

PASTOR GENERAL'S REPORT

TO THE MINISTRY OF THE
WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD



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Dear Ministers,

It seems that the adversary was not at all pleased with the recent telecast exposing him for what he is. Weather interference, including unusually strong winds and rain in Los Angeles just as the telecast was airing, and WATS line outages in Big Sandy and in the Vancouver, Canada, office, were among the problems encountered this weekend. I'm sure the devil was doing what he could to thwart the success of this particular program which was entitled "Is There a Real Devil?" Yet, in spite of his efforts, we received 17,771 weekend responses on the WATS lines. Continue to pray earnestly for the programs. "The World Tomorrow," along with "The Plain Truth," are front-line duties of God's Work.

I am reminded of the example of Elisha in II Kings 6:8-23. Elisha and his servant were surrounded by the Syrian army. His servant said: "Alas, my master! What shall we do?" Elisha answered, "Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them."

When God opened the eyes of Elisha's servant, he saw the mountain full of horses and chariots of fire all around them.

The apostle Paul said, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" This Work of God is a Work of faith. God is our strength. Our trust, hope and confidence are in Him. He will see us through all trials, all obstacles, so long as we rely faithfully upon Him.

We had an outstanding trip to Big Sandy, Texas, this past Sabbath, March 15. I was able to speak to more than 4,500 brethren assembled from surrounding church areas in the Feast building on the Ambassador campus. What an inspiring sight it was to look out over such an enthusiastic, joy-filled group of God's elect! After the sermon, I was able to spend more than an hour meeting the brethren and students, shaking hands and conversing. The trip was most enjoyable and certainly informative for me as I am in the process of making decisions about the future of the campus.

I'd like you ministers, as I asked the brethren in Big Sandy, to pray that God will lead me in those decisions. I know that God will guide and direct our course, if we are truly seeking His will rather than our own.

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Recently, Mr. Dexter Faulkner pointed out to me that the Church's magazine for youngsters, "Youth 86," is mailed out automatically to all Church Pastors. But, he added, the rest of the ministry must specifically request the magazine, and then renew annually. Now if I didn't know that, I'm sure there

are some of you who didn't (which is why Mr. Faulkner brought it up). So, beginning with the May issue, all ministers will begin automatically receiving "Youth 86."

I'm doing this for a reason, of course. I feel it is important for the ministry to be reading this magazine. It will keep you informed on important issues and topics that affect youth, which will aid you in being better equipped to counsel and encourage youngsters about God's way of life. Many have called "Youth 86" a "junior 'Plain Truth.'" Some of its older readers have commented on how clear are its simpler explanations of doctrines. I'm sure all of you who haven't been regular readers will find it well worth your time.

Thank you for your labor of love. Stay close to God. This Passover season needs to have special meaning to all of us. Our lives are totally dependent on the vast mercy of God. His compassion toward us and the supreme sacrifice of His Son, making possible a change in our nature, provide the substance of our hope, our future and our lives for all eternity.

Pray for all of us in Pasadena, for one another and for all the brethren everywhere.

With deep love,

Joseph W. Tkach

FROM CHURCH ADMINISTRATION

AUSTRALIA VISIT; SECOND TITHE ASSISTANCE; CERTIFICATES; DANCE MUSIC TAPES; RECENT ORDINATIONS; INTERNATIONAL NEWS--German, Italian, United Kingdom

Australia Visit I'm writing to you en route to Pasadena from Australia where we've just completed a very successful ministerial conference. In attendance were all of the full-time ministry and their wives in Australia, pastors in the Asian areas, several local church elders and some of the staff from the office in Burleigh Heads.

We met at the SEP site at Lake Moogerah, which allowed for fellowship and mealtimes together and a variety of recreational exercise in the late afternoons. God certainly has provided a beautiful and inspiring setting for the summer camp and the Lake Moogerah church.

Assisted by Messrs. Morton, Winner and Bradford, I was able to conduct four days of meetings on such subjects as God's government in His Church, liberalism, church discipline, youth activities and others. We also played as a review the videotape of Mr. Tkach's refresher program presentation on music.

Mr. Tkach had, of course, sent me to Australia on his behalf and had approved in advance the outline and summary of the conference agenda. It is Mr. Tkach's desire to build and strengthen the unity and harmony in God's Work worldwide through close communication with the regional directors and the entire ministry. Both the ministry and the brethren in Australia were very enthusiastic about the news of the Work and the leadership Christ has given through Mr. Tkach.

