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Dear Brethren and Co-Workers with Christ:

One year ago today Satan launched his most devastating attempt to DESTROY this Work of the living God, including The PLAIN TRUTH, Ambassador College, the Worldwide Church of God, and the Ambassador International Cultural Foundation. I want to tell you the real significance of that massive attack by the attorney-general's office of the State of California -- and how God has spared this Work and kept it going -- AND GROWING!

Also, day before yesterday we entered a whole new DECADE -- the decade of the 80s -- and I want to tell you what Bible PROPHECY says is to happen -- including the significance of the Iranian crisis and the progression of world events likely to affect us all in this decade now starting.

First, then, what has happened during the year just ended, especially in relation to this attack by the forces of the government of the largest state in the Union.

This is of utmost concern to the lives of all of us. I ask you to bear with me, as I take enough space, in a longer-than-usual letter to explain it, and bring you up to date on the real significance of world events as they now are rapidly shaping up. For we have all now entered by far the most eventful and serious decade of our lives. It may well mean a matter of LIFE AND DEATH, during this decade, to all of us!

On January 3rd, 1979 -- one year ago today -- without the legally required prior notice or warning, an armed task force swooped down in a massive surprise attack, in utter violation of the Constitution of the United States, on the headquarters complex of the Worldwide Church of God, Ambassador College, The PLAIN TRUTH and other publications, and the Ambassador International Cultural Foundation in Pasadena, California.

It illegally and forcibly assaulted, seized possession of and took over control of this long-established Church, College, publications and Foundation.

Undoubtedly you read of this in the newspapers. It's now time you knew the true inside FACTS, for they loudly shout the question, Is America being taken over by a Communist- oriented government -- or one Nazi-oriented? Are your constitutional and civil rights being destroyed -- your LIBERTIES our forefathers fought and died to secure for us stealthily being taken from us?

This case is JUST THAT SERIOUS! Many old and established churches -- including the National Council of Churches, the Methodist Church, the Baptist Church, the Roman Catholic and others have prepared strongly-worded protests and legal petitions, sent to the California Supreme Court. Such established and powerful church bodies have doctrinal differences from us, and from one another -- BUT THEY SERIOUSLY REALIZE THAT THEIR RIGHT TO EXIST IS ALSO THREATENED in this state government action to take over and operate the Worldwide Church of God and its affiliated corporate organizations mentioned above. They know it is a threat to them as well as to us.

The secretly court-appointed receiver, without a shred of evidence, but on the trumped-up ridiculously false allegations of six expelled former members, came with an armed task force to take over \$80 million worth of headquarters property (including the most beautiful campus in America).

This invasion of state against church was made solely for the witch-hunt purpose of seeking to find some evidence to support the baseless allegations of embittered expelled members. There was no evidence. Hence there was no criminal charge.

Records were taken by them. The Church, which sponsors its associated educational, publishing and cultural organizations, had, of course, always employed competent certified public accountants. But after this unconstitutional invasion, we employed the CPA firm which I understand to be the largest in the United States, at our own expense, to make a thorough examination, to check and verify the audits of our smaller previously employed CPA firm.

Now, after ONE YEAR, not a particle of wrongdoing of any kind has been found. Meanwhile Church members filled the campus buildings -- about 5,000 members, including women with children and babies, so the receiver could no longer gain entrance -- unless by force, which he did not choose to use. The receiver resigned, and by a bond supplied by many local members, the receivership was side-tracked, while the case continues on the long drawn-out court procedures, as our attorneys seek to get it up to the state Supreme Court and then to the United States Supreme Court.

Meanwhile, God had led me, without my realizing His hand in it, to take a residence in Tucson, Arizona, the year before. When I sent a letter to members and regular contributors requesting emergency funds for legal expenses to free us from the receivership, on January 4th, the receiver managed to stop the letter from going out at the Pasadena Post Office. Consequently I have incorporated in this state as a corporation sole, as custodian for our organizations. I have moved the necessary portion of our Mail Processing Department here, and opened a Mail Processing office in Tucson to receive and process mail, and protect incoming funds in local banks in Tucson.

Since we put up the bond, the court has not appointed any further receivers. The case is now, as it were, shoved on the back burner. We are thus enabled to carry on God's Work, although until a higher court discharges this whole thing, the case hangs over our heads.

Actually, God has blessed us so that the income for carrying on the Work of God has continued, and has shown enough increase through 1979 to offset inflation.

I have been able to carry on this past year, personally, at age 87, evangelistic meetings in two points in Africa, the Middle East, Japan, and just recently -- in December -- I was the first and only church leader from the Christian world to be invited, as guest of the government of the Communist People's Republic of China. There I spoke to audiences of approximately 400 and 200, including top government officials, with a private one-hour meeting with one of the three top men in the government, Vice-Chairman Tan Zhen-Lin, a contemporary of the late Chairman Mao, and Premier Chou En-Lai. Also I had several meetings with the President of the Chinese Educational Society. The latter met us at the airport, and also went to the airport to see us off on our departure. These men are in a peculiar and MOST SIGNIFICANT position. The present Chinese government is educating the entire nation in the government's present philosophy. So in fact I was actually able to deliver to a number of top men who are now RESPONSIBLE for the beliefs of ONE-FOURTH of all the people on earth -- to deliver to them the GOOD NEWS of the coming KINGDOM OF GOD -- which is the only TRUE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST! China now has a population of approximately A THOUSAND MILLION -- a fourth of earth's population!

I was the invited guest of the government. They placed a limousine (government- owned) and an interpreter at my disposal for the entire stay in Peking. I found them all very warm and friendly.

So the living Jesus Christ has protected God's Work completely, and given it great advances, in spite of the state's attack. The state's lawsuit is actually a matter of "WHO is LORD -- Caesar or CHRIST?" The Constitution gives the church separation from the state -- and so the issue eventually must be decided.

