

PASTOR GENERAL'S REPORT

TO THE MINISTRY OF THE
WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD



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DWIGHT ARMSTRONG SUCCUMBS TO CANCER AT AGE 80

(The following will appear in the November 26 WORLDWIDE NEWS.)

SEQUIM, Wash.--Dwight Leslie Armstrong, 80, composer of the music in all but 12 hymns in the Worldwide Church of God hymnal used in all congregations worldwide, died of cancer Sabbath morning, November 17.

He was the youngest brother of Pastor General Herbert W. Armstrong. He is survived by his wife, Karen, daughter Deborah, and his twin sister Mary Lucile Edmonson of Portland, Oregon. Dwight was born in Des Moines, Iowa, September 12, 1904.

In his early adult life he was employed in Portland. In the late 1920s or 1930, he moved to a farm near Molalla, Oregon, with his father and mother, Horace Elon and Eve Wright Armstrong. He was a violinist and also played the piano.

After the death of his father in early 1933, he continued on the farm until about 1947. After the founding of Ambassador College that year, he moved with his mother to San Gabriel, California.

At the time of the founding of Ambassador College in 1947, the pastor general recognized his brother Dwight's talent for composing music. Mr. Armstrong felt, since his conversion and entrance into the ministry, that the people of God should sing the words God inspired to be sung, such as the psalms, instead of Protestant hymns which sang primarily the praises of people rather than praises to God.

The pastor general proposed that Dwight devote himself and his God-given talent to composing the music for such a hymnal for God's Church. From that time Dwight devoted himself primarily to composing the music sung in God's Churches around the world.

Dwight Armstrong continued composing the music for more hymns up to his final fatal illness. Even during the present year, 1984, he continued his work. Several hymns more recently composed still remain to be published in a later edition of the Church's hymnal.

During 1984 the pastor general sent a letter to the Church membership telling of his brother being stricken with cancer. Several thousand letters were sent by members to Dwight telling him of their appreciation and love for his music sung in all Sabbath services.

These thousands of letters greatly moved Dwight Armstrong and probably extended his life by many days and weeks.

Dwight Armstrong's beautiful music will remain behind him to give many thousands of members inspiration and joy for years to come--and perhaps on into the wonderful World Tomorrow during the coming Millennium in the Kingdom of God. His work will live on after him.

LETTER OF APPRECIATION FROM MR. AND MRS. DWIGHT ARMSTRONG

(Following is a letter Mr. and Mrs. Dwight Armstrong prepared for publication in the WORLDWIDE NEWS. It was phoned in to Pasadena by Mrs. Armstrong on November 17, shortly before Mr. Armstrong died.)

Dear members of the Worldwide Church of God,
Ambassador College students and their families:

My wife and I have been deeply moved by your many gracious and heartfelt letters of sincere appreciation for the hymns I have been privileged to compose for the Worldwide Church of God, and for your many cards, gifts and generosity in response to my brother's letter to the brethren. Words fail to properly express our hearts, thanks and gratitude. God has been most gracious and we know He will never fail us.

Though our hearts' desire is to answer each one of you personally, with such a large response this is not possible, and so with this letter we wish to express our deepest thanks to each of you for your real concern for my state of health also.

Above all we are knowing that nothing will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Romans 8:35-39).

With love in Christ,
Mr. and Mrs. Dwight Armstrong

FROM MINISTERIAL SERVICESChurch Visit Program Resumes

I'm happy to report that we are now resuming the Church Visit Program, which was temporarily postponed in mid-September due to the cash flow problem. This program, approved by Mr. Armstrong, began in late June of this year for the purpose of providing each local U.S. congregation and pastor a visit from Headquarters personnel. Two men from Pasadena, with their wives, will be sent out separately on most available weekends to visit two congregations or circuits. When combined with our regular Holy Day visit schedule, these visits will allow each U.S. congregation a visit approximately once every 15 months.

These personal visits have proven to be very valuable to the local congregations and to the local ministry. They provide pastors an opportunity for personal, one-on-one contact with the guest speaker. The visiting minister can spend time with the local minister and gain a valid appreciation of the circumstances of the local congregation, its people, its hall, the pastor's circuit, his workload, etc. Whenever it is practical, the visitors will stay with the pastors in their homes.

