

PASTOR GENERAL'S REPORT

TO THE MINISTRY OF THE
WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD



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DECEMBER 12, 1979

A FIRST in the Colossus of CHINA!

by Herbert W. Armstrong

The visit to Communist PEOPLES' REPUBLIC OF CHINA was a significant FIRST! It was the first time a world church leader from the world of Christianity had been invited to visit, speak publicly, and meet privately with leaders of the vast Peoples' Republic of China.

These Chinese leaders with whom we spent four jam-packed days represent and rule over ONE BILLION PEOPLE--A THOUSAND MILLION--one-fourth of all the people on earth!

I myself had not realized before that China occupies even more square miles of land area than the United States!

Except possibly our many visits to, and friendships made in ISRAEL, this was the MOST IMPORTANT, and the most successful trip ever made overseas. We were royally received and treated.

A full report of our visit will appear in the February PLAIN TRUTH, and perhaps the same report earlier in either the GOOD NEWS or the World-wide News.

We arrived Tokyo Friday, November 30. Flew on to Peking Sunday December 2, arriving late afternoon. Three government limousines were driven up to our plane on landing and a reception committee was there to welcome us--including the president and vice-president of the government library and educational system. A woman interpreter was assigned to us, who rode with Mrs. Armstrong and me to the government guest State House. This is an apartment building maintained for government guests. Mrs. Armstrong and I were given a three-room suite, Mr. and Mrs. Rader a suite, and there were single TV rooms for all the rest of our staff, including aircraft staff and our TV and cameramen.

There was a welcoming dinner for us that evening. Monday evening was the big dinner at the Peking Duck Restaurant in a large room, with close to 400 present--government and university officials and wives. I spoke there, and I think many of you already have heard the tape recording of the speech program.

In most of my talks and speeches there I handled the Gospel of the Kingdom Message by speaking of the problems today being too great for any government to handle, but that what many scientists predict--the need of a ONE-WORLD Government with one single military force--will be brought about in OUR TIME, with WORLD PEACE and eternal salvation for all, brought about by a "strong unseen Hand from Someplace." That way I avoided using names of God, Christ, or the Bible, which I felt might be hostile to them since they are atheists. Yet they all knew well that I am leader of the

Worldwide Church of God, and they knew well what I really meant. It was just said in a polite way, unoffensive to them--yet unmistakably getting the message over.

Tuesday night, after a day's trip to the Great Wall of China, I spoke to the Diplomatic Corps. Beside Chinese officials, there were present FIFTY-SEVEN ambassadors--officials from 57 OTHER NATIONS! The speaking that night was also taped. You'll probably hear it next Sabbath.

This dinner was held in the Great Hall of the People in spacious Peoples' Square. It is a huge building, filling an entire block, and housing government headquarters. The dining room is larger than a U.S. football field!

Wednesday morning we visited the State Library, and Forbidden City--the walled-in former headquarters and palaces of the Emperors--now apparently just a sightseeing place. There was a luncheon, with no speaking except the usual continual round of toasts.

At 4 p.m. we had a meeting lasting one hour with one of the two Vice-Chairmen. The other Vice-Chairman and Chairman Hua were at the same time at the airport welcoming Prime Minister Ohira of Japan, who was just arriving for important talks on the Korea and Viet Nam situations--crucial to them right now.

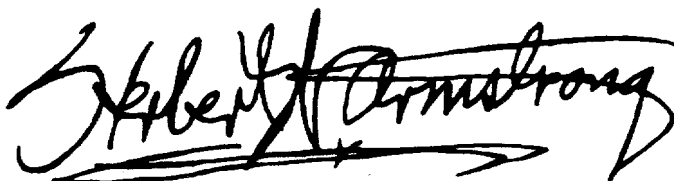
Wednesday evening we attended a show at a theatre, sponsored by the AICF. It was a series of semi-ballet performances--quite a spectacular performance. Mr. Rader will probably arrange for the troupe to appear at Ambassador Auditorium, with other appearances in New York, Chicago, Washington, and other U.S. cities. There was great applause from the audience when I walked in, and Mrs. Armstrong and I, with Mr. and Mrs. Rader, were whisked up on the stage at the conclusion, shaking hands with the many performers, as the audience applauded.

That had been an exhausting day. But Thursday at noon we drove to the airport and flew back to Tokyo.

