

# PASTOR GENERAL'S REPORT

TO THE MINISTRY OF THE  
WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD



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PASADENA, CALIFORNIA

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\*\*\*\* NOTICE TO ALL MINISTERS \*\*\*\*

Very important information appears in different sections of this issue which requires your thorough reading.

FROM MINISTERIAL SERVICES

Passover Attendance Policy

Several men have been asked whether or not children, teenagers, prospective members or interested unconverted individuals may attend the Passover service. Mr. Armstrong has instructed us that only baptized members are to attend or participate in the Passover service.

1983 Days of Unleavened Bread Church Visits--United States

Once again several Pasadena ministers will be able to visit some of the field Churches during the Days of Unleavened Bread. The schedule is as follows:

<u>Speaker</u>	<u>Sabbath (3/26)</u>	<u>Passover (3/28)*</u>	<u>First Holy Day (3/29)</u>
R. Rice	Philadelphia, PA	Bethlehem, PA	Bethlehem, PA
H. Hoeh	Columbus AM & PM, OH**	Cleveland E, OH	Cleveland E & W, OH
D. Albert	Bismarck & Minot, ND**	Bismarck, ND	Fargo & Grand Forks, ND--combining in Fargo
D. Blackwell	Missoula, MT	Helena, MT	Helena & Great Falls, MT
H. Jackson	Mt. Pocono, PA	Johnstown, PA	Huntingdon & Johns- town, PA--combining in Altoona

\* Observed the evening before

\*\* The guest speaker will speak in both churches

<u>Speaker</u>	<u>Sabbath (4/2)</u>	<u>Second Holy Day (4/4)</u>
G. Albrecht	Honolulu, HI	Honolulu, HI
H. Jackson	Hood River, Portland E, S & W, OR & Vancouver, WA-- combining in Portland	Klamath Falls & Medford, OR--combining in Central Point
D. Blackwell	Liberal, KS	Colorado Springs & Pueblo, CO--combining in Pueblo
R. Kelly	Sacramento, CA	Modesto & Stockton, CA--com- bining in Modesto
E. LaRavia	Phoenix E & W, Mesa, AZ --combining in Phoenix	Flagstaff & Prescott, AZ --combining in Flagstaff

### Ministerial Feast Transfers for 1983

All ministers employed by the Church are required to attend their assigned Feast sites with their local congregations. The Feast of Tabernacles is considered a part of your routine responsibilities in serving the brethren even though you may have no specific assigned duties at the site your congregation will be attending.

Only those who are requested to fill a need at another site will be permitted to transfer. However, if you feel there are extenuating circumstances in your case, please send a written request and explanation to Ministerial Services for approval. All overseas ministers requesting transfer should send their requests to their Regional Directors.

Note: All such ministerial requests for transfer to U.S. or overseas sites must be in by April 15.

### Why the Church Negotiates for Festival Housing

Some Church members have asked why the Church continues to be involved with housing arrangements for the Feast. To them this seems almost contradictory to the policy of each person being responsible for his own reservations. We want to explain the reasons for this continued involvement so that you and the members in your congregations may understand.

It would be very easy for the Festival Office to discontinue any further involvement in housing for the Feast of Tabernacles. We could simply say "find your own motel or hotel room," and save ourselves a great deal of effort and worry.

Unfortunately, that wouldn't work for very long. Desirable housing in some areas is limited. Supply and demand would force prices upward quickly. Within a few years, desirable festival housing would be affordable only to those in higher income brackets.

Our experience has shown that buying motel and hotel space as a group helps keep prices down. Each Festival Coordinator is responsible for visiting all the establishments in the festival site area that have acceptable standards of quality and service. He looks very closely at the types of

housing in the area and strives to find the facilities that will suit the members' needs.

We always strive for a discounted rate, even in the off season. We encourage this by helping the establishments to understand the volume of business that will come their way when the price is right.

