

PASTOR GENERAL'S REPORT

TO THE MINISTRY OF THE
WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD



VOL. 5, NO. 36

PASADENA, CALIFORNIA

SEPTEMBER 9, 1983

REPORT FROM THE TREASURER'S OFFICE

In August the percentage of increase dropped a little from the previous two months to 10.2%. This brings the year-to-date figure down slightly from 12.5% for the previous two months to 12.2%. By comparison, last year at this time we were coming out of a bad slump and had a good August with a 27.3% increase, making the year-to-date increase a 9.8%. Right now we are at one of the two low points of the year for our reserves. We are a little above last year and about the same as we were in 1981. The Feast offerings should increase the balances considerably by the time of my next report.

A week ago Wednesday we had a visit by the Chief Executive Officer of Wells Fargo Bank. (At present this is our major bank, and it is one of the largest banks in the U.S.) With him were the regional vice president and the local branch manager, who is also a vice president. They met with Mr. Armstrong, Aaron Dean, Gerald Seelig (who manages our cash and banking area) and myself. This was a fine get-acquainted visit. They are very pleased with our business relationship and want it to thrive, just as we do.

I hope all of you have a very inspiring and profitable Feast. My wife and I are looking forward to our first international Feast. As you may know, we will be in Australia. In addition to visiting the office and three festival sites, we expect to visit the Auckland and Manila offices and churches.

--Leroy Neff, Treasurer

FROM MINISTERIAL SERVICES

Remind the Brethren to Buckle Up!

Can you believe that only 10% of the drivers in Southern California use their seat belts while driving? This startling estimate is the result of a recent study by the National Safety Council. Could this percentage hold true for the general membership of God's Church? Hopefully not.

During this fall festival season when driving is at an annual peak for the brethren, we would like you to encourage members to use their seat belts. Contrary to some maverick opinions, seat belts DO save lives and prevent much bodily injury. It is the rare situation where use of a seat belt causes added injury or other problems.

At the same time please remind the brethren not to drive when overly tired or sleepy. Emphasize especially that they should not drive all night. Each of us must take seriously the God-given responsibility for the protection of the lives and bodies of our families and other passengers. Since the slow destruction of one's body through smoking, excessive use of alcohol or drug abuse is a sin, is it any less of a sin to destroy it quickly by taking careless and irresponsible risks?

Let's all do our part to prevent accidents that can not only mar our enjoyment of the Feast this year, but also our bodies for the rest of our lives.

**** TO BE READ TO ALL CONGREGATIONS ****

Family Togetherness at the Feast of Tabernacles

Throughout the year family members of God's Church tend to become separated by the demands of jobs, schools, and other daily responsibilities and activities. But God's Feast of Tabernacles is a time for families to draw closer together as we worship Him.

Accordingly, it would only seem natural for parents and their children to want to sit together in services as they listen to God's ministers preach from His Word. Parents should therefore take the lead in making sure that their teens and younger children sit with them.

Of course, it would be fine for the teens or younger children to sit with their friends occasionally, provided that the parents of the friends are also there. However, unsupervised teens should not sit together in groups, as this takes away from their attention to the messages and prevents family togetherness. Other problems have resulted from this practice in the past--problems which parents and teens should be striving to avoid this year by sitting together.

When we come before God as a family, He will bless us individually and as a family. This is because worshipping God in this way glorifies the One who created family life for a great purpose. Let's do everything we can during this festival season to draw our families together!

NOTICE TO ALL MINISTERS

Mr. James Talmadge Lee and Mr. Joseph Soley are dis-fellowshipped. Mr. Lee is approximately 45 years old, a Caucasian and is from the Baker, Oregon Church area. Mr. Soley is approximately 43 years old, a Black originally from the Grand Cayman Islands, and is from the Toronto, Canada Church area. In the event that Mr. Lee should appear in your area, it is imperative that you immediately contact Mr. Jeff McGowan or Mr. David Mills for more detailed information. Should Mr. Soley appear in your area, immediately contact Mr. Richard Pinelli. Church rules regarding disfellowshipped members should be stringently enforced in both cases. (This notice is not to be read to your congregations.)

