

History of the *World Tomorrow* Broadcast

By CM White

Version 1.2

In *The Wonderful World Tomorrow: Herbert W. Armstrong's Vision of Life After the Apocalypse*, Scott Lupo noted:

"In 1985, the year before Armstrong's death, Arbitron ratings listed the *World Tomorrow* as the number one religious program in the United States in markets reached, while Armstrong's periodical, *The Plain Truth*, neared eight million newsstand and subscription copies each month. Church membership peaked at 120,000." (p. 2)

In a footnote he adds:

"The Arbitron ranking of the *World Tomorrow* as the number one religious program in the United States in terms of markets reached appeared in the August 19, 1985 issue of the *Worldwide News*, a newspaper sent to members of the Worldwide Church of God. In May 1985, when the Arbitron report was released, the *World Tomorrow* was aired on 290 United States stations in 196 markets, reaching 98.8% of the population." (p. 2)

Year	Event
1933	A temporary 15-minute slot on KORE, Eugene, Oregon, on 9 October, 1933. This became a permanent half-hour slot the following year.
1934	The Radio Church of God (later re-named <i>The World Tomorrow</i>) program commences broadcasting by HWA on KORE, Portland (7 Jan). "I do not remember the exact format of the program, as it started, during those first few months. Very soon the duet was replaced with a mixed quartette, with our daughter Beverly singing soprano, Mrs. Armstrong alto, Claude Ellis tenor, and Alfred Freeze bass, with Mrs. Ellis at the piano. As the program started out it was called the "Radio Church of God." It was, indeed, a church service on the air. There has been a gradual evolution in the format of the program. We were to learn, later, that an abbreviated church service appeals only to a very few church-going people, who may want to listen in on a church service -- or to "attend church" without leaving their homes. It attracts only what is called the "religious audience." Through the years the program changed, until it became a program pointed toward the NON-churchgoing public -- people who are not religious and may never attend church." (ch 31)
1935	"By August, 1935, the radio audience was estimated at 10,000." (ch 35)
1937	"By this time we were using a mixed quartette on the program. As the program started out, our concept had been to condense a regular church service into a half hour, using radio techniques. The program started with a fast-moving theme hymn, then two verses (never more) of a lively hymn, followed by prayer during which the singers usually hummed -- or followed it with a threefold "Amen" -- then announcements about the program, <i>The Plain Truth</i> or other free literature. Then followed a sermon of about 22 minutes, then sign-off with a closing theme hymn" (ch 39)
1940	"More than 100,000 people were listening to the message weekly." (ch 40)

