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Dear Brethren and Co-Workers with Christ:

I have to tell you now that the outlook for the United States and the entire world is bleak and foreboding indeed! Based on world news, observation and personal contacts with world leaders -- based on Bible prophecy and a long life of experience, I have to tell you now that the entire world economy is in a drastic nose dive.

Civilization itself is stricken with spiritual, moral and economic sickness UNTO ITS DEATH -- THE END OF THIS WORLD!

But there is also GOOD NEWS! There is GOOD NEWS for the Work of God -- the best ever! And the BIG good news (the word gospel means "good news") is the new civilization -- the WORLD TOMORROW -- the Kingdom of God -- is soon to follow! God's Church -- the living and the dead in Christ -- will then emerge into a new world of PEACE, happiness, abundance, with ETERNAL LIFE.

Bible prophecy shows WHAT soon shall occur -- WHY the world is now sick on its deathbed -- WHY the RISING UNEMPLOYMENT, the SICK ECONOMY, the immorality, crime, violence and world evils.

I have seen much of this in 90 years of event-packed experience.

In November, 1919, I was a member of the Chicago Association of Commerce. At a regular weekly membership luncheon, the noted Boston statistician and economist, Roger Babson, was guest speaker. He astonished major bank officials and industrial leaders saying that in one year we would experience the most drastic depression our generation had known. Economic executives ridiculed. We were then in an upward trend of prosperity.

A year later Roger Babson again was our guest speaker. He said, "The year has passed, and I am back and depression is here with me." There was no ridicule or laughter. Mr. Babson told us why he knew, and why business and financial executives did not.

"When I want to know what the temperature in this room is going to be an hour or two from now I don't consult the thermometer on the wall. I go to the boiler room and see what is going on down there. I go to the factor that CAUSES the future temperature. You men were looking at bank clearings, retail sales, wholesale indexes, stock car loadings and trends -- the thermometers on the wall." But Mr. Babson said he had learned that when 51 percent or more of the people were righteous in their dealings with one another, prosperity was just ahead. But when 51 percent or more of the people were unrighteous in their dealings, economic depression was coming.

Was Roger Babson right?

In January, 1914, I was in the editorial department of a national magazine -- the nation's largest trade journal. I was assigned to cover the story of the very beginning of the conveyer-belt assembly-line mass-production system at the Ford Motor Company plant in Detroit. Ford initiated this system of mass machine production. At that time only the U.S. provided a mass market for such mass production.

Soon other auto companies followed suit, and then virtually all American production in other lines. This swelled profits enormously for capital and management. But labor unionism immediately engaged in a crusade of strikes to raise wages. Also labor leaders adopted the false philosophy of "GET" instead of cooperation and sharing. Labor union wars ensued, like the Herrin, Illinois, coal mine massacre, in which more than 20 were murdered and many injured. Labor turned to the attitude that the employer was the enemy -- slow down your work, give as little as you can get away with, then fight with the weapon of the strike to increase wages and lower hours of work.

Result? The quality of industrial production diminished.

Meanwhile a burgeoning affluent middle class -- also motivated by the way of "get" -- developed in the United States. Before World War II the United States had mounted to a position of wealth and power such as no nation ever possessed.

God had blessed us with the natural resources. Selfishness and greed on the part of both management and labor temporarily increased our prosperity. But those very evils are now bringing this country DOWN!

As late as 1969, the American wage was three times that of England and four times that of Japan.

Meanwhile, the Common Market (EEC) in Europe gave that continent a mass market for mass machine production -- AT LOW- COST LABOR. Even with machine production, labor had to direct the machines and remained the largest item of cost in production. Development of modern transportation gave Japan a mass market -- in fact, a world market. Now Europe and Japan compete with mass production and LOW-cost labor against the U.S. with its high-cost labor. Not only that, but both in Japan and West Germany, labor is patriotic, regarding conscientious work as a duty to their country. Result, Japan and West Germany export to the U.S., underselling U.S. competition with better quality merchandise.

In 1970 Prime Minister Sato of Japan told me he foresaw and feared a real trade war with the U.S., and hoped it would not happen. It is HERE! Japan has figuratively bombed and almost destroyed Detroit. I am leaving Monday on a Far East trip, and expect to discuss this situation with Prime Minister Nakasone in Tokyo. He just departed from talks with President Reagan in Washington yesterday -- apparently with no good results for the U.S.

Again, was Roger Babson right?

What does your BIBLE say? What does GOD say?

Actually applying to our nation, God says, Deuteronomy 28:1, "IF thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Eternal thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments ... the Eternal thy God will set thee on high ABOVE all nations of the earth." In Deuteronomy 4:40: "Thou shalt keep therefore ... his commandments ... that it MAY GO WELL WITH THEE "

In many scriptures God tells us he prospers those whose ways please him. But our people as a nation have not obeyed God. The whole world has been founded and built on the philosophies and ways of life of Satan, not of God. This has been SATAN'S WORLD -- not God's. But the CHURCH OF GOD IS God's world in embryo -- begotten but not yet born. We are called -- drafted -- to be trained to be teachers and rulers in the world to come.

When THIS WORK pleases him, he prospers it. He has been getting us back on the track. We have just closed a RECORD-BREAKING year.

The world has NOT lived God's way. Now the final result of the selfish way of living is converging on the whole world in its final climax at the END of this world.

But God is blessing his Church. We suffer because of the sins of the world among which we must live. But unemployment is not as high among our members -- God does bless the commandment keeper and tithe payer.

1982 was the most successful year by far in the history of this Work. The PLAIN TRUTH circulation took a big leap ahead -- now well over five million copies a month. There was a BIG increase in number of TV stations. A big increase in people asking for counsel about baptism.

PRAY for continued success in the Work. Remember, whatsoever we ask, we receive from him because we keep his commandments and do those things that are pleasing in his sight. Pray for me, even as I do for you. Pray for the continued economic stability and financial needs for God's Work.

With much love, in Jesus' name,

Herbert W. Armstrong