

PASTOR GENERAL'S REPORT

TO THE MINISTRY OF THE
WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD



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PASADENA, CALIFORNIA

August 14, 1979

Greetings, Ministers and Wives:

It was just about two years ago that I died, just past my 85th birthday. I had completely stopped breathing. There was no pulse--no blood pressure. But by frantic life-and-death effort, and a "touch-and-go" battle with mouth-to-mouth resuscitation and pounding on my chest, they started my heart beating once again. Two women did that--but it WAS GOD who brought me back to life FOR A SERIOUS PURPOSE!

Two years have gone by--as if they were only two weeks. About nine months were required for convalescing. But since then much has been accomplished.

I look back and ask, "WHY did God bring me back?" "What has He done with and through me these past 15 months?" Primarily He has used me in SETTING HIS CHURCH BACK ON THE TRACK! The Church and entire Work had been derailed--sidetracked. It had become a non-spiritual, secular organization like any commercial organization in this world. Christ was scarcely in it any more--nor even thought of by those at Pasadena any more than officials of big steel, automobile, and oil corporations think of Christ in connection with their plans and everyday operations.

These past 15 months the living Jesus Christ has been moving swiftly to set God's Church on the track.

My job is not easy. There can be NO THOUGHT OF RETIRING! Once God calls one to His ministry, and he "sets his hand to the plow," Jesus said he must never leave it or turn back into the secular field of occupations. "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God" (Luke 9:62). Paul wrote Timothy that we in the ministry must stay with it, "in season and out of season" (II Tim. 4:2).

When I receive a letter from a minister who is discouraged and wants to leave the ministry, I feel very depressed. I want so earnestly to see ALL of us in God's Kingdom, but the greatest of disappointments is when one turns back and leaves the ministry of Jesus Christ.

In Luke 17:32 Jesus reminded us of Lot's wife, who turned back. It is he that ENDURES "UNTO THE END" that shall be saved. Yes, I am distressed and discouraged when I have to see some who have "put their hands to the plow" turn back and leave the ministry.

On the other hand, a letter like the one I shall quote here, gives great inspiration to me--and I believe it will to YOU--so I shall quote it in full. It came from one of our ministers of many years of faithful service: I am thankful and inspired that we have so many dedicated, tried and proven ministers in God's Church. Below is the letter:

Dear Mr. Armstrong:

Your letters and sermons, articles and editorials have been truly inspired and inspiring to all of us. Your latest letter to the ministers, CHRIST NOW MOVES TO PUT GOD'S GOVERNMENT BACK ON THE RIGHT TRACK, shows clearly once again why indeed you are God's Apostle. My wife and I want you to know that we are back of you 100%, and so is the vast majority of the members in our area.

You mentioned in the article that: "There came to be a total lack of response from ministers when I repeated requests during 1975 and thereafter." Actually, Mr. Armstrong, many of us did respond but the response never reached you. We would write but could never be sure that you would ever receive the letters. The Pastor's Report, Worldwide News and other publications did not mention what you were doing except only in vague terms. I can see why some perhaps believed that you were senile or even dead. If it were not for your own letters and articles we would have heard virtually nothing about your activities. I would call Headquarters and ask about you--no one seemed to know anything. As late as last December I wrote a memo to the Pastor's Report staff humorously saying I was getting more news about you from the grapevine out of Tibet than I got from Headquarters. That Memo went to Wayne Cole but created no response or change. Indeed, when the Receivership struck the only news we received was Mr. Cole's side of the story--and it just didn't sound right.

Please don't think that the majority of ministers are not behind you. Only a handful left in comparison to the number that have remained loyal. It is sad that so many of your "spiritual sons" have revolted against you while at the same time Japanese Congressmen, who have no interest in the Church, have asked to be your sons. Well, Mr. Armstrong, I consider myself one of your sons as well, and my wife considers herself your daughter. You have taught us everything that counts, you've fed us God's Words of Life. I feel that the majority of true, loyal ministers and members today consider themselves your children as well.

When my wife and I returned from overseas in 1973 we were saddened to see the state of the Work and College. Ted was "in charge" and we tried to back him up. But, I finally asked to be transferred to the field where we could at least do something constructive in feeding the flock--Headquarters was just too much like the worldly institutions and businesses we had come out of and we were frustrated in our attempts to do anything about it. We are extremely thankful and relieved that God has once again placed you over the whole Work and Church. That is exactly as it should be.

