

Future NEWS

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A LIVING REALITY

Agitate, agitate, agitate. The subjects which we present to the world must be to us a living reality. It is important that in defending the doctrines which we consider fundamental articles of faith we should never allow ourselves to employ arguments that are not wholly sound. These may avail to silence an opposer, but they do not honor the truth. We should present sound arguments, that will not only silence our opponents, but will bear the closest and most searching scrutiny. With those who have educated themselves as debaters there is great danger that they will not handle the word of God with fairness. In meeting an opponent it should be our earnest effort to present subjects in such a manner as to awaken conviction in his mind, instead of seeking merely to give confidence to the believer.

Whatever may be man's intellectual advancement, let him not for a moment think that there is no need of thorough and continuous searching of the Scriptures for greater light. As a people we are called individually to be students of prophecy. We must watch with earnestness that we may discern any ray of light which God shall present to us. We are to catch the first gleamings of truth; and through prayerful study clearer light may be obtained, which can be brought before others.

When God's people are at ease and satisfied with their present enlightenment, we may be sure that He will not favor them. It is His will that they should be ever moving forward to receive the increased and ever-increasing light which is shining for them. The present attitude of the church is not pleasing to God. There has come in a self-confidence that has led them to feel no necessity for more truth and greater light. We are living at a time when Satan is at work on the right hand and on the left, before and behind us; and yet as a people we are asleep. God wills that a voice shall be heard arousing His people to action. *Testimonies*, volume 5, 708.

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Mission Statement

The ministry of *Future for America* is to proclaim the final warning message of Revelation 14 as identified within the prophecies of the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. The end-time fulfillment of Bible prophecy is no longer future-for it is taking place before our eyes. The historic, prophetic understanding of Seventh-day Adventism is now present truth. We are the final generation. Our emphasis on the prophetic word includes all the counsel of God's Word. To know what lies ahead is useless if we do not possess the experience to stand during these solemn times. Through obedience to God's law, and faith in the promises of God's Word, we are to receive that experience.

Coupled with the prophetic message, *Future for America* emphasizes all aspects of the medical missionary work. The "entering wedge"-medical missionary work-must be practiced by those who are to finish God's work in these final hours.

During this time period, country living becomes more essential with each passing moment. *Future for America* upholds and promotes this end-time truth. God's people must prepare for the coming storm, and that preparation includes the experience of learning how to survive in a simple fashion, away from the great centers of population.

Future for America intends to print and distribute truth-filled literature, while helping to establish lay-printing operations in parts of the Lord's vineyard where faithful brethren do not have the means to raise up a printing operation with their own resources.

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"GOD CANNOT DISPLAY THE KNOWLEDGE OF HIS WILL AND THE WONDERS OF HIS GRACE AMONG THE UNBELIEVING WORLD UNLESS HE HAS WITNESSES SCATTERED ALL OVER THE EARTH. IT IS HIS PLAN THAT THOSE WHO ARE PARTAKERS OF THIS GREAT SALVATION THROUGH JESUS CHRIST SHOULD BE HIS MISSIONARIES, BODIES OF LIGHT THROUGHOUT THE WORLD, TO BE AS SIGNS TO THE PEOPLE, LIVING EPISTLES, KNOWN AND READ OF ALL MEN, THEIR FAITH AND WORKS TESTIFYING TO THE NEAR APPROACH OF THE COMING SAVIOUR AND SHOWING THAT THEY HAVE NOT RECEIVED THE GRACE OF GOD IN VAIN. THE PEOPLE MUST BE WARNED TO PREPARE FOR THE COMING JUDGMENT. TO THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN LISTENING ONLY TO FABLES, GOD WILL GIVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO HEAR THE SURE WORD OF PROPHECY, WHEREUNTO THEY DO WELL THAT THEY TAKE HEED AS UNTO A LIGHT THAT SHINETH IN A DARK PLACE. HE WILL PRESENT THE SURE WORD OF TRUTH TO THE UNDERSTANDING OF ALL WHO WILL TAKE HEED; ALL MAY CONTRAST TRUTH WITH THE FABLES PRESENTED TO THEM BY MEN WHO CLAIM TO UNDERSTAND THE WORD OF GOD AND TO BE QUALIFIED TO INSTRUCT THOSE IN DARKNESS." *TESTIMONIES*, VOLUME 2, 631-632.

"THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IS TO CONVINCe THE WORLD OF SIN, OF RIGHTEOUSNESS AND OF JUDGMENT. THE WORLD CAN ONLY BE WARNED BY SEEING THOSE WHO BELIEVE THE TRUTH SANCTIFIED THROUGH THE TRUTH, ACTING UPON HIGH AND HOLY PRINCIPLES, SHOWING IN A HIGH, ELEVATED SENSE, THE LINE OF DEMARCATION BETWEEN THOSE WHO KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS OF GOD, AND THOSE WHO TRAMPLE THEM UNDER THEIR FEET. THE SANCTIFICATION OF THE SPIRIT SIGNALIZES THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THOSE WHO HAVE THE SEAL OF GOD, AND THOSE WHO KEEP A SPURIOUS REST-DAY. WHEN THE TEST COMES, IT WILL BE CLEARLY SHOWN WHAT THE MARK OF THE BEAST IS. IT IS THE KEEPING OF SUNDAY. THOSE WHO AFTER HAVING HEARD THE TRUTH, CONTINUE TO REGARD THIS DAY AS HOLY, BEAR THE SIGNATURE OF THE MAN OF SIN, WHO THOUGHT TO CHANGE TIMES AND LAWS." *BIBLE TRAINING SCHOOL*, DECEMBER 1, 1903.

MINISTRY UPDATE

THE PHILIPPINES

Our twelfth evangelistic series in the last five years was completed in May with good success. We have planned to hold another series in January 2003. The budget for the upcoming series is six thousand dollars. In past years we have committed to a certain number of annual evangelistic series. We are going to do it differently this year. Instead of agreeing to two or three series, we have committed to the first one in January, and agreed to hold another every three months thereafter, as the Lord provides funding. If the funds arrive marked "Philippines Evangelism" we will move forward on the next series. If the Lord sees fit to bless this planning we will continue holding evangelism in this part of the Lord's vinyard until circumstances close the work down.

