

PASTOR GENERAL'S REPORT

TO THE MINISTRY OF THE
WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD



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FROM MINISTERIAL SERVICES

Year-end Tax Review for U.S. Ministers

With the Feast now over, the end of the year rapidly approaches. It is time to start putting your tax records in order for the tax return that you will need to file early next year.

We want to remind you of a couple of the many items you need to consider in preparing your return. First, be sure to review your housing allowance to be certain that what you have set aside is the appropriate amount. Any amount that has been set aside and not spent during the year must be declared as income. On the other hand, any amount spent but not previously set aside cannot now be deducted. If you find yourself in this situation, you may want to consider filing an updated Ministerial Housing Allowance form.

The other item you need to plan for is your expense records for both the monthly ministerial and second tithe allotments. Any unused allotment should be returned. Please make separate checks for second tithe funds and for the monthly allotment.

Regarding the monthly allotment, when your allotment check is mailed, it is sent in advance of projected expenses. At the end of the year, the total of all allotment checks will be added to your W-2 form as income. Unless you can sufficiently justify to the IRS the business expenses that match the expense allotments you received, you will end up having to pay tax on it.

The allotment check is to be used only for Church business expenses. If you have received more expense money than you actually spent, you should return the excess to the Church. If you find that your allotment has exceeded your expense by a large amount, you may need to consider reducing the allotment. If you want to do this, please include a note to that effect with your reimbursement check.

We need to receive any reimbursement checks by the middle of December in order to credit the amount to your W-2 statement. If we don't have it by then, we can't be sure the necessary processing will get done. If it isn't received in time, your W-2 statement will not reflect the returned money, and you will have to pay tax on that amount. You will need to estimate your expense needs for the rest of the year to know how much to return.

Comments From Monthly Church Reports

From the United States

TEXARKANA, TX--CHARLES BRYCE: We have witnessed a definite improvement in the attitudes of YOU members recently. In general they are becoming more responsive and responsible. We attribute this at least in part to young ones who have been "turned-on" by the YES program and are now at the bottom end of YOU. So we are

beginning to see in YOU some of the good fruits of YES. We hope the improvement is also due to the ministry's increased involvement in the YOU program.

BISMARCK, ND--DAN CREED: Overall, the Church here is doing very well. One of the greatest pleasures of being in an area a number of years is to see the young people come along and be baptized. Many I am now counseling for baptism were just young teens when I first arrived in the area.

MOBILE, AL--STEVEN MOODY: Our attendance has had a marked increase with new PMS beginning to attend. We have had an excellent response among the new contacts lately. Also, several grown children of members who had left the Church are now wanting to return.

RALEIGH, NC--MIKE BOOZE: We have experienced several examples of God's miraculous intervention this month. One woman had a dark spot on her lung disappear after anointing. One of our PMS contracted hepatitis after donating blood. The case was severe enough that the doctor mentioned the possibility of death. After prayer, he was completely healed in two days. The doctor said, "I don't know what you did, but if I ever get hepatitis, I'm going to call you and find out what it was!" These are only two cases. God has been very generous with us this month.

--Joe Tkach, Ministerial Services

YES UPDATE

We regret that we were unable to make a necessary correction before the recent mailing of Lesson 1 of the Youth Bible Lessons. In Level 7, the first paragraph on page 6 should read: "one pair of all the unclean animals" came into the ark--not two pair.

Also, because of the present cash flow situation, only Lessons 1 and 2 will be mailed prior to January 1985. Lessons 3 and 4 are tentatively scheduled for mailing in January.

Thank you for your patience and loyal support of the Youth Bible Lesson program.

--Kevin O. Dean, YOU

UPDATE FROM MAIL PROCESSING

MPC Reducing Mail Backlog

Although a partial crew stayed in Pasadena to process the most urgent mail, we returned from the Feast to find nearly one-half million cards and letters waiting for us. Incoming mail since the Feast has also remained heavy, and we are facing a sizable backlog.

