

PASTOR GENERAL'S REPORT

TO THE MINISTRY OF THE
WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD



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DECEMBER 2, 1986

Dear Ministers,

Our annual Regional Directors Conference began Friday, November 21, here in Pasadena. I opened the conference with an address to the assembled regional directors, wives and support personnel on the subject of international unity and the need for all to be speaking the same thing worldwide. I referred to my recent visit to the churches in Mexico and explained how much it meant to our Mexican brethren to be reminded of the valuable and important role they play in the end-time Work of God's Church. Each of God's people around the world, no matter how far from headquarters, is an integral part of the family and government He is developing for the future. Yet each must be in harmony with God. Any who are not in harmony with God are not really a part of the Church.

We must come to deeply understand, however, that the Body cannot be unified if the leadership is divided. Unity must be solid from the top down. The Father and the Son are in absolute, perfect unity. But how about us? We humans will only be unified to the extent that we allow ourselves to be led by the Holy Spirit. We are told to let Jesus Christ live His life in us. If we do that, we will be in harmony with Him and our Father. And we will be in harmony with His Church.

If a leader is filled with strife or vainglory, operations bog down. Confusion is created. A sports team is a good example. If one team member becomes a glory hog, the morale and effectiveness of the whole team is harmed.

In John 14:9 Jesus told Philip, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." Jesus was such a pure reflection of His Father's character, mind and attitude that if you saw Him, you had seen His Father. That is the example that each of God's ministers must keep strongly in focus.

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We are called ambassadors for Christ. An ambassador is one who represents his government. We are representatives of God's government and its Head, Jesus Christ. Yet we are to be more than just representatives. We are to be reflections of God and His government. We are to be like Him, not just represent Him. In Jesus' day, the scribes and Pharisees

were indeed representatives of God's government on earth. Jesus said of them in Matthew 23:2-3, "The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say and do not." These people were representatives but not reflections! They knew what to say, but that was as far as it went.

Church pastors have the responsibility to enhance unity in the congregation by being faithful reflections of headquarters. Your enthusiastic responsiveness to those over you inspires and encourages those under you to follow suit. A scripture Mr. Herbert Armstrong used to refer to often was Amos 3:3, "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" We must be like-minded, having a common goal, and fused together by the Holy Spirit. Regular communication with God is essential. Then, with God's mind and attitude, we must communicate regularly with one another. Strong, positive, unifying relationships are not developed in a vacuum. You pastors need to be the architects humanly of the kind of positive, encouraging atmosphere in which godly love can be developed.

I've written before about putting up the superstructure on the foundation God laid through Mr. Armstrong. We are God's building material. I Corinthians 3:9-11 explains it so clearly: "For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building. According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth there upon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." We must allow God to use us as He sees fit. And we must not stray off our foundation.

I told the brethren in Mexico, "Samos familia." The English translation is, "We are family." And our relationship is that of members of God's Family. The apostle John wrote in I John 3:1, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not."

Continue to remind the brethren about these things. And remember how important your own personal example is to them. You are to be a reflection of God. That is what Jesus was, and we are to follow His example. For many who never had the benefit of a father's presence when growing up, you may be their only physical comparison to what God is like. How clear a reflection we are depends on how close to God we are.

As I said to the Mexican brethren, "Viva la unidad!" ("Unity forever!")

With love, in Jesus' name,

Joseph W. Tkach

FROM CHURCH ADMINISTRATION

LITERATURE REVISIONS; RECENT ORDINATIONS

We have just concluded a most successful and enjoyable Regional Directors Conference. Attendees included the Regional Directors, regional business managers, other regional office personnel and many of their wives, along with various men and women here at Pasadena. It's always a delight to visit with God's servants whom He has placed in responsibilities throughout the world. I was particularly pleased with the warmth and enthusiasm shown by these men and their wives.

Mr. Tkach was able to personally open the conference with an hour-long address. He again emphasized that we must transcend the concept of teamwork and build a close-knit family. Throughout the week, several social occasions were held, which promoted fellowship and deeper friendships. If we are to be of one mind, then we must come to thoroughly know one another.

In our meetings and workshops we were able to discuss many aspects of the Work worldwide and project future growth and needs. I'm confident the conference will pay rich dividends in the coming year.

One highlight of the conference was an explanation by Mr. Tkach of his office and title in God's Church. As Mr. Tkach said in his first sermon as Pastor General, we have entered a new chapter of the book of Acts. Having witnessed God's mighty hand in Mr. Armstrong's life as Christ built this Work through him, we must now go forward in faith to finish that same work of preparing the way for the return of Jesus Christ. Our minds must be fully occupied with that purpose uppermost in God's mind--the restoration of His government to this earth. There was a time when most of us expected the Work to be finished in Mr. Armstrong's lifetime. But God sees much farther than we are able. Is there anyone among us who thinks we should now turn from the task and turn our thoughts inward to care only for the self, or perhaps the Church, and simply wait for the return of Christ? I think not!