Saturday night there was an important banquet in my honor in Tokyo with several ambassadors and wives and chief officials from the Chinese Embassy present.

Sunday evening, 6 p.m., our aircraft was taking off for Tucson. We arrived here in Tucson Sunday afternoon, hours before we left Tokyo. When you ARRIVE before you START, that's speed! Of course we were helped by the international date line.

So the long-anticipated visit to Communist China has come and gone--a huge success, as we all believe.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Herbert Armstrong". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal line underneath.

OFFICIAL CHINESE DELEGATION TO
VISIT AMBASSADOR CAMPUS

by Herbert W. Armstrong

It seems events of importance now are occurring more rapidly than I can write to convey them to you!

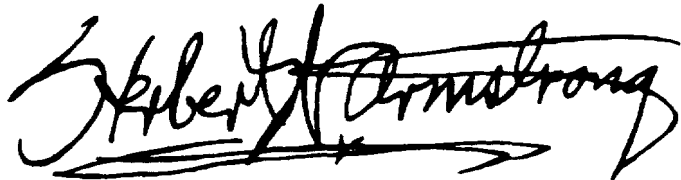
Following my official visit to the capital of the largest nation on earth, the government of the PEOPLES' REPUBLIC OF CHINA is sending an official delegation, this very coming Sunday, to visit the Ambassador College campus.

Actually this delegation is being sent on a government mission to Washington D.C. But Mr. Stanley Rader, who negotiated all plans for my visit to Peking, arranged with Chinese officials for a stopover at Pasadena.

The delegation will arrive Sunday, December 16, at San Francisco. Instead of flying direct from there to Washington, as originally scheduled, arrangements have been completed for them to detour to Pasadena where reservations have been made for their stopover here at the Pasadena Hilton Hotel.

Not only was I enabled to deliver before leaders of the largest nation on earth in language they well understood, the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, but, in addition, we are by my visit there, by Mr. Rader's planning in Tokyo and in Peking, and by this official visit of Chinese leaders to Pasadena, furthering the good will now being built up between the greatest economic and industrial nation on earth and the greatest nation in population.

Thus, in carrying out the GREAT COMMISSION, we also continue contributing to the function of being Ambassador of world peace, and a builder of bridges between nations.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Herbert W. Armstrong". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal line underneath.

CHURCH ATTORNEYS AWAIT FEDERAL JUDGE'S DECISION

The oft-postponed federal court hearing took place December 7th in Judge Laughlin Waters courtroom in the Los Angeles Federal Courthouse. The hearing began at 1:30 p.m. and concluded three and one half hours later. Allan Browne requested two hours to present the Church's position with extensive explanation of the extraordinary and unlawful irregularities on the part of the Attorney General and the receiver. Judge Waters showed considerable interest in the issues and quizzed both sides heavily toward the end of the hearing. He said that he wanted to do more reading of the papers submitted and asked both the Attorney General and attorneys for the Church to submit additional written information. We expect the judge's decision late this week.

FROM MINISTERIAL SERVICESMember's Right to Observe Holy Days Upheld

On Monday, December 10, the U.S. Supreme Court dismissed an appeal by a California school district which involved a member of God's Church.

Thomas E. Byars, a member since 1971 and an elementary school teacher in a small school district north of Bakersfield, California, must be permitted to take time off to observe the holy days. That decision came from the California Supreme Court last May and was based on state constitutional law. Thus the decision is binding on all city, county and state government employers in California.

There have been a number of similar legal disputes around the country and the California Supreme Court decision has often been cited. However, the school district appealed the state Supreme Court's decision to the U.S. Supreme Court. The highest court in the land has just decided to dismiss the school district's appeal. The justices, in a 6-3 vote, refused to hear the matter on the grounds that the case didn't contain a "substantial federal question."

Essentially, this matter involved whether the state requirement that the school district accommodate Byar's observance of the holy days was in violation of the U.S. Constitution's ban on "establishment of religion." Not only will members of God's Church in California benefit from the California Supreme Court decision, but so will other religious faiths that celebrate their religious holidays at times when most Americans are working.

