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Dear Brethren and Co-Workers with Christ:

We are off to a running start in the new year, 1981. Never before has God given us such a leap forward at the very beginning of a new year!

This is the MOST SERIOUS year of the Work of God so far. GOD'S TIME HAS COME TO SPEED UP HIS WORK WITH DYNAMIC AND TREMENDOUS POWER! Time for completing the GREAT MISSION OF GOD in this dying world is fast running out on us!

This country -- the U.S. -- and the whole world is in ferment, confusion, serious TROUBLE! President Reagan has just said the economic state of the U.S. is the worst and most serious since the supreme Depression of 1929-1936. It's a NATIONAL EMERGENCY!

Nations are being overthrown around the world. Satan knows he now has but a short time -- BUT DO WE KNOW IT? We have to sacrifice now as NEVER BEFORE! We have to put the Work of God FIRST in our lives! FIRST in our prayers! We now have to DEDICATE OUR LIVES TO HIS SERVICE AS NEVER BEFORE!

In this time of world turmoil, Jesus Christ is starting off His Work for 1981 with a DYNAMIC START! He is inspiring me as never before. I am doing the best, most effective and powerful work of my life. I feel the surge of God's Spirit and inspiration and power as He uses me more effectively than ever!

I returned a week ago from the last important meetings in Japan and the Philippines. They were the most successful so far in all these years.

In Tokyo I spoke a vigorous message on the soon-coming Kingdom of God at a banquet of some 400 important and leading people of that energetic and upcoming nation. Then I spoke on the Sabbath afternoon to 100 Japanese subscribers to The PLAIN TRUTH, mostly college students and professors. Then again about the same number three weeks later on the return from the Philippines.

At Manila, reporters of newspapers and TV news met me at the airport and we had a press conference. President Ferdinand Marcos had ordered a pilot siren car and three motorcycle police with sirens to escort me to my hotel -- and at my service, escorting me with sirens screaming wherever I went for the more than two weeks I was there.

I was guest of honor, and spoke a full message in power at a huge banquet of 750 members of the very important Philippine Constitution Association, a power in the Philippines. I was guest of honor and speaker at a luncheon of combined Rotary clubs. I spoke to a packed auditorium a full Message of the Kingdom of God at the very prestigious Adamson University. I had a private televised meeting, featured that evening on TV and next morning with my picture at the top of front pages of Manila newspapers, with President Marcos. There was a short meeting with the First Lady later. Minister of Labor Blas Ople hosted a dinner for me, with two or three other cabinet ministers and Mr. Rader, of course. Impressed by the things I said, the Minister of Agrarian Reform of the Government invited me to speak to a hastily organized assembly of some 450 people in his government department the next afternoon in a full Gospel Message.

Then there were the two MAIN PUBLIC meetings in the city's leading auditorium, seating 4,500, on successive Saturday and Sunday nights, virtually packed houses. I believe these were possibly the most effective speeches proclaiming Christ's Gospel Message of my life. God was with me, and did inspire me.

I was greatly hampered in a manner that reminded me of the apostle Paul's "thorn in the flesh" (whatever that was), but by constant prayer, God was with me and inspired me to do my most effective work on this important trip.

While there, the Church was holding a ministers' conference for three days, attended by all ministers and local elders of the

Philippines and their wives -- some 35 or 40 of them. I found time to spend a morning session with them, expounding some important scriptures pertaining to our time now. The Church there has grown around 30 percent this last year. I spoke on the Sabbath there to a combined congregation of more than 1,000 of our warm-hearted and dedicated Filipino members.

I returned home Sunday morning just as the very first of our new TV series was coming on. I was really thrilled at the way our TV staff had tailored that program, with exciting film clips illustrating my sermon all the way through. When I spoke of a meeting with Mrs. Golda Meir, the late prime minister of Israel, a picture of me talking with her was flashed on the screen. When I spoke of the oratory at the San Francisco Conference, which I attended in 1945, there appeared a film clip of President Harry Truman speaking at the conference -- and so on. The new TV series, I feel, is the most effective of all our TV programs, so far.

