

PASTOR GENERAL'S REPORT

TO THE MINISTRY OF THE
WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD



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JULY 8, 1983

REPORT FROM THE TREASURER'S OFFICE

July 6, 1983

We have completed the first half of 1983 with an increase in income of 12.5 percent over the same period last year. The month of June was 16 percent more than last year. We are pleased that this is several percentage points above the budget estimates of last December. It is always a lot nicer to have a little more than planned than to have less. As a result, we have been able to make numerous budget realignments and have increased the television and radio time buying budget for the last half of the year. We are also increasing the utilities budget to take care of the larger-than-expected increases this year. The income and expenses do not permit cost-of-living increases this year. Thankfully, the increase in the cost of living is only about one percent since the last such raise.

You may have read that the U.S. Congress has passed a new law concerning social security which becomes effective January 1, 1984. This law requires all our employees, except ordained ministers who have filed for exemption, to pay the social security tax. For 1984 this tax will be 6.7 percent of income, up to a maximum pay-in of \$2,392. In addition, the Work must also pay seven percent.

In effect, this tax would cut each person's income by about seven percent. For some employees, such a decrease might create serious financial problems, and it would be quite a reduction for everyone involved. It is our hope, not a promise, that an appropriate increase for salaries can be built into next year's budget to compensate for this tax. Since a salary increase to cover this would also have to cover other taxes and tithes, an increase of several more percentage points would be necessary.

We are trying to hold back a little on expenses during the last half of the year to partially offset this expense. If departments do as well in the expense area during the last half of the year as the first half, we will possibly have a good start toward this new multi-million dollar annual expense.

--Leroy Neff, Treasurer

AMBASSADOR COLLEGE UPDATE

(Pasadena campus)

Summer classes, and the Continuing Education night courses are now under way. Within one week we expect to welcome about 90 Japanese students on campus where they will be studying for a few weeks.

On the 4th of July, ten A.C. students left Pasadena for the People's Republic of China. They were accompanied by Mr. Ralph Levy, a member of the

Pasadena faculty, and by Mr. and Mrs. Steve Pelfrey. They will be in China for an eight-week period studying Chinese. What a wonderful opportunity for those fortunate people!

Just this morning I spoke to a prospective student from Thailand. I also spoke to her father, who is a colonel in the Thai military, and is an ex-senator. Even though Mr. John Halford, Mr. Leon Sexton and I explained fully that all students coming to Ambassador College are required to take a certain number of classes in theology, this did not deter them. Neither this prospective student nor her father objected to her having to take a number of classes in "Christian theology." We wanted to make certain that the daughter, who is a Buddhist, would not be unhappy having to sit in a number of classes where the Bible was being expounded.

Both this Thai colonel and his daughter were very impressed with Ambassador College and definitely wanted us to accept her into Ambassador, if at all possible. Since she had a good academic record, seemed alert and intelligent, and was generally a good prospective student, Dr. Dave Albert (who is now serving as Acting Director of Admissions) and I felt we should accept her. We are already slightly over our limit of about 524 single students on campus, but we can, if need be, put up another bed or two in some of the dorm rooms.

A recent article in TIME magazine (May 30, 1983) noted that the average total cost of attending a state college could rise from \$4,388 "to nearly \$4,800," whereas the average expected cost of attending a private college is expected to climb from \$7,475 "to more than \$8,300" during the coming year. We are happy that we have been able to keep the total cost of attending Ambassador down to just a little over \$4,000 annually. If we did increase the overall costs of attending Ambassador very much, we would thereby make it impossible for some of the better (but poorer) prospective students from Church families to attend God's College.

Last year we had a number of ministers and their wives from various overseas areas attending Ambassador for one year. Following is a letter from Mr. Yong Chin Gee from Malaysia. He is one of the ministers who attended Ambassador last year. His letter shows both deep gratitude to Mr. Armstrong and to others in the College for the wonderful opportunity he received to attend Ambassador for one year. His letter is both enlightening and inspiring.

Dear Mr. McNair:

We're very blessed that God, through Mr. Armstrong, made it possible for us to receive the one-year Ambassador College education. The theological classes, the Ambassador Club and the social activities proved to be rewarding experiences. We have learned much throughout one year. Personally, I feel I am more equipped to serve the brethren in Malaysia after the one year of priceless training at Ambassador College.

