

WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD
WORLD HEADQUARTERS
PASADENA, CALIFORNIA 91123

HERBERT W. ARMSTRONG
President and Pastor

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Dear Brethren and Co-Workers with Jesus Christ:

I have to ask you to help me in something connected with our carrying the GREAT COMMISSION INTO ALL THE WORLD preparing for the coming of Christ to RULE.

Late last June, when I was suffering a personal trauma in the very painful task of having to disfellowship my own son from God's Church, I felt we should dispose of Quest/78 and I think I wrote you that I had instructed Mr. Rader to dispose of it. I think I probably was somewhat influenced at that time by the fact my son was so savagely against it and because of his personal animosity, against anything else that in any way involved Mr. Rader.

However as soon as I looked into the problem of disposing of it, that is, letting it go defunct, it would cost us approximately 1 to 1 1/2 million dollars to settle existing commitments. Further, it would cause much ridicule in all the publishing industry, bringing derogatory publicity in the public press -- both newspaper and news magazines.

I decided it was better to delay a few months, let the word get out in the industry that Quest/78 might be up for sale. This brought us tentative offers from two of the three major television and radio networks. These networks have been going into other lines of businesses beside TV and radio. For example, few know that CBS some time ago bought the Steinway Piano New York plant. All three networks are now going into the magazine field. Two of them have approached us, with the tentative purpose of making Quest/78 their flagship quality magazine.

Quest/78 is now RECOGNIZED as the TOP QUALITY magazine of the United States. It would add considerable prestige to either one of these networks.

But, by the same token it is now beginning to add considerable prestige to the Worldwide Church of God.

Already it is giving us important prestige in the purchase of television and radio time. It, together with illustrated folders showing the Ambassador Auditorium and its performing arts concerts, and the Ambassador International Cultural Foundation, resulted in opening up to us at least one Feast site never open to any church conclave before, and in saving the Work large sums of money due to the fact that several organizations, as a result of this prestige, gave us free use of the Feast sites.

Quest was never intended to be a religious or gospel publication. But even though God has called us OUT of this world, not to be OF it, YET WE MUST LIVE IN THE WORLD, and we are commissioned to go TO the world with Christ's Gospel Message. To carry on the Work of God, we have to deal with the world, though not of it ourselves. Quest, I now have come to realize, is giving us a good image and favor in the eyes of those we in GOD'S WORK have to deal with.

So I must report to you that the picture has now changed concerning Quest.

So last week I sent Mr. Rader to New York to go thoroughly into the situation -- of how much we have invested in it -- how soon will it be "in the black," paying a profit -- how much more will we have to invest in it before it becomes self-supporting, and profit-making.

I now have all the facts and figures, along with extra-conservative estimates for the months and years ahead.

One problem came to me for decision NOW. Quest started as a bimonthly -- six issues a year. We have not finished our second year, but for this second year it was stretched to seven copies a year -- with a December issue offered as a bonus at no extra subscription cost. Now the question is whether it should go to a MONTHLY magazine. Several monthly magazines omit two issues during summer, and publish TEN issues a year.

The advertising people are finding what I could have told them they would find -- great difficulty in selling the advertising space. Now you probably know that no magazine or newspaper could begin to exist on subscription-price revenue. It's the ADVERTISING that pays their bills and keeps them in business.

Most of you know that I had twenty years' experience in the advertising business, in magazines and newspapers. What I learned is true today. I started in Chicago representing one bank journal, whose circulation covered seven states. I had made extensive surveys that led to tractor manufacturers advertising in bank journals. But not with just that one five-state magazine. I found that space-buyers in advertising agencies, and advertising managers of manufacturing corporations buy on a yearly contract and national circulation basis. I found that by adding eight other bank journals, giving me full NATIONAL coverage, I could sell full-page or double-page space for all NINE magazines, whereas I could not sell any space for ONE five-state magazine. Having learned how magazine advertising space is bought, I understand perfectly the difficulty the Quest advertising staff had in selling ANY amount of space AT ALL! In this magazine advertising field, agencies and advertising managers buy A YEAR OR NOTHING! I think Quest's advertising staff has done exceptionally well to sell as much as they have for a seven-issue per year magazine.

Now, I think many of you know that I have always said a wise decision necessitates getting ALL the facts, and then making the decision.

I am going to give you the actual facts and figures. We are committed to publish Quest/79 at least until the end of this fiscal year, June 30 next year. As of November 8, this year (1978) we already have invested in it \$5.6 million. The peak cash flow deficit, which we will have to invest, through the calendar year 1979, is \$1,410,000. We are definitely already committed to half of that, anyway -- through June 30. Continuing in 1980 will require from us a subsidy of \$903,000. 1981 is projected to cost us a subsidy of \$95,000 and 1982 is projected to produce for the Work a profit of \$334,000.

