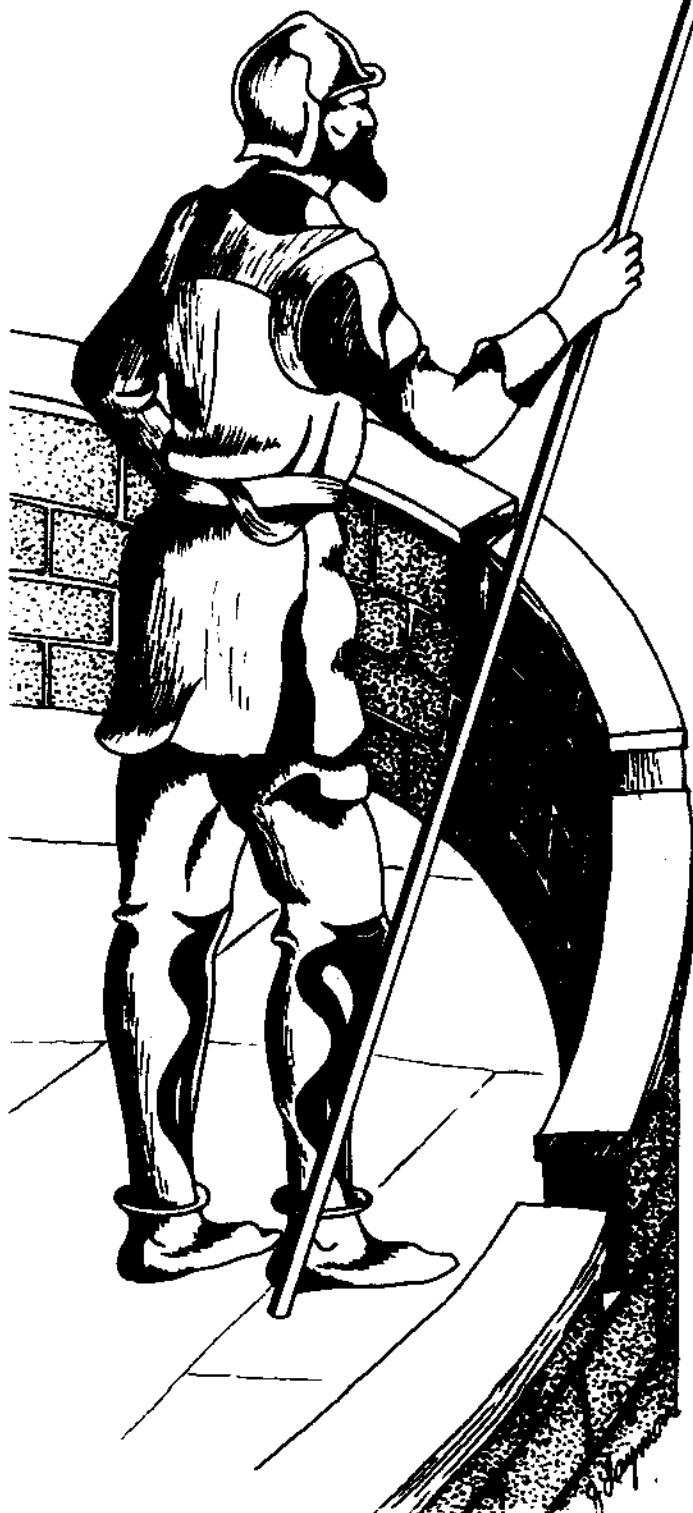


*"Watchman,  
what of the night?"*

"BEHOLD, THE BRIDEGROOM!  
Come out to meet Him."