We're very inspired by you and the College instructors who set a good example of dedication in the pursuit of excellence and recapturing the true values. My wife and I enjoyed thoroughly interacting with the students and the fellowship with the brethren in the Church. There was peace, unity and harmony.

With the beautiful campus, together with the good spiritual atmosphere, Ambassador College is truly an oasis of true education. We are grateful for our learning at Ambassador College and we hope the excellence of education will not only be maintained but upgraded through the power of God's Spirit and the commitment of all at the College.

Finally, we wish Ambassador College another year of success and spiritual excellence.

Before closing, I wanted to mention that the beautiful Ambassador campus regularly hosts various activities (mostly through the Ambassador Foundation) which bring to our campus a number of dignitaries from all over Southern California and from various parts of the world. As an example, I have seen Mayor Tom Bradley of Los Angeles on this campus during the past year; and I have also seen the Mayor of Pasadena on campus at least two or three times during that same period of time.

On June 28th, the annual dinner for the Pasadena Chamber of Commerce was held in the beautiful setting of the floodlit Loma D. Armstrong Academic Center. Several political figures and TV personalities were present. Jess Marlow, a TV news anchorman here in Los Angeles, and Robert Finch were among those present. Mr. Finch served as Lieutenant Governor with Mr. Ronald Reagan when he was Governor of the state of California and more recently, as Cabinet Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare under President Nixon.

It seems, increasingly, the word is getting around that there is no place in Southern California which has the serene beauty of the Ambassador Campus.

Also, quite recently, a special NBC program was filmed in the Ambassador Auditorium. This special review of music during the past few decades is scheduled to be shown nationwide during the latter part of this year. At the taping of that special, many well-known personalities (including Steve Allen, Burt Bacharach, Dick Clark, Bob Hope, Michael Landon, Arthur and Kathryn Murray, Marie Osmond, Patti Page, Carole Bayer Sager, Dinah Shore, Ben Vereen and Dionne Warwick) were present.

I hope all of you had an enjoyable and invigorating 4th of July. My wife and I spent July 3rd and 4th wallpapering our new living room. We have just about finished decorating our new addition, and hope to be able once again to begin having a number of you ministers and wives into our home for fellowship while you are attending the MRP.

--Raymond F. McNair, Deputy Chancellor

FROM MINISTERIAL SERVICES

NOTICE TO ALL MINISTERS

Mrs. June Myers is disfellowshipped. If she appears in your area, please contact Mr. Bob Jones at (813) 393-4787. This notice is not intended to be announced to your congregations.

Appreciation for the Second Ministerial Refreshing Program

Dear Mr. Armstrong and Mr. Tkach:

We want to thank you very much for the opportunity to attend the eighteenth session of the Ministerial Refreshing Program. It is inspiring to see how God is bringing unity among His ministers through the Refreshing Program.

It was a feast in many ways: spiritually, physically, and culturally. We enjoyed seeing how God is getting the work done by using all the modern technology; God inspired it for that purpose in the first place. It was a real inspiration!

We hope to help our home congregations to see this also by using all the materials given us to help them grow spiritually.

Dennis and Phyllis Hagquist

Dear Mr. Tkach:

It is difficult to describe our feelings about the Ministerial Refreshing Program that we have just been privileged to attend. The opportunity to be able to experience the peace, harmony and cooperation so evident in Pasadena was wonderful. The information we received in the various classes was invaluable and certainly refreshing.

Please pass our gratitude on to Mr. Armstrong for his having approved the Refreshing Program. To be able to visit and live on the Ambassador College campus, to attend the Headquarters Church, renew old friendships and make new ones, are all memorable experiences. We're thankful to you and all the lecturers who have obviously put in many hours in the preparation of the subjects.

We now go back to South Africa with an appreciation for the Headquarters of God's Work that we never had before. Thank you!

Terry and Bev Browning

Dear Mr. Tkach:

Warm greetings from Malaysia!

We would like to thank you very much for your care and concern for our welfare while we were attending the one-year course in Ambassador College. We were very well looked after, and my family and I appreciated what had been done for us. We are thankful to God that He made it possible for our training at Ambassador College to prepare for the full-time ministry. Our children learned much attending Imperial School.

