

PASTOR GENERAL'S REPORT

TO THE MINISTRY OF THE
WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD



VOL. 6, NO. 18

PASADENA, CALIFORNIA

MAY 4, 1984

REPORT FROM THE TREASURER'S OFFICE

The big news in the financial area in April was the holy day offerings. The Church responded enthusiastically to Mr. Armstrong's member and co-worker letter in April concerning these offerings. The first day's offering for the United States was 34.6% above last year! The second day dropped a little bit to an increase of 26.1%. When averaged out, these offerings were 30.3% more than last year.

For this very substantial increase over last year, we here on the staff are most grateful. I know that Mr. Armstrong is also very pleased, and, more importantly, the Head of the Church, Jesus Christ, is pleased with such a good increase. Thank you for your part.

While we were having such tremendous holy day offerings, the month's increase in general contributions or regular tithes and offerings was lower than normal. The month of April ended with a 2.8% increase in this donation category. However, when all of the donation income for the month was put together, we had an increase of 15.6% over last April. This is up from recent months and has changed the year-to-date increase from 12.4% at the end of March to 13.5% at the end of April.

We were able to get through the traditionally low spring period before the holy day offerings without any cash flow crisis and without borrowing from the bank, as we used to do years ago. We have also received a very fine response to Mr. Armstrong's letter concerning the Feast of Tabernacles and the tithe of the tithe. Offerings for this purpose were 35% more during April 1984 than for April of last year, with the year-to-date increase being about 32%.

Arthur Andersen & Co. has completed the United States audit, and it has been distributed to certain large business and banking firms which normally get such reports. The worldwide audit is not quite complete yet, but should be in a few more days.

Now that we have had such good spring offerings, I hope that everyone is also preparing for an increased offering on the day of Pentecost next month!

--Leroy Neff, Treasurer

FROM MINISTERIAL SERVICES

Jerusalem Feast Site Still Open

For your information, there is still room available for the Jerusalem festival site. If any brethren in your area would like to attend the Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem, they may call Gil Tours in Philadelphia at 800/223-3855 or 215/568-6655 for information and application forms. A full recap of the information we sent you earlier in the year will be printed in the May 7 WORLDWIDE NEWS.

International News

Report From New Zealand Around 2,500 new PLAIN TRUTH subscribers were added in this part of the world in March, largely as a result of three promotions during the month.

Our double-page spread with insert card headlined "What Next For New Zealand?" in the March READER'S DIGEST brought in 856 responses, and many more were still coming in daily as the month ended.

An ad of similar format with the title, "The Peril To Your Life Grows" in the June 1983 READER'S DIGEST has brought in 606 responses over a period of nine months. These results indicate that New Zealanders, geographically isolated from the rest of the world, have their minds more on parochial, local matters than on the threat of nuclear war, which they view as somewhat remote and unreal.

A newspaper insert in the AUCKLAND STAR of March 12th, delivered to 130,000 homes, has brought in 847 responses by the end of the month. Meanwhile, an ad in THE NEW ZEALAND LISTENER has so far added another 135 new PLAIN TRUTH subscribers.

Just under 7,000 items of mail were received in March, an increase of four percent over the same month last year. White mail was up by 275%, but the regular mail was down compared to March 1983. The year-to-date increase in mail is now 10.7%.

Income for March was up by 3.9%, bringing the year-to-date income increase to 7.9%.

Over 600 new Bible correspondence course students have been added in the first three months of the year.

From Australia Mail received during March was the second highest in the history of God's Church in Australia, surpassed only by an unusually large number of letters received in December 1973. Our staff processed 29,552 letters this month--a 39.7% increase over the same month last year. Mail, year-to-date, now stands at a 50% increase over the first quarter of 1983.

The exceptionally fine mail response is primarily due to our full-color advertisements placed this month in READER'S DIGEST and WOMAN'S DAY magazines. The READER'S DIGEST ad returned 2,712 requests, and 3,747 new people responded to the WOMAN'S DAY advertisement. Responses to these two ads are still coming in.

In addition to the magazine advertising, a composite "new subscriber/renew my PLAIN TRUTH" card inserted in the March issue of The PLAIN TRUTH brought in an unusually heavy response. Over 8,000 readers returned the cards, 927 of which were from new subscribers.