Many establishments are very happy to have the Church's business and gladly offer good rates. However, some refuse to offer discounts. It might seem senseless not to recommend a housing property which is of good quality and has the features the Church members need. But sometimes we do not recommend such a facility because it demands a rate that does not reflect the amount of business the Church might do with that establishment. We find it wiser to move the Church's business to where the rates are more favorable.

In other cases, the rate might be attractive, but quality or service is lacking. Rather than recommend a place which would later cause problems, we choose to leave it off our list of recommended housing. Some members might want to stay in establishments such as these, but this would not be wise.

We need the full cooperation of all the members for our negotiating efforts to succeed. When the establishments which deal favorably with us are filled with joyous, friendly Feast-goers for eight days, they will very happily offer us good rates again. Likewise, those places which refuse to offer favorable prices should not be rewarded by those who might have personal reasons for lodging there. The facilities booked by the Feast Coordinators and their staffs should be adequate for the needs of all members.

The policy, then, is this: Members should stay only in the motels and hotels listed in the "Festival Planner" supplement to The WORLDWIDE NEWS. This is simply to everyone's advantage. Please tell the members to patronize those establishments, and only those, for their festival housing.

### International News

French-language Areas Report February was truly a month of growth for the French phase of God's Work. The month started with the roar of jet engines bringing the French ministers from France, Switzerland, Canada and the French West Indies to Pasadena for the February 7-18 Refreshing Program. This was a unique occasion as never before had so many of the French ministers and their wives been together! Several of the ministers had the opportunity to make new friends with fellow ministers they had never had the chance to meet before.

In addition to the regular Refresher activities, there was a ministerial meeting conducted by Mr. Dibar Apartian, Regional Director, and a series of social events and soirees.

February also saw tremendous growth in the circulation of the French International GOOD NEWS. From mid-December 1982 to the end of February 1983, our circulation increased 202.4%. Our previous circulation of 3,118 jumped to the current figure of 9,428. This growth was due to Mr. Armstrong's November 1982 letter to CORRESPONDENCE COURSE students in which he offered a subscription to the IGN.

The response rates from the CC students, as broken down between the Canadian French file and the rest of the French file, showed that 35% of the Canadians responded to Mr. Armstrong's letter, as compared to 23% from the other French areas. The Canadian French file increased from 882 to 5,079, an increase of 475.8%. The worldwide French file grew from 2,236 to 4,352, an increase of 94.6%.

"Le Monde a Venir" broadcasts in French started in Europe in 1960 and since then there has not been a week without at least three broadcasts, whether on Radio Luxembourg or on Europe No. 1--both powerful radio stations which can be heard through much of French-speaking Europe.

In the Caribbean, "Le Monde a Venir" broadcasts have been heard four to five times each week since May, 1961. At the present, the French broadcasts are heard on 20 radio stations worldwide, 13 of which are in French-speaking Canada.

Canadian Report February turned out to be a busy month, although not as busy as the corresponding time a year ago. Incoming mail totaled 41,240 pieces, of which 11,410 represented new people contacting the Work requesting literature. The incoming mail was down 15%. Outgoing mail was 104,636 pieces, down 22.9% from February, 1982. A year ago we were processing responses from an advertising campaign and Mr. Armstrong's semiannual letter, thus we are going against very high figures.

By combining the French and English files, we come up with the following figures:

PLAIN TRUTH subscribers	291,512
GOOD NEWS subscribers	19,158
YOUTH 83 subscribers	5,681

During the first two months of this year we have added 281 new co-workers, bringing our total to 5,456. During this same period 930 donors have been added, swelling their numbers to 11,020.

Income for the month was a plus 13.6%. This brought the year-to-date figure to a healthy 16.7%. Considering the high unemployment still extant in the country, this is a very encouraging figure.

Negotiations on a new office lease are currently underway. The slow economy has put us in a favorable position with rents on office/warehouse complexes having decreased from their all-time high of a year and a half ago.

