

PASTOR GENERAL'S REPORT

TO THE MINISTRY OF THE
WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD



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Dear Brethren and Co-Workers,

This is my first letter to you in 1986, and could very well be my last. Now in my 94th year I am in a very physically weakened state enduring severe pain and with virtually no strength whatsoever. I briefly described my condition in last month's co-worker letter to you, and now it has worsened. It may be that the Work God has given me to do is complete, but not the Work of God's Church, which will be faithfully doing God's Work till Christ, the True Head of this Church, returns.

After much counsel and prayer over the past months God has led me in announcing a decision last week to appoint Mr. Joseph W. Tkach, director of Church Administration, to the office of Deputy Pastor General, to assist me while I am in a weakened state, and should God choose to take my life, to place himself totally in Christ's hands to lead God's Church under Christ, succeeding me as Pastor General, in the difficult times ahead. Christ will lead in the decision about which men will continue the telecast.

Remember, brethren, this is not the work of Herbert W. Armstrong, nor will it be the work of Mr. Tkach, or any man. It is the Work of the Living Creator, God. You are supporting this Work of God, and it is the Great God who will pour out his blessings on you for your generosity. Continue to sacrifice through 1986 to finish the commission God has given his Church. The greatest work lies yet ahead. Christ confirmed that in John 4:35, "Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest." Never before in the history of the Church has it been possible to reap so great a harvest. It has only been made possible through modern technology, beginning with the printing press, radio, television, and rapid mass transit and mass communication. I personally have seen

nearly all of these technological advances in my lifetime, starting in the last century through the horse-and-buggy age to the current space age.

It was prophesied in Daniel 12 that in the last days knowledge would be increased. This has been fulfilled, yet with this awesome progress we are experiencing

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even more appalling and continuous evils, which will culminate in the Great Tribulation ahead of us now. Then, just before humanity blasts human life off this planet, God will once again send his Son Jesus Christ. This time in power and glory as King of kings and Lord of lords to rule with all the power of the Great God and usher in utopian peace, happiness and prosperity. Thank God Satan will then be gone.

Are you ready for the return of Jesus Christ? Will you escape the Great Tribulation soon to occur? Christ said to watch and pray always, that you will be accounted worthy to escape (Luke 21:36). Now is the time of the end.

Each of you must commit yourself to support God's Work, to fast and pray. God's Work must push ahead this coming year as never before. God is opening new doors in television and in the PLAIN TRUTH distribution. Help us walk through them. Praise and thank God, and pray for his Work. Thank you very much from the bottom of my heart for your prayers for me personally.

In deep gratitude and love, in Jesus' name,
Herbert W. Armstrong

CHURCH ADMINISTRATION

ONE OF THE CROWD?; PACKETS FOR NEWLY BAPTIZED; TAPING;
D & R GUIDELINES; PRAYER; INTERNATIONAL NEWS--THE NETHERLANDS

One of the Crowd? An article recently given to me pointed out that many modern clergymen in the Protestant and Catholic world are more interested in being accepted as "one of the crowd" than in being spiritual guides.

I hope that is not true of any ministers of God's Church. Are any of us more concerned with how others perceive us, or what others think of us, than we are with making full proof of our ministry? God has indeed called us to a most marvelous and weighty responsibility. The ministry are called "helpers of your joy." God holds us responsible for the spiritual health and well-being of the brethren in our care. But if we are not careful, our human desire to be popular and well-liked can cause us to try to blend in rather than to set the pace.

On occasion each of us should carefully reread Paul's description of the qualifications of elders in I Timothy and Titus. As we go over each point, we need to honestly consider how we measure up. We need to ask God to show us where we need to improve and grow and ask for His Spirit to empower us to change. God's ministry is serious business. He takes it seriously. So should we!

