

PASTOR GENERAL'S REPORT

TO THE MINISTRY OF THE
WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD



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FROM MINISTERIAL SERVICES

Guidelines for the Night to Be Much Observed

As a reminder, the "Night to Be Much Observed" should be held in family groups in private homes. Proper planning and preparation should be made to see to it that everyone, including all elderly and singles, will have a place to go to be with the brethren on this very important occasion. We reprint once again the following quote from a pastoral letter of April 8, 1970 giving Mr. Armstrong's last official statement on the subject:

Mr. Herbert Armstrong had intended to write you all a note regarding how to conduct the "Night to Be Much Observed." However ...he has been extremely busy and unable to....So he told me to go ahead and tell you that he has now decided that there should not be any type of service or Bible study on that evening with the new format we will now be using.

He said to simply tell the brethren to have two or three families eat and fellowship together on that evening in an attitude of thankfulness and rejoicing for the deliverance from sin which we as New Testament Christians experience. The host or leading man should ask God's blessing on the meal and the occasion but no further "sermonizing" will be necessary or helpful since the brethren will be meeting, for the most part, without an ordained minister present.

You ministers be sure to explain carefully the Sabbath before the meaning of this night of rejoicing and then tell the brethren to bear that in mind as the background and focus of the spiritual fellowship through that particular evening. But we feel it is better NOT to give them an outline of some kind of service...they will all get to hear from God's ministers twice on the very next day, the Holy Day, anyway. So, no Bible study or sermonizing is necessary on the previous evening. It will merely be your responsibility to appoint elders and deacons to check with the brethren and be sure that the widows and other single people are included in the dinner and fellowship with one or more families so that no one is left out of the fine feast and fellowship on this night which pictures Israel's thankfulness and rejoicing in coming out of Egypt and our deliverance from sin.

In addition, be sure to remind the brethren to plan well in advance for this entire Holy Day season so that they won't have last-minute hardships due to unforeseen meal needs on the first Holy Day. There should be two services on that day as on all Holy Days except Atonement.

Caribbean Feast Transfers Announcement (North America Only)

Last year we experienced some difficulties with Caribbean transfers that could be minimized this year if ministers will carefully check to see that

transfer applicants have sufficient funds before signing their application forms. We recommend that those applying to Bermuda or the Bahamas have available \$50 per person per day over and above the airfare to get there and back, and \$40 per person per day for any other Caribbean sites. To eliminate financial problems at the Feast, the Caribbean festival coordinators will be dependent upon your careful evaluation before approval. In this regard, we request that all church pastors in North America make the following announcement in services:

**** PLEASE ANNOUNCE ****

Caribbean Feast Transfers

(North America Only)

Any brethren considering transferring to the Caribbean for the Feast of Tabernacles should be sure to read the pertinent article on page 7 in the WORLDWIDE NEWS dated February 21. Application requests are being taken immediately, and procedures are detailed in the WN. Please calculate your expenses carefully before applying. Those with minimal funds will not be approved. You must wait for a reply from the site office before you make any further arrangements or commitments.

NOTICE TO ALL MINISTERS

Douglas Boyd of Odessa, Texas says that he has been attending Church in different areas of the U.S. It had been reported to us that he says he is carrying a message about buying land for a temple. The Church records indicate that he is disfellowshipped. If you have any questions, call Mr. Ben Faulkner at (213) 304-6139.

International News

Report From Dutch-language Area Regional Director Mr. Bram de Bree reports on an excellent start in 1983:

Although national unemployment is still rising and thousands of businesses filed for bankruptcy during 1982, God's Work in The Netherlands started off the month of January with an increase in income of 10%. Also, in January we started a new advertising campaign with a newspaper insert in 200,000 copies of the Saturday edition of DE TELEGRAAF. So far the total response is 2.8%, bringing the total circulation of the Dutch PT, De ECHTE WAARHEID, to 47,863. This gives us a subscriber circulation increase of 62%.

