

FINANCIAL CUTBACKS

2. NEED FOR DRIVER SAFETY

REPORTING ACCIDENTS WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD

WORLD HEADQUARTERS
PASADENA, CALIFORNIA

MR. MEREDITH'S EYE

OPERATION

HERBERT W. ARMSTRONG
PRESIDENT and PASTOR

OFFICE OF
RODERICK C. MEREDITH, Minister

MARCH 13 1970

Dear Fellow Ministers:

Greetings again from Headquarters! The income situation is still very serious. The month of February ended with only a 13.4% increase in total income, and because of an unusually good income last March, the income for this month does not show any increase. The weekend figures (which include the income for Monday) are not yet complete, but it is clear that the income for the first nine days of March will not even match the amount received in this period last year.

Because the income for the first two months of this year was very poor, and the trend seemed to be continuing, [Mr. Armstrong decided last Thursday to take drastic action to reduce our expenditures. For the Work is truly in a CRISIS situation! And I hope you and the brethren can realize this, and respond.]

First of all, he decided to place The PLAIN TRUTH on an every-other-month basis until the crisis is over. There will be no April issue! But an April-May issue will come out near the end of April. How long The PLAIN TRUTH remains on this basis will depend, of course, on the income, but it might be for only two or three bi-monthly issues -- four to six months. This one step alone will effect considerable savings when you take into account the monthly cost of materials and labor involved in printing and mailing approximately two million magazines. The expenses of printing and mailing The PLAIN TRUTH will be cut in half for as long as we continue this temporary measure.

In addition, we will immediately undertake a massive subscription renewal program in order to reduce The PLAIN TRUTH circulation. Last fall we instituted a long-range subscription renewal program aimed at keeping the "deadwood" trimmed from our list so that our circulation would remain at about two million -- the growth about equalling the number of people failing to renew their subscription. Now, however, we will

send out a renewal letter to about one-half million subscribers within a short period of time. This may reduce our mailing list by 200,000 or more, and it may stimulate many of those who do respond to send in a contribution when they renew.

The renewal letter will be sent to those who have been on our list for a year or more who have not become Co-Workers and who have not requested either the Correspondence Course or a subscription to TOMORROW'S WORLD. The renewal letter will, in some ways, be like a semi-annual letter in that several of the newer booklets will be announced, and it will have the effect of generating more interest in those who want to continue receiving The PLAIN TRUTH. Since those who are not really interested and who don't read the magazine anyway probably won't respond and renew their subscription, the Work will be able to save the costs of printing and mailing the magazine to those individuals. The renewal letter will in this way serve to "prune" our subscription list, purging the "deadwood" and stimulating new growth.

A number of radio stations are also being canceled as a result of this financial crisis! While we don't like to see any stations canceled, Mr. Armstrong is personally going over the list of stations to determine which ones should be canceled, and no area into which the broadcast now reaches will be deprived of the broadcast as a result of the cancellations. The people in areas in which stations are being canceled can, in every case, hear the broadcast on another station.

In addition, Mr. Armstrong has definitely decided to sell the Falcon jet aircraft if we can get a decent price for it, and I understand that there is now someone back East who is definitely interested, and will pay a good price, so pray about this!

We are able to make various other adjustments here at Headquarters, also, to reduce expenses temporarily. The outlook at this point is certainly not all bleak and there is no reason to be discouraged or to feel that the Work, overall, has been hindered by these cutbacks. Rather, there is every reason to be encouraged and to feel that these temporary cutbacks will -- as has always been true in the past -- set the stage for and help lay a firm foundation for future growth. These temporary measures are not unprecedented in God's Work. All of them have been employed in the past. They are sound and healthy measures from a financial standpoint, and they are certainly needed at this time when the entire national economy is experiencing a downturn. This should, however, inspire us to pray even more fervently for God's blessing on His Work. Pray that God will continue to inspire and guide Mr. Armstrong

and the other leading men here at Headquarters in this crisis situation. We need -- as never before -- to pull together in this Work and to wholeheartedly back up Mr. Armstrong in our prayers. We need to have faith in the Living Head of this Work and have confidence in what He is doing in His Work. Pray positively, asking God to cause this all to work together for the good of His Work -- as we are certain it will!

Turning now to other news, because of the growth in Kansas City, Missouri, area, we have raised up a new A.M. church there. Mr. Dean Blackwell will pastor this new church, along with the Kansas City, Missouri, P.M. Church and Kansas City, Kansas, Church. I don't yet have the attendance for the first service, which was this past Sabbath, but Mr. Blackwell thought it would be about 260.

In the way of baby announcements, Mr. and Mrs. Bill Bradford announced the birth of their son, Randall Craig, on January 22. He weighed 9 pounds and 2 ounces, but he came so fast that Mr. Bradford had to deliver the baby himself, becoming, as he said, "midwife for a day."

On February 17, Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Vance became the happy parents of a son, David Stewart. He weighed 7 pounds and 2 ounces.