Requests for subscriptions to The PLAIN TRUTH from all media sources this month added 8,862 new readers to our Australian mailing list.

Income for the month increased by 13.7%, bringing our year-to-date increase to 16.4%.

--Joe Tkach, Ministerial Services

UPDATE FROM MAIL PROCESSING

Incoming mail continues at a record-breaking pace. This time we want to share with you a summary of some recent trends and comments in the mail over the past month.

Mr. Armstrong's April 1 Member Letter

Hundreds of brethren responded with love and concern to Mr. Armstrong's April 1 letter. Many sent cards of encouragement to him and also to his brother, Mr. Dwight Armstrong in Washington, promising they would be praying for the health and healing of both. Many told how much the hymns Dwight Armstrong has composed have meant to them.

The PLAIN TRUTH

Recent PLAIN TRUTH articles addressing family problems, such as "Domestic Violence--The Secret Sin" and "The Truth About Child Abuse," have touched off a sizable response. Several abused children and battered wives related their experiences. Two prisoners appreciated the article on domestic violence, admitting this as the reason for their confinement. They were now sorry for what they had done and hoped the article would help others to avoid the same pitfalls.

The Newsstand Distribution Program continues to bear fruit. Several people recounted how they came across a newsstand copy of The PLAIN TRUTH just as they were pondering life's meaning, searching for answers to specific problems or feeling depressed. They report finding the magazine in supermarkets, beauty parlors, hospital lobbies, motels and airports.

The GOOD NEWS

Scores of readers responded to the February GOOD NEWS article "God's Plan for Widows and Orphans" by Mr. Leroy Neff. Many had no previous knowledge of the third tithe and were anxious for more information. Several immediately sent donations for the fund. Members were inspired by the results of the program. A few shared "success stories," recounting their bountiful blessings during third tithe years.

Impact of Our Literature

Our literature has aided and inspired people from all walks of life. It is especially helpful to prisoners, people who have lost loved ones, and others facing serious trials and difficulties. Last month, for example, we heard from a prisoner in a maximum security section, a woman whose daughter committed suicide and another woman who was severely depressed after a stillbirth, all of whom said they were given hope and inspiration through our publications.

Readers are often astonished at the truths they learn. One said THE TEN COMMANDMENTS booklet was a "blow to my solar plexus." Another was "stunned" by THE UNITED STATES AND BRITAIN IN PROPHECY. A third said THE BOOK OF REVELATION UNVEILED AT LAST! "exploded several lifelong thoughts."

Impressions of God's Church

We heard from a number of people who attended local Worldwide Church of God services for the first time. They said they were very inspired and moved by the friendliness and concern of the brethren. One man brought money for an offering to services and was somewhat surprised that there was no collection.

The PLAIN TRUTH In the Classroom

The high quality and educational value of The PLAIN TRUTH is recognized by teachers of various grade levels in countries around the world. From the Filipino teacher who wishes to enhance the moral and spiritual upbringing of her pupils, to the professor in India who wants to teach his students how to think, many educators have used The PLAIN TRUTH and our other literature in classroom situations.

A few students have written to order literature recommended, or in some cases required by their instructors. Following are some letters from teachers who have contacted the Church:

I am very grateful for your having furnished me several pieces of literature, including The PLAIN TRUTH magazine. Especially in this chaotic and sick society, these reading materials are enlightening and give me a spiritual awakening, as well as an in-depth explanation of the causes of the present worldwide social, political and economic upheaval.

As a classroom teacher, I am able to utilize effectively the principles gathered from your precious literature in giving my students the appropriate discipline and encouraging them to observe moral, spiritual and social laws to enhance their upbringing.

H.M. (San Juan, Metro Manila PHILIPPINES)

Please send the PT to me in India. I am a professor at a college there and would like to use the magazine as a classical reference for my students. I like it because it is of HIGH QUALITY and THINKING. I would like to train my students in higher thinking with it. My doctorate is in the Cultural Arts.

Dr. A.D. (Bardoli, INDIA)

Working with young adults today has become increasingly more difficult for the classroom teacher. There are many areas which the teachers are either not allowed or haven't the time to talk to the students about. To somewhat help this problem in my own classroom, I am starting an "Information Table." This table will hopefully contain information on a wide variety of problem areas of adolescence.