Our full work force is pitching in to help get caught up. The inventory of letters requiring personal answers is high, but visit requests are receiving top priority and are up to date overall. Please understand that we may find an occasional visit request among some older routine mail. As always, your patience is appreciated.

Tremendous Growth Since Last Year's Feast

The year between the 1983 and 1984 Feasts of Tabernacles brought encouraging growth and accomplishment for God's Church. Here are just a few figures covering the United States during this period:

- 70.7 million publications were distributed, including 25 million PT subscription issues, 22 million newsstand copies and 5 million booklets.
- Incoming mail soared to 4.7 million pieces. This is equivalent to what God's Church of this era received in its first 28 years.
- WATS calls received totaled 723,338--the highest number ever.
- New Bible correspondence course enrollments reached 224,443.
- More than 87,000 PT subscribers became "donors" by making one or two contributions during the year. Another 23,873 became "co-workers" by giving two or more donations within a six-month period.

We expect new all-time records in most categories by the end of 1984.

Winter Semiannual Letter Being Sent to Four Million People

The second semiannual letter of 1984 is now being mailed to over 2.3 million U.S. subscribers and to 1.7 million international subscribers. Postal Center employees will be putting in 60 hours a week for two to three weeks to complete this gigantic mailing.

The semiannual letter has long been the number one source of new co-workers. For example, this summer's semiannual accounted for more than half of all new co-workers added to the file so far this year. It is most important, therefore, that we follow the admonition of Mr. Armstrong to pray fervently for an excellent response.

He wrote in the October member/co-worker letter: "I am sending out a semiannual letter to all PLAIN TRUTH subscribers. PLEASE PRAY FERVENTLY and continually that God will PROSPER our brethren and Co-Workers, and also that he will put it into the minds and hearts of many of the millions who will receive this general letter to BECOME CO-WORKERS with you and me and Christ our Savior. The harvest is plenteous, but the laborers are too few."

What a Feast!

As expected, this year's Feast was truly the "best Feast ever" as evidenced by a number of letters we have received. Members returned home rejuvenated, fired up and deeply inspired as never before. Some of the major highlights included Mr. Armstrong's powerful messages, moving sermons by the other ministers and outstanding films. Following are some of the comments received to date:

We have just attended our 21st Feast and it was the greatest Feast ever! God just keeps blessing His people year after year. It seemed that everyone went to the Feast with positive attitudes this year. We saw only happy faces, few complaints and very little sickness.

We would like to extend our thanks and appreciation to you, Mr. Armstrong, and all those who were involved in making this Feast the best ever. We are already looking forward to another great Feast in 1985.

Mr. & Mrs. M.P. (High Point, NC)

It seems each year the Feast is more wonderful and this year certainly was no exception. People seemed so friendly, the scenery was a splendor to behold, and the weather could not have been more beautiful. Everything seemed to go so smoothly, thanks to the planning and cooperation of everyone. This truly was the best and most wonderful Feast I have ever enjoyed. I thank you and pray for your health and safety always.

T.A. (Moscow, PA)

I just returned from a fantastic Feast in Hawaii, and must say I've never felt so spiritually full! Every single message, including the offertories, was so enlightening that I felt like I was a new babe in Christ, trying to gobble it all up. Every sermon gave new aspects--after 19 years, you would think I'd have heard it all. The whole congregation was musically responsive also. Fifteen hundred sounded like 15,000 happy voices, praising our great and loving Father. Thank you for your messages, for the "Behind the Work" film, and for sharing yourself with us in "The Young Ambassadors" film.

S.W. (Duluth, MN)

I wanted to thank you for the very basic, trunk of the tree messages that you gave us this year at the Feast. Your opening message without notes was very inspiring. Knowing that you did not have notes to rely on to keep track of what you were planning to say next, made it very obvious that God was inspiring you to say what we needed to hear the most.