Never have Christ's words been more applicable: "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few" (Matthew 9:37). Not only is there an ongoing marvelous Work, but new doors appear to be opening wide before us. As we see this world careening crazily toward utter destruction, Christ's words should ring in our ears: "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come" (Matthew 24:14). Later in the same chapter He shows our responsibility even more clearly, saying, "Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing" (verses 45-46). Dare we hesitate to plunge ahead to carry on the Work to which each of us has been called? Did the Church's commission expire with Mr. Armstrong? Let's notice the conclusion of this book of Matthew: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world [age]. Amen" (Matthew 28:18-20). Scriptural evidence indicates that even from the place of safety the Gospel message will go forth to the world.

And what about the condition of the Church? How do we measure up to the description Christ gives of His bride? We read in Revelation 19:7-8: "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints."

Through the last seven years, God's Church has been put back on the track and has made remarkable progress. But we must continue to put on Christ until we are "without spot or wrinkle."

We have received, from around the world, many comments about the smoothness of the transition to Mr. Tkach's leadership. And the positive fruit of that leadership is clear. It was Christ who inspired the apostle Paul to write, "Let all things be done decently and in order" (I Corinthians 14:40). Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong invoked this same principle in what was one of his last official acts. In appointing Mr. Tkach as his successor, he stated, in part: "I feel that the procedure I am to adopt will aid in preserving the unity that exists in God's Church and prevent some from falling away. All of this is for the greater purpose, to aid the Church in carrying out its Godly commission in unity and strength."

Christ is leading His Church and He is not nearsighted. During the last several years Christ saw to it that Mr. Tkach was pressed into daily contact with Mr. Armstrong and was directly involved in virtually every major decision. Mr. Armstrong delegated to Mr. Tkach ever-increasing responsibility for gathering facts and implementing his decisions. In the final weeks of his life Mr. Armstrong specifically instructed Mr. Tkach in the responsibilities of Pastor General, sharing many personal experiences with him. And before his death he appointed Mr. Tkach as his successor and saw to it that the passing of the baton was legally documented and announced to the Church.

Now what is this passing of the baton? It is an analogy to a relay race in which one runner, having finished his course, passes the baton, as a symbol of continuity, to the next runner on his team. Firmly grasping the baton, the second runner leaps with new energy toward the goal before him. He is not required to return to the starting line because that part of the race has already been run. The one receiving the baton receives with it the position achieved by the cumulative effort of all those who have run before him.

Notice Ephesians 4:11, "And he gave some apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers." It has become obvious to the leading ministers at headquarters that Mr. Tkach is doing, as Mr. Armstrong was before him, the work of an apostle.

While we commonly use the term Pastor General as an administrative title that describes Mr. Tkach's executive position, his spiritual rank and authority supersedes all others in the ministry just as Mr. Armstrong's did. Christ has chosen him and sent him forth as an apostle to carry on His Work, supported and reinforced by the whole Church, as co-workers with Christ.

Therefore, in order to avoid confusion on this point, and to assure that we all speak the same thing, Mr. Tkach has now consented to your confirming this fact to the brethren, preferably in a sermon.

Literature Revisions When it becomes necessary to reprint a piece of our literature, it is standard procedure to reedit it as instructed by Mr. Armstrong years ago. This ensures a regular review and updating.

Editing includes everything from typographic errors to further elaboration and explanation of a passage that seems unclear, as indicated by readers' questions. Changing circumstances may also require new edits. For example, with the death of Mr. Armstrong, every publication had to be edited to reflect a change in leadership.

Though editorial changes are usually minor, Mr. Tkach would like for you to be informed of them so that you do not have to reread a booklet or brochure every time a new edition is printed. The latest printing date of a booklet appears at the bottom of the address page at the end of the booklet. For example, "The World Won't End This Way" booklet has this numeric code on its address page: 302694/8609. Reading from right to left to the slash, this booklet was printed in September of 1986. The remaining figures are computer numbers assigned to that particular job.

We will give you these updates in the "Pastor General's Report" as they are available. Please review them. The first installment follows.

● "The Early Years"

In the previous edition the copy under the subhead on page 6, "A Spanking in School," contained no reference to spanking. The subhead therefore has been replaced by the one now found in Volume 1 of the 1986 edition of the "Autobiography." The booklet has been repaginated so that the new subhead, "Those Important First Years," is found on page 3. This subhead change highlights how Herbert W. Armstrong edited his "Autobiography," for he was concerned how his life and office would affect others. If you compare pages 18 and 19 of the 1973 edition, in which the story of the spanking occurred, with pages 13 and 14 in the new 1986 edition, you will notice how he shortened and improved the copy.

● "Does God Exist?"

