

PASTOR GENERAL'S REPORT

TO THE MINISTRY OF THE
WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD



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FROM MINISTERIAL SERVICES

International News

Bonn, West Germany The ministers in the German-speaking area of God's Work did a lot of traveling this month. On December 11 and 12, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Schnee visited our brethren in East Germany. On December 13 and 14, Mr. Schnee, accompanied by Office Manager John Karlson and Festival Elder Winfried Fritz, traveled to Prague, Czechoslovakia for talks with officials of the Czech Office of Travel and Tourism (Cedok) regarding the 1983 Feast of Tabernacles in Brno. Negotiations went very well and everything looks good for a great Feast there.

On December 20, Mr. John Halford arrived in Bonn and traveled with Mr. Schnee to Prague on December 21 to 23 as part of a fact-finding mission for a future PLAIN TRUTH article on Czechoslovakia. Mr. Halford commented that his trip proved very profitable. "It was like walking into a library and going straight to the books I needed. God certainly opened the doors." On Sabbath, December 25, Mr. Halford spoke to the 130 participants of the Youth Winter Camp in Austria. On December 29, Mr. Halford journeyed on to Poland with Mr. Paul Kieffer and his family, where they visited Auschwitz and the only member of God's Church in Poland, Mr. Wiktor Przybylla and his family.

The 1982 Youth Winter Camp was held for Y.O.U. members, singles, and some attending parents in Radfeld, Austria from December 22nd to January 2nd. Bible studies every other day and Church services on the Sabbath provided spiritual food. Excellent weather and deep snow made for ideal sledding, skiing and skating (not to forget snowballing!). Meals taken together at the Sonnenhof Hotel added to the exuberant fellowship enjoyed by young people from West Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Holland, England, France, Norway and Sweden.

The ministry also had the chance to spend a week at the Youth Camp. Unity and friendship were strengthened by joint family expeditions to sledding and skiing territory. They really enjoyed getting to know our youth better, by having meals in the same hotel with them and addressing relevant themes during the evening Bible studies (which the ministers alternated in presenting).

December's incoming mail increased 73% over December, 1981. This increase came mainly from responses to Mr. Armstrong's letter to CORRESPONDENCE COURSE students, in which he offered a free subscription to the GOOD NEWS. Forty-five percent (4,530) of those receiving the offer have requested the magazine thus far. We expect a 50% response and will soon have a German-language GOOD NEWS list of more than 8,000 subscribers.

The mail income for the month of December increased 22.2% over December, 1981. Aided by several large donations, the year 1982 closed with a 31.4% increase over 1981.

Appreciation for the Second Ministerial Refreshing Program

Dear Mr. Armstrong:

Thank you very much for the December Refreshing Program. It is impossible to state its value to us personally. Brethren here are saying we have a new sparkle since we returned home.

We did enjoy seeing you in person, hearing you speak, and also seeing where you make the telecasts. We even enjoyed it again on tape last Sabbath.

We felt a new spirit of love wherever we were on the campus, which was even greater than when we were in on our first session. We believe many members are growing stronger and more dedicated at this time.

Ernest and Evelyn Hoyt

Dear Messrs. Armstrong and Tkach:

My wife and I wish to express our deepest thanks for the opportunity of being part of the eleventh session of the Refreshing Program. As a local elder, I feel this has been our greatest thrill in the 20 years we have been associated with God's Work. I just wish the whole Church here could have been with us to hear and to see what a great worldwide Work we are involved in. We appreciate not only the subject matter of the lectures, but also the spirit of cooperation and service that is evident throughout the whole campus; and it's certainly wonderful to see the love you ministers have for one another. Also, our thanks go to you Mr. Armstrong for your leadership and dedication. We hope that other local elders will have an opportunity to take advantage of this spiritual blessing.

Joe and Hazel Taylor

Dear Mr. Tkach:

My wife and I recently returned from the second Refreshing Program, session number 12. To us it was more than a Refresher but also a Revivifier!

We were very impressed by the extremely high standards being set and the constant striving for improvement in each department at Headquarters. The air of respect and cooperation... "May I help you?" attitude was terrific! The privilege of being given the opportunity to imbibe such an atmosphere was greatly appreciated and we found it very hard to leave.

