

PASTOR GENERAL'S REPORT

TO THE MINISTRY OF THE
WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD



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REPORT FROM THE TREASURER'S OFFICE

We ended the month of November with a year-to-date increase of 10.3%. Even though we have spent more so far this year than we have received, it appears almost certain that we will end the year with a little more in reserves than a year ago. This has only been possible by the departments holding down expenses.

For the past month, all departments have been working on the 1983 budget. This seems to nearly always be a painful process, as it seems we never have enough funds to do what we think we need to do.

The income basis for the 1983 United States budget has been estimated at seven percent more than 1982, which means we anticipate in the neighborhood of \$92 million income. This sounds like a lot of money, and it is. But, a seven percent increase is almost immediately swallowed up by the recent cost-of-living increase and expected Great Commission growth for 1983. When all of the departments submitted their budgets, we found that they had asked for \$18 million more than the seven percent increase expected. On that basis, we would have to have about a 28% increase in income!

After days of painful budget evaluation and work, the budget team was able to present a balanced budget to Mr. Armstrong which was based on 1982 expenditures. Since most departments have grown during the year, this means that most will have to decrease expenditures back to 1982 levels or lower. This makes it a no-frills, bare-bones budget. The only exceptions are outside printing of magazines and literature, plus funds to maintain radio and television at current levels.

Those on the budget team wrestled with the overall budget most of last week. This week most of the departments are having to wrestle with their budgets.

Your continued prayers are needed.

--Leroy Neff, Treasurer

FROM MINISTERIAL SERVICES

International News

New Zealand/South Pacific The highlight this month was the whirlwind tour of Evangelist Mr. Gerald Waterhouse, who traveled to every Church in New Zealand, speaking to a different congregation every day for almost two weeks!

Mr. Waterhouse's dynamic sermons centred on the way that God, through His apostle, is building His Church to be a bride and a temple prepared for Christ's return. The members responded enthusiastically, sincerely appreciating the opportunity to hear such a powerful and inspiring message from one of God's evangelists and a personal emissary of Mr. Armstrong. Most of the sermons were around four hours in length, but many of the brethren took

the opportunity to travel to other Church areas to hear even more about God's plan and purpose. Many commented that the sermons were so fast-moving and jam-packed with important principles and examples that four hours simply sped past!

On this trip, Mr. Waterhouse was able to speak to our brethren in Suva, Fiji for the very first time. All in all, 1,027 people heard Mr. Waterhouse in 11 locations, and only a small handful of members in scattered areas missed being able to attend one of the meetings.

After Mr. Waterhouse left Fiji en route to Australia, Regional Director Mr. Peter Nathan stayed there and conducted six new visits, plus one baptism. While in Suva, he also held two PLAIN TRUTH lectures. These were attended by 27 new people on the first evening, and 25 new people the second evening.

November was an encouraging month for mail income, posting an excellent 34.6% increase over November, 1981. The year-to-date mail income total now stands at an increase of 14.3%.

Over 8,300 items of mail came in during the month. About 3,000 of these were renewal responses, and another 2,000 were the first batch of replies to the latest semiannual letter, which was mailed late in the month to over 40,000 subscribers.

Update From Canada In November the office staff was extremely busy handling the heavy volume of returns from Mr. Armstrong's semiannual letter and responses to the newspaper campaign.

We have, as of this writing, received approximately 60,000 response cards from the newspaper advertisements. This should increase the subscription list to The PLAIN TRUTH to over 200,000. This figure combined with the 300,000 PLAIN TRUTHS distributed via the newsstands, brings the total number of PLAIN TRUTHS circulating in Canada to over 500,000 per month. It is encouraging and exciting to see so many magazines placed into the hands of the Canadian public. This half million figure is double the amount of magazines we were distributing in 1975, which was our previous highest circulation year.

The advertising campaign has brought with it, as might be expected, a certain amount of opposition. Some newspapers published letters from their readers expressing their opposition to the paper becoming a vehicle for the Church to advertise in.

We also continue to receive opposition in regard to the newsstands. In some areas this world's ministers have mounted campaigns to have the stands removed from retail establishments in their parishes. Despite this opposition the newsstand program continues to be a very effective way of reaching a broad cross section of society.

November's income was a plus 13.1%, bringing the year-to-date figure to a plus 13.4%. This is an excellent increase when the high unemployment the nation is now suffering is taken into account.

Incoming mail was up 229.6%, mainly as a result of the advertising campaign in several newspapers. The office in Vancouver sent out a total of 185,567 pieces of mail, which is an increase of 18.9% over the corresponding month of 1981.