The total population of the Dutch-speaking area of Holland and Belgium is 21,000,000. Our penetration rate at the present is 1:438. Perhaps interesting to note is that this entire work is supported by a handful of God's people who are very dedicated to their calling not only in words but also in deeds. Sixty percent of our income comes from 196 Dutch-speaking brethren.

The remaining 40% comes from co-workers and donors. Very few of the brethren are unemployed and God is blessing others through blessing them. As Mr. Armstrong said in the movie "Behind the Work 1982": "The one that gives is better off than the one who receives."

In addition to the production of De ECHTE WAARHEID and the Dutch-language GOOD NEWS, our staff has been extremely busy with the translation of new booklets and the updating of existing ones. Last year seven new booklets were issued, bringing the total list of Dutch-language booklets and reprint articles to 47.

The 62% increase in ECHTE WAARHEID circulation is also reflected upon the active CORRESPONDENCE COURSE list. The number of students increased from 1,783 to 5,213, or 192%.

Total incoming mail this month is 6,008--a 99% increase over January, 1982. Church attendance increased 15.5%.

God is keeping the doors open here and we are very grateful to Him for the very positive beginning of 1983.

News From Canada January has started out well for God's Work in Canada. Finances stand at a plus 19.7%. It is very encouraging to see the continued dedication of God's people in these tight economic times.

January has seen the addition of two extra WATS lines. These extra lines will help us be much more efficient in handling calls. In 1982 we experienced steady growth in WATS calls. From a small beginning of approximately 250 to 280 calls per month we are now handling over 1,000 per month. With the WATS phone number now advertised in the inside front cover of The PLAIN TRUTH, we are expecting more growth in this area.

The highlight of the month was the move in printing The PLAIN TRUTH from Kentucky to Winnipeg, Manitoba. Regional Director Mr. Colin Adair and Mr. Roger Lippross, Production Director from Publishing Services in Pasadena, were both at Lawson Graphics for the occasion. Everyone was excited to see the first sample copies and to realize that negotiations which began back in 1981 had finally come to fruition.

A change in policy related to insert cards was implemented in January and will continue for the next eight editions of the PT. Insert cards will be alternated in the subscription edition. One month will carry a blow-in subscription card while the following will carry a blow-in literature card.

January also saw an agreement reached whereby Canada will print and ship to England 50,000 newsstand PLAIN TRUTHs. The magazines will be trucked to Montreal and then shipped to England. The frequency of ships is such that it is hoped to have the magazine in England two weeks before the cover date.

With the end of the Newspaper Insert Campaign, a big drop in mail activity during January was anticipated. Although some categories--TV, radio and donation mail--did decrease, the overall picture is one of increased activity. Total incoming mail for January was 50,255, an increase of 16.2%. Total outgoing mail was 146,709, an increase of 72.7%.

This first month of the new year has begun very positively and it looks like it will be a year of steady growth.

New Zealand January is holiday time for New Zealanders. With summer skies and this world's festivities being at the same time, most people take their vacations. As a result, January tends to be a quiet month for business.

Not so for God's Work!

The year got off to a very fine start with income from New Zealand increasing by 31% over January, 1982. For the whole area of New Zealand and the South Pacific the increase was 28%. Following the January 1st fast called by Mr. Armstrong, the brethren have responded enthusiastically and generously in their offerings and their prayers.

Mail, however, was down 24% compared to last January because last year's semiannual letter responses poured in during January, whereas this time the majority of responses were received in December. To this point in time, 7,700 responses have come in from Mr. Armstrong's November semiannual, a return of just under 20%.

The breakdown of requests for the literature advertised in Mr. Armstrong's letter is as follows:

NEVER BEFORE UNDERSTOOD.....	5,080 (66%)
THE PLAIN TRUTH ABOUT CHRISTMAS.....	5,540 (72%)
THE HUMAN MIND.....	6,160 (80%)

In addition, 6,700 (87%) have taken the opportunity to renew their PLAIN TRUTH subscriptions, which is over 16% of our entire PLAIN TRUTH mailing list.

