

Herbert W. Armstrong
Box 431
Tucson, Arizona 85701

February 24, 1979

Dear Brethren and Co-Workers with Christ:

HALLELUJAH!! God is still on His throne! He has given us victory in a major battle -- **BUT THE WAR IS NOT YET OVER!** It is a WAR to determine WHO is LORD -- Jesus Christ or Caesar.

The Superior Court in Los Angeles has now removed the Receiver, but the lawsuit is not over. More about that later.

But first let me summarize what actually happened on January 3rd. We are running a full page advertisement in the Los Angeles Times, the Pasadena Star-News, the three newspapers in San Francisco, and, in such other newspapers as the Sacramento Bee, the Chicago Tribune, the Atlanta Constitution, the Cleveland Plain Dealer, the Kansas City Star, and others. **THIS ASSAULT BY GOVERNMENT AGAINST JESUS CHRIST, AND AGAINST RELIGION GENERALLY, MUST BE MADE KNOWN TO THE NATION!**

The headline of the ad, in big type across the newspaper page, will be:

**"ALL CHURCH PROPERTY IN CALIFORNIA
HAS BEEN CONFISCATED BY THE STATE"**

The advertisement then will say to the nation:

This startling proclamation of the State of California was made by Deputy Attorney General Lawrence Tapper. In open court he was compelled to reveal, perhaps prematurely, the confiscatory plot of his office. The Deputy Attorney General was forced to do so in order to sustain a little-expected retaliation by the Worldwide Church of God in contesting the State's attempt to claim ownership of all of its churches, administration buildings, records and all contributions. The circumstances giving rise to the confiscatory proclamation are as follows:

MORE THREATS

Shocked Church personnel were told Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong, leader of the Church, and Stanley R. Rader, Mr. Armstrong's personal advisor were fired and the Church was in receivership. The State, they said, was now in control of the Church, its finances, property and personnel. Any resistance by any Church employee would be met with immediate dismissal.

In this gestapo-type raid the deputies took possession of innumerable cartons of Church documents, records and confidential material, which have not been returned or accounted for.

CHURCH RIGHTS GONE

"The Worldwide Church of God has no rights -- therefore, no rights were violated!"

This statement punctuated in court the attempt by the California Attorney General's office to seize control of the Worldwide Church of God. Historically, this incident marks the most blatant attack on individual and collective religious constitutional rights since the institution of the Bill of Rights.

The Deputy State Attorney General three separate times stated in court that the Church has no rights, that the members have no rights, and that the Church has no legal recourse. That the Worldwide Church of God and all churches belong to the State of California.

In effect, the State claims the tithes and offerings sent to the Church from all over the world by some 75,000 members and 170,000 co-workers and donors, to be used in spreading the Gospel of the soon-coming Kingdom of God, belong to the State of California.

This strikes at the very heart of the rights guaranteed by the Constitution of this great country.

STATE INVASION

On that fateful day, without notice (as required by law), government attorneys, investigators and law enforcement officers stormed Church headquarters, disregarding the character of the institution, the religious and sacred nature of its responsibilities both in the United States and internationally, and its many other cultural and charitable activities.

Exploding into the executive offices in an emotionally violent takeover of Church property, the court-appointed receiver, stated that Herbert W. Armstrong, the temporal head of the Worldwide Church of God, was "fired and out!"

The State insisted that Mr. Armstrong, the Church's spiritual leader for more than forty years, was no longer responsible for the Church and demanded access to and control of all aspects of the organization's financial assets, bank records, physical facilities, computer files and addresses of the Church's confidential 75,000 person membership.

This unprecedented invasion was taken outside the bounds of the law; yet, employees of the Church were threatened with jail if they did not submit to the demands.

ILLEGAL HEARING

The basis for this takeover by the State is a suit filed by six former members of the Church. Supported only by unproven and erroneous allegations concerning financial misconduct, these dissidents filed their complaint with the Deputy Attorney General only after they had received assurances from a judge that their action would result in the paralyzing receivership.

The action was blatantly illegal; charges against the Church or any of its officers had not even been filed!

Even after the filing of the so-called "charges," due process of law was denied the Church, as the plaintiffs sought and were granted moves to place the Church in receivership without a representative of the Church present at the proceedings; the takeover of Church property was enacted without even the four hour notice to be given in cases of severe emergency.

The State joined the dissidents in their effort to take over the control of the Church, its financial resources, its physical plant and its activities worldwide -- thereby negating its rights guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States of America!

IRREPARABLE DAMAGE

During the two-months term of the receivership the Church has lost \$5.3 million in working capital. In addition, normal bank credit lines were curtailed and \$1.3 million in demand notes were called.

The first six weeks saw almost daily press, radio and TV coverage emphasizing the allegations rather than the facts. This resulted in irreparable damage to the Church's moral reputation and its civic and legal credibility.

