

PASTOR GENERAL'S REPORT

TO THE MINISTRY OF THE
WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD



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FROM MINISTERIAL SERVICES

Plans are progressing well for the upcoming Feast of Tabernacles. As you may already be aware, the first Holy Day falls on Monday, September 30. Many of you who have responsibilities at your respective festival sites will simply not have time to fulfill those responsibilities adequately unless you arrive at your assigned site before the Sabbath, September 28. However, many brethren who live within a day's journey of their site will plan to be in their local areas on the Sabbath. Therefore, all church pastors will need to arrange for services to be held for these brethren on September 28, even if the pastors themselves will not be present.

All church pastors should plan to be in their local congregations for services on Atonement, except those who have international assignments for the Feast of Tabernacles. If you have an international assignment, please inform Ministerial Services or your Regional Office about the arrangements you will be making for Atonement services in your congregation(s). U.S. ministers may consider September 26 through October 11 as Festival travel time.

On another subject, it seems that one area in which we can always grow is that of communication in the local congregations. Just as in a marriage, a key ingredient in effectively pastoring a local congregation is communication among the leadership. We need to keep in mind the principle the Apostle Paul laid out in II Timothy 2:2.

Church pastors should meet with associate or assistant pastors once each week for the specific purpose of discussing plans and procedures for the coming week, as well as results and progress of the preceeding week. This is not, as some may have thought in the past, for the purpose of "checking up" or "keeping tabs" on the associates and assistants. It is simply a matter of sensible management. God teaches us in I Corinthians 14:33, 40 that we should work together in unity and harmony. This includes, of course, the government of the local congregation as well. This simple procedure of regular communication among the leadership of the congregation greatly increases their ability to effectively serve God's people. This is not just some idea that so-called "management experts" have come up with to write about. It is a clear principle from God's Word.

God loves unity. Regular, godly communication enhances and promotes unity. When the left hand doesn't know what the right hand is doing, confusion results. Associate and assistant pastors who aren't given regular guidance and direction tend to become frustrated, unsure of whether they are properly serving their pastor and the congregation.

Some pastors may feel that they won't know what to discuss, or how to properly handle such a meeting. But realize that God will give you the help you need, just as He does in every other area of your ministry. Ask God for His help to use these meetings to encourage and give positive direction to the men working under you.

You associates and assistants should realize that the purpose of meeting with your pastor once a week is to promote unified and harmonious leadership in the congregation. It is an opportunity for you to grow in understanding of your pastor's approach and to get to know him better. This will enable you to back up and support his office more effectively.

These same principles also apply to local church elders and deacons. Meetings with the elders and deacons should be held about once a month. Again, elders and deacons need this regular contact and communication with the pastor in order to do their jobs effectively. These meetings give you the opportunity not only to map out plans and responsibilities for the coming month, but also to review and discuss the previous month's successes and failures, as well as to give needed instruction and Biblical guidance to the local leadership.

All associates, assistants and elders also need to recognize their responsibility to keep the pastor informed of any development in the local congregation that will in any way affect his ability to serve the brethren. Ask God for understanding of His government. Sometimes it is easy for the vanity of human nature to rise up and make you begin to feel that it is best for the brethren to come to you rather than to the pastor. "After all," one might reason, "the pastor may one day be transferred, and I will probably still be here." Ask God for the humble attitude He describes in Isaiah 66:2. Don't allow yourself to develop the attitude Satan had of wanting to assume more authority or responsibility than was rightfully his.

In times past, some associates, assistants and elders have found themselves disagreeing with their pastor. Some have assumed that their pastor was "off the track" simply because he did administrative things differently than they would have done. In their vanity, they lost sight of the difference between an actual heresy and a simple matter of administrative style. Mr. Armstrong made it clear in the September 25, 1978 GOOD NEWS that one who disagrees with his pastor should go to him about it with the desire to understand. If the matter is only a question of style or personal approach, and not something contrary to established Church policy, then the elder should simply recognize his responsibility to back up the pastor's decision. Of course, pastors need to be open to suggestion and constructive criticism done in a right attitude. In James 3:17, we are told to be easily intreated.