Packets for Newly Baptized I'm sure you will be glad to know that a new packet of material has been designed to send to newly baptized members, welcoming them to the Church. The key item in the packet will be a reprint (in letter form and format) of Mr. Armstrong's article

"Open Letter to Newly Begotten Brethren Recently Baptized." This should help focus the new member's attention upon his responsibility as a part of the Church, building upon a foundation already laid by the local minister.

If the newly baptized individual has a mate who is already a member, Mr. Armstrong's letter is all they will receive. The member's mate will have already received the additional material. However, if newly baptized individuals don't have member mates, they will receive an additional letter--from Mail Processing--explaining literature requests, asking them to communicate any address changes promptly, giving directions on contribution procedures and explaining contribution receipts. They will also receive a copy of the following:

- God's Sacred Calendar
- A copy of the pocket calendar that shows the dates of the Holy Days for future years
- Reprint articles entitled "Which Bible Translations Are Best?" and "Should You Try to Convert Others?"
- An order form for additional literature

Since the last two items will be mailed to all members, some newly baptized members will receive them in the packet, while others will receive them as a part of the general member mailing. That will depend upon the timing of their baptism. (This highlights the need to send in the baptism card immediately when a baptism is performed.)

Taping As a reminder, pastors should be audiocassette-taping the entirety of services each Sabbath and regular Bible study. If any were under the impression that only the sermon or only the sermon and sermonette were to be taped, please begin this Sabbath taping the entire service. As mentioned in the December 27, 1985 "Pastor General's Report," these tapes should be retained for a full year before being reused.

D & R Guidelines I thought it would be helpful to again review the guidelines for writing up divorce and remarriage cases. I hope each pastor realizes the importance of doing a thorough job on these write-ups. The report can be brief, but it must contain all pertinent information.

No divorce and remarriage decisions are to be made at the local level. And, of course, it is wise to wait until you hear from Pasadena before discussing any "probable" outcome with the members involved. This will prevent potential misunderstanding, disappointment or embarrassment.⁷

Also, be sure to remember that all divorce and remarriage cases should be written up and sent to Pasadena regardless of how clear-cut or simple the case may seem. Even these "clear-cut" write-ups give us necessary background for later reference should divorce occur or should a case be reopened. Following are key points to keep in mind while preparing the reports:

1. Be sure to **pray** about each write-up before preparing it, realizing the importance of Christ's wisdom and mind in putting it together.
2. Put the **date** on the write-up.
3. **Sign your name** on the write-up.
4. **Type** it, or write or print clearly and legibly.
5. Give the **full names** of the people involved in each marriage at the beginning of the write-up. Make sure you **clearly identify** each individual throughout the write-up.
6. State the **city or location** of each party involved.
7. State the **present age** of each individual involved, as well as the age at the time of any marriage under consideration.
8. Use **full names** in specifying who married whom **each time** you mention it.
9. **Be specific about key dates** involved in the courtship, marriage ceremony, divorce, separations, fornication, etc.
10. Include the **length** of each marriage.
11. Be very careful not to slant the write-up in any way. Keep it totally **objective and factual**.
12. Ask the members involved to prepare a complete write-up also, including all information that is pertinent.

Prayer Finally, thank you again for your continuing faithful prayers for Mr. Armstrong. God is our Father--a faithful, merciful, powerful all-wise and all-knowing Father. Jesus Christ is our Master, our Savior, our Lord, our Elder Brother and the Head of the Church. We could not be in better hands.

International News

From Bram de Bree The autumn advertising campaign in October and November 1985 has given the "Echte Waarheid" list a fine boost. In October a full-page ad appeared in the monthly magazine of the Dutch Automobile Association at a response of 0.25 percent. At the beginning of November a flyer was placed in the weekend edition of "DE TELEGRAAF" with a response of 2.2 percent.

The total number of subscribers in the Dutch language areas is now 54,762. The International "Good News" list has increased to 7,724

Dutch readers. Several requests for visits have come in on account of the article contents in the International "Good News."

