse or counterproductive tendencies. We and the Europeans would both be better off with an all-European NATO, which would then have friendly relations with the United States. I am not an isolationist. I am not anti-European."....

In his response at Columbia, Eugene Rostow [said]..., "It's hard for me to imagine any reason why it's in the American national interest to have a Europe so independent and so nuclear, on its own as a third force," he said. "That, it

seems to me, is a risk we should never have to contemplate. We fought two wars to prevent Europe from being unified under German control. (Those whose real reason for opposing change in NATO's structure is fear that West Germany is potentially more dangerous than the Soviet Union should make their case forthrightly. Then it could be explained to them that wars between democracies are implausible events today.)...

[GHH note: Conservatives focus almost exclusively on the Soviet threat, seeing it through their single-reflex East-West lenses. They can't see a time when today's German state in the West may not remain democratic and allied to the U.S.]

It is striking that the Soviets have never agitated for the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Europe. According to Adam Ulam, director of the Russian Research Center at Harvard University: "Although the Soviets want to encourage tensions between Western Europe and the United States, they may not want to see the United States withdraw or greatly reduce its land forces in Europe. Such a shock might make West European leaders decide they have no choice but to unite politically."

The Germans and other Europeans, in turn, are concerned about the very visible "Pacific Tilt" of the United States. In the December 15 LOS ANGELES TIMES, editorial writer Ernest Conine wrote:

The Konrad Adenauer Foundation, the research and public-relations arm of West Germany's ruling Christian Democrats, sponsored a conference in Los Angeles last week to explore whether a Pacific tilt really exists.... The meeting was attended by 17 West German politicians, diplomats, scholars, journalists and businessmen, along with a similar array of Americans.... There is no doubt about the Pacific tilt in purely economic terms. The Pacific Basin countries account for an increasingly large proportion of world production; and have long since passed Western Europe as America's most important trading partner.... If the flag follows commerce, as history teaches that it does, logic suggests that the focus of U.S. foreign policy and military planning will shift increasingly to the Pacific, with a corresponding de-emphasis on the Atlantic alliance.

This hasn't really happened yet. But obviously it could, given the Soviet military buildup in the Pacific and the severe budgetary strain on a U.S. military establishment with worldwide commitments. The tendency among a new generation of Germans to belittle the Soviet military threat to Europe doesn't help, since Americans are bound to ask why they should worry more about European security than Europeans do....

The unhappy fact is that, as some of the German visitors conceded, political dialogue in Europe--and certainly in West Germany--is heavily laced with anti-Americanism these days. CDU politicians are not the big offenders, but it has become fashionable in West Germany to magnify the shortcomings of U.S. policy and leadership while making excuses for Soviet

transgressions.... When Americans hear the strident voices of opposition Social Democrats and some of the younger CDU spokesmen, as well as Britain's Labor Party [which says U.S. nuclear missiles in Britain must go if it comes to power], they have to wonder about the future of the historic European tilt in U.S. policy.

Increasing numbers of Europeans feel their future lies with a much closer economic and even political-security arrangement with the Soviet bloc. In the Winter 1986-87 issue of FOREIGN POLICY there appeared an article entitled "The Third Way," written by Jolyon Howorth:

There have been only two coherent postwar scenarios for Europe. The first rests on..."Atlanticism," that concept positing a community of purpose between the peoples of Western Europe and those of North America. The second scenario centers on a process of trans-continental reconciliation, implying gradual progress toward a regional security structure from, say, the Atlantic Ocean to the Ural Mountains. Atlanticism once reigned supreme. But today, historical forces are, with increasing urgency, nudging Europeans at every level toward the latter [scenario].... The West Europeans, after all, are condemned by geography to live as neighbors with the Soviet empire, while the Americans are condemned by geopolitical strategy to function as rivals....

Detente helped Europeans recognize their common cultural roots..., generating a widespread feeling throughout Western Europe that the Continent is a cultural unit--at least from Wales to Warsaw, if not from Madrid to Moscow.... As more and more West Europeans, especially young ones, travel to Eastern Europe, they discover what their grandparents took for granted: that Prague and Budapest and Warsaw are European cities and that, in some ways, Leningrad is the most European of them all.... For whatever reason, Europeans tend to believe that a historic agreement can be reached with the Soviets, while Americans tend to put their faith in a military balance.

In sum, an East-West non-aggression pact, ushering in "peace in Europe"--with America on the outside looking in.

--Gene H. Hogberg, News Bureau