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Dear Brethren in Christ:

This morning a very serious and crucial conference was held here in my office. Attending were top executives of the contracting firm, the architects, our own Business Manager and our Director of Buildings and Grounds at Ambassador College.

I had to make a MOMENTOUS decision. The decision I was forced to make means just this: THE WORK OF GOD IN THESE LAST CRUCIAL DAYS FOR THE NEXT TWO TO FIVE YEARS MUST GO BACKWARD, AND NO LONGER FORWARD!

And WHY? WHY, when the living Jesus Christ is BLESSING His Work as never before, was I forced to make such a decision? I WANT YOU TO READ CAREFULLY, and then read AGAIN and consider PRAYERFULLY, the reason! It is BECAUSE so many of YOU BRETHREN seem to have LOST FAITH in JESUS CHRIST and in His ability to HEAD and DIRECT God's Work. It is because so many of YOU have not had confidence in THE WAY the living HEAD of this Church -- Jesus Christ -- is running it. It is because so many of YOU have DISAGREED with Christ that HIS COLLEGE needs a Building Expansion Program!

This morning we came up to the deadline for final decision on starting the building of the ALL-IMPORTANT new dormitory building to house 150 additional men. We were supposed to sign contracts, so the work could commence.

Brethren, there are 30% more of us in God's Church than there were a year ago. We absolutely had to have at least 30% more money coming in for the BUILDING FUND if we were to proceed with this building. INSTEAD, SINCE THE FIRST OF THIS YEAR, THERE HAS BEEN LESS! Many of you, who profess to be the very begotten children of God, have simply let me down -- you have let CHRIST down -- you have NOT DONE YOUR PART!

Have YOU tried to decide WHETHER we need these buildings? Have YOU taken it on yourself to decide that Christ has failed to guide me and His top executives here at Headquarters -- and that WE are also incompetent -- and that you, not knowing the facts and circumstances as we do, are in better position to decide than is CHRIST, who HEADS God's Work, and directs us here at Headquarters? Did YOU take it on yourself to decide whether or not these buildings were needed?

Unless that building was ordered started now, without further delay, it could not be ready for new incoming students by the last of August NEXT year -- 1967. It was scheduled to have started construction last March. We had to delay. Now we have hit and passed the deadline. I had to decide NO! We can't build! Not this year.

Now let me tell you THE FACTS. I want you to realize WHAT THIS MEANS to GOD'S WORK! In order to take in a few additional students this coming fall, we are having to house all additional students in some temporary buildings in an additional plot of ground we recently purchased to COMPLETE the college campus. The City officials will allow us to house these few additional students TEMPORARILY -- for this one school year ONLY -- in these old houses before they are torn down. This past year we have had just under 400 students on the Pasadena campus. This TEMPORARY housing allows us to take in about 17 additional -- ALL MEN -- for this coming year. THAT IS NOT ANYWHERE NEAR THE INCREASE WE OUGHT TO TAKE IN. but at least it is going forward, even if only a very slight increase. But beginning 1967, we will not be allowed to use this temporary housing. WE HAD COUNTED ON THE NEW DORMITORY BUILDING, to give us a big leap forward.

Every year, now, we have three to seven TIMES more students applying for admission than we can take. There are plenty of high-caliber young men who WANT to become Ambassador College students. If we could have gone ahead with this building, we could have accepted them for the 1967-68 school year.

But this morning I had to inform the contracting firm that we CANNOT start to build the dormitory building this year.

Let me give you some more facts. Because banks have confidence in us, due to the careful and businesslike manner in which we handle finances, we had secured a signed LOAN commitment from a New York insurance company, to finance about HALF of the cost -- payable over some 15 or 20 years. We had planned to finance the other half out of our special BUILDING FUND, month by month. BUT, while this loan commitment is assured, it will not be received from the insurance company until COMPLETION of the building. But our bank had agreed to give us an interim loan of equal amount, based on this signed commitment, on my signature and without security -- provided that we deposit in the bank the other half of the entire cost of the building. That would mean the WHOLE cost of the building would be on deposit, from which progress payments would be made month by month, during construction.

But, BECAUSE YOU BRETHREN HAVE LET DOWN ON THE EXTRA SPECIAL OFFERINGS FOR THIS BUILDING FUND, we are unable to do that without drastically reducing our reserves for the operation of the whole work. That would be unwise. It might ruin our credit. There is STILL MORE to this story. We got this signed loan commitment from the eastern insurance company several months ago. Meanwhile, the money market has tightened up. If we did not have it, it is unlikely that we could get this loan, as of now. We think the insurance company will grant a six months extension on the time of this loan. If not, we may have lost it.

Now let me MAKE CLEAR what this means.