The Festival Coordinators traveled to Vancouver for the first of two meetings to be held this year. Preliminary work on the audio-visual hook-up for the Feast of Tabernacles has already begun. And thanks to the work of Mr. Keith Stoner who was able to establish new contacts through Ottawa, we should be given permission to receive the signal directly from the U.S. satellite and bypass having to use expensive terrestrial lines. If our plans come to fruition, we hope to cut last year's cost for T.V. hook-up by 35-40%. Needless to say, we are quite excited about this possibility.

News From Australia February continued to reflect the upward trend of God's Work here in Australia and Southeast Asia. The highlight of the month was Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong's Asian trip during which he visited the

Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia and Hong Kong, and then continued on to Japan. Unfortunately, Mr. Armstrong was not able to conduct a PLAIN TRUTH lecture in Kuala Lumpur as planned. At the last moment, Malaysian immigration authorities would not give Mr. Armstrong a permit to speak to the 800 people who came for the lecture. Instead, the audience of PLAIN TRUTH readers was treated to a showing of the film "Behind the Work." They appreciated the film, but naturally were disappointed at not hearing Mr. Armstrong.

In Hong Kong Mr. Armstrong spoke to a group of seventy people who turned up for his lecture there. Considering that we have only 850 PLAIN TRUTH subscribers in Hong Kong, the interest shown was quite high and some few stayed behind after the lecture to ask questions.

Over the past couple of years, the brethren throughout Australia have prayed and even fasted for a door to be opened so the Gospel can be preached via television in Melbourne. Last year we tried five different times to place Mr. Armstrong's programme on T.V. there, only to find the door firmly shut. We tried again on January 31st while Mr. David Hulme, Media Liaison from Pasadena, was on a brief visit to Australia and it miraculously opened. In fact, it opened so easily that those involved were dumbfounded. February 20th, the Sunday after massive forestfires devastated large areas around the city taking many lives, "The World Tomorrow" programme began to be aired over ATV 10 in Melbourne.

The following week, we unexpectedly received a call from another television station in southeast Queensland. Station SEQ 8 requested Mr. Armstrong's programme and offered the 11:30 a.m. slot on Sunday mornings beginning February 27th. SEQ 8 covers the area north of Brisbane up as far as Bundaberg. These two additional stations mean that "The World Tomorrow" telecast can now be viewed by approximately 80% of the Australian population!

Despite rising unemployment in Australia (now around 10%), the recession, and the national drought, we experienced another fine increase in income for the month of February. Income was 27.1% over the corresponding month last year, and our year-to-date increase in income is 25.4% over the same period in 1982.

We received a total of 7,522 letters during February, and our mailing staff was especially busy this month, sending out 28,108 pieces of mail containing literature.

--Joe Tkach, Ministerial Services

### PUBLISHING SERVICES UPDATE

#### New Doors Open to Publish the Gospel!

In rapid-fire succession, Jesus Christ is opening new and exciting doors to publish the message of the coming Kingdom of God! God's Apostle is setting the course to vigorously walk through the dynamic new doors described below!

(1) PLAIN TRUTH newsstand distribution in major supermarkets throughout the United States is ready to begin!

Mr. Armstrong has just given his approval to a contract with Supermarket Communication Systems, Inc. SCS maintains what are called "Good Neighbor

Bulletin Boards" through which flyers, coupons and pamphlets are distributed in over 4,100 class "A" supermarkets such as Safeway, A & P, IGA, Kroger and many others across the United States.

SCS has agreed to place, maintain, and distribute our magazine. You may recall that we ran a test of this distribution program in late 1981 and early 1982. Although the test results proved favorable, we felt that our members could do a much better job in maintaining continuity and consistency in distribution. In recent discussions with SCS this important request was agreed to.

Beginning with the June, 1983 issue, newsstand distribution will begin in 541 supermarkets in the greater New York City area. Through a combined effort of the pastors and members in the eight Church areas of the region, circulation will increase up to an estimated 200,000 per month for a three-month phase-in period. Mr. Armstrong will evaluate the success of the program after that time and, if results prove favorable, will consider expanding the program to include the remaining supermarkets located in 160 Church areas across the United States, distributing an additional 1,400,000 magazines per month!