In three combined services in Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne, I was able to preach to about 75 percent of the members in Australia. After each, both Judy and I received numerous comments and messages of support to be relayed to Mr. Tkach. Many of these included the question, "When is Mr. Tkach coming to visit Australia?" They eagerly await such a visit.

We very much appreciate the hospitality shown us and the fine job done by the entire staff to make our stay in Australia very pleasant indeed.

As our plane ticket required a two-hour stop in Auckland, we extended the number of hours to 24, allowing us to visit the offices of God's Work in New Zealand. Regional Director Peter Nathan and his wife Karen, ably assisted by the staff, hosted a lunch at the office. We enjoyed the opportunity to visit with several ministers as well as the staff. Once again, thanks to all concerned. All in all, God's Work in Australia, New Zealand and Southeast Asia seems to be moving steadily forward. We look forward to another visit when the opportunity arises.

Remember, fellow ministers, this is a worldwide Work. Wherever you are and whatever your responsibilities, be diligent to stay close to God, be fervent in your prayers for one another and always look to Headquarters for Christ's direction through His chosen servant, Mr. Joseph Tkach. Please pray for all of us here as we pray for you.

Second Tithe Assistance This week all the U.S. Church Pastors were sent revised Second Tithe Assistance Applications and a revised Second Tithe Assistance Manual. This material was sent first class. If you haven't already received your packet, you should be receiving it soon. If an envelope with this material doesn't arrive in the next week or so, please let us know and we will send you another set.

Once you have received your packet, please carefully read the instructions. There are several changes in procedures, part of which requires you to be working with those who will be needing assistance right away--even before the Spring Feasts.

Certificates Each year we receive a number of requests in May and June for rush orders for Spokesman Club Graduation and YES Completion Certificates. Many times the shipping costs of these orders end up being more expensive than the certificates themselves. Please do your planning now and make your requests in plenty of time to allow normal handling of these orders.

Dance Music Tapes In the February 21, 1986, "Pastor General's Report," Mr. Tkach informed the ministry that dance music tapes were being put together here in Pasadena to be sent to all Church Pastors for local use. Although we are anticipating these tapes being sent out this spring, it looks doubtful that they will be ready by the Spring Holy Days.

Recent Ordinations The following individuals were ordained to Preaching Elder rank: Anthony Goudie, of the Dublin and Galway, Ireland, congregations, was ordained by Mr. Frank Brown on February 23, 1986. Gary Smith, of the St. Louis, Missouri, congregations, was ordained by Mr. Robert Spence on March 8, 1986.

Ordained to the rank of Local Elder was Philip Gray, of the London, England, congregation, by Mr. Frank Brown on February 23, 1986.

International News

From Germany Towards the beginning of this month, Office Manager John Karlson and I flew to the States to participate in the Festival Coordinators' Meetings. Upon our return, we both commented on how valuable and essential these meetings are.

This month the congregations in the German-speaking area were able to see the video of the funeral of Mr. Armstrong and the message from Mr. Tkach, something the brethren appreciated very much.

Paul Kieffer, who pastors the churches in northern Germany, reported that in February a member's 5-year-old child was miraculously spared serious injury when she fell down a 12-foot deep hole. The little girl was sledding when her sled hit a snow-covered man-hole, jarring its cover. The girl fell down the 12-foot deep hole and landed on her back between a pipe that jutted upwards and the side of the ditch. She was taken to the hospital but nothing was found to be wrong with her and the next day she was out sledding again, this time at a different location.

Tom Lapacka, who pastors the Stuttgart, West Germany, and Zurich and Basel, Switzerland, churches, writes: "Some of the brethren said they were amazed at Mr. Tkach's dynamic and sure approach. The response was overwhelmingly positive."

Also in Mr. Lapacka's area God answered a faithful member's financial prayers. "This man is relatively new in the faith and has faithfully paid the tithes despite resistance from his wife and having to cut his living standard to the bare minimum. After over a year of scratching to make ends meet, yet all the while keeping a faithful and positive attitude, he took the matter to God in a fast. While praying, the thought came to him, 'Go talk to your boss.' Well, he did, expecting the absolute maximum of DM 200 (approximately \$90) per month pay raise. The unthinkable occurred--he was given DM 600 (approximately \$280) per month! This was enough to move him out of the 'crisis management' situation that he had been in so long."