During the "Echte Waarheid" advertising campaign one of our readers expressed his appreciation, as an editorial staff member of the POLITIE SIGNAAL, for the contents and quality of the "Echte Waarheid." A four-color monthly, is distributed to all members of the Dutch national police force. He suggested that we place a flyer in their magazine.

From November 18 through 22, Regional Director Bram de Bree and Business Manager Johan Wilms attended the Regional Director's Conference in Pasadena. At this conference the Dutch-language-area budget for 1986 was presented to Mr. Leroy Neff and the budget team. The budget presentation was based on the instructions of Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong as a "no-growth" year and maintaining the 1985 circulation of 60,000 for "Echte Waarheid."

Our incoming mail for November increased by 265.2% while our outgoing mail decreased by 57%. Income for November shows a year-to-date increase of 6.7%.

Church membership increased by 4.6% during the same month compared to one year ago.

--Joseph Tkach, Church Administration

YOU UPDATE

Production of "The 1986 Diplomat" has already begun; however, we are in need of assistance from local YOU members in both photography and article writing. This opportunity for youth participation is being offered as part of the development of a new section that will highlight YOU sports events and activities worldwide. The section will involve items such as team photos, group shots and all those who "letter" in an activity.

"The Diplomat" is the official annual pictorial record of the youth programs conducted by the Worldwide Church of God. Its purpose is two-fold: to report the fulfillment of Malachi 4:5-6 around the world, and to provide an educational outlet for Church youth in the areas of photography and writing.

We would like to encourage all interested YOU members to become "reporters" for "The Diplomat" by generating written coverage and photographs of local activities. In other words, this is an opportunity for Church youth to become "Diplomat" staff members. Those whose photographs and articles are published may find themselves encouraged to the point that they will pursue the journalism field as a career or hobby, and possibly benefit the Work in the future.

All District Coordinators will receive a detailed memo listing specific requirements for the project. The coordinators, in turn, will duplicate the information for you. Questions and comments may be addressed to:

The 1986 Diplomat
 c/o Imperial Schools
 300 W. Green Street
 Pasadena, CA 91123

We need your help and support in providing YOU members with the incentive and encouragement to become involved in this project. By working together in unity, we can make this new section of "The 1986 Diplomat" a real success!

--Kevin Dean, YOU

FROM FACILITIES ADMINISTRATION

CHINA FEAST PLANS; STUDENT EXCHANGE PROGRAM

China Feast Plans Yue Daiheng, Chairman of China Swan International Tours (CSIT, a new company in the People's Republic of China that handles international tour groups, met with Festival personnel to discuss preliminary plans for the 1986 Feast of Tabernacles in Nanjing.

This will be the first year we will be able to welcome brethren from throughout the world, with only a few exceptions. An announcement concerning this was in the November 15 edition of the "Pastor General's Report."

A tentative itinerary has already been planned with CSIT, including all members meeting in Hong Kong after the Day of Atonement, flying into China for a 14-day tour including nine days in Nanjing for the Feast, and exiting through Hong Kong.

Some brethren are calling to ask about Festival details that are not yet confirmed. Please let the brethren know that we plan to inform them as soon as the details are worked out. There is a great deal of traveling and hiking involved, and if some have serious physical handicaps, we may be unable to accept their applications due to the rigorous demands.

All who have been involved in the planning are very excited and look forward to receiving responses from those interested. The Festival Office has been receiving letters from brethren around the world. Any who are interested in attending the Feast in China and have not yet submitted applications should do so immediately. Any brethren wishing to send in their names, addresses and "Plain Truth" subscription numbers should address them to: Festival Office, 300 West Green Street, Pasadena, California 91129, U.S.A.

Student Exchange Program Meetings were also held concerning the Ambassador Foundation Education Exchange between the People's Republic of China and Ambassador College. Ji Xiaolin, who works for the Educational Commission of China and is responsible for foreign students studying in China and Chinese students studying abroad, met with Ambassador Foundation and College officials to discuss the exchange, which will take place this summer.