The letter sent to our CORRESPONDENCE COURSE students offering The GOOD NEWS magazine has also had a fine response. We have now added over 1,000 new GOOD NEWS subscribers as a result of this letter--already a 25% response.

An extremely successful S.E.P. program on Motutapu Island, near Auckland, concluded on January 7th. Over 150 campers and staff were able to spend two weeks together learning to live life to the full--God's way! Many letters have come into the office from campers, staff and parents expressing profound appreciation for the tremendous lessons learned and benefits gained from the camp.

Mr. and Mrs. Colin Sutcliffe joined us this month, transferring from Australia to the ministry in New Zealand. They will be replacing Mr. and Mrs. Karl Karlov, who are returning to their homeland of Australia after ten years of service here.

Appreciation for the Second Ministerial Refreshing Program

Dear Mr. Tkach:

The month of January was an exciting time to be in Pasadena for the Refreshing Program. As one after another record-breaking statistic came in from all the areas of the Work, the department heads could not help but express their enthusiasm and awe for the tremendous growth God had provided in the past year. The presentations each one gave sounded like an excerpt from the U.S. TV show, "That's Incredible."

At the same time, one could feel the deep commitment and urgency of those involved in carrying out the Great Commission with greater thrust and power worldwide. Also, Mr. Armstrong's direction could be felt in all the departments of the Work as they reflected a spirit of dignity and integrity.

Therefore, my wife and I wish to express our appreciation for this very profitable second Refreshing Program. It strengthened and buttressed the sound foundation established for the ministry in the first Refreshing Program. Our knowledge has been deepened and we want to thank those very experienced men at Headquarters who imparted that wisdom and understanding.

Mario and Cathy Seiglie

Dear Mr. Tkach:

Julie and I want to thank you for the success of the two weeks of Refreshing Program classes and related activities. We will endeavour to apply the material and spirit so warmly evident and exercised by all. Thank you for the wonderful meals, the entertainment from local churches and Imperial Schools, and the administration's evening socials. I hope to have exhausted all the material your team provided before the next refresher, but I somehow doubt it since the material and spirit go hand in hand. This is a great family to be a member of, and it just keeps growing more meaningful.

Dan and Julie Hope

Dear Mr. Tkach:

Please accept on behalf of your staff and all those who instructed us at the January Ministerial Refreshing Program our appreciation and thanks for all their efforts and kindness. To see the importance of our calling as shepherds in such detail was very sobering; and to be given the spiritual tools to grow as Christians and lead and protect God's flock was extremely encouraging. Then to be given such an appreciation of all that is being accomplished by God in His Work around the world motivates us to want to be more diligent in serving the brethren.

The brethren were so pleased to hear how much the Church and College are back on the track and how much God is opening the doors for the Gospel to be preached around the world.

We will savour for a long time the physical and spiritual food and fellowship we enjoyed at Headquarters. We were served so ably and kindly in every way--a real example for us to follow! Thank you again.

Keith and Pam Stoner

Comments From Monthly Church Reports

MIAMI, FL--AL KERSHA: The spiritual maturity of many of our people seems to be increasing. More are showing up for Bible studies and getting more serious about real changes in their lives. Compared to a few years ago, there has been noticeable

progress in overcoming the world's approach to success and the pursuit of "happiness." More brethren are pursuing God's approach to success and happiness.

MANSFIELD-FINDLAY, OH--JIM HAEFFELE: Mr. Armstrong's sermon tape on "Mark of the Beast" brought several people to me who had been compromising with the Sabbath in their jobs. They had already made up their minds to put God first before seeing me. One or two may lose their jobs as a result. Overall, everyone seems to be doing well spiritually.