Public Bible Lectures to Resume

Mr. Armstrong is very enthusiastic about moving ahead with the Public Bible Lectures. As you know, these lectures are given by the local Pastors in their own areas. We are pleased to announce that these men have already scheduled lectures for the near future:

<u>CITY</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>NUMBER INVITED</u>	<u>MINISTER</u>
*Tampa, FL	2/3/80	unknown	Ron Lohr
Cumberland, R.I.	1/16/80 2/20/80	1,165	Jim Franks
Concord, MA	1/02/80 2/06/80 3/05/80	2,000	Jim Franks
Worcester, MA	1/09/80 2/13/80	688	Jim Franks
Aptos, CA	1/16/80	395	Ronald Reedy
Moultrie, GA	12/11/79 12/12/79	97	Rick Beam
Saginaw, MI	12/06/79	427	Gerald Weston
Kawkawlin, MI	10/24/79	224	Gerald Weston

*Will be holding special lectures in the Tampa area in four different locations, starting February 3 and ending April 16, 1980.

Remember to encourage your congregations to be praying for the success of all these and other Public Bible Lectures as the dates draw near. All Pastors who can be certainly encouraged to begin making plans for their own Public Bible Lectures.

We'll plan to keep you up to date on the progress of all the lectures. This is a very important and exciting part of the Work of God in which the local Pastors and the local churches can be directly involved.

As a part of this program, Mr. Armstrong has approved a nine-minute film which can be shown before a lecture begins to provide a moving background and introduction to Mr. Armstrong and the Work. This will help to set the tone for the lectures and provide an introduction for the Pastor who is speaking.

Let us know when you decide to begin planning your Public Bible Lectures.

Comments From the Monthly Church Reports

The following comments represent a cross section of the feelings and trends in the Church as reported by many pastors on their monthly church reports.

James Reyer, Des Moines, Iowa, October: The members here are in very good shape spiritually. I am very pleased with the attitude of this Church.

John Elliott, Mena, Arkansas, October: Everyone is "starry-eyed" and very receptive in this the second month of the Mena Church. The brethren loved the Feast.

John Elliott, Fayetteville, Ark., October: Everyone is still full of the effects of a great Feast! Those who had been lax in diligence are becoming spiritually rejuvenated.

Warren J. Heaton, Jr., Rolla, Mo., October: All the members here are looking to H.Q. Mr. Waterhouse spoke 11-21-79. His sermon was very inspiring--God's people need this type of encouragement. Thank you for sending him!

Dave Havir, Iowa City, Iowa, November: The members have responded positively to Mr. Armstrong's admonitions to become "cleaned up" spiritually, and are anxiously waiting to hear the results of Mr. Armstrong's trip to China.

Hal W. Baird, Jr., Houston East, October: For weeks prior to the F.O.T. and now following the Feast, attitudes are decidedly on the positive side. The brethren say the F.O.T. was inspirational and uplifting to them.

Richard Rand, Columbia, Mo., November: I have just received the December number of The PLAIN TRUTH. It is outstanding! One of the best in years --chock full of Biblical understanding and truth. We are on the right track now with this publication. Thanks again!

Leonard Schreiber, Minneapolis, Minn., September: As best as I can determine, the brethren are really loyal to God and His apostle.

Dave Fiedler, Wausau & Appleton, Wisconsin, September: I've noticed that the brethren here are more enthusiastic about volunteering their help than in recent years.

Steve Buchanan, Rapid City, S. Dak., September: We are in a very beautiful area and the Church is expressing stability and loyalty to God's apostle.

Arthur Docken, Omaha, Neb., September: Everyone I've talked to is very enthusiastic about recent ordinations--especially Mr. Rader's!

Allan Barr, Chicago Southside, September: The response was gratifying after I announced the recent ordinations to evangelist rank. I have believed for a long time that as Mr. Armstrong's assistant Mr. Rader should be ordained a minister. He has shown that he has the guts to stand up against the enemies of the Church, and I feel in many ways he has been preaching the gospel.

Dr. Lynn Torrance (Local Elder), Texarkana, Texas, September: Enthusiasm and morale is very good in Texarkana. Attendance continues to set records. Growth is way above average.

Bob Spence, St. Louis, Mo., September: Gossip is disappearing as the members strive to overcome, and as they look to Mr. Armstrong and Pasadena for guidance and encouragement and the right example. Feast fever has really swept the members!!!

PUBLISHING SERVICES UPDATE

The Plain Truth and Quest are printed and distributed from a massive printing facility tucked away in the green rolling hills of Kentucky. I returned last week from the R. R. Donnelley printing plant which is in Glasgow, Kentucky, 80 miles north of Nashville. I met with their management to go over some needed changes in our production cycle and introduced Vikki Matulewicz of Quest to the Quest distribution system which was set up back in 1976.

