

Greetings from Tyler,

We are witnessing the unfolding of history before our dumbstruck eyes, and that's a fact. Nearly every newsbreak brings mind-boggling numbers into play, plans our government has to spend the nation into prosperity by funding massive new government programs, many of them in the realm of far-left social engineering.

You're all aware of the trillions of dollars already signed into law in recent weeks, but new projections of government spending over the next few years were released during the evening hours last night, and the red ink is poised to flow like a mighty river in flood conditions. During CNN's Anderson Cooper program last night, both the host and his analyst guests could hardly choke out the numbers that were coming across the wire services, outlining the unprecedented spending frenzy the new administration plans in the next few years. The host was at a virtual loss to pronounce the phonetics of these numbers without shaking his head in disbelief.

We may well be seeing the beginnings of a backlash against the unprecedented gamble our leaders are taking with the immediate future of the United States. It is not our place to encourage any such thing. But it certainly is within our scope to recognize where this thing may be headed.

Serious trouble lies ahead for the United States. Despite politicians who would beg to differ, economists warn that a huge gamble is being waged at very long odds. The alarmist language, the dire predictions trotted out in conjunction with each new outrageous requisition of future earnings by future generations may well prove accurate in spite of, and because of the spending bonanza.

I could lead you by the hand through the logic involved, but won't insult your intelligence. Unless you're completely tuned out, or limited strictly to the most mainstream of media, you know what is at stake, and how the prospects look. We're told there is no interest in nationalizing banks while the government is taking over thirty percent ownership in Citibank in exchange for bailout money. And that's only one of numerous examples in play right now.

Earlier this week, billionaire media mogul Rupert Murdoch said, "We are in the midst of a phase of history in which nations will be redefined and their futures fundamentally altered." That's exactly what my Dad warned would be in the offing in the event of economic upheaval. Our nation has just been redefined, and it's happened at a breakneck pace, without a multitude of council, without a "moment to spare." The United States is rapidly becoming a place that, if you'd been in a coma for the last six months, you'd hardly recognize. And all the "targeted spending" our elected leaders are so giddy about will not solve the crisis, according to the best minds, but exacerbate it!

Big demonstrations are scheduled for Europe. One already took place in France, and Germans are preparing to take to the streets next month in conjunction with the global finance summit in London. Demonstrations are planned for Berlin and Frankfurt under

the banner, “We’re not paying for your crisis.” According to a recent interview carried by Spiegel Online, European “banks are sitting on toxic assets worth several trillions of euros.” Several trillions of euros are well beyond the capacity for any bailout.

My Dad’s warning, and Murdoch’s statement apply not just to the United States, but to Europe, where we know there will ultimately be a realignment of power that looks nothing like the European Union. We’ve just posted a new commentary from Michael Burkert on our web site that looks at the unfolding economic crisis from the European perspective. Knowing what we do about European history and Bible prophecy, it is a very sobering piece. [Note: The commentary will be up late Friday evening].

Unemployment, homelessness and desperation stalk the cities and towns of the United States. There may be something of a window of opportunity to prepare for the difficult times that lie ahead. It should not be ignored.

Last week I reported that our income has shown strength, even in the face of some terrible economic news. And it has held up remarkably well. However, we may be beginning to see the first signs of a slight decline, as we compare the first eight weeks of 2009 with the same time period last year. We will do our best to maintain a high level of service to our members and to those who respond to the telecast, and trust God to guide us safely through whatever we may face.

The Garner Ted Armstrong telecast this week offered the paperback book, *The Real Jesus*, bringing 435 requests with two hundred seven first time responders. We certainly appreciate all the energy and assistance that comes from all of you in the field, for the service you provide and the example you set for others. I believe that we are proceeding with our eyes wide open, maintaining our integrity and humility. Thank you all very much. Have a nerve-calming Sabbath.

Until next time,

Mark Armstrong