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Contents

PROLOGUE ix
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS xi
FOREWORD xii
PREFACE xiii
INTRODUCTION xvi

PART I: ARMSTRONG'S WORLDWIDE EMPIRE

Chapter **Title** **Page**

ONE ARMSTRONG'S MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR EMPIRE 1
The Armstrong Image – p. 1

TWO ARMSTRONG'S FIRST SECRET: How to get Donors 9
Frequency of Broadcast Contact – p. 10
Getting the Mailing List – p. 11
Breaking Down Resistance – p. 11
Making Requests for Money – p. 12

THREE ARMSTRONG'S SECOND SECRET: How To Get Money 27
Co-Worker Letter Bags
$4.5 Million – p. 27
Armstrong Psychology – Capturing Donor Confidence – p. 28
Armstrong Suppositions – p. 30
Selected Rules of Propaganda – p. 31
Letter Openers – p. 32
The Closer – p. 37
The Filling – p. 40

FOUR ARMSTRONG'S COMMISSION– And How He Spends 55-Million 49

Chapter **Title** **Page**

Armstrong's Commission
is the **Big** Question – p. 50
Christ's Commission to
Armstrong-p. 50
Ezekiel- Elijah- Armstrong
Commission – p. 51
Armstrong Defines Commission – p. 55
The Costly "Armstrong Image" – p. 62
Armstrong's Income and
Expense Report – p. 65
Questionable Areas – p. 66
Questionable Transfer of Assets – p. 68
Twenty Million Dollar Battle – p. 69
The Million Dollar Home Question – p. 70
Further Jet Aircraft Problem – p. 70
Armstrong's Treasure Trove–
Another Money Problem – p. 72
Armstrong's Donation Withdrawal–
Another Money Problem – p. 73
Twenty-Four Million Problem – p. 75

FIVE PROFILE – Herbert W. Armstrong 79
The Religion Profile – p. 80
The Nomadic Family Profile – p. 81
The Follower Profile – p. 81
The Loner Profile – p. 82
The Analyzer Profile – p. 82
The Salesman Profile – p.83
The Traveler – p. 84
Publisher's Representative Profile – p. 86
Three Good Years – p. 88
The Chicago Disaster – p. 88
Stagnation Profile – p. 89
Poverty Profile – p. 91
Preacher Profile – p. 91

Chapter	Title	Page
SIX	PROFILE-Gamer Ted Armstrong	93
	The Child – p. 93	
	Ted The Teen-ager – p. 94	
	Ted as Office Manager – p. 95	
	Ted as A Ladies' Man – p. 96	
	Ted as a Student – p. 97	
	Ted as a Minister – p. 98	
	Ted as an Executive – p. 98	
	Ted in Exile – p. 99	
	Ted's Final Return – p. 101	
	Ted Reeks [sic] Vengeance – p. 101	
SEVEN	MEN BEHIND THE ARMSTRONGS: Their Rise and Fall	105
	Albert J. Portune – p. 105	
	Roderick C. Meredith – p. 106	
	Herman L. Hoeh – p. 109	
	Raymond F. McNair – p. 111	
	Ronald L. Dart – p. 111	
	Norman A. Smith – p. l12	
	C. Wayne Cole – p. 113	
	Leslie L. MceuI1ough – p. 114	
	Charles F. Hunting – p. 115	
	Raymond C. Cole – p. 115	
	Stanley R. Rader – p. 118	
	End of The Vice Presidents – p. 120	
EIGHT	ARMSTRONG'S MEDIA PSYCHOLOGY: Radio, TV and Publications	123
	Broadcast Psychology – p. 124	
	Publication Psychology – The PLAIN TRUTH- p. 126	
	Publication Psychology – The Good News – p. 127	
	General Editorial Psychology – p. 128	

PART II: BUILDING A RELIGIOUS ORDER

Chapter	Title	Page
NINE	A MINISTRY OF CONFLICT- Armstrong's Early Theological Studies . . .	131
	Immersed By Baptist – Comes up Church of God – p. 132	
	Armstrong's First Sermon – p. 133	
	Armstrong Ascends The Pulpit – p. 136	
	Armstrong Tests Church – p. 136	
	Armstrong Becomes Evangelist- Takes over – p. 137	
	Armstrong Laid Off As Minister – p. 142	
	Armstrong Rehired As Minister – p. 142	
	Armstrong Brought To Trial – p. 143	
	Armstrong On Trial Again – p. 144	
	Armstrong Quits-Takes Members And Mailing List – p. 146	
TEN	ARMSTRONG'S LAST BATTLE WITH THE CHURCH OF GOD	149
	Armstrong's New Radio Church – p. 149	
	Armstrong's Worldwide Commission – p. 151	
	Birth of Plain Truth Magazine – p. 152	
	Armstrong's Three-Point Program – p. 153	
	Armstrong Credentialed by Salem Church of God – p. 154	
	Armstrong: The Fluke Prophet – p. 156	
	Armstrong Wins Battle- Loses War – p. 157	
	Armstrong Fired by Duggar – p. 160	
ELEVEN	ARMSTRONG THE PROPHET: True or False	163

Chapter **Title** **Page**

The Gathering Prophetic Storm – p. 163
World War II Prophecies – p. 164
Armstrong Finished in Oregon – p. 168
Armstrong Abandons Oregon – p. 174

TWELVE AMBASSADOR COLLEGE – Armstrong's School of The Prophets 179
Armstrong Officially Organizes – p. 179
School of The Prophets Bears Fruit – p. 183
1960 Prophecies Fail – p. 188
1961 Prophecies Fail – p. 189
1962 Prophecies Fail – p. 189
1963 Prophecies Fail – p. 190
1964 Prophecies Fail – p. 192
1965 Prophecies Fail – p. 192
1966 Prophecies Fail – p. 194
1967 Prophecies Fail – p. 196
1968 Prophecies Fail – p. 199
1969 Prophecies Fail – p. 200
1970 Prophecies Fail – p. 203
1971 Prophecies Fail – p. 204
1972 Prophetic Disaster – p. 207

PART III – DECAY AND DECLINE OF THE ARMSTRONG EMPIRE

CHAPTER **Title** **Page**

THIRTEEN GOVERNMENT FROM THE TOP DOWN – Armstrong Dictatorship. 213
Armstrong's Pyramid Dictatorship in Formation – p. 216
Look To Headquarters – p. 221

Chapter **Title** **Page**

One place for Feasts
(of the Jews) – p. 221
The Frustration of "Growing" – p. 222
Rule By Fear – p. 224
Armstrong's "Thus Saith
The Lord" Rulings – p. 225
Armstrong's Rule By Confusion – p. 228
Ministerial Bulletin Becomes
Canon Authority – p. 229
Local Minister Victim
of Fear – p. 231
The Persecution Syndrome – p. 234
Ministerial Defections Start – p.235

FOURTEEN ARMSTRONG'S EARLY EMPIRE FRACTURE:
The Fear Syndrome 239
Armstrong Suspends Evangelist – p. 240
Armstrong's Kangaroo Court – p. 241
Armstrong Attempts Character
Assassination – p. 244
The Real Objective – p. 245
Armstrong's Ministry Rejected – p. 245
Judging Motives and Attitudes – p. 246

FIFTEEN EARLY DOCTRINAL DIFFICULTIES 249
Wresting the Scriptures – p. 249
Ruber-Stamp Doctrinal
Review Board – p. 251
Ramrod Research Tactics – p. 252
Divorce Research-A Fiasco – p. 253
The Dilemma of Change – p. 254
Division Inevitable – p. 255

Chapter **Title** **Page**

SIXTEEN ARMSTRONG'S POLITICAL STRUCTURE EXPLODES 257
Political Structure Formation – p. 257
The Credibility Gap – p. 258
Big Image-Poor Administration – p. 260
Ted's Problem Surfaces – p. 262

SEVENTEEN DOCTRINE – Battleground of Division 267
Martin Resigns – p. 267
Council Requests Ted's Removal – p. 268
Shreveport Church Secedes – p. 272
Dissident Ministers Organize – p. 273
Landslide Secession Starts – p. 274
Armstrong Counterattacks – p. 275
Government Qualifications Closed – p. 277
Armstrong Attempts Justification-p. 278
Resignations Continue – p. 183

EIGHTEEN ARMSTRONGISM: Where Next? 287
Future of Splinter Groups? – p. 290
Decline of Armstrongism? – p. 191
Collapse of The Armstrong Empire? – p. 291
The Flimflam Evangelist – Spirit of Elmer Gantry – p. 293
Imminency of Christ's Return-Beware! – p.293
Self-styled Prophet – Beware! – p. 295
The Whole Truth Syndrome – p. 296
Future of The Armstrong Empire? – p. 296

EPILOGUE 299
REFERENCE NOTES 303
BIBLIOGRAPHY 315
INDEX 325
ABBREVIATIONS 341

Prologue

Prepublication requests for this volume have gone into the hundreds–not huge orders for merchandising purposes but many, many personal requests from around the world.

Each correspondent has his own personal traumatic story to share – some very graphic. And each personal testimony is further indication that this bizarre historical document is vital to the well-being of mankind.

One correspondent in the Mountain States of the U.S. related how he was induced to sell his possessions, giving the proceeds to the Armstrongs in preparation for their prophesied calamity in 1972. The total "take" from this man – over $l-Million dollars.

Another family in the New England area expressed thankfulness that they escaped Armstrongism with sanity and good health after having lost their home and $200,000.

A family from the South was not so fortunate. A member of their family, a former student of Ambassador College, suffered a nervous breakdown over the confused state of affairs in the Armstrong church–different standards for different people. It has taken several years to recover and bring stability back to this family.

Another Ambassador College student was brought to such a state of depression after sitting through a college class lecture that he walked a short distance to "suicide bridge" and ended it all by plummeting to the rocks below–the same location where many bankrupt millionaires plunged to their death after the stock market crash in the depression year of 1929.

Thousands of normal family units have been broken up by the Armstrong's regime. Many, many people have suffered physical ailments and died rather than seek aid from those in the medical profession.

But, perhaps most pathetic of all is the little known case of the poor, the fatherless and the widow who have been deprived or have deprived themselves of, adequate food, clothing and shelter to give to an organization which freely

admits that it's commission is not the same as that which Christ gave to His apostles and His church. Those deprived ones bleed themselves white to give to an organization whose leader declares the heathen will not recognize any difference between their heathen religion and the message which he delivers to them in their heathen land.

The author has observed the degree of bondage to which many souls have fallen and has hammered out this thesis in an effort to replace the spirit of fear and tyranny with that of true Christian Liberty.

It is the author's prayer that the spirit of this document will ring the Golden Bells of Heaven so loudly that thousands and millions throughout the world for generations to come will atune their spirit to those Heavenly Chimes and shun the tyranny of men. May this effort serve as the spiritual counterpart for the effort of the author's ancestor Andrew McNair – official ringer of the Liberty Bell – that great bell of freedom for the original Thirteen U.S. Colonies.

And may this document, prepared in this Bicentennial year of the U.S., ring out the spirit of religious bondage and tyranny and ring in the Heavenly Freedom of a new and better life in Christ.

Acknowledgements

Half a life is focused upon these few pages. Every man, woman, child – each experience has molded the lens of life through which these episodes are focused upon the pages of history. Friend and foe alike have, knowingly or unknowingly, been the source of documentation of this volume. Time and propriety limit those who may be acknowledged for their assistance in a work of this nature.

With regard to my friends (associates of the Armstrongs – currently or in the past) I shall spare you the chagrin of publishing your names. However, I do acknowledge, in spirit, the valuable assistance which has come from those who dedicated their energies to this project.

I particularly acknowledge the excellent counsel of Arthur L. Burke, Certified Public Accountant, Attorneys William L. Mims and Herbert L. Allen.

Dr. Jerome R. Freund is commended for his excellent work in producing the psychological notes which have been appended to this volume.

I also wish to acknowledge the tireless efforts and patience which my wife, De Loyce, has exhibited during the many trials which occur as a result of doing a work of this magnitude.

Foreword

THE SEARCH

Unfettered youth walks in Godly Liberty.
But pawns that priceless jewel to
Domicile his searching soul with
Tyrants Throng-and awakes in Shackle's
Dungeon to covet freedom from afar.

Dedicate this hour to free that youthful spirit
Still faintly flickering in the window of
Your soul.

Dedicate this day to the burning ember of youth.
Which ties the bonded soul to freedom still.

Dedicate your ALL to the miracle of Hope which
Breaks the shackles of Tyrant's Throng and
Walk anew on the eternal path of youth-
In the spirit of Godly Liberty.

The Author

Preface

This book is the result of the author's effort to regain the youthful spirit of TRUTH. It is a study of the people and the *organization* which sought to cast his life in the irreverent image of conformity.

It is presented with the hope that others may be spared the deceitful snares lurking on the path of life-cults, "isms," and organizations which eagerly abridge the Godly freedoms and common decencies of humanity.

The author's life is incidental to this volume. It is not a book about him, but rather an examination of the forces which have weighed so heavily in his life.

Incidental though he may be to this volume, a brief review of his background will enhance the reader's understanding of succeeding chapters.

He was among those who entered the world in that fateful year of the "Stock Market Crash"–1929. The depression which followed soon squeezed his father into the unemployment lines of Kansa City, Missouri, and by early 1931 his family, like many others, travelled in a furniture-laden touring car to the foothills of the Ozarks. They settled on his grandmother's farm about a mile south of the little country Post Office called Camp, Arkansas-so named because of an old abandoned Indian camp.

There the family grew during those dark years of the depression–years so lean the author recalls living in a log house and vividly remembers eating boiled cow feed on some needful occasions.

Unspoken religion was strong in the lives of that poor folk in the Ozark foothills. The author relates being seriously involved in a private study of the Bible from age twelve. Most folk there were quite religious–each in his own particular way.

On the family farm the author first discovered radio–a marvel far beyond his childish comprehension. There was the famous Max Schmelling – Joe Louis Match, the

demoniacal rantings of Adolph Hitler, the stirring "bull-dog" speeches of that grand statesman – Winston Churchill, the utterly charming presentations of Franklin D. Roosevelt, The Grand Ole Opry, and the Bell Telephone Hour–all memorable moments of the daily fare of Arkansas life.

The advent of radio brought ready-made religion to millions in those hard years – the author's family *very* much included. There was the Lutheran Hour with Dr. Maier from St. Louis, a Baptist minister (W. E. Dowell) from KWTO, Springfield, Missouri. and Sam Morris with his "Yoke of Temperance" over XEG, Monterey, Mexico. And many more!

In the early 1940's came Herbert W. Armstrong with The WORLD TOMORROW–first over WOAI San Antonio, Texas, and later over XEG, Monterey, Mexico.

After listening to Armstrong's program for a number of years the author graduated from high school at Salem and migrated to Pasadena, California via the wheat harvest in Oklahoma and Texas, a short stint at Caterpillar and ABC in Peoria Illinois, the fruit harvest in Washington and Oregon and then on to Pasadena where he joined Armstrong's work in November 1948.

Four years later he graduated from Armstrong's college at mid-term–January 1953–with a B.A. in theology and communications and was consequently ordained to Armstrong's top rank of Evangelist.

During the interim years he assisted in pastoring Armstrong's churches in Pasadena and San Diego, California; Eugene and Portland, Oregon and Tacoma, Washington.

His wife and he attended Oregon College of Education at Monmouth during the summer of 1953 and consequently moved to Gladewater, Texas, to organize and teach in Armstrong's first private elementary school.

Political pressure from Armstrong's in-laws, the Hammer family, was brought to bear so heavily in August 1954 that Armstrong, by letter, suspended him from his ministry and informed him that his teaching contract would not be renewed. His wife's contract was arbitrarily treated in like fashion.

He then moved to Odessa, Texas where he worked in commercial Radio-TV broadcasting for the succeeding seven years.

Impelled by a fervent desire for greater knowledge–and haunted by the desire to verify the real basis for Armstrong's action of suspending him from the ministry–he returned to Armstrong's college in the fall of 1961 and began working toward his Masters degree.

By the time he completed credits for his Masters, he came to recognize that the prejudicial circumstances of his earlier departure made it virtually impossible for him to again become active in Armstrong's ministry.

By the mid-sixties, he became fully aware of the forces being exerted upon him as a result of those prejudices and determined to direct his energies into areas other than the ministry. From then, until his quasi-resignation, February 1, 1974, he concentrated his efforts in the area of Administrative Services.

Also, by the mid-sixties he became acutely aware of the basic administration difficulties in the Armstrong organization. In the following chapters the author relates how it became evident to him, as early as 1964-1965, that Armstrong's Empire would eventually fracture.

The following expose is an eye-witness account of the rise and decline of the Empire and an analysis of the factors involved.

Introduction

Before the split of the Armstrong organization, the names of Herbert W. Armstrong, Garner Ted Armstrong and Ambassador College were household words throughout many nations of the world.

Living in palatial opulence, they have become the most effective fund raising Radio-TV evangelists on record–reaping approximately FIVE TIMES that of their nearest competitor–taking over FIFTY-FIVE MILLION as their annual peak income in 1973, and nearly Sixty-seven million in 1975.

In this volume are detailed facts of how they do it. The author, having been associated with the Armstrong work for over *THIRTY YEARS,* more than half of which has been in their Pasadena Headquarters, has had opportunity for personal, eye-witness testimony and documentation that is unparalleled for presenting the true inside story of the Armstrong modus operandi.

The author tells the whole story about Armstrong from his early life through the building of his empire and its ultimate fracture.

He reveals the details of Armstrong's failure as a *team worker* in school, his failure as a business man, as a family *provider* and as a prophet and minister.

He unveils the facts surrounding Armstrong's inability to cooperate with other ministers and how he left Oregon after the close of World War II–after having reaped TWENTY-ONE major prophecy failures between early 1938 and mid 1945.

For many years, through the FIFTIES and SIXTIES, Armstrong was unofficially hailed as *"The* Prophet" for our time–both by those within and from without his church. But the whole truth is, Armstrong's organization has reaped a bountiful harvest of an additional *FORTY MAJOR PROPHECY FAILURES* since the founding of Ambassador College in 1947–giving a total of SIXTY ONE prophecy

failures without scoring a single major prophetic victory during his entire ministerial career.

Many, under the hypnotic spell of Armstrongism actually fear to acknowledge that Armstrong has failed as a prophet. They fear to speak the truth, because Armstrong has them believing that if they speak a word against his "work" they speak against God and might be committing the UNPARDONABLE SIN!

But God says, "if the thing [prophesied] follow not nor come to pass . . . [he] hath spoken presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him" (Deut. 18:22).

In this publication, for the first time, is revealed the true extent of the PROPHECY FAILURES of Armstrong and his organization between 1938 and January 7, 1972–before which time, according to Armstrong, America was supposed to have been annihilated by atomic warfare.

Prophecy has been the KEY to Armstrong's success. By constantly dangling the bauble of a "dooms-day" message before his adherents, Armstrong holds them in a constant state of hypnotic fear.

In this book, the author shows how Armstrong proceeds to propagandize his adherents with his *fear of impending doom* until they surrender their lives and livelihoods to the Armstrong cause.

As indicated by this fear tactic, Armstrong switched from the *democratic process* of his early ministry to that of *rule from the top down* dictatorship. By 1972, the Armstrongs had absolute dictatorial power over their FIFTY-FIVE MILLION DOLLAR organization.

A famous strategist once said, "Power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts *absolutely.*" The degree to which this proverb applies to the Armstrong organization will probably never be determined, but in this volume, the author dares to raise questions about *internal corruption:*

The author dares to ask about misappropriation of funds.

He dares to raise the question of the adverse press publicity of the reported long-standing martial infidelity of Garner

Ted) with its implied hypocritical life style. He also raises a question over Herbert Armstrong's insistence on fastening Ted, with his bad public image, on the shoulders of Ted's fellow ministers whom Ted has disparagingly labeled as the "super-righteous syndrome."

The author dares to tell the truth about Herbert Armstrong's Jet-set banquets with party tabs running as high as $10,000.

He dares to give a full account of the fracture and final split of Armstrong's Empire as well as a general analysts of the present organization and its splinter groups.

You will find it all thoroughly documented in the following chapters.

Part I

Armstrong's

Worldwide Empire

CHAPTER ONE

ARMSTRONG'S MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR EMPIRE

Herbert W. and Garner Ted Armstrong are rising stars among world leaders. Herbert Armstrong has been considered by some as front runner in the interpretation of BIBLE PROPHECY! And as a result of his worldwide activity in the early 70's some suggested he would be nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize.

Herbert Armstrong has thrust himself into today's jet-age diplomacy with the speed of his private Gulfstream II. His globe–girdling peace tours log conferences with world famous personages– Anwar Sadat, Golda Meir, (ex) King Leopold, Haile Selassie, Indira Ghandi, Suharto, President Marcos of the Philippines, and Prince Makasa along with Emperor Hiro Hito of Japan. Many other equally famous governmental luminaries are being constantly added to Armstrong's list of conferees.

Why is Armstrong conferring with world leaders? Why do kings and presidents counsel with this relatively unimportant figure who presides over a comparatively insignificant college and cultural foundation backed by a relatively small, generally poor church membership?

Just what does Armstrong represent to world leaders? Is he a religious figure? Is he an educational or cultural leader? Just how do they view him?

THE ARMSTRONG IMAGE

Herbert W. Armstrong is Chancellor of Ambassador College (see Reference Section, No. 1) with headquarters at the campus in Pasadena, California. There is a sister campus at Big Sandy, Texas (near Dallas), and another at Bricket

Wood, on the outskirts of London, England (sold in 1976) due to financial difficulties). The colleges are authorized as four-year liberal arts colleges and empowered to issue B.A. Degrees. Higher degrees were available earlier, including M.A. and Ph.D. Those, however, have now been discontinued.

All three of the Ambassador College campuses are socially, economically and administratively stranded together to serve as a springboard from which Herbert Armstrong launched his gospel mission to kings, presidents, prime ministers–the world's ruling echelon of society. However, Armstrong no longer uses Ambassador College as his entree to this elite corps of royalty. The element which he now uses as his "OPEN SESAME" to the stately and palatial mansions of the elite in governments is his newly formed Ambassador Cultural Foundation.

The physical character of Armstrong's cultural foundation and his campuses is mirrored by his meticulously manicured life style. Viewed from the royal compartment of Armstrong's elegant, ebony Cadillac limousine, the Pasadena campus is a luscious paradise. As his limousine silently sweeps along Pasadena's South Orange Grove "Millionaires' Row" one views Chancellor Armstrong's humble millionaire domicile along with similarly expensive faculty mansions occupied by his chosen few.

A block north of the Chancellor's mansion the limousine turns eastward and skirts along the Green Street side of this FIFTY ACRE campus.

At 300 West Green Street (the Hall of Administration – World Headquarters) the limousine flashes into a circle drive bordered by terraced acres of luscious diachondra. A radio-controlled private security gate lifts, the Cadillac swerves into a descending concrete cavern and eases to a cushioned, subterranean stop adjacent to Armstrong's private elevator.

The controlled access elevator silently whisks to the fourth floor executive suite, opens like a giant camera aperture to reveal a picturesque décor that would compliment highest

royalty. Seldom will this luxury grace the common eye. Mohair carpet with plush pile near half-shoe deep. Paintings which only could be the project of a master's delicate stroke. In such surroundings one finds appropriate and costly furnishings selected and arranged to the taste of the most discriminating connoisseur.

A down–sweep of the eye through picture windows reveals expansively terraced gardens abounding with exotic semi-tropical plants – many rare and costly. This FIFTY ACRE paradise of luxuriant gardens is studded with fountains and magnificent architectural creations–most elegant being the 1200 seat, TEN MILLION DOLLAR Ambassador College Auditorium (24 MILLION including financing costs) which stands as the crowning glory of Herbert Armstrong's architectural acquisitions.

To celebrate the Auditorium's Grand Opening, chancellor Armstrong engaged the services of the Vienna Symphony Orchestra. The entire group, along with Maestro Carlo Maria Guilini, were flown to the U.S. From Europe as paid guests to grace with overture and aria the elegant interior of this magnificent structure. Ambassador College picked up the tab which is reliably reported to be about $500,000. But Armstrong hasn't revealed the exact dollar figure.

Among the chancellor's guests attending this extravaganza, Herbert Armstrong names: ". . . President of the University of the East, Dr. S.F. De la Cruz. . . . President of the University at Saigon (South Vietnam). . . Two governments sent representatives . . . The Japanese Diet allowed only one to be away from important Diet sessions, but officially sent Bunsai Sato, and the wives of two others who had planned to come in their husbands' stead. The president of the world-famous University of Tokyo and his wife came . . . King Hussein officially sent the Jordanian Ambassador to the United States (from Washington, D.C.). A judge of the World Court of Justice at the Hague and wife attended. The President and wife of the University of the Ryukyus came. The Ethiopian Ambassador to India was here. Many local VIPs of Southern

California attended . . .” (Quoted from a Member-Co-Worker letter dated April 28, 1974.

These world luminaries are educational and social giants in their respective corners of the world–all with whom Chancellor Armstrong had been previously associated.

The Ambassador College Campus building complex at Big Sandy, Texas (near Dallas), though smaller, is equally elegant in imagery, and the sister campus in Bricket Wood, England, surpasses even that of the Pasadena Headquarters in many ways–including the stately Rolls Royce which is lovingly garaged for use by the Armstrongs.

Herbert Armstrong's private jet, the Gulfstream II serves as the magic approach for his red carpet touch-down before the royal elite around the world. Aboard his G-II is generally a precious cache of gifts and goblets to pave the way for protocol. But more important is the power of the pen and the Ambassador College checkbook by which Armstrong has picked up royal party tabs of $10,000 in one evening.

In his socializing before, during, and after these royal parties, Armstrong occasionally obligates Ambassador College or his Cultural Foundation to term funding agreements to back foreign educational or cultural projects. Among those of public record are: an archaeological project with Hebrew University of Israel, a $10,000 annual grant to Thailand, a 50-50 funding arrangement for King Leopold's anthropological expeditions, and a 50-50 archaeological project for Japan. More recently Ambassador College has entered a cultural venture with the University of Turin, the University of California at Los Angeles and the Government of Iraq to rebuild the old area of Babylon and the Tower of Babel. This move seems somewhat incongruous in view of the fact that Armstrong indicated that rebuilding old Babylon would be proof that God does not exist (see his booklet “Proof of the Bible” – 1972 Edition).

The number of other funding projects being sponsored by Ambassador College, through Herbert Armstrong, is known only to a closed group at the top but it was commonly

reported that the Armstrongs reserved 25 percent of the 55-million budget for their direct administration. That is approximately 13.75 million annually (1973-74). Behind Armstrong's graciously endowed checkbook lies a wealth of funds which can be easily tapped by a foreigner in the right place. If he is coy enough to catch the vision presented by Armstrong's advance agents and act as a yielding tool in Armstrong's hands, he may well become the heir of a fabulous unknown sum from Ambassador's treasure house of dollars. The full extent of this style of operation has just come to light (1976) as evidenced by the Lockheed scandal. It is now known that it is common practice to bribe one's way into foreign markets. This type of operation is apparently not even frowned upon by the British Parliament. There is very strong suspicion that numerous of Armstrong's liberal endowments wind up in the private coffers of foreign manipulators.

Thus, Herbert Armstrong, who has spent over forty years as a minister, is now jet-setting around the world under the guise of spreading culture and education as the head of his newly formed, Ambassador International Cultural Foundation. He is sufficiently successful in this posture to have been granted the “Peace Award” from King Leopold of Belgium, the Medal of Honor from Japan (the highest honor which is bestowed upon a non-citizen by the Japanese government-some of the officials involved were implicated in the 1976 American-Japanese bribery scandal), and an honorary Ph.D. from the University of the East in Manila of the Philippines (where bribery and extortion are thought to be the most scandalous in the world). In most or all of the above cases there has been a substantial commitment of funds flowing from Ambassador College, through Herbert Armstrong, to the foreign nation's college, university, or other institutions.

Little wonder Herbert Armstrong is eagerly welcomed in these circles. He often comes with studied protocol (bearing a gift of expensive Steuben Crystal–often valued at $5,000 or

more) and with checkbook ready to dole out a substantial portion of his FIFTY-FIVE MILLION annual budget to supposedly subsidize secular education in foreign countries-and without any apparent control agreements.

As a reward for this gratuity, Herbert Armstrong is afforded royal dining privileges with foreign luminaries. This friendship, he hopes, is to be cashed in for opportunity to do what he calls "warning" those people. What this exactly consists of will be covered later.

Standing behind Herbert Armstrong and Ambassador College is the Worldwide Church of God consisting of probably fewer than 100,000 baptized members, and about 100,000 non-member co-workers. In numbers there is POWER. And the combined financial force of the Co-Workers and Members add up to an annual "take" of approximately FIFTY-FIVE MILLION dollars. Of that amount the Members contribute about 75 percent and Co-Workers the remaining 25 percent.

Armstrong's Worldwide Church of God has over 600 churches around the world with more than 500 ministers working for the Armstrongs. The church sponsors the Ambassador Colleges and The WORLD TOMORROW (more recently called The Garner Ted Armstrong Program) radio and television programs which are released on hundreds of stations throughout the U.S., Canada, Australia, Central and South America, South Africa, Europe, South-East Asia and the Philippines. The reportedly morally controversial figure, Garner Ted Armstrong (son of Herbert W. Armstrong) is the featured speaker. In addition, the church, through Ambassador College, sponsors The PLAIN TRUTH magazine with a worldwide circulation of about three million, The GOOD NEWS magazine, an internal organ for readership of church members and a select group of "spiritually strong" Co-Workers. It also sponsors Herbert Armstrong's new pet project–a publication known as "QUEST '77" which is planned as a tool for evangelizing among Armstrong's royal friends.

In recent years the church has funded numerous of its more stirring speakers in evangelistic meetings throughout the major cities of the U.S., Canada and Australia.

The main thrust of this effort was aimed at turning those non-member Co-Workers into tithe–paying members who would be obligated to pay a first, second, third, and fourth (tithe of second tithe) tithes into church related functions. Of recent date this tithing structure has come under fire from certain ones on Armstrong's "on-again, off-again" Doctrinal Committee. But this tithing structure is still generally intact.

The Armstrongs have taught tithing of that magnitude to their adherents for several decades. The average contribution of members toward Armstrong's religious purposes has ranged between 25-30 percent of their gross annual income–assuming they tithe and give according to Armstrong's prescribed method.

Herbert Armstrong has been desperately trying to continue the increase of that 55-million dollar intake by 30 percent per year. The next two chapters reveal his secret methods of raising those funds.

CHAPTER TWO

ARMSTRONG'S FIRST SECRET: HOW TO GET DONORS

The Armstrongs are the most adroit fund raisers in the history of Christian evangelism–outstripping their nearest competitor *FIVE TO ONE!* Just how do the Armstrongs get all that affluence? The answer is in the analysis of Armstrong's fund raising letters to his members, co-workers and listeners. We will analyze his semi-annual letter to listeners, but first note what he promises those listeners over the air.

A typical closing on Armstrong's broadcast or telecast promises:

> " . . . for your copy of this free booklet and a FREE one-year subscription to The PLAIN TRUTH, send your letter to . . . [Herbert W. or Garner Ted] Armstrong. . .It's absolutely free and there is no price. No one will call on you.
> No one will try to sell you something or send you a bill. No one will ask you for money. Send your letter to … [Herbert W./Garner Ted] Armstrong . . ."

You might understand this *typical* closing to indicate that the Armstrongs never ask for money. The truth is, they ask for and get five times as much as their nearest competitor They have taken as high at 66.8 MILLION DOLLARS a year (1975)!

According to an article written for "Braniff Personality Profile" (Vol. 3, No.5), America's most popular Radio-TV evangelist, Dr. Billy Graham, with the backing of numerous Protestant denominations, musters an annual income of only TEN MILLION DOLLARS from his Radio-TV evangelistic

efforts while the Armstrongs without Protestant support brought in over five times that amount.

How they do it has remained a secret of the Armstrong modus operandi. Part of that secret was learned over forty years ago (January 1934) when Herbert Armstrong first started paid broadcasting for the West Eighth Street Church of God in Eugene, Oregon. During his early broadcast ministry Armstrong discovered that evangelism was much like advertising, which had been his profession for twenty-three years.

First, Armstrong learned that to get attention he must stand out from the crowd–be different. He was indeed different in many of his doctrinal teachings. And he dared to be different in another way–offering the listener something free! But experience soon taught him that when offering something free, he must overly convince the listener it *really* is free or he will draw back.

Second, Armstrong discovered that the free article he offered must be a periodical in order to *establish a regular correspondence relationship* with the listener who writes.

Effective though those methods may be, the compound secrets were not to be learned for many years. The final puzzle was put together by Herbert Armstrong in the following bits and pieces over a period of four decades.

FREQUENCY OF BROADCAST CONTACT

The *one piece* of the puzzle which fell most readily into place was that of FREQUENCY OF CONTACT. Armstrong found the response from listeners went up much faster than seven times by going to a *daily broadcasting schedule* instead of the usual Sunday program. This led him to the conclusion that he must switch to daily (radio) broadcasting in order to instill listener rapport and confidence, thus inspiring the best listener response.

To harmonize with this new daily concept, Armstrong changed both the name of the program and its format to improve his public image. His program began to appear as a

news analysis. Starting in 1942, it was no longer “The Radio Church of God presents Herbert W. Armstrong.” But, Art Gilmore, one of Radio's most famous voices, announced, “The WORLD TOMORROW! Herbert W. Armstrong analyzes today's news, with the prophecies of The WORLD TOMORROW!”

The new format laid heavy stress on prophecies, featuring the down-fall of the United States. With this “warning” Armstrong attracted larger and larger listening audiences during the critical years of World War II. On virtually every broadcast he offered a free booklet plus The PLAIN TRUTH magazine–in some cases both. The listener was always assured, “No one will call on you; no one will bill you or ask you for money.”

GETTING THE MAILING LIST

After a sufficient number of broadcasts, confidence was instilled in the listener and a personal, albeit unilateral rapport developed. Eventually the listener wrote for the free publication. This usually took place only after a psychological incision occurred in the mind of the listener–and sometimes over a prolonged period of many years. Great skill was applied in order to sever the listener from his family, economic community, and society.

Once in Armstrong's file, he was subjected to a scientific, psychological process calculated to move him from the realm of a religious-free-loader to a supporter of the Armstrong goals.

This new correspondent was then bombarded with a continual barrage of acidic articles designed to erode his confidence in every fiber of society while increasing his loyalty to the Armstrongs.

BREAKING DOWN RESISTANCE

Armstrong's FRONT LINE ATTACK in this psychological battle still remains an assault on such Christian traditions as Christmas, Easter, and Halloween. The correspondent is

ultimately informed, by pseudo scholarly presentations, that those are PAGAN and must not be observed in any way.

Twice a year (though in earlier times, only once a year) the listener received what became known as Armstrong's semi-annual letter–specifically drafted to make the correspondent feel he should donate to the Armstrong cause even though the letter does not solicit funds in a forthright manner.

Armstrong relies on THREE POWERFUL PSYCHOLOGICAL FORCES to transform his newly found listener into what he calls a co-worker–one who will be a regular contributor. Prior to receiving the semi-annual letter, however, he may not have donated a single penny to the Armstrongs. But he may have received as many as six issues of the beautiful fifty-two page process color PLAIN TRUTH magazine (once published in flexible newsprint style) and a number of equally attractive doctrinal booklets.

The *FIRST FORCE* which impels him to contribute to the Armstrong cause is PERSONAL GUILT. Armstrong, as well as every psychologist, knows people will give to a religious cause to alleviate pent-up guilt feelings. It serves as a type of psychological atonement.[2]

The *SECOND FORCE* which makes Armstrong's listener contribute is a type of MODESTY! He has been getting something for nothing for several months. He feels he must either *stop receiving* or he must PAY. If he thinks of himself as honest, his conscience will force him to yield to this law and contribute.[3]

The *THIRD FORCE* which drives him to give to the cause is that of psychological isolation–and subconsciously identifying with the cause! It is very likely, having read The PLAIN TRUTH articles for several months, he has become partially or wholly isolated from his empirical self–this surrounding society.[4]

MAKING REQUESTS FOR MONEY

With these forces at work, the odds are very high the

listener will respond to Armstrong's specially designed semi-annual letter with a rather favorable donation–particularly if he requests the booklet or other printed matter which Armstrong regularly offers in this letter.

Herbert Armstrong, his advisors, and the office work force are quite aware that Armstrong has said OVER THE AIR,

> "No one will call on you. No one will bill you or ask you for money."

But very subtly it is introduced! Armstrong's letter of November 25, 1955, written on the letterhead of The WORLD TOMORROW program, as you shall see, turns out to be a very strong hint for funds.

Armstrong starts:

> "Dear Co-Workers:
> Here is a letter I am sending to some *75,000* people who receive The PLAIN TRUTH and our other literature, but are not Co-Workers. I just thought that YOU, TOO, might like to read this letter – so here it is . . ."

Author's comment: In this opening Armstrong notes for his co-workers that this letter went to those 75,000 who were not contributors–not co-workers. Examine further to see what was the real purpose of this letter.

Armstrong continues:

> "Perhaps I can answer some questions you may have had in mind. Hundreds of our friends who see me on Television, or listen to the broadcast, keep asking such questions as 'What denomination do you represent?' Or, 'Who sponsors and pays for your telecasts, broadcasts, magazines and booklets?' Or, 'How can you publish a world-circulated magazine without subscription price, and give attractive pamphlets without charge?' Or, 'For what *reason* do you offer these FREE?" Or, 'WHY don't you ask for money over the air?'"

Author's comment: In this paragraph Armstrong says only *hundreds* have asked questions which involve funding. But he uses this as an opportunity to PLANT THESE QUESTIONS in the minds of 75,*000 people.* Why bother 75,000 people with a problem which could be handled by sending out a few hundred form letters? To the close observer it becomes obvious at this point that Armstrong is using this semi-annual letter as a tool for putting across a subtle message to nearly 75,000 people who didn't ask for it. And it becomes quite evident before the end of the letter that they should contribute.

How masterfully he comes to the discussion of financing!

But before getting to the subject of money, notice how he takes his reader through a glass-house-maze of dazzlement. Watch!

Armstrong continues:

> "You have a right to know these answers and all about me and this work. So, as briefly as I can, here is the frank and straightforward answer. And if you have any other questions, please feel free to write me. For a year I have been intending to give you, through the pages of *The PLAIN TRUTH,* a more detailed account of how God called me to His work, of its start and growth to its present world-wide scope and power. I hope this may appear in the January or February number.
>
> "I'm usually pretty skeptical about God speaking to anyone today in visions or dreams. God speaks to us thru His Son, Jesus Christ–the WORD of God–and the Bible is the *written* Word. I didn't really believe it then, 38 years ago, but subsequent events have verified that God did speak to my wife at that time, shortly after we were married [1917] revealing thru an angel that He was calling us to the mission of WARNING the world of the fast-approaching END OF THIS WORLD, the Coming of Jesus Christ, and the world-ruling Kingdom of God. At the time I was

> unconverted, not bothering to attend church, interested only in business and making money. I was embarrassed–a little awed–but immediately tried to put it out of my mind. But at age 30 God took away my business, struck me down, took away my idol of money-making and business prestige."

Author's comment: The preceding paragraph introduces the subject of a vision by Armstrong's wife–but why? It is a delay tactic to create suspense and an attempt to orient the reader's thinking toward his special calling. It is vital to the success of his plan that he lead his reader to believe HE and his wife were called to perform a SPECIAL MISSION for God–WARNING THE WORLD. This SPECIAL REVELATION by an angel to Mrs. Armstrong will also serve as a subconscious cornerstone on which will partially rest the reader's future FAITH IN THE ARMSTRONGS.

Armstrong continues:

> "During this ordeal, the religious issue came between me and my wife–almost separated us [1926-nine years after Mrs. Armstrong's dream]. She determined to obey God and live God's way–I objected. Finally, I set out to try to prove to her by the Bible itself that this type of life wasn't necessary to be a Christian. For six months of intensive study night and day, I wrestled with the question, was forced to see the truth that she was right and I was wrong, and found myself face to face with the life-and-death *decision* of whether I would surrender my will to the will of God, or reject what I had found to be the TRUTH. God had softened me by repeated defeats [referring to his business failures starting in 1922] to a point where I had lost all self-confidence, felt my life was worth nothing to me any longer, and I was then willing to make the decision for GOD, and present my life to Him as a living sacrifice, telling Him it was worthless, but if He would use it and make anything out of it, He could have it.

> "This experience changed everything! Life began to take on new hope, and intense interest. The BIBLE began to open to my understanding, like entering into the richest gold, diamond or ruby mine in the world, in glorious splendor. As I began for the first time in my life to UNDERSTAND it [or at least he thought he did] , I became enthralled with it, and studied it night and day, very much of the time on my knees in reverence, in excited and eager joy, finding for the first time the REAL RICHES!

Author's comment: The two foregoing paragraphs which create an attitude of sympathy toward Armstrong are also structured to convince the reader of the depth of his repentance. Notice!

He continues:

> "After three and a half years of eagerly absorbing the divine inspiration and true understanding, God literally plunged me into His work as His minister. This was the last profession on earth I had wanted to enter. I did not, even then, seek entrance into the ministry–I was literally PUT IN by circumstances of God's making. I had been thru a gruelling experience–had known utter defeat, humiliation, hunger, suffering. God had rebuked and chastened me in many ways, burned out former egotism and replaced it with faith in God. God must humble those He can use."

Author's comment: In this paragraph Armstrong also begins to personally identify with Christ. He wants his reader to believe unquestionably that HE IS SPECIAL and DIFFERENT. The paragraph starts, "After three and a half years . . ." The reader will later be led to believe there is divine significance in that three and one-half-year figure and this too will become a subconscious cornerstone on which the reader will rest his future FAITH IN ARMSTRONG.

Armstrong continues:

> "And so, as I wrote to some of you a year ago, as the Apostle Paul said to those at Galatia: I certify to you, that the GOSPEL which is preached of me is not after man, for I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it but BY THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST . . . When it pleased God, who . . . called me by His Grace, to reveal His Son in me that I might preach Him to the world, immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood [men], neither went I to any sect or denomination or human theologian, but I went directly to the WORD of God, on my knees, to be taught, corrected, reproved, and instructed in God's righteousness and Truth." (Compare Gal. 1 :11-18).

Author's comment: Here Armstrong unmistakably separates himself from the realm of mere human contact. He subtly leads one to believe he got all of his religious tutoring by special visitation directly from Christ. Note here that he is not quoting exactly what the Bible says about Paul. He takes that divinely inspired scripture about the person of that spiritual giant, the Apostle Paul, and appropriates it unto himself. He wants his reader to believe, from this quotation, that Christ communicates DIRECTLY with HIM.

Armstrong continues to identify with God:

> "Have you ever noticed, in the Bible, that when God starts anything thru His called HUMAN servants, it must always begin as the very least–the very smallest–and, like the grain of mustard seed, GROW large and great thru God's power? "This present world-wide program, now reaching the millions and changing thousands of precious lives, started out the very smallest activity. It started with nightly meetings in a little one-room country school house, eight miles west of Eugene, Oregon. There was no money for handbills or advertising. I borrowed the use of a typewriter, and typed out slips outlining the sermon-topics. I WALKED over the countryside, for I had no car, where houses often were a half mile apart, personally inviting the neighbors to

attend. In those days I had to rely on God by faith to get me to the meetings, often having to hitch-hike. The school house seated 36 and our average attendance was over 40–several standing thru the entire service. There were several conversions.

"A few months later, the first Sunday in 1934, the door of radio was opened, and the program, then under the name 'Radio Church of God,' started on the air. It has never missed a Sunday since. It started on the smallest of stations, a mere lOO-watts of power. This work of proclaiming Christ's true GOSPEL has never been backed, financed, sponsored, endowed, or controlled in any way by any denomination or organization of men.

"I remember that during those early meetings, late in 1933, a resident of that community met me out on the road and said, 'Mr. Armstrong, you'll never get far. You're preaching the straight truth of the Bible, no matter whom it offends. People won't stand for that very long. People won't support that kind of preaching–it's too strong for them!'

"It was GOD who put me into His work. It was GOD I had to look to for financial support. From the beginning our faith has been sorely tired. I used to go up on top of a small mountain in that neighborhood, where I found a flat stone for an altar before which to kneel and pray–and I had to find my way up there often. But God always heard and ANSWERED, often in miraculous ways you probably wouldn't believe. Today, God has provided me with a private prayer-room. I still have to go there often.

"On February 1, 1934–one month after the broadcast went on the air–The PLAIN TRUTH made its very humble bow. It was mimeographed on a borrowed mimeograph, from stencils cut on a borrowed typewriter, at a few cents' cost, except for postage. I don't remember that Original 'press run,' –but it was around 250-300 copies,

"But it was GOD'S work and He blessed and prospered it Mrs. Armstrong worked tirelessly with me. For two or three years she ground out the 'magazines' on the mimeograph, addressed and stamped them and kept up the tiny mailing list which

started gradually to grow. In nine years the work had multiplied to 30 times its size and scope at the end of the first year. The second nine years it multiplied 30 times its size at the end of the first nine. And now, entering its 23rd year in another month, it has become one of the most powerful works of evangelism in world history–probably the largest user of radio on earth today, beside the Television program Coast to Coast, and mailing out tons and tons of literature, without charge.

"This year we have opened overseas Headquarters in London, England, with my son Richard D. Armstrong, now an ordained minister, in charge of our office there. Close to 5,000 copies of The PLAIN TRUTH now go regularly into the British Isles."

Author's comment: In these paragraphs Armstrong identifies with God. He points to the fact that he started small and grew large. This is supposed to be proof that his WORK IS GOD'S WORK. Of course, the thing he *didn't* tell was that the organization even at the time of his writing hadn't grown large by comparison. It was so small it didn't appear in Mead's *Handbook of Denominations* in the United States. And it is still infinitely small today by comparison.

Armstrong continues with a challenge to his reader:

"Listen, dear Friend! Have YOU put God to the test, to find HOW TRUE are His PROMISES, in your Bible? Well I have, and it seems He has blessed Mrs. Armstrong and me with every blessing within the heavenly sphere! But He still allows our faith to be severely TRIED!

"It seems it is always tried, too, right at this Christmas season. It seems that at this season every year, most people, without realizing what they are doing, FORGET any gift for CHRIST and His work, exchanging presents with their relatives and friends.

"Did you ever stop to think about that? At this season people spend lavishly for Christmas presents, SUPPOSING they are following the example of the wise men–not

> realizing those wise men did NOT exchange presents among themselves–they gave their gifts to CHRIST! Of course, the truth is, they were not giving the Christ-child birthday presents at all–it was NOT His birthday, but several days afterward! It was eastern CUSTOM to present gifts to a KING when coming into his presence–and Jesus was born to be the KING of the world!–the WORLD TOMORROW!"

Author's comment: Here is the first subtle hint for money. He begins telling how he is *tried* (which one, later, discovers to mean, Armstrong needs a donation). Then he appeals to the spirit of Christmas–giving in hopes the reader will get the point and give a little to him for Christ. He has already identified with Christ and God and, of course, he expects the reader to believe that any gift he gives to Christ should go to Armstrong.

Now he goes to a straight out discussion of "funds" –after hopefully having gained the sympathy and trust of his reader:

> "Now finally, let me answer the questions: 'How is your work financed?' 'WHY don't you ask for money over the air?'
> "The answer is simple: Some 28 years ago I gave my life over to God for HIS use–dedicated to living and doing HIS way, not mine or the way of the world or of tradition. God's way is that the GOSPEL cannot be sold like merchandise. God's people must not–do not BEG. Our literal lire con rains the true GOSPEL–the true LIGHT that God sent into the world by Christ, which the world rejected. WE DARE NOT PUT A PRICE ON IT. We have nothing to sell."

Author's comment: Here Armstrong lets the reader know he does not beg for money over the air.

He follows up by letting his reader know how much he has given up and sacrificed for "the work."

Armstrong continues:

> "From the first I've had to RELY SOLELY IN GOD for financial support. A few business corporations have offered to sponsor my broadcast and pay the bills–provided I would quit preaching God's PLAIN TRUTH, and say only what they allowed me to say!
>
> "Twelve years ago [1943] a large advertising agency offered me a personal salary of $100,000 per year if I would give up God's ministry, and go on the air five days a week on a large national net-work as a news analyst, sponsored by one of the great corporations in the food industry. My wife scolded me reprovingly for even telling her about the proposition! God's way hasn't been the EASY way –but we know it's been the RIGHT way!"

Author's comment: Here Armstrong digresses (a favorite psychological maneuver) to inform the reader that he could be sponsored–could even command a $100,000 annual salary–but he says he gave all that up. This is supposed to convince one of his genuine dedication and sincerity. Actually, no written evidence has ever been presented to verify that Armstrong had a firm offer of that $100,000.

Continuing, Armstrong begins to comparatively intimidate and belittle those who do not contribute.

> "We learned that God does have a few that are His own true people–and from the first a very few–a very small percent of the listeners–began to send in their tithes and offerings freely and unsolicited, to carry on God's precious work, of reaping a harvest for His eternal Kingdom!"

Author's comment: Here is introduced the subject of tithes and offerings given freely by a "few of His [God's] own true people." This refers to the co-workers and the implication is, if one doesn't give a donation he is just not among "His [God's] own true people." No one wants to be classed as a "spiritual goat," and so he gives.

Armstrong continues:

> "I remember how we got started on the air in Seattle–the first time we were able to expand outside of Oregon. A family who had been droughted out in the middle-west and moved to the Coast, and in getting a new start had saved up enough money to finish building their house. At the time they had only the outside shell–no partitions, no rooms, no upstairs–just a ladder thru a hole in the ceiling so they could climb up to their beds in the attic. They sent us all the money they had saved to finish building their home. Mrs. Armstrong and I traveled over a hundreds miles to take that money back to them–we felt we simply couldn't accept it and deprive them of their home. They told us, with tears in their eyes, they would not take the money back–they couldn't enjoy the home when they knew it would deprive THOUSANDS of hearing about the eternal home in God's Kingdom FOREVER over the radio station this money would buy time on. They insisted the money be used to expand the broadcast, and assured us that in another year or so they'd save enough money to finish their own temporary material home for this world.
>
> "I could tell you dozens of heart-touching experiences like that. But it illustrates how this work has been financed, and kept FREE to SPEAK OUT with God's truth, without fear or favor!"

Author's comment: In this episode, Herbert Armstrong relates just how dedicated "a few of His own true People" can be. This, of course, is put into the letter for the specific purpose of impelling his reader to give up things he ACTUALLY NEEDS to send a donation for "the cause." This instills a sense of guilt in those who don't give up as much to help in Armstrong's work.

Armstrong continues:

> "So here is our policy–which we believe is GOD'S policy. We do not ask for money over the air–will not permit the announcers to make any such request. We send no request

for money with the free literature. We DO have a precious family of Co-Workers–but one must join that family VOLUNTARILY, and not of our urging!"

Author's comment: The very spirit of the present letter denies that claim. This letter, though subtle, does urge people to become co-workers. And so, we have come to the heart of the matter. Armstrong says, "So here is our policy . . ." 1) We do not ask for money over the air. 2) We send no request for money with free literature. 3) We have a precious family of co-workers who join voluntarily. But watch!

Armstrong continues:

"WHO is a 'Co-Worker?' If a listener or viewer sends in, voluntarily, an offering twice inside of six months, we carefully read the letter, and if the tone of the letter indicates the writer wants to have a regular part in supporting God's work financially, he or she is put on our 'Co-Worker' list – but if not, they are left on what we call our 'Regular' mailing list–made up of scores of thousands who have either NEVER sent us any money for the work, or who may have done so one to three times only. If they are put on the 'Co-Worker List' a letter is sent, explaining our action, and explaining that we have done so because Jesus said, 'Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also'–and so we believe their hearts are in this work. If so, we tell them candidly that I will send them my regular special 'Co-Worker' letters, giving them inside information about this work, its plans for the future, its progress, and when necessary, which seems to be most of the time, its NEED–even as Moses sent out a proclamation asking Israel for material help, and as Paul admonished the Christians. But if we have mistaken their intentions, they are asked to tell us so, and they will be kept on our 'Regular' list to continue receiving the magazine and other literature without any request for money. We believe this is GOD'S WAY as we find it in the Bible."

Author's Comment: This paragraph tells the mechanics of how one may become a co-worker. He may send donations up to three times before he will be considered a co-worker but if he makes a donation twice within six months he will be automatically put on a special list of co-workers from whom Armstrong solicits on a monthly basis. That means, if a listener answers both of Armstrong's semi-annual letters with a token donation he can *automatically* become a co-worker.[5] And the only way his name could be removed from the co-worker list is by specific request, which most people would be embarrassed to do, or by failing to contribute over a rather extended period of time.

Armstrong continues:

> "Before closing, may I say sincerely, and from the heart, THANK YOU for the very great PRIVILEGE of being able to serve you, on the telecast or broadcast, or by the things that I or colleagues on our staff have written.
>
> "DO YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN? I've found it's TRUE–what Jesus said–'It's more blessed to GIVE, than to receive!' I feel, sincerely, it is a far greater privilege God has granted me, in being able to serve you, and to be His instrument that thru my voice and pen (or typewriter) you may receive the precious truths of God, than the privileges He grants you in receiving. WE'RE BOTH BLESSED!"

Author's comment: Here Armstrong *conveniently* points out that Christ said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." He further states that he is the one who is blessed–in being able to give his message. Of course, he must also be quite aware that this quotation used in the present context carries a rather strong inference that one should donate to Armstrong's cause.

Armstrong continues:

> "And may I add a word about the forthcoming new booklet,

'1975 IN PROPHECY' –a fast-moving, one-two-three SUMMARY of all the major prophecies in world events FROM NOW–in plain, simple language, in their precise order of time–sequence, exactly as YOU'RE GOING TO SEE THEM HAPPEN!"

Author's comment: After some *sixty-two* prophecy failures this booklet was withdrawn from circulation but has been revised and reissued to meet the psychological needs of Armstrong's present situation.

Armstrong continues:

"And arc you enrolled for the Ambassador College Bible CORRESPONDENCE COURSE? I think it's the most interesting, most valuable course of Bible study ever prepared. Thousands think so. If you're willing to devote not less than a half-hour every day to the study of YOUR BIBLE, then please write me and enroll by return mail. Or, ask for further information about it if you prefer. I enclose a self-addressed envelope for your enrollment.

"Have you read our startling, eye-opening booklet, 'The Plain Truth about CHRISTMAS'? Few today know where Christmas came from, WHY they observe it–WHETHER it is really a Christian holiday–WHAT the Bible says about it. It's shocking, but it's the truth!

"THANK YOU AGAIN, for your interest in the precious things of GOD."

Author's comment: In this closing portion of his annual letter to listeners, Armstrong typically offers some kind of pamphlet.

A review of Armstrong's annual (later semi-annual) letters over the past twenty years reveals his modus operandi in this area has remained unchanged.

A person who is honest in spirit will readily recognize that Armstrong's annual or semi-annual letters to listeners are

specifically composed for the purpose of subtly soliciting a donation from the recipient and coaxing him to become a co-worker. It is commonly known even among his office workers that this is true. Management personnel often made a projection of the expected income return from such letters and in later years an entire department was created to develop a scientific method of stepping up the process of moving Armstrong's correspondents from the realm of the free-loading regular file into the co-worker file where they would be expected to donate on a monthly basis.

It was common knowledge in the executive suite that one of the real purposes of those letters was to get contributions from listeners who were not voluntary co-workers and to entice them to become co-workers.

In a directive to field ministers, Roderick C. Meredith, then Second Vice President and Superintendent of Ministers for the world-wide operations, informed the ministry that Herbert Armstrong was in the process of preparing one of his semi-annual letters to all listeners and urged the ministry to pray that God would cause Armstrong to phrase the letter in such a way as to bring in a large amount of money. This directive was not just an isolated event but was an admonition which went from the Superintendent of Ministers to the ministry at large on numerous such occasions. It is evidently clear that Armstrong's actions in producing such letters is a breach of the spirit and intent of his promise over the air that “no one will ask you for money.” Still, this letter goes out regularly.

In light of this evidence many view this tactic as a subterfuge. Still, this type of letter has been used throughout the decades to develop a large file of donors.

CHAPTER THREE

ARMSTRONG'S SECOND SECRET: HOW TO GET MONEY

Recruiting donors is an important facet of Armstrong's modus operandi. Of equal importance, if not more so, is the scheme employed to coerce those donors into giving an increasingly large percentage of their income into the Armstrong coffers. This art has been so highly developed in the Armstrong organization that each of Herbert Armstrong's monthly co-worker letters will be followed by an influx of several million dollars.

CO-WORKER LETTER BAGS $4.5 MILLION

Let us fantasize a bit by comparing Armstrong with a camouflaged hunter. He steps into a clearing and in his peripheral vision detects a slight tilt of racks in the brush. Quickly adjusting for windage and a 300-yard range, he draws the cross-hairs down to the vitals of his target. At the squeeze of a trigger a buck flashes into the air, then disappears 30 yards from target area.

Arriving at the site, the hunter is delightfully surprised. He bagged a gleaming, 1432 pound buck. Upon closer examination he finds it is SOLID GOLD!

Fantastic? Yes: but that's what figuratively happens when Herbert Armstrong takes aim at the co-workers' bank accounts with his monthly co-worker letters. He bags over $4.5 MILLION per month (average-1973) after sending out one of his monthly super-powered solicitation letters.

These innocent looking letters form yet another piece of Armstrong's financial puzzle. During the past 40 years he has written and rewritten between four and five hundred such letters. They have now become a finely honed tool with

which he severs the purse strings of his most miserly adherents. In this chapter we analyze the monthly co-worker letters and lay bare their inner meaning.

ARMSTRONG PSYCHOLOGY–CAPTURING DONOR'S CONFIDENCE

Before continuing to analyze Armstrong's co-worker letters, we must understand more of the Armstrong psychology. A small bit of it was given in the analysis of Armstrong's semi-annual letter covered in Chapter Two–particularly the part where Armstrong spoke of his wife's angelic vision. Let's take a closer look at the psychology behind it because that is typical of how Armstrong gains the confidence of his co-workers. He has sought to immortalize her dream by including it in his autobiography. In that publication he indicates his wife's dream-vision occurred in 1917.

He relates:

> "One night my wife had a dream . . . it was so vivid it seemed more like a vision . . . There appeared an awesome sight in the sky . . . [it was] filled with a gigantic solid mass of brilliant stars, shaped like a huge banner. The stars began to quiver and separate, finally vanishing. She [in her dream] called my attention to the vanishing stars . . . another group of flashing stars appeared, then quivering, separating and vanishing like the first. As she and I [says Armstrong], in her dream, looked upward at the vanishing stars, three large white birds suddenly appeared in the sky between us and the vanishing stars. These great white birds flew directly toward us. As they descended nearer, she perceived that they were angels. Then it seemed that from among these angels in her dream . . . Christ descended from among them and stood directly in front of us. At first I [in her dream] was a little doubtful and afraid of how He would receive us, because I remembered we had neglected our Bible study and had our minds too much on things apart from His interests. But as we

> went up to Him, he put His arms around both of us, and we were so happy! I [in her dream] thought people were just swarming into the streets . . . Then it seemed He (Christ) had changed into an angel. I was terribly disappointed at first, until he told me Christ was really coming in a very short time.
> "At that lime, we had been going quite regularly to motion picture theaters. She (Loma) asked the angel if this were wrong. He (the angel) replied, Christ had important work for us to do, preparing for His coming–there would be no time for 'movies.' Then the angel and the whole spectacle seemed to vanish, and she [Loma–Armstrong's wife] awakened, shaken and wondering! . . ."

Armstrong then closes with this comment. "God left me to my own ways for five more years. But at age thirty (1922), He began to deal with me . . . Every business or money-making venture I attempted was turned into utter defeat." Herbert Armstrong and his wife, later, were driven by an obsession to fulfill what they thought was the interpretation of that dream-vision. To paraphrase it, "Christ had important work for them to do in preparing for His coming."

Objectively, the dream-vision could have been viewed as the result of sleeplessness. Instead, this whole supposition has grown to the place where Herbert Armstrong has developed the concept that he is to fulfill the prophesied work of Elijah recorded in Malachi 4:5. Some of Armstrong's more lofty disciples believe that Herbert Armstrong IS the prophet Elijah and they further teach in such a way as to lead the people to believe it–disregarding the fact that Armstrong and his protege prophets have racked up an impressive loss record of SIXTY-TWO prophecy failures without scoring a single major victory!

To carry the pretense further–some of Armstrong's most loyal ministers lead others to believe that Armstrong and his son will team up to become the TWO WITNESSES of Revelation 11. This whole rank of suppositions will be exposed in detail by a later chapter. It is not the general

object here to debate doctrines or suppositions–just report them as they are. But, it is necessary to have knowledge of these suppositions in order to understand and analyze Armstrong's co-worker letters.[6]

THE ARMSTRONG SUPPOSITIONS

The following is a catalog of a few suppositions held by the Armstrongs and their adherents–all are effective tools in getting people to contribute.

1) Loma Armstrong through an angel prophesied Herbert Armstrong's present work.

2) Herbert Armstrong superstitiously credits God with his business failures–turns it into a sign that God wants him to fulfill his wife's dream-vision.