In response to a scientist's comments, the beginning of the paragraph at the bottom of page 4, which explains the decomposition of uranium, has been reviewed by the Science Department of Ambassador College. The new, slightly expanded text reads: "So notice carefully what this now disclosed FACT of science means: Uranium-238 is a radioactive isotope of uranium with a mass number 238. In decomposing, it first gives off an alpha particle (which is the nucleus of a helium atom). This is followed by two beta-minus emissions, then by two more alpha particle emissions. The substance left is an isotope of radium with a mass number of 226. Radium, then, is simply the end product of uranium-238 after this disintegration process."

This new wording adds just enough information to satisfy more knowledgeable readers, while not losing the attention of general readers.

● "Did God Create a Devil?"

This enduring question--and the Bible answer--is again reprinted as a booklet. It was reduced from a booklet to a reprint in the previous decade. The new edition was edited by Herbert W. Armstrong. The first sentence on page 9 of the new edition now reads, "The earth was created perfect"--not "perfect and complete" as in earlier editions.

The second paragraph on page 9 is expanded to include the author's increased understanding and now reads from his own handwritten correction: "He gave Adam a chance to take the place of Satan the devil, sit on earth's throne, and restore the Government of God on earth. Adam rejected the tremendous opportunity, yielded to Satan who to this day remains on earth's throne as the god of this world. Christ, the second Adam, will soon come to sit on that throne and restore the Government of God (Acts 3:19-21). Remember, Lucifer had been placed in rulership."

● "All About Water Baptism"

In the drophead the following sentences have been deleted by request of the Personal Correspondence Department: "Suppose you were baptized by a minister you have since lost confidence in. Should you be baptized over again?" In any case Editorial would have had to shorten the drophead to accommodate the larger typeface now used in booklets.

Before his death Herbert W. Armstrong expanded the first paragraph of the booklet to read: "We are born mortal--with a temporary physical life. But the great Plan of God provides for a rebirth in the Kingdom of God to immortality and happy, joyous life for all eternity. We may receive the gift of eternal life...."

In paragraph 4, page 1, he added: "... (or a false Christ)...." On page 5, the second paragraph, the first sentence is edited to read: "The blood of Christ by itself does not finally save any man." On page 8 the last paragraph preceding the subhead "Baptism Definitely Commanded" now reads: "... Since they did not have the Holy Spirit..." instead of the older wording "... had not been baptized with...." Mr. Armstrong thought these editorial changes improved the readers' grasp of the subject.

On page 14 the old subhead, "Baptism Should Never Be Delayed," and the next sentence are deleted.

Before the next subhead, "Should Children Be Baptized," Mr. Armstrong added a paragraph that reads: "But this does not mean that God's ministers should be hasty in baptizing one until there is evidence of a REAL CHANGE of mind and heart--a real surrender to God and the will of God. God's ministers must be assured of a genuine repentance and belief in Jesus Christ as personal Savior. The minister must be assured that the individual is genuinely called of God (John 6:44), has fully repented and really wants to turn his life over into the hands of the living God. Many tragic circumstances have occurred because of failure to be sure of these points, interpreting temporary remorse for true repentance. But when the conditions Christ set are all met, one should be baptized immediately."

In the fourth paragraph (page 14 in old edition, page 15 in new edition) under the last-mentioned subhead, Editorial received the author's additional thought so the first sentence now reads: "The average mind does not mature until about age 18 and is not fully mature until about age 25--though there are often exceptions."

The Personal Correspondence Department, in response to the ministry, requested that all copy in the previous edition, beginning with last paragraph, page 15, through to last paragraph, page 17, be deleted. People were misunderstanding what the author had clearly said. So now the subhead "Who Should Baptize?" appears on page 16 of the new edition and introduces the paragraph about Philip, a deacon, baptizing. If you have only the earlier edition, you should mark this section as a reminder that it is deleted.

• "The Seven Laws of Success"

All graphics have been removed except for the photos of the two bankers referred to in text.

• "The Middle East in Prophecy"

The concluding sentence on page 27 above the subhead now reads: "... this abomination that 'maketh desolate'--it is the armies that set up an idol in 167 B.C., by Antiochus Epiphanes." Editorial wishes to thank one of the ministers who brought this correction to the Department's attention.

• "What do you mean... Salvation?"

Because this statement was generating a lot of unnecessary correspondence, the Personal Correspondence Department asked that the following paragraph on page 5 be deleted: "For years we offered \$1,000 to anyone who can show any place where the words 'immortal soul' are found in the Bible. No one ever found it!"

• "World Peace--How It Will Come"

This brochure is edited so as to drop personal references to Herbert W. Armstrong's world travels as ongoing. The drophead now begins: "We discuss world problems...." Similar references in body of text have been edited.

Style or typographical errors only:

- "What Is Faith?"
- "Lazarus and the Rich Man"
- "What Will You Be Doing in the Next Life?"
- "Managing Your Personal Finances"
- "What Is the True Gospel?"