Comments From Monthly Church Reports

LONG BEACH (EAST-WEST), CA--LES McCOLM: I never cease to be amazed at the understanding these new babes have. The articles Mr. Armstrong and others are writing are educating them much faster. As her first question, one young mother asked where we keep the Feast of Tabernacles. I am currently counseling with eleven PMs for baptism. We are also seeing several "third-generation Christians" coming along very well in studying and preparing for baptism.

MIAMI, FL--AL KERSHA: We continue to have improved responses to God's witness in this area. More people are calling, writing and wanting visits from the ministry of God's Church. The combined effects of TV, radio, PT newsstands and Public Bible Lectures are producing some encouraging fruits. It certainly brings stimulation and excitement to our local area.

COLUMBUS, GA--OTTO LOCHNER: God is surely granting growth to this area. The TV and radio programs are causing people to start acting. Many four- and five-year PMs are beginning to act who had not in the past. Mr. Armstrong is (with God's Word) digging, dunging and trimming up some of these hard-shelled, Bible-belt religionists.

ROSEBURG, OR--STUART SEGALL: We baptized a man who remembers Mr. Armstrong visiting, counseling and anointing his parents when he was just a boy. Smoking for 35 years held him back, but he overcame it and now he and his wife are members.

PITTSBURGH, PA--DON LAWSON: This was a very good month. The greatest and most rewarding event to ever happen for the Pittsburgh area was having the opportunity to host Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong's visit recently. It was like a one-day F.O.T. with about 5,000 brethren attending. Everyone--many seeing Mr. Armstrong in person for the first time--was greatly inspired and appreciative of his message.

HOOD RIVER, OR--BRYAN HOYT: The brethren are very excited about the upcoming Feast in Eugene. They are especially looking forward to seeing and hearing from Mr. Armstrong and celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Church. Needless to say, there have been very few transfer requests--everyone, it seems, wants to go to Eugene!

EUGENE, OR--LEONARD SCHREIBER: Most are very excited about the upcoming Feast and very willing to help. Nearly everyone is working now. Attitudes overall are very positive. We are regrouping in our PT distribution efforts in order to try to prevail over the vandalism and resistance in the area.

NORFOLK, VA--EDWARD FAULK: The brethren are very positive about the Work of God, Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong and the Headquarters team. They are especially pleased with the dynamic articles in The GOOD NEWS and The PLAIN TRUTH. All are looking forward to the feast days and the joy of hearing our Pastor General.

YANKTON, SD--GEORGE AFFELDT: Mr. Armstrong's tape was very much appreciated by everyone. It shows that God does use him in a very powerful way in filling the needs of the local churches. He gives the correction and encouragement that is needed, and makes it so plain in many ways. We would all like to hear from him more.

PASADENA (AUDITORIUM PM), CA--ROBIN WEBBER: It seems that brethren in Pasadena are truly seeking ways, in their own personal lives, to "come out of the world," as Mr. Armstrong exhorts. We have had very positive feedback from brethren on Mr. Armstrong's sermon on make-up. Many feel it has been the most inspired, clearest definition of sin (and its intent) ever given.

TOLEDO, OH--GEORGE KACKOS: Mr. Waterhouse's visit was greeted with a lot of enthusiasm. After his message, numerous members surrounded him and listened intently to further remarks. Such enthusiasm for God's Work has helped the brethren strongly support Mr. Armstrong and the activities of the Church. As one man said, "Mr. Waterhouse conveys real vision and understanding of God's government that really inspires you to work hard to be part of the team."

DETROIT (WEST), MI--RAY WOOTEN: Mr. Waterhouse gave the brethren a big boost. He was more enthusiastic than ever. With the economic conditions and other problems, this was a real spiritual lift for the area. The principles shown in Mr. Armstrong's sermon were very poignant and helpful to everyone. The brethren appreciate seeing and/or hearing from God's Apostle any time. PM activity continues to be very good. This is stimulating to the brethren.