OLYMPIA, WA--MEL DAHLGREN: We have excellent potential member activity with about six ready for baptism and five or six others almost ready to be invited to attend church.

MANHATTAN-WESTCHESTER COUNTY, NY--FRANK R. McCRADY: Only a few Manhattan members have had difficulty in finding a job to now and we have had full employment. At present some are having a problem, but it is far less than one would expect. The Church in Manhattan continues to develop and everyone wants to participate in whatever is going on.

MOUNTAIN VIEW-HARRISON, AR--TOM BLACKWELL: One member at Guion, Arkansas, on the White River, was flooded. The floor in her small house will have to be replaced along with parts of the walls. We are planning to have a church project to help her with repairs. The St. Louis Church sent a donation of \$500 to help with expenses; she was very grateful for their generosity.

BINGHAMTON-CORNING, NY--BRITTON TAYLOR: I would be remiss if I didn't mention what a tremendous spirit of service our members showed in hosting 120 Y.O.U. members for five days in our area. Our members cooked all the meals and were responsible for the activities. The young people were truly a pleasure to serve. Mr. Armstrong would have been very pleased.

--Joe Tkach, Ministerial Services

AMBASSADOR COLLEGE UPDATE

(Pasadena Campus)

Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong arrived safely from his trip to the Far East about one week ago. At the Bible study in Pasadena last Friday evening (the 18th), Mr. Armstrong showed that Christ's gospel is to go into all the world--including before kings--before the end of this age. Then he showed us a number of slides illustrating his recent trip and explained some of the circumstances surrounding the awards which he received in Thailand and in the Philippines. It is interesting to note how many world leaders hold Mr. Armstrong in high honor, yet the same honor has not been shown by the leaders of our own great country. "A prophet [or servant of God] is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house" (Matt. 13:57). How true it is in our day!

Mr. Armstrong also gave the sermon at the afternoon service last Sabbath here in Pasadena. In the sermon he brought out that we are all awaiting the glorious moment when we will become glorified sons of God in the soon-coming Kingdom of God.

Then on the following day, Sunday, February 20th, Mr. Les McCullough and I were able to discuss with Mr. Armstrong various points regarding the two campuses. (Mr. and Mrs. McCullough decided to remain in Pasadena for a few days after attending the Ministerial Refreshing Program so Mr. McCullough and I could see Mr. Armstrong together.) Our major question concerned just how many of the Associate of Arts graduates from Big Sandy's two-year program did Mr. Armstrong want us to accept to complete the last two years of the four-year Bachelor of Arts program at Pasadena. With our limit of 500 on-campus students at Pasadena, we will not be able to accept very many of the Big Sandy students for the 1983-84 college year.

During our discussion of the problem, God put the best solution into Mr. Armstrong's mind. Mr. Armstrong made the decision that, beginning with this fall's freshmen class, we will only accept students for a two-year Associate of Arts program--both at Pasadena and Big Sandy. Then, when they complete their two-year A.A. program, we will reevaluate all of the students (both at Pasadena and Big Sandy), in order to determine which ones are the best qualified to be admitted into the Bachelor of Arts program at Pasadena for another two full years. This means that the Big Sandy students will have the same chance to qualify for the junior and senior years of the four-year Bachelor of Arts program in Pasadena as will the students here on this campus.

We believe that this change will inspire all of the students to be even more diligent, and try even harder to qualify to go on to complete the four-year B.A. program at Pasadena. (Of course, the new policy does not affect students currently enrolled in the four-year program at Pasadena, but will apply to those enrolling this fall.)

Mr. Armstrong also stressed the importance of not choosing students for the B.A. program solely on the basis of their academic scores, but also taking into account such important factors as character, personality, leadership, zeal, motivation, etc. We will admit into the Bachelor of Arts degree program at Pasadena only those students who show the most overall potential to be used in the Work, stressed Mr. Armstrong.