3) Armstrong claims to have spent three and one-half years in study for his ministry–just as the Apostles were supposedly with Christ for three and one-half years–and that is supposed to have some supernatural significance.

4) Armstrong claims he did not get his doctrinal teachings from other men–that they were REVEALED BY CHRIST with whom he was in communion (like the Apostle Paul) during that three and one-half year period.

5) Armstrong claims that no one has preached (original Greek-published) the Gospel from the time of the early Church until he began his ministry in 1927–which he is quick to point out is ONE HUNDRED "19-year time cycles" after the (supposed) beginning of Christ's ministry. And all that is supposed to have some supernatural significance.

6) Armstrong assumes the *title* of APOSTLE (he declares only one APOSTLE is necessary today) and teaches that his commission is to "publish" the Gospel to the world as a "warning" *witness–not* specifically to make converts and save souls.

7) And of more recent date, the Armstrongs have declared that Garner Ted's ministry was foretold by the Old Testament prophets.

What do all these suppositions have to do with acquiring FIFTY-FIVE MILLION DOLLARS annually? They are Armstrong *suppositions* but they become SUPERstitions to his adherents. And when they become SUPERstitions in one's mind he will contribute heavily to his last breath. Thousands and thousands have compromisingly accepted them and many thousands more have gullibly *believed* those suppositions.

They ARE suppositions pure and simple! None of the above points have anything to do with the "way of life"–how you treat your neighbor and live before God. They are EXTRA BIBLICAL. They cannot be directly proved by the Bible because it just doesn't deal in suppositions.

Reinforcing Armstrong's suppositions is a highly exercised code of psychological propaganda to which the average, unwary, reader is completely oblivious. This adds even greater weight to his leverage for soliciting donations.

SELECTED RULES OF PROPAGANDA:

1) Always appear PATRIOTIC! Your position is almost invulnerable when you stand up for "Mother, God, and Country."[7]
2) Get on the BAND WAGON! Really whoop it up. Put on the sales pitch. Bring in a few glowing testimonials, and hand out a few rewards–trophies, titles, etc.[8]
3) Use glittering GENERALITIES! Always deal in vague terms. Let others *think* they know your stand–but keep your real position, facts, figures obscured.[9]
4) Elevate those who compliment you–who back you without reservation. Always speak well of them–put them in a good light. Promote them in every way

possible. Reward them well with money, gifts, and honor when it is within your power to do so.[10]

5) Always have a COMMON ENEMY readily at hand. When difficulty develops within your camp–always lay it to the charge of that OUTSIDE ENEMY. When one within your ranks is in disfavor always equate him with the OUTSIDE ENEMY. Then attack that ENEMY rather than the man. This isolates the culprit from his friends and puts them (his friends) in your camp.
6) Deprecate those who question your decisions, actions, or motives. Avoid them like the plague. Any reference to them must be one of pity, scorn, or reproof.
7) Use the HALF TRUTH. Don't give all the facts. Use only the ones favorable to your goals and array them so as to present your efforts in a good light even when the whole picture is very bleak. [11]
8) Tell the BIG LIE (Gospel not preached for 1800 years). The BIG LIE technique–make it big enough and tell it long enough and even the most skeptical will believe it.

Armstrong's arsenal of suppositions born on a tidal wave of propaganda, floods the minds of his co-workers, on an average of once a month, on some occasions, more.
Now, with a knowledge of Armstrong's suppositions and use of propaganda principles, the actual content of Armstrong's "gold-getting" missiles may be analyzed.

LETTER OPENERS

Armstrong's co-worker letters, like a sandwich, consists of THREE basic parts. 1) The top crust. 2) The filling. 3) The bottom crust.

The top part, the opening of Armstrong's letters, usually contains a short paragraph at or near the beginning, which announces some supposedly startling news–either some world event or an important happening in the development of his work.

Take a look at some examples:

From Armstrong's co-worker letter dated April 12, 1943:

"WHO [a 50KW radio station in Des Moines] HELD! SUPER POWER WOAI, San Antonio, ADDED!"

Author's comment: Large 50KW station contracts were difficult for Armstrong to acquire. The above announcement, which may not now appear to have much significance, was a real victory for Armstrong in those days. WHO, Des Moines, was trying to cancel his program and he was able to save it by making a special trip there. This was hailed as a direct intervention from God. The same is true for the 50KW station in San Antonio mentioned above.

From Armstrong's co-worker letter of early April, 1946:

"I have just arrived in Hollywood from New York where I spent a week attending and observing the vital SECURITY COUNCIL meeting of the new UNITED NATIONS world organization . . ."

Author's comment: This was thrown out as an opener for two reasons. First, Armstrong associates with the GREAT as much as possible. He wants his reader to think he is betting on a winner when he supports him. It is the old PRESTIGE ROUTINE. Associate with the GREAT and others will think of YOU as GREAT.

Throughout the letter Armstrong shows pity and contempt for those "poor deceived men in the UNITED NATIONS" who don't know how to bring peace. The whole tenor is to subtly sever the reader's loyalties from constituted authority, bending them in the direction of him and his efforts.

From Armstrong's co-worker letter dated September 8, 1950:

"Here's the BEST NEWS IN YEARS! . . . After all the discouraging conditions and troubles encountered this year, 1950 is turning out to be the most productive, the most successful, since God started us in His work!"

Author's comment: What was this big news? Armstrong was finally able to get together enough funds to put a baptizing team in the field. The term "most successful" on this occasion has reference, *not* to the amount of money brought in (that was a real problem at that time), but to the fact that a number of people were being baptized. There is certainly no reflection upon people being baptized, however, it was unusual for Armstrong to reckon the progress of his work in terms of "souls being saved."

"Saving souls," according to his own testimony is not his mission–and his usual criteria of measurement was a 30 percent increase in money. At the time this letter was written, income had been very low. And at the expense of shifting emphasis, he held this out as his brightest star of hope.

From Armstrong's co-worker letter of January 18, 1965:

> "I want to report *BIG NEWS!!!* It is the BIGGEST news that ever happened in the history of this work! Later on, after the World Tomorrow has dawned [meaning after Christ's return] the world may look back on this event as a big milestone in world history!"

Author's comment: What had happened here? Armstrong had contracted to put his broadcast on one of the pirate ship stations off the coast of Britain and this was the date for airing the initial program. A relatively short time later Britain outlawed the pirate stations and forced Armstrong off the air. Little if any significance is now attached to this event. But it did make flourishing copy at the time it was written.

From Armstrong's May, 1970 co-worker letter:

> ". . .This is probably the MOST IMPORTANT announcement I have ever made to our Co-Workers . . . We are in the process of intensive preparation for the most

> POWERFUL world program ever launched to WAKE UP this drowsy, sleeping world BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE'"

Author's comment: The essence of this announcement? Armstrong planned for his son to carry evangelical meetings to all American cities. The effort was known as "AMERICA LISTEN–before it's too late." Only a few such campaigns materialized and the project was abandoned for a better format a couple years later. Little notice was taken by any other than WORLD TOMORROW broadcast listeners who were specially invited by letter from Armstrong's mailing list. The drowsy, sleeping world just didn't hear the message.

These example cases of Armstrong's sensationalized letter openings were picked at random. There are literally dozens and dozens of similar examples among his letters where opening statements grossly over-play the situation.

The object of his startle–approach in the co-worker letters gives the illusion of *super progress* toward fulfilling *his* interpretation of Mrs. Armstrong's 1917 dream-vision. Armstrong's concept of the fulfillment of that vision is essentially that of warning and *WITNESSING* to the world to get it ready for Christ.

In his words, " . . . we came to realize that this [Mrs. Armstrong's dream-vision] really was a message from God . . . My wife saw an angel . . . revealing that God was calling me and her to the mission of *WARNING* this world of the fast-approaching END OF THE AGE, and the second coming of Christ . . . Jesus Christ has called us to a 'DIVINE MISSION'" (See co-worker letters of November 19 and 28, 1956).

Armstrong's mission had grown in his thinking from that of "WARNING THIS NATION" (see co-worker letters of the early 1940's) to "WARNING this world" in 1956.

Armstrong wrote on November 15, 1955:

> "That great prophecy (Matt. 24:14 and Mark 13:10) is being carried out by . . . *YOU* AND *ME* TODAY! . . ."

This was further amplified in Armstrong's co-worker letter of Nov. 25, 1957:

> "Listen! Read this TWICE! Realize this! . . . No other work on earth . . . is . . . preaching this true Gospel of Christ to the whole world!!! . . . This is the most important activity on earth today!"

Armstrong is propelled by a burning zeal to fulfill that vision. He uses those who *will* be used to advance his work. Those who he *considers* impediments are ruthlessly and summarily crushed (see Chapter Seven). Thus Armstrong casts a Christian-looking cloak over the Machiavellian doctrine, "The end justifies the means." This is done by figuratively, relentlessly "martyring" his "LOYAL OPPOSITION" to the tune of his pseudo-innocent refrain, "*IT'S ALL FOR THE GOOD OF THE WORK."*

In deference to this *VISION* Armstrong manages to paint a progressive picture even under the bleakest circumstances. When an obvious *reverse* occurs, it is negated by his "cocked gun" parable, "It's just the cocking of the trigger for another mighty plunge forward" (Armstrong's phraseology).

He avoids revealing decrease in growth rate when possible. Such "growth decrease," by his own admission (in earlier years), was evidence God may not be blessing the one who suffers the reverse. After all, one of the purposes of his co-worker letters is to relate progress–not stagnation. He is quite aware that people won't bet on a dead horse. He desperately tries to project the image of being in control of a winner–way out in front!

He vigorously protests, "The work can never *STAND STILL*. If it doesn't go forward, it will stagnate, *GO BACKWARD* and *DOWN AND OUT."* He has exerted every psychological pressure possible to make it grow at the rate of 30 per cent a year. But as of publication date the growth rate of his work is constantly going down.

For many, many years he purposely over-extended the

budget for broadcast, publishing and general expenditures by 30 per cent. He would then plead, beg, cajole and occasionally threaten his adherents with the *lake of fire* if they didn't come to his aid and "SAVE THE WORK!"

By the mid 60's Armstrong's habit of over-extension by 30 per cent had so infected the lower and middle management segment of his organization that it was common practice to include in a department's annual budget a 30 per cent over-extension–predicated solely on anticipated income growth.

That is a look at the top crust of the parabolic sandwich with which we compared Armstrong's co-worker letters. Now, take a look at the bottom crust, as it were, to see what the letter *CLOSING* generally looks like.

THE CLOSER

This area of Armstrong's co-worker letter is usually an urgent plea for funds. The first one, randomly selected is dated:

1) January 24, 1952– "Yes, the work is growing–things are literally HUMMING with activity here–thousands and thousands of new names are going on the mailing list . . . but our Co-Workers, very many of them, are slacking off again in their efforts. In ten more days this could become a *fatal crisis"* Co-Workers, EVERY *ONE,* leap to my aid! Send in the very largest sum you possibly can, at any sacrifice, BY RETURN AIR-MAIL in the enclosed envelope, whether it be a check or draft of several thousand dollars or only one or two dollar bills–the widow's mites. There is no time for more words. I must make this brief so it can be printed and mailed AT ONCE. It's VITAL to the life of the work that you keep tithes and offerings coming in REGULARLY–as often as possible! . . . PLEASE HURRY!"

July 24,1953–" . . . the July PLAIN TRUTH has had to

lay, all printed for *one solid month* in the printing plant because of lack of sufficient funds to pay for it. Think of it! One month late! And we had it printed ON TIME! . . . The summer months are the most difficult of the year Co-Workers! I call on you now in Jesus' Name to *rally* to God's great cause! We have to re-double our efforts! A miracle is now needed to keep the work going . . ."

3) July 31,1955– ". . . Co-Workers, I can't carry my load much further, unless you'll get into DEADLY SERIOUS EARNEST about this! If you don't have a thousand dollars to send, YOU *COULD* PRAY HARD ENOUGH, AND BELIEVING ENOUGH, that God would lay it so HEAVILY on the heart of one who CAN, to do so! . . . But I doubt whether God will hear you UNLESS you are willing to do your UTMOST [i.e. *give* your utmost] . . . It's all deductible on income tax, up to 20% . . . And, not only do we need an IMMEDIATE response to this letter–WE NEED TO HAVE IT KEEP UP . . . There's no need for this undertaking to fail–IF YOU'LL STIR YOURSELVES AND GET UNDER THIS BURDEN WITH ME! But we shall have to keep it up *UNTIL* TV produces its harvest!"

4) February 3, 1955–"Listen, Co-Workers! Do I have to send you desperate, urgent appeals to be faithful in sending God's tithes, and your generous offerings? It is still a life and death struggle . . . It always will be! [This indicates Armstrong actually planned to budget beyond the level of current donations and constantly keep pressure on the members and co-workers.] . . . Send the largest amount for the work God has made possible for you to send–AND KEEP IT UP, as OFTEN AS POSSIBLE! It's later than we think! Time is growing short . . ."

5) March 23, 1955–" . . . This work . . . is not only a matchless PRIVILEGE–it is also *the very testing ground of FAITH,* to try us, and make us WHITE in the

righteousness of God! . . . Either we endure in the joy of our glorious Mission [supporting Armstrong's work with money] –or we lose salvation! . . . I tell you dear Co-Workers, your own salvation for eternity is at stake . . .”

6) October 19, 1956–“ . . . if ever we needed a number of LARGE donations of $1,000 to $10,000 or more, it is right now. I would suggest that any of you in position to make such a gift or loan contact me immediately by long distance telephone . . . There's not an hour to lose! Please hurry!”
7) November 25, 1958–“ . . . I must stop right here and RUSH this emergency S.O.S. to you! God's Work needs your WINDOWS' MITES–it needs the generous offerings of one or several thousand dollars from the VERY FEW of you who are able to give so much for CHRIST and His Work. It needs whatever amount is GENEROUS giving, according to YOUR circumstances and ability, whether as much as $50,000 or only one or two dollars.”

Perhaps it *has* happened before–but surely it is rare for a religious leader in a mass circulated letter, to request specific donations of even a few thousand dollars, not to mention TEN THOUSAND or FIFTY THOUSAND. Such a request has just been witnessed–spiced with a threat of “loss of salvation”[13] if enough doesn't come in to keep Armstrong's work going.

But how does he get people to respond to requests mingled with threats? The real psychological pull which impels Armstrong's adherents to *dig down deep* is found *between* the letter's opening and closing. And like the great American hamburger, it is almost addictive.

Just what kind of *filling* does Armstrong put between the upper and lower crust of this (co-worker letter) sandwich?

THE FILLING

The body of Armstrong's co-worker letter is a flavorful, homogeneous concoction for addicting and mesmerizing the unwary soul. Ever so subtly one is *led* to believe or *accept* more of Armstrong's suppositions:

1) The Devil has everyone in the world deceived except Armstrong and his adherents.
2) The Gospel hasn't been preached (Greek-published) in over 1800 years–until Armstrong started his ministry in 1927.
3) Preaching the Gospel to the WORLD as a witness (Matt. 24:14) will be done by some INDIVIDUAL human preacher–and Armstrong claims to be fulfilling it.
4) Mrs. Herbert Armstrong had a REVELATION from God by an ANGEL which told her, she and Herbert Armstrong were to fulfill Matthew 24:14.
5) The prophecy of Matthew 24:14 is essentially the same as the prophesied Elijah of Malachi 4:5 and Armstrong is consequently identified as doing or fulfilling the Elijah prophecy.
6) Armstrong's WORK is the only work of God in the world today.
7) Armstrong has been specially selected, trained and appointed by God to be a Watchman to fulfill the office of a modern Ezekiel (co-worker letter of March 28, 1966).
8) Armstrong's mission is that of WITNESSING and WARNING–not that of making converts and saving souls.
9) Armstrong has a specially revealed understanding of prophecy.
10) The U.S., Great Britain, and the Democracies of Europe are descendants of the northern ten tribes of Ancient Israel.
11) The U.S., Great Britain, and the Democracies of Europe

will go into captivity and will be delivered by Christ at His coming.

These are only a few of the Armstrong suppositions. There are many, many more! And they arc a powerful leverage which he uses to cause his adherents to give more.

But how does Armstrong bring people to believe and accept such suppositions? Surprising as it may seem, it has been partially made possible by the way Christian ministers have handled the matter of church holidays–Christmas, Easter, Halloween, etc.

Serious Christian scholars know Christ's birth date was not on December 25. But they fail to tell their congregations Christ's exact birth date is unknown–and December 25 is only a traditional date on which they have decided to celebrate it. The people of the Christian congregation just take it for granted that Christ was born on that day. A similar misunderstanding surrounds Easter and Halloween.

It is quite easy under these circumstances for Armstrong to create a credibility gap between a person and his minister. Once this has occurred, it is usually a matter of time until he is drawn into the body of Armstrong's co-workers. There he is made to feel he has a DIRECT, ACTIVE part in getting "his" gospel to others.

He begins receiving Armstrong's co-worker letter every month, as well as hearing him on the air and reading his literature. Very subtly he is fed the Armstrong suppositions. Once he begins to *believe* them, he can be pressured into larger financial commitments to the Armstrong cause.

Slowly he gravitates toward Armstrong's church, as he is presented juicy doctrinal morsels, delightfully seasoned and delicately served on a gilded tray of propaganda. And thus, a large percentage of people having lost faith in their local pastor will become members of Armstrong's church.

But, Armstrong does not, at first, teach the new adherent all his doctrines. There are generally TWO stipulations for joining the Armstrong organization:

1) One must repent–utterly abhor himself, abhor his own very body and mind as well as his sins.
2) In accepting Christ, he is required to make an *unconditional surrender.* This *UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER*[14] which one thinks he makes to God, in reality turns out to be an unconditional surrender to Armstrong's doctrines.

After becoming a member, the new adherent finds the *real* pressure is on. He begins attending church services under one of Armstrong's local pastors.

This NEW CONVERT, with an attitude of TOTAL SURRENDER, now sits at the feet of a man who teaches him he must give a full tenth of his gross annual income to the church. This TOTALLY SURRENDERED convert later finds there is *another* TITHE to be devoted to religious causes. Then later he discovers still *another* TITHE to be devoted to religious causes. And then finally a TITHE of the TITHE. This may sound a bit bewildering but little by little it is accepted and practiced.

Suffice it to say that the member in Armstrong's church will earmark between 25 and 30 percent of his gross annual income for religious purposes.

Now, take a look at the final ingredient in the CENTER FILL of Armstrong's *gold-getting* sandwich. Yes, there's more! It is yet another *special* co-worker letter which goes to Armstrong's *members.* It is from these that he fleeces about 75 percent of his total receipts. Up to this point only Armstrong's co-workers in general have been discussed–a group-classification of adherents which provides about 25 percent of his income.

Take a look now at his letters to the group from which he receives the other 75 percent–those members who have *surrendered* TOTALLY!

Following are direct quotes from letters written to this select group:

1) (Member Letter–March 2, 1967) "You KNOW that we are on a SEVEN YEAR (or longer) building program, that began less than four years ago, and has three or more years yet to go. And yet, YOU BRETHREN, who call yourselves *GOD'S* PEOPLE, have dwindled down to about HALF the amount of SPECIAL OFFERINGS for the BUILDING FUND you were sending in a year ago–though there are 30 percent more of us! [15]

"THINK OF IT! How ASHAMED God must be with *His* Church! . . .

"LISTEN, Brethren–and listen HARD! Learn a LESSON that may save you from the Lake of Fire. Learn a basic TRUTH about how you are to develop character and GROW spiritually to INHERIT GOD'S KINGDOM! Learn a GREAT TRUTH! Learn what may mean your ETERNITY!

"Read this two or three times! UNDERSTAND IT!

"Some of you do not GO FORWARD spiritually with Christ, UNLESS I or YOUR LOCAL PASTOR, or SOME ONE *PUSHES YOU!* But our PUSHING will never get you into God's Kingdom. Our PUSHING will never get you to the PLACE OF SAFETY for the Great Tribulation about five years from now . . . (1972)."

2) (Member Letter–September 1, 1968) " . . . MANY who DO have the ability (to give) . . . are GUILTY BEFORE GOD of shirking–of letting the SATANIC attitude of *GET* fill their minds . . . The only reward, later, will be DEATH in the LAKE OF FIRE!" [15] [sic]

3) (May 5, 1969) "Now about the annual Holy Day

offerings . . . Brethren I wonder if that (what you have done) is not doing almost exactly what Ananias and Sapphira did! . . . They professed that they put in the amount they sold their property for. Peter said THEY LIED to THE HOLY SPIRIT. *They DROPPED DEAD!* If YOU profess that what you put in the Holy Day offering is a SPECIAL HOLY DAY OFFERING, when it is only a regular offering, is not that about the same thing? Brethren, in the name of Jesus Christ I say I WOULD BE AFRAID to do such a thing!"

4) (Member Letter–June 29, 1969) "What, then, is the WORST, most TERRIBLE sin? . . . It is that which cuts you off from . . . INHERITING and SHARING with God *ALL* THAT HE HAS! . . . Could it be that EVEN *YOU* are putting Some of these things ahead of HIM–or ahead of YOUR PART in HONORING our God with this EXTRA SPECIAL BUILDING FUND . . . I cannot authorize [certain buildings] unless the statement of intentions [promised money] amounts up to $200,000 per month . . ."

5) (Member Letter–March 30, 1970) "This was suggested this afternoon by Mr. Stanley Rader, our legal counsel and financial adviser . . . go to your local bank and borrow whatever you are able–from $100 to $1,000 . . . giving it to the work, and paying it back monthly yourself–in ADDITION to continuing to send in your tithes and offerings."

6) (Member Letter–September 3, 1970) " . . . it seems MOST OF YOU have cut down on–or quit altogether–sending in SPECIAL OFFERINGS for the building and property fund . . . Also the THIRD TITHE fund has been slacking off. The number of members is INCREASING, and these funds ought to increase also." [This THIRD TITHE will be more fully explained later].

7) (Member Letter–April 12, 1971) "THINK what a *great Work* has been generated! And yet, WHAT A SHAME that I have to tell you it is facing a financial CRISIS, in which we may even have to STOP publication of The PLAIN TRUTH!"

8) (Member Letter–December 27, 1971) *"AT LAST!* And this time IT'S OFFICIAL! . . . The ground breaking ceremony for construction of the superb HOUSE FOR GOD (. . . but will be known by the public as . . . the auditorium of Ambassador College . . .) is set definitely for Friday, January 14th, 1972! The contract has been let, and we are now bound. To payoff the balance of this financing, we have to meet payments of $200,000 per month for the next few [ten] years."

According to notes taken by the author, Armstrong indicated while speaking before local Pasadena church members, the financing was to run for TEN YEARS–making a total of TWENTY-FOUR MILLION PAY OFF INCLUDING FINANCING.

9) (Member Letter–May 31, 1972) "I cannot longer delay telling you that we now face a crisis even more serious than we faced at the end of February, 2½ years ago. I had to ask you, then, even to go to your bank and borrow what you could pay back within 2 years on a monthly repayment basis . . . I simply have to tell you brethren that we now face an even more desperate crisis, and reluctant as I am to do so, I am forced to ask you to respond once again as you did . . . [borrowing money from their local banks and giving it to Armstrong–Paul said, even God does not expect you to give what you have not got. But apparently Armstrong does]."

10) (Member Letter–August 28, 1972) "Now, AS NEVER BEFORE I call on *you,* by the authority of JESUS CHRIST, to get back of this Work as NEVER BEFORE . . . to sacrifice for it as never before!"

11) (Member Letter–October 27, 1972) "There is no 'success story' I verily believe, in the annals . . . equal to what has been accomplished in this great work [16] . . . the number one REASON . . . God has put YOU into His Church . . . to help *GIVE* . . . Our Mission is NOT to CONVINCE the world, not to SAVE the world NOW–it is to TELL the world what is going to happen whether they believe it or not . . . We have had no GUIDELINES. We cannot organize or operate like activities, organizations, or businesses in this world . . . Yet the building of . . . [this] Church has become a 'success story' probably unparalleled IN THE ORGANIZATIONS OF THE WORLD."

l2) (Member Letter–November 2, 1972) " . . . This Work . . . is geared to a pattern that demands constant INCREASE. IT CANNOT HOLD EVEN. It either goes on forward, or it goes backward! We *MUST* . . . GET THIS GREAT WORK BACK ON THE PATTERN OF A 30% annual INCREASE in power and scope . . . Brethren, we have to face a VERY SOBERING AND SERIOUS SITUATION. Unless drastic CHANGES take place, we are going to have to reduce many vital phases of the Work, and eliminate others. That means seeing the Work . . . start going BACKWARD for the first time in 40 years! . . . Brethren . . . WE DARE NOT LET THAT HAPPEN! . . . Brethren, *I KNOW* the *CAUSE* of our present situation. WE AS A CHURCH HAVE BEEN LETTING DOWN . . . That means that NOT ONLY God's WORK is in danger–MANY of YOU BRETHREN are in *MORTAL* DANGER! I say to you

> candidly, I know that some, if not MANY of you are in *REAL* DANGER of the LAKE OF FIRE! . . . Let's not dodge the real issue–let's not deny the REAL *CAUSE*–let's not PASS THE BUCK! Our own personal, individual SALVATION is at stake . . . Jesus Christ, has shown me THE REAL CAUSE–not merely of the present situation, BUT OF THE DIMINISHING INCREASE IN INCOME–and-consequently IN THE ENTIRE SCOPE AND POWER OF THE WORK these past three and four years! . . . I know that the ETERNAL LIVES of many–perhaps more than HALF . . . are at STAKE . . .”

Why do “children of God” submit to this kind of abuse heaped high in Armstrong's fund raising letters? They have been slowly bound by an invisibly spun web of propaganda enclosing them in a cocoon of total submission. They have drunk deep of Armstrong's intoxicating chalice of suppositions. In the blur of their vision, tyranny and spiritual turmoil are glamorized as freedom and harmony.

Their stupor mistakes determination for inspiration, and transforms mights and maybes into infallible prophecies. In the giddiness of their spiritual deception the garment of a beggar appears as royal glamour.

They grope their way along the avenue of life until the day a psychological peel of lightning rends the skies in startling revelation that the True Prophet is the Saviour Jesus Christ in the heavens!

Members of Armstrong's Church support his efforts out of a sincere conviction that they are supporting God's ONLY Apostle and Prophet doing God's ONLY WORK for the first time in 1800 years (THE BIG LIE).

According to Armstrong's own testimony those who support his work are the poor, and the middle class–not the wealthy or elite. There is a constant flow of letters to Armstrong from widows, pensioners, and recipients of Social

Security all over the land – people who deprive themselves of needed food, clothing, and adequate shelter to give to his cause. The author has personally read hundreds of such letters in Armstrong's offices.

Typical, is a letter which Armstrong quotes in a Co-Worker letter:

> (Co-Worker Letter–August 9, 1954) " . . . I have to sacrifice to send what little I do. I try *each day* to sacrifice a little more, to have a few more cents to send. I know that if I put God's work ahead of my own personal need that He has PROMISED to supply my every need, and I am trusting Him for that . . . we must work harder than ever before, altho it seems my part is so little . . . $2.00 enclosed."

That certainly is a fine, sacrificing attitude. By the tenor of the entire letter, it is easy to see this humble lady puts implicit faith in Armstrong's honesty and ability to administer her precious $2.00 sacrificial offering–to use it to the glory and honor of God in preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The foregoing examples are sufficient to show how Armstrong attracts the really big as well as the small donations. Thus the pieces of Armstrong's *financial puzzle* have fallen into place. The picture it projects is a FIFTY-FIVE MILLION DOLLAR annual "take."

But in the background lies a nagging question–does Armstrong use the *offerings* of the poor, the widow, the struggling farmer, and Mr. average middle class to take the Gospel to the world as Christ commanded?

That is a question for our next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

ARMSTRONG'S COMMISSION-AND **HOW HE SPENDS 55-MILLION**

FIFTY-FIVE MILLION–a staggeringly *HUGE* amount of money! The average person finds it difficult to comprehend how much it really is! So, for the sake of reality, toy with these comparative values and see 55-million translated into meaningful terms for the fatherless, the widow, the struggling farmer, Mr. average and Mr. affluent.

Assuming God hired Noah to PREACH at a salary of $10,000 a year, how long would he have to work to earn such a huge sum as 55-million? If he started at a young age he would be preaching in the days of Moses. Even more –he would be honking away in the days of the Babylonian Empire, in the days of Christ, on through the Dark Ages, during the Protestant Reformation, and on into our space age. He could retire at the ripe old age of FIVE THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED which would be more than a thousand years beyond our day (1977) today!

Fifty-five million translated into modern $30,000 homes would build a small city of nearly 2,000 homes housing about 12,000 people.

How about the affluent? Suppose a man takes ninety days to buy a lakefront home with boat dock, a private aircraft with a landing strip. He anchors a new cabin cruiser at the dock, hangers a private twin at the landing strip and parks a shiny new Fleetwood Cadillac behind his radio-controlled garage doors. Now, he salts away a cool TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY GRAND in his bank account and takes off on a ninety day pleasure cruise to Acapulco. For the whole package, if he spends lavishly during his ninety-day cruise, less than a half million.

Upon returning from his cruise he gives it away–signs it all over to his best friend and does it again. Another home, another aircraft, another cabin cruiser and another ninety-day cruise.

If he starts at age 23 and repeats this every six months, he can retire at the ripe old age of 81–twenty years beyond the age required for Social Security. His gross expenditures, after all that, would just barely total 55-million.

It takes a lot of effort to spend that amount. But Armstrong does it!

ARMSTRONG'S COMMISSION IS THE BIG QUESTION

Does Armstrong spend those millions to fulfill Christ's commission and use our Lord's offerings judiciously? Does he merit the *faith* and *confidence* placed in him by the fatherless, the widow, the pensioner, the struggling farmer and Mr. average wage-earner?

CHRIST'S COMMISSION TO ARMSTRONG

Herbert Armstrong sets himself apart from Christ's commission as well as apart from most all evangelical efforts which have occurred over the last 1800 years. He *assumes* a self appointed commission to fulfill the PROPHECY of Matthew 24:14: " . . . this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached (Greek-published) in all the world for a *witness* unto all nations; and then shall the end come."

Armstrong, attempting to fulfill this prophecy, has developed a towering pinnacle of suppositions which in reality only fulfills his wife's dream-vision. Fabulous sums are spent in doing so.

Now, examine the myths which have grown up around Armstrong's *supposition* (that he is fulfilling Matthew 24:14), because this is what compels Armstrong to spend so lavishly. And it is even presently considered, by Armstrong's adherents, that he is now on the "gun-lap" in fulfilling this prophetic scripture. He is looked upon as fulfilling the duties

of Ezekiel and the work of Elijah the Prophet. His adherents are led to believe Christ's statement in Matthew 17:11 indicates that Elijah will yet come "and restore all things," a prophecy which Armstrong has attempted to fulfill.

Members are quick to point out, it is Armstrong who is *restoring* all of God's *truth*. They often cite the fact that Armstrong's teachings include keeping certain Old Testament laws such as Israel's annual festivals as well as dedicating the FIRST, *second* and *third* tithes toward religious purposes.

EZEKIEL–ELIJAH–ARMSTRONG COMMISSION

With regard to the work of Ezekiel. Armstrong wrote to his co-workers, March 28, 1966:

> "Did you ever NOTICE and UNDERSTAND this striking prophecy [which God gave to Ezekiel]? . . . 'I have made thee a watchman unto the House of Israel: . . .therefore hear the word at my mouth and GIVE THEM WARNING FROM ME' . . . Now the man Ezekiel was a prophet. He wrote down the prophecy. But *he* was not the 'WATCHMAN' . . . The prophecy was not for *his* day. Prophecy is history of FUTURE events–to happen after it is written. God was to raise up 20th-Century 'Ezekiel'–a different person– . . . A SPEAKER to SPEAK and PROCLAIM this Warning, AT THE TIME when the event prophesied is about to happen. God is using THIS WORK [Armstrong] . . . to *proclaim* this vital warning."

Armstrong thus sees his work as fulfilling the prophecies of Ezekiel as well as those of Elijah to which he referred in his co-worker letter of June that same year and he has spent our Lord's offerings to do this prophesying.

Armstrong continues:

> "Jesus Christ will not come until THE WAY HAS BEEN PREPARED . . . And you are helping prepare the way . . . Already this Work [Armstrong] is REACHING and

> WARNING MILLIONS! And more, it is *preparing the way* for the coming of the ALL-mighty CHRIST . . . SOON!"

The Armstrong adherents, when using the expression "preparing the way" in connection with Armstrong's work, have reference to Armstrong fulfilling the prophecy of the work of Elijah.

Armstrong is accepted as a prophet by many of his adherents. The author has documented proof that in recent years "acceptance" of this supposition was required of some before being admitted to the membership.

Armstrong's church generally accepts him as a prophet. The basis of his prophetic utterances is his supposed discovery that the U.S., Britain and the Democracies of Europe are the descendants of the Lost Ten Tribes of Ancient Israel. With this "key" Armstrong has supposedly unlocked ONE THIRD of the Bible which here-to-fore remained sealed.

Recently the validity of his research has been found inconclusive and his booklet, "The UNITED STATES and the British COMMONWEALTH in Prophecy" was withdrawn from circulation in order to keep it out of the hands of critics. It is now available in a revised form–the same old doctrinal booklet rewritten in such a way as to hopefully avoid and obscure the pitfalls of Armstrong's 1972 prophecy failures. But, regardless of these reverses, Armstrong remains a *prophet* to his church.

In reference to prophesied calamitous events "right around the corner" the church looks to Amos 3:7 for assurance that God won't bring a calamity on the world or His church without first letting Armstrong know. In a sermon, September 1963, Garner Ted Armstrong bellowed:

> "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets [implying the Armstrongs] ."

This scripture has been intoned thousands of times by those of lesser rank, to assure their *faithful* they need only stay with Armstrong to be protected at the time his prophesied calamities come down upon the world.

Herbert Armstrong thundered:

> "The very reason for the Church is to fulfill the prophecy of the work of Elijah as in Malachi 4:5 and Matthew 17:11" (Sermon–November 30, 1963).

In his sermon of February 5, 1966 Armstrong proclaimed:

> "Our commission? – to preach the gospel to the world as a *witness.*"

He then proceeded to draw a close parallel between his own activity and the work of John the Baptist (the Elijah of that time) and indicated he was fulfilling the prophecies of Malachi 4:5, and the example of Luke I:17 –the prophet Elijah.

From Tokyo, February 1971, Armstrong wrote the membership:

> "You and I are shouldered with that gigantic commission to *PREPARE THE WAY* for the intervention of that strong hand [Christ] that will usher in . . . [the] World Tomorrow . . ."

Make no mistake! Armstrong sees himself as fulfilling the prophecy of the great Elijah–and subtly leads his adherents to believe it. That's why he continues to indulge in extravagant spending for spreading his message.

Dean Blackwell, one of Armstrong's leading ministers stood before a membership group of over 8,000 in St. Petersburg, Florida (October 8, 1974) and eulogized Armstrong for *TWO SOLID HOURS.* Constant references were made to Ezekiel and Elijah.

In reference to Matthew 11:7, Blackwell noted:

"What went ye out for to see, a prophet? Yea, more than a prophet." Then he asked [referring to Armstrong], "I wonder what we went out to see?"–inferring something *more than a prophet.*

He thundered:

"Isaiah went only to Israel. Jeremiah went only to limited nations. Ezekiel was a prophet to Judah in Babylon. Zechariah, and Haggai were prophets to Judah only. What are we a part of?–a world-wide work!–The biggest job [of prophesying] is being done NOW!"

Then Blackwell continued:

" . . . [who] is preparing the way before Christ's second coming? Yea, more than a prophet [implying Armstrong]."

Referring to Ezekiel 33, Blackwell noted:

"If the people take a man and make him a watchman . . . if the watchman blow not the trumpet . . . I will require their blood . . . at his hands,"

Then Blackwell proclaimed:

"I've already taken a *man* [Armstrong] as a watchman! . . . some people will take [accept] him and some won't . . . We still *hold* the servant of God in his church [meaning–the church hasn't martyred Armstrong as other prophets had been] . . . But we haven't *recognized* what place God has given him [Armstrong] . . ."

Blackwell closed with a passionate plea for members to:

" . . . break that habit . . . of not accepting . . . a prophet in the name of a prophet in their day."

Hence Blackwell inferred that members who hadn't done so should accept Armstrong as a prophet while he is still living.

The following year in the St. Petersburg meeting (September 24, 1975) Blackwell asked, "What are the Jews doing looking for Elijah?" Perhaps it never dawned on Blackwell that if the Jews rejected Christ they also rejected John the Baptist who *Christ said* fulfilled that prophecy of Elijah in Malachi 3 and 4.

However, Blackwell claimed:

> "John fulfilled only the third chapter of Malachi, 'Behold I will send my messenger and he shall prepare the way before me . . .

Then Blackwell added:

> "This work [Armstrong] is fulfilling the *fourth* chapter of Malachi, 'Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord:'"

To support his claim Blackwell noted :

> "Jesus quoted only Malachi chapter three when referring to John the Baptist and chapter four of Malachi is now being fulfilled by *this work."*

However, Blackwell's shallow theological observation is devastated by Christ's statement in Matthew 11:14, " . . . This *is* Elijah (Greek-Elias) which was for to come . . ." Contrary to Blackwell's claim, this reference to "Elias" came directly from Malachi 4:5–the only place in the book of Malachi where the word "Elijah" is inscribed.

Only God knows whether it is Blackwell's research ability or his integrity that is lacking in this case.

ARMSTRONG DEFINES COMMISSION

Armstrong wrote (Co-Worker Letter, April 1971):

> "We are preparing for the return of Christ–clearing off the debris from His throne–preparing the way for His coming . . ."

Here Armstrong had reference to his joint participation in an archaeological dig with Hebrew University. Armstrong indicated they were digging down to the old throne of David–clearing it off and getting it ready for Christ to sit on. Knowledgeable archaeological scholars have confided, "The excavation is not taking place at the site of the old Davidic throne." According to that testimony Armstrong's claim is an attempt to lend credibility to his otherwise "shaky" prophecies.

But Armstrong persists. In a letter to the members (Nov. 1972) he asked:

> "What is our Great Commission . . . FIRST, to proclaim to the whole world . . . His world-ruling GOVERNMENT–is soon coming to RULE ALL NATIONS . . . And so, combined with that FIRST Great Commission is the great Mission to *PREPARE THE WAY for this second Coming of Christ,* as John the Baptist prepared the way before His first coming, more than 1900 years ago!"

Armstrong's self-defined mission is thus to *WARN THE WORLD* that Christ is coming and to pave the way for His arrival.

Preaching the Gospel, as Christ commissioned, for the *sole purpose of making disciples* and converts for Christ is *foreign* to Armstrong's operations. Converts which result from his ministry were described by him in a letter to the members (Oct. 1972) as just an "EXCESS blessing–like an additional reward God gives us" – like the cherry on top of a milkshake.

In a number of Armstrong's letters, some of which have been previously quoted, he makes it quite clear, he believes the only reason God calls Christian converts is to support his work with money to *WARN* the world and *PREPARE* the way.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ARMSTRONG

Why spend $55 million *widows' mites* to shout a warning to the face of the world so one can later say, "I told you so?" Is perhaps Armstrong *off the track* on his "Gospel of WITNESSING, WARNING and PROPHESYING?" His batting average for accurately predicting the future has been something less than spectacular. As a matter of fact it is down right embarrassing.

Would a big leaguer *hang in there* over 40 years without putting one over the fence? Even worse, not making a single hit? A player like that wouldn't last long unless he had a few gimmicks, stunts, tricks and hilarious dances with which to entertain the spectators. The only time the coach would let him near a bat would be *between* innings. Even that might be dangerous. But Armstrong hangs on!

Armstrong is *unlike* John the Baptist who lived in a *desert place,* wore a loosely knit garment woven from raw hand-spun wool and gleaned a goodly portion of his food from available *natural* sources.

He is unlike Christ who attired himself modestly, had no home for his exclusive private use and chose the most humble mode of transportation available–a flop-eared donkey!

Yes, it is true. Armstrong says he lived in poverty for many years! And even now he claims to actually own nothing except his *personal belongings,* the value of which he has taken care never to divulge.

It is true that he says he gives 30 percent of his salary to "The Work." But he has also failed to divulge whether his earnings (from all his corporations) is: $50,000, $100,000 or $200,000 per year.

It is true that he sold his very modest home in Eugene, Oregon in 1945 and put the money in the work. But it is also true that shortly thereafter he moved to Pasadena, California, and bought a $50,000 home.

It is also true that he later (1965) sold his Pasadena home for approximately $60,000 and *loaned* all but one-sixth to "The Work." However, at the same time he took up residence

in one of his college's faculty mansions on "Millionaires' Row."

Yes, it is true that Armstrong *claims* he later turned all of his (approximate) $50,000 loan into an out-right gift–but that is subject to question.

It is also true that Armstrong says he *LIVES LIKE A KING!* Yes, he travels from his millionaires' mansion to his Burbank based jet in a gleaming Cadillac limousine. It is true that, he jet-sets around the world in a $4.5 Million Dollar (including deluxe interior and avionics) Gulfstream II with his son criss-crossing his contrails in a $3.5 Million (including deluxe interior and avionics) French Falcon. It is true that Herbert Armstrong also has a home for his private use at his Texas and Bricket Wood college properties. And it is true that Armstrong purchased a glamourously sparkling Rolls Royce for use while in the area of Europe.

And most of all, it is true that Armstrong doesn't particularly try to keep this information secret. While he has not made it available in an organized manner, he has generally given this information to members and co-workers to give the appearance of openness. However, it has been given only in bits and pieces and in such a manner as to confuse rather than clarify.

Thus, to most, Armstrong is an enigma; a man who claims to be a virtual pauper–says he keeps only $100 in the bank, yet LIVES LIKE A KING!

What is the *MOTIVE* behind this pretense of being a pauper? What is the JUSTIFICATION for putting multiple millions of *WIDOWS' MITES* into exorbitantly expensive buildings, lavish gifts for dignitaries, Rolls Royces, Cadillacs, and jet aircraft–supposedly in the name of Christ who chose the humblest mode of travel.

Armstrong has gone to great lengths to *justify* his *respectable image* in order to keep his supporters behind him. The method he uses is an unabashed willingness to keep his adherents teetering on a pivot of uncertainty. Most are just not sure but what Armstrong *might* be a SPECIAL

PROPHET OF GOD. But at the same time they are *not wholly convinced* that what Armstrong is doing is TOTALLY INSPIRED by God.

Armstrong has led them to believe it is a *possibility*– and has caused them to fear their very SALVATION depends upon supporting him. They may not personally approve his methods but they fear to *question* him lest they be found questioning the decisions of God.

Thus, they are cast into a no-man's land of uncertainty causing the tide of support to swing in Armstrong's favor. [17]

It is this FEAR ELEMENT which is the key to Armstrong's unrelenting grip on his adherents. It is not a Johnny-come-lately development but one which Armstrong has subtly fastened on his adherents over the course of twenty-five or thirty years and most of them are not aware of the extent to which it grips them.

This *fear* of loss of salvation accounts for the fact that Armstrong can abuse his adherents with threats and ridicule and still command their support. To put it in the words of one of his Vice Presidents, Herman Hoeh, "Doubting the decision of a minister [Armstrong being chief] is as doubting Christ." (Sermon, March 29,1964).

With years, and in some cases DECADES, of pre-conditioning by constant propaganda, Armstrong has built a formidable bulwark of support to sustain him in his preaching "The Gospel *ACCORDING* to *ARMSTRONG*."

Just what is his gospel? Let Armstrong define it. In his letter to the membership (July 30, 1973) to inform them how he is to get his GOSPEL to the non-Christian nations, he writes:

> "God has shown me *HOW* to present it [his gospel] . . . as a sensational NEWS ANNOUNCEMENT that effects their country . . . in such a way that their newspapers will PUBLISH THE NEWS–PRINT WHAT I SAY . . . I believe I can proclaim this true [Armstrong's] Gospel as something *SO NEW–so* STARTLING–so SENSATIONAL–that it will get big headlines in newspapers . . ."

> "It's NOTHING LIKE what missionaries have taught in those countries! They will not recognize any connection WHATEVER. It will not appear as anything competitive to THEIR religions.
> "In Japan it will be thundered to them as direct from the CREATOR OF THE JAPANESE PEOPLE. I will not say anything against their religions . . . In Ethiopia it will be . . . the Message from the CREATOR of the Ethiopian people. From the CREATOR of ALL MANKIND! . . . "THAT'S OUR COMMISSION! Just the ANNOUNCEMENT of the soon coming KINGDOM OF GOD . . . of course I must reveal this great announcement to these heads of state first . . ."

It is obvious from this communique that Armstrong has reduced the Gospel of our Saviour to that of a simple announcement that the god of the non-Christian nations (not Christ) is about to set up a kingdom here on earth for the purpose of bringing *WORLD PEACE!*

He says, they to whom he speaks will "not recognize any connection WHATEVER . . . [to evangelical Christianity]."

Did the TWELVE APOSTLES, when they came to the attention of rulers, hide the fact that they represented Jesus Christ? Did they not say, when confronted, ". . . we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard. . . . and they spake the *word* with *boldness,* . . ." (Acts 4:19-20), Verse 2 of this chapter shows exactly what they preached–"the resurrection of the dead through Christ Jesus,"

But Armstrong does not represent Christ to the Japanese. He thunders to them as direct from the CREATOR of the Japanese people. Whatever false god they have in their minds is the *one* they will "believe" is sponsoring Armstrong. It could be Buddha, Confucius or the Imperial god (Shinto) but not Jesus Christ.

Is that what our Lord instructed? Did He say to go to a nation "in the name of its god?" But rather through Paul, ". . . whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of

the Lord Jesus . . .” (Col. 3:17).

Armstrong states, “It will not appear as anything competitive to THEIR religions.” Yes, the Apostle Paul faced this same dilemma. Instead of identifying with “an idol god” Paul preached boldly the name of Jesus Christ to those at Ephesus–worshippers of the heathen deity, Diana. Paul didn't pussy-foot (or jet-set) around, but stayed there two years until “ . . . all they which dwelt in (the province) Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus” (Acts 19:10).

Did Paul have opposition? You bet he did! “ . . . there arose no small stir about *that way”* (Verse 23).

It was Paul who stood before King Agrippa and spoke boldly of Jesus Christ, how he had taught “first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance.” Whereupon King Agrippa proclaimed, “Paul, almost thou persuade st me to be a Christian.” Paul, extending chain-laden arms to Agrippa testified, “I would to God that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds.”

The early Apostles did not come in the name of the CREATOR! No man is authorized to come in that name–nor any other name under heaven except that of “Jesus Christ.” To do otherwise–to come as a representative of the CREATOR and Father of all mankind is to insult and deny our Saviour, Jesus Christ the *Son* of the living *Creator God.*

And so, Armstrong has reduced the Gospel of our Saviour to a simple announcement that a heathen god will one day set up his kingdom on this earth and then all will be at peace.

Is that what Stephen preached just before his martyrdom? No! Is that what the Apostles preached to keep from being scourged and beaten? No!–ten times no! Is that what Paul preached which caused the uproar at Ephesus? No!–a hundred times no! Is that what Paul preached standing before Agrippa in chains? No! – a thousand times no!

But what did Paul say about the *high minded* approach?

" . . . (I) came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified."

The shameful course of denial is that which Peter took during the trial of his Master. He wanted to follow along. He wanted Christ to notice him there. To "think" he was on His side. He wanted to give the impression he would never abandon or deny his Master. His own *station* in life, his own prestige, his own "hide" was at stake. Yet, he stood there in the very trial palace with his Master and refused to step forth and say "Jesus is a *good man."* But Peter repented–"went out, and wept bitterly" (Matt. 26:75).

Jesus said, "Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words . . . of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh . . ."

Christ wants His ministers to speak boldly in His name. He did not say, "Go ye therefore unto all the world and *SNEAK* the Gospel to every nation," as if it were some kind of secret. It is like a *city on a hill–or* a *candle* in a dark room. It cannot and must not be smuggled about with stealth.

THE COSTLY "ARMSTRONG IMAGE"

Armstrong's evangelistic efforts are deliberately planned to take the form of a cultural and educational course. From the earliest days of his radio evangelism he has presented himself as a secular *press representative.* Since opening his first college he has played the game of Dr. Jekyl and Mr. Hyde–playing the role of a college president, press representative or *cultural* leader–whichever best suits the occasion.

His radio and television programs have become increasingly secular in nature–more of a news commentary with less and less religious content throughout the years. Today he travels as a representative of his newly formed organization, Ambassador International Cultural Foundation (AICF). This is purported to be a non-religious institution but is the

vehicle which Armstrong plans to use to *open the door* to kings. They in turn are supposed to read as well as contribute articles for Armstrong's Foundation magazine, "QUEST '77." The magazine carries editorials by Armstrong which are a *watered down* version of Armstrong's gospel. Armstrong's Worldwide Church of God reportedly underwrites the project to the tune of $2.5 million per year.

The foundation (AICF) and its magazine *(QUEST* '77), was occasioned by the need of Armstrong to be presented by a respectable institution. The essence of this is most adequately expressed in the words of Arthur Ferdig, one time editor of Armstrong's *QUEST* '77, as quoted by the *Los Angeles Times:*

> " . . . if he [Armstrong] represented a church, this smacked of 'religion,' which in turn sparked 'prejudice.' And if he represented Ambassador College, then he was asked how big it was and had to admit it only had some 500 to 700 students on each of two campuses." *Los Angeles Times,* August 11, 1975.

To foster the image of AICF, the Armstrongs (November 1975) financed the Hollywood Premier of the movie, "Paper Tiger." Rental of the Emporium was reported to be $25,000. AIFC bought most, if not all, of the tickets at $100 a seat–coming to over $90,000.

After the showing, Armstrong's AICF hosted the group at a prominent nearby restaurant to the tune of $10,000. Grand total–over $125,000 just to *buy* or *restore* a brightness to the Armstrong image which had been tarnished in the Jewish cultural community by Rabbi Cunnin's attack on Armstrong's AICF. In this assault, Rabbi Cunnin directed the attention of the Jewish community to the fact that Armstrong's AICF is actually a tool for proselyting among the Jews. The same, of course, applies to other religious persuasions around the world–and particularly the royal palace personnel who Armstrong seeks to impress through AICF.

And so, Armstrong now chooses to cast his shadow as the image of *culture* and *education* and make his programs conform to that image. It is that approach which impelled him to incur the heavy costs of Ambassador College and Ambassador International Cultural Foundation, with a secular image as opposed to the moderate costs of a theological institution.

Armstrong's cultural and educational image combined with his supposed *watchman theory* also incur enormous expense as a result of maintaining worldwide news agencies. In addition to the fully staffed news room in Pasadena, full time offices are maintained in Washington, D.C. and Brussels, Belgium. Hundreds of additional man hours are directed toward this effort annually in other stations around the world–to gather news and cultural objects which Armstrong thinks he needs for use to meet the elite and in support of his self-pronounced prophecies.

This cultural and educational image has caused Armstrong to project himself as promoter of culture or as a cultural leader–not as a minister of Christ. It is in this role that he is impelled to maintain luxuriously extravagant buildings, grounds, Cadillacs, Rolls Royces and jet aircraft.

Armstrong leads his adherents to believe he is going before kings as a minister of Christ–that he is preaching the Gospel of Christ to them. In reality, on his visit with presidents, prime ministers, kings and emperors he does not represent Christ, but Ambassador International Cultural Foundation or Ambassador College's educational extension program.

Dignitaries are introduced to him through culture or education, not for religious purposes. His discussions are on cultural or educational philosophy–not about Christ! After his departure the leaders–with whom he confers are not aware that Armstrong has preached the Gospel of Christ to them–that he came to their nation to bring them or their people the True Gospel of Christ.

It's probably true that Armstrong wouldn't see many dignitaries if he went from nation to nation riding on a

donkey like Jesus. But maybe he would do some good for the cause of Jesus Christ, if he followed Christ's example and took the course of modesty in physical things.

ARMSTRONG'S INCOME AND EXPENSE REPORT

Take a look at the method of preparing and issuing the annual income and expense report to contributors. Only 37 per cent of Armstrong's expenditures were for radio, T.V. and press evangelism. And, of course, even that was administered with the usual Armstrong wasteful flair. But when one looks at the whole report it leaves many unanswered questions.

It is prepared by Stanley R. Rader – Armstrong's accountant, legal counsel and financial adviser. For all practical purposes it is prepared in single-copy form *without* distribution. It is generally *hand carried* by Rader and Armstrong to each of several *convention* sites where a quorum of membership is present. At each of these convention sites information from the report is given orally. Those present are specifically requested not to take notes of its content. Even the corporate controller, until 1974 (and as far as the author knows until now), did not have access to it, and indeed during his ten years as controller he was never allowed to examine a single income and expense report. To the knowledge of the author, this condition still exists.

Subsequent to the 1973 convention, the oral financial report has been completely omitted, violating a standing custom of over twenty-five years. The 1973 report was issued in abbreviated written form in the second quarter of 1974 when *external pressures* forced its release. Even then it was extremely vague. There is no way it can be deciphered without a thorough knowledge of the inner workings of the organization and even then it is doubtful that it could be clearly understood.

After more than THIRTY YEARS with the institution, the author having had access to much internal intelligence, a background of good grades in math, and after having been

considerably involved in preparation of sections of the budget from which the resultant figures were derived, has concluded that the report may have been specifically designed to confuse the reader rather than inform.

QUESTIONABLE AREAS

The following table is a summarization of how $55-million was spent. The reader will note, there are numerous areas of his '73 statement of income and expenses which are not properly explained by Armstrong's organization.

Expenditure categories are as follows:

1)	Broadcasting and Media	7,264,300	
	Publishing	8,951,700	
	Ministerial & Church	10,934,800	27,150,800
2)	Departmental & Admin:		
	Admin. Salaries	2,114,000	
	Jet Aircraft Rentals	379,200	
	Jet Expenses	475,200	
	Other Dept. Exp.	11,367,000	14,336,000
3)	Festival Expenses	3,010,400	
	Ambassador College UK	4,570,600	
	Ambassador College, Tex.	4,203,100	
	Depreciation	2,105,000	
	Other noncash charges	179,200	14,068,300
	GRAND TOTAL	55,555,100	
	INCOME	55,988,500	
	NET INCOME	433,400	

The report has been segmented into three basic groups for convenience of commenting. Group 1) totals more than $27 million and is self-evident, although certain sub-expenditures within each category might be questionable from the standpoint of propriety.

Group 2) Administrative Salaries are shown to be $2,114,000. No information is given on its distribution. Available records indicate there were about twenty-eight people who were classified in the Administrative category.

A. The two Armstrongs
B. Other:
   Fifteen-Pasadena (including Stanley Rader)
   Six-Texas
   Five-England

This indicates an *average* of $75,000 each per year for all twenty-eight. Of course it was not distributed in that fashion. From evidence obtained, Administrative salaries below the two Armstrongs and Rader range from $25,000 to $50,000 per year. Chief executives are higher than $50,000 and could be upwards to $300,000 a year depending on the number of Armstrong's corporations from which they are paid.

These facts raise a very legitimate question about the propriety of taking salaries of this magnitude from a non-profit religious organization which is heavily supported by *widow's mites.* But Armstrong has never published a schedule of his and other executive salaries. This is a bit questionable in view of the fact that even the salary of the President of the United States is published, and other leaders of non-profit organizations are not afraid to publish their administrators' salaries.

Another item of concern in this category of the report is expense relative to the purchase, operation and maintenance of the jet aircraft. The schedule indicates the jet *rentals* to be $379,200 and business jet *expense* to be $475,200–the two combined, a bit under a million dollars, $854,400.

How is this figure of $854,400 to be explained in the light of figures for previous years? Their 1971 report showed total jet expenditures to be $1,833,340.95. One would think, with the inflation factor and more miles flown, the costs would be considerably higher in 1973 over 1971 but it actually appears to be less than half.

There is a disparity here of almost *ONE MILLION DOLLARS*

Take a look now at Group 3) in the expenditures breakdown. There are *five* entries in this group amounting to a total of $14,068,300. There was no accompanying schedule to explain these five components.

What was the $3 million Festival Expense? Was it payment on existing facilities? Purchase of new sites? Or rentals? Were there any salaries involved?

What about the $4.5 million which went to the college in the UK (United Kingdom)? Their Administrative, Academic Salaries, as well as Media, Printing Facilities, Church expense were all covered by allocations in Groups 1) and 2). What happened to that $4.5 million? The same applies to the $4.2 million which went to the Texas Campus.

And what about the $2.1 million for depreciation? What is this depreciated against. The income–$55.9 million–was in the form of cash (or was it?). Is this depreciation against cash receipts due to inflation? Could it be against real properties? How could this be when such properties are not shown on the "Income" side of the report?

Is that $2.1 million depreciation taken against the jets? How could that be? The report showed total jet expense less than one million.

Now, to the non-cash charges shown in Group 3). How are they derived? Non-cash charges would be appropriate in a "Financial Statement" but this is not a financial statement–rather a simple statement of income and expense. All receipts were in the form of cash. To introduce "non-cash" values here seems to be comparing "oranges" with "apples." Is perhaps this $179,200 a tailor-made plug to make the arithmetic balance?

QUESTIONABLE TRANSFER OF ASSETS

Moving away from the report on *income* and *expenses,* look now at OTHER problems in the area of questionable expenditures–the transfer of assets.

In the early 1970's, it is reported, practically all church assets were transferred to Armstrong's college, leaving the church with large liabilities and very few assets to cover them. Previously a large Los Angeles bank had issued a $6 million dollar line of credit based on Armstrong's integrity and ability to repay. Moving those assets raised a grave question of ethics.

To further aggravate the situation an additional eight to ten million was reportedly borrowed at a later time using the previous church assets to secure the new loans made now to Armstrong's college. Perhaps Armstrong's legal counsel steered him through this treacherous legal "ice-flow" to avoid *technical violation;* however, moral and ethical codes give rise to questioning the integrity of such a procedure.

TWENTY MILLION DOLLAR BATTLE

Further questions have been raised over the alleged practice of securing loans with "worthless paper securities." It is indicated that Armstrong's college acquired huge loans by listing as assets the funds which were transferred to the English campus. It is reported that those funds were not held as *cash reserves* but were applied toward regular operating expense. The amount of previously expended funds carried on the books in Pasadena finally amounted to TWENTY MILLION DOLLARS. This was reportedly carried on the books to lead financiers to believe Armstrong's college was much stronger financially than it really was.

It is reported that Armstrong's accountant agreed to retire the $20 million at the rate of about $3 million per year–but only after prolonged insistence by leading business office personnel.

What does this have to do with how the money is spent? Simply this. HIGH FINANCING by Armstrong would probably *not* have been achieved without the "shifting of assets" on one hand and showing *"worthless paper securities"* on the other. The end result, aside from ethical and legal standards, Armstrong has an annual cash out-flow of nearly

ONE MILLION DOLLARS in interest alone! It takes a lot of WIDOWS' MITES to fill that yawning gap.

THE MILLION DOLLAR HOME QUESTION

Armstrong has provided housing subsidies for most men on his Administration Staff in Pasadena, Texas and England. Most of those facilities are of the usual "Armstrong caliber." One of the homes in Pasadena housed $70,000 in paintings alone.

There is one home in particular which raises considerable question. It is the Beverly Hills home of Armstrong's Legal Counsel–Stanley Rader. Top authoritative sources indicate that the home originally cost Ambassador a half-million dollars and another half-million was reportedly spent to remodel, furnish and decorate it.

Plans had reportedly been made to DEED (in fact it may have actually been done) it to Rader without charge. But after considerable resistance from the business office, it is reported, Armstrong decided to let Ambassador hold the deed and give Rader free life-time occupancy. In addition, Ambassador College has handled maintenance and taxes. Annual occupancy value in a home of that status is a huge sum. But Rader reportedly pays no rent or interest for the $ l-million occupancy. Simple interest at 10 per cent would be $100,000–a minimum value received every year by Stanley Rader.

FURTHER JET AIRCRAFT PROBLEM

Armstrong's entry into the jet set has been a marbleized concoction of business, pleasure, and frustration. As for frustration–we are informed by high level authority, the Armstrongs' jets (A Grumman Gulfstream II and the French Falcon) were initially purchased from an account donated for the sole purpose of relieving the plight of the fatherless, the widow, etc. Monthly lease, rental (or purchase payments) as well as the down payments, reportedly were made out of that account. This process continued over an extended period of

time until knowledge of it filtered down to rank and file members. A raucity [sic] ensued and this practice was supposedly discontinued. However, the fund for the fatherless and widows was reportedly never reimbursed – millions were involved!

Turmoil and embarrassment over the extravagance of maintaining two corporate jets combined with financial difficulties forced the Armstrongs to put the jet planes up for sale in March of 1970. They were apparently overpriced because they did not sell. Later in that same year (September) Armstrong was flying one that was bigger and better.

Apparently, to avoid further controversy and embarrassment over use of the aircraft, the Armstrongs turned them over to a *holding company.* Perhaps the $ l-million disparity in the cost of operating the jets (1971-1973) can be explained by that move. A review of the situation does raise some questions–particularly when one finds that the holding company officers include Stanley Rader (Armstrong's Legal Counsel). The company reportedly was set up as a Pennsylvania corporation by the name of Mid-Continent Leasing. Officers are reported to be Stanley Rader, Max Gerson, and Barry Peril.