INDEPENDENCE, KS--VINCE SZYMKOWIAK: I wish to express my appreciation to Headquarters for the diligent effort made to keep us in the local areas informed about the news of the Work. The PGR is so helpful; I read highlights from it to the brethren on the Sabbath and at Bible studies. They hunger for news of the Work and are inspired by the reports of progress that God is granting. The monthly letter from the PT newsstand department and other memos serve to keep us informed and help us improve the quality of our work.

AMARILLO, TX--JAMES M. O'BRIEN: The Y.E.S. program is showing phenomenal potential. Many parents are alarmed at the poor level of academics in the public school system and are motivated to spend more time at home teaching their children the Scriptures. The students are learning the Scriptures and making academic gains at school as a result!

CLARKSBURG, WV--DAVID JOHNSON: The almost total healing of a little girl who should have died in a serious fall (40 feet) has been a great encouragement to everyone. Her entire family is well known, so everyone is well aware of what a miracle it has been.

--Joe Tkach, Ministerial Services

Y.O.U. UPDATEY.E.S. Progress Report

The Youth Opportunities United office in Pasadena has received many positive comments concerning the Youth Bible Lessons, as well as a number of questions about the overall progress of the Y.E.S. program, Evaluation Meetings and schedules for the upcoming academic year. We hope to answer many of those questions in this report.

The Youth Educational Services program is based on a monthly Bible Correspondence Course for children ages 5-13. The course, when completed, will comprise nine different grade levels of 12 lessons each (plus the Fall and Spring festival editions of each level). They are written specifically with the vocabulary and comprehension of each level in mind.

Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong, who is very interested in the education of the Church's youth, has established the goals and purposes for the Y.E.S. program. This education program is by far the most important aspect of Y.O.U. and is designed to teach children the who, what, when, where, why and how of the Bible. Mr. Armstrong feels that the Youth Bible Lessons are vitally important tools to aid parents in instructing their children in the basic principles of Christian living.

The Y.E.S. program has been growing rapidly. Youth Bible Lessons are presently mailed to over 75 different countries around the world. Estimates for 1983 show that we will have printed over 500,000 copies of the lessons. The course is scheduled to be completed during the 1983-84 academic year.

Y.E.S. Academic Year

We have recently started a new academic year for the Y.E.S. program in the Northern Hemisphere. It began in August with lesson 1 and will continue through to the following July with lesson 12. Those who receive the lessons in the Southern Hemisphere will begin the academic year in January with lesson 1 and continue through to December with lesson 12. The two festival issues are mailed just prior to the Spring and Fall Holy Day seasons.

After a child has received lesson 12, he or she is automatically advanced to the next level before receiving lesson 1 at the start of the next academic year. Children who are considered NONChurch youth will receive a renewal notice in May (Northern Hemisphere) and must reply by July in order to continue their enrollment in the program. For the Southern Hemisphere, a renewal notice will be mailed in October and a reply is needed by December. (Currently there are over 2,500 nonChurch youths enrolled.)

Evaluation Meetings

The Pastor is responsible for seeing that a monthly Y.E.S. Evaluation Meeting is held for all levels of the course. The time of month the meetings are held should allow for the children to receive and study their lessons beforehand. These meetings are not to be conducted during the Sabbath service, and lessons should be completed at home with parental help and guidance before the child attends the Evaluation Meeting. However, the child should be allowed to attend the Evaluation Meeting if he has not completed his lesson.

An Evaluation Meeting consists of children enrolled in the Y.E.S. program meeting together, in a classroom situation, under the supervision of an evaluator. The curriculum for the meeting is based upon the currently completed Youth Bible Lessons for that month.

The meetings should be conducted by adults, chosen by the pastor, who are deeply converted and "apt to teach" (I Tim. 3:2). Also, it is suggested that women who are chosen to conduct the meetings should evaluate levels one through four or five. Men who are selected to conduct the meetings should evaluate levels five or six through nine. This follows the policy set by Mr. Armstrong for teaching students at Imperial Schools.

The organization of these meetings depends upon the facilities available and the number of youths involved in the program. Because some areas have several children in the program, all levels need not meet on the same Sabbath or at the same time of day. Where it is practical, some levels may be combined. The time limit of the meetings can be varied to meet the age and needs of the children.