Eight Ambassador College students will be going to the Beijing Teachers College, a small college that the city government coordinates. From China we will be welcoming 12 administrators from 12 universities who will be studying English and American history, government and culture. This is the fourth year we have had an educational exchange program with the People's Republic of China.

This semester we have a teacher from Beijing, a program director in China Science and Technology Exchange Center. Zhou Lin Yi will be studying to improve her English and teaching Chinese to some of the students who have been involved in the China program or hope to be in the future.

The friendships we have been developing with China in the past few years are continually growing and deepening. Mr. Armstrong was greatly respected by those who met with him and see the students and brethren exemplifying his teachings of the "give" way.

--Ellis La Ravia, Facilities Administration

ON THE WORLD SCENE

DEFICIT-CUTTING LEGISLATION: POTENTIALLY GRAVE CONSEQUENCES; AIDS AND LOSS OF VALUES

The Gramm-Rudman Bill As 1986 begins, the American public is confronted with a new fiscal reality, the result of rather hasty end-of-the-year federal legislation. This revolves around the so-called Gramm-Rudman bill (named after its two primary proponents, Senators Phil Gramm of Texas and Warren Rudman of New Hampshire), designed to force the federal government, step by step, into a balanced-budget posture by 1991. Gramm-Rudman (sometimes the name of Senator Ernest Hollings of South Carolina is also attached) tackles the budget deficit problem in a most draconian manner: If by a certain deadline every year, Congress and the Administration fail to agree on which spending programs are to be pared back to reach the reduced deficit level, an automatic formula is activated, slashing military spending and domestic spending programs by equal amounts in an arbitrary, across-the-board basis. Of course, the budget could be partly balanced by raising taxes. President Reagan is against this in principle, but might be agreeable to certain indirect means of "revenue enhancement," such as a levy on imported oil.

The legality of Gramm-Rudman is being challenged in court. If the entire bill is held to be legal, look out. The first cut (whether by design or computer)--\$12 billion by March, 1986--should not be too difficult to reach. But the prospects of the next one--a \$50 billion wrenching-down for fiscal 1987--is already causing tremors. Since Social Security and most antipoverty programs have been made exempt, budgets for essential domestic programs such as the FBI, prisons and air traffic control will be hit hard. So will efforts to control drug traffic and patrol the nation's borders against the illegal alien invasion.

The Pentagon will be especially impacted. Threatening the military with the loss of \$25 billion, or almost 10 percent of its budget for fiscal 1987, Gramm-Rudman promises to put a screeching halt to Mr. Reagan's arms buildup, with far-reaching consequences such as a sizable reduction in the U.S. troop commitment to Western Europe. In the Jan. 3, 1986 TIMES of London, journalist Bailey Morris speculated on the implications of this multi-billion-dollar squeeze:

The U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff are planning the unthinkable: the abrupt "build-down" of the cherished military "build-up" which has been the top priority of Ronald Reagan's administration. Against their will, with the reluctant acquiescence of the president, the military chiefs are attempting to put on paper the amount and kind of programmes which will have to be cut as a result of the deficit-reduction legislation endorsed by Reagan and passed by Congress on December 11.... Belatedly, officials are beginning to realize the consequences. By the end of his second term, Reagan may have to preside over the largest dismantling of U.S. military power since the end of the Korean war in the early 1950s.... Under the inflexible formula of the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings legislation, whole divisions could be disbanded; important weapons systems delayed or cancelled; more than 50,000 of the 300,000 US troops defending Europe recalled; the M-1 tank programme...stripped to a bare minimum...and...the Navy's ambitious plan to modernize 26 ships during the coming financial year cut to 12 or even fewer.

What this means to the world at large, and to the United States specifically, is an issue now under the microscope. In the 1986 fiscal year, when only an estimated \$5.5 billion must be subtracted from the Pentagon's budget, the issue is not very grave. But in the 1987 fiscal year, when the figure could be more than \$25 billion (17.6 billion pounds) out of a total of \$277.5 billion, the cuts become draconian. This partial unilateral disarmament would occur just as Reagan entered the second stage of his summit talks with the Soviet leader, Mikhail Gorbachev--seriously weakening his negotiating position, in the opinion of senior administration officials....