We are now in the process of checking to see just what Ambassador College at Pasadena will have to do in order to be able to offer an Associate of Arts degree at the end of two years. Dr. William Stenger, Dr. Don Ward and others are working on this with me, and when we have gathered more of the facts we will present our findings to Mr. Armstrong for his decision. Presently, we do not anticipate any difficulty in our having to make some fairly minor alterations in the curriculum in order to make the A.A. degree possible. (Fortunately Dr. Ward, who has been chiefly responsible for working out the details of Big Sandy's A.A. program with the Texas education authorities, is now at the Pasadena campus where he has been teaching since last fall.)

We have already sent out about 1,800 application forms, and have now received over 700 completed forms at Pasadena. Again, we have far more wanting to enter A.C. than we can accept.

--Raymond F. McNair, Deputy Chancellor

UPDATE FROM MAIL PROCESSINGTelecast Has Increasing Impact

As "The World Tomorrow" reaches more and more people, there has been an increase in comments about the effect the program is having on their lives. They are very much impressed with Mr. Armstrong's clear and straightforward approach to the Bible as the following phone comments show.

Mr. Armstrong is very impressive. I sat with my eyes and ears glued to the television set. This is the first time I've ever seen the program. I was so impressed that I watched it instead of one of my favorite programs.

Mrs. M.A. (New York, NY)

I just told my sister that Mr. Armstrong kind of frightens me. He seems to know what he is talking about. These are scary times.

L.B. (Brooklyn, NY)

I really think Mr. Armstrong is doing a great work. I have heard a lot of comments in the neighborhood. My neighbor will ask, "Did you hear Mr. Armstrong this morning?"

I.H. (Hogansville, GA)

I've listened to Mr. Armstrong for about two or three months. Things are pretty rough in this world--a person can't tell the difference between night and day. It's so confusing. But I like Mr. Armstrong because he makes it clear. He speaks plain English and doesn't use words like the others, where you need a dictionary to know what they're saying.

E.B. (Chicago, IL)

I think Mr. Armstrong knows more about the Bible than anyone. I read the Bible but don't really understand it very well. I believe you should understand what you read, so I listen to Mr. Armstrong every morning on the radio.

Mrs. J.R. (Texas)

Mr. Armstrong makes sense. He doesn't speak like a minister, "churchy-churchy." He tells the truth. He scared me to death today. We need the truth. He should be the president of the U.S.!

L.K. (Illinois)

I don't attend any church because I'm elderly, but I get more out of Mr. Armstrong's program than any other on television or anywhere else. He really knows the Bible.

H.J. (Florida)

"The World Tomorrow" has really changed my life in the last few months. I was into drugs, and around the end of November I started listening to Mr. Armstrong. I started thinking about my life and asking myself, "What am I doing?" I started getting myself back together.

I just enjoy Mr. Armstrong so much because he's so real and there's nothing phony about him. He tells it like it is--just like the magazine--it's the plain truth.

R.H. (New York, NY)

I don't agree with everything Mr. Armstrong says, but I find the gentleman extremely stimulating. It's important to keep an open mind if one wants to grow, and it's essential to make the right choices when one wants to make a change. I'm glad that Mr. Armstrong is around to help me do so.

G.F. (Ormond Beach, FL)

I enjoy Mr. Armstrong's program more than all the other Sunday morning programs because he doesn't have movie stars and a big production--and he doesn't beg for money.

C.N. (Ft. Lauderdale, FL)

My father is 83 years old and he says we should watch Mr. Armstrong every Saturday because he's a wise man.

Mrs. C.M. (Daisey, TN)

--Richard Rice, Mail Processing Center

ON THE WORLD SCENE

OIL WAR; LIBYAN THREAT; RIOTS IN INDIA The world is waiting for the second and biggest shoe to drop in what could be the opening salvos of an oil price war. The first shoe fell when North Sea non-OPEC producers, Britain and Norway, cut their price approximately three dollars to around \$30.50 a barrel. This was roughly matched by Nigeria, an OPEC producer, thus generating the first official split in OPEC ranks.