N.W. (Goleta, CA)

I have just returned home from the Feast in Norfolk, Virginia. This is my first year as a co-worker and my first Feast. I was extremely blessed because my brother and his family took me with them as one of theirs. I have just been recently separated. My husband is filing for a divorce, so you know how much it meant to me to be included in their family. I left Pennsylvania with a handful of brethren and returned with thousands in my heart.

A.R. (PA)

I would like to thank you and God for one of the best Feasts of Tabernacles I have ever had. I have attended God's Church since I was eight. Because my father does not attend, I was unable to attend the Feast till I had graduated from high school and could work and save my tithe. I never knew how much I missed until that Feast. I am now married and have three children, who each year look forward greatly to God's Feast days.

This year's Feast seemed to be an extra special blessing. I have not felt so much love and unity at one place ever. I truly felt like it was a large family gathering. Your two messages on film

were very greatly inspiring and your live message on the first day gave me the desire to keep going.

V.C. (Orlando, FL)

We had a very wonderful Feast at Biloxi, Mississippi. I'll be looking forward to next year's Feast all during next year. I've found out that the more one serves at the Feast, the more one gets out of this special time. I feel more a part of the Church when I can serve. Thank you so much for pointing the truth out to us and what this very special time represents.

D.G. (Cottdale, FL)

--Richard Rice, Mail Processing Center

ON THE WORLD SCENE

THE REAGAN LANDSLIDE; "SUPERTERRORISM;" THE SOVIETS CHALLENGE THE PRESIDENT; CAMPAIGN HUMOR

On November 6, President Ronald Reagan swept to the landslide that nearly all the pollsters predicted was coming. He captured nearly 60% of the popular vote and a record high number of electoral votes, 525. Mr. Reagan's victory was unusually broad-based: the majorities of young people, the elderly (supposedly frightened by cuts in social spending), farmers, women (what gender gap?), Catholics (once solidly Democratic), and Protestants. Hispanic voters, a so-called "interest group" heavily courted by the Democratic Party, nearly went for Mr. Reagan as well. They gave him 47% of their votes, up from 22% in 1980. The President carried every income group down to \$10,000--and nearly took the \$5,000 to \$10,000 bracket.

Democratic challenger Walter Mondale was simply unable to counter the tide of economic well-being in the country. He was left with big majorities only among black, Jewish (worried over the "religious right"), feminist, jobless and lowest income groups. His campaign promise to raise taxes (to reduce the huge deficit) went over like the proverbial lead balloon.

Mr. Reagan's "coattails"--the ability to sweep your party's Congressional candidates along with you--were not as long as he had hoped; only a net gain of sixteen in the House of Representatives (a race or two still undecided), with an actual loss of two in the 100-seat Senate. One major reason for the continued good showing of the Democratic Party in the House is the fact that Democratic candidates worked feverishly in their own campaigns to distance themselves from the national ticket that they knew was doomed. Their strategy was to stress local issues while saying "Walter who?" The WALL STREET JOURNAL, on November 8, analyzed the Democratic dilemma as follows:

The fact is, there are two Democratic parties. The one that runs candidates for president is in deep trouble. The other one, the one that runs people for the Senate and the House and for almost every other office in the land, is reasonably healthy. What the Democrats have to do is figure out how they can choose a presidential candidate who can do more than carry his home state and the District of Columbia.

This won't be easy, for the national party has become the citadel of radical personalities and issues, out of sync with the national character of the

American people. Conservative Democrat author Ben Wattenberg explained this phenomenon very clearly in the November 8 LOS ANGELES TIMES, in an article entitled "Mugged, But Still Clutching Their 'Issues'":

The Democratic presidential disaster brings to mind a harsh, apocryphal but relevant story. A liberal clergyman in a big city was mugged. He had always believed that there were no bad boys, only bad societies. He sermonized against any hint of police brutality. He favored civilian police-review boards. He said that "law and order" was code for racism.