The course was packed with information and inspiration and the attitude expressed by those attending was definitely one of unity and outgoing concern in fulfilling a common goal. Please extend our heartfelt thanks to God's Apostle for making all this possible, enabling us to better serve in our local area.

Russ and Esther Couston

Comments From Monthly Church Reports

WICHITA, KS--JUDD KIRK: There is much excitement among the members each time we receive a letter from Mr. Armstrong. Local and world conditions are causing real anticipation for the Kingdom.

LONG BEACH, CA--LES McCOLM: Average attendance is up considerably this month. Mr. Armstrong's tape was extremely effective--especially with the newer PMs who have been recently invited. I have noticed that the new PMs are more "educated" in the doctrines of God's Church and in world events. There have been several requests for baptism.

ANCHORAGE, AK--EARL L. ROEMER: Mr. Armstrong's comments about qualifying to become teachers has had a profound effect on most here. This is evidenced in more Bible study, more diligence in members solving their problems and seeking more counsel from God's Word.

SAN ANTONIO, TX--GREGORY L. SARGENT: We've had a tremendous increase in PM activity this month. I have received more letters asking for visits than at any time in the history of my ministry. The telecast and newsstand program are really beginning to take effect. Besides the 11 PMs visited last month, there are seven others waiting for visits right now. Most of the PMs are singles rather than families--a sign of our times and the breakdown of the family.

TULSA, OK--DONALD E. MASON: There has been quite a surge in new PM activity this month. Mr. Armstrong's telecasts are having a positive impact on the area. We are seeing good growth (new subscriptions) in the PT newsstand program.

DES MOINES, IA--ROBERT L. CLONINGER: Many of the young singles who have grown up in God's Church are beginning to counsel for baptism. Lately our PMs have been solid, filled with a first love and eager to learn.

FINDLAY, OH--JIM HAEFFLE: The Findlay area used to be very prosperous, but the economic problems of the nation have now caught up with it. Gradually, more brethren are being laid off their jobs and are unable to find even minimum wage work for a temporary period of time. The Church, in a number of cases, is all they have to look to for help once their benefits run out.

KANSAS CITY (EAST), KS--RUSSELL DUKE: I appreciated the instructions regarding men's clubs. The theme ideas add an educational dimension for all. We've had quite an influx of PMs with some very interested. Have spent considerable time giving marital counsel with some marked improvements.

TRENTON, NJ--VINCENT PANELLA: The building the Trenton Church met in burned down in November. Had it happened a month earlier we would have lost all our equipment, including a lecturn, speaker amplifier, chorale risers, PT stands, etc. However, three weeks before the fire, the management insisted we store our

equipment in a small room in back of the building, one of the only rooms not destroyed in the fire! Our loss was slight--one cabinet with some papers in it and a piano. God really protected us.

--Joe Tkach, Ministerial Services

FROM MAIL PROCESSING

Readers Appreciate Free Literature

We continuously receive comments from readers and listeners expressing startled surprise that our literature is absolutely free. Such comments as "you never ask for money" are a frequent occurrence. It's difficult for them to believe that our offer is real. Those with limited incomes are especially grateful that such high-quality publications come without charge. Although it is not Mr. Armstrong's policy to solicit the public for funds, it is encouraging to note the numbers who voluntarily send in free-will offerings to help support God's Work. The following are examples of some of the letters received.

I want to commend you for what you are doing to help humanityI enjoy your magazine very much because it deals with varied subjects like family, health, science, religion, world affairs, etc. What I don't understand is how you can publish such a wonderful magazine and not charge anything for it.

Mrs. F. (Hollywood, FL)

Thank you for the magazine The PLAIN TRUTH--I have really enjoyed the articles in it. It is completely unbiased, and in this world in which most look out for number one, it is refreshing to get something absolutely free. However, I'm enclosing a check to help you in your ministry of preaching the Gospel.

R.D. (Bisbee, AZ)

One of the things that has made my life livable is the gospel of Jesus Christ. A good share of the knowledge I have comes from The PLAIN TRUTH and your other publications. And you have never asked for one cent.

