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Dear Brethren and Co-Workers in Christ:

Once again I write you from my office in the sky, aboard our G-II jet aircraft over the Pacific Ocean. Captain Black just announced over the public address system that we are flying at the speed of 690 miles per hour, due to a stiff tail wind.

We are returning from visits to Manila, the Philippines, Bangkok, Thailand, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Manila again, and a week in Tokyo.

Mr. David Hulme, in charge of TV and radio time purchasing, flew with us to Manila, then he flew by commercial jet to Australia and New Zealand, meeting us again in Hong Kong. In Australia he managed to open up time for us on TV in Melbourne. We now cover all cities in Australia on TV. He also received an offer for a time slot on Hong Kong TV if we decide to purchase it.

The PLAIN TRUTH circulation now is right around 5 1/2 million copies per issue. It has grown tremendously during the past year.

On this trip I spoke before a large audience of Church members and PLAIN TRUTH subscribers in Manila, and a group of somewhat less than 100 PLAIN TRUTH subscribers in Hong Kong.

Also at Manila, in a special ceremony in Malacanang Palace, I was decorated by President Ferdinand Marcos with the Presidential Special Merit medal. The President and I walked together before an audience to the front of the Grand Salon room. Flag bearers -- one with the stars and stripes and the other with the Philippine flag -- marched to the front after us. A band played "The Star-Spangled Banner" followed by the Philippine national anthem. Then a protocol minister read a presidential proclamation conferring the decoration. Then the President and I rose, facing each other while he placed the medal around my neck, after which the President and I walked back together, followed by others. There was a private meeting with the President in his office prior to the ceremony.

At Bangkok I had another private meeting with King Bhumibol, and the following day there was a special ceremony at another palace or public building at which the Minister of Foreign Affairs decorated me with the highest decoration of the Thai government. At this ceremony, both the U.S. flag and the Thai flag were placed side by side, though there was no band playing.

At Kuala Lumpur some 800 Church brethren and PLAIN TRUTH subscribers gathered for a Sabbath service. Several had come from Singapore. Our local minister had arranged for the hall and the permit for the meeting. But at the airport the Immigration Office asked if I was coming there to speak, and denied permission to speak. Even though we had the police permit, the Immigration officer said no one is allowed to speak on any religion but Moslem. Our aircraft could have been seized and I imprisoned.

So, already we are entering the time when no one can work in the Work of God. The time is now rapidly approaching when there shall be a "famine of hearing the Word of the Lord." Many brethren were sadly disappointed. Some came to the airport to see us off.

Brethren, God is opening many doors now for a final worldwide surge of getting the Gospel to the world. We are working on ways to get the Work going into Japan, and doors are opening to us. The language barrier is our big problem in Japan. But many are learning the English language, especially at high school level.

World conditions are moving rapidly toward the CLIMAX at the CLOSE of the age -- the END of this world. We must work harder now than ever on a great final effort while there is still time. We must put our hearts into our prayers more than ever. We must devote more time to study of the Bible and our booklets, books and articles on Bible subjects. We must sacrifice

more that the Work may be able financially to walk through these new doors opening. Pray for one another -- and for me -- as I pray for YOU.

With deep love, in Jesus' name,

Herbert W. Armstrong