Recent Ordinations The following individuals were ordained as local church elders: Carl Aas from the Oslo, Norway, congregation on October 22; William Kubon of the Nassau, New York, congregation, on November 8; Richard Sorrentino of the Kenosha, Wisconsin, congregation on October 13 and Roger Vavra from the Waukesha, Wisconsin, congregation on October 13.

Ordained as local elders were William Hutchison from the Auckland, New Zealand, congregation on October 17; Saul Langarcia Verdin of the Tijuana, Mexico, congregation on September 10 and Greg Williams from the Glendora, California, congregation on October 20.

Ordained as a preaching elder was Rex Morgan from the Auckland, New Zealand, congregation on October 17.

--Larry Salyer, Church Administration

EDITORIAL SERVICES

MEETING WITH REGIONAL EDITORS; "PLAIN TRUTH" MEETING; TELEVISION UPDATE; "GOOD NEWS" READABILITY; "YOUTH 86" FEAST SUPPLEMENT

Meeting with Regional Editors Regional directors and their assistants met with Dr. Hoeh and myself, and others of the Editorial staff, for a full day of conferences Tuesday, November 25. It turned out to be a phenomenal day. Editorial got an around-the-world tour as our international regions were described by their directors one by one, on the hour, throughout the day. We found by and large America's problems are the world's problems. Our literature is hitting the mark. The shorter articles in the magazines were especially appreciated. We got at least two new article ideas from each director and assistant. It was another profitable day of this year's very successful Regional Directors Conference.

"Plain Truth" Meeting Before the Regional Directors Conference we managed to squeeze in a planning session for the April "Plain Truth." One of the articles we plan to include in the April issue is "Europe's Need for Self-Defense" by Gene Hogberg. Mr. Hogberg will show why the West Germans, the French and even the British are coordinating their defense strategies, including nuclear defense, to an unprecedented degree. Ron Kelly's article, "How God Designed the Family," is also scheduled. He will explain that there are laws that if followed would ensure happy and successful family life. Don Schroeder addresses some of the factors in today's worldwide crisis in agriculture and Clayton Steep asks, "Friendship--Is It a Lost Art?" Many other topics will also be covered in that edition.

Television Update The telecast keeps us on our toes. We are working on yet another TV brochure, "The History of Europe and the Church." You will remember that this series by Keith Stump ran in "The Plain Truth" several years ago. It will be one of our largest brochures and should spark a lot of interest from our viewers. Speaking of the telecast, Pastor General Joseph W. Tkach has asked Editorial to research and prepare the preliminary scripts for the "World Tomorrow" broadcast. Our writers will work very closely with the broadcasters to work out scripts that will be supported by articles on the same subjects in "The Plain Truth." Needless to say, our editors and writers are excited about this new responsibility.

"Good News" Readability According to a PBS documentary aired this fall, 20 million adults in the United States cannot read. Equally alarming is the estimate that 25 to 50 percent of the adult population who can read, cannot read anything written above a fourth- or fifth-grade level. We

did a readability study on "The Good News" and sent the results, along with guidelines for easy-to-comprehend writing, to our regular contributors. We hope to make "The Good News" an even more effective tool for preaching the Gospel and for providing spiritual food for those God is calling.

"Youth 86" Feast Supplement Each year we include in "Youth 86" a Feast supplement for the young people in the Church. We would appreciate it if you would make an informal survey to find out how well we are meeting the needs of Church teens in your area. Specific article ideas, questions teens would like answered, games and puzzles--any and all suggestions are welcome. Subjects not related to the Feast can be helpful, too. We would appreciate any input on how we can improve and make the Feast supplement more effective.

--Dexter Faulkner, Editorial Services

AMBASSADOR COLLEGE UPDATE (Pasadena Campus)

I thought you ministers would appreciate knowing that Ambassador College recently was reviewed by a committee from the California State Department of Education and has been duly authorized to offer the Associate of Arts in Theology, the Associate of Science in Theology and the Bachelor of Arts in Theology degrees.

We are having a very busy and fruitful college year. All is going well. We ask for your continued prayers on behalf of the Ambassador College students and faculty.

--Raymond F. McNair, Deputy Chancellor

MEDIA SERVICES

The response to the television and radio programming continues to move upward dramatically. Programs dealing with prophecy continue to pull the highest telephone responses. "Principles of Prophecy" by Dr. David Albert, which aired November 9, drew 39,411 weekend phone calls. It was an outstanding program in its presentation and visuals. The new television brochure "Where Are We Now in Prophecy?" also contributed to the fine response.

"Roadmap of Prophecy" by Mr. David Hulme, which aired November 23, pulled 37,500 weekend phone calls. The prophetic booklets "Who or What Is the Prophetic Beast?" and "The Book of Revelation Unveiled at Last!" were offered.