Hold on to your hats and prepare yourselves for greater involvement!

Mr. Armstrong is very enthused by this stimulating opportunity and feels that "this could be the largest single door that has ever opened" to publish the Gospel! He requests that all pastors motivate their congregations to pray fervently that God will provide the funds needed to back him up as he steps through this tremendous door in faith!

(2) In another remarkable and stirring development, Mr. Armstrong has given his endorsement to begin distribution of The PLAIN TRUTH through the Elson's chain of over 100 gift shops and newsstands located in major hotels, commuter railway stations and international airports across the United States. There is no question that these will prove to be some of the finest outlets in which The PLAIN TRUTH has ever been distributed. Some of the most notable locations include:

Atlanta--Hyatt Regency  
 Boston--Logan International Airport  
 Chicago--Hyatt Regency  
 Chicago--O'Hare International  
 Airport  
 Dallas--Hyatt Regency  
 Houston International Airport  
 Los Angeles--Bonaventure Hotel  
 New Orleans Hilton

New York--Grand Central Station  
 New York--Penn Central Station  
 New York--The Waldorf-Astoria  
 Phoenix Hilton  
 San Francisco International Airport  
 Seattle Sheraton  
 Tucson--Sheraton El Conquistador  
 Washington D.C.--Hyatt Regency  
 Washington D.C.--The Capital Hilton

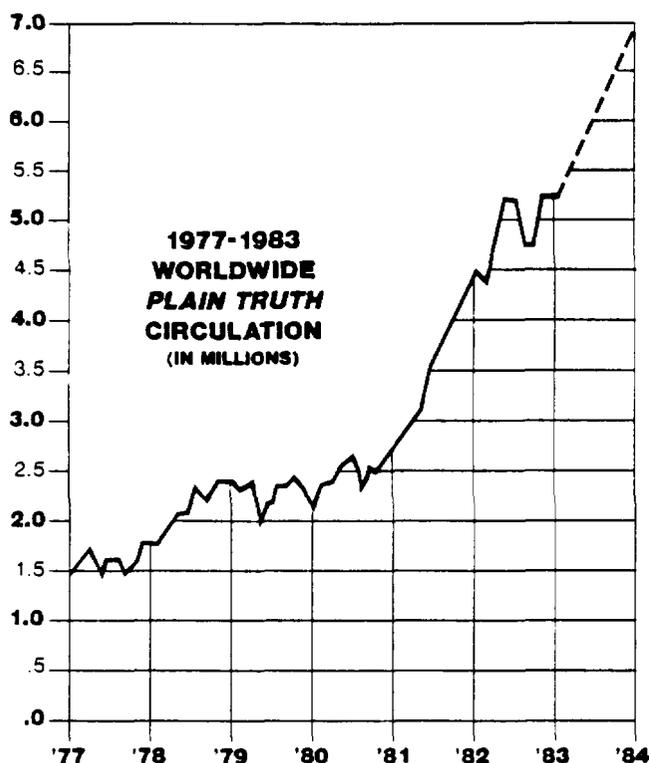
Again, our members will be handling distribution of the magazine in all of these new locations using the counter display or the single column stand. We plan to begin distribution with the June issue, and we will shortly notify the pastors in the areas concerned as to which outlets they will need to service.

(3) Mr. Armstrong has made another decision which will dramatically affect the number of new individuals coming in contact with the Work through The PLAIN TRUTH. For budgetary reasons we had, a number of months ago, elimi-

nated the "blow-in subscription" card from the pages of The PLAIN TRUTH. Mr. Armstrong has now reinstated the use of this important subscription vehicle beginning with the May 1983 issue, mentioning it is important that we give potential subscribers an opportunity to easily obtain their own subscription to The PLAIN TRUTH. This "blow-in," postage-paid subscription card easily ranks as one of the most effective response devices the Work has ever produced. In the remaining months of 1983, this card will add an estimated 275,000 subscribers to the files.

