

PASTOR GENERAL'S REPORT

TO THE MINISTRY OF THE
WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD



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LEGAL UPDATE

Another Victory in Church/State Related Case

When the state of California lawsuit against the Worldwide Church of God was dismissed in October, 1980, the Church's attorneys noted that the battle would not be over until side issues were cleared up. With God's help, more progress has been made.

Hillel Chodos, as reported in the December 11, 1981 PASTOR GENERAL'S REPORT, lost his lawsuit asking that the Church pay his legal fees while he was serving the state and dissidents. (He still has the right to petition the State Supreme Court for a hearing, however.) Now Mr. Chodos has lost another lawsuit, this time before a different judge and in a different court. Chodos was suing the Church and others for, ironically, defaming him! Following is a report from Mr. Helge detailing the Church's latest victory in court.

I am pleased to be writing you again about another God-given victory in the State v. Worldwide Church of God case.

If you recall, Hillel Chodos was the attorney for the relators in that case. Early in the litigation the Church placed an advertisement in the LOS ANGELES TIMES which described Mr. Chodos' conduct in connection with the suit. The Church also caused to be produced and broadcast a telecast in which Mr. Chodos was mentioned. Additionally, a church official sued Mr. Chodos for defamation. That official subsequently dismissed his suit.

Mr. Chodos then sued Mr. Armstrong, the Church, the church official and his attorneys for defamation and malicious prosecution.

Demurrers were filed against the complaint. A demurrer is a legal means which admits all the facts in the complaint, for the sake of argument, but denies that the complaint states any legal wrong. In short, it has been described as saying, "so what."

The general rule is that if a demurrer is granted, the court will customarily permit the attorney to amend his complaint and have another chance to restate the facts to see if he can state a legal wrong.

I am pleased to announce that the judge has not only dismissed Mr. Chodos' case on demurrer, he also did not permit Chodos to amend.

The judge in his opinion, in referring to the comments Mr. Armstrong made, stated: "the alleged defamatory statements are absolutely privileged as true and an accurate report of judicial proceedings."

--Ralph K. Helge, Legal Office

FROM MINISTERIAL SERVICESOpening Prayer for Bible Studies

It has come to our attention that in several areas it has become common practice for the congregation to remain seated during the opening prayer for Bible studies. Although midweek Bible studies may not be as formal as Sabbath services or Friday evening Bible studies, they are nevertheless a group of God's people assembling before God, and the brethren should be asked to rise for the opening prayer as they normally would at any other service.

Reinstatement of Disfellowshipped People

Recently we have had a small number of problems arise regarding the reinstatement of certain disfellowshipped persons. In each case, all problems could have been avoided if the ministers who reinstated the individuals had contacted the minister who put them out prior to reinstating them.

This should be a routine procedure before reinstating any disfellowshipped person not originally disfellowshipped by you. If the minister who disfellowshipped the individual is still in the ministry, always check with him before reinstating. Sometimes there are factors involved that you need to be aware of in order to properly make the decision. (The other elders in your area may know the circumstances if the former pastor cannot be consulted.) As Mr. Armstrong continually stresses, there must be PERFORMANCE --real repentance--on the part of the individual. How can we determine whether that is true if we have not taken the time to gather all the facts?

Reinstatement should not be taken lightly. It is a serious responsibility to determine whether there really are fruits of repentance, and to be sure we are not doing the individual himself a gross disservice by reinstating him before he is really ready.

NOTICE TO ALL CHURCH PASTORS

Mary Elizabeth (Fink) Gainey has been traveling from area to area, requesting emergency fund help from the ministry. She is disfellowshipped and marked. Under no circumstances should any assistance be given to her, nor should she be reinstated without first discussing it with Mr. Les McColm and Mr. Joseph Tkach, or Mr. John Anderson at Ministerial Services.

Also, anyone needing information concerning a Mr. Terry Green, please contact Mr. Dennis Doucet, pastor of the Lake Charles, Louisiana Church. His phone number is (318) 478-5367.

Marriage and Divorce Case Write-ups

We would like to again remind all church pastors that all divorce and remarriage cases must be written up and sent to Pasadena no matter how "simple" or "clear cut" the case may seem. This gives us the necessary background for later reference should another divorce occur or should a case be reopened.