Another topic that pulled an outstanding weekend telephone response was on the family. "The Shattered Family" by Mr. David Hulme, which aired October 5, drew 36,269 phone calls.

The overall response to the telecast is averaging a little over 28,500 calls per weekend. God is truly blessing the response to the television program.

Because certain information is presented in such a unique way, viewers are beginning to ask for transcripts of the television program. We normally do not make such transcripts available because the literature we

offer usually contains the material covered in the program--for the most part, even in greater detail than what was said in the telecast.

In working with Mr. Faulkner and Dr. Hoeh of Editorial Services, we have come up with the following:

If there has been a large interest for a transcript of a particular telecast, and if key information covered in the program is not included in the literature offered, then the television script will appear in a future issue of "The Plain Truth" as either a separate article or "From the Telecast," which is a regular feature of "The Plain Truth."

The transcript of "Is Anything Wrong Anymore?" presented by Mr. David Hulme, which aired November 2, will be included in a major "Plain Truth" article in the next few months.

Here is a schedule of "The World Tomorrow" programs that will air in December 1986:

DEC 6-7 TRUTH OR TRADITION?

For most Christians, Sunday is the traditional day of worship--yet few have ever questioned the source of this tradition. Was the day God commanded to keep holy at Mt. Sinai changed by the New Testament Church Christ founded? David Hulme shows from the Bible which day is the Christian Sabbath.

LIT OFFERED: "Which Day Is the Christian Sabbath?"; "Has Time Been Lost?"; "Plain Truth"

DEC 13-14 THE PLAIN TRUTH ABOUT CHRISTMAS

Each year millions celebrate Christmas--a time of year where commercialism cashes in on all the yuletide customs. But what do Santa Claus, reindeer and Christmas trees have to do with Christ's birth? Richard Ames examines the surprising origin of these Christmas traditions.

LIT OFFERED: "The Plain Truth About Christmas"; "Plain Truth"

DEC 20-21 WHAT CHRISTMAS DOESN'T TELL YOU

Christmas is one of the most widely observed holidays in the western world. While intending to honor Christ's birth, Christmas traditions actually obscure the true meaning of why He was born. Richard Ames shows from the Bible the inspiring and yet little understood reason for the birth of Christ.

LIT OFFERED: "World Peace--How Will It Come?"; "The Plain Truth About Christmas"; "Plain Truth"

DEC 27-28 1986—THE YEAR IN REVIEW

Did news stories of 1986 have any real significance for us, or did we see them as just an endless stream of unrelated events? David Hulme examines the news of 1986 through the prism of Bible prophecy, which reveals that we are living in a crucial phase of world history the Bible calls "The Last Days."

LIT OFFERED: "Where Are We Now in Prophecy?"; "Plain Truth"

--Larry Omasta, Media Services

MAIL PROCESSING UPDATE

UPDATE ON BACKLOG; CORRESPONDENCE COURSE;
INCREASES IN TV LETTER RESPONSE;
VIEWERS RECEIVE LITERATURE WHEN PROMISED; JAPANESE SUBSCRIBERS;
"AUTOBIOGRAPHY" WELL RECEIVED

Update on Backlog As mentioned in our last report, Mail Processing employees returned from the Feast of Tabernacles to a record backlog of 600,000 pieces of mail, which included letters, WATS cards and Holy Day envelopes. Nearly all of this workload has now been finished. Our staff worked overtime and on Sundays after the Feast to eliminate this backlog while handling the normal flow of mail.

Correspondence Course Each month about 300 new people are put on our U.S. mailing list as a result of requesting to be enrolled in the Correspondence Course. As you know, those who take the full complement of lessons are usually well-grounded in the basic doctrines of the Church and have gained a good understanding of God's plan.

During the past five years, one out of every 100 such individuals has been baptized. This may appear to be a small percentage. However, only one in 1,000 new contacts from all sources combined has been baptized in the same span of time.

Increases in TV Letter Response Earlier this year, we noted that the letter response to "The World Tomorrow" was declining while greater numbers were calling on the WATS line.

In order to provide another opportunity for people to respond, all three speakers began mentioning our address during the program. This is in addition to Art Gilmore's announcement at the end. Emphasizing the address has produced a substantial increase in those writing for the literature.

In June 1986, we received 2,972 letters addressed to "The World Tomorrow." In September, however, 5,000 such letters were received.

There are certain reasons why some of our viewers may prefer to write rather than call when requesting literature. These are summarized below:

- The elderly and hard-of-hearing may feel more at ease when writing, because they are more confident of being understood.

- Some viewers feel uncomfortable making a telephone call. They would rather write.
- Some people may wish to make donations when they request literature.
- Individuals sometimes have further questions on the subject matter discussed on a telecast. They may prefer to ask these questions by mail rather than by phone.