The employees at the R. R. Donnelley plant in Kentucky are generally very proud to be a part of producing the Plain Truth. Glasgow is in the "Bible Belt" and the Plain Truth has, to them, backed up their beliefs for many years. It is not unusual to be called aside and given a warm handshake or a word of praise for the Plain Truth from a shop floor worker. Word soon gets around that somebody from the Plain Truth is in their plant. I mention this because Donnelley prints many other magazines in Glasgow, but the Plain Truth is set aside in the minds of many people as being something special--even by those who may not be regular readers now.

One last point regarding Quest magazine. Some of you may have noticed that unfortunately the January cover carried the word "Damn." It was agreed with our New York staff that this word should not be used and an alternative was typeset as a replacement. Unfortunately, through an administrative error in the production department in New York the change was not made. The next thing we saw was the printed cover with the offending word still in place.

The Quest Staff and we here in Pasadena are very sorry about this and would like to apologize for any offense caused to any of you or to any church member who may be upset by it. We certainly did not want this to happen. It had been caught, but slipped through the system.

--Roger Lippross

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

South Africa

Greetings from Southern Africa! Once again "the best Feast ever" seems to be the only way to describe the reaction God's people have had towards the fall festival, 1979. Over 2250 people attended the Feast of Tabernacles at the five festival sites throughout Southern Africa and Rhodesia, 15% up on 1978--which means 300 new people attended this year.

Calendar year-to-date figures for mail income to the end of October are an encouraging 16.1% up on the same period of 1978. In the third quarter of 1979 alone, mail income was over 20% above the equivalent months last year.

Advertising: We have been particularly encouraged by the response to a "message" ad placed in the largest South African Sunday paper, The Sunday Times (Circulation 480,000). The ad, entitled "World War III will not destroy humanity," has drawn 970 requests to receive a subscription to The Plain Truth. This response equals the highest figure for a booklet ad in the same newspaper a couple of years ago. After quoting a few prominent historians and politicians concerning the spectre of future world war, the text focused in on Mr. Herbert Armstrong's recent address to top government officials and Ambassadors in Tokyo.

We feel some of the advantages in this kind of "message" ad are:

- a) The "article" is in the main news section of the paper, and being typeset in exactly the same style it may be read as part of the paper.
- b) Mr. Herbert Armstrong is introduced to a wider readership in the context of prestigious meetings or addresses. This gives wider credence to both the magazine and the rest of the ad text.
- c) We can say a lot in the space available which, in a booklet advertisement, is used only in promoting one publication.
- d) The advertisement promotes only The Plain Truth, which establishes monthly contact with those who respond.
- e) If 1000 times as many people read the ad than those who actually respond, each and every one of the readers will know who Mr. Herbert Armstrong is, what he does, who he represents and what the message of the Work is all about.

We hope to be able to cover Mr. Armstrong's meetings through similar ads. His messages to the leaders constitute a tremendous opportunity for us to reach a larger South African audience with great impact through "message" ads.

Swazi Radio: Though we do not have major commercial radio time available to us in Southern Africa, we have been using a small station (broadcasting from the Kingdom of Swaziland) which covers much of South Africa and Zimbabwe/Rhodesia. Mr. Armstrong met the King of Swaziland on one of his trips to Southern Africa.

The majority of members may hear Mr. Armstrong on a regular basis. We also direct The Plain Truth readership to the station, which broadcasts The World Tomorrow at 9:00 P.M. Friday nights on shortwave and medium wave frequencies.

The response has not been spectacular, but anyone who came into the Church through listening to Mr. Armstrong knows how valuable that regular contact is. We feel we have a reasonable-sized audience. The station has been signed on for another year's contract.

--Compiled by Rod Matthews, International Office

MAIL COMMENTS

Through his Personal column in the October/November PLAIN TRUTH, Mr. Armstrong excited readers with the announcement that THE BIBLE STORY by Basil Wolverton would once again be made available for distribution. Many, familiar with THE BIBLE STORY, grew to deeply appreciate Mr. Wolverton's literary and artistic talent and expressed hope that the books would soon be republished. In fact, many requests for the book are received daily.

We are continuing to receive comments from listeners of The WORLD TOMORROW program expressing gratitude over hearing Mr. Armstrong's inspiring broadcasts. We are including a number of reactions from new and longtime listeners alike.