During the Evaluation Meetings, the evaluator is to discuss with the class the main points of the lesson. The evaluators may ask questions about the lesson to prompt discussion from the class, or give comments to further clarify facts and principles for the children's understanding. Many of the discussion topics can be derived from the lessons themselves--such as story flow, questions, pictures, etc. The evaluator may also introduce other information or activities relative to the lesson if it is helpful and needed. All added information or extra activities must be approved by the church pastor prior to initiation. (If there is a question, please contact the Y.O.U./Y.E.S. office and we will be happy to help.) The meetings should not have a "Sunday school" flavor and God's Sabbath must be respected in every way.

The Bible Memory sections of the lessons should be memorized by the child and recited during the Evaluation Meetings. If a child/parent finds the memory work too difficult, or he has not had time to complete it, the child may continue working on it at home before attempting it again.

The completed lessons are to be collected by the evaluator, checked, and returned to the children the following Sabbath. A record of completed lessons and memorization work should be maintained by the evaluator.

The use of a star chart is a good motivational device to encourage younger children to complete their work. Also, a bonus star may be given for exceptional memory work. Stickers with various encouraging statements, scents or different colored stars can be placed on the lessons themselves for the child to take home. The star chart may also be displayed in the Church library.

Awards and Certificates

At the end of each academic year, awards or certificates may be given to the children in recognition of their completion of the year's program and their advancement to the next level. Certificates should be awarded by the Pastor and can be presented during the sermonette portion of one Sabbath service, or as a portion of a Bible study.

Plans are underway to produce an official Y.E.S. certificate for the children by the end of the 1983-84 Y.E.S. academic year. Until then, certificates may be made in the local church area for use in that particular church. The professional reproduction and use of the Y.O.U. and Y.E.S. seals by local churches is prohibited, although the children themselves may draw them.

More information will be provided in the near future concerning the Y.E.S. program. Thank you very much for your loyal support and participation. We look forward to your comments, questions, and suggestions.

--Kevin O. Dean, Y.O.U./Y.E.S.

UPDATE FROM MAIL PROCESSING

S.E.P. Building Fund Reaches \$150,000

Response to Mr. Armstrong's co-worker letter in which he mentioned S.E.P. building needs has been overwhelming! Because of the generosity and support of members and co-workers, the total amount received has now reached \$150,000--three times what Mr. Armstrong wrote would be needed. A number of this year's campers have written in commenting on how valuable the S.E.P. experience has been to them. One said it was like a "mini-Feast of Tabernacles." Another summed it up by saying, "It's the greatest place on earth!"

Copies of THE BIBLE STORY--Vol. II for the Ministry

Normally, all new literature is mailed to the ministry by first class mail. However, since postage rates are determined by weight, costs to mail THE BIBLE STORY would be considerable. Therefore, we would appreciate your picking up your personal copy of THE BIBLE STORY--Volume II at the Feast of Tabernacles. You should have already received a claim check for the book with your Holy Day Offering envelopes. Thanks very much for your understanding.

Telecast Replaces Sunday Church Services for Many

Viewers from other churches often mention that "The WORLD TOMORROW" program either supplements or completely replaces their regular church attendance. Some, for one reason or another, are unable to attend church, while others have come to realize that Mr. Armstrong teaches truths not addressed by other ministers. The telecast clearly satisfies a thirst many have for spiritual knowledge. Following are some of the comments we have received from such people.

I do not go to church now but I did when I was a child. My mother always gave us children a dime as our offering and we dutifully put it in the basket that was passed around. What bothers me is that the churches (and there were many different ones that we visited) never told about tithes the way you explained it in your magazine.

I am amazed and pleasantly surprised to find your magazine so frank and that it explains without criticizing. I am proud to discuss God with my friends and co-workers when I have your very truthful magazine to back me up on sticky points. Most (if not all) of the people and churches around me celebrate Christmas,

birthdays and all the other pagan holidays and it's appalling to me to be doing this in God's name. So instead of going to church, I read your magazine and watch your program on Sunday morning as my "church."

J.J. (Mena, AR)

I listen to your broadcast with great interest. You have told me things I never knew before. You say many times that churches do not preach such information about the Kingdom of God. You are so right. Certainly we hear of the many kind and loving works of Jesus. But they miss the main point--the reason Jesus came. I turn to your program for that.