Viewers Receive Literature When Promised Recently, we again checked to see if literature requested by viewers reaches them within the four-week period we promise.

According to our Mail Monitor system, most areas in the continental United States do receive literature within four weeks. Some areas get the literature in three weeks, while a few others require a little more than four.

Our operators always inform callers to expect their literature in about four weeks. This allows us to send literature by the less expensive third-class mail, which we have done for decades. Using third-class postage saves the Work hundreds of thousands of dollars each year.

Japanese Subscribers Circulation of "The Plain Truth" in Japan has now reached 11,550. This means that our Japanese subscriber list is now 840 percent larger than it was at this time last year. The enormous increase is due to the PT advertisements placed in various Japanese magazines.

Following is a letter of gratitude from one of our Japanese subscribers:

Your literature and magazines are a floodgate to better understanding the Bible and man's salvation. They are so thought-provoking and they speak with such authority that I have come to both love and respect God with great regard. This has enormously enriched my life, for I now know that I must strive my best to adhere to God's ways.

Tokyo, Japan

"Autobiography" Well Received Since Mr. Armstrong's "Autobiography" was sent to co-workers around Feast time, many dozens have written to tell us of the impact the book has had on their lives. Following are some of their comments:

I am reading the book on Mr. Armstrong's life. It is the greatest book I have ever read, next to the Bible. It is like Mr. Armstrong is talking to me in person.

Ohio

Just had to write and tell you how much I enjoyed receiving Mr. Armstrong's "Autobiography." I couldn't put it down! I am going to let my family and friends read it also. I am very anxious to receive Volume 2 when it is available.

Ohio

Last week I finished Mr. Armstrong's "Autobiography." I enjoyed it very much. I laughed and I cried, I felt sad at parts and happy at others. It has opened my eyes to a few things about God's truths, and I am so glad for it.

Florida

Thank you so much for the book about Mr. Armstrong. It is amazing! I grew up in Oregon and have been to the very places he lived. I am so sorry I did not get to meet him, but this book is very interesting! I look forward to the next edition.

California

We are taking this opportunity to thank you for "The Autobiography of Herbert W. Armstrong." This book and "Mystery of the Ages" are among our most cherished possessions. We are happy to have them grace our bookshelves, and we expect that in time they will become worn from being read and reread by our many friends and family members.

Michigan

Thank you so very much for sending me a copy of the book on Mr. Armstrong. I am sure he will have a good position in the world tomorrow, because he did what God wanted him to and preached and explained His Word.

New Mexico

Thank you so much for your gift of the "Autobiography." I must say that I cannot remember the last time I read a book as interesting as this one. I was actually sad to come to the end of this beautifully written, informative book on the life of a true man of God. Needless to say, it has left me thirsting for more reading of the life of Mr. Armstrong.

Pennsylvania

--Richard Rice, Mail Processing Center

ON THE WORLD SCENE

SINGLE EUROPEAN ACT APPROVED IN BRITAIN; THE POPE'S GROWING ROLE AS WORLD SPOKESMAN FOR PEACE

Momentous Decision for Britain In Britain, the debate on legislation to either approve or reject British adoption of the Single European Act is over. In the first week of November, the House of Lords approved the European Communities (Amendment) Bill by an overwhelming 124-vote majority. It was not possible to amend any of the provisions of the Single European Act. The parliaments of Britain and all the other 11 EC members are required to either ratify it as a package or not--a simple "yay or nay." Thus there exists a certain inevitability about the Single European Act, whose main thrust is to introduce qualified majority voting in place of unanimity in broad areas of Community economic and social life, with the aim of a truly single, harmonious market by the end of 1992. The main logical argument given by those favoring it is basically this: "Look, we've come this far, we can't turn back now. We must eliminate the remaining barriers to free trade in goods, services and labor."

Perhaps overlooked in this "logical" process is the fact that additional power naturally accrues to EC institutions. Whenever the EC rules on matters, its law is supreme. In these areas, therefore, the EC is sovereign, above the national parliaments. (Sovereignty is generally described as the right to make and enforce one's own laws.) Moreover, the EC countries approving the Single European Act--and it is likely all will, since few if any seem willing to be left on the outside looking in this late in the game--must go along with subsequent legislation whether they like it or not, providing a qualified majority of members do so.

Each member state is allotted a quota of votes. The total for all 12 states is 76. A majority of 54 carries an issue. The U.K. has only ten votes. (Apparently, from what I've seen, the roughly-equal-in-size big powers such as the U.K., France, West Germany and Italy each have ten votes, the smaller states fewer. The Irish Republic, for one, is allocated only three.) Even Britain plus one of the other big states cannot stop legislation from being passed.