(Matt. 25:6 RSV)



## WHAT'S IN A NAME?

In recent months reams of paper have been used to tell Seventh-day Adventists, either directly or through the mails, about the "trademarking" of the Church's name, and the legal results when the hierarchy sued a small break-away church in Hawaii for using the name - "Seventh-day Adventist Congregational Church." Just before leaving for Minneapolis to attend the 1888 Centennial celebration, a whole packet of 4-page tracts listed variously as Part I, Update 1 and Update 2, came through the mail. Then on arriving at the Northrup Auditorium on the campus of the University of Minnesota, where the meeting was to be held, concerned Adventists placed in our hands the SDA Press Bulletin. In banner headlines this newspaper proclaimed - "Human Rights Violated at Minneapolis '88" - and sought to associate this issue with the "Trademark Lawsuits" as a major item for Centennial consideration. An interesting sidelight is that one of the speakers during a panel discussion sought to introduce his own brand of "human rights" as involved in the righteousness by faith issue declaring his "hobby horse" was "where the rubber hits the road." The dissidents felt the same way about their "human rights" issue.

So that I will be clearly understood, let me state from the beginning certain convictions:

1) Even though the hierarchy may have had valid reasons for facing the problem they perceived as existing, the route chosen - trademarking the name - has not proved to be the correct solution. A problem does exist, but they would not admit to themselves, they contributed to the problem.

2) There is no Scriptural justification for legal action, such as has been taken in the Hawaii case, unless the hierarchy no longer looks upon those who broke away as brothers in Christ. The Scripture forbids only "brother going to law with brother." (I Cor. 6:6) If they do not consider the Hawaiian church as "brethren," this should tell all dissidents something!

3) The use of a Roman Catholic lawyer to represent the Church is reprehensible and only

compounds a bad course of action. To speculate as one voluminous writer has done as to the nature of the funds used to pay the lawyer doesn't add to his tarnished credibility resulting from other journalistic ventures. If, as speculated, the tithe is being so used, this only adds to the hierarchy's sin; but let us document, and not just give our "opinions." Opinions do not help concerned Seventh-day Adventists arrive at truth!

4) This action on the part of the hierarchy of the Church does create what the Bible calls "an image to the beast." To use the power of the State - in this instance, the courts - to solve a problem perceived to exist is truly following "in the track of Romanism." However, in so recognizing this aspect, is not saying that the "trademark" issue is a fulfillment of Revelation 13.

Using all of these factors, the dissidents are having a heyday in castigating the Church and its leadership - yet the voluminous writer and many of the chief agitators whom I met and talked with at the Centennial meeting in Minneapolis are still members of the Church. If indeed, as is claimed by the dissidents this is an "image to the beast," then they are a part of that "image"!

Now if the dissidents and the voluminous writer, along with the small Hawaiian Church would have simply sat at the feet of Jesus and learned of Him, this whole thing would have been diffused. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said:

**If any man will sue thee at law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.** (Matt. 5:40)

Jesus was talking to professed believers of the House of Israel and their problems. He was setting forth the ground rules of the new Kingdom, He came to establish.

Are we so busy climbing up Mount Sinai, playing God, thundering our opinions and speculations, that we have forgotten to climb up Golgatha's hill and pray, "Lord put into my heart your Sermon on the Mount?" Because dissidents are reading and studying any and everything but the Bible, they have been majoring on minors, and minoring on majors. Besides this, reams of paper do not cover spiritual nakedness, no matter how white the paper may be, but most of the time it has been off-shade.

Now what is in a name? The tear-shedding "brothers" of John Marik say that we must have the name - "Seventh-day Adventists" -

because Ellen White said that is the name the God of heaven wanted us to have. That is true at the time the name was chosen by our spiritual forefathers. Just one question - "Does the name - Seventh-day Adventist - stand for the same thing today, it stood for in 1863? If the dissidents can say, "Yes" to this question, then they better cease to be dissidents!

The Lord Himself changed the name of Jacob to Israel. (Gen. 32:28) His descendants took upon themselves the name - "House of Israel." This name was recognized by Jesus as the name of the Jewish Church. (Matt. 10:6) On the Day of Pentecost, Peter accused that Church with the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. (Acts 2:36) The name - Israel - changed from one who had prevailed with God to one who killed God in the Person of His Messiah. Even though the New Testament pictures the Christian community as "the new Israel" (Eph. 2:12-13), the Jewish hierarchy did not need to "trademark" the name - "House of Israel." Why? The Apostolic Church did not use that name, but called themselves - "The Followers of the Way" - and were so recognized by the leadership of the Jewish Church. (See Acts 9:2 margin; 19:9, 23. In each verse, the Greek reads - "the way.")