Appreciation for the Second Ministerial Refreshing Program

Mr. Joe Tkach:

Gwen and I want to thank you again for the opportunity to come in for the second Refreshing Program. We found this program to be instructive, inspiring and corrective. Our thanks also to those who assisted in presenting the Program. Their efforts are much appreciated. All in all, our time spent in Pasadena was very "refreshing" and inspiring, in spite of the fact that we were not able to see Mr. Armstrong because of his traveling schedule. We're already looking forward to the next MRP!

Dave and Gwen Register

Dear Mr. Tkach:

Where do we begin to thank you for being the instrument for re-kindling, really reigniting, our first love?! We have thanked God and have thanked you personally but felt that we must put something in writing. We particularly want to express our thanks to Mr. Armstrong for directing us solidly in this way!

Our two weeks at Headquarters were the most refreshing two weeks of our lives--pure spiritual strengthening, rejuvenation, renewal, recuperation and reinvigoration. And it is most exciting to see the tremendous example that Headquarters is setting for all of the local Churches and for all the members around the world.

It is quite a challenge for all of us who came in from the far-flung areas to emulate what we saw, what Jesus Christ is doing there now. You are setting quite a pace! With Christ's help we will keep up with you, in unity, in every way.

All kinds of love and appreciation to you and everyone involved in the Refreshing Program and at Headquarters!

John and Nancy Egbert

--Joe Tkach, Ministerial Services

AMBASSADOR COLLEGE UPDATE

(Pasadena Campus)

This week we have the twelfth group of ministers and their wives here in Pasadena on the Ministerial Refreshing Program. Many have remarked how inspired they have been by being at Headquarters once again. They have also remarked how pleased they are to see the dress, grooming and conduct of the students. It is truly a great blessing to be able to serve in the College at this time in the history of God's Church.

On Monday afternoon, December 13th, Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong spoke to the ministers and their wives attending the Ministerial Refreshing Program. His two-hour lecture on the serious times in which we are living, and what the future holds, was very sobering to all of us.

Today, December 14th, Mr. Armstrong spoke to the students and faculty, giving an interesting and inspiring panoramic view of the "History of

MINISTERIAL EVALUATIONS OF PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS

We are requesting that all completed applications of prospective A.C. students who are seeking admission to Pasadena be here no later than March 1st, 1983. Therefore, Ambassador College would once again like to ask you ministers (especially those in the international areas of the Work) to assist the Admissions Committee in providing well-thought-out evaluations of prospective students.

The members of the Admissions Committee rely very heavily upon these evaluations, realizing that you ministers often have incisive insights into the background, potential and/or the weaknesses of prospective students. And since the Work invests about \$2.00 for each \$1.00 which the students invest while at Ambassador College, it is very important for us to have all of the ministerial input possible before we make the final decision concerning a particular individual. We don't want to accept a single student who does not have good potential to do high level work at Ambassador. Otherwise we can waste up to about \$8,000 per student per year he or she is at Ambassador College--and that could add up to about \$32,000 wasted on a single student during his four-year stay at Ambassador College.

We request that you ministers in the international areas send a duplicate copy of your ministerial evaluations to your Regional Director so that he can help us in the selection of international students from his area. Thanks very much for your cooperation in this matter.

--Raymond F. McNair

Education"--from the time of Adam until the present. Then this afternoon, Mr. Armstrong, accompanied by Mr. Larry Salyer (Dean of Students at Ambassador College in Big Sandy), flew to our sister campus. Mr. Armstrong planned to speak to the students and faculty, and I am sure he also planned to have a number of meetings while visiting Big Sandy.

Mr. Armstrong continues to have formal dinners at his home for seniors in groups of 11. He plans to have all of the seniors into his home before the end of the college year. Mr. Armstrong enjoys these formal senior dinners very much; they give him needed contact with the seniors and enable them also to have an opportunity to meet and talk with him personally. All of the seniors I have spoken to readily express that these dinners with the Chancellor of Ambassador College, in his own home, are the highlight of

exams. Before long we will be in the second semester.