In the House of Lords, Lord Denning, the most outspoken opponent of the Single European Act, did his best to argue against the enabling bill. But in the end, he, too, resigned himself to the inevitable. He felt compelled to inform the British public, in a November 3 TIMES of London article entitled "Farewell to Our Sovereignty," what this momentous decision means for the British people:

For nearly 300 years our constitutional law has been based on the principle that Parliament was our supreme legislative authority. It alone could make, unmake or amend our laws. That sovereignty has now been ended. Its overthrow will be completed by Parliament itself today when it passes the European Communities (Amendment) Bill.... This [action] ...creates a new legal order in international law; and also in our constitutional law. Parliamentary sovereignty has gone. It has been replaced by Community sovereignty. Take two recent decisions of the European Court of Justice.

The first was about rubber inflatable dolls [a male sex-fantasy item]. They had been manufactured and sold freely in West Germany. When they were imported into Heathrow, customs officers condemned them as "indecent or obscene" and seized them. The European Court held that the section of our act governing indecency and obscenity was no longer valid because it offended against the fundamental principle of the Common Market that goods lawfully marketed in one member-state must be allowed free entry into other states.... [We omit, for lack of space, the second example.]

So we have to reckon with a new constitutional principle. Community law, as declared by the European Court, is superior over any act of our Parliament that is inconsistent with it. Our courts must follow its rulings: and our Parliament must enact whatever legislation is necessary to make our law conform.... Even our influence over Community legislation receives a severe setback. Previously most decisions had to be unanimous. But now, in the Single European Act, they can be made by a "qualified majority"....

Coupled with this, the Single European Act enables the legislative institutions of the Community to expand their areas of lawmaking greatly by "harmonizing" the laws of member-states so as to make them uniform. The select committee reported: "It is already apparent from the preamble that the act's intention is to make the Community's legislative procedures more effective. This streamlining, if successful, will increase...the areas subject to Community law rather than national law."...

So the debate is over.... The Single European Act ushers in a new constitution for Europe.... Gone is the concept of national sovereignty--to be replaced by European unity. The bells are sounding, "Ring out the old, ring in the new." It is the beginning of an epoch. It is a vision come true. For Europe.

In his final Lords debate on the matter Lord Denning said, in effect, that Britain now had little choice but to exercise its full complement of rights inside the EC apparatus in order to try to uphold, as much as possible, British customs and traditions. "Therefore, I urge us to go into Europe with enthusiasm and vigor," he said, adding, "We must send the very best of our people to Europe."

Not all Britons, however--at least not those who are awake to what is happening--are resigned to this course of action. In the November 10 DAILY TELEGRAPH, T.E. Utley wrote, in an article entitled, "Duped by a European Smoke Screen":

I do not accept defeat, as Lord Denning does: what Parliament has given it can take back. Any [political] party which will commit itself to doing so will stand a fair chance of getting my vote.

Britain's Labour Party has been considerably more anti-EC than the Conservatives, who for the most part believe that Britain, now shorn of empire, must take up a significant role in a greater Europe. What if Labour wins the next general election in a year or two? The Labourites, if they are clever, can tap a large reservoir of British discontent over the EC, as reflected in this article in the SUNDAY TIMES of May 12, 1985:

Getting the ordinary Briton to like, let alone love, the EEC is an awesome task. Enoch Powell [outspoken ultra-nationalist parliamentarian from Northern Ireland] reminded us yesterday that his hostility towards the EEC and all its laws remains undiluted. He told the Anti-Common Market Campaign that the passage of time since we joined the community in 1973 had made the British people increasingly conscious of their loss of sovereignty. And he spoke of the United States as the sinister power behind it all, because they regarded the EEC as a "politico-strategic necessity."

John Paul II: Increased Stature as World's Premier Spokesman for Peace
On his current trip to Australasia, John Paul II is speaking out boldly on the need for religious joint efforts serving the cause of peace. Here

is a LOS ANGELES TIMES report (November 20) from the first stop on his tour, Dhaka, Bangladesh:

Pope John Paul II pleaded Wednesday for religious reconciliation in the name of peace and human survival. The Roman Catholic pontiff, beginning a 14-day Indian Ocean-Pacific pilgrimage...made his pleas to Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim and Protestant religious leaders at a colorful sunset ceremony on the grounds of Dhaka's Catholic Cathedral of St. Mary.

John Paul noted that one of his chief reasons for taking so many arduous papal trips abroad is to "carry forth the church's commitment to sincere and loyal dialogue with other religious traditions concerning the common spiritual and human destiny which we all share." Then he added: "There is a growing conviction that something must urgently be done to secure the peace and development that are the conditions for a better future for the whole human race. We are painfully aware that man's God-given dignity, and even survival itself, are gravely threatened."

The Pope added that tensions between East and West, North and South, "as well as the many forms of violence, injustice and inequality, are a present and growing threat to human rights and human dignity." The answer, he said, "is my constant prayer that the harmony of mind demonstrated by the recent [interfaith] meeting of prayer at Assisi [Italy]...will grow from day to day until all individuals and all peoples are reconciled in love."