Over the last few years, many pastors have expressed their appreciation for this personal contact resulting from Holy Day visits. So we are all very

happy about this opportunity to nearly double that contact by resuming these Sabbath visits. This is one way to help us all grow in unity, all speaking the same thing, working together to back up God's apostle, Mr. Herbert Armstrong, and reflect to the brethren his teaching and example.

Just this past Sabbath, I had the opportunity and privilege of visiting the Tampa, Florida congregation, pastored by Mr. Ron Lohr. I thoroughly enjoyed the warm reception from the brethren there and the chance to spend some time with Mr. Lohr. I'm looking forward to making other visits in the coming year as time permits.

We hope to continue sending guest speakers from Headquarters to each of the international areas for the Feast of Tabernacles, as well. These visits not only help to unify our brethren around the world through contact with Headquarters, but they also broaden the experience and perspective of the Headquarters ministers.

Please remember to pray for Mr. Armstrong on his current trip, and for the rest of us here in Pasadena. We are anxiously looking forward to his safe return and the exciting news he'll bring about the doors God continues to open to him to preach the Gospel around the world.

International News

From the Italian Department The month of September, in addition to the usual pre-Feast preparation rush, proved to be a good, stable month mail-wise. We received over 1,400 new subscription requests as a result of the "Are-you-reading-a-friend's-PT" blow-in card. In addition, Mr. Armstrong's broadcast on Television Monte Carlo (English with Italian subtitles) generated 362 responses. Nine hundred fifty-five pieces of literature left our mail room along with 844 letters (mostly form letters for mail returns) for an outgoing mail total of 1,799.

October saw a dip in advertisement responses, but television held its own, topping the 300 mark once again. Outgoing literature totalled 2,266 pieces. By the end of October, PLAIN TRUTH circulation had risen to 56,819.

The 1984 Feast of Tabernacles in Fiuggi, Italy was a resounding success! Over 600 feast-goers from around the world enjoyed an inspiring combination of sound spiritual messages and some of the finest physical accommodations and surroundings Italy has to offer.

An important aspect of the worldwide bond of festival unity was provided by the well-done festival films. As always, Mr. Armstrong's opening night address set the tone for a spiritually fruitful Feast. "The Hearts of the Children" pointed the way to proper family relationships and Mr. Armstrong's Last Great Day sermon rounded out the program of spiritual instruction.

In addition, we were granted unusual favor in the eyes of local authorities and the Italian Tourist Board, who have already requested that we return next year. Representatives of the local town council also held a brief ceremony at the close of one of the services in which the vice-mayor of Fiuggi (a town of about 10,000) officially expressed pleasure at having us come to their community and presented Regional Director Carn Catherwood with a miniature brass sculpture mounted on a wooden base. To the base was

affixed a brass plate with the inscription "In Commemoration of the Feast of Tabernacles 1984."

On the physical side, our brethren were able to enjoy superb hotels, fine Italian cuisine, beautiful weather and several highly educational side trips to places of interest such as Rome, Pompei, Capri and Monte Casino.

The day after the Last Great Day was special for God's Church in Italy. On that Friday, a resident of Catania in Sicily was baptized into the Body of Christ. Mr. Catherwood performed the ceremony in the Italian language, the first such ceremony in modern times to be performed in Italian in Italy. (Previous baptisms had been performed by visiting English-speaking ministers using an interpreter.)

There are now 13 members of God's Church who are permanent residents of Italy. In addition there are four other members in Italy on a temporary basis: one from the United States, one from Zambia, another from Guyana and another from Tanzania.

Through La PURA VERITA', now beginning its third year of existence, and Mr. Armstrong's telecast, God is gradually calling people in Italy. By Feast time, about 40 had requested visits or contact with the Church. As a result a counseling tour was organized. Nine persons scattered from Rome to Milan were visited between October 20th and 25th. Virtually all of the visits were very positive and represent good growth potential for the Church.

NOTICE TO ALL MINISTERS

(Not to be Announced)

Mr. Helmut Eden is disfellowshipped. He is approximately 60 years old, a Caucasian and is from the Jacksonville, Florida Church area. Should he appear in your area, it is imperative that you immediately contact Mr. Allen Bullock for more detailed information. Church rules regarding disfellowshipped members should be stringently enforced in his case.