Mr. Armstrong recently approved of a number of us faculty members exchanging visits with our sister campuses during the coming second semester. The following list of names and dates has been approved by Mr. Armstrong:

Big Sandy Faculty to Visit Pasadena:

Mr. Les McCullough--Friday, April 15th to Sunday, April 24th
 Mr. Larry Salyer--Friday, January 21st to Sunday, January 30th

Pasadena Faculty to Visit Big Sandy:

Mr. Raymond McNair--Friday, January 28th to Sunday, February 6th
 Mr. Greg Albrecht--Friday, February 25th to Sunday, March 6th
 Dr. Roderick Meredith--Friday, April 15th to Sunday, April 24th

Also, Mr. Armstrong recently approved of Mr. and Mrs. Gary Antion accompanying the students to the Big Dig in Jerusalem this coming summer. Mr. Antion has been employed in the Work as a minister and/or instructor for nearly twenty years. He and his wife have served the Work loyally all through the turmoil which enveloped the Church and College during the trying times of recent years. Mr. Antion served well in various church areas--primarily in the Toronto, Canada area. Now, he is carrying a heavy teaching load at Ambassador, handling theology and speech classes. And he is very busy counseling students. I am sure that Mr. and Mrs. Antion will both enjoy and profit from their trip to, and service at, the Big Dig next summer. We all rejoice to see them receive this wonderful opportunity.

God willing, we hope to send a minister of the faculty and his wife to serve with the students at the Big Dig each summer--if funds permit. We ask your continued prayers for Ambassador College--both campuses!

--Raymond F. McNair, Deputy Chancellor

FROM PUBLISHING SERVICESReceipt of PT Card Brings Queries From Members

Recently, we have received a number of queries from members and ministers regarding their receipt of a card offering them a PLAIN TRUTH subscription.

This card was sent to all former QUEST subscribers. In discussions with Mr. Armstrong and others, it was determined that if at all possible we should recover some of our investment in the Foundation-owned QUEST subscription list by mailing a card to the old QUEST list, advertising a PLAIN TRUTH subscription. Since we own the list, this became a very attractive way to recover some of the investment.

Some members and ministers who had previously been subscribers to QUEST magazine would have naturally received a copy of the card. It would have been much more expensive to have eliminated those names from the QUEST list than to go ahead and send the card.

The mailing was extremely successful, and we have added many former QUEST subscribers to our PLAIN TRUTH subscription list.

With this explanation, we would appreciate your handling any of the questions locally.

--Ray Wright, Publishing Services

MAIL PROCESSING UPDATEBiggest Year Ever for Responses to God's Work!

It's official! This year now stands alone as the all-time record year for mail and phone responses to God's Work. The previous records in both categories were broken this past week (December 4-11).

Total incoming mail has reached 3,603,840 pieces. Total WATS calls is now 581,662. This equals over four million responses in all, as compared to 3.6 million responses in 1973, which was the previous record year. There are still three full weeks in December for additional letters and calls to be added before the final figures are in for 1982.

Computer Assigned Media (CAM) Benefits WORLD TOMORROW Programming

Keeping track of the radio and TV stations by which people come in contact with God's truth has always been an important tool for the Work. This data is extremely useful to Media Services in determining what stations are most effective and productive. This was a manual task until recently, consuming many hours. Now, Data Processing's computer at Pasadena has been programmed to do the work for us in minutes.

Here's how it works. The date, time, literature requested and the individual's zip code for each TV or radio response is fed into the computer, which then automatically assigns the call letters of the TV or radio station the person would most likely be responding to. Once all requests from an aired program have been entered, the computer calculates the total response from each station. These statistics are collected each week and sent on to Media Services for their study and evaluation.

Many Convicted by GOOD NEWS Articles on Tithing

Two recent articles in the October/November GOOD NEWS--"The Man Who Couldn't Afford to Tithe" by Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong and "Should a Non-member Tithe?" by Mr. Herman Hoeh--brought an unusually high mail response.

The large number of comments was probably due to the addition of thousands of new readers to The GOOD NEWS since it was offered to AMBASSADOR COLLEGE BIBLE CORRESPONDENCE COURSE students this past summer. Undoubtedly the economic recession and resulting hard times have led many to see the importance of obeying God's financial laws. Their personal trials have inspired them to begin tithing and trust God to look after their needs. Some sample letters follow:

I am sending in my first tithe. I always thought I never had enough money to tithe, but after reading The GOOD NEWS this month, I see now how wrong my thinking has been. So here's the first of, I hope, many tithes.

V.V. (Otsego, MI)

I have just finished reading your article on tithing. I have read other articles on the same subject, and have even sent money before, but this time I just got a different feeling about it. So

for the first time I am sending a real tithe--a full one-tenth of our money for this week.

