

PASTOR GENERAL'S REPORT

TO THE MINISTRY OF THE
WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD



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REPORT FROM THE TREASURER'S OFFICE

1983 has come and gone, and I am sure you are interested in finding out how we did financially in the United States. But before telling you about the mail and holy day income for 1983, let me give you some information about the previous two years.

In 1981 we had a very nice increase of 17.1% over 1980. However, when this increase was adjusted for inflation, it was actually only about a 6.1% increase. In 1982 we finished the year with an 11.2% increase, but inflation cut this back to an actual increase of approximately 4.8%. We have just finished 1983 with approximately a 12% increase. When this is corrected for inflation, it was an actual increase of about 8.5%. From these figures it should be evident that 1983 was a good year and that it ended with more adjusted increase than either of the preceding two years and, in fact, was a better increase than we have had since 1969! We should all rejoice and be thankful to God for this increase.

Even though the increase was good, it was not quite as good as we had hoped it would be. The approximately 17% combined increase for September-October possibly caused us to be overly optimistic concerning November and December. Those two months dropped back considerably. Some may conclude that December is normally a low month and this should be expected. However, this reasoning does not take into account the fact that we are comparing the same period for the previous year. I realize that the severe weather, which affected income, and the postal system accounted in part for a lower than expected income for November and December. But, during this same time, retail sales around the nation were up considerably, apparently much more than the income for God's Church.

Even though we had a comparatively good year, the bank balances on December 30 were lower than a year ago. The lower balance is caused by several factors. We had an extra payroll that normally would have been paid in January, there were additional expenditures in some outside services, such as utilities, and higher than normal or expected year-end expenses. This, coupled with a lower-than-expected increase for November and December, brought the bank balances down. It is my opinion that it is very necessary that they be increased, and we are endeavoring to do our part in holding back expenses so that bank balances might increase.

We historically have had two very low points in bank balances during the year, which prior to 1979 were covered by temporary loans. Since we are not having such loans now, we have to have sufficient balances in the bank to cover these low points, and hopefully to cover any other temporary emergencies. In December we got into an unexpected low point because of the problems that I have already mentioned. We are determined to do all we can to prevent a crisis in this area.

Now, for 1984, we finally have a balanced budget, but it is a tight one. In order to have a balanced budget for 1984, it was necessary to set the budget income estimate higher than we would like.

This year, as was mentioned in previous issues of the PASTOR GENERAL'S REPORT, we are having to pay social security tax for most employees for the first time. The cost relating to this social security expense, either directly or indirectly, is about \$3.4 million. We have included an automatic pay increase for the employees who are affected; however, this increase will not adequately cover their additional expense. The fact is that the employees will have an effective decrease in income. This is especially going to be difficult for employees who must pay very high rent or housing costs, such as in the expensive Pasadena area. Hopefully, increased income above projections will permit us to make increases later to permit some relief for these employees.

It seems that in 1984 there are greater financial needs if we are to continue the present levels of activity in publishing, as well as radio and television. In addition, the support departments are also having increasing needs. Some departments, and I think especially of Ministerial Services, are badly in need of greater increases than can be granted in the budget. Our field ministers in the U.S. are stretched about as far as we can stretch them, and we need to employ more ministers. We have qualified graduates of the college who are elders, and we believe they are qualified to be employed as full-time ministers, but the present budget will not permit such new employment.

I hope all of you will pray that God will give us a considerable increase above what we have been experiencing so that these and other needs can be met.

--Leroy Neff, Treasurer

FROM MINISTERIAL SERVICES

Proposals for New Churches (United States)

In order to balance the U.S. Field Church budget for 1984, one of the items we had to cut out was funding for starting new churches. We are hoping the financial picture will be a little brighter by midyear. If so, we will try to have the budget for new churches restored at that time.

For the present, all plans for new churches need to be put on hold. If you have a proposal for a new church ready to send in, go ahead and submit it. We will keep it on file. When the budget for new churches is restored, we will review all the proposals on file and notify the pastors involved when the churches can be started.