Using the Index to Free Material, I have found the titles of the following information which I feel would benefit my students. If still available would you send me 30 copies of the following material: ALCOHOLISM--A WORLDWIDE CURSE, THE DILEMMA OF DRUGS, THE SILENT EPIDEMIC, and BUILDING A HAPPY FAMILY. Any help would be appreciated and well used, I guarantee.

Miss S. (Thorndike, ME)

I have been a teacher at Maryknoll Convent School for over one year now. While in transit in Alaska in December of 1979 (on my way to take up my post here as a French teacher), I was pleased to find a copy of La PURE VERITE. I enjoyed reading the many different articles in that edition, and have used several as teaching material in class--with a good response from my students. If possible, we would appreciate very much your sending complimentary copies of each issue. As we have a very strong French department in our school, I can faithfully promise that each magazine you send will be carefully read.

J.C. (Hong Kong)

A member of our faculty was so impressed with your article entitled "What Teachers Wish Parents Knew About Schools" that he brought a copy of The PLAIN TRUTH to me. The principal and I have read the article in question and we think that it should be read by our students' parents.

On December 8th, 1983 we have scheduled our open house activities and we would like to reproduce the article and make it available to parents on that day. May I have your permission to do this? If you would be willing to assist us in this very special way, you would be performing an invaluable service for our students and their parents.

Dr. J.W. (Chicago, IL)

Thank you very much for sending The PLAIN TRUTH magazine. I teach Catholic religion, English, and ethics. Your magazine has already often given me valuable information, new incentive to look at things differently, and practical material for the school lessons. I am very interested in further information and would be happy to receive brochures to give to some of my pupils.

R.H. (Mainz, WEST GERMANY)

I extend my heartiest congratulations to The PLAIN TRUTH in your 50th year of publication. I have learnt much from the few copies that I have received. May the Lord bless and prosper you in your good work. I am looking forward to your free booklets. It would be a great help to both my mum (a missionary) and I (a Sunday School teacher). I am often confronted with difficult questions asked me by my teen-age class, and your booklets would definitely be a guideline for me.

V.G. (Chatsworth, REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA)

With great pleasure I received your postcard today. After reading the reader's opinions about KLAR & WAHR, I'm interested in it too. I'm a German teacher in the Tianjin Foreign Language Institute. Our Institute has only ordered SPIEGEL and STERN. I don't have the opportunity to read other magazines. But today I'm writing to you with much hope and a burning desire to receive and to read KLAR & WAHR. I believe it will be very useful in my job.

S.S. (Tianjin, CHINA)

--Richard Rice, Mail Processing Center

ON THE WORLD SCENE

CHINA-U.S. TIES; HONG KONG TO GO; SOVIET GAINS IN MIDDLE EAST President Reagan's six-day visit to China is now history. The Chinese leadership went to unprecedented lengths to accord Mr. Reagan a welcome more extensive than that given any previous head of state.

Not that all went without a hitch. The Chinese authorities felt compelled to edit the nationally telecast tapes of two addresses by Mr. Reagan. His enthusiastic support for the growing but controlled role of capitalism in the Chinese economy was expected. But his advice to "trust the people" as being "the most powerful force for human progress in the world today" did not reach the ears of China's 1,200,000,000 people.

His hosts also felt it was in their interest to remove the President's blunt remarks concerning the Soviet Union, including his reference to the tragedy of Korean Airlines Flight 007 ("shooting 269 innocent people out of the sky") and Soviet actions elsewhere ("the brutal occupation of Afghanistan, the crushing of Cambodia"). The current Chinese leaders were not about to give the appearance of being drafted into any type of anti-Soviet crusade.

Privately, of course, there was a considerable meeting-of-the-minds--as well as "fatherly" words of caution from 79-year-old Deng Xiaoping to the 72-year-old Mr. Reagan. This was reported by David Ignatius, traveling with the President and writing in the April 30 WALL STREET JOURNAL.

During a private meeting on Saturday, Deng Xiaoping, the Chinese leader, cautioned Mr. Reagan that he should moderate his policies toward the Soviets to avoid antagonizing U.S. allies. According to an official who was present during the meeting, the message of Mr. Deng, who is something of an anti-Soviet hawk himself, was: "Don't overdo it."...