J.B. (Deland, FL)

I want to say that I'm very impressed with The PLAIN TRUTH; it has enlightened all the family in one way or another. We all read it and appreciate it so much. Even though you are the only organization that doesn't beg for money, I feel that God would have me send you this check.

Mrs. B.S. (Elizabethton, TN)

Bless you a thousandfold for all the precious reading materials you've sent me already. Your ministry is surely of God--you never ask for any money. So enclosed is a check to put towards the Lord's ministry of teaching the good news.

R.M. (Hayward, CA)

I like the manner in which you make God's Word available to people. There are no sales of tapes or other religious material

hidden between the pages of the magazine. Usually these items are very costly.

D.B. (Blountville, TN)

It is amazing that you do not ask for a subscription fee. I can easily say I've never encountered such an offer before in my life. Something for nothing!? Unheard of in this world.

M.P. (Jackson Heights, NY)

I have known for a long time that I am supposed to give ten percent of my earnings, but I have not known who to give it to. My grandfather said that it should be given to God's Work. Well, I have watched many church programs on TV including yours. I feel that my ten percent should go to you because I have never heard you ask for anything.

D.B. (Bellows Falls, VT)

--Richard Rice, Mail Processing Center

ON THE WORLD SCENE

PUSHING JAPAN DOWN A DANGEROUS PATH How soon succeeding generations ignore the lessons of even fairly recent history. Who in 1945 could have believed that in late 1982 American officials would be calling a proposed 6.5% increase in Japanese military spending "inadequate."

Nevertheless, the U.S. State and Defense Departments, in a joint statement on December 30, 1982 said, concerning the hike in Japan's defense spending: "We believe that more significant progress toward achieving the self-defense capabilities proposed by the Japanese government needs to be made."

Echoing official disapproval of the rate of increase in Japanese defense spending, a resolution was recently introduced in the U.S. Senate, cosponsored by 60 senators, calling for Japan to do more for its own defense (and, of course to buy more weapons from the U.S.). A similar resolution is pending in the house.

The U.S. Defense Department would also like to see Japan eventually assume the burden for the defense of its vital sea lanes up to 1,000 miles from the Japanese coast.

The pressure is superficially logical, of course. Japan has had more or less a free ride on defense since 1945, spending annually less than one percent of its Gross National Product on defense, compared to about 6.6% for the United States. To keep Japan pacified after the war, the U.S. undertook the role of Japan's defender. But in the face of severe balance-of-trade deficits with Japan year after year, this arrangement no longer seems appropriate on the surface.

Then too, the U.S. has been drawing down on its Seventh Fleet facilities in the Pacific to transfer strength to the Indian Ocean/Persian Gulf regions. Thus, U.S. forces are stretched thin in the Pacific while Soviet Far East strength continues to grow, with the obvious intentions of intimidating the Japanese.

Japan's dynamic new Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone appears to want to please the United States on the defense spending issue. Of course, there are factions within his own ruling Liberal Democratic Party that do not want to see Japan take a more active role militarily in Asia. Nevertheless, in his first press conference shortly after assuming the office of Prime Minister last November 26, Nakasone said, "I believe that our country's defense efforts have not been adequate. And I understand the argument put forward by the U.S. and its European allies that Japan should increase its military spending now that it has become a great economic power."

Mr. Nakasone does have considerable support from within the LDP for a militarily stronger Japan. Last spring, at about the time that Defense Secretary Casper Weinberger visited Japan to urge a big increase in military spending, several hundred prominent Japanese, including 58 members of parliament, demanded a revision of the Japanese-U.S. security treaty, which goes back to 1952 (and amended somewhat in 1960).

Declaring that the treaty represented a "stain on our national pride," the group maintained that it was "inexcusable for Japan to continue to rely on the United States," and called for a vast expansion of military forces. Some members urged that the no-war clause in the constitution be eliminated, and even broached the ultimate taboo by suggesting that Japan acquire nuclear weapons.