(4) In another important judgment, Mr. Armstrong has decided to begin using a "stitch-in" literature envelope rather than the regular literature postcard in The PLAIN TRUTH. This envelope, tested with excellent results, has proved to be very effective in giving readers a vehicle to write or donate to the Work, if they so desire.

Year by year, as God wills, PLAIN TRUTH circulation climbs higher and higher. Since 1934 to the present, nearly 502 million copies of The PLAIN TRUTH have rolled off the presses! Millions upon millions of people worldwide have had the opportunity to learn about God's true Gospel message. As Mr. Armstrong requested, please encourage your congregations to pray fervently that these new doors will remain open, and that the finances required to maintain this program will come in.



--Ray Wright, Publishing Services

#### UPDATE FROM MAIL PROCESSING

#### New Procedures for Handling Visit Requests in the U.S.

As most of you are aware, visit requests have been on the increase in the United States. Last year we received close to 7,000, with 8,000 expected this year. A sizeable number are from new people who are not well grounded in our literature or in the teachings of God's Church. Many are of the "curiosity" type, simply wanting to know more about us. In the past our policy has been to put everyone who requests a visit in contact with the local minister. But lately, a number of ministers have mentioned that many of these visits are not panning out. The people are either too new to understand Church doctrine, are religious hobbyists or become chronic timewasters.

Mr. Tkach and I took the matter to Mr. Armstrong and it was agreed that a more efficient, upfront screening process should be implemented. Hopefully, with our new procedures we will be sending you requests from higher quality PMs. This will allow you more time for those individuals God may be calling into His Church.

We are now categorizing visit requests into three broad types:

1. Requests from brand new people with little or no knowledge about the Church or Work

These requests will no longer be sent to you, nor will we give out your name and phone number. Instead, we will kindly suggest that they first read and study certain recommended literature to become better acquainted with the Church and its teachings. If they request a visit after reading the literature, it will be handled as described in the following category.

2. Requests from those who show promise of becoming prospective members

These people have some knowledge about the Work and the Church. They have been reading The PLAIN TRUTH as well as our booklets for some time. To ensure that they are seriously interested in a visit, we will send them your name and phone number so they can call you. We will also notify you of their request. If they don't call, you are not expected to make contact unless you for some reason deem it advisable.

3. Requests from those apparently being led to conversion and baptism

These people have made a direct request for a visit and appear to be good PMS who want to be baptized or have contact with a minister. We will inform them that their request has been forwarded to you, and that you will contact them for an appointment as soon as possible. We will also send your card should they need to call you.

Emergency Situations Occasionally, we receive urgent requests from new people for ministerial counsel--often involving serious marital problems, child abuse, alcohol or drug abuse, suicide threats, etc. In these critical situations, Personal Correspondence or WATS will call you immediately and relay the information.

We would also like to mention that both WATS and PC personnel do endeavor to sort out potential problems--"kooks," detractors, disfellowshipped members, etc. We never knowingly give out your name and phone number to such individuals. However, we do not always have adequate information to make a proper judgment. If you find that certain people are "timewasters" please let us know. This will help us in evaluating future requests from them.

How Some Ministers of Other Churches Use Our Literature

We frequently receive letters and phone calls of appreciation from ministers of other churches. Interestingly, some incorporate what they've learned from us into their sermons and counseling. One pastor even changed his Sunday services to Saturday after reading our Sabbath booklet! Following are some of the comments we have received.

The pastor of our church has recently changed our Sunday worship service to Saturday, after reading your booklet, WHICH DAY IS THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH? and much studying of the Scriptures. We at the church were ready for the change and are willing to accept whatever God has for us. We are trying to understand all of God's Word.

I am wondering if you have any booklets on the feasts we are to observe as Christians. We do not keep any of the pagan holidays. What feasts are we suppose to celebrate?

Mr. & Mrs. D.T. (West Jefferson, NC)

This letter is to express my appreciation for your magazine The PLAIN TRUTH, and the books and literature which you have sent at my request.

