

PASTOR GENERAL'S REPORT

TO THE MINISTRY OF THE
WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD



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FROM MINISTERIAL SERVICES

Helping the Brethren Prepare for the Feast of Tabernacles

Excitement is growing in Pasadena and around the world as the Feast of Tabernacles draws near. As this time fast approaches, pastors can help ensure that the brethren will have a well-planned, safe and happy Feast free from illness or other major problems by giving certain reminders and instruction in advance. Bible studies, sermonettes, sermons and announcement time can be used to mention a number of areas of importance. These would include the following:

(1) Traveling When Tired Mr. Armstrong has repeatedly admonished us to avoid driving all night or late into the night. A common-sense rule of the road is to pull off and rest or sleep anytime you feel drowsy while driving. This is not only a matter of safety for one's own family or passengers, but also for other drivers on the road. This is a specific application of God's law of love--of outgoing concern and consideration for others. The same applies to driving over the speed limit. Not only are we as Christians to be considerate of the safety and welfare of others, God also instructs us to obey the laws of the land. Highway laws, as all laws that do not prevent us from obeying God, should be carefully observed by God's people.

(2) Planning Ahead Thought and planning should go into the Feast trip so that potential problems can be avoided. Vehicles should be checked out and made ready before the trip to help prevent problems from coming up at the Feast where parts, repairs, etc. may be far more expensive and difficult to find. A budget should be prepared so that funds are regulated throughout the Feast, with no surprises in the middle. All articles and suggestions pertaining to Feast preparations in the WORLDWIDE NEWS and other publications should be read well ahead of time so that all bases are covered.

(3) Plan Ahead to Serve Others There is no surer way to have a miserable Feast than to go with the idea of having a good time for yourself as the only or main goal. Deuteronomy 16:14 shows us that our rejoicing is to include far more than just ourselves. In fact, unless we do have the attitude of helping others have a wonderful Feast, we simply will not be able to properly and truly rejoice as God intends. The Feast points us to the time when true happiness, based upon God's law of love, will prevail. That is the attitude we must carry with us to the Feast if we hope to fully observe it.

A sermonette on ways to serve at the Feast would be of value. This would be especially good for singles and teen-agers. By involving themselves in Church activities and seeking ways to serve others, their Feast can be much more meaningful than it would be if their minds are focused only on "singles activities" or "youth activities." Being a part of the whole Church through service and active participation instead of becoming part of separate, special interest groups, should be of paramount importance to our singles and older teen-agers.

(4) Plan to Have a Healthy Feast There is a cause for every effect. Colds and flus can dampen the Feast for yourself and others. Avoid illness by getting enough exercise and sleep. Avoid overeating, as well as too many rich or sugary foods. The better we feel, the better Feast we'll have.

(5) Plan to Have a Spiritual Feast The Feast of Tabernacles is no time to let down in prayer and Bible study. How can we expect God to be with us and bless us during the Feast if we shut off communication with Him? How can we expect to fully understand the spiritual meat given to us at the Feast if we are not spiritually renewing ourselves daily as God tells us through Paul (II Cor. 4:16)?

Spending time with God's people in wholesome fellowship and activities is another important facet that will contribute to having a spiritual Feast, and something that should not be neglected.

Proper emphasis should be placed on attending services. Attendance at every service ought to be a priority. We should not miss a service for some activity, trip or any other reason except illness or emergency. We must not let the purpose of the Feast escape us by putting too much emphasis on fun and activities.

Another area to be mindful of is excessive talking and walking around during services. Sometimes it seems that the biggest offenders in this are ushers, deacons, and ministers. These are the people who ought to be setting a right example. Only such talking as is absolutely necessary should take place during services. Storytelling and laughing, general discussion, and all other unnecessary conversation simply displays a lack of respect for services, the speaker, and for God.

(6) Conduct at the Feast Jesus said, "You are the light of the world." We have a responsibility before God to set a right Christian example at all times. At the Feast we are all the more under close scrutiny.

Another area that has been a problem, sadly, is conduct on the Sabbath. The Sabbath is not the time for pool parties, loud playing and shouting by children, playing video games, sports, etc. Last year at some motels, the Sabbath was anything but peaceful. In some instances children and adults were making so much noise in the pool and game areas that other people could not sleep on Friday night. The sad part about it was that the offenders were our own people! Let's show respect for God by keeping the Sabbath holy as God created it.

(7) Prepare Your Children for the Feast We should be preparing our children for the Feast by discussing with them their own examples. Their behavior in public, not being noisy, not running in buildings, etc. should be a part of their instruction well before the Feast.

