

PASTOR GENERAL'S REPORT

TO THE MINISTRY OF THE
WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD



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FROM MINISTERIAL SERVICES

International News

Canada October saw an increase in the income of 4.7% over the corresponding period of a year ago. The year-to-date figure stands at a plus 13.4%.

We received 47,588 pieces of mail in October. This is an increase of 42.5% over last year.

Listed below are new radio stations over which the broadcast will be aired in Canada starting late November:

Caraquet, Gloucester, N.S. (French), CJVA-AM, Sun. @ 10:15 a.m.
Sudbury, Ont., CJMX-FM, 105.0, Sun. @ 7:30 a.m.
Edmundston, Madawaska, N.B. (French), CJEM/CKMV, 570, Sun. @ 8:35 a.m.
Sault Ste. Marie, Ont., CJQM-FM, 104, M-F @ 10:30 p.m.
Sault Ste. Marie, Ont., CKCY-AM, 920, Sun. @ 10:30 p.m.
Charlottetown, P.E.I., CHIN, 1190, M-F, 10:00 p.m.
Edmonton, Alta., CHED, 630, Sun. @ 6:30 a.m.
Espanola, Ont., CKNS, M-F @ 10:30 p.m.

The first returns from our newspaper insert campaign are now coming through the mail. The preliminary results are quite encouraging--we received over 4,000 responses in two days! We are hoping to boost our PLAIN TRUTH mailing list by 30% which translates into approximately 70,000 new subscribers.

In October the final decision was made to move the printing of The PLAIN TRUTH from Donnelley's in the United States to Lawson Graphics in Winnipeg, Manitoba. The transfer will begin with the printing in January of the March issue. A savings of at least \$90,000 per year will be realized by this move.

U.K. & Eire PLAIN TRUTH subscriber circulation in the United Kingdom is now at about 80,000--the highest for eight years, and almost double what it was in 1977. The newsstand circulation is steady at 50,000 magazines--40,000 in London and 10,000 in Birmingham--averaging a two to three percent response for new subscribers, which means over 10,000 new subscribers added so far this year. Our advertising campaign featuring Mr. Armstrong's two advertisements headlined respectively, "How will you survive World War III?" and "The Peril to your life grows," has so far added 24,000 subscribers.

Mail is up nine percent so far this year and the amount of literature mailed out increased 27.7%. Mr. Armstrong's summer semiannual letter pulled approximately a 13% response. Mail income is up five percent year to date.

Scandinavia Though circulation has dropped back from the late 1981 level to around 10,000 due to the delayed start of the advertising programme, a

small test campaign in this area has pulled in over 1,000 subscribers. Interestingly a test ad in the Norwegian language, although offering the English PLAIN TRUTH, did much better than a similar English language ad. We hope the new subscribers fully realized they were getting an English magazine! On the other hand, an English language ad in Finland pulled remarkably well, once again confirming the excellent response figures we have experienced before in this country.

Norwegian language booklets are now being advertised to Scandinavian readers by way of Norwegian language insert cards in The PLAIN TRUTH. A recent offer for WHY WERE YOU BORN (in Norwegian) pulled a three percent response. English is as well known as any single Scandinavian tongue among more educated Scandinavians, though Norwegian is clearly the single best understood Scandinavian tongue.

Continent of Europe and the Middle East English is the most widely understood international language in the world, and Europe is no exception. Circulation of The PLAIN TRUTH has grown as a result of the combined international advertising of all the Church's European language offices, and now totals about 33,000. The readership is naturally of an above average level due to the type of media used and is very responsive. Mail received is up 35% for the year and the literature mailed out is up 135%.

East and West Africa PLAIN TRUTH circulation has been held steady at around 30,000 all year. In Africa, there is no promotional problem since word-of-mouth spreads news of The PLAIN TRUTH. In fact, a circulation level has to be fixed according to budgets available rather than demand! Incoming mail has increased by 58% over last year, and outgoing mail by 56.6%.

Mr. Steve LeBlanc, who for the past 15 months has been assisting Mr. Melvin Rhodes in Ghana, was ordained a local elder on the Feast of Trumpets.

