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May 24, 1977

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#11

Re: Columbia Union College

Elder W. B. Quigley, President
Columbia Union Conference
7710 Carroll Avenue
Takoma Park, MD 20012

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DO NOT REMOVE

My dear Brother Quigley:

The question that you have raised "Are there statements from the pen of Ellen G. White to the effect that we should not move Columbia Union College to another location?" is relevant to the present discussions concerning the relocation of the school. Elder White has asked me to write to you after a session in which Dr. Robert Olson, Elder White, and I discussed the matter and put together relevant material.

Coming back to the question, let me say to begin with that the antagonism to the relocation of the college could possibly be based upon the idea that Takoma Park and the location of the college and other institutions here is fixed, that here we have holy ground, and that these institutions must ever remain in this location near the nation's capital.

As we have studied the Ellen G. White writings on this matter, which we have gathered together in a book called Removal to Washington, we have never come across any statement to the effect that the school must not be moved to another location, nor have we discovered a statement to the effect that Takoma Park is holy ground and that our institutions are to remain here forever, or until the Lord comes.

Sister White did call for the establishment of a college in Takoma Park at a time when it was a wooded village seven miles from Washington. She also counseled that it would be well for us to have a college within close proximity to a sanitarium. She also counseled that the publishing house should be located in Takoma Park, but she indicated that "the publishing work that has been carried on in Battle Creek should for the present be carried on near Washington. If after a time the Lord says, move away from Washington, we are to move. We are pilgrims and strangers in this earth, seeking a better country, even a heavenly. When the Lord tells us to move, we are to obey, however inconvenient and inconsistent such a command may seem to us to be."

The foregoing was found in a letter addressed to a locating committee and is quoted by Elder Daniells in the little tract "Removal to Washington," pp. 17, 18. This tract is a part of the compilation bearing the same title Removal to Washington.

It is true that on May 10, 1904, in a General Conference tract titled "Statement and Appeal," p. 32, Ellen White said concerning the establishment of the school and sanitarium in Takoma Park, "The location that has been secured for our school and sanitarium is all that could be desired. The land represents representations that have been shown me by the Lord. . . . It seems as if Takoma Park

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has been especially prepared for us, and that it has been waiting to be occupied by our institutions and their workers. . . . We know that we are where the Lord would have us. The atmosphere is pure, and the water is pure. . . . We fully believe the Lord has gone before us in the purchase of this land, and we shall do all in our power to carry out His will in establishing His work in this place." Quoted in a tract called "A Call to Strengthen Washington Missionary College."

We must not interpret the word "establish" to mean fixed or permanent. We were also established, you will recall, at Healdsburg College for about twenty five years, near the end of the nineteenth century, but the Lord led in the move to Howell Mountain and in the "establishment" of Pacific Union College. So a change was made, you see, in the location of this West Coast school.

Enclosed is a document prepared in our office by Robert W. Olson titled "Ellen G. White Counsels Relating to the Moving of Battle Creek College." As you read this you will note that the Lord led also in the move from Battle Creek College to Berrien Springs, yet the work of the college was indeed established in Battle Creek for years, but Battle Creek was not holy ground. Berrien Springs became the site for the establishment of the new school.

It is interesting that the work of our West Coast publishing house was established at Twelfth and Castro Streets in Oakland for a time, but the call came from the Lord to move from Oakland to a suburban area, namely, Mountain View, where for years the Pacific Press has been located.

The church must be very cautious about undue sentiment and reverence for buildings and sites. "The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are these." We hear the words quoted often. They have come to symbolize this sentimental feeling and this undue reverence directed toward established buildings, centers, et cetera. But when the cloud of the Lord moves on Israel is to follow and to camp in a new location, should the Lord direct. We are strangers and pilgrims in this world, Ellen White wrote. This is true of our institutions as well as individuals within the church.

I am also enclosing a statement for you, Bill, from Fundamentals of Christian Education, p. 492, that might be helpful. Note carefully paragraph 3 where the principle has been underlined. The reference deals with the move from Oakland to Mountain View of the Pacific Press Publishing Association.

Insofar as the move of Columbia Union College to a rural atmosphere near Gaithersburg is concerned, this is a question that must be resolved by the Columbia Union Conference leaders. The White Estate is glad to cooperate, however, by providing such sources of information as are available here that might be useful to you. Please read the enclosed documents carefully. Of course the basic idea of moving because of the advantages of rural influences and the disadvantages of urban influences is paramount.

Sincerely your friend,



D. A. Delafield, Undersecretary
White Estate