Even congressional critics of the five-year, \$1,000 billion U.S. military build-up are astonished by the implications of the cuts required under the legislation. "This bill could achieve by legislative fiat what the Soviets failed to achieve at Geneva," said a top Republican aide on the Senate armed services committee. "That is, to halt any real progress on the Strategic Defence Initiative" (the so-called Star Wars project). Les Aspin, the Democratic chairman of the House of Representatives armed services committee, said in an interview: "If this legislation goes into effect as written, it is going to be very, very dangerous, a serious threat to the national security."

How did this happen to a president, elected in part because of his promise to stand up to Soviet military pressure by launching a defence build-up to close, once and for all, a dangerous "window of vulnerability"?... It happened, in the opinion of Aspin, senior Republicans and disgruntled Pentagon officials, because the White House bought a concept--deficit reduction--without reading the fine print.... In the current fiscal year...the Pentagon...can decide for itself where the axe should fall. In 1987 it will have no such flexibility: cuts will be made equally in every programme--manpower, weapons systems, ships, bases and military aid to other nations. There are no rights of appeal, no leeway to trade off one programme in favour of another.... "This is a ludicrous way to run the government. It is not a rational process. You lose the ability to choose. You may have to sacrifice readiness. The computer is not going to answer the questions of who will defend Europe if U.S. troops pull out," said Robert Komer, a defence analyst for the Rand Corporation....

Thus Gramm-Rudman could play a significant role in beefing up defense postures in both Western Europe and Japan. The bill also reflects an astonishing degree of responsibility-avoidance on the part of "the people's representatives," who appear unwilling to take the political heat for making the cuts by normal means. Better to let computers do the job, reported the Dec. 30, 1985 NEW YORKER:

The public elects the members of the two houses of Congress to make decisions in the public interest. The current officeholders, however, have found that to be impossible... so they have delegated the final responsibility for meeting this fundamental obligation of their branch of the government to a formula: the one in the recently passed Gramm-Rudman bill....

In the light of this legislation, at least one old saw about politicians and power will have to be revised. It's said that politicians love power. The current crop of congressmen disproves the axiom. These congressmen shun power, and seek to slough it off onto an adding machine. The new axiom should be: Politicians love a good image.... To govern is to choose; but to choose is to make yourself accountable for the consequences, and that can spoil even the most carefully cultivated image, and lead to electoral defeat.... Gramm-Rudman is...designed to make the choices that the politicians are afraid to make. (Unlike the politicians themselves, it will not have to run for office next year or thereafter.)...

Thus, it seems that few have seriously thought through the ramifications of four years of spending cuts in the \$50 billion range, of how this could ratchet the economy downward, perhaps uncontrollably, into a deflationary cycle. (Of course, ever-widening deficits are harmful as well.) The economy just might not be able to tolerate the drastic pruning of domestic programs, plus severe cutbacks in weapons

programs, closures of military bases and cutbacks in military personnel. (After all, military spending upholds the economy, too.) Some predict one result may be a return to the military draft to replace the high-salaried volunteer army.)

AIDS and Loss of Values The ongoing AIDS crisis is threatening, as we have pointed out before, the entire health-care industry. Hospitals forced to treat costly AIDS-infected patients--who often have no insurance--are also fearful of getting hit with lawsuits from several directions at once, as reported in the January 12 LOS ANGELES TIMES:

AIDS is a "time bomb" for the nation's hospitals, threatening to burden them with expensive health care and waves of costly lawsuits, a report by the American Hospital Assn. said. The report predicts two waves of lawsuits against hospitals. The first may be over employment issues, such as the dismissal of workers who develop AIDS or the rights of hospitals to screen blood of workers. The second wave may come from...such things as...failure to protect patients from contracting AIDS in the hospital.