We had planned to take in a good increase in the number of men students a year from this coming September -- that is, September next year -- 1967. But without this dormitory building, we shall have to admit FEWER. It means that the ENTIRE STUDENT BODY will have to be drastically REDUCED! Instead of the 500 to 550 students we need to have on campus, the total student body will have to be reduce to 375 or fewer! Now SEE HOW THAT SETS BACK THE WHOLE WORK OF GOD!

From 95% to 97% of graduates qualify for some important and direly needed position in the Work. While only one in seven to one in ten become ministers, these others are direly needed for other positions. If we are forced to take in 100 to 150 FEWER men beginning September 1967, we will have that many FEWER for the work when they graduate, in June 1970 or 1971. (About half our men students have had previous university training, and many graduate in three years.) THAT MEANS THESE MEN WOULD BE AVAILABLE FOR IMPORTANT PLACES IN THE WORK WHEN NEEDED MOST -- WHEN WE MAY HAVE ONLY ONE OR TWO MORE YEARS LEFT TO FINISH THE WORK THE LIVING CHRIST IS DOING THROUGH HIS CHURCH! Time is running out on us! It is now FAR later than you think!

There is -- even YET!!! -- a bare POSSIBILITY we might have that dormitory building completed in time. It is THIS: We made the decision, in this conference, that the college building and maintenance crews will take over the first phase of the work -- the demolition, and preparing and grading of the ground. That will reduce the cost of the building. It will add little to our own expenditures. We can proceed with that, and have it done by December. Then, IF our members will redouble their efforts, even at personal sacrifice, and between now and then considerably INCREASE this special Building Fund, so that we may authorize the contracting firm to proceed in December, by working DOUBLE SHIFTS (at some additional cost for overtime pay) they could YET have it completed by mid-August next year. Brethren, THIS we simply HAVE TO DO!

Now once again, about the special BUILDING FUND. By the authority of Jesus Christ, I have to call on you brethren -- all who are able (we realize many are not) -- to send in a "Statement of Intention" card, if you have not already done so. THIS IS NOT A PLEDGE. It is NOT a vow! It is merely a statement of what you will undertake to do AS LONG AS ABLE. If circumstances render you unable, you are not bound. We're not going to try to "hold you to it." We know that some few will not be able to keep it up. But we know that most will. WE are forced to make definite commitments before we start construction on a building. We do not ask YOU to do that. But we do need these Statements of Intention so that we may know HOW MUCH WE MAY COMMIT OURSELVES TO.

We realize, Brethren, that prices have been going up somewhat, recently. WHAT I HAVE TO CALL ON GOD'S PEOPLE TO DO, IS THAT WE BE MORE CAREFUL in our necessary purchasing -- such as groceries and the necessities and like. We can all shop more carefully. We can cut down a little here and there.

I do not ask that any one of you send in to God's Work beyond your means. I do not ask that you deprive yourself of necessities so that you suffer. I just ask that you all be very CAREFUL in handling your own incomes, cut down on spending what you don't really need, and BE SURE that what you send in for the BUILDING FUND be a SPECIAL and an ADDITIONAL offering over and above your tithes, and the offerings you ought to make beside tithes, for the Gospel Work.

We here at Headquarters are practicing what we preach. I wanted to add 16 more pages to The PLAIN TRUTH in the next few months. I decided this morning to forego -- or at least POSTPONE that. We had also planned to start construction on two other BADLY NEEDED buildings this year -- a Science Hall, and a Fine Arts Building for additional classrooms. Both have been put off.

I wonder, too, if some of you have neglected to MARK or DESIGNATE your special offerings for the BUILDING FUND. Be sure to designate how much of any check is for this purpose -- BUT DO NOT designate part of your TITHES or regular offerings for the Gospel Work as Building Fund money.

Now I hope we can yet start this dormitory building by the coming December -- SO AS TO HOLD OUR BIG LOAN. NO SUCH LOANS HAVE EVER BEFORE BEEN GRANTED TO ANY COLLEGE OR CHURCH. It sets a new record!

Now, Brethren, I ask all, who are able, and who did not send in a Statement of Intention card earlier this year, to do so BY RETURN MAIL. By the way -- I, personally, did not have time to finish writing the letter sent asking for these statements early this year. I was leaving Pasadena, and had to ask my son, Garner Ted Armstrong, to finish the letter for me. He made the mistake of calling it a "PLEDGE" card. He did not realize this was not intended to be a pledge.

If you can INCREASE your SPECIAL offerings each month for this BUILDING FUND, by all means do so. AND PLEASE PRAY for this SERIOUS NEED!

With love, in Jesus' name,

Herbert W. Armstrong