If you feel there is a critical need for a new church that just cannot wait, please let us know. Perhaps an exception or two could be made.

New Telephone Area Code for Pasadena

On January 7th, 1984, the northern section of the greater Los Angeles area changed over to a new telephone area code to accommodate future growth in the phone system.

The Church and College numbers now have the new area code--818--which replaces 213, although both codes will be simultaneously operational for a transition period of nine months. All the actual telephone numbers remain unchanged; and there is no change at all in the Church's toll-free number.

Please start using the new area code immediately.

PREFIXES WITHIN NEW 818 AREA CODE

For your personal information, all phones having the following prefixes in the old 213 area code have now changed over to the new 818 area code:

240	308	352	442	574	762	795	886	912	980
241	330	353	443	575	763	796	887	913	981
242	331	354	444	576	764	797	888	914	982
243	332	355	445	577	765	798	889	915	983
244	333	356	446	578	766	799	890	917	984
246	334	357	447	579	767	---	891	918	985
247	335	358	448	---	768	810	892	919	986
248	336	359	449	700	769	812	893	951	987
249	337	360	---	701	780	814	894	952	988
280	338	361	500	702	781	840	895	953	989
281	339	362	501	703	782	841	896	954	990
282	340	363	502	704	783	842	897	956	991
284	341	364	503	705	784	843	898	957	992
285	342	365	504	706	785	845	899	960	993
286	343	366	505	707	786	846	---	961	994
287	344	367	506	708	787	847	901	962	995
288	345	368	507	709	788	848	902	963	996
289	346	369	508	710	789	880	903	964	997
---	347	---	509	715	790	881	904	965	998
300	348	400	570	716	791	882	905	966	999
303	349	401	571	717	792	883	906	967	
304	350	440	572	760	793	884	907	968	
307	351	441	573	761	794	885	908	969	

International News

Spanish Department Year-end Report During 1983, the subscription list of La PURA VERDAD reached an all-time high in August, when 197,144 subscribers were listed on the files. At the end of the year, circulation was slightly under the figure for the same time the year before (actually a six percent decrease). A total of 81,757 new subscribers were added in 1983--the second highest number for one year (exceeded only by 1982's 110,000).

Bible lectures for La PURA VERDAD subscribers were conducted in 15 cities in 10 countries, with a total of 3,767 people attending. This was 11.5% of those invited.

Due to an overwhelming response to an offer of The GOOD NEWS to Bible correspondence course students, the number of subscribers to the GN went up

from 2,320 to 11,808 by the end of the year! Growth in the number of co-workers and donors has been strong since 1980 and has continued in 1983, with donors up by six percent and co-workers by 30%.

Church and Bible study attendance averaged 1,503 in 21 churches and five outlying Bible studies in 10 countries. Total membership now numbers 972 and represents a 6.2% increase over 1982. During the year 64 baptisms were conducted in 13 countries. Currently 20 ministers serve the Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking areas.

During the past year, four new CC lessons, four new reprint articles, five booklets and two books were translated by the Spanish Department editorial area in addition to the regular issues of the magazines. Also, three booklets and two reprint articles were translated into Portuguese. At this time, there are 14 pieces of literature available in Portuguese.

End-of-year Report From Germany The activities of God's Church in the German-speaking area experienced record growth during the year just ended. At the beginning of 1983, the German PLAIN TRUTH (KLAR & WAHR) list stood at 106,000 subscribers. At the end of December it had reached 200,000. During 1983, a total of 143,000 new requests for subscriptions arrived at the Bonn office, 121,317 of which were for the German PLAIN TRUTH and the rest for other languages.

Most of the requests for subscriptions came as a result of advertising. One ad with a reply postcard in the November German and Swiss READER'S DIGEST (total circulation of 1.5 million) brought in 28,790 requests.

Another ad, with only a reply coupon, appeared on the back cover of the German Automobile Club's January 1984 issue of their magazine, ADAC MOTORWELT (circulation seven million). Published in the closing days of 1983, this has already brought in over 20,000 responses. In past years the record for responses from one ad was 24,000 from DER SPIEGEL. The new ad in ADAC MOTORWELT may possibly double that! It is the largest piece of advertising ever placed by the German office and will reach one quarter of all West German households.