In my sermons and teaching I have repeatedly quoted Isaiah 50:10: "Who is among you that feareth the LORD, that obeyeth the voice of his servant...?"

You certainly are the Servant of God and as such I honestly feel the one we must follow. I believe we are being trained to obey you and follow your lead, not just as a man, but as God's Servant. I continually point my flock to your leadership--where you are, there is the Work and there is the leadership of the Church of God. Obviously God backs

up your decisions and teaching and when you give us instructions I want my people to quickly respond or they may just have to go through the tribulation.

Some may still question or doubt but they are the minority of Church members. The farther this world and its governments sink into the cesspool of ignorance and corruption, the more this Church stands out as God's one and only Church, the only true Body of Christ. How grateful we should be for this blessing!

My wife and I wish there were something more tangible that we could do to assist you, but we know that God is giving you the strength and inspiration to clean us up so we go to Him in prayer for you, our leader and the Apostle and Servant of the Living God. Don't be concerned for those who are against you, Mr. Armstrong. Most of us are for you 100% and are instructing our congregations to back you up all the way. Hopefully all those opposing you and Christ will soon repent or be removed.

Thank you for all you have done--for teaching us, training us, cleaning us up, encouraging and inspiring us. Please continue to make the Hot Line telephone messages. I record them and play them for the Church as part of our Sabbath services. Your sermons are always instructive and inspiring and we are all looking forward to this Feast of Tabernacles and hopefully seeing you in person. We need your leadership, Mr. Armstrong. May God strengthen you physically and spiritually more and more as we approach the end of this age and the coming of Christ.

In sincere love, respect and gratitude,
(Name withheld by Mr. Armstrong)

Ministers and wives, Jesus Christ brought me through an experience in which he struck me down in a manner quite different than He did the Apostle Paul, yet in which He CONQUERED me--brought me to complete surrender to Him in repentance and FAITH--and started me in His ministry. I have said before, He had taken from me a successful business, and I walked the gravel highways on shoes with "holey soles." I started against severe persecution and opposition--and the start was the smallest possible, but Jesus Christ used me to start (the smallest possible) and build the Work that employs so many of YOU and in which you have learned the precious TRUTH of God, known by NO OTHER church or sect or denomination. Directly or indirectly, you are all my sons and daughters in the Lord Jesus Christ.

I do have to push myself a little harder now than I did 20 or 30 years ago. It is not as easy to "get the job done" now as it once was. But I know God brought me back to life to set HIS CHURCH back on the track, READY for the soon-coming of the Lord and KING JESUS CHRIST. And, with your help, I intend to keep right on the job.

Sometimes, now in my 88th year, I almost feel like the Apostle Paul (when he was much younger), when he said "For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart /this life/, and be with Christ; which is far better: Nevertheless TO ABIDE IN THE FLESH IS MORE NEEDFUL FOR YOU. And having this confidence, I KNOW THAT I SHALL ABIDE AND CONTINUE WITH YOU ALL FOR YOUR FURTHERANCE AND JOY OF FAITH" (Phil. 1:23-25).

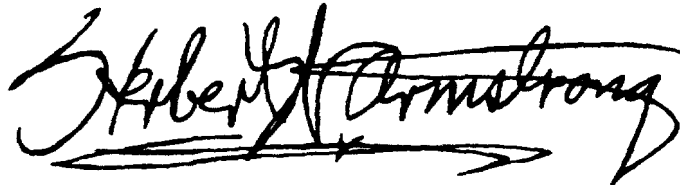
Great progress has been made in these past 15 months--but we are NOT YET READY for Christ's return.

Let us continue with ONE MIND--the mind of Christ--spending more time on our knees--drawing closer to HIM. HE is the HEAD of this Church!

SPECIAL NOTICE

The Minister's Conference for early next year will be held in Tucson, Arizona, on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, February 11, 12, and 13.

All reservations have been made. Ministers and wives will have food served in special dining rooms at the Convention Center. It will be announced later whether all Preaching Elders will attend--depending on the financial situation.



