



*"Watchman,
what of the night?"*

The watchman said, The morning cometh, and also the night: if ye will enquire, enquire ye: return, come. Isaiah 21:11-12

WILSON REFUSES TO ACT

Americans United File Complaint in Federal Court

We received a letter dated August 17, 1984, from the Executive Director of Americans United for the Separation of Church and State. In this letter, Dr. Robert L. Maddox told of the attempts by the organization to "persuade the Administration and the Congress not to appoint an Ambassador to the Roman Catholic Church." They wrote letters, talked to the White House staff, joined with major religious bodies in protest, and testified before Congressional committees. But nothing availed.

The letter continues:

"The President, the State Department and a majority of the Congress refused to recognize this damage to the U.S. Constitution and its principle of church-state separation. Operating from a short-sighted view of history and a cynical desire to gain Roman Catholic votes, our leaders plunged ahead with this million-dollar-a-year appointment."

Americans United thus faced no alternative except go to court. They announced in the letter that "on Wednesday, September 19, 1984, we will file our case in the U.S. District Court in Philadelphia, challenging the Government's right to send

an Ambassador to the Roman Catholic Church." They would contend this appointment was (1) "a violation of the Establishment Clause of the U.S. Constitution;" (2) It "gives special preference to one religious group over all others;" (3) It "involves the U.S. government in the internal affairs of a church;" and (4) it "uses approximately a million dollars a year of tax money to fund that impermissible involvement."

To those who are following closely the events of history as the scroll of Bible prophecy unfolds will watch with deep interest the outcome of this Civil Suit. The American government as set forth in the Constitution is composed of three branches - the Executive, Legislative, and Judicial. Already the Executive has acted in the appointment of Mr. William A. Wilson as the Ambassador to the Holy See. The Senate acted in confirming the appointment, and the House of Representatives responded by initiating the necessary legislation to fund the appointment. The Judicial thus remains as the only branch of the government which has not declared itself in the matter. The outcome of this suit will be crucial.

In the light of this crucially important suit, we are reminded that "it is at the time of national apostasy, when, acting on the policy of Satan, the rulers [plural] of the land will rank [Webster - row or series] themselves on the side of the man of sin - it is then the measure of guilt is full; the national apostasy is the

signal for national ruin." (GC Bulletin, Vol 4, #19, p. 259, April 13, 1891) Already we have witnessed "the handclasp" when on October 6, 1979, then President Jimmy Carter welcomed Pope John Paul II into the White House, "the symbolic home of all" the American people with the words - "On behalf of every American of every faith, I also welcome you into our nation's heart." (RNS, Oct. 8, 1979) It was on this occasion that the Pope, following the reception at which the three branches of the United States government were represented, surprised the assembled dignitaries by saying - "the pope wants to bless you --- with the permission of the president of the United States" - and did so. (Ibid.) This suit will give further evidence in the ranking of "the rulers" of this land on the side of the man of sin.

In the letter of August 17, there was also another very interesting paragraph. It read:

"Religious leaders and lay citizens from all walks of life from across the nation join us in this legal outcry. Methodists, Baptists, Unitarians, Humanists, Presbyterians, Roman Catholics, Jews, members of the Churches of Christ and Disciples of Christ and many others have already signed on. As a matter of fact, nothing in recent history has so galvanized the American religious community like the nearly unanimous opposition to the Vatican appointment. In addition, Masons, educators, civic activists and independent citizens of many persuasions are enthusiastically lending their names and influence to the case."

As I read this paragraph, I observed the same thing you have observed as you have read it. The name of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is missing. By knowing the deep involvement of Seventh-day Adventists with Americans United from its very inception, one begins to wonder what happened that the Seventh-day Adventist Church is not a part of the suit. (The lawyer who filed the Complaint in Federal Court for Americans United is an Adventist from Berrien Springs, Michigan.) Therefore, on September 9, we wrote to Dr. Robert L. Maddox, the Executive Director, of Americans United, a letter which read

in part:

"I read with interest the form letter dated August 17, 1984. However, I do have a question. You listed on page 3, various churches and other groups who have responded in giving at least moral support to your endeavor.