The increase in income for 1983 stands at about 20.7% over 1982. Thirteen hundred new donors and 550 new co-workers were added last year, so this looks favorable for 1984. Holy day offerings were up 45% in 1983. The German GOOD NEWS list reached 10,764 by the end of the year--a 100% increase over 1982.

In 1983, the Bonn office installed a Datapoint 8600 series computer, which will help process all the added work. A fine piece of property with a building where the booklets are stored was purchased and plans are to move the postal services department to that area.

--Joe Tkach, Ministerial Services

Y.O.U. UPDATE

1984 S.E.P. Applications Available

S.E.P. applications for Orr and Big Sandy have been mailed to all United States Church pastors for distribution. Two types of applications will be made available--CAMPER, which applies to campers only, and CAMPER II, which

replaces our former "Worker" applications. CAMPER applications must be postmarked no later than March 15 and CAMPER II applications must be postmarked no later than February 15. If additional applications are needed, please contact the Y.O.U. Office. Applicants in Canada should contact the Vancouver Office for their S.E.P. applications.

--Kevin O. Dean, Y.O.U.

AMBASSADOR COLLEGE UPDATE

(Pasadena Campus)

Next Monday we begin classes again as we kick off the second semester of college. During the two-week break, we of the faculty have kept busy catching up on a number of things which we had been unable to accomplish during the first semester.

Yesterday we had a Retentions Meeting. We have such meetings after each semester to see how the students have done. Also, we have to take a close look at the scores of all students who might not be doing very well academically. We were pleasantly surprised to see that none of the students had done so poorly that we had to drop anyone from Ambassador.

Overall, we are quite pleased with the majority of the students and their progress. There are always a few, however, who want to coast along instead of diligently applying themselves.

During the break, a number of students from Pasadena and Big Sandy went on a ski trip to Colorado. Mr. Ron Kelly (who was in charge of overseeing the students from Pasadena) mentioned that there were no auto accidents or student injuries. He also mentioned that a number of business people who came in contact with our students were very well impressed with their conduct, and told him so. It is always good to hear such reports, for as the proverb says, "A good report maketh the bones fat" (Prov. 15:30).

During the midsemester break we continued having our ongoing, twice-weekly Student Progress Meetings. These meetings are for the purpose of discussing the progress of the seniors and juniors.

Because January 1 fell on a Sunday this year, the annual Pasadena Rose Parade and the Rose Bowl football game were scheduled for Monday. Both students and local Church brethren were again able to serve at these events, helping to park cars, selling programs, staffing various concession stands, etc. These annual events enable the Church and College to make enough money to help fund various activities for the entire year. The Church and College divide the proceeds equally.

It won't be long now before we will be able to see many of you again as you begin attending the next Ministerial Refreshing Program. It is always good to have you back in Pasadena, and we look forward to being able to visit with as many of you as time permits. I am sure all of you will look forward to being able to once again visit Headquarters and be refreshed by the new program.

Everything here at Headquarters seems to be coming along very well. Please remember God's people here in your prayers, as we continue to remember in our prayers all of His people scattered around this globe.

--Raymond F. McNair, Deputy Chancellor

UPDATE FROM MAIL PROCESSING1983--Biggest Year Ever in the U.S.!

The 50th year of God's modern-day Church was one of record-breaking progress in publishing and broadcasting the Gospel. As a result, mail and phone response to the Church's programs remained at high levels. New all-time records were set in nearly every category:

- 3,865,580 pieces of mail were received--1.4% more than the previous record set in 1982.
- 621,732 telephone calls were received--1.8% above 1982. Nearly 400,000 calls were in response to "The WORLD TOMORROW" telecast.
- 61 million publications were distributed in the United States. This total includes:

38.5 million PLAIN TRUTH magazines

11.3 million letters

4.3 million books, booklets and reprint articles

1.8 million Bible correspondence course lessons

1.4 million GOOD NEWS magazines

1.0 million YOUTH 83 magazines

- 196,000 new people became Bible correspondence course students. The previous record for enrollments was 134,643 in 1982.