Our reasoning for this planning is as follows. We have all been commanded to do the work of evangelism: **But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry. 2 Timothy 4:5.** We believe part of the ministry of *Future for America* should be evangelism. There are many opportunities to do evangelism in the world. When you have the funding, most Conferences outside the US are quite willing to allow American Adventists to bring funds into their Conference to accomplish the task at hand. We have concluded that we have a stronger and more lasting impact when we work with the same Conference at each meeting. This allows us to be familiar with the many aspects of the work we pursue during the brief three week period. We point to the record of the past four years working with a single Conference in the Philippines as evidence of this principle. In the last four years the Central Visayan Conference has led their Union in baptisms. The brethren there attribute this success to the efforts of *Future for America*. I attribute it first; to the Lord, second; to the dedicated Bible workers, and third; to the prayers and financing our supporters have provided.

Working in one field allows you to do long term assessment of the fruits of your labor. Last year I returned to several churches where we had previously held series and found that almost one hundred percent of those baptized over the last four years were still in Sabbath school every Sabbath day. This high percentage of retention of new converts is amazing compared to what takes place in the more affluent Western world. Therefore we have set forth a plan to continue holding evangelistic series every three months as the Lord provides funding. We are attempting this approach because the amount of planning and preparation for a series is much more difficult than the actual crusade. This pre-work is also complicated by the fact that we wait on the Lord to supply the funds. This prevents you from moving forward until a certain amount of funds is in hand. From this point on we will keep an update of the Philippine Evangelism fund in our newsletter, and when we reach half the budget of six thousand we will begin the next series. Three thousand dollars is the amount needed to pay ten Bible workers to begin their three month advance work. We will trust if the Lord provides that amount, He will provide the other half within the next three months.

We encourage you to help in this work. There has been an average of just over one hundred baptisms per series, which averages out to sixty US dollars for one soul receiving and accepting the truth. This takes place while ten Bible workers are being supplied with a four month salary they would not otherwise have, so there are other blessings involved as well. In a recent newsletter we listed out the churches, schools, and other blessings that have also been supplied through this work as well. Time is short and we are willing to serve in this fashion if the Lord continues to supply the funding, and thus, demonstrating His providential leading.

After my trip to the Philippines in May I received the following letter from Pastor Palange. We have served with him every year in our work there. You may remember a story two years ago in the *Mission Spotlight* program that spoke of an Adventist pastor that entered a dark Catholic area in the Philippines and began Bible studies with a group. Before long the group had invited three Protestant pastors to set in on the studies. When it was all done, the pastors and their congregations accepted the truth. Pastor Palange is this pastor. The dark area he entered is one of the areas we have been following up in since that time. One of those former Protestant pastors was convicted to continue as a pastor and began co-reporting while he paid his way through Mountain View college to get the needed degrees to be an Adventist pastor. He is now a Bible worker serving with pastor Palange, and *Future for America* is supplying his monthly stipend. Almost all the Bible workers have worked their way through seminary, but there are not enough funds to hire any new pastors in the Philippines, so they either sell books or do advance work for evangelistic series. These men are dedicated. (Though not having funds to hire pastors, the average pastor in the Philippines has eighteen churches to oversee!) In any case, here is pastor Plange's recent note:

Dear Elder Jeff,

After we met at Central Visayan Conference I went home awaiting your telephone call as we agreed. I then learned that you have left early so I proceeded to my territory bringing the packages you brought to be distributed to all concerned. Brother Jeff. Thank you so much for your support. Without you the work here in Southern Cebu is slow due to lack of financial support. Imagine before we had only two hundred members in Southern Cebu District, but now over six hundred. Southern Cebu is a big and dark (Catholic) territory. It needs more Bible workers to work the dark areas. Our Conference cannot afford to hire Bible workers.

Our future plans is to have two crusades in two municipalities that have no Seventh-day Adventists, (Ronda and Oslob). We will pray for these places. People are prejudice against our religion. They are dedicated Roman Catholics. Everything will be trusted to Him.

God bless you, and more power to you and your family. Your brother in Christ, Pastor Palange.

CANADA

As you may have noticed on page two, *Future for America* now has an office in Canada. I met Sister Vallieres at a camp meeting in Nova Scotia a couple of Summers ago and we have been in communication off and on, since that time. At the beginning of last year there was a postal increase which forced us to cease sending monthly materials overseas, with the exception of Canada. The postage increase for Canada was small, but there were other problems with changing Canadian money to dollars. Through the Lord's providence and Sister Phyllis' willingness to serve, she will now be handling all transactions of this ministry in Canada. This is a blessing in many ways. We solicit your prayers as this work develops further.

THE MOSLEM WORK

Currently Brother Steve Dickie is in Uzbekistan making preparations for two evangelistic campaigns directed at the Moslems of that area. About a year ago Steve and I became convicted that the way to reach Moslems was through the prophecies, and most specifically, the book of Daniel. At that time, Steve asked the Conference leaders (in Uzbekistan) if they would allow he and myself to share the book of Daniel in an evangelistic series. Not only were they willing, they asked us to hold two series. A problem that existed was the laws of Uzbekistan. It is against the law to do any type of evangelism, except when you own your own building. The brethren estimated twenty-five thousand dollars to build one Adventist mosque. (We have built churches in the Philippines from three hundred to five thousand dollars.) Steve and I used this financial problem as a fleece. If the money was supplied, we would move forward. The Lord has since provided twenty-five thousand to build the first mosque, so Steve is currently in Uzbekistan doing the ground work for building the mosque and preparing the series. The following is a letter we recently received from the Pastor Shvarts:

Dear Stephen Dickie,

It gives me great joy to know of your and your friend's, Jeff Pippenger's, interest in Southern Union Conference, and we certainly hope and look forward to being able to work together in this large task of reaching people for Christ. Truly the countries we are working in are challenging areas and we need to develop creative ideas in order for the witnessing work to continue. As Elder Ott has mentioned to you, countries like Uzbekistan have issued specific laws restricting any public or personal witnessing work outside of a registered church. In spite of that, by developing culture specific approach, we are able to reach people as it was in the case with Olga Mourga's program in Samarkand, which we are thankful for. You are very correct in your observation that we have some common ground with the Muslims in Samarkand, who so highly revere Daniel. This may and should be used in our attempt to reach the Muslim population there. Thank you again for your letter and for your interest in the countries of Central Asia. We look forward to working together. Sincerely, Alexander Shvarts.