The one-year theological studies at Ambassador have laid a good foundation of Scriptural understanding and I personally have gained a deeper and wider perspective of God's Work at the Headquarters Church as a result of interacting with fellow ministers, students and faculty members.

We're very inspired by the unity and harmony in the College and the Church. We thank you for your good teachings and instructions during the Refreshing Program. We also admire your total dedication to God's Work by loyally supporting Mr. Armstrong.

Yong Chin Gee and Yuet Siam

Greetings Mr. Tkach!

Cindy and I would like to thank the staff and you for a very fine Refreshing Program. The fellowship, the spiritual feasting and the change of pace helped to "recharge our batteries." Everyone on campus wanted to help and to serve. It is easy to see that more of God's Spirit is working and is prevailing at the center of God's Work. Please relay our thanks to Mr. Armstrong for the invaluable Refreshing Program and for his leadership under Christ.

Chuck and Cindy Calahan

--Joe Tkach, Ministerial Services

UPDATE FROM MAIL PROCESSING

Eleven Percent Year-to-Date Increase in Radio WATS Calls

Although "The WORLD TOMORROW" broadcast has been aired on fewer radio stations than last year, it has shown an 11 percent increase in responses over 1982. Calls in response to the radio program totaled 16,485 in the first six months of 1983, as compared to 14,891 for the same period in 1982.

One possible reason for this increase is that prophetic literature has been offered more frequently. Fifty-four percent of the broadcasts this year dealt with prophecy compared to 39 percent for the same period last year. Traditionally, messages on prophecy usually pull heavier responses.

The prophetic literature included:

WHO IS THE BEAST?

ARE WE LIVING IN THE LAST DAYS?

THE BOOK OF REVELATION UNVEILED AT LAST

THE UNITED STATES AND BRITAIN IN PROPHECY

Also, better broadcast times for some stations probably contributed to these increases.

Immigrants to America Led to God's Truth

Each year thousands of people from all over the world immigrate to the United States or travel here to work or study. Invariably, some come in contact with the Work, usually through the telecast or the pages of The PLAIN TRUTH. Some are already familiar with us through experiences in their home countries.

These immigrants and visitors, for some reason, seem to possess a special child-like appreciation and enthusiasm for the Work's programs. A few, in-

spired by the truth, express a desire to see it brought to their nation of origin. Here are some of their letters.

I am very happy to watch your TV show this Sunday and decided to write this letter to you. I am a Vietnamese refugee. My family is including 10 persons. We are Christians from Vietnam. We escaped from our country early this year.

Your shows were very interesting to my family. We understood that you have some very interesting magazines as: NEVER BEFORE UNDERSTOOD; PLAIN TRUTH magazine; THE TRUTH ABOUT CHRISTMAS. We would like to receive these magazines for the family to read. Please tell me how can I receive them? Do I need to pay for them? I very much appreciate your answer to us. May God bless you all.

T.T. (Bastrop, TX)

A free sample copy of The PLAIN TRUTH of July 1982 came into my hands. After I went through it, I was attracted by the articles that appear in it. Very plain, balanced and thought-provoking presentation.

We are from India and have now immigrated to the U.S.A. I thank you for sending me the booklet--THE U.S. AND BRITAIN IN PROPHECY --which I am still reading. I shall be delighted to read more of the literature you prepare and select so judiciously.

P.M. (West Orange, NY)

I am a Venezuelan student, presently enrolled at Bradley University in Peoria, Illinois. I have been reading The PLAIN TRUTH magazine since I am here in the United States. I really think it is a great magazine and furthermore a magazine of understanding. Reading your articles helps me feel much better about myself. Also, it is encouraging to see all those finely-written articles about specific and delicate topics such as religion, drugs, health, international politics, nuclear danger and personal development. Finally, I would like to congratulate all of you for making this magazine available in different languages. I express my wish for you to publish this magazine in Venezuela and all those underdeveloped countries that have need of sincere and positive guidance.

F.A. (Chicago, IL)

While I do not claim to understand all the things you have been proclaiming over the radio and TV and through The PLAIN TRUTH magazine, I am sure that I have been properly encouraged and challenged through your personal testimony and ministry of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God.

