

## Defence Speech by M. L. Andreasen

R. H. BIETZ

Such as he would have made had he been permitted to defend himself at his "trial" Apr. '61

April 14, 1961, I received a letter from Eld. Beach, secretary of the General Conference, informing me that my ministerial credentials had been suspended, and for me to return them. This was a complete surprise to me, as I had received no previous notice that I was on trial and that my name was coming up for consideration. The Church Manual provides that "Due notice should be given by the church to members under discipline, of ~~the~~ intention to try their cases, thus giving them opportunity to appear in their own behalf." This was not done.

I answered Eld. Beach that I did not recognize this assembly as lawful, that I considered the action null and void, and asked that it be set aside and a lawful council called. I never received an answer.

In a letter of August 4, 1961, Elder Figuhr informed me that they "simply want assurance that since you have already have ceased to circulate your material, you do not propose to continue it." I am to stop circulating protests.

May I explain that I ceased circulating my protests not because of the action of the council. I had already done so - but because unscrupulous persons copied and circulated my writings, sending where I did not intend to send it. I could not stop this abuse unless I copyrighted my material, and this I could not afford to do. So I simply stopped writing, as this would stop them also. I intended to continue writing until I had sufficient material for a book, then I would copyright this. On this plan I am now working. This, then, does not mean that I will write and circulate no more. I consider the present apostasy so great that I may not keep silent. God's command is not nullified by an unlawful act of a council.

I am perplexed that any one can think that I will be moved by a threat and by such suspension of credentials. God gave me those credentials, and God only can remove them. I believe with all my heart that we are in the Omega apostasy. Men who hold office but a little longer, may wish to exhibit ~~reserved to God only~~ powers reserved to God only; but God has not resigned. He will see justice done, and the fleeting pride of man laid in the dust.

It is my intention to recount this present apostasy, with names I have previously omitted. I don't think the names of the four men who visited with Dr. Barnhouse in his home should any longer remain a secret. For six years they have no remained in the background, thinking that silence will hide them. I want definite answers to some questions, though no answer will tell the same story. I want their answer to the question if they totally repudiated our sanctuary doctrine and investigative judgment. I know what Dr. Barnhouse said and maintained till his death. We shall now get the statements from our own men. Here is where the present apostasy began, and here is where I shall begin. I want to know about the vault, and the men who visited there; about the changes said to be made in Sr. White's writings, and why access is denied to the writings. I want to know about editor Nichol's story in the Review slandering my name. I want to of anti-Christian passages in Questions on Doctrine - and many other things.

It is not my intention to begin in this paper the seventeen articles I have outlined for publication. All I shall do in this paper is demand the right of man, any man, to be heard in his own defence, as a fundamental right, which no man can take from him. It can be a Chessmen, and Eichmann; it may concern as small a matter as the theft of a pin or an apple or the murder of five million Jews - all have a right to be heard - and are heard. This holds true in all civilized nations. And if the defendant is unable to speak in his behalf, the government will supply him with the best legal assistance. Only Hätler, in modern times violated this rule. What about Seventh-day Adventists?

Officially we stand on solid ground in this matter. Our Church Manual says this;

RIGHT OF MEMBER TO BE HEARD IN HIS OWN DEFENCE

"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 the member of this right, if he chooses to exercise it. Due notice should be given by the church to the member under discipline of the intention to try their case, thus giving them opportunity to appear in their own behalf."

Read that declaration again. There are six definite directions given, every one of which Eld. Figuhr violated. He was not ignorant of these provisions; he had read them again and again. He knew what he was required to do. And still he decided to abrogate every one of them, and forbid me to make any response. He taped my mouth. An elected official who served a few years and uses them to abrogate fundamental rights! May God save His people!

The right to be heard is not a mere privilege. It is a right, whom no man can grant nor take away. It should be noted, however, that it was not Eld. Figuhr who was only guilty. The vote was unanimous. That means that every officer was guilty, and shares with the president this injustice and lawlessness. Every one shared his violation of his (implied) oath of office. That put all on the defence and raises the question of their right to administer law which they violate. It raises the question if they can be trusted not to violate other fundamental rights. What they have done is not only a sin, but sin done "with a high hand", a transgression, which counts heavy in the government of God.

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To refuse a man to be heard is a sin peculiarly heinous in the sight of God. It reduces a man from his God-given status as a being formed in the image of God to the level of brute creation who before his hearers stands dumb, his mouth taped and a dagger plunged into his sheath. He is degraded to the level of a beast who cannot explain and who cannot speak. A dog may disturb the sleep of his master by his barking, and be subjected to an unmerciful beating, because he cannot explain that he was merely trying to protect his master by warning him of a prowler. A man who is not permitted to speak is put in the same position. A man that thus degrades another man is lowering himself to the status in which he puts the other man. Because of these considerations, taping a man's mouth is reckoned as one of the lowest crimes of which man can be guilty. Such cannot serve in any position in the cause of God. It is not a matter of punishment meted out for transgression. It is an insult, to God and man. May God have mercy on his church, if its members are to be subject to such officials.

In view of these considerations, I demand first of all a retraction of the sentence of suspension. Next I demand a trial according to the laws of Seventh-day Adventists. I demand a neutral jury; not a jury composed of my accusers, a jury such as is selected from fair, honest men, who have not already formed their opinion. In this trial I want freedom of speech, as I wish to present certain charges against his officials. These, as matters of justice, are my demands.

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If my request for a retraction of the sentence is granted, I suggest that I am willing to negotiate all other matters, for I well realize that such a trial as I suggest will cause serious results as far as the church is concerned. Remove the sentence of suspension, and all other matter can be negotiated. But I do not want this to be unduly prolonged. If a book is to be written it must be done before Christmas to be of value.

Sincerely,

*M. L. Andreasen*