In the August 28, 1978 GOOD NEWS, Mr. Armstrong also explained that a case of actual heresy or false doctrine that is intentional should be reported immediately to Headquarters. An accidental mistake or oversight can be handled by discussing it with the pastor. But clear, intentional heresy should be reported immediately.

As mentioned earlier, however, some have assumed that the pastor was "off the track" simply because his method of handling a matter was different from their own. Much of this kind of problem could have been avoided by regular, proper communication done in a right attitude of genuine concern and love for superiors and subordinates. An attitude of real concern for one's superior would not permit criticism of every little thing he does. Instead, a subordinate should strive to support, uphold, strengthen and pray for his superior, striving to make his plans and procedures work.

On the other hand, a supervisor who truly loves and cares for those under his responsibility will not keep them in the dark about everything he is do-

ing. He will not leave them on their own to do the best they can. Obviously, there are some things that cannot, and rightly should not, be shared with everyone. But regular communication regarding those things pertinent to an individual's own responsibilities is vital to the effective discharge of his duties.

Pastors also have the responsibility to keep Headquarters informed of significant developments they become aware of, as was discussed in the September 2, 1983 PASTOR GENERAL'S REPORT.

I hope each of you will realize the need for regular communication in all areas. It is an important way to increase your effectiveness as a servant in God's Church!

So let's all strive to improve our communication with one another, thereby growing together in the oneness of God's mind as He intends. Let's also continue diligently in our prayers for one another, for Mr. Armstrong and for all the brethren as we all work together in fulfilling the commission of proclaiming the Gospel around the world.

Recent Ordinations

Six men were recently ordained local elders or local church elders. The men and the dates on which they were ordained are as follows: March 30, Edward Johnston, Ft. Collins, Colorado; April 6, Jacob Enns, Saskatoon, Canada; April 12 (the last day of Unleavened Bread) John Katai, Vancouver, Canada; John Kohoot, Vancouver, Canada; Wilmer Thompson, Cumberland, Maryland; and April 20, Gary Richards, Pasadena Auditorium PM.

**** TO BE ANNOUNCED IN ALL U.S. AND CANADIAN CHURCHES ****

More Festival Sites Filled to Capacity

We have been notified that the following Festival sites have now reached capacity and will not be able to accept any further transfers: Bonndorf, West Germany; Cracow, Poland; Port D' Albret, France; Bredsten, Denmark; and Dunoon, Scotland.

Correction of Telephone Number

The telephone number for "The Lodge on the Desert" in Tucson was incorrect in the FESTIVAL PLANNER. Please note the correct number: (602) 525-3366.

Regional Director Frank Brown Visits Ghana

BOREHAMWOOD, ENGLAND--Evangelist Frank Brown and his wife Sharon returned to England Sunday, April 7 from a visit to the Church in Ghana. While in the West African country, Mr. Brown, who is Regional Director for the British Isles, Scandinavia, English-speaking areas of Europe, the Middle East

and East and West Africa, conducted the Passover service in Accra, assisted by church pastor Mr. Josef Forson. One hundred nine members from all over Ghana were in attendance.

On the first day of Unleavened Bread, Mr. Brown spoke to a combined church group of 257 people from Kumasi and Accra. The Holy Day offering was 40% higher than a year ago.

Mr. and Mrs. Brown were able to visit the Church's farm program located 30 minutes north of Accra. Presently under cultivation are 26 acres of cassava, corn, beans, pineapples and yams. With the rainfall pattern having now returned to normal, the crops are expected to flourish in the next few months. Each church family has access to a plot of land for their own use and all are expected to work on a communal area set aside for those church members who are unable to work. Any surplus produce is sold in the marketplace and the proceeds are used to buy materials for the farm.

Mr. Forson says that the farm project is invaluable in many ways. "It serves as a focus for family unity as well as [being] a most welcome source of food, especially at times of national shortage," he stated.

Mr. Brown noted that economic conditions in Ghana have improved dramatically in the last few months. Due to drought and economic problems, food shortages were severe during the previous eighteen months and the people of Ghana experienced much hardship. It was at that time that the farm's produce meant the difference between life and death for many members.