Since we came under conviction that Daniel is the key to the Moslem world several doors have been thrown open for us to present the prophecies to Moslem audiences. We have an invitation to do a series in the area of the Philippines where the recent Moslem unrest has taken place. We have an invitation from a conference in Africa for two series. Plus the two in Uzbekistan that are already under preparation. We have a possible series on the other side of Africa as well. We solicit your prayers for the planning and preparations of these five and possibly six prophetic presentations to Moslem audiences.

If we are to proceed with these plans the Lord will need to supply the funds, as He has already begun to do in Uzbekistan. Travel expenses in Africa and Central Asia are generally more expensive than average. We also will need to translate and print materials into local languages, hire interpreters, rent meeting places, and many other as yet unknown expenses.

After Steve and I came under conviction that the book of Daniel was the key to the Moslem world we began to study in order to understand their culture, history, and religion. The Lord brought us into contact with a very minority understanding in Adventism concerning Moslems and their religion. As we have studied the small amount of information from this minority position we realized that many of the concepts were correct, but some of the applications currently used by those who practice this minority understanding were not in agreement with the role and purpose of prophecy. Prophecy is the key that we recognized for reaching mankind at this point in earth's history, no matter what culture or religion a man may be found in.

We therefore have come to recognize that our approach will be unique. We have found none in Adventism who have chosen to make the book of Daniel the point of reference for the Moslem community, even though the book of Daniel identifies several prominent truths designed to reach the Moslem mind. Consider the following truths located in the book of Daniel--the Roman church as the antichrist power; the Jews as God's chosen people and their ultimate rejection by God as His people; the USA and its role of returning the papacy to power. All of these powers are identified in a light which should be easily received by the Moslem mind. After all it was the Roman church that opposed the Moslems during the Crusades. The hatred of the Jews by the Moslems is well documented. The hatred of the USA (the Great Satan) is also well documented, especially since 9/11. Along with all this is a well documented respect for the prophet Daniel by the Moslem world. This is the avenue we intend to use to approach the Moslem audience.

Since we began to study the Moslem culture we have come to understand information from the Quran that can be used as points of reference to challenge the listener with "the events connected with the close of probation and the need of preparation for the time of trouble".

At this point, we are uncertain about what is ahead in this undertaking, but we both are convinced that it is the Lord directing these different projects. Because of this we know He will also supply the funding. I prayerfully ask that you would take this work to the Lord in prayer and ask His blessing upon it, but also ask if He would have you help financially in any way. We have already recognized that to do the "gospel business" in Central Asia and Africa is much more costly than South America and the Philippines. We are now waiting on funding to begin. If the Lord convicts you to help please mark your funds "Moslem Work".

"The events connected with the close of probation and the work of preparation for the time of trouble, are clearly presented. But multitudes have no more understanding of these important truths than if they had never been revealed." *The Great Controversy*, 594.

CURRENT ITINERARY

In three days we leave for New York state to hold a week of prayer at two different churches. When this service is finished we are off to Angwin, California for a Sabbath meeting. In September we are holding meetings in London, and in October we will attend the annual meeting of the Christain Coalition in Washington, DC. At the end of October and the beginning of November we have two camp meetings in Colombia. Then January we have the Philippines evangelism series. Somewhere in this itinerary we will begin the Moslem meetings. We solicit your support.

SPANISH DEPARTMENT

Al and Lupe Perez are now living in the area near us and beginning their service of producing the monthly Spanish newsletter and audio mailout. They have already been a great blessing is beginning to share the work load here and with providing very nice fellowship in our service together. They are fairly new Adventists, but consecrated. We ask that you would add them and their work to your prayer list.

After a decade of work and financial sacrifice, Seventh-day Adventists in the Central Asian nation of Uzbekistan now have a spiritual center of their own in the capital city of Tashkent. "I think of all the prayers that have been uttered over the years about this new house of prayer," said regional Adventist president Rubin Ott at a dedication service in late June. "Finally this miracle has happened. The Lord is holding up Uzbekistan and Tashkent."

Ott says that religious groups in Uzbekistan are allowed to hold public meetings only in their own buildings. "We can't rent a hall or theater as they do in places like Russia," he explains. Complicated registration laws restrict the work of all religious bodies in Uzbekistan, including that of the majority Muslims.

The new Adventist center, which was sponsored in part by church members in Germany and other countries, includes a large church auditorium, rooms for small group meetings, and a field office for local church leaders. The Adventist administrative office for Uzbekistan and several nearby nations is located in the country of Kyrgyzstan. Adventists must obtain local registration in eight of Uzbekistan's political regions before they will be legally permitted to open a separate headquarters in Uzbekistan. The church has currently completed this registration process in six regions.

Despite challenges to their freedom, members in Uzbekistan point out that their situation is better than in neighboring Turkmenistan, where Adventists and other minority groups are essentially forbidden to meet.

Adventists in Uzbekistan say they faced discouragement as their membership declined in the late 1990s. When the Soviet Union broke up, thousands of Uzbekistan residents with Russian and German ancestry returned to their homelands. Local Adventist churches lost many second and third generation members. "We met and prayed about how our church could grow again," says Ott. "Our countries [in Central Asia] have so many laws about what you can do and can't do as a church. But we decided to start focusing not on what we couldn't do but on what we could do."

"For example, in Uzbekistan, we can legally invite the public to our own buildings. We can do health education programs such as Health Expo and stop smoking seminars. We can meet in small Bible study groups as long as we do it in one of our churches. We tried to focus on what is possible, and for the past two years we have once again experienced small increases in membership."

With about 25 million inhabitants, Uzbekistan is the most populous and some say the most historic of the former Soviet nations in Central Asia. Samarkand and other cities served as major stops on the ancient Silk Road between China and Europe. The first Adventists probably arrived in the country before 1905. *Adventist News Network*.

GOVERNMENT DEBT WILL SINK THE US

For a while, there was a lot of talk about surpluses, though this was based on accounting tricks that would make Enron executives blush. Now the talk is that we have a war, and so we need to run deficits that not even accounting tricks can hide. This is very dangerous for the future of our country.

The \$6 Trillion debt is a real debt owed to real people and corporations, both domestic and foreign. We owe it, in global terms, mostly to a handful of rich people and big corporations. They expect to get paid, and should the day come when they doubt the ability of the US government to pay, they can wreck our economy by dumping the [US] bonds on the [stock] market. I know the president wants to protect the country, but if he bankrupts us in the process, he will have done more damage than the terrorists. *The Conservative Chronicle*, March 20, 2002.

Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. James 5:1-3.

THE US DOLLAR IS RUNNING OUT OF TIME

In 2000, outlays by foreign direct investors in the US were \$320.9 billion, 99% of which were to acquire existing US companies rather than to establish new US companies. In other words, foreigners are using our \$1 billion-per-day trade deficit to buy up American firms, while many of the remaining US companies are moving both production, and research and development out of the US. Sooner or later, the domestic economic base won't support a strong dollar. If the dollar falls in value, those "cheap foreign goods" won't be cheap any longer. American consumers will be squeezed by a declining dollar, and by the loss of domestic manufacturing and high-tech jobs.

The economic shock would take political stability with it, as politicians scramble to offset declining incomes with more income-redistribution programs. America's continuing importation of massive numbers of poor, uneducated, welfare-dependent [**Editor's note:** largely Catholic.] immigrants from Third World countries will add to the political pressures. Politicians will further squeeze the incomes of those Americans who hold the shrinking supply of productive jobs, not yet moved offshore. What is the solution? There might not be one. If crisis arrives, it is a good bet that Washington will have no clue. *The Conservative Chronicle*, May 22, 2002.

"There are not many, even among educators and statesmen, who comprehend the causes that underlie the present state of society. Those who hold the reins of government are not able to solve the problem of moral corruption, poverty, pauperism, and increasing crime. They are struggling in vain to place business operations on a more secure basis. If men would give more heed to the teaching of God's word, they would find a solution of the problems that perplex them.

"The Scriptures describe the condition of the world just before Christ's second coming. Of the men who by robbery and extortion are amassing great riches, it is written: 'Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. Behold, the hire of the laborers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter. Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you.' James 5:3-6." *Testimonies*, volume 9, 13.

THE EROSION OF ECONOMIC CONFIDENCE

In the last year, we have gone (it seems) from a world of small and understandable risks to a world of huge and imponderable dangers. The stock market flourishes or falters according to the prevailing mood. To make new investments, companies need more than cash flow. They need enthusiasm. In the late 1990's the euphoria was indestructible. Now there is a curious tension. American consumers have remained fairly optimistic. Their spending has kept the economy advancing. But among economic elites, there's a foreboding that something—terrorism, corporate scandals, a "dollar crisis," a "Japan crisis"—is leading us to we know not where. The foreboding could become self-fulfilling, if it paralyzes people and and companies. *Newsweek*, June 17, 2002.

"The present is a time of overwhelming interest to all living. Rulers and statesmen, men who occupy positions of trust and authority, thinking men and women of all classes, have their attention fixed upon the events taking place about us. They are watching the relations that exist among the nations. They observe the intensity that is taking possession of every earthly element, and they recognize that something great and decisive is about to take place,—that the world is on the verge of a stupendous crisis.

"The Bible, and the Bible only, gives a correct view of these things. Here are revealed the great final scenes in the history of our world, events that already are casting their shadows before, the sound of their approach causing the earth to tremble, and men's hearts to fail them for fear." *Prophets and Kings*, 536-537.

"In the last scenes of this earth's history, war will rage. There will be pestilence, plague, and famine. The waters of the deep will overflow their boundaries. Property and life will be destroyed by fire and flood. . . . Are we individually forming characters that will be meet for the society of Christ and the heavenly angels?" *Review and Herald*, October 19, 1897.

NOT IF, BUT WHEN

Even though the American people on September 11 witnessed the horror of terrorism up close, at home, over and over again on television, they still seem to underestimate this new threat. Our most senior officials tell us that attacks using weapons of mass destruction are inevitable. Not if, but when. As Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld put it, terrorist networks "are aggressively trying to get nuclear weapons . . . and they would not hesitate one minute on using them."

Since these terrorists, in civilian garb, can blend into a polyglot American population, the strategic doctrine of containment cannot work, and the strategic doctrine of deterrence, based as it is on an aversion to dying, has no relevance. In short, the historic invulnerability of the US homeland to catastrophic terrorism has ended. Staying calm in the face of such warnings is an admirable quality of character, but when calmness verges on complacency, we are at risk of disproportionate panic when the next shock comes. *U.S. News & World Report*, June 17, 2002.

Editor's note: Calamitous terrorist attacks on the US could sweep away all the United States' "temporal prosperity." Then, the aforementioned "disproportionate panic" will set in.

THE PENTAGON'S NEW WAR

The terrorists' arsenal is asymmetrical, ranging from low-cost, low-tech military hardware up to weapons of mass destruction. We no longer have to resist thousands of Soviet tanks rolling toward the Fulda Gap. We may have to fight that kind of conventional land war in North Korea or somewhere in the Middle East, and we must be prepared to do that. But the most likely enemy we face today is the international, non-state terrorist organization. Like the rogue states that often host them, the terrorists know that on the open battlefield, we are overwhelming. That's why these new adversaries plan to strike directly at cultural, political, and population targets. They understand just how big an impact these attacks can have on markets, communications, and cultural icons and how hard it is to attack them when they secrete themselves in civilian populations or in remote, inaccessible places. *U.S. News & World Report*, June 3, 2002.

"This nation will yet be humbled into the dust." *Testimonies*, volume 1, 259.

US CULTURE HAS CONSEQUENCES

Before 9-11, our culture had elevated "nonjudgmentalism" to the level of civic religion. We've been told that "everything has changed" since then. But not everything has. Some [politicians] continue to worship the old civic religion. When your greatest source of pride is "nonjudgmentalism", you will pretend not to see even what is patently obvious. *The Conservative Chronicle*, June 5, 2002.

And judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off: for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter. Yea, truth faileth; and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey: and the Lord saw it, and it displeased him that there was no judgment. Isaiah 59:14-15.

EXPLOSIVES DISAPPEAR

June 19—Tons of explosives have been stolen in the US over the last five years and no one can say for certain where much of the material has gone, officials told *ABCNEWS*.

It's a gap that has some of them losing sleep. It took about 3,000 pounds of the explosive ammonium nitrate to bring down the Murrah Federal Building in the deadly Oklahoma City bombing in 1995. Convicted bomber Timothy McVeigh is believed to have bought or stolen most of the explosives.

Last year alone, 31,000 pounds of that same material were stolen from locations across the country. Most of it has not been recovered. Government officials acknowledge that significant quantities of potentially lethal explosives routinely disappear.