I really feel I have been stupid in the past for calling God a liar by my actions and not trusting in His words. I was always afraid I would not be able to pay my bills if I gave God a full tenth, but I know now I was wrong. Our finances are in bad shape because of my selfishness and greed. I only hope and pray for God's forgiveness and mercy.

C.H. (Columbus, OH)

I have just finished reading the October/November issue of The GOOD NEWS magazine. The articles on tithing have inspired me to start paying God His share of my income. I'm requesting envelopes to send in my tithes.

T.D. (San Diego, CA)

I received my October/November issue of The GOOD NEWS in the mail yesterday and was very impressed with the two articles on tithing. They really made me stop and think that disobeying God's law on tithing may be why I have been unemployed for over a year and my financial situation is so meager. At any rate, I realize just how wrong it is of me not to give God what is rightfully His. I know my tithe right now is small, but please accept it and use it to continue spreading the good news of the World Tomorrow.

C.S. (Wichita, KS)

Your article about the man who couldn't afford to tithe has made me realize that even though I'm not working, I can afford to tithe. Thank you for that bit of information and enlightenment. Enclosed is my first tithe to God. I want to put God first in everything I do.

B.A. (Inglewood, CA)

Please accept my tithe. Those articles in the October/November GOOD NEWS are fabulous--I just had to stop and get this into the mail. I have not been very faithful in tithing but plan to be from now on.

Mrs. M.V. (Lebanon, OR)

This is my first tithe and the biggest bet that I, a non-Christian, have ever made. GOD said to PROVE HIM!

D.M. (Huron, OH)

--Richard Rice, Mail Processing Center

ON THE WORLD SCENE

THE INCREDIBLE PLOT TO KILL THE POPE: THE SUSPICIONS GROW MORE OMINOUS

The chain of evidence and circumstance surrounding the attempted assassination of Pope John Paul II in the spring of last year is leading straight in one direction--Moscow. Here are the facts so far:

On May 13, 1981, the pope was shot and wounded by a would-be assassin in St. Peter's Square in Vatican City. The assailant, Mehmet Ali Agca (pronounced Ah-dja), a right-wing Turkish terrorist, was subsequently arrested, tried and sentenced to life imprisonment for the crime.

Three weeks ago, police in Rome arrested a Bulgarian airline official, Sergei Ivanov Antonov, on a charge of "active complicity" in the assassination attempt. Then, two weeks ago, the Italian press reported that Agca, in a long and detailed confession, told police that the attack on the pope was conceived in Sofia, the capital of Bulgaria, and that he took orders from the Bulgarian secret police.

Agca also implicated two other Bulgarian officials--the cashier of the Bulgarian embassy in Rome, and the secretary to the Bulgarian military attache in Rome. Both of these men were recently spirited home to safety out of reach of Italian law officials.

After gaining access to Agca's purported confession, the Milan daily CORRIERA DELLA SERRA asserted bluntly, "The plan to kill the Pope was conceived in Sofia."

But it should be obvious that the trail does not stop there. Bulgaria is the Soviet Union's most compliant satellite. It is so subservient to Moscow that it is jokingly referred to as the U.S.S.R.'s "sixteenth republic."

The small Bulgarian secret police cooperates hand-in-glove with their dominant Soviet counterpart, the KGB. Every espionage department within the service takes orders directly from Soviet officials. So says the former chief of Bulgaria's secret service, who defected to the West three years ago.

The Bulgarians thus could not have attempted to perform such a drastic measure as to kill the pope without the express knowledge and approval of the KGB. And that's being charitable. The most likely explanation is that Bulgarian agents were selected and ordered by the KGB to carry out the murder, thus keeping the Soviets at arms-length distance from the deed. And who was in charge of the KGB at that time? None other than the current party boss, Yuri Andropov. It should be obvious that Bulgaria itself would have little interest in doing away with the pope. Orthodox in culture, Bulgaria possesses but a tiny Catholic population and a docile work force.

As to why the Soviets would do such a thing should also be obvious. Moscow had grown increasingly concerned over the pope's influential role in Polish affairs and the support he had been giving to the Solidarity independent labor union. The pope was the "spiritual father" of Solidarity, which would never have been born without his blessing. Moscow perceived a long-term threat to its hold over all of Eastern Europe if the Polish-born pope were allowed to go on, and the Solidarity movement spread to other East bloc members. (Solidarity was finally banned a year ago.)

The pope himself believes that the KGB was behind the assassination attempt. Cable Network News in the United States reported that the pope revealed his belief to visiting U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz who conversed with the pope in Rome December 13. (Shultz later denied the report, diplomatically, of course, lest undue offense be cast against Moscow.)