Paul in his defense before Felix clearly understood the change that had taken place in "The House of Israel" and how he perceived himself in relationship to it. He stated:

This I confess...that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets." (Acts 24:14)

So what's in a name? Only what it stands for at any given point of time even if given by God, such as the name, "Israel." The question is simple: What does the name - Seventh-day Adventist - stand for today? The answer is equally as simple: - "The 27 Statements of Fundamental Beliefs as voted at Dallas, along with the policies of the hierarchy who are in control of the Church."

So if I want a name to express what the name expressed in 1863, along with an organizational structure, if one wants to go the "church" route which apparently the Hawaiian group prefers, what can be chosen? Here is a suggestion - "Congregational Seventh-day Maranatha Church." Such a course could have saved money, time, and trouble before the time of trouble. But because the words of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount were counted of little merit, and the case of the Hawaiian

# OBSERVATIONS

The Sabbath of the 1988 Centennial Celebration of the Minneapolis General Conference session had arrived. I was sitting in the Northrup Memorial Auditorium on the campus of the University of Minnesota waiting for the events to unfold. "Hottel" type of weather had settled in on Minneapolis. It was misty and wet outside, and snow would begin falling on Sabbath morning. However, the dimly lighted auditorium was warm and comfortable.

During each of the evening meetings of this Minneapolis Commemoration, John Carter of Australia had presented an "evangelistic" type of message. This Sabbath evening his subject was to be - "How to Be Saved and Stay that Way." In the presentation, he did not skip a single note in giving a pure Desmond Ford perception of the Gospel. He challenged - "Will there ever be a time when we will not need to pray the Lord's Prayer: 'Forgive us our debts?'" His answer was clearly - "No!" The leadership of the Church is ill prepared to answer this challenge because in the two Centennial celebrations I attended, on the West Coast and now at Minneapolis, the final atonement and its meaning had not been presented, and my notes indicate that it was only verbalized once during the formal presentations.

In faulting Carter on this concept, is not to say there is no truth in the positions taken by Desmond Ford. The Biblical truth of Justification by Faith alone was clearly presented at both the John W. Osborn Lectureship Series in Riverside, California, and Minneapolis. But there was no attempt to "go on unto perfection" (Heb. 6:1) and seek earnestly for the significance and meaning of the Day of Final Atonement. The idea of a final atonement was projected, in a presentation given during the week, to the time when after the Millenium "one pulse of harmony and gladness beats through the vast creation." (GC, p. 678) This can never be until those who willingly afflict their souls and cease from their own works receive the finished work of the Great High Priest in the Most Holy Place of the Heavenly Sanctuary.

Preceding the Friday evening "Evangelical" message, a thirty minute musical program was presented which included songs on the screen, special selections by soloists, and the Seminary Chorus from Andrews University. The audience this evening, as on other evenings,

was composed of a small number of non-Adventist visitors, the laity of the area churches and ministers at all levels of church administration in the North American Division. Following the rendition of a deeply moving medley by the Seminary Chorus, the audience clapped their approval to the embarrassment of the conductor who sought to stop it. This reponse, entirely inappropriate, can be understood by the fact that each night when Carter came on stage for his act, the assembly was urged to give him a warm "North American" welcome by clapping vigorously their hands. However, during this evening's musical prelude before the stage actor gave his performance, the assembly was led in a chorus based on Isaiah 35:10 - "The Ransomed of the Lord." This was sung through several times, and each time the audience clapped hands to the beat to such an extent that I wondered when they would get up and start dancing. This with the use of large kettle drums beat loudly during a musical rendition for the Sabbath worship service made me wonder how near we are to the fulfillment of the prophecy made in the Writings. In a letter addressed to S. N. Haskell, concerning the Holy Flesh Movement in Indiana, Ellen White wrote:

The things you have described taking place in Indiana, the Lord has shown me would take place just before the close of probation. Every uncouth thing will be demonstrated. There will be shouting, with drums, music and dancing. The senses of rational beings will become so confused that they cannot be trusted to make right decisions. And this is called the moving of the Holy Spirit. (SM, bk ii, p. 36)

Carter departed sufficiently from his outline on how to be saved to clearly state that all were sinners from the General Conference president on down. It was also clear that he was answering his critics in high places. He emphasized heavily the parable of the Pharisee and Publican. There was little doubt left in the minds of those present as to who was who in 1988.