I recall that about twenty-five years ago, while I was still in my home country of Taiwan, I acted as your radio message monitor for several years up to 1966. I remember I corresponded quite a few times with your representative in Australia.

I must testify honestly that even at that time when I was a mere budding Christian, so to speak, I was already mightily blessed directly and indirectly through your ministry....

Now I am in America, and last year by chance I resumed my perusal of your magazine and sent in for a subscription. Today I write simply to express my heartfelt gratitude to you again and pray that God will continue to bless your ministry.

D.H. (Houston, TX)

When I watched your preaching on TV, I learned that you are willing to send the booklet of Revelation concerning the Beast to whoever begs you to send. I will be much appreciative if you can kindly send me one book each. I want to translate them in my own tongue to send to my homeland in Burma to those who are very needy to know.

U.C. (Las Cruces, NM)

I am Russian and I enjoyed the program. I just came here about one month ago. Mr. Armstrong was talking about my country and I want to read this book.

N.I. (Brownsville, TX)

Thank you for sending me your magazine The PLAIN TRUTH. I'm an international student from Japan. I really want to know the truth--the real meaning of life. As soon as I started studying on the American college campus, I noticed that many people, including students, are involving themselves in Christianity and feeling happy. Actually in Japan, few people even think of God. They don't care. In classes, teachers teach "Human Evolution" as the true theory. I really don't know, but I really want to know!

Since I came to the U.S., I've tried to listen to the people who speak about God. I may have learned about God from them, but they always asked me to donate money. I know the truth may be expensive. But last month I found your magazine The PLAIN TRUTH, and I've noticed that you are not asking us to give you money even for the magazine. I'm very surprised! You are giving us a real chance to know the truth.

H.H. (Flagstaff, AZ)

--Richard Rice, Mail Processing Center

ON THE WORLD SCENE

NEXT STOP IN PAPAL OFFENSIVE: SOVIET LITHUANIA; THE EUROPEANS (CONCLUSION)

Having concluded his trip to Poland with an unprecedented--and precedent-setting--"deal" with Communist authorities there, Pope John Paul II is already planning his next trip. This time he would like to go inside the Soviet Union itself, to Lithuania, the Baltic "captive republic" which is overwhelmingly Roman Catholic. In the July 5, 1983 LOS ANGELES TIMES, foreign correspondent Dan Fisher reports from Warsaw concerning this possible next move in the papal "Drang nach Osten":

WARSAW--There have been preliminary contacts between the Vatican and the Kremlin on the possibility of Pope John Paul II visiting Soviet Lithuania next year, according to well-placed Roman Catholic Church sources in Poland. The Vatican's target date for

what would undoubtedly be the much-traveled Pope's most extraordinary pilgrimage is next March, the sources said. That date would coincide with the 500th anniversary of the death of St. Casimir, patron saint of Lithuania. Also next year are the 600th anniversaries of a series of important dates connected with the 14th-Century federation of Poland and Lithuania and the subsequent Christianization of Lithuania....

A papal trip to any part of the officially atheist Soviet Union would be unprecedented. And a visit to Lithuania--which, with its mix of Catholicism and nationalism, may be the country's most rebellious republic--would appear particularly risky from the Kremlin's viewpoint. "I can't see them doing it," one Western diplomat commented. However, he added, "it makes sense for the Russians to string the pope along." "I think the Russians would demand so high a (political) price for such a visit that the pope couldn't possibly agree," another added....

Last year, the Kremlin hosted American evangelist Billy Graham for a visit that critics charged was a propaganda spectacle for the Soviets. If they were to invite Pope John Paul II, the Soviet authorities would clearly hope for even greater propaganda benefits. It is believed that the Soviets would particularly welcome any Vatican pronouncements that might be used to advance their campaign against the modernization of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's nuclear forces in Western Europe. Just as clearly, the pope is well aware of attempts to use his prestige in high-stakes international political contests. His recent Polish pilgrimage was seen by most here as a masterful job of walking a political tightrope.

A papal trip to Lithuania would be even more delicate. The Soviet Union has an estimated seven million nominal Catholics, mostly concentrated in the northwestern part of the country--the Baltic republics and the westernmost sections of Byelorussia and the Ukraine, which were part of Poland until after World War II.

