

News Release:
Tyler, Texas
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GARNER TED ARMSTRONG, world-known radio and television evangelist, recently ousted by his father, Herbert W. Armstrong, the aging patriarch of the Worldwide Church of God, has reincorporated under the name, "Church of God, International," Box 2525, Tyler, Texas, 75710

Off the airwaves since his father's ouster in the early summer, the younger Armstrong can now be heard nightly over WOAI, San Antonio, 1200 kc, at 11:30 p.m. He said, "I will use my personal savings for radio time for as long as I can; I believe the message I have for the peoples of the world must not be silenced."

In a swift series of events, the younger Armstrong was stripped of his executive positions in his father's religious empire. Garner Ted had been President of Ambassador College, the church-related liberal arts college with campuses in Big Sandy, Texas and Pasadena, California; Executive Vice President of the church; President of the Ambassador International Cultural Foundation sponsored by the church; and vice chairman and executive director of the church-sponsored magazine, The PLAIN TRUTH.

It is estimated that Garner Ted Armstrong was heard by more than twenty million Americans and Canadians each week over, at the peak of his broadcasting career, more than 300 radio stations, and dozens of television stations. A recent article in the Wall Street Journal listed Armstrong as one of the big four among users of the electronic media, with an annual income exceeding even that of the Billy Graham organization.

Persistent reports of a power struggle within the organization, and centering around the question of the succession (the elder Armstrong is 86 years of age) pitted Stanley R. Rader, Beverly Hills Attorney and personal advisor to the aging patriarch, against the younger Armstrong. Mr. Rader earlier denied any such power struggle, though sources from high in the church, and dissidents who had left the church insisted there was a struggle for succession occurring.

The younger Armstrong said, "I was 'marked' (the church equivalent for disfellowshipment) for false reasons, either in part or in total---and have written to my father, requesting a written apology from him. He charged I tried to divert corporate mail and funds, and I have sent a copy to him, and a copy to all the ministry of my letter to the Pasadena Postmaster requesting only my 'personal, confidential and private mail.' My father believed hearsay from his advisors, and chose not to believe his own son."

The younger Armstrong says the work (the entire organization was referred to as "the work" in inner circles) as he has known it is "being dismantled." He cited the sale of important assets, and said inside sources claim income is down by around 17 to 20 percent.

"They are trying to sell the campus at Big Sandy" he said, "Which was a church property long before the college was begun there, for which my father took up large offerings, promising the church property was 'deeded in God's name' and that 'God has placed His name there.'" The elder Armstrong had instructed his son to reopen the college campus in Big Sandy last May, and then, only weeks later, rescinded the order, and later canceled the college in Pasadena, which had an enrollment of nearly 1,200 students.

The elder Armstrong's radio career began in 1934, in Eugene, Oregon, and spanned more than 25 years, when his son began broadcasting in the late fifties. "My father produced almost 1,200 radio programs in his lifetime--I have now completed almost 3,800 half-hour programs; 411 five minute commentaries; and over 720 half-hour telecasts."

"I had finished twenty-two of my required 26 new television programs when I was banished," he said, "and yet, my father was told I had done only four, and Mr. Rader repeated this false statement over a nationally televised talk show last week. It seems they are attempting to make it appear I wasn't working hard enough."

In a letter sent to the entire ministry of the church, the younger Armstrong said, "Maybe God wanted to free me from the shackles of monstrous debt, corporate inertia, politics, jealousy, hatred, cynical contempt and greed; ego and vanity, to try and test me, to the point of near despair, so that He may fulfill His purpose in my life."

Armstrong says he has leased offices in Tyler, and is hoping to have his second book "Peter's Story," a narrative about the life of Christ as seen from Peter's vantage point, to the publishers soon. His first book "The Real Jesus" (Sheed, Andrews and McMeel), was published in hardback version last November, and Avon has bought the rights for "The Real Jesus," expecting to bring it out in paperback soon.

Is he now in competition with his father? "Absolutely not," the younger Armstrong said; "I believe my father thinks he is right--although I cannot agree with the way he has done all this; the way I was blind-sided, kept in the dark, and then ousted for no good reasons bears no resemblance to the teachings of Jesus in the New Testament. Nevertheless, I believe my father has been a great man, and I have striven to show him every honor, and respect. However, though I have never left the organization voluntarily, I cannot 'retire' in the middle of my prime years when I feel I have so much to give my country, and the world. I will continue to preach what I have always preached--and I believe God will bless it, for I believe it is what He wants done."