The next morning, as a part of the Sabbath School program was an abbreviated reenactment of the pre-session of the 1888 General Conference. It was performed simply, yet dramatically, fully portraying the tensions of 1888 and the major personalities involved. It was well done and very instructive. This reenactment clearly showed that the brethren in 1888 did not disguise their disagreements but spoke openly to each other. The tensions in 1988 are just as real, but disguised under a cloak of "brotherly love."

At the Sabbath morning worship hour, Charles Bradford, president of the North American

Division, did not speak on the subject as indicated in the Bulletin, but rather assailed Carter's Friday evening message, both from a theological viewpoint involving the depravity of man and the incarnation, and from an administrative point of view. It was made clear that if the "brethren" at the top needed correction, God would take care of it without the help of "critics" whether within or on the periphery of the Church. At points in the presentation, one could almost hear Bradford express the Wieland-Short theme that God was going to turn the Church around, and that all would be well.<sup>2</sup>

Sabbath afternoon was devoted to a musical program featuring singing groups from Andrews University, Union College, Collegedale, Tennessee, the Minneapolis Korean Church, as well as vocal and instrumental soloists. The large stage was arranged for the musical groups to be as near center as possible with the moderator on the audience's left. All announcements and reading of the Scriptures were given from the same pulpit as was used at the 1888 session.

As the Sabbath was drawing to a close, the "George I Butler"<sup>3</sup> of 1988 made his first appearance before the gathering. It was to be a dedication service. After a few brief comments from the pulpit, Elder Neal C. Wilson moved to center stage, mounted the conductor's podium, and without notes spoke for about thirty minutes. His movements were carrying a message prior to his verbalization. In an introspective manner, he discussed Carter's Friday evening appeal in a commendatory way, thus easing Bradford's attack, yet explaining how the various calls did not apply to him. He then sought to lay to rest the 1888 issues just as Elder W. H. Branson had done in 1952. (The language in part was almost parallel.) Wilson indicated we should forget the 1888 episode and direct our focus on only that which had been proclaimed during the 1988 Centennial. He urged the Church to move forward to a finished work under the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. And with the close of the Sabbath, the Centennial Celebration of 1888 also closed - another failure to come to grips with the real message the Lord sought to begin in 1888. From a private conversation, I learned that at the highest levels of the Church, the leadership is unable to come to a consensus as to what the work and mission of the Church should be in the present hour. Thus again, as prior to the 1888 General Conference session, the Church is adrift without chart or compass.<sup>4</sup>

Certain significant facts from 1888 were

recognized at these centennial celebrations. It was clearly documented that Ellen G. White refused to be placed in the role as an inspired interpreter of the Bible, and instead urged those listening to the prophetic conflicts between A. T. Jones and Uriah Smith, and the theological conflicts between E. J. Waggoner and George I. Butler's surrogates to go to the Bible in deep earnest study to find the truth. She said in her final message at the 1888 session:

Let us take our **Bibles**, and with humble prayer and a teachable spirit, come to the great Teacher of the world; let us pray as did David, "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wonderous things out of thy law." (Ms. 15, 1888)

Her final admonition to the delegates was:

We should not reject or oppose the views of our fellow laborers because they do not agree with our ideas until we have used every means in our power to find out whether or not they are truth, **comparing scripture with scripture.** (Ibid.)

Many concepts were presented both at Riverside and at Minneapolis based in the Bible. Vital material, however, was omitted, or merely alluded to. While many in the Church would like to forget 1888<sup>5</sup> now, and no longer be reminded of the failure at the first Minneapolis session, the failure of the Centennial celebration to come to grips with the unique truth given to the Adventist Movement, requires that the message which **began** in 1888 be brought to full revelation. This we have vowed to do, along with continued reports and analyses of current happenings.