Now is the time to discuss the Feast with your children's schoolteachers also. Many hard feelings and problems for your children can be avoided by politely and courteously discussing Feast plans with their teachers far in advance, thereby showing respect for and cooperation with the teachers' needs and plans.

God intended the Feast of Tabernacles to be a time of great rejoicing. With careful preparation physically and spiritually, we can all have a superb Feast this year!

Accounting Department to Close for Feast Break

The Accounting Department will be closed September 17 through October 4. Please prepare now any hall rental vouchers, etc. that need to be paid before the Feast, as Accounting must be notified by Tuesday, September 13. This means that you should have your vouchers at Ministerial Services by Friday, September 9th. Following the Feast break, Accounting expects to need about a week to return to its normal schedule, so please take this into consideration as well.

1983 Feast of Tabernacles Traveling SpeakersUnited States Sites

Anchorage	Bob League Greg Sargent	Mt. Pocono	Ron Kelly Royston Page
Big Sandy	Gerald Waterhouse Dennis Luker	Norfolk	John Ritenbaugh Gary Antion
Biloxi	Dennis Luker Gerald Waterhouse	Pasadena	Clint Zimmerman Charles Bryce
Cape Cod	Larry Salyer Dick Thompson	Rapid City	Rod Meredith Ron Howe
Dayton	Robert Fahey Norman Smith	Sacramento	Raymond McNair Greg Albrecht
Eugene	Les McCullough George Geis	St. Petersburg	Don Ward Dean Wilson
Hawaii	Richard Rice	Spokane	Greg Albrecht Raymond McNair
Jekyll Island	Dean Wilson Don Ward	Tucson	Charles Bryce Clint Zimmerman
Johnson City	Gary Antion John Ritenbaugh	Wisconsin Dells	Norman Smith Robert Fahey
Lake of Ozarks	Dick Thompson Larry Salyer		

Canadian Sites

Charlottetown, P.E.I.	Richard Ames Don Lawson	Regina, Sask.	Ron Howe Rod Meredith
Niagara Falls, NY	Royston Page Ron Kelly	Victoria, B.C.	Greg Sargent Bob League
Penticton, B.C.	George Geis Les McCullough		

International Sites

Australia	Leroy Neff	Kenya/Malawi	Abner Washington
Bahamas	Jeff Barness	Malta	Carn Catherwood John Halford
Barbados	John Bald	Malaysia	Rod Matthews
Bermuda	Dan Creed	Netherlands	John Halford Piet Michielsen
Caribbean (various)	Harold Jackson	New Zealand	Dean Blackwell
Costa Rica Guatemala	Herman Hoeh	Philippines	Jim Friddle
Czechoslovakia	Neil Earle Carn Catherwood	Puerto Rico Spain	Leon Walker
Denmark/U.K. (Isle of Man)	Dexter Faulkner	St. Lucia	Randal Dick
France/Canada (Jonquiere)	Dibar Apartian	South Africa	Burk McNair
Guyana	Curtis May	Trinidad & Tobago	Roy Demarest
Israel	Richard Frankel Arthur Docken Wil Berg	United Kingdom (Various) (Scotland)	Dave Albert Selmer Hegvold
Jamaica	Briscoe Ellett	Zimbabwe Mauritius	David Hulme

Renting Members' Homes During the Feast

With everyone making definite plans for the Feast, it is necessary to address a problem that has occurred in the past. At one site there were hard feelings over how much should be paid for the use of a member's home during the Feast. This kind of problem can be easily resolved if both parties are willing to do one thing--give.

The fact that motels and other establishments might charge large amounts for their accommodations is no justification to also rent one's own home to a member for a large sum. If the renter only uses the home for eight days, that's only one-fourth of a month. In no case should the amount exceed the normal monthly rent or mortgage payment.

On the other hand, the feastgoer who wants to live in another member's home during the Feast should not assume that it should be cheap. If he feels there are advantages to renting a home instead of a motel or condominium, he should be willing to pay for them.

Any of you ministers who are aware of members wanting to rent a home, or rent out their own home, should advise them to be more willing to give than to get.