--Joe Tkach, Ministerial Services

MAIL PROCESSING CENTER UPDATE

Five Million Stitch-in Envelopes Ordered

As the Work continues to grow, increasing amounts of material are needed to assist in bringing the Gospel to the world. For example, five million "stitch-in" envelopes have just been ordered for use in our literature.

A "stitch-in" envelope serves as a convenient and effective means of advertising the Work's publications. Three million will be used in booklets to offer literature on basic subjects such as salvation, conversion and faith. The remaining two million will be inserted into Correspondence Course lessons.

Just how much is five million envelopes? The following example may help you to visualize the number. If neatly stacked in a warehouse, they would form a pile 35 feet long, 35 feet wide and 10 feet high.

It is interesting and encouraging to note that over the years, occasional freewill offerings received from "regulars" in such envelopes have more than paid for them.

Despite Unemployment, God Provides Needs

Unemployment and other economic difficulties currently face numbers of brethren and others who write to the Work. This week's comments focus on the positive attitude shown by many despite such trials. God is surely blessing and providing for those who trust in Him, often in amazing or unexpected ways, as evidenced by the following letters.

What a trying year this has been. There has been no employment for most of the year. The economic situation here in Michigan is worsening daily. However, God continues to bless us. We have even been able to help others with nightmarish trials--those in this present world groping around with little or no real hope.

As things in this world continue to deteriorate, it is truly wonderful to be just a small part of God's Work, watching it grow despite all obstacles. The trials experienced by our family have served to strengthen our faith in God's Word.

Mr. & Mrs. J.D. (Sawyer, MI)

Even though I have been laid off from a job which had lasted 13 years, and am now on public assistance while in school, God has truly taken care of my family and me. He has blessed us in ways I have never thought possible. Please accept this offering as I'm truly grateful to God for our blessings and most importantly, His love.

J.T. (Derby, NY)

My husband has been out of work for six months, but every day God proves His love for us in ways I would have never dreamed. Praise God, from whom all blessings truly flow--but not necessarily material blessings. We are living in a house without heat, air conditioning and bathroom, and we heat water to wash. However, I love it and feel privileged to have this much.

L.N. (Omaha, TX)

My husband received an adjustment on his Social Security check and as a result we have received some back pay. We are most thankful to God for this. It had been a tight summer, but God has helped us all the way through and is still helping us. Here is our offering and we thank God for being able to know His truth.

Mrs. C.H. (Waynesboro, MS)

Although my husband has been working at a steady job, he has not been paid for three and a half months. Even though we have had no income, we have had all the food and other things we need--God has surely taken care of us.

Mrs. P.S. (Blue Ridge, TX)

The work situation in our area is very discouraging as far as the family breadwinner is concerned. My husband is now signing up for the ten-week extension of unemployment benefits. But God has really blessed us this year. We have kept our bills paid, been able to attend Church services every Sabbath and also go to the Feast. He gave us an abundance of good vegetables during the

summer and all we can possibly need for several months or even years. In my job it sometimes looks as though I will have to take a cut in hours, but it always turns out to be an increase for some reason. Even though I only make \$3.45 per hour, it helps to keep us going. We have learned that come what may, we will give our heavenly Father thanks.

Mrs. G.M. (Chippewa Lake, OH)

In Philippians 4:19 it says, "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." Even though I have been unemployed for six months, I have found that God will always tend to my needs as long as I obey Him. Sometimes, humanly speaking, a situation would look impossible, but I would always find reassurance in prayer. When I least expect it, my needs are taken care of in a way that defies all logic. Thus am I in the state of mind spoken of in Philippians 4:6, "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God."

R.G. (Moab, UT)

--Richard Rice, Mail Processing Center

ON THE WORLD SCENE

POPE ISSUES MOST DRAMATIC CALL FOR EUROPEAN UNITY

DATELINE--LONDON, ENGLAND (November 22, 1982): Throughout Mr. Armstrong's three-week trip to Africa and Europe he has been consistent in message after message to both the brethren and PLAIN TRUTH readers. Time is short, he warned. Watch, he said repeatedly, for the emergence--more sudden than anyone would ever realize--of a United States of Europe. Religious unity between the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Churches, he added, will be an absolutely essential ingredient to such unity.