Many years ago I was called into the ministry, but came to a sudden halt when it became very clear that I simply did not know what I was talking about. I was unable to give clear, rational answers to those who came to me with questions concerning the fate of loved ones who had died. The doctrine which I preached, and frankly never really believed, was cruel and unreasonable, and I could not in good conscience continue with it.

I must tell you that recently a very dear friend called me long distance with the news that her brother had been killed. She was distraught in the belief that he might not have been saved. For the first time in my life, I was able to write her with the confidence that I would offer solace with truth. Interestingly enough, I had just come to a solid understanding of the distinction between those who are "called" in this life, and those who are not. I also suggested to this lady that she subscribe to The PLAIN TRUTH.

J.W. (Belleview, FL)

I picked up three of your wonderful magazines in our local food store and am thankful for whomever put them there.... Before entering the ministry I was an "old war horse newspaper reporter," and found your magazine to be extremely well written, informative, and pulling no punches where God's Word is concerned. Your articles give great inspiration and a basis for sermons I wish to share with my congregation. May God continue to bless your endeavors and keep you all in His care.

D.G. (Newton, AL)

I'm starting a Bible course for my congregation using your literature. Can you send me, as quickly as possible, 15 sets of your CORRESPONDENCE COURSE, three of the booklets DOES GOD EXIST? and WHAT IS THE TRUE GOSPEL?

Bishop G. (Chicago, IL)

I'm a minister from a different denomination and I think Mr. Armstrong preaches a lot of truth. I'd really like to subscribe to your PLAIN TRUTH magazine.

G.S. (Belleville, IL)

Mr. Armstrong says things that other ministers are not saying. I'm a young minister and I've been in this occupation for only two years. Would you please send me anything you can that would help us. I am the associate pastor of a small congregation of 25.  
J.H. (Florida)

I am a minister and The PLAIN TRUTH looks like it would provide excellent sermon material.

C.W. (Jeanerette, LA)

I am preparing my Sunday morning sermon from Mr. Armstrong's broadcast this morning.

J.G. (Miami, FL)

--Richard Rice, Mail Processing Center

#### NEW HEADQUARTERS TELEPHONE SYSTEM

A new telephone system has been purchased and installed on the Pasadena Campus. Therefore a new number for the campus has been assigned by the Pacific Telephone Company.

The new number is (213) 304-6000. This replaces (213) 577-5000.

The 800 service has not been changed--it remains (800) 423-4464 for ministerial use and (800) 423-4444 for the Telephone Response/Mail Processing Center requests.

We will be announcing some further changes in our telephone usage in the near future. Please bear with us during this time of change.

--Fred Gilreath, Communications

#### ON THE WORLD SCENE

HOW THE GHOST OF VIETNAM PARALYZES AMERICA After a lull, El Salvador has leapt into the news again. Recent guerrilla successes in the field against an El Salvadoran army that evidently lacks both the necessary skill and will to fight effectively have prompted renewed requests for military aid for El Salvador by a concerned President Reagan.

What brought the Central American problem to the crisis stage is a grim report given to the President by U.N. Ambassador Jeane J. Kirkpatrick. Last month Mrs. Kirkpatrick toured the embattled region, receiving information firsthand from leaders in the countries involved that things were going from bad to worse. (She was later hooted off the stage at the University of California, Berkeley, for giving her assessment of the situation.)

As a result of the ambassador's visit, President Reagan unveiled a request to Congress for 110 million dollars in emergency military aid and 67

million in economic assistance. At the same time, the President outlined U.S. Central American policy in a March 10, 1983 speech before the National Association of Manufacturers in Washington. In it, Mr. Reagan said:

I know a good many people wonder why we should care about whether Communist governments come into power in Nicaragua, El Salvador or other such countries as Costa Rica and Honduras, Guatemala and the islands of the Caribbean....