Mr. Deng, slouching in his chair and chain-smoking, delivered what U.S. officials said was a friendly critique of Mr. Reagan's foreign policy. An official who was present during the meeting said Mr. Deng agreed with the U.S. president that the Soviet Union is "expansionist" and "hegemonic," and said he didn't object to Mr. Reagan's defense buildup. "You have to do this. You have done a great deal," one U.S. official quoted Mr. Deng as saying of the military buildup. This private acceptance of U.S. rearmament contrasts with China's public criticism.

But the 79-year-old Chinese leader warned Mr. Reagan that his hawkish policies toward Moscow could backfire by undermining support for the U.S. among its friends. A U.S. official quoted Mr. Deng as saying: "If you do things correctly, then everyone will work with you and you will be able to contain the other side. But if you don't do things correctly, you're just playing into their hands."

The Chinese, of course, want to see a strong NATO alliance between the U.S. and Western Europe preserved. This ties down the Soviets in Europe, preventing them from having a freer hand in Asia. Nevertheless, the Chinese felt nervous about Mr. Reagan's remarks about the Soviet threat, according

to Hedrick Smith, writing in the May 1 NEW YORK TIMES. They want to maintain, Smith reports, a safe distance from Washington on this issue:

Rather ambitiously, President Reagan asserted, in language that has made the Chinese publicly nervous, that the two sides had common political concerns "that align us."... The Chinese leaders have proved balky toward Mr. Reagan's efforts to draw them into a common posture against the Soviet Union....

Several [U.S.] officials have already predicted that the Chinese will "tweak us" or "put some distance between them and us" with some policy criticisms within the next few days before the scheduled arrival in Peking of a high-level Soviet delegation in mid-May.

One of the most important developments of the visit was the signing of an accord on nuclear cooperation which clears the way, pending Senate approval, for American corporations to bid on nuclear reactor construction projects that China plans for the next decade. The agreement was completed after China complied with a provision that it would not enrich or reprocess fuel from American-built reactors, or store materials that could be used for nuclear weapons, without permission from Washington. The Chinese however, nearly balked at U.S. demands for the various "safeguards," reported Christopher Wren in the April 27 NEW YORK TIMES:

The treaty creates a legal framework for United States companies to sell nuclear reactors, components, materials and related technology to the Chinese to help them resolve a chronic energy shortage that is hampering China's modernization drive.... Some American officials have estimated that if the Chinese took full advantage of the opportunity to buy American nuclear reactors, the sales over the next 20 years could be worth up to \$20 billion....

According to the commerce officials, agreement on the treaty was reached only after the Chinese yielded on a point on which the negotiators had been deadlocked since last January. China agreed not to enrich or reprocess fuel from American-built nuclear reactors or to store materials that could be used in nuclear weapons, without prior consent from Washington. China had previously refused to accept such conditions, saying such limits infringed upon its national sovereignty. The American side insisted that it had no leeway on the matter because its Atomic Energy Act prohibits the sale of nuclear equipment without such safeguards....

The sale of American nuclear technology to China had also been delayed by China's refusal to sign a nonproliferation treaty or to accept international safeguards, including outside inspection, for its nuclear power plants. Administration officials now say they are satisfied with Prime Minister Zhao Ziyang's statement, made in the United States in January, that "we do not engage in nuclear proliferation ourselves, nor do we help other countries develop nuclear weapons."

The Reagan Administration took this as an assurance that China, which detonated its first atomic bomb 20 years ago, would not help other nations develop theirs. China has denied reports that

it passed on nuclear technology to Pakistan and uranium to South Africa. The commerce sources said they had been given to understand that American concerns about safeguards were allayed when China joined the International Atomic Energy Agency in January. The safeguards set by the Vienna-based organization provide for some inspections to insure that fissionable material is not diverted to make weapons.

Despite the new economic bonds tying together two highly disparate societies, one link remains uppermost, and should never be forgotten. The NATIONAL REVIEW, in its May 18 issue, focuses on this key bedrock factor:

One fundamental historical force brought the United States and China together in recent years: the growing military power of the Soviet Union. That same historical force is the only binding power that keeps them together. Alongside the vast threat from the Soviet Union, which both China and the United States face, the issue of Taiwan pales... America has only one vital interest in China: ensuring that Peking does not return to the Soviet fold.