Winfried Fritz, who pastors the Munich and Nuremberg, West Germany, and Vienna and Salzburg, Austria, churches, also takes care of our members in East Germany. They unfortunately are not allowed to see video presentations. However, Mr. Fritz was able to visit them and report on the success of the telecasts.

We are very grateful to Mr. Tom Root, who teaches German at the college in Pasadena, as well as the Television Department, for enabling our members to hear the cassettes or videos in the German language. When we receive a

cassette from Pasadena, Tom Root also receives one. With the help of the Television Department, a stereo cassette is prepared with the English original on one sound track and Tom Root's simultaneous interpretation in German on the other sound track. This is then sent to us in Datapost, enabling us to play the cassettes or videos in services with the original English being played over the loudspeaker system and the German sound track over the infrared interpreting system.

Our Newsstand Program is progressing well. When we started our pilot Newsstand Program in June of 1985, the response was 0.9%. This increased each month, giving us an average response rate for 1985 of 1.7%. Results are still coming in for February 1986 but January's response was 2.1%, which is the highest yet. We now have 10 outlets, through which 3,000-3,500 magazines are distributed monthly.

Donation mail income also looked very positive this month. The month-to-date increase was 26.0%, which brought our year-to-date increase to 17.0%. Since the budget had been set for a 4.0% increase, this will help us greatly.

(Submitted by Frank Schnee, Regional Director)

From Italian Office Circulation of "La Pura Verità" climbed to a record-breaking 91,449 this month, topping the 90,000-mark for the first time. This recent growth spurt is the result of a direct-mail campaign in Italian-speaking areas of Switzerland as well as responses from a space ad placed in an Italian T.V. guide.

Our full-page color ad entitled "What Next for Europe?" drew over 2,900 responses as a result of its November, 1985, run in SORRISI E CANZONI, Italy's most popular T.V. guide. It was, however, positioned by the publishers on a left-hand page instead of a right-hand page, as had been requested. This mistake proved to be a profitable one: to compensate, SORRISI E CANZONI reran the ad in January at no extra cost. Responses from this second free ad rapidly surpassed those of the first, bringing the combined total to just under 7,000 to date, representing a commendable \$3.00 cost per response.

Incoming mail this month was up 53% over the previous year. We received 11,075 pieces of mail, 7,140 of which were new subscribers. Outgoing mail was up an amazing 181%, with 4,027 envelopes being sent out.

The fields in Italy were certainly "white to harvest" this winter, but in more ways than one -- minister Michael Caputo battled deadly snowstorms and thick fog in North Italy as he conducted a week-long visiting tour this month. Genoa, Trentino, Venice and Milan are among the cities on an 820-mile circuit where members and prospective members were visited. Says Mr. Caputo: "After leaving Venice, we went to the Friuli region where horrible blizzards had left a disaster area. In the towns we visited, they had had a half meter of snow the day before, all of which had melted off the road when we arrived. Many of the visited areas were ravaged by severe storms and flooding up to the day of our arrival." Mr. Caputo was accompanied by Mr. Carmelo Anastasi, a church employee and long-time member.

The recent visiting tour was a profitable one, resulting in two baptisms and several new prospective members being invited to church services in Milan. Burgeoning growth is evident throughout the Italian peninsula as this month brought us a total of five baptisms and several promising new visit requests. Mr. Caputo feels that the number of members, currently at 38, could double by the time of the Feast.

The interest of ministers of other churches has continued. Mr. Caputo tells us: "Up to now we have visited a Mormon elder, an elder of Jehovah's Witnesses and a Seventh Day Adventist pastor. All three are seriously studying our literature and have had their previous beliefs severely shaken as a result. The Mormon elder has refused the position of bishop after reading 'La Pura Verità,' saying that his conscience would no longer allow him to teach Mormon doctrine with conviction." The Adventist pastor (supervising a church of several hundred) has had several visits and has told us that "half the Adventists in Italy now receive 'La Pura Verità.'"

(Submitted by Carn Catherwood, Regional Director)

From the United Kingdom In the last few days there have been a number of changes at Elstree House as various people working in the Publishing area have moved up to the 4th floor (5th floor by American standards), while other moves have affected most other offices. All the moves are not yet fully completed, but within two weeks everybody should be fully settled in their new locations.

