

PASTOR GENERAL'S REPORT

TO THE MINISTRY OF THE
WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD



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FROM MINISTERIAL SERVICES

International News

Australia A steady flow of mail continued to come in throughout the month of July. 15,601 letters were received, 2,858 of which were from new people requesting our publications. So far this year 126,429 letters have been received and processed. This is a 6.8% increase over the same period last year.

The WORLD TOMORROW on television and the newsstand programme continue to be most effective tools in reaching new people with the Gospel. Those writing to us for the first time usually include a favourable comment or two about the TV programme or The PLAIN TRUTH magazine picked up at a newsstand outlet.

The economic climate in Australia continues to be of concern. A report recently released by the Australian Council of Social Services states that nearly five million Australians are now in serious economic plight. With approximately one-third of our population facing economic difficulties, one wonders if the term "lucky country" applies anymore. This is obviously affecting the income of the Work in Australia.

However, in spite of continuing economic difficulties, members and supporters contributed an excellent 23.7% increase in income for the month, bringing our year-to-date increase to 16.1%. In view of the circumstances, this shows a high level of commitment to the work Jesus Christ is doing through His Apostle. While we are most encouraged and grateful for this increase, high inflation and cost increases in almost every area where we purchase materials and services are forcing us to continue to cut our expenditure and carefully monitor cash flow.

A blow-in card offering the Ambassador College Bible Correspondence Course was inserted in the May issue of the Australian edition of The PLAIN TRUTH magazine, resulting in 998 new students. This represents a 1.5% response. Students actively taking the Correspondence Course lessons in Australia are now in excess of 2,000.

Telecast in Sri Lanka The first WORLD TOMORROW television programme was aired July 19 over the state-owned Sri Lankan broadcasting system which reaches the entire country of Sri Lanka, plus southern India via a relay system. This first programme was a special by Mr. Armstrong on the Middle East and brought unexpected reaction due to the current crisis in Lebanon. There is apparently a great deal of sympathy in Sri Lanka for the P.L.O. Because of this the Sri Lankan broadcasting Board of Management requested that we wait a few weeks before the next specials on the Middle East are aired. Our minister in Sri Lanka, Mr. Mohan Jayasekera, is in almost daily contact with the Board of Management, and negotiations are under way to

have Mr. Armstrong's programmes covering his trips to Asia in early 1982 aired first. This will allow time for the Middle East situation to modify before the other special programmes centering on that area of the world begin to air.

Appreciation for the Second Ministerial Refreshing Program

Dear Mr. Armstrong:

I want to add my thanks to those of others for the second Refreshing Program. Of course, it is of no value unless the information that was covered is applied. We are doing that here.

I found it a wonderful blessing, an inspiration, and at the same time a humbling experience to be allowed to learn from a number of very dedicated leaders of the Work...in the midst of one of the most beautiful places on earth.

Braden Veller

Dear Mr. Tkach:

One of the highlights of the last two Refreshing Programs has been getting to know the Ministerial Services staff. We have certainly appreciated your forcefulness and leadership in these past two years.

Refreshing Program session number seven was a very valued experience. True harmony and unity pervaded and it was great to see the respect and camaraderie amongst the ministry. Dr. Hoeh was at his best again, especially in his perceptive talk on alcoholism.

Of course Mr. Armstrong's visit with the ministry was the highlight. It is very comforting and strengthening to see the loyal staff he has around him. His taped messages are deeply appreciated. There is no doubt but that we serve under a lion-hearted leader of the house of David!

Neil and Susan Earle

Dear Mr. Tkach:

Thank you for allowing us non-ministers to participate in the Refreshing Program--a most enjoyable and profitable experience. It has given me a high respect and appreciation for the job the ministers are doing.

Dale Hanway

Pastor Expresses Heartfelt Thanks

Dear Mr. Herbert Armstrong:

We are very appreciative of your enthusiasm and great efforts to accomplish the Great Commission which has been given you by Jesus Christ. Scarcely do you ever find a man half your age with the kind of life and dynamism you possess. It is quite obvious to us that God's Spirit is strongly leading you.

We pray constantly for you to have the strength to do whatever God leads you to do. As a local pastor here for the Huntsville and Florence, Alabama Churches, I can say assuredly that God's people are behind you wholeheartedly. We are your children in the Lord and we look to you. Please be encouraged and keep up the wonderful job you are doing!