We are happy to report that 1984 is already showing the same high levels of growth, indicating that this year may be even more productive for God's Church.

Subscribers Impressed With Quality of The PLAIN TRUTH

Readers of The PLAIN TRUTH, including professionals in the field of magazine publishing, frequently comment about the magazine's high quality. They are especially impressed with the relevance of the magazine's articles, its objective and up-to-date writing style, and its professional use of graphics and superb photography. Many say they prefer The PLAIN TRUTH over other magazines, TV news and daily newspapers as a source of information on current events. Following are some recent comments:

I have just finished the first article I have ever read in your magazine, entitled "Why Planet Earth is Unique," and found it unique in Christian literature. It is about time that somebody wrote a modern magazine about the way of the Lord and helped people to understand our creation and reason for being in modern terms. Good work!

J.B. (address unavailable)

Just a few lines to let you know that I enjoy The PLAIN TRUTH very much. To receive this beautiful magazine free of charge is simply amazing. The photos are of such high quality I feel I could step into them; as if they were 3-D! The words also seem to jump off the pages and I can hear your voice explaining events the way they are--the plain truth!

J.M. (Wilkes-Barre, PA)

I used to work in a 7-11 food store where I had access to 185 magazines like TIME, NEWSWEEK, SCIENCE DIGEST and FORBES. But I must say that The PLAIN TRUTH is impressive indeed and by far the best!

D.W. (Chicago, IL)

The daily news in the newspaper is extremely slanted, sensationalized and hampered by a shortsightedness caused by rejection of God's prophetic goldmine, the Bible. Television news is even worse, and such magazines as TIME are hopelessly humanistic and liberal in their reporting and writing. Where can one find a magazine that will really tell you not only what is happening, but interpret it in the light of biblical prophecy--God's Word? I have been increasingly disillusioned by other so-called religious magazines. They are asking such questions as "Should homosexuals be ordained?" and "What is going on in the World Council of Churches?"

Your magazine is a real joy and I thank you for sending it. It is consistently well written (I am an editor, so I can appreciate that), the photographs are of high quality, good color and composition (being an art major, I can appreciate that), and the thrust of the magazine is in world affairs that really count.

G.L. (Houston, TX)

Your magazine is one of the best in print! You have more news than all other religious magazines. Your authors are superb and you don't fear and hate science! Mr. Armstrong's editorials are the best and he comes across well on the TV.

C.H. (Shawnee, OK)

Having been a printing employee for 35 of my 87 years, I can say it is amazing that the Worldwide Church of God publications can be put out without a price on them, and that typographical errors are practically nonexistent. First-rate printing!

P.A. (Decatur, IL)

Your magazine is most amazing. Interesting, refreshing, alternate viewpoints are combined with superb color photography; timely and informative graphs and charts are coupled with news features on important social issues; it is offered free each month. Not any longer though--please receive my donation. I think it's worth it!

B.D. (Panorama, CA)

I am writing in regard to The PLAIN TRUTH and The GOOD NEWS. As a graphic artist and designer, I am very pleased to see a marked

upgrading in the quality of the graphics being produced. I am happy to see these publications reflecting a standard of quality and aesthetics that I think may be what publications will look like and reflect in the world tomorrow.

In a world of confused standards and no clear definition of what is good in art, I wish I could be a part of the stimulating team of artists and graphic designers that are creating mass communications with "punch." Not everybody might notice the effort and thought put into the graphic design in these publications--but I do and encourage you to exceed any limits in producing the best there is.

R.Z. (Saco, ME)

--Richard Rice, Mail Processing Center

ON THE WORLD SCENE

VATICAN, U.S. ESTABLISH TIES; POPE DEEPLY CONCERNED OVER CATHOLIC CHURCH IN AMERICA

After a lull of 116 years, the Vatican and the United States, on January 10, reestablished full diplomatic relations. The brief announcement to this effect was read to reporters by the Vatican's chief spokesman, Romeo Panciroli. "The Holy See and the United States, wishing to develop their already existing mutual, friendly relations, have decided in common accord to establish between them diplomatic relations," Panciroli said.