As noted above, the Pope drew attention to the "interfaith day" he initiated and held on October 27 in Assisi, Italy (two days after the Last Great Day) in which religious leaders of many faiths fasted (it's not clear if this was total abstinence from food and drink) and prayed both separately and as a group for a nine-hour period. Leaders representing Bahais, Buddhists, Christians, Hindus, Jews, Jains, Moslems, Shintoists, Sikhs, Zoroastrians, American Indians and animists from Africa all participated in the service, intended to focus on, said the Pope, "the dramatic challenge of our age: true peace or catastrophic war."

In Dhaka, Vatican officials, according to the November 20 NEW YORK TIMES, said that John Paul II was "increasingly preoccupied with the idea that the world's religions must make a common effort to forestall apocalyptic dangers."

Increasingly, John Paul is being seen by other Christian bodies, and leaders of a number of other faiths as well, as the ecumenical spokesman of the religious world. This concept factors into the type of church unity that might develop in the future. Notice this article in the November 14 INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE:

The ruling body of the Church of England took a further step Thursday toward reunification with the Roman Catholic Church by overwhelmingly approving a motion that envisages some kind of papal authority in a reunited church. The General Synod, a

565-member parliament of clergy, laity and bishops, voted 344-137 for the church to engage in more exploratory talks with Rome on the issue of papal authority and primacy.... The churches split when England repudiated Rome's authority in 1534.

The General Synod, which meets three times a year, had before it two reports from the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission that suggested the pope should act as "universal primate" in any union between the two churches. During a sometimes heated debate several speakers questioned how the Church of England, the mother Church of the 70-million worldwide Anglican Communion, could ever accept the authority of Rome.... But the Archbishop of Canterbury...Robert Runcie, spiritual head of both the Church of England and the Anglican Communion, spoke in favor of the motion and said that Anglicans could no longer ignore the reality of the papal scene.

Recalling the gathering of religious leaders with Pope John Paul II in Assisi last month, Archbishop Runcie added, "The other great communities of faith regard the pope as somehow the main spokesman for Christianity whether we like it or not." Archbishop Runcie said people still maintained the myth that Rome never changes but he said that in Assisi he had seen the possibility of a new style of papal leadership.

About four years ago, around the time of John Paul's visit to Britain, a top official on the staff of Archbishop Runcie admitted that the Pope could well play a unique role as a front-line ecumenical spokesman. "We Christians," he said, "need to see a personal figure of unity.... We are beginning to see the point of a Pope for the worldwide Christian churches--just so long as their traditions are not swallowed up on Roman Catholic traditions."

Summing up the information in this "Pastor General's Report" and in the last issue (Vatican disaffection with American Catholicism and the Single European Act), certain conclusions might seem logical:

1) Europe is being unified at the economic and social level to a degree most outsiders do not yet perceive. It is being harmonized and standardized (homogenized?) in the areas of product design, specifications and safety, combined with Community-wide approaches toward service industries, social legislation and labor policies. It doesn't take a leap of imagination to see that, someday, the Church "sitting [in control] on the scarlet beast" (Revelation 17:3) may take this harmonization process one step further and demand that the secular authorities legislate on which days work may or may not be done. Check Revelation 13:16-17.

2) The Vatican's recent crackdown on wayward Catholics in the United States may not work. U.S. Catholicism has been affected too much by American Protestant attitudes, including the heretical (to the Vatican) concept of the separation of church and state. Watch the activities of Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, the Vatican's top "doctrinal watchdog." As head of the Congregation of the Faith, this Bavarian theologian sums up

Rome's position on doctrinal deviancy by declaring that the faithful "are to give the religious submission of intellect and will to the teaching which the Supreme Pontiff or the College of Bishops enunciate on faith or morals." We might be seeing the development of the rationale for a united Europe's eventual military action against a wayward America. Of course, many faithful immigrant Hispanic-Americans, far more loyal to the Pope, may be spared. When the Pope visits Los Angeles next fall, one of his two themes will deal with "immigration."

3) There will be pressure, and ultimately persecution, on those religious bodies not falling into line and supporting the Vatican's worldwide peace drive. To quote Mr. Herbert Armstrong's article in the January 1984 "Plain Truth" entitled "What Lies Ahead Now": "When our great commission is in God's sight completed...we shall be taken to a place of protection from the Great Tribulation, which is the furious wrath of Satan.... While we are in this place of safety 3-1/2 years...Satan in his mad wrath will then make war with the REMNANT Church. This has to be the Laodicean era of the Church..."

Individuals not enjoying God's protection will be confronted with one of the most agonizing decisions of all time--obey God and confront economic deprivation and religious persecution, or compromise with the satanic system and "drink of the wine of the wrath of God" (Revelation 14:9-10).

--Gene H. Hogberg, News Bureau