

PASTOR'S REPORT

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Greetings fellow ministers,

We have held up this Pastor's Report an extra day so something dealing with recent developments could be included. I apologize for not having been able to communicate more with you since being in this present position, but these have not been normal days, to say the least.

Right now there are just a few things I would like to say which I hope you will find helpful during our present circumstances.

You fellows are the pastors of the churches. You are the daily shepherds of God's people. You are the ones who can discern most accurately right from the grass roots level, the health, stability, concerns, fears, doubts, hopes and trends of the people in God's church. Also, you are the ones who can have a tremendous personal impact and influence on the membership. As a shepherd cares for his sheep, moves them to new feeding grounds, waters them, watches over them, etc., so this analogy applies to you as ministering servants to God's people.

We know we cannot, and should not drive people in our care. We are not ultimately responsible for the actions of others so long as we have done all we can do in service to them as needed. But, any local pastor who has dedication to God (which is perceptible to those around him), and has a sincere, service-oriented attitude toward those God has placed in his care, does have a very powerful impact on those he serves. This power of influence, an aspect of leadership, must be used cautiously, discreetly and for the proper reasons.

Human nature being what it is, it is sometimes easier for us to use our influence to disorient, create negativism or confusion rather than lift people above despair, discouragement, hopelessness, etc. We all know this, so I do not need to dwell on this aspect of my subject.

But, fellows, aren't times of stress, change, uncertainty, and crisis the times that really test a man's strength of leadership; test his mettle and possibly test the depth of his own personal conviction and loyalty? A famous writer once wrote, "It is good for a man to stand against the wind." Standing against the wind is being able to withstand prevailing forces -- strong elements capable of moving heavy weights, strong pressures affecting surrounding conditions.

What are our responsibilities as ministers of the Worldwide Church of God during times of crisis? Are they not to 1) stabilize the church, 2) establish and maintain credibility in ourselves, the

institution and leadership as much as possible, and 3) to work diligently to create, maintain and/or renew, as required, a sense of optimism, hope, and quiet resolve to look forward in faith?

Some of the elements we may be able to use in our efforts to fulfill these responsibilities might include an honest admission that we as an institution are suffering problems and difficulties. But problems in the Work of God, both internally and externally, are not modern phenomena without precedence in God's Word. We don't need to be specific in such statements, but to deny the obvious certainly isn't going to make you very believable.

Another element we need to bear down on is "be patient." Don't over-react. In time problems will be resolved. We need to wait for the resolution. And, while we wait for it we need to trust God for the answers to come His way. Often, I suspect God has answered a prayer or intervened in a matter, but His answer or act was not recognized because He answered His Way and not the way the requester had expected it.

We need to maintain faith and trust in GOD. God's ways are not man's ways (Isa. 55). God's ways are at times unsearchable -- past finding out (Rom. 11). God does not always act as we might expect. Taking sides, getting polarized, wanting some specific answer, deciding what is the "better solution" can become a giant personal problem if God decides to do it some other way.

God expects us to respect and follow leadership. When God places someone in a position of responsibility in His Work, He expects us to acknowledge that position, submit to it and respond to it. We can all preach powerful sermons dealing with specific examples on this subject. I believe deeply in the "mantle of authority" God gives to His servants. For me to repudiate this is for me to repudiate my own position. That "mantle" should be respected whenever and to whomever God may transfer it. But until such a transfer has been made, then there is no choice in one's loyalty, submission and response.

This contains a very important lesson, I believe. Let none of us lose sight of the God who called us, gave us to Christ, imbued us with His Holy Spirit. Our faith is in Him. No problem, no challenge, no muddle is too great for Him to solve. My commitment, my surrender was and is to Him. My hope is to be a productive member of His Work. I may not always know where He is leading me. But, if I could always see where I was going then I'd be walking by sight rather than by faith. (See II Cor. 5:7.)

