

PASTOR'S REPORT



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UPDATE ON MR. HERBERT W. ARMSTRONG'S DECISION CONCERNING QUEST/77 On January 3, 1978, at the Board of Director's meeting of the Worldwide Church of God, Mr. Armstrong made the following comments concerning the Ambassador International Cultural Foundation and QUEST magazine:

I approved both the Foundation and QUEST/77. I know that Stanley Rader and Robert Kuhn have been very accurate in predicting the results of their creative efforts. I have personally seen what the Foundation and QUEST/77 did for me and the Work during my efforts abroad these last three years. I have not read each QUEST/77, but I did give my whole approval and authority to Stanley Rader to get the best outside professionals and to make QUEST/77 a success.

I know that QUEST/77 and now QUEST/78 has been very well received everywhere that it was designed to go, particularly in certain circles where we would be unlikely to reach directly with our other efforts. It has given us much prestige and much help in countering the attacks of our enemies because of its impact on persons in the highest places in the community.

But, I am aware that there are certain problems that have been created by QUEST/77. Much of this difficulty arises from the failure of some members and even some ministers to realize that QUEST/77 was not designed to be a vehicle to reach all persons or to reach any person directly in biblical idioms with the biblical message. In addition, there has been some concern within the Church when articles or illustrations have appeared which seem to be in conflict with our basic underlying values and which seem to be in conflict with our basic teachings.

We must strive to eliminate this confusion and to be of one mind concerning the effectiveness of QUEST/77 as a means of getting the gospel to the world. Furthermore, I am aware that QUEST/77 may have had an impact on our budget greater than I had anticipated and perhaps greater than foreseen by our financial men. Accordingly QUEST/77 may have to be curtailed or even abandoned if it is costing too much, or if it is keeping us from fulfilling our work in other areas more directly connected with the great commission. The cost of operation of QUEST/77 to the Work must be reduced or it may have to be sold or even abandoned if its continued publication will impair our ability to fulfill the great commission.

In January, Mr. Armstrong envisioned that we would continue to publish QUEST/78 throughout the calendar year 1978 to determine whether our financial commitment to QUEST was consistent with the overall priorities of the Work; and during the year 1978, he also contemplated that an

effort should be made to make the members and the ministers more fully aware of the value of QUEST/78 to the Work.

During the last few months, I have had opportunities to discuss QUEST/78 in great detail with Mr. Armstrong and to share my views with him. Consequently, he has decided that his comments (quoted above at the board meeting in January) reflected clearly and accurately his current feelings about the continued publication of QUEST/78 for the rest of the year. Accordingly, he instructed me to arrange for the extrication of the Church from direct involvement in the publishing activities of QUEST/77 at the earliest possible moment, consistent with good business practice, and to find a buyer, if at all possible, before the end of the calendar year 1978.

Responding to this directive, Ray Wright, Vice-President for Financial Affairs, and I went to New York last week and took immediate steps to separate the Church from all of the direct publishing activities of QUEST/78. We also initiated discussions with prominent publishers and other institutions who have evinced an interest in acquiring QUEST/78.

Naturally, we cannot approach the sale of a valuable asset without exploring all of the possibilities, and at this point of time we do not know whether we will be able to find a buyer at what we consider to be an appropriate selling price within the next few weeks, or even by the end of 1978. However, it is unlikely that we will have to fund QUEST beyond December 31, 1978 in light of the profit projections that were made available to us last January -- projections which are being brought up to date for us at the present time.

In any event, the magazine will now be published, as was originally contemplated by Mr. Armstrong, entirely by outside professionals who were engaged at Mr. Armstrong's direction. Church personnel who, for one reason or another, were added to the staff of QUEST/78 in New York have been reassigned to the publishing field within the Work where they will be able to use the valuable experience that they gained while working with QUEST/78. This experience includes exposure to commercial circulation, production, promotion and even editing techniques in the publishing industry at large. Naturally, we expect that this experience will be of inestimable value to The Plain Truth, Good News, and the various church publications.

During the last several weeks, in furtherance of Mr. Armstrong's directions concerning the ultimate sale of QUEST and the curtailment of the church's activities with respect to the publishing activities of QUEST/78, we have discontinued the International Edition.