I plan to record two more TV programs and two radio half hours next Tuesday and the same amount on Wednesday, when the whole TV crew will be in Tucson. I plan to keep this up until we have six months or more of programs ahead on tape -- and possibly we then may start DAILY TV and radio broadcasting in major cities in the U.S. and Canada.

It is now Sunday as I write. Today's TV program was a half hour devoted to our China visit as guests of the People's Republic government. It showed a certain amount of several of my speeches there. What I am doing now, as televised, is, I feel, vastly improved and more effective than I was doing a year ago. I may be a year older, but I appear younger, smooth-speaking, more vigorous and effective. God is invigorating and inspiring me. I need your prayers that He will surcharge me with His Spirit and power for still greater effectiveness as we plunge on to finish His great Work before Christ's coming.

But of course His coming will be preceded by the Great Tribulation, the Day of the Lord (initiatory phase, with terrifying signs in the skies).

Just a few months ago God gave me a new idea for turning the hearts of the children to their parents and of the parents to their children -- the new magazine YOUTH 81. The first two issues are out, and I honestly feel it is far superior to any youths' publications ever published. When I was young there was a prominent magazine called Youth's Home Companion. But I feel that YOUTH 81 is far superior, and I'm sure our young people will be much profited.

Now God has given me a NEW IDEA for our youth! I have set a ceiling of a total of 500 students in Ambassador College. If we go beyond that we would be unable to maintain the high morale of GOD'S college. That means we can accept only 150 new freshmen each year. But we have between 300 and 400 acceptable applications -- young people -- almost altogether YOUR CHILDREN - - those of our Church members -- and at present we can accept only about one in three of them.

We are besieged with letters from high school seniors asking us WHAT CAN THEY DO IF WE CAN'T ACCEPT THEM? Can they go to some other college or junior college? Our experience is, candidly, that if they go to some other school they will be indoctrinated in the materialistic evolutionary approach to all knowledge, and in too many cases, RUINED so far as God's teaching and way of life are concerned. THIS IS A VERY DEEP AND SERIOUS PROBLEM!

God gives me this SOLUTION: For some reason God has blocked the sale of our Big Sandy campus. We still have it on our hands. So I now have in mind, as I believe God leads me, that we immediately start a JUNIOR COLLEGE at Big Sandy. We would accept 100 new freshmen for Big Sandy for this coming fall. We would transfer 75 out of this year's freshman class at Pasadena, who will then be sophomores, to Big Sandy, to implant there the AMBASSADOR character and atmosphere. That means that, in addition to the 100 additional new students we can accept for Big Sandy this fall, we can accept an additional 75 freshmen at Pasadena -- to keep our combined student body at Pasadena at 500. So, this year, instead of accepting only 150 out of close to 400 acceptable applicants, we can accept 175 more, or a total of 325 instead of only 150.

Then, next year we would accept 225 at Pasadena instead of only 150, and an additional 100 at Big Sandy -- total 325, or close to the total number acceptable. We would have to reject very few or none who can qualify and are acceptable. THIS WILL SOLVE OUR PROBLEM.

The new junior college at Big Sandy will thereafter accept up to 150 or more per year. After two years at Big Sandy, some who qualify would transfer to Pasadena for the third and fourth years, and graduate at Pasadena.

I have to consider this budget-wise, of course. But, with tuitions helping, study of the budget situation indicates we can squeeze this new junior college in. Plans are already well under way for providing faculty.

**GOD IS BLESSING HIS CHURCH AND ITS WORK!**

We are now all set to PLUNGE FORWARD in the Work as NEVER BEFORE! New time availabilities are opening up on both radio and TV. God is generating in me increased power and energy, and better programs are coming.

WE SERIOUSLY AND URGENTLY NEED INCREASED INCOME! Not because we are behind. I don't have to say we are in a hole, unable to pay our bills -- come to our aid and bail us out, THANK GOD! We have as of today a BALANCED BUDGET! But the WORK must now plunge forward in GREATER POWER!