Year	Event
	<p>“Mail response now indicated a listening audience of 150,000 with the three radio stations” (ch 41)</p> <p>“The broadcast had started on KRSC, in Seattle, September 15, 1940.” (ch 41)</p>
<p>1942</p>	<p>The Radio Church of God’s first ever nationwide broadcast – Radio WHO, Des Moines, Iowa.</p> <p>“They [radio managers] began to suggest dropping off the music. I have mentioned before that when the program started, the first Sunday in 1934, it was not called The World Tomorrow, but Radio Church of God. It was, actually, the format of a typical church service condensed into a half hour ...</p> <p>The time had come to drop the church service type program altogether. Since the original broadcast name, Radio Church of God, did not invite a listening from nonchurchgoers whom we wished primarily to reach, and since in the world’s language the message of the true gospel -- the kingdom of God -- is about tomorrow’s world, I adopted the broadcast name The World Tomorrow! And so, mid-April, 1942, The World Tomorrow went on the air in Hollywood.” (Autobiography, ch 42).</p> <p>NB: the motto for the world renowned 1939 New York’s World Fair was World of Tomorrow, which Mr Armstrong would have been aware of. But essentially, it is a modern English variation on the old English world to come found in Heb 6:5; Matt 12:32; Mark 10:30; Luke 18:30; Eph 1:21. It is the time that the Messiah rules the earth; Israel is revived; and the restoration of all things (Acts 1:6; 3:21; Matt 2:6; 10:23; 19:28; John 1:41).</p> <p>“WE WERE now ON THE AIR -- IN HOLLYWOOD!</p> <p>The radio station KMTR (now KLAC) had the very desirable wavelength of 570 kilocycles on the radio dial. This, combined with exceptional and unusual mechanical and transmitter advantages gave it a daytime signal almost equal to the average 50,000-watt station. The mail response from listeners was at least double that of any of the three stations already used in the Pacific Northwest.” (ch 43) This happened mid-April.</p> <p>Early Winter 1942, HWA took a trip to Des Moines to go live on WHO.</p>
<p>1943</p>	<p>Broadcasts over KVI, Tacoma and in Feb over WOAI, San Antonia</p> <p>August over KRNT, Des Moines and KMA, Shenandoah, Iowa.</p>
<p>1944</p>	<p>“Coming into the year of 1944, <i>Bulletins</i> in old files show that mail response and other methods of checking indicated the radio audience had grown to between a half and threequarters of a million in the war years. That was a big jump from our small and humble start ten years before.” (ch 46)</p>
<p>1945</p>	<p>Writing from Eugene in <i>The Bulletin</i> (27 Aug) HWA announced</p> <p>“that, beginning October 1, the World Tomorrow program was to be broadcasted six nights a week, at the prime listening time of 8 p.m., at 800 on the radio dial, over the superpower 100,000-watt station XELO, Juarez, Mexico.</p> <p>That station, then having an exclusive channel over the North American continent, could then be heard in virtually every state.</p> <p>This was by far the biggest leap ahead of God’s work, so far!</p>

Year	Event
	<p>After this tremendous impact of nightly broadcasting got under way, the number of listeners of God's truth increased faster than ever.</p> <p>Then, on the heels of this, GOD OPENED ANOTHER STILL BIGGER DOOR! Station XEG, with 150,000 watts, making it the most powerful voice reaching over the United States, opened its mighty doors -- and at the prime listening time of 8 p.m., Central standard time, and also six nights a week! I do not, at the moment, seem to find records in the old files showing the exact date, but I believe we started on this station on October 1, 1945." (ch 49)</p>
1947	<p>Art Gilmore becomes announcer for the programme</p> <p>"Although I used four or five different announcers in the next few years, I think the very first one was perhaps the best known of all -- Art Gilmore. He was coast-to-coast announcer on such CBS shows as Sam Spade, Stars over Hollywood, and, I believe by that time, Amos and Andy, besides several others. Since 1947, Art Gilmore has been on The World Tomorrow as our announcer, and millions worldwide will hear his voice at the beginning and the sign-off of the program except some of the foreign overseas stations. We still believe his is the best radio voice in America to precede our program. He also does the announcing on our TV programs. Our readers may be glad to know that Mr. Gilmore is a fine, upstanding, sincere and high-principled man." (Autobiography, ch 42)</p>
1949	<p>HWA continues with XEG and adds XEMU to the list. In November the programme went on WAIT in Chicago.</p> <p>The broadcast continued over 9 stations.</p>
1951	<p>"The radio log shows that, at that time, The World Tomorrow was being broadcast on only seven stations: XEG, seven nights a week; a local Pasadena station, KALI, at 7:30 seven mornings a week; and all others were Sunday only -- stations WAIT, Chicago; XERB, Southern California; KXL, Portland, Oregon; KVI, Seattle; and XENT, Mexico, just below the Texas border." (ch 59)</p>
1953	<p>World Tomorrow aired on Radio Luxembourg, the most powerful station on earth -- first broadcast to Europe (1 Jan) (ch 60)</p> <p><i>The World Tomorrow</i> goes on the transcontinental ABC network in the United States. (25 Oct)</p>
1955	<p>World Tomorrow television program commences (July) with HWA speaking from a Hollywood motion picture studio and was broadcast on ABC TV once a week in black and white (30 min shows) (ch 61)</p> <p>"And, on top of all these points against continuing on television, we were learning that RADIO WAS NOT DEAD AT ALL.</p> <p>We had not gone off radio. We had canceled out the once-a-week network, and a few of the once-a-week 50,000-watt radio stations we were using in addition. But we were still broadcasting The World Tomorrow on a daily basis on superpower WLS, Chicago, WWVA, Wheeling, West Virginia, the powerful border stations XEG, XELO and XERB, besides daily broadcasting in Los Angeles, Portland and Seattle." (ch 62)</p>
1956	<p>"We were still on Radio Luxembourg, world's most powerful commercial station, at 11:30 p.m., Mondays. We were on the three superpower bands of Radio Ceylon. From this we received considerable mail from far-off Burma, Malaya and Singapore. Also from India, Ceylon, and portions of eastern Africa. We were broadcasting once a week over Radio Lourenço Marques, at the border of the Republic of South Africa. By March, 1956, we were broadcasting once a week over Radio Formosa." (ch 62)</p>