It is reported that Ambassador College gave the leasing corporation $300,000 to hold, interest free, for five years. Also they reportedly donated the equity in the contemporary French Falcon to use as down payment for purchase of a new model.

The Armstrongs now sub-lease the jets from this leasing corporation and it, in turn, pays the institution which financed the purchase of the planes.

Perhaps refinancing the jets between 1971 and 1973 accounts for the $1-million disparity mentioned earlier.

This circuitous procedure achieves TWO important things for the Armstrongs.

1. The Armstrongs, even though the planes may cost more

in the long run, can present a better looking financial report on their jet costs.

2. The Armstrongs are able to propagandize members with word that they do not *own* any jets–an obvious advantage when dealing with a critical press or membership.

What happens to this $300,000 which Ambassador gave to Mid-Continent Leasing? Who will be credited with the interest which accrues on that account? Over a five year period at 10 per cent simple interest it amounts to $150,000. It could amount to much more if it were invested or compounded. Will that money go to the principles of Mid-Continent Leasing as a gratuity?

What about the final disposition of the aircraft? Will they become the property of Mid-Continent Leasing at the end of the lease or is there a buy-out clause which permits Ambassador to buy the aircraft at a token fee? If so, what is the buy-out price?

It is reported by authoritative sources that both the Armstrongs have used the corporate jets for personal trips. Among them – Mexico, Central and South America.

The cost of operation of the Gulfstream II is $2,320.14 per hour and the Falcon is $1,346.26 per hour (1971 report) and fuel prices have since quadrupled on the world market. Has reimbursement been made accordingly for any and all personal use of the corporate aircraft?

ARMSTRONG'S TREASURE TROVE– ANOTHER MONEY PROBLEM

It is reported that Herbert Armstrong has a most fabulous collection of gilded treasures in his basement on Millionaires' Row. It was reliably reported by a first-hand witness that Armstrong, in an amalgamated character of stealth and *pride of assurance, fumbles* for the *one key* that is an open sesame to his private den of treasures. “It's really nothing to me,” says Armstrong, flashing $5,000 diamond

accessories in subdued lighting.

Why all this? It serves as a focal point of Ambassador culture. These *gods* and *goblets* represent Ambassador culture at its best and make Armstrong very comfortable in the presence of kings. These fantastically expensive artifacts form another link in the pseudo–chain of *education* and *culture* with which Armstrong has chosen to bind his adherents.

As much could be said of Armstrong's Art Cavern where artists' speechless icons recline on silent canvases of darkness like dead souls awaiting the day of judgment. Many *widows' mites* indeed, are entombed in these dark chambers of flaking oils and tainted statuary.

ARMSTRONG'S DONATION WITHDRAWAL– ANOTHER MONEY PROBLEM

One of the great disappointments of life must come to the Armstrong adherent when he finds that very authoritative sources have revealed that Herbert Armstrong reportedly withdrew $30,000 of a $50,000 donation.

The more disheartening is this when it is realized that this was the same $50,000 donation which Armstrong used to entice members and co-workers to convert their existing loans into *donations.* About $2-million in loans were consequently converted to out-right gifts as a result of those requests.

It all started in 1969 when Armstrong discovered, much to his amazement (?), that a loan isn't as valuable as an out-right donation (and that ought to raise a few eyebrows)! For several years he had asked members and co-workers to make loans of larger amounts to his work if they felt they couldn't give them as donations. Such loans had reportedly accumulated to something over TWO MILLION DOLLARS.

When Armstrong sought to borrow money for further property expansion, these loans showed up as demand liabilities. They were subject to immediate recall by those who had made them. It was at this time that Armstrong wrote to all members and co-workers asking them to convert

their loans into gifts,

In his letter of January 1969 Armstrong wrote:

> "About three-and-a-half or four years ago, we sold our home, and keeping one-sixth of the money to pay capital gains tax and add a little to our personal bank account, we LOANED the five-sixth to the work . . . So I want to tell you what I have done. At first, I thought I would turn this into a donation at the rate of a certain amount each year which I could deduct on my income tax. Then I realized that if I did this, either 1) I could *not* deduct my tithes and regular offerings, and special building-fund offerings–for they amount to between 28 and 30% a year-as much as the law allows for deduction; or, 2) it would mean *not* paying in the tithes and offerings out of income, these years, but merely crediting this loaned money in lieu of tithes and offerings. Result: I have just GIVEN the entire amount AS A DONATION, and I shall not try to deduct it on my income tax, but keep on contributing up to 30% out of income. I have PAID income tax on all that money–and now I will sacrifice any tax advantages in donating it, because that way I can put more money into the Work."
>
> "As it is today, I do not own any property–not even an automobile. What, then, if some unexpected emergency should come along, that would need this sum of several thousand dollars I am donating? I have thought of that, of course. The answer is, I HAVE A GOD TO TRUST, AND I SHALL RELY ON HIM!
>
> "I wonder how many of YOU Co-Workers did as I did–loaned to the Work money you didn't really expect to have to ask to be paid back–but making it a loan, supposing it would help the Work AS MUCH, and then, IF an unexpected emergency happened, you could ask for it? I wonder how many who did that, as I did, would now join in releasing the loan, and turning it into a donation–or if you feel unable to do that, turn part or most of it into a donation? . . ."

As a result of this co-worker letter of January 1969, and a similar subsequent letter (Feb. 1969), approximately $2.0-million in loans were converted to donations.

The amount of Armstrong's donation, which he never states in the co-worker letter, is reported to be $50,000. At a later time, Herbert Armstrong is reported to have called the Loan Department headed by his corporate attorney, asking him to arrange for the return of $30,000. The $30,000, according to high level sources, was returned to Armstrong for his personal use without the issuance of securities. Subsequently, a controversy arose in the business office over the return of funds to Armstrong. This unsettling situation continued for many months. As of the time when the *fracture* occurred in the church, early 1974, no action had reportedly been taken to either *replace* or *secure* those funds to the account of the organization. The entire process makes Armstrong's co-worker letters appear as a subterfuge.

TWENTY-FOUR MILLION PROBLEM

Armstrong's crowning architectural glory is his 1200-seat Ambassador Auditorium. At an average of $20,000 per seat the total comes out to *TWENTY-FOUR MILLION* It should be pointed out that the Auditorium (a $10 million contract price) could have been built for much less and apparently without sacrificing real quality. The Armstrongs reportedly rejected an *exact specification* bid of *SEVEN* MILLION and granted it to another firm for $10 MILLION. To the observer there was seemingly no justification for having taken a higher bid.

Armstrong claims the AUDITORIUM costs only TEN to TWELVE MILLION. Why then do some say TWENTY-FOUR MILLION? The answer–Armstrong has never really given all the facts about the cost of the Auditorium at anyone time or place. They must be gleaned from various sources.

The contract total in its primary form was TEN MILLION DOLLARS. However, that doesn't reflect the total cost. With

financing, it is expanded to TWENTY-FOUR MILLION, payable at the rate of $200,000 per month for *ten* years. Armstrong generally veiled these facts in such a way as to confuse his members and co-workers regarding the total cost.

Personal notes reveal that Armstrong, in one of his sermons, gave the duration of the financing to be *ten* years and the amount of the monthly payments is gleaned from Armstrong's member letter of April 12, 1973.

> "The loans are long-term. We shall have to continue making payments of $200,000 per month long after the splendid edifice is completed . . ."

And so the price dispute between Armstrong and his critics is resolved. Armstrong is right in claiming that the Auditorium cost only *TEN* to *TWELVE* MILLION (both figures have been given orally by Armstrong).

It is also true that finance charges over the period of the contract actually make the *TOTAL COST* twenty-four million.

What about quality? The structural quality of the building is very good–strong and well fire-proofed. With regard to its *strength* Armstrong's critics look upon it as more of a "bomb-SHELL," instead of a bomb shelter.

What about propriety? Armstrong declares, "It will be a lasting monument . . ." But a construction worker (who heard this) stated, "It may be a lasting monument, all right, but I could hardly say it is a frugal use of the Lord's money."

With its completion, Armstrong has figuratively, if not literally, placed a "pot of gold" at the end of *his* BIG, AFFLUENT, supposedly SUCCESSFUL rainbow. He now lives in the unreal world of exclusivism.

This attitude of exclusivism started in the early days of his occupational life. To put it as Armstrong paraphrased W. O. Finkbine:

> " . . . I want to impress on you the importance of always traveling in a Pullman car [first class] . . . whenever you stop at a hotel the same applies. Always stop at the leading hotel in any city . . ."

Of course, this is what Armstrong uses to *impress the world!* –to have the highest esteem in the eyes of man–and to get ahead in the world! His life style is intimidating and is carefully planned to impress the important and the elite. [18]

Do not make the mistake of thinking Armstrong does this wholly out of vanity. Rather, he has pseudo-convinced himself that he is fulfilling the greatest prophecies of all history and is burdened by the *delusion* that God holds him personally responsible for mobilizing sufficient money force to fulfill the prophecy of Matthew 24:14–a miracle which will only be performed by Christ's direct intervention and not the work of men! (Consider Rev. 14:6).

In the process of performing his self-defined mission Armstrong says he has been specially chosen, trained, and commissioned to provide the modern voice of Ezekiel, and represent God in the personage of Elijah the prophet–to PREPARE THE WAY for the coming of Christ.

All of this supposedly justifies lavishly exorbitant expenditures to build up his image and make him comfortable walking in the presence of kings. Armstrong has learned the secret art of intimidation–use of the high image posture most aptly revealed in Roger Ringer's book, *Winning Through Intimidation.*

Don't forget! It is in Armstrong's camp where the mantle of sainthood has been cast upon Machiavelli. He has transformed Machiavelli's notoriously famous doctrine, "The end justifies the means" into Christian virtue, "It's all for the good of the Work!"

CHAPTER FIVE

PROFILE - Herbert W. Armstrong

Herbert Armstrong, born July 31, 1892 in Des Moines, Iowa, is a short, pudgy, roly-poly bundle of pseudo-confident nerves molded into immaculate dress of sumptuous fabrics and extravagantly expensive furnishings. To the uninformed his very presence is calculated to be intimidating.

Herbert is President of both Ambassador College and Ambassador International Cultural Foundation. He is also the President and acknowledges himself as the only Apostle and Prophet of his small sect known as the Worldwide Church of God.

His followers, mostly poor or below average income, believe he speaks for God. To them, his beliefs are God's beliefs, his judgments and decisions carry the weight and authority of God-inspired revelations.

His headquarters are located on the luxuriant FIFTY ACRE Ambassador College campus in Pasadena, California. A large modern college building (300 West Green Street), known as the Hall of Administration, houses the offices of both church and college.

This acreage is bejeweled with very costly buildings faceted among extravagantly expensive natural and man-made gardens, fountains and trappings.

Over a dozen private mansions on Pasadena's Millionaires' Row make up this Armstrong-style Edenic paradise. Vastly expensive remodeling projects have been carried on during the 29-year history of his college. Numerous new structures have been erected including *FIVE* super-modern buildings of astronomical costs. The last to be completed was an auditorium of relatively small capacity–a 1200-seat Ambassador College Auditorium at an official price of *TEN*

MILLION DOLLARS. The final payout, including finance costs will be approximately *TWENTY-FOUR MILLION*.

Ambassador College (with additional campuses at Big Sandy, Texas and Bricket Wood, England) has served as a *front* for the activities of the sect since its inception in 1947. And more recently (1975) another *front* has been erected–Ambassador International Cultural Foundation.

Prior to the founding of Ambassador College, the Armstrong sect was a handful of predominantly poor folk in the Pacific Northwest with a few adherents sparsely scattered throughout the southern half of the United States.

In the last three decades Armstrong's work has mushroomed. By 1973 Armstrong was riding a cultural and educational tidal-wave propelled by a financial force of over $55-MILLION annually – 66.8 million in 1975.

But who is Herbert Armstrong–the *throne-hopping* enigma who stands behind this fantastic operation? What is his background? What really makes him *tick?*

This is a profile of Armstrong–a research of the discrete elements which have conspired to set him apart and make him what he is!

THE RELIGION PROFILE

Herbert's parents were of the old line Quaker stock. This religious group, though small, was strong in Scotland and England. Their founder was George Fox from a Scottish sept in 16th Century Kelso and 17th Century Angus.

From earliest days the Quakers were considered a radical religious group. The *charismatic* element was prominent among them in earlier times and like most new sects they were looked upon with distrust. In the early American Colonial days many were burnt at the stake for their radical religious conduct.

By the time Herbert was attending church as a boy, the Quakers, or the Religious Society of Friends as they are more properly called, were an accepted institution though relatively small.

THE NOMADIC FAMILY PROFILE

When Herbert was eight years old (1900) his parents moved from Des Moines to Union, Iowa, then back to Des Moines a year later.

From that time, until Herbert left his parents for a lifetime vocation, the Armstrong family moved regularly every year or so. Herbert's father was a home builder. He would build a new home, live in it until it sold and then move on to another.

In 1912 Herbert's parents moved to Idaho, leaving him in Des Moines (age 20) with no immediate family. He did however, have sporadic contact with his Uncle Frank who worked in the field of advertising. Herbert inherited the moving habit and today he is an *impulsive traveler.* It is one of his greatest joys!

THE FOLLOWER PROFILE

Herbert Armstrong was the oldest child in his family. He should have naturally developed a *sixth-sense* of leadership. But for some reason he did not develop an ability of leadership and teamwork.

Herbert associated with friends who were older and consequently became a follower. These early childhood associations apparently stymied his normal development, sense of teamwork and leadership. He was only moderately active in sports and failed to develop leadership in that area.

At age *sixteen* Herbert took a summer job as a bus boy in a semi-resort hotel near Des Moines. During his brief tenure the owner complimented him *excessively-emphasizing* his *good qualities.* It is unlikely this man knew the disastrous effect this had on Herbert's life. Armstrong records it in his Autobiography (Vol. I, p. 29):

> "Actually this flowered into grossly overrated self-confidence and conceit . . . It was pure vanity."

Rather than encouraging Herbert toward companionship,

this removed him further from his normal rank of associates in a most unusual way. He now turned his energies toward *self-directed* scholarly pursuits and slighted his high school studies. He became a disciple of the philosophers–Plato, Socrates, Aristotle, Epictetus and later the *boot-strap* philosopher and agnostic–Elbert Hubbard.

These were hardly the type of scholarly pursuits an impressionable, young sixteen-year-old should attempt to master without the sage advice of a balanced teacher.

Thus, Armstrong's extracurricular studies helped to further isolate him toward becoming a *loner.* With only average grades Herbert dropped out of school after his sophomore year.

THE LONER PROFILE

Herbert's first overt move as a loner came at age seventeen. He secretly acquired a teacher's certificate and, by the tenor of his autobiography (Vol. 1, p. 33), he never discussed this with his father.

Herbert went to his room, packed his bags and was ready to leave for a teaching job near Des Moines when his father greeted him at the foot of the stairs in thundering disapproval: “Just where do you think you're going, young man?”

Thus, Herbert was put back in school for his sophomore year. The following spring he “quituated” and turned to the school of hard knocks.

THE ANALYZER PROFILE

At age eighteen Herbert indulged in the questionable practice of administering his own aptitude tests. Reliability of such tests is uncertain. But from the results Herbert concluded he was tempered for the advertising profession–a field in which his uncle Frank was then engaged.

Herbert supposedly put himself under the tutelage of his uncle to pursue that profession for the next eleven years–from his first job in the Classified Section of the *Des*

Moines Daily Capital to the time of his business collapse in Chicago-1922.

THE SALESMAN PROFILE

Herbert's first job was in the Classified Section of the *Daily Capital* and his first *assignment* was soliciting rooming house ads.

The manner in which Armstrong made *his first sale* presents a vitally important segment of his profile.

The accepted sales routine was demonstrated by the *Daily Capital* employee who was being promoted out of that job. He was open and *above board* in approaching prospective clients and got a few doors slammed at him. That is par for the course in sales.

But Armstrong tried to do it the easy way. He pretended he wanted to rent the room of the prospective client. This deceptive approach is recorded in his Autobiography (Vol. I, p. 39).

> "I hope you haven't rented your room yet,' I smiled as the landlady opened the door. 'May I see it?' 'Why, certainly,' she smiled back, opening wide the door."

After getting inside, Armstrong feverishly wrote an ad and prevailed upon the landlady to use it.

Through years of experience, directly in the advertising media and through dealing with sales representatives, it has been demonstrated beyond a shadow of doubt by those who are reputable salesmen, that Armstrong's approach to sales was in poor taste, to say nothing of ethics.

A further example of this was Herbert's willingness to regularly solicit restricted and classified information from the telephone operator. (Autobiography, Vol. I, p. 41).

> "So I called the information office, and first engaged the operator in a jocular conversation. After a while I persuaded her, this once, to give me the name of the rooming-house

> landlady at a certain street address . . . Somehow I managed to talk this information operator into giving me the names and telephone numbers of every room-for-rent want-ad in the morning paper that we had not carried the evening before . . . This daily morning procedure continued as long as I was on Rooming House ads."

Real life experience will show beyond question that a high level, ethical procedure will, in the long haul, serve better than the use of unethical and devious approaches.

But the man who is clawing to get to the top will climb the backs of others to elevate himself regardless of the jeopardy which it may bring upon those around him. Such an approach is sure to bring doom crashing down upon the head of its maker. It is a natural law! One who uses such tactics never realizes the people with whom he works do not have a deep feeling of trust toward him. His *base* is always *crumbling.* He is out to *MAKE IT BIG* and he can be spotted a *mile away.* Such a person may *move on* but he will seldom find a true welcome either where he is going or where he has been.

THE TRAVELER PROFILE

Herbert left the *Daily Capital* after almost one year. His next stint in advertising (with a one-year interim) was with *The Merchant's Trade' Journal* of Des Moines. His first position with the journal was that of producing classified ads, but he later took their job of roving research reporter.

The journal maintained a man in the function of roving reporter, and when the position was open Herbert was assigned to it. It required traveling and was well suited for an energetic young man with no family. Armstrong met these qualifications and brought along a couple pluses. He was already conversant with the publishing process from a couple years' experience in various facets of the work–newspaper classified ads, real estate layout, classified ad sales and layout for the journal itself.

The next year and a half Herbert traveled a great deal submitting research material for feature articles. On a few occasions they appeared under his own byline.

But Herbert's interest began to flag and the quality of the material he submitted deteriorated to such an extent it prompted a sharp letter from his home office. This so unnerved him that he feared being fired (Autobiography, p. 108). The letter of correction backfired. Rather than knuckling down to the work and building a team spirit Armstrong began to withdraw. His deep-rooted feeling of inferiority and lack of training in *teamwork* made him determined to beat them to the punch by quitting before they could fire him.

It was while under this heavy cloud of psychological pressure that Herbert did his first survey at Richmond, Kentucky–even though his job description did not allow for this kind of activity. He took four days of his company's time to perform this project *on his own*. By a stroke of luck, or perhaps to mitigate the sting of his previous sharp letter, Herbert's boss printed the results of his survey.

All considered, the survey was the result of self-willed action by a *LONER!* It was done aside from his assigned duties. More surely than ever, Armstrong felt he would be fired for taking four days of company time to do an unauthorized project.

He reveals his innermost feeling of this in his Autobiography (Vol I, p. 116).

> "I felt I could not remain another day in Richmond. I was already three days behind schedule . . . The fear that I was slated to be fired on return to Des Moines had been haunting me. Actually I wrote up this complete report of the survey for the express purpose of explaining this three-day loss of time–and I actually felt I would be reproved for it, and now, more surely than ever, fired."

Herbert's survey was published before the dreadful day of

his return to Des Moines–but he still feared being fired and shortly after leaving South Bend, Indiana, on the return leg of his last of three tours, he called back to South Bend to ask the Chamber of Commerce Secretary to arrange a job for him. He then wrote his superior a letter of resignation and quit his $20-a-week job with the journal. Upon returning to Des Moines he found they had no intention of firing him.

Armstrong's association with the South Bend Chamber of Commerce was short lived. The Chamber Secretary failed to arrange a salary. Sales commissions from the Chamber's Motor Club Memberships were not sufficient to keep body and soul together and Armstrong left South Bend owing a number of creditors.

Herbert spent his last cent aboard the train on his way to Danville, Illinois and narrowly escaped severe hunger by arranging to do a survey in association with the local Danville newspaper.

After the survey, Armstrong tried his hand at selling pianos. He soon found piano sales were less profitable than Motor Club Memberships–at least for him. Without making a single sale he responded to a letter from his uncle Frank and returned to Des Moines.

His uncle invited him to take temporary work with the *Northwestern Banker* trade journal. His position with this journal was that of selling advertising for a *special issue* featuring display of newly constructed bank buildings around the state of Iowa.

A foray into the southern part of the state netted nothing.

But in the north it was a different story. Herbert made some very good sales and developed some valuable contacts. From those he later developed his Chicago business as a publisher's representative.

PUBLISHER'S REPRESENTATIVE PROFILE

Soon after putting this special issue “to bed” Armstrong contracted to represent the *Northwestern Banker* as an advertising solicitor and shortly thereafter rented an address,

telephone number and desk in a common office area in the Advertising Building a short distance from the important South La Salle Street in Chicago. He took with him TWO of the biggest accounts he sold while working that *special issue* of the *Northwestern Banker* trade journal.

And so, in late 1915, at age 23, Armstrong seized upon the opportunity to establish a business based upon a handful of accounts and non-exclusive representation of a single trade journal which he had picked up within the previous ninety days or so.

The next couple of years were rough sledding for Armstrong. He had never disciplined himself to develop a spirit of comradery, leadership and teamwork–a weakness which was destined to bring him many woes. But he managed to keep his business sufficiently active to provide *spending money* for his free and easy style of living.

Frequent trips were made to Des Moines reportedly to conduct business and visit acquaintances. It was during this time that Herbert met his *third cousin, country girl,* Loma Dillon. Herbert "dropped" the girl he dated for eight years and after a short courtship became engaged to Loma. They were married in a simple, private ceremony on his birthday–July 31, 1917. From this time until her death in 1967, Loma exerted a very great influence over his life.

But otherwise, 1917 was not a good year for Armstrong. He was attempting to standardize the seven U.S. *regional* bank trade journals to conform to a format which was to be adopted by the two *NATIONAL* trade journals. But there was one big snag: The *Northwestern Banker,* which he represented for a year and a half had bought the St. Louis banking journal and the owner was trying to scuttle Armstrong's project.

Armstrong arrived in St. Louis broke to discuss the issue with the owner. Without his support Armstrong's plan was a dead duck! Armstrong's financial status was so low he was dependent on the manager to pay his return expenses to Chicago but the owner of the journals refused to give

Armstrong expense money unless he agreed to drop his big plan for representing all banking journals. By some means which is not clear, Armstrong held the trump in this contest and the owner of the journals paid his return trip to Chicago.

THREE GOOD YEARS' PROFILE

The following three years were *GOOD* YEARS for Armstrong–the only really good years he had in his (supposed) twenty-three-year advertising career (1910-1933).

During the THREE YEARS, 1918 through 1920, Armstrong's income was approximately $7,300, $8,700 and $11,000 respectively. This continual income rise resulted from his finally gaining standardization and representation of those *regional* banking journals.

THE CHICAGO DISASTER PROFILE

A severe *short contraction* of the economic business cycle occurred in late 1920 and Armstrong's small accounts melted away quickly. By February, 1921 his last substantial account canceled.

In the depressed state of the economy he was unable to produce an advertising program to stimulate demands for farm machinery produced by his clients.

The following TWO YEARS were *very bleak.* Armstrong was gradually reduced to poverty and by July 1922, it was necessary for his wife and children to seek refuge in her father's Iowa home.

For three months Herbert remained in Chicago attempting to glue the pieces back together. To put it in his own words (Autobiography, Vol. I, p. 221):

> "It was a mistake to try to face this uphill treadmill . . . alone . . . I began palling around with two other young men who were advertising representatives . . . We began to haunt nightclubs–then called cabarets. Often we would hang around these places of sorrowful, moaning, screeching, wailing music . . .We began

> to drink . . . too much for efficacy . . . I reached the end of my rope in Chicago in October, 1922 . . . I, too, had to seek refuge on my father-in-law's farm . . .”

STAGNATION PROFILE

Armstrong's next few years were those of stagnation. His only income was from a survey conducted at Ames and Indianola, Iowa, plus miscellaneous small ad-writing projects for local merchants. The total income was probably little more than a thousand dollars.

In the early part of 1924 Loma (Herbert's wife) suggested a move to Oregon and began making plans. In the early part of that same year Herbert suggested a survey to a friend at the *Des Moines Register.* The survey was turned down 'but Armstrong was offered the job of Advertising Manager for the paper.

Armstrong declined with the following explanation:

> “ . . . I can't manage the work of others. I'm like a lone wolf. I have to do my own work in my own way. I often work in streaks. When I'm 'on' I know I'm good. But on the 'off' days I couldn't sell genuine gold bricks for a dime . . . I had no confidence in my ability to direct the work of eight men . . . so I turned down the offer to become Advertising Manager of a great newspaper.”

Leading the life of a lone wolf had nurtured Armstrong's lack of confidence in his leadership ability. It denied him admission to a fine team on this and a number of other occasions. And it put his family through countless days, months and years of agony and suffering.

In addition to turning down the job with the *Des Moines Register,* he had previously turned down a post with one of the nation's most prestigious publishing firms–Curtis Publishing Company of Philadelphia–publishers of the old famous *Country Gentleman, Ladies Home Journal* and the *Saturday Evening Post.*

On June 16, 1924 the Armstrongs left Iowa, arriving in Portland, Oregon, on July 4.

Another employment opportunity soon came to Armstrong after arriving in Oregon. He took a short trip across the Columbia River bridge into Vancouver, Washington, to consult with the owner of the Vancouver *Columbian* about doing a newspaper survey. The owner raised the question as to whether they could afford a man of Armstrong's caliber.

He records his reply (Autobiography, Vol. I, p. 253):

> "The answer came like a flash. 'No you cannot!' I said positively. This was a challenge (to the owner). He was cocky, too! 'Well, I think we *CAN!* How much is it going to cost us?' I had to think fast. Was I going to turn down a survey, because I felt too important to take a permanent job on a small city newspaper? I made a quick compromise proposition. 'Tell you what I'll do,' I shot back. 'I'll put on the survey for a flat fee of $500. That will take a week or ten days. Then I will stay on your staff as a merchandising specialist for six months only, at a salary of $100 per week. Take it or leave it!'"

The survey was completed, and Armstrong's six months' term expired in time for him to step foot-loose into the new year–1925.

In the early months of his new year he tried teamwork for the first time in his career. He and a chemist joined forces to upgrade commercial laundries to new processing equipment–attempting to induce a skeptical public to use the laundry services.

This scheme meant selling more soap and machinery for the chemist and more advertising for Armstrong. They had visions of developing the system to national proportions. In his Autobiography. Vol. I, p. 260, Armstrong states:

> "I began to see visions of personal net income of $300,000 to a half million dollars a year!"

But by the fall of 1926 their plans were scuttled by the big eastern "pros." Armstrong's Autobiography continues:

> "Some 'bright' advertising man, in an advertising agency in Indianapolis, Indiana, put over on the Laundry owners National Association a $5,000,000 advertising campaign for the entire industry–the entire amount to be spent by this agency in big circulation NATIONAL women's magazines, such as Ladies' Home Journal, McCalls, Good Housekeeping, etc."

This forecast *certain doom* for Armstrong's scheme. Most laundries were members of the association and were obligated to support the national program. One $50 per month account remained–hardly enough to keep the wolf off Armstrong's doorstep.

Armstrong's family was reduced to a gaunt existence, often going without lights and fuel. The presence of the landlord was an awesome specter.

POVERTY PROFILE

During the next seven years, right on through 1933, the family lived a *hand-to-mouth* existence with Herbert getting only the meagerest income from odd jobs and an occasional try at door-to-door selling. He attempted peddling everything from his own homemade "mud-pack" beauty facials to aluminum cookware.

His final try at advertising was in late 1931. He decided to take a job with *The Messenger,* a local newspaper in Astoria, Oregon. It was on its last legs when he came aboard and in February 1933, as if symbolic of Armstrong's total career, *The Messenger* collapsed as Armstrong walked away from it. Armstrong had a new-found sanctuary–that of religion.

PREACHER PROFILE

In 1933 Armstrong was standing at the head of a long line of successive business failures. Yet, he was elected to lead

what he refers to as a “tiny, ignorant, band of church people in Oregon.” He had been dabbling in religion for some time and had gained the confidence of this small group. Little did Armstrong know this move would be like jumping from the frying-pan into the fire. And so in departing the secular world, Armstrong fastened himself–his strengths, weaknesses, fears, suppositions, latent ego and ambitions–upon this little band of people. Like the life of the past, his walk along this new path of religious duties was to be beset by many lean and stormy years. More about that is given in the chapter on Armstrong's early ministry.

Today, his work has proved to be a lengthened shadow of the Profile of Herbert W. Armstrong–not only figuratively but literally in the personage of his son, Garner Ted.

CHAPTER SIX

PROFILE-GARNER TED ARMSTRONG

Sheik, suave, dapper, debonair, Ted Armstrong is, for all practical purposes, the operational manager of the Armstrong empire. He is the "Voice" of "the Garner Ted Armstrong Program"–a new nomenclature for what was, until recently, The WORLD TOMORROW. He is both the "Voice" and the "Face" of a similar program carried on numerous television stations around the U.S. and Canada. He generally manages all executive personnel and his name appears on the payroll checks.

Ted has been the Executive Vice President in the Armstrong organization since 1958, except for a relatively short period of exile in the early 70's.

Just who is this GARNER TED ARMSTRONG?–this steel grey-haired Casanova who jet sets around at the controls of his $3.5-Million (Including deluxe interior and avionics) French Falcon. How does he rate a mid-week golfing foray to Monterey, a Friday escapade to his private lake-front Texas home, a week-end at his Orr, Minnesota summer resort, and a Monday night stopover at Las Vegas as he returns to Pasadena where he helplessly struggles to cram a week's work into the remainder of the week?

THE CHILD

Ted Armstrong was born February 9, 1930 in Portland, Oregon, to a father who performed miscellaneous occupational duties in a desperate effort to keep food on the table during those dark days of the depression.

About a year after Ted's birth, his father was elected to pastor a group which Armstrong has called "poor religious folk." They were officially known as the Church of God,

Oregon Conference, and were located in central Oregon. This required the family to move to Salem in early 1933, and later in that year to Eugene.

Ted's earliest memories would be of his father as a minister of that small church group which later seceded from the Oregon Conference.

Ted, the youngest of four children, smothered with attention from teacher and parents alike, developed an inordinately strong sense of self assurance. In his later school years this was transformed into an irrepressible measure of cockiness and conceit. True to the tradition of his father, he developed a strong outward show of self-sufficiency.

Family discipline diminished as his father became increasingly absent from home due to a widening sphere of self-made evangelistic responsibilities. As a result Ted approached adolescence in an insecure family.

TED THE TEEN·AGER

As Ted progressed into adolescence, he constantly compared his station in life with that of his school friends. His church was a very small clap-board structure on a muddy street in the outskirts of town. His friends attended at stately structures on spacious parkview locations in prominent residential sections.

His friends attended *respectable* churches and their ministers were highly respected in the community. The image of Ted's father was that of a controversial radio preacher always spouting some odd-ball prophecy of doom and disaster which *he* supposed was right around the corner. His father was always *hard pressed* for money. His friends didn't seem to have this problem.

The disparity between the two images was too great for the adolescent mind to reconcile. That, combined with the natural antagonism of youth and the inordinate desire to be popular, isolated Ted from both his father and his religious teachings.

By the time Ted was in his middle teens, his father's

evangelistic work had grown to dominate the total time and interests of both parents. His mother worked in the office and had little time for the family. Corn flakes and milk constituted the triple daily fare on many occasions. They sold their home in 1945, moved into a rooming house, and took most of their meals in restaurants.

At age seventeen, Ted's parents moved their evangelistic headquarters from Eugene to Pasadena, California and started a college. Thus Ted took his junior high school year in the big city school atmosphere of Pasadena.

As Ted advanced in age, the cleavage between him and his father widened. At mid-semester of his senior high school year the family rend was final and Ted volunteered for the Navy to escape the supposed tyranny of his father.

After entering the Navy, Ted occasionally sought escape from Naval authority by visiting his father's college campus. In the typical vigor of youth, he dashed about in T-shirt and skin-tight “whites” with a pack of “weeds” twisted into the sleeve of his T-shirt. He occasionally sported a can of contra-ban booze to inflate his he-man image.

After three years and a few gray, lonely, desolate ocean cruises he became disillusioned and unhappy. At this juncture, he traded his undistinguished uniform for a “ruptured duck” and returned to a job in his father's mail processing office in early 1952.

TED AS OFFICE MANAGER

Unlike his undistinguished Naval career, Ted began to pick up the chevrons in his father's office and in short order was made office manager. He promptly named his long-time friend, David Jon Hill, as his assistant, and together they set out to rearrange the operations. They jointly proclaimed their efforts a huge success and the chevrons kept rolling in. In spite of all that, the rank and file employees still managed to get the work done–if they worked hard and gave no attention to the angle at which their desks were turned.

About that time the office took on a completely new

atmosphere–the faint smell of cigarette smoke. Ted and "Du-Jon" (as Hill was called) failed to realize that flushing their contra-ban cigarette butts down the tubes didn't make their breath smell like freshly cut mint. The rank and file employees ignored all that and just kept cranking out the work.

TED AS A LADIES' MAN

Decorated with the badge of office manager, backed up by three-years Naval "career" plus the dubious reputation of having *been around* couldn't help but turn the ladies on.

But at Ambassador it didn't work–at first. There, Ted was somewhat isolated from the students for two major reasons. His more affluent life style could not be matched by the students. He had a full salary but they were on a virtual subsistence budget. Ted had much free time evenings and week-ends, but the students were strapped to a study routine.

This created a frustrating social problem for the students. Ted complained to his parents that students were ostracizing him. His father (president of the college) came to his aid by means of scorching rebukes in the small student assemblies. But the problem wasn't thereby solved–it was being attacked from the wrong angle.

Ted became further isolated by his own mannerisms. He smoked–a thing which students were forbidden to do. He frequented nightclubs which, of course, the more serious students neither desired, nor had the money to do.

Under these circumstances, Ted was casting longing glances at the college co-eds, but he found it difficult to land dates with them. Many of the co-eds, for some instinctive reason, did not trust Ted sufficiently to accept him as a date.

Lack of success in dating the co-eds, and impelled by a Casanova life style developed during his Naval tenure, Ted turned his romantic interests elsewhere. By some means Ted became acquainted with a girl in Louisiana. It seems she was the niece of Roy Hammer, one of Herbert Armstrong's adherents who lived in Gladewater, Texas. Apparently Ted

met the girl while with his father who was looking at a convention site in the Gladewater area.

She and Ted later became engaged and Ted's father really "blew a fuse." Herbert Armstrong soon prevailed on Ted to induce the girl to spend a week or so in the Armstrong's Pasadena home. The resultant social pressures forced Ted to acquiesce to his father's wishes and the engagement was broken in the fall of 1952.

In December of that same year Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Armstrong, accompanied by Ted, returned to the Hammer home in Gladewater to transact further business regarding acquisition of the convention site. While Herbert and Roy Hammer were taking care of the business at hand, Ted was forging bonds of matrimony with Hammer's daughter.

About a month or so later, the Armstrongs made a hurried return trip to Gladewater to attend *urgent business*. It had become expedient for Ted and the Hammer girl to become engaged. After a very short engagement, Ted and his fiance, Shirley Hammer, were married in February, 1953. The following September they were the parents of a healthy, fully developed, seven-pound baby boy.

TED AS A STUDENT

Ted registered for classes at his father's college during the 1952-53 college year. He made fairly good grades when he applied himself but Ted appeared to be, in the extant circumstances, a most unhappy soul. One got the constant impression that he suffered from hyper-compression of the solar plexus; or in common language, he looked as if he had been kicked in the pit of the stomach.

Shortly before the end of that college year, Ted "accepted" his father's religion, was baptized, and for the first time in his twenty-three years, began to orient himself ideologically to the *Armstrong cause.*

Ted continued as manager of Armstrong's mail processing department during most of his regular college career. He graduated in 1956 and later took an M.A. and Ph.D. in his

father's college. Since graduating he has served continually in the ministry, with the exception of a period of exile in 1971-72.

TED AS A MINISTER

Ted progressed through a rapid series of promotions soon after college graduation and ordination. In 1957 The WORLD TOMORROW microphone was shared by four others beside Herbert Armstrong–the four most promising to assist with the radio evangelistic effort. From the four (Ted, Dick Armstrong, Roderick Meredith and Herman Hoeh) Ted was singled out as the front runner. Soon the other voices were no longer heard on the air.

Ted began to carry an increasingly large portion of the daily broadcasts and by January 1958 his voice was dominant over that of Herbert Armstrong and has dominated The WORLD TOMORROW broadcasts and telecasts since that time. He was elevated through the ranks of the Armstrong ministry and was given top place in *the work* under Herbert Armstrong and became First Vice-President in January, 1958.

TED AS AN EXECUTIVE

During January 1958 Ted received his new badge of authority, or so it seemed. It was announced to the membership through the January issue of The GOOD NEWS magazine that Herbert Armstrong had, " . . . made it official . . . he was appointing Garner Ted Armstrong as the Vice-President of both the Church of God and Ambassador College." This appointment turned out to be more of an *expressed desire* than an established fact.

Ted continued for more than FIFTEEN YEARS without any real authority. He carried on The WORLD TOMORROW program under the shadow of his father's name as indicated by the familiar closing to the program during that time. Every broadcast ended with, " . . . send your letter to Herbert W. (not Garner Ted) Armstrong . . ."

Appointment to the Vice-Presidency actually proved to be

more of a power vacuum than a post of active responsibility. Ted's specific duties relating to previous managerial functions were diminished and slowly etched away. His discrete functions were replaced by a larger area of undefined limits. He could not consistently function in line of command but was regularly by-passed by both his father and junior executives.

He remained in this "stand-by" mode, with no real authority, for over fifteen years while his father and junior executives carried on the work. Any attempt to render an operational decision was most frequently accompanied by a sharp thrust from one side or the other.

Herbert Armstrong's inability to carry on a well defined team effort, discussed in the preceding chapter, had again come home to roost. And this time it's sharp talons were biting painfully into the shoulders of his own son. But the most frustrating part for Ted was that Herbert Armstrong was unknowledgeable of line function procedures–so much so that he was apparently unaware of the division he was creating.

Ted's image was progressively tarnished by this endless process and his self-esteem diminished proportionately. Herbert Armstrong added the spark to an already volatile situation by appointing *seven* additional vice presidents in 1968, giving them direct access to his office. Ted was named Executive Vice-President but in reality, remained outside the functioning line of command.

This chaffing situation built up an increasingly high level of unspoken animosity among executive personnel. By the late 60's it was apparent to knowledgeable by-standers that the Pasadena Headquarters was headed for a serious rupture. Ted was destined to be the focal point of the action though he apparently had little to do with the making of this unbearable circumstance.

TED IN EXILE

By the early 70's it was leaked out that Ted had a

long-standing problem of marital infidelity–which (reportedly) had been known by only a few at the top, including Herbert Armstrong.

By July of 1971 Herbert Armstrong could no longer hold the lid on and sent Ted on a leave of absence but he was back in about sixty days. After a couple weeks or so his father sent him away again. But Ted returned after another couple months absence.

His return this time was like plunging into a mental hell! Ted had decided to put away his "marital problem" which he referred to as his "retempus feme." He also determined to put on his "fighting breeches" with an aim toward making his Executive Vice-Presidency a functioning line of command.

This resulted in a release of every gripe and animosity which had found anchor in his soul during his fifteen-year power-vacuum vice-presidency. Ted made sharp attacks on business policies and procedures of his father plus a thrust at a few doctrines which were not to his understanding. He even dared to attack the wisdom of his father's decision to build his *TEN MILLION DOLLAR* auditorium. That was like attacking the very apple of his father's eye.

Totally confused, frustrated and defeated, his self-esteem dropped to an all time low. At home and at work it was the same scene. By early 1972 Ted had reportedly reached the brink of insanity. The specter of physical violence, homicide and suicide roosted in the belfry of his mind until at last he spent nearly the whole of one night among hanging clothes in his closet with a pistol at his head trying to muster the courage to pull the trigger. To put it in his own words, "I was out of my mind. I was insane."

Ted was ordered to meet with his father on the Big Sandy campus relative to his disposition with regard to Armstrong's work. Some among his closest friends declined to ride with him in the Falcon Jet because of his mental instability. They took a commercial flight in order to attend the meeting.

In February of 1972 Herbert Armstrong stripped Ted of all rank and authority, both from the ministry and his

executive duties, and sent him on an extended leave of absence. He was given one year to get his life sorted out or be completely terminated.

TED'S FINAL RETURN

By late May Ted was back. He completely acquiesced to Herbert's wishes regarding the controversial auditorium project and bowed to his father's desire for heavy expenditures in his current mission of taking his gospel to kings.

In a session with his father and other junior executives, Ted requested all except himself and his father leave the conference–including Herbert's legal counsel, Stanley Rader.

It was during this period that Herbert and Ted agreed to agree. Ted was never to openly oppose Herbert. In turn, Ted received his heart's greatest desire–line function authority. After a series of relatively mild skirmishes, clear-cut lines were drawn and in January, 1973, Ted was surreptitiously given control over all functions of the Armstrong empire–subject only to Herbert's veto. For the first time Ted began to have a real voice in the work. But more than that, Ted began to *RUN THE WORK!*

TED REEKS VENGEANCE

One by one Ted consigned all of Herbert Armstrong's vice-presidents to "Fort Knox"–big jobs with no action. They were systematically transferred from their posts of high responsibility and severed from their power bases. Their stripes were unceremoniously peeled off one by one in order to reduce the possibility of an effective internal challenge to Ted's authority.

Final and TOTAL authority was unceremoniously given to Ted by his father in July 1973 by way of a letter written from Mexico City. The church membership was similarly notified. With the final rounds of fire-power now in his camp, Ted began to pick off the last of his executive sitting ducks.

Soon, a number of those top men resigned and left or were

sterilized psychologically. They resolved to serve out a life-time sentence of frustrated, miserable busy-work on an inflated executive salary.

Some chose to leave rather than stagnate! They have raised the banner of truth in hopes that others will join Christ in a lifetime of secure liberty and reject the tyranny of dictatorship which they helped build, under which they lived, and by which they have been ruthlessly crushed.

As a result of the departure of some, further scandalous information has been forced into the light of day. It is reported on good authority that Herbert Armstrong knew of Ted's alleged continuing marital infidelity for *many years* and still allowed him to remain in Armstrong's ministry and represent the church before the world on The WORLD TOMORROW program.

It is reported on very good authority that Ted confessed to one in high rank, as early as 1960 that his involvement had touched the lives of 200 of the fairer sex.

And it is reported on top authority that there continued to be a long and growing list of as many as thirty-five co-eds who have been so tainted–some of whom later became the wives of Ted's fellow ministers.

Based on those very reliably reported cases, the men in the Armstrong organization were shockingly repulsed by Herbert Armstrong's attempt to saddle them with a leader of such reputation–particularly in view of the fact that the scandal had reached gigantic proportions through releases on national and international wire services.

Ted's fellow ministers were gagged by Herbert's insistence to disregard the scripture that a minister must “be of good report.” But Herbert persisted in cramming this issue down their throats, and Ted was a 50-50 partner in the deal by accepting the appointment. It was the opinion of many, in deference to God's Word, that Ted should have resigned. But this he refused to do.

That was the real beginning issue which brought about the split in the Worldwide Church of God in 1974. Quite

naturally, other grievances were later added until the issues became so clouded that many lost sight of the principles involved.

As it stands, Ted is in complete control of the organization. His father holds only a veto power which diminishes proportionately to his progressing age beyond eighty-four (July 31, 1976).

Sorrowfully, pitifully, painfully, and regretfully these events have been immortally inscribed upon the pages of Worldwide Church of God history. The deed of the sinner and the righteous will be forgotten by posterity but the acts of Armstrong's tyranny is a terrible sin against the Liberty of our Lord. It must be projected as nothing short of what it really is–the enslavement of the souls of men!

Where tyranny is present its master is always nearby. And the hireling who binds a slave at the auction block is as guilty as the master who bids for his soul. The heart of tyranny can never be reached with reason and truth from within, but can only be pricked by the sword of the spirit and the written word from without.

And that is the profile of Garner Ted Armstrong.

CHAPTER SEVEN

MEN BEHIND THE ARMSTRONGS:
THEIR RISE AND FALL

Surprising as it may be, Armstrong's work was not built by Herbert Armstrong or his son Garner Ted. The real builders of the Armstrong empire were the men who came to him through his college.

To put it in Armstrong's words, "This . . . was virtually a one-man work until Ambassador College started in Pasadena . . . Our colleges are training important executives, ministers, teachers, college professors, secretaries, for service all over the earth." (Co-Worker Letter Nov. II, 1964.)

It would be impractical to catalog all who have had a part in Armstrong's work but it is noteworthy to bring attention to the activities of those leading men who came through the ranks to Vice Presidency. Those are the men who have had a profound effect on the growth and development of the Armstrong empire.

How Armstrong makes and breaks men at will is a melancholy medley and heart-rendering story.

ALBERT J. PORTUNE

One of Armstrong's most dynamic men was Albert J. Portune. He came to Armstrong as a stable, middle aged man and served as Business Manager, Controller and Corporate Secretary for over *ten years*.

Portune registered into Ambassador College as a freshman in the fall of 1956. He brought with him a background of minimal military experience and a moderately successful career as owner of a Los Angeles based heating and air conditioning firm.

During his tenure as a student he was assigned as personal

aide to the Executive Vice-President–Garner Ted Armstrong By 1962 Portune graduated with a B.A. in Theology, and was ordained to the ministry. He was later raised to the top rank of Evangelist.

During the intervening years he was moved into the office of Business Manager, Controller and Corporate Secretary, and in 1969 became Vice President of Financial Affairs, U.S.A The development of modern systems and procedures in Armstrong's work was largely the result of Portune's able and perceptive planning.

During the operation's internal conflagration of 1973-74 Portune was relieved of his post as Business Manager and Controller and assigned the task of co-ordinating personal appearance tours of Armstrong's travelling evangelists.

For reasons of conscience, Portune resigned his corporate posts and moved out of the home Armstrong had provided him on Millionaires' Row.

Portune also withdrew his membership from Armstrong's church in support of those who had vainly looked for moral and doctrinal reform within the church but found it necessary to separate themselves from the organization due to Armstrong's unwillingness to deal with the real heart of moral and doctrinal problems.

In this manner, under Ted's administration, one of the great support pillars was pulled from under the superstructure of Armstrong's figurative capitol building.

RODERICK C. MEREDITH

Another of Armstrong's most influential men was Roderick C. Meredith who came to Armstrong's college from Joplin, a cattle and produce trading center in southwest Missouri. Meredith lettered in high school sports, and upon graduation attended Joplin Junior College where he was schooled in ROTC–an element which later aided in organizing Armstrong's empire.

Meredith came to Ambassador in the fall of 1949 to check up on Armstrong! But the constant round of classes, work,

and social activities left little time for extensive research required to really check up on the Armstrong doctrines. Thus after a superficial study into the Armstrong doctrines, Meredith surrendered to the tenets of Armstrongism and was officially admitted to Armstrong's church membership in the latter part of his first year at Ambassador. This brought Meredith into a faster circle of activities and made it even more difficult to find time to *check up* on nagging problems. Those hazy-gray areas of supposition which Armstrong taught as doctrine were gradually relegated to the twilight zone of his consciousness and eventually faded away.

Meredith graduated in the spring of 1952 and was ordained to the top rank of Evangelist. During the succeeding twenty years he obtained an M.A. and Ph.D in Theology from Armstrong's college. Shortly after graduation (1952) he was assigned a pastorate in the Pacific Northwest and moved to a number of different pastorates during the next few years.

In the mid 1950's he was transferred to England where he organized a church or two based on response to Armstrong's WORLD TOMORROW broadcast out of Luxembourg.

In the late 1950's Meredith was made Second Vice President and returned to Armstrong's Pasadena headquarters. There he was assigned the specific duty of Superintendent of Ministers, U.S.A., Instructor of Theology, and appointed to the Board of Trustees of the Pasadena branch of Ambassador College.

In this post Meredith became the most dominant figure in shaping the image of Armstrong's student body. He also became the most dominant influence in the religious, social and psychological development of Armstrong's ministers and church members in the entire U.S.A.

Under the guidance of Meredith a social cast was developed in conjunction with a strong-handed ministerial visiting program, looked upon as a “spy system” by members who denigrated it by comparing *it* with Hitler's Gestapo.

Through the years this progressively heightened *sin detection system* became a crucible of interrogation. During

more than ten years of this process thousands of members were molded in the Meredith image but many, many more were not sufficiently refined by the heat of the crucible and came up as rejects. Thousands were expelled for raising insignificant questions of doctrine or for failure to agree with one of Armstrong's *suppositions.*

And thus, for more than TEN YEARS Meredith cast the singularly most impressive image over the internal configuration of the Armstrong church.

In the late 60's it became apparent that Meredith's administration was creating internal problems. At that time he made a strenuous effort to relax his stringent administrative policies but it was too late to save his ship from crashing into the reef.

As early as 1968 he received a relative demotion by Armstrong's act of appointing a total of *NINE* vice presidents. He was thereby effectively reduced from *THIRD RANK* in the organization to a possible ninth position excluding the two Armstrongs. At that time he was named Vice President of Student and Alumni Affairs.

Meredith was relieved of his post as Superintendent of Ministers, U.S.A. and Vice President in 1972 and assigned as Deputy Chancellor of Ambassador College, Pasadena.

In 1973 Meredith was further demoted when his Deputy Chancellorship was transferred to that of the *smallest* of the three branches of Ambassador College–Bricket Wood, England.

In 1974 he was again demoted by action of the Armstrongs which closed that campus and left him as co-pastor in England–over 7,000 miles away from the glamour of his former plush office of Second Vice President in the executive *suite* of Armstrong's Pasadena headquarters.

Meredith was transferred back to Pasadena in mid-1975 where he now serves in the relatively minimal position of pastor of a local church and night-class lecturer.

And that is the fashion in which another of Armstrong's great pillars was pulled down by Ted.

HERMAN L. HOEH

Herman Hoeh, Santa Rosa, California, was a pioneer student of Armstrong's college and one of the most influential figures in his organization.

Hoeh had been a listener of Armstrong's radio program, The WORLD TOMORROW, and was admitted as a member of Armstrong's church before his second college year.

Hoeh came from a home where a high premium was placed on education and consequently he made rapid advancement in a chosen line of studies. Before graduation he was instructing in physical science, Spanish and theology, as well as carrying his other classes. In addition Hoeh assumed the responsibility of Executive Editor of The GOOD NEWS magazine from the outset of its publication in April 1951 and was assigned the duty of Executive Editor of The PLAIN TRUTH magazine by November 1953.

Hoeh graduated with a B.A. in 1951 and in later years took an M.A. and Ph.D. from Armstrong's college. Hoeh's graduation ceremony was only a signal for further study and he immediately launched upon a prolonged effort to unscramble such involved elements as Biblical chronology, history and prophecy.

Ordained as a top-ranking Evangelist, Executive Editor of Armstrong's two publications, Hoeh was virtually guaranteed an outlet for his theses as they evolved in article form.

By design or default dozens and dozens of Hoeh's articles were published during more than a TWENTY-YEAR PERIOD from the early 1950's into the 70's. It was during this same period that Hoeh cast a long shadow over the intellectual growth of Armstrong's church. And it was much of his work and research (now admitted to be faulty) which has caused Armstrong much embarrassment in recent years.

In his early research he began to *unearth* a number of (supposed) new truths. They continued to come one after the other –most of which were quite flattering to Armstrong. As the process continued Armstrong found that Hoeh had delved into certain doctrinal and historical matters

considerably deeper than *he* had previously been able to do. By judicious soft-shoe tactics Hoeh managed to clear much of his research material with Armstrong and worked it into his publications. Eventually Hoeh's research had gone so far beyond Armstrong that he virtually held a free hand in publication of (supposed) historical discoveries and certain *new* peripheral doctrinal concepts. Armstrong had no time to catch up with Hoeh's level of research and eventually allowed material to be published by *defaulting* his control process.

This situation proved to be an increasing source of irritation for Armstrong who reportedly exhibited his displeasure on occasions by sending Hoeh on a leave of absence "for health's sake," of course!

Whether Hoeh remained on Armstrong's payroll reportedly depended on Hoeh's posture upon return. The only way back into Armstrong's good graces was to figuratively crawl under the door.

Hoeh survived these attacks with only a few battle scars and emerged triumphant in 1968 as Vice President of Academic Affairs, Pasadena Campus, while retaining his position as Dean of Faculty, Professor of History, Managing Editor of The PLAIN TRUTH magazine and Senior Editor of The GOOD NEWS magazine.

But in November, 1969, Hoeh lost his position as Managing Editor of The PLAIN TRUTH magazine and was slotted as Senior Editor of both that magazine and The GOOD NEWS. The title Senior Editor in Armstrong's organization means one has the *privilege* of writing articles for his magazines but is no guarantee of publication.

During those organizationally volatile years between 1970 and 1975, Hoeh was shuttled in and out of various posts–Dean of Faculty, Managing Editor, and professorship. After the last shuffle Hoeh, for all practical purposes, was left with the oversight of one of Armstrong's local church congregations. And thus another of Armstrong's supporting columns has been tumbled by Ted's administration.

RAYMOND F. McNAIR

One of the most steadfast of Armstrong's adherents is this man who is loyal to a fault–Raymond F. McNair. He is a native born Missourian, and came to Armstrong's college in 1948 from Salem, Arkansas, as a result of listening to Armstrong's WORLD TOMORROW program.

McNair was admitted to membership in Armstrong's church during his first year at the college and upon graduation at mid-semester, January 1953, was ordained to the top rank of Evangelist.

During the years 1953 through 1958 he pastored churches in Portland and Eugene, Oregon, St. Louis and Chicago, Illinois. He was transferred to England in 1958 where he served the Armstrong cause until early 1973.

During McNair's tenure in the British Isles he served as pastor over all churches in Britain and in 1959 was given the additional post of Instructor in Armstrong's English branch of Ambassador College.

By 1963 he was awarded the Deputy Chancellorship of the college as well as retaining his other posts. In 1968 he was appointed Vice President, Academic Affairs, Ambassador College, U.K. and the Worldwide Church of God for Europe, the Middle East and South Africa.

Raymond McNair was caught in the vortex of a power shuffle in 1973 and transferred to the Pasadena Campus as Deputy Chancellor. Within 90 days after his arrival in Pasadena his Deputy Chancellorship was abolished and he was assigned to the post of Senior Editor for the purpose of writing special articles for The PLAIN TRUTH and GOOD NEWS magazines–again, no guarantee of publication. During the succeeding three years little if any of his work was published.

In 1974 the Editorial Department was dis-banned and McNair was, for all practical purposes, an ambassador without portfolio. And thus another of Armstrong's giant Vice Presidential columns has fallen under Ted's administration.

RONALD L. DART

Another pillar is moved! Ron Dart, came to Armstrong's college from Houston, Texas, as a result of listening to The WORLD TOMORROW broadcasts.

Dart entered as a freshman for the 1958-59 college year and graduated in 1960 as a result of credit transfers. During that time he was accepted as a member and worked as an assistant to field ministers.

Upon graduation he was assigned pastoral duties and in 1964 transferred to Pasadena as Executive assistant to Garner Ted Armstrong to coordinate the activities of the foreign offices. In 1968 he was appointed Vice President for Foreign Education Services.

In 1973 Dart was installed as Deputy Chancellor of the Texas branch of Ambassador College, effectively negating his Vice Presidency. In 1976 Dart was designated executive assistant to Ted Armstrong and now has a one-man office for church administration, thus knocking another vice presidential support beam from under Armstrong's superstructure during Ted's administration.

NORMAN A. SMITH

One technical support remained fairly stable in the personage of Norman A. Smith until 1976. Norman came to, Ambassador in the fall of 1950 as a high school graduate from the southern Illinois farm community of Burnt Prairie.

Smith was a student with exceptional aptitude for electronics and early in his college years turned his attention to the technical aspect of Armstrong's radio studios. After graduation in 1954, Smith was ordained to the top rank of Evangelist responsible for producing and distributing Armstrong's radio programs to stations under contract.

Smith was appointed Third Vice President in the late 50's–a position which was later abolished by the creation of nine vice presidential posts.

When Armstrong decided. to try his hand, for the second time, at television, in the late 60's, Smith assumed the

responsibility of designing and equipping the studios. Thus in 1968 Smith was appointed Vice President for Broadcasting Production.

Smith's functional operations remained essentially unchanged during the organization's 1972-74 round of executive shuffles. His position was not vulnerable as it was essentially a technical post which hardly warranted vice presidency status. By that time Smith's vice presidency had come to be regarded as more of a memento than an authentic position.

The final blow came to Smith's thin-shelled vice presidency in 1976 when he was removed from Pasadena and given a perfunctory post as church area coordinator of the North west. He can neither exercise his vice presidency nor use the electronic expertise which he has developed during the past quarter century. Thus was terminated another of Armstrong's vice presidencies.

C. WAYNE COLE

Another overseas support column tumbled in the personage of Wayne Cole. Wayne was reared on a farm in the area of Jefferson, Oregon and came to Armstrong's college in 1950 under much the same circumstances as those of his brother, Raymond Cole (to be discussed later). Wayne was more athletic and of very open and cordial demeanor.

During his first year at Armstrong's college he was admitted to the Armstrong religious fold and shortly after graduation in 1954 was ordained to the ministry.

During the succeeding eight years he was assigned to various pastorates throughout the United States. And in 1962, after having been raised to top Evangelist status, was transferred to Australia as head of the Australian branch of Armstrong's work.

Six years later, in 1968 Wayne was appointed Vice President, Financial Affairs, Australia and Asia. He was removed from that post in 1973 and brought to Pasadena headquarters as Director of Publishing to manage

Armstrong's multi-million dollar printing facility.

In 1974 he was again removed from his post and assigned to coordinate the activities of a *five-man team* working as administrative assistant to the Executive Vice President with no line function authority.

For all practical purposes that wiped out another of Armstrong's vice presidential pedestals. Cole was put on a leave of absence (for health reasons) in the second quarter of 1976 and later in that year assigned a post in Canada. Thus another vice-president goes down under Ted's administration.

LESLIE L. McCULLOUGH

Another vice presidential post crumbled in the personage of Leslie McCullough. He came to Armstrong's college from Hillsboro, Oregon as a result of viewing Herbert Armstrong on The WORLD TOMORROW telecast during its ephemeral and very amateurish existence in the mid 50's. McCullough registered as a freshman for the fall semester of 1957 after a limited time of service as managerial trainee for a nationwide department store.

McCullough graduated in 1961, was ordained to the ministry, assigned as Administrative Assistant to Armstrong's Executive Committee, and also instructed in theology and speech.

He was transferred to the Texas branch of Armstrong's college and assigned the post of Deputy Chancellor for the college year 1964-65. In the following years he was raised to the top rank of Evangelist.

In 1968 McCullough was appointed Vice President for Academic Affairs, Texas Campus, but in 1973 was transferred to Pasadena headquarters where he served as Executive Assistant to Garner Ted Armstrong and coordinated the activities of the Foreign Offices from Pasadena.

In this manner his previous function was negated and another of Armstrong's vice presidential pillars was chopped down during Ted's administration.

CHARLES F. HUNTING

In England another overseas support column crumbled. It was Charles Hunting who came from Los Angeles, California, to Armstrong's college in the late 50's after professional business training at the University of California. He graduated from Armstrong's college in 1961 after having been ordained to the ministry and was assigned to Armstrong's English college campus as Controller and Manager of the Business Department as well as instructor in college classes.

Hunting's title was changed in 1963 to Bursar of the English campus, a post which he held until 1968 when the scope of his office was expanded to that of Vice President, Financial Affairs, Europe and the Middle East.

In 1973 he was further appointed overseer of churches in the British Isles. He retained those posts until Armstrong appointed him as his personal aide. The effectiveness of that appointment was thwarted by a threat of resignation by FIVE of Armstrong's top men in Pasadena including his son Garner Ted.

Hunting was thus reconfirmed in his office as Vice President of Financial Affairs, Europe and the Middle East and overseer of churches in the British Isles.

Hunting continued to hold that post for over two years after Ted returned as Executive Vice President, but the effectiveness of his function was considerably diminished due to complete closure of the Bricket Wood Campus and a general scaling down of the British work due to Armstrong's supposed tight financial squeeze. In January 1976 Hunting, along with a few other top men in the London Office, resigned, charging the Armstrongs with spiritual tyranny and complacency. Thus another of Armstrong's vice presidents was forced out under Ted's administration.