Comments From Monthly Church Reports

From the United States

CHARLESTON, WV--STEVE BOTHA: From all reports, the Feast of Tabernacles was certainly a very special time for God's people. There have been some very positive comments about the messages this year at the different Feast sites. The "Behind the Work" film was a highlight. The membership really appreciates Mr. Armstrong's keen interest in the youth of God's Church.

TULSA, OK--DONALD MASON: Have heard many positive comments about how uplifting this Feast was no matter where it was kept. The

general feeling is that time is short and we need to make positive personal changes to get ready for what is ahead.

SPRINGFIELD, MA--LYLE WELTY: People were really excited to go to the Feast and even more excited upon returning. Seeing Mr. Armstrong's live address the first day of the Feast and seeing him in the films were highlights of the Feast.

MANSFIELD, OH--JIM HAEFFELE: We had brethren attending the Feast in Britain, Italy, Israel, China, Jamaica, Canada and almost every U.S. site. It is great to see the worldwide unity in God's Church as these people return home and have nothing but positive feedback about the sermons and sermonettes they heard around the world.

MERIDIAN, MS--PAUL KURTS: People continue to grow closer together as a family unit in the Church. This is a wonderful group to work with. More are becoming involved with all aspects of local Church activities. More are participating in The PLAIN TRUTH Newsstand Program and the Waiting Room Program.

NORTON, VA/KINGSPORT, TN--GEORGE ELKINS: Mr. and Mrs. Harold Jackson's visit to these Churches was without a doubt a highlight of the year! I certainly appreciate Mr. Armstrong and Mr. Tkach sending senior men in the Church to make these visits with the local pastors and their congregations. Mr. and Mrs. Jackson certainly do hold up the hands of God's Apostle! Their example should motivate all of us here to strive to do a better job of that in the coming months and years. Their visits to these two churches truly inspired us all. Thank you again for sending them to visit us!

IOWA CITY, IA--STEVE NUTZMAN: God healed a 12-year-old boy who cut two fingers while playing. After anointing, one finger's broken bone was healed and the bone chips disappeared! The doctors who had X-rayed the finger couldn't understand what had happened. They said they had never seen fingers damaged that badly heal so quickly.

--Joe Tkach, Ministerial Services

UPDATE FROM MAIL PROCESSING

A Big "Thank You" to Members

Many sincere thanks once again to the members for their conscientious efforts in preparing their Holy Day offerings. The attention given to properly filling out checks and envelopes helped us immensely to process the offerings. Since this is the busiest time of the year at MPC, it also aids us greatly when discrepancies and other processing problems are kept to a minimum. In past years, many valuable man-hours have been spent solving such difficulties, which are usually the result of inattention.

We would also like to express our thanks to the more than 900 members who volunteered to help with offerings at the U.S. Feast sites.

Important Notice About Receipts

Because this year's Feast occurred in mid-October, there will be a combined September-October contribution receipt that will be mailed shortly. Fall Holy Day offerings will not be included on this receipt, but will appear on November's, which will be sent out in December.

"Cross-training" Helps MPC to Cope With Workload

The Mail Processing Center now handles an average of 15,000 phone calls, 90,000 letters and cards, and 140,000 computer entries every week. Since the actual workload can vary greatly among departments within MPC, employee cross-training is used to enable us to do our work more efficiently.

For example, many terminal operators have been trained to answer WATS calls and are scheduled to work on Sundays. Since most callers respond within the first ten minutes after the telecast has aired, operators can use the rest of the time for regular terminal work.

With international areas experiencing rapid growth, operators who previously worked only with U.S. names and addresses have been trained to enter those from other nations. Thus, they are able to meet needs in either area.

This year, for the first time, new student employees were trained to perform all three jobs--answer WATS calls, and do terminal entries for the U.S. and International Mail Center's files.

Cross-training has given us added flexibility to effectively meet the challenges of the growing work of God's Church.

Best Feast Films Ever!

Members have written to express overwhelming appreciation for the two films shown at the Feast this year. Many commented that "Behind the Work--1984" powerfully underscored the need for God's Kingdom. They appreciated the detailed and firsthand look at the Summer Educational Program.