U.S. Church Visits--Trumpets '83

<u>Guest Speaker</u>	<u>Trumpets (September 8)</u>	<u>Sabbath (September 10)</u>
Dave Albert	Columbia, MO	AM: Macomb, IL PM: Peoria, IL
Greg Albrecht	Bowling Green, KY & Clarksville, TN	AM: Paducah, KY PM: Cape Girardeau, MO
Dibar Apartian	Jackson & Greenwood, MS	AM: Shreveport, LA PM: El Dorado, AR & Texarkana, TX
Dean Blackwell	Eau Claire, WI & St. Paul, MN	AM: Minneapolis N, MN PM: Minneapolis S & Lake Crystal, MN
Mike Feazell	Ft. Wayne, IN	AM: Muncie, IN PM: Richmond, IN
John Halford	Appleton & Green Bay, WI	PM: Duluth, MN
Herman Hoeh	Phoenix E-W & Mesa, AZ	PM: Tucson, AZ
Harold Jackson	Albuquerque & Santa Fe, NM	AM: Durango, CO PM: Alamosa, CO
Les McCullough	Montgomery, AL	AM: Macon, GA PM: Columbus, GA
Raymond McNair	Springfield, MO	AM: Rolla, MO PM: Lake of Ozarks, MO
Rod Meredith	Birmingham AM/PM & Jasper, AL	AM: Florence, AL PM: Huntsville, AL
Leroy Neff	Kenosha, Milwaukee & West Bend, WI	AM: Wisconsin Dells, WI PM: Wausau, WI
Larry Salyer	Jackson & Memphis, TN	AM: Murfreesboro, TN PM: Nashville, TN
Leon Walker	Madison, WI & Rockford, IL	AM: La Crosse, WI PM: Rochester, MN

U.S. Ministerial Transfers--Summer 1983

<u>Name</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>
Rick Baumgartner	Houston N, TX (Assoc.)	Muncie-Richmond, IN (Promoted to Church Pastor)
Charles Calahan	Lafayette, IN	Denison-Paris, TX

U.S. Ministerial Transfers--Summer 1983 (continued)

<u>Name</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>
Bill Cowan, Jr.	Chattanooga, TN-Murphy, NC	Birmingham AM/PM-Jasper, AL
John Dobritch	Belle Vernon-Washington, PA-Clarksburg, WV (Assoc.)	Belle Vernon-Washington, PA (Promoted to Church Pastor)
Ozzie Engelbart	Mt. Pocono, PA	Modesto-Stockton, CA
Dan Fricke	Portland W, OR	Lafayette, IN
Gil Goethals	Tacoma-Olympia, WA (Assoc.)	Little Rock-Searcy, AR (Assoc.)
Cecil Green	Atlanta E-W, GA (Assoc.)	Houston N, TX (Assoc.)
Garvin Greene	Muncie-Richmond, IN	Midland-Cadillac, MI
Charles Groce	Asheville-Marion, NC	Hammond, IN-Park Forest, IL (Assoc.)
Nelson Haas	Flint-Lansing, MI	Portland W, OR
Roy Holladay	Chicago NW-N-W, IL	Mt. Pocono, PA
Noel Hornor	Modesto-Stockton, CA	St. Paul, MN-Eau Claire, WI
Bill Jahns	St. Paul, MN-Eau Claire, WI	Akron, OH
Dave Johnson	Belle Vernon-Washington, PA-Clarksburg, WV	Houston E, TX
Harold Lester	Atlanta E-W, GA	Austin-Waco, TX
Paul Luecke	Prescott-Flagstaff, AZ (Asst.)	London-Somerset-Middlesboro, KY (Asst.)
Ken Martin	Birmingham AM/PM-Jasper, AL	Atlanta E-W, GA
Harold Rhodes	Austin-Waco, TX	Chattanooga, TN-Murphy, NC
Steve Schantz	London-Somerset-Middlesboro, KY (Assoc.)	Clarksburg, WV (Promoted to Church Pastor)
Paul Shumway	(Rehire--living in Tacoma, WA)	Tacoma-Olympia, WA (Assoc.)
Mike Swagerty	Akron, OH	Chicago NW-N-W, IL

U.S. Ministerial Transfers--Summer 1983 (continued)

<u>Name</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>
Raymond Taylor	Little Rock-Searcy, AR (Assoc.)	Ft. Worth AM/PM, TX (Assoc.)
Gerald Weston	Midland-Cadillac, MI	Asheville-Marion, NC
Gerald Witte	Denison-Paris, TX	Flint-Lansing, MI

International News

German Area Update On June 17 Mr. Frank Schnee, along with 1983 Big Sandy graduate and former PORTFOLIO photographer Dominick Furlano, headed for Ottobeuren, just west of Munich. The occasion was a rally for a united Europe, called for by the bishop of Augsburg.

On the way there, Mr. Schnee and Mr. Furlano stopped off in Stuttgart, where a European Economic Community summit meeting was taking place. European leaders such as Helmut Kohl, Margaret Thatcher and Francois Mitterrand were present at this event.