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<sup>1</sup>In George R. Knight's book - From 1888 to Apostasy, he alludes to a diary which was recently discovered belonging to R. Dewitt Hottel who attended the 1888 General Conference as the only delegate from Virginia. But as Dr. Mervyn Maxwell put it at the John W. Osborn Lectureship series, Hottel didn't record much except the weather, his sight-seeing, being sick and taking a bath in a rubber tub downtown somewhere in Minneapolis. For Thursday, October 18, Hottel entered the notation - "Rain". For the next day, he wrote - "Cold - Snow". This sequence was followed this year in Minneapolis, except instead of Thursday and Friday, it was Friday and Sabbath. (See Manuscripts and Memories of Minneapolis 1888, p. 514)

<sup>2</sup>In the Ministry (October, 1988), J. Robert Spangler interviewed Charles Bradford regarding the conference scheduled for Minneapolis.

# RIDING HIGH!

During his remarks at the Dedication service in Minneapolis closing "Celebration 88", Elder Neal C. Wilson mentioned that in recent months he had visited with several "heads of state" and other dignitaries. Returning to my desk, I took time to scan the various periodicals that had accumulated during my absence of several weeks. An article in the Adventist Review (Oct. 27, 1988, p. 11) reporting the Annual Council in Nairobi, Kenya, caught my eye in the light of Elder Wilson's remarks. It was captioned - "Wilson's Road to Nairobi." It was a "high road" from various elevations. Setting aside the mountain climbing that was done, we shall note the more serious aspects of the report.

Five weeks prior to the Annual Council, Wilson went to Africa. He first visited Ghana. Arriving at the Kotoka International Airport, he was welcomed by a crowd of more than 2000. "The government of Ghana received the Wilsons [His wife accompanied him] as state guests and placed at their disposal one of the aircrafts reserved for the private use of" the "chairman of the Provisional National Defense Council." During his 10-day itinerary in Ghana, the Wilsons "were paraded through the streets of Kumasi with police motorcade" and "were received by the traditional rulers (Ashanti)..."

Another pre-Council stop on Wilson's schedule was Kampala, Uganda. Here he was met at the airport by the head of government, the prime minister, Dr. Samson Kisekka, a Seventh-day Adventist. On Sunday, Wilson "was taken by police motorcade for the one-and-one-half meeting with Uganda's chief of state, President Y. Museveni."

In a more recent Adventist Review (Nov. 10, 1988, p. 20), a report is given of Wilson's visit to Oslo, Norway, where he attended the Nordic Congress in May. This Congress included Adventist members from Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden. During this time, Wilson visited with "representatives of parliament, the Norwegian state church, the Council of Independent Churches and the National Ecumenical Council." The climax came on May 16 with a visit with King Olav V at his palace which lasted for 20 minutes instead of the customary 10 minutes. Topics of discussion during these visits included "alcohol prevention, racism, the world situation and the role of the Christian church."

All of this activity raises some very serious and perplexing questions. Who paid for the cost of the government plane placed at Wilson's disposal in Ghana? Who paid for the expense of the motorcades in both Ghana and Uganda? Did the Church, or was it all government expense? Did the money come from the taxes taken from the poor of those countries, poor that write to America asking for Bibles? Or was it money from Foreign Aid - money from American taxpayers? If the Church did not pay for these services, then what right does the Religious Liberty section of the Public Affairs Department of the General Conference to protest the expenses paid by the government for the Pope's itineraries here in the USA?