The apparent end of the drought and an injection of funds into the country by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) contribute to a much easier life for Ghanaians than had previously been the case. However, conditions are still far from ideal. "Don't think, though, that God's people in Ghana have it easy," said Mr. Brown. "Many commodities are in short supply and people only make enough money to provide for a very basic standard of living." Despite this, he added, nobody complains, and the members of the Church are very dedicated and faithful.

The Church in Britain has been able to assist the Ghanaian brethren by purchasing a truck, which is used not only for carrying workers to the farm but also in transporting members to and from Sabbath services. Public transport is so expensive that many were finding it a great financial strain to travel to services regularly. The truck, which has been fitted with benches and a roof, serves as a bus and enables the brethren to be much more mobile. They are very appreciative of this help from their British brethren.

Before returning to the U.K., Mr. and Mrs. Brown were guests at a Ladies' Night meeting of the Kumasi and Accra Spokesman Clubs. Seventy club members and their wives or dates participated in a rousing table topics session and listened to five entertaining and interesting speeches. Mr. Forson gave the overall evaluation, complimenting all those who took part and exhorting everyone to greater standards of excellence.

In his closing comments, the Regional Director urged the members not to take the things given to them by the Church for granted; especially Spokesman Club. "Strive always to give a speech," he said, "not just take time.

These clubs are unique in Ghana. Put yourself into them fully." Mr. Brown mentioned that he was pleased to see the considerable growth which had taken place since his last visit to the Club in 1981.

Because they were unable to obtain visas for Nigeria, Mr. and Mrs. Brown were obliged to cut short their visit to West Africa. They hope to schedule a trip to Nigeria later in the year.

(Note: The above report will also appear in an upcoming issue of The WORLD-WIDE NEWS.)

International News

From Mr. Robert Morton A regional ministerial conference was conducted March 17-21 for all ministers and wives from Australia and Asia. The conference was held at our beautiful SEP camp site at Lake Moogerah. Lectures by pastors Bill Winner and Bill Bradford and myself continued the theme of "unity" set by Mr. Herbert Armstrong at the recent Regional Directors' Conference in Pasadena. There were many comments of appreciation from the ministry for the in-depth instruction and counsel contained in the material presented.

Harmony, cooperation and uplifting fellowship were very evident throughout the conference. Touch football, volleyball, basketball and water skiing added to the overall success and enjoyment of the meetings.

The regional office was seriously disrupted in March by severe electrical power shortages extending over a period of two weeks. A confrontation between the state government and striking electrical power line men caused load shedding throughout the state, and complete loss of power in some areas. Business and industry were severely restricted or shut down. Millions of dollars in business and wages were lost throughout the state because of the dispute. In addition, union activity within the post office, especially in the Sydney area, disrupted mail or caused a slowdown in delivery.

Mail and income for March were affected by these disputes. However, responses to "The WORLD TOMORROW" telecast were the highest on record. The availability of our WATS line number to viewers has been primarily responsible for the increase in responses to the programme.

The most successful programme to date is "Ascent to Greatness," aired March 3, offering Mr. Armstrong's book, THE UNITED STATES AND BRITAIN IN PROPHECY. This programme pulled twice as many responses as any other programme aired so far in this country. Seventy percent were responding to the programme for the first time and went on file as new PLAIN TRUTH subscribers.

Income for March rose 10.2% over the same month last year, bringing our year-to-date increase to 3.0%.

NOTICE TO ALL MINISTERS

(Not to be Announced)

Due to inquiries received regarding Mr. Charles Ranchie, we feel it is necessary to advise the ministry that Mr. Ranchie, former pastor of the Penticton and Kelowna, B.C. Canada churches, has been removed from the ministry and the Church, and is considered disfellowshipped. Mrs. Ranchie remains a member of the Church. This notice is not, and should not be considered a marking of Mr. Ranchie.

--Joseph Tkach, Ministerial Services

FROM MEDIA SERVICESRadio Tapes for Church Libraries

Please advise your congregation(s) that the second set of cassette tapes of Mr. Herbert Armstrong's radio programs has been sent to you for your church library.