This theme was certainly borne out by news events as well as personal experiences gained on our last two stops in Athens, Greece and Madrid, Spain--the last stop before arriving here in London. We spent two and one-half days in the bustling Spanish capital, which is nearly bursting at the seams with over three million people and, it would seem, almost as many cars!

For Mr. Armstrong, certainly one of the highlights of the entire trip occurred in Madrid. He had a very cordial 40-minute long private audience with King Juan Carlos I on Friday morning, November 19th. I am sure Mr. Armstrong will convey his impressions of the 44-year-old monarch in his own writings.

I am convinced it was not a matter of mere happenstance that the Madrid segment was scheduled into this overseas trip a number of months ago. Certainly a lot transpired in the intervening time in this key European country, much of it immediately preceding Mr. Armstrong's arrival.

Socialists' Triumphant Win

On Friday, October 29th the Spanish and Socialist Workers' Party chalked up an amazing victory in Spain's national elections, winning a clear majority of seats in the Spanish Cortes, or parliament. The main opposition rightist party also gained a good number of seats. The main loser was the

coalition of centrist parties which had governed the country ever since its return to democratic rule in 1976, the year after the death of Generalissimo Francisco Franco. Thus Spain is posed somewhat precariously on a left-right axis with the moderate center ground having collapsed.

Nevertheless, from conversations I had in Madrid, the Socialists and their popular, young (aged 40) leader, Felipe Gonzalez, seemed to enjoy a wide basis of support. Few people expect the Socialists to be as radical as their counterparts were in the early 1930s, whose flirtation with communism brought on the reaction from the right in the person of Franco. A disastrous civil war resulted from 1936 to 1939.

(Significantly, Mr. Armstrong and his party visited the national shrine to the victims of both sides in the war. This monument in the "Valley of the Fallen" is located in a mountain range about an hour from Madrid. It consists primarily of a massive Catholic Cathedral tunneled deep into a mountainside. A 181,000 ton cross rests on the peak, beneath which is the basilica's dome. General Franco, who inspired the entire project and oversaw all aspects of its construction, is buried beneath the dome. Mr. Armstrong definitely wanted to see this national monument. He had been there once before in 1956, two years before its actual completion. He was escorted at that time by a member of the royal family.)

Papal Visit Stirs Spain's Soul

Even more significant than the startling turn of political events in Spain --whose full impact is yet to be felt--was the remarkable ten-day visit of Pope John Paul II to the country beginning only three days after the election. (It had been scheduled months before.)

Of all John Paul's foreign trips this was the most grueling. While in Spain the pope traveled 4,470 miles (7,152 kilometers), visiting nearly every corner of the country. He made 50 separate appearances in 16 cities. It is believed that up to two million people witnessed his arrival in Madrid. More than one million of them attended his mass at the Plaza de Lima, perhaps the largest single crowd for a mass he has drawn on any of his 16 foreign trips.

Spaniards have long been known for their devotion to the Catholic faith. The pope was believed to have said on this trip that the zeal of the Spanish even exceeded that of his native Poland, where the impact of communist atheism has taken its inevitable toll. Nevertheless, the pope aimed to put Spain "back on the track." The Catholic Church in Spain has suffered a serious drop in attendance, coupled with a serious drain in the priesthood. It is estimated that nearly three quarters of all Spaniards no longer attend mass on a regular basis.

Urbanization, prosperity (very evident in and around Madrid) and the desire to be just like other modern European societies have all exacted their toll upon the power of the Church. Coupled with this has been the impact of Spain's new constitution, enacted in 1978, which stripped away the privileged official role the Church had long enjoyed.

The Socialist program threatens to reduce the power of the Church still further, similar to the manner in which the Socialist government in Greece has challenged the privileged status of the Greek Orthodox Church.

The Spanish Socialist party has proposed the legalization of abortion. Their forerunners, the center coalition, pushed through Spain's first divorce law only last year.