In the Bible, I do read of one of the Lord's apostles speaking before "heads of state" - even kings - Felix and Agrippa. But I find no resemblance between what Paul talked about - except "temperance" and I suspect in the case of Felix it got rather personal (Acts 24:25) - and Wilson's agenda of topics. Nowhere, do I read where Paul met with the religious leaders of his day, and the Roman Empire was full of various religious traditions. Paul also appeared before the head of state for the entire Empire - Nero himself. But I am told that before Nero, Paul presented "the truths of the gospel." He pointed his hearers, those assembled at the Judgment Seat of Nero - Jews, Greeks, Romans, with strangers from many lands - "to the sacrifice for the fallen race." (AA, p. 495) Is it not sad that the Church has so lost its concept of the unique message entrusted to it by God of Christ's final atonement in the Heavenly Sanctuary, that its "chief officer" dialogues on common earthly matters with heads of modern states and regales in exaltation rivaled only by the Pope! It will be countered that Wilson left some good Adventist literature with these men.

Perhaps, however, there needs to be painted on a sign near the new General Conference headquarters a similar duo of pictures as was painted in Prague long ago by "two strangers from England." The only change would be, instead of the Pope, a picture of Wilson as he was paraded though the streets of Kumasi, Ghana, with a police motorcade. (See The Great Controversy, pp. 99-100)

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"My Kingdom is not of this world."

Jesus to Pilate

From page 4 - Observations

One of the questions Spangler asked Bradford was - "Brethren Wieland and Short have had a great burden for the 1888 Message. How do you relate this commemoration to these good brethren?" Bradford replied in part:

Brethren Wieland and Short ought to be happy. Their message has gotten through. We are all receiving it. They have done the church a service. (p. 9)

When I read this - before the meetings I attended - I had to smile. Who is trying to fool who? If the message presented either on the West Coast or at Minneapolis was the message Wieland and Short were sent by God to give to the Church, as written in the original edition of 1888 Re-Examined, then I am unable to read or understand plain English. But if the message had really gotten through, then why were Wieland and Short not permitted to tell that message at Minneapolis in 1888? They were there, but were given no place on the agenda. Or could it be that they have so watered down their message for acceptance by the hierarchy that God could not overrule in their behalf lest He compromise Himself? However, the message on Sabbath morning by Bradford did reveal something. He liked the part Wieland and Short have been teaching that God will heal the backslidden Church and Laodicea will go through. The section of Bradford's message based on Jeremiah and Hosea could have been lifted right out of one of Wieland's sermons. However, the parallel drawn between Judah of Jeremiah's day and today has no validity. The only parallel that meets today's reality is the parallel between the Jewish Church of AD 27-34 and the Church today.

<sup>3</sup>George R. Knight in his book - From 1888 to Apostasy - indicates that George I. Butler "had a lofty view of the role of the General Conference president" (p. 33) In 1873, Butler had written that never had there been a "great movement in this world without a great leader" in reference to James White, and that the members of that movement should follow "the counsels of those best qualified to guide." Knight observes that when Butler became president "he adopted that leadership style for himself" believing himself to be a strong leader and exercised authority from the top down. To him, he was holding "the highest position that our people could impose." Following the 1888 session, Ellen White would write that Butler "thinks his position gives him such power that his voice is infallible." (Ibid.) Now 100 years after 1888, another man occupies the presidency of

the General Conference whose actions and demeanor evidence that he too, believes as George I Butler in regard to the highest of all church offices.

<sup>4</sup>Prior to the General Conference session in 1888, Ellen G. White through the pages of the Review sent messages to prepare the Church for what was to come at that session. (See Christ Our Righteousness, pp. 40-55; 1926 edition) In these messages, she stated the real condition of the church at that time. She wrote:

Spiritual death has come upon the people that should be manifesting life and zeal, purity and consecration, by the most earnest devotion to the cause of truth. The facts concerning the real condition of the professed people of God, speak more loudly than their profession, and make it evident that some power has cut the cable that anchored them to the Eternal Rock, and that they are drifting away to sea, without chart or compass. (R&H, July 24, 1888)

The message in 1888 as given through Elder Jones and Waggoner was to have remedied this condition and given to the Church its chart and compass. The failure then, and the failure now, still leaves the Church adrift without chart or compass.