People who make these arguments haven't taken a good look at a map lately or followed the extraordinary buildup of Soviet and Cuban military power in the region or read the Soviets' discussions about why the region is important to them and how they intend to use it. It isn't nutmeg that's at stake in the Caribbean and Central America; it is the United States' national security.

Soviet military theorists want to destroy our capacity to resupply Western Europe in case of an emergency. They want to tie down our attention and forces on our own southern border and so limit our capacity to act in more distant places such as Europe, the Persian Gulf, the Indian Ocean, the Sea of Japan....

We've been slow to understand that the defense of the Caribbean and Central America against a Marxist-Leninist takeover is vital to our national security in ways we're not accustomed to thinking about.

The U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT for March 21, 1983 summarized the concerns of the President--not shared by many members of Congress--in this fashion:

Behind the Salvadoran struggle, Reagan believes, is a Communist threat "aimed at the very heart of the Western Hemisphere and eventually at us." At stake, in the President's view, are the vital sea-lanes of the Panama Canal, the Caribbean and the Gulf of Mexico, through which pass half of U.S. imports, including large quantities of oil. The region, Reagan believes, constitutes this country's "fourth border" and is of strategic importance for resupplying Western Europe in case of an emergency.

Equally central to the Reagan policy is a fear that victory by the insurgents in El Salvador would expose the governments of other Central American countries, including oil-rich Mexico, to similar subversion.

Echoing the President's concern is Secretary of Defense Casper Weinberger. On at least two occasions recently, Secretary Weinberger has expressed his view that the ultimate aim of the Soviets in the Western Hemisphere is to bring revolution right up to the southern border of the United States. This will cause the U.S., he says, to bring military forces back from Western Europe and Asia in order to defend the national integrity of the United States. Europe and Asia would then be exposed to the full military and political leverage of the Soviets.

After the West German elections, Moscow probably realizes that the "main front" in Europe will not be broken for some time. Hence, now is the time to probe Western--meaning mainly U.S.--weaknesses in other vital, but sub-

ordinate areas. This reminds one of the famous article written by the former U.S. ambassador to the Soviet Union, George F. Kennan, who was the principal thinker behind President Harry Truman's post-war "containment" policy. The U.S., wrote Kennan in 1947 (in an article in FOREIGN AFFAIRS magazine under the pseudonym "X") must oppose Soviet expansion

by the adroit and vigilant application of counterforce at a series of constantly shifting geographical and political points, corresponding to the shifts and maneuvers of Soviet policy.

This shifting and maneuvering has never stopped. But America has seemingly grown weary of the struggle. Many cannot see that there even is a struggle still under way--and that it's getting dangerously close to home.

And of course, President Reagan finds himself face to face with the paralyzing ghost of Vietnam, which in essence says that it is useless for the United States to resist "national liberation" movements in other countries and areas. It makes little difference whether the revolutions are communist-supported or not; they are usually rationalized by liberals as being "just." This reasoning, of course, provides a clear path to the enemy, even though in most cases it may start out from a weak position. As the March 21, 1983 U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT analyzes the relatively small (6,000 men) revolutionary force in El Salvador:

For all their recent success, the insurgents do not claim victory. Their stated objective, they say, is not to defeat the Salvadoran Army on the battlefield, but to force its disintegration through loss of morale and will to fight. [Breaking the enemy's will to resist is the aim of all warfare.]

Vital as U.S. military aid may be for El Salvador's Army, in the end its success or failure will depend even more on whether the troops can be convinced that they are in a conflict worth fighting--and winning.

President Reagan's critics in Congress are urging him to put pressure on the El Salvadoran government to negotiate with the rebels--despite the fact that the rebels, fully aware of their numerical disadvantage, repeatedly reject such offers. Congressional and House liberals continue to view the conflict in El Salvador as a home-grown "civil war" and one isolated to that nation only. They reject all warnings of a "domino theory" in Central America despite the fact that the domino theory did indeed become reality in Southeast Asia (the toppling of Laos and Cambodia along with South Vietnam).