I have been lax in the past about attending church. I always meant to go, but never did. Now I make it a point to attend every week, but without your program I do not feel I get a complete picture of Christianity as Jesus meant it.

J.T. (George AFB, CA)

We enjoy your programs on WMCA and WOR radio every night and also on Channel 9 TV. These messages are a godsend to us, as we are senior citizens. We get more from them than from going to our church on Sunday. I'm blind, and it is so hard to travel a long distance in cold weather. Also, my husband likes The PLAIN TRUTH and your small booklets.

F.S. (Woodside, NY)

I enjoy your TV programs. I go to church, but every other Sunday I stay home because I want to hear your programs. I like all of your literature. I tell all my friends to listen to you each week. Maybe I will give up going to church because I receive a lot more from you. I am glad you are on TV. You are the best.

C.K. (Largo, FL)

I watch you as often as I can. I like you better than most preachers. I find it very hard to choose a church, because most preachers are dishonest. Instead of going to church, I often wake up early on Sunday morning and watch you. Whatever you talk about on your program I know that you aren't lying because I can read the Bible to find the same thing. I hope you can continue to inspire other people as much as you do me.

S.B. (Atlanta, GA)

I strongly believe in what you are preaching, and pray that more people will begin to believe also. I watch your program on Sunday mornings. A lot of times I'll watch your program instead of going to church. In my church they just don't preach the things they should (in my opinion, anyway). I've been going there off and on all my life (I'm 25 now) and I can't ever recall them once talking about the book of Revelation or the soon coming of Christ. That's what I want to hear about. I don't know of any church in this town that discusses these things, but I sure wish there were. I'm not able to go out of town so I listen to your program on TV.

S.W. (Fostoria, OH)

--Richard Rice, Mail Processing Center

ON THE WORLD SCENETHE KOREAN AIRLINER TRAGEDY AND ITS LINK
TO A UNITED EUROPE; "WE'RE ALL THE SAME, RIGHT?"

After five days of implicit denials, the Soviet government has acknowledged that one of its Far East-based fighter planes shot down a South Korean airliner last Thursday morning resulting in the deaths of 269 passengers and crew. Authorities in Moscow, however, insisted that its anti-aircraft defense command operated within its prescribed role of defending Soviet airspace against all unauthorized aircraft.

At the same time, the cornered Kremlin, trying to mount a counter-attack against mounting worldwide criticism, stepped up its harsh criticism of President Reagan, who had denounced the barbarous act on a nationwide televised address Monday evening. A report circulated by the Soviet Union's TASS news agency called Mr. Reagan "ignorant" and said his speech amounted to a "torrent of rude abuses and slander" imbued with "pathological anti-communism."

According to all logical accounts of the disaster the unarmed Korean Air Lines plane had wandered off course, drifting over Soviet territory north of Japan, an area which contains strategic Soviet naval and air bases, such as those at Vladivostok and Sovetskaya-Gaven, main facilities for the 820 ships of the Soviet Pacific Fleet. Soviet officials from Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko on down justified their country's action by claiming that the airliner, in addition to its normal functions, was collecting intelligence information for the United States C.I.A.

Reflecting the paramount--indeed paranoic--concern for secure borders, the official Communist Party daily, PRAVDA, announced coldly: "We will not allow our borders to be violated, and we know how to defend them. Let no one have any doubts on this. Any provocation must and will be duly repulsed. Otherwise things might go too far: Today they are sending planes into our territory, tomorrow missiles could follow."

What is likely to be the short- and long-term impact of the grim disaster? Short-term, very little. President Reagan's hands appear pretty well tied. For example, the new five-year grain deal with Moscow, inked only six days prior to the incident, will go on, embarrassingly. Mr. Reagan's TV address was tough--but that's about all. Said one editorial writer: "He did no more than pelt the swaggering offender with the adjectives of pious outrage." Said another: "Adjectives break no bones."