The establishment of diplomatic relations officially will be with the Holy See, the governmental entity of the Roman Catholic Church which administers the Vatican.

Congress cleared the way for establishment of diplomatic relations when it voted early last year to lift an 1867 ban against spending public funds to maintain a diplomatic mission in the Vatican. President Reagan was expected to nominate William A. Wilson as the nation's first ambassador to the Holy See. Wilson, 69, a Californian with close ties to Mr. Reagan, has been the President's personal representative to the Vatican since 1981. The Vatican will in turn appoint an ambassador, known as a papal nuncio, to Washington. Up until now it has been represented in Washington by an apostolic delegate.

It is a little known fact that the United States had informal ties with the Vatican during much of its early history, and had formal diplomatic relations from 1848 until 1867, when most of the papal states had been absorbed by the new kingdom of Italy under the leadership of Guiseppi Garibaldi. Congress withdrew funds for representation to the shrunken church entity after criticism by American Protestants of the Roman Catholic Church's treatment of Protestant churches in Rome.

It wasn't until 1939 that informal relations resumed with the appointment by President Franklin D. Roosevelt of a personal representative to the Holy See. President Harry Truman tried to upgrade ties in 1951 by nominating Gen. Mark Clark to be the first U.S. ambassador to the Vatican. This set off a congressional storm, however, forcing Mr. Truman to withdraw the nomination.

Why the action now? The Reagan Administration believes that the important world role now played by Pope John Paul II demands the move. Also, for the State Department, the advantage of formal diplomatic relations is clear: the Vatican is a font of highly prized information on what is happening around the world, as church officials from every nation where there is a Catholic Church are constantly in and out of the tiny city-state.

As far as advantage to the Vatican is concerned, church officials say the Vatican will find its campaign for peace and justice throughout the world "significantly strengthened" with a formal diplomatic mission in Washington. Official U.S. recognition adds luster to the Vatican's diplomatic prestige and moral authority. "I can see that the Vatican would welcome this type of recognition because its own world recognition is enhanced," said a high-ranking American churchman at the Vatican. The Vatican daily newspaper, L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO, said in an editorial Tuesday: "No one can fail to see the importance of today's development."

Some believe Mr. Reagan may hope to gain greater Catholic voter support in the next election. However, there is no evidence of great Roman Catholic enthusiasm for the move. In fact, the rather independent-minded U.S. Catholic Church generally feels that a full-fledged Vatican representative could attempt to influence Rome's attitude toward internal church matters.

The Editor-in-Chief of the respected Catholic weekly AMERICA said, "There will be divisions in Catholic opinion. The move will be applauded by many American Catholics, but others will be more restrained. The Conference of Bishops are beginning to have a greater sense of their own identity and to upgrade the presence of the Vatican could conceivably inhibit the further development of the national identity of U.S. bishops."

There may be substantial Protestant condemnation of the action. Opponents of the action regard it as a blatant violation of the constitutional principle of the separation of church and state and already are planning efforts to scuttle the move. (White House spokesman John Hughes argues that the new arrangement does not violate the constitutional separation of church and state because "for a long time we recognized the Holy See as having an international personality distinct from the Roman Catholic Church." The Holy See is responsible for the Vatican, which Hughes described as "a sovereign city-state." Pope John Paul II heads the Holy See as well as the Roman Catholic Church.

The U.S. is the 108th nation to be represented at the Vatican by ambassadors. The only major powers unrepresented are the People's Republic of China and the Soviet Union. Britain established relations at the ambassadorial level in 1982 for the first time since King Henry VIII broke with the Roman Catholic Church in 1529 in order to marry Anne Boleyn. The step was taken just before the Pope's visit to Britain in late May 1982. Another Protestant country, Sweden, also established ties to the Holy See in 1982, ending a 456-year break brought on by the founding of the Lutheran Church in Sweden.