Jim and Joan Tuck

--Joe Tkach, Ministerial Services

FROM MAIL PROCESSING

Colorful Comments About God's Work

Members and coworkers often use unique expressions, as well as interesting analogies, when writing to Mr. Armstrong. Here is a selection of such comments.

Church Brings Light and Refreshment

I want to thank the Worldwide Church of God for the Work of God, made so plain and understandable, which brought light into my life when it seemed so dark and lonely.

R.C. (Hagerstown, MD)

I spent years listening to all the doctrines that were being taught, knowing deep down inside that they simply could not be true. I could not find the truth until I started receiving The PLAIN TRUTH--then I felt like I had arrived home after a long, dark journey.

M.R. (Fort Worth, TX)

At 62 years of age, I feel as though I have been for all my adult life in a dry desert and have now come upon a spring of pure, cool, refreshing water--thanks to Mr. Armstrong and The PLAIN TRUTH.

Mrs. A.M. (St. Louis, MO)

PT Fits It Altogether

I read magazines like TIME and NEWSWEEK to find out what's happening in the world, but I read The PLAIN TRUTH magazine to find out how it all fits together.

L.M. (Vienna, VA)

Coworker Letter Uplifting

When I am depressed from hearing so much bad news, your coworker letter full of good news arrives and lifts me up by the shoulder straps, shakes the dust off me and fills me with renewed vigor. Please, please keep the letters coming.

D.W. (Alliance, NE)

On Track and Firmly Seated

I have the feeling our train is not only back on the track but is picking up speed and momentum. Through your guidance and direction you are helping us to get firmly seated in the train, rather

than hanging onto the caboose where a sudden jolt could fling us off.

N.P. (San Diego, CA)

Nearing the Goal

This world is now in the final seconds of the last quarter of the ball game. We have carried the ball 99 and one-half yards. The touchdown is only inches away! We must see it through!!

J.P. (Bladensburg, MD)

Mr. Waterhouse's Job

Mr. Waterhouse is like a needle sewing a thread of UNITY between all congregations of this worldwide Work of God.

Mr. & Mrs. I.S. (Hagerstown, MD)

Like Pioneers

Our calling reminds me of the heroes this country bore during its beginnings--men like Franklin, Jefferson, Adams, etc., who were loyal heroes to an idea of freedom. They were fighting for ideas and against men. We are fighting for truth and against spiritual wickedness in high places. We also are pioneers.

J.R. (Albuquerque, NM)

--Richard Rice, Mail Processing Center

ON THE WORLD SCENE

THE "POISONED PIPELINE": HOW IT IMPERILS AMERICA'S FUTURE SECURITY

Mark down Wednesday, August 25, 1982 on your calendars as a major milestone along the path of declining relations between the United States and the nations of Western Europe. On that date the U.S. government took two actions that are certain to heighten political and economic tensions between the two halves of the Atlantic Alliance.

First of all, the U.S. Commerce Department ruled that 13 firms in six European countries received improper subsidies on steel exports to the United States. The finding, if upheld in October by the U.S. International Trade Commission, will lead to import penalties against the European firms to offset the subsidies, which have been found to range from one percent of the value of steel shipments to over 20%. European Common Market officials have said that adoption of countervailing duties on steel exports could set off a trade war between the continent and the United States extending far beyond the steel industry.

Secondly, President Reagan announced that he would impose sanctions against the French subsidiary of a Texas firm as part of his effort to block construction of the Soviet Union's natural gas pipeline to Western Europe. The decision to move against Dresser France, a subsidiary of Dresser Industries Inc., of Dallas, means that the French subsidiary will not be able to receive goods shipped by Dresser or any other U.S. firm. Mr. Reagan's decision to "blacklist" Dresser France, however, did not prevent the shipment of the first three compressors which sailed from the French port of Le Havre aboard a Soviet freighter the following day. The French socialist government of President Francois Mitterrand ordered the shipment to proceed.

The French are leading the pack in opposing American policy vis-a-vis the massive pipeline project, which Moscow Radio calls "the deal of the century." The West Germans, the Italians and even the British, however, are not far behind. In fact, the pipeline row is engendering a remarkable degree of European unity. "For the first time," reported the French daily LE MONDE, "Europeans, including the British, feel a solidarity stronger with each other than anything linking them to the United States."