As chance would have it, the clergyman was scheduled to speak to a group of elderly citizens a few days after he was mugged. He searched his soul to find meaning in his traumatic experience. When he mounted the podium to address the elderly crowd, he said roughly this: "I have gone through a great personal trauma. I have thought again about my views on crime. And despite the harsh and ugly act of violence unleashed upon me, I still believe in my liberal principles." There was dead silence in the hall. Then an old lady in the rear cleared her throat and rumbled "Mug him again."

The Democratic party got mugged Tuesday.... Like the mugged liberal clergyman, the Democrats are thinking things over. Already we can hear the response from some Democrats from the left side of the spectrum. It was, they say, a personal victory for Ronald Reagan. He's so amiable. Walter Mondale wasn't a good candidate, they tell us. Young people are too selfish these days, that's what did it. It was Geraldine Ferraro's finances that tripped us up. Reagan tricked us; he never came up with a plan. They outspent us; it was unfair. Accidents, tricks, personal popularity--everything but substance.

Strange. This is the message now brought to us by the folks on the far-out left who earlier told us that it was substance that was in the saddle. They said that the nuclear-freeze movement would freeze Reagan. They said that the gender gap would sink the sexists. They said that a tidal wave of black registration would establish the agenda of the Rainbow Coalition and carry the South. They said that Central America was another Vietnam....

These are the folks who believe that the Civil Rights Commission must be the exclusive province of the quotamongers.... They had no problems with establishing homosexual quotas in the Democratic National Committee. After all, they apparently believe, Democrats can always get the votes of people concerned with traditional values by waving plastic flags at the national convention.

Now the left tells us that it was only because of an accident of personalism that it lost. It incants its new slogan: The People Really Agreed With Us on the Issues. There is just enough truth in that for it to be thoroughly deceptive. In national politics "issues" are subservient to "principles," and the voters supported Reagan's principles: strength, traditional values, merit and initiative....

Because they now maintain that they lost only by accident, the left-liberals will insist that the Democrats do it once more their way, and with feeling.... It is plausible to suggest that the left will prevail once again in party rule-making commissions.... It may triumph in legislative battles....

What is implausible is to suggest that the left will ever win a national election with its current viewpoint. That is too bad, for it robs the rest of the Republic of the services of the national Democratic Party, which was once a great political engine for sensible progress in America. If the activists of the left succeed in shaping the image of the party again, the voters will merely shrug and say, "Mug him again."

One of the most succinct points was made by George F. Will, who is now a political affairs analyst for ABC. He passed along a comment made by the father of a young man he was acquainted with. Said the older gentleman: "The Democratic Party made me a middle-class American. The Republican Party will keep me that way."

With overwhelming public confidence, the President embarks upon a new four years in office. But he has his enemies too, and some of them, outside the country at least, are bitterly hostile to him. Here is a chilling dispatch from Beirut, Lebanon that moved across our UPI wire on November 5:

The group that claimed responsibility for the suicide bombings of U.S. facilities in Lebanon has threatened the life of President Reagan and warned the Lebanese cabinet against holding talks with Israel on a troop pullout. "Let it be known, you Reagan, that if we are unable to prevent your re-election, we will for certain prevent you from continuing your second term in office," a spokesman for the pro-Iranian Islamic Jihad, or Holy War, said.

The threat sounds extreme--but then consider the narrow brush with death that Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher had recently. One cannot even dismiss the likelihood of a medium range missile attack. After all, we are entering the age, writes William Safire, of "superterrorism." He analyzed this in his October 15, 1984 NEW YORK TIMES column entitled "Bolt From the Blue":

Eighteen months ago, in the informal talks after a nuclear arms control session, a Russian negotiator said casually to one of his American counterparts, "What if Qaddafi got the Bomb?" In response, the American merely winced--such a prospect is one that all of us hate to face--but he duly noted the Russian's concern about the possession of a nuclear device by a terrorist state.

Today, the successful escalation of terror tactics against the U.S., by fanatics in the Middle East, is the most serious campaign issue raised by the Democratic candidate against Mr. Reagan. At the same time, the close call endured by Margaret Thatcher and her Cabinet at the hands of I.R.A. bombers has driven home to Europeans the rising threat of terrorism.