The fact is, the detente-based policy of the late 1960s and 1970s to so "enmesh" the Soviet Union in the affairs of the West that its policies would be "moderated" has once again been shown for what it is--a failure. The U.S.S.R. will always put two principles ahead of any advantageous links to the West: (1) national defense and maintaining territorial integrity, and (2) the attempt to spread its political influence around the world wherever possible, searching out opportunities where they present themselves. This justifies the validity and "historical imperative" of Marxism. It will always probe Western weaknesses, avoiding strength. The threats of embargoes and technology cut-offs do not alter the pre-eminence of these two factors.

The fallacy of the "linkage policy" was explained by Josef Joffe in the September 1, 1983 WALL STREET JOURNAL, one day before the Korean plane was shot from the sky:

From the late 1960s onward, the West...[calculated] that money would buy influence over the East. Together, the nations of the Western Alliance would enmesh the Soviet Union in trade and technology ties, credit lines and arms-control agreements. Having acquired a stake in cooperation, Moscow would behave according to Western standards--like any reasonable power that values peace and prosperity more than aggrandizement. The Kremlin, so the "linkage theory" went, would not risk the horn of capitalist plenty for a quick geopolitical grab here or there....

A dozen years later, our hopes have not blossomed into reality. The Soviets did not live up to our "good conduct code" in Angola, Ethiopia and Afghanistan. Where they faced concentrated Western power (as in Europe) they behaved with prudence; where Western commitments were neither clear nor backed by force, they acted as great powers always do: with opportunism and risk taking....

Nor could the West do what "linkage" required.... Western... governments depend on the consent of the governed. Hence firms and farmers do not yield gladly to control from above, which is absolutely indispensable for a political trade policy. "Linkage" requires the freedom to cut links. That freedom is heavily constrained by vested economic interests, the prospect of lost jobs and the pains of structural adjustment.

In other words, Western interests (such as American farmers or manufacturers of gas pipeline laying equipment) have more to lose from a suspension of links to the Soviets than do the latter.

The Intriguing Long-term Possibility

One thing the crude Soviet act has done: mute the voices of President Reagan's critics who claimed that he had embarked on a new "cold war" crusade against the Soviets. Also, the wind may have been taken out of the sails, temporarily at least, of the "peace movement" in Western Europe. The Soviets had been cleverly using elements within the movement to get the idea across that the U.S.S.R. was all peace-loving and that America was the major threat to world peace--especially by pushing ahead on the NATO plan to upgrade nuclear missiles in Western Europe.

TIME magazine, in its September 12 cover story, "Atrocity in the Skies," concluded its account as follows:

In the U.S., the Soviets' rash act certainly strengthens military hard-liners and gives Reagan an even better chance to win final congressional approval for deploying the MX missile while limiting U.S. concessions in arms-control talks. [U.S. Senator] Jesse Helms made the point well in discussing the Soviets with conservative colleagues in Seoul last week. Said he: "This is the best chance we ever had to paint these b..... into a corner."

Actually, the painting has already been done. It is a nasty self-portrait that shatters the reasonable image that the Soviets

have been trying to project as part of their peace offensive to block deployment of U.S. cruise and Pershing II missiles in Europe. For a nation so profoundly insecure as the Soviet Union, the public relations debacle resulting from someone's decision to shoot to kill was a terrible setback....

Thus, the NATO plan to begin deploying the first nine Pershing II's in West Germany this December will probably be held to schedule, regardless of what peace activists--who have promised a "hot October" of protest--are able to do in the streets and at missile sites. Either that, or there will be a serious break between "hawkish" America and "dovish" Europe.

The Soviets, paranoically concerned about security, are extremely fearful of the new NATO weapons. The Pershing II's will be able to reach Soviet soil in only seven or eight minutes flying time. The cruise missiles, while taking about two hours, will be extremely difficult, well-nigh impossible, to detect, flying low under radar detection.

Moscow also doesn't like utterances from high officials in Western Europe (Mrs. Thatcher and Franz Josef Strauss, to name two) that European host-nations should have a dual key on the new U.S.-made weapons, in contradistinction to past policy whereby there was only a U.S. hand on NATO's older-generation nuclear weapons. The very thought of Germany having such access inspires dread in the Kremlin.