And nowhere in the Communist world except Poland is a church so firmly rooted in the national tradition as is the Catholic church of Lithuania. About 80% of Lithuanians call themselves Catholic; 70% of marriages are in the church, and as many as 90% of babies are baptized. About 30% of Lithuanians are practicing Catholics, according to Western estimates. Because of the church's intimate identification with national traditions and culture, it is seen by rebellious Lithuanians as a bulwark against the Sovietization of their tiny Baltic republic.

Much of what is today Soviet Lithuania, including the capital of Vilnius, was part of Poland until the Soviets occupied it in 1939. Lithuanians thus have a special affection for John Paul II, the first Polish Pope. When he was elected in October, 1978, the joyous Lithuanian population immediately claimed him as its own. For the pope, a pilgrimage to Lithuania could be both a personal and a professional high point. He has said that half his heart is in Lithuania and he has also made it clear that one of his objectives is to reintegrate the Slavic nations into the Catholic mainstream.

In the July 3, 1983 NEW YORK TIMES, Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski, former national security adviser under President Carter, analyzed both the short-term and the least-understood (by the news media) long-term objectives of the pope.

...A more discriminating judgment of the consequences of the visit [of John Paul II to Poland] must take into account the complex motives guiding the pope. The immediate political dimension, so emphasized in the Western press, is only part of the story.

The visit was motivated by three concerns: First, the visit was designed to break the political stalemate, while reminding the regime of the Polish people's overwhelming desire for more liberty....

The second, longer-term objective was to consolidate the church's victory in Poland. It was almost exactly 30 years ago that the Communist regime in Poland imprisoned Cardinal Wyczinski, the Polish Primate. Thirty years later, in the course of the papal visit, the regime had to accept the reality of dual power in Poland. The church has won its competition with Communism in Poland. The people are overwhelmingly religious; Communist ideology has been thoroughly defeated. The papal visit not only underlined this reality but was designed to consolidate it. Such consolidation, however, requires also compromises with the regime, which may superficially appear in conflict with the first objective....

The third purpose of the visit is the one least understood by Western observers--and also opposed by the bureaucratic midgets in the Vatican Curia. The Pope's objective, of which he has spoken openly, is of a truly historical dimension. It is to reunify the Western and the Eastern Catholic rites, split apart for a millennium. The pope views the East as being in the midst of a spiritual crisis, generated by the failure of Marxist materialism. (He also views the West as beset by the malaise of hedonism, and also craving for renewed spiritual purpose.) In his homilies, he clearly was projecting the vision of a more just, spiritually-based society, responsive to the humanistic values which the Communist experiment has so degraded. The Pope was clearly speaking to all the Slavs who live under Communism, reminding them of their common Christian roots. This is his most fundamental challenge and without a doubt his greatest goal.

To understand the purport of the trip, one has to take into account these three basic goals. He clearly succeeded in the first and in the second, even though there may be some tactical tension between these two goals, and only history will tell whether he succeeds in his monumental third objective.

Perhaps Dr. Brzezinski should have said: "Bible prophecy indicates he will succeed at his monumental third objective."

The Europeans (Conclusion)

Three weeks ago, we presented excerpts from Luigi Barzini's book, THE EUROPEANS, in particular his comments concerning the British, the French and the Dutch. The "Flexible Italians" and the "Baffling Americans" also get the Barzini treatment.

Time and space simply do not permit encapsulating the author's intriguing accounts concerning the above two peoples. His observations concerning "The Mutable Germans" deserve some treatment however. The Germans are mutable, says Barzini, because they are a people, who despite a constancy of German national characteristics, called Deutschtum, can nevertheless superficially change more than most peoples. He begins this chapter by saying:

The future of Europe appears largely to depend today once again, for good or evil, whether we like it or not, as it did for many centuries, on the future of Germany. It is still, as Madame de Stael wrote, "le coeur de l'Europe" (the heart of Europe). Destroyed, defeated, humiliated, arbitrarily reshaped according to angry and frightened foreigners' punitive ideas...it has become once again the richest, strongest, most efficient, orderly, productive, scientifically and technologically advanced, as well as the most populous nation of western Europe. In prosperous years, it is the first up; in lean years, the last down (and not all that much down). Italy is too tired, skeptical, unruly, and confused to count. Victorious Great Britain has seen its arrogant pride fade away along with its wealth, power, and prestige. France, of course, firmly and loudly proclaims itself Number One, but too firmly and too loudly at times.