The big Persian Gulf producers, led by Saudi Arabia, will probably match the cut--along with a warning that they "will not be undersold." They have both the petroleum reserves (to increase production) and monetary reserves (over \$300 billion for only 10 million people) to win any price war. They will thus attempt to bring other OPEC nations back into line, albeit at a lower price. Nigeria will be a hard one to rein in.

Most experts believe that if the price settles in at not lower than \$27 to \$29 a barrel, serious danger to the world economy and banking structure can be contained. Any lower than that and there will probably be grave repercussions. In the Middle East, Saudi Arabia (now producing less than four million barrels a day as opposed to ten million two years ago) might be hard put to continue funding Iraq's war against Moslem firebrand Iran. The Teheran government needs oil revenues, too, and would be doubly furious at Saudi Arabia should it drive prices down and increase production, depriving Iran of markets.

Mexico and Nigeria remain the biggest worries for international bankers. Each \$2 a barrel drop in oil revenues, unless matched by increased sales, means a one billion dollar drop in revenues per year for hard-strapped Mexico. The Mexican economy is already in a state of shock from a collapsed peso and sharply rising inflation. Industrial activity has stagnated, especially that large segment which depends upon the U.S.A. for capital goods and parts. There is little foreign exchange to pay for vital imports. Mexicans are heading for the United States in record numbers in search of work.

There will, of course, be further developments in this big story in coming weeks. An emergency OPEC meeting is scheduled soon, probably about the time you receive this.

Kadafi Back "In His Box"

Thanks to a show of force by the U.S., a plot by Libya's mercurial leader, Muammar Kadafi, to overthrow the government of the Sudan has been thwarted. The carrier Nimitz was dispatched from offshore Lebanon to the vicinity of the Libyan coast. Four U.S. AWACS (airborne warning and control system) planes were used to scan Egyptian and Sudanese airspace for any unwanted Libyan aircraft. There is little doubt that Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak asked for U.S. assistance for his ally to the south, Sudanese President Jaafar Numeiri. However, he had to publicly deny the request so as not to appear to fellow Arabs to be too reliant on U.S. power.

From all appearances, it may have been a close call for the pro-Western Numeiri who said after the incident that the Libyan threat has been "going on for three years," that "it won't go away" and that the Libyan dictator "is not only a threat to Sudan, he is a threat to the world." The President of Chad, Hissen Habre, could echo the sentiment, his country having endured a year-long occupation by Libyan forces beginning in December, 1980. Here is how the lead editorial in the February 23, 1983 WALL STREET JOURNAL analyzed this latest threat to Middle East stability and the reality of world affairs in general, so minimized by idealists:

Now that [Secretary of State] George Shultz has declared that the Libyan threat has "receded"...the usual skeptics are asking whether any real danger existed or was this a Reagan grandstand play. To be certain one would need to read Muammar Qadhafi's mind, a formidable task.... [There are many English spellings of the Libyan dictator's name.] While the Sudan was the ostensible target, some folks at State thought another invasion of Chad was just as likely. Qadhafi himself implied as much and Chadian sources tell us they believed him.... The Chad government is still as nervous as turkeys in November.

The extent to which the U.S. has frustrated this ambition [of Qadhafi] over the last two years is one of the quiet but significant success stories of President Reagan's diplomacy. The judicious use of force, including the downing of two Libyan SU-22s over the Gulf of Sidra in 1981, economic and political pressure and a great deal of luck, have helped keep Qadhafi "in his box," as Secretary Shultz puts it....

