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Dear Co-Workers and Brethren in Christ:

Last night on TV Channel 4, Los Angeles, during the evening news, the newscaster held up, so the viewing audience could read the large-type headlines, my full-page ad. These full-page ads are appearing weekly in the Los Angeles Times, New York Times and other metropolitan newspapers over the United States.

The newscaster, Jess Marlow of NBC, was interviewing the attorney general of California. The advertisement headline was addressed: "MR. ATTORNEY GENERAL OF CALIFORNIA." Mr. Marlow asked the attorney general (as reported to me by telephone) WHY he had picked on the WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD in the state's massive lawsuit to gain control, ownership and operation of all churches in California.

The attorney general gave his stock answer to this question: his contention that "all charitable trusts ought to be supervised to protect the public." There is no one else, he contends, to protect the public on how the public's money is being handled. Therefore he says it is the duty of the attorney general to manage and supervise the expenditures of all funds of public charitable trusts.

Mr. Marlow then asked if the attorney general thought expenditures for this advertising in the nation's leading mass-circulation newspapers was mishandling public funds. The attorney general, I was told by telephone, was then a little confused and had no direct reply.

I reply, first of all, the WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD is N O T a "charitable trust." It is not a public CHARITY! It is a CHURCH!

Second, we do not handle the PUBLIC'S money! We never do -- NEVER DID -- solicit the public for money.

We do not solicit or receive the public's money. Therefore we are not responsible TO the public. We ask nothing from the public. We receive nothing from the public. We do not have, receive or handle and expend the PUBLIC money. Therefore we owe NOTHING to the public except love, and upstanding law-abiding individual citizenship and good neighborliness!

WHAT IS a CHARITY -- in the public sense? Webster's dictionary defines it: "Charity: an institution engaged in relief of the poor; public provision for the relief of the needy."

WHAT IS a CHURCH? Jesus Christ said, "I will build my Church." The CHURCH was built by JESUS CHRIST -- not by the public! The first place the word "church" appears in the Bible is quoted above from Matthew 16:18. In Acts 2:42 the church is defined as a spiritual organism (NOT a secular or political or public ORGANIZATION). The CHURCH is subject to Christ -- not to the political attorney general of California!

WHO is the HEAD of the Church? Your Bible says CHRIST is the Head of the Church (Eph. 5:23) -- not the California attorney general. The Church is SUBJECT UNTO CHRIST (Eph. 5:24) -- NOT to the California attorney general!

Jesus Christ built His CHURCH on the FOUNDATION of the apostles and prophets, JESUS CHRIST Himself being the chief corner stone (Eph. 2:20).

What is the function, PURPOSE, great commission of the Church? Jesus said, "Go ye into ALL THE WORLD and preach the Gospel" (Mark 16:15).

The CHURCH is NOT a public CHARITY or a "CHARITABLE TRUST."

The California attorney general -- in a political and elective office by vote of the people of ONE STATE ONLY -- contends he ought to own, possess, direct, manage the CHURCH -- ALL CHURCHES IN CALIFORNIA -- supervise their expenditures of money.

Now suppose the California attorney general had been managing this Church and its Work from the foundation of the present era of it -- now called the WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD. What would have happened?

It started in Eugene and Lane County, Oregon. It started with 19 members -- mostly new converts from a six-weeks' six-nights-a-week series of services I held in a 36-seat one-room country schoolhouse 8 miles outside Eugene.

But, had the California attorney general been managing and directing it and all financial expenditures, he would have delegated just as he tried to do on January 3, 1979 -- the actual management and expenditure of funds to the Honorable ex-Judge Steven Wiseman -- appointed receiver of the WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD.

Immediately -- January 7, 1934 -- Jesus Christ opened the door of radio for me to start going into all the world proclaiming Christ's Gospel ON RADIO. The cost was then \$2.50 per weekly broadcast. But Judge Wiseman would have had to decide whether to spend that \$2.50 per week. Now actually we in that fledgling church did not have the \$2.50 per week to allocate. The very little membership in 1934, at the very depth of the century's worst depression, was able to pledge only \$1.35 per week for the broadcast. The other \$1.15 per week had to be allocated ON SHEER FAITH. And it was contrary to our Church policy to REQUEST FUNDS ON THE AIR or in any way to solicit the public for that \$1.15 per week!

Now the Honorable Judge Wiseman was reared in the Jewish faith, certainly not to his discredit. However, those reared in Judaism KNOW NOTHING OF PROCLAIMING THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST. That religion, respected though it is, has never accepted Jesus Christ nor His Gospel message! Would, then, the living Jesus Christ, the HEAD of this new fledgling rebirth of God's Church, have entrusted decisions and management of His great commission to GO INTO ALL THE WORLD and proclaim that Gospel to a man who by life-long religious training does not BELIEVE in proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ?

The Work grew. By traveling to Des Moines, Iowa, I was able, almost 10 years later, to buy time on 50,000-watt Radio WHO. Would the attorney general's receiver, Judge Wiseman, have approved and allowed that expenditure? We received requests for free literature from ALL 48 states of the continental United States from that station. The Work grew. In due time we were purchasing more wattage of radio time than any program on earth. Would that expenditure have been approved?

Meanwhile, the income for this rapidly growing worldwide Work obeying Jesus Christ's commission was increasing as its needed expenditures mounted.

WHERE DID THAT MONEY COME FROM? We never solicited the public. We never charged for anything. We GAVE one of the world's finest mass-circulation magazines (published in five languages), with NO SUBSCRIPTION PRICE -- and we sold NO ADVERTISING!

The Work growing WORLDWIDE was all GIVE!

God did, as in the first century, continually "add to the Church such as should be saved." And, as the Bible commands, these members paid their first tithe (10% of income) to GOD through His Church.

That money is GOD'S money -- not public money. In addition, a small percentage of listeners to the broadcast and subscribers to the "no-subscription-price" PLAIN TRUTH began -- unsolicited -- sending regularly tithes or freewill offerings. But these STARTED CONTRIBUTING VOLUNTARILY of their own free will!

It was GOD'S MONEY -- not public money.

God had built this great worldwide Work through me as His chosen Apostle. I OBEYED HIS COMMAND TO GO INTO ALL THE WORLD WITH HIS GOSPEL MESSAGE. It was HIS money that came -- without solicitation or charging -- and I was accountable to HIM, not the California attorney general for the way HE directed it to be handled.

We have through the years made continual reports to the Church of the operations of its Work, the expenditures of God's money and direction of God's Work.

We have made full and regular reports, submitted to regular audit and examination and scrutiny of receipt and disbursement of funds of GOD'S MONEY to the Internal Revenue Service of the federal government, and to the Franchise Tax Board of the State of California, who usually have accepted the IRS audits as official.

I just felt that our co-workers, members and occasional voluntary donors would be interested in this explanation of the financial operations of this large world-encompassing Work of GOD. All finances are handled by one of the finest, most advanced systems of accounting anywhere in the world. In addition to our own auditors and the federal IRS, we employ one of the largest and most reputable firms of certified public accountants in the nation, Arthur Andersen & Co., who regularly audit our books.

It's time the PEOPLE know the TRUTH about this political attack against the CHURCH in violation of the Constitution of the U.S.A.

It's true, we have to ASK GOD, in prayer, as Jesus taught us to pray, "Give us this day our daily bread." There is ALWAYS a NEED in this great Work of the GREAT GOD! But He does not supply tomorrow's need -- nor next year's need -- today. I know you will join me in prayer that GOD will supply current needs as He has done these past 53 years. For Jesus said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you!" He never has!

With grateful love, in Jesus' name,

Herbert W. Armstrong