Should the missiles indeed be deployed, the whole rationale of the Soviet defense network in Eastern Europe would begin to fade. The East Bloc "buffer zone" would be virtually rendered null-and-void by advanced nuclear technology. With this in mind, here again are the chief paragraphs of the article, "Russia May Opt for Unity of Germany," published in the PASTOR GENERAL'S REPORT of August 19, 1983. It came from the July 31, 1983 issue of THE OBSERVER in London. These words bear repeating.

Sources here [in Budapest, Hungary] say that the Russians are now working on a long-range strategic plan which will entail fundamental changes in their policies towards Eastern Europe and the West, including their past opposition to German reunification. The reason for this rethink, they say, is the recognition by the Soviet Union that the development of nuclear missiles has destroyed the rationale for maintaining the states of Eastern Europe as a "buffer" between Russia and the West. However loyal Poland and Hungary and the rest might be in a nuclear war, they could do nothing to prevent the annihilation of the Soviet Union....

Faced with the missile threat and more serious long-term risk of a hostile China, the Soviet leadership sees its security as lying in a combination of arms control agreements with the United States and political stabilization in Europe....

The Hungarians would not be surprised if among the offers from Moscow would be a striking one: the withdrawal of military forces from Eastern Europe in exchange of [sic] American forces withdrawing from Western Europe.

Thus, amazingly, the Korean airliner tragedy may well prove to be the "trigger" to propel a series of future events that will lead to the freeing-

up of the nations of Eastern Europe--and the emergence of the final prophesied ten-nation combine in Europe, with national components from both West/Central and Eastern Europe.

This Divided World

The latest Soviet action just might cause some people to see today's dangerous world a bit more realistically. Too many have engaged in "mirror-imaging," dangerously overlooking the obvious divisive factors of radically different national characteristics, cultures, values and ideologies among the world's nations. Commented the editors of the WALL STREET JOURNAL in their September 2 edition:

Why do we always assume that the Soviets are just like us? Where is the evidence to support such a belief? Would we find it in their slave labor camps?... In the use by Soviet soldiers of incendiary materials to burn to death 105 Afghan villagers trapped in an irrigation pipe? In the testing of poison gases (yellow rain) on Hmong villagers in Laos and on Afghans?

The die-hard apologists always answer that the American military has done some bad things, too, citing My Lai as a case in point. And indeed, the history of warfare is full of horrors, some committed by people who normally seem quite civilized. But surely we don't need to go into long relativistic debates about man's dual capacities for good and evil to discern that there are crucial differences between the U.S.S.R. and the U.S. On the face of present evidence, one of those differences is that the Soviet Union is fundamentally an armed camp, a place where the regular military and paramilitary KGB holds sway and do not flinch at purposeful killing.

Americans tend to view the world through glasses tinted with the American experience of liberal democracy, with its legal provisions for checks and balances, governed by the lofty principles of individual freedom and justice for all. Thus, despite the chasmic differences in this world's national characteristics, cultures and governments (even varying forms of democracy), Americans in general tend to hold to a rather simplistic and unrealistic view of the world--one that says: "We are all alike." Nothing could be further from the truth--in this world. Here are excerpts from a very interesting "Essay" in the August 15, 1983 issue of TIME magazine entitled "Deep Down, We're All Alike, Right? Wrong." The essay was written by Charles Krauthammer.

Solipsism is the belief that the whole world is me, and...its authentic version is not to be found outside mental institutions. What is to be found outside the asylum is its philosophic cousin, the belief that the whole world is like me. This species of solipsism--plural solipsism, if you like--is far more common because it is far less lonely. Indeed, it yields a very congenial world populated exclusively by creatures of one's own likeness, a world in which...KGB chiefs and Iranian ayatullahs are, well, folks just like us.

The mirror-image fantasy is not as crazy as it seems. Fundamentally, it is a radical denial of the otherness of others. Or

to put it another way, a blinding belief in "common humanity," in the triumph of human commonality over human differences.... Its central axiom is that if one burrows deep enough beneath the Mao jacket, the shapka or the chador, one discovers that people everywhere are essentially the same.... We all have "eyes, hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions." We are all "fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer." It follows, does it not, that we must all want the same things? According to Harvard cardiologist Bernard Lown, president of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, that's not just Shakespeare, it's a scientific fact: "Our aim is to promote the simple medical insight," he writes, "that Russian and American hearts are indistinguishable, that both ache for peace and survival."