God's time has come! More TV and radio stations will cost more money. The Wall Street Journal full-page ads are the best and most effective I have ever written. God is helping me now to do the BEST WORK OF MY ALMOST 89 YEARS OF LIFE! I am working harder, more energetically than ever before. I NOW NEED YOU TO WORK HARDER, MORE ENERGETICALLY AND AT GREATER SACRIFICE IN PRAYERS AND EXTRA FINANCIAL OFFERINGS THAN EVER BEFORE!

A few months ago I wrote you a warning that we must prepare to tighten our belts, and reduce our living standards! This whole nation is going to have to do that! The nation's economy is in DEEP TROUBLE. It's a national emergency! Worse, says the President, than ever before except the Great Depression following 1929! The President is asking for a 10 percent cut in income taxes across the board. Congress may not give him that much. But his plan is for people to SAVE what they gain by it. I know most won't but will go out and spend it, causing still more inflation.

BUT I ASK YOU, BRETHREN, IN JESUS' NAME, TO PUT WHATEVER CUT YOU GET -- AND MORE -- INTO GOD'S WORK IN THIS CRISIS HOUR BEFORE THE GREAT TRIBULATION THAT WILL CUT OFF OUR WORK -- AND THE SOON-FOLLOWING COMING OF CHRIST AND THE WORLD TOMORROW.

Let's now set our hearts and whole interest on the SOON- coming KINGDOM OF GOD, when we shall shine as the sun in brightness and find happiness FOREVER! We -- you backing me up -- are preparing the way before Christ's soon coming and His KINGDOM! What else now counts in this world? I ask you to SACRIFICE -- go without some things you might want -- put all you can spare into this GREAT SURGE FORWARD IN GOD'S WORK!

Just over two years ago, Satan struck what he thought would be the FATAL BLOW to DESTROY God's Church and Work. It only drew us closer together in UNITY!

Before January 3, 1979, we had to borrow, every year in January, \$1 million or more at the bank, and pay it back out of spring Holy Day offerings. Then we had to borrow another million or more in July and pay it back out of Feast of Tabernacles offerings. The January, 1979, assault by the state RUINED OUR CREDIT SUDDENLY. We couldn't borrow. GOD WAS WITH US! We didn't need to!

From that day we have not had to borrow a cent at the bank. And God has made it possible to keep the budget BALANCED! FOR THE FIRST TIME! Just THINK how God has blessed us! This is HIS Work!

We could not borrow now, although I think our credit is reestablished -- because of the excessive high interest rates! God has so blessed us we haven't had to! We have a balanced budget WITHOUT BORROWING! PRAISE GOD!

But now His Work must surge forward in tremendous POWER! I have to ask you to sacrifice and make possible more TV and radio stations, and more advertising space in TV Guide and Reader's Digest. We need to build the circulation of The PLAIN TRUTH! I ask YOU to finance this now -- and in due time this extra- pressure Gospel lunge will bring in new co-workers to help finance the Work!

Next Sabbath I fly to Seattle, Washington, to speak to an assembly of combined churches in that area. I plan to do this every two weeks. I am pushing myself forward as never before. BACK ME UP! Thousands of you have sent me messages YOU ARE BACK OF ME 100 PERCENT! God's time has come to DO IT!

PRAY as never before! Fast and pray!

In deep love, in Jesus' name,

Herbert W. Armstrong

P.S. This is a NEW SURGE FORWARD in God's Work. The Church, and whole Work, is in the best financial condition it has EVER been in its long history! But we must now LUNGE FORWARD in the FINAL LAP, coming in on the HOME STRETCH of the great Work God gave us to do.

I am plunging on ahead with the NEW JUNIOR COLLEGE AT BIG SANDY, and on a CONSIDERABLY ENLARGED TV AND RADIO campaign and on newspaper and magazine advertising -- ON SHEER FAITH! This Work of God was BUILT from nothing financially ON FAITH! I go forward now IN FAITH IN CHRIST that He will inspire YOU DEAR CO- WORKERS TO MAKE THE EFFORT WITH ME! You will have to give up some things you might want. But we all shall GAIN eternal GLORY in God's Kingdom -- and SOON. I know you won't let me -- OR CHRIST - - DOWN! God bless, help, prosper and inspire you.