"I failed to see listed the name of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. What are their plans in regard to this action on your part? Will they file a brief as a 'friend of the court' or will they join you all direct in your suit?"

To this letter, Dr. Maddox responded:

"President Wilson declined to join in the case either as a plaintiff or as a friend of the court. I have not talked with Elder Wilson personally but his staff told me he had declined to participate after careful consideration. I am sending him a copy of your letter and of my reply."

I also asked a friend to write to Elder Roland R. Hegstad, Editor of Liberty, to ascertain why the Church has not joined in this suit. To this date, now more than two months, this friend has received no response - not even an acknowledgement! One would hope that sufficient letters will be sent to Elder Wilson to cause him to come out into the open as to why he has refused to act in joining in this case. (Perhaps if enough letters are sent, Elder Patzer will have to prepare another "form" letter explaining this position of "Caiaphas" as was done in response to "The Crucifixion in Hungary.")

In the meantime, until an answer is forthcoming either by letter, or in the pages of the Adventist Review, we will give to our readers information concerning the attitude of the church's leadership to the Roman Catholic Church and its teachings. This present position could have had a part in Elder Wilson's "careful consideration."

In another Federal case which had been filed in the U.S. District Court for the northern district of California, Wilson was involved as a member of the hierarchy, for the suit was "by the United States against the Seventh-day Adventist Church," as stated by the legal counsel for the Church. The government placed in the

record an affidavit by Lorna Tobler, one of the "Intervenors" in the case. In this sworn statement, Mrs Tobler, wife of an Adventist minister, declared:

"I have frequently heard the term 'hierarchy' used among Adventists when reference is made to the Roman Catholic system, of which I have always been taught that Adventists strongly disapprove. I have never heard the term 'hierarchy' used to describe Adventist ministers as is done in the defendants' brief (OBE pp. 14, 44, 97), and I find it strange and contradictory to all I have ever learned in Adventist schools and churches. (Tobler AE 114, p. 39, lines 4-11)" [37]

[The number in brackets, is the page number, where the quotation can be found in Excerpts - Legal Briefs: EEOC vs PPPA. This document can be procured through the Adventist Laymen's Foundation of Arkansas.]

To Mrs Tobler's testimony, the Church's Counsel - including Boardman Noland, a Seventh-day Adventist lawyer involved in the case - replied:

"In several ways this illustrates the dangers incurred by an individual church member who presumes to deny the authority of the duly constituted officials and governing bodies of the Church. In the first place, it is true that for a period in its history, the Seventh-day Adventist Church had an aversion to Roman Catholicism and especially to the papal form of church government -- an aversion shared by virtually all Protestant denominations. . . . While, however, Adventist doctrine continues to teach that church government by one man is contrary to the Word of God, it is not good Seventh-day Adventism to express, as Mrs Tobler has done, an aversion to Roman Catholicism as such." [46]

You will observe that this Brief on behalf of the Church does not say - "an aversion to Roman Catholics" - but - "an aversion to Roman Catholicism." You will also note that the only teaching of Roman Catholicism still held as contrary to Adventist doctrine is church government by one man. To the rest of the teaching there is no aversion. Now what is the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church relative to an

exchange of diplomatic representation with the nations of earth?

Archbishop Pio Laghi, Apostolic Pro-Nuncio in the United States (Ambassador of the Vatican to the USA) in an address given at The Catholic University of America, Washington D.C., on April 6, 1984, quoted from Jesuit R. A. Graham's book, Vatican Diplomacy. From it he read:

"Papal Diplomacy rests essentially upon the spiritual sovereignty of the Holy See and not upon dominion over a few acres in the heart of Rome." (p. 15)

On this statement, Laghi commented:

"It is, therefore, the Pope's religious authority which confers upon him the classical right of legation, a diplomatic standing in the world. Those who interpret Papal Diplomacy as emanating from the Pope's temporal sovereignty are failing to understand the true nature of the mission of the Holy See." (Quoted in Complaint filed in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, on behalf of Americans United)

Since the Seventh-day Adventist Church is on record in Federal Court as indicating it is no longer good Seventh-day Adventism to have "an aversion to Roman Catholicism as such," one can sense the difficulty Elder Wilson faced should the Church have joined in the case, even as a friend of the court, and thus have declared the church's "aversion" to the Catholic position of "diplomatic standing in the world."