While being very careful not to denounce Spain's youthful experiment with democratic pluralism, the pope, nevertheless, lashed out stronger than he ever had before against destructive social trends. He decried Spain's rush into rampant consumerism. His denunciation of contemporary views on sex and marriage was his most vehement yet. Regarding divorce he said, "It is not licit for man to separate what God has united." On the issue of abortion, he said, "the murder of an innocent never can be legitimized." (It is obvious just looking at Madrid's newsstands how much the country has changed since 1975. Generalissimo Franco would never have permitted such an open display of so-called "men's magazines.")

The Astonishing but Little-reported Finale

The first nine days of the pope's Spanish sojourn were devoted to issues involving Spain's "backsliding" Catholics. The theme of the tenth and final day, however, expanded to cover a much greater theme: the spiritual unity of all Europe.

At the city of Santiago de Compostela, the pope issued an impassioned appeal for all Europeans, both East and West, to rediscover "...your origins. Give life to your roots." Of course he was speaking of Europe's Catholic heritage. Here is the way Henry Kamm of the NEW YORK TIMES described the activities of this final day of the pope's Spanish tour in his column in the November 10th INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE:

At the final destination of his 10-day pilgrimage to Spain...the pope celebrated what he called a "European act," in which he spoke as much as a Pole as he did as head of the Roman Catholic Church.

He said: "I, John Paul, a son of the Polish nation that has always considered itself European, by its origins, traditions, culture and vital relations; Slav among Latins and Latin among the Slavs; I, successor to Peter in the See of Rome, a See that Christ wished to situate in Europe and which he loves for its striving for the spreading of Christianity throughout the world; I, bishop of Rome and pastor of the universal church, from Santiago issue to you, old Europe, a cry full of love: Find yourself. Be yourself. Discover your origins. Give life to your roots."

The pope spoke in the presence of King Juan Carlos and representatives of European organizations and universities especially invited for the "act" that was clearly intended as the high point of the papal tour. Shortly afterward the pope boarded his plane for the return to Rome.

His speech made no reference to the United States, except possibly by inference among the countries he said had been "enhanced" by European expansion, and left in doubt whether the Soviet Union formed part of Europe in his world view. The great nations and civilizations of other continents were not mentioned, nor were the contributions of non-Christian faiths. The Europe

the pontiff described was equivalent to Christian Europe. He said the history of the founding of its nations "coincides with the penetration of the gospel." European identity, the pope declared, "is incomprehensible without Christianity...."

The pope listed as the ills of the world "secularized ideologies that go as far as to negate God and limit religious liberty," excessive importance given to economic success and materialism and hedonism that attack "the values of the prolific and united family." For those reasons, he said, Europe must again find its soul and work to overcome them. He declared that Europe could become one "and can be so with the respect due to all its differences, including those of diverse political systems."

The pontiff did not try to chart a path toward the overcoming of the political chasm between Eastern and Western Europe. If Europe achieves these goals, he said, "Its future will not be dominated by uncertainty and fear, but rather a new period of life will begin."

Writing for the DAILY TELEGRAPH of London in its November 10th, 1982 edition, reporter Michael Field added:

In an emotional finale at Santiago de Compostela in Galicia, shrine of the Apostle St. James, the traditional evangeliser of Spain, the Pontiff pleaded for Peace in "Old Europe."

He offered the services of the Roman Catholic Church as a mediator between East and West.

He issued the warning that the Continent was facing a crisis of economic, spiritual and political upheaval, and the threat of nuclear holocaust. The solution, he said, lay in an affirmation of Europe's Christian heritage. "Precisely in this are found the common roots that have matured the Continent's civilisation, its culture, its dynamism...in one word, all that constitutes its glory."

The Pontiff asked that due respect be shown for European differences, including the various political systems. Vatican analysts said it was the first time he had spelled out in any detail his vision of European unity.

Pilgrims who had come to the Shrine of St. James in the Middle Ages had helped to make Europe a homogeneous and spiritually united Continent of Latin, Germanic, Celtic, Anglo-Saxon and Slav peoples. But now Europe was in crisis, fractured by unnatural divisions [meaning the ideological division into the capitalist West and the Communist East] that had stopped its people from meeting freely, driven by materialism and hedonism that had eroded family values, and prey to nihilism that played into the hands of terrorism.