Take the time to do a thorough job on these write-ups. Often they can be brief, but be sure all pertinent information is included. Below are some key points to remember in preparing these write-ups:

1. Be sure to pray about the write-up before preparing it, realizing the importance of Christ's wisdom and mind in putting it together.
2. Put the date on the write-up.
3. Sign your name to the write-up.
4. Type it, or write or print clearly and legibly.
5. Give the full names of the people involved in each marriage at the beginning of the write-up. Make sure you clearly identify each individual throughout the write-up.
6. State the city or location of each party involved.
7. State the present age of each individual involved as well as the age at the time of any marriage under consideration.
8. Use full names in specifying who married whom each time you mention it.
9. Be specific about key dates involved in the courtship, marriage ceremony, divorce, separations, fornication, etc.
10. Include the length of each marriage.
11. Be very careful not to slant the write-up in any way. Keep it totally objective and factual.
12. Ask the members involved to also prepare a complete write-up, including all information that is pertinent.

International News

Spanish Department Update September, 1981 marked the 25th anniversary of the beginning of the Work of God in the Spanish language. In commemoration of this event as well as to commemorate his visit to Mexico, a sterling silver gift was presented to Mr. Armstrong on behalf of God's Work and Church in Mexico. The presentation on the state of the Work in Spanish-speaking areas, made while Mr. Armstrong was in Mexico City in November, appeared in the December 18, 1981 issue of the PASTOR GENERAL'S REPORT.

The 1981 Feast of Tabernacles was observed by 1727 brethren in eight Spanish-speaking countries: Argentina (271), Chile (100), Colombia (161), Guatemala (227), Mexico (600), Peru (142), Puerto Rico (161), and Spain (65).

Feast attendance was up 17% over 1980. Despite high inflation experienced in most countries, holy day offerings increased substantially over last year's figures. All sites reported pleasant weather conditions amidst beautiful surroundings throughout the eight days. However, Mario Seiglie,

pastor of the Santiago congregation, reported that after a formal dance at the Chilean site, "the earth also decided to participate" by producing a 5.5 earthquake lasting over one minute!

Once again, Mr. Armstrong's messages were shown at most sites. The brethren were inspired and enthusiastic that they were able to see him and hear his messages. All sites reported inspiring and practical sermons--truly a profitable Feast. This year Leon Walker, director of the Spanish Department, was able to attend the Cullera, Spain and Rincon, Puerto Rico sites as well as St. Petersburg, Florida.

Comments From Monthly Church Reports

YOUNGSTOWN, OH--EUGENE NOEL: The Church has received the restoring of the truth on make-up very well. Mr. Armstrong's nine-page article in the PGR made the truth of God clear. They have been led to see the subject from God's point of view.

DETROIT (EAST), MI--EARL H. WILLIAMS: The women in the Church are responding very positively to the change on make-up. Many have stated how thankful they are that God inspired Mr. Armstrong to make the change. As the announcement was made many took their kleenex out and started wiping their faces and mouths.

RALEIGH, NC--MIKE BOOZE: The women of the Church have had a very positive attitude toward the change re make-up. Most simply began to wash it off. No attitude problems to my knowledge.

BOONE/LENOIR, NC--KEN SMYLIE: All have taken the make-up change in stride and seem content and, yes, happy with it. They seem more contrite and humble with "naked" faces. Many rejoice over this change and it promises good things.

WASHINGTON, PA/CLARKSVILLE, WV/BELL VERNON, PA--DAVID JOHNSON: The churches seem to be coming together well. There is a significant core of "old timers" who have known each other for years and work well together. Virtually everyone is being given the opportunity to serve in some way and some are serving for the first time in their lives.

Some of us pastors were discussing the quality of the young people in our areas, especially those applying for AC. We have never seen such a fine group of young people, all of whom would really do well at AC, having real potential for the future.

Some of the brethren in Bell Vernon said they really do not understand the ruling on make-up, but they intend to go along with it anyway simply as a matter of obedience to God's government in the Church.

WATERTOWN/YANKTON/SIOUX FALLS, SD--GEORGE AFFELDT: In the last month I have had many of the young people come to me wanting to talk about baptism. I talked to some of the other ministers at the Feast and they commented about the same thing. This is very encouraging for many of the parents.

The Churches were very excited about Mr. Armstrong coming to Minneapolis. I canceled services in the area and many of the members drove many miles to hear and see him. Many commented about the message and I personally was thankful for the chance to see him again in person and talk to him. My wife and I both felt moved by his concern for the Church and came home wanting to do more than ever to complete the Work.

HAGERSTOWN, MD--WILLIAM R. PACK: Having now finished giving all the material received from the MRP via sermons and sermonettes, I can now report that everything given was well received, appreciated, and given wholehearted support. Cannot wait for MRP number two!!

--Joe Tkach, Ministerial Services

AMBASSADOR COLLEGE UPDATE

(Pasadena Campus)

This year the usual attendant enthusiasm at the annual Rose Parade and Rose Bowl game was dampened somewhat by rain the night before the parade. But in spite of the inclement weather, the brethren and students who sold programs, food, drink and parked cars on this occasion did a very fine job. I have not yet heard what our receipts for this year were, but I understand we earned less than in previous years--mostly because of the rain which caused fewer people to attend the parade.

