

Andrews file

Glendale, Calif., June 12, 1961

Dear Brother Figuhr,-

Naturally I have given much study to the situation that has arisen by your unlawful action of suspending my credentials and calling a session to consider my case without giving me due notice as provided in the Church Manual:

"It is a fundamental principle of justice that every member has a right to be heard in his own defence, and to introduce evidence and produce witnesses in his own behalf. No church should vote to disfellowship a member under circumstances that deprive a member of this right if he chooses to exercise it. Due notice should be given by the church members of intention to try their cases, thus giving them opportunity to appear in their own behalf."

Practically every provision of this you violated, and the fact that you knew the rule, makes your violation most serious. I shall ascertain ~~on this trip~~ how far members of the official group who voted, are also responsible. I think they are.

I thought at first that the matter could be terminated by an apology on your part and the restoration of my credentials; but as matters have developed, this is no longer possible. Had you been ignorant of the rule, this might serve as mitigating circumstances. But this was not the case. It appears to be a deliberate attempt to ruin me, by violating well known rules. This makes your action inexcusable. It will be so dealt with.

I get letters from all over the earth asking what really happened. I have avoided answering them; but I shall do so no more. A man's reputation is his life, and when reputation is gone, life may as well go.

Most of the letters I receive are encouraging and profess confidence in me and express perplexity in regard to what has happened, of what crime I have been guilty and why the "trial" was held in secret and the defendant not notified nor present. All express amazement of a trial being held and a man condemned in his absence, where of course it was impossible to make any defence. Two were clear that it was planned procedure to ruin me, and that the statement of wanting a hearing "On my own terms" is a clumsy attempt to cover up something they did not want the public to hear. In that they are correct. For at least three years I have been wanting a hearing and have been denied one, on the grounds as they themselves say that it "would only add to the present

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Discord." What has been done in the matter of a "trial" is not only a crime but a sin, and a grievous one, as it concerns the matter of a minister's reputation, as is pointed out to me in not a few of the letters I receive. They know that our officers are supposed to be good men, and would not deprive a man of his credentials unless there were very good grounds for it. Hence my sin must have been, perhaps morals or defalcations. Thousands, many thousands perhaps, will lose faith in me, in the church, perhaps in God, and surely in the officers, all because a few men consider themselves ^{authorized} to set aside the rules that are given for the protection of the innocent.

I shall never wish to see any one suffer as my wife has suffered these last few weeks. She is one of God's chosen ones, a saint. God will surely call some to account for the suffering they have brought to innocent ones. What I have gone through is not to be compared to the thousands who have had their confidence in the ministry sadly shaken. If Andreasen has done such awful things that they have felt clear to suspend his credentials, and the thing was so bad that they even had a secret session where he was not present, in whom then, can we have confidence? My children deeply feel the disgrace. As were the lepers of old, I am excluded from my place in the pulpit. I cannot preach, I cannot pray, I cannot step on the rostrum. I cannot baptize, I cannot officiate ~~in~~ the Lord's supper. I cannot bury my sister in law who died last week and whose funeral I attended, but as a pariah. Did I suffer, and thousands with me, because some officers pass an unjust sentence, and do not even invite ^{me} to the occasion? God will surely not let this pass. And should I let it pass and do nothing? If I did not do my best to wipe this awful injustice from the church, I could never look upon my face in the mirror any more. I would be a craven coward.

Now, what can be done? The illegal suspension passed by men who never heard the defence, must not only be retracted but the very record of it erased. That is No. 1. There must be an apology published in the Review, signed by the president on the behalf of all the officers. The sentence has gone to all the world, and the correction

must go as far. No. 3. Due consideration ^{should be} given to the conduct of Elder Figuhr in this case in view of the terrible consequences resulting from an illegal trial, consequences ^{which} has brought the denomination in disrepute and suffering an sorrow to untold thousands. NO. 4. Just remuneration to Elder Andreasen for the financil cost to which he has been put. No.5. Vote of censure for the part of the officers in knowingly ^{ing} transgress the rules and passing an illegal sentence in the defendant's absense. No. 6. Consideration to what else can be done to reinstate Eld Abdreases to the high ^{years.} cateem in which he has ben held for more than sixty. He must not go down to the grave an outcast.

M.L.Andreasen