

RADIO CHURCH OF GOD

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Dear Fellow Ministers:

Greetings again from Pasadena! It has been about seven weeks since my last letter, but with the Ministerial Conference in between and seeing many more of you, also, at a recent Akron District Conference, it has not seemed as necessary to get out this letter. However, I know that many of you scattered ministers still are lacking somewhat on information of the Work and of what transpired during the Ministerial Conference.

For the moment, however, let me say that everything is fine here in Pasadena and the Work is coming along well over-all, although the receipt of money and mail seems to be dragging somewhat during this month of February. Perhaps the terrible storms back East are contributing to this. In spite of some of the "records" that you have heard about in mail and money during November and December, be sure to encourage the brethren to pray earnestly for God's Work as both money and mail have fallen off somewhat so far during 1966. However, Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong are both in reasonably good health and so is everyone else here to my knowledge. One exception to this would be Mrs. Swaney, Mr. Armstrong's secretary, who seemed to have a terrible bout with the flu and later, I understand, felt that it must have been a severe case of pneumonia. Now, some have said she thinks it may be a re-occurrence of spinal meningitis which she had several years ago. Anyway, Mrs. Swaney has been very sick for nearly three months now, so I do solicit your earnest prayers on her behalf. Certainly she has made a valuable contribution to Mr. Armstrong and Mr. Garner Ted Armstrong and helped really "keep things moving" in the Executive Penthouse offices.

Briefly, let me say that the Conference this year was very profitable and very enjoyable for all who attended. We were able to cover a number of points involving Christian living and the application of Biblical principles to severe problems that come up in relation to healing, conscientious objection, problems with worldly school and other very ticklish situations. Perhaps we will soon be able to send out a summary of the points discussed to all of you, point by point. Reports were given from the managers of the overseas offices and certainly the growth of God's Work everywhere was the keynote of the Conference.

Mr. Armstrong discussed the need of writing our own textbooks for Imperial Schools to remove the wrong approach given in so many textbooks of this world. This would also enable us to better guide our scattered members in how to teach their children and counter the errors of the public schools systems.

The Ministerial Ball was held in the beautiful Cast-Away Club in the hills above Burbank with a gorgeous panoramic view of the lights of Los Angeles and Hollywood lying below. It was certainly a very fine occasion in every way. Another highlight of the Conference was the evening in the new home of Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong. As most of you know, the home on the corner of Grove Street and South Orange Grove -- formerly occupied by Dr. and Mrs. Lisman -- has been ruled out by the city for dormitory use. Mrs. Lisman vacated it over a year ago for one of the beautiful apartments "behind" Mayfair and facing on South Orange Grove now that she is alone.

Being forced out of their own home on Hill Street by the expansion of Caltech, Mr. and Mrs. Armstrong have taken over and completely remodeled this residence formerly occupied by the Lismans. They have done a beautiful job on it, and it is certainly a home of dignity and character now in every way. On Thursday evening during the Conference, they invited all of the ministers and their wives to come by for an open house, and the ministers had the opportunity to see this beautiful residence, to enjoy a stereo concert presented by Mr. Armstrong and to relax and visit in very fine fellowship.

Again this year, a basketball tournament was played between the teams from the upper and lower classes of Ambassador in Pasadena, the Pasadena Faculty team, and the visiting College team from Big Sandy. As usual, our "semi-pro" Pasadena Faculty team came out on top! But it was certainly a very fine tournament, and everyone was thrilled that the Big Sandy team -- playing as one unit -- came out on top of the student teams.

Certainly the outstanding event of the Conference for most of us was the ordination service where eleven men were raised in rank and responsibility in Christ's ministry. I would like to say something about each of these men, but will save this for The GOOD NEWS and simply rehearse the facts -- which most of you know -- that Mr. David Jon Hill Mr. Dibar Apartian, Mr. Leslie McCullough and Mr. David Antion were all raised to the rank of Evangelist in Christ's ministry!

Next, Mr. Dennis Luker, Mr. Harold Jackson, Mr. Arthur Mekarow and Mr. Arthur Craig were all raised to Pastor rank.

Then, Mr. James Doak and Mr. Lowell Blackwell were ordained to the rank of Preaching Elder. And on the Sabbath following the Conference, Mr. Raymond McNair joined Mr. Carl McNair in ordaining Mr. Kelly Barfield also as a Preaching Elder in God's Work.