The next day the two men drove on to Ottobeuren for the rally, which took place at the 1,200-year-old Benedictine monastery "Basilika Ottobeuren." The two main speakers at this rally were German Parliament President Rainer Barzel and European Parliament member Dr. Otto von Habsburg. Messrs. Schnee and Furlano were able to take numerous photos of Dr. Habsburg while he spoke on the goal of a united Europe. During Dr. Habsburg's July visit to Ambassador College in Pasadena, an album consisting of photos taken at Ottobeuren was presented to him by Mr. Armstrong.

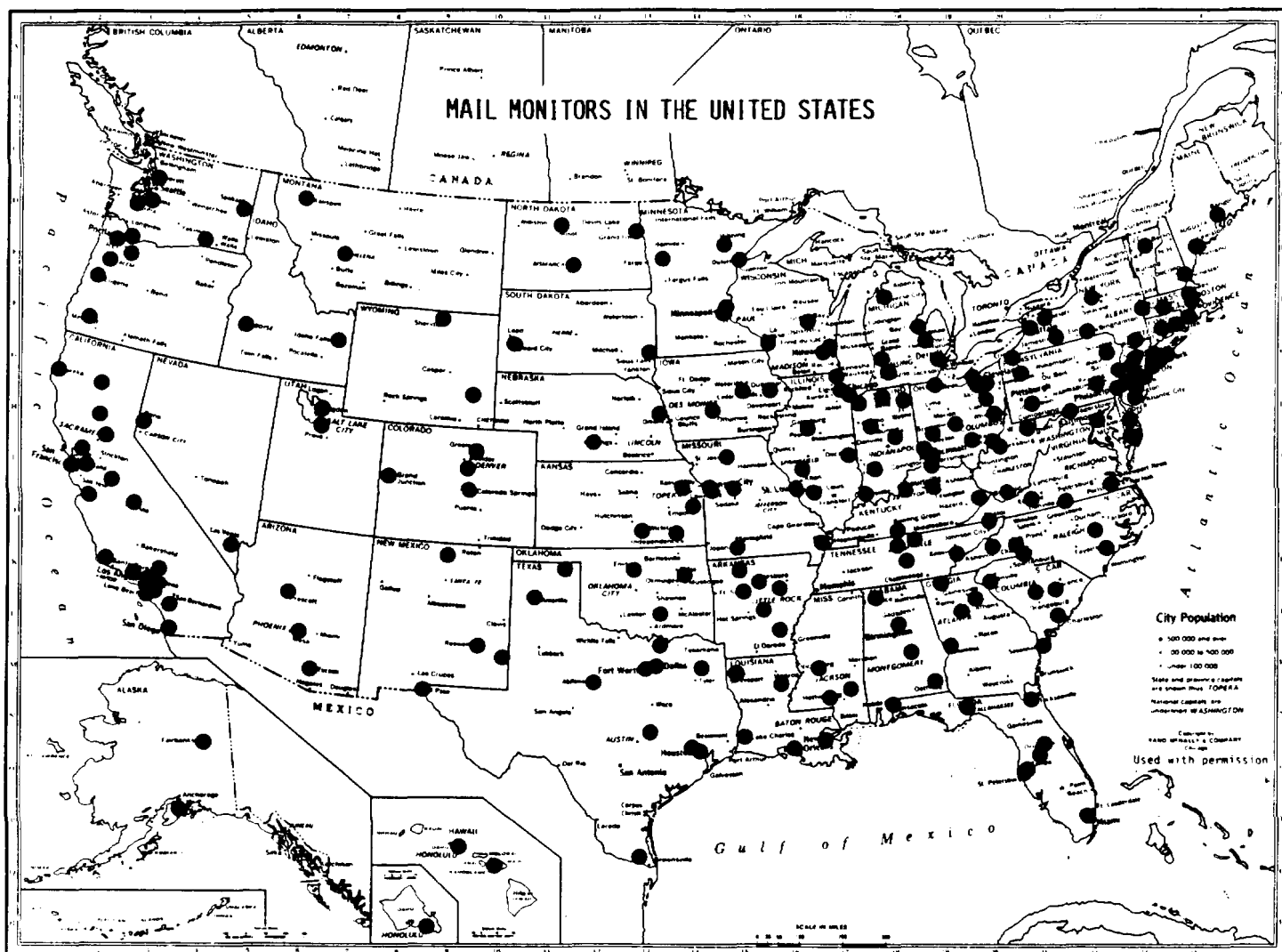
Ambassador College students participating in the 1983 German summer program had the opportunity in June to spend four days in Switzerland, where they attended Sabbath services and became acquainted with the Swiss brethren. On this trip the students also traveled to Strasbourg, France near the French-German border, to view the new headquarters for the European Parliament. The students' second trip was to East Germany, where they met in Jena with our East German brethren.