Mr. and Mrs. Walter Sharp announced the birth of their daughter on February 23. Bonnie Jean weighed 8 pounds and 11 ounces.

And Mr. and Mrs. Gary Antion's daughter, Susan Kay, arrived on February 25. She weighed 8 pounds and 8 ounces.

Congratulations to all of you!

2 Mr. Bill Evans, of our Driver Education Department, recently sent me an alarming report which I want to pass on to all of you.

"In November 1969 we were in First Place in our National Safety Contest sponsored by the National Safety Council; however, we are now in Fourth Place. The reason, obviously, is accidents.

"Since December 1, 1969, up to January 26, 1970, we have registered fifteen accidents by our Field Fleet. Of the fifteen reported, eleven were said to be the fault of the other driver and four as the fault of our drivers. Of the four that were charged to us, two were backing accidents and two were hitting parked cars. In either case, whether hitting a parked car or backing, the cause is probably carelessness or inattention to driving.

"On the other hand, let's look at the eleven cases reportedly caused by the other driver, from the standpoint of defensive driving.

"Four were uncontrolled intersection crashes. We teach our drivers in our Defensive Driving Course a very effective way to avoid just this kind of accident. We call it 'intersection approach.' We must, as a defensive driver, approach each intersection with our foot off the throttle and over the brake, ready to stop if need be. Statistics show that this rule, put into practice as a habit, can prevent up to 65% of all intersection crashes.

"Now, for the other seven of the eleven accidents that were charged to the other drivers. All of the remaining seven accidents were rear-end collisions. We all know that sometimes we can just be trapped into a situation where we cannot avoid such a collision, but there are just lots of them that could be avoided by us.

"A defensive driver should know as much about the traffic behind as the traffic ahead. How? -- by habitually glancing at your mirrors at least every five to eight seconds. Just a flick of the eyeball can tell you the whole story of how the traffic pattern to your rear is changing. You must keep a safe cushion of space between you and the car behind you, just the same as the car ahead of you. If you discover you have a driver tailgating you, just slow down a little and force him to pass. It can be just as dangerous to let him tailgate you as to let him hold a loaded gun to the back of your head. Most rear-end accidents can be avoided.

"We must learn to drive defensively."

Please take this to heart, fellows! Such accidents cost the Work money, but more important, they could cost you your lives! Most of you have been instructed in the principles of defensive driving, but we tend to lapse into careless driving habits unless we are alert and are continually striving to drive defensively.

Also, I need to remind all of you that it is important to notify Headquarters immediately if you are involved in an accident. In the case of some of the accidents recently, Headquarters was not notified for a month or more! Anytime the car cannot be driven or the damage requires leaving it at a repair shop, be sure to call the Transportation Department at Headquarters before having the repairs made. A telephone call can often save us money in the long run. Since shoddy repair work can reduce the resale value of the car, it might even be better to have the work done at Headquarters if the car is due to be brought back in soon.

Even if you call Headquarters, however, it is still important that you fill out and send in an accident report promptly in accordance with the instructions in your Fleet Automobile Manual. It would be a good idea for all of you to reread this manual at this time, taking special note of page 2.

We recently learned that our Purchasing Department can obtain Samsonite attaché cases at a substantial discount if we submit an initial order for at least 50 cases, including at least 35 of their "Classic II" line and 15 of their "Signat" line. The length and height of all the cases are standard sizes, but the width of the cases vary. The size given below is the width of the various cases. Here are the cases that will be available if enough of you are interested:

<u>Style</u>	<u>Size</u>	<u>List Price</u>	<u>Our Cost</u>	<u>Colors Available</u> (All sizes)
<u>Classic II</u>	2"	\$27.50	\$14.50	Scotch Briar, Deep Olive, Oxford Grey, and Jet Black
	3"	\$30.00	\$15.60	
	5"	\$32.50	\$16.90	
<u>Signat</u>	3"	\$19.95	\$10.40	Olive, Heather Grey, and Black
	5"	\$21.95	\$11.50	

You would be expected to pay the shipping charges from Pasadena (about \$1 to \$2, depending on where you live). If you are interested in ordering a case, send in a memo to the Purchasing Department right away, specifying the style, size and color of the case you would like. If we receive enough orders we will go ahead and order them. If not, we'll let you know. A final word of caution -- if some of you check with a local Samsonite outlet in order to see what the different styles or colors are like, please don't mention that you are getting any kind of "special deal" from us since this could cause problems.

Mr. Armstrong has written a letter which is being sent to all the brethren in the United States and Canada who have not ordered a copy of the special 1969 edition of the ENVOY which will be distributed soon. Since you will be receiving a copy of the letter for your information, I wanted to mention this so that you'll know the letter was not sent to you by mistake. If you would like to mention this in Church again as an announcement -- especially for the benefit of the newer members who may not be familiar with the ENVOY -- it might encourage some of them to order a copy, and we know they'll be glad they did.