FROM MINISTERIAL SERVICES

Excitement fills the air in Pasadena as the new sabbatical ministers begin arriving for a year of challenges, development, and growth! Each of them, as well as every one of us ministers worldwide, needs to recognize this is a time to rededicate ourselves to the very special calling that the Great God has given us.

We have a very great responsibility to the flock God has placed in our care. And like any good shepherd who is truly concerned about the health and condition of his sheep--truly concerned about leading them to wholesome, nourishing pastures and sufficient water--we should keep our sheep healthy, strong, and safe, thereby preventing any disaster from harming a portion of the flock.

As Jesus says in John 10:14, "I am the good shepherd and know my sheep, and am known of mine;" so we must also, as ministers of Christ, through constant vigilance, and much personal contact, know our sheep and be known of them, so that they can be prepared to withstand all spiritual predators, disease, and danger which could otherwise destroy the flock, or any portion of it. We must earnestly and enthusiastically drive ourselves through fervent prayer and fasting, to stay close to God, and by hard, selfless work assist Mr. Armstrong in making God's church ready for the imminent return of Jesus Christ.

Mr. Armstrong strongly urges the ministry to keep him informed about the trends, problems, pertinent news, needs, and any matters that may require his immediate attention.

The Ministerial Services Department is a service oriented department, designed to assist the ministry in maintaining open communication with Mr. Armstrong, as well as carrying on the day-to-day ministerial operations as it has done in the past. The function of Ministerial Services is to see

to it that Mr. Armstrong is not cut off from the ministry. It serves to channel all communications from the ministry to Mr. Armstrong, and to carry out all of Mr. Armstrong's decisions and directives.

All communication to Mr. Armstrong, and all church reports should be sent directly to Ministerial Services in care of Joseph Tkach, where they will receive Mr. Armstrong's immediate attention.

Some have asked that we clarify the role of Senior Pastors. To quote Mr. Armstrong, "There will be no line authority under senior pastors." Mr. Armstrong is our only human head. The ministry answers to him. Senior pastors are responsible only for their local congregations like any other pastor. They have no authority over any other pastor, and no other pastors must report to them. Obviously, from time to time, a younger minister may desire advice or counsel from a more experienced, and mature minister. But that has nothing to do with authority.

In Christ's Service,
Joe Tkach

PROCEDURAL INFORMATION

Ministerial Expense Questions

Since the area coordinator function has been eliminated, ministerial expense questions or requests for additional expense can be directed to Ministerial Services.

Disfellowship and Inactive Cards

It has been noticed that some of the disfellowship and inactive member notices being sent in do not have comments explaining the reason for the action being taken. Please be sure to include a brief explanation as to why the individual was disfellowshipped or made inactive.

--Joe Tkach, Ministerial Services

FUND RAISING PROJECTS HELP UNIFY CHURCH

Since the middle of April, brethren in the U.S. churches have been participating in fund raising projects to help ease the financial strain inflicted upon the Work this year by the state of California. Overall participation has been very enthusiastic and imaginative. The brethren have participated in a wide variety of projects ranging from small individual efforts, such as canning, to large group activities like cleaning up a stadium after a rock concert.

To date over \$455,000 has been raised by these projects. However, something more valuable has resulted in many Church areas. These efforts have acted as a unifying force to draw God's people together. This, as many have expressed, is perhaps even more important than the revenue generated.

--Mail Processing Center

FEAST UPDATE

Work toward the 1979 Feast of Tabernacles is rapidly going ahead. The Feast Office plans to get the first run of housing confirmations in the mail by early next week, with 80-90 percent of applications prepared for the first confirmation run.

Mr. Sherwin McMichael met with Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong Friday, August 10 to discuss many facets of the Festival, including the solidifying of Mr. Armstrong's personal appearance schedule at several of the U.S. sites this year. Mr. Armstrong will announce his schedule in a letter to the ministry in a future Pastor General's Report.

Mr. Armstrong and Mr. McMichael also discussed the ministerial speaking schedule, which Mr. Armstrong reviewed for the second time. Mr. McMichael says ministers will be notified soon on their duties. Mr. McMichael added that the schedule is once again designed to spread the speaking opportunities to more Church pastors during this year's Feast of Tabernacles.