Project this threat ahead five or ten years. After we figure out a way to stop trucks and hand-delivered bombs, we must expect the

terrorists to improve their delivery systems. A West German company has already delivered the components of a medium-range missile to the Libyans; only the most cockeyed optimists think that terror states will not be able to buy intercontinental missiles on the secret arms market by 1990. Logic suggests that, sooner or later, the terrorists' bombs will be nuclear.... Unrest assured that Colonel Qaddafi--or the successor to the dying Ayatollah, or perhaps some paranoid Sandinista--will one day possess both an atomic bomb and a missile that can take it across the ocean.

In some future extremis, a terror-state leader will tell Washington or Moscow that unless some concession is made, a world capital will be destroyed. Retaliation would mean nothing to a suicidal bomber; he could not be deterred in any way short of surrender to his demands. What could civilized leaders, in their muscle-bound helplessness, do to a canny madman who welcomes mutual assured destruction?

We are running away from that question, finding security in our old thinking that the threat is from a rational superpower and the greatest worry is an escalation of a conventional war. But consider the unthinkable: World War III may not be the Soviet Union versus the Free World, but terrorism versus civilization.

The only serious suggestion put forward so far is that plan so glibly derided and dismissed by scientific doubters and the frozen arms-control establishment as "Star Wars," and so hastily written off by Walter Mondale as "militarizing the heavens." The derogating knee-jerkers live with today's threat, with which they are comfortable, but refuse to deal with tomorrow's threat, which is looming larger. That threat is from superterrorism, armed with atomic missiles in a defenseless world. At the least, superterrorism will be able to hold millions hostage to one bolt from the blue, and, at the most, be able to trigger accidental or mistaken war between superpowers.

Space defense would make it possible for the superpowers--the world's nuclear police--to detect a missile in its booster phase and shoot it down before it destroyed a city. If an M.P. in the sky is "militarization of the heavens," make the most of it: Support your celestial sheriff.... Ronald Reagan's offer to share space-defense technology is the most daring peace proposal made by an American President.

It is almost axiomatic that the Soviets will test any new U.S. president. Even though Mr. Reagan is a returning incumbent, it is perhaps not coincidental that the Soviets have chosen the time of the election to ship highly inflammatory military hardware to Nicaragua. New attack helicopters (to fight off the contras) arrived a few days ago. Now, as we go to press, a Soviet freighter may be unloading advanced MiG fighters at the port of Corinto. Washington has warned Managua that such equipment is "unacceptable," totally unnecessary for Nicaragua's own defense, and is, in its view, intended only to extend a threatening military reach toward Nicaragua's neighbors. Thus, a showdown may be near, perhaps by next week.

How do the Soviets assess America's position in the world? Here are excerpts from an article entitled "The Bear May See Its Way Past Winter," written by Harry Gelman, a senior staff member of the Rand Corporation. It appeared in the November 7, 1984 WALL STREET JOURNAL:

One can cite...underlying U.S. vulnerabilities that partially offset Soviet problems.... First, there is the continued growth of fissures between Western Europe and the U.S.--a long-term trend that has not been halted by the start of the Pershing and cruise missiles' deployment in Europe last year. Among the many manifestations of this trend are the drift to the left of the British Labor Party and the German Social Democrats,...the near-indifference of many Europeans to Soviet behavior in the Third World, and now the growing European anger and resentment over American plans for space defense.

Second, despite the obviously grave Soviet concern about U.S. weapons programs and about the U.S. technological advantage, many in Moscow may still see grounds to hope that Mr. Reagan has bitten off considerably more than he can chew. Some of his programs--such as MX, the B-1, and space defense--clearly lack a broad consensus and remain vulnerable to adverse political currents [and] the huge U.S. budget deficits....