Just how expensive hospital care is for AIDS patients was revealed in a January 9 UPI dispatch from Washington, DC:

AIDS victims used up nearly as much in hospital costs as lung cancer victims did even though AIDS is far less common than the nation's no. 1 cancer killer [lung cancer], researchers from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and San Francisco Public Health Department said. The first 10,000 AIDS patients spent 1.67 million days in the hospital at a cost of about \$1.4 billion, the study said, while in 1980 lung cancer patients spent 3.36 million days in the hospital at a cost of \$1.6 billion.... As of Jan. 6, the CDC had recorded 16,138 cases of AIDS, 8,220 of which resulted in death.... Lung cancer, considered the top cause of cancer deaths in the United States, was expected to claim 130,000 lives in 1986, according to the American Cancer Society.... "AIDS will increase the annual cost for infectious diseases by 30 percent to 55 percent," the study said.

Nevertheless the "antidiscrimination" battle on the behalf of "Gay Rights" continues unabated, in fact with greater fervor. Recently in California (where else--California is a "cereal state," as I heard recently: the land of flakes, fruits and nuts), the American Civil Liberties Union has filed a lawsuit on behalf of a bisexual Los Angeles man who was not accepted as a candidate by the Big Brothers of Greater Los Angeles. (The Big Brothers groups are nonprofit organizations that match carefully selected older men with fatherless boys, aged 6 to 12, to act as part-time substitute fathers.) The president of the Los Angeles group defended his organization's stringent screening policy by saying: "Since a Big Brother is looked to for information on everything from school to sex, we don't believe it is appropriate to match a homosexual or bisexual man with a fatherless boy." But such a policy based on "sexual orientation" is discriminating, claims the ACLU, which says such screening should not take place, and that only

the single mother of the boy should make such a decision. (The parent does have the final approval.)

Elsewhere on the morality front, in his November 14, 1985, column in the WASHINGTON TIMES, columnist Cal Thomas discussed the number of recent television dramas that "make statements" on social issues, revealing the pronounced liberal views of the producers and writers who favor "prochoice" (proabortion) and tolerance for sexual deviance. The writers and producers stoutly defend their "enlightened" viewpoints against what they charge is religious bigotry. In his analysis Thomas exclaimed: "In another age, when we knew what 'sin' meant, it was said that we should condemn the sin while loving the sinner. Now, we condemn those who condemn the sin and absolve the sinner."

On Sunday, January 12, a local television station in Los Angeles sure made its "statement." It ran four consecutive Rock Hudson movies plus an hour-long documentary on AIDS research.

It is interesting to note that the Islamic world, in general, has not been "enlightened" or "had its consciousness raised" regarding homosexuality. Mr. Keith Stump, who was recently in Dacca, Bangladesh for a regional summit conference, brought back a few copies of THE BANGLADESH TIMES. Like many newspapers around the world, the TIMES runs "quotable quotes" on the front page. In its case, THE TIMES places a quote from the Koran to the right of the masthead. In one issue the following quotation from the Koran was run: "For ye practice your lusts on men in preference to women: ye are indeed a people transgressing beyond bounds."

But what is happening to "enlightened" America? Before the Chattanooga (Tennessee) Rotary Club on January 27, 1985, John A. Howard, president of The Rockford Institute, delivered an address entitled "Taking the Blinders Off." His speech was reprinted in the publication VITAL SPEECHES OF THE DAY. Mr. Howard focused initially on America's incredible drug problem and concluded by showing this crisis is only one manifestation of America's loss of moral absolutes:

The American society has its full share of troublesome problems which don't seem to be diminishing no matter how hard we try to provide remedies.... Today's lesson is in the realm of drugs--illegal, mind-altering drugs.... Let us bring that impression into a sharper focus. In 1978, the value of marijuana grown in the United States was estimated at about a billion dollars. The harvest last year is believed to have been about \$16.6 billion, more than the value of any other crop except corn. A story in NEWSWEEK in August of 1983 provided information [that]...the annual dollar cost to the nation of illegal drugs was calculated to be at least \$25 billion. Of that amount, about \$5 billion was lost to absenteeism, slowdowns, blunders and sick leave in the work force. Another \$5 billion was spent for the involvement of the police, the courts and the jails in drug cases....