RAYMOND C. COLE

Last, but hardly the least of Armstrong's leading supports was Raymond Cole. Cole was reared in the Oregon farm district near Jefferson. His father, Otis Cole, was a member of

the old line Church of God, Oregon Conference. Armstrong had proselyted him in the earlier days of his ministry and at the time Raymond was a young, impressionable lad who became captivated by the Armstrong style.

After graduating from high school, the old line Church of God offered Raymond a scholarship at their theological seminary. He turned it down to attend Ambassador under the tutelage of Armstrong.

After a few religious scrimmages Cole gave up the particular beliefs of his former church and threw his support solidly behind Armstrong. This was a personal triumph over Armstrong's lingering opponents of the old Oregon Conference. To repay Cole, Armstrong took every opportunity to promote him.

Cole enrolled at Armstrong's college in its opening year–1947. He graduated in 1952, was promptly ordained to the top rank of Evangelist and assigned to Armstrong's old Oregon territory in an effort to save the crumbling remains of Armstrong's Pacific Northwest empire.

In 1954 Raymond was assigned to do a “hatchet job” on one of his previous college classmates. Armstrong sent Cole to Gladewater, Texas, to investigate allegations from Armstrong's in-laws against their local minister (Chapter 14). Armstrong had suspended the minister by letter asking him to leave town so the area would remain as undisturbed as possible. The minister concurred–in the belief that a complete and unbiased investigation would exonerate him.

There was no objective and unbiased investigation. Upon Armstrong's arrival in Gladewater some weeks later, the accused minister was called into Armstrong's office and put on indefinite suspension. Until that very moment he had not been contacted in any manner concerning fads of the investigation. No letters. No phone calls. No personal conferences.

And thus Armstrong's in-laws, the Hammer family, through Raymond Cole had brought about the purge of one of Armstrong's top ranking evangelists and established a

precedent for undisputed, behind-the-scenes control of Armstrong's Gladewater (Big Sandy) base of operations–a control which they still subtly exercise twenty-two years later.

Shortly after axing out his fellow minister, Raymond Cole was rewarded with an assignment at Armstrong's Pasadena headquarters. His new post was Superintendent of churches in the field-an office which he ostensibly held as late as 1961 (Envoy, 1961 following p. 171).

But in reality Cole's new-found reward quickly tarnished.

Armstrong soon realized Cole was not prepared to handle that level of responsibility and found it convenient to transfer him to Oregon for alleged health reasons.

Raymond moved to a number of different churches during the late fifties and early sixties. By the mid sixties he was transferred to the Northeast section of the U.S. and elevated to the position of District Superintendent

In 1968 Cole was again moved to Pasadena and appointed Vice President of Church Convention Activities, but later moved his operations to Armstrong's Big Sandy, Texas, base. In 1972 he was moved out of that post and transferred back to Pasadena, effectively losing the status of Vice President.

His new job was to assist newly appointed David L. Antion, Superintendent of Ministers, U.S.A. And his first assignment was that of swinging the support of local ministers behind this new regime.

In this new assignment Cole lived for a number of weeks with a suitcase in one hand and an airline ticket in the other. He traveled almost constantly, chopping up the image of the old Meredith regime, attempting to replace it with Antionism. This brought disillusionment, discontentment and strife to the doorstep of many of Armstrong's local ministers throughout the United States and laid the groundwork for an eventual fracture within the church.

Cole was given an additional assignment concurrent with his duty as Assistant Superintendent of Ministers–that of District Director for the Southwest Region of the U.S. Which

included the Pasadena headquarters area.

In this capacity Cole traveled to the local churches throughout the district reportedly preaching and spreading doctrinal discontent among members and fellow ministers. Subtle hints were reportedly dropped concerning the alleged scandalous activities of Garner Ted.

Authoritative sources report that in early 1974 Cole wrote Herbert Armstrong requesting Armstrong to designate him Executive Vice President and so remove Ted Armstrong from that post.

Herbert didn't take kindly to Cole's request and in short order Cole was again on his way to Oregon for his "health's sake," of course! Thus, Armstrong put Cole on a sabbatical of sufficient duration to sort things out in a manner a bit more congruent to Armstrong's thinking. But Cole failed the test and was excommunicated from Armstrong's church in February 1975 for conducting unauthorized meetings and preaching doctrines heretical to Armstrong's beliefs-doctrines which Armstrong had preached for forty years but recently abandoned.

Cole continues to pastor a small group of previous Armstrong adherents–parading under the banner of "Restoring the faith once delivered to Armstrong."

In July 1975 three of Armstrong's prominent pastors, Bryce Clark, Jim Doak and Paul Royer, with their congregations, reportedly joined Cole's crusade. But even with this Cole's crusade seems to be diminishing.

And that was the way another vice presidential column fell fro m the Armstrong empire under Garner Ted's administration.

STANLEY R. RADER

Stanley Rader, though not a vice president for about fifteen years, was another powerful influence in the Armstrong empire. He obtained his B.S. from the University of St. Lawrence, L.L.B. from the University of California, and also holds certification as a C.P.A.

Rader became ideologically associated with the Armstrong cause as a member in March 1975. Even prior to that time he exerted a profound influence over this worldwide work. Immediately after being admitted as a member he assumed the office of Executive Vice President in charge of Financial Affairs–a post previously held by Albert J. Portune who resigned for reasons of conscience.

Radar was first associated with Armstrong's organization as accountant and legal adviser in 1958. In the late 60's he took over Armstrong's advertising budget by establishing an advertising agency within the confines of his law and accounting suite on the Los Angeles strip of Wilshire Boulevard but has since moved to Beverly Hills.

In the early 70's he reportedly set up the Mid-Continent Leasing Company which apparently controls Armstrong's two jet aircraft amounting to about $8 million.

Rader is regularly aboard the Gulfstream II with Herbert Armstrong on his world tours to kings and covers those travels by his “In Brief” column in the newly formatted PLAIN TRUTH newspaper (1974-1976) but by late 1976 it was reformatted as a slick paper, 52-page magazine. In this atmosphere Rader serves Armstrong in the capacity of Financial Adviser and Legal Counsel.

To Rader goes the credit for Armstrong's multi-million dollar financing program. This results in about *one million dollars* cash out-flow annually in the form of interest to Rader's banking connections.

And it is through Rader, with the assistance of Osama Gotoh, that most, if not all, of Armstrong's *king visits* are arranged. Rader's worldwide Jewish contacts and money sources have brought much prestige to Armstrong.

For his services he is well paid. In addition to his executive salary and accountant fees (estimated to total over $100,000 a year), Armstrong reportedly provides him with a $ l-million executive home at no cost.

Rader's latest advancement was when he was put on the sermonette list with Herbert Armstrong traveling from one

location to another when Armstrong's members keep the "feasts of the Jews." Another late organizational promotion came in early 1976. He is now responsible for certifying and re-certifying all ministers of the Worldwide Church of God.

Rader is the only executive officer in the corporation who has not been touched by the probing tentacles of the Executive Vice President–Garner Ted Armstrong.

END OF THE VICE PRESIDENTS

Armstrong's vice presidents have all been great assets as builders of his EMPIRE. It was not Armstrong who brought in the many thousands of members during the past *TWENTY-FIVE YEARS*. It was the dedicated service of those vice presidents and hundreds of their support men who pitched in to help do the work.

Few realize that Armstrong lacks the genuinely warm, sincere, friendly character necessary to deal effectively with people on an on-going personal basis. Though he has been able to *attract people* he has not been able to work closely with them in a direct personal way. To the knowledge of the author, most of the top ranking member personnel (with the exception of his son Garner Ted) with whom Armstrong has been closely and personally associated over the years have either voluntarily left him or have been *crushed* and put out of the way either by Armstrong himself or with his tacit approval.

The history of Armstrong's early ministry in the Pacific Northwest was a chronicle of one *crumbling* church congregation after another. Even his original headquarters church in Eugene, Oregon, was crumbling beneath him as he established Pasadena, California, as his headquarters in 1947. Harmony was later restored to the Eugene church–but not by Armstrong. It was done by warm, friendly, personable young college trained ministers to whom Armstrong assigned the task after he left the area.

Armstrong always blamed his early organizational difficulties on *others*. He has constantly and loudly

proclaimed he had to start Ambassador College because he *couldn't work with* those *older men.* But he has no such excuse for the near collapse of the Eugene Church. He raised it up and was its sole pastor for fourteen years. When he left Eugene, there were only a few members left and they were hopelessly divided.

Armstrong proved in his early life that he was not a team worker. He proved it again in his advertising business. And he proved it in his early Oregon ministry.

When Armstrong squeaked open the doors of Ambassador College in 1947, he was a ONE MAN work with only sufficient income to carry on the evangelistic activities of one man.

For students he chose young men who had no knowledge of Machiavellian tactics. These men had single hearted, unspoiled minds. In short, men who were no competition for his FIFTY-FIVE years experience both in business and the ministry.

Over a period of twenty-five years Armstrong trained his men to be loyal followers and supporters. During that time they, through their direct personal contact with Armstrong's adherents, managed to put together his $55-million empire.

By 1969 Armstrong's organization sparsely covered the entire earth, and was led by nine vice presidents (others came and went later) excluding the Armstrongs.

As Armstrong associated with those men they became wise to his ways even though they desperately wanted to remain loyal. As the years rolled by, they became increasingly aware that they had no effective voice in the Armstrong operations and few if any channels were open for doctrinal correction and airing of grievances.

And so, the Armstrongs, like spiritual vampires, thrive on the life-soul of those who they can lure. After their vacuumous fangs have slowly drawn the life-soul from their victims, their depleted carcasses are cast with abandon upon the heap of *dead soldiers* which have surrendered the content of their soul to maintain their captain's state of inebriated

euphoria.

If the victim struggles to retain the last ounce of his life-soul, his carcass is dashed with violence upon life's rocks of reality–expulsion from the Armstrong empire, usually under the condemnation of being in a *bad attitude* which is further branded as being treasonous.

But in the early 70's defection was taking place on a mass scale because those men, the vice presidents and others, were grieved by the fact that Herbert Armstrong disregarded God's Word on ministerial qualifications by fastening Ted irrevocably upon their shoulders.

Even more repulsive in that situation was the fact that Ted Armstrong, once he was given reins to do so, set about to relatively demote every single one of the top ranking vice presidents.

The deteriorating relationship between Ted and his father, and Ted's reported relationship with consorts had created the situation at hand. Those men did not want to raise their voices against their superior. But failure to do so was to deny God's Word regarding the *spiritual* qualifications for the ministry.

In this matter it was clear to many that Herbert Armstrong put his desires ahead of God's Word in reassigning Ted as Executive Vice President disregarding his publicly reported history of scandal.

When the chips were down, Herbert Armstrong was true to his old form. This was his final chance of life to prove he could work on a team. He took the path of the *loner,* He insisted on his scandal-ridden son taking *FIRST PLACE* in the Armstrong empire and consigned his vice presidential team to ignominy.

History may yet prove that in pulling down those giant pillars, more than a quarter century in building, Armstrong sealed the doom of his worldwide empire.

CHAPTER EIGHT

ARMSTRONG'S MEDIA PSYCHOLOGY: RADIO, TV AND PUBLICATIONS

The media which links Armstrong to his adherent or prospective adherent is the lifeline of his organization. And the psychology he employs determines the strength and effectiveness of that lifeline.

Armed only with a self-taught background in the psychology of *ADVERTISING,* Armstrong entered the evangelical broadcasting field as little more than a novice. Only two or so of his advertising articles had been published in the *Merchant's Trade Journal* and those were primarily in *report* form and were written about *TWENTY YEARS* before Armstrong attempted evangelical journalism. A perusal of his early writings indicates it was perhaps his fund of self taught psychology which saved him from journalistic suicide.

Dubious exercise of *ADVERTISING PSYCHOLOGY* and propaganda principles exerted toward unwary souls has brought together Armstrong's present band of *poor church folk.*

What are the psychological ploys used by Armstrong to turn every apparent defeat into certain victory–to figuratively take one of his "lemons" and transform it into lemonade?

How does he go about attracting listeners to his program? How does he obtain readers for his PLAIN TRUTH magazine? How are those subscribers turned into members who eventually earmark 25-30 percent of their gross income for religiously oriented purposes?

Take a look now at the psychological make-up of each branch of Armstrong's evangelistic thrusts, starting with his

radio broadcast in 1934, then the development of his PLAIN TRUTH and GOOD NEWS magazines and now his newest endeavor, "QUEST '77"–the official publication of Armstrong's Ambassador International Cultural Foundation.

BROADCASTING PSYCHOLOGY

Armstrong's current radio (also TV) broadcast format is far removed from what occurred on that first frightful broadcast in Eugene, Oregon – September 1933.

The local announcer came on with an opening format which went typically like this: "The following quarter hour Morning Devotional is brought to you as a public service of Radio Station KORE. To present our program this morning–Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong (a non-denominational minister)."

That was immediately followed by a nightmarish constriction of Armstrong's vocal anatomy–a phenomenon known as mike fright. After a few struggling moments, Armstrong launched into his ready prepared devotional presentation–a typical religious format boring directly into the heart of doctrinal controversy. Soon Armstrong was dominating KORE's Morning Devotional air time.

His radical issues created such a stir in the religious community, particularly among local ministers, the station manager had to take Armstrong off their Morning Devotional and make it available to the *accepted* denominations within the community. As a peace making gesture, the manager offered Armstrong a regular Sunday morning program at reduced rates.

Armstrong wrote to his adherents asking them to pledge support for this newly offered program time and sufficient funds were pledged to encourage Armstrong to accept the station manager's offer.

But Armstrong had learned a vital lesson! He had been made aware of the pressures which the local religious community could bring to bear on one of whom they disapproved. Thus, he began to slowly draw back from a

candid, forthright presentation of his beliefs and doctrines over the air.

It was a slow and painful process, but by the early 1940's Armstrong cast the final mold for the format of his program and renamed it The WORLD TOMORROW.

Armstrong swung from the complete religious format to one which was dominated by a *news analysis* flavor with incidental religious comments. He has abandoned that format on occasions and in some cases for considerable periods of time, but he inevitably returns to it with an ever-diminishing religious content within the program itself.

The format which Armstrong found to be consistently best throughout the years, is one broken into *THREE MAJOR SEGMENTS.* The *opening segment* is generally devoted to a problem of *public interest–anything* current in the news which will hold a listener or arrest the attention of a listener dialing across the station frequency.

The topic may be international affairs, family relations, civil unrest, economics, natural disaster, the natural ecological environment, etc. The first segment of Armstrong's program, will generally be the presentation of innumerable statistics *about* a problem .

The *SECOND* segment is generally devoted to focusing the attention of the listener on the *MAGNITUDE* of the problem. The facts which have been presented in the first segment are now arrayed in such a way as to make the problem appear hopelessly involved, and almost without solution. Doom and disaster are pictured as being *just around the corner.* The listener is led to a psychological state of helplessness.

And then the *THIRD SEGMENT* comes into play. The solution! The only way is *God's way* and Armstrong is the special messenger from God with the answers–a gospel which hasn't been preached in over eighteen and one-half centuries! And thus, the secret to the only way out of the present dilemma is held exclusively by Armstrong. Then he starts presenting the periphery of the *supposed* facts in his solution–which is, of course, represented as God's solution.

He holds out a ray of hope that God will save the situation. He vigorously pursues it in a race-horse fashion right down to the very last minute of his program and then, BANG!–he just doesn't have time to finish presentation of his solution in this program but he offers a specially prepared booklet which promises the listener the "plain truth" of what he claims God says on this matter. And it's free. [19]

But the listener will have to write Armstrong to get the *supposed* answer to the problem. He is *DOUBLY ASSURED* he will not be billed and no one will call on him or ask him for money. Consequently, hundreds and thousands of new listeners write for booklets every day. In addition to the booklet the listener will usually request The PLAIN TRUTH magazine or will be mailed a *sample copy* with the booklet he requests. [20]

In this process Armstrong has achieved one of his primary objectives–a new name on his mailing list. And it is from this list that the new listener will be bombarded regularly by Armstrong's publications.

PUBLICATION PSYCHOLOGY–

The PLAIN TRUTH Magazine

The PLAIN TRUTH magazine is Armstrong's front line evangelical contact in the publication field and is designed to the same psychological specifications as his broadcasts.

The PLAIN TRUTH, until February 1975, was a 52-page, four-color process production. Since that time it has been circulated in a l6–page newspaper style on cheap flexible *newsprint* (changed back to the old format in late 1976).

In its earlier format it was designed to circulate freely without causing offense or embarrassment to its readers. It has posed as an *in-depth.* authoritative international news magazine boasting a circulation in excess of three million. But in reality it carries a rather stale news diet and commentary that runs from thirty to ninety days behind major news magazines.

Its editorial policy generally excludes publication of

articles with religious content though articles dealing with *ethics* and *high morals* are acceptable. Oblique references to God, and His law are occasionally made but it is in such a way as to be non-committal toward religious issues.

Again, there have been periods when the editorial pendulum swung toward a higher religious content but it is usually short lived.

The secret of the success of The PLAIN TRUTH lies in determining just how much religious flavor is needed to cause religiously oriented people to donate, but still remain inoffensive to others. Finding that ever-shifting fine line and treading it delicately is an editorial art which has been highly developed by Armstrong.

The PLAIN TRUTH *is* an impelling force which may. eventually turn the reader into a co-worker. This is accomplished by closing articles in such a way as to imply there is much more to be known on that given subject. [21] The reader is psychologically pulled into requesting other booklets and specially prepared papers or writing for personal correspondence on the subject. As he becomes more involved he is impelled to donate to the *cause.* This process is further accelerated by Armstrong's semi-annual letters (covered more fully in chapter two). Consequently the recipient of the letter becomes a regular donor.

Doctrinally, the reader of The PLAIN TRUTH is introduced to numerous of Armstrong's peripheral concepts. Through the pages of this magazine he is led to write for additional doctrinal booklets and hopefully the Ambassador College Correspondence Course. The eventual result will be a membership in Armstrong's organization with 25-30 percent of his gross annual earnings earmarked for religious purposes. He will then be eligible to receive such membership publications as The GOOD NEWS magazine and The WORLDWIDE NEWS.

PUBLICATION PSYCHOLOGY–The GOOD NEWS Magazine

The GOOD NEWS is designed to spoon-feed Armstrong's

adherents with the full gamut of Armstrongism.

It is vitally necessary that this publication constantly recycle 22 all the Armstrong *suppositions* and *doctrines* due to the fact that Armstrong's church has never published an official statement of beliefs–not even for its members!

The GOOD NEWS is specifically used to recirculate doctrinal beliefs of the church to avoid production of such a formalized creed or statement. And in this publication will appear the most sensitive doctrinal articles circulated by the Armstrong organization. It has not, in the past, been generally recommended for outside circulation, although it is now mailed to a limited few who Armstrong categorizes as *more sympathetic.*

There has recently been consideration toward converting The GOOD NEWS into an organ for general circulation. Under such a plan The GOOD NEWS would no longer be a membership oriented magazine. The membership would be left with only The WORLDWIDE NEWS–a news-nose type of publication printed on cheap, flexible newspaper stock. It is generally sent only to members who wish to pay the annual subscription fee of $4.00.

All told, the internal membership organs have been used as propaganda tools throughout the years to totally subjugate those who have accepted membership in the Armstrong *cause.*

GENERAL EDITORIAL PSYCHOLOGY

The pervading approach which Armstrong takes toward use of the media is that of modern advertising. There must always be an element of suspense, surprise, controversy, etc. The editorial presentation must never degenerate to the level of relating simple facts in a simple straight-forward manner.

As an example of just one of the psychological tools used by Armstrong, take a look at the element of *CONTROVERSY–one* of his favorite! The following incident is that of Armstrong coaching Walter Dillon in a speech contest as related in Armstrong's Autobiography.

Armstrong instructs Walter Dillon:

> " . . . pick for your subject some red-hot controversial topic . . . have the courage to actually ATTACK something . . . work yourself up to white-hot heat of indignation and emotion, and let fly–Billy Sunday style–to start a big controversy . . ."

Armstrong and Dillon selected a contemporary issue–the labor controversy. It was rehearsed until just the right effect was evident. Dillon had gotten himself enraged concerning the issue and broke out in explosive voice and violent gestures. Then Armstrong breaks in:

> "There . . . Hold it! Hold it right there! Just go into the contest exactly as you went into this rehearsal! . . . the judges still may not like something so radically different from the established style of college oratory. But now you will be either last, or first!"

Dillon won the speech contest and Armstrong reaped a vicarious victory. He has won many oratorical victories since.

Like the speech contest, everything is a challenge to Armstrong. There is no such thing as a normal day! A private conversation becomes an oratorical challenge–a traumatic moment to see who will dominate.

This spirit totally saturates Armstrong's daily routine, his overall life style, and finds a ready harbor in every facet of his media expression–radio, TV, and publications.

The spirit of challenge and attack has developed such a broad base in his personality that it has become increasingly difficult to deal with him on vital daily operational duties. The act of doing so has reportedly become a game of studying moods, finding out what he ate for breakfast, or determining if he slept well the night before. A negative on any of those could mean delay in discussing vital issues due to his temperamental status.

Policy changes and corrections have become increasingly

difficult to effect. And a question raised over a doctrinal issue has been known to produce a reverberating tantrum that vibrated the ear drums of those in closed offices two or three floors below his plush fourth floor suite in the Hall of Administration.

Part II

Building a Religious Order

CHAPTER NINE

A MINISTRY OF CONFLICT - ARMSTRONG'S EARLY THEOLOGICAL STUDIES

Application of the Armstrong philosophy to the airwaves as a regular fare started in January 1934. But that was not the beginning of his ministerial training and activity.

It started in 1926 with a religious controversy between Herbert and his wife. She had engaged in Bible studies with a neighbor of Herbert's father, Mrs. 0.J. Runcorn of Salem, Oregon. Mrs. Armstrong accepted Saturday as the Sabbath–a concept held by only a small minority of Christendom. At about the same time Herbert's sister-in-law challenged his very concept of God.

All told, he felt either his wife or his sister-in-law was about to make a laughing stock of him. His wife's acceptance of unorthodox beliefs was envisioned as bringing ridicule and embarrassment. His sister-in-law had called him *ignorant* for blindly accepting a Creator. All this on top of SIX YEARS of business failure appeared to be a crushing blow to Armstrong's ego.

Thus he launched a whole new field of endeavor–Biblical research. He had no knowledge of Greek or Hebrew and no research library of his own. His findings were gleaned almost exclusively from the volumes of the Portland Library plus what few religious pamphlets he could get together on a given subject.

The end result of his initial study was acceptance of Saturday as the Christian Sabbath.

He then arose to the challenge of his sister-in-law. His retort to her for stigmatizing him was rather curt.

He warned:

> " . . . I am just starting a study of the Bible. I intend to include in this research a thorough study of the Biblical account of creation .. , I will include an in-depth study of evolution . . . And if and when I do [disprove it] I'm going to make you EAT those words!" (Autobiography, p. 2 (6).

Armstrong does not record whether or not he ever made his sister-in-law EAT her accusation but the material he prepared on the subject of evolution held him in good stead for *fire decades.*

IMMERSED BY BAPTIST-COMES UP CHURCH OF GOD

From this point Armstrong began to move into the study of other doctrines, one of which was baptism. Upon conviction of the need for baptism he went to see Mrs. Runcorn's minister–Mr, Unzicker who was a minister of the Church of God, Stanberry, Missouri.

Armstrong does not explain in his autobiography (page 281) why he declined to have the Church of God minister baptize him, neither does he explain which denominational minister he finally selected. In personal conversation, however, Armstrong has let it be known that it was the Baptist minister whom he finally chose for this purpose. The year of his baptism was 1926 (Autobiography, p. 266).

It is unusual that Armstrong was introduced to the concept of the seventh day Sabbath by those of the Church of God but declined the service of their minister in favor of a Baptist even though their mode of baptism is almost identical. Even more unusual, after baptism Armstrong immediately began association with the Church of God people, not the Baptists.

And strangest of all is the fact that Armstrong denies ever having held membership in the Church of God–even though he associated with them regularly for SEVEN YEARS, three of which he served as a *lay minister* actually conducting lectures, studies and giving sermons.

ARMSTRONG'S FIRST SERMON

His first sermon (Autobiography, p. 318) was given during the summer of 1928, about two years after his conversion (Autobiography, p. 266).

Armstrong encountered opposition from the Church of God hierarchy upon presentation of his first sermon or "talk" as he chose to call it. Word leaked out to the Church of God minister in Idaho, A. H. Stith *(A History of the Church of God,* p. 261 by Nickels and Cole and Autobiography, p. 478) that Armstrong had preached to the group without a license and to make it more sensitive, he had preached "new light" to the little group at the Denver Store near Jefferson. Following this meeting Armstrong learned of a small group in Oregon City and on his way back to Portland, stopped there to establish acquaintance with Mr. G. A. Hobbs–the most influential and *most* respected member in Oregon.

The following week Armstrong was back in Jefferson and Elder Stith was present–having been sent over from Idaho to monitor Armstrong's presentation. Sure enough Armstrong had another parcel of "new truth" which he handed out to the group.

Armstrong's approach could hardly go uncensored from an organizational point of view. He was mildly reprimanded by way of refutation from the licensed minister, A. H. Stith. Armstrong's ego which had been already completely flattened was now being painfully *stung* to death. But his ego lived on for many years and he resisted correction from his superiors to the very encl.

This was a crucial test for Armstrong. He would either cooperate with established authority or create a situation which would lead to years of endless strife. He took the latter and steered a constant course of proselyting sedition–propagating doctrines which constituted authority in the Church of God disallowed.

During the next *nine years,* until the fall of 1937) he fought to get control of the Oregon brethren. In many of his

personal presentations and writings he points an accusing finger to the constituted authority which opposed his heretical preaching. He always makes it sound as if they were fighting him when in reality the exact reverse is *ABSOLUTELY TRUE!*

The Church of God ministers had spent many days, weeks, months and years in evangelizing the area, conducting Bible studies, and providing what pastoral service was possible under the circumstances.

Armstrong was a studious man and could have helped if he had submitted to the process of discipleship. Elder Stith openly invited Armstrong to become actively engaged in the ministry (Autobiography, p. 478). But instead he waded freely among their converts who were there without a pastor and made the most of the situation. He had refused baptism by their ministry because it was the custom of that church to have their converts study their doctrines and "count the cost" as Christ enjoined.

But Armstrong, true to form, took the course of the *loner*! He would not submit to the process of discipleship but went to another denomination and was baptized. Still, he expected those in the ministry of the Church of God to sit calmly while he came among their converts and preached his self-educated heresy to unwary and poorly educated local farm brethren.

Armstrong has stood on his self-elevated pedestal for *FIFTY YEARS* accusing those men of *opposing him* but he has never candidly laid the facts bare which really show that it was *he* who was *OPPOSING!* Such seditious proselyting and opposition is both repugnant and altogether abhorrent when one views the whole picture–how Armstrong spread his intellectual snobbery over those men by refusing their baptism, even to the present day loudly proclaiming he was never a member of their organization.

Only gross ignorance of command procedures or unmitigated vanity could cause Armstrong to believe that those men unethically *opposed him,* He has always attacked,

belittled and ridiculed those men.

It is true that some of the Oregon brethren asked Armstrong to speak at their meetings. But those requests should have been cleared through the Church of God ministry and Armstrong knows fun well that is true. He demands the same of his own men. And he knows most certainly that he did not clear those requests through proper authority,

Armstrong's own word judges his action at that time as well as the actions taken during the 1973-74 fracture of his own organization. He vehemently decried those among his ministry who took away members – people with whom they had labored cooperatively *for many years.* They were ridiculed as serpents, vipers, and ministers of Satan, And any mention of "new truth" or supposed heretical doctrine by one of Armstrong's ministers results in his being immediately returned to Pasadena and possibly terminated, or such action may prompt the immediate dispatch of a jet plane load of Armstrong's heavy-weight ministerial executives to "grill him on. the spot."

What Armstrong did with impunity, he scathingly denounces in others.

In Armstrong's case the Church of God hierarchy sent a man to take the oversight of the Oregon brethren in an effort to stop the Armstrong heresy from spreading and to preclude his taking over the Oregon brethren. Headquarters dispatched a minister from the Missouri-Arkansas area to: do the job and he promptly and very cordially visited Armstrong in his Portland home (Autobiography, p. 320).

As a result of his visit the newly appointed Church of God minister sent a recommendation to headquarters advising that Armstrong's articles should no longer be carried in their official church organ–The *Bible Advocate.* It was explained that Armstrong Was not a formal member of the church and publication of his articles would give him undue standing and

prestige before the brethren and thus make it possible for him to take over that whole state membership.

Stanberry headquarters then wrote their leading member in the state of Oregon, Mr. G. A. Hobbs of Oregon City, informing him that Armstrong's articles should no longer be submitted for publication.

ARMSTRONG ASCENDS THE PULPIT

Mr. Hobbs liked Armstrong and wrote headquarters a scorching letter which resulted in the reinstatement of Armstrong's articles in *The Bible Advocate.* As a result Armstrong he came an ardent admirer of Hobbs and from that time until late 1930, despite lack of ministerial license and disapproval of constituted authority, Armstrong took the oversight of Hobb's little Oregon City Sabbath study of eight to twelve people.

Armstrong relates it in his Autobiography (p. 321):

> "Almost immediately they asked me to be their leader in the study of the lesson. And soon I was delivering them a 'sermon' every Sabbath."

And thus, though not a member of the church, and under the disapproval from constituted authority of the Church of God, Armstrong established himself a pastorate which he exercised for nearly two years. Oregon City was a considerable distance from the main body of members in the farm belt between Salem and Eugene, and Armstrong offered little threat with his handful of admirers way up in the northern part of the state.

ARMSTRONG TESTS CHURCH

It was during this two-year period of pastoring at Oregon City that Armstrong put the Church of God to a dual test.

The first test was in the form of a 16-page article to their Stanberry headquarters purporting to be irrefutable proof that the church was teaching a *minor* doctrinal error.

Armstrong's Autobiography does not relate the *problem* but only states that a letter came back from headquarters informing him he *was right* but this minor error could not be corrected because it might divide the church.

There seems to be some incongruity here. If it were only a minor problem it would be most unlikely a split would result from correcting it. Neither did Armstrong think it important enough to reprint their letter which came to him on the subject. If this document were so important as to constitute condemnation of the Church of God, why didn't Armstrong keep it? And if he did, why didn't he print it?

Armstrong did keep another letter-one which he received from A. N. Duggar in response to the *SECOND TEST* to which Armstrong subjected the Church of God. It *is reprinted* in his Autobiography (p. 372).

What was that SECOND TEST? In early 1929 Armstrong submitted a 300 page document attempting to prove the "Lost Ten Tribes of Israel migrated to Western Europe, the British Isles, and later to the United States."

Armstrong makes much ado of the fact that Mr. Duggar wrote him, "You are surely right'! –about the British Israelism doctrine. As a result of this letter Armstrong has, for over *FORTY-FIVE* years, loudly condemned the Church of God as hypocrites because they would not preach his thesis.

But the part Armstrong does not tell is, Duggar's opinion was not the official voice of the Church of God (Author's private papers–Testimony of Elder E. A. Straub, Church of God). Duggar did personally accept that belief but the Church of God always rejected it as unprovable, And the higher Church officials frowned on Duggar for upholding it. Eventually Duggar was ousted from the Stanberry Church of God as a result of his undermining activities,

ARMSTRONG BECOMES EVANGELIST-TAKES OVER!

During his two years as minister of Hobb's Oregon City Church (summer 1928-fall 1930) Armstrong continued to develop his theological concepts under the protective wing of

G. A. Hobbs. Some of those concepts were shared with Duggar by correspondence.

Armstrong was twice asked to join the Church of God organization–once by Elder Stith and again by Duggar. In a letter to A. N. Duggar, July 11, 1928, Armstrong rejects Duggar's invitation to join the Church of God.

> "I appreciate your kind invitation to affiliate actively with the Church of God organization. Elder Stith approached me on the subject, also . . . However . . . I do not know exactly, yet, what my mission or calling is to be, or what the method of carrying it out is to be. Unquestionably it will require organized effort, rather than attempting to carry out the mission alone and unaided." (Autobiography, p. 478).

Careful analysis of this information reveals two very important elements. 1) Armstrong refused to join the organization in which he was already actively ministering by way of articles for their official publication, *The Bible Advocate,* if not actively preaching. 2) Armstrong envisioned that he had a mission or calling which would require organized effort.

Even at this early date the men at headquarters in Stanberry, Missouri, should have put this together sufficiently to realize Armstrong would attempt to carry out an independent missionary effort and would likely try to take over the Oregon territory. "Unquestionably it will require organized effort . . ." said Armstrong. Yet, he refused to work with their organization. That should have alerted them to what he had in the back of his mind.

Another clue which pointed toward trouble with Armstrong was his concept of superior self-knowledge of the Scriptures,

He related it to Duggar in the same letter:

> "If I am being given any of the gifts, it is that of UNDERSTANDING of the truth of scripture . . . But I am not fully prepared as yet."

Duggar and Armstrong kept in contact during the next few years, As Armstrong built up his fund of private heresy, Duggar was continually pushing toward acceptance of his new Church Organization concept.

Armed with those supposedly incriminating documents from Duggar, Armstrong moved to Salem, near the main body of the Oregon brethren in October, 1930. He had to again move in with his father (Autobiography, p. 355) because his income was very low from the sale of cookware. In the meantime the minister of the Church of God who had been sent to oversee the Oregon territory had apparently been moved elsewhere– by November of 1930, there was no resident minister in the state of Oregon (Autobiography p. 355).

During the month of November Armstrong accompanied the Runcorns to their semi-annual church business meeting armed with those supposedly incriminating letters from Duggar. Plans had been afoot for some time to secede the Oregon brethren from the national Organization. Political pressures for remaining within the national organization were about equal to those for withdrawal. But after a heated session Armstrong asked for permission to speak. He shamed those present for their anger over the issues. The incident is recorded on page 353 of his Autobiography:

> "'Brethren,' I said, you all know how, as recorded in the first chapter of Job, when the sons of God came together, Satan came also. You also know how, in the 12th chapter of Revelation we are told that [we are] His people Satan is most angry with . . . I am going to drop to my knees right now, and ask God Almighty to cast Satan out of this house! All of YOU who wish may kneel with me and pray silently. "Without another word, I quickly dropped to my knees beside my chair, and began asking God to rebuke Satan and this controversial spirit . . ."

This attitude, of course, is very good if and when it is genuine. It is very probable that Armstrong was using this as a means of gaining the confidence of those present–particularly in view of the fact, about two years later Armstrong stood before that same board and "with blazing eyes and sharp voice" threatened to "shut their mouths before they could finish their first sentence" if any dared speak ill of his wife. And of course, how effective it would be for him to arise from prayer and support the secessionists by relating the details of his correspondence which he used to make hypocrites of the headquarters church in Stanberry, Missouri!

It was after Armstrong's presentation that the Oregon brethren voted to secede from the Oregon Conference. Thus the tide was turned. in favor of withdrawal, dumping the national organizational plan being proffered by A. N. Duggar. Consequently, the Oregon Conference was formed with Armstrong's tutor, G. A. Hobbs of Oregon City as president. Naturally, Herbert Armstrong was picked to represent them in evangelistic meetings and they scheduled him for a meeting at Harrisburg in late December.

Hobbs and Runcorn were the two leading church men in the state of Oregon and they were using Armstrong as a very willing pivot around which to build their Oregon Conference. Of this situation Armstrong records in his Autobiography:

> "And actually. from the time of this business meeting, the brethren in Oregon looked to me for the leadership . . . There had been no minister of the church resident in Oregon . . ."

Armstrong held the evangelistic meetings as scheduled and both he and the Oregon Conference suffered heavy criticism from the national headquarters because they had sponsored Armstrong who was neither a member nor a credentialed minister (Autobiography, p. 357).

Rebuffed by the treatment from national headquarters,

Armstrong put on three evangelistic meetings for the minister of the Junction City Baptist Church.

The incident is recorded in Armstrong's Autobiography (p. 361):

> " . . . It was arranged that I should hold three special services there–on Saturday night, and on Sunday afternoon, and Sunday night–with the pastor himself holding his usual Sunday morning services."

Armstrong fails to record any problem of conscience in switching from one church denomination to the other, and back again, over the weekend. He also fails to record how much he was paid for his "three time stand" in the Baptist church.

Monday morning Armstrong "punched in" with the Oregon Conference and was now ostensibly in charge of the Church of God for the entire state of Oregon. He had the backing of the leading church members with no resident minister to deter his complete take-over.

But the Church of God did not stand idly by. They rushed men into the area to try and bring it back into their national union. The end result was a constant wrangle for the next three years.

Armstrong's next evangelistic assignment came in about six months. In the Slimmer of 1931 he was teamed with a Church of God minister from the California Conference–Mr. R. L. Taylor. They were to conduct an evangelistic campaign in Eugene, Oregon. At this time the Oregon Conference issued its first independent ministerial credentials. They, along with a weekly salary of $20, went to Armstrong shortly before he joined Taylor in the Eugene campaign. Only one member was added to the church as a result of their thirty-six-night stand-six nights a week for six weeks.

Armstrong was next teamed with Roy Daily to put on an evangelistic campaign in St. Helens, a short distance north of Portland. Taylor remained in Eugene to supervise the starting

of a small church on West 8th Street as he had donated a certain amount of the building materials. This little church later played an important role in Armstrong's independent ministry.

The result of the St. Helens campaign was a total zero and it was shortly abandoned in favor of Umapine over in Eastern Oregon. Five were baptized us a result or those meetings but that fellowship disintegrated quickly.

ARMSTRONG LAID OFF AS MINISTER

After return from the Umapine campaign in late 1931 Armstrong and Daily were laid off in favor of R. L. Taylor and. Armstrong was forced to look elsewhere for a livelihood. This ended Armstrong's first round of ministerial efforts having worked with only two evangelists. He found fault with both men and was unable. to get along with either.

Elder E. A. Straub's personal observation and tater that of John Kiez in this area indicates the same– . . .“That man [Armstrong I doesn't take [orders from] anybody” (Author's private notes).

Shortly thereafter (December 1931) Armstrong made his final try in the advertising field by spending the next fifteen months attempting to bail out a sinking ship–the *Astoria Morning Messenger* (Autobiography, p. 403). That ship sank in early 1933 and Armstrong stepped back aboard the payroll vessel of the Oregon Conference.

Mike Helms paid Armstrong a visit in January 1933 and found the family again in near starvation condition in Astoria, The latter part of February, Mr. Helms returned to Astoria with his truck, and prevailed on Armstrong to give up the idea of salvaging the *Astoria Morning Messenger* and take a $3.00 a week salary in the ministry. Food and housing were also to be provided.

ARMSTRONG REHIRED AS MINISTER

Armstrong's move back to Salem In February of 1933 was the beginning of the end –a six-month siege of turmoil to see

who would take over as representative or tile Oregon Conference. Unknown to Armstrong, two factions within the Oregon Conference were rushing to get *THEIR RESPECTIVE MINISTERS* in the place of pre-eminence.

The former president of the California Conference of the Church of God, A. J. Ray, had moved to Oregon and upon heating that the Oregon Conference planned to hire Armstrong, sent for his minister friend, Sam Oberg in California.

Concurrent with this, Mike Helms, president of the Oregon Conference, learned of Ray's plot Rushing to Astoria, he brought Armstrong back and presented him to the Oregon Conference which forthwith hired him. Oberg was left out in the cold.

Shortly after his arrival in Salem, Armstrong initiated a publication called "The BULLETIN" and circulated it to the entire Oregon membership for the first time in April 1933 (Autobiography, p. 444).

Also in early April Armstrong teamed with Oberg for meetings on the north side of Salem. During these meetings Armstrong's father became ill and he, accompanied by Oberg, went to pray for him. A. J. Ray filled in for them at the evangelistic podium. Armstrong's father died; they returned to the Salem meetings and brought them to a close on July I (Autobiography, p. 431), with no new members (p. 425).

ARMSTRONG BROUGHT TO TRIAL

During, this time Ray and Oberg brought Armstrong before the Oregon Conference Board because of alleged poor housekeeping practices of Armstrong's wife. At this meeting Armstrong, "with blazing eyes and sharp voice" threatened to "dose their mouths before they can finish the first sentence" if they dared accuse his wife. This was quite a change in Armstrong's psychological tactics since the time he "dropped to his knees" before this same group about two and a half years earlier,

With the Salem campaign completed and Armstrong's

domestic trial shelved, two new locations opened up for evangelistic campaigns–a church location in Harrisburg and the rural farm community in Firbute School District near the home of Elmer Fisher, eight miles west of Eugene. The Board met and assigned Oberg to Harrisburg and sent Armstrong to the farm area.

Oberg went directly to Harrisburg to prepare for his meetings coming tip July 9th, but Armstrong stayed behind, personally visited and baptized some whom Taylor would not baptize. He proceeded to rent a church building on the north side of Salem, combined the few newly gleaned members with current members who could come up from Jefferson and put together a church of about 30 members. The Board of Directors for the Oregon Conference arranged for A. J. Ray to act as pastor and Armstrong left for his next assignment. The Salem group fell apart very quickly.

Armstrong arrived in the Firbute School District about the 5th of July and started his evangelistic campaign to coincide with Oberg's–July 9 (Autobiography, p. 435). Armstrong preached his troublesome doctrines of British Israelism and prophecy–doctrines which were not fully approved by the Oregon Conference Board. And he neglected to preach doctrines which the board desired. By Sunday, August 6, Armstrong had baptized *FOUR NEW MEMBERS*

The same Sunday, Ray and Oberg were dispatched by the Board to meet Armstrong in the Jeans Schoolhouse (four miles west of Firbute) to instruct him, he should not baptize those who were not properly informed of the church's doctrines.

Armstrong declined to be reproved and was summoned to appear before a specially called General Business Meeting of the Oregon Conference the following Sunday. He was instructed not to let the Fishers or any in the Firbute or Eugene area know about the meeting.

ARMSTRONG ON TRIALAGAIN

Sunday, August 13, Armstrong appeared before the

Conference to determine his disposition with regard to the church. Ray and Oberg spearheaded a drive to put Armstrong out of the organization for violating its instructions–preaching questionable doctrine and failure to fully instruct candidates in approved church doctrine before baptism.

Armstrong's defense centered on a "straw dummy"–the meaning of *repentance* being his main issue, He defined it as an "unconditional surrender" and argued, if one "totally surrenders" he does not need to know all of God's will before baptism. Armstrong's concept was; the candidate gets baptized and then accepts what Armstrong tells him after baptism.

Armstrong's concept would be very fine provided he and his church were as infallible as God. But unfortunately this can never be the case. The turmoil and fracture which later came to Armstrong's own church stands as evidence that his hypothesis was in error.

Armstrong Closed his defense with a request that the Board postpone action on his disposition until he could again be present–as he had to leave immediately to hold an evangelistic service. The Board agreed.

The Board, in keeping with its word, did not take further action on Armstrong's personal disposition. However, they did pass a resolution to reaffirm their official policy–"their ministers must teach all church doctrines to candidates before baptism."

This chaffed Armstrong greatly. And again he chose to take the path of the *loner.* Instead of working on the team, Armstrong refused to comply with the policy of his superiors–clearly a case of insubordination. Armstrong had not been asked to do anything contrary to God's Word. It was simply a matter of administrative policy. But Armstrong took such an indefensible position that even his long time backers, Hobbs, Helms and Runcorn, could not save him.

Armstrong's refusal to instruct the candidates in

accordance with established policy ostracized him from the Oregon Conference even though its board *did* not take immediate steps to oust him.

ARMSTRONG QUITS-TAKES MEMBERS AND MAILING LIST

Armstrong wrote the church officials a letter rejecting his (then) $3.00 a week salary, left the parish home in Salem and moved .into the vicinity of Eugene (Autobiography, p. 447). There he continued to hold evangelistic meetings in the country community west of Eugene.

However, Armstrong claims he never left the church.

> "My wife and I did not leave the church. This was God's church . . . They came closer to Biblical truth than any other . . ." (Autobiography, p. 448).

This actually indicates he considered himself a member of that church, yet he has continually denied it. This is very difficult if not impossible to reconcile. He says:

> ". . . [we] continued to fellowship with those brethren. I continued to work with them and with their ministers as far as possible. The lay brethren continued to look to me for the leadership . . . But from that all-day wrangle I was independent of them and their ministers financially" (Autobiography, p. 448).

Another apparent reason for Armstrong's association with those people was to proselyte members and get funds, At least that is the way it turned out.

Regarding finances, Armstrong recorded in his autobiography that he had been taking offerings directly from the members as well as taking his salary and living expenses from the Oregon Conference Board. There appears to be a question of ethics here–particularly in view of the

fact that later, Armstrong never allowed *his* ministers to take and use tithes and offerings directly. He stigmatized such practices as "stealing" when done by others. Thus, what was acceptable and practiced by him is rated as sin when done by others.

Armstrong pulled away us many members from the Oregon Conference as possible. Surely he will argue, many of those were his own converts. True, a few may have been, but he was paid by the Oregon Conference to produce that "fruit." Surely the Oregon Conference felt those members belonged to the church instead of Armstrong personally.

A group of his own ministers chose to withdraw from Armstrong, in 1973-74, taking members with them. He referred to them as "instruments of Satan," for taking tithes and members. But, of course, when he did this, he did it as the supposed only true minister of God???

With regard to Armstrong's break from the Oregon Conference perhaps the old parable applies– "He who laughs last laughs best." Armstrong had one *ace* up his sleeve. He had started circulating The BULLETIN in April and had compiled a rather comprehensive state-wide mailing list. In short order he utilized this list to contact the members for a pledge to back his new found venture of radio evangelism.

Compare the following references from Armstrong's Autobiography:

A. Page 320 indicates Armstrong estimated about 50 to 60 members in the Oregon Conference.
B. Page 444 indicates he had been circulating The BULLETIN to the state-wide list.
C. Page 458–Armstrong changes the name of the state organ, The BULLETIN, to his PLAIN TRUTH and sends it to the same mailing list which he rates as "possibly less than 50."
D. Page 454 indicates Armstrong solicited pledges from this same list to support his radio broadcast after he had broken away.

E. Some of the names on that list were 'such noted and staunch conference members as Runcorn, Hobbs, Helms, and McGill (Autobiography, April 1961 PLAIN TRUTH).

Thus, Armstrong closed his *official* association with the *old line* Church of God and the Oregon Conference. He rejected his $3.00 a week salary and walked off with their mailing list which he promptly used to get their money.

CHAPTER TEN

ARMSTRONG'S LAST BATTLE WITH THE CHURCH OF GOD

Armstrong, now free from the Oregon Conference, set out to build up his base of operation in the area of Eugene, Oregon.

The evangelistic meetings at Firbute drew to a close on August 20, 1933, shortly after his break with the Oregon Conference. A head-count at that time indicated Armstrong had approximately twenty members in that area including ten older members from the Fisher and Ellis families. This obviously included children.

ARMSTRONG'S NEW RADIO CHURCH

The first official meeting of Armstrong's new group took place the day following the campaign at the farm home of Ed Smith–across the road from the Jeans School House. The members voted Armstrong as pastor and Elmer Fisher as deacon.

Another meeting was called a few weeks later to approve plans for a weekly radio broadcast to be conducted by Armstrong. It was viewed as "an effective evangelistic activity of the church" (Autobiography, p. 454).

This action was prompted by an invitation for Armstrong to speak on KORE's weekday morning devotional starting Monday, October 9. Armstrong used this occasion to preach his heretical doctrine of British Israelism which always starts with the subject of "The Promises to Abraham." Armstrong thus declares on his very first radio program he "struck directly at the heart of the Gospel." (Autobiography, p. 454.)

Armstrong's new religious concepts engendered a small response from the curious public but no conversions resulted right away.

A different kind of reaction, however, occurred in the religious community. It was one of outright hostility! The organized religious denominations of Eugene, angered by Armstrong's heresies, agreed to prepare programs in respective weekly turns to deny Armstrong the opportunity to ever again get on that free devotional period of time to spew out his heretical doctrines of British Israelism and world prophecies. Armstrong, in his sermonizings has always since branded their action as a "trick of Satan" to prevent his "gospel commission" from being fulfilled.

The station manager was somewhat embarrassed over the whole situation. He attempted to settle the problem by offering Armstrong a half-hour Sunday broadcast, for which he did not have the money to pay.

But Armstrong refused to be put in the box and used this as an opportunity to generate an air of excitement among his little flock, now meeting each Saturday in the country at the Jeans School House twelve miles west of Eugene. But he was not able to drum up sufficient funds from among those people to meet the $2.50 weekly charges.

At this point he turned again to his "confiscated" mailing list. According to his Autobiography he says:

> "So I sent out a letter to the small mailing list of members we had for The BULLETIN. I asked for pledges . . . to help raise this $2.50 per week . . . In due time pledges came back for . . . about $1.35 per week!" (Autobiography, p. 454).

Elder Straub's personal testimony:

> "He [Armstrong] says it was a few brethren that pledged and by saying that leaves the impression that it was a few favorite brethren. But the fact is, that was the Church of God that did that, brethren of the Church of God who are [1975] still with the Church of God" (Author's Personal Notes),

Armstrong soon began to frantically beat the "Armstrong Mission" drums in order to fasten his self-appointed commission of Matthew 24:14 on the backs of his own members and those Church of God brethren of the Oregon Conference.

ARMSTRONG'S WORLDWIDE COMMISSION

In early 1934 Armstrong records:

> " . . . at last . . . it became apparent Jesus Christ was opening the gigantic mass-media door of radio and the printing press for the proclaiming of His . . . Gospel [meaning the Armstrong heresy] to the world !"

Just how far did Armstrong envision his special calling would take him? Ironically enough, it is expressed in the sub-script of the Stanberry Church of God letterhead:

> "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in *all the world* for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Matt. 24:14

That sub-script had been carried on the letterhead of the Church of God long before Armstrong opened the Bible for his first Bible study. Armstrong had seen that letterhead many times as correspondence under that letterhead had been directed to him on several occasions.

And so, Armstrong, even while working with them, aspired to usurp that supposed commission. In his Autobiography, page 457, Armstrong cites that same scripture as *his divine commission* (Matthew 24:14) and adds Mark 13:10.

What was Armstrong's position at this time shortly after his departure from the Oregon Conference?

A. Armstrong's wife had the dream-vision in 1917 indicating he had some special calling or commission.
B. He refused discipleship, baptism and membership with the Church of God.

C. He refused to join in the ministry of their church.
D. He soaked up the fellowship of those members and took freely of their tithes and offerings and preached among them.
E. He assumed the same commission which the Church of God had assumed–Matthew 24:14.
F. He finally broke off official ties of control from that group.
G. He proselyted as many members as he could.
H. He took their mailing list and used it to circulate The BULLETIN.
I. He later changed the name of The BULLETIN to his PLAIN TRUTH.
J. He used this mailing list to solicit pledges for his evangelistic radio efforts.

With these factors in his favor Armstrong was ready to launch an independent ministry. Remember, he wrote Duggar on July 11, 1928 (referred to in the previous chapter), he had a "special mission" but he was not then prepared for it. He indicated it would require *organized effort.*

Five years later, in 1933 Armstrong was ready! He had formulated his basic theological concepts, he had the sympathy of many of *their* members and he made his move!

BIRTH OF PLAIN TRUTH MAGAZINE

Only then did he reveal the remaining part of his aims and goals;

> "Immediately the idea came of realizing, at last, the dream I had cherished since 1927, the publication of a magazine, to be called The PLAIN TRUTH. Back in 1927 I had made up an entire 'dummy' of this proposed magazine. I had even written articles for it. I even had a professional letter artist design a front cover idea in 1927 . . ." (Autobiography, p. 457.)

It is noteworthy that Armstrong had written articles for the official Church of God magazine, The BIBLE

ADVOCATE, during those years–1927-34. Still he had this "cherished dream" of printing his own magazine all that time. This further reveals why Armstrong refused their invitation of membership and active ministerial affiliation. Armstrong simply had visions of doing his "own thing."

While there is certainly nothing wrong with his desire to publish The PLAIN TRUTH independently, there is a big question of ethics surrounding his method of achieving it–at the direct expense of another church denomination,

And so The PLAIN TRUTH was introduced as a follow-up to Armstrong's "Radio Church" program which started in January 1934. It had previously been issued as The BULLETIN–the only known publication of the Oregon Conference, but it was, according to Armstrong's Autobiography, converted into his own publication:

> "If I could not afford to publish a high-quality, professional-appearing magazine, I would simply convert the mimeographed 'BULLETIN' . . . into The PLAIN TRUTH." (Autobiography, p. 458-460).

Under these circumstances, with a *$10.00* typewriter and a *$10.00* Neostyle The BULLETIN gave birth to Armstrong's new PLAIN TRUTH and The BULLETIN died in the process.

After his break with the Oregon Conference Armstrong quickly saw the need for direct personal contact with audiences. He consequently initiated regular evangelistic meetings in the vicinity of Eugene.

ARMSTRONG'S THREE-POINT PROGRAM

He thus developed his famous THREE POINT PROGRAM–the radio broadcast, The Plain TRUTH as a follow-up and PERSONAL public meetings. The members of Jeans Country Church "completely approved" Armstrong's three-point program but they were too poor to underwrite it.

Armstrong next launched a campaign to sell his concept to the members of the Oregon Conference–again using the confiscated mailing list.

He states:

> " . . . I wrote to the small number of members on the mailing list I had . . . the news of the forthcoming THREE-POINT campaign: (1) The half hour Sunday radio program; (2) The new mimeographed magazine for interested listeners, The PLAIN TRUTH, and (3) Personal. public meetings."

The Oregon Conference response to Armstrong's new three-point program was not overwhelming. He asked for pledges totaling $2.50 but the pledges which came in amounted to only $1.35. That averaged less than 3 cents per week for each, based on 50 members.

Impelled by this urge to broad cast, Armstrong moved from the Fisher's home (he had lived there for about nine months) and rented a place in Eugene. During this time he attempted to carry out his designs in opposition to those from whom he had proselyted in the Oregon Conference and from whom he had confiscated their mailing list.

The Oregon Conference was, August 1934, split down the middle and thereby abolished. This left Armstrong's opponents divided but with no fewer grudges for his laying claim to their storehouse of members and tithes.

Abolition of the Oregon Conference, however gave him a temporary respite. It was brought about by the following factors: Duggar's plot to split the national organization had jelled. Half of the Oregon Conference stayed with the. old line Church of God, Stanberry, Missouri. The other half aligned themselves with A. N. Duggar and his new organizational plan with headquarters in Salem, West Virginia.

ARMSTRONG CREDENTIALED BY SALEM CHURCH OF GOD

Armstrong was chosen to sit On the Board of the Seventy Ruling Elders in Duggar's organization and was credentialed as Pastor of the Jefferson church which gave him oversight of half of the members of the previous Oregon Conference. Concerning this arrangement Armstrong records in his

Autobiography:

> "I began to send in regular minister's reports [to Duggar's organization] . . . I did not accept salary or expense money from them [This is disputed by the Salem Church of God]. None in our local church put himself under their authority . . ." (Autobiography, p. 473)

Armstrong's report responsibility to Duggar was, by this concept, minimized to that of a "friendly letter" status. As a reward he collected the tithes and offerings from Duggar's adherents in Oregon. Armstrong claims he never received salary or expense from them but obviously there was a considerable income from this group which in effect belonged to Duggar. Armstrong was supposedly Duggar's spokesman.

Obviously, such a one sided "sweetheart" arrangement could not long endure. Armstrong was getting all the tithes and offerings in that area of Duggar's domain for the price or a postage stamp. Another rift was sure to come but it was delayed for over two years–time vitally needed for Armstrong to shore up and stabilize his shaky foundation. But from the outset this proved to be stormy water. Armstrong laid claim to the tithes but others in high positions disapproved.

During the next two or two and one-half years Armstrong worked feverishly on his *THREE POINT PROGRAM* as well as building a solid foundation under his local Eugene church.

One of his first moves was to purchase and remodel the Eugene church building which had been built by R. L. Taylor in 1931. The building was paid for by the members of the Duggar faction but deeded to a Board of Trustees–Fisher, Day and Conn (Autobiography, p. 486-87), The members from three areas–Jeans School, Alvadore and Eugene were consequently focused into this one center with an attendance of about 45 including children (Autobiography, p. 474-77).

Later in the year Armstrong purchased a home on West Sixth Street in Eugene, also paid for by the members of the

Duggar faction. It too was deeded to the Church Board of Trustees.

By September 3, 1936 Armstrong laid plans for expanding his radio program into Salem and Portland. His letter requesting pledges for this expansion netted a total of $40.00 per month* (Autobiography, p. 522). Five months later, February, 1937 Armstrong estimated his combined listening audience at 40-50,000 for all three areas–Eugene, Salem, and Portland.

In early autumn of 1935 he set up a dingy office in the unventilated interior of the Hampton Building, across from the Eugene Post Office. He then managed to get possession of an old 1929 Graham-Paige automobile and for the first time "Armstrong's gospel" was on wheels.

This was all financed from a monthly income of $40-45 including tithes from the Jefferson church and the Duggar faction.

ARMSTRONG: THE FLUKE PROPHET

In 1935 Armstrong tried his prophetic soundings in a big way for the first time. And just like "beginner's luck" it worked the first time around. In an early 1935 issue of Armstrong's little mimeographed PLAIN TRUTH, he predicted Mussolini would take Ethiopia. It happened in October later that same year, though Mussolini lost Ethiopia in 1941 which totally negated Armstrong's prophecy. Yet, this momentarily put Armstrong on the map as a PROPHET. He was quick to exploit the full value of his soaring prestige among the people of the Church of God and they soon began to look to him for the meaning of world events during those stormy pre-World War II days.

Under these circumstances Armstrong's radio program continued to be a chaffing sore to other ministers of the Church of God. Not because of the program itself but

*Note: Here a pledge of $40 as compared with $5.40 per month which Armstrong was able to get before his association with the Duggar faction.

because Armstrong was using it as a means of spreading his heresy* to an Increasingly large number of their members. Through this means Armstrong had direct vocal access into the homes of many if not most of the members. Through his broadcast, in conjunction with direct mail access from their confiscated mailing list, Armstrong was gaining momentum for support of his *THREE POlNT PROGRAM.* More and more members were turning toward Armstrong and away from other Church of God ministers serving in the area.

Armstrong's three-point program and his three-fold heresies were threatening to captivate the whole church. He publicly, over the air, taught TWO of those heresies–(l) British lsraelism and (2) Prophecy.

Privately, among members and in sermons he was vocal about the third: keeping the "Feasts of the Jews" as they are referred to in John 6:4. Those other ministers of the Church of God were desperately looking for ways to keep those heresies from taking over the entire church. One of the means elected to curtail them was "open exposure" of Armstrong's *tactics* and a "candid" revelation of the fallacies of those heresies. The time and event elected for this exposure was the annual Church of God Camp Meeting.

ARMSTRONG WINS BATTLE-LOSES WAR

The place selected for the (August 20-29, 1937) camp meeting was in the Eugene vicinity. Armstrong and the Eugene church were to be hosts.

Armstrong rented a campsite near Eugene under his own name rather than under the name of the church as it should have been. While making preparations for the event, leading authorities of the Duggar faction of the Church of God gathered near Eugene to determine how to handle the Armstrong heresy problem.

*Note: The Armstrong heresies were: (1) British Israelism (2) The interpretation of prophecy based on British Israelism and (3) The "Jews' Feasts." See; "A History of the Seventh Day Church of God" by Nickels and Cole (An Unpublished Thesis - Author's Library).

Armstrong got wind of their meetings and sent out his lieutenants to warn those ministers to stop plans to expose his tactics and heresy Or he would cancel the entire meeting.

This promptly brought the annual coordinator, A.N. Duggar to Armstrong's door, to warn him he must not cancel the meetings. But the power of decision was in Armstrong's hands. He had announced the meetings over the air for several weeks prior and he could use the same means to cancel them. Thus Armstrong informed Duggar, he held three aces which he was prepared to Use.

He threatened:

> First: " . . . next Sunday, I shall announce to the radio audience that the camp meeting, to start that night, has been canceled . . ."
>
> Second: "You see, I have rented this camp ground in my own name, and I alone control it. I will not allow the grounds to be used . . . There is no other possible place where such a meeting could be held."
>
> Third: "I have the en tire mailing list. I shall send out notices . . . telling them it is canceled, and not to come. About 85 percent of all expected to attend are members of the two churches at Eugene and up at Jefferson, of which I am Pastor–and they will do exactly as I say." (See Armstrong's Autobiography, p. 530.)

It is evident from the above percentage figure that Armstrong still held about 85 percent o(the entire Oregon Conference membership,

And so, Armstrong had them "over a barrel" and he was willing to dunk the whole series of meetings by pulling the string. The General Ministry con ceded; they would not expose Armstrong's distasteful tactics or his heresies. Armstrong in turn, was to refrain from preaching his heresies during the meetings.

Armstrong had *piped* and the hierarchy *danced.* But after

the meetings were over they determined that "piper" Armstrong would be dealt with more thoroughly. The tune they played back to him was not pleasant to his ears. It was a blow to his ministerial vanity; his bank account and thus to his broadcast.

A. N. Duggar, national leader of that faction of the Church of God told Armstrong the honeymoon was over. lie would collect no more tithes and offerings for the price of a postage stamp to mail his ministerial reports.