In the midst of these changes, unfortunately Mr. Roy Ostensen, the Editor of "Den Enkle Sannhet" (Norwegian edition of The Plain Truth), was involved in a car accident which led to bone damage in his knee. He was taken to the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital, which happily is nearby in Stanmore, and a pin and plate had to be inserted into his knee to enable the bone to set properly. He expects to be out of hospital soon though he will be on crutches for many weeks. We look forward to his full recovery and return to the office.

In England, new newsstand outlets have been opened in Croydon, Portsmouth and Nottingham. Croydon is particularly successful, distributing over 4,000 magazines per month through five newsagents' shops in a busy shopping area. In Leeds a stand containing March "Plain Truths" was recently ransacked by a group of homosexual men who were offended by the straight-talking editorial!

The U.K. "Plain Truth" list has stabilized at around 150,000 and there are no plans at the moment to increase this significantly. The Good News list now stands at 19,898, up 78.8% over 1985. Year to date, 45,659 items of U.K. mail have been processed, an increase of 9.6% over 1985. The number of PCF letters answered is also up - by 3.8%.

The response to the "Mystery of the Ages" offer has been very encouraging. Of 15,814 "Good News" readers mailed, 7,730 responded, representing a 48.9% response. 6,275 people responded to the offer to "The Plain Truth" file, a 4.5% response.

From Europe and the Middle East The Government of Turkey has prohibited the distribution of "The Plain Truth" magazine in their country, and so we

have for the moment stopped mailing any magazines to Turkey. The mailing list will be maintained so that distribution can be resumed when appropriate.

The "Good News" mailing list in Europe has grown by 131.5% over the last year, and in the Middle East by 121.5%.

Usually, the minister invites people to service
From East and West Africa Mr. Josef Forson, a full-time minister in Accra, Ghana, reports that a new Bible Study held in Likpe-Mate has an attendance of 71 people, most of whom are prospective members. Most of these people had been meeting together to study the Bible with the aid of literature from the Church. They then invited Mr. Forson to join them. When he explained that they needed a minister, they readily invited him to minister to them.
GIVE EXAMPLES

From Tanzania Sadly we have had to say goodbye to the service of Mr. Ben Kaswaga who we had hoped would be able to work in our office in Nairobi. Unfortunately, the Kenyan authorities were unwilling to issue Mr. Kaswaga with a residents permit. Consequently, he has returned to Tanzania where hopefully he will be able to pick up a teaching post similar to that which he held before he went to Ambassador College. It may well be that God's hand is involved in this very directly as there seems to be an increasing interest amongst people in Dar es Salaam, the capital of Tanzania. We have a Bible Study there with 20 people in attendance, most of whom are adults. Mr. Kaswaga reports that there is much potential for growth in this area as those attending are of a very high quality.

From Uganda Here is the latest report from Mr. Owen Willis, the pastor in charge of our Church in Tororo, in Uganda:

Conditions worsened during the month to the usual killing, looting, etc., even in the Tororo area. We have not heard from brethren since the overthrow of the Government in Kampala. I could not get across for the meeting of the 1st February due to the turmoil and closed borders. I still have not made any contact with the two members (husband and wife) in the Baganda area - it is now six months without news of them.

I would like to ask our members to continue to remember the situation which, although seems to be settling down, is still far from satisfactory.

(Submitted by Frank Brown, Regional Director)

--Larry Salyer, Church Administration

FACILITIES ADMINISTRATION

Festival Housing Housing negotiations have now been finalized at all U.S. and Canadian Festival sites. The 1986 "Festival Planner" is being assembled, and will be shipped to you in a few weeks. As we stated in the March 10 memo from the Festival Office, please do not distribute the planners before May 3.

You will be happy to know that, on an overall basis, housing rates seem very stable as compared to last year. This is a result of a great deal of

effort on the part of the Festival Coordinators and other housing personnel. Please remind the members of God's Church that they, too, have a part in making the Feast housing program a success. Their part is to reserve their housing only from the approved list printed in the "Festival Planner," and to follow the other instructions which are printed in that publication.

The cooperation we receive from the individual members is a hallmark of God's Feast, and a great light to all of the communities in which the Feast is held. It is also the only way we can continue to successfully organize the Feast in its present configuration. Please thank the brethren for their personal cooperation in the past as you elicit their cooperation for the coming year.