During the ordination service at Pasadena, nearly everyone had tears in his eyes -- and I definitely feel that ~~most of these men were sincerely shocked~~ in being raised in authority and responsibility in Christ's ministry. On being raised to Evangelist rank, Mr. David Antion was so overcome and his eyes so filled with tears, that he literally bumped into the supporting pole coming up the aisle in the Assembly Hall! For everyone present, this ordination service was certainly a moving experience.

In the weeks since the Conference, Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Armstrong have flown to Texas and returned. Now, Mr. Ted Armstrong and his family have been in Texas for about ten days and are scheduled to be back later this week.

My wife and I had the opportunity to fly back to Akron, Ohio, to direct the combined District Conference there on February 1, 2 and 3 between the Akron and Chicago Districts. All told, we had fifty-six ministers, wives and second men in attendance! So it was certainly the largest conference of ministers ever held outside of Pasadena. Being with these men and their wives made me realize more than ever the definite need for such conferences for those of you who cannot get to Pasadena. Also, I realized more than ever -- even after being there -- how needful it is for one of us from Pasadena to join you in conducting these conferences at least most of the time. Mr. Antion and Mr. McDowell brought this up themselves. Later, Mr. Hill reported to me that Mr. Swisher, District Superintendent over the Southeast, mentioned to him that he felt one of us from Headquarters should always attend these District Meetings.

Be that as it may, we will certainly plan to have at least one or two such District Conferences each year and one of us from Pasadena will plan on being there for at least one of these each time.

Mr. Hill and his wife have just returned from Atlanta, Georgia, where he conducted the Atlanta District Conference with Mr. Swisher and the men under him. Mr. Hill reports that a total of twenty-seven ministers, wives and assistants attended this conference, and it, too, was very successful, inspiring and needful to the men. I have personally heard since from both areas reports of how much these conferences meant and were appreciated by the ministers and wives involved.

As Mr. Armstrong himself stated, these District Conferences will in many ways be more valuable even than the Pasadena Conference in solving many of the local and field problems which we simply do not have time to discuss at Pasadena. Also, I noticed -- and Mr. Antion and Mr. McDowell both commented -- that there seemed to be more time and opportunity for personal fellowship and really talking things over in the District Conference than there had been at Pasadena. So those of you who do not get to come to the major Conference at Pasadena should certainly not feel "left out" but should anticipate and appreciate the District Conferences which we will be having.

Certainly for all of us who are together in God's Work, there ought to be a feeling of closeness, oneness and open lines of communication at all times. This is one of the things we discussed at Akron, and I sincerely hope that all of you men will feel really close, not only to your District Superintendents, but to me, to Mr. Hill as the Assistant Superintendent of Ministers and to all of us at Headquarters at all times. Feel free to call, wire and write us whenever any real problem or misunderstanding arises. God has drafted us together in a literal crusade to get out His Gospel to the world and to feed His flock. So let us be "open" with one another -- and strive for the closeness and unity which Jesus Christ wants between His servants and His Work!

Just before the Conference a new Bible Study was begun in Texarkana, Arkansas, with a beginning attendance of 94. This certainly portends a Church in that area before long!

Also, since the Conference, we have started new Churches in Fort Smith, Arkansas, and Tupelo, Mississippi. Now that Mr. Kelly Barfield is ordained as a Preaching Elder, he has been put in charge over the Churches in Little Rock and Fort Smith, Arkansas. Fort Smith started February 12 with a fine attendance of 140! Mr. Carl McNair will continue to pastor Memphis, Tennessee, and will turn the Tupelo Bible Study into a Church. We have not yet heard about the first attendance there.

Mr. Carn Catherwood just reported that the new Church in Ottawa, Canada, had a new record of 88 in attendance for the Sabbath of January 22. And, of course, there is a great deal of growth in most of the Churches throughout the United States and around the earth.

During and after the Conference, we were able to send more men into the field at this time of year than ever before in history! They were all sent out from the Headquarters area and from the College in Big Sandy. From the Big Sandy College, Joel Lillengreen was sent to assist Mr. Mocarow and Judd Kirk was sent to assist Mr. Friddle.