So, in conclusion, fellow ministers, let us bear down in our sermons to God's people about the beautiful, exciting, precious truths God has given us. Jesus said the Kingdom of God is like a "pearl of great price," something for which a man would sell all he had so he could purchase it. The meaning of the Kingdom of God -- the hope for ALL mankind throughout all ages (even though most have had "blinded eyes and deaf ears") -- is the glorious destiny, the fabulous potential of becoming born-again Sons of God. This is the very heart and CORE of our teachings. We know and understand the mysteries that wise men, princes and philosophers have tried to grasp (See I Cor. 2.) Surely, when we focus on this message, this hope, this promise,

we can weather the storms of unrest -- we can truly "stand against the wind."

The elements we need to bear in mind in fulfilling our responsibilities as ministers are: 1) Honesty, admitting problems without being specific. 2) Exercise Faith! Our faith is in God. He can move in any way He chooses whether predictable or mysterious. We respect those God appoints as leaders and we follow their administration. But, our confidence and faith is in GOD. 3) Be patient. In patience we possess our own souls...our very lives. Patience was a virtue God taught ancient Israel as He moved in many strange and mysterious ways. 4) Don't expect perfection among human beings. Disillusionment and disappointment result from unreasonable expectations of those God uses in leading His Work. But regardless, the Work of God is no less the Work of God! 5) Be Christ-centered. He is the "Captain of our salvation." He will lead us through the "sea of adversity," the rough periods of life. 6) Never lose HOPE! God will complete the Work He has begun in each of us. (See Phil. 1:6-7.) God will never fail nor forsake us. Our every hair is numbered. Christ is the Rock...the mooring...the anchor of our life. He is the author and Finisher of our faith.

God's people need to see and hear strong leaders. As God's leaders, we have a noble, high, rewarding calling to uphold.

I hope these remarks have been helpful. I love all of you. We're on the team together. Please stay in touch.

With Love In Jesus' Name,



C. Wayne Cole

THE SCHOOL OF BIBLICAL AND MINISTERIAL STUDIES As recently announced, Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong has established the Ambassador College School of Biblical and Ministerial Studies on the Pasadena campus beginning this fall semester. The three programs offered by the school are designed to meet the specific needs of the church at this time. While the enclosed brochures give many of the details of the three programs, I would like to give all of you the broad overview regarding the school.

With the discontinuation of the four-year liberal arts undergraduate program, Ambassador College, as the educational arm of the church, will now focus its attention on those areas of biblical, ministerial, and professional studies which are unique to Ambassador and are most relevant to the objectives of the church. We would like you to announce these new programs to your congregations and make the brochures available to those who might be interested in the particulars.

You are already familiar with the Certificate of the Ministry program, which is not only being continued, but is being made even more directly responsive to the current needs of the ministry. Beginning this fall,

this program will be open only to ordained ministers. A number of the courses (or certain sections of courses) will be specifically designed for the ministers enrolled in the program.

The following two new programs should be of special interest to the members of your congregations:

The Diploma in Biblical Studies

A one-year (thirty unit) undergraduate level (non-degree) program leading to a Diploma in Biblical Studies will be open to qualified high school graduates and college students. This program is designed to provide biblical understanding and to promote spiritual and personal development. Students will acquire the essence of the educational experience which has been distinctive to Ambassador College.

The diploma program is primarily oriented toward the young people of the church; that is, the college age men and women who traditionally have attended Ambassador College. In addition to formal coursework, there will be numerous extracurricular opportunities including social activities, men's and women's clubs, recreational athletics, personal counseling, and career guidance.

Qualified students may enter the program immediately after high school or during their college years (either in summer sessions or regular academic year).

The Master of Arts in Religious Studies

A two-year (sixty unit) graduate level program leading to a Master of Arts in Religious Studies will be open to qualified applicants who hold a bachelor's degree from Ambassador College (any campus) or other approved institutions. This program will have specializations in church leadership and development, marriage and family counseling, journalism, church educational programs, and youth ministry.