I have many more detailed figures, relating to a breakdown of editorial costs, advertising department costs, production costs, etc.

So it sums up to this: We are already committed to half of the 1979 deficit, \$705,000, making the total investment, from the start, of \$6,305,000. And it is projected to cost us an additional \$1,703,000 through the years 1979 to the end of 1981, and 1982 is projected to return to the Work a profit of \$334,000. And, of course, future years should increase the profit return each year.

Another factor to consider. The magazine industry is in its "hey-day" right now. Many new magazines have been started in the past two years, and established magazines are fat with advertising.

And perhaps MOST IMPORTANT OF ALL, Quest gives me and the Work FAR GREATER PRESTIGE and CREDIBILITY in the eyes of government leaders, in our efforts to open their doors for giving Christ's GOSPEL Message to their peoples. That's our COMMISSION!

It is incumbent on me, now, to make the following decisions:

1) Whether to dispose of Quest, immediately, by putting it out of business. I have already shown you, above we would still be heavily obligated by existing commitments, an additional \$705,000, and we would also lose great prestige and invite ridicule in the public press. With two prospective buyers who are approaching us about SELLING the magazine to them, I have to decide, as you can plainly see, not to just quit now.

2) Since we will not dispose of it by simply closing down, and in any event will wait until we have definite and firm offers from prospective purchasers, I have to decide, NOW, whether to hold to the awkward seven issues a year, or going to TEN, which will be regarded in the industry as a year-round basis. I have decided. We go immediately to TEN, and will give subscribers who subscribe NOW the whole year's subscription for the same price charged until now for seven. If we sell the magazine to one of the networks, Quest becomes a much more desirable purchase in their eyes than the present seven. So even if we sell it, we MUST go to the full ten.

I have not decided, as of now, that we will NOT sell it. I want to see what develops in the next two or three months. However, reasons are now developing which indicate heavily that it may be better for the Work to keep it. Many of our high ranking ministers are urging to keep it. Again, I want time to continue praying over it, looking at it from GOD's viewpoint. I myself will make the decisions, as God leads me, and considering ALL the facts.

I want to add this comment. I have always preached that GOD's WAY is the way of EXCELLENCE. God says "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might" (Eccl. 9:10). All that GOD created and made was "VERY GOOD". I have tried conscientiously, under Christ, to build God's Church and Work and College in that manner.

Quest is now recognized as the very TOP magazine in QUALITY in this country. It is dedicated to "the pursuit of EXCELLENCE." I hope you will pardon me if I say I am just human enough to feel a certain pride (not vanity) in the fact that if my name appears in the masthead of a national secular magazine as Founder and Chairman, it appears in the recognized top QUALITY magazine "in the pursuit of EXCELLENCE."

That brings me again to the fact that, even though God has called us out of the world, yet we must be IN it, and are commissioned to go TO it with Christ's Gospel.

And while I want to encourage you all to put, in your reading, THE BIBLE first, and next, The PLAIN TRUTH, The GOOD NEWS, and The (being restored) WORLDWIDE NEWS, yet you do read, in the secular field, your newspapers, and perhaps other magazines -- and you probably view news telecasts and certain other TV programs, even though you are, and should be, careful in selecting WHICH TV programs are right and proper for God's people to view.

Subscribe yourself. Quest/79 is NOT a religious or gospel magazine, and is not intended to be. But it is HAVING AN UPLIFTING INFLUENCE on this world. It won't bring spiritual salvation, but it will influence its readers toward the TRUE VALUES, toward higher standards.

Enclosed you will find an order card -- ten issues for the price heretofore charged for seven -- and, as quantity allows, an illustrated brochure. (If your brochure is not enclosed with this letter, you will receive one in a later mailing.) It points toward the HUMAN potential of character, quality and excellence, on the human level, as The PLAIN TRUTH does on the SPIRITUAL plane.

Read these brochures. Show them to nonmember friends, neighbors and relatives. Get some of them to subscribe. See if they do not respect you highly for it. Why not show the brochure (we will send you extra copies on request) to your doctor, dentist, or those who have waiting rooms with magazines for clients or patients to read.

Brethren, with God's Church and the prayers of God's people back of it, we surely can expect its future to be much less costly and much more profitable to us, so I do ask you to pray about this, as I do, and I pray for YOU!

With love, in Jesus' name,

Herbert W. Armstrong