In June we experienced another sharp rise in incoming mail, mainly as a result of responses still coming in from our May advertising. Our total mail was up 90% over June 1982 and we added 6,322 new subscribers to the KLAR & WAHR file, which brings our subscriber list up to 120,297. For the month of June we had a month-to-date mail income increase of 8.2%. The year-to-date income is up 21.4%.

--Joe Tkach, Ministerial Services

UPDATE FROM MAIL PROCESSINGValuable Mail Monitor Service Continues

We now have 231 mail monitors serving in the United States. These volunteers have provided a valuable service to the Work in determining average times for the delivery of our literature. Mail monitors, who are all baptized members, are chosen from specially selected cities and towns in proportion to the current U.S. population. The following map shows where they reside.



Over the past five months, our monitors have sent us information on a total of 7,641 pieces of literature they received. Although more publications are being sent out this year than ever before, high standards of mail delivery have been maintained. For example, first class mail is usually delivered in three days or less. The PLAIN TRUTH averages eight days while The GOOD NEWS, WORLDWIDE NEWS and YOUTH 83 average eleven days. Booklets take about four weeks from the day requested to the day delivered, mainly due to the use of the more economical third class postage rates.

We would like to take this opportunity to once again express heartfelt thanks and appreciation to all of the volunteers involved in the Mail Monitor Program. They are helping to make it a very successful effort.

Latest Literature Index

The latest Literature Index is included with this PASTOR GENERAL'S REPORT. It lists all currently available books, booklets and reprint articles, and is for your use. May we ask that you not loan out your list or allow it to be duplicated in your Church area.

We are always happy to fill any reasonable request for our publications from members. However, when long lists are sent in asking for dozens or

sometimes even hundreds of pieces of literature, postage and processing costs increase considerably. Thanks always for your help and cooperation.

Persecution Encountered by Those Responding to God's Truth

As people who have contacted God's Work become more involved in learning about the Truth of God, they usually encounter some degree of opposition, just as the Bible predicted they would. This week we're including a few recent letters from some who have met with such resistance. Their responses indicate that they are remaining steadfast in their determination to follow God's way. Following are some of their encouraging comments:

I have done a lot of research on Mr. Armstrong and the Worldwide Church of God and even at this moment I have a book by someone who's trying to make your organization out to be a cult. I've read it over and over again and can't help but say to myself, after studying into what you believe, that you are definitely not a cult. It's amazing how God seems to be speaking or working through just this one man--there are no others like him.

I'm really excited about what I'm learning, and feel like I might want to become a member of your church. You've got something very truthful, real and valuable there; don't let any opposition or persecution (which I can see that your church suffers) get you down or make you let go.

G.F. (Bethel Park, PA)

Enclosed is a contribution to your fine work. I agree that this is a very challenging magazine and I find it most interesting. However, I would like to say that when I took the magazine along to one of our Bible study groups, the members pounced on me, telling me to discontinue receiving and reading it--that your group is a cult. I disagreed with them wholeheartedly, but they insisted and in fact produced a book that labels your organization as a cultist group.

Well, I said, cult or no cult I have learned much from The PLAIN TRUTH and will continue to read it with enthusiasm. I just will not mention it in our study group.

B.S. (Delta, PA)

I have been getting The PLAIN TRUTH and Bible Correspondence Course since some years ago. I stopped going to church on Sunday--which made all my relatives disown me and condemn me to hell. But that doesn't hinder me. I know they don't know the true word of God. I pray for them. I am very happy and they don't understand why. But one day they will.

I have started going to church in Alexandria, Louisiana. I can't begin to tell you the joy it has brought me. I didn't know the Church was there until I was visited by some of your ministers. I was sure glad they did because now I look forward to God's Sabbath. I am so thankful God opened up my eyes to the truth.

Mrs. R.S. (Anacoco, LA)

The great God has answered my prayers! On March 3 I was laid off my job because I wouldn't work Friday nights. My wife was going

to leave me for the same reason. On April 4 my company transferred me to a Monday-to-Friday daytime job. They also told me I would be able to have all of the holy days off including the entire Feast! My wife has returned and there is peace in my house. I thank the living God for these blessings every day. I thank you for your prayers also. I am so glad to be a part of God's Work.

L.H. (Susan, CA)

I thank God that there is one man who is preaching the plain truth to the world. You are preaching the Word of God the way that I have always believed. I have attended many different churches and no one preaches the Word of God the way you do.