The picture is further complicated by the fact that in the same Brief submitted by the Church, her counsel declared in a footnote:

"Although it is true that there was a period in the life of the Seventh-day Adventist Church when the denomination took a distinctly anti-Roman Catholic viewpoint, and the term 'hierarchy' was used in a perjorative sense to refer to the papal form of church governance, that attitude on the Church's part was nothing more than a manifestation of widespread anti-papery among conservative protestant denominations in the early part of this century and the latter part of the last, and which has now been consigned to the

historical trash heap so far as the Seventh-day Adventist Church is concerned." [41]

Another question remains. In the Complaint filed by Americans United in Federal Court on September 19, 1984, it is noted in hearings before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations on the nomination of William A. Wilson as Ambassador to the Holy See - "Statements of opposition were submitted on behalf of . . . the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists" - as well as other religious bodies, and who have now joined in the suit filed by Americans United. The question is simply this - What forces have been at work in the Curia on the Sligo to cause Elder Wilson "after careful consideration" to refuse to join in this Federal Court case in spite of the fact that the Church did present a statement of opposition before the Senate Committee? Was it fear of perjury? - or could there be, as has been alleged, Jesuit infiltration?

Besides these possibilities, there is another factor. In the Davenport scandal, there was inferred violation of Federal Law on the part of some of the Trust Officers of the Conferences. The suggestion was even made in some quarters that some of these men could possibly face Federal prosecution. But this has not happened. Why? Was an agreement struck with the Government, and now to go to court against the Government would show a lack of appreciation for a favor done? These questions can only arise because the hierarchy has not been open with the laity, nor has the editor of the Adventist Review kept his promise to report to the Church vital facts, whether good or bad.

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Overseas Readers

A number of folk in overseas countries are receiving the monthly Thought Paper, "Watchman, What of the Night?" via air mail. The paper is still free, but these have made arrangements to cover the additional postage. If you are interested in receiving your copy by air post, write us for details of the air cost to your part of the world.

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PATZER RESPONDS FOR WILSON

"Form" Letter Used

In reporting on "The Crucifixion in Hungary" (WWN, XVII-9), we suggested that "perhaps a deluge of letters to Elder Wilson might bring forth an 'official' explanation from some member of the Curia on the Sligo." Evidence is that letters were written in such a volume that a "form" letter was required to care for the inquiries. We have two such letters before us as we write this report. The only difference between them is that the first paragraph varies, the initials of secretary are different, and one contains a postscript.

However, it is this postscript which tells volumes of the attitude of the Curia on the Sligo toward the laity. It reads: "This is a personal letter to you and is not to be reproduced." How can a "form" letter, with merely a different first paragraph and written by a different secretary using electronic equipment with the same or a duplicate disk, be called, personal? Is deception the technique to make the lay person feel good? The laity are not morons. The couple who received this "personal form letter" had written to Elder Wilson only about the Hungarian crucifixion. The reply included two paragraphs about an Elder John Carter of Australia. If one writes asking questions about one topic, and gets a reply on two topics - how well did the one receiving the letter read it? Then the response is noted as "personal"! It is dishonesty and "cover-up" of which this response is representative that has produced the credibility gap that presently exists in the minds of the laity regarding the hierarchy. When will such techniques end?

Since it is evident that the letter was really not "personal," we shall quote the paragraphs on Hungary only, with comments. (The paragraphs in quotes will be from the letter; our running comments will be in brackets.)