For the past few years, the money earned during the Rose Parade and related activities was divided evenly between the College and the Church. But next year we will not be able to participate in selling, parking, etc. since the parade will fall on the weekly Sabbath.

No Regional Grants This Year

For the past three years we have been able to offer a regional tuition scholarship to one outstanding prospective student from each of the 13 former regions of the United States. We also offered several tuition scholarships to prospective students from Canada, Britain, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa.

But this year our tight budget does not permit us to offer any scholarships to prospective students from the above-mentioned countries. We still plan, however, to offer tuition scholarships to the non-English-speaking world. Prospective students from France, Germany, the Spanish-speaking countries, the Philippines, and the countries of Africa will still be able, if they qualify, to receive full tuition scholarships. (A tuition scholarship now equals about \$1500 per year.)

There is a special need for the Work to train students from the non-English-speaking countries. We want to take advantage of the opportunity to train every such prospective student who shows any real promise.

In spite of Ambassador College not being able to offer tuition scholarships to students from the English-speaking countries for the 1982-83 college year, several times more students than we can accept have already applied (now over 1600), and more applications continue to come in!

I might add that the interest in Ambassador College continues to increase. God's ministers, the members and the young people of God's Work all continue to show great interest in, and support for, God's College. We appreciate the part which you ministers have had in turning God's people from a negative to a very positive attitude toward Ambassador College.

Also, since Mr. Armstrong has set Ambassador back on track, God has been showering His blessings on the College. We ask your continued prayers that God will further inspire, bless, guide and direct the College administration and the faculty so that we can continue to train the Church's most precious heritage--its youth!

The second semester of the College will begin next week. We had a very good first semester, and we hope and pray that the next semester will be even better.

God willing, we shall be seeing many of you as you attend the Ministerial Refreshing Program here in Pasadena. May God bless, guide, inspire and watch over all of you as you serve His people in your very important calling.

--Raymond F. McNair, Deputy Chancellor

MAIL PROCESSING CENTER UPDATE

"I Was In Prison, and You Came Unto Me..."

One of the special groups of people reached by the Work are inmates in various prisons around the country. We have received a number of letters from prisoners expressing heartfelt appreciation for our literature and television programs.

God's true message has given hope and encouragement to these people. Through the Work some have been led to a deeper understanding of the Bible, others have found new meaning in life, while a few have even come to repentance and baptism.

Following are excerpts from some of the letters received:

Booklets Opened His Eyes

When I read WHAT DO YOU MEAN--SALVATION?, I broke down and cried. I couldn't believe that all this time I had been living in sin! Your booklets have opened my eyes to a more happy and loving life. I would like to request some of the other pamphlets you have listed in these booklets. I am in an institution and cannot afford to give a donation. However, I would like you to know that while I'm in here, I want to learn all about God. When the time comes for my release, I would like to donate my time to your organization to help others as you have helped me!

Prisoner (Linden, NJ)

Literature Changing His Life

Thank you for all the help that you have given me toward understanding the Word of God. You have helped me to change a life that I have not been proud of. I have lived a life of crime and I am doing time now in the State of Texas for theft.

I realize that what I have done is wrong and feel that I should pay for it. I am glad in a way for coming here as I have had time to think of the way my life had been going and of the things I have done.

Your magazine and other literature have given me a true understanding of the Bible and the reason God created us. I pray that God will use me to work with young people when I am released from here, so that I may help to keep them from behind these walls.

Prisoner (Lovelady, TX)

Now Understands the Truth

I never thought I would be writing and thanking you (and all those who support this ministry) for having opened my blind eyes concerning God's Holy Days, the Sabbath, Easter, the resurrection not being on Sunday, etc. and for supplying such interesting material....

In 1976-77 I attended an independent Baptist school. But God had to allow me to be sent to prison where I became more than willing to "study to show myself approved unto God." Because of some of your publications (which were given to me by other inmates) the seed was planted. Then God's Word bore witness to what you published. My eyes were opened. Thank you.

Prisoner (Waycross, GA)

Watches Program Regularly

I am doing time in Menard, Illinois Prison for murder and have 100 to 150 years. But that doesn't matter to me anymore because I am a child of Almighty God....I am writing you to let you know that I have been watching your program on television every Sunday night and will keep on watching your program because I believe in God's word, and God does not lie. I like the way you teach the Kingdom of God. You teach with authority and read from the Bible. I would like to get a couple of booklets from you about prophecy. I would really appreciate it very, very much.

Prisoner (Menard, IL)

--Richard Rice, Mail Processing Center