The Young Ambassadors film was thoroughly enjoyed as well. Members were particularly impressed with Mr. Armstrong's home and said it gave them a deeper insight into the character and personality of God's Apostle. Following are a few comments from the many letters received:

Thank you and the Ambassador College students for the best Feast gift ever--the 1984 Young Ambassadors Film! I never stopped smiling the whole time--even as I dabbed at tears of joy as I thought of the opportunity we would have in the future to share this kind of life-style with the whole world!

I see so clearly now why God inspired Paul to write in Philipians 4:8 that we should think on things that are lovely, pure and true. It is so good for us! I had the opportunity to sit next to a young couple who had graduated from Ambassador College about 10 years ago. They shared with me that having dinner with you was the most memorable moment of their lives. What an excellent way to impress on these young people the importance of their noble calling!

Incidentally, as a result of seeing this year's film, our own 15-year-old daughter has set a goal to attend Ambassador College in 1988 (after working a year to save part of the tuition). As a family, we are committed to helping her achieve this goal.

V.G. (Spanaway, WA)

Thank you so very much for such an uplifting Feast! Before the Feast, our son was indifferent about keeping God's Holy Days. Now after the film "The Hearts of the Children," his attitude is so different. You have made God's Kingdom come alive for him. He has always been blessed with a good understanding, but now he says he really understands.

Mr. & Mrs. C.A. (Deer Park, NY)

Dear Forever Young Ambassador: I just wanted to take a moment of your time to thank you and the Young Ambassadors for the superb Festival 1984 film. The efforts expended by both you and them certainly were admirable. It was a first-quality show you can indeed be pleased with! May God continue to richly bless you and the Young Ambassadors.

B.G. (Houston, TX)

I would like to express my deep appreciation for the two festival films. I had the opportunity to participate in the Feast shows in the mid-seventies as an Ambassador College student and know somewhat the time and effort, and of all the things that "slide" during that time, such as sleep and studies. I want to thank the students, the performers and all the behind-the-scenes personnel who make a production like this musical Feast film a great success. It was beautiful and makes us all look forward to the Millennium....

As for the film on youth...it ran the gamut of happiness and rejoicing for the things God's Church is providing for its youth today, to tears and grief for the poverty and suffering experienced by so many today, and the awful tribulation that is to come. But then comes the World Tomorrow! It was a very powerful movie.... My congratulations to you all on a job excellently done.

Mr. & Mrs. R.M. (Hinckley, OH)

I've seen your films at the Feast. I thought they were great. I can understand things better when you explain them. Mr. Armstrong, I think you look much younger in a baseball cap. I think you can play the piano very well. By the way, we went to Johnson City. I am sorry about your eyesight. I wish it could get better. You are the only person I ever knew that I could understand.

R.R.--age 11 (Combs, KY)

We wish to thank everyone involved for the wonderful films made for our enjoyment and education. The movie made by the students was better than anything produced in the big studios. It will surely be wonderful in the World Tomorrow when all entertainment is wholesome and beautiful like this was.

The film "Behind the Work" was eye-opening and made me even more aware of the urgency to get this work done and to draw even closer to God. I am very thankful for the knowledge God has given us and for being able to help spread this knowledge to others.

G.J. (Milwaukee, WI)

We thank you and the Young Ambassadors for the wonderful film. We enjoyed their singing and dancing. We also enjoyed being in your home through the film and listening to you play the piano. We have a lot to pray for this coming year, especially for God's Kingdom to arrive soon.

Mr. & Mrs. B.T. (Kennard, TX)

The film about the Summer Educational Program shown at the Feast of Tabernacles was an eye-opener. I've been a member of the Church for ten years and have never really understood what the camps were about. I had envisioned them much as the world's summer camps, except for the Bible studies. After all, what could a few weeks in a child's life really contribute towards his/her improvement? Well, I found out without a doubt it is planting a seed in those children that can mature to lead them into God's Kingdom eventually. I thank God for giving you [Mr. Armstrong] the wisdom to see the need for such a program.

P.W. (FPO, NY)

--Richard Rice, Mail Processing Center

ON THE WORLD SCENE

THE POLITICS OF FAMINE Each day, the grim news coming to light from Africa gets worse. While the plight of Ethiopia gets top billing, thirty other countries in Africa are affected by drought and famine to one degree or another. The fact is there are two broad famine belts, one running just below the Sahara, spanning the continent from east to west, together with another band stretching along the East coast, from the Horn of Africa down almost to the tip of the continent.