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SUMMARY REPORT - 1

From time to time during the progress of the "Class Action" suit filed by Americans United for the Separation of Church and State on September 19, 1984, in Federal District Court at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, we will be giving either Summary Reports, or "Direct Quote" reports. This one, and those to follow in the next two months will cover the Complaint filed. All direct quotes in this Summary, unless otherwise noted will be from the Complaint. - Editor

The Plaintiffs

The Plaintiffs, besides Americans United for the Separation of Church and State, are many and varied. Church groups - The American Baptist Church, Church of the Brethren, National Association of Evangelicals, National Council of Churches, Presbyterian Church (USA), and the Progressive National Baptist Convention - have joined the case. Pastors of local congregations of the Church of Christ, Reformed Church, Baptist General Association, Southern Baptist, and Seventh-day Adventist are also listed among the plaintiffs.

The individual Seventh-day Adventist ministers named are - Mitchell A. Tyner of Silver Spring, Maryland; Willis Adams of Lima, Ohio; Edwin E. G. Shafer of Frankfort, Kentucky; and Gordon W. Zutz of Henrietta, New York. Also among the plaintiffs is the Council on Religious and Civil Liberty located in Sacramento, California. "The directors and staff are lay members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church."

It is also of interest to note that two Roman Catholic groups have joined the suit. The National Association of Laity is made up of 1300 Catholic Laypersons, which was established to advocate liberal causes within the Catholic Church and "to expedite the carrying out of Vatican II mandates." This group opposes government funding of parochial schools. Another Catholic group is the National Coalition of American Nuns dedicated to "speaking out on issues related to human rights and social justice."

A large number of individuals "have signed on" including educators, a Jewish Rabbi, an Episcopal Bishop, a former member of Congress, and others whose qualifications are listed as "citizens" and "voters of the United States."

One item of interest among the plaintiffs noted above is the appearance of the National Association of Evangelicals represented by Billy A. Melvin, Executive Secretary. The Chicago Sun Times had reported that when Dr. Billy Graham had been asked by William Clark, former National Security Advisor to assess the reaction of Evangelicals to the appointment of an Ambassador to the Vatican, Mr. Melvin was among those listed as contacted by Graham. Graham had reported back that Evangelicals would present few problems "if the Vatican were recognized purely in a political way and without religious implications." (Church and State, March, 1984, p. 7) Apparently now, Mr. Melvin and the Association have had second thoughts.

The Defendants

The Defendants in this Case are listed as (1) Ronald W. Reagan, President of the United States; (2) George P. Shultz, Secretary of State; (3) Donald T. Regan, Secretary of the Treasury; (4) William A. Wilson, Ambassador to the Holy See; and (5) The United States of America.

President Ronald Reagan becomes a defendant because "Under Article II, section 2 of the Constitution, the President has been empowered to nominate, and with the advice and consent of the Senate, appoint ambassadors and other public ministers. Under Article II, section 3 of the Constitution, the President is empowered to receive ambassadors and other public ministers."

"Pertaining to the matter in Hungary, you have misinformation and neither the full story. Any situation that has developed over a long period of time is not resolved easily by mentioning just one phase of a situation by those who have not been involved. Neither the General Conference nor Elder Neal C. Wilson disfellowships anyone. The church where the individual holds his or her membership disfellowships."

[It is true that neither Elder Wilson nor the General Conference have the power to disfellowship individual church members, nor even to disassociate whole churches from conference fellowship. However, Elder Wilson in a sworn affidavit presented in the United States District Court for the Northern District of California stated:

In the Seventh-day Adventist denomination the term "church" has a very comprehensive and broad meaning. It is used to apply to the general organization and headquarters for the Seventh-day Adventists under the name of General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists." [25]

Applying this definition of the "church," Elder Wilson further swore under oath, and consider the implications of the underscored sentence:

In order to achieve the purposes and mission of the Church and to deal with personnel, it is absolutely essential for the Church to have organization and laws. It is also essential for the Church to establish its authority in the community of believers." [26]

I thought The Church is the "community of believers;" and when you seek to establish the "authority" of the hierarchy in that "community" you have Papalism. Thus for Wilson to come down on the side of the organization recognized by the government as the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Hungary is to give approval to the disfellowshipping of "the community of believers" who declined to be a part of the equivalent of the National Council of Churches in Hungary.]