Year	Event
	<p>World Tomorrow booms into Australia once a week on 8 stations in total (in November, though some say it was 14 April).</p> <p>The programme began booming out of WABC, KARM and KUGN.</p>
1957	<p>WLAC in Nashville (Sept) and KVOD in Denver (Dec) carries the programme</p>
1958	<p>Garner Ted Armstrong takes over the duties for the broadcast.</p> <p>Radio Luxembourg permits two broadcasts per week.</p> <p>8 more stations added in Australia (making a total of 16).</p> <p>KGO in San Francisco takes on the broadcast and more stations in Tulsa, Pittsburgh and Springfield.</p> <p>“BY JANUARY, 1958, the World Tomorrow program was being broadcast over every inhabited continent on earth. We were using more than four million watts of radio power every week. We were broadcasting from Okinawa, from Mozambique into the Republic of South Africa, and into India, over into Burma and the East Indies, and into Eastern Africa by the three superpower beams of Radio Ceylon, besides Radio Luxembourg, world’s most powerful station in Europe -- and beamed over the British Isles.</p> <p>These were very powerful stations -- reaching out as far as 2,000 miles, covering vast areas. With our coverage in South America, we were reaching out over areas containing approximately half of the entire world’s population.” (ch 70)</p>
1959	<p>“The beginning of 1959 saw the work of God gaining momentum fast. The World Tomorrow was now broadcast worldwide, on five million watts of radio power weekly. This was the 25th anniversary of this work.” (ch 62)</p>
1965	<p>In January The World Tomorrow begins broadcasting from Radio London, an offshore station:</p> <p>“I want to report BIG NEWS!!! It is the BIGGEST news that ever happened in the history of this Work! ...</p> <p>About two years ago there was considerable talk in England about a so-called "pirate" ship radio station, anchored just outside British territorial waters. But it never seemed to get going. Garner Ted Armstrong went over to interview the promoters. But neither he nor our London advertising agency felt it offered anything desirable for us. Then last spring two well-financed operations with substantial and reputable backing actually succeeded in getting on the air from so-called "pirate" ships. One was called Radio Caroline, the other Radio Atlanta. They each put out about 5,000 watts of power. We could hear them clearly out at the college, but not within the congestion of London proper. These two later consolidated. There was some negotiation through our advertising agency, but we did not go on...</p> <p>When Radio Caroline opened last year, there was a great furor in London papers. The government did everything they could to stop it. But it turned out that the radio Caroline lawyers had surveyed the situation thoroughly. They were sure of their ground. They were doing nothing illegal. They were breaking NO LAW! They were broadcasting from the open sea -- INTERNATIONAL WATERS -- belonging to NO nation. The British government has NO JURISDICTION beyond its 3-mile limit! ...</p> <p>The British Government, finally gave up the fight for the time being. Then, this last December, the most powerful ship-station of all, Radio LONDON, a super-power station broadcasting 50,000 watts, got on the air, anchored just off the British coast in the Thames Estuary. On Friday, December 4th, our office at the college in England called me long distance. It appeared that Radio LONDON was about ready to accept the</p>