There is disquieting evidence that the incapacity of the United States to contain its drug problem has led to a whole new spectrum of severe problems in Latin American countries.... Our government's efforts have largely been directed to intercepting the drugs on the way to the users. We have aimed our campaign against the traffickers. The fact is...if there is no effective constraint on the demand, then the amount of money behind the demand for drugs is going to stimulate human ingenuity to find ways to deliver those drugs.... It [strikes] me as strange that the government of the United States should pressure another government to penalize its citizens for growing a crop [case in question, poppy growers in Turkey], when we are unwilling to penalize our own citizens for using the crop. That doesn't make sense. It is silly, arrogant and unjust.

In the realm of individual behavior, the American society has somehow lost the capacity to say this is good or this is right and that is bad or that is wrong. Our current drug laws are a marvelous example of this moral paralysis. We have recognized the devastation that drugs are causing, but we are unwilling to say flat out to the individual, "You mustn't use these drugs." We somehow want to permit each citizen to make his own choice on that question, and then deal with the problem by going after the traffickers....

We have an equally ridiculous circumstance with regard to pornography. We pass state laws with penalties imposed on pornographers who exploit children under the age of 13 or 15 or whatever, but miraculously after the child reaches the specified age, it is an OK thing for the youngster to be lured into this beastly commerce. What we are looking at is a cultural failure of staggering dimensions. The principal idea industries in America--and they are the literature, the movies, the press, the entertainment industry, the academic community and religion--have all been dominated by people who reject normative standards for individual behavior provided the individual's conduct does not harm other persons. Moral relativity has triumphed.

History tells us that no group of people can live together or accomplish anything if each person does whatever he pleases. The result is chaos. There must be standards of behavior which are accepted by the group, insisted on by the group transmitted to each generation of children by the group, and protected by penalties. This requirement of behavioral standards has somehow been forgotten or never understood among the cultural leadership that has dominated American thinking about education, the laws, the family, crime and the whole range of public social policy. We have paid a terrible price for that shortsightedness, and it will take decades to repair the damage....

Let us begin with education which by and large has been a wasteland of non-normative, non-judgmental activity. The

students not only have not been trained in the ideals and values, the obligations and taboos of their own cultural heritage, but the very refusal to tell the students that certain kinds of conduct are desirable and other kinds of conduct are not has been held aloft as a triumph of democratic open-mindedness....

To conclude, we have suffered greatly from the limited understanding of those opinion-leaders who have given us an era in which normative values and civic virtues have been excluded from the evaluation of our courts, our schools, our literature, our families and all other common undertakings. The mass catastrophe of a drug culture gone out of control is only one of numerous penalties we are paying for that lack of vision....

Yes, where there is no vision the people indeed perish (Proverbs 29:18). And the words of Hosea 4:1-3 confirm Mr. Howard's remarks about today's opinion leaders excluding what he calls "normative standards": "There is no truth or mercy or knowledge of God in the land. By swearing and lying, killing and stealing and committing adultery, they break all restraint." How? By saying there are no laws to regulate human behavior, and that everyone can do his own thing "as long as it doesn't hurt anybody." What folly! We are indeed paying a terrible price. In verse 6, God summarizes the effect of such lawlessness by saying that "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge."

No wonder America can't stand up to its enemies in the world. One private newsletter we receive put it simply: "The Russians [are] filled with a sense of mission and equipped with great force and power--the Anglo-Saxons [are] reluctant, without sufficient military capability, shorn of beliefs and weakened by much vice."

--Gene H. Hogberg, News Bureau

Editor's Note: The copy for this issue was finalized on January 15, 1986.