Finally, and most fundamentally, despite the obvious resurgence of American patriotism,...the Soviet leaders have reason to assume that the successive wounds inflicted on the U.S. by history have still not healed completely. Three consecutive catastrophes --the murder of President Kennedy, the Vietnam tragedy, and the Watergate melodrama--have left a lasting residue of damage to the American policy consensus. Fresh causes of internal division caused by foreign events--under Jimmy Carter, Iran, and under Ronald Reagan, Nicaragua and El Salvador--have seemed to emerge periodically to tear at the scab.

The Soviets probably also sense that...a large minority in the U.S. apparently continues to believe that much of the American position in the world against which the Soviet Union presses is fundamentally illegitimate. This semi-permanent estrangement of the left has sometimes been matched, in recent years, by an arrogant tendency toward self-isolation on the part of the right.

Despite America's great military strength and the scope of its military buildup,...Soviet skepticism on [the will to defend U.S. interests] has probably not been eliminated...by the U.S. participation in a brief and easy multilateral intervention in Grenada.

Hence, the Soviets may have guessed that now was the time to put Mr. Reagan to the test.

Election Madness--and Hilarity

Those of you living outside the United States can probably not appreciate the great relief felt now in America that the long-drawn-out campaign is over. The bad news is that the 1988 election "campaign" is now underway.

There is already considerable speculation as to who the next candidates might be. One journalist thought that Governor Mario Cuomo of New York (unlike Mondale, an excellent public speaker--style, not substance, that is) would be a good Democratic choice, pitted against California Governor George Deukmejian. Incredibly, some journalists are already calling Mr. Reagan a "lame duck president."

The election proceedings brought forth one interesting phenomenon--the attractiveness of Mr. Reagan to young voters, even the college crowd. Believe it or not, there is now a Young Republicans chapter at the University of California, Berkeley, site of so much radicalism in the 1960s. Some young people are even dropping out of college to go into business, becoming their own entrepreneurs. Why waste time in college, when the business climate is so good? NBC news one night profiled the meteoric rise of one 24-year-old college dropout who is now a supermillionaire.

The other day a cartoon showed a driver of a Mercedes plastered with "Reagan-Bush" and "America: Love It or Leave It" slogans, conversing with a motorist next to him, who was driving a battered VW bus, sporting "Mondale" and "No Nukes" stickers.

The first driver said: "I swear I'll never understand your generation. You're more worried about peace, justice and equality than you are with making a buck."

"Lay off me, will ya," came the reply, to which the first driver responded: "Okay, see ya later, Dad."

During the campaign, Mr. Reagan took many unjustified jabs for his alleged tilt toward the rich. One of the best lines was his supposed definition of the "truly needy"--anybody who has to wash his own Mercedes. On the other side, Mr. Mondale was often criticized for his dullness. (The day after his defeat, Mr. Mondale confessed: "I've never really warmed up to television.") On his lack of charisma, the September 21 NATIONAL REVIEW remarked that "the wags say he can't even get automatic doors to open when he walks up to them." Even his running mate, Geraldine Ferraro, when asked what should be done in the next election, candidly replied that it would probably be necessary to project a better television image. Speaking of running mates, Republican Senator Paul Laxalt reportedly remarked that Mondale had picked a better running mate than Jimmy Carter had in 1976.

One can't help wondering how long the supposed conservative and patriotic "tide" will last. Very likely not beyond the next recession or the next real war. One final thought to consider. The large voter registration drive among blacks in the southern states failed to amount to much on November 6. Many new registrants, turned off because Jesse Jackson was not on the ticket, simply did not vote. On the other hand, nervous whites turned out heavily (89% of white Alabamans voted for Reagan). The result is an even greater racial cleavage.

The ones who really turned out the voters were the Moral Majority religious fundamentalists. The movement's leader, Jerry Falwell, even proclaimed a fast prior to the election so that candidates supporting "Christian" views would win. He set his fast from sundown Sunday November 4 to sundown November 5--a "true biblical fast" he explained, although he said those fasting could partake of liquids. One can't help reflect on Isaiah 58 in this regard. "Is it a fast that I have chosen?" God asks (verse 5).

--Gene H. Hogberg, News Bureau