Before the Pope spoke, King Juan Carlos expressed hopes that the Pontiff's visit to Spain would produce a spiritual renewal, and

echoed the Pontiff's words on severe international problems, ranging from economic recession to terrorism.

It is noteworthy that so few news sources reported on the momentous remarks by the Pope on his last day in Spain. Neither TIME nor NEWSWEEK magazines had anything to report on the finale, the reason being that they had both reported on the first week or so of the pope's trip but by the time their next issues came out President Brezhnev of the Soviet Union had died. The editors of both publications chose to run "specials" on the changeover in the U.S.S.R., dropping other international news including the conclusion of the papal trip. Thus the impact of the pope's concluding remarks escaped most of the world's news media. We, in fact, had to wait until our arrival in England to receive news of this important last day in Spain.

European Unity Coming

On this trip, Mr. Armstrong has seen more than ever before the outline of European unity. In Athens, Greece, Mr. Armstrong delivered a powerful address to the Rotary Club. Many influential people, including company presidents and professional people were present. Mr. Armstrong told them that the day before, a leading Greek politician had told him that European unity would lead to world peace. Mr. Armstrong showed the Rotarians how this was true, albeit in a different manner than the gentleman had intended it. European unity, Mr. Armstrong said, is coming and it is indeed a prophesied event that will occur before the return of Jesus Christ and the institution of the Kingdom of God.

Mr. Armstrong also stressed the need for key nations from both Eastern and Western Europe to play a role in this coming united Europe. He emphasized the importance of Church unity between the Roman Catholic and the Eastern Orthodox spheres.

After the meeting, Mr. Ellis LaRavia, who had arranged the events in Greece for that part of the trip, met with several of the Athens Rotarians. They were quite moved by Mr. Armstrong's message. Particularly noteworthy were the comments by the Athens Rotary Club President, who also is president of a big Greek shipping company, Hellenic Lines.

This gentleman told Mr. LaRavia to tell Mr. Armstrong that little that is substantial stands in the way of unity between the Roman Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox bodies. The Orthodox community, he claimed, is ready to submit to the authority of the pope, but the infallibility of the pope remains an obstacle yet to be hurdled.

Also while in Athens, Mr. LaRavia had a 45-minute conversation with Otto von Hapsburg the day before Mr. Armstrong arrived. Dr. von Hapsburg, a longtime advocate of European unity and a descendant of the Hapsburg dynasty (the fifth resurrection of the Roman Empire) was in Athens for a special session of the European Parliament of which he is a member. He told Mr. LaRavia he would very much like to meet Mr. Armstrong and to visit Ambassador College, perhaps next summer.

Which Type of Unity Will Bring Peace?

The economic, military and religious unity of Europe is coming. Mr. Armstrong expressed this very forcefully yesterday in his sermon to the

Dutch brethren in Rotterdam (we stopped there on the Sabbath). Mr. Armstrong stressed to the membership and also to the ministers afterwards, that in discussing what is to happen prophetically in Europe we must in no way be hostile to the Catholic Church or to the politicians, or whoever might be instrumental in bringing about this unity. Mr. Armstrong told the ministers that should he ever have the occasion to meet the pope he would certainly show him all the respect due his high office. He referred to the biblical example of the archangel Michael not bringing any railing accusation against Satan (Jude 9).

Pope John Paul II is preaching European unity as being vitally necessary for the survival of Europe's civilization, in fact of the entirety of the world. European unity is the key, he maintains, to world peace. It is interesting that the headline writer for the article appearing in the INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE expressed his summary of the article this way: "Pontiff urges Europe to recover its 'soul' and serve humanity."

Meanwhile, God's Apostle is not only forcefully warning the world of what the unity process in Europe will lead to, but is showing that the true key to world peace lies in another far greater form of unity: the unity of mankind with the Creator God, living in total harmony and agreement with God's purpose. That kind of unity, the same kind of unity and harmony that has prevailed throughout all eternity between God and the Word, is the true unity which will bring peace forevermore.

--Gene H. Hogberg, News Bureau