Such breathtaking non sequiturs (cardiological or otherwise) are characteristic of plural solipsism.... If people everywhere, from Savannah to Sevastopol [in the U.S.S.R.], share the same hopes and dreams and fears and love of children (and good food), they should get along. And if they don't, then there must be some misunderstanding, some misperception, some problem of communication....

It is the broken telephone theory of international conflict and it suggests solution: repair service by the expert "facilitator".... Hence the...mania for mediators, the belief that the world's conundrums [puzzling problems] would yield to the right intermediary, the right presidential envoy.... Yet Iraq's Saddam Hussein and Iran's Ayatullah Khomeini, to take just two candidates for the Roger Fisher School of Conflict Resolution, have perfectly adequate phone service. They need only an operator to make the connection. Their problem is that they have very little to say to each other.

There are other consequences. If the whole world is like me, then certain conflicts become incomprehensible.... The more virulent pronouncements of Third World countries are dismissed as mere rhetoric. The more alien the sentiment, the less seriously it is taken....

When the Saudis finally make it unmistakably clear that they will support neither Camp David nor the Reagan plan nor the Lebanon accord, the U.S. reacts with consternation. It might have spared itself the surprise if it had not in the first place imagined that underneath those kaffiyehs are folks just like us, sharing our aims and views....

Ultimately to say that people all share the same hopes and fears, are all born and love and suffer and die alike, is to say very little. For it is after commonalities are accounted for that politics becomes necessary. It is only when values, ideologies, cultures and interests clash that politics even begins.

At only the most trivial level can it be said that people want the same things. Take peace. The North Vietnamese want it, but apparently they wanted to conquer all of Indochina first....

From where does the idea of a world of likes come? In part from a belief in universal brotherhood.... In part from a trendy ecological pantheism with its misty notions of the oneness of those sharing this lonely planet....

To gloss over contradictory interests, incompatible ideologies and opposing cultures as sources of conflict is more than anti-political. It is dangerous. Those who have long held a mirror to the world and seen only themselves are apt to be shocked and panicked when the mirror is removed, as inevitably it must be.

Thankfully, for the very preservation (Matt. 24:22) of the hopelessly divided and competing human race--wherein billions of human spirits clash--a select group of individuals is being called out of this world of "incompatible ideologies and opposing cultures." God's called-out ones are being trained in His universally-applicable way of life, based on His law of love, which will comprise the unifying culture of the World Tomorrow.

--Gene H. Hogberg, News Bureau

As a postscript, here is an intriguing article received over our Reuters news wire, datelined Tel Aviv, September 7 and entitled "Jewish New Year 5744 Spells Destruction in Hebrew Letters."

For Israelis preparing to celebrate the Jewish New Year which begins this evening, the ominous implications of 1984 are already here. In Hebrew, numbers are given letter equivalents, which mystic Jewish tradition has interpreted for omens. For the coming Jewish year 5744, the letters spell the word "Tashmad" or apocalyptic destruction. With Israeli soldiers still bogged down in Lebanon and Prime Minister Manachem Begin announcing he intends to resign, even secular Israelis believe "Tashmad" will be a difficult year.

Education and Culture Minister Zevulun Hammer earlier proposed switching the last two letters to avoid the year's unpleasant name, but government calendars have been issued with the fearful word. Radio commentators have been spelling out the letters to avoid pronouncing the full word and Israeli mystical experts, grasping for a comforting interpretation, say the year could mean the destruction of the enemies of the Jews.

Superstitious Jews note that the Hebrew letters for the Jewish year in 1938-39, on the eve of the Nazi holocaust of European Jewry, spelled "Murder." Some Israeli experts say George Orwell, who studied Jewish Kabbala mysticism, chose 1984 as the title of his futuristic book because he knew the year's letter equivalent according to the Jewish lunar calendar. (Literary experts generally say Orwell simply switched the last two numbers of the year he wrote the book--1948.)