The immediate cause of the multiple famines is, naturally, drought. But other more fundamental factors lie at the root of the crisis. First of all, there is widespread abuse of the land, such as deforestation, overgrazing and improper cultivation techniques. Then there are wayward governmental policies. Throughout Africa since independence agriculture has been sorely neglected. In addition, leaders coveting the political allegiance of the urban masses, have found it expedient to clamp price controls on the rural food-growers, discouraging production. It is no coincidence that "famines and pestilences" follow, in time sequence, after "for nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom" (Matt. 24:7, RAV). Here, first of all, is a summary of the cause-and-effect relationship, as published in the November 26 issue of NEWSWEEK:

It is the worst famine in African history.... Already, as many as 200,000 people may have died in Mozambique. In Ethiopia, the famine has helped kill at least 300,000 people, and an additional million may perish before the disaster is over....

Drought is, of course, a normal occurrence in Africa. But...some Africans agree that part of the damage is self-inflicted--that

mismanagement, corruption and civil strife aggravate the natural disasters that have always beset their societies. It is no coincidence that some of the nations suffering most from the current famine--Ethiopia, Mozambique, Chad, Angola--have been embroiled in civil war for years. None of that will change quickly. Nor will the famine go away overnight; with the best of weather, the hunger is likely to last until this time next year....

Africa's dependence on relief aid will probably grow in the years ahead. A study issued last week by the Swedish Red Cross and by Earthscan, a London-based environmental news service, reports that "events called 'natural disasters' are killing more and more people every year. Yet there is no evidence that the climatological mechanisms associated with droughts, floods and cyclones are changing." Instead, the report says that the effects of natural disasters are worsened by poverty, environmental damage and rapid population growth.

Black Africa is the world's poorest area, and it is the only region in which the population is growing faster than the food supply. Agriculture never fully recovered from the devastating drought of a decade ago. In 1982, Ethiopia's per capita food production was only 81 percent of what it was in 1969-1971: in Mozambique, the figure was 68 percent. On average, African governments spend four times as much on armaments as they do on agriculture. Primitive farming, in turn, has devastated the environment.

Under increasing pressure for production, traditional fallow periods have been shortened, wearing out the soil. Most farmers have no chemical fertilizers, and the animal dung that they once used to enrich the soil is now being burned for fuel. That's because so many trees have been cut down. Only 20 years ago, 16 percent of Ethiopia's land area was covered by forest; today the figure is just 3.1 percent. "With deforestation, the soil loses much of its capacity to retain moisture and consequently its productivity and resistance to drought," says U.N. environmentalist Seifulaziz L. Milas.

There is reason to believe that relief shipments, though necessary, only aggravate the fundamental problems. "Food aid saves lives but can also undermine long-term local self-sufficiency," says the Earthscan report. The study concludes that "disaster assistance must go hand in hand with development assistance." There is much that could be done. Many African nations ought to raise their artificially low food prices, in order to encourage farmers. [But politicians fear this will cause disturbances in the cities, which could topple them from power.] Large areas need reforestation, perhaps with fast-growing species such as the eucalyptus tree. Many countries should strike a better balance between food crops and cash crops raised for export; Chad recently reaped a bumper cotton harvest, but its people are dying for want of homegrown food.

Above all, governments must spend money on agricultural development. "I believe Africa can become a granary for a large part of

the world, but there has not been a very major investment until now," William Clark, president of the International Institute for Environment and Development, said recently. Time is running out. Without the right investment of effort and money, Black Africa is more likely to become a charnel house than a granary.

The only long-term solution is better policies, or perhaps more to the point, better governments. Reported staff writer David R. Francis, of the CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR (October 10 issue):

Over the long term, the goal of American aid to Africa is to increase the self-sufficiency in food production of African nations so they can better withstand years of drought. Agricultural production has been decreasing in Africa for the last 14 years. "This is basically because of lousy policies," noted an official. Often farmers have been inadequately paid for their products under state price controls, thus discouraging output.