--Festival Office

PLEASE ANNOUNCE

Please do not send any applications to the Festival Office, either in Tucson or Pasadena, after September 10. Any new members who have not sent in an application by that time should go to the Housing Office when they arrive at their assigned site.

For those who find they are unable to attend the Feast and must cancel their reservations, the deposit refund deadline is September 5. All requests for refunds must be postmarked by that date or within 10 days of the date printed on the housing confirmation.

Even if you are no longer eligible for a refund, please do let the Festival Office know if you will not be attending so these rooms can be reassigned to others. See your festival adviser for the proper form (Reservation Action Request). This form and your confirmation slip should be mailed to: Worldwide Convention Service, 300 W. Green St., Pasadena, CA 91123.

Remember, most of the Housing Officers must be at their site by the Day of Atonement in order to get all necessary pre-Feast work done. Any correspondence received too late cannot be acted upon. So please notify the Festival Office as early as possible about any change of plans.

--Festival Office

PT PROMOTIONAL BROCHURE UPDATE

As promised in a previous Pastor's Report, here's an update on the PT Promotional Brochure which we inserted in the San Diego and Sacramento Sunday newspapers. (One is enclosed for your interest.)

As of last week, we have added over 5,400 new subscribers from both cities. This is over a 1% response which we consider excellent on a cost per response basis. Several outside direct mail consultants have told us that this response is very good by industry standards. We feel that these subscribers will be of fairly high quality because the insert was designed to accurately describe the religious content of the magazine. Successful as we feel the insert has been, we are working on improvements to increase future responses even more.

--Roger Lippross, Publishing Services Director

THE WATS LINE GREETING

The telephone operators in the WATS area of the Mail Processing Center in Pasadena are greeting callers with the words: "Thank you for calling. May I help you?"

Frequently we receive questions as to why we use such a general greeting, rather than specifically mentioning the Church or "The World Tomorrow." The reason for this simple salutation is primarily to avoid confusion in the minds of many new "first-time" callers. The WATS number is occasionally used in nationwide spot commercials--as well as in many of our booklets and magazines. Calls to the WATS number come from spot ads, booklet cards, PT newsstand copies, as well as from ministers and members. And, because the Work has many entities--Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong, the Worldwide Church of God, Ambassador College, AICF, PLAIN TRUTH, GOOD NEWS, etc.--calls can be in response to media efforts of any of these entities.

In answering any given call, the operators have no way of knowing the background of the caller, and are therefore using a general non-specific approach which will be appropriate for whoever is calling.

This simple greeting is being used, then, as a means of avoiding confusion --and yet is a friendly acknowledgment to each call. (Unfortunately in the past, some new callers have responded to booklet spot commercials and when hearing our operators say "The World Tomorrow program," they thought they had a wrong number and hung up!)

So, if you happen to use the WATS number and hear this general greeting, this is why we use it. It allows us to respond to a wide variety of listeners--some who know a great deal about the Work, and some who know very little. Our goals are to serve everyone as equally well as we can.

--Richard Rice, Mail Processing Center

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

July has been the best month for income in Canada for about three years! A 24% increase for the month puts the year-to-date income figure at +11%. Coupled with -4% on expenses, the financial picture is looking very healthy as we move into planning fall programs.

There has been a noticeable increase in co-worker activity over the past month along with a growing number of positive comments on the radio program. Mail received is beginning to turn around now, after a period of several months of year-to-date deficits. It seems that regular subscribers, donors, co-workers, and members alike are reacting very excitedly to the upgrading of the Church and its publications under Mr. Armstrong's direction.

The latest statistics on membership, co-workers and donors in Canada are: Members 5,664; Donors 3,828; Co-workers 8,850. Another growing group of involved people are the 9,754 Bible Correspondence Course recipients.

The Church in Grenada (In the Caribbean)

The church in Grenada had its beginning back in 1975. At that time, the church was being served both from Trinidad and Puerto Rico. Services were held twice a month, once by a sermon tape and the other time by a visiting minister.

Since July 1977, Mr. Victor Simpson became responsible for Grenada, traveling from Barbados twice a month to conduct services. There are 35 baptized members and more about to be baptized, and the church's attendance is around 65. The church is also well served by a recently ordained deacon, Mr. Desmond Andrew, and another church pillar, Mr. Harold Joseph helping out with sermonettes.