These radio programs are part of a series on the book of Hebrews. Individual subjects are:

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Answered prayer | 5. Sabbath |
| 2. Man's destiny | 6. Melchizedek |
| 3. Salvation | 7. Christ--Head of the Church |
| 4. Real Christianity | 8. A new priesthood |

--Larry Omasta, Media Services

YOU/YES UPDATESEP Acceptance Notices Mailed

More than 7,000 SEP Camper and Camper II applications were received by the YOU Office this year! The final selections have been made, and notices have been mailed. We apologize for the delay, which was caused by a hold-up in the computer processing of the applications.

YES Pastor's Manual

The "YES Pastor's Manual" is finally complete and will be ready to print in a few days.

--Kevin O. Dean, YOU

PUBLISHING SERVICES UPDATESupermarket Newsstand Program Greatly Exceeds Expectations!

Several years ago, when Mr. Armstrong approved distribution of The PLAIN TRUTH on "Good Neighbor" bulletin boards, he said, "This is the greatest

door that God has ever opened for proclaiming the Gospel." Once again, the fruits have born out the wisdom and foresight Mr. Armstrong has in these matters. More magazines are now distributed and a higher response is attained by the Supermarket Newsstand Program than any other newsstand source.

Percentage of response from this program continues to increase steadily, and the number of stores distributing the magazine has stabilized. Distribution of a PLAIN TRUTH subscription brochure in supermarkets where the magazine is not approved has also exceeded all our most optimistic projections, and is now achieving over a five percent response.

The recent entry of "Good Neighbor" bulletin boards into the Missing Children's Program has reached national recognition and has been personally commended by President Reagan. This new recognition will draw more people to the supermarket bulletin boards, and, consequently, make more people aware of The PLAIN TRUTH. As a reminder, we ask that these racks be kept filled with magazines at all times.

The success of the Supermarket Program is overwhelming! Our sincere appreciation for the tremendous efforts displayed by the pastors and their assistants in all church areas. We look forward to even greater growth throughout the remainder of 1985.

--Ray Wright, Publishing Services

UPDATE FROM MAIL PROCESSING

4.4 Million Subscribers to Receive Semiannual Letter

Preparations are under way to mail Mr. Armstrong's spring semiannual letter. More than 4.4 million people worldwide will receive the letter, one million of whom are new subscribers since the last semiannual.

To illustrate just how massive this mailing has become, we'd like to present a few statistics. Even though we've used similar examples before, we thought you would be interested in a visual picture of its size. It would take seven 40-foot semi-trailers to carry the necessary materials: Two for the carrier envelopes, another for the return envelopes, two for the letters and response cards and two more for empty mail sacks to put the letters in.

But we'll still need other supplies: 30 gallons of glue, two quarts of red ink (for postmarking) and 600 pounds of heavy duty rubber bands!

Through the years, the semiannual letter has proved to be one of the most important tools in the work of God's Church. It provides a way for Mr. Armstrong to personally keep in touch with subscribers and update them on the significance of the latest happenings in world news. It also allows him to offer key pieces of literature. For example, he will be offering THE UNITED STATES AND BRITAIN IN PROPHECY and A WORLD HELD CAPTIVE in this letter. The semiannual has also become the largest source of new co-workers and donors. We encourage you to remind the brethren to pray earnestly for God to bless and provide a good response to this current letter.

Young Ambassadors Telecast Stirs Viewer Enthusiasm

A number of "WORLD TOMORROW" viewers were especially impressed with the recent "Young Ambassadors" telecast. Many commented on the wholesome and uplifting quality of the program. Several also noted the positive effect that God's true way of life had on our students. Following are some of the viewers' comments:

I've only been watching the program a short while but I love it! That program today was incredible--it's refreshing to see such clean, happy, young people who really enjoy living the right way. It was just marvelous!

I.C. (Ft. Wayne, IN)

I watched the program last week and was struck by the beauty of the buildings and grounds. I particularly liked the dancing in front of the fountain. I called five neighbors in to watch it and they enjoyed it also.