Armstrong paraphrased Duggar's presentation before the ministerial meeting in his Autobiography:

> " . . . dear Brother Armstrong had worked So hard, and was so overworked, that they decided to 'help' . . . by relieving . . . some of my 'burdens.' Therefore, they had decided to appoint another of their ministers as pastor of the church . . . at Jefferson . . ." (Autobiography, p. 531).

While Armstrong had won the opening battle, it now looked as if he might lose the war.

But Armstrong persisted in carrying out his plans for spreading his heresies and collecting what tithes he could from the church brethren. This prompted further action from the top officials of the Church of God. They sent him orders to transfer to Tacoma, Washington and assigned the entire Eugene-Salem territory to A. J. Ray (Autobiography, PLAIN TRUTH, June 1963).

Armstrong refused to move, claiming the church area as well as the radio program was his–emphasizing he had taken neither pay nor expense money from them. This attitude again brought A. N. Duggar back to the area, accompanied by the secretary of the General Conference, Otto Hueber from California. Upon arrival they called a meeting with Armstrong.

The account of that meeting with Otto Haeber, Elder Straub and Mike Helms of the Old Line Church of God is reported as follows as recalled by Elder Straub:

> Straub: "This was reported to me by brother Haeber who was treasurer at that time. Brother Haeber said, 'When he [Armstrong] said he never received that money [$500], I went to my briefcase and got a check of over $500 . . . which was canceled [cashed] by Herbert . . . and said, Herbert, what is this? You never received any money from the organization? What is this here?"
> Straub: "I quoted that when I talked to Mr. Helms, the president of the Oregon Conference at that time. When I said he [Armstrong] claims he never took any money from the organization, he [Helms] said, 'Ah, that's a big fib. Everything he [Armstrong] ever got [meaning tithes] never went any place [to headquarters], but to him. He hung on to it pretty tightly.'"

Thus the records of the Church of God proved Armstrong's claims to be somewhat less than reliable.

ARMSTRONG FIRED BY DUGGAR

Consequently, in 1937 Armstrong was asked to surrender his ministerial credentials to A N. Duggar. The account is recorded by John Kiez in his thesis, "The Radio Church of God vs. The Church of God (7th Day)" p. 1:

> " . . . in the *fall* of 1937 . . . Armstrong's credentials were revoked by the Salem Church of God organization [A. N. Duggar being the president]. The reason given by the Board . . . was because he taught and kept the [Feasts of the Jews) Feast Days. But the real reason seems to have been because of his uncooperative attitude." (Author's private papers)

Under these circumstances Armstrong left the Church of God in 1937. Elder Straub's testimony renders the final feeling and attitude of the general membership;

> "To begin with, he [Armstrong] had all the Oregon brethren, but when he wasn't willing to study with the

> ministers, and to study what the Church of God taught [about Armstrong's heresies] –not even willing to study it [Armstrong's heresies] they [Church of God members] just all left him . . . stayed with the Church and Herbert left with a few families in Eugene." (Author's private papers)

For the next *TEN YEARS* Armstrong was destined to walk a lonely path, haunted by 'the knowledge that he had been unable to put himself under authority and work with others. It was from these circumstances that he developed what appears to be troublesome inferiority and persecution complexes,

Since his dismissal by Duggar, Armstrong has lashed out at those of the Church of God to ridicule, malign, impugn, and undermine them in the hearts of God's people. In all his writings, broadcasts, and sermonizing it is difficult, if not impossible, to find evidence of a "heart-felt" good word or compliment for those with whom he associated for over *TEN YEARS*.

Those harbored feelings of animosity and insecurity have been the wellspring from which has come Armstrong's present empire–a dominion in which it is openly proclaimed that God's, and hence Armstrong's, form of government is total dictatorship.

But Armstrong has not always held this dictatorial attitude. Of this, one of his very close former Church of God friends has said:

> "Following this incident of the revocation of Armstrong's credentials, he and I remained close friends . . . [but] something caused him to drop me like a hot potato . . . I remember the time when Herbert wrote and taught strongly against church organization [church government in the Church of God] as it was generally carried on, but now he is so strongly organized that many of his followers actually fear him" (Radio Church of God vs. Church of God [7th Day], by John Kiez, p. 2).

At this point Armstrong forever officially severed his relations with the Church of God. He had sacrificed his friends and associates in favor of his heresies of British Israelism, prophecy and the "Feasts of the Jews."

These all had free rein during Armstrong's *liberated* years after he was ousted from the ministry of the Church of God. But for liberty a price must be paid–a price of which Armstrong became acutely aware after the failure of his prophecies in the mid-1940's. Those were the years of Armstrong's solitary ministry, a time for him to really test the metal of his heresies–the subject of our next chapter.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

ARMSTRONG THE PROPHET: TRUE OR FALSE?

For almost *TEN YEARS* Armstrong cultivated the fields of the straggling Church of God in the state of Oregon. His only success, except for his *brilliant flash* as a prophet, was his continued measure of *failure.* He failed to finish high school, failed as a publisher's representative, as a laundry advertising agent, as a cook-pot sales man, as a church member, and now he had failed as a minister–was fired by officials of the Church of God.

At this juncture, he drew himself within himself, retreated to the little town of Eugene, and determined to use his *THREE POINT PROGRAM* of radio, The PLAIN TRUTH and personal evangelism to rebuild both his badly shattered image and his empire. But little did he know that the next *TEN YEARS* held even greater disappointments!

Armstrong may have been down but he wasn't out!–and where there is life there is hope. He proceeded with no restraints on the spread of his heresies. But even more, he was now engaged in a grudge battle with time, chance, and the Church of God. He was determined to preach more, baptize more, and take in more money than those in the Church of God. This, to him, would constitute proof that he had God's blessing. *Growth* of his work became an obsession and *lack of growth* was scorned as evidence that God had withdrawn His blessing.

THE GATHERING PROPHETIC STORM

The world stage was set for unleashing Armstrong's heretical prophecies as the entire world was poised on the brink of war.

In less than six months from the revocation of Armstrong's

ministerial credentials, Hitler ordered his troops into Austria, March 11, 1938. March 4, 1939, it was Czechoslovakia. The following month, April 8, Mussolini took Albania, and by May 9, Hitler and Mussolini had formed their infamous military alliance. August 21, Russia and Germany announced their 10-year non-aggression pact. On September 1, Hitler made his lightning strike into Poland, automatically drawing Britain and France into the vortex of his power play.

All the while Armstrong was casting a *weather-eye* over the war-clouds of the world. Each military maneuver was weighed as evidence to Armstrong that God had prepared him as a *special prophet* to warn the U.S. and Britain of their forthcoming Armageddon.

Armstrong wasted little time in trying out his latest prophetic discoveries, as he had (by early 1939) formulated his basic prognostications concerning the outcome of World War II.

He prophesied a union of TEN NATIONS in the Axis powers and proceeded to describe future movement of nations with the pretended precision of a Master at chess.

WORLD WAR II PROPHECIES

His analysis was published in the February-March, 1939 issue of The PLAIN TRUTH magazine:

> "Everybody knows, today, that world war is certain to come . . . Mussolini [is] to capture Egypt as well as . . . half the city of Jerusalem . . . [he] will become world peace enemy number one . . . But Hitler's gains in' this direction will not provoke war.
>
> " . . . Mussolini must absolutely wrest control of the Mediterranean from Great Britain . . .
>
> "When the war starts lbn Saud, Arabian leader, under Mussolini's influence, and with his backing, will declare himself King of a United Arabia, and will claim Palestine and Jerusalem, and attempt to take it, pouring both Arabian and Italian soldiers into the Holy Land . . . Mussolini must take

> the four vital gates and passes indicated . . . [Gibraltar, Djiboti-Aden, Suez and the Tunisian sea pass].
> "We cannot imagine Hitler, ruler over a German nation twice as great in population as Italy, turning all his vast power over to Mussolini, and himself playing 'second fiddle' to Mussolini . . . yet Bible prophecies [show] . . . most if not *all* of the nations now coming under Hitler's influence, finally giving their armed power over to [Mussolini] the Roman leader . . . Possibly Hitler will die or be killed, within the next eighteen months.
> "General Franco [Spain] becomes the first of ten dictators . . . to give their power over to Mussolini.
> "Ethiopia and Libya will become allied with Russia. Mussolini will take Egypt, parts of Palestine, and the Suez Canal, besides other territory.
> "Russia will gain control of the Orient . . . [and] will send their mighty hordes, including the yellow races, into Palestine in an effort to conquer BOTH the Fascists and the Democracies.
> "Finally ALL NATIONS, the United States included, will be drawn into frightful, unthinkable, horrible . . . war, on the battle-fields of Palestine."

The following year Armstrong fine tuned his prophecies and was ready to predict the specific plight of the Democracies: (April-May 1940 PLAIN TRUTH).

> "Democracy went, yesterday, in England! *Today England* is a DICTATORSHIP, as absolutely as that of Adolph Hitler or Benito Mussolini . . . And when the United States gets into the war . . . THE SAME THING WILL HAPPEN HERE! . . . the president will become dictator absolute and not only soldiers, but factory workers, farmers, every dollar of our money and wealth–all will be CONSCRIPTED! And it is THEN . . . [that] the Great Tribulation shall come, and the MARK of the Beast will be enforced! THE TIME IS AT HAND. IT IS time for us to AWAKE!

> ". . . Armageddon, we believe, must be at least [only] three or four years away . . ."

Seven months later, in the November-December 1940 PLAIN TRUTH, Armstrong 'proclaimed:

> "It is part of God's prophesied plan that Britain shall be invaded and conquered . . .
> "It is in the prophesied course of the war that the main fighting shall be in the Mediterranean and the Near East.
> "Turkey is . . . to turn traitor to, Britain . . .
> "God has decreed that, . . . Britain and the United States are to utterly consume and annihilate the Turks from off the earth! . . . an entire nation wiped out–DESTROYED! Not one is to remain. God has decreed it! Surely it is the most fateful doom ever pronounced upon any people."

In late 1941, September-October PLAIN TRUTH Armstrong began to predict the fate of the United States:

> "Our God is now about to punish . . . if our stiff-necked and rebellious people go on defying . . . trusting only in material and military defense . . . We shall be invaded, CONQUERED, uprooted from our homes and transplanted to OTHER lands across the seas–scattered, ruled over as slaves."

With the March-April issue of the 1942 PLAIN TRUTH, Armstrong mapped out the future destruction of the United States in greater detail, In his article entitled "Democracy's Fate in Prophecy," Armstrong defines the six vital fortress-gates of Democracy and prophesied their loss to the enemy: The British Isles, Gibraltar, Suez Canal, Singapore, Pearl Harbor, and the Panama Canal.

> "Pearl Harbor has been crippled and Singapore has been taken.

> "God Almighty says in plain language that He will take away ALL those 'gates' . . .
> "UNLESS America WAKES UP, repents, turns to God and puts her faith in Him, the punishment we already arc suffering in greater and harder doses from week to week shall continue until there is invasion–and utter SLAVERY!
> "America is being warned – through The PLAIN TRUTH–through the Radio Church of God [Armstrong's World Tomorrow program] . . .
> "Oh, America . . . awake today, repent, and be spared! . . .
> "Today we are not blundering and muddling our way to victory, BUT TO DEFEAT!"

Armstrong envisioned himself leading a nation-wide revival to bring America to her knees before him and thus save her from defeat: (October-November, 1942 PLAIN TRUTH).

> "An offensive, NOW! There is an OFFENSIVE that America is prepared, now, to launch against Hitler–a great, heart-rending, BELIEVING, national PRAYER OFFENSIVE! . . . That is the way we can NOW SERVE OUR COUNTRY in her hour of crisis. That is the SURE way we can SAVE our country . . ."

In his letter to co-workers dated May, 1944 Armstrong further reveals how he looks upon himself as a spiritual leader and prophet to the United States of America:

> "God has called me to the special mission of WARNING THIS NATION."

In the same letter he proceeds to again prophesy the downfall of America:

> "The Japanese have invaded India . . .
> "We have made but the slightest little dent in the Jap defenses in the Pacific and at the present rate it will take us

about 20 years and more resources than we possess, to take enough of these island defenses to smash thru to the central objective and win . . .

"The prophecies of Almighty God tell us bluntly that WE ARE GOING TO LOSE–unless our people WILL REPENT . . ."

Armstrong's theme of DOOM and DESTRUCTION of the United States and Great Britain was carried right on through those war years. But it was somewhat mitigated by fear of being ordered off the air by Federal authorities. As the Allies continued to make military gains Armstrong's prophetic prestige correspondingly decreased among those who knew the full extent of his prophetic pronouncements. And with the decrease of his prestige came a decrease in monetary support from those who knew of his prophetic failures. And so, Armstrong began to mitigate his stand while he kept reaching for *new audiences* which knew nothing of those failures.

His financial plight had become so desperate by early 1944, it became imperative that Armstrong sell his home to pay radio bills–but he hung on (Autobiography, August 1962 PLAIN TRUTH).

By early 1945 Armstrong was broadcasting from fewer than a half-dozen U.S. Stations–primarily on the West Coast with one 50 KW station in San Antonio, Texas. However, his main concentration of radio coverage was with three superpower stations operating along the northern border of Mexico – XEC, XELO, XERF.

From those stations, vast areas of the Mountain States, the Southwest, Midwest and the South were bombarded daily with Armstrong's prophetic warnings (Autobiography, October 1962 PLAIN TRUTH).

ARMSTRONG FINISHED IN OREGON

What had promised to be a rocketing prophetic career for Armstrong turned out to have the trajectory of a sputtering

Roman candle. He went up in a brilliant flash but was beginning to descend in a sickening trail of smoke–headed down *to* a disastrous crash.

Every single one of his prophecies had failed! Even his original *brilliant* prophecy regarding Mussolini's taking Ethiopia backfired when Mussolini lost if to the British in 1941 instead of Ethiopia becoming allied with Russia, as Armstrong had predicted.

In fact, it seems everything Armstrong prophesied happened in *exact reverse.* The following are just some of the *reverse* examples which could be cited–things which happened exactly reverse to what Armstrong prophesied.

1. Mussolini did not capture Egypt.
2. Mussolini did not capture half the city of Jerusalem.
3. Hitler's gains did provoke war.
4. Mussolini did not get control of the Mediterranean.
5. The Arabians did not ally with Mussolini.
6. Mussolini [or Hitler] did not get control of Gibraltar, Aden, Suez or the Tunisian pass.
7. Hitler did not turn over power to Mussolini.
8. Franco of Spain did not give his military over to Mussolini.
9. Ethiopia and Libya did not ally with Russia.
10. Russia did not get control of the Orient.
11. The United States and Britain were not drawn into a major battle in Palestine.
12. The Turks did not turn against Britain.
13. Britain and the U.S. did not obliterate Turkey.
14. Britain was not invaded and conquered.
15. The United States did not have a NATION-WIDE spiritual revival.
16. The United States did not lose the war.
17. America and Britain were not enslaved in other nations.
18. England did not lose her democracy.
19. America was not conscripted.

20. The Great Tribulation of the Bible did not take place.
21. Armageddon did not occur.

As a result of those progressive prophetic failures, Armstrong's career as a prophet was just about to crash. In early 1945 the Allied Victory was only a few months away. Hitler's regime had almost reached the stage. of rigor. mortis and Japan's *rising sun* was settling dangerously close to death's horizon.

This situation required superb strategy on Armstrong's behalf. He was now forced to draw up a complete appraisal of his position–where he had been, where he currently stood, and where he planned to go.

Upon appraising his past, he found himself in a very precarious standing. He had repeatedly rebuffed the ministers and authorities of the old line Church of God. They had. pleaded with him to forsake his prophetic heresies and pause long enough to learn of the pitfalls in his prophetic path. (Author's notes from Elder Straub, Church of God). But Armstrong scornfully rebuffed those offers and pressed forward with his own interpretations. He now stood on the brink of disaster. Thus, the Oregon brethren who knew him personally also knew of his conflict with the Oregon Conference and later with Duggar's regime. They all began to lose confidence in him.

Those were the cold, hard facts of the situation. And Armstrong was faced with going in one of *two directions.* He must either capitulate, humble himself and ask admission into the Church of God or look for a way of escape.

Armstrong again took the path of the loner. He took an escape route which would allow him to maintain his heretical doctrines. But that path was destined to be very *long,* lonely, circuitous, and difficult.

Armstrong soon saw that victory was within the grasp of the allies and he decided to *join* them since he couldn't beat them with his prophecies. So, he started preparations to attend the San Francisco Conference–just in case! In early

1945 the Allies were preparing for peace negotiations by meeting en masse for the first time to draw up the charter for the United Nations. Even at this late stage of the war Armstrong was unwilling to concede he could he 100 percent wrong in his prophetic utterances. In early April, 1945, before cessation of hostilities with Germany, Armstrong was desperately hoping for a turn of military events to save him from prophetic disaster.

On April 11, he wrote his co-workers:

> " . . . World events are moving rapidly toward a crisis. There *will be* [author's emphasis) a drastic turn in the war very soon. Whether the most momentous prophecy of all, for our nation and people, in the rapid unfolding of GOD'S PLAN in this age-END will be fulfilled immediately [this refers to the down-fall of the U.S. and Britain] –or whether it shall be slightly delayed . . . we shall not have to wait much longer, now, to know."

Later in the same letter, however, he begins to psychologically condition his co-workers for the eventuality of a peaceful settlement of World War II instead of the catastrophic "Armageddon" which he had prophesied for YEARS:

> "In any event, we are nearing the very CLOSE of this present age. We are in the very midst of the CRISIS at the CLOSE of the present world and age, and the final *END* of it all is traveling toward us at a speed much faster than we probably realize. OUR TIME IS SHORT, and we have *so much* to do yet! We must press on, with greater effort and energy and determination and sacrifice than we have been doing. Only a comparative FEW have heard the warning so far, even though we already are reaching a million [?] people every week with God's final WARNING MESSAGE. It must now go in far greater power! Many times the present audience must be made to hear it. They must be made really

> CONSCIOUS of it! I know I can count on you . . . to put forth greater effort with me, that the work not only *may continue,* but with multiplied power!
>
> "I expect to leave in two weeks to attend the United Nations conference at San Francisco, and from there Twill report to you the inside facts, and an analysis of the efforts of man to establish world peace, based on an understanding of GOD'S PLAN, and Biblical prophecies. Jesus warned us to 'WATCH!' these world events and efforts of man, as they fulfill the prophecies, as well as to 'PRAY!' and to 'BE READY,' for, as He warned, 'at such an hour as ye think not the Son of Man cometh: Who, then, is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season'–(that is, to proclaim the Gospel, and shout the special warning Message for this very end-time–the 'meat in due season')–'Blessed is that servant, whom his lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing' (Matt. 24:45-46).
>
> "We must not slacken, but rather increase our efforts, and keep at it until the Lord comes. Our time is short . . ."

Two weeks after writing "the above letter to the co-workers, Armstrong attended the meetings of the United Nations in San Francisco on April 25, 1945,

Upon his return to Oregon he was greeted by news of the collapse of Hitler's Third Reich. While America and all Europe was exultant with the joy of victory, Armstrong was squeezed between the jaws of his self-made prophetic vise. But for Armstrong, "It just wasn't supposed to turn out this way!"

By early August Armstrong had become so distraught that it was necessary to get away for a while. At the insistence of both his wife and office staff, he and his family took a *retreat* to Yakone Beach near Waldport, Oregon (Autobiography, Aug. 62 PLAIN TRUTH).

But there were greater troubles ahead which would bring Armstrong urgently to his office. On August 6, President

Truman, the military chiefs of staff, and General Douglas MacArthur conspired to tear up the remains of Armstrong's prophetic playhouse. They dispatched a specially fitted B-29 bomber to Hiroshima with orders to dump the terror of the world's first Atomic Bomb on that unsuspecting city.

Three days later a more powerful A-Bomb dropped on Nagasaki brought Hirohito and Premier Tojo to their knees. The following day Japan accepted the conditions of the Potsdam Ultimatum with the exception that the Japanese Emperor would remain head of state.

On September 2, 1945, General Douglas MacArthur went aboard the U.S. Flagship, Missouri, anchored in Tokyo Bay, and affixed his signature to the Japanese surrender documents thereby signing the death warrant to Armstrong's heretical prophecies.

This quickly brought Armstrong out of retreat. That last minute surprise super-weapon which Armstrong expected the enemy to produce, and thus snatch victory from the hands of the allies, backfired. The super-weapon came to the allies–not to the Japanese. And again, even Armstrong's prophetic insinuations went the exact opposite of the way he had hoped.

Armstrong was now faced with the dilemma of saving what he could from among his prophetic shambles, But one thing was sure he was finished in Oregon and he knew it!

Thus Armstrong turned his attention to maintaining the sympathy and confidence of his co-workers scattered over the U.S. who were less knowledgeable of his prophetic fiasco. His very first letter to them, after the surrender of Japan, was not one of candid admission that he had been wrong on TWENTY-ONE COUNTS OF PROPHECY, and perhaps more. That was totally ignored. Rather, his letter was calculated to gain their *sympathy*.

He writes, September, 1945:

> "Due to the war's end and other developments, Mrs. Armstrong and I returned to the office for a few days after

> only one week [in retreat] over on the Coast . . .
> "We do meet many obstacles, and even opposition, in this work . . ."
> "Sometimes I almost get to feeling that no one stands with me, and that all is opposition–you see, I'm human, as we all are, and subject to the Same human feelings and discouragements inherent in the natures of us all.
> . . . And when I read of the trials and tests and persecutions Jesus suffered of the plots laid against David by his enemies–of the opposition and hardships suffered by Paul–and then of the unbreakable PROMISES OF GOD to deliver us from EVERY trial, to supply EVERY need, to NEVER forsake us, and that HE WILL NOT stop THE WORK HE HAS BEGUN, then I can take courage . . ."

With ten years of prophecy failure behind him one would see reason to be discouraged. During the preceding TEN YEARS Armstrong's prophecies had been defeated battle by battle right along with the enemy Axis powers and this letter was an appeal to his. co-workers to stay with him. [23]

But it was evident Armstrong would have to move out of Oregon. He had lost the last ounce of respect among the Oregon brethren of the Church of God and also that of many of his own personal friends. It was evident he would have to make a clean sweep of the slate and start anew–salvaging what he could from a few thousand co-workers scattered over the United States.

ARMSTRONG ABANDONS OREGON

To justify abandoning his churches and leaving the Pacific Northwest, Armstrong began to propagate the idea that his work had now outgrown Eugene, He contended that the headquarters must be moved near Hollywood–a leading communication center of the nation. And he propagated the idea that The PLAIN TRUTH was too big for printers in that area–the press-run being about 15,000 copies of an 8-page issue.

And so, by December 1945, only a few weeks after the surrender of the Japanese, and consequently a total collapse of Armstrong's prophecies, he made plans to move to Southern California (Autobiography, Nov. 1962 PLAIN TRUTH).

By this time his mall group of adherents in Eugene were in complete turmoil. They did not BUY his line of propaganda. If giant newspaper presses in Portland could circulate hundreds of thousands, why not The PLAIN TRUTH? Commercial recording equipment was available and the church could now afford it. Why not buy it and stay in Eugene? It was difficult for them to accept his propaganda at face value.

They had stuck with Armstrong through *thick and thin.* They stayed with him when he left the Oregon Conference. They remained loyal to him when he was ousted from the ministry of the Church of God. They had patiently overlooked the failure of his prophecies and supported him to the end. And now they were faced with the specter of being abandoned–left without a shepherd.

This forced to the surface all the pent-up gripes and animosities which they had accumulated during the preceding TEN YEARS. They began to resist Armstrong's propaganda for moving. But Armstrong was determined to clear out and leave his troubles behind.

Simultaneously with his plans to move he began to mitigate the effects of his prophecy failures by preaching that only his timing was wrong. His predictions would yet happen but it would be in the *next war.* Unfortunately many of his adherents were not in the mood to stick with Armstrong until the next war.

But Armstrong started preaching his mitigating doctrine of "right prophecies–wrong war." He began to preach, the Armistice of World War II was only a momentary *breathing spell.* The war wasn't really over; *it* was only in *recess between rounds.* Thus Armstrong began to dangle the psychological explosiveness of the A-Bomb over the heads of his adherents and listeners.

He propagandized that *Hitler* was still alive and would miraculously and momentarily step forth from a *fake resurrection.* He was to then astonish the world by a quick military rally culminating in the battle of Armageddon.

In this manner Armstrong directed the attention of his adherents away from himself and his prophecy failures and focused them upon a *forth-coming* disaster.

This gave Armstrong a temporary breathing spell. It was a race against time or he would lose the confidence of his nationwide family of co-workers, and they were now his main, if not only support. The two years which followed, witnessed some of the most daring and dramatic moves Armstrong has ever made.

His first move was to totally isolate himself from those who knew the details of his past failures–his unwillingness to work with the Church of God and the collapse of all his prophecies. He thus, by late 1945, was planning to move out of the Pacific Northwest.

The second major objective was to consolidate his loyal forces. This resulted in his traveling over the entire United States during the summer months of 1946, visiting and baptizing every radio listener he possibly could.

And remember, Armstrong's criteria for baptism was assurance from the candidate that he had *totally surrendered. Total surrender* can mean different things to different people. But the. one thing this accomplished for Armstrong was to temporarily strengthen *their* bonds to him to more surely guarantee their financial support behind him and his self-appointed mission.

Armstrong's THIRD MOVE was to establish a college at the location of his new headquarters. And so, in July 1946, Armstrong signed the lease-purchase agreement for his first Pasadena, California, property although he continued to operate from Eugene) Oregon, for one more year. And what a stormy year that was! His own Eugene church continually opposed his move to California. They became very vocal over his plans to leave them and by the time of his departure the

church was split right down the middle. Those in favor of the move were largely the ones who were directly involved with Armstrong's work and who would probably move with him. By the time Armstrong left Eugene, July 1947, he left behind only two or three loyal members in Eugene and an equally small number in the Portland area.

Armstrong's departure from Oregon was a sad one. Parties on both sides suffered exceedingly serious spiritual wounds–incisions so deep they were impossible to heal during the ensuing quarter-century.

For Armstrong, departure from Eugene was like bringing down the curtain on THIRTY YEARS of tragedy and trauma. There was *new-found hope* in the hearts of the Armstrongs as they migrated toward the golden rays or sunny Southern California, but little did they know some of their most tragic days, months and years lay just ahead.

CHAPTER TWELVE

AMBASSADOR COLLEGE-ARMSTRONG'S SCHOOL OF THE PROPHETS

Armstrong's first twenty-one prophecy failures probably set some kind of world record. But he was destined to ascend to even greater heights in this regard. His unwillingness to recognize his previous prophecy failures expressed itself in form of a determination 10 transform those failures into victory. The means employed to do this was the establishment of a legally constituted church organization and a college which we shall call the "School of the Prophets."

Before Herbert Armstrong could start his School of the Prophets, he had to better organize as a church. Thus 1946 could be called Armstrong's primary year of church organization. In mid-February he hired his son-in-law, Vern R. Mattson, as office supervisor and business manager and initiated procedures to document his organization with the State of Oregon.

ARMSTRONG OFFICIALLY ORGANIZES

Prior to this, Armstrong had been independently organized at a low level since 1934, but continued to associate with the *Duggar faction* of the Church of God as late as 1937. Duggar fired Armstrong in the fall of 1937 and then around the Christmas season Armstrong conferred with his friend John Kiez and Elder E. A. Straub at The Dells, Oregon.

It was at this conference it became evident to the officials of the Church of God that Armstrong was planning to create a new organization. John Kiez pleaded with Armstrong, "Let's not create a new organization."

But, it was Elder Straub who spotted Armstrong's real intents. To put if in Elder Straub's words:

> "Why John [Kiez], didn't you get that. That man [Armstrong] is ready to boot everybody out . . . [he has the attitude] . . . don't anyone tell me what to do.
> "John Kiez said, 'Well I don't know whether I got that or not.'
> "But later on brother Kieztold me, 'Brother Straub, you were really right. that man doesn't take [orders from] anybody. Nobody can work with him."

After Armstrong's break with Duggar he continued as an unofficial organization for over eight years, but in March 1946 Armstrong incorporated as the Radio Church of God, officially notarizing his instruments of incorporation in Lane County on March 3 of that year. The papers were filed with the Circuit Court ten days later, the 13th of March. (Those same papers of incorporation were later filed with the Secretary of the State of California–February 20, 1947–only a few months before Armstrong moved to California).

Armstrong named Basil Wolverton as Elder, David T. Henion and James A. Gott as Deacons, Ester M. Olson as Secretary and Loma D. Armstrong as Treasurer.

The names of Armstrong's official officers in the Eugene church (Fisher, Day and Conn) were conspicuously absent from the Board of Directors even though they were trustees of the Eugene church.

And so, Armstrong dumped ALL his former Eugene trustees and officers in favor of the ones listed–three of whom were members of the Armstrong family (Herbert, Loma and Gott). Ironically, of those named to the board, only one (Wolverton) is still with Armstrong today. Henion and Loma are deceased. Gott and Olson repudiated Armstrong and his organization many years ago.

Armstrong hired his son-in-law, Gott, to start a printing department shortly after incorporating in Oregon. In this

way. he not only solidified his organization but insured that his immediate family would move with him to Pasadena.

In addition to his two sons-in-law named, Armstrong hired his brother, Dwight, to write both lyrics and music for Herbert's newly envisioned church hymnal. Thus Dwight, along with his elderly mother, also moved with the Herbert Armstrong family to Pasadena.

In that same year Armstrong also hired his brother-in-law, Walter Dillon, to serve as president of his newly envisioned Ambassador College in Pasadena.

He got the idea of organizing a college for training ministers by observing a small church organization there in Eugene (Autobiography, Nov. 62 PLAIN TRUTH). This idea later gained Biblical credence when it was compared to Elijah's "school of the prophets." Herman Hoeh expounded in sermon (6-27-64) when he noted that "Christ's early APOSTLES FAILED in not starting a "school" as Elijah had done. Hoeh noted that Armstrong "has CORRECTED their mistake by establishing Ambassador College."

But how was all this to be financed? According to Armstrong's Autobiography, his annual income from co-workers in 1946 was between 50 and 75 thousand dollars. By late fall of 1.947 it was between 100 and 125 thousand dollars. But even that was a small sum from which to pay his church related expenses and establish a college with tell faculty members, plus an administrative staff member.

And so, Armstrong started his college on a shoestring! The property was mortgaged to the hilt. Remodeling, necessary to meet city codes, dragged on until October and was very costly.

The first year at Armstrong's college was a stormy one! He was unable to meet payroll requirements for instructors who outnumbered students more than two to one! This created a great deal of unrest and all but three of his original faculty left him by the end of the first term.

The second year was even tighter! Those of the faculty who remained were put on HALF SALARY due to a

continued shortage of funds. At the end of the secant! year only *two* of the original staff remained. Even Walter Dillon, Armstrong's brother-in-law who served as college president, returned to his post at the University of Oregon.

By the beginning of the fourth year, Armstrong's college was beginning to operate on an even keel and at the end of that year it was evident that Armstrong's Ambassador College WOULD graduate its first students 'in May, 1951.

Thus Armstrong incorporated his school as Ambassador College, registered with the State of California and issued degrees, even though Ambassador College has never been accredited by NEA educational associations. Appropriate papers were prepared under the guidance of Bollver B. O'Rear, Armstrong's resident attorney. They were filed with the Secretary of State in Sacramento, California, on April 6, 1951. Of the seven college trustees named, three were members of the Armstrong family, Herbert, Loma (his wife) and Vernon R. Mattson (his son-in-law).

Thus, by graduation time, June 1951, the basic organization of Armstrong's church and college had been *set* in the concrete of his corporate charters under the name of Radio Church of God and Ambassador College. Both were overwhelmingly controlled by the Armstrongs, their in-laws or very close associates. In this respect, Armstrong was either ignorant of, or chose to ignore counsel of management experts in setting up his organization. It is generally recommended that a board of directors be made up of a majority from *outside* the institution with heavy emphasis on the business or professional area being served. None such members appeared on the board of either Armstrong's Radio Church of God or his Ambassador College.

The Articles of Incorporation were written or amended and the boards of directors were selected so as to put Herbert Armstrong in the position of dictator which appears to have been his direct' intent, as indicated by the succeeding chapters. The necessity for this dictatorial position was caused by his obvious inability to cooperate, coordinate, and

subordinate himself to others.

At the time of incorporating the Radio Church of God (early 1946) Armstrong was severely buffeted by the trustees of the Eugene church, They refused to let him supposedly secularize their church by including it in his articles of incorporation. Armstrong quickly recognized he had no control over the Eugene church property, having put it into their hands as trustees in 1935–over ten years before!

Had the members of the Eugene church taken a course of active animosity instead of a passive course, Armstrong's work could have been virtually scuttled. But like the Church of God and the Oregon Conference before, they allowed Armstrong to dictate the time of his departure instead of putting him out.

At that time Armstrong was determined never again to get into such a precarious situation. Slowly and cautiously he regained, not only the Eugene territory, but eventually took possession of the original Eugene church. However, it took many anxious and agonizing years to accomplish.

Those were not pleasant happenings and even now they are distasteful for many in Armstrong's church to *face up to.* But those events did take place and they partially explain how Armstrong came to accept a totalitarian form of church government.

SCHOOL OF THE PROPHETS BEARS FRUIT

For approximately four years Armstrong was in a virtual tailspin, attempting to keep up with his self-made duties–one of which was teaching classes in *Bible Prophecy.* At the same time he continued writing prophetic articles for The PLAIN TRUTH magazine.

Everything spoken or written by him and his students was in support of the basic prophetic theme that his ill-fated prophecies of World War 1I were right but only his timing was wrong. He was currently making all his prophecies relevant to the THIRD WORLD WAR!

In early 1946 he prophesied, “[there is a] Coming

World-Explosion in Palestine." But after thirty-one years (1977) it still hasn't happened. The June 7, 1967, war which DID occur was not a "world-wide conflagration" like he had predicted in 1946.

During the late 1940's Armstrong was apparently reading *Police Gazette* quite a lot. In the September, 1948 issue of his PLAIN TRUTH magazine he published an article based on information from that magazine. He asked, "Is Hitler Alive or Dead?"–and indicated the weight of evidence was in favor of Hitler's still being alive.

Of course, Armstrong published numerous articles during those years attempting to keep up with world events and constantly predicted the obvious–Germany would RISE AGAIN! It was really difficult to miss on that one, particularly in view of the fact, the U.S. was pumping billions of Marshall Plan aid into their nation to revive it. The same was true of FRANCE and ENGLAND as well as numerous European and East European countries.

Armstrong claims to be the only one prophesying, Germany and Europe would rise again. But those schooled in *only the fundamentals* of geopolitics heartily concurred that France and Germany must bound back quickly or be clutched in the Icy hand of the Kremlin. the U.S. strategists *knew that* and instituted the Marshall Plan to avoid it happening.

Thus, Armstrong *safely* published page after page and article after article purporting to prophesy something which the United States Government, with the power of the Marshall Plan, was desperately trying to perform–rebuild a healthy Europe with a healthy Germany.

In the November 1949 issue of The PLAIN TRUTH, Armstrong proclaimed, "The Pope will announce, December 24, the bones of St. Peter have been found under the Vatican." But it didn't happen on that date–nor for many months and years to come.

According to Armstrong, doom and destruction of Atomic warfare: was dangling overhead; yet he adamantly

held Russia, the only other nation capable of 'launching such attack, would not attack the U.S. or Britain.

By early 1951 some of Armstrong's protege prophets were flexing their prophetic plasma in the form of The GOOD NEWS–a newly published magazine distributed exclusively to members. However, their articles were primarily doctrinal in nature for the first two years and Herbert Armstrong carried the heavy load of prophetic soundings.

The same year Armstrong announced with startling certainty, the "Pope's plan to move the Vatican," he also declared, "Showdown nears between Pope Pius XII and Stalin." But, again nothing happened!

In 1952 Armstrong was apparently still reading *Police Gazette* quite religiously, Under the apparent inspiration of that publication, he ventured to write all article for his June PLAIN TRUTH entitled, "Hitler May Be Alive!" and announced, "German Rearmament" and revealed to his readers, "How You Can Escape!" Obviously an attempt to *stir* people's emotions and elicit support,

Two months later he was emboldened to assert his beliefs even more positively in the August PLAIN TRUTH, "Hitler Did Not Die–Positive evidence comes to light. . . Hitler is alive,
directing Nazi Underground, today!" He further commented, "Hitler will stage a fake resurrection." But that didn't happen.

In July 1952, Herman Hoeh wrote for The GOOD NEWS, "You will soon be compelled to worship the Image of the Beast" (which he points out to be the Catholic Church), Again, it just didn't happen!

By June of 1953, Hitler hadn't executed his fake resurrection and Armstrong dropped him as an editorial subject in favor of a sure-fire hit! This time he *PROPHESIED* about *HIMSELF!* Yes, it really happened! In the June issue of The PLAIN TRUTH Armstrong wrote, "Prophesied for Now!"–in which he purports to prove that HIS WORK was what was prophesied for that particular time. But how can you know?

Later in 1953 Armstrong's prophecy STUDENTS broke into the hither-to protected, domain of Herbert Armstrong by writing articles for The PLAIN TRUTH magazine. His son, Richard David Armstrong (Dick); Herman Hoeh and Roderick Meredith were the first to break into this hallowed editorial circle. Hoeh announced the "Kremlin plans for a 20 year war in Korea." Again, it didn't happen.

In October Herbert Armstrong declared "the Gospel is now reaching the WHOLE WORLD for the first time in 1800 years." That announcement was the result of his contracting to carry the WORLD TOMORROW broadcast on Radio Luxembourg, starting on the nineteenth anniversary of the WORLD TOMORROW. Added impetus was supposedly given to his proclamation the following month when he took up a contract for the ABC Radio Network.

In 1954 Armstrong predicted the end of the world was near–August-September PLAIN TRUTH, "Catastrophic Events–Soon to Bring End of World!" This was the first in a series of articles describing the plagues of the Book of Revelation–all frighteningly illustrated by caricature artist Basil Wolverton. Armstrong closed out the year with his December 1954 co-worker letter predicting, "Japan is turning against the US." But she didn't.

By January 1955 the prophetic nature of The PLAIN TRUTH acquired a new dimension with Herman Hoeh's threat, "Weather Changes Threaten Disaster for U.S.A.," proceeded to prophesy, "Within 20 years [1975] this nation will be TOPPLED . . .by the worst drought in history." Interestingly enough, it was that very year, 1975, that the U.S. had a bumper crop and made massive grain sales to Russia.

Another dimension was added the following month by Garner Ted Armstrong when he declared, "World War is Here Now–the present battlefield is economic–not military!"–a theme which was never ending from that point onward!

Also in the February-March issue of The PLAIN TRUTH Herbert Armstrong admitted to trying to FRIGHTEN readers

into his brand of obedience.

In 1956 Herbert Armstrong prophesied, (the) "U.S.A. [is] riding to total collapse in 20 short years! [1976] – famine, disease, epidemics, to be followed immediately by World War III . . . It's prophesied for 15 to 20 years or less [1971-1976]."

In the following issue of The PLAIN TRUTH, Herman Hoeh was inspired to prophesy, "Disease Epidemics Threaten U.S.A. in 2-years . . . Droughts, floods, polluted water, wonder-drugs and soft living arc combining to produce raging epidemics . . . The year 1951 [year of drought in Southwest] saw the handwriting on the wall for America and for the whole Western World . . . In about TWO YEARS [author's emphasis] we are going to face the beginning of man-made plagues that will ultimately reduce our population by one-third in perhaps sixteen years [1972] . . . to culminate in 1972 with war, slavery, and cannibalism . . ." (April '56 PLAIN TRUTH). It didn't happen!

In June of 1956 another horrifying dimension to world prophecy was added by Kenneth Herrmann when he prophesied, "Earthquakes [will] Shake the World!" He failed to specify the time, place, magnitude or frequency of those quakes.

Other stark cries for the U.S. and Britain were included in articles concerning loss of the Suez, Ceylon, Cypress, Gibraltar and Singapore. But none have been completely lost to use by Western shipping.

In 1957 Roderick Meredith pleads, "America, Wake Up!"–and asks, "What is definitely prophesied to happen? Disease Epidemics and in 1965 TRADE EMBARGO!" It didn't happen.

On March 5, 1957 Armstrong wrote his co-workers, "We may have finished the Gospel to India" (preaching or warning India)–indicating another step completed in ultimately fulfilling his self-appointed commission–to *warn* an nations. What prompted him to write that? He had just lost his broadcast contract with Radio Ceylon, an incident which he

interpreted as a sign from God, that he had fulfilled the requirements of "warning India."

In 1958 Ted Armstrong prophesied, "National Epidemics are spreading," and cited the fire-ant plague, and rabid animals among others would eventually devastate our land. And in December of that year it was revealed how Russia planned to use Germany to start World War III. But again these things didn't happen!

In 1959 it was the scare of the Berlin Crisis with Herbert Armstrong proclaiming, "[the] Biggest World News [is] Happening in Germany–Doom for USA in [1974] 10-15 Years." And in his co-worker letter of August 13, Armstrong pleaded, "I have been telling the world for 25 years, the U.S. would go down–no one believed! [It will be] probably twelve to thirteen years–certainly in fifteen [1975] or less.

In the latter part of the year Ted Armstrong introduced another ominous channel of doom for the world–"Disastrous Weather World-Wide!" In December Herman Hoeh closed the year's prophecies with, "Red China plans a spring invasion of India." But, it didn't happen.

1960 PROPHECIES FAIL

The year of 1960 proved to be a prolific year for the "school of the prophets." Herman Hoeh asked the warning question, "Where will you be 15 years from now [1975]?" And warned all to, "Watch Germany!"–followed by a leading question "Is Nazism Dead?" He further warned, "Those who join Catholicism will suffer the seven last plagues." Ted Armstrong wrote about "The Explosive 60's!" He dealt with the projected Super Weapon–The death-ray bomb and Trade War. And Herbert Armstrong thundered, "The First Blow of World War III [has been struck]"–praising German industriousness and scorning British and American indolence.

Albert J. Portune rattled the psychological windows of The PLAIN TRUTH world with his article on "Earthquakes!" And Herbert Armstrong closed the prophetic

year with a warning in his December co-worker letter:

"Euromart is capturing world trade. In [1972] 12 years or less the U.S.A. will suffer the worst depression ever suffered by any nation." But it didn't happen.

1961 PROPHECIES FAIL

In 1961 it was the gold crisis, water crisis, Common Market, the Berlin crisis, the Cuban crisis and the significance of a Catholic President (Kennedy).

But from all these impending disasters, Armstrong offers a way of escape and in his October co-worker letter he assured his readers, "God has revealed to me the way of escape," He didn't say what it was, but implied, those who followed him would be spared the woes .coming .upon the world and escape to that "place of safety."

1962 PROPHECIES FAIL

Herbert Armstrong started the year of 1962 with the prophetic question, "What will happen in 1962?" And hastened to inform his readers, "There is no boom in sight [for the U.S.A.]" Needless to say, the following six or seven years constituted one of the biggest economic "booms" in the history of both the U.S. and the world.

Yes, 1962 was a prolific year for the "school of the prophets." The PLAIN TRUTH was consequently enlarged to forty-eight pages in order to accommodate those prophetic soundings. In July Herbert Armstrong prophesied the doom of Britain for seeking entry into the Common Market. In October he issued an open-ended prophecy– "The new Europe would smash Russia–a grand strategy of the U.S."

In November Bob Boraker announced, "Nazis are plotting World War III." During that same year Herman Hoeh authored a series of articles in The GOOD NEWS magazine inciting members to look to Petra as a "place of escape" when all those prophesied, catastrophic events take place. Herbert Armstrong further incited the members by announcing in the July co-worker letter, "We have reached the time of the end." He then closed the year by pleading

with co-workers to back his building program–again citing, "this is no longer a one-man work."

1963 Prophecies Fail

The year 1963 was a replay of the scare tactics of forgoing years, and this *scare syndrome* continued right on through the 1960's. There was a constant push to uncover the slightest evidence that Germany was a threatening military power or an indication Britain and the United states, along with the Democracies of North-western Europe, were tobogganing to national calamity, disaster, defeat, and ultimate enslavement.

In March, 1963, a new name appeared on the list of the "prophets"–Gene Hogberg. He made his debut by warning, "Worst Weather in TEN YEARS!" And the same month Raymond McNair prophetically prescribed the "Decline and Fall of the British Commonwealth."

Earlier, May 1963, Armstrong had announced a *financial austerity* program laying off a number of employees while simultaneously launching a multi-million dollar building program.

In June, David Jon Hill wrote, "Volcanic Disaster–a Reality!" Rod Meredith warned "The Beast [Germany] is rising up" and Herman Hoeh mitigated with assurance, "When World War III Comes there is a Way of Escape."

July, Ted Armstrong renewed the tide of fear with his article, " . . . When you see the Abomination . . . (then know that the destructions draw nigh)." That same month his father issued a "parallel" warning in his co-worker letter, "Racial strife and pollution brought the end of the world before Noah," –indicating contemporary racial strife and pollution was a sign of the end of the world.

By October Herbert Armstrong announced to his co-workers, "We are drawing toward the end of the world," and indicated there were only eight or nine years to finish his work (by 1972).

The year 1963 witnessed even bolder predictions in various

sermonizings, In July Dibar Apartian warned, "We have only 3,240 days left." A couple weeks later Ted Armstrong scowled, "Persecution is [soon] to begin on our organization and individual members . . ." And a couple months later he assured the congregation, "God will do nothing except he reveal it to his prophets," (Amos 3:7)–implying God would reveal all future disastrous world happenings to His *supposed* prophet, Herbert Armstrong.

The following month Ted thundered, "By approximately 1975, Dallas, Chicago, St. Louis–the United States mid Great Britain will be destroyed . . ." But one of his comrades, Ron Kelly, soothed the tumultuous minds of the members by assuring their ranks would be swelled to ONE HUNDRED THOUSAND–all of whom would be taken to (Petra) a place of safety before Ted's dreaded prophecies could fall on the wicked world which would be left behind.

A *specific* time element tor persecution was added by Herbert Armstrong in his sermon declaration (11-23-63), "In eight years [1972] all of our ministers will be silenced!"

The following week (after the assassination of President Kennedy) Herbert Armstrong wrote his co-workers, "Some would like to do me like [they did] Kennedy," and closed the year with an announcement (sermon 11-30-63), "We have only eight years to finish the work [1972]."

Further, there was a tendency to report on every move of the Vatican as well as other world heads of state. An official visit, especially by the Pope, a German Or Italian leader, occasioned an article in The PLAIN TRUTH to inform readers of the *specific prophetic value* of the event–indicating another step in fulfillment of their prophecies had taken place.

All the while, Armstrong's school of the prophets cranked out a steady stream of propaganda attempting to paint an increasingly gloomy picture for the U.S. –droughts, floods, famines, disease epidemics, earthquakes and volcanoes. Step by step these happenings, readers were informed, would surely dash America's ship of state upon the rocks of disaster.

1964 PROPHECIES FAIL

But while the prophets were pronouncing doom upon the nation and the world, they were not faring so well themselves. According to Armstrong's co-worker letters (4-26-64 and 2-1-65) they initiated their first really *large* employee lay-off in 1964 and were forced to continue their austerity program–all the while going full steam ahead on their multi-million dollar building program. But Armstrong assured his co-workers (11-11-64) those buildings were vitally needed and pleaded, "This was a one-man-work until I built Ambassador College" –thus attempting to reap their continued financial support.

In 1964 The PLAIN TRUTH carried such frightening articles as, "Now one-fourth of [the] earth is affected by drought, floods and famine [Hoeh]." Ted Armstrong prophesied, "Trade war this year [1964]!" But it didn't happen.

Gerhardt Marx cited catastrophic omens in earth's weather patterns and other natural phenomenon.

Herbert Armstrong prophesied in sermon, "Only seven more years [until 1972] before H-Bomb warfare breaks out." That, of course, didn't happen in 1972. Ted Armstrong preached (sermon 7-11-64), "The bottom will drop out of this work in less than eight years," and Charles Dorothy discordantly sermonized (sermon 9-21-64) there were "only seven years left."

1965 PROPHECIES FAIL

The year 1965 was another year of AUSTERITY combined with huge spending on Armstrong's building program. He announced to his co-workers in February. "We must continue our austerity program for the third year [1965] ."

In addition to being an AUSTERE YEAR, 1965 was a year of continued prophetic proliferations. Rod Meredith wrote (Feb. '65 PLAIN TRUTH), "A new Fuehrer [now] for rearmed Germany" and proceeded to assure his readers he

had, "Documented evidence (to) prove Hitler did not die in his Berlin Bunker as popularly supposed."

In May he was emboldened to further write, "Hitler's Germany [will] . . . rise again," then informed them, "Hitler . . . will be falsely resurrected by the Pope," and indicated they would join forces to "Gain control of the world." Meredith prophesied again in the September pages of The PLAIN TRUTH by asking the prophetic question, "Can . . . Hitler's ovens happen again?"–implying many Americans were destined for cremation in those fiery furnaces.

Meredith was not alone in prophesying for 1965. Ted Armstrong predicted vast mental illness (Jan. '65 PLAIN TRUTH). Hogberg predicted "Natural weather disaster will devastate the earth." Ted Armstrong and Charles Dorothy predicted the loss of Gibraltar, Panama and announced the loss of Singapore by the British.

Herbert Armstrong simultaneously warned his members, many of them were lukewarm Christians and would constitute a feeble remnant church after he and his spiritually strong "elect" were taken to (Petra) his *place of safety* to be spared the woes pronounced by the school of the prophets (sermon 3-20-65).

Regardless of these prophetic soundings, rumor broke out that the *place of safety* would be Minneapolis, Minnesota. Rod Meredith found it necessary to inform the field ministers (MB 11-26-65), "Several in the Dakotas have the idea that they should move to Minneapolis, Minnesota as the *place of safety."* Meredith then proceeded to instruct the ministry on how to handle the problem.

Herbert Armstrong closed the year of 1965 by announcing to his co-workers (CWL 12-13-65), "We are in the grand smash climax–only six more years left [until 1972]," As a means of creating "believability" for his prediction he then prophesied, "[There will be] . . . manned space platforms by 1970 . . . [and further warned] . . . Christ is coming soon!" It is now more than a half decade later but still no manned

space platforms. Another prophecy failure by Armstrong,

1966 PROPHECIES FAIL

The tide of *disaster propaganda* has a way of reinfecting its carriers and by early 1966 a huge swell of *specific prophecies* were sounded by some of Armstrong's leading protege prophets. Most notable of those was Rod Meredith, In an early 1966 issue of The PLAIN TRUTH Meredith authored an article entitled, "As 1966 Dawns–Watch These 7 Trends." He then enumerated: (1) crime (2) liberalism (3) trade war and gold supply (4) loss of overseas bases (5) drought, famine, pestilence, (6) Germany, Italy and France (7) ten nations to unite church and state in Europe.

Meredith further specified, "Ten nations [will unite] . . . in [1974-1976) less than eight to ten years . . . under a great false religious system and a super dictator . . . The people of Europe will be swept off their feet . . . Now you know–in specific detail–what to 'watch' taking place in the news, in fulfillment of prophecy . . ."

Personal notes indicate Meredith was even more outspoken in his sermonizings than in his writings. While serving as pastor of Armstrong's Los Angeles (sermon Friday Morning Club) congregation in 1966, he prophesied, "Drought, famine, pestilence, and disease will become so terrible in the U.S. by 1969 people will flee the big cities en masse." And he asserted, "The major highways from Los Angeles to New York, Kansas City, Chicago and other highways leading out of America's large cities will be knee deep in corpses–bodies of helpless people who will fall prey to the specter of death in their attempt to escape the ravaging plagues of the festering cities." But it just didn't happen!

The same year Raymond McNair authored articles entitled, "The Crumbling Commonwealth," and "Britain: The Sick Man of Europe," and prophesied Armstrong's ". . . WORLD TOMORROW program will continue to go out from the 'pirate ship stations' to warn Britain of its

impending doom." And Herbert Armstrong chimed in with his "Obituary of the British Empire."

The famine scare so preoccupied the minds of Armstrong's followers, Dale Shurter warned (April-May 1966 GOOD NEWS), "Prepare for Famine!" And many members did just that–visiting the commodity markets in a "rush" fashion. Thousands of pounds of grain were stashed away by local members throughout the nation. In the Pasadena area alone, members carried out a "grain rush" on El Molino Mills of Alhambra (just south of Pasadena), buying up thousands of pounds of grain.

Ted Armstrong wrote an article attempting to control the situation by instructing, "Don't store up food, you could get yourself killed [by the famished trying to steal your supply]." See June-July 1966 GOOD NEWS.

Such a "grain rush" was a threat to the economic stability of Armstrong's work. The funds for purchasing such huge grain stocks came from the same pockets which supported him. There was a rather highly defined conflict of financial interest,

Roderick Meredith added his weight to the *famine scare* at an earlier time by sermonizing (sermon 3-5-66), "It was the BOMB scare in the 50's,the FAMINE *scare in the 60's* and it will be the PESTILENCE [scare] in the 70's."

As early as May 1966 (sermon 5-21-66), Ted Armstrong was predicting a "Great falling away–beside the Pope [or Papal apostasy commonly referred to among Protestants]." His sermon indicated about half of Armstrong's members would have to suffer the penalties of the Great Tribulation While *safety* and *protection* in Petra was indicated for his *faithful.* In the Pasadena Headquarters sermon (sermon 6-26-66) it was reaffirmed, "one-half of the members will suffer the pangs of the Great Tribulation – [adding] SIXTY MILLION Americans will die of starvation by 1972."

Roderick Meredith (sermon 12-3-66) prophesied the organizational chart for Christ's imminent World Government. He indicated Christ would rule from the top, through

Abraham. Abraham is predicted to rule through David to the Jews and through the Apostle Paul to the Gentiles, Under David, Meredith places "Moses as Civil World Ruler with Joseph [one of the twelve sons of Jacob] as Finance Minister." Elijah, Meredith predicted, "Will be over the churches and schools with John the Baptist and the 'Modern Elijah' [Herbert Armstrong] as his assistant."

1967 PROPHECIES FAIL

Armstrong's school of the prophets suffered a traumatic year in 1967. The first disaster to strike was the illness of Loma D. Armstrong, wife of Herbert W. Armstrong. In about February Loma became seriously afflicted with a condition of the lower bowel. Her strength gradually diminished until bowel movement could not be induced–even by use of colonic irrigations.

There were three possible solutions:' natural recovery, surgery, or a miracle. The family rejected surgical treatment on religious grounds. This left two alternatives–natural healing or a divine miracle. As Loma grew weaker it became obvious there would be no natural recovery. Only a miracle could save her. Herbert Armstrong called in his top ranking ministers to anoint her and pray for a miracle. But her condition grew steadily worse and she succumbed to the multiple effects of toxicity and malnutrition on April 15, 1967 at the age of 76.

That was a devastating blow to the spiritual prowess of the church leaders. Their reputation as the *spirit filled* and only *true church* was threatened. Further, their claim of access to God's divine healing power was also in Jeopardy.

In order to maintain a stance of *spiritual respectability* among the members, the hierarchy attempted to use the gimmick of transforming this *point of weakness* into one of *strength*. They began to preach the propaganda that Loma's condition was actually prophetic!–a sign of the poor condition of the church. To reinforce their supposition, a church-wide purge was instituted and dozens of members

were excommunicated.

What the church was never told during that episode was; Loma Armstrong reportedly contracted that condition in early adulthood and had reportedly been unable to have normal colonic evacuation without the aid of irrigation for many, many years. The lay membership, if not the ministry–even those at the very top–were apparently led to believe Loma's condition developed rather suddenly. They were led to believe it was a condition imposed by God as a SIGN of the stagnant spiritual condition of the church.

Roderick Meredith put it in sermon (sermon 3-11-67) when he threatened, "The ministry believes solidly that Mrs. Armstrong's intestinal blockage is a type of the spiritual condition of the church."

Herbert Armstrong took a scheduled jet flight to Jordan shortly after Loma's funeral, to complete arrangements for his WORLD TOMORROW broadcast to be carried on Radio Jerusalem. And in a co-worker letter dated April 17, 1967, Armstrong announced this action as the fulfillment of Isaiah 40:1·2, "The Word of comfort is to go forth to Jerusalem."

As early as February, Roderick Meredith had informed his field ministers, Herbert Armstrong planned to fulfill a similar prophecy, Micah 4:2, "The time has come for the Gospel to go forth from Jerusalem," and Isaiah 4:1·8, "Preach God's message to the world from Jerusalem." While in Jordan, Armstrong presumably made preliminary preparations to fulfill those prophecies by making final arrangements for his WORLD TOMORROW to start broadcasting on Radio Jerusalem, June 7, 1967.

While conferring with Jordanian and Arab leaders, Armstrong acquired some very interesting, if not startling, information. The political and diplomatic air among them Was *electric* with rumors of war with Israel. For obvious reasons they told Armstrong, "The Jordanian Government is expecting, . . . the Jews to take Jerusalem," (Herbert Armstrong–Sermon 5·7·67).

By the first of May Armstrong was back at the English

campus in Bricket Wood where he reported, "The Jews will capture Jerusalem in about a month," and then proceeded to PROPHESY "[and the Jews] will build a NEW TEMPLE" (also see Armstrong's quote 9-67–GOOD NEWS by Hunting).

A week after his Bricket Wood prophecy, speaking in his Pasadena Headquarters church (sermon 5-7-67), Armstrong STRENGTHENED his prophecy by adding, "The Jews will demolish the Dome of the Rock [Al Aksa Moslem Shrine] and build a temple of God on that spot." But it just didn't happen! It is also interesting to note that Armstrong later denied he had said such when one of his PLAIN TRUTH readers, Rohan, tried to burn the Mosque in order for the temple to be built. Authoritative sources also report that all evidence of Rohan's records were clandestinely expunged from Armstrong's London based data processing facilities.

Earlier in the year (3-2-67) Roderick Meredith wrote to the field ministers, Herbert Armstrong was "Doing the work of Zerubbabel," who built the second Jewish Temple. And as late as September 6, Meredith wrote to the ministry, Herbert Armstrong had "Reported by Telex on plans for building a Jewish Temple."

So, the net result of Armstrong's 1967 prophecy was: First, Charles Hunting was badly informed when he wrote in The GOOD NEWS, Armstrong had prophesied the Jews would take Jerusalem. Armstrong didn't prophesy *that event.* The Jordanian officials had *told him* it WOULD HAPPEN. Armstrong was Simply relaying it to his church members.

However, Armstrong *did prophesy* the Jews would demolish the Al Aksa and build a new temple *on that spot.* Needless to say, it didn't happen. As a result of the June 1967 war the Jews gained control of Radio Jerusalem which squelched Armstrong's June 7 contract as well as putting the skids under his prophetic plan to fulfill Isaiah 40:1·2, Isaiah 4:1-8 and Micah 4:1-2.

Another prophetic setback came in 1967 when England outlawed the so-called pirate ship stations (CWL 9-28-67),

negating Raymond McNair's prediction of January 1966, "The Ship Stations will not be silenced."

In addition to these spectacular prophetic problems, Armstrong's PLAIN TRUTH and co-worker letters carried the usual fare of *scare articles* on famine, quakes, hurricanes, tornadoes and floods.

In October Herbert Armstrong warned the co-workers, "We are on the gun-lap and the 'Great Tribulation' will soon strike." As a result, the rumor soon got out that newly-weds should not have children due to the imminence of the Great Tribulation. Roderick Meredith found it necessary, in his November ministerial communique, to instruct the local ministers to arrest that rumor.

1968 PROPHECIES FAIL

The following year, 1968, Armstrong's ministers and prophets numbered more than 300–and they were all active in carrying forth the words of Armstrong's prophecies. Herbert Armstrong, fired the first prophetic volley of 1968 by informing his co-workers, "[the] U.S. and Britain will be invaded in [1972] four or five years:" In March he again warned the co-workers of the "Soon coming Great Tribulation," and *preached* as early as January 13 of that year, "Britain, India and Russia have all been warned." This he accepted as a sign of the imminence of the end of the world and the coming of Christ.

The PLAIN TRUTH, then circulating to 1.2 million, referred to Britain as the "International Pauper," and questioned the U.S. diplomatic decision concerning the Pueblo incident by stating, "Pride of U.S. Power–Where is it?" Garner Ted was the next to issue an implied prophecy by questioning, "Another Mid-East War Soon?" But it didn't come for five years and that could hardly be called *soon,*

Roderick Meredith prophesied in sermon (sermon 2-24-68), "The next big war will be between the Germans and the Arabs," But it didn't happen that way. The biggest tank battle in the history of the world took place in the 1973

Yom-Kippur War–between the Jews and Arabs. The Germans were not involved.

In May Meredith informed his men, "We have only 3½ years left . . . [we] are entering the final phase of THE WORK." And in August he warned , "Persecution is soon to come."

The PLAIN TRUTH, meanwhile, carried the usual: "Watch Jerusalem, Vietnam in prophecy, pollution, Robert Kennedy assassination, weather upheaval, famines, and the generation gap."

Herbert Armstrong closed 1968 with a sermon (sermon 12-7-68) in which he informed the membership, "Haggai's *seventy years* and the *building of the temple* is a prophecy for the Jews and this [Armstrong's] church."