It must be realized that Beijing will continue to play its "U.S. card" only as long as it perceives that Washington can stand up to Moscow's challenges. Should America be further weakened, China will, to preserve its own security, be tempted to patch things up with the U.S.S.R.

The always perceptive Bruce Herschensohn, a local political commentator on KABC (Channel 7) in Los Angeles expressed his fear for America's future, should China ever return to the Soviet "fold." Summarizing his remarks as near as I can, Mr. Herschensohn believed that the sale of nuclear technology could be a very serious error down the road. What if, he said, 16 years from now (year 2000), China decided to recement the Soviet alliance, throwing in its nuclear lot with the Soviets? What if also, by then, much of Central America were to be lost to Communist regimes? (The Chinese criticized Mr. Reagan's policy in Central America.) The halls of the U.N., Herschensohn said, would resound to the cheers of America's enemies (note Lamentations 2:16), and the U.S. would be isolated from its allies--alone, he glumly predicted, in a hostile world.

Hong Kong--Last Sizable British Colony to Go

In another development regarding China, the British government, after 19 months of tough negotiations with Beijing, has publicly admitted that it will not be able to continue British rule beyond 1997, the year the lease over much of the prosperous Crown Colony runs out.

The Chinese held all the "cards" in the talks. Britain, a mere shadow of its imperial self, had no choice but to cave in with regard to the last sizable possession it has--truly a milestone in Britain's decline. The prosperous, but now nervous, 5.3 million Chinese in Hong Kong will have no choice but to accept Communist China's promises that the current free-capitalist system will be maintained, under Chinese sovereignty, for a 50-year period beyond 1997. But who can foresee what China will be like in years to come? If anything marks Chinese politics, it is the likelihood of sudden radical changes. After all, only 17 or 18 years ago China was in the throes of its "cultural revolution."

The INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE, in its April 21-22 weekend edition, summarizes the British concession as follows:

Sir Geoffrey Howe, Britain's foreign secretary, Friday became the first British official to state publicly that his country would relinquish sovereignty and administrative powers over Hong Kong to China in 1997 without retaining an official presence in the colony.

"It is right for me to tell you that it would not be realistic to think of an agreement that provides for continued British administration in Hong Kong after 1997," he said at a press conference after talks in Beijing. Sir Geoffrey's comments about a British presence were not a surprise, yet they marked a turning point in the history of the colony.

Since September 1982 British and Chinese officials have been negotiating an agreement on exactly how and when the exchange of power would take place. The indications are that Britain at first pushed to retain a role in Hong Kong's administration after returning sovereignty to China. Sir Geoffrey's comments Friday confirmed that this was not to be. The comments were certain to raise tension in Hong Kong despite Sir Geoffrey's assurances that Britain would press Beijing to guarantee the colony significant autonomy under Communist rule....

China has said it intends to "basically" retain Hong Kong's present system for at least 50 years after 1997, and Sir Geoffrey took note of this in his remarks.

Nervous Hong Kong financiers have been steadily sending their money outside the colony making considerable investments in the United States, Singapore and elsewhere. In fact, the independent island-nation of Singapore stands to benefit the most from the financial exit. Should there be a human exit, it is widely believed that the majority of those leaving would try to come to (where else) the United States.

Middle East: As U.S. Prestige Fades, Soviets Move In

The announcement this week that the Soviet Union was selling \$2.5 billion worth of arms to Iraq--the weapons to be paid for by Saudi Arabia--reflects once again the dearth of U.S. prestige in the Middle East and the strengthened position of the Soviet Union. At the same time, the Saudis have threatened to purchase all their own weaponry from the Soviet Union, Britain and France if the United States continues to hamper arms sales to them or if Washington moves its embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.

The embassy move issue is a highly evocative one--even the Israelis are not forcing the U.S. hard on it--but is gaining support in both chambers of the U.S. Congress. The Saudi ambassador to Washington warns that should the U.S. move its embassy "it would affect one billion Moslems around the world like you have never seen before."

The following report from the SUNDAY TIMES of Britain shows how Russia is making a Middle East comeback at America's expense:

Perhaps the most shocking news for Washington was the warning last Tuesday from the conservative Saudis that they were prepared to take their weapons purchases and up to \$13 billion (£9 billion) in other trade to Moscow if the Americans were not more cooperative on arms sales.... The Reagan administration recently cancelled an offer to sell 1,400 Stinger anti-aircraft missiles to Saudi Arabia, and 1,600 to Jordan, because of congressional pressure....