In addition, there is a local Spokesman's Club, a YES program, and a progressive newsstand program with 1,000 magazines going out monthly in Grenada and in Carricou, a neighbouring island.

One sad bit of news is that the broadcast which has been on Radio Free Grenada since 1977, has been banned now due to the current political changes in the island. So as of now, we are no longer on radio in Grenada. Nevertheless, the church is planning other projects such as offering select pieces of literature to subscribers and extending an invitation to local lectures. The church in Grenada intends to find a way to continue generating responses as the broadcast used to do.

--Compiled by Rod Matthews, International Office

ON THE WORLD SCENE

EUROPEANS AND ARABS FORGING NEW LINKS: In a dramatic, but quiet, manner, a "special relationship" is developing between major oil producers in the Middle East and the industrial oil-importing powers of Western Europe. The United States, at the same time, is being shut out of the new arrangement.

Led by France and Kuwait, the nine members of the European Community (Common Market) and six of the oil producers on the Persian Gulf have one major objective in mind: long-term, guaranteed oil supplies for the Europeans and access to Europe's markets, technology--and possibly military assistance--for the Arabs.

Since the revolution in Iran and the worsened oil crisis, French diplomatic activity in the OPEC countries has been intense. Both the Prime Minister, M. Raymond Barre, and his minister for Foreign Trade, M. Jean-Francois Deniau, have been to Iraq.

The Defense Minister, M. Bourges, has been to Saudi Arabia, and President Giscard de 'Estaing himself stopped off in the United Arab Emirates on his way to tour French islands in the Pacific in July. (Top West German officials, such as Foreign Minister Genscher have also been journeying to the Mideast capitals.)

The immediate result has been that France has been reassured about its oil supplies. Iraq has promised to supply one-third of French needs. Three-quarters of these will now be met by three countries, the other two being Saudi Arabia and the United Emirates.

But the French seem to have a far more encompassing scheme in mind. According to the Daily Telegraph of August 1, 1979: "It is even suggested that French leaders want a collective security pact in the Middle East under European guarantees. Strengthened by shared European and Arab disapproval of America's wasteful oil policies, and by reticence about the American-sponsored separate Middle East peace, the diplomatic Quid pro quo would be French--preferably European--sponsorship for an overall settlement."

President Giscard has sold the rest of the EC on the idea of attending a meeting with Persian Gulf producers, probably next month. The Arabs are already talking about the concept of a 20-year energy co-operation agreement. And, reports the August 20 Business Week, United Arab Emirates Oil Minister Mana Saeed al-Otaiba, (who is also OPEC's president) said that the talks "should not be limited to energy problems alone but should include political and economic areas of common interest. The number one political issue is, of course, Palestine. Says a West German official: "It would be highly unlikely that the two groups would sit down and the Palestinian issue did not come up."

If the Arabs and Europeans can strike a deal, it will further undercut American influence in the Middle East. First of all, the scheme would involve direct government-to-government supply contracts. This means that both the Arabs and the Europeans will lessen their dependence on the big U.S. oil companies.

The Arabs also feel the European connection could provide a way out of their dilemma over the sinking value of the U.S. dollar. Reports the Business Week article: "Another strong bargaining chip for Europe is that under the European Monetary System (EMS), dominated by the German mark, more and more European currencies have become attractive alternative investments for Arabs anxious to diversify out of the dollar. The dollar's sharp decline has shaken Arab confidence in the U.S. economy as much as the fall of the Shah of Iran and the Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty has shaken their confidence in U.S. political and military leadership. 'The Arabs have frequently talked of tying oil prices to a basket of currencies, and I would imagine that they would want to discuss what role the EMS could play if they should decide to cut loose from the dollar,' says an EC official."

Arab interest in developing closer military ties with Europe is very logical as well. The United States did nothing to prevent the Shah from toppling from power in Iran. And it stood by while the Russians put a Communist regime into power in Ethiopia. The idea of some sort of a "collective security" arrangement between the Arab producers and their most

important European customers would keep the Russians at bay in the world's most sensitive area.

No wonder leading Israeli officials are disillusioned both with American pressure on the Palestine issue and with what they perceive to be a growing European--especially German--slant toward the Arab side.

--Gene H. Hogberg, News Bureau