F.B. (Pinellas Park, FL)

I just called to tell you what a lovely program you had on today. I would love to visit your campus and tour the grounds and also visit Mr. Armstrong. The students look so fresh and exuberant. The teachers must work very hard with them to produce that kind of response and enthusiasm. This is the first time I've ever seen a musical show like this on a religious program. I am definitely becoming more interested in your organization.

S.W. (Sioux Falls, SD)

I would like to tell you how much I enjoyed the TV program about the Ambassador College singers and dancers. I really enjoyed the young lady and the little girl with the baby lamb and lion. In fact, I watched it again on Sunday. After I watch your broadcast, my day seems to go better.

Mrs. R.F. (E. Wenatchee, WA)

What college was that? My daughter and I just stood there in awe, we were so impressed. Please send information on the college. I would like so much for my daughter to attend.

Mrs. B. (Indiana)

My wife and I were greatly moved by your musical program tonight. The young, smiling boys and girls indicated to us that they had found a way of life that is just about ideal. I'm sure that many others who saw the program felt the same way, but in our case it was special in that I'm 80 and my wife doesn't tell her age.

P.M. (Davis, CA)

We just watched your TV program and we think it was the best young people's program we have ever seen. Christians can do better than the world out there. We do hope you will have more programs like that on the air.

Mr. & Mrs. W.P. (Coeur D'Alene, ID)

--Richard Rice, Mail Processing Center

ON THE WORLD SCENE

CONGRESS GUARANTEES COMMUNIST Foothold April 23, 1985 will go down in history as a pivotal milestone in the decline of American power and prestige. The House of Representatives defeated a \$14 million aid package for the Nicaraguan anti-communist counterrevolutionary forces, commonly known as the contras. The Senate had earlier in the day approved the legislation, but it was nullified in the House.

All sides acknowledged that the vote represented a stinging defeat for the Reagan Administration's Central American policy. "Few votes will ever be so important to the national security of the United States," Mr. Reagan warned last week. "A vote against our proposal would hasten the consolidation of Nicaragua as a Communist terrorist arsenal." Rep. Henry J. Hyde (R-Illinois) likened the refusal to finance the contras to "a neighbor seeing a crime on the street and pulling the shade. We don't want to get involved." The issue of U.S. security "cannot wait until we have a fight at our own borders," declared California Rep. Robert J. Lagomarsino (R-California). Opposition Democrats, in general, did not agree.

In Nicaragua, of course, the scene was one of relief, if not jubilation. The government radio declared the House vote "a disastrous defeat for President Reagan." The Sandinistas had done their own fair share of lobbying in order to ensure the outcome by inviting key House and Senate members to visit Nicaragua to "hear their side." They also "campaign" hard over the three U.S. television networks. Sandinista leader Daniel Ortega, an avowed Marxist revolutionary, was seen on all three networks on the eve of the vote. NBC gave him prominent air time, in an extensive interview and profile conducted on-the-spot by anchorman Tom Brokaw. As one former Vietnam correspondent for AP said: "Today it is almost mandatory to interview guerrillas--you get to see the other side."

Perhaps it's ironic that the "green light for revolution" in Central America was given just as the nation was taking note of the tenth anniversary of the fall of South Vietnam. In fact Secretary of State George Shultz, in a speech marking the 10th anniversary of America's lost effort, warned that Central America is in danger of going the way of Indochina if the United States repeats its earlier policies.

"The ordeal of Indochina in the past decade--as well as the oppressions endured by the people of Cuba and every other country where Communists have seized power--should teach something," Shultz said. "Do we want another Cuba in this hemisphere? How many times must we learn the same lesson?" He added: "Broken promises. Communist dictatorship. Refugees. Widened Soviet influence, this time near our very borders: Here is your parallel between Vietnam and Central America."

Shultz was scathing in his assessment of the results of U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam. "Our retreat created a vacuum that was exploited by our adversaries," Shultz said. "The Soviets...took advantage of our inhibitions and projected their power to unprecedented lengths: intervening in Angola, in Ethiopia, in South Yemen and in Afghanistan. The American weakness turned out to be the most destabilizing factor on the global scene," he said, adding that "the larger lesson of the past decade is that when America lost faith in herself, world stability suffered and freedom lost ground.