The main purpose of the master's program is to provide a means whereby you, as a pastor of a congregation, can build a team of fully qualified men and women to assist you in developing and administering the various programs and support systems in your local area.

Anyone in your congregation who might be interested in either program may write to the Admissions Office for application forms and information.

Those of us who have been involved in the planning and development of the school are excited about what we are going to be able to accomplish with these programs and feel that the new school should be a very effective means of utilizing our educational resources. We hope you will convey our enthusiasm to the brethren. Perhaps you can post a copy of each brochure on your church bulletin board for all the brethren to see.

--C. Wayne Cole, Vice Chancellor

DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION PROGRAMS--A PROGRESS REPORT Those of us who have been hard at work developing the programs and curriculum for the School of Biblical and Ministerial Studies are quite enthusiastic

about our opportunity to implement Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong's policy decision dedicating Ambassador College to directly serve the Church. For well over a year now, Mr. Armstrong has been telling many of us that he is "not in the college business" and that Ambassador College must focus its educational activities on the development of biblically-trained and ministerial personnel (whether in our employ or not) who can then directly help in the building of the Church.

Mr. Armstrong also instructed us that he wanted about 250 students in this program (with some flexibility allowed for the transitional period) in order to significantly shift dollars from our previous educational efforts into the Church's primary commission of preaching the gospel. (Although the specific number of 250 students is a more recent directive, it has been well known that Mr. Armstrong has desired to make these changes in the Church's educational activities for some time.)

Presently, we are making excellent strides in planning and organizing what we trust will become the very best academic program in the history of Ambassador College -- with the finest faculty (dedicated to God's Work, professionally trained and all individually approved by Mr. Armstrong), a highly efficient utilization of space and financial resources and, most important, the firm intention to support Mr. Armstrong's decisions to develop a highly-focused educational program to benefit the Church, especially as it facilitates the training of Churchwide manpower, who can then effectively serve in the local congregations.

The enclosed brochures represent the collective, intensive efforts of our leading administrators and faculty. They portray a conceptual overview that has become one of the primary goals of our institution: to concentrate on content rather than form, to emphasize instruction rather than administration, and to focus on those academic areas where we are expert and unique (biblical understanding, counseling, etc.).

By fall, we should have a full catalog to send to prospective students fully explaining the programs, curriculum and social and recreational opportunities available at Ambassador. Though there is much work to be done, we fully expect the whole Church will become as excited as we are now about the School.

On behalf of the entire faculty and administration, Dr. Geis and I would like to re-emphasize what Mr. Cole requested in his letter: Please communicate to your congregations all about Ambassador College's new School of Biblical and Ministerial Studies. Please emphasize our collective and enthusiastic support for Mr. Armstrong's policies regarding the College. Encourage interested members to apply, especially those who you feel would eventually be able to make positive contributions to the Church as a result of completing such a program.

We really desire to develop the programs most relevant for helping God's ministry build and strengthen the Church and serve the brethren. Let us know how we can be more effective. We appreciate your support.

--Robert Kuhn, Director

EDITORIAL SERVICES--RECENT DEVELOPMENTS Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong has now directed that the name of the Worldwide News be changed to The Good News. This change will be carried out next issue. The tabloid format will continue however -- at least for the time being. Non-members will not be renewed and the subscription price will be removed.

The only basic change, other than the logo change, will be that Mr. Herbert Armstrong will be contributing regular editorials to the paper. The first is to explain the kind of government structure that is to be used in the church. Otherwise the regular features to which you have become accustomed will be retained. Any minister interested in contributing articles to the Good News please send us your copy.

--Brian Knowles/Dexter Faulkner, Editorial Services

TWO NEW BOOKLETS BRING EXCELLENT RESPONSE New publications are always received with enthusiasm by our subscribers and members, and these two new booklets were no exception: A Tale of Two Prophets written by David Jon Hill, and Coming--A New Age by Brian Knowles. As you will recall, the Tale of Two Prophets booklet had appeared in serial form in The PLAIN TRUTH, and during past months we have received numerous requests for it to appear in booklet form.