Then too, there is unbelievable unconcern on the part of some governments--most notably Ethiopia--as to the plight of their own people. The LOS ANGELES TIMES carried a report in its November 11 issue entitled "Government Brings Famine to Ethiopia," written by their Nairobi correspondent, Charles T. Powers. In his dispatch Powers explained how the callous Marxist government in Addis Ababa has cleverly stage-managed the media reporting of this grim crisis:

The sad truth is that the famine struck first in rebellious Tigre and Eritrea, and that the central government apparently did not care whether people there starved to death or not. It has only been since the famine spread southward, as people pushed out of their remote mountain villages in search of food and the famine has come close to the capital, that the government has been prompted to make a truly serious appeal for help.

So a British Broadcasting Corp. film crew was allowed into the area, under government supervision. The officials of the Ethiopian Relief and Rehabilitation Commission are well aware of the value of three minutes of television footage showing starving children. As it happened, the response probably exceeded their expectations....

Meanwhile, visa applications from a large number of journalists have not been acted upon in Addis Ababa. Most of the reporters hoping to enter the country represent the print media, and would be much more difficult for the Ethiopians to control than a single film crew. The inescapable conclusion is that the Ethiopians do not want any one around who will look too closely at what is going on, including what is happening to the relief supplies sent from countries of the developed world.

International relief agencies have been troubled with the same problem of access to Ethiopia. Representatives of such agencies have learned through experience that you just do not send tons of relief supplies to a disaster-stricken nation and expect the material to reach its intended target. There is too much corruption, too little organization and, worst of all, too little genu-

ine concern.... Good will by foreigners counts for little when the Ethiopian government responds with near indifference to the tragedy building within its own borders.

Ethiopia is one of the world's poorest nations. Yet, on September 16, the government shelled out, it is now believed, \$200-250 million to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the overthrow of the late Emperor Haile Selassie and to formally proclaim the establishment of Ethiopia's new Communist Party. Ethiopia's dictator, Lt. Col. Mengistu Haile Miriam, delivered a numbing seven-hour long speech --the usual "down with imperialism." But he did not mention the famine which was endangering the lives of one-fifth of the population.

Another nation gripped by famine is Chad. A civil war between two groups, one supported by Libya and the other (the incumbent government) by France, has greatly aggravated the situation. Here are excerpts from an article appearing in the November 10 DAILY TELEGRAPH:

A fragile ferry link, capable of carrying only one lorry at a time, is the only means of transporting food to five million people in Chad, where the famine is potentially even more catastrophic than in Ethiopia. "There are not so many people affected as in Ethiopia, but the potential for catastrophe is very much greater because of logistic and political problems," said Mr. James Henry, 32, head of international operations for the British Red Cross.

Chad is landlocked, and for political reasons neighbouring countries have closed their borders, allowing only one entry through Cameroon. "The three-week journey by road is totally dependent on a ferry-crossing over the Chari River, where the only vessel takes one lorry at a time," said Mr. Henry, who returned yesterday after a month in Chad and Ethiopia. A fall in the level of the Chari River on the Chad-Cameroon border was making it too shallow for the ferry to operate, but still deep enough to be impassable to vehicles.

Relief agencies faced "a major logistic nightmare" in trying to meet Chad's estimated food deficit of 125,000-150,000 tons.... Mr. Henry said that an airlift would not be able to cope with the volume of food required, and the next harvest was not expected for many months. Moreover fighting between government troops and Libyan-backed rebels had hindered planting.

Naked politics and shameful name-calling hamper whatever role the United Nations could play in Africa's grim plight. This report appeared in the November 12 issue of the DAILY TELEGRAPH, entitled "Communists Block U.N. Moves to Aid Africa":

Russia and its East European allies are being blamed for the inability of the United Nations General Assembly to take effective action to tackle the economic woes of Africa and more importantly the drought in Ethiopia. According to diplomatic sources the assembly has been unable to approve proper language for a draft declaration or resolution because the Communists insist that any document places the blame for the trouble on colonialism.

Britain finds the situation particularly disturbing since Sir John Thomson, its chief delegate, urged members in a debate on Africa that others, besides the traditional donors, should look for ways to assist. "We should not find solutions if we indulge in the discredited device of blaming these problems on imperialism, neo-colonialism, transnational corporations and the like," said Sir John. "Ideological flights of fantasy," he added, should be avoided, while concrete ways should be found to help those from dying all over Africa....