"We're not talking about firecrackers, or bottle rockets, or anything like that," said Representative Lamar Smith, chairman of the House Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism and Homeland Security. "We're talking about large quantities of very dangerous explosives."

From January 1998 through December 2001, 27,000 pounds of high explosives—including dynamite—were stolen. Thieves have targeted construction sites, mining operations and demolition companies. And while some of the stolen explosives flow into a lucrative black market serving the construction industry, there is growing law enforcement concern about how easy it would be for terrorists to steal bomb-making elements.

In response to the September 11 attacks, the ATF contacted 7,500 explosive dealers and users. They found more than 1,000 violations of record keeping and storage. The agency has ordered dealers to increase security and to report any losses. But under current federal law, it is just as easy to buy explosives as it is to buy guns. Anyone—even noncitizens—can buy as much explosives as they want—without a background check. "It's literally easier to buy a ton of explosives than it is to buy a small-caliber pistol," said Smith.

AT WHAT PRICE THE AMERICAN EMPIRE?

The price of empire is terror. The price of occupation is terror. The price of interventionism is terror. Before, not after, the next terrorist attack on this country, America's leaders should start telling the truth: Evil though they may be, Islamic killers are over here because we are over there. They are not trying to kill us because they dislike our domestic politics, but because they detest our foreign policy. As Osama bin Laden said, they want us to stop propping up the Saudi regime they hate, and to get off the sacred Saudi soil on which sit the holiest shrines of Islam. They want our troops out of Saudi Arabia—and if we don't get out, they are coming over here to kill us, any way they can. The central issue: Terror on American soil:—and eventual cataclysmic and atomic terror on American soil—is the price of American empire. *The Conservative Chronicle*, June 5, 2002.

"These visitations are to become more and more frequent and disastrous. Destruction will be upon both man and beast. 'The earth mourneth and fadeth away,' 'the haughty people . . . do languish. The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant.' Isaiah 24:4, 5. And then the great deceiver will persuade men that those who serve God are causing these evils. *The Great Controversy*, 589.

Editor's note: Its only a matter of when and where terrorists will strike again, not if they will strike again.

"Let it be your study to select and make your homes as far from Sodom and Gomorrah as you can. Keep out of the large cities. If possible make your homes in the quiet retirement of the country, even if you can never become wealthy by so doing. Locate where there is the best influence.

"I am instructed by the Lord to warn our people not to flock to the cities to find homes for their families.

"To fathers and to mothers I am instructed to say, Fail not to keep your children within your own premises.

"Take your families away from the cities is my message.

"The time has come when, as God opens the way, families should move out of the cities. The children should be taken into the country. The parents should get as suitable a place as their means will allow. Though the dwelling may be small, yet there should be land in connection with it that may be cultivated.

"Before the overflowing scourge shall come upon the dwellers of the earth, the Lord calls upon all who are Israelites indeed to prepare for that event. To parents He sends the warning cry: Gather your children into your own houses; gather them away from those who are disregarding the commandments of God, who are teaching and practicing evil. Get out of the large cities as fast as possible." *The Adventist Home*, 139.

"HAMBURGER HELL"

In "Hamburger Hell: The Flip Side of USDA's Salmonella Testing Program," [the consumer-advocacy groups] *Public Citizen and the Government Accountability Project* analyzed the *Department of Agriculture's* own testing records for salmonella bacteria at ground-beef-processing plants. The report found that 77 plants in 26 states failed at least one batch of tests. Though many large plants repeatedly flunked, they continued to ship USDA-approved beef to stores. Consumer groups would like to see testing for a broader range of bacteria (including E. coli), and public disclosure of plants that flunk. See the full report, including the list of failing plants, at www.citizen.org. *Newsweek*, June 17, 2002.

"There are those who ought to be awake to the danger of meat eating, who are still eating the flesh of animals, thus endangering the physical, mental, and spiritual health. Many who are now only half converted on the question of meat eating will go from God's people to walk no more with them." *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, 382.

IS GOD PUNISHING AMERICA?

Junk theology makes bad foreign policy. In a speech last March, Senator James Inhofe said, "One of the reasons I believe the spiritual door was opened for an attack against the US is that the policy of our government has been to ask the Israelis not to retaliate in a significant way against the terrorist strikes that have been launched against them." Wow. God is punishing the American people because their government is insufficiently pro-Israel. *The Conservative Chronicle*, June 5, 2002.

"The class that have provoked the displeasure of Heaven will charge all their troubles upon those whose obedience to God's commandments is a perpetual reproof to transgressors. It will be declared that men are offending God by the violation of the Sunday sabbath; that this sin has brought calamities which will not cease until Sunday observance shall be strictly enforced; and that those who present the claims of the fourth commandment, thus destroying reverence for Sunday, are troublemakers of the people, preventing their restoration to divine favor and temporal prosperity." *The Great Controversy*, 590.

THE “RAINBOW CARPET”

Atlanta is rolling out the red carpet to homosexual tourists. The thinking goes: “Gay people, many of whom don’t have children, have disposable incomes. So let’s get them to spend it here.” Such campaigns have also popped up in cities like Minneapolis, Chicago, and Fort Lauderdale, that have “rolled out the rainbow carpet” to homosexuals.

The website for Atlanta Mayor Shirley Franklin’s campaign, gay-atlanta.com, features the slogan “We’re out to show you a good time!”

Also, at the university level, some colleges have not only co-ed dorms, but co-ed dorm rooms. At Pennsylvania’s elite Swarthmore College and nearby Haverford College, homosexual groups insisted that it was “heterosexist” to require roommates to be of the same sex, therefore, having a man and a woman share the same sleeping quarters is just another way to make homosexuals feel more comfortable. This is just one of the extraordinary ways the nation’s institutions of higher education are catering to homosexuals, who seemingly exert more moral authority than any other group on campus.

Many colleges and universities have started programs to actively recruit homosexuals. “Schools are inviting these students because they question the norms.” said Judith Brown, director of the Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Center at Tufts University. That Tufts should have a Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Center is, of course, telling in itself. Affirmative action for gays, though, is harder than affirmative action for blacks, women, and other minorities. For one thing, its hard to tell who is gay and who isn’t. Colleges are reduced to trumpeting their anti-discrimination policies, highlighting their gay student associations and institutes like Tuft’s LGBT Center, and drawing attention to courses and even academic majors in “Queer Studies” (their term).