Three days later (12-10-68) he revealed to his co-workers it was official–Armstrong's college and Israel's Hebrew University would engage in a joint archaeological project to excavate the sight of the old Davidic Throne in Jerusalem. This, he hailed as an indirect step toward the fulfillment of his earlier prophecies *of building a temple.*

1969 PROPHECIES FAIL

The next four years, 1969 through 1972, may be accurately described as the *zone of confusion* for Armstrong's school of the prophets. Some were fastening their hopes firmly on the infallibility of *their prophet* (Herbert Armstrong) and refused to consider they may have miscalculated the date for the end of the "times of the Gentiles" and hence the end of the world.

Herbert Armstrong took the general course of caution, but occasionally was unable to resist the temptation to indulge in prophetic sensationalism. March 29, 1969, he sermonized, "We may have only two Passovers in the U.S., possibly four [Passovers] in Petra . . . [and] in about five more years [1975] we may be taking it with Christ."

The following month (4-28-69) he informed his co-workers, "Europe United [Beast] draws closer after

DeGaulle's resignation . . . We may have only 2½ years left." And in October he again wrote, "We may not have more than two years left."

By this late date Armstrong's prophetic *time element* was beginning to cause him trouble. He was predicting a catastrophic destruction of Britain and the U.S. By 1972; yet, heavily engaged in a 22-million dollar building program (Ministerial Bulletin, 5-21-69) which included his 10 million dollar (actually 24 million with interest) auditorium–the real apple of his eye. Some co-workers and members felt the two were irreconcilable. With the nation on the brink of *prophesied disaster* and Armstrong already in financial trouble, how could he justify such exorbitant building expenditures?

Armstrong fielded this question in a letter to the members (5-5-69). First, he "marveled" at the semblance between the appearance of the architect's drawings for his auditorium and the ancient Temple of Jerusalem.

Did Armstrong or his architects not know it was a virtual replica of a building on the campus of one of the Michigan Universities?

But to the members Armstrong hailed it as a virtual miracle and inspiration from God! In his letter, he declared, "God may spare Ambassador College and save our buildings . . . [allowing them] to continue for more than a thousand years." Shortly thereafter the rumor spread that when the 1972 H-Bomb war would break out and the Southern California area devastated by nuclear war Ambassador College would remain an oasis in the middle of a desert parched by nuclear fission. Some smiled in secret amusement.

By late 1969 Herbert Armstrong was still holding to 1972 as the *finish line* for his work and the *disaster deadline* for the world. In October he wrote the co-workers, "[We] may not have more than two years left," and in November he wrote with assurance, "We are on the home stretch . . . [with] possibly two years left . . ."

But all of Armstrong's PROPHETS were not confident! As

early as June, 1969. Roderick Meredith gave a sermon with "Five reasons why time maybe longer [than 1972]." Little attention was given to his reasonings because most wanted to tickle their prophetic vanity and ride "dumb, fat and happy" into the clinching jaws of a 1972 debacle.

The PLAIN TRUTH was secularized in 1969 and carried articles on a rash of doomsday subjects: World crisis in agriculture, disastrous floods hit Northern U.S., the dooms-day bug (CBW–chemical biological warfare), venereal diseases, drought and a series on the Modern Romans–an expose on moral debauchery.

A new magazine, TOMORROW'S WORLD was introduced in March of 1969 to provide articles for spiritual growth to such subscribers as were likely candidates. It's aim was two-fold. First, It was to provide a spiritual cram-course for those who could he *made ready* by the 1972 deadline. Second, it was to shore up their lagging financial support.

Financing was now an increasingly difficult problem. Armstrong had instituted his first austerity program in 1963. He executed his first large employee cut-back in 1964, and continued the austerity program through 1965. Budget cuts were announced for 1967 and they were destined to come with increased regularity as the years rolled by.

Armstrong made note to the co-workers (2-29-69) of a forthcoming budget cut for 1970. Earlier, in 1969, the situation had become so critical, Ted Armstrong announced in sermon (12-8-69), their real borrowing power was NIL due: to loan commitments. Herbert Armstrong pointed out to his co-workers there were several budget cuts in 1969 and by March of 1970 they had already been forced into *two* budget cuts in less than three months.

It was hoped the new TOMORROW'S WORLD magazine would put the organization back on the road to its much publicized 30 percent annual growth rate. The effort was too little and too late and the magazine was taken out of circulation after only thirty issues.

1970 PROPHECIES FAIL

Confidence in the Armstrong cause was eroding quite rapidly by the beginning of 1970 as a credibility gap continued to widen regarding his 1972 prophecies. Long-time listeners were turning away and fewer new ones were being attracted. Co-workers were being lost at very nearly the same rate new ones were being acquired.

The entire organization was randomly circling in its prophetic *zone of confusion.* It was becoming increasingly obvious they had missed the marker! The junior prophets were secretly bewildered, not knowing what to do and the senior prophets were AFRAID to advance solutions. All the while, Herbert Armstrong was attempting to hold doggedly on course as their annual growth rate sagged to 12 percent (CWL 12-9-70) for the year ending December 1969.

In his co-worker letter of January 29, 1970, Armstrong assured his readers "Christ's coming would probably not be until 1975." The following month (2-1-70) Norman Smith bellowed, "We don't know when Christ is coming." By March the financial picture was so gloomy that Herbert Armstrong asked all the *members* to borrow from their local banks all the money they could pay back in ONE YEAR and donate it to his work. The net "take" was two million dollars (MB 3-30-70).

In May 1970 another attempt was made to *beef up* the sagging financial situation. The church sponsored Ted Armstrong in an enormously expensive evangelistic campaign tour called "America listen." Members envisioned Ted's campaign developing into a nationwide revival to "Bring America to repentance" and save her from destruction; captivity and enslavement prophesied for 1972. However, little resulted from this extravagant effort.

In August (sermon 8-8-70) Herbert Armstrong was again prophesying! He proclaimed, "Jordan may be broken into three parts: one part to Syria, another part to Iraq and the third part to Israel." But it didn't happen.

By October (sermon 10-10-70) Gerald Waterhouse

announced, "Israel will build a highway connecting Haifa, Petra and Jerusalem. And the TWO WITNESSES of Revelation 11 [whom the church leaders suspect to be the two Armstrongs] will commute from Petra to Jerusalem." The highway apparently has not been built. The reason Armstrong gave for Ambassador's association in the archaeological excavation in Jerusalem was to clear off the throne of David for Christ to sit on. This was stated by Gerald Waterhouse when he echoed, "We are engaged in the project of cleaning off the throne of David for Christ to sit on." And he later stated, "This work [implying Armstrong] is fulfilling the prophesied WORK OF ELIJAH."

The month of October seemed to be *the month,* for prophesying about Elijah. Ronald Dart followed Waterhouse the following week by citing Malachi 4:2, "They [the nations] shall know a prophet [Elijah-Armstrong] was among them." Carlton Smith was cycled in the next week with a prophetic pronouncement from Malachi 4:5, "I shall send Elijah" and proclaimed, "This is being done by the church [implying Armstrong] today!"

A week later (sermon 10-22-70) Waterhouse prophesied the church would spend "3½ years in Petra." And Herbert Armstrong closed by announcing (sermon, 10-31-70), "Christ's return could be quite soon now." Earlier (9-28-70), Herbert Armstrong had written his co-workers; "We may have only one year and three months left."

1971 PROPHECIES FAIL

The following year 1971 was one of fear and trepidation! In a member letter Herbert Armstrong warned, "We must reach the rest of the world *this year!"* The day of reckoning, January 7, 1972, lay only twelve short months ahead and anxiety was beginning to build.

But Herbert Armstrong was not to be caught unprepared. As early as 1966 he had been jet-hopping world capitols to confer with political and educational dignitaries. The momentum of his Royal Travels accelerated as did his

willingness to propagandize his followers with the belief that his *king visits* were *God's express will* for the church at that time. In his February 27 letter to co-workers Armstrong recaps his visits with dignitaries to that contemporary date. And about six weeks later (CLW 4-12-71) he informed his co-workers, his "visits" had set the WORK on a new and higher plane.

He hastened to point out the prophetic significance of his Jerusalem connection and the excavation being clone by his college in association with Hebrew University. He declared, "We are clearing off the throne of Christ, making it ready for Him."

In an attempt to give further Godly impetus to his efforts, he went to great lengths to convince his members (CWL 4-12-71) of the miraculous intervention required for his *king visits*. Although a few weeks later he did condescend to inform his co-workers those visits were arranged through the Japanese and Jewish connections of Osama Gotoh and Stanley Rader.

But in his April letter to members he declared, "The *work* is now in a NEW and FINAL PHASE." Then he informed them he had been personally called upon to "help plan the new city of Jerusalem." (In fulfillment of that commitment Armstrong doled out $250,000 to pay for building a city park–1976). He thus gave a psychological push to put members more solidly behind his *king visits* of which many members had been more than mildly skeptical.

In June, Roderick Meredith, filled with frustration and apprehension sermonized, "There are SEVEN REASONS for a BREAK-THROUGH in the WORK . . . (1) plant size-data processing facilities, (the Co-Worker and Personal Correspondence Departments are ready), (2) age and experience of the leading men, (3) size and dedication of solid core supporters, (4) Herbert and Ted Armstrong's most unusual world-wide trips, (5) the educational approach toward the public, (6) world now demands our work, (7) Zechariah 4:6 . . . By my spirit saith the Lord of Hosts–the

spirit which leads this work'."

In spite of Meredith's seven supposed powerful reasons for the work to leap ahead to a BREAK-THROUGH it constantly went backward in its rate of growth.

All the while Herbert Armstrong was traveling as an emissary of *peace.* On June 8 he informed his co-workers, "This WORK makes the GREATEST contribution to peace." And on July 23 he stated, "We are doing more for peace than any nation." Earlier in July (sermon 7-3-71) he tried to reassure the Pasadena congregation of his divine mission by pointing to the "doctrines" which he had restored: the Saturday Sabbath, "feast(s) of the Jews," etc. and closed his sermon with the notation that it was "Elijah who restored the knowledge of God." He thus implied and led his followers to believe he is fulfilling the role of the *Modern Day Elijah.*

By August (sermon 8-21-71) Armstrong informed his Headquarters following, "No one can tell what *will* happen in the world . . . We can tell what *might* happen" –apparently the beginning of an effort to prepare his members for the eventuality of total collapse of the 1972 syndrome.

In September he made the date or "time" of the "end" a bit more conditional by writing to his co-workers (9-26-71), "The end will come *when* the Gospel has been preached to the whole world as a witness!"

In October Richard Plache attempted to mitigate the 1972 syndrome effect by comparing Herbert Armstrong with the prophet Joshua who followed Moses. Plache noted, "God gave Joshua a job to do, When he needed more time, God made the sun stand still." This, of course, was a plea for *more time* if 1972 rolled around and Armstrong decided he hadn't finished *warning the world.*

And that is exactly what happened: In December (12-29-71) Armstrong informed his co-workers, "We have gotten the 'message' to all but four or five small nations," thus indicating a little more time would be needed to reach those.

Throughout the year of 1971 there was also a rash of "gloom and doom" articles published in The PLAIN TRUTH by various members of the school of the prophets, but without the *date-setting* liberty which had been heretofore exercised. January featured an article on "Welfare–A Social Disaster," followed by articles on the energy crisis, old age, nuclear war, mercury pollution, the dollar crisis, the great drought of the 70's and our cities' financial plight.

While wrestling with the "72 syndrome" the school of the prophets was forced to deal with an equally knotty situation–the reported character problem of Ted Armstrong which surfaced as early as July 1971. As a means of *testing the waters* Herbert Armstrong sent Ted away for an "announced" vacation. Ted later prevailed upon his father to let him return and preach during the "Feast(s) of the Jews" which were coming up in the fall. His father acquiesced, notifying members that Ted was "rested and refreshed." He was to be back in full swing for the annual occasion (ML 9-26-71).

But Ted's return was short lived. By October 14, Herbert Armstrong had again sent him away reportedly for more "rest" (ML 10-14-71). However, Ted was back by early January to participate in the annual Ministerial Conference and to act as Master of Ceremonies during ground breaking for Herbert's 10 million dollar auditorium.

1972 PROPHETIC DISASTER

And so, it looked as if there would be a united front of all church officials to fight the upcoming prophetic battle of the January 7, 1972 syndrome–date on which Armstrong was supposed to have completed his second 19-year cycle and the prophesied time for the collapse of the United States.

It was the date on which Herbert Armstrong and his *elect* were to flee to the barren and dubious *safety* of Petra, about 100 miles south of Jerusalem and slightly eastward across the Wadi Araba. Contemplating such a *flight* Armstrong had continually sought the favor and good graces of the Arab

leaders, and Charles Hunting (one of Armstrong's vice presidents who has since repudiated Armstrongism) conjectured, "The Arabs might even deed Petra to us [the Armstrong organization MB 2-10-67]."

Nothing could stop nature's time machine as the year 1972 irresistibly dawned upon Armstrong's school of the prophets. Suspense mounted as the days clicked off–January 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and next, January 7!–prophetic D-Day!

That momentous day came like all days before it. It rained in the rain forest. The sun parched the barren sands of the world's great deserts. The lonely Arab rode his camel through blistering sand storms and the Bedouin again rummaged through the ruins of the Rose-Red City of the Dead–PETRA! But Armstrong and his *elect* were not there! The world's three billion inhabitants arose, and went about their daily duties, unaware of the supposed significance of that date–January 7, 1972.

But, unfortunately, this was not the case with Armstrong's followers. Thousands were in a quandary and there was no way the leaders of the church could avoid a great loss of prophetic credibility. Further credibility loss was incurred shortly thereafter. Herbert Armstrong again found it necessary to expel Ted from the organization, strip him of all rank and authority in both the college and the church and excommunicate him from the church (sermon 4-21-72). Then in short order adverse press publicity compelled Herbert Armstrong to give the members a more complete disclosure of Ted's reported long-standing problem of marital infidelity, even though it was artfully couched in euphemistic chicanery (ML 4-25-72).

To make the situation even more difficult the national economy was on a down-tilt and fund raising was becoming increasingly difficult. All the while, Herbert Armstrong, determined to over-ride the counsel of his top men, obligated his adherents to an additional 10-million dollar auditorium commitment (24-million including financing) even though it would render no *additional* service to the campus, other than

that of a *public relations conversation piece–another* article in Armstrong's bag of intimidating tools.

The Jay member may not have paused to tabulate the number of Armstrong's ill-fated prophecies. Viewed through the vagueness of the *eye of his memory* they were projected as a mass of confusion and uncertainty–which indeed they are when catalogued in one group.

Now, take a realistic look at what has transpired. There are many more prophecy failures than it is expedient to list here, but they can be reduced to a common denominator of about forty prophecies which just didn't happen.

Following is a list of forty major ill-fated predictions from Armstrong's school of the prophets–1947-1972.

1. There has been no “World Explosion” in Palestine.
2. The Pope did not move the Vatican.
3. There was no showdown between Pope Pius Xll and Stalin.
4. People world-wide were not “compelled” to worship the Catholic Church.
5. There was no 20-year war in Korea.
6. The end of the world was not near in 1944.
7. Japan has not turned against the U.S.
8. The U.S. was not toppled by drought in 1975.
9. National disasters did not start for the U.S. in 1972 .
10. America and Britain did not go into slavery in 1972.
11. America and Britain were not practicing cannibalism by 1972.
12. The global earth has not been shaken by devastating earthquakes.
13. U.S. trade embargo did not occur in J965.
14. The U.S. was not doomed by an attack from Germany in 1972 or 1974.
15. There has not been worldwide weather disaster.
16. Red China did not invade India in the spring of 1960.
17. The U.S. did not enter the world's worst depression in 1972.

18. The U.S. "DID" have it's biggest BOOM in the mid 60's.
19. Europe did not smash Russia.
20. There has been no worldwide volcanic disaster.
21. Dallas, Chicago, St. Louis–The U.S. and Britain were not destroyed by 1975.
22. One hundred thousand of Armstrong's members did not flee to Petra in 1972.
23. Trade war did not occur in 1964.
24. The Pope did not stage a fake resurrection of Hitler.
25. Hitler and the Pope did not seize control of the world.
26. There were. no manned space platforms in 1970.
27. Dead bodies were not piled knee keep on America's super-highways by 1969.
28. Armstrong could not stay on the ship stations located off the British Isles.
29. There has been no pestilence scare in the 70 's.
30. Sixty-million Americans did not die or starvation by 1972.
31. The Armstrong broad cast did not "go out from Jerusalem," as prophesied.
32. The Jews did not demolish the Dome of the Rock (Al Aksa),
33. The Jews did not build (J temple on that spot (Al Aksa),
34. The "Great Tribulation" did not strike.
35. The Germans and Arabs did not fight the NEXT BIG WAR.
37. Jordan was not broken into three parts.
38. Israel did not build a highway from Haiti to Petra and thence to Jerusalem.
39. There was no H-Bomb war in 1972.
40. Britain did not lose Gibraltar.
41. World War III did not break out in 1972.

That is a partial list of the prophecies which came out of Armstrong's school of the prophets–predictions which *just*

didn't happen. Very few, if any, events which they specifically prophesied came remotely close to being accurate though some were *contorted* so as to give the ILLUSION of fulfillment.

John Kiez, Armstrong's most loyal and lasting friend in the old line Church of God, most aptly evaluates the "spirit of prophecy" which permeates the Armstrong organization.

> "When one claims that he has been ordained of God, baptized by Jesus Christ . . . and dares to tell in specific, point-by-point, and in detailed order, the events that are to occur, the real meaning of the mysterious books of prophecy . . . he ought not to have made predictions which have never come to pass . . .
>
> " . . . Armstrong and his fellow-writers have written articles . . . stating that no one but he and his group understand these things . . .
>
> " . . . and if he is God's true prophet for these times, he should never have made such predictions as have miserably failed" (Radio Church of God Vs. Church of God, 7th Day – John Kiez).

Of course the real test comes from God's Word. Read it in Deuteronomy 18:22, "When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, hut the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him."

Herbert Armstrong was, in the estimation of some, *finished as a prophet* after the 1972 debacle. He thus exerted his effort toward shifting the attention of his members and co-workers to his accelerated round of royal parties–another article in his *bag of intimidating tools.* The reason for attempting to divert their attention from the prophecy failures and Ted's reported marital problems was to buy enough time to regain the confidence of his adherents and re-establish a seat of authority for Ted.

However, many ministers and thousands of members did not accept Ted as *spiritually qualified* in view of the national scandal which occurred as a result of his reported long-standing marital infidelity-scandal which started in 1971 and has raged for years.

Ecclesiastical discord broke into the open in 1973, shortly after Herbert transferred his seat of authority to Ted. That led to a complete fracture of the organization by mid 1974. Instability is still prominent among Armstrong's members and many are destined to leave his church when they recognize that totalitarianism is not synonymous with spirituality.

Tile fissure which occurred in Armstrong's church was largely caused by his totalitarian form of government. However, Armstrong mistakenly believed his dictatorial approach was all that saved his church from total collapse.

Armstrong's totalitarian government, how it developed and what it has done to his people and organization is thus the subject of the following chapter.

Part III

Decay and Decline of the Armstrong Empire

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

GOVERNMENT FROM THE TOP DOWN– ARMSTRONG DICTATORSHIP

In his early ministry Armstrong used the democratic process. In his words, " . . . in Oregon I . . . allowed voting to be done at first." (11-28-64 SN.)

However, by the mid 60's Armstrong lauded the principle of dictatorship and by 1973 he had fixed the doctrine of *spiritual* dictatorship firmly upon the shoulders of his adherents.

The *dictatorship philosophy* was unreservedly propounded by Frank Brown, concurrently one of Armstrong's leading Headquarters executives and minister (who is now–I977–serving in Armstrong's Bricket Wood, England office), when he angrily snorted (3-28-74 SN):

"God the Father is a total dictator!"

The Armstrongs were so pleased with Brown's presentation on *dictatorial church government* that it was tape recorded and replayed in Armstrong's churches throughout the nation.

Dictatorship, Armstrong thinks, is God's form of government and has consequently adopted it as the mode of administration in his organization.

It was thus elaborated in Brown's sermon:

> "You know, Jesus Christ, God the Father even moreso, is a total dictator . . . He's a total dictator . . . makes all the decisions . . . He had all the input [counsel] he wanted, and still does, but yet he is still a total dictator! Utter! Complete!"
>
> "Now there are some who say you ought to have a *board* of directors to run the church . . . Now listen, if you think

> there is any form of government that is subject to abuse, it's democracy! Because when everybody's equal, everybody has a right to say exactly what they want [he wants] at any time about any thing. And (thus) democracy, within itself, has the seeds of its own destruction . . . Rule by one man is the best possible form of government."

Note that Brown equates democracy as the same type of rule as a *board of directors.* But the historical fact is that democracy has little in common with a governing board. It is a well known fact that few nations have ever allowed democracy in its purest form. The U.S. Government is a republican form of government and corporate boards in the U.S. are also generally republican in form.

Contrary to Brown's conclusion, it has been historically proven that a one-man dictatorship is not the best form of government. And it is not God's form of government! All governments of recorded history have fallen into decay whether dictatorship, democracy or republican. How then, does one appraise the value of a particular form of government? *By its fruits,* of course.

The constituted democratic-republic of the U.S. has brought evidence of the greatest blessings to the largest number of people of any government in recorded history. That same governmental process, incorporated into our large industrial institutions has produced spectacular results. American industry has led the world in research, development and production. Those great advances are primarily the result of our *form of government.*

Some underdeveloped countries have more square miles. Some are more populous, but most are plagued with a *residual spirit* of tyranny which makes it virtually impossible for them to *think free.* And only a *free mind* is a fully creative mind.

The form of government God reveals as His, is far from a dictatorship. It is in fact a constitutional patriarchy. While the *line structure* of that government is pyramid in form (as

is every form of government except pure democracy) it is to be exercised only in compliance with constitutional provisions and is never expressed as a dictatorship.

God's constitution for Israel, the Law of Moses and the Ten Commandments on tables of stone, left nothing to the imagination of a dictator. There were even checks and balances provided by the five independent governing lines which existed in the Old Testament regime; the priests, prophets, elders, judges and kings.

God gave Israel a distinct and clearly written constitution but by the time of Christ, men had so infringed the law that its administration was both heavy and fearsome. Perhaps as a result of those infringements, Brown concludes God's government was a dictatorship.

He cried:

> "God has set up a form of [New Testament] government [implying dictatorship] . . . if men have abused that government [in Armstrong's New Testament church] is that God's fault? .. what are you going to do? . . . throw out the baby with the bath water? Or, aren't you going to try to clean up and change the system, reorder the administration but retain the same organization [dictatorship]?"

Brown continues:

> "The only form[s] of government Paul was familiar with . . . was the Mosaic form of government which was a pyramid . . . [he was] very familiar with the Roman government which was even more of a pyramid .. It was *really* 'from the top down.'"

True! But a pyramid form of government need not be and *will not be a dictatorship* if it is properly constituted. A well written charter, whether a national constitution, a corporate constitution and by-laws, a. church constitution, or a simple job description for an employee, transforms a *petty dictator* into a civil administrator.

God's Old Testament government was called an "administration," by Paul (ll Cor. 3:7-9 & I Cor. 12:5) and never a dictatorship.

Israel had a constitution–simply a form of agreement or covenant as it was referred to in the Old Testament.

When Christ ascended, did He leave a *dictatorship* behind? Did He not leave a *board of twelve,* all of equal Apostolic rank with perhaps one (Peter) as chairman or moderator'?

The stark reality of that board of twelve confounds and confuses the disciples of the *dictatorship theory.* Christ added even more to their consternation when He spent three and one-half years with Paul, personally taught and appointed him to equal rank of apostle and started a *second work.*

Paul's work was, administratively, independent of the Jerusalem *Board of Twelve.* On one occasion Paul even brought a complaint against them for allowing their ministers to preach the heretical *doctrine of circumcision* in *his* territory.

The *Twelve* counseled together and concurred that Paul was right. James acted as Chairman and rendered the *opinion* in this case as Peter was under indictment in the complaint. The *Jerusalem board* finally admitted they had no authority for that heretical doctrine and gave Paul written testimony which he read to his churches.

No dictatorship was exercised. Paul was *right* and the twelve acquiesced. He wasn't charged with *insubordination* or *bad attitude* nor was he *put out* of the church or accused of being a *tool of Satan* because he dared to bring a charge *against* the Board of Twelve.

ARMSTRONG'S PYRAMID DICTATORSHIP IN FORMATION

Soon after the advent of Armstrong's Ambassador College he began to pattern his hierarchy after that of the *absolute dictator.* His *pinnacle of power* started its growth even before he ordained his first rank of ministers. One of his students (Herman Hoeh) started the process by proclaiming (1951)

Herbert Armstrong as "God's Apostle" for our time (see 2 & 3-55 GN).

This set the stage for Armstrong's first round of ordinations and upon graduation, Herman Hoeh, Dick Armstrong, and Raymond Cole were ordained to the top rank of Evangelist followed by Roderick Meredith and his uncle, Dr. C. Paul Meredith. The following January the two older McNair brothers were added to the Evangelists' rank, making a total of seven.

Concurrent with these ordinations the Evangelist rank ministers, along with Herbert Armstrong, began writing *canon articles* for The GOOD NEWS magazine. It was in this publication that Armstrong and his ministers laid the foundation for his dictatorial system over the people. He started the theme by an attack on the *right to vote* and asked, "How Would Jesus Vote for President?" (11-52-GN). He answered by closing his article in the following manner:

> "What then, would Jesus do in the time of presidential election? He would warn our people . . . come out of her [Babylon–implying one should not vote] my people, that ye be not partaker of her sins [implying that voting is a sin] and that ye receive not of her plagues!"
> " . . . What would Jesus do? He would be too busy proclaiming the good news of his own coming world kingdom. . .to take any part whatsoever in the politics of this present evil world . . ."

This article, carried in Armstrong's GOOD NEWS magazine, intended exclusively for members, was to convey to them the concept that *they should not vote.* This. set the policy for all time in the minds of Armstrong's ministers and was thus gradually settled as a *church doctrine.* Consequently Armstrong's adherents have been taught not to vote on any *issue* or for any *candidate* at any level from local to national elections. However since their 1974 administrative *shake-up* this has been relaxed somewhat.

The following year (7-53 GN), Herman Hoeh declared their exclusive membership magazine to be the *canon voice* of the Armstrong hierarchy by announcing:

> "The GOOD NEWS becomes the Church Voice in these closing days."

This put the members on notice that any article appearing in the pages of that magazine would be considered as canon, virtually equal to a "Thus saith the Lord" and set the stage for further development of dictatorial government.

The following month Hoeh followed with an article entitled, "Government in Our Church," in which he pointed to Ephesians 4:'11 to enumerate the ministerial functions of Apostle, Prophet, 'Evangelist, Pastor, and Teacher. He designated those functions as authoritative ranks rather than *operations of the spirit* and thereby *set* the ranks of authority in Armstrong's church.

At that early date (1953) Armstrong's dictatorial government had not been totally developed as indicated by Hoeh's article:

> "Among the twelve apostles Peter was pre-eminent, although they all held equal office. Peter had *no one-man dictatorial authority* over the other eleven." [This, of course, was reversed years later.]

Later in the article, in reference to *Paul,* Hoeh stated:

> "Paul had the authority when necessary to command . . . [men] to go wherever he designated although in other instances when duties were not imperative, Paul sometimes left it to the convenience of the Evangelists . . . Paul *was not a dictator."*

Hoeh continued:

> "Down through the ages Jesus has chosen *directly* [author's emphasis) those who serve in the capacity of Apostle

> [implying Christ personally chose Armstrong] –His direct representatives bearing His authority . . .
> " . . . in [Armstrong's church] the church . . . in which the government of [Armstrong] God exists today, *Jesus has chosen* Mr. *Armstrong* as His *direct representative,* as an Ambassador of the Kingdom of God . . ." [Author's emphasis] .
> "Mr. Armstrong's office carries with it *divine authority* [author's emphasis], backed up by the power of God. Jesus has sent him to speak in His name and by His authority . . ."

Needless to say, that began to raise Herbert Armstrong to near divine status among his members.

The following month Rod Meredith added to the reverence of Herbert Armstrong with his article on church government, "Whose Opinion Counts?" (9-53 GN). The subscript to Meredith's headline purports to summarize a popular belief that "man should be governed by what HE believes God says."

Unfortunately Meredith does not state it *that way.* His exact quote apparently distorts the "common belief." Meredith puts It as follows:

> "We have all been reared with the modern concept that in religious matters a man should be governed primarily by what HE thinks." ["God says"–left out.]

By leaving out the words "God says" in his subscript Meredith distorts the image of the *common belief* and sets up a *straw dummy* which he then attempts to destroy.

Meredith's article leaves little doubt with Armstrong's adherents that failure to harmonize one's *opinion* with Armstrong is a mark of *spiritual immaturity.*

Meredith concludes:

> " . . . God has specially 'called' His ministers . . . [their] authority is to be respected! . . . Let us submit ourselves to [Armstrong's] God's government."

Herbert Armstrong added to Meredith's theme of *sanctification* of ministerial acts and edicts with his article entitled, "Must God's Ministers be Ordained by the Hand of Man?" –implying a succession of the ministry.

This article was written to block inroads by Gene Carter, a free-lance Bible student, who was wooing certain Armstrong adherents into his association in the St. Louis Missouri, area.

Gene had a program on KSTL-Radio each Sunday morning at 9:15. His letter head reads: "The WORLD AHEAD" Radio Program and St. Louis "CHURCH OF GOD," 2345 Lafayette.

Gene was not an ordained minister although he had associated with Armstrong a great deal. He had worked at Armstrong's Eugene, Oregon, offices in the capacity of office manager trainee and served as deacon in Armstrong's Eugene church. But Gene was unable to continue holding those posts due to a personality conflict with Herbert Armstrong. In 1949 Gene left Oregon to again join Armstrong and attend his college which had opened in Pasadena in 1947. But Gene returned to his native Illinois after one year in college and started his ministerial work *without* the blessing of Armstrong's ministerial credentials.

Thus, Armstrong's article, "Must God's Ministers be Ordained by the Hand of Man?" was an attempt to retain the support of his (Armstrong's) adherents which was beginning to gravitate toward Carter. In this way Armstrong discredited Gene by alienating him from the people. One very interesting thing Armstrong failed to put in the above-mentioned article; like Gene, there is no record of Armstrong himself having been ordained by a licensed succession of the ministry.

Gene's comment in private correspondence reveals some of the disappointment which he experienced in the situation.

> " . . . Raymond [McNair] was sent to replace me as Pastor of the St. Louis Church. Having to relinquish the Pastorate and bow out was *easier* (author's emphasis) . . . because of the very cordial good will and understanding that has always *existed between [him and me]."*

Garner Ted later put the axe to those who would set themselves up as ministers without the *Armstrong sanction,* in his article, "How God Calls His Ministers." (10-57-GN).

LOOK TO HEADQUARTERS

Keeping his adherents polarized toward him has been a concern of Armstrong throughout the years. A propaganda routine was started, concurrent with the establishment of local congregations to train members to *think Headquarters.* Armstrong's Pasadena Headquarters from that time on has been equated with the Jerusalem Church of the early Apostles.

Herman Hoeh asked, in the July 1955 GOOD NEWS, "Does God Have a Headquarters Church Today?–Where is the central church of *divine authority* [author's emphasis] to which scattered members and local churches should look for TRUE DOCTRINE or to settle disputed points?"

Hoeh's conclusion:

> "The Church at Jerusalem was the headquarters for carrying the Gospel [to the world] . . . [But] in our day . . . the central church is at Pasadena."

Therefore, authoritarianism continued its poisonous growth, and in 1957 Herbert Armstrong made his authoritarian doctrine quite emphatic when he wrote, "Christ did put authority in His Church" (1-57 GN).

The church was again propagandized to keep looking to Headquarters by Herbert Armstrong's article, "Local Assemblies are Not Social Clubs." This article also greatly discouraged the development of a deeply rooted brotherhood among the local church brethren (10-57 GN).

ONE PLACE FOR FEASTS OF THE JEWS

Their ever-constant *theme of Headquarters* was reinforced by the teaching that all members must go to *one place* to be with Armstrong in keeping the *Feast of the*

Jews– Tabernacles. And that *one place* in the North American continent was thought to be "Gladewater."

He further questioned:

> "How can we know where the new Tabernacle ought to be located?
> What Bible authority do we have for keeping the Feast of Tabernacles in ONE place in [North America] Gladewater, Texas? Here is what the Bible reveals about it! . . . Today the earth is divided into several geographic and communicative world areas! These include North America, Europe, Australia, South Africa, and South America . . .
> In each one of these separate geographic areas on our earth there can be only *one* Feast of Tabernacles held . . . ! In America that one place is GLADEWATER, TEXAS" (12-57 GN).

Also, to prove this concept, the Armstrong organization constantly harked to the *authority* of the Old Testament to reinforce its doctrine of the one place theory for holding the *Feast of the* Jews–Tabernacles. To give further credence to this line of reasoning Hoeh authored an article entitled, "Does the Old Testament have authority over Christians today'?" (9-57 GN), and assured his readers that Armstrong's Old Testament teachings were truly God inspired.

But within ten years from that date Armstrong's church was holding Feast of Tabernacles meetings in numerous other places throughout the U.S.–a real point of embarrassment to those who had come to feel that *decisions* from Pasadena Headquarters were a virtual "Thus saith the Lord!"

THE FRUSTRATION OF "GROWING"

All of this led to frustration, particularly due to the interpretation which Armstrong puts on the scripture, "Grow in grace and knowledge." This was taken to mean that the church should always be discovering some new kernel of truth as a mark of spirituality.

This mark of distinction was borne for many years by Herman Hoeh, So prevalent had this thinking become that at one time it was commonly said, "God uses Herman Hoeh to reveal new truth in our time." Only the crucible of time was to determine the lack of validity in his *studied revelations*.

One such trial for Hoeh's doctrine started with the publication of his article, "What Will Your Job Be in the Kingdom?" (2-58 GN). This was supposedly a marvelous enlightenment of the meaning of the so-called seven church eras of Revelation 3, with emphasis on the conclusion that Armstrong's church was the *glorious Philadelphia* era. The "Sardis era" which precedes that of Philadelphia in Revelation 3 was used to stigmatize the old line Church of God with which Armstrong had associated in Oregon. And the Laodicean era was supposed to follow Armstrong's Philadelphia era and would be comprised of Armstrong's more unfortunate members caught in a dreadfully weak spiritual condition.

What effect did this doctrine have on Armstrong's church government? It officially categorized members of the Armstrong organization for the first time!

Even more, the article suggested, those entering the Kingdom of God would perform the same tasks there and *rule over* only that which they had acquired as a dominion here during their limited tenure in Armstrong's church. Few realized what a disastrous effect this article was destined to have on Armstrong's organization. It had a residual influence over the young ministerial students long after that specific article was forgotten.

But what was its disastrous effect? It set off a chain reaction of *politicking* and *back climbing* within the organization. Many felt justified in clawing their way to the top of Armstrong's political heap. Even Armstrong, himself, has encouraged this in numerous sermons by jibbing, "If a man is not willing to 'fight' for his position he doesn't deserve it!"

Thus, many of Armstrong's energetic young men felt justified in doing what was convenient to *get* the position

they wanted. And they (half-thinking) felt it had God's blessing and would bring them a greater reward in His Kingdom (8-58 GN).

Hoeh's article had started the *theory* of the *seven church eras* in 1958 and Leroy Neff expanded it in 1959 with his article, "What is the 'Laodicean Church'?"

In this article Neff warned:

> "The Laodicean [Armstrong's spiritually weak] is not going to escape to a place of safety; When it is too late, they will find that the church of Philadelphia [Armstrong's spiritually strong] has gone to safety, only two choices remain for each person [Laodicean] left. They will be tried by the fire of men, and may lose their lives in severe tortures; or if they recant, they will lose their lives in the final gehenna [hell] fire."

Thus, one who is stigmatized by the term *Laodicean* is looked upon as spiritually weak and in danger of hell. Hence Laodicean is a term commonly used by both lay members and ministers to *judge their supposed weak* Christian brothers.

From this period on, in Armstrong's church, the last three churches of Revelation 3 became *labels of judgment,* Sardis means *spiritually dead.* Philadelphia is equated with *faithfulness and love.* Laodicean is used to signify one who is *spiritually weak* and in danger of hell.

RULE BY FEAR

The element of fear plays a big part in the government of Armstrong's church. Fear of committing the unpardonable sin looms great in the minds of God's children. Ministers know this.

Armstrong uses it–uses this element of fear to hold adherents in subjection. He writes:

> "You may speak a word against us [Armstrong and his ministers] personally . . . and be forgiven . . . But . . . if and

> when you criticize Of accuse or condemn THE WORK, then you arc speaking against the Holy Spirit . . . you shall not be forgiven" (3·60 GN).

Armstrong continues to explain the article that criticizing or speaking against *him* is sure to lead one to eventually criticize the *work* and reap the punishment of the unpardonable sin. Hence Armstrong implies that any criticism of him can be virtually equated with the unpardonable sin.

Personal observation has shown that Armstrong will not tolerate a critic in his regime–whether objective or subjective. One who takes such a stance is either slowly pushed aside or violently thrust out by Armstrong pointing an accusing finger until such a one is totally discredited in the eyes of his peers.

ARMSTRONG'S "THUS SAITH THE LORD" RULINGS

By the early 60's Armstrong had developed a number of local churches throughout the South, West and Mid-West. A constant patter of propaganda was fed to all church members in those areas, reminding them that they were *spiritual subjects* of Armstrong's Pasadena Headquarters.

One such article was written by Herman Hoeh: "How Far Does Church Government Extend Into Your Life?" In the subscript to the title Hoeh asked:

> "Through whom does God make final decisions in matters of church policy? What is your responsibility under the Government of [Armstrong] God?"

Throughout the article Hoeh makes it adequately clear that decisions made at the ministerial level carry the strongest possible authority–even in relation to personal customs and ways. He cites "The Decision on Wearing MAKE-UP" as an example:

> "God's [Armstrong's] government even determines the question of wearing make-up in *your home!* The problem of 'make-up' was not clear to many people [1955 GN]. The church could have been split on this matter! The church [government] had to speak authoritatively on this matter, and it did. Now, whether you agree, whether or not you can understand, it is no longer a question. There has been a 'thus saith the Lord' and all are to obey."

A number of members were put out of Armstrong's church over this issue. It is not known if any came back or were re-admitted when Armstrong's church revised its "thus saith the Lord" decision twenty years later (1975). But for twenty years many patient, tolerant souls endured Armstrong's false "Thus saith the Lord," on the "make-up" issue.

The same has been true with the problem of divorce and remarriage. Armstrong *ruled* for years, there is absolutely no Biblical grounds for divorce. But Christ said there is *one* cause.

Armstrong acquiesced in the 47th year after his first sermon and admitted there is an allowable cause for divorce though he still does not agree with Christ's teaching. But during his 47 years of adamant teaching of the divorce issue, literally thousands of families were needlessly and mercilessly broken up by the incorrect teachings of Armstrong and his ministers and thousands were thus legislated into sin.

Armstrong's response to this tragedy was, since God did not reveal it to us, He sanctioned our decision. And the ministerial response was that this error of the church helped people to build character. Does God sanction error, and does He legislate people into trauma? Where can you find it in the Bible? Not in the book of Job–his calamity was of Satan's doing!

Hoeh's article on *church government* cinched the doctrine of *authoritarianism* upon the church. As the years rolled by, a person vested with the office of ministerial rank was esteemed equal to the elevated place of a divine oracle. His

word and decision was respected as "thus saith the Lord."

Following is a modified list of *decisions* which found their way into the canonical pages of The GOOD NEWS magazine (summarized for the sake of brevity):

1) Only Armstrong's ministers should perform marriage
2) Divorce and remarriage is unconditionally prohibited (booklet).
3) Never sympathize or console one who has been castigated by a minister (1-54-GN).
4) Members should not assemble without Armstrong's approval (3-54 GN).
5) Criticizing Armstrong or his work is equated with the unpardonable sin (6&7-54 GN).
6) Failure to observe the "Feasts of the Jews" could cause you to love salvation (8-54 GN).
7) God's vacation plan for Christians is keeping the "Feasts of the Jews" (9-54 GN).
8) The wearing of make-up prohibited (7-55 GN).
9) Christians should not celebrate birthdays (5-57 GN).
10) Young people should date only those in Armstrong's church (9-57 GN).
11) Medical Science originated with heathen superstition
12) No tape recorders to be used during services. Too costly and would take funds from the "House for God" being built at Gladewater, Texas (5-58 GN, also 6&7 58 GN). (The "House of God" was never built in Gladewater, but 14 years and many "collections" later was built in Pasadena at an astronomical cost.)
13) Masonry not to be patronized by church members– considered to be a crutch which a true Christian does not need. (Carried in a series of GN articles in 1958-1959).
14) Set precedence of naming *places* after people by naming a building on the English Campus (after his

son) the Richard D. Armstrong Memorial Hall, and the Loma D. Armstrong Academic Center, in Pasadena after his wife. Armstrong had preached against this for many years. To the knowledge of the author the reasoning behind his reversal was not made generally known to the membership (3-4-59 CWL).

15. Policy on warfare–Armstrong's adherents are not to come under military authority in any wise (10-.60 GN).
16. Photographs are not to be taken of ceremonies (4-61 GN).
17. Women's dresses are to be at or below the knee (9-62 GN).
18. Armstrong's adherents are not to bring visitors to church (9-62 GN).
19. Dancing, movies, card playing and alcohol approved (3-62 GN).
20. Armstrong RULED–·· No applause in church 01-30-63 GN), but allows it for himself and his son, Ted.
21. Use of hair pieces approved (8-22-72 MB).
22. Restatement of policy on skirt lengths–no bare thighs when ladies sit down, etc. (8-22-72 & 10-17-72 MB).

Unfortunately Armstrong never catalogued those *rulings* for the people, but continued to rule in a state of confusion.

ARMSTRONG'S RULE BY CONFUSION

The number of *do*'s and *don'ts* had grown long and burdensome as early as 1962 and ministerial authority had broadened to the point that it greatly afflicted the spirit of fellowship among the members. Headquarters had a long and confusing history of individual “Thus saith the Lord” edicts without a formalized statement of beliefs. This left the members bewildered and confused and with each passing year there was an increased fear of discussing Biblically oriented subjects. There was always a chance one would be reported by others for having countered a *hidden* decision couched among the antiquated pages of Armstrong's publications–one

which had perhaps rolled off his *canon press* many years before. Thus, Armstrong's local churches gradually degenerated into stratified social casts dominated by fear.

In recognition of this fact Herman Hoeh found it necessary to write an article entitled, "Talk about the Bible–when you visit one another!" In the title subscript Hoeh wrote:

> "Some brethren assume they should not TALK about the Bible when visiting one another, unless a minister is present. Let's understand when and how we should talk about the Bible–and to whom!"

Hoeh's article notwithstanding, fear and confusion continued to grow among the members. Their inhibitions were continuously fed by the propaganda fires stoked by an increasing number of publications from Headquarters. And there was the ever present reminder of absolute church authority as exemplified by Ted Armstrong's articles, "Unity in the Church" and "Are You Willing" (3-62 GN & 4-62 GN). These articles call for a total surrender of one's will to Armstrongism. [24]

MINISTERIAL BULLETIN BECOMES CANON AUTHORITY

In 1963 the GOOD NEWS magazine declined in its value as the *official* voice of the church. Local congregations were becoming more numerous and thus the primary channel of *church authority* became the *Ministerial Bulletin.* From that publication came announcements which took on the proportions of a "Thus saith the Lord" from Pasadena Headquarters to the local congregations. Among personal sermon notes are found many such elements of authoritarianism which had their roots in the *Ministerial Bulletin* or direct word from Headquarters.

1. "True conversion is willingness to be corrected" (HWA 1-5-63).

2. “We are the only true church” (HWA 2-16-63).
3. “Reluctance to accept advice can keep you out of the Kingdom of God” (NAS 2-3-63).
4. “How much do you fear and obey the decision of the minister?” (NAS 2-3-63).
5. “Is it wrong for women to wear make-up? It is a sin!” (GTA 2-2-63).
6. “The fate of those who leave the church–Hell Fire!” (HLH 2-25-63).
7. “Mind your own business–don't be concerned with church administration” (DA 10-19-63).
8. “Doubting the minister is as doubting Christ” (HLH 3-29-64).
9 “A man left the church . . . [because] he didn't fully accept the authority of the church . . . every doctrine is infallible” (AD 11-21-64).
10. “You can reject Christ by running to a doctor, banker, lawyer . . .” (FB 11-27-65).
11. “Carnal mind will condemn its superiors . . . a spiritual mind will be obedient” (GTA 2-26-64).
12. “We need to re-surrender ourselves to 'The Work'” (EMc 11-4-67).
13. “Supreme sin . . . to be cut off from God . . . become embittered at this [HWA's] WORK” (HWA 6-29-63).
14. “If you don't have your heart in this *work* you will flounder at Ambassador College” (HWA 8-30-69).
15. “Never criticize authority” (AC 3-7-70).
16. “We should never make the mistake of criticizing the minister” (RR 2-20-73).
17. “Submit yourselves” (LMc 11-1 0-73).

This is just a minute sampling of the constant hail of propaganda which bombarded the psyche of the Armstrong adherent. The end result was virtual paralysis of any sense of creativity and individuality among the members.

The process did, in fact, create a mindless membership and a *rubber stamp ministry.*

LOCAL MINISTER VICTIM OF FEAR

Yes, even the local minister was a victim of what became known as *Headquarter-itis*. The slightest infraction of a rule or even suspicion of independence by a local minister brought swift retribution from Headquarters.

No act or enterprise which *threatened* the authority of Headquarters was allowed to go unnoticed. A prime example was suppression of the local church news journals they started in 1960 and increased until many local congregations were producing them in 1963.

The first sanction against their publication came in tile form of an order from Garner Ted to drop the cartoon section, "Dr. Bill Saltine and Billy Soda-Cracker." The stated objection was that this cartoon *poked fun* at *authority.* Thus Garner Ted ordered, "You are now instructed to drop these columns immediately" (6-25-63 MB).

Ted took another swing at the local ministers by accusing them of a tendency to "sit back and relax in . . . bloated affluency" (8-14-63 MB).

This critical process was active on every level until a spirit of total subservience was instilled in the ministry from trainee to evangelist. Graduates were sent out as ministerial assistants and instructed, " . . . [you] should feel honored to mow [your superior's] lawn and scrub [his] floors" 5-29-63 MB). And, the local pastor had to offer the same subservience to Headquarters, He even had to get permission from Headquarters to form a volunteer local church choir (2-21-64 MB).

The local pastor was *hacked* again by Herbert Armstrong's *1964 decision* to discontinue *local* church news journals. They were restricted to having "only district newspapers" (5-15-64 MB). Later, even those were completely abolished.

The following month the minister's realm of influence was further curtailed by Headquarters taking over all reservations for their annual conventions (6-22-64 MB). And in August of '64 Headquarters removed the handling of "third tithe" funds from the minister's domain, with the exception of a

small local balance (8-5-64 MB).

By January of 1965 the general ministry was excluded from attending tile annual conference at Headquarters (10-22-64 MB), thus pushing the local pastor further from the *eye* of the *work.*

Again, in 1965 Herbert Armstrong a tracked the local ministry for alleged extravagance–instructing them to eat at lunch counters as well as "brown bagging" when possible.

At this point Armstrong also called in all "second" and "third" tithe funds leaving the local ministry with only a pittance under local administration (5-19-65 MB).

Later in the year Armstrong further curtailed the local minister's influence by *ruling,* "No minister is to fly or ride in a private aircraft unless he is accompanied by a commercially qualified pilot" (9-14-65).

In November, there was perhaps an attempt to atone for ministerial curtailments by extending to the general ministry certain vacation and fringe privileges which had heretofore been enjoyed by only the *top eschelon* (11-26-65 MB).

The year of 1966 saw even further castigation of the local ministry. They were corrected for being too *independent* and accused of allowing the church to become too social. To counteract both of these supposed *weaknesses,* Gerald Waterhouse was sent on a world tour to visit the churches and preach what became known as Headquarter-iris (4-8-66 MB).

In February 1968 a further blow was struck at the local minister when headquarters instructed each to return his *$300 second tithe* emergency fund to Pasadena for administration. In that same month ministers were instructed from headquarters that they should check the very personal and private tithe records of their members in the headquarter's Model 360 IBM computer, if they felt some of their members might not be tithing (2-26-68 MB). Record of each member's donations to the three tithes were constantly updated in the computer and were readily accessible to those in the ministry.

The final blow was struck against the *Fund Accounts* of the local ministers when headquarters instructed them to transfer their locally donated *Love–Fund* (fund for the poor) to headquarters for distribution back into their own territories. The directive stipulated that "even pennies, nickels and dimes were to be sent to headquarters." This left no fund administration with the local pastors. Everything went to headquarters!

In August a rather insulting directive went out, " . . . [all] fat preachers are ordered to go on a crash reducing program" 8-27-68 MB).

In 1969 the ministers were admonished by headquarters for the second time, to check members' personal and private tithing records in the computer (1-28-69 MB) if they felt one was not tithing (all three tithes).

This long siege of control propaganda and the continual removal of responsibilities had almost sterilized the ministry (1969), as indicated by the fact that they taught from a *manual* that carried a doctrine which *they knew was wrong–yet,* they would not contest it! (4-24-69 MB). This *Ministerial Bulletin* reprimanded the ministers for their rubber-stamp attitude.

August 1969, headquarters again grasped for money: This time the local ministers were ordered to request their members to send all "estimated excess second tithe" (their supposedly God-ordained vacation money) to headquarters *in advance* 8-5-69 MB) and in November a directive from Meredith to the field ministry dealt a severe blow to the morale of the local ministry by virtually wiping out what was known as their *Visiting Program.* This left literally hundreds of long-faced frustrated, local elders standing slump-shouldered with hands in pockets and nothing to do (11-25-69,12-16-69,11-12-10 MB).

By 1970 a new dimension was added to the local minister's job even though it was short-lived. He was to collect the tithe from the people and send it registered and insured in large bundles to Pasadena. This resulted from a

survey which indicated approximately $l-million per year was being lost due to mail larceny. Offenders had been apprehended, starting in the Pasadena Post Office and as far away as Chicago, and other major cities (3-20-70 MB). This responsibility was wiped out only a couple of years later. Apparently headquarters feared the local ministers might try to take over the church by confiscating the tithe.

THE PERSECUTION SYNDROME

In 1970 a specially prepared *press kit,* produced to relieve the constant pressure from the public press, was made available to the local ministers.

Pressures mounted from different directions as the year progressed and the hierarchy became concerned over doctrinal material which was available to the public. This prompted a sermon in Pasadena by Ted Armstrong urging local members to discontinue taking sermon notes and to destroy all notes taken from past sermons. This order was again appealed to by Paul Flatt at the church's convention site in St. Petersburg, Florida as late as October 1975. He urged members not to take sermon notes or notes of proceedings of any such meetings for fear of persecution.

At the time Ted made the original proclamation in Pasadena, an order went out to all local ministers to strip local church libraries of all their publications in order to prevent their falling into the hands of *enemies.* This *police state* tactic aroused the suspicion of both minister and member alike. Paradoxically in the same communique from headquarters, Rod Meredith warned the local ministers “The Police State attitude ought to be erased from all congregations” 01-12-70 MB). Thus, while they were instructing the field ministers to refrain from *police state tactics,* headquarters was itself indulging in the practice.

The following month it was announced in the official *Ministerial Bulletin* that headquarters had established what became known as the *persecution department* to deal with the increasing problem of internal and external antagonists

(12-15-70 MB). In relation to this the local ministers were instructed to *report* to David Jon Hill, at headquarters, any internal or external *criticism*. Hence headquarters continued to indulge in *police state tactics* by keeping a black list on both members and nonmembers.

MINISTERIAL DEFECTIONS START

In 1970 signs of an ominous storm appeared for the first time on Armstrong's ministerial weather scope. Plans were laid to discuss, at the forthcoming ministerial conference, the increasing number of defections from Armstrong's ministry (12-15-70 MB).

A couple of months later, Garner Ted found it necessary to defend the ministry and the honor of a fellow minister who was transferred to headquarters. He made a point of the fact that coming to headquarters is *not* particularly *a sign of disciplinary action.* But the fact remained that large numbers of the men ordered back to Pasadena were under some measure of disciplinary constraint. Knowledge of this attitude had filtered out to the field ministry and a near universal fear of being brought back to headquarters had developed (2-71 MB). Again it became necessary to reassure the ministry in August of '71– "Being returned to [Armstrong's] college doesn't mean a man has a problem" (8-25-71 MB).

The example and administration of Armstrong's dictatorial government *from the top down* had so infected the ministry that many of them conducted themselves as miniature dictators. In many cases their *Visiting Program Team* was compared to Hitler's Gestapo. They thrust themselves into the private lives of members, *interrogating* them about the most intimate and sensitive areas including details of their personal sex lives. The dictatorial attitude was still so prevalent among the ministers that in April 1972, it was necessary for Meredith to refer to their tactics as "very hard and extra critical . . . constantly putting . . . [others] in their place by . . . [an] overbearing approach."

In 1972, for the first time in the history of Armstrong's work, Meredith asked for volunteers to take a lay-off from the ministry (6-13-72 MB). The following month 84 elders were on the list of those relieved of their posts. Prior to that time, anyone leaving Armstrong's ministry was labeled a defector and *eyed* as a traitor.

This sudden switch of the hierarchy's attitude toward ministerial status was not easily accepted by the lay members who had revered those resigning elders as God's *walking oracles* (7-25-72 MB).

That event marked a *turning point* in Armstrong's church. From that time there continued to be dispute, trouble and eventually a major fracture of the organization. Thus *division.* is the fruit of the Armstrong philosophy of dictatorship.

The following allegorical testimony of the author, one of Armstrong's previous associates, aptly describes the case of many.

His ways are as varied as the moods of a tyrant!
exorbitant earthly blessings heaped upon the head of
Slavish souls who tread the crooked path of
Acquiescence and appeasement.
But Curse and Woe awaits the wretch who lifts his
Head in questioned gesture!
The Overlord's Island is molded of those
Dredged from the mire of wicked souls,
Heaped high to bask in the light of *his* divine
revelations.
Each molecular soul contemplates the aesthetic
Moment when his back may bear the
Footprint of his imagined prophet and overlord.
But where is the Woe of that wretch who asked a
Reason for an edict or a law?
Where is the slave whose ill fated sense of fatigue
Raised his weary body in the presence of his master?
Strokes for his back! Irons for his feet!
Do not ask justice for him lest his welts and
Shackles be doubled.

But call him a traitor though he has never
Sipped the brew of that evil spirited word.
His despised body must not pollute his master's
Palace and his castigated soul must not infect
The master's prison slaves.
Bless him with the elements of banishment–the
Whipping wind, the lashing rain, the scorching
Sun and the biting frost!
And if he will return to see his master's glory,
Graciously remove his shackles–but first remove
His legs.
Let the *worm* crawl to the blessing of his
Master's foot-stool and there eat of traitor's
Fare–a dried crumb seasoned with the burning spice
Of a sadistic smile.

The awfulness of tyranny is unknown except in the presence of freedom. Those Master Builders who framed the American Constitution long dined on the porridge of tyranny–until that day they ladled the delectable cauldron of freedom.

At first taste those noble Masters determined to preserve the recipe of its sweetness for their progeny–thereby declaring tyranny the enemy of all Godly and human decency. That glorious recipe of freedom was sealed with that gilded label, "Constitution of the United States of America." That, along with the Bill of Rights became the lighthouse beacon to which a troubled world has looked for centuries.

Paramount among those constitutional provisions are such natural decencies as:

"Freedom of speech"
"Freedom of the press"
"Right of peaceable assembly"
"Right to petition for redress of grievances."

Each of those is it threat to tyranny and a dictator will make a mockery of them.

Personal testimony from within the Armstrong regime attests that those natural decencies have been highly abridged and masterfully suppressed.

A true Christian scorns the surrender of his soul to dictatorial whims and mounts the wings of Egretic freedom. He tunes his harp of life to the melodic ode of his Master, "Love the Lord with a pure heart and thy neighbor as thyself."

There is no place for dictatorship in the Kingdom of God, for love and tyranny cannot abide in the same house.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

ARMSTRONG'S EARLY EMPIRE FRACTURE: The Fear Syndrome

A biographer or historian not intimately associated with the Armstrong organization would likely point to the early SEVENTIES as the first fracture of the Armstrong Empire. But that is far from reality.

The *seeds of schism* lying dormant in the fertile soil of Armstrong's subconsciousness have repeatedly germinated to produce the fruit of failure and division. Each generation of failures lengthened Armstrong's *staying cycle* by modifying his pattern of previous failures, conflicts or divisions. But the element of division has recurrently cycled itself through his organization.

Recapping one of those incidents: When Armstrong was forced to leave Oregon in 1947, his churches were in a state of disarray. He was considered a *failure* by those who knew about the collapse of at least TWENTY-ONE MAJOR PROPHECIES. For them, his move to Southern California added little impetus to the uninspired status of his self-pronounced prophecies. But, even though this was the case, he and his cohorts erected a new prophetic structure over the shambles of his Oregon prophecy failures. The reader may recall, it took only eleven years for his first prophetic structure to collapse. But his second structure lasted *TWENTY-SEVEN YEARS* (1945-1972). A study of the hairline fractures in his organizational foundation and prophetic superstructure, however; indicates the FIRST internal stresses were taking place long before 1972.

The earliest evidence of internal fracture is unveiled by an analysis of how Armstrong used an organizational conflict to establish a *fear syndrome* among his ministers and members

alike. It started when Armstrong suspended one of his ministers.

ARMSTRONG SUSPENDS EVANGELIST

The first serious internal fracture occurred in 1954 when Armstrong suspended one of his leading men who shall be referred to as the *Evangelist* .

This Evangelist received the assignment to organize Armstrong's Gladewater, Texas church and was further commissioned to organize and supervise the first private (Imperial) school (Fall 1953). The church and school were located on a small acreage which had been donated by the Hammer family and was under the custodial care of Armstrong's in-law, Roy Hammer, a prominent lay member of the church and the one around whom the unorganized church community had centered.

Shortly after the Evangelist's assignment, Hammer began to feel that his previous position of pre-eminence had become somewhat eclipsed among Armstrong's adherents of that community. Hammer, in defense of that fear, sought to secure his place of pre-eminence by attacking the image of the one who he thought threatened his position.

Hammer's first stroke was public criticism of the Evangelist's sermons. The Evangelist chose not to antagonize the Hammers and ceased further discussion of the controversial doctrine, both privately and in public sermons. He did however, privately discuss the matter with Hammer–indicating he would submit the doctrinal matter to Armstrong's headquarters for study.

A reply to the doctrinal controversy did not come for several months, during which time Hammer incessantly chipped away at the Evangelist, thus eroding his image among the Armstrong adherents of that community.

The verdict finally came from Armstrong's headquarters. The Evangelist was sustained in his doctrinal position but also received a *stinging rebuke.* Hammer's continual *grinding criticism* against the Evangelist had filtered through the

in-laws of the Armstrong family causing Armstrong to reprimand the Evangelist with a very precarious judgment. The Evangelist, while sustained in his doctrinal position, was scathingly reprimanded for *being in a bad attitude.*

Facts did not sustain such a charge. It was Hammer who continued to chip away at the issue. The Evangelist ceased all teaching and discussion concerning the subject until a *decision* was handed down from headquarters.

It was evident from this that the young (twenty-five-year-old), naive Evangelist was no match for the wily ways of the fifty-four-year-old Roy Hammer. The Evangelist followed the Christian principle of overlooking Hammer's improprieties. But Hammer issued a rising tide of vindictive propaganda against the Evangelist.

Hammer, then one of Armstrong's largest financial contributors, continued his barrage against the Evangelist until mid-summer of 1954 when Armstrong was threatened, "get rid of the Evangelist or *else.*" This prompted a letter from Herbert Armstrong to the Evangelist, notifying him that he was temporarily suspended from the ministry and indicated that his teaching assignment would not be renewed the forthcoming year.

There is nothing unusual about a teacher not having his contract renewed. And that was not the first time in Christian history a minister was defrocked. Had the matter been dropped at that point, little suspicion might have been raised over the *modus operandi* of the Armstrongs. But subsequent events put a stain upon their garments which neither they nor their cohorts have been able to eradicate.

ARMSTRONG'S KANGAROO COURT

After he temporarily suspended the Evangelist, Armstrong made plans to justify his action before the church. His first step was to request the Evangelist to leave town on the pretext of making an investigation. The Evangelist left immediately, confident that he would be exonerated by a thorough investigation of the circumstances.

The *investigation* was apparently a *ONE SIDED STUD Y* of the charges. The Evangelist (defendant) was *never ONCE contacted!* Not in person, not by phone, nor by letter! The investigating party supposedly turned all *evidence* over to Armstrong as he arrived at Gladewater to keep the Fall "Feast of the Jews."

Near the end of the Feast, Armstrong called a meeting of most of the local Gladewater brethren on the pretext of further fact-finding. It was, in reality, a means of putting the members on notice that any who supported the Evangelist would be in danger of excommunication.