Right at the present time I am going through hard times. None of my family believes in what I believe. They tell me that I don't know what I'm doing. I know that Satan is trying to break me away from hearing the truth. I know that my family and my so-called friends are also trying to break me away from hearing the truth. But I will not break away. I know that God has a plan for me and I will do His will.

C.P. (Mt. Sterling, KY)

I am 17 years old and very grateful that three years ago I picked up a copy of The PLAIN TRUTH at school. Seeing your viewpoint provoked me into looking and inquiring as to what God's Word actually says and means. Because my mother greatly opposes the Church, I must "smuggle" in your publications by using my grandfather's address. Anyway, here is my small donation to help you continue your Work.

L.P. (Arkansas)

Satan is trying very hard to destroy my faith and confidence in God and His way of life. But through much prayer and diligent Bible study, God has delivered me many times from persecution, mocking and ridicule. Twice I have been threatened with total destruction of all my papers, Bible Correspondence Course lessons and other study material, but God has prevailed. I also have been rebuked many times because of the time I spend in prayer. One family member told me that one day I will end up in an insane asylum.

But I remember the scriptures which tell us not to be afraid of what men do or say against us, because it's evil spirits we are fighting against. Many times their fiery darts have been quenched with God's Holy Word.

Mrs. D.M. (Bonne Terre, MO)

--Richard Rice, Mail Processing Center

ON THE WORLD SCENE

SOUNDING AN UNCERTAIN TRUMPET The fleets are underway, the troops will arrive soon for "exercises" in Honduras. Feeling the pressure, Cuba's Fidel Castro and the ruling Marxist junta in Nicaragua both denounce President Reagan as a warmonger while giving faint hints at compromise and a "political solution." But beware, says General Gustavo Alvarez, commander of the Honduran military forces, who adds: "When Communists are

winning, they say: 'Victory or death.' When they are losing they say they will negotiate."

The August 8 U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT said this about the perceived purpose of the military show of force:

Since May, there have been growing fears in the White House that Cuba and Nicaragua are preparing to mount an attack against Honduras. That country is the main base for anti-Sandinista guerrillas supported by the CIA and a major center for training Salvadoran Army recruits.... The White House, with its military moves in Central America, is telling the Cubans and Nicaraguans that an attack on Honduras now would involve the inescapable risk of conflict with American forces.

What is actually in the cards involves far more than brief exercises by U.S. armed forces. The administration is planning a dramatic expansion of America's military presence over the next six months, with upward of 16,500 soldiers, sailors, marines and airmen taking part. In addition, an infrastructure is being developed that would facilitate quick intervention by U.S. forces in the future....

The twin naval exercises are intended to remind Cuban and Nicaraguan leaders, as well as America's friends in the area, of the enormity of U.S. military power. Mock blockade operations reportedly are on the program. When these maneuvers are completed, the plan is to have other warships transit these waters to maintain at least a token U.S. naval presence there on a continuing basis.

NEWSWEEK magazine, in its August 8 issue opined that the move is a gamble and that the enemy will not choose to fight and that President Reagan will not suffer politically for dragging the country into war.

In the end, according to [one] adviser to the president, Reagan decided on his latest Central America moves simply to do something--to project an image of mastery and momentum. The gamble was on a two-punch effect, in which a tough show of strength would encourage the Sandinistas and the Cubans to negotiate, thus making it easier for the Kissinger commission to pursue long-range solutions to the region's problems.

In its July 28 lead editorial entitled "Uncertain Trumpet," the WALL STREET JOURNAL found fault not with the show-of-force, but the manner in which President Reagan, in his July 26 news conference, appeared to downplay its obvious seriousness. Not only Congress, but even the "hawkish" Administration seems to be motivated by fear.

...The administration is afraid.... It fears that if it talks too tough, people out there will think it bellicose.... This low estimate of the American people becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. It is impossible for a president to build public support for his policies, especially foreign policy, unless he tells people straight out what he wants and asks them to stand behind it. And if the president cannot gather such support, U.S. policy will be

forced to creep along sideways in that ambivalent way that turns peace into war....

Mr. Reagan is ducking the challenge, moving his policies one way and his rhetoric the other. This is a recipe not for gaining support but for losing credibility at home and abroad. No one is going to rally behind a strong U.S. stand in Central America if the president himself is afraid to do so.

In a column in the July 24 NEW YORK TIMES, Norman Podhoretz, editor of COMMENTARY magazine, commented on the difficult decisions that President Reagan may yet have to face (especially with an election coming up).