Some colleges are pushing to add a check-off box on their admissions forms for “sexual orientation.” The University of New Hampshire’s associate director of admissions for inclusion and diversity says, “If we truly want these students, it’s vital to ask the question. It will help us really tailor a message of support to them.” *WORLD*, June 1, 2002.

Editor’s note: According to Dr. H.L. Willmington, *Willmington’s Guide to the Bible*, page 447, “The sin of homosexuality is usually the final stage in those civilizations which turn from God. It was for this crime that God burned Sodom off the map of the Middle East (Genesis 19), and later ordered the destruction of Jericho, along with other Old Testament cities (1 Kings 14:24). In recent years the number of homosexuals in Western civilization has increased drastically.”

“The love of pleasure was fostered by wealth and leisure, and the people gave themselves up to sensual indulgence. ‘Behold,’ says the prophet, ‘this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and needy. And they were haughty, and committed abomination before Me: therefore I took them away as I saw good.’ Ezekiel 16:49, 50. There is nothing more desired among men than riches and leisure, and yet these gave birth to the sins that brought destruction upon the cities of the plain. Their useless, idle life made them a prey to Satan’s temptations, and they defaced the image of God, and became satanic rather than divine. Idleness is the greatest curse that can fall upon man, for vice and crime follow in its train. It enfeebles the mind, perverts the understanding, and debases the soul. Satan lies in ambush, ready to destroy those who are unguarded, whose leisure gives him opportunity to insinuate himself under some attractive disguise. He is never more successful than when he comes to men in their idle hours.”

"In Sodom there was mirth and revelry, feasting and drunkenness. The vilest and most brutal passions were unrestrained. The people openly defied God and His law and delighted in deeds of violence. While angels drew near on their mission of destruction, men were dreaming of prosperity and pleasure. The last day was like every other that had come and gone. Evening fell upon a scene of loveliness and security. A landscape of unrivaled beauty was bathed in the rays of the declining sun. The coolness of eventide had called forth the inhabitants of the city, and the pleasure-seeking throngs were passing to and fro, intent upon the enjoyment of the hour.

"In the twilight two strangers drew near to the city gate. They were apparently travelers coming in to tarry for the night. None could discern in those humble wayfarers the mighty heralds of divine judgment, and little dreamed the **GAY**, careless multitude that in their treatment of these heavenly messengers that very night they would reach the climax of the guilt which doomed their proud city." *Patriarchs and Prophets*, 156–157. [Emphasis supplied.]

DOMESTIC PARTNER BENEFITS

June 18, 2002—In an attempt to sneak an unexpected bill past determined opposition, AB 1080 was introduced just last week in the California Assembly to require all businesses contracting with the State to provide domestic partner benefits to employees. This violates the sincerely held religious convictions of numerous contractors, both religious institutions and private businesses.

"The coercion of individual conscience is unprecedented," said Alan J. Reinach, Esq. Director of public Affairs & Religious Liberty for the Pacific Union Conference. "This bill would require countless contractors to violate sincerely held religious beliefs, or go out of business."

"The Adventist Church does not oppose state law providing for the availability of domestic partnerships, or allowing employers to grant domestic partner benefits," said Dr. Bradford Newton, legislative affairs director for the Pacific Union Conference. "However, the church does object to California coercing employers to violate their own fundamental beliefs."

For years, this office has been warning about the inevitable clash between gay rights and religious freedom in the context of religious organizations becoming dependent on government funding sources. Our worst nightmare has just become reality. This may be the worst bill we've seen in the California legislature in a long time, but even if we defeat it, it won't be the last. This conflict is now front and center. For those advocating so-called "faith-based initiatives," meaning increased government funding of religious charities, the handwriting is on the wall. Partnering with government has now become practically suicidal. <http://www.churchstate.org>

Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed *them* all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed. Luke 17:28–30.

LIBERAL INSTITUTIONS MARGINALIZE CONSERVATIVES

As most public universities and public institutions continue to support a public policy that discourages discrimination against traditionally marginalized groups, those with a conservative ideology are finding themselves gradually circulated to the fringe. At many relatively liberal campuses conservatives are finding that liberal students are accepted at the table of ideas even as they are pushed away. *Liberty*, May/June, 2002.

Editor's note: If "religious intolerance in the work place". and "institutionalized liberalism in public institutions and universities" becomes too strong, it may create a backlash among religious people that could seek to impose religious values on the rest of society.

RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION IN THE WORKPLACE: LAWSUITS INCREASE

It may come as a surprise to Americans, who are used to hearing about the wide range of civil rights enjoyed in the workplace, that religious beliefs remain so vulnerable. While civil rights law requires employers to attempt to accommodate their employee's faith, the Supreme Court has interpreted this requirement to impose a very low level of responsibility on employers. The Court concluded that employers are merely required to accommodate believers if the cost of doing so is minimal.

Indeed, lawyers who represent people of faith in the workplace indicate an increasing number of cases in which employers have refused to take even the most basic steps to accommodate the religious faith of their employees. In part this is a natural outgrowth of our drift toward a 24-hour, seven-day economy—an environment in which Americans are spending more of their lives in the workplace—and the increase in religious diversity in America. But this does not appear to explain the increasing caseload adequately. After all, many employers have expended significant resources on building a sensitive workplace in which ethnic, gender, and sexual-preference diversity is respected and accommodated. In addition, in 1990 Congress passed the *Americans With Disabilities Act* to ensure that those with disabilities are accommodated in the workforce. It therefore appears out of keeping with the times to find that the ability to practice one's faith is increasingly disregarded by employers. *Liberty*, May/June, 2002.

CHRISTIAN BOOK SALES SHOW QUALITY OF US FAITH

The *Christian Booksellers Association* (CBA) posts on its website (cbaonline.org) the topselling titles in the evangelical book industry. Most buyers of CBA books are women. If the titles for men and women are added to the books about family, they account for nearly 40% of all CBA bestsellers. Of the top 100 books, only four could be described as even popular theology, only six are about the Bible, only four are about Christ, and the Holy Spirit rates two. Billy Graham's book about angels barely came in at No. 99. The Christian life tends to be depicted in terms of what WE do, rather than what God has done. Thus, a number of the bestsellers dealing with God are "how-to" books. From many of these spiritual "how-to" books, one could easily get the impression that salvation is by works after all. Still, the Christianity of the bestseller lists tend to be personal, private, and interior, with little attention to objective theology or to the church.