"The litany of apology for Communists, and condemnation for America and our friends, is beginning again," Shultz said. "Can we afford to be naive again about the consequences when we pull back, about the special ruthlessness of Communist rule?"

Despite Grenada, American elected leadership is still paralyzed by the "Vietnam syndrome." There is no national consensus on what to do about Nicaragua. Such indecisiveness would not have happened years ago, as explained in a UPI report on April 24:

Not long ago, a president would have sent the U.S. Marines into Nicaragua and kept them there until a friendly government was in charge.... But Reagan knows an invasion would cause a huge uproar. It would anger most of Latin America, fuel anti-American sentiment elsewhere, make it even harder to deal with Congress and bring demonstrators back into the streets in this country.... So the President is trying to unseat the Marxist-led Sandinistas by subsidizing their opponents. The Communist superpowers do this all the time, calling the rebellions they aid "wars of liberation."

Columnist George F. Will put the pivotal Congressional action in the broadest strategic context. It signalled, he maintained, the end to the 38-year-long (interesting number) policy of containment. He wrote in his April 21 syndicated column:

This is the most important congressional moment since May, 1947, when Congress supported U.S. intervention-through-aid on the anti-communist side in the Greek civil war. Congress thereby transformed containment from a theory into a policy. Congress...has forbidden even modest financial support for the military effort of a mass movement prepared to do the dying to prevent consolidation of the second Soviet satellite in this hemisphere and the first on this continent. The evisceration of containment is complete....

In 1947 President Harry S. Truman told Congress: "I believe it must be the policy of the United States to support free people who are resisting subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressure."... An armed Nicaraguan minority, sustained by outside forces (Soviet, Cuban, East German, etc.) is Sovietizing Nicaragua in the way that was being done in Eastern Europe in 1947....

In 1947 Congress had fresh memories of the terrible price paid because of nonresistance to Hitler at the time of the remilitarization of the Rhineland. Today the historical memory of many members of Congress consists entirely of Vietnam and its putative lessons. But congressional management of U.S. policy toward Central America--too little aid, too late; pursuit of the chimera of negotiated settlement...is a recipe for another Vietnam: another protracted failure.

On Wednesday, the day after the crucial Senate and House votes, the House nailed the door shut on support for the contras by refusing to support

either of two additional proposals which would have given only humanitarian aid, directly or indirectly, to the anti-Sandinista forces. In a gesture of "gratitude" to the House, the Sandinistas announced they were sending home 100 Cuban military advisors (Washington claims there are 3,000 Cubans in Nicaragua) plus arranging for the release of 107 prisoners charged with "counterrevolutionary crimes."

A couple of weeks ago, I attended a debate in Los Angeles on the question of congressional aid to the contras. There were six participants, three on the right (pro-aid), three on the left. One of the latter was actor Ed Asner, president of the Screen Actors Guild. His hatred for President Reagan was so evident, it flashed like a beacon. He always referred to the chief executive as "Reagan," (usually with a pejorative push in his pronunciation) never President Reagan, or Mr. Reagan, or even "the President." Another panelist, Congressman George Brown of Riverside, California, while not such a doctrinaire leftist, expressed the prevailing liberal view of the House of Representatives. He denied that the U.S. was confronted with a spreading political cancer in Central America. He admitted that there were Cubans and other communist agents in Nicaragua, but he said, "None of them pose a threat to U.S. security. If you see this then you see this as something that few members of Congress see." Congressman Brown saw President Reagan's concerns as fundamentally flawed in the larger context: "We're putting millions [of dollars] into the fight against the Communists around the world."

Of itself, a Communist Nicaragua, or even El Salvador would not pose a direct immediate threat to the U.S.--except, of course, that the Nicaraguans are building a 10,000 foot long air strip of the type that was so worrisome in Grenada. Long-range missiles based in Central America would be only eight minutes from U.S. targets. Nicaragua would be, claimed a participant on the other side, an "earthen aircraft carrier." However, experts stress that the real threat comes from a solidified Nicaragua becoming a staging ground, a regional headquarters for the further spread of Communism up to the north, through Mexico, and south, enveloping Panama and the Canal, and into the northern tier states of South America, including a vulnerable Colombia.