Suddenly, experts on both sides of the Atlantic are talking about the on-coming death of the alliance. Europeans say that it was bound to happen sooner or later. That it is happening now, they claim, is a result of President Reagan's so-called "cowboy shoot-from-the-hip mentality" toward the Soviet Union. What does Reagan really want, they ask? Is he out to declare economic warfare against the Soviet Union? Did he really mean it, when he said in London in June that the West should take advantage of Soviet economic weaknesses and embark upon a global "march of freedom and democracy" in order to "leave Marxism-Leninism on the ash heap of history"?

European leaders at the June 9-10 NATO summit were said to have been stunned at the President's "hard-line" views toward the Soviets, conveyed at a closed-door meeting at the end of the conference. Mr. Reagan repeatedly said that he felt that Moscow should not be helped in any way economically as long as it still insisted on undermining Western interests around the world, such as supporting various "national liberation" movements. One diplomat quoted the President as saying of the Soviets: "They may not be fighting us, but they certainly are at war with us."

Mr. Reagan's remarks so startled the assembled heads-of-states and their delegations that NATO Secretary General Joseph Luns immediately adjourned the session which had been paralyzed by numbing silence. (European leaders should have been prepared for such a Reagan bombast, he having told them earlier at the Versailles economic summit: "If we push the Soviets they will collapse. When will we get another opportunity like this in our lifetime?")

While Europeans claim they are put off by such "cold war rhetoric," American officials say that this is precisely the point: That Europeans have been so lulled by detente that they no longer understand that there still is a "war going on" between the free world and the Communist world. According to Washington's viewpoint, it makes no sense for the free world to continue to expand trade with the Communists, especially by offering government-subsidized low-interest loans. (The pipeline is being financed at less than eight percent interest.) This makes even less sense now, goes this argument, given the huge indebtedness of the East bloc. The lender is in danger of becoming the slave of the borrower. If trade is to be conducted, keep it to the minimum--and strictly cash only. (Mr. Reagan thus defends his grain sales.) In sum, let the Soviets feel the pinch a bit. Just maybe they'll have to think twice about their huge arms build-up and support of worldwide revolution.

In case the Europeans are not impressed by these arguments, the U.S. is prepared to push another pipeline approach. There is growing evidence that preliminary drudge-work on the pipeline under harsh arctic winter conditions is being done by forced labor, including political and religious prisoners and former South Vietnamese army officers undergoing "re-education" and whose services offset Vietnam's \$1.6 billion war debt to the U.S.S.R. Some severe critics of the project even dub it the "Gulag Pipeline."

If the Europeans are so "thick" that they cannot fathom this rationale, then maybe it is time after all, say some U.S. voices, to cut the ties to the continent, to let the Europeans float free, if that is what they really want (which means if they no longer see things America's way). One, in fact, almost detects a certain "death wish" for the Atlantic Alliance in influential conservative circles in America. This crowd has always been more isolationistic. It has never felt as comfortable having close ties to Europe as has the liberal East Coast elite which controlled U.S. foreign policy for years. This train of thought is expressed continuously these days by William Safire, the token-conservative columnist of the NEW YORK TIMES. In his August 12, 1982 syndicated column, Mr. Safire wrote:

If Schmidt and Mitterrand are so committed to making the biggest East-West trade deal in history that they are willing to risk a serious breach in the Atlantic Alliance, that is their business, but the U.S. is not obligated to assist them in what we believe to be a fundamental mistake.

The point of having an alliance is not merely to have an alliance--it is to act together in a common purpose. The purpose of NATO, for example, is to deter the Soviet Union from doing in West Germany what it has done in Afghanistan and Poland. If the West Germans consider it more important to strengthen their ties with the Russians than to maintain their ties with the Americans, then the "alliance" has become a hollow shell and we would do well to so recognize it.

A total of 350,000 U.S. servicemen are stationed in Europe to defend it from Soviet aggression. We have a right to object to actions by misguided allies that add to the power of our common adversary. If these serious objections are derided by foreign ministers who bluster about "divorce" [the words of French Foreign Minister Cheysson] and threaten to use our technology against our will, Europeans now taking us for granted may find themselves with a fine gas pipeline to the East and no umbilical cord to the West.