It is therefore once again essential for everybody, the French, the British, the Italians, the other Europeans, as well as the Americans and the Soviets, to keep an eye across the Rhine and the Alps and the Elbe in order to figure out, as our fathers, grandfathers, great-grandfathers, the ancient Romans, and remote ancestors had to do, who the Germans are, who they think they are, what they are doing, and where they will go next, wittingly or unwittingly. This, of course, was always impossible to fathom. How can one tell? Germany is a trompe l'oeil [bluff or deception] Protean country. As everybody knows, only when one tied down Proteus, the prophetic old man of the sea, could one make him reveal the shape of things to come. But he couldn't be pinned down easily; he continued to change. He could be a roaring lion, a harmless sheep, a slippery serpent, a charging bull, or in turn, a rock, a tree, a brook, a bonfire.

Author Barzini has always been amazed at the ability of the Germans to adapt to foreign styles ("their blottingpaper capacity to absorb and improve alien conceptions," he says) while still retaining a distinctive Deutschtum. The post-World War II copy-model has, of course, been the United States. This is not surprising, Barzini notes, since nations at all times have adopted the customs, fashions, and ideas of the predominant power of the era, especially a conquering one. But what about the Russian view of this problem country? The Russians, for their part, both greatly respect and fear the Germans. To continue:

One of the two main reasons...why the Russians cling hysterically to the German eastern provinces and the German Democratic Republic; govern them nervously through subservient political henchmen; keep a vast armored army in them ready for instant war...is the terror (and admiration) Germany has inspired in Russian hearts for centuries. Russians have always been dazzled by the Germans' superior scientific knowledge, perseverance, orderliness, and their unique diabolical military proficiency.

When they are at war they do the job, as they do it in peacetime, as thoroughly, efficiently, and expediently as possible, without looking left or right, like the good obedient workmen they are. They never bother about what the rest of the world will think. Scruples and doubts might slow them down [note Isa. 10:7]. Thus they sent armies across neutral Belgium twice, as a matter of course, shocking the world; were the first to use poison gas in World War I; practically allied themselves to the Soviets in 1939 and then attacked them without warning in 1941....

Nazi Germany's attempt to unify Europe by force ended in disaster. After the war, Germany changed again:

Their professed aim during the last war was to unify and pacify all Europe forever, but they did not bother to charm the Europeans with lies. They candidly made it clear instead that they considered all foreigners inferior, contemptible, and irresponsible, to be governed with an iron hand. Naturally their prospective subjects did not like the idea at all.... Many Europeans, in fact, preferred death to a well-regulated future and a Nazi peace lasting one thousand years.... Even its allies fought half-heartedly or did not fight at all. They were infinitely more frightened of winning than of losing.

After World War II, the Germans, evidently appalled by the hatred directed toward them, worked hard to make friends and influence people. It was a new experience. They really needed to be liked this time. Therefore they tried to be as inconspicuous as possible and to demonstrate the fact that they were just a western European nation like all the others. It was one of their Protean transformations.

The future of Europe, Mr. Barzini writes, has never really been determined by one nation alone, not even Germany. Nevertheless, it is important once again to keep an eye on the German Proteus in an attempt to fathom the probable shape of things to come.

What is the shape of the German Proteus this morning? Which will be its shape tomorrow? Johannes Gross thinks his countrymen wear a mask. "But the day may come when someone lifts the mask," he wrote.... "So long as we wear the mask, we remain hidden and continue to conceal the situation even from ourselves...." Is the German, as Nietzsche wrote, still "acquainted with the hidden paths to chaos?"

Author Barzini returns to the German/Proteus theme at the very end of his book. He concludes his work by writing:

The future...will probably be decided, once again, by Germany's decisions. And Germany is, as it always was, a mutable, Proteus like, unpredictable country, particularly dangerous when it's unhappy.

It is for this very reason that the title of Mr. Barzini's book in the German-language edition is translated as "The Fate of Europe is in the Hands of Germany."