The International Edition was undertaken in the very first part of 1978, although Mr. Armstrong and I thought at the time that it was a premature effort in light of the short time that the U.S. Edition was in publication. That has proven to be the case, as well as a very expensive operation. The International Edition will no longer be in newsstand circulation in England and the European continent. We shall, however, continue to fulfill our subscriptions that had been received as a result of the circulation of the International Edition in both areas since January 1978.

The International Edition has also been circulating on newsstands in South Africa. However, it was doing extremely well there and with a modicum of expense due to the already heavy penetration of the area by the Work's publications, and by Mr. Armstrong's activities over the past two years. Consequently we more than likely will print and bulk-ship the U.S. Edition for continued circulation in the very fruitful South African market. We shall also continue to fulfill subscriptions already generated from the International Edition.

As you can see, these recent decisions of Mr. Armstrong concerning the future of QUEST were not precipitous in any way. Over these many months Mr. Armstrong has expressed concern over the apprehensions and doubts of some concerning what QUEST'S role was and was not intended to be in helping indirectly in our commission of proclaiming the gospel. On the positive side, we greatly value the acclaim the magazine has brought to us by being an outstanding success in the very difficult and competitive arena of magazine publishing.

So, while the Church is withdrawing from active day-to-day involvement in the magazine, it remains a very valuable investment until disposed of. In this we are stewards and must protect our investment as we proceed to elicit and consider all suitable offers. (We are, by the way, receiving calls every day from interested buyers.) If this divestment of QUEST should take months before we match the right buyer with the right price we will, in the meantime, soon be receiving a return as the magazine gets in the black.

-- Stanley R. Rader

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN EDITORIAL SERVICES Been on vacation for a few weeks -- first time I've taken a complete vacation since being in the Work. While away I managed to get a good start on several PT articles and catch up on my reading. Have to fill the well, you know. . .

Contrary to an absurd rumor I heard, I was not in Colorado "conspiring" with anyone -- I was in Canada staying with relatives -- and getting sick the last week. No matter what anyone is saying, I had no contact whatsoever with Mr. GTA during the entire vacation period. Rumors can certainly be maddening!

In any event, plans are proceeding well for the biblical supplement to be added to the current PT. Because we are working so far ahead, however, the first installment may not show up until November or December. Many have expressed great enthusiasm for the supplement -- Frank Brown believes it will be a great help to the Work in England. We certainly hope so!

We have some fresh copy on hand from Mr. Herbert Armstrong for the PT and that will appear in the next issue we are working on -- October/November.

-- Brian Knowles, Editorial Services

SUGGESTIONS FROM THE FIELD The following remarks about member moves from Ron Lohr, Pastor in Tampa, Florida, concern a problem that is fairly wide-spread and especially affects us here at Pasadena. Pastors

in the area tell me that an average of between one and two persons a week end up here without funds and with nowhere to go.

As Ron observes, most of these members making unwise moves are not malicious. They are just picking up stakes and moving without seeking the proper counsel or considering the seriousness of their situation.

Please follow Ron's suggestion and mention the problem to any in your congregation who may be contemplating a move. It is wrong for members with inadequate funds to move with the idea in the back of their minds that the Church will take care of them if they run into trouble.

After counseling with a couple of financially destitute families that have just moved into the area, the thought occurred to me that we ought to make some kind of public statement to the effect that the Church will not be on the other end to bail them out (usually from the Central Clearing Account) when members make ill-planned moves from church area to church area. They may leave one city with no money and no definite job and go on "faith." When they get to their destination, broke, they know of no place to turn so they call the local minister. The cases I have observed are not malicious, just ill-planned.

This is probably more of a problem in Tampa which I would describe as a "transient" church, but unless a comment is made nationwide, it will be of little help since I have members moving in here from all over the country.

Another idea that I am trying out in my never-ending crusade to properly administer the Central Clearing Account is that in certain cases I am asking the requester to provide me a written statement from Welfare as to their inability to assist the requester.

-- Ted Herlofson, Ministerial Services