In the same period of time, the Receiver nor any of his staff have been able to prove, through audit or investigation, any wrongdoing on the part of either Herbert W. Armstrong or Stanley Rader.

To add insult to injury, the Receiver (who had been admonished by the judge to stay out of ecclesiastical affairs) intervened by stopping the mailing of a letter from Mr. Armstrong to the members of the Church.

He then sent his own letter to the ministry of the Church around the world saying anyone sending contributions directly to Mr. Armstrong would be in contempt of court in California, even if the giver lived outside state boundaries.

LOWER COURTS INSENSITIVE

Historically, lower courts (local and state) have been insensitive to the constitutional rights of people.

One need only recall the monumental effort required by the black people of this country in their attempt to gain equality to understand the situation facing the Worldwide Church of God today. The civil movement fought battle after battle in local and state courts -- basically to no avail.

It was not until the Federal Supreme Court heard their plea for civil rights that the American Black became forever free and equal to his white brothers.

As the Supreme Court was necessary in establishing civil rights of the American Black provided in the constitution, so, no doubt, the federal courts of this land will be required to preserve the freedom of religion and the freedom of speech provided in the First Amendment.

HOW THIS CONCERNS YOU

The unlawful seizure of the Worldwide Church of God by the State of California sounds the death knell of religious freedom!

This action cannot be allowed, otherwise no church, synagogue or religious institution will be safe from the whims of political powers. This heinous and illegal action cuts to the heart the basic freedoms for which our country's founders fought and died to preserve.

Such action affects you and your family -- the future of your religion and your other precious freedoms!

The State can no longer hide behind the mockery of alleged mischief within a charitable organization. This action has been an ugly, vile attempt on the part of the State Attorney General of California to assume proprietorship of the Church in direct contravention of the Constitution.

The attempt to reclassify the Worldwide Church of God as a "public trust" and its property as "in a sense, public" is a flagrant attack on the freedom of religion in this country. The effect of this state action is to place all churches ultimately under state control.

All Americans must be committed to the preservation of the integrity of our religious institutions and the freedom to exercise our religious rights.

How can you help -- what can you as an individual do?

Let everyone know that you as an American will not stand by and allow our freedoms to be so callously subverted. Contact your church pastor, write your congressman, write your senator, contact the media and let your views be known!

For more information on how you can be more involved in your own community complete the coupon below and return to: Worldwide Church of God, Box 111, Pasadena, CA 91123.

Herbert W. Armstrong

Pastor General

(This information is in the process of being printed. Your name will be added to a mailing list and you will receive it as soon as it is available).

I have written you the story of how our approximately 5,500 Southern California members, enmasse, flooded into the Auditorium, the Hall of Administration and the Student Center building, and barred the doors against entrance by the Receiver. The main floors of these buildings were well-sprinkled with women, children and babies. To force entrance -- which our people would not have resisted -- would have forced the deputy sheriffs to arrest and jail women with babies and children. The sheriffs, the Receiver, and prosecuting attorneys threw up a white flag of truce, so to speak (not literally), asking for a compromise. Our attorneys said "NO COMPROMISE!"

Now the Receiver (who never came back after that day) resigned, and Judge Title vacated the receivership. That means that the State has given up for the moment on claiming all church property, assets, incoming tithes and offerings -- as well as the MANAGEMENT OF GOD'S WORK, CHURCH, AND COLLEGE.

But the original lawsuit, charging me and Mr. Rader with "siphoning off" millions of dollars for our own accounts still stands -- but without ANY EVIDENCE OR PROOF! Actually, the very reason for the receivership was to seize all records

before we could remove them (which was the last thing we would ever have done).

We were accused of this gross theft and "siphoning off" without ONE SINGLE BIT OF EVIDENCE OR PROOF. They sued us first, seizing records, HOPING to find evidence to warrant their heinous suit.

We would never have hidden any financial records from them, had they requested in a decent manner the right to come in and examine our financial records. But, private correspondence in regard to legal matters are matters of privacy and confidentiality, to which they HAVE NO RIGHT.

This whole plot against us was hatched secretly in a judge's chambers. It was a totally unwarranted and illegal maneuver.

In the Time magazine issue of January 22, 1979, was a two-page essay questioning whether the judges in our courts have not gone too far. The judicial system was called in this article "an ever-more-activist judiciary." Judges were said to have become "an Imperial Judiciary," having our republic in "its clutches." Judges do much more than just judge -- they involve themselves in legislating, imposing policies and administering.

Brethren and Co-Workers, our attorneys are doing a fine job. They are competent and experienced. We must not rely on them alone but cry out to the great God to look down on this foul persecution, and deliver His Church and His people, so that we may get on with God's Work. In the LIVING GOD is our trust and hope!

We need to remember that God's people always have been persecuted -- and often by the powers of worldly government.