<sup>5</sup>In introducing his presentation at the John W. Osborn Lectureship series at Riverside, California, Dr. William G. Johnsson, Editor of the Adventist Review, quoted at length from a letter he received from the field which indicated the writer's antipathy for all the agitation over 1888. The writer indicated he was sick of it all and that he would "be glad when 1989 rolls around." Johnsson commented - "I expect (sic) that not a few Adventists echo his sentiments." Wilson in his sole appearance before "Celebration 88" in Minneapolis alluded to this same attitude. The letter quoted by Johnsson clearly indicates that the writer has been turned off by the agitation which Wieland and Short have been doing over the past several years, and how those listening to their messages have represented them in their respective home churches. The whole thing is a sad picture. There is no question but that much new research has been done as to what happened in 1888 and its aftermath. This documentation needs to be carefully analyzed. Besides this some of the emphases given both at Riverside and Minneapolis must be brought to the testing investigation of the Bible. It is doubtful that some of it will hold up. This distortion of truth along with the failure to give the whole truth has only compounded the

To page 7, col. 2

From p. 2 - "What's in a Name?"

Church was seen as a way to castigate the hierarchy for their policies, the dissidents have chosen to take a course of action contrary to the law of Christ wrapping themselves up in clothes of righteousness made out of paper.

Another complaint of this group of dissidents is that the hierarchy of the Church through the power of the Courts are going to take all Adventist books from this little Hawaiian Church. Won't they still have their Bibles? I asked this question of one who came to Minneapolis to protest. The answer - "They will take from them the Bibles with the "Richards' Helps." If so, the sooner, the better! Now the "Richards' Helps" are good in and of themselves, but isn't it time we stopped using "crutches" in no matter what form or size they come, and get down to the business of knowing for ourselves just what the Word of God teaches? No man, organization or government, can take that from us. Perhaps if more time had been so spent, the Church in Hawaii and the dissidents who have taken up their plight might have discovered Jesus and His guideline. Did not this same Jesus also counsel the Laodiceans to buy of Him, His righteousness, instead of paper righteousness to cover spiritual nakedness. It doesn't take reams, Part I and Part So-many of so-many, plus "Updates" to tell the truth, pure and unadulterated, which is Christ's righteousness. (TM, p. 65) There is nothing wrong with using paper to convey concepts. It is a good means of communication, if used wisely and judiciously.

### Ethics

While the independent presses have been turning out reams on the Hawaiian Trademark Case, another item was being distributed. It was set forth as an interview with Neal C. Wilson following the morning services at PUC. As published, one was led to believe that Wilson granted this interview, but I learned from direct conversation that it was recorded from a hidden microphone and during a time when a number were around Elder Wilson asking questions. Then one of two things must have occurred. Either this exchange of questions and answers amounted to a two-way conversation between Wilson and Alabach with the others merely listening in, or else the recording was heavily edited. Whatever the circumstances, the whole was unethical, deceptive, and of the earth, earthly. I do not care how many things Wilson has done with which dissidents can rightly disagree, nor

how sanctimoniously he closed the 1888 Centennial celebration, two wrongs do not make one right. When those who profess, and I say, profess, to be holding up basic and fundamental Adventism, stoop to deception to obtain information, or quote to someone's disadvantage information so obtained, they are in reality worse than the ones they seek to castigate. Say what you mean; mean what you say without malice or intrigue. What you write document using the highest ethical standards possible.

The excuse was offered that tape recorders are used in many services to record what is being said. This is true, but if there is no official recording being made, ethically one should obtain permission before recording privately. Then when asking questions in an off-the-record manner, having a hidden microphone with the view of printing and circulating the questions and the answers, - how low do we stoop to do "battle" in the name of the Lord? There is no question but that we should earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints (Jude 3), but in what and in whose armor do we fight? Truth is never advanced by using the standards of the devil - deception!

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From p. 6, col. 2 - Observations

problem. The question has been left unanswered - "Where do we go from here?"

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"As Christ's ambassadors, [His laborers] are to search the Scriptures, to seek for the truths that are hidden beneath the rubbish of error. And every ray of light received is to be communicated to others. One interest will prevail, one subject will swallow up every other, - Christ our righteousness." (R&H Extra, Dec. 23, 1890)

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