While the U.S. government might feel a need to be cautious, for some reason the press also has been squeamish in pointing the finger all the way in the right direction. (The press would have screamed had the CIA been remotely

implicated.) Ernest Conine wondered about this in his December 13, 1982 column in the LOS ANGELES TIMES:

The continuing investigation into the attempted assassination of Pope John Paul II is one of the great detective stories of this century. Yet the dispatches from Rome are attracting surprisingly little interest and excitement either in the United States or in Europe....

The obvious and rather terrifying implication of Soviet involvement was first suggested in September, in a Reader's Digest article by Clair Sterling and in an "NBC White Paper." Since then, the finger of suspicion has come to point more credibly at the Bulgarians, and therefore at the Russians.

Yet the stories from Rome are being played inside most newspapers. Aside from the NBC documentary, television hasn't paid much attention. The general public doesn't seem terribly interested, either. It seems that people just can't bring themselves to take seriously the possibility that a government--even the Soviet government--would knowingly countenance a plot to kill the spiritual leader of 580 million Roman Catholics....

The Sofia government has indignantly denied Bulgarian involvement in the attack on the Pope, branding such allegations a "nonsensical and absurd campaign of slander...."

As for the Soviet connection, it is much more tenuous....It is one thing to speculate that the Kremlin was angered enough to kill by what it saw as the Polish Pope's role in encouraging the emergence of the Solidarity free trade union movement in Poland. It is quite another to prove it.

However, the Italian government is taking the Bulgarian connection with the utmost seriousness. Otherwise it would not be inviting a diplomatic crisis with the Sofia government, and perhaps with Moscow as well, by pursuing the matter with such determination.

In any event, honest skepticism does not seem to be the whole explanation for the ho-hum attitude toward the stories from RomeMaybe a lot of people have lost the capacity to be outraged by anything....Then there is the strange double standard of many European socialists and American liberals toward misdeeds, real or suspected by the Soviet Union. They always seem to feel that to accuse the Kremlin of wrongdoing is somehow to make excuses for excesses committed by our own government or secret services.

It is safe to say that, if the Italian police had uncovered a smidgin of unverified evidence of American CIA involvement in the shooting of the Pope, the U.S. and European presses would be full of big black headlines and hysterical editorials of condemnation.

Whatever the explanation, the Italian authorities--while bending over backward to avoid any official suggestion that either the Bulgarian or Soviet government was directly involved in the

assassination attempt--deserve praise for persevering with the investigation in the face of Communist hostility and indifference by practically everybody else.

Why was Mehmet Ali Agca, a notorious right-wing terrorist in Turkey, selected, trained and funded for purposes of carrying out the orders? (In addition to expenses, Agca was reportedly offered \$1 million.) The READER'S DIGEST article referred to in the quote above reports:

There is reason to believe that Mehmet Ali Agca was not only used but betrayed, that he was counting on his two accomplices to create a diversion at the Vatican so he could slip away. Instead, they ran away themselves, on orders. His right-wing persona firmly established, Agca was meant to be caught. "He was not in much of a position to bargain after that," said a high DIGOS official. "If he talked he would just be left to rot in jail. If not, maybe his patrons would spring him again."

However, Agca, abandoned by his erstwhile cohorts, finally decided to reveal all.

The Agca case has all but disrupted Italian-Bulgarian relations. The two countries have recalled their ambassadors. Italian investigators are uncovering new evidence everyday concerning "the Bulgarian connection." Italian trade union leader Luigi Scricciolo has admitted that he worked for the Bulgarian secret police under orders to spy on Lech Walesa the Polish union leader. He visited Poland, got the confidence of Walesa, and personally organized his visit to Rome in 1981. It is believed that the information Scricciolo obtained on Solidarity's leadership was instrumental in helping General Jaruzelski to so swiftly shut down the union's operations in December, 1981.

Scricciolo also acted as liaison between Bulgarian agents and Italy's notorious Red Brigade terrorists. He admitted to supplying Bulgarian agents with texts of interrogation of U.S. Brigadier General James L. Dozier, who had been kidnapped by the "Rosso Brigade."

Italian authorities are convinced that Bulgarian agents have been involved for several years in a communist conspiracy to undermine the Italian democratic state. The growing Italian-Bulgarian crisis, including the scandal over the attempt on the pope's life, reports the CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR in its December 15, 1982 edition, "may have wider repercussions in East-West relations."

--Gene H. Hogberg, News Bureau