It started with Abel, second son of Adam and Eve. He was martyred by his elder brother Cain. The Children of Israel were severely persecuted in cruel slavery by the government of Egypt, until God delivered them. Moses was persecuted and accused from WITHIN the nation Israel -- yet God protected and delivered him.

King David of Israel was harrassed by persecution. But God delivered him. The kingdom of Judah was persecuted, and finally taken into slavery by the Chaldean Empire.

Daniel's three companions, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were persecuted by the Government -- literally thrown into a whitehot furnace alive. But GOD delivered them, and not even their clothes were scorched by the fire. Daniel was thrown into the lion's den by the government; because he prayed three times a day, God shut the lions' mouths.

Jesus, the Son of God, was terribly persecuted, evilly spoken of, falsely accused, and finally put to death by the Roman government. God delivered Him by a resurrection. Jesus said that if they persecuted Him, so would they persecute us.

Early Christians were cruelly tortured to death by governments of men. GOD'S PEOPLE ALWAYS HAVE SUFFERED PERSECUTION. The Apostle Paul was beaten "with stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft ... Thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day have I been in the deep ... " (II Cor. 11:23-25).

Our persecutions, so far, are as nothing compared to many who lived before us, but much more is to come. Hopefully we are the people who shall be taken to a place of safety (Rev. 3:10,12,14).

We live in Satan's world. Satan hates God's people, and Christ's Gospel of the KINGDOM OF GOD which we proclaim into this world. Satan can do NO MORE THAN GOD ALLOWS! That means God has ALLOWED the present persecution, still prior to the "Great Tribulation."

We need to ask seriously, WHY is God allowing it? I can answer that. Our people of this "Philadelphia" era were becoming lukewarm, drifting little by little into the ways of this world. Even some ministers were "watering down" the truths and doctrines a loving Christ had put into His Church.

We needed a real EXPLOSION to wake us up! We needed a housecleaning! Christ has had to set the division of Pastoral Administration BACK ON THE TRACK. That has been done! I had asked the former incumbent in that office to make this necessary change in the case of a few "liberals" in the ministry. He did nothing about it. I had asked him to write telling you brethren, the REAL TRUTH about why I had to put my only living son out of the ministry. He refused. He and a former holder of that office insisted heatedly that I fire our attorneys who are defending us in this massive state action, and let the Receiver (who was constantly with the attorney who brought the suit against us!) choose our attorney. Have you ever heard of such a thing -- trying to have the prosecuting attorney select the attorneys to defend us! It was then revealed to me that

those men were secretly IN on this persecution, hoping themselves to take over the leadership of God's Church. Oh yes, there really was a "power struggle" going on. There really was a conspiracy, which I sensed at least four years ago. But now GOD IS CLEANING HOUSE!

Jesus Christ is drawing us CLOSER TO HIM! He is drawing the overwhelming majority of us CLOSER TOGETHER than we have ever been! He is setting His Church back on HIS track -- and His College as well! He is weeding out the liberals who love many of the ways of Satan's world.

GOD'S CHURCH IS BEING CLEANED UP! And now, for the first time in ten years, WE ARE NO LONGER DIVIDED! There is no longer any "power struggle" or politics to remove me and take charge.

But this war is not yet over by a long way! Brethren, without our impassioned heartrending deadly-earnest PRAYERS, with FASTING to: 1) each set ourselves right with God, and 2) to cry out to God to deliver us from this monstrous action, our attorneys could well yet lose the WAR! But if we unitedly seek Him, CHRIST will deliver us, and HIS WORK shall be finished!

He started building the spiritual Temple, to which He shall soon come, through me 45 1/2 years ago (Eph. 2:20-21). And I believe He will finish it through me (Zech. 4:9).

Some few of you who will read this have been holding back your offerings and God's tithes, perhaps waiting to see how this crisis comes out. But NOW is the time when your help is direly needed! I have to say to you now, as Elijah said to ancient Israel; HOW LONG HALT YE BETWEEN TWO OPINIONS? IF THE ETERNAL BE GOD, FOLLOW HIM; but if the god of this world be Satan, then follow him! The time for standing up and showing where you stand is HERE! God's sifting time is here! God is TRYING us now, as never before!

Our attorneys feel that it is not yet safe to send God's tithes and your offerings to Pasadena. Some of the mail processing staff has been moved here. They pick up the mail and process it, just as they did in Pasadena.

So continue to send it in my name, Post Office Box 431, Tucson, Arizona, 85702.

Brethren, THANK YOU A MILLION TIMES FOR THE WAY YOU HAVE RALLIED BEHIND ME SO FAITHFULLY AND LET'S CARRY ON UNTIL GOD GIVES US VICTORY COMPLETELY."

With great love, in Jesus' name,

Herbert W. Armstrong

REMEMBER, THE MAILING ADDRESS UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE, IS HERBERT W. ARMSTRONG, BOX 431, TUCSON, ARIZONA, 85702.