To the extent that American pressure has helped keep Qadhafi on the defensive, it has undoubtedly contributed to the peace and stability of his neighbors. There are plenty of people around to whom U.S. carrier movements smack too much of gunboat diplomacy, and Libya will play to this audience with its U.N. complaints about imperialist aggression. But Chad President Habre had the right response, for his people and for us, when he warned in his New Year's Eve address, "The present world is ruled by the law of the jungle. He who does not recognize this hard reality, who does not wish to see reality face to face, is bound to disappear under the implacable weight of events."

Predictably in the ensuing two-day U.N. debate, communist and Third World countries joined forces to violently condemn the United States for its "threatening" movement of AWACS, an aircraft carrier and warplanes to the shores of North Africa. (No mention, of course, of Libya's planned aggression.) A U.S. diplomatic source said the meetings "merely afforded some delegates an opportunity to malign the United States with lies, distortions and misinformation."

One of the simplest truisms of international relations is that "power alone can limit power." President Reagan understands this. Former President Carter did not.

In India, Riots Strain India's Fragile Union

Riots stemming from a religious/cultural clash have erupted in Assam state, at India's extreme northeast tip. The issue revolves around the influx over the years of poverty-stricken immigrants flowing into Assam from neighboring Bangladesh (a somewhat similar problem to the Ghanaian refugees in Nigeria). The rub is that the refugees are Moslem whereas native Assamese are Hindus. For three years Assamese university students have campaigned for the expulsion of the refugees. They accuse the Moslem newcomers of tainting their culture and costing them jobs and farmland.

Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's decision to let the refugees vote in upcoming elections set off the carnage. To date, at least 3,500 people have been killed, unofficially, in the three weeks of bloodletting. It has been the worst spree of communal violence since approximately two million people were killed in riots at the time of the independence of India and Pakistan in 1947. U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT, in its February 28, 1983 issue summarized the turmoil in this fashion:

In India, religion, politics and unwelcome immigrants form a bloody mix. The setting: State elections in Assam.... Adversaries: Four million refugees from Bangladesh, just given the right to vote, and up to four times that many Assamese who resent their presence. Refugees are mostly Moslems, speak Bengali. Assamese are Hindus.

India's Prime Minister Gandhi [ignored] pleas by opponents to call off the three-stage election. One of her Congress-I Party's candidates was executed by villagers armed with spears and knives. Congress-I was assured of victory when most opposition parties withdrew.

In her campaigning, Gandhi stressed nationalism and unity, warning that regionalism can easily turn to separatism. It's a trend that frightens her. Only last October, millions of Sikhs in Northwest India demanded autonomy. Indians have scores of cultures, speak hundreds of languages, worship countless gods. Fading nationalism is the glue that holds the country together.

The recent outbreak of communal fighting on the Indian subcontinent recalls the fight of Winston Churchill in the 1930s to prevent the emergence of an independent India having dominion status with its own central government. Churchill believed that there were "fifty Indias," not one, and that on the subcontinent there existed "bitter theological hatreds." In the new book,

WINSTON CHURCHILL, THE WILDERNESS YEARS, published in conjunction with the current television series of the same name, author Martin Gilbert writes on page 31:

The centre of Churchill's argument was that there was no single group in India capable of taking responsibility for the whole of India, or prepared to act in the interests of the many different and conflicting Indian interests. Only the British Parliament could do that. The individual provinces of India, each one many times larger than Britain, could indeed, he believed, be governed by Indians. But the control of all-India, the linking together of the wider needs, the safeguarding of minority interests, these could only be done fairly and effectively by a British controlled central government in Delhi and an ever-vigilant and beneficent Parliament at Westminster. This had always been Churchill's view of Empire.

Churchill felt that some of the independence leaders in India's Congress Party were more interested in personal power than in "improving the well-being of India." But after his Commons fight was over and he had lost, Churchill told them to "use the powers that are offered and make the thing a success." Though an opponent of Mohatma Gandhi, for example, Churchill harbored no malice toward him.

Yet, Churchill's forebodings, so horribly realized in 1947, hold true to this day.

--Gene H. Hogberg, News Bureau