But the Soviet delegate, Mr. Vladimir Plechko was not impressed with either Britain's contribution or any other. He commented: "Many of those who have made enormous profits in Africa are now trying to present their aid as an act of outstanding charity."

International food relief agencies are often hamstrung by the very governments they seek to help. Ethiopia is again a case in point. The doctrinaire Marxist central government, for example, exerts a lot of pressure on aid organizations attempting to help drought victims living in the Red Sea province of Eritrea, home of secessionist groups fighting Addis Ababa. Some aid organizations themselves willingly submit to this pressure, being rather leftist themselves. Here is a disturbing report written by David Kline and published in the November 11 SAN DIEGO UNION, entitled "Famine: Food Help Stalled by Political Walls":

If Americans were shocked to see the horrible skeleton face of famine, they might also be shocked to learn that some of the charitable agencies working to relieve this suffering are using political rather than humanitarian criteria to deliver food relief--in effect, to decide who will live and who will die.

A number of private relief agencies in the United States, including groups much in the news of late, like Catholic Relief Services and World Vision, have chosen not to provide any assistance at all to approximately half of all the starving people in Ethiopia. That half lives in Eritrea, a province now in rebellion against the pro-Soviet central government of Ethiopia and therefore inaccessible to government aid channels. The Eritrean insurgents have proposed a ceasefire as a "precondition for the solution of famine," but government officials have not responded.

When first contacted about their inactivity in Eritrea, agency spokespeople insisted this was due entirely to "logistical problems"--lack of access to the Eritreans. But officials from Lutheran World Relief of the U.S. and Dutch Inter-Church Aid--two of the few groups active in Eritrean famine relief--report that while the conflict makes it difficult to move aid into troubled areas from government zones in Ethiopia, the Eritreans themselves have a highly efficient infrastructure ready to distribute emergency food transshipped through the Sudan. The only thing lacking is the food.

Dan Connell of the Boston-based aid group Grassroots International, one of the few agencies active in Eritrea relief work, offers another explanation for the refusal to aid Eritrean famine victims: "There's no doubt in my mind that the Eritreans are

being abandoned for political expediency." As another aid official, who insisted on anonymity, put it: Eritrea's famine is "politically sticky."...

Until 1974, when emperor Haile Selassie was overthrown, the United States supported the Ethiopian ruler against leftist insurgents. Today it is the Soviet Union which supports the now-Marxist Ethiopian regime against the Eritreans with \$2 billion in arms aid and 1,500 Soviet military advisors.

When pressed, some agency spokespeople concede that their organizations have decided that the geopolitical high seas around Eritrea are simply too dangerous to be navigated safely. And despite Ethiopia's pro-Moscow tilt in recent years, many agencies still have a large investment in resources in Ethiopia, an investment which they are reluctant to jeopardize.

"We're concerned that the government (of Ethiopia) would be very upset if we worked directly with the Eritreans," concedes Jim DeHarport of the Africa Programs section of Catholic Relief Services. "That could jeopardize our on-going work in the rest of Ethiopia."...

There are also liberal agencies like the American Friends Service Committee and Oxfam who have so far refused to help the Eritreans for fear of joining in what they feel is Washington's cold war against the Soviet Union and its allies like Ethiopia....

To be sure, not all aid groups have allowed their political bias or organizational self-interest to stand in the way of aid to Eritrea. One organization that has opted for a strong Eritrea involvement is the Mennonite Central Committee, even though five members of an Ethiopian group associated with it languish in Ethiopian prisons....

Some agencies cite other reasons for refusing to work in Eritrea. The United Nations-sponsored World Food Program, for example, says it will work only with legally recognized governmental entities....

Humanitarianism, it seems, has had to learn to adapt to a highly political world. Indeed, nowadays the dollars and human resources of the international aid community trail after the storms of political conflict, picking up the human wreckage left behind, and in some cases also picking sides.

Nearly all experts believe that Africa's food crises will only get steadily worse, rains or no rains. Nothing substantial is being done to eliminate the root causes in the social and economic fields. And warfare threatens to undo what could be done anyway. Famines "in divers places" may just be with us from here on out.

--Gene H. Hogberg, News Bureau