Worry Over a Rebellious Church

The establishment of diplomatic ties with the United States doesn't mean the Vatican is pleased with conditions inside the American branch of the

church--the fourth largest (51 million members) and by far wealthiest Catholic Body. Far from it.

"The American church," summed up NATIONAL REVIEW magazine in an introduction to a feature article in its November 25, 1983 issue, "has all but turned its back on Rome. Dissent has become orthodoxy, rebellion its rule. A good bishop is hard to find. But the Pope is going to have to start finding some, and soon...." Nevertheless, reports this NATIONAL REVIEW article, the Pope has his hands full with a wayward church, and especially its leadership. The following is from this same article.

Since his election in 1978, John Paul has been generally identified as a "conservative" on Church matters, which means that he believes and teaches official Catholic doctrine and expects priests and religious [sic] to do the same. During the five years of his pontificate, meanwhile, it has also been obvious that in many ways the Church in the United States is moving in a direction, if not opposite to, then at least obliquely away from the Pope's own....

That the Pope realizes this was confirmed in a series of unusually blunt addresses that he gave to American bishops in early September. In one, using the strongest terms he has yet employed... [he] told them that the question of ordaining women to the priesthood is closed and there is to be no more discussion of it, warning them to "withdraw support" from groups that advocate it. He went on to deplore the decay of sexual morality and told the bishops that they must oppose contraception, divorce, premarital sex and homosexuality.

Reactions to that concern have been predictably negative. Sister Donna Quinn, an arch-feminist nun, said the Pope's words mean "more oppression coming down" on women. Vincent Connery, a parish priest in Norfolk, Virginia, wrote a letter to a secular newspaper in which he announced a "time for revolt" and suggested that American priests call a "selective strike" against the Vatican....

During the decade of the Seventies the...most outspoken "conservative" bishops soon found themselves put on the sidelines of the national Church--excluded from important committees, not listened to at meetings, sometimes subjected to criticism from more liberal bishops.... The best way to ensure being denied promotion in the American Church was to be an outspoken defender of traditional Catholic doctrine.... Practically no aspect of Church life is free of serious disorders, many of them officially tolerated. A reasonably complete catalogue would have to include the following:

--Religious orders, especially but not exclusively orders of women, openly dissent from all manner of official Church teaching and use their institutions--schools, colleges, seminaries, hospitals, retreat houses--to promote dissent....

--There is much tolerance, in clerical and religious circles, for known violations of the laws of celibacy.

--A growing, and increasingly militant, homosexual network within the Church has influence, among other places, in seminaries and religious orders.

--There has been an almost total collapse of discipline in some seminaries, along with the purveyance of dissenting theology as if it were orthodoxy. Probably a large majority of Catholic colleges and universities have become effectively secular, while their residual Catholicism is closer to that of Hans Kung than to that of John Paul II. [Kung is the ultra liberal Swiss theologian censured by the Vatican in 1979.] ...

One dimension of the malaise is the turn toward political leftism that has characterized much of American Catholicism over the past decade. Prominent religious orders like the Jesuits and the Maryknolls are openly sympathetic to "liberation" movements in Latin America. Those agencies of the United States Catholic Conference that are officially concerned with "peace and justice" act like extensions of the left wing of the Democratic Party.... The bishops' highly publicized pastoral letter on war and peace, adopted last May, reflected this leftward trend. Although in some ways the document, if read strictly, can be called moderate, it postulates, for example, a "tradition" of pacifism in the Church that is not really a tradition, and then gives it equal weight with the historically dominant "just war" tradition. [The bishops are now preparing another leftist letter, this one critical of capitalism]....

Three fairly broad dissenting constituencies [are prevalent]--priests restive under the discipline of celibacy, women (mainly nuns) who want to become priests and laymen who reject the traditional teachings about divorce and contraception. Everything that now happens in the Church is filtered through those glasses.... No amount of concession will satisfy the dissenters, because they aim at nothing less than total revolution within the Church.

Hopefully more on this important trend next week.

--Gene H. Hogberg, News Bureau