It must be emphasized that the pipeline dispute is but a symptom of far deeper troubles in the alliance. And at the heart of the quarrel is one irreducible and nearly irreconcilable element: A fundamental disagreement on the nature of the Soviet threat and how to respond to it. We have read what Mr. Safire says concerning the American point of view. Now, to give the French (and by extension, European) view, is Andre Fontaine, the editor of a major French newspaper, LE MONDE, as published in the August 1, 1982 LOS ANGELES HERALD EXAMINER:

PARIS--It was bound to happen. No honeymoon can last forever, especially when the two partners--France and the United States--have so little in common and so many reasons to disagree.

To start with, it was an unlikely marriage--a match of incongruous partners. For years, the United States had warned against communist participation in any Western government. Who would have dared to think that a dedicated anti-communist such as Ronald Reagan could make friends with a president surrounded by four communist ministers [in Mitterrand's cabinet]? Reagan is a

committed conservative, while Francois Mitterrand is proud to have brought the left back to power after 20 years in opposition. Ideologically they could not be further apart. The American president hopes to effect a dramatic reduction in government controls. The French president relies on the state to achieve an ambitious program of industrial reconversion and redistribution of wealth.

Such a difference of approach could not but interfere with foreign policy. Reagan wants to resist the Russians everywhere, to get rid of the subversion he believes they are encouraging, to support "good governments"--anti-communist ones--no matter how they handle human rights. In Mitterrand's eyes, people become communists less because of Soviet mischief than because of the miserable conditions in which they live....Hence the complete divergence between the two presidents on, for instance, Central America.

The two countries' interests are no less conflicting than their presidents' views. Both have to cope with the effects of the world economic crisis....Each government is concerned above all to defend its markets and its currency. National selfishness, in such periods, is the rule....

If the present crisis were limited to France and the United States, it would be tempting to see it as just another misunderstanding and wait for better weather to come. But the novelty this time is that all Europe is siding with France. Not only Schmidt but also Italy and even Britain. The same could be said of Japan and Canada.

Does this mean that Europe and Japan are ready to surrender to Big Brother in Moscow? Not in the least. What they don't want is to pay for the deterioration of the Soviet economy that the United States hopes to achieve at the price of further deterioration of their own economies. None of these countries shares the American assumption that this is the only way to convince the Russians to behave more peacefully, for Moscow may decide instead to respond by increasing tension in various parts of the world.

"Pull Out of NATO"

The upshot of the whole multifaceted dispute is the increased demand in influential circles in America (so far resisted by Mr. Reagan) to reduce--or even eliminate altogether--America's commitment to the joint Western defense structure, embodied in NATO. There seems to be a widespread misconception, especially among American conservatives, that only the Europeans benefit from NATO; that, to America, NATO is just a financial burden. ("How long do we have to keep those 350,000 troops over there?") Where is the understanding that a free Europe is a tremendous shield for America itself? Standing together, the U.S. and its allies outnumber the Soviets in many military categories. The U.S. simply could not do it alone.

Yet the trend toward isolation, or reorientation of America's global strategy away from Europe toward Asia, say, or the Western Hemisphere continues. This trend is amplified by the fact that America, with huge immigrations

from these two regions in recent years, is becoming less and less European in ancestry and culture.

Recently one of the "deans" of American neo-conservatism, Irving Kristol, in a WALL STREET JOURNAL article, even called for the reshaping of NATO as a strictly European institution. The 6,000 U.S.-controlled nuclear weapons on hand in Europe, he said, should "simply be left behind" and the new European NATO should be encouraged to develop its own long-ranged nuclear weapons "if it wished." After reshaping and rearming, Kristol added, this new NATO "could then form an alliance with the U.S. if it so desired (as it presumably would)."

What kind of cut-your-own-throat reasoning is this? A future, independent nuclear-armed Europe, composed of nations at odds with the U.S. over fundamental political and economic issues, would hardly remain allied with America. Rather the opposite would be true, as Bible prophecy indicates: A Europe allied against the U.S., perhaps in cooperation, for a while at least, with its big trade partner to the East.

--Gene H. Hogberg, News Bureau