It has been a momentous decade -- that of the 70s. Actually, it appeared in the late 60s that we were so near the END of this present world that this Gospel Work might end by 1972. You will find in the book of Revelation, 10th chapter, that we came to a time when it was believed "that there should be time no longer" -- or as in the Revised Standard and other translations, "no more delay." But then came the message of the "little book," when it was decreed "Thou must prophesy (preach or proclaim) again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings" (verse 11).

During the decade of the 70s, Christ has opened the door for me to be invited for private meetings with perhaps more kings, emperors, presidents and prime ministers all over the world -- on all continents -- than any other man on earth. The TRUE Gospel has gone to the heads of governments! And now, the latest, has come an invitation to Moscow! It is planned for me to appear there in early May.

However, as the decade of the 80s dawns, a very significant event involves the Soviet Union.

So let us now look to the present and the future through this new decade of the 80s.

For the past weeks the BIG NEWS, especially in the U.S., has been the hostages being held at the U.S. Embassy in Tehran, Iran.

But on Thursday of last week, a NEW development -- highly significant -- occurred. Soviet armed forces invaded Afghanistan, bordering on Russia on the south, and also bordering Iran on the east. The northern border of Iran also is a Russian border.

Under the Shah, the U.S. had military bases in Iran, bordering on Russia. A few years ago I was invited to meet the King of Afghanistan in Kabul. Before I could make the visit, a military coup overthrew the government and the King had fled. There has been, until a week ago today, a Soviet-dominated man heading the Afghanistan government in Kabul. But the Kremlin felt he was not sufficiently loyal to Moscow. So a week ago today, some 30,000 Soviet troops crossed the border into Afghanistan. The head of government there was assassinated. A new government head, regarded by Moscow as completely loyal to the Soviets, though still in Russia, was appointed.

A few days ago, President Carter called Mr. Brezhnev on the government hot line. The communist leader claimed he had been asked by someone to "protect" the people of Afghanistan. This obviously disillusioned Mr. Carter, and he told the ABC network he now saw the Soviet Union in a new and different light than before.

WHERE DOES THAT LEAVE THE IRAN SITUATION? Local civil upheavals against Khomeini have been sputtering in different parts of Iran. The militants (they are NOT really "students") holding U.S. government representatives hostage remain firm in not letting the hostages go.

Is Russia now planting her boot solidly, with increasing thousands of troops, in Afghanistan, on Iran's border to the east? Will Russia, any day now, also invade Iran, to prevent the U.S. from having any military bases adjacent to the Russian border?

That situation, today, January 3rd, is as EXPLOSIVE AS DYNAMITE -- and could we even say, as NUCLEAR HYDROGEN BOMBS?

I emphatically do not expect an immediate nuclear war between the Russians and the U.S.A. Certainly no such war is prophesied!

BUT -- I do foresee this having an explosive reaction on America's European allies! The U.S. has now lost two military bases -- Iran and Afghanistan, ringing around Russia. Europeans have had to rely on U.S. military power to protect them from Russia -- with her satellite nations bordering Europe on the east. For some time European nations have been losing faith in U.S. dependability to protect them.

The nations of Europe WANT very much to consolidate themselves into ONE UNITED EUROPE. They made a start toward such union in the Common Market. But they want POLITICAL and MILITARY union. This they cannot achieve by themselves.

Now into this tense situation, comes the new Polish Pope at Rome. Prophecy DOES, definitely, foretell a union of European nations bringing back to life the medieval "Holy Roman Empire." (Revelation 17 and elsewhere.)

I know that the Roman Curia, led especially by "king-maker" Cardinal Bonelli has worked toward this. Undoubtedly this already has been discussed secretly with European leaders. What European nations cannot do by themselves, they CAN DO through the good graces of the Pope. Could it be that the present Pope is destined to be that man? I know some think he will die soon -- as did his predecessor -- and the prophesied Pope will be elected. THAT, we cannot now know. I had thought the Pope to head such a move would be named "Sixtus VI." Five have been named "Sixtus."

What prophecy does reveal is the now VERY SOON EMERGENCE of what in Matthew 24:21 is called the "GREAT TRIBULATION." That will be cut short after 2 1/2 to 3 1/2 years by "the Day of the Lord" -- mentioned in some 30 prophecies in both Old and New Testaments. The "Day of the Lord" will be the time of Christ's supernatural direct intervention with miraculous signs in the skies and on earth. It will be short and will culminate in the second coming of Christ in supreme POWER AND GLORY, to rule all nations and establish THE KINGDOM OF GOD on the earth!

The actual movement of world events as prophesied WARNS US that all this MAY now occur in the decade we entered day before yesterday -- and, if delayed past 1990, most certainly during the decade of the 90s. TIME IS NOW SHORT! IT IS LATER THAN WE THINK! TIME is MARCHING ON -- and PROPHECY is now being fulfilled!

I hope the events of the past week do not cancel out my invitation by the government to visit Moscow. I take NO PART in

the world affairs I have described -- I am merely an observer as is Christ. I am above politics of this world, and an AMBASSADOR of Jesus Christ for PEACE among nations, and the GOOD of ALL NATIONS. I hold citizenship by birth in the U.S.A., but the HIGHER citizenship in the Government of God by conversion and the gift of God's HOLY SPIRIT.

I would have put the material in this letter in The PLAIN TRUTH, but it could not have appeared there until the March or April number. When I want to get TIMELY news to you quickly, I have to do it by letter and personal mail.

May God's richest blessing be with you through this entire decade of the 1980s! I pray daily for you, and ask you to pray for me and this great Work of the living GOD!

In Christian LOVE, in Jesus' name,

Herbert W. Armstrong