Further developments regarding the Feast will be forthcoming in future issues of the "Pastor General's Report" and other publications.

We have finalized the cost and itinerary for the Feast of Tabernacles in China this week, and have mailed an application to all who had expressed interest. Enclosed with this week's "Pastor General's Report" is a spare copy of the application and cover letter for anyone in your area who may not have received one and would still like to apply. As we announced previously, the Festival tour is available to members from the U.S., Canada, Australia, New Zealand and English-speaking Europeans.

--Ellis La Ravia, Facilities Administration

FLEET ADMINISTRATION

We were informed this week that Chrysler can not accept any more orders for the 1986 Dodge Caravans and Plymouth Voyagers. The effective date was March 11, 1986. If you are ordering a 1986 vehicle, and you desire a mini-van, please order a GMC, Chevrolet or Ford mini-van as soon as possible.

--Dean May, Fleet Administration

PUBLISHING SERVICES UPDATE

Gift Subscriptions Oftentimes avid readers of "The Plain Truth" will send us the names of friends they think would enjoy it and benefit from the articles.

Our policy in such situations is to send a special letter explaining that a friend suggested they receive a copy. With the letter, a sample "Plain Truth" magazine is sent, along with a subscription card.

During 1985 over 283,000 people received a sample "Plain Truth" by this program. This represents quite a witness!

About one in every 12 people who received a gift copy of "The Plain Truth" last year requested their own personal subscription.

Over 80% of these people were referred to us by regular "Plain Truth" subscribers.

Not only are people reading the magazine, but they are passing along their enthusiasm to others!

--Ray Wright, Publishing Services

MAIL PROCESSING UPDATE

LETTER INCREASE; VISIT REQUESTS UP; ANNOUNCEMENT

Letter Increase The mail continues to pour in at a record-breaking pace. Through the first 10 weeks of the year we have received 1.3 million letters in the U.S. This is a 28.6 percent increase over the same period last year. The amount of mail containing donations also shows an increase of 10 percent. Although we're "busting at the seams" with mail and phone calls, we're presently managing to keep our heads above water.

Visit Requests Up Through the end of February, Personal Correspondence has received 3,600 visit requests. This is 40 percent more than last year's total (2,579) for the same period. The overwhelming response to the telecast is the biggest factor for this increase.

Interestingly, however, a significant number of people were prompted to request visits after Mr. Armstrong's death. Many of them felt they should act on the truth they've learned, but kept putting it off until now.

To Be Announced in all U.S. Congregations

Members Calling on Weekends

We would like to request your assistance in a matter involving our WATS lines. Unless calling for the literature offered on the telecast, would you please limit all other business-type calls (such as address changes, donation inquiries, literature not received, etc.) to regular weekday hours whenever possible. There are two main reasons for this:

1. Business calls from members during busy weekend periods tie up precious time on the phone lines, when many first-time viewers are trying to get through.
2. Your needs and questions can be more efficiently handled during the week when full-time staff members are on duty to assist you.

As a reminder, when calling, please have your file identification number at hand. Your number greatly assists us in fulfilling your needs.

We hope this request does not inconvenience you. If an emergency situation arises, please feel free to contact us regardless of the time. Thanks for your understanding.

TV Graphics The vivid illustrations and film footage used on "The World Tomorrow" powerfully add to the program's effectiveness. A number of people have commented that the graphics grab and hold their attention, and make the message clear and easy to understand. They are particularly effective on prophetic telecasts and make prophecies come alive, as the following comments show:

"I was really engrossed by the program. I would imagine the beast in my mind and it wasn't like seeing it on your program. I sat with chills as I saw Napoleon crowning himself, and I know what I was seeing was true as Mr. Hulme laid it out down to our time. I was disappointed when the show ended. I hoped it would go another half hour!"

Porter, Oklahoma

"I just loved the program today! Boy, those pictures were something, weren't they? It sure makes you understand the chronological order of things like the Babylonian Empire, Persian, etc. I love the booklets, too. I read them over and over."

Barstow, California

"I found the graphics very interesting and my two children paid attention to the whole program. Mr. Hulme was very informative in what he said."

Summit, Mississippi

"I've never seen a program like this before. I was just flipping the channels and stopped to see about this. The pictures are fantastic."

Riverdale, Georgia

--Richard Rice, Mail Processing Center