Many diplomats suggest that the opportunity for the Russians to play a big part in the region has not been so great in more than a decade, since their decline in influence after the 1973 war. Yet Soviet observers in Beirut admit that prestige was inherited rather than earned. Beirut's DAILY STAR commented: "By far the biggest losers have been those in the Middle East who put their trust in the U.S. and who sought in vain to reconcile contradictions in American policy. Lebanon counts its dead. Moderate Palestinians see hopes vanish of a negotiated peace. King Hussein fears for the safety of his state. Gulf rulers wonder whether to hedge their bets on the U.S. as a guarantor of their security."....

Egypt, which has had rocky relations with Moscow since the expulsion of 17,000 military staff in 1972 and the expulsion of the Russian ambassador three years ago, recently announced that full diplomatic relations would be restored "soon".... Soviet influence in Baghdad has soared almost overnight, after the signing of an agreement for help in a new nuclear power plant in Iraq and the resumption of large-scale supplies of arms....

In the Gulf,...diplomats say the Saudis are so frustrated with the U.S. that they may allow stronger eastern bloc connections with the kingdom's sister states to develop.

The reason behind Moscow's tilt toward Iraq in the raging gulf war is explained by William Drozdiak of the WASHINGTON POST (no date given, but in April):

The Soviet Union has agreed to build Iraq's first nuclear power plant, a commitment that emphasizes Moscow's new desire to strengthen relations with President Saddam Hussein's government after a period of estrangement.... However, it is not Iraq's first reactor. A French-supplied nuclear research facility was destroyed in an Israeli air attack on June 7, 1981, and is reportedly beyond repair....

Moscow abandoned its line of cautious neutrality in the gulf war and tilted toward Baghdad last autumn, when Iran's Islamic government executed leaders of the Tudeh Communist Party and escalated its verbal tirades against the Soviet Union "as the junior Satan," second in evil only to "the great Satan," the United States.... "The Russians once felt that Iran was the bigger prize but they now see nothing to gain in dealing with [Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's] regime," a western diplomat said....

The Reagan administration's recent condemnation of Iraq for using chemical weapons against Iran seems to have stalled momentum

toward improved contacts between Baghdad and Washington. Local newspapers have prominently carried commentaries by the Soviet news agency Tass criticizing the American position as hypocritical because the United States used napalm and phosphorus bombs in the Vietnam war.

The Israelis, for their part, are understandably concerned over the vast quantities of high-grade Soviet arms pouring into the Middle East, specifically into arch rival Syria. In the April 24 issue of NEWSVIEW (published in Britain, with a Middle East focus) correspondent Costas Andreou reports:

In 1982 Israel shot down more than 80 Syrian MIG fighters over Lebanon, at a cost of one damaged plane. It also took out 19 SAM-6 missile batteries in the Beka'a and a fair crop of Syrian tanks. Nearly half the MIGs were much vaunted MIG-23s....

An 80-0 score in any air battle is a pretty devastating verdict for one of the combatants.... The Soviets had no option but to up the stakes in the confrontation with Israel and more than replace what Syria had lost.... The Syrians lost approximately one billion dollars worth of equipment and it was replaced by two billion dollars worth. SAM-6s in the Beka'a were replaced by the more formidable SAM-5s placed inside Syria. They are now situated on sites from which even Syrians are excluded. The new missiles are manned by 5,000 Soviet soldiers and technicians and another 3,000 so-called "advisors."...

What the weapons do for Syria is to effectively increase its circle of action in defense and attack. In an interview with an Arab magazine, Syrian Defense Minister Mustafa Tlas claimed the Negev was in range of his country's missiles. If so, the Syrian missile umbrella can now hit important northern and Negev airfields. A surprise attack on these sites could tear holes into Israel's vital air-supremacy plans. Israel Air Force Commander General Amos Lapidot said last year that Israeli forces trained as if the enemy were the Soviet Union and not the Arabs. Considering the significant intensification of Soviet training programs in Syria, it is probably a wise philosophy.

At the moment, tensions are rising between the Israelis and Syrians who are holding three Israeli officials captive in Lebanon on charges of "spying."

--Gene H. Hogberg, News Bureau