The arguments of Asner, Congressman Brown and Blase Fontaine (a pro-Marxist ex-Maryknoll priest) were countered by Dr. Alejandro Bolanos, a Nicaraguan refugee. He pointed out that the top Sandinista command were all dedicated Marxist revolutionaries, many of them educated in the East Bloc. "Comandante" Ortega, for example, is a graduate of Patrice Lumumba University in Moscow. Dr. Bolanos charged that Americans and their representatives in Congress were naive as to the real intent not only of the Sandinistas, but the Cubans and Russians. "Wake Up America!" he shouted in conclusion to his remarks.

The April 25 editorial titled "The Politics of Inaction" in the WALL STREET JOURNAL had a lot to say about the real nature of the threat in Central America, and especially how the Sandinistas have cleverly campaigned in the U.S. for their position:

We now know more about the current condition of the American political process. It has become, more than ever before, internationalized. And some of the players have no high regard either for democracy or the future well-being of the U.S.

For example, Danny Ortega, the Nicaraguan president, was able to predict on Monday that the U.S. House would hand him a victory over his contra foes. In a show of religious devotion not evident in the policies of his government, he even went to a church to pray for that victory. But on the chance that the Almighty might not be listening, he had previously enlisted two freshman U.S. senators, Kerry of Massachusetts and Harkin of Iowa, as his ambassadors to Ronald Reagan, assigned to tell the president that Mr. Ortega was offering what Sen. Kerry called a "wonderful opportunity" for peace.

Mr. Ortega had also offered concessions...before a House vote on contra aid last summer, then reneged after Congress gave him what he wanted. Even if the senators didn't know that, they should know that bait-and-switch tactics are an old game for authoritarians trying to consolidate power. Hitler constantly made promises he didn't intend to keep during the early '30s....

A still unresolved issue is the nature of the threat, Mr. Reagan's strong rhetoric notwithstanding. The Sandinistas don't plan to launch their 75 tanks and 12 helicopter gunships against Houston. But they, the Cubans and the other foot soldiers in Moscow's imperial crusade are going to continue doing some other things. They will continue to dabble in U.S. politics, partly by subterfuge and deception. They will continue building the drug trade, which nets them huge piles of dollars, spreads degeneracy and undermines law enforcement in the U.S. They will continue to train terrorists who, partly through the networks developed in the drug trade, will sow further disorder and try to destabilize democratic regimes in this hemisphere....

Finally, some congressmen probably represent what the polls suggest is a common view among Americans generally, that \$14 million in aid to the contras doesn't look like we are very serious about beating the communists. Do we intend to win or don't we? If not, poll respondents seem to be saying, don't get us bogged down in any more losing struggles. It is to that final misgiving, especially, that the administration must find an answer...because this problem, and indeed the larger problem of Soviet imperialism, is not going to go away just because the House tried to wish it away Tuesday night.

An article in the April 23 WALL STREET JOURNAL, entitled "A Lobbying Drive Began in Managua," gives further details about how the Sandinistas were able to sway Congressmen to their side. Just think of what Nazi master propagandist Josef Goebbels could have done today, enlisting public relations firms in his big-lie techniques! This article was written by Jim Denton, executive director of the National Forum Foundation, a public-policy group in Washington.

The likely congressional defeat of President Reagan's proposal to provide military aid to the anti-Sandinista contra forces comes in the wake of an extraordinary lobbying campaign.... Although it is not uncommon for foreign governments to try persuasion on Capitol Hill, the manner and degree to which the Sandinistas have manipulated public and congressional opinion is noteworthy....

The Washington, D.C. law firm of Reichler & Applebaum is the Nicaraguan government's official registered agent in the U.S. For its services, the firm is paid an annual rate of about \$320,000. From all outside appearances the firm has ably represented its client. An accounting of the lobbyists' appointments with legislators and staff reads like a Who's Who among Senate and House liberals.