Even after World War II had already begun, President Roosevelt promised never to send American boys to fight in Europe, and President Reagan, while proclaiming that our vital interests are involved in Central America, has announced that "there is no thought of sending American combat troops" to the region. Yet if the stakes are as high as President Reagan says, it is precisely this thought that must be entertained, and it must be entertained seriously. Above all else, this means resisting the temptation to rely on incremental half-measures and accepting the responsibility to do whatever we have to do in order to succeed. On this point, there actually is a lesson to be learned from Vietnam, and it is that fighting a war on the cheap is a sure formula for defeat. President Kennedy, trying to win on the military cheap, refused to commit adequate military forces; President Johnson was willing to commit the forces but, trying to win on the political cheap, refused to mobilize the consensus he had inherited behind a strategy that would have enabled those troops to succeed. Permitted in these ways to drag on inconclusively, the war [in Vietnam] gradually lost the public support it had once enjoyed, and the stage was set for American withdrawal and all the disasters that have trailed in its wake....

At the moment, the military situation in El Salvador seems to be improving and perhaps the guerrillas can be defeated by the Government without our direct participation. So much the better. But if American military power should become necessary to prevent El Salvador from following Cuba and Nicaragua into the Soviet orbit, and if we should then fail to use it at all, or fail to use it effectively, we will have revealed ourselves as a spent and impotent force.... If we are unwilling or unable to contain the further advance of Soviet influence, and the Communist totalitarianism that usually accompanies it, in our own hemisphere, where else can we be expected to do so? And if we are thus neutralized, will anyone, including eventually even ourselves, be safe from Soviet imperial control?

In his August 1 LOS ANGELES TIMES column, Ernest Conine reported that Castro and the Sandinistas have changed their tune, slightly. But for how long--and will they call the U.S. bluff?

The Cuban and Nicaraguan leaders were not suddenly overcome with a fit of good will. They were responding to U.S. military pressures.... The trouble is that the nervousness may not last. The

Soviets and Cubans may call the U.S. bluff by becoming more directly involved in Nicaragua and by stepping up their political and material support of the guerrillas in El Salvador. Then what do we do? Blockade the area? Shoot up military bases in Nicaragua? Or back off?

If Reagan and national-security adviser William P. Clark have not thought through such questions and decided that they are prepared to deal with whatever the consequences may be, the military exercise is a dangerous mistake. Blockades are difficult to pull off. U.S. air strikes would trigger worldwide condemnation. Yet retreat in the face of a communist counterbluff would demolish U.S. prestige in this hemisphere. And the Soviets, having found Reagan to be a paper tiger in his own part of the world, might be sorely tempted to test his nerve elsewhere as well.

The American public is, incredibly--after all the news from Central America--still pretty much in the dark about the grave issues at stake in the region. In his editorial entitled "Central America? What's That?" U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT editor Marvin Stone editorializes in his magazine's August 8 issue:

Challenged on our own continent, faced with the prospect of Marxist forces in control of nearby nations and with a small war that could grow much larger, Americans have fateful choices to make. Who among us is weighing the possible repercussions of sending troops and a carrier battle group to Central America? Is it a bad idea or a good one?... It is shocking to learn that most of the population lacks the basic information needed to deal with these questions. Only 25 percent of persons answering a NEW YORK TIMES/CBS poll could tell which side President Reagan favors in El Salvador; only 13 percent knew the faction he backs in Nicaragua; just 8 percent were able to name his preference in both places. Some, in another poll, thought Central America was Kansas and Nebraska. Can those in the uninformed majority take effective part in the judgments that belong to them as citizens?

In these past few months, anybody who can read or can listen to radio or view television has been exposed daily to discussions of the crisis in Central America. So what is amiss? It may be that people have become discouraged at the complexity of the news, or that they have grown accustomed to regard explanations as political ploys by one group or another.

Mr. Reagan has become aware of this.... His blue-ribbon commission on Central America, with Henry Kissinger at the helm, could be regarded as an opening move to show that he is getting people involved who are outside the administration. Though the President's action seemed sensible, the public has not applauded very loudly. Nor did Mr. Reagan's news conference on July 26 evoke much enthusiasm from realists. One reason is that the President seemed to be fearful of coming right out and saying that U.S. military forces were being sent to Central America to transmit a firm signal of resolution--that our friends there could count on us, and our foes had better think hard about further encroachments in this hemisphere. Instead, Mr. Reagan sought to disguise

our military movements as routine exercises lest he further upset his squeamish critics here at home. It is hard to have it both ways. People remain confused.