The booklets were offered to co-workers and members in a member/co-worker letter from Mr. Ted Armstrong, and thus far the response has been excellent. Our statistics show that about a 50% response was received from members, and a 25% response was received from co-workers. This has been the highest response to a booklet offer which we've obtained in some time.

Mail and WATS Update: A total of 118,000 letters and 26,000 telephone registries have been received through May 25. This brings the yearly mail count to approximately 802,000, and phone registries to around 214,000.

That's all for this time.

--Richard Rice, Mail Processing Center

ON THE WORLD SCENE

NEW WORRY FOR WEST: ENCIRCLEMENT OF IRAN: This week's NATO conference has turned out to be a sounding board for widespread concern over growing Soviet penetration in areas of the world vital to Western interests. Recent events in Africa and the Middle East have drawn the most attention.

The carnage in Zaire, and resultant French-Belgian counterthrust to drive out the Communist-trained invaders have finally alerted even Washington to the fact that, indeed, Russia really is up to something.

There is another area of the world too, that bears serious watching. That is the strategic Near East region of Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan.

"The Iranian government," reports the Los Angeles Times, "is deeply worried by recent events in Afghanistan and Pakistan, its neighbors to the east, fearful that a leftist takeover combined with ethnic pressures and political instability could produce a Soviet toehold on the Arabian Sea astride Iran's oil routes."

"This fear helps explain Iran's push for modern weapons, its intense interest in the new regime in Afghanistan, and its pressure on Pakistan to get its house in order to help block expansion of Communist influence."

The shah's staunchly anti-Communist government was shocked by last month's leftist coup in Afghanistan which brought to power a military-backed Marxist group that shuns the label Communist, but appears to be receptive to Soviet influence and all the strings to which it is attached.

Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi reportedly has told Pakistan's strongman General Zia ul-Haq to drop the threatened execution of former Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. Bhutto is appealing a death sentence imposed after he was convicted of ordering the murder of a political opponent. The execution of the popular Bhutto, Iranian officials believe, could revive smoldering ethnic disputes that have been constant sources of trouble in this part of the world.

These latent troubles revolve around two Pakistan ethnic groups -- the Pushtuns (also called Pathans) and the Baluchis. Pushtuns are found in northwest Pakistan along the border with Afghanistan. In Afghanistan, they are the major ethnic group. For years, relations between the two countries were strained by Afghanistan's insistence on autonomy for the Pushtuns in Pakistan, or creation of an independent Pushtunistan. The new rulers of Afghanistan might try to push this autonomy issue to the fore.

The Baluchis occupy Pakistan's sparsely settled southwestern region bordering Iran, and they believe that development in their province lags behind Pakistan's more prosperous provinces.

"These seeds of regional discontent," said the Times report, "could sprout if Pakistan's military regime allows Bhutto to be executed. And the shah fears, close informants say, that the Russians could capitalize on such instability to promote movements for autonomy among the Pushtuns and Baluchis, which might lead to puppet states in what is now Pakistan, and to the achievement of a Russian dream going back to czarist days -- access to a warm-water port on the Arabian Sea.

"That would bring Soviet influence close to the Strait of Hormuz, the bottleneck through which passes practically all the oil of the rich Gulf states, including that of Iran."

The Afghan coup has only added to the Iranian obsession that the country is being encircled by Communist enemies. It has a 2,000-kilometer border with the Soviet Union, pro-Moscow Iraq to the south, and now Afghanistan on the east.

"We must stop them, all of us," said a senior official in Teheran. "If we don't, they will destabilize the whole area."

But Iranian leaders are skeptical that the United States is capable of appreciating their danger and reacting sensibly to it.

--Gene H. Hogberg, News Bureau