Year	Event
	<p>WORLD TOMORROW for daily broadcasting!!! Our people at the college there were terribly excited! On Monday, December 7, I flew back over to London for a Tuesday morning appointment with the Radio LONDON people at the office of our advertising agency...</p> <p>The station management wanted to start with the first Monday in the new year, 1965.” (<i>Coworker Letter</i>, 18 January 1965)</p>
1966	The programme is broadcast from several stations including Britain Radio and Swinging Radio England.
1967	<p>The telecast switches to colour.</p> <p>Broadcasting of the World Tomorrow from Amman, Jordan, led to HWA to meet with King Hussein which was the first meeting with a head of state.</p> <p><i>The World Tomorrow</i> is first aired from Jerusalem (7 June).</p>
1978	Mr. Armstrong announces his decision to return to regular broadcasting on <i>The World Tomorrow</i> (18 May 1978).
1982	The <i>World Tomorrow</i> television program appears with French subtitles (1 Jan).
1984	The <i>World Tomorrow</i> television program appears with Italian subtitles (1 Jan).
1985	<p>Mr. Armstrong records his final two <i>World Tomorrow</i> broadcasts. He becomes ill (Aug).</p> <p>The <i>World Tomorrow</i> television program appears with Norwegian subtitles (4 Aug).</p>
1986	26 Jan - A memorial tribute to Mr. Armstrong, broadcast on the <i>World Tomorrow</i> program, draws more than 100,000 responses when Mr. Armstrong's book <i>Mystery of the Ages</i> is offered.
1994	<i>World Tomorrow</i> ceases broadcasting.
2010	Art Gilmore dies on 25 September. He was the announcer for the World Tomorrow broadcast, telecast and other audio-visual productions.
2016	Don Hunter (born 1914) who did HWA's early recordings from his studio in the basement of his home in Eugene in the 1930s, died 10 April.

Notes and Comments:

The radio program was also broadcast in French in Canada and Haiti (by Dibar Apartian); German (over Europe 1); Spanish in South America and Portugal (by Benjamin Rea); Italian in Montreal and Toronto; Russian (over Radio Monte Carlo). I do not have all the details.

Of interest is a paper by Scott Lupo about the broadcast:

“This provocative vision of a New World Order gave Herbert W. Armstrong and his followers a sense of security in an uncertain world. Things would become better, but not before they became worse, much worse. Yet no matter how bad they became, even if it meant losing one’s life, the contours of history were predetermined, and, in the end, the Christian would triumph. Through the skillful use of language, Armstrong created in the minds of his audience a persuasive vision of a better world: a society without war, crime, disease, hatred, bitterness, and pollution. This utopian ideal was nothing less than a return to the paradise of Eden, when humankind enjoyed an innocence and intimacy with God, and reveled in the pristine beauty of an unpolluted world. For most of those who shared Armstrong’s vision of this New World Order, their lives in the present world became immeasurably

richer, less burdensome, and filled with a greater sense of anticipation than the lives of their counterparts. For at last, thanks to Herbert W. Armstrong, the world made sense.” (“The Wonderful World Tomorrow: Herbert W. Armstrong’s Vision of Life After the Apocalypse,” *Journal of Millennial Studies* (Paper presented at the 4th Annual Conference of the Center for Millennial Studies, November 1999), p. 7)

Another paper is “Prophecies of Dystopic “Old World, New World” Transitions Told: “The World Tomorrow” Radio Broadcasts to the United Kingdom: 1965-1967” by Gilder & Hagger.

In this article, the authors ludicrously and vainly attempt to link the World Tomorrow to the CIA! They use typical conspiracy theory techniques, offering no proof and leave the reader wondering what on earth they are going on about.