Those who testified on the Evangelist's behalf, not to condemn Hammer, but simply to tell of the *good works* which the Evangelist had done, were *viciously cut down* by Armstrong. He thundered "If anybody in this room has anything against the Hammers, he may as well *GET OUT NOW!"*

What a clever and prejudicial tactic! But not very conducive to finding real facts. Suddenly, anyone who cited a good deed in behalf of the Evangelist was *accused* of being *against* Hammer. Befuddled and confused by such threats, all were silenced under a cloud of fear. They were further warned by Armstrong not to discuss this matter publicly.

Through those tactics a minister of Christ was tried.

The Evangelist was not allowed to be present to testify in his own behalf. His friends were not allowed to testify for him and he had no opportunity to confront his accusers. The Evangelist on trial was not told of the *trial* in which he was being bitterly and publicly attacked.

The reader will recall that Armstrong was similarly *brought to trial* before the Oregon Conference in 1933 for preaching heresy. *His judges* made no decision in his absence concerning Armstrong's disposition in relation to the church. They did however reaffirm that all their ministers must *"speak the same thing."* As a result, Armstrong, for more than four decades, has decried their action as foul play. Yet, in the Evangelist's trial Armstrong was infinitely more severe than

his judges had been. He didn't even allow the Evangelist to know the trial was taking place.

Conducting a secret trial was in violation of Armstrong's own Church Constitution. The constitution which Armstrong had personally drafted, provided for a "two week's advance notice" to be given one charged with misconduct.

Article III, Section 3, of Armstrong's 1954 Constitution and By-laws pertinent to bringing discipline against any member:

> "It shall be the duty of every member . . . to follow this scriptural instruction, by first going to the [accused] guilty . . . [who] shall upon approval of the pastor and a majority of the members be excluded . . . provided, however, that two weeks' notice of said action shall be given the one in question and the congregation in advance, and the one involved shall have had opportunity to *appear in his or her behalf,* and provided further that the scriptural steps pointed out in Matthew 5 and 18 shall have been followed in a sincere attempt to reconcile the offending [accused] member."

Thus, Armstrong violated both the letter and the spirit of his own constitution. First, he suspended the Evangelist by correspondence without prior notice. Second, he conducted a secret meeting and tried the Evangelist in absentia and thunderously suppressed testimony in the Evangelist's behalf. Third, Armstrong privately sentenced (indefinitely suspended.) the Evangelist without a hearing–before his accusers or otherwise.

Even worse, Herbert Armstrong would not allow the Evangelist's fellow ministers to be involved in the proceedings.

The trial of that Evangelist has been one of the most closely guarded secrets of the Armstrong family. And until the year of the *split* in the Armstrong Empire (nearly twenty years later), few if any of Armstrong's ministers, outside his family, knew why that Evangelist was suspended.

ARMSTRONG ATTEMPTS CHARACTER ASSASSINATION

After putting that Evangelist on indefinite suspension Armstrong proceeded to destroy every vestige of respect for him, both in his home and among his friends.

Armstrong privately counseled the Evangelist's wife without the Evangelist being present and subtly assured her that her husband was guilty of many (unnamed) sins. He further counseled that she should never agree or sympathize with her husband. He then stressed to her that she should privately correspond with the Armstrongs to keep them *informed* of the *situation.*

The Evangelist's wife wrote one letter to the Armstrongs *informing* on her husband's conduct. Before a second report was written, she realized that this process could alienate her from her husband. A second report was never made.

It was only through the decision of the Evangelist's wife to disregard Armstrong's counsel that she prevented alienating herself from her husband and perhaps eventually breaking up their home.

Solomon classified the style that Armstrong used in counseling the Evangelist's wife, as one of the "seven abominations" which God hates. Read of it in Proverbs 6:16, "These six things doth the Lord hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him . . ." The one referred to is Verse 19: " . . . sowing discord among brethren," was involved in Armstrong's counsel. It would have resulted in alienating the Evangelist from his wife–had she followed that counsel.

Armstrong's attack against the Evangelist didn't stop there. He carried it to the headquarters membership where his tactics were even more subtle and deadly. There he used one of the most devastating tools known to psychology–suspicion![25] He announced to the people, "I can't tell you what he did–because if you knew, you would never forgive him."

This is an example of the most damaging propaganda it is possible to direct against a fellow Christian–to deceitfully

plant in the hearts of one's friends a suspicion that one has committed a terrible, most unspeakable sin–one so terrible it can not be forgiven!

But such was the insidious manner in which Armstrong set out to destroy that Evangelist, and others later, who fell prey to his displeasure. To add the weight of spiritual impetus to his dreadful insinuations, Armstrong *pleaded* with the brethren located in different parts of the nation, to pray for the supposed erring Evangelist, but hastened to admonish that they should never sympathize with him lest they too be partakers of his sins.

THE REAL OBJECTIVE

The object here is not to fix blame or proclaim innocence concerning an incident that happened over two decades before. However, the author does have documented proof that every allegation brought against the Evangelist was ill-founded. Armstrong has long proclaimed that he "gets all the facts" before making a decision. The foregoing case casts a grave shadow over both his willingness and ability to get *facts.* Yet, this case, where Armstrong suspended an Evangelist, served as a *fearsome example* of what he would do to any minister who felt prey to his displeasure. Indeed, the case was often used as *an example* in the counsel parlance among Armstrong's ministers and was carelessly referenced by lay members.

ARMSTRONG'S MINISTRY REJECTED

The Evangelist referenced in the foregoing case returned to Armstrong's college, where he completed credits for his Master's Degree but was denied permission to write a thesis–on wholly prejudicial grounds. Indeed, throughout the *TWENTY YEARS* following the Gladewater episode the Evangelist, even though maintaining a low profile in the Armstrong organization, was systematically "watched, harassed, and suppressed."

But when Armstrong's church needed solidarity and

support in 1974 (twenty years after his suspension) the Evangelist was approached by a top rank board member of the organization for the ultimate purpose of reinstatement in the ministry. Such a gesture, coming at a time when the organization was on the verge of collapse, carried more the spirit of prostitution than justification.

At that point in time, the Evangelist was forced by conscience to withdraw his candidacy as a minister because the spiritual state of the Armstrong church had sunk to an all-time low.

There was no vengeful joy in the necessity of declining such an offer, but sorrow that a *sop* would be offered at a time when Armstrong's church writhed with disease–destined to rend its very soul–and at a time when his return would tend to prejudice the judgment of the ministry concerning the reestablishment of Armstrong's own son–Garner Ted Armstrong.

JUDGING MOTIVES AND ATTITUDES

Fragmentation of Armstrong's church soon followed. And one of the leading causes was the long-standing practice of judging motives and attitudes. It started with the case of the Evangelist in 1954 and came to a crashing crescendo only a couple years before the *split* in Armstrong's church.

Armstrong and his ministers, as their power increased, had grown bolder in the application of this dubious practice of judging attitudes. Shortly before the split of the Armstrong Empire, it was common practice to condemn and execute sentence *based almost solely on the accused one's attitude.* Lamentably, it is the one charge against which there is absolutely no defense, because it is wholly subjective.

Executing punishment upon one as a result of *judging attitude* is, in the final analysis, assuming the prerogative of God. God has given men authority to judge *overt acts.* But there is apparently no example of God having abdicated His authority of judging the spirit, or attitude.

God grouped His Ten Commandments into TWO distinct

categories–one group relating to man's conduct toward his fellow man, and the other relating to man's conduct toward his God.

Man does not have the power or prerogative of judging and executing punishment upon his fellows, relative to one's spiritual relationship toward God or his *attitude* toward his fellow man. To assume such is to usurp the Judgment Seat of God–to put one's self in the very place of God.

He who assumes such authority relegates God's Judgment Function to that of a harsh, *caped* creature with two rubber stamps. One reads, "You may enter God's Heavenly Kingdom." The other, "You go to Hell!" Consequently, God's judgment would become subject to the prior judgments of men.

But, when a human judge sentences a man for an *overt act* he will always be justified in doing so provided he is careful to really get the facts. However, if he presumes to punish for a *bad attitude* his actions may cause further deterioration in his subject's attitude. The process may continue until the subject is spiritually destroyed–becomes a mindless zombie, operating under the hypnotic directives is his superior.

The process of judging attitudes was a major operational procedure which contributed to the fragmentation of the Armstrong Empire. And it was a *very strong* element in Armstrong's judgment against the Evangelist in 1954.

The Evangelist in later years had to decline their approach for reinstatement into the ministry. He had witnessed for nearly twenty years, the slow spiritual decay creeping over the church-body until it lay feverishly prostrate, with no vehicle of treatment by which its malady might be cured. Instead of improvement, the spiritual state of the Armstrong organization has continued to ferment and decay.

The real essence of this chapter, then, is to disclose the *way* in which the Evangelist was *unethically tried* and suppressed and how his trial served as a frightening example to Armstrong's ministers, causing them to remain in a state of pseudo-voluntary suppression for twenty years.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

EARLY DOCTRINAL DIFFICULTIES

A complete rend of Armstrong's organization was many years in materializing. One of the chief deterring factors was the way Armstrong handled the case of the suspended Evangelist covered in the previous chapter. It was like plugging the relief value of a giant boiler.

For twenty years Armstrong's methods created unbearable emotional pressure among his ministers. They, fearing to *cross* him, developed a self-propelled despotic caste system. Seldom did one successfully *question a decision* or decline an assignment from his superior, even when he was unsuited for the assignment.

Affected researchers became self-hypnotized while engaged in doctrinal studies. Their course of research served as an embroidery work to credential the supposition that God had *inspired Herbert Armstrong's previous efforts* in every specific line of study. God had supposedly *revealed* the truth to Herbert Armstrong. Then, who among his men would be so sacrilegious as to shatter that mystic superstition?

Armstrong's corps of researchers was headed by Herman Hoeh (commonly pronounced Hay) one of Armstrong's most worshipful devotees and supposedly one of his more scholarly researchers. Hoeh condescendingly produced dozens of doctrinal articles, most of which were slanted to lend scholarly credence to Armstrong's supposedly high level of *God inspired* research.

WRESTING THE SCRIPTURES

In 1959 Hoeh tackled the knotty problem of the Old Testament tithing system of ancient Israel, attempting to

verify Armstrong's teaching that each church member should dedicate three different tithes toward religious activities (July 1959 GOOD NEWS).

In the process of developing his thesis on this subject, Hoeh *interpolated* key scriptural renditions into an inaccurate meaning–one being an overt mistranslation. In fact, one of the *key words* from the scripture passage (Deut. 12:18) which Hoeh quoted, was completely changed. He replaced the third person plural (them) with the neuter (it). The sense of its meaning was thereby completely changed from that clearly intended.

The correct rendition is properly given in a translation of the Masoretic text by the most eminent Jewish scholars. See "The Holy Scriptures According to The Masoretic Text" by the Jewish Publication Society of America. They are infinitely more qualified to translate the sense of the passage than Hoeh who could neither read nor speak Hebrew.

The above discrepancy along with associated doctrinal difficulties in Armstrong's tithing system were written and presented personally to Armstrong, in 1959, by the Evangelist whom he had suspended in 1954.

Armstrong read only a few pages of the paper and released a verbal torrent calculated to intimidate the Evangelist. He thundered, "Are you calling Herman Hoeh (author of the tithing article) a liar?"

But Armstrong's attempt to turn the problem into an arena of emotional conflict failed. The Evangelist calmly replied, "Can't we come to a simple difference of opinion without *assuming* that we call each other liars?"

Then, Armstrong gruntingly retorted, "Well, I'll turn this over to Herman and let him work it out."

Hence, a snort and a grunt was the nearest thing to an official response the Evangelist *voluntarily* received from his written inquiry of the tithing subject as it was *officialized* by Hoeh in The GOOD NEWS.

In the spring of 1960 the Evangelist, not having heard from Hoeh, met him in Denver, Colorado, where Hoeh was

conducting special services. Hoeh responded to the Evangelist's request to discuss the tithing issue but his only defense for altering the scripture was, "God gives his ministers the spirit to know how to interpret [alter] the scriptures."

As indicated by this attitude, Armstrong and his ministers were continually emboldened to assert their eminence as inspired oracles of God. Thus the hierarchy and the laity gradually imputed infallibility to Armstrong which pseudo doctrine grew to ridiculous proportions during the decade of the sixties.

Those men became so bold as to lead the people to feel that when Armstrong *made a decision* God was virtually duty-bound to back it up. Or, if he made a prophecy, God would surely bring it to pass–because Armstrong was God's prophet.

This growing attitude created increasing pressure to *conform.*[26] It squelched personal initiative for doctrinal research, in both the ministry and laity. Papers which did not embrace the party-line were pigeon-holed and their authors usually became subjects of suspicion and ridicule.

During the decade of the 1960's many attempts were made, by unwary souls, to reform a number of Armstrong's radical doctrines. But all attempts at correcting error were squashed and the *attempted reformers* recanted, resigned or were excommunicated.

RUBER-STAMP DOCTRINAL REVIEW BOARD

A classic example of doctrinal hedging was demonstrated by Armstrong's Doctrinal Review Board in 1961.

Ernest Martin, then instructor of Theology at Armstrong's Bricket Wood, England campus, presented a well documented paper citing a problem, in Armstrong's observance of Pentecost (Whitsunday). Armstrong had moved the observance from Sunday to Monday. Martin's paper disclosed Armstrong's errors in calculations and recommended a return to Sunday observance of Pentecost.

Martin's paper was first reviewed by the *overseer* (pastor) of Armstrong's churches in the British Isles. The pastor commended Martin for his research and recommended the paper be sent to Armstrong's Pasadena headquarters for review by a board of ministers where Herman Hoeh was to defend Armstrong's established doctrinal position.

The board was composed of men who were heavily burdened by teaching and administrative duties. Little time was available for scholarly research and review of works such as Martin's thesis. Herbert Armstrong read a relatively small portion of the paper. Ted Armstrong, during the meeting, found it necessary to inquire what it was all about. Hoeh had not read it in its entirety and the general members of the review board were hardly conversant with its contents.

Hoeh made a brief rebuttal to one small section of the paper (which rebuttal was later proved erroneous). But the review board *rubber-stamped* Hoeh's condemnation of Martin's thesis based on his light comments regarding one very small point. Thus, Martin's thesis was denied and he was led to believe that the review board went through it with a fine-tooth comb.

With assurance from those *respected authorities* of Pasadena, Martin obediently laid the matter aside in deference to the wisdom and knowledge of his superiors.

But, in 1972, eleven years after the review board had rejected his thesis, Martin learned the real facts of the indifferent attitude displayed by the board in handing down a rubber-stamp decision on a subject to which they had given little or no study. Proof of the recklessness displayed by the board lies in the fact that the Armstrong regime later reversed the decision (1974) when under pressure from Martin who had resigned and was then exposing the weakness of this and other Armstrong doctrines.

RAMROD RESEARCH TACTICS

Another shaky doctrine over which Martin was drawing a fine bead was that of divorce and remarriage.

Armstrong enforced his self-willed rule concerning divorce for over four decades. Anyone married to a divorced person would have to separate and live *alone* to be eligible to join or remain in Armstrong's church.

Armstrong stubbornly maintained there was absolutely no grounds for divorce–not even adultery (Greek-harlotry) which Christ, Himself, allowed was grounds for divorce. But even though Armstrong ruled that pre-marital sex relations was grounds for *annulment,* he insisted it must be disclosed prior to or immediately after marriage. And it was *only an annulment – not* a divorce.

Thousands of happy homes were broken up. Well adjusted couples were emotionally and physically torn from each other and innocent children were subjected to a childhood of maladjustment.

DIVORCE RESEARCH – A FIASCO

Armstrong's treatment of the divorce and remarriage issue, just prior to the church split, is typical of a pre-sensitized research procedure. [27]

The study by Dr. Ernest Martin and other staff members was initiated because they had experienced agitation on the issue for quite some time. Martin had recently transferred to Pasadena from England (fall 1972) to head the Theology Department at Armstrong's headquarters.

A doctrinal committee was formed to research the matter of divorce for presentation to Armstrong. The group soon found itself divided. One school objectively presented studies indicating Armstrong's previous dogmatic stand on divorce did not harmonize with the Scriptures. The other school rejected their *objective* approach in an effort to reaffirm *inspiration* of Armstrong's position.

Even though divided, they all agreed to make no reports nor discuss the studies outside their group until the project was complete. They were then to present it to Armstrong jointly. But the agreement didn't last. The pro-party-line faction broke silence to make a clandestine presentation to

Armstrong, thereby scuttling the research efforts of the others.

Armstrong forthwith disbanded the doctrinal committee and personally took charge of the project. He then selected an elite *ramrod research team* from among those favorable to his supposedly inspired concepts on the divorce issue. He put them on a project of "busy-work" research stating that he would do the writing himself. He further declared, "I'm not going to have these young whipper-snappers rewriting my booklets." (Repeated Oct. 1976–St. Petersburg, FL)

The result was an inordinately oversized production which was evaluated, by friend and critic alike, as one of the most amateurish, inept articles the Armstrong organization had ever published. Notwithstanding, it was circulated to thousands throughout the U. S. but criticism of it was so rash that Armstrong soon withdrew it from circulation.

It was restudied under much pressure from critical sources and Armstrong acquiesced to a change in the doctrine of divorce and remarriage. He still does not, however, accept Christ's provision–divorce due to harlotry. Armstrong simply *assumes that he has the authority* to forgive the past when one comes into his church.

THE DILEMMA OF CHANGE

Armstrong went unchecked for nearly a half century (48 years)–from the time he began his independent study of theology in 1926. Throughout those years he proclaimed himself as the only minister to remain faithful to God–always willing to accept truth and grow in knowledge. This gave the outward appearance of being open to correction and change. In fact, Armstrong openly boasted that if anyone could show where he was wrong he would change.

But proving Armstrong wrong and getting him to admit to it were two distinctly different ball games. Armstrong barricaded himself behind an impregnable bulwark of psychological defense mechanisms until it was nearly impossible to direct his attention to an area of doctrinal

problems.

He seldom devoted sufficient time to a problem to thoroughly understand it. Usually, after a very superficial exposure to a situation he snapped into action but generally failed to zero in on the heart of the problem. He attempts to take the initiative away from his supposed enemy-critic by presenting an alternative solution. In so doing he discredits the enemy-critic and enhances his own image in an attempt to maintain unquestioned control in the minds of his subjects.

Under these conditions fewer and fewer top men went to him with problems and by the early 70's only a favored few dared approach him with doctrinal difficulties.

DIVISION INEVITABLE

Many of Herbert Armstrong's doctrines came under fire as Ted Armstrong was gaining ascendancy over his father's empire. Ted had long held a more liberal stance on many of his father's hard-line doctrines but was in no position to call for reform due to his relatively weak political position. He needed his father's full blessing and support and consequently adopted a go-slow policy on doctrinal reform so as not to alienate himself from his father.

But time was running out. Armstrong's ministers all over the U.S. and in some foreign countries were calling for immediate doctrinal reform. Thus Armstrong re-instated the doctrinal study team (hand-picked, of course) as an appeasement gesture with Ted ostensibly in charge, and Ted was careful to give the appearance of being in command. He was, in fact, being constantly pushed over the brink by the momentum of fractious organizational activities.

Neither the Armstrongs nor the doctrinal committee could work fast enough to avert a crisis.

All this was the threatening result of a mode of operation started nearly twenty years earlier. Armstrong's autocratic form of government used in suspending the Evangelist in 1954, and the subsequent authoritarian syndrome, had

created a steam boiler effect.

Soon that boiler was to be brought to a superheated condition by addition of the uncontrollable element of emotionalism. The inevitable result was a complete organizational explosion–subject of the following chapter.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

ARMSTRONG'S POLITICAL STRUCTURE EXPLODES

Doctrinal problems had plagued the Armstrong organization for many years before it finally fractured. But it was not divided by *doctrine a/one. Doctrine* may have ignited the *tinder* but it had to be fanned into a raging conflagration before it could engulf the whole political structure and cause massive separation.

POLITICAL STRUCTURE FORMATION

Take a look at the FIVE major power pinnacles which developed during the late 50's and 60's and then see how they are carefully manipulated and in some cases dissolved by Armstrong.

The first, quite obviously, was Herbert Armstrong who led the field in the earlier years. He was prime administrator, sole speaker on The WORLD TOMORROW broadcast and the only writer of both doctrinal booklets and his PLAIN TRUTH magazine. As the organization grew, the tempo of its movement literally ripped responsibilities away from him. By sheer default, certain duties passed from him into the hands of students whom he had trained.

By the late 50's Roderick Meredith was looked to as the *authority* in the area of ministerial administration and setting of social and religious orders throughout Armstrong's churches. He was singularly the most influential one in both social and spiritual activity among ministers and laity alike.

Herman Hoeh was the *research specialist* and was looked to as the one through whom *new light* was brought into the organization. Hoeh held a tremendous sway over the *thinking* of the church by way of his editorial activities in The GOOD NEWS–the church's internal authoritative voice.

By the late 50's Herbert Armstrong's influence again receded when Ted Armstrong's voice became dominant on The WORLD TOMORROW radio program. By this remote method Ted brought prospective members into the organization where they promptly came under the abounding influence of Meredith and Hoeh,

Hence, Herbert Armstrong was gradually relegated to the position of patriarch–ultimate wisdom and knowledge but far removed from the daily social and spiritual functions directly affecting the lives of the individual members.

It was Meredith and Hoeh who exerted the dominant influence over the people during a ten year period-mid 50's to mid 60's. During that time the membership increased rapidly even though the organization was woefully lacking in *responsible* management personnel.

This management deficiency was alleviated by the installation of Albert J. Portune as controller and business manager in 1963. Portune quickly developed that area into another pinnacle of power–turning it into a well coordinated unit. Under his able management the Armstrong organization began paying its bills regularly and on time for the first time in its thirty years of existence.

Portune's managerial talents so impressed Herbert Armstrong that he was rapidly promoted in every area of possibility. Soon his counsel and advice on both spiritual and physical matters was sought by Armstrong's administrators, teachers, ministers and laymen alike.

In this way Portune's power and influence mushroomed. By the early seventies he was the most powerful single figure in the organization aside from Herbert Armstrong. So favorable was Armstrong toward Portune that he was selected to perform last rites for Mrs. Herbert Armstrong at the time of her death in April 1967.

THE CREDIBILITY GAP

The year of Mrs. Armstrong's death, an ugly specter known as the *credibility gap* first became visible to members

and co-workers at large. As a result of problems raised by the introduction of computerization and the death of Mrs. Armstrong, Herbert Armstrong's credibility plummeted and the percentage of growth began to recede more rapidly.

In the case of the IBM Data Processing Unit, Armstrong had avowed to his members and co-workers for over three decades that they would never become a *number* in a gigantic organization. By installing the computer system that is exactly what happened. Armstrong either ignored or was oblivious to the fact that this diminished his credibility with many of his adherents.

Also, the way Herbert Armstrong reacted to the illness and death of his wife was another serious blow to his credibility. Her death resulted from an impacted colon–an abnormal bowel condition which developed over many years. But Armstrong, rather than admitting his wife's condition was chronic, led the people to believe that God brought that condition on her to serve as a prophetic warning indicating *spiritual filth* among the members. Many, both ministers and laity, were repulsed by such prophetic sham.

This same tactic had been used with unmeasured success in two earlier cases. One was that of Armstrong's son, Dick, who died as a result of injuries sustained in an auto accident.

Armstrong could not face the reality that God would not save his son from death. He had claimed to have performed many notable miracles throughout his ministry and in the case of his own son the proverb "Physician, heal thyself" was resting uncomfortably at his doorstep.

God did not respond and Dick died.

In the propaganda which followed, Armstrong proclaimed Dick a martyr. He claimed Satan had angrily struck at his work–"Satan had taken the single most valuable man out of his work." Dick's life was carefully recounted over his last few years and it was proclaimed by Armstrong that he had been living a *practically perfect* life. He was, *"ready to go* and God allowed Satan to martyr him" (paraphrase).

Another parallel case was that of Dr. Benjamin Rae. The

same propaganda was employed. Rae was portrayed as a titanic force in Armstrong's work. It was said that he was becoming *too effective* and Satan was angry. Even though he died of a lingering heart ailment, it was duly declared in the annals of Armstrongism that Satan caused him to be martyred. His death actually resulted from excitement generated while doing verbal battle with a newspaper reporter who had written critical remarks about Armstrong's work in the British Isles.

In all three cases the test of Herbert Armstrong's *spirituality* rested on whether or not God would hear him and SAVE the afflicted by a miracle.

When God refused to respond, Armstrong developed an elaborate fabrication to explain away his lack of ability to cajole God into doing an honest miracle. [28]

But Armstrong's people were not totally blind. And the weight of these incredibilities came crashing down in unison when the people found that Armstrong had protected his son, Ted, from expulsion for many years even though Herbert knew of Ted's reported continual problem of marital infidelity. At that point, the phantom of Armstrong's credibility vanished before the eyes of the serious beholder.

BIG IMAGE-POOR ADMINISTRATION

The year 1968 opened with the Armstrong organization still on the rise even though their *rate* of growth was dropping. They set up offices in a new multimillion dollar Hall of Administration, expanded their press facilities and opened a new wing of offices for the Mail Processing Department in that recently expanded Press Building.

At that time, despite its immense size, handling multiple-millions of dollars annually, there were only three vice presidents. There was no well defined corporate structure, no job descriptions, no procedural manuals –"no nothing" organizationally.

Power had become inordinately concentrated at the top and it became obvious that this situation could present a

serious challenge to Herbert Armstrong when he decided to put Ted in charge of his work. This was all the more threatening because Armstrong had come to learn that Meredith, Second Vice President, had knowledge of *Ted's problem* and might conceivably use it as a political ace to trump Ted out of the top spot in Armstrong's organization.

Herbert Armstrong took no chances. It was expedient to dilute Meredith's power and Armstrong appointed a complete line-up of vice presidents (none of which ever really functioned in that capacity), thereby reducing Meredith from Second Vice President to that of equal rank concurrently among ten.

Thus, the vice presidential appointments equalized the power of the ten most prominent men in Armstrong's organization and had the immediate result of dramatically neutralizing the effect of the three most influential men in Armstrongism–Meredith, Hoeh and Portune.

Ted, during the next few years (1968-72) continued as heir-apparent with little or no authority. Meredith and Hoeh declined while Portune's political position was greatly enhanced.

The next few years were indeed stormy ones. Herbert Armstrong failed to provide clearly defined areas of authority for his vice presidents, giving rise to constant elbow tactics among those inclined to extend the borders of their dominion into vaguely defined territories.

All the while the financial growth of the organization was on the wane. In an order to stem the tide, Portune, in concert with others, instituted numerous management training programs among both ministerial and administrative personnel at headquarters. Each program effort was systematically scuttled by Herbert Armstrong. No logical reason was given for having done so. It became obvious that development of good management techniques among lower and middle management personnel posed a threat to Armstrong's despotic security.

In 1970 Portune took the ultimate step in management

and brought in a business consultant, William Shaak from San Antonio, Texas. Shaak worked untiringly toward solving Armstrong's organizational and managerial problems but with only moderate success. He was later forced out due to internal political maneuverings and much of his accomplishment was quickly dissolved by continued political shuffles.

TED'S PROBLEM SURFACES

The *wide-open* conflagration started in 1971. Ted's reported marital infidelity reached such proportions that Herbert Armstrong was forced to publicly castigate him or lose *total credibility* among even his top men. It was obvious, Ted could not be given control of Armstrong's work until he went through the efforts of purging himself. Earlier, Mrs. Armstrong had reportedly urged her husband, Herbert, to take such steps, stating, "Herbert, if you don't do something about Ted, I fear for your salvation," Herbert reportedly snapped back at his wife, "I'm not concerned about my salvation, I want Ted in this work."

Herbert Armstrong knew of Ted's problem years before, yet failed to take steps to train another to broadcast and assume top executive duties. This later brought the entire church under heavy pressure to compromise and allow Ted to perform a duty for which he is not spiritually qualified. The people were led to believe that if Ted did not do the broadcast, personally, Armstrong's work and church would *fold up.* They were consequently compelled to accept Armstrong's adaptation of the Machiavellian principle, "The end justifies the means" or in Armstrong's words, "It's all for the good of the work."

The reader will recall that Herbert Armstrong was forced to send his son into exile in the fall of 1971 but Ted was back before the first of 1972.

After a few tense weeks Ted was again forced into exile but returned in late May of 1972.

In order to pave the way for his return, Herbert Armstrong

promised the Pasadena congregation that Ted would not be in the ministry of Christ nor hold any position of authority in the work (author's private sermon notes).

But once Ted was back, Armstrong played the game of *creeping conquest.*

Developments during the next few months gave the impression that Herbert Armstrong was surreptitiously *easing* Ted into positions of authority a little at a time. He was soon involved in making *major* decisions.

One of Ted's first drastic moves was to take Roderick Meredith out of his very powerful and influential position of Superintendent of Ministers, U.S.A. Meredith was designated Deputy Chancellor of Armstrong's college in Pasadena for the 1972-73 term.

Ted found it impossible to function in the same room with Meredith. In fact, Meredith's presence on the Pasadena campus virtually sent Ted into peptic convulsions. Thus, in March 1973 (in the middle of the semester) Ted ripped Meredith out of his post and transferred him to the Deputy Chancellorship of Armstrong's campus in Bricket Wood, England. Not only was Meredith removed from the Pasadena campus, he was moved out of the state and exiled (as it were) into a foreign country.

Above all men in Armstrong's organization, Ted Armstrong feared Roderick Meredith. He knew that Meredith had sufficient knowledge of his past to prevent his being installed as Executive Vice President. Herbert Armstrong had also previously stated that if anyone would try to stop him from bringing Ted back it would be Rod Meredith.

Four months after Meredith was moved out of the U.S., Herbert Armstrong formally declared Ted as prime administrator of his empire. Herbert flew to Mexico City and unceremoniously announced by letter that Ted was to *take over.*

This shocked even the most liberal–just a bit too sudden for many to accept. Only fourteen months earlier Ted was

out of Armstrong's work, out of his ministry and out of his church!

Furthermore, Herbert Armstrong had personally put others out of the ministry because of sexual promiscuity and vowed, "Any minister who does such will never again serve in the ministry."

Among many of the ministers and the laity Herbert Armstrong's last ounce of credibility went down the drain, although the dissidents offered no immediate organized opposition.

Armstrong had edged Ted back gradually, constantly testing the waters so as *not* to create a situation from which he could not withdraw. He employed the tactic–kick down the door and if there is no opposition, take possession. But if opposition is encountered, move on to the next.

From the moment of installing Ted as prime administrator, both Herbert and Ted met with opposition. First it was scattered and disorganized. But due to the exemplary political executions exercised against those who *opposed,* the men were reluctant to raise their voices *individually* against the Armstrongs. Yet, they felt that the Armstrongs had flagrantly violated the scriptural instructions regarding spiritual qualifications of a minister in putting Ted in as a minister.

Totally frustrated, not knowing how to lodge their grievance without committing political suicide, the dissident ministers began to collaborate on how they could conscientiously solve their dilemma.

It all boiled down to basic *doctrinal problems.* It became clear that the Armstrongs did not admit certain scriptures into their theological code. They posed as the hand picked favorites of God. They were above the law–above having to meet the qualifications of a minister. And their dictatorial form of government was sustaining them in their position. Obviously, if either of those two issues were opened for examination they were vulnerable to defeat.

Consequently, the Armstrongs issued a show of wanting to

study *doctrine.* But they refused to study those in which they were vulnerable. Their intractable position formed the opening shots of a battle which was destined to rend their organization–a battle which is still raging and will continue for many years or perhaps even decades.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

DOCTRINE-Battleground of Division

The first serious blow struck against Armstrong's tactics came in September 1973, two months after Ted was officially installed as chief administrator. Dr. Ernest Martin, head of the Theology Department, upon returning from his Middle East summer tour found that Ted, in concert with the Dean of Faculty, had completely reorganized his department. Martin had neither been consulted nor notified.

MARTIN RESIGNS

Fed up with the high-handed dictatorial tactics of the Armstrongs, Martin resigned. By that time he had also learned of the *rubber-stamp* manner in which his thesis on Pentecost was denied in 1961. He had also witnessed Herbert Armstrong's *ram-rod* tactics used during the divorce and remarriage research issue.

Martin later began publishing and circulating doctrinal material among several of Armstrong's members who requested it. The spirit of dissidence quickly spread. All during the summer of 1973 the field ministry had been wrestling with the problem of justifying the installation of Ted who was not spiritually qualified for his high office. Dozens were ready to resign but were unprepared in many ways. They began to communicate more closely with each other in the field ministry and it became apparent that either Ted would have to resign or there must be wholesale resignations among Armstrong's ministers.

The tenor of their conclusions is best expressed in a communique from a reactionary group within the church known as The Council. The document laid the cards on the table before Herbert Armstrong who had installed Ted in his post and was responsible for securing him there.

COUNCIL REQUESTS TED'S REMOVAL

The following communique from The Council, directed to Herbert Armstrong, summarizes the situation:

> "This Council, members of the Worldwide Church of God, members in good standing, direct your attention to a matter of grave importance to the Church of the Living God.
> "It grieves this council unspeakably to find it necessary to direct your attention to the fact that one of our foremost Evangelists has disqualified himself, for all time, as a minister of Jesus Christ and as an overseer of any rank in God's Work.
> "It has come to the attention of *many members* of the Church and it is known by *many without* that this Evangelist in question did for *seven years,* while serving in the ministry of Christ, forsake the sanctity of his home to cohabit with numerous other females.
> "The seriousness of this conduct was heightened by the prowess and position of the one in question.
> "It is known among the *EVANGELISTS* and leading ministers that the aforesaid Evangelist has imposed his physical presence upon young college girls who came to Ambassador College to learn *GODLY CHARACTER.*
> "The Evangelist in reference was charged with the sober responsibility of setting our students a good example. He rather forsook the law of God and established a ploy for entrapment of some of our co-eds. He violated the sanctity of his wife and home to embrace the bosom of the aforesaid females in repeated adulterous-fornicating relationships.
> "This man was *put out* as a result of those actions and a nationwide scandal ensued. But he was reinstated, the Scriptures notwithstanding.
> "The aforesaid Evangelist does not now meet the qualifications to serve in Christ's work.
> "This council directs your attention to these scriptural requirements and qualifications:

"I Timothy 3:2

'A bishop (minister) must be blameless . . .' (Strong's Greek Dictionary No. 483 *An-til-ego– not* subject to dispute, refutation, contradiction, denial or gainsaying).

"Titus 1:7

' ... a bishop (minister) must be blameless . . . ' (Strong's Greek Dictionary No. 410 *An-eng-klay-tos– unaccused,* by implication irreproachable).

"I Timothy 3:2

'The husband of one wife . . .' (precludes known, habitual fornicators, adulterers and polygamists). . . . of good behavior (modest) . . .'

"MODEST –Webster: ;1) Placing a low estimate on one's self. 2) Moderate. 3) *Chaste.*

"This council brings to your attention the fact that the Evangelist in question is not 'unaccused' as required by Titus 1:7 and remains 'reproachable' before the world which has not tasted of the grace of God. He does not and can never again meet the requirements as a minister or overseer as found in the above scriptures because he has violated the confidence of those to whom he might preach.

"This council requests you to be obedient to the Word of God and, in concert with the Board of Directors, withdraw the re-appointment of Garner Ted Armstrong as a minister of Jesus Christ and further, remove him from all office of rank and authority in the Worldwide Church of God and all branches of Ambassador College.

"This council further calls upon you to *honor your own words* by complying with the aforesaid request of this council. It has been noted by this council that on two or more occasions when you 'marked for dis-fellowship' other ministers who have, in like manner engaged in fornicating and adulterous relationships, you did specifically pronounce that 'any minister who is of such demeanor can never again serve in the ministry of Jesus Christ.'

"This council brings to your attention that God, through the Apostle Paul, set the requirements of a 'SPIRIT LED

MINISTRY.' That mighty apostle, under the inspiration of God and with full knowledge of King David's example, said a minister of Christ must be 'blameless: unimpeachable before the world.

"You stated, in a Bible study on April 21, 1972, Garner Ted was coming back and would be 'reinstated in the church but he will not be in the ministry or have any post of authority.'

"This council calls upon you to be obedient and submit to the Word of God, to be equal in judgment of all men, and to *honor your own words* by causing Garner Ted Armstrong to serve as a lay member, forever barred, in this life from the ministry of Christ and any office of authority in God's work.

"The above action is prerequisite to complete restoration of confidence by the members and the world in this ministry and *WORK*. When that confidence is restored *within* and *without* God will work through these same vessels to return every blessing to His Church.

"The instruction of scripture is clear. There is no place for 'special revelation' in this situation. God has made it abundantly clear that He does not deal with His church at this time by 'special revelation.'

"Paul said, 'God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past . . . by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son.' (Heb. 1:1).

"The books have been written and sealed by Jesus Christ through the hands of the Apostle John who received the last admonition from Christ '. . . If any man shall add to these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book . . .' (Rev. 22:18).

"It should be made clear to all church members that God did not give you instructions by 'special revelation' to put Garner Ted at the head of this work, as you implied in a previous member letter.

"This council recommends that the people of God provide Garner Ted and his immediate family with the material substance necessary to sustain them at a moderate to upper

middle class living standard . . .
"This council requests total compliance with all provisions of this *request* by December 1, 1973, and in the following steps ...

1. Prepare and release to the press a statement that Garner Ted has disqualified himself as a minister of Jesus Christ and representative of Ambassador College and the Worldwide Church of God and is being relieved of all such duties.
2. Prepare and distribute to all members of the Worldwide Church of God and employees of Ambassador College a statement that Garner Ted is being relieved of all duties as in Item 1. above–the letter being signed by: you (Herbert W. Armstrong) and an accompanying letter of acknowledgement signed by Garner Ted.

"Both of the above actions to be executed and the above stated items and materials be in the hands of the recipients by December 1, 1973 and Garner Ted's departure from this organization (Worldwide Church of God and Ambassador Colleges) as a representative of any rank and as a minister of Jesus Christ be not later than December 31,1973.
"This council urgently requests you before God to be obedient to the instructions of Scripture which have been set forth in this correspondence and thus remove. or cause Garner Ted to be removed from the ministry and all administrative posts of authority in God's Work.
"Then wait on the Lord Eternal and let Him bless His Work.

Signed.
THE COUNCIL FOR PROPER LEADERSHIP

The above communication from The Council went to Herbert Armstrong about the first of November, 1973. It carefully set forth the major problem and requested Armstrong to adhere to Biblical instructions in that regard.

The level of debauchery to which Ted had reportedly fallen was much more serious than indicated in the letter from The Council. There was authoritative evidence that Ted had been involved with as many as 200 different consorts, both in and out of the church, married and unmarried and some of whom were the wives of his fellow ministers. It reportedly continued up to the time Ted was exiled in 1971. Further authoritative evidence indicated "that he reportedly had consorted with as many as 35 different co-eds on Armstrong's three college campuses–Pasadena, Big Sandy, and Bricket Wood.

In spite of this evidence and Herbert Armstrong's own personal knowledge of Ted's problem, Armstrong rejected the plea of The Council to withdraw Ted's reinstatement as minister, Executive Vice President and chief administrator. This resulted in a general deterioration of relations between headquarters and the field ministry. Ministers from the Atlantic to the Pacific were threatening to resign. Some were vowing to *tell all.*

SHREVEPORT CHURCH SECEDES

The first major break occurred November 24, 1973. Mr. John Mitchell, Jr. and W. A. Sutton told their congregations *what they knew.* Mitchell pastored Armstrong's Shreveport, Louisiana, and Texarkana, Texas, churches with Sutton as his assistant. The *crisis of conscience* for these men came only four months after Ted Armstrong was designated as chief administrator by his father, Herbert Armstrong.

Mitchell and Sutton's actions are recorded in Volume I, Number 1 of their joint publication entitled *The Alternative.* He wrote:

> "Beginning about the first of August, 1973, information came to the attention of the ministry in Shreveport [relating] mainly to the past profoundly immoral activities of Garner Ted Armstrong,the Executive Vice President of the [Worldwide Church of God]

> worldwide work. It also concerned the inability of several ranking ministers; of long standing in the work, to obtain an open forum at headquarters for the discussion of important doctrinal issues."

David L Antion, in charge of Church Administration, was quickly dispatched to the Texas-Louisiana area to deal with this supposed rebellion. He arrived in the area the evening of November 24, 1973, and called for a mass meeting of some 300 brethren. In the words of *The Alternative,* Antion was impelled to, "acknowledge the veracity of about 90 of what John Mitchell had said." The other 10 percent he didn't know about.

Mitchell's action dislodged the rock that started an avalanche. Before the landslide was over, upwards to *fifty* ministers had quit the Armstrong organization and as of this writing, loose stones are still falling (now over 100 ministers have left the Armstrong organization – 1977).

A hasty ministerial conference was called in January 1974 to deal with the defections triggered by Ted's reinstatement as Executive Vice President and assignment to the post of chief administrator. From outward appearances the storm was quelled. But once the men were beyond the range of the charismatic charm of the Armstrongs, it was obvious to many of them that they had been *swayed* against their spiritual conviction and personal knowledge of scripture.

DISSIDENT MINISTERS ORGANIZE

When it became apparent to the ministers that they had been victimized, they became aflame with *righteous indignation.* And those flames of suspicion and distrust set off smoke signals all over the nation. Local ministers in many churches began speaking openly of the *credibility gap* with headquarters.

Another hasty meeting was called at Pasadena (February 1974) which brought in Armstrong's eight regional directors. At this meeting Ted Armstrong attempted to figuratively

throw himself on the mercy of the court. His sobbing confessions verified what was already common knowledge.

But Ted's convulsive admissions didn't erase God's indelible requirements for the ministry.

He begged for the men's forgiveness. Of course, they forgave him! But after all, Ted had not sinned directly against them. His actions were directed toward his consorts. Those were the ones from whom he should have asked forgiveness as well as before God.

But, in this way, Ted sought the favor of those men. It was needful for him to psychologically conquer them in this way in order that he could rule over them and maintain his position as chief administrator.

But it was God who canonized the Scriptures, who set the spiritual qualifications for a minister (elder). No amount of weeping can change that. Tears may psychologically *trick* vain men into believing they can waive the requirements of God's Word and allow an unfit man in that honorable place. But that is the working of men–not God!

LANDSLIDE SECESSION STARTS

Dozens of Armstrong's ministers refused to submit to this kind of *spiritual bribery.* On one occasion a number of ministers resigned en masse as reported in the *Los Angeles Times* (Feb. 24,1974):

> "Six ministers of the Worldwide Church of God . . . have resigned, alleged sexual improprieties, squandering of money and doctrinal issues . . . The ministers charge that Herbert Armstrong, 81, concealed from the membership over a period of years the alleged adultery of his Son, Garner Ted Armstrong . . . Carrozzo [one of those who resigned] said in a letter that he had known about 'Ted's problem' since 1965"

As more and more ministers resigned, top officials at Pasadena promised to open various doctrines for study,

setting May 5, 1974, as the date for a special conference. While a number of major doctrines were on the study list the Armstrongs adamantly refused to open up the questions of church government and qualifications for the ministry,

Armstrong's failure to admit research on those two vital issues caused the continuation of the rift. The ministers were led to question, "If the Armstrongs will not take correction from the scripture on these issues, which strike a deadly blow at their own personal desires, can they be trusted to lead the church?"

Dozens of ministers said emphatically, No! They resigned or were ignominiously fired and branded as *instruments of Satan.*

As more ministers withdrew their support, Herbert Armstrong charged them with rebellion–accusing them of seceding from his church in order to steal the tithes of the local members. Of course Armstrong did the same thing in the 1930's when he pulled away from the Church of God. But he justified that on the grounds that he alone was faithful to God. He alone remained untarnished–pure and clean before God. But now Armstrong was found in violation. Still, when his own ministers broke away from him, based on unshakable proof that Armstrong had violated God's Word and refused to study the two central issues, he cried *foul play* and accused them of *thievery–church robbing* and *tithe stealing.*

ARMSTRONG COUNTERATTACKS

Armstrong further unleashed the full power of his $55-million organization against the dissident ministers. Hastily written letters rolled off his giant web presses warning members of the dissident ministers' supposedly Satanic plot to *destroy the work.*

In this way Armstrong cleverly confused the issues in the minds of the laymen. He led them to believe there were no *real* problems at headquarters and charged the dissidents with maliciously dredging up false accusations in order to

steal away members and their tithes.

Thus, the dissident minister, who could not *conscience* what he knew and saw in the Armstrongs, was forced to quietly resign and take up secular duties or fight the might of Armstrong's $55-million machine.

Many chose to calmly resign, Others were ignominiously fired and left virtually penniless. But many of those chose to join battle with the Armstrongs even though they were so poorly funded they could hardly buy a public address system to effectively reach those in their own local congregations.

Charges and counter charges struck with lightning speed across transcontinental phone lines. An elite battery of Armstrong's admirers manned the phones at Pasadena almost day and night attempting to cajole some to rejoin. Those who held to their request to review church government and ministerial qualifications were fired on the spot–by phone!

The state of affairs became so unstable that Ted and his aides could no longer contain the situation. Ted sent a telegram to his father, Herbert Armstrong, in Manila, requesting him to rush to his aid. Herbert Armstrong canceled a speaking engagement there, where he was to have received an honorary doctorate, to *jet* back and join battle against the dissidents.

Once again the Armstrongs assaulted the dissident ministers with such venomous accusations that even some of Armstrong's friends and top ranking men were repulsed. An example of such is found in a member letter written by Ted, February 26, 1974. He charged:

> "These men (dissident ministers) are not INTERESTED in *solving* the problems; they are hoping desperately the problems will remain UNSOLVED, that YOU BRETHREN will become *so disturbed* by these unsolved problems, that you will turn in dismay and frustration and leap into the arms of these 'bright young leaders' who will then gobble you up and devour you as a flock for themselves!
> "They are *USING* you–by seeking to embitter and

> discourage through lies, half-truths and false rumor! They continually upset and torment dozens of deacons, local elders and leading members, in an attempt to gain support for their plot!"

Previously, on March 18, Herbert Armstrong wrote the brethren, leading them to believe that the dissident ministers were fulfilling the damnable prophecy of Revelation 12:9-13. Armstrong charges:

> "It seems very likely we have now come to the time prophesied . . .
> 'And that great dragon was cast out [of heaven], that old serpent, caned the Devil, and Satan . . .'
> "God has been OPENING NEW DOORS–to meetings with kings, emperors . . . Satan moved to PREVENT that great [Manila] meeting! Ministers he could deceive were used in this !""

Then Armstrong proceeded to draw a parallel between the rebellion of Satan (Lucifer, lsa. 14, Ezek, 28) and the work of his (Armstrong's) dissident ministers:

> "Satan deceived some leading ministers . . . These men profess that they are SINCERE MEN. But we have to realize that Satan . . . is cunning enough to *deceive* sincere men."

In this subtle way Armstrong branded those men as companions of Satan in an attempt to turn the minds of the people from the original problems–church government and Ted's spiritual qualifications.

GOVERNMENT-QUALIFICATIONS CLOSED

But the Armstrongs officially closed the door on those two issues. In a communique of April 3, 1974 (later reiterated in a letter to a dissident minister –Zapf), Ted Armstrong issued an edict:

> "The issue of qualifications, so far as Garner Ted Armstrong is concerned is not subject to question, so far as the basic [dictatorial] PRINCIPLE of Church Governmental structure FROM THE TOP DOWN [is concerned]."

As a result of that stance, a number of Armstrong's ministers and churches seceded, formed a new organization known as The Associated Churches of God, and released the following statement on April 8, 1974:

> "The major doctrinal controversy [centers} around the matter of Church Government . . . and whether the qualifications of the ministry applied to all ministers [Armstrongs included] at all levels of the organization."

ARMSTRONG ATTEMPTS JUSTIFICATION

Herbert Armstrong had earlier attempted to confuse the issues in his member letter of February 25, 1974:

> "I want to explain to you the [four] primary accusations."

None of those four however, were satisfactorily *explained.* Armstrong rather gave flimsy, inconsistent excuses, reasons and alibis for why he violated God's Word. He also launched a sizzling counter accusation in each case. Note how he treats them:

> Accusation No.1 "[Failure on Armstrong's part to give the] . . . specific reason for Ted Armstrong's leave of absence early in 1972 Some ministers . . . accused 'cover-up!'"

Armstrong's answer:

> "If I came out and exposed his [Ted's] sin . . . How many of you would become discouraged . . . HOW MANY, I asked . . . would I send . . . into A LAKE OF FIRE . . . The

> number . . . if I exposed to the public the details might be as many as ten thousand!"

Is that a laudable reason to *cover-up?* The scripture says, "Love covers." And *it does cover!* The scripture also recognizes that the press *uncovers* and that's why God requires that a minister of Christ have a *clean moral record.*

The public press deliberately tried to expose Ted and expose they did!–turning the situation into one of international proportions. But for legal reasons they obliquely reported what Ted called *his sin.* The press insinuations, however, were right on target! They did their part to assure there would be *no cover-up.*

When preaching in Ted's defense, Herbert Armstrong drew a parallel between the *Watergate cover-up* and what he referred to as Ted's sin. Armstrong stated he felt "Mr. Nixon probably knew about Watergate and covered up for them." Then he added, "If I had been in his place I would have done the same thing." (Author's personal sermon notes, February 1974). In a later sermon Armstrong, in violation of Christ's command to "bless, curse not," said, "I pronounce a *double curse* on anyone who gives information about Ted to the press."

Concerning Accusation No. 1–note that Armstrong did not address the *cover-up problem* but simply *excused it.* But at that earlier time, though numerous ministers knew what the problem was, not a single one of Armstrong's ministers raised a protest.

Why? They did not want to hurt Ted, embarrass the Armstrong family, or put a stumbling block before the brethren.

It was the American press which first exposed what was referred to as *Ted's sin–not* the dissident ministers. But once the press had done that, those ministers had to come to grips with the problem which Herbert Armstrong later created by reinstating Ted–bad press and all!

If Armstrong had been obedient to the scriptures in

refraining from reinstating Ted, the press would have had no reason to have carried the stories and the ministers would have had no reason to call the Armstrongs to account for the situation.

Where was Herbert Armstrong's *concern* for the *ten-thousand* little sheep of his flock which he claimed he might send to hell if he *told all?* When he wanted to reinstate his son to the *top spot* that concern seemed to vanish. At that point Armstrong was willing and *did* sacrifice whomever and whatever necessary to get his son back at the head of his work–and it was done by sheer dictatorial power.

Accusation No.2 (Armstrong claimed):

> "It is only in the last three days [February 23-25, 1974] that it has come to my attention that certain men, and even possibly a couple of evangelists at Headquarters, are still being troubled over the 'Divorce and Remarriage' question . . . [referring to a, then, recently published booklet on divorce and remarriage written by Armstrong]."

What an oblique way to state an accusation which the ministers had launched against him! The charge *was* that Armstrong had *ram-rodded* the research and writing of the booklet. But Armstrong wouldn't state the charge clearly to the members. He, instead, launched the dissident ministers' complaint against him in such a way as to make it an accusation against them–insinuating that they didn't let him know they were *troubled.* The fact was, the men were as troubled about the *ram-rod tactics* as they were about the doctrinal difficulty itself.

But Armstrong claimed ignorance. That, however, is only a *reason* for why things went sour with the divorce and remarriage issue and booklet research.

The real charge was; during the time of the preparation of the booklet, Armstrong, having learned of an attempt to change his supposedly *inspired* doctrine, created a proverbial *tempest in a teapot* by disbanding the research committee.

From that point Armstrong primarily wrote the booklet himself.

Never in the history of the organization was there such controversy about the production of a doctrinal booklet. Yet, Armstrong tries to claim ignorance and writes to the members that he "thought that issue had been settled, satisfactorily to all."

It was, in fact, *settled* but it was by Armstrong's usual *strong-arm tactic*. He *ruled* on it, wrote the booklet, stealthily scheduled it through the press and that was *supposed to settle* it for all! But it was far from being "satisfactory to all," and Armstrong knew it at the time.

In late 1973 Dr. Ernest Martin resigned to escape the atmosphere of intimidation and began to *stir the pot.* This forced Armstrong's hand on the divorce and remarriage issue. He had to reopen it or see his claim as a seeker of truth blown right out of the water. To maintain credibility with the people he *pleaded ignorance* of any knowledge of dissent over the issue. But the truth is; he knew full well that there was a raging controversy over the issue and consequently ram-rodded it through.

Accusation No.3–again stated in the form of a counter accusation to confuse his members on the real issue against him. Armstrong wrote:

> " . . . The third area of complaint is Church authority . . . [they] want to desert *God's* authority and *assume it themselves* . . . they want DEMOCRACY, VOTING which is totally unscriptural."

Note that Armstrong doesn't even state the accusation. He rather phrases it in such a way as to make a counter charge against the dissident ministers. They had simply asked for a study of the church's governmental structure. But that request was categorically denied by Armstrong who claimed:

> "This would DESTROY THE WORK . . . put an END to . . . PREACH [ing] THE GOSPEL . . ."

That, of course, was only a *reason* for maintaining *status quo* for himself as titular head. Many church denominations use the democratic or democratic-republic process in their administration. It hasn't destroyed them. In fact a number of them carry on extensive evangelical works throughout the world.

Armstrong has, in reality, functioned as a *loner* during his entire life.[29] It is virtually impossible for him to coordinate his efforts through the representative process. He has the temperament of a despot. He can not work with others. They either work *for* him or they just DON'T WORK!

So, Armstrong never addressed the problems of the totalitarian process of his regime. He accuses others, teaches that he has the God ordained totalitarian form of government. He teaches that any other governmental structure will lead to failure. And that is it!

As a result of this despotic atmosphere, Armstrong's ministers had developed an inner feeling of being in a constant state of intimidation. This feeling was best expressed in the words of David Antion, Evangelist in charge of Armstrong's field ministry, when addressing the subject of " . . . the general governmental atmosphere of the work [Armstrong's organization]."

Antion says:

> "Personally, I feel . . . that the atmosphere is not conducive to seeking truth. It is not an atmosphere which produces honesty, candor, openness. Rather, it is an atmosphere which by its very nature, intimidates, makes cowards of men, forces conformity to those in authority.
>
> "There have been many meetings in which I felt there was more to be discussed. But the atmosphere was intimidating. To bring up another point for consideration, there were times when one would have to fear for his job . . ."
>
> "Whenever a man states his feelings, he is often made to feel guilty by the frequent quoting of Korah's rebellion or of Miriam and Aaron speaking against Moses."

> "Speaking one's mind is not necessarily tantamount to challenging the office of a superior. Yet, at times a person who speaks out is made to feel like a rebel."

And so, the dissident ministers made a valid request. Any system which so sterilizes the minds of men can not fulfill the true spiritual intent which God and Christ want.

Accusation No.4:

" . . . MISallocation of funds."

Armstrong never addresses the issue except to deny it. He does, however, bring counter accusations against the dissident ministers in his usual fashion. He charges:

> "What they REALLY advocate . . . let the local flock spend ALL its tithes on themselves, or, let the local minister spend it all on HIMSELF any way he wishes to allocate it!"

Armstrong did not address any specific area of MISallocation of funds even though there were questionable areas presented to him.

Instead, his tactic was to ACCUSE![30] He imputed motives to those men for which he had no honest basis either in historical fact or current evidence. Those accusations were a figment of his imagination–an attempt to turn the attention of the people from the MISallocation charges brought against him and cause the members to distrust those men who brought the charges.

RESIGNATIONS CONTINUE

It was this oblique manner of Armstrong which continued to fuel the fires of division. When a problem was presented, it became *personalized* by equating it with the one who brought it forward. Thus, in theory, Armstrong sought to destroy a problem by destroying the man who brought it to the surface.

After witnessing this, men terminated by the dozens but *the problems persisted.* They will remain with the organization until the Armstrongs seriously, humbly and fervently go to the heart of the problem–put themselves on an even plain with *other men* and arbitrate in *open forum* those two major issues presented by the dissident ministers; church government and Ted's spiritual qualifications for the ministry. And as it stands now even Herbert's qualifications should be re-examined.

Failure to do that has cost Armstrong some of his highest ranking men–resignation of three vice presidents and numerous others from the ranks of middle management and ministerial personnel.

It was Albert J. Portune who best summarized the Armstrong administration. In his letter of resignation, April 25, 1974, Portune commented:

> " . . . at this time through official resignation, I must make it known that I repudiate the leadership of the (Armstrong) organization because of the neglect, the errors, the continuing oppression which is preventing the growth and development of the people, the misrepresentations, the corruption and the ungodly methods being employed. I sincerely regret it has to be this way.
> "I could only wish we were *all collectively* working together at the *real problems* instead of imagined ones which have been contrived to preserve a hierarchical order which has become profligate." *(Los Angeles Times-April* 29, 1974).

Portune resigned in honor while the Armstrongs persisted in fastening what Portune called a "profligate administration" upon the Church of God.

The Vice President of the United States, Mr. Agnew, had the decency to resign when his improprieties were publicly verified, 1974.

The President of the United States, Mr. Nixon, resigned when he was incontrovertibly confronted with the

proportions of his Watergate involvements, 1974.

The Chancellor of West Germany resigned under shadowy reflections cast over him by appointing questionable associates, 1974.

Senator Hays of Ohio resigned when confronted with the magnitude of his improprieties, 1976.

Are the Armstrongs *different*–hand picked of God as they claim? Are they like Indera Ghandi, Prime Minister of India (accused or rigging her election) with whom they confer? Are they, like she, *above and outside the law?–(The* Indian Parliament officially sustained her claim making her a despot-1976).

Such claim has no basis in the annals of God's Word. It has no basis in Christianity. It has no basis in common decency. It has no basis in the Constitution of the United States, the greatest single governmental expression during the Christian Era. It is altogether repugnant to every sense of honesty, ethics and common decency. It is in fact, the *mark of a true despot.*

Why is it necessary to hark to the example of men of the *political world* for an example of propriety? Can it not be found among those who *claim* to represent God?

Even *there* we do have one noble example–that of the head of the Florida Bible College as reported in the *Orlando Sentinel* (1975):

> *"UNFAITHFUL BIBLE COLLEGE HEAD LEAVES"*
> "Confessing infidelity to his wife, the president of the country's largest Bible college has resigned . . . he informed the Board of Trustees of the Florida Bible College he had been unfaithful to his wife and that it would be an injustice to the school if he stayed.
>
> "Friends of [the administrator] . . . said he indicated the 'other woman' was a student he met on the college tennis courts . . ."

Like Agnew, Nixon, the German Chancellor, Senator Hays and the Florida Bible College administrator, the Armstrongs

should exercise the decency to allow the church to carry on without the eternal blotch of moral compromise which they have imposed upon it. Let the Armstrongs say, as did the Florida Bible College administrator, “It will be an injustice if we stay.”

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

ARMSTRONGISM-Where Next?

The Armstrongs have refused to yield and remain adamantly at their posts disregarding God's Word in spite of the large losses in membership and wholesale resignation by the ministry. Where will the Armstrongs lead their church in the future?

A study of their past will probably give the best projection for their future. Let us then look at a brief synopsis of the Armstrong strategy of the past.

In the 1930's and early 1940's Armstrong's area of conquest was the *Oregon territory* of the Church of God. The Oregon battle was both tragic and bizarre. While Armstrong lost the battle, he drew enough monetary strength from those whom he opposed to set up an independent base of operation in Eugene, Oregon.

But Armstrong was eventually beaten in battle by the old line Church of God. Later on, in the mid-40's, his prophetic pronouncements were defeated battle by battle as the Allies achieved the victory in World War II.

In retrospect, one sees that Armstrong was waging war on two fronts. His defenses were finally smashed on both, yet he refused to admit defeat. It was at this point that he invented the theory, “Right prophecies–wrong war” (author's phraseology).

To give substance to his theory, Armstrong claimed that God had given the world more time to repent and turn to Him–hence more time for Armstrong to *warn the world.* To add further impetus to his claim he began to teach that the job was too much for one man. In this way he gained support for his concept of Ambassador College and was thereby transformed from an abyss of failure into a gleaming tower

of educational respectability. In this educational setting, Armstrong passed his prophetic concepts on to his students. But one thing he kept hidden from them–his prophetic debacles of the 1930's and early 1940's.

With the help of his unsuspecting cohorts, Armstrong built an elaborate prophetic structure which forecast military defeat and slavery (1972) for the United States, The British Commonwealth and the democracies of Northwestern Europe, while Armstrong and his adherents were to be miraculously whisked away to Petranic safety.

With the dawning of the 70's the possibility of another prophetic debacle loomed ominously and increasingly larger–like a mountain silhouetted against a morning sky. Quietly, behind the scenes, contingent plans were being laid. All the while, Armstrong's adherents were assured that his 1972 prophecies would still come to pass.

In January 1972 Armstrong's prophecies collapsed with the impotency of nature's mid-winter sterility. The United States, the British Commonwealth and the democracies of Northwestern Europe were enjoying one of the greatest periods of affluence in the history of mankind–instead of languishing in captivity as Armstrong had prophesied.

