

WATCHTOWER

BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF NEW YORK, INC.

CABLE WATCHTOWER

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February 9, 1990

TO ALL BODIES OF ELDERS IN THE UNITED STATES AND ITS TERRITORIES

Dear Brothers:

There is no doubt that we are living in thrilling yet demanding times. As foretold, Jehovah is turning the little one into a thousand. Yes, the small band of Kingdom proclaimers has become a mighty nation. (Isaiah 60:22) As new ones stream to "the mountain of the house of Jehovah," and as new territories open up, organizational support must be provided. (Isaiah 2:2-4) The demand for Bibles and the Society's Bible-based literature has never been greater. New facilities have been completed for several branches. Expanded or new facilities are being built in many others.

Although we have always offered the Society's literature on a contribution basis, recent Supreme Court decisions have opened the way for secular authorities to possibly categorize our literature distribution as commercial activity. To prevent this misportrayal of the spiritual nature of our activity and to continue to give the good news of the Kingdom the widest possible distribution, we are adjusting the Society's literature distribution arrangement. These simplified operations will clarify the voluntary and religious nature of our work.

In light of these developments, the Society is adjusting its method of literature distribution by going to a complete donation method. This will underline the fact that we are not motivated by financial interests when preaching the good news. We are "not peddlers of the word of God as many men are, but as out of sincerity, yes, as sent from God," we are declaring the good news of the Kingdom. (2 Corinthians 2:16b, 17, *New World Translation Reference Bible*, footnote; Matthew 24:14) These adjustments in literature distribution procedures will greatly aid us to continue our public ministry unrestricted by state and local laws that regulate commercial house-to-house activity. We believe these adjustments will lighten the work load for you brothers and allow all of us more time to care for spiritual interests and to "make sure of the more important things."—Philippians 1:10.

The enclosed letter to all congregations announces the new arrangement for distribution of the Society's literature. The enclosed congrega-

tion announcement concerning the letter should be read at the Service Meeting and Book Studies held during the week of February 19, 1990. The letter to all congregations and all scriptures cited therein will be read during the week of February 19, 1990, following an abbreviated *Watchtower* Study. For congregations enjoying the circuit overseer's visit, attending their special assembly day, or circuit assembly, the letter will be read by the circuit overseer following the consideration of *The Watchtower*.

The elders and ministerial servants should meet as soon as possible and review this letter and the letter to all congregations. You should especially note the tenor of the concluding material under the heading "With what spirit should each one view the new arrangement?" in the letter to the congregations. Please study this carefully to grasp the nature of what direction is now being given. This matter must be kept in strict confidence until the enclosed letter is considered with the congregation.

Following the meeting of the elders and the ministerial servants, the presiding overseer, the secretary, and the service overseer will then meet with the accounts, magazine, and literature servants. The purpose of this meeting will be to acquaint the brothers with the enclosed new forms and instructions concerning literature, magazines, and accounts. The outline for this meeting is enclosed with the forms. Commencing March 1, 1990, congregations will use these revised forms.

An actual count of the magazines and literature on hand should be taken on March 1, 1990. Then the magazine and literature accounts for February should be closed out, forwarding funds received on the new contribution form. Some congregations will find that they have a literature or magazine deficit. The body of elders may wish to handle this deficit by proposing a resolution to the congregation to care for this by means of a donation as circumstances permit.

All should be helped to understand that magazine orders and literature supplies may be picked up by the publishers and others present at the meetings. However, instead of accepting any

contributions at these counters, brothers should be informed that they may make contributions for the literature in one of the boxes marked "Contributions for the Society's Worldwide Work.—Matthew 24:14." Attention should be given to the placement of these contribution boxes near the magazine and literature counters. Labels for these boxes are enclosed. This will facilitate the donations of any who may wish to contribute toward the advancement of the worldwide work.

Previously designated controlled stock, such as deluxe items, *Insight on the Scriptures*, the Reference Bible, bound volumes, and cassettes, should be ordered only when there is a specific request. The brothers will need to be alert to note requests for unusual quantities of literature or magazines by someone who has formerly obtained or placed few publications. Such situations need to be monitored closely. Personal reminders may be necessary to emphasize that the new arrangement does not mean that we are now casually giving away literature to indifferent and uninterested people who do not really want it. (Isaiah 26:10) Everyone involved in magazine and literature handling should make every effort to ensure that the literature is not wasted.

Subscription service to *The Watchtower*, *Awake!*, and cassettes will be discontinued. Following the reading of the Letter to All Congregations dated February 9, 1990, please send any subscriptions *already* on hand immediately to Watchtower, Wallkill, N.Y. 12589; subscriptions for a term longer than one year will not be accepted. No subscriptions, including renewals of current subscriptions, will be accepted from the congregations if obtained or requested after the reading of the Letter to All Congregations. *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines and cassettes will continue to be mailed to all subscribers until current subscriptions have expired. You should direct the publishers to pick up personal copies of the magazines and cassettes from the congregation's regular supply once their personal subscriptions expire.

We will send notices to the congregation for each subscriber within the congregation's assigned territory when subscriptions are due to expire. A qualified pioneer or publisher can then make sure that those individuals in the field who are interested in the magazines will continue to receive them regularly after their subscriptions expire. It is hoped that this personal contact with

former subscribers may be a stimulus to starting new home Bible studies.

During the week of February 26, 1990, the elders should arrange for a special Service Meeting in lieu of the regularly-scheduled meeting in *Our Kingdom Ministry*. The outline for this meeting is enclosed. The instructions for demonstrations must be carefully followed. For those congregations enjoying the circuit overseer's visit, attending their special assembly day, or circuit assembly, the circuit overseer will see to it that the special material and demonstrations are presented in their entirety, as an added feature of the program.

The Service Meeting programs for March should be adjusted to conform with these instructions. For the week starting March 5: When making announcements from *Our Kingdom Ministry*, make sure that the friends are reminded that the literature is to be presented on a complete donation basis. For the week starting March 12: When considering the article, "Presenting the Good News—With Discernment," the demonstration in paragraph four should conclude by offering the book without requesting a specific donation. For the week starting March 19: Following the local announcements, remind the friends that when offering the magazines they are to be offered on a complete donation basis. For the week starting March 26: Subscriptions are no longer being accepted. Issues of *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* will be featured in all phases of our public ministry. The parts on the Service Meeting for this week should be adjusted to encourage the brothers to start magazine routes.—See March 1984 *Our Kingdom Ministry*, pages 5-6, paragraphs 28-31.

You brothers caring for the sheep entrusted to your oversight need to keep in mind that *material* resources are necessary to accomplish the worldwide work, including the production of literature. Elders should inform pioneers that, for the time being, they may make donations for the literature and magazines as they have been doing. (1 Peter 5:1, 2) As undershepherds of Jesus, it will be necessary to see that everyone appreciates the value of the literature and that none is wasted on unappreciative people. We are confident that Jehovah will bless our cooperative effort under this new arrangement so that the good news will be fully preached to the entire inhabited earth before the end comes.—Matthew 24:14.

We appreciate your hard work in Jehovah's service and pray for his blessing upon you.

Your brothers,

Watchtower B. & F. Society

OF NEW YORK, INC.

Enclosures