"The leadership of the Euro-Africa Division has been dealing with this situation in a patient, compassionate and Christian manner during the past ten or fifteen years. They have spent an enormous amount of time and have made many trips to Hungary.

They have counseled closely with the General Conference leadership and we have been in complete accord in terms of the approach that should be made.

"It is a very complicated and tragic situation. No one can really understand this unless they have spent considerable time in Hungary itself talking with the various groups that have been involved. It was for this reason that Elder Neal Wilson and Elder G. R. Thompson, the General Conference Secretary, joined the Euro-Africa Division officers in spending twelve days in Hungary during January of 1984. They had extended conversations and discussions with all parties involved. They spent more than thirty hours with the breakaway, so-called Egervari Group. They did everything to encourage these brothers and sisters to return to the church. They declared based on the Church Manual and the procedures accepted by the Seventh-day Adventist Church that hundreds of individuals had been disfellowshipped in an improper manner, and made it easy for these individuals to return to the church. They recommended that there be a union session to choose new leadership and this was accepted by the Hungarian Union and the Hungarian authorities.

"The GC and Division leadership indicated that all had made serious mistakes, both the Hungarian Union and those who had broken away and set up their own organization and church procedures. The breakaway group were in violation of the Church Manual in terms of hiring workers, using the tithe and offerings, ordaining ministers and refusing to accept counsel from the General Conference and the Euro-Africa Division."

[It should be observed that the charge against those who have been disfellowshipped is that they are "in violation of the Church Manual - not the Word of God, nor of moral integrity. The hierarchy indicate that this has been going on for a considerable period of time. Is not the "body" of Christ one? Why has not the Church as a whole been advised of this situation? Why has an explanation of the Hungarian crucifixion had to be pried out of the Curia?]

"The breakaway group insisted that the Hungarian Union remove itself as a member of the Council of Free Churches, and that

unless this was done they could have no part with the organized work of the church in Hungary. This in itself is a very complicated issue and the Division and the General Conference feel that this should happen at an appropriate time but should not become a condition for their return to the organized work of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Hungarian family of conferences or unions.

"The breakaway group insisted that this was a condition and that the church in Hungary is in a state of apostasy as long as they are members of the Council of Free Churches. While we strongly advise against our organizations joining such councils, it has never been a point upon which to declare apostasy. There is considerable history behind this, and the Division and General Conference did not feel impressed that some precipitous and hasty action in this connection was in the best interest of the church. The Lord will indicate the time and the way in which some of these matters should be properly adjusted."

[Do you really catch as you read the above two paragraphs, the force of what is written? - "It is never a point upon which to declare apostasy" for the church to unite with Babylon! God does! Have we gone so far into apostasy that we no longer perceive the meaning of what is written in the book of Revelation? Is this not further evidence of the Laodicean blindness of the hierarchy?]

"As a result of all this, the Division and the General Conference had no choice but to indicate that the breakaway group was in a state of rebellion and that they therefore could not be considered a part of the organized world church. We still love individuals and need to reach out to each one of them with a pastoral concern. We do not consider that the breakaway group is a part of the world family of organizations.

"Of the number you indicated in your letter, approximately one-half of them are still members of the Church. The other

half were disfellowshipped over a period of ten or fifteen years and have organized themselves independently. The General Conference leadership has taken the position not to recognize this self-appointed, independent organization that calls itself Seventh-day Adventists.

"We as a church go together in a united manner, standing for 'the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.'"

[One simple final question to close this sad, sad reply: - Does "the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" include union with Babylon? Then just one more question: - Can one imagine Elijah encouraging the 7000 to join the National Council of the Prophets of Baal and the Grove? But one can, Caiaphas doing it!]

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From Page 5 - Summary Report - 1

While admitting the Constitutional authority of the President to appoint and receive ambassadors and ministers, the Plaintiffs will "claim that the President's authority is not unlimited in that the President of the United States has not, by Article II, been granted any authority to appoint ambassadors to a church."

Representing Americans United are Counselor at Law, Lee Boothby, a Seventh-day Adventist of Berrien Springs, Michigan, and Earl W. Trent, Jr., House Counsel for the American Baptist Church in USA.

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