Ironically, many of these bestselling Christian books—around 20%—have almost nothing to do at all with Christianity. Even books classified as "inspirational," often have no, or very little Christian content. They offer practical tips, folk wisdom, business advice, and sentimental anecdotes, but they are wholly secular, offering platitudes, pop psychology, self-help, and positive thinking—but no law, and no gospel—there is little with which a nonbeliever could disagree. The CBA bestseller list illustrates how far Christians, even those who think of themselves as conservative theologically and culturally, are already aping the unbelieving culture [around them].

The Christianity of the bestseller lists, with its subjectivity and pragmatism ("this is what works for me"), its overall indifference to theological truth, in favor of interior, psychological experiences, fits seamlessly with contemporary culture. Christians need to realize that the culture is growing more and more hostile to any kind of biblical worldview. *WORLD*, July/August 2002.

"The line of distinction between professed Christians and the ungodly is now hardly distinguishable. Church members love what the world loves and are ready to join with them, and Satan determines to unite them in one body and thus strengthen his cause by sweeping all into the ranks of spiritualism. Papists, who boast of miracles as a certain sign of the true church, will be readily deceived by this wonder-working power; and Protestants, having cast away the shield of truth, will also be deluded. Papists, Protestants, and worldlings will alike accept the form of godliness without the power, and they will see in this union a grand movement for the conversion of the world and the ushering in of the long-expected millennium." *The Great Controversy*, 588.

THE CHRISTIAN FAITH IN AMERICAN MEDIA

We know that four out of ten adults read the Bible in a typical week, four out of ten attend a church service, eight out of ten pray to God, two out of ten attend a small group, and one out of four attend a Sunday school class. But what about the Christian media? Many Americans assume that the most common way of experiencing the Christian faith is by attending a church service. A new nationwide survey by the *Barna Research Group*, of Ventura, California, reports a different conclusion. A greater number of adults experience the Christian faith through Christian media, such as radio, television or books, than attend Christian churches.

The new study states that slightly more than six out of ten American adults attended a church service during the past month. In contrast, two out of every three adults used at least one of three forms of religious media—radio, television or books—for a dose of the Christian faith in the past month. In raw numbers, about 132 million adults have been to a church service compared to 141 million using Christian media.

The fastest-growing type of Christian broadcasting—Christian music—has already surpassed the talk-driven formats. Just more than two out of five adults said they had listened to a station airing Christian music during the past month. The expansion in both the number of radio stations adopting a Christian music format and in the size of the listening audience helps to explain why the Christian music genre has been one of the fastest-growing categories in the music industry during the past two years.

One out of every three adults claimed to have read a Christian book, other than the Bible, during the past month. This total includes both fiction and non-fiction titles. Projected over the entire adult mass, that represents 70 million people reading Christian books in the past month. Realize that among the country's top-selling books are several Christian titles, including the latest offering in the *Left Behind* series by Jerry Jenkins and Timothy LaHaye, books in the *Jabez* series by Bruce Wilkerson, and business books by former pastor John Maxwell. www.barna.org, July 4, 2002.

INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT A CONSTANT THREAT TO THE US

The ICC began its work on July 1. The executive director of Lawyers Committee for Human exults: "Nuremberg was a baby step. This is a major evolution. It is a global court. It has all the world's great legal traditions. It is permanent." There is little in past experience to suggest that the ICC will operate efficiently or evenhandedly.

Belgium, one of Europe's most inconsequential countries, now asserts universal jurisdiction over all cases of genocide and crimes against humanity. The World Court blocked Belgium from issuing an arrest warrant against a former Congolese foreign minister because he enjoyed diplomatic immunity at the time of his alleged crimes. Otherwise, the court ruled, international relations would grind to a halt. But the ruling would not apply to the ICC.

Unfortunately, the US, with a global military, political and economic presence, will always present the greatest potential target for ICC action. Yet decisions by the unaccountable international bureaucracy, in which the US would have only a single vote, will always be politically driven.

Moreover, the organization's mandate is expansive, including "outrages upon personal dignity" and "serious injury to mental health." In the future, the ICC's charter could be amended to cover drug-trafficking and environmental crime. Thus stained with the blood of the innocent deserve to be punished. But the International Criminal Court is utopianism run amok. *The Conservative Chronicle*, May 22, 2002.

Editor's note: The anti-Zionist United Nations will likely use the ICC to prosecute all Sabbath-keepers, as well as the already-hated Jews.

THE UN, WOMEN'S RIGHTS, ICC, & NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY

Once again the push is on for the Senate to ratify CEDAW, the United Nation's 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. Its a blueprint for foisting the West's 1970's radical feminism on every nation gullible enough to sign. . . . 167 so far. It bristles with contempt for family, motherhood, religion, and tradition. Parents and the family don't count. Some analysts think CEDAW's ban on "orientation" bias will make pedophile sex legal, since some people are "oriented" toward children. Linguistic sinkholes are so common that Muslim women wanted assurance that the term "sexual slavery" would not be defined later as including marriage.

The World Bank now seems primed to serve as an enforcer for CEDAW. One World Bank document is titled "Integrating Gender Into the World Bank's Work: a Strategy for Action." The feminists talk about the World Bank's "accountability mechanisms." Translation: no CEDAW compliance, no loan.

Worse, CEDAW backers intend to use the new International Criminal Court as an enforcement tool. The Heritage Foundation, who follows CEDAW closely, predicts that the CEDAW committee will bring an ICC case against Catholic hospitals to force them to perform abortions. Language setting up the court is so vague that radical prosecutors and judges might be able to jail clerics who refuse to perform same-sex marriages or who decline to ordain women.

The lesson here is that small groups of dedicated bureaucrats, out of the public eye, can make rules affecting the domestic affairs of countries that would be difficult or impossible to achieve democratically. The trick is to create "customary international law" out of marginal views, constantly repeated on the world stage. The basic plan is ingeniously simple. The idea is to couch the feminist agenda in the language of human rights, and then assert the ascendancy of human rights over the sovereign rights of nations. Due to a fumble in the State Department, CEDAW has been listed as a treaty the administration considered acceptable. President Bush now has to choose between antagonizing his [political] base by calling for Senate ratification or antagonizing female voters by seeming to come out against women's rights. *U.S. News & World Report, July 1, 2002.*

"Satan is diverting minds with unimportant questions, in order that they shall not with clear and distinct vision see matters of vast importance. The enemy is planning to ensnare the world.