--Mail Processing Center

Anticipating New Edition of the Bible Story

In your personal this month in The PLAIN TRUTH, you are paying tribute to Mr. Basil Wolverton. Thanks so much that you are going to reprint new editions of The Bible Story books. That's just a prayer answered. I know several new church members who have been praying that they would be reprinted so they could get a copy for themselves and their children. I've read them several times and always enjoy going back over them again and again.

--Ruth Baker (Huntsville, AL)

Thanks a million for deciding to print The Bible Story book, again. For the seven years I have been in God's true Church I have wished you would print it again. It seems too good to be true, how I wanted a complete set! It would be fantastic if it were in book-stores because it is unlike any other "Bible Story" book. It wouldn't surprise me if God would use it to call adults in the world.

--Gordon L. Solt (Burbank, CA)

I am so happy you are going to order a new edition of The Bible Story book by Mr. Wolverton. I was not able to obtain all of the old volumes, but the ones I had were worn out from use while I was

raising my children. They loved them and so did I. I have wished very much for some new ones for a very long time. So this is very exciting news to me and I'm sure it is to all of the brethren.

--Mrs. James Cook (Columbia, LA)

I think Mr. Wolverton's art talent is a very useful tool in helping people understand the Bible. As they say, a picture is worth a thousand words and also it will help people to get a better picture of the content of the Bible and make it more interesting in understanding God's Word.

--Charles A. Ehrn, Jr. (Baltimore, MD)

I have volumes II and III, and I have enjoyed them and learn from them easier than any other way. In case of reprint, I would like to request the volumes that I do not have. In my opinion the illustrations that Mr. Wolverton puts into the articles give it so much more meaning.

--Bob M. Rambo (Lutesville, MO)

I read your very touching tribute to Basil Wolverton and was inspired by it. I would be most interested in becoming acquainted with Mr. Wolverton's Bible Story. If it is possible I would consider it an honor to be placed on the list of those who might be considered to receive the new edition of The Bible Story book.

--Matthew Shanley (Somers, CT)
Catholic Chaplain at the Connecticut
State Prison

Expressions of Appreciation for Broadcasts

I heard your broadcast by accident a couple of weeks ago. It seemed as though God meant it to happen. I always had set my clock radio on an FM station. Evidently one of my children had flicked the button from FM to AM. So when it woke me up the next morning, you were on. Now I set the radio to come on at 5:00 so I can hear all your program before I get up.

--Mrs. Carolyn Kinworthy (Moweaqua, IL)

I've been listening to your radio program for a couple of months and have decided to enroll in your Bible Study Course. I listen to you on WMAQ radio station in Chicago. You come on just as I leave for work every morning at five. I didn't like your program at first, but for some reason I kept listening every morning and all things you talk about are starting to make sense to me.

--Steve Haslett (Altamont, IL)

I want to let you know how much I really need and appreciate your daily radio broadcasts. Your voice coming loud and clear over the air speaks the real plain truth about God's Word. I need that preaching and teaching. Each broadcast is like a brilliant light shining in the darkness. It gives me much to think about for the rest of the day.

--John K. Pierson (Warren, PA)

It sounds so very good to hear your voice coming across our radio so loud and clear still strongly crying aloud to Israel.

--Jewel St. John (Honey Grove, PA)

ON THE WORLD SCENE

IRAN: AMERICA REAPS BITTER FRUITS OF WAYWARD POLICY It's now over a month since "students" stormed the U.S. Embassy in Teheran. Fifty American hostages remain in captivity--their hopes of early release as remote as ever. What led up to this humiliating experience? It's not hard to discover.

Shortly after President Carter assumed office in January 1977, he laid down the principles of his "new look" foreign policy, a policy advocated by leftist State Department planners who had been thwarted by the hard-line, realpolitik approach of previous administrations.

First of all, the East-West ideological struggle was to be down-played, Americans having shed their "inordinate fear of Communism." In its place was a new, 90-degree turn of the political axis. The world was henceforth to be viewed primarily as a "North-South" struggle--that is, one between the developed countries of the Northern Hemisphere (including Communist states) and the "developing" countries of the basically southern hemisphere Third World.

