

— HWAPP #4503 *[Signature]*

MEMORANDUM

To: Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong

Date: October 31, 1972

Subject: Report on U.S. Field Ministry

From: David L. Antion

---

Here is a report on the overall condition of the U.S. Field Ministry. The report is as a result of counsel with Raymond Cole, Wayne Cole, several District Superintendents -- plus trips to the field in the last three months and conversations with many local pastors.

First of all, all the ministers in the field -- wherever we go -- show a great respect for you personally, Mr. Armstrong. They look to you for leadership and cohesiveness in this Work. They are right behind you -- loyal, dedicated and wanting to know your wishes in order to carry them out. (We plan to keep this loyal dedication going!) They all desire more contact with you.

LOSING ASSURANCE AND CONFIDENCE:

However, there is a situation developing that you should know about.

Knowledge -- firm knowledge is essential to confidence. Not knowing makes one unsure, lacking confidence.

This not knowing has bred a lack of confidence in the men in the Field Ministry.

Here's what happened.

In the last six years a gray area with regard to the application of doctrine has come on the scene. And it is increasing daily. At one time, ministers were sure of where they stood on such subjects as healing, tithing, land sabbaths, uses of second tithe, vows, prophecy, etc. They were sure because every year at the Ministerial Conference there were questions answered, policy-judgment matters clarified.

1966 —  
got too  
large

This was up until six years or so ago. At that time the Ministerial Conference became too large and unwieldy a body for the discussion of doctrinal matters and judgment questions.

At that time you made the right decision not to discuss the doctrinal-policy-judgment matters in front of all the ministers.



There were too many Local Elders and Pastors to have major discussions in front of them. It was determined that you and the Evangelists would meet here at Headquarters and would decide on these matters and then explain the decisions to the men coming in. This was fine, but.....

What happened was that you and the Evangelists found ourselves too busy during the school year with other matters. It was only at the Conference that we were free to apply our minds to the important doctrinal-policy matters. But there were too many at the Conference to go into policy and doctrine. So we just didn't do it.

As a result years have gone by with no real conference, discussion, decisions or rendering of judgments on doctrinal applications for the field.

But this is not all!

There have been, of necessity, emergency decisions and judgments made by various ministers on specific cases.

Ref. Rod  
Meredith's  
eye sur-  
gery.

Every time a judgment was made (for example on healing, repair operations) the ministers in the field heard about it. They didn't hear all about it. But some concluded that we changed on certain doctrines or policies. At least they became confused and unsure.

Reason  
the STP  
was  
started.

Rumors have spread from the campuses to the field. Ministers hear something that was said in Bible Study or taught in one of the college classes. If it affects a doctrinal-policy matter they again become a little unsure of the former stated policy. (In this regard, our ministers are very sensitive to the things they hear. Over the years, the ministry was small and all policy matters were communicated by word of mouth. We have no written policy manual on doctrine or applications of doctrine. Therefore, our ministers are used to hearing about policies via word of mouth for the most part. Occasionally letters are written out stating the policy on various subjects. But for the most part policy matters are transferred verbally. This has caused our ministers to be very sensitive to the things they hear.)

When the ministers become confused or unsure they back away from a firm stand. For instance, most don't preach on healing anymore.

There are more and more gray areas and healing is just one of them. The attached memo will show a list of other doctrinal and policy matters that need to be clarified, restated or new policy issued.



Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong  
October 31, 1972

Page 3

Each minister wants to do the right thing. He wants to know. He wants to be loyal to Headquarters. But when he doesn't know for sure he gets frustrated, become unsure, lacks confidence. He retreats into safe areas of doctrine where he can speak with confidence. This is mainly in the area of exhortations (especially on study and prayer and Christian living).

NEED FOR WORKING MINISTERIAL CONFERENCES:

After talking the problem over with Mr. Dart, Mr. Cole, Mr. Portune and others -- the need is clearly evident for viable, working Ministerial Conferences with you, Mr. Armstrong, at the helm.

I personally feel that this would do much to give the whole Church a boost in encouragement to hear that you with the Evangelists are poring over the Bible -- studying doctrine -- coming to solid conclusions and applications of God's Law.

The Doctrinal Research group under Mr. <sup>MEREDITH</sup> ~~XXXX~~ can be employed to funnel necessary research and background information as well as technical data on any of the matters.

Not only will it boost and encourage the Church -- it will boost and encourage the Ministry. For if the ministers don't have confidence, show doubt and indecision -- it will surely filter down to the members. The members' confidence in the Ministry will be shaken and eventually they will begin doing "what seems right in their own eyes."

Mr. Portune, Mr. Cole, Mr. Dart also have some ideas on what we need in the way of meetings before the Conferece.

May we discuss this matter with you further?

Thank you for your time and concern in this matter.