"The so-called Christian world is to be the theater of great and decisive actions. Men in authority will enact laws controlling the conscience, after the example of the Papacy. Babylon will make all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. Every nation will be involved. Of this time John the Revelator declares:

"'The merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double. How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her; for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow' Revelation 18:3-7.

"'These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for He is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful' Revelation 17:13-14.

"'These have one mind.' There will be a universal bond of union, one great harmony, a confederacy of Satan's forces. 'And shall give their power and strength unto the beast.' Thus is manifested the same arbitrary, oppressive power against religious liberty, freedom to worship God according to the dictates of conscience, as was manifested by the Papacy, when in the past it persecuted those who dared to refuse to conform with the religious rites and ceremonies of Romanism.

“In the warfare to be waged in the last days there will be united, in opposition to God’s people, all the corrupt powers that have apostatized from allegiance to the law of Jehovah. In this warfare the Sabbath of the fourth commandment will be the great point at issue; for in the Sabbath commandment the great Law-giver identifies Himself as the Creator of the heavens and the earth.” *Manuscript Releases*, volume 1, 296–297.

“The third **wall** which the Papacy will bring down in order to take control of the entire world is the symbolic “wall of national sovereignty.” The likely structure which will be used to control the world is the United Nations. Already within the laws which have been developed by the United Nations, we find the legal principles designed to remove national sovereignty. This organization has already written and passed laws which supersede the national laws of individual countries. In fact, many of these countries—including the United States—have already signed these agreements, placing the laws of the individual nations in subjection to the laws of the world government.” Jeff Pippenger; *The Final Rise and Fall of the King of the North*, page 26.

U.S. “PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE” DECLARED UNCONSTITUTIONAL, JUNE 24, 2002

In a 2-1 decision, *Newdow vs. U.S. Congress*, the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, based in San Francisco, having jurisdiction over California, Oregon, Washington state, Arizona, Montana, Idaho, Nevada, Alaska and Hawaii, said the reference to God violated the First Amendment’s Establishment Clause, which requires a separation of church and state. The government will have several months to ask the court to reconsider its decision, or appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court. The decision stunned lawmakers. Within hours, the Senate approved 99-0 a resolution in support of the Pledge of Allegiance. Lawmakers also instructed their legal counsel to intervene and defend the constitutionality of the pledge.

The Pledge of Allegiance was codified by Congress in 1942 as: “I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.” In 1954, it was changed to read: “I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.”

Today’s ruling was met with a mixture of shock and anger. In a statement to reporters, White House spokesman Ari Fleischer said President Bush had called the decision “ridiculous.” In a statement, Attorney General John Ashcroft called the decision “contrary to two centuries of American tradition.” An appeal was certain. “We are certainly considering seeking further review in the matter,” Justice Department lawyer Robert Loeb said. Sen. Joseph Lieberman, D-Conn., predicted the decision would eventually be heard by the U.S. Supreme Court.

“It presents a conundrum,” said David Cole, professor at the Georgetown University Law Center. “On one hand, the Pledge of Allegiance under traditional Supreme Court tests is probably unconstitutional. On the other hand, it has been with us for so long, and so much a part of our culture that it is very unlikely that the Supreme Court is going to declare it unconstitutional.” *MSNBCNEWS.com, June 24, 2002*

Editor’s note: “Satan is diverting minds with unimportant questions, in order that they shall not with clear and distinct vision see matters of vast importance.” A popular backlash from this unwise ruling may result in some religious forms and customs becoming a political “football” as they are battled back and forth in the nation’s courts. Ultimately leading to right-wing, political/religious despotism.

U.S. SUPREME COURT OK'S STATE FUNDS TO RELIGIOUS SCHOOLS

The Supreme Court ruled on June 27 that a Cleveland, Ohio, voucher program does not violate the separation of church and state. The 5-4 ruling sent shockwaves through the public-education establishment. Last year, eight state legislatures killed voucher bills, largely out of fear that the programs would result in lengthy, expensive court fights. With the constitutional question now settled, backers expect many states to revisit voucher proposals they had shelved earlier.

Milton Friedman, the Nobel Prize-winning economist known as the “father of vouchers,” had argued that the Cleveland voucher program in no way promoted the “establishment” of religion because children could use their vouchers to attend the school of their choice—public, private, or religious. But the *National Education Association* and its allies pointed out that almost 97% of the Cleveland students ended up in the latter category.

The reason, according to Mr. Friedman, is simple: Ohio provides a maximum voucher of \$2,250, and only religious schools can keep their tuition that low. “**Catholic schools dominate** because they are the only ones who do it at this cost. I hope very much that as the voucher movement extends around the country, the amount is made at least a reasonable ratio of the \$8,000 to \$9,000 that the government spends per child in public schools.” *WORLD*, July/August, 2002.

“When the leading churches of the United States, uniting upon such points of doctrine as are held by them in common, shall influence the state to enforce their decrees and to **sustain their institutions**, then Protestant America will have formed an image of the Roman hierarchy, and the infliction of civil penalties upon dissenters will inevitably result.” *The Great Controversy*, p. 445.

“In the movements now in progress in the United States **to secure for the institutions and usages of the church the support of the state**, Protestants are following in the steps of papists. Nay, more, they are opening the door for the papacy to regain in Protestant America the supremacy which she has lost in the Old World. And that which gives greater significance to this movement is the fact that the principal object contemplated is the enforcement of Sunday observance—a custom which originated with Rome, and which she claims as the sign of her authority.” *The Great Controversy*, 573.

THE SUPREME COURT AND PUBLIC VALUES.

Vouchers have always swum in a *milieu* that was ideologically suspect. In fact it was the *milieu* rather than the details of implementation that presented the greater danger. But now it appears that a campaign that dodged discussion of real goals, and concentrated instead on the mythology of an educational utopia, combined with a very real public swing toward security through state sponsorship of values, has won over the electorate and put pressure on the Court. And make no mistake about it, the pressure is to move in a direction that will at the very least strain the First Amendment and at the worst turn it inside out by establishing state religion. But only with the majority concurrence, of course. *Liberty*, May/June, 2002.

SUPREME COURT BREACHES WALL OF SEPARATION

The US Supreme Court okayed school vouchers, as you have undoubtedly heard by now. Both the decision and the actual vote were expected. No surprise. But the decision is a great disappointment, and signals a dramatic shift away from our constitutional heritