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December 18, 1979

Dear Brethren and Co-Workers with CHRIST:

I am back from probably the most important and successful single trip overseas. I was honored to be the first church leader from the world of Christianity to be invited as a guest speaker and for personal conferences with leaders of the Communist People's Republic of China. There I spoke with leaders who shape the minds and thinking and beliefs of one fourth of all the people on earth!

With me was my wife, Mr. and Mrs. Stanley R. Rader, Mr. Osamo Gotoh and Mr. Yamashita, a senior member of the Japanese Diet, secretaries, and aircraft crew. All were guests of the government, and all were housed in the government State House -- a special guest house for official government visitors. It is a two-story building, large enough to house the entire entourage accompanying me.

Government limousines drove up to our aircraft as we landed. A welcoming delegation had come to the airport, including the president and vice-president of the educational system, which includes the national library.

A woman interpreter was assigned to us, who accompanied Mrs. Armstrong and me throughout our visit. She is a professor of English at the University of Peking.

We arrived on Sunday evening, December 2nd. On Monday evening I spoke for about a half hour at a banquet in my honor, attended by prominent members of the government and their wives. Tuesday evening I spoke again before the Diplomatic Corps, including ambassadors -- many with wives -- representing 76 (SEVENTY-SIX) other nations from all parts of the world, beside a number of high-ranking Chinese.

Both of these speeches were taped, and will be heard in most of the local churches of the Worldwide Church of God around the world.

A more detailed account of the entire visit to Communist China will appear in the February issue of The PLAIN TRUTH.

We were taken on a virtual all-day visit to the great China wall -- undoubtedly one of the seven man-built wonders of the world -- on Tuesday. Wednesday was a very full day. In the morning we visited the national library, the "Forbidden City" -- a walled city within the city of Peking -- former palaces and buildings of the Emperors. Then a noon luncheon, and at 4 p.m. the real highlight of the visit -- the private meeting at the Great Hall of the People (government headquarters) with the Vice-Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress -- one of the three top men in the government, Mr. Tan Zhen-Lin. A full report on our conversation -- which lasted a full hour -- will appear in The PLAIN TRUTH. In a note from Mr. Rader from Tokyo, later, he said of this conversation with the Communist leader, that the meeting "was truly a highlight, in my opinion, of our travels around the world as you have strived to spread the Gospel of the living Christ. The comments of the Vice-Chairman and your own response to him, I believe, are well worth reciting for the benefit of all our members, and PLAIN TRUTH readers. As you will recall, the Vice-Chairman was in a particularly talkative mood, and he launched into a full-scale discussion along geopolitical lines He was urging a strong Europe to oppose a 'militant imperialistic Russia.' It was then that you were able to tell him what is in prophecy, and I believe he listened very attentively to your description of the coming United Europe, and the events that will be so momentous for the entire world.

"The Vice-Chairman undoubtedly had been advised of your strong comments Monday night and again on Tuesday night. I believe that he knew full well that the United Europe and the cataclysm that would follow were directly connected with your comments about the 'Strong Hand from somewhere' that would save mankind from complete destruction and would be man's salvation and only HOPE.

"The Vice-Chairman, as we later discovered, was a contemporary of Chou En-Lai and Chairman Mao, and had a military background as well as political."

The above is quoted from a memorandum written after we returned to Tokyo.

Wednesday evening we attended a special program sponsored by the Ambassador International Cultural Foundation at a Peking theatre. The theatre was crowded and there was vigorous standing applause as our party entered. It was a semiballet program and was excellent. We were guided up on the stage at the end of the show, as audience applause continued, and we shook hands with the whole cast. The AICF will endeavor to arrange for this show to be staged at the Ambassador Auditorium in Pasadena, and also in New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, San Francisco and other major cities.

Thursday noon we left for the airport. There, to see us off and bid us good-bye was a delegation, again including the president and vice-president of the government's educational system.

We were royally received and entertained by the government people. They could not have been more friendly. And we were enthusiastically invited to come again.

On Saturday night there was a banquet in Tokyo at which, among many toasts, I was privileged to speak again. Then Sunday the long trip home to Tucson, with one fuel stop at Cold Bay, Alaska.

God was with us. He gave us great favor in the eyes of our Chinese hosts.

I had been invited to visit China some five or six years ago, by the Chinese Ambassador in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. At that time the government at Peking refused to admit me, saying I had written articles against Communism. However, they said, they had noted that it had been many years ago, and I had not written things against Communism in recent years, so they said then they might invite me later. And this they did.

It is true that I did write anti-Communist articles, because they are atheist and anti-God, rather than because of their political persuasion. However, I hope I have GROWN in grace and the KNOWLEDGE of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, as Peter instructs in II Peter 3:18. It has been impressed on me in more recent years what I only partly realized some thirty to fifty years ago, how, when our first parents REJECTED God's teaching, God's GOVERNMENT over them, and God's salvation, that God, in driving them out of the Garden of Eden, barring entrance to the "tree of life," said, in effect: "You have rejected my government, my teaching, and me as Savior. Therefore, I SENTENCE you and your children which shall populate and form the world, for 6,000 years, to being cut off from me and my Holy Spirit. Therefore, GO, and create your own religions, form your own kinds of governments, devise your own knowledge and educational systems, and your own types of society. Yet I will call a very FEW who are predestinated to be called for use in preparing for the final KINGDOM OF GOD."

It actually was GOD who cut mankind off -- except for those specially called -- rather than man having turned from God (except for Adam and Eve, of course).

God simply has not called most of the millions in China and Russia and India. He WILL, either in the coming millennium, or in the Great White Throne Judgment, when Satan will no longer be here to deceive.

So I no longer write articles condemning communism, or their governments. Instead I go to them with the message of HOPE -- the Kingdom of God, when God WILL open all minds, and bring them to salvation.

Jesus DID NOT COME ON A SOUL-SAVING MISSION! The GOSPEL is GOOD NEWS, which God has called me to proclaim.

On this basis, not judging or condemning them, but bringing to the leaders of the most populous nation on earth Christ's MESSAGE OF HOPE, I was enthusiastically welcomed. The most universally believed lie and false doctrine with which Satan has deceived the whole world of "Christianity" is that all not now "saved" are LOST. That is not true. They are neither saved nor lost -- they are NOT YET JUDGED.

Jesus said plainly, "NO MAN CAN come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him" (John 6:44). Unless the Father DRAWS them, atheists and communists CANNOT come to Jesus. HE SAID SO IN PLAIN LANGUAGE!

Now I am also INVITED TO GO TO MOSCOW BY THE GOVERNMENT THERE! That trip is planned for about next April or May.

I must close this letter, but first I am reminded that many are forgetting to keep up the regular contributions for the BUILDING FUND. We did get 100% financing before we started building the Ambassador Auditorium, but it is not yet

paid out. So that I would not forget, I have the Accounting Department take my monthly special building-fund offering out of my salary before my salary check is written every month. You can't all do it that way, so I give you this friendly reminder. Already we have been enjoying the USE of this supremely beautiful auditorium for 5 1/2 years, while we are paying back the insurance companies who loaned us the money. We must never default on this obligation. THANK YOU for remembering on this reminder!

We are closing a GREAT YEAR for GOD'S WORK in spite of the massive assault by the Attorney-General's office of the State of California. We have gotten through this year without having to borrow from the bank, as in former years. Income has been UP -- and it is up to YOU and me to KEEP IT THAT WAY. Meanwhile God's Church has been getting BACK ON GOD'S TRACK after a several-years' conspiracy to secularize and liberalize it. We are now REALLY getting closer to Jesus Christ and God our Father through more prayer and Bible study. KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK!

With much love, in Jesus' name,

Herbert W. Armstrong