Those paralyzed by the ghost of Vietnam were surprised, but probably not dissuaded when on March 13, El Salvador's leftist guerrillas declared they were "proud" of their ties to Cuba and Nicaragua and admitted they were part of a regional struggle. Their boast was reported over our UPI wire in a dispatch from San Salvador:

The statement by the rebels' clandestine Radio Venceremos [Victory] appeared to be a tacit acceptance of charges made by captured guerrilla chief Arquimedes Antonio Canada, interviewed in a government television program last week....

"We are and will continue to be friends of the people and governments of Cuba and Nicaragua and we're not ashamed of it. To the contrary, it makes us proud to maintain relations with these nations," [Radio] Venceremos said.

"We've armed our forces...through all routes that we could and for this we have used all of Central America and other countries," the radio said.... "Our war is and will continue to be national, but...we view our plans in the framework of a regional conflict in which there are interests of the people of Central America, the Caribbean and Latin America."

In this light, it was interesting to see Cuba's Fidel Castro arriving at the recent non-aligned nations conference in New Delhi, India aboard a private jet belonging to the Soviet airline, Aeroflot. Of even more significance were the two men traveling with him, the leftist leaders of Grenada and Surinam (formerly Dutch Guiana).

Times have indeed changed since the United States, possessing the military advantage, forced the Soviets to withdraw missiles from Cuba in October, 1962. Now it's Moscow that's issuing the ultimatums. Just yesterday, Georgi Arbatov, the Kremlin's chief "americanologist" departed from his usual soft words to warn Washington that the Soviets will install new missiles "near American borders" if the U.S. deploys advanced Pershing 2 and cruise missiles in Europe. Most observers felt "near American borders" referred either to some place in the Caribbean/Central American region or possibly in far eastern Siberia, near Alaska.

The curse of Vietnam, which crushed America's pride in its power (Leviticus 26:19) stalks the halls of Congress and the corridors of editorial offices all over America! The lead article in moderate-liberal THE NEW REPUBLIC of March 28, 1983 analyzed this crippling paralysis as follows:

Damn Vietnam. It is now entering its third decade of interference with America's perception of America's interest.... Mr. Reagan assures us that "there is no parallel whatsoever with Vietnam,"...[yet] the press and the pundits address themselves portentously to the collective memory. "Why Are We in Vietnam?" asks Anthony Lewis [of the NEW YORK TIMES] about El Salvador....

Naturally it is difficult for us to escape the encrustations of the recent past. Vietnam will continue for many years to weigh like a nightmare upon the foreign policy of the living. But we must make our foreign policy in a waking state. The task before the American government is not simply to stay out of Vietnam. It is to provide security for the United States in a manner that will not preclude social justice in El Salvador.

The endurance of the Salvadoran insurgency has persuaded many Americans, commentators and Congressmen, that it is time for negotiations. The most commonly espoused goal of such negotiations is "power-sharing." Now, if there is one thing in the world that Leninists do not do, it is share power. How many revolutions will have to ruin how many countries before this is clear?...

All is not lost, however. The institutions of democracy in Central America are uncertain, but the idea of democracy is not. The Salvadoran elections last March are proof.... Nobody is suggesting the use of American troops, because American troops are not necessary for the job. But some projection of American power is.

But what kind of power projection, and how much? One thing is certain, the communists will insert just enough power, always a grade or two more than America's, to ensure victory for their side.

One gets the distinct impression that, like in Vietnam, the U.S. will act haltingly, half-heartedly, fearfully--unsure of itself and of public opinion on the home front--until El Salvador and other dominoes to its north, south and east eventually topple one by one. If--or when--this indeed occurs, just think of the millions of refugees who will flee their communist "liberators"--all seeking asylum in the United States. Hundreds of thousands are already here. Just go to downtown Los Angeles and see such signs as Cafe Salvadorena and Restaurante Nicaraguena!

Truly a national calamity of immense proportions awaits the United States from the ferment in its "soft underbelly."

--Gene H. Hogberg, News Bureau