Central to this switch was the President's emphasis on "human rights." The prime targets of the new approach were right-of-center governments--such as in Iran and Nicaragua--which, while hardly Swiss or American-style Democracies, had helped stem the tide against Communism or Communist-agitated violence.

America's humiliation in Iran can be attributed to this very policy shift. Syndicated columnist Jack Anderson reported on December 7: "In memoirs that may never be published, the deposed Shah of Iran blames Jimmy Carter for pressuring him to make concessions that cost his throne and brought Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini to power."

The Shah, according to his memoirs, said that during the last years of his reign, he had been under constant American pressure to relax his grasp on political dissent in his country. The release of hundreds of political prisoners--avowed enemies of the Shah--only led to more problems, his enemies convinced the Shah was acting out of weakness. When he cracked down on subsequent civil unrest, his policy only drew more ire from Washington.

Even when he left, the Shah said he had been led by the President to believe that his exit would be only temporary--a time during which his generals could get the upper hand, calm things down and return the Shah to power (as happened in 1953). But, according to Anderson, "Carter pulled the rug out from under him. According to the Shah's view, his generals were notified that if they tried to seize control and bring back the Shah, the United States would cut off all supplies and assistance."

The Shah has another bitter complaint against Mr. Carter. The president once praised him in language that was almost obsequious. In a New Year's Eve toast at the dawning of the Shah's final year, Carter declared: "Iran,

because of the great leadership of the Shah, is an island of stability... This is a great tribute to you, Your Majesty, and to the respect and the admiration and the love which your people give you."

The Shah previously had trouble with arch-foe Ayatollah Khomeini as early as 1963. The main grudge the various Ayatollahs and mullahs had against the Shah was a simple, politically-motivated one: The Shah, in his ambitious land reform program wanted to reduce the size of the vast holdings of religious-held land. (He had already divested himself of his own crown-held lands, in order to set an example. That, plus his desire to emancipate Iranian women, earned the Shah the eternal wrath of Iran's Islamic leadership. It's been a simple, cut-and-dried power struggle all along.

Many, including Senator Ted Kennedy, have decried the Shah's reign as being exceptionally violent and repressive. The facts, however, don't bear out either the cries of the U.S. liberal-left establishment or the outrageous allegations of Khomeini's pseudo-government. (The new Foreign Minister Gotbzadeh is fond of calling the Shah the "most evil man on face of earth.") According to a British expert on Iran, normally in an average year, 100 persons were imprisoned or killed for their political beliefs, these being avowed enemies of the Shah's government. Says this expert from the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London: "The notion that the Shah was uniquely vicious doesn't bear up. There is hardly any Third World government that cannot be accused of similar crimes."

Charges that the Shah bilked his country of billions of dollars are similarly overstated: Reports Newsweek, in the December 10, 1979 edition: "The Shah's critics usually fail to mention that the great bulk of the Pahlavi wealth was in Iran and reverted to the Iranian government when the Shah fled. 'If anything, the Shah may have increased rather than plundered the wealth of Iran,' says University of California political scientist George Lenczowski. 'Iran was left with a fantastic amount of money.'"

The facts are, the Shah was a friend of the U.S. and the West for 37 years. But he was no lachrymose either, as his critics also charge. He led the push for a steep rise in OPEC oil prices. There was a reason behind this as well. Britain had abandoned its "seagate" holdings in Aden and the Persian Gulf, leaving a dangerous vacuum. The Shah needed money to finance a rapid increase in Iran's armed forces in order to become the "policeman of the Gulf." In this he had Washington's full support.

The undermining of the Shah graphically reveals the bankruptcy of America's recent leftist human-rights policy. David Horowitz, a self-professed Marxist romantic in his early years, writes in the December 8 edition of The Nation about the "blind spot" of the left: "Above all, the left seems trapped in its romantic vision...The left's indignation seems exclusively reserved for outrages that confirm the Marxist diagnosis of the sickness of capitalist society. Thus, there is protest against murder and repression in Nicaragua, but not Cambodia, Chile but not Tibet, South Africa but not Uganda, Israel but not Libya or Iraq. Political support is mustered for oppressed minorities in Western countries but not in Russia..., while a Third World country that declares itself "Marxist" puts itself--by that very act--beyond reproach. In the same vein, almost any 'liberation movement' is embraced as just that, though it may be as unmistakably atavistic and clerically fascist on first sight as the Ayatollah Khomeini's in Iran."

--Gene H. Hogberg, News Bureau