Thus, the President still has to sell his strategy, and many pressing questions remain.... Do we have a right to intervene? Could we win a war there? How big would the war be? What would the Soviets do?... Would open intervention alienate our hemisphere neighbors, and is it worth that? Things are not necessarily as they used to be, with the Latins docilely following the giant United States. Is it wise to attempt running any part of the Americas without cooperation?...

All these questions and many more, if we're lucky, will be debated publicly over weeks to come. Citizens who value this nation's future should be listening.

In a recent interview in the business magazine FORBES (August 1, 1983), President Reagan said the following concerning Central America:

...Congressmen that have come back [after visiting El Salvador] have some fascinating stories to tell. They talked to 16-year-old boys, enlistees in the El Salvador army: "Why? Why are you doing this?" And those kids said, "To fight for our country." This isn't a thing in which there's a lackadaisical feeling on the part of the people....

But there are other stories, because the congressmen talked to others on the other side. They had high-ranking leaders of the forces that are backed by the Soviets and the Cubans tell them that this revolution is for real and that this revolution is aimed at all of Central America. They stated that. As a matter of fact, one of these high-ranking officers said to the congressmen, "Make no mistake about it. We'll be at the Arizona-New Mexico, Mexican border sooner than you think."

I think that it [the war] is winnable on our side, but we do need to get adequate funds from Congress to help them down there. What we need is to give them the weapons, the training.... And the American people have got to know that this is to our national interest. We're talking about if those Cuban- and Soviet-backed people succeed in getting their kind of dictatorships there, you can look for anywhere from seven to ten million refugees.

At the moment, the initiative in the fighting appears to be with the government in El Salvador. Training in counterinsurgency tactics has paid off. A U.S.-sponsored military/civilian national reconstruction plan in rebel-contested areas is bearing fruit. This only means that someday, probably after President Reagan is no longer on the scene, a squeamish Congress will pull the support plug, as in South Vietnam, letting the undermanned Communists win.

Meanwhile, Pentagon officials are said to be concerned that a more-or-less permanent placement of military power in Central America will stretch global U.S. forces thin. Reports the August 4 LOS ANGELES TIMES:

The Reagan Administration's decision to stage military exercises in Central America as a deterrent to leftist insurgencies may be the first step toward a long-term U.S. strategic commitment in the region, according to a senior Pentagon official deeply involved in Central American planning.... In the short term, the senior official said, moving any forces into Central America "leaves a hole somewhere else. Being stretched too thin is definitely a worry." Also, a stepped-up commitment to Central America could require a major and sustained increase in defense spending, especially for naval forces....

Perhaps the most significant issue is how such deployments would affect the balance of power there and elsewhere. William J. Taylor, senior national security analyst at the Georgetown University Center for Strategic and International Studies and a former West Point professor, believes the United States is headed toward a permanent deployment down there, at least as long as Cuba's around and the Soviets keep resupplying them and their satellites. And I don't see any reason for them to negotiate any kind of settlement. The Soviets are making a h... of a lot of inroads there and they can do it on the cheap and they can tie us up," he said. If I were a Soviet strategic planner, I'd be sitting back and thinking, 'Boy oh boy, we've got them on the run,'" Taylor said. "I am very worried about this."

Robert W. Komer, a former CIA and Defense Department official who is now a senior analyst for the Rand Corp., said..."Quite obviously the Soviets can't fight and win a war with us in the Caribbean,"... "But they can very easily and cheaply divert our forces."

The Soviets see a great advantage in tying down U.S. military forces close to home. In the long run this would entail a drawdown of American troops from Europe and Asia as a nervous American public would demand security along the porous southern U.S. border.

What, for example, will happen to the 40,000 U.S. troops still on constant alert in South Korea? The North Koreans have been undergoing a major build-up of ground and naval assault forces. The Pyongyang regime now has the world's largest commando force, at 100,000 strong.

There is absolutely no chance for a peaceful solution of the conflict in Korea. The only factor that keeps the North from renewing the war is the certainty that the 40,000 U.S. troops would fight along with the South, triggering an expected larger U.S. response.

Take the American troops out and war is a certainty--with millions of Korean "boat people" clamoring to come to the U.S.--joining the millions of Central Americans (and perhaps a few hundred thousand "yacht people" choosing to leave Hong Kong once China takes that British colony over in the years ahead). Note Lamentations 5:1-2: "Look, and behold our reproach! Our inheritance has been turned over to aliens, and our houses to foreigners." Asian refugees might flood Australia as well.

Thus, the U.S. posture in Central America has worldwide ramifications.

--Gene H. Hogberg, News Bureau