But Reichler & Applebaum's lobbying efforts on the Sandinistas' behalf have gone beyond the congressional routine. In an interview, Mr. Reichler confirmed that some months ago he originated and orchestrated a plan to send a team of "professional attorneys to Nicaragua to conduct an objective, independent investigation of contra atrocities." Reed Brody, a 31-year-old lawyer, and Jim Bordeloin, a law-school student, were selected to conduct the "objective investigation." They spent four months in Nicaragua taking statements from witnesses of resistance-force atrocities, all with the full cooperation of the Sandinistas. Mr. Brody confirms that most of the investigators' in-country transportation, boarding, housing, office space, staff and, one can assume, the witnesses themselves, were provided compliments of their Marxist hosts and sympathizers in Managua.

Upon completion of the "investigation," the 141-page Brody Report, consisting of nearly 150 sworn affidavits from "witnesses," was duly processed back through the Sandinistas' lobbyists at Reichler & Applebaum. There it was prepared in final form....

The Brody document made its way into the public and congressional debate with a splash. The media fallout included articles in the Washington Post and the New York Times, and network coverage, including about 2½ minutes on the CBS Evening News. None of these accounts seriously challenged the report's origins or handling, ignoring or playing down the Sandinista sponsorship to the point that it was virtually unrecognizable to the audience. The overall impact of the press accounts and congressional responses served the purposes of a Marxist regime to distort the U.S. public and Congress's understanding of the human-rights saga in Nicaragua.

It has often been said that the Vietnam War was lost in the living rooms of America, as television journalists began to openly question, debate and distort U.S. policy. The Communists have learned this "lesson from Vietnam" well. In their latest campaign of disinformation, they are influencing the news media in order to mobilize public opinion to their cause, as well as influencing Congress to take a stand against the President. This campaign is working well, as the new Editor-in-Chief of the WASHINGTON TIMES, Arnaud de Borchgrave observed in his paper's April 8 edition (before the Congressional votes):

President Reagan told The Washington Post last week that "we've been subjected, in this country, to a very sophisticated lobbying campaign by a totalitarian government--the Sandinistas. There has been a disinformation program that is virtually worldwide, and we know that the Soviets and Cubans have such a disinformation network that is beyond anything we can match."

The Post in particular, and the liberal media in general, dismiss the very notion of Soviet and Soviet-proxy disinformation as a manifestation of mindless anti-communism. In a column headlined "Sandinista Disinformation?"--the question mark was designed to discredit the president's irrefutable statement of fact--The Post's deputy editorial page director, Stephen S. Rosenfeld, wrote, in effect, "Yes, but so what?" So a lot, Mr. Rosenfeld.

Vietnamese officials (e.g., General Giap himself) and defectors have confirmed that disinformation operations in the U.S. media and on Capitol Hill played a major role in changing perceptions about that war. The former justice minister of so-called National Liberation Front of South Vietnam...escaped among the boat people. He has testified that clever disinformation operations led us to believe that the 1968 Tet offensive was an unmitigated disaster for the United States. So pervasive was this perception--this misperception--that President Johnson felt compelled to abdicate a few months later. The reality, according to Truong Nhu Tang, was the other way around. Tet was an unmitigated disaster for Hanoi....

There is also every indication that disinformation and Soviet-Cuban-Nicaraguan "active measures" have played a crucial role in laying the groundwork for yet another U.S. strategic defeat.

There are many groups in the United States whose media connections are an open secret. Their mission is to shade, embroider and distort the truth for their own disinformation agenda.... These groups have helped nurture an entire new generation of journalists who have made it their duty to transform America's sworn enemies into misunderstood innocents, while at the same time portraying our own leaders as the foes of democracy and freedom....

How is it possible that so many intelligent people accept these dangerous misconceptions as the geopolitical gospel? Disinformation is the key.... How does it do this? Quite simply by distorting the data and corrupting the process of understanding in such a way that it leads public opinion to react differently than if it understood the true nature of reality.

It would behoove the Congress to take note before our elected representatives vote yet another resolution that will once again make it possible for the Marxists to steal a revolution from the people, only to impose a totalitarian dictatorship more draconian than the authoritarian regime that was overthrown.

Well, the elected representatives did not listen--or rather, listened to the disinformers. As a result, an unmitigated disaster awaits a sin-laden America not far down the road.

--Gene H. Hogberg, News Bureau