One item that should be quoted is from the paper by Eric Gilder, *Topical Argumentation Practice: Selected Historical Readings in Post-War Commercial Radio Broadcasting in the United Kingdom*:

“The message of “The World Tomorrow” radio program was highly controversial and polemical in tone. Unlike other religious radio programs, only this one carried a Hollywood-produced jingle theme at the end so that announcer Art Gilmore (who was the voice-over on the Broderick Crawford’s “Highway Patrol” TV series), could give out the mailing address. There was never a request for money on the air and offers of free literature were plentiful. But it was the message itself that was important. Armstrong believed in prophecy, and before WWII ended he was predicating that a German led United Europe would rise again like the Roman Empire of old, with another dictator at its head. Armstrong believed that it was his mission to warn the world, and not to make converts.” (footnote 79, p. 298)

“It is important to point out that until 1990, any foreign-sponsored religious broadcasting from UK-based stations was illegal. *The 1990 (amended 1996) Broadcasting Act* allowed for the dissemination of sponsored religious programming on satellite, regional and local radio only, with no national broadcast licenses being granted independent religious organizations, i.e., any “body whose objects are wholly or mainly of a religious nature” (Goodenough, Patrick, “UK Gov’t Looks Set to Keep Ban on Religious Broadcasting,” *CNS News*, May 1, 2001 (<http://www.cnsnews.com/ForeignBureaus/Archive/200105/For20010501b.html>) (Site accessed July 8, 2002).” (footnote 80, p. 298)

=====

Sources:

W.C.G. (1986). “Milestones in the Life of Herbert W. Armstrong,” *The Good News*, May, pp. 26-27.

Armstrong, H.W. (1996) *Autobiography of Herbert W Armstrong*, Vols 1 & 2.

Armstrong, H.W. (1965). *Coworker Letter*, 18 January.

Gilder, E. & Hagger, M. (2007). “Prophecies of Dystopic “Old World, New World” Transitions Told: “The World Tomorrow” Radio Broadcasts to the United Kingdom: 1965-1967” in *New/Old Worlds: Spaces of Transition*, Mihaila, R & Pan, I (eds) Univers Enciclopedic, Bucharest, pp. 205-223.

Gilder, E. (2019). *Topical Argumentation Practice: Selected Historical Readings in Post-War Commercial Radio Broadcasting in the United Kingdom*. Techno Media, Sibiu, Romania.

Meredith, R.C. (1963). *The Inside Story of the World Tomorrow Broadcast*. Ambassador College, Pasadena, CA.

Lupo, S. (1999). "The Wonderful World Tomorrow: Herbert W. Armstrong's Vision of Life After the Apocalypse," *Journal of Millennial Studies*, (Paper presented at the 4th Annual Conference of the Center for Millennial Studies, November 1999), pp. 1-7.

=====

Articles in this series:

- *Do Church Eras Exist?*
- *History of the Fair Chance Doctrine*
- *History of the Feast of Tabernacles in the Radio/Worldwide Church of God*
- *History of the Place of Safety Doctrine in the Church of God*
- *History of the Plain Truth magazine*
- *History of the World Tomorrow Broadcast*
- *History of Worldwide Church of God Ministerial Conferences*
- *History of Worldwide Church of God Foreign Works*
- *History of Worldwide Church of God Publications*
- *How the Israel Identity truth entered the Church of God*
- *Notes on the Third Resurrection Doctrine in the Church of God*

History Research Projects

GPO Box 864, Sydney, Australia 2001

www.originofnations.org

www.friendsofsabbath.org

No limitation is placed upon reproduction of this document except that it must be reproduced in its entirety without modification or deletions. The publisher's name and address, copyright notice and this message must be included. It may be freely distributed but must be distributed without charge to the recipient.

Our purpose and desire is to foster Biblical, historical and related studies that strengthen the Church of God's message & mission and provides further support to its traditional doctrinal positions.