For the *second time* Armstrong's prophecies were defeated en masse. Equally devastating, Herbert Armstrong's son, Garner Ted, was under pressure from both the membership and the press to account for his apparent long standing marital infidelity.

With the precision of a Grand Master at chess, Herbert Armstrong shielded his son from attack and secured him firmly in the line of the Armstrong ecclesiastical dynasty.

As for his shaky prophecies, Armstrong dismissed those with even greater dexterity than he had done after his first round of prophecy failures in 1945. How convenient to simply say, “God has given us more time!”. With such abandon a quarter century of unfulfilled prophecies (over sixty in all) were excused.

As early as 1966, while Armstrong's protege prophets were

rigorously applying the *prophetic scare* to their adherents (and to a less degree the public), Herbert Armstrong was setting the stage for the next phase of his work–planning for the eventuality beyond 1972–just in case! In fact, as early as the mid-60's he had begun his jet-set tours, courting the favor of the royal and elite.

On those tours Armstrong avoided being introduced as a minister or press representative, choosing rather to wear the hat of the educator–chancellor of three colleges. Finally, word leaked out that his three colleges were basically religious institutions–a point of embarrassment for Armstrong.

At this juncture he jettisoned the strict educational image and by typical Armstrong monetary fiat produced an image to his own liking by funneling multiple millions of *widows mites* into a pool for *cultural purposes.* This clandestine creation became known as AICF (Ambassador International Cultural Foundation) and once again Armstrong announced his work was on a new and higher plateau.

But this soft-shoe routine and hocus-pocus didn't befuddle the honest hearted. The result was to widen the split in the Armstrong organization with a loss of five to ten percent of its membership–with large losses still continuing (1976). An even larger proportion of its ministry, possibly as high as 25 to 30 percent, has abandoned Armstrongism,

That brief summary of how Armstrong has worked in the past can serve to project an image forward– a glimpse of Armstrongism in the future. Let us take a look then at the prospects of the Armstrong organization. But first, a brief look at the four major splinter groups which emerged at the time of the Armstrong split–all of which had previously been a part of the Worldwide Church of God.

1) The Church of God of The Eternal, headed by Raymond Cole, holds to the original Armstrong doctrines while the Armstrongs have moved slightly off their original position on certain very limited doctrinal issues.

2) The Associated Churches of God, headed by Ken Westby (elected for a one-year term), moved slightly to the left toward the liberal side of the Armstrongs, but can be comparatively classified as moderates. They hold a moderate position on centralized church government with few doctrinal differences from the Armstrongs.
3) The 20th Century Church of God, headed by Al Carrozzo, is in about the same position as the Associated Churches. They hold the position of a more decentralized church government than the Associated Churches of God and sufficient doctrinal differences to be classified as *liberal* in relation to the Armstrongs.
4) The Foundation for Biblical Research is headed by Dr. Ernest Martin who affirms that he is not trying to build another church. Martin has been very influential in the split of Armstrongism, having researched and successfully challenged a number of Armstrong's shaky doctrines. He and his adherents may be classified as very liberal in comparison to the Armstrongs. They totally reject the concept of Armstrong's rulership by *divine right* as well as central church government in general.

   This group, more than any other; was responsible for focusing the powerful spotlight of scripture upon certain shadowy doctrines in the Armstrong camp–forcing them to restudy a number of their doctrines.
5) The Worldwide Church of God (Armstrongism) even though they were forced to restudy some of their doctrines, has made little real change. However, enough superficial movement has been introduced to satisfy some members that the "real truth" is being sought.

FUTURE OF SPLINTER GROUPS?

But what will happen to each of the splinter groups? That

depends upon the WILL of the individual group. The law of probability indicates that a group which really wants to continue will do so. The chances are very good that each of the four splinter groups will go through a series of trials before they come to realize that they must appropriate a divine commission.

In all the above cases, the splinter groups were formed in a reactionary manner as opposed to the concept that they were themselves divinely commissioned. They may survive in their present state but they must accept the concept of divine commission before they can begin to grow rapidly. They will probably languish for a while, merge or experience further splits among themselves before they come to this state of conviction.

DECLINE OF ARMSTRONGISM?

As for the Armstrong organization; they lost only a small percentage of their membership–probably less than ten percent. However, defection in the ministerial ranks has climbed much higher.

The net effect of this movement was to give the Armstrong organization a relative financial boost. Percentage-wise, their income held relatively steady while ministerial expense was cut dramatically. Concurrent with this movement their total income climbed from $55.9-million in 1973 to $66.8-million in 1975.

COLLAPSE OF THE ARMSTRONG EMPIRE?

Some are predicting total collapse of the Armstrong empire. Others hope for it. But realistically, what lies in store for this widely known, numerically insignificant group?

By the author's analysis (and this is certainly no divine revelation), they will continue to grow, perhaps at a somewhat slower rate. Doctrinal changes will likely be difficult during the next few years; however, sufficient doctrinal changes may be effected so as to eventually bring them into line with the accepted Protestant concepts.

Keeping of the Feasts of the Jews in central locations will probably give way to the observance of only the Holy Days (a small portion of the Feasts of the Jews) in their local churches. This in turn, will de-emphasize the need for their current elaborate tithing system. It will likely fall into disuse and later may be officially abandoned in favor of the system of donations through private and philanthropic organizations. If this occurs, they will probably continue to refer to it as tithing but it will bear little resemblance to the tithing system of the Old Testament–the system which they now adhere to quite rigorously.

Embarrassment caused by continued prophecy failures will probably force a re-examination of the British–Israel doctrine and most likely, a highly modified, ineffectual, version of this doctrine will eventually be adopted.

As for the concept that the Armstrong organization will just go a way; let us recall that it is extremely rare for an organization to cease existence. One of the most obvious examples is that of the Jewish people. They have been sought out and persecuted through every nation of the world. Dictators have tried to expunge them from off their land, but to no avail.

Another example–the American Indian. They are generally looked upon as being greatly diminished in number. Many people in the Eastern United States, who have never seen a native Indian, think of him as a painted savage, riding bareback horses while raiding covered wagons. They are often thought of as a type of creature which has become all but extinct in the United States. The truth is, authoritative sources show that the Indian, once known as “the Vanishing American” is continually on the increase.

No, peoples and organizations don't just go away! So one should not make the mistake of taking the position of the avenger–hoping for, wishing for, and waiting for the collapse of Armstrongism. It is very unlikely that it will ever happen. If it does, it will probably be the result of a direct intervention by the hand of God. God does not take lightly

such words and deeds of man which make a mockery of Him. He does not take lightly man's willingness to stand in the place of God, speak in His name and by His authority–all the while spouting out sterile prophetic threats of doom upon the world.

Let God be the avenger of men. Withdraw from such an organization if necessary; however, it is not wise to expend one's precious energies fighting. Rather, build a new building with heavenly splendor and leave earthly passions behind.

THE FLIMFLAM EVANGELIST-SPIRIT OF ELMER GANTRY

Each new generation of religious awakening spawns its own hybrid variety of the flimflam man–the Elmer Gantry of the pulpit. The gullible eagerly frequents the medicine show, the rain maker, the healer, the prophet, one who promises the fountain of youth, the mystic elixir of life or ultimate knowledge of the Divine.

Each flim-flammer will seek his own following, shunning those who question the authenticity of his supposedly divine formula. Those men must be called on to account for the slightest failure of their heavenly claims and left desolate with their own hocus-pocus. Without the blessing of the widow's mite their well pressed garments will become rumpled and their fancy potions *appear* as ineffectual as they really are.

But how can the youth, the non-initiate, the novice detect and avoid the flim-flam religious practitioner? It is not as difficult as one might think. There are, basically, three things to watch.

IMMINENCY OF CHRIST'S RETURN-BEWARE!

The first to be wary of is the man who predicts the imminency of the literal return of Jesus Christ. Christ warned, “Ye know not the day nor the hour wherein the Son of Man cometh” (Matt. 25:13). Christ and all the major apostolic authors warned that Christ's return would be as

unexpected as the appearance of a thief in the darkness of night (Luke 12:39, I Thes. 5:2, II Pet. 3:10, Rev. 3:6; 16:15).

Heaven guards that event with such secrecy that neither the angels nor even Christ Himself knows the time of its final fulfillment. God the Father has reserved that knowledge to Himself–alone! ". . . of that day and hour knoweth no man, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only," said Christ (Matt. 25:36),

Even though Christ's literal return will come unexpectedly, it need not catch the child of God unaware. Those who are spiritually prepared will not be startled by Christ's return–even if it comes while he is sleeping in the wee hours of the morning. The time or imminency of Christ's return is something about which one just need not be frightened if he is living a Godly life (II Thess. 5:4).

A mighty temptation rests on every minister and layman–a temptation to dabble in the prophetic date of Christ's return. But every minister or layman who has, or ever will do so, is destined to sail straight into the reef of prophetic disaster.

Why then do ministers do it? It is a very easy way to get people stirred up to the point where they will generously support *a work* with their financial means. In some cases, hundreds of thousands and millions will be donated by a single individual to support this kind of scare-tactic preaching–something which Christ warned should not be done. He said, " . . . many shall come in my name saying I am (of) Christ; and *The* time (of Christ's return) draweth near . . ." (Luke 21:8). What then should one's reaction be when self-styled prophets come proclaiming that Christ's Second Coming is just around the corner? Christ said, " . . . go not after them . . ." (Luke 21:8).

There is no truth so well documented and yet so widely abused by self-styled prophets. Christ labeled it a forbidden area and specifically warned, " . . . there shall arise . . . false prophets . . . (Matt. 24:23-24).

Ministers who indulge in this forbidden trickery will invariably construct an elaborate prophetic scheme and eventually become purveyors of dooms-day threats–in many cases directing the venom of their strikes against the sanctity of other Christian faiths.

Such men, after misappropriating millions of *widows mites* become the victims of their own schemes as the scripture of Deuteronomy 18:22 is fulfilled upon them, "When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously; thou shalt, not be afraid of him."

SELF-STYLED PROPHET-BEWARE!

The second thing to watch in detecting the Elmer Gantry flimflam type has already been referenced–the self-styled prophet. As his prophetic structure grows it will become increasingly necessary that he be looked upon as having a higher station than the ordinary minister of Christ. Eventually his *decisions* will be equated with a "Thus saith the Lord." Those of such esteem will gradually assume the position of the sale keeper, regulator and interpreter of God's Holy Word. They will then exercise the freedom to add to and detract from the Scriptures.

What does God say about such as this? "If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book . . . God shall take away his part out of the book of life. . ." (Rev. 22:18-19),

While this scripture pertains primarily to the book of Revelation, the same holds true for the entire Bible At the time of his death, the writer of Revelation, the Apostle John, had compiled and canonized the Scriptures as we have them today. He wrote the above quote. There is no room for special revelation when it comes to Truth. "Grace and truth came (not is coming or will come–but CAME) by Jesus Christ" (John 1:17). Paul made it clear, while writing to the

Hebrews, ". . . (God) Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son . . ." (Heb. 1:2), whose words are recorded in the Bible.

Beware of the self-styled prophet who uses double meaning phrases such as, "God has revealed to me," If you believe your Bible, you know God is not now giving direct revelation to men. Beware of the man who claims otherwise.

THE WHOLE TRUTH SYNDROME

Thirdly, beware of the organization which thinks or teaches that they are the only ones who have "The Truth." Further examination will reveal that they teach salvation is generally possible through their closed society alone. They subtly infer that only they hold the key to the Golden Gate of God's Heavenly Kingdom. Hundreds of years–perhaps eighteen hundred years have gone by without the gospel having been preached–according to them. Souls for centuries, have been doomed to their graves without the saving grace of the Gospel of Christ–according to their teaching. Beware of those who supposedly have a monopoly on heavenly things.

Armstrongism is plagued with all three of the above; they: 1) Dabble in the imminency of Christ's return; 2) Hold Armstrong as a prophet; 3) and generally hold that their church alone has "The Truth."

FUTURE OF THE ARMSTRONG EMPIRE?

The real test for the Armstrong organization lies yet ahead. According to the method of their calculations, 1982 is a very significant date. That was calculated to be the alternate date on which Christ would return. The captivity of the U.S., Great Britain and the Democracies of Northwestern Europe were slated to be three and one-half years before (probably in the spring of 1979).

The Armstrongs are a bit gun-shy over the 1972 prophetic debacle and are not making much ado of the alternate date. But be aware of the fact that they will be standing ready to

take any psychological advantage they can reap from strategic military or propaganda reverses which may occur in the free world up to and during that period–Spring 1979 to the Fall of 1982.

If nothing of' significance occurs, they will probably continue to say that God has given the world and the universe more time to repent. The meagerest possibility of life on other planets could give rise to a new Interplanetary Church of God. Civilization may yet view on television:

ICG PHASE III: "Houston Control, stand by to receive ICG telecast of Interplanetary Phase III."

HOUSTON CONTROL: "Houston Control, standing by."

ICG PHASE III: "Interplanetary PHASE III, to Houston Control, stand by for film intro to ICG ... 5,4,3,2, I–Roll!"

ANNOUNCER: ICG: "The Universe Tomorrow! Herbert W./Garner Ted Armstrong analyzes today's Interplanetary News with the Prophecies of the Universe Tomorrow."

ARMSTRONG: "Greetings friends throughout the Universe. This is Herbert W./Garner Ted Armstrong coming to you from aboard 'Interplanetary PHASE III.' I had breakfast this morning as we whizzed by Mars and viewed the small colony there through our PHASE III space–scope. Today we are on our way to (interference–snap, crackle, pop) beyond the reaches of Pluto (more interference–snap, crackle, pop). Our work has just been thrust upon a new and higher plateau . . . (snap, crackle, pop) . . ."

Fantastic? Perhaps. But there are poor widows who will support it.

Beware of the modern space-age flimflam Elmer Gantry as he may some day peer through your space-scope. Keep your hand on your hip because he is going to reach for your wallet.

If he uses your offerings for any project other than Christ's commission of preaching His Gospel, you haven't donated to the real cause of Christ. You, my friend, have experienced a *Religious Rip-Off!*

EPILOGUE

Those who have left Armstrongism now number many thousands. There was a drop of 10,000 in attendance at Armstrong's Feast of the Jews (Tabernacles) in October 1976. There is a constant flow of members, ministers. elders and deacons abandoning the constraints of Old Testament legalism in favor of true Christian liberty.

Many ask, "What do I do now? Where do I turn for friends and fellowship?" Before answering, let us deal with the question, "Why these folk (you–if you are an adherent of Armstrongism) joined Armstrongism in the first place?"

The most common testimony indicates that many people at large, then as well as now, are really seeking God and His will for their lives. They are searching for "The Truth."

But what do we see around us? The same thing most Armstrong adherents witnessed around them before they joined Armstrongism–hypocrisy (euphemistically referred to today as "the credibility gap").

Hypocrisy openly flourishes in political circles of our time. It has long been said that Machiavelli's book, *The Prince,* is the Politician's Bible. In a nut-shell the Machiavellian doctrine is commonly paraphrased, "The end justifies the means." In other words, do what dirty tricks one wishes in order to gain his point–get elected, advance his party, or get his bill passed.

The single word WATERGATE is sufficient to make the point, to say nothing of lobbyists and pressure groups strenuously exerting their efforts to have their way.

Would to God it stopped there. But hypocrisy projects its vacuumous tentacles into every strata of society; political, religious, business, labor, right down to the basic unit of our society–the family.

Hypocrisy from within or without creates great mental unrest. Many people throughout the world want rest from this unsettling element. They want and desperately need the rest which they will find only in the Kingdom of God.

Many search constantly for rest from the hypocritical elements of society and consequently, are sure game for the ELECTRONIC EVANGELIST which gallops into their Jives by way of super-sonic radio and full color television.

Many donations and disappointments later one discovers he is getting poorer, and his life troubles and problems are getting more complex. All the while the fair-haired electronic evangelist lives sumptuously with possibly even jet planes, multi-million dollar shrines, Rolls Royces, Cadillacs, etc., etc., etc! Common to his life style may be a well supplied wet-bar, a secret harem, and a few unplanned children which, for obvious reasons, can't bear his name.

He may well close his life under the hand of a medical specialist skilled in the treatment of cirrhosis of the liver, gout, diabetes and other diseases of excess.

All the while his "faithful" are bombarded with the propaganda that he died a martyr–in the service of the Lord. But when the truth gets out to the public, they smile and nod a knowing gesture.

But we haven't answered the question, "Why do people seek Christ by abandoning Armstrongism?" It is because they have become disillusioned. When they joined Armstrongism they were seeking TRUTH and they were led to believe they had, at last found an organization which placed the highest premium upon the constant search for truth and personal integrity.

But alas! They found that the parabolic leaven of the Pharisees infects every minuscule fiber of organized society–Jew and Gentile alike.

They witness scandal at the highest level: children conceived, born out of wedlock. Cover-up. Irresponsible fiscal administration. Cover-up. Alcoholism. Cover-up. Gambling. Cover-up. Bribes. Cover-up. The list is endless.

There is nothing so pleasant as truth when it is for us and nothing so painful when it is against us.

Jesus said, "The truth shall make you free." Free to do that which you sought in the beginning. Free to seek God's

will in your life without legalism, without constraint and coercion of man, society or government. You are free to be a walking shadow of Christ–not any man.

For freedom a price must be paid. Not the price of a painful moment but the price of eternal vigilance to paradoxically keep it and give it away. It is only through GIVING IT that you keep it for yourself.

Those leaving Armstrongism must realize their responsibility to assist mankind in community services and above all establish a close one-to-one relationship with those around them who are in need. They must study with an open mind–read widely from various points of view and flee from those who purport to hold an exclusive patent on TRUTH–all wrapped up in a neat little package.

Happiness is not where you find it–but where you *make* it through service to your fellow man.

REFERENCE NOTES

The following psychological observations and notations were made by Dr . Jerome Freund, who holds the very honorable title of Council On Ministries (the entire state of Florida) – Florida Conference – United Methodist Church, The Author is much indebted to Dr. Freund for his professional assistance by preparing these notes.

1 Armstrong–Chancellor of Ambassador Colleges. The colleges have never been accredited by a recognized accrediting association, although Ambassador College, Pasadena, now has candidacy status only. Unless there are considerable changes it is unlikely they will ever be accredited even though they are chartered in their respective states to issue degrees (p. I of text).

2 One of the laws which impels Armstrong's adherents to donate is that of personal guilt. The psychological law which comes into play here is modesty and guilt which results from accepting something for nothing. On this see: J.L. Freedman, S.A. Wallington and E. Bless in their article, "Compliance without Pressure: the effect of guilt," published in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology,* July 1967, pages 117-124

Compliance with the principle of Cognitive Dissonance may also have bearing here. It may be summarized, " . . . when an individual is induced to perform some behavior inconsistent with his beliefs, and the less the pressure put upon him to perform that behavior, then the greater the consequent attitude change toward consistency with the behavior." See Kiesler and Kiesler's "Conformity" page 103 (Addison-Wesley Publishers, Reading Mass., 1969).

Dr. Freund says, "Even though a listener of Armstrong's has sent for and received his publication, he is not necessarily a believer. However, it soon becomes clear that in his behavior the listener supports Armstrong's cause by continuing to accept and read the free literature. Theory predicts that, in general, most persons will change their attitudes to match their behavior, especially in the absence of pressure to do so."

See Gershen Kaufman's "The Meaning of Shame: Toward a self-affirming identity," in the *Journal of Counseling Psychology,* Vol. 21 (6) 568·574, (Nov. 19741 (page 12 of text).

3 Ibid., 2.

4 Armstrong assumes the position of an authority. Dr. Freund says, "Two related factors interact here: (a) Credibility – trustworthiness of the source of information. (b) The reader's value of his own opinion as compared to that of the source."

Relative to (a) Dr. Freund notes, "Armstrong continually reiterates his 'expertise' of long years in Biblical study. Consequently, he becomes an expert in the eyes of his readership, persons of moderate to marginal education (in that area). Armstrong's media messages are given in very self-confident manners. It is known that information coming from highly self-confident and credible sources can strongly influence one's opinions." He cites Kiesler's "Conformity," page 72 and an article by B. J. League and D. N. Jackson entitled "Conformity, Veridicality, and Self-esteem," published in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology,* pages 68 and 113-115 (1964).

In relation to part (b) above it is evident that the reader "devalues his own opinion proportionately as he escalates the value of the author he reads [in this case the Armstrongs] (p. 12 of text)."

5 Dr. Freund compares Armstrong's method of gaining correspondents with the "foot-in-the-door" technique which states, "If you get a person to do a little thing for you, he'll do you a much bigger favor later. The reason is that by the second contact the person's attitudes about himself have changed. He thinks of himself as a 'doer' rather than a 'receiver.' Then having committed himself to contributing, the person tends to 'get stuck' in this position, perhaps as a way of justifying his commitment by continuing to act in conformity with it." See Freedman & Fraser's "Compliance without Pressure: the Foot-In-The-Door Technique" in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology,* Vol. 4 (1966), pages 195·202. Also see Gerard's "Deviation, Conformity, and Commitment," Steiner & Fishbein's "Current Studies in Social Psychology," pages 263-276 (1965), published by Holt, Rinehart & Winston, New York.

Dr. Freund also notes concerning " . . . the rather severe 'initiation' into the (Armstrong's) band of co-workers, via repeated contributions . . . [It] has been found . . . that a person who has

undergone a more severe initiation into a group will value the group more highly than one who has undergone a mild initiation, or none at all. The reason this process occurs is that usually the immediate rewards for entry into a group have not been worth the 'cost' of the severe initiation. An inner tension, or cognitive dissonance is set up. The person feels pretty dumb for being suckered in. Therefore, most people in this situation tend to justify their behavior, which they can't change, by changing their original reaction to the group membership, from a neutral or negative attitude to a positive one. This reduces the inner tension, feels good and is therefore rewarding." See Anderson & Mills "The Effects of Severity of Initiation on Liking for a Group" in the *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology,* 1959 (59), pages 177-181. Gerard & Mathewson's "The Effects of Severity of' Initiation of Liking for a Group" in the *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology,* 1966, (2) 278-287. Festlnger's "Theory of Cognitive Dissonance," Stanford University Press, 1964 (p. 24 of text).

6 Dr. Freund notes, "The equating of Armstrong with Elijah and him and his son with the Two Witnesses of Revelation Chapter 11, is a planned conferral of high status upon the two of them. It is known (Kiesler & Kiesler's "Conformity" Addison-Wesley Publishers, 1969) that one's private acceptance of the views of a high status person is greater than for a low status person. Interestingly enough, the actual position and behavior of a high status person is distorted by others to match their preconceptions of what that high status person *ought* to be like (p. 30 of text)."

In other words, when the common people think the Armstrongs are special prophets, to them then Armstrong would be just that regardless of the facts. The Armstrongs would then tend to conduct themselves in the manner of their expectations and play the role of the prophet.

7 Kelman notes that, "acceptance of another's views depends upon whether the other person's views fit in with one's value system." Dr. Freund adds, "The majority of Americans like to think of themselves as patriotic. Thus Armstrong's establishment of his patriotism helps build his credibility with his readership." See Kelman's "Compliance, Identification, and Internationalization" in

the *Journal of Conflict Resolution,* 1958, No.2, pages 51·60. (p. 31 of text).

8 In relation to rewarding one's associates, Dr. Freund observes that, "These activities enhance the attractiveness, as well as status of Armstrong. Thus, the greater the attractiveness of another person, the greater the power over others in his attempt to influence their opinions." See "An Analysis of Compliant Behavior" by Festinger. "Group Relations at the Crossroads" by Sherif and Wilson (Harper 1953-pages 232-256) and "The Human Group" by Homans. These deal with the effects of giving rewards to others and thus raising the status of the giver (p. 31 of text).

9 Dr. Freund says, "This procedure of obscuring clear goals for the group enhances group cohesiveness." See Tsouderos' "Organizational Change in Terms of a Series of Selected Variables" in the *American Sociological Review,* 1955, Vol. 20, pages 207·210. (p. 31 of text) ..

10 Ibid., Ref. 8.

11 Relative to the half truth and the big lie tactic (Gospel hasn't been preached in 1800 years) Dr. Freund cites: "Katz and Lazarsfeld have provided basic Information in the area of internal group influence–how opinion *leaders* affect the opinions of groups and how groups in turn prescribe 'correct' attitudes for its members as well as *supplying the* very *information* for formation of those attitudes." See Katz & Lazarsfeld's "Personal Influence: The Part Played by People in the Flow of Mass Communications." New York: Free Press, 1955 (p. 32 of text).

12 Ibid., Ref. 11.

13 Armstrong threatens loss of salvation if his adherents don't contribute to the extent of his supposed needs. Dr. Freund notes: "Loss of salvation constitutes a *marking out,* a rejection, a stigmatization of Armstrong's adherents." For further reading in this area of psychological law, Dr. Freund suggests a number of authors: Goddman's "Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity," pages 7·10, Prentice-Hall, 1963. Perry, Gawel & Gibbon's "Clinical Studies in Psychiatry," page l45-published by Norton &

Company, 1956.

Dr. Freund notes that the "marking or stigmatization process can have a powerful influence and effect on the behavioral pattern of group members," and consequently a great influence toward causing them to respond liberally to Armstrong's requests for money (p. 39 of text).

14 Ibid. Ref. 5 on severe initiation.

15 Armstrong threatens his adherents with the lake of fire if they don't contribute. Of this Dr. Freund notes, "Coupled with the threat of stigmatization, by God no less [Ibid. Ref. 13], is the subtle hint that the probabilities for attaining the goal of the building program has increased, because the *membership* has increased."

Dr. Freund cites Deutch's article, "Some Factors Affecting Membership Motivation and Achievement Motivation," pages 81-95, published in the *Human Relations Journal,* No. 12, 1959. In his article, Deutsch points out that "stigmatization leads to a greater attractiveness of the goal because the probability of success is higher. Greater attractiveness leads to greater commitment."

Dr. Freund notes, "Armstrong attributes very high status to himself–reference to Elijah [see Ref. 6]. Individuals tend to distort situations when confronted with high status of others, particularly, when confronted with information about himself from another of higher status if that information does not match his self-understanding." See Peptone's "Motivational Effects in Social Perception," published in the *Human Relations Journal,* 1959, No. 3, p. 57-76. In such a case the person will distort the views of the high status person so that he perceives less disagreement between himself and the high status person.

"Finally, we note that the group to whom this letter (Armstrong's co-worker letter) was written had become full-fledged members of Armstrong's church, i.e., they had committed themselves to future interaction. Studies suggest that when a person is less attracted to a group, his opinions will change in the direction of those of the group *if he* is *committed to future interaction.*" See Kiesler & Corbin's article, "Commitment, Action, and Conformity" in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology,* 1965, No.2, pages 890-895. Also Kiesler, Zanna, & De Salvo's "Deviation and Conformity: Opinion

Change as a Function of Commitment, Attraction, and Presence of a Deviate," in the *Journal a/Personality and Social Psychology, 1966,* No.3, pages 458-467.

Dr. Freund further analyses, "With reference to this abstract and the other abstracts of Armstrong's letters to his adherents, we see a double thrust aiming to convince readers that indeed they are guilty, i.e., will accept Armstrong's stigmatization of them.

"First his condemnation of them would tend to alienate him from his followers, making 'his group' relatively unattractive to each member. However, the commitment to future interaction with Armstrong's 'group' exerts a powerful force, aligning each member's views more in accordance with those of the 'group.'

"Secondly, this process is assisted by Armstrong's high status (among) the members.

"Finally, having accepted the shame of the stigma from Armstrong, each member becomes powerfully moved to neutralize the shame under the terms which Armstrong conveniently provides, i.e., financial support of his program goals" (p. 43 of text).

16 Here Dr. Freund comments, " . . . is the psychological pay-off for [Armstrong's] members. [They] have achieved [assumed] status as members of the most successful organization in the world."

"As indicated, the adherents of Armstrong's church are socially marginal folk. The status they have (however) is of little experience positive value [it] . . . is 'ascribed' rather than 'achieved.'" See Sarbin's "Notes on the Transformation of Social Identity" and Roberts, Greenfield & Miller's "Comprehensive Mental Health," University of Wisconsin Press, 1968, pages 97-116.

Freund continues, "There is little or no choice involved in ascribed status, i.e., a person can't choose his age, or sex, and has little choice in the matter of retirement, being on welfare, widowed, etc. On the other hand 'achieved' status involves those roles which one can earn, i.e., job promotion, high school diploma, becoming a member of a church, supporting a successful organization, etc.

"There is little or no felt value in ascribed status roles. Our social rewards come from our achieved status, i.e., 'what we've made ourselves.' Among the adherents of Armstrong, the status seems preponderantly ascribed, i.e., of neutral or negative felt value. Thus

the status achieved, even vicariously, by belonging to and supporting actively a successful organization assumes a relatively great importance, by contrast. Membership can be greatly rewarding and thus a reinforcement for future support and a spur for continued commitment" (p. 46 of text).

17 This situation says Dr. Freund, " . . . is suggestive of the 'risky shift' phenomenon reported in social psychological literature.

"Two elements in a member's 'pivot of uncertainty' set up the 'risk' situation: (a) Probability of salvation. (b) Probability that Armstrong is a false prophet (p. 59 of text).

"In one alternative, a member could believe that on the evidence of his senses Armstrong is a false prophet. That (perhaps) is a safe assumption. However, a person cannot be sure of salvation, i.e., his payoff (if he accepts that position).

"On the other hand, Armstrong (presumably) offers the almost perfect certainty of salvation, though to strive for the prize means a member must invest Jots of money and effort (perhaps), risking being defrauded. However (he reasons), if he truly finds salvation, clearly it has been worth the risk.

"Assuming the communication of members in local congregations, the situation is set up for the group decision to follow the riskier course–namely following Armstrong for the sake of the glittering prize of salvation, at the increased risk of being defrauded by a false Messiah." See Wallace & Kogan's "Group Decision-making Under Risk of Aversive Consequences" in the *Journal of Abnormal Social Psychology,* 1965. Marquis' "Individual Responsibility and Group Decisions Involving Risk" in the *Industrial Management Review,* 1962, No.3, pages 8·23. Nordhy's "Group Interaction in Decision Making Under Risk"–an unpublished Master's thesis submitted to the School of Industrial Management, M.LT., 196.2. Stoner's "A Comparison of Individual and Group Decisions Including Risk"–an unpublished Master's thesis, School of Industrial Management, M.l.T., 1961. Wallace & Kogan's "Group Influence on Individual Risk-taking" in the *Journal of Abnormal Social Psychology,* 1964, No. 68, pages 263·274 (Page 59 of text).

18 Armstrong tries to fraternize with the elite. Regarding this, Dr. Freund observes, "Rubbing shoulders with the elite and powerful

enhances Armstrong's status in the eyes of members, whom he (seldom) fails to appraise of his important contacts. This further influences his members' acceptance of Armstrong's views and compliance therewith (p. 77 of text).

"Kelman and Eagly point out that persons tend to hold attitudes similar to those persons they find attractive, in that so holding these views enhances one's self-definition (image) e.g., 'The President and I think alike on this matter.'" See Kelman & Eagly's "Attitude Toward the Communicator, Perception of Communication Content and Attitude Change," in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology,* 1965, No.1, pages 63-78 (p. 77 of text).

19 Armstrong is well trained, though self-taught, in the use of broadcast and telecast psychology.

In this case Dr. Freund references the works of Shaw, commenting, "During the course of his presentation Armstrong sets up a goal for his listeners, the hearing of (supposedly) God's solution. The achievement of the goal is thwarted by the conclusion of the radio time. For those listeners who have accepted the goal as stated by Armstrong, an inner tension is produced which persists until the goal is attained, i.e., the answer heard. The reduction of this tension provides a force strong enough in many cases to prompt individuals to take action to resolve the tension, i.e.; send in for the free material."

See Shaw's, "Group Dynamics: The Psychology of Small Group Behavior," published by McGraw-Hill, 1971. Also compare Worchel & Arnold's, "The Effect of Combined Arousal States on Attitude Change" in. the *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology,* November, 1974, pages 549-560 (p. 126 of text),

20 Armstrong tries to get his listeners involved. When he writes for a booklet he becomes a "doer." Thus, Freund expands his observation on the above footnote, "Having taken action, the listener is now a 'doer.' Armstrong also exposes him to a potentially satisfying publication, The PLAIN TRUTH. It is known that to establish the motivating power of an event or item, a person must first be exposed to it. If its effects are satisfying, the probability is that the person will increasingly perform the behavior resulting in the recurrence of the pleasing event (p. 126 of text).

[21] See Ref. 5, also Ayllon and Azrin's "Token Economy: A Motivational System for Therapy and Rehabilitation," published by Appleton-Century-Croft, 1968. And Reynolds' "Primer of Operant Conditioning," page 6, published by Scott, Foresman & Company, 1968 (p. 127 of text).

[22] See Ref. 5, and Ref. 21 Ayllon and Azrin.

[23] Dr. Freund notes: "The reaction here, of Armstrong and the subsequent maintenance of his organization of adherents in the face of massive disconfirmation of his prophecies, is reminiscent of another prophetic disconfirmation which was extensively studied by three social psychologists–Festinger, Reicken and Schachter–in their publication, 'When Prophecy Fails; University of Minnesota Press, 1956."

Freund continues, "For our purposes, a cogent explanation of why Armstrong's followers did not desert in droves, following the great prophetic 'disconfirmations of post World War II, involves the Cognitive Dissonance Theory (i.e., there is) an underlying premise (concerning) much of a person's behavior–'he acts in accordance with his beliefs.'"

Freund continues, "In terms of Armstrong's followers, even though they *believe* in his prophesied cataclysmic events (which failed) . . . their *actions*. . . continued to support Armstrong's organization (thus setting up a *known dissonance).*

"Consequently, in the face of disconfirmation of belief (prophecy failure) it was easier to disavow the belief in the defunct prophecy rather than disavow their 'good group member' behavior. Cognitive dissonance theory states that when one is caught between a *belief* 'discrepant with one's *actions,* a person most generally will *change his belief* before he disavows his actions."

See Brown's "Social Psychology," Free Press, 1965, pages 590-601. Festinger, Reicken & Schachter, "When Prophecy Fails," University of Minnesota Press, 1965 (p. 174 of text).

[24] See Ref. 5-"Foot-in-Door &. Severe Initiation Technique."

[25] Here Dr. Freund notes a study which "suggests that attributions (in this case a vague accusation of the greatest evil imaginable) of character made by others on a person have an independently

persuasive effect." This means that each person who hears such accusation will independently impute to the person, in this case the Evangelist, perhaps the worst evil which he can envision. For further study of this see Munson and Kiesler's "Role of Attributions by others in the Acceptance of Persuasive Communications" in the *Journal of Personality,* Sept. 1974, Vol. 42, (3), pages 453-466 (p. 244 of text).

26 Dr. Freund cites a study by Zimbardo and Ebbeson, "Influencing Attitudes and Changing Behavior" which shows that heightened credibility or trustworthiness of the one communicating (Armstrong) . . . has a powerfully positive effect on opinion change.

"By stating that God Himself backed Armstrong, the credibility of Armstrong was vastly amplified in the eyes of his believers (in this case researchers) ... Add to this another feature, pressure to conform, (and) the situation becomes practically irresistible to (the researcher)." See Zimbardo and Ebbeson, published 1969 by Addison-Wesley Press, Reading, Mass. (p. 251 of text).

27 Dr. Freund notes, "There are various basic methods of 'knowing.' Three are noted here in contrast with the scientific or researched-based method. A) *Method of Tenacity:* simply holding firmly to assumed truths. B) *Method of Authority:* truth is established by some authority. C) *A Priori Method:* deductions are made from axiomatic truths which are themselves untestable. D) *Method of Science:* truth, in the form of propositions, is subjected to a testing procedure to determine their logical (or mathematical) consistency and their correlations with a commonly perceived reality. Because the appeal here is to objective evidence, this method is potentially self-correcting .

"Armstrong's research here is certainly not the method of science. It may be an 'a priori' method, though the indications are that it is a combination of the methods of Tenacity and Authority." See F. N. Kerlinger's "Foundations of Behavioral Research," Chapter 1 (p. 253 of text).

28 Here Dr. Freund observes, "This behavior is reminiscent of the tactic employed by another famous mystic, Mrs. Keech, when her prophecies failed and her mystic efforts proved fruitless." See

Brown's work, page 592, as in Ref. 23 (p. 260 of text).

29 On communications, Dr. Freund says, “People of high status, when feeling insecure in their position, tend to curtail communication with persons of lesser perceived status. To re-establish his position, in his own eyes at least, the threatened, high-status, individual tends to cut himself off from others, responding less and less to their communications and seeking generally to differentiate himself from them through increasing his isolation. This leads to his greater experienced instability and eventually his downfall.” See Cohen's, “Upward Communication in Experimentally Created Hierarchies” in the *Human Relations Publication* Nov. 1958, pages 41-53. Also see same publication page 75 for Kiesler & Kiesler's article on “Conformity” (p. 282 of text).

30 Dr. Freund cites this as, “Another tactic related to the defense of insecurity.” Ibid Ref. 29.

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INDEX

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ABC Radio Network-p. 186
AICF (Ambassador International Cultural Foundation)-p. 2, 4, 5, 62-64, 79, 80
Agnew, Spiro (Vice President of U.S.)-p. 284, 285
Agrippa, King-p. 61
Albania (Taken by Mussolini)-p. 164
Allen. Herbert, L.-p. xi
Allies (World War Il)-p. 170
Alternative, The–p. 272
Alvadore, Oregon (Church of God)-p. 155
Ambassador College Auditorium (10 million dollar Ambassador College Auditorium-24 million with financing)-p. 3, 75
Ambassador College-p. 182
-Big Sandy, Texas-p. 4
-Bricketwood, England-p. 4
-Pasadena-p. 1-3
America Listen-p. 203
Ames, Iowa (Location of Armstrong survey)-p. 89
Angus (17th Century-home of Fox Sept) -po 80
Antion, David L.-p. 273, 282
Apartian, Dibar-p. 191
Apostle (Armstrong)-p. 79
Arabians (were prophesied to have allied with Mussolini)-p. 164, 169
Aristotle (Armstrong studied)-p. 82
Armageddon (To have occurred during World War H)-p. 164, 170
Armstrong, Dwight (Hired as song writer)-p. 181
Armstrong, Frank (Uncle of Herbert W. Armstrong)-p. 81,86
Armstrong, Garner Ted-p. 6
-Profile-p. 93
Armstrong, Herbert W.
-Profile-p. 79
Armstrong, Loma D. (Mrs. Herbert W.)-p. 258, 259, 262
-Academic Center-p. 228

–Board member Radio Church of God–p. 180
–Dream-vision–p. 28
-Illness and death–-p. 196-197
–Prepares to move to Oregon–p. 89
-Trustee of Ambassador College (School of the Prophets)-p. 182
Armstrong (Dick) Richard David–p. 186, 217, 228, 259
–Herbert W. Armstrong's oldest son–p. 19,98
Asia-p.61
Associated Churches of God, The-p. 278, 291
Astoria, Oregon (Armstrong works there)-p. 91,142,143
Atomic Bomb (Dropped on Japan)-p . .173, 175
Auditorium ($10-24 million problem)-p. 75
Austria (Hitler Takes)-p. 164

Babel (Grant)-p. 4
Babylon (Grant)-p. 4
Baptist (Armstrong baptized by Baptist minister)-p. 132
Bell Telephone Hour–p. xiv
Bible Advocate, The (National publication of the Church of God to which Armstrong contributed articles)–p. 135, 136, 152, 153
Big Sandy, Texas–p. 1
Big Sandy, Texas (Ambassador College)-p. 80
Blackwell, Dean (Teaches Armstrong fulfills prophecy of Elijah)-p. 53-55
B-29 (Boeing Bomber which delivered the Atomic-Bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki)-p. 173
Boraker, Bob-p. 189 .
Braniff (personality Profile, Magazine)-p. 9
Bricket Wood (Herts, England)-p. I, 2, 4, 58, 80, 251
Britain (Enters World War II)- p. 164
British Israelism–p. 144, 150
British Parliament–p. 5
Brown, Frank–p. 213-215
Buddah–p. 60
Bulletin, The (Changed to The PLAIN TRUTH)-p. 143, 147, (All of Chapter 10)–p. 149·162

Burbank, California–p. 58
Burke, Arthur L-p. xi

Cadillac limousine (Armstrongs)-p. 1,58,64
California (Armstrong files with Secretary of State, 1947)-p. 180
California Conference (Church of God)-p. 141
Camp, Arkansas-p. xiii
Carrozzo, Alfred E.-p. 274, 290
Carter, Gene-p. 220
Caterpillar–p. xiv
Central America-p. 72
Chancellor (W. Germany)-p. 285
Chicago, III. (Armstrong's early advertising office location)-p. 88
-Armstrong forced out of Chicago–p. 88, 89
Christmas (The Plain Truth About Christmas-Booklet) -p. 25
Church of God (Oregon Conference and Stanberry, Missouri)-(Chapter 10)-1'.149-162,179
-Armstrong puts church to dual test–p. 136, 137
Church of God of The Eternal–p. 289
Churchill, Winston-cp. xiv
Cole, Raymond C. (Men behind the Armstrongs)-p. 115-118,217,289
Cole, C. Wayne (Men behind Armstrongs)–p. 113
Columbia River Bridge–p. 90
Columbian (Vancover Columbian-Armstrong does survey)–p. 90
Confucius-po 60
Conn, Mr. (Trustee of Armstrong's West Eighth Street Church of God)-p.155
-Not on board of Radio Church of God–p. 180
Constitution, U.S.-p. 285
Constitution and by laws (1954, of Armstrong Church)-p. 243
Council, The–p. 267–272
Country Gentleman-p. 89
Cruz, Dr. S.P. de al Cruz–p. 3
Cunin, Rabbi–p. 63
Curtis Publishing Co. (Philadelphia-Armstrong rejects job)-p. 89
Czechoslovakia (Taken by Hitler) – p. 164

Daily Capital (Des Moines Daily Capital)-p. 82·84
Daily, Roy (Church of God Minister with whom Armstrong worked)-p. 141
Dallas, Texas (Ambassador College, Texas branch near Dallas)-p. 4
Damascus–p. 61
Danville, Ill. Armstrong does first paid survey)-p. 86
Dart, Ronald L. (Men behind the Armstrongs)-p. 112,204
Day, Mr. (Trustee of Armstrong's West Eighth Street Church of God)-p. 155
-Not on Board of Radio Church of God -p. 180
DeGaulle's Resignation-p. 201
de la Cruz, Dr. S.F.-p. 3
Degrees (of Ambassador Colleges)-p. 2
Denver Store (Oregon-where Armstrong gave his first sermon)-p. 133
Des Moines, Iowa (Radio Station WHO)-p. 33, 79, 81, 82, 84–87
Des Moines Register (Armstrong rejects job offer)-p. 89
Diana, godess-p. 61
Dillon, Loma (Armstrong meets) -p. 87
Dillon, Walter (Brother-in-law of Herbert Armstrong)-p.128, 129
-Hired as President of Armstrong's College-p. 181,182
Divorce Controversy–p. 2S3
Doctrinal Committee–p. 253
Doctrinal Review Board–p. 251
Dorothy, Charles–p. 192,) 93
Dowell, W. E. (Baptist Radio Evangelist)–p. xiv
Duggar, A.N. (Responds to one of Armstrongs testing articles) –p. 137–140,154–162,179,180

Egypt (Prophesied to be taken by Mussolini)–p. 165, 169
Elijah (Foreshadow of Armstrong)–p. 51–55, 77
Elijah's School of the Prophets (Pattern for Armstrong College)-p. 181
El Molino Mills (Alhambra, CA.)–p. 195
Ellis (Family)–p. 149
Elmer Gantry–p. 293,295
Emporium (Hollywood premier movie house)–p. 63
England (Quakers–Armstrongs)–p. 80

Ephesus-p. 61
Epictetus (Armstrong studies)-p. 82
Eugene,Oregon-p. *10,* 17,57
-McNair-p. xiv
-Garner Ted Armstrong's (family moves to)-p. 94
-Garner Ted Armstrong's (parents move from)-p. 95
-KORE (Armstrong's first radio broadcast)-p. 124
- Taylor Starts Church Building (which Armstrong later takes over)-p.141-142
-Church of God (All Ch. 10) 149·162, 183
-Armstrong retreats to-po 163, 174, 177
Europe-p. 58
Evangelist (Suspended by Herbert W. Armstrong)-p. 240
Ethiopia (Ethiopian Ambassador to India)-p. 3
-Taken by Mussolini-p. 156
Ezekiel (Foreshadow of Armstrong)-p. 50-55, 77

Falcon (French Falcon Aircraft)-p. 58, 70-73
Feasts of the Jews–p. 157, 160, 292
Ferdig, Arthur–p. 63
Flnkbine, W.O.-p. 76, 77
Firbute School District-p. 144, 149
Fisher, Elmer-p. 149,154,155
-Not on Board of Radio Church of God-p. 180
Flatt, Paul-p. 234
Florida Bible College–p. 285, 286
Foundation For Biblical Research-p. 290
Fox, George (Founder of Quaker Movement)-p. 80
France (Enters World War II)-p. 164
Franco, Spain-(Supposed to have given his power to Mussolini)-p. 165,169

Garner Ted Armstrong (Program)-p. 6
-Profile-p.93·103
Germany (Russia makes alliance with Germany, World War II)-p. 164
-To rise again-vp. 171

Gerson, Max–p. 71
Gestapo (Hitler's–Armstrong's visiting program)- p. 107
Ghandi, Indira (Prime Minister of India)-p. 1,285
Gilmore, Art Gilmore–p. 11
Gladewater, Texas (Roy Hammer)-p. 96
-McNair moves there–p. xiv
-Church & School-p. 240, 242, 245
Good Housekeeping (Magazine)-p. 91
Good News (Magazine}; p. 6, 127
Gotoh, Osama-p. 205
Gott, James A. (Board Member, Radio Church of God)-p. 180
Graham, Dr. Billy Graham-p. 9
Grand Ole Opry-p. xiv
Great Tribulation (Did not occur)-p. 170
Gree n Street (300 W. Green Street, Pasadena, Armstrong's headquarters)-p. 2
Guilini, Maestro Carlo Maria–p. 3
Gulfstream II-p. 1, 4, 58, 70-72

Haeber, Otto (of California)-p. 159-160
Hall of Administration (Armstrong's World Headquarters)–p. 2,79
Hammer, Roy (of Gladewater, Texas)-p. 96, 97, 240,241
Hammer, Shirley (Married to Garner Ted Armstrong)-p. 97
Harrisburg, Oregon–p. 144
Hayes (U.S. Senator from Ohio)-p. 285
Headquarters (World HQ for Armstrongism) -p. 2
Hebrew University (Joint Archeological venture with Armstrong)-p. 4, 56, 200, 205
Helms, Mike (Brings Armstrong back into ministry from Astoria, Oregon)-p. 143,145,148
- Testimony about Herbert W. Armstrong–p. 160
Henion, David T. (Board Member, Radio Church of God)-p. 180
Herrmann, Kenneth-p. 187
Hill, David Jon (Assistant & Associate of Garner Ted Armstrong)-p. 190, 235

Hirohito (Emperor of Japan) – p. 1, 173
Hiroshima (Bombed with Atomic Bomb) -p. 173
Hitler (Takes Austria)-p. 164
-Speeches-p. vi
-Still alive and would pull fake resurrection- p. 175, 184 (Also xiv)
Hito, Hiro (Emperor of Japan)-p.1, 173
Hobbs, G.A. (Elder of the Church of God)-p. 133, 136-138, 140, 145, 148
Hoeh, Herman (Men Behind the Armstrongs)-p. 59,98, 109, 110, 181, 186,188-190, 192, 217, 218, 221-226, 229, 249-252, 257, 258, 261
Hogberg, Gene-p. 193
Hollywood (Premier movie, Paper Tiger)-p. 63
-Armstrong plans to move near–p. 174
Honorary Ph.D. (From the University of the East, Manila of the Philippines-given to Armstrong)-p. 5
Houston Control-p. 297
Hubbard, Elbert (Armstrong studies)-p. 82
Human Potential (Magazine of AICF, changed to QUEST '77)-p. 6
Hunting, Charles F. (Men Behind the Armstrongs)-p. 115, 198, 208
Hussein, King of Jordan-p. 3

IBM (Armstrong's Data Processing Unit)-p. 259
-Ministers check personal tithe records of members–p. 232
Idaho (Home base of Elder Stith–Church of God)-p. 133
Imperial School (Armstrong's first private school)-p. 240
Indian, American-p. 292
Indianola, IA (Location of Armstrong survey) -p. 89
Interplanetary Church of God-p. 297
Iraq (Grant)-p. 4

Japan (Grant)-p. 4, 60
Japanese Diet-p. 3
-prophesied to have taken U.S.-p. 167, 168
Jeans, Schoolhouse and Church–p. 149, 150, 153, 155
Jefferson, Oregon (Area where Armstrong started preaching)- p. 133
Jefferson Church of God-p. 154

Jerusalem-p. 61
-Half, was prophesied to be conquered by Musso1ini-p. 164, 169
-Armstrong helped (?) in planning new city–p. 205
Jewish Community (or Los Angeles)-p. 63
Jewish People– p. 292
Jews (Armstrong proselyting)–p. 63
Jordan (Herbert W. Armstrong leaves for J. following Loma's funeral)-p. 197
Jordan (To be divided three ways)-p. 203
Junction City, Oregon (Baptist Church-Armstrong preaches there)-p. 141

Kansas City, Mo.-p. xiii
KORE (Eugene, Oregon-Armstrong's first broadcast)-p. 124, 149
KSTL St. Louis (Radio Station)p. 220
KWTO Springfield, Mo.-p. xiii
Kelly, Ronald-p. 191
Kelso (16th century home of Fox Sept)-p. 80
Kiez, John (Friend of Armstrong)-p. 142
–Paper (The Radio Church of God vs. The Church of God-7th Day)-p. 160, 161,179,180,211
Kremlin-p. 184

Ladies Home Journal–p. 89,91
Lane County, Oregon–p. 180
La Salle Street, South (Chicago-near location of Armstrong group office)-p. 87
Las Vegas, Nev–p. 93
Leopold (Ex-king of Belgium)-p. 1,4
Lockheed Scandal–p. 5
London, England (Armstrong HQ in British Isles-1955)-p. 19
Los Angeles Times-p. 63, 274, 284
Louis (Joe Louis, the boxing champion)-p. xiii
Louisiana (Garner Ted Armstrong, engaged to girl in Louisiana)-p.96
Lutheran Hour-p. xiv
Lybia (Prophesied to ally with Russia)-p. 165

Machiavelli – p. 77
-Machiavellian Principle (Armstrong's Adaptation)-p. 262
Maier (Dr. Maier) of the Lutheran Hour-p. xiv
Makasa (Prince of Japan)-p. 1
Marcos (President of Philippines)-p. 1
Manila, of the Philippines-p. 276
Marshall Plan-p. 184
Martin, Dr. Ernest L–p. 251–253,281,290
Marx, Gerhardt-p. 192
Mattson, Vernon R. (Armstrong's son-in-law and trustee of Ambassador College-School of the Prophets)- p. 182
MacArthur, Douglas (General, U.S. Forces in the Pacific)-p. 173
McCullough, Leslie L. (Men behind the Armstrongs)-p. 114
McGill (Prominent member of Oregon Conference)-p. 148
McNair (The two older-Marion & Raymond)-p. 217
-Men behind the Armstrongs-p. Ill, 194, 198
McCalls (Magazine)-p. 91
Medal of Honor of Japan (Given to Armstrong)-p. 5
Meier, Golda (of Israel)-p. 1
Merchant's Trade Journal–p. 84
Meredith, Dr. C. Paul-p. 217
Meredith, Roderick C. (Men behind the Armstrongs)-p. 26,98, 106, 107, 187, 190, 192-200, 202, 205, 217, 219, 233–236, 257, 258, 261,263,264
Messenger, The (of Astoria, Oregon)-p. 91
Mexico–p. 72
Mexico City (Herbert W. Armstrong writes letter, turns work over to Garner Ted Armstrong)-p. 263
Michigan University–p. 201
Mid-Continent Leasing-p. 71, 72
Millionaires' Row (Pasadena, CA)-p. 2, 58, 79
Mims, William L-p. xi
Missouri (U.S. Naval Flagship on which the Japanese surrender documents were signed)-p. 173
Mitchell, John Jr.-p. 272
Morning Messenger (Astoria-Armstrong abandons and it goes under)-p. 142

Monterey, CA-p. 93
Monterey, Mexico–p. xiv
Mussolini (Takes Ethiopia)-p.) 56
-Takes Albania-p. 164

Nagasaki (Bombed with Atomic Bomb)-p. 173
Navy (U.S.-Ted joins)-p. 95
Neff, Leroy-p. 224
Nixon, Richard (President of the U.S.)-p. 284, 285
Nobel Peace Prize–p. 1
Northwest Banker-p. 86, 87

Oberg, Sam-p. 143·145
Odessa, Texas–p. xiv
Olson, Esther (Board member Radio Church of God)-p. 180
Orange Grove (Avenue & Blvd.)-p. 2
O'Rear, Boliver B. (Armstrong's resident attorney)-p. 182
Oregon, State–p. xiv
Oregon (Armstrong arrives July 4, 1924)-p. 90
Oregon City, Oregon (Church of God-G.A Hobbs)-p. 133. 136, 140
Oregon College of Education-p. xiv
Oregon Conference (Church of God)-p. 94
-Formation & General Activity-Ch. 9, 140, 141.143,146, Ch. 10, p.149·162
Orient (Russia prophesied to take orient)-p. 165,169
Orlando Sentinel-p. 285
Orr, Minnesota-p. 93
Ozark Mountains (Foothills)-p. xiii

Pasadena, California–p. 57
-Headquarters-p. 2,4
-Garner Ted Armstrong's parents move to-p. 95
-Armstrong buys property–p. 176
Paper Tiger (Armstrong sponsors Hollywood .premier)-p. 63
Paul, Apostle-p. 61,62
Peace Award of Belgium (given to Armstrong)-p. 5

Pentecost Controversy–p. 251, 252
Peoria, IL.–p. xiv
Peril, Barry -p. 71
Peter, Apostle-p. 62
Petra (Place of safety)-p. 200, 207
Plache, Richard-p. 206
Plain Truth (Magazine)-p. 6, 1,13,14,37,126
-Origin of–p. 18
-In England 1955-p. 19
Plato (Armstrong studies)-p. 82
Poland (Taken by Hitler)-p. 164
Pope (of Rome)-p. 184, 186,193,195
Portland, Oregon (Armstrong's program)-p. 156
-McNair pastors there–p. xiv
- Library, literary basis of Armstrong's research–p. 131; 133
-Armstrong home–p. 135
-Birthplace of Garner Ted Armstrong-p. 93
Portune, Albert J. (Men behind the Armstrongs)-p. 105, 106, 188, 258, 261, 284
Potsdam Ultimatum–p. 173
Propaganda (Armstrong propaganda technique)–p. 31
Prophecy (1975 in prophecy-booklet)-p. 25
Prophet (Armstrong)-p. 79

Quakers (Armstrong family)-p. 80
QUEST '77 (Magazine of AICF- previously, Human Potential)-p. 6

Rader, Stanley R. (Men behind the Armstrongs)-p. 65, 67,70,71, 118-120, 205
Radio Church (Start of Armstrong's radio program)- p. 149
Radio Church of God-p. 11, 18, 180, 182, 183
-vs. The Church of God (7th Day) (paper by John Kiez)-p. 160, 161
Radio Jerusalem-p. 198
Rae, Dr. Benjamin–p. 259,260
Ray, A. J.-p. 143-145
-Assigned to take Armstrong's place at Jefferson–p. 159

Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)-p. 80
Richmond, Kentucky (Armstrong's first survey)-p. 85
Ringer, Roger-p. 77
Rohan (Armstrong adherent tried to burn the AL Aksa Shrine)-p. 198
Rolls Royce-p. 4, 58, 64
Roosevelt, Franklin D.-p. xiv
Rucorn , Mrs. O. J. (Herbert Armstrong's wife studies sabbath question)-p. 131, 145, 148
Russia (Russo–German Alliance, World War II)-p. 164
Ryukyus (President of the University of the Ryukyus)-p. 3

Salem, Arkansas-p. xiv
Salem. Oregon (Home of Runcorns)-p. 131 143,
-Church of God-p. 155, 159, 160
-Armstrong's program–p. 156
–Salem-Eugene (Area of largest membership for Church of God)-p. 136
San Antonio, Texas (Radio Station WOAI)- p. 33, 168
-Largest station in U.S. which carried Armstrong's broadcast)-p. 168
San Diego, CA. (McNair pastors there)-p. xiv
Saturday Evening Post–p. 89
Sato, Bunsai (Japanese diet)-p. xiii
Schmelling, Max-p. xiii
School of the Prophets–Ch. 10, p. 179-212
Scotland (Quakers– Armstrongs)-cp. 80
Sadat, Anwar (of Egypt)-p. I
Selassie, Haile (of Ethopia)-p. I
Semi-Annual Letter (Armstrong's)-p. 12, 13
Shaak, William (Business consultant)-p. 262
Shinto-p.60
Shreveport, LA-p. 272
Shurter, bale-p. 195
Smith, Carlton–p. 204
Smith, Ed-p. 149
Smith, Norma A. (Men behind the Armstrongs)–p. 112

Socrates (Armstrong studies)-p. 82
South America-p. 72
South Bend, Indiana (Armstrong took job selling motor club memberships)-p. 86
Southern California (Armstrong plans to move there)-p. 175, 177
Springfield, MO.-p. xiv
St. Helens, Oregon (Armstrong holds meetings)-p.141, 142
St. Louis (Illinois, Missouri-Armstrong meets with official of Northwestern Banker)-p. 87
St. Petersburg, FL (Blackwell proclaims Armstrong a prophet)-p. 53,55
Stanberry, Missouri (Headquarters for Church of God)-p. 132, 136, 137,140
Stephen, The Martyr-p. 61
Steuben Crystal-p. 5
Stith, A.H. (Minister of Church of God)-p. 133, 134, 138
Straub, E.A. (Declares Duggar's opinion was not the official word of the church)-p. 137, 142
-Elder-p. 150,159,160,170,179,180
Suharto, President of Indonesia-p. 1
Superstitions (Armstrong's suppositions become superstitions to his adherents)-p.31
Suppositions (Armstrong suppositions)-p. 30,40
Sutton, W.A.-p. 272

Tacoma, Washington (Armstrong refuses transfer by Duggar)-p. 159
-McNair pastors there–p. xiv
Taylor, R. L (Minister)-p. 155
-Minister of Church of God with whom Armstrong worked)-p. 141, p. 144
Temple (To be built in Jerusalem)-p. 200,201
Texarkana, Texas-p. 272
Texas-p. 58 (also xiv)
Thailand (Grant)-p. 4
The Council–p. 267-272
The Dells, Oregon–p. 179

Truman, Harry S. (President of U.S.)-p. 173
Tojo–Premier of Japan-p. 173
Tokyo (Date line-membership letter)-p. 53
-Place of surrender by Japanese-p. 173
Turin University (Grant)-p. 4
Turkey (Prophesied to have turned against Britain and to have been destroyed to the last man)-p. 166, 169
Twentieth Century Church of God-p. 290

UCLA (University of California at Los Angeles-Grant)-p. 4
Umapine, Oregon (Armstrong holds meeting)-p. 142
Union, Iowa (One of the homes of Armstrong family)- p. 81
United Nations-p. 33, 171, 175
–Security Council-p. 31
United States & British Commonwealth (In prophecy)-p. 52
University of Oregon (Walter Dillon returns to his post)-p. 182
Unzicker (Minister of the Stanberry, Missouri Church of God & Friend of the Runcorns)-p. 132

Vancouver, Wash.-p. 90
Vienna Symphony–p. 3

WOAI San Antonio, Texas-p. xiv
Waldport, Oregon–p. 172
Washington, D.C.-p. I
Washington, State–p. xiv
Watergate-p. 285
Waterhouse, Gerald-p. 203,204,232
West Eighth Street Church of God–p. 10
Westby, Ken–p 290
Winning Through Intimidation by Roger Ringer–p. 77
Wolverton, Basil (Board member of Radio Church of God)–p. 180
-Artist-p. 186
World Ahead, The (Radio program by Gene Carter)– p. 220
World Court of Justice, Judge–p. 1
World Tomorrow, The (Broadcast, origin of)– p. 11,13

World War II – p. 156
Worldwide Church of God-p. 79, 290

XEG (Monterey, Mexico-carried Armstrong's broadcast)-p. xiv, 168
XELO (Warez,Mexico-carried Armstrong'a broadcast)- p. 168
XERF (Rosa Rita Beach Mexico-carried Armstrong's broadcast)- p. 168

Yakone Beach, Oregon (Armstrong's retreat)-p. 172
Yom-Kippur War-p. 200

Zapf, Paul-p. 277

ABBREVIATIONS

AC	Ambassador College
AICF	Ambassador International Cultural Foundation
CWL	Co-Worker Letter
GN	Good News
GTA	Garner Ted Armstrong
HWA	Herbert W. Armstrong
MB	Ministerial Bulletin
ML	Member Letter
PT	Plain Truth
RCG	Radio church of God
WWCG	Worldwide Church of God