I had mentioned in a recent letter that Mr. Luker's wife's parents, Mr. and Mrs. Livengood, both had cancer and needed your prayers. I

just received word that Mr. Livengood died late Sunday night. Mr. and Mrs. Luker have flown up to Portland for the funeral -- at which Mr. Luker will officiate. Mr. Livengood was converted and did die "in the faith." Mrs. Livengood still needs our prayers, of course -- especially after her husband's death. Humanly speaking, it will be more difficult for her to have the faith to be healed now, so especially remember that in praying for her.

One other bit of sobering news is about me. I am dictating the last part of this letter to you from my family room while wearing a big patch over my left eye! I started to explain this problem in my last letter, but decided to wait since I knew God still might intervene or I might receive information or counseling which would have changed my present circumstances.

3 Anyway, since it involves the Superintendent of Ministers and could be wrongly interpreted or applied by brethren through rumor and scuttlebutt, let me tell you briefly about the repair surgery which has recently been performed on my left eye. During the recent Ministerial Conference, I began to notice that my left eye was not seeing as clearly and that my peripheral vision on the left side was diminishing. I talked to one or two of the ministers about this and some suggested it could be a "floater." I decided to pray about it and build up my general health, and hoped it would go away. But it grew progressively worse over the next few weeks and I finally decided to have it checked by a specialist here in Pasadena. I did so, and he found that I had a displaced retina. This means that the thin membrane at the back of the eye, concave and acting as a mirror, was torn loose from the nasal side of the eye. Both the Pasadena specialist and, later, the one at UCLA felt this was because of some blow or injury. And I had been hit in the eye several times -- with a handball, a football and once with one of my boys' thumbs when wrestling with them. (I am now learning to live more peaceably!) The Pasadena specialist, of course, wanted to operate and fasten the retina back to the nasal side. However, I did not, of course, want any operation. I was anointed for the eye by Mr. Portune and others here, since Mr. Armstrong was out of town, and certainly intended to put it in God's hands, in any case. However, I was told that the tear would probably grow steadily worse -- as it had been -- and would eventually result in my going either partially or totally blind in the left eye.

After waiting several days, meditating on the situation and noticing further deterioration, I felt I at least should get counsel from Mr. Herbert Armstrong since he was, by then, back at Headquarters and the loss of one eye would certainly affect my life and my work a great deal. In going over the exact problem and the nature of the operation with me and with Dr. Riley

-- a young physician who is now a student in college here and who accompanied me to see the specialist -- Mr. Armstrong felt definitely that this was a matter of repair surgery. It is a matter of pressing or pushing the retina back in place and "freezing" or, in effect, searing it there with a special instrument so that it will not tear loose again. It is just like taking stitches in one's arm or having a doctor make an incision in one's arm to fasten two parts of a badly broken bone together with a pin and then close the incision. This, as you all know, we have been advising for a few years now.

We knew God could, of course, heal the eye. But Mr. Armstrong felt that in this case it involved something we could do and probably should do under the present circumstances. Therefore, I arranged to get the best specialist available through a special eye institute attached to UCLA and had this repair surgery performed last Friday morning. The eye is now, of course, extremely tender and sensitive, and I am not even supposed to read, as the bad eye will automatically "track" if I read. It begins hurting if I persist in reading, or looking or staring at anything too much. So I certainly feel very confined, but I was blessed in that the physician did allow me to come home within 48 hours after surgery. I can rest at home and talk to some of you as you need to call in, and have brief meetings with some of the men at C. A. D. and brief meetings with others about various problems. I will probably convalesce for another week or ten days and will appreciate your prayers that the eye will heal properly and that I will continue to have effective vision in my left eye.

I felt it might be worthwhile going into as much detail as I did about this because of the example it might set. Do NOT announce in so many words that Mr. Meredith "had an operation." But, if anyone asks about it or rumors get started, it would be good to mention that after counseling with Mr. Armstrong and others here, it was felt that I should have repair surgery on my left eye to, in effect, suture the retina back in place and keep it from tearing loose just as we would take stitches to sew a wound together again. We do not want to go to either extreme in this kind of thing. As you can imagine, I have prayed, worried, wondered and meditated about this a great deal -- and my thoughts have jumped back and forth on both sides of the fence. But after going to the one whom God is using as He did Samuel in the days of David, and Elijah in the days of Ahab, etc., and getting his advice, I decided to follow that advice! With that, I am sure that you will all understand and that this will not set off a "wave" of ministers, Elders and brethren rushing off to the doctors and hospitals and forgetting that GOD is our Healer, as we so thankfully reviewed again in my last letter describing the recent miracles He has performed.

Before closing, let me just say in a very personal way, fellows, that I am sure you realize more than ever, as a result of the announcements I made in the first part of the letter and many other things, that God's Work is truly in a CRISIS situation such as we have not been in for many, many years! Please understand this -- meditate about it -- and pray and FAST that God will help all of us get closer to Him, do our part, and then grant us His BLESSING as never before.

With Christian love,

Roderick C. Meredith

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