Down through the years, Mr. Nakasone, while no militarist, has repeatedly said that Japan's U.S.-composed post-war constitution should be changed in order to give legitimacy to the military forces Japan already has. Article Nine of the constitution states that "Japan will never maintain land, sea and air forces, as well as other potential forces for war." This, of course, is totally out of date, Japan long having possessed land, sea and air "self-defense" forces. In fact, Japan already is the world's eighth-ranked military power.

Thus, by force of events, due to the fact that the U.S. is a power in decline and Japan is still on the way up, a change in the power relationship between the U.S. and Japan and between Japan and its Asian neighbors seems inevitable. But there is, notes Ronald Steel, a "political price to pay" for the change America seems to want. In the December 16, 1982 INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE, Steel writes:

American taxpayers have every reason to ask why, 37 years after the end of the war, they are still paying for the defense of a country that is their greatest economic challenger and obviously has the means to pay its military bills. All this makes economic sense.

But there is a political price to pay--one which American officials are curiously unaware of. If Japan starts rearming in a big way, it will not let its diplomacy be made in Washington. It will start making its political and military influence felt throughout Asia, as most Asians fear, and will be far less willing to take its cues from Washington. It means the end of the kind of relationship America has had with Japan since 1945.

This is the price for pushing Japan to rearm. It may be an unavoidable price, for the alternative is a continued military

protectorship that the American people cannot sustain without economic sacrifice. But this is not what American officials had in mind when they prodded the Japanese to increase military spending. Judging by the direction of events in Tokyo, they may now have to live with the problems of their dream come true.

Leaders in Asia who are old enough to remember the cruel years of Japanese imperialism are also warning Washington--seemingly to no avail--of the consequences of its "logical" action. Note this dispatch which moved over our UPI teletype on December 29, 1982:

Manila, Philippines (UPI)--Carlos Romulo, a world statesman who boasts of being the oldest foreign minister on earth, had a few words of fatherly advice Wednesday for the United States and Japan: Don't ignore history. In an exclusive interview with UPI, the Philippine foreign minister said the United States was making a serious mistake by pushing Japan to beef up its military might and Japan was equally wrong to listen.

"Those who ignore history tend to become its victims," said Romulo, who served as Gen. Douglas MacArthur's aide-de-camp in the Philippines during World War II. He turns 84 in January. "I've always said the United States should be very careful about making Japan its surrogate for the defense of the Pacific," said Romulo.

The United States is pressing Japan to take on the task of defending sealanes extending 1,000 nautical miles from the Japanese coast and significantly increase its military spending.

"The Japanese are a very determined people, they have brains," said Romulo. "At the end of World War II, no one thought that Japan would become the foremost economic power in the world--but they are. If you give them the chance to become a military power --they will become a military power." He said the United States was encouraging Japanese defense spending because "America does not want to pay the piper."

"All countries see no harm if Japan has to defend itself against Communism--but do they need offensive arms?" asked Romulo. "We must be careful not to encourage any aggressive designs...or another co-prosperity sphere. Back in 1918, I told my American classmates (at Columbia University) to beware of the Japanese and my American classmates said 'those jokers wouldn't dare,'" said Romulo. "Well, they dared and Pearl Harbor is the witness."

Romulo, one of the last surviving framers and signatories of the 1946 U.N. Charter, said he considered Japanese attempts to re-write history textbooks covering its role in World War II "a bad omen." He termed "very dangerous" reports that some Japanese want to amend their constitution to delete the clause banning the use of war as an instrument of national policy. "The handwriting is on the wall for us to read," said Romulo.

The Philippine diplomat, who has been awarded most of the world's major honors and decorations from the Pulitzer Prize (1942) to

the purple heart, said he would air his fears when Japanese Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone visited Manila next May. Romulo said he conveyed the same fears to President Reagan in Washington and that the American leader "said he understood our fears but then said nothing further" on the subject.

Recent new revelations of brutal Japanese disease and human endurance experiments with Chinese prisoners-of-war during Japan's occupation of Manchuria in the 1930s have caused Asian nations to hoist up a few more warning signals to Washington. "Proceed with utmost caution" Japan's neighbors seem to be saying. But Washington isn't paying much attention.

--Gene H. Hogberg, News Bureau