(Not) Using the Internet

Dear Brothers,
Some of you may have become aware that certain apostolic workers have begun using E-mail to communicate with each other. This was done for the specific purpose of avoiding high phone bills for frequent faxes and other inter-tribal communication. It is critically important that all would have the right mind about this, and that none would consider it a license to get his own account and begin delving into the realm of electronic communication.

The subject of Internet access was discussed in the Computer Meeting of June 13, 1995, with the conclusion that ."..for now no one is covered to get on E-mail in our communities." For anyone who has anything to do with acquiring or using computers in the edah, the notes of this meeting are *required reading* (copies available from the Print Shop).

Since that time there was another brief meeting to revisit the question of E-mail correspondence, with the conclusion that certain apostolic workers who, because of their responsibilities, are engaged in frequent inter-tribal communication would begin using CompuServe to send and receive mail and exchange files, such as teachings. We specifically *excluded* the use of CompuServe or the Internet for any other purposes, such as industry needs, browsing the Internet, personal correspondence with friends or relatives in the world, shopping, etc.

Cyberspace, as this electronic world is sometimes called, is a very dangerous place, full of potential for defilement. It is like having a newsstand and video arcade in your office or bedroom. Any way you want to be defiled, you can, without the shame of being seen gawking at a magazine, etc. We do not want our people to enter into this realm. This is the playground of the elite and affluent. We do not want to be known to those outside the community as a people who communicate in this realm, or who are accessible via the Internet.

Because of the tremendous potential for dissipation and defilement, any who are covered to have CompuServe accounts should ensure that their accounts be password protected, and that the password not be disclosed to any who are not specifically covered to share their account. If the CompuServe interface is installed on a computer that is easily accessible, such as in an industry office, then the interface should be configured so that entering the password is required in order to connect to CompuServe. We do not want to make it easy for a weak brother to stumble by noticing this program and trying it out.

At this point this is our understanding on the subject. But in general we want to obey the words of the apostle, ."..those who use the world [should do so] as though they did not make full use of it; for the form of this world is passing away." (1 Cor 7:31)