Deutschtum also persists in East Germany, despite 38 years of Communist rule. In an article in the April 25, 1983 NEW REPUBLIC, author Nick Eberstadt, after a trip into the German Democratic Republic, took note of the national character of Germans living there.

Why do Slavs living under Communism lose themselves in alcohol when Germans do not? Why does Communist Germany makes its trains run on time and fill its stores with high quality (if eccentric) consumer goods when its fraternal allies [the U.S.S.R. and other East Bloc countries] cannot seem to do so? Perhaps the answer has something to do with what it means to be German.

Idealists and philanthropists in our country currently resist the notion that there is such a thing as national character. Well-meaning though this may be, they are closing their eyes in the face of the obvious. For all the great variety that people may embody, there is a German national essence. To consider oneself German is to be pulled by powerful tides.

Even if one talks to East Germans about pleasantries, the subject of the reunification of the Germanys invariably, almost obsessively, comes up. In the Federal Republic of Germany, opinion polls indicate that only 8 percent of the public believes the Germanys will be reunited before the end of the century; in East Germany there are no polls, but the fraction can hardly be much higher. Yet private conversations here are full of talk about a reunion of the German Volk. What such talk implies is that East Germans are prepared to wait out their present government. They seem prepared to out wait it, moreover, not as individuals, but as a people. The implications of this attitude are profound for it cannot but affect the Soviet Union's assessment of the feasibility of detente, and in a larger sense, of prospects for long-term peace in Europe.

Dream of the "Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation" Has Never Died

The pope is fanning the flames of Catholic fervor in Eastern Europe--where, under persecution, it has survived, in fact, thrived. He hopes to reanimate Western European cultures from a solid base in the East. Poland is absolutely essential to this process. But the Poles could never be the nation to lead Europe politically. That will of necessity fall on Germany's shoulders. In his book, GERMANS, author George Bailey describes the pivotal role of the German nation in history, asking first an intriguing question.

Can we be sure that history has written finis to what was perhaps the grandest design ever conceived by man: the Holy Roman Empire?

It was not by mere chance that the words "of the German nation" came to be added to the title [the Holy Roman Empire of the German nation]. Germany was the country best fitted to be the home base of the empire. In the very center of the European land mass it formed, then as now, the geographical, economic, and political heart of Europe.

The Reich [as in das Heilige Roemische Reich, or Holy Roman Empire] is not a kingdom; a kingdom is a qualified Reich, a Koenigreich. Etymologically the word "Reich" is cognate with the English "rich." But there is nothing crassly material about the Reich: it is mantled in a vague solemn dignity that is other-worldly. To call the Reich holy [heilig] is almost repetitious. Reich is a semantic and conceptual bridge to "Himmelreich," the Heavenly Kingdom. With the lateral transfer of the Holy Roman Empire to Germany the Germans became the people chosen by God to implement the Christianization of the world, beginning with Europe. "Germany" became synonymous with the Reich, with the Kingdom of God on Earth (a development that made the confrontation between Germans and Jews all but inevitable: one chosen people versus another chosen people)....

So the dream of the Holy Roman Empire has remained. It has bemused every generation of Germans since Charlemagne. It has beckoned and bewitched every German leader worth or not worth his salt, ranging in terms of merit and ability all the way from Barbarossa to "Kaiser Bill." The dream has proved to be an irresistible attraction and by no means only to Germans and their far-flung relatives.... Napoleon realized this early in his career and accepted it. Indeed, the empire was virtually thrust upon Napoleon as a matter of course by German princes....

After Hitler had annexed Austria and, in conscious or unconscious imitation of the medieval German emperors, traveled to Rome with fitting pomp to negotiate with Il Duce, the German press erupted in headlines proclaiming the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation. During Christmas 1942, when the blitzkrieg had become a protracted bloodbath, there appeared in the FRANKFURTER ZEITUNG an editorial under the title "The Empire Put to Proof." The point of reference was the Holy Roman Empire. "This," ran the editorial, "was a supra-national European order in which a variety of culturally different peoples were subordinated to the German emperor...."

Very few news analysts (Dr. Brzezinski and William Pfaff are notable exceptions) really see what is happening now in Europe. Even these men will be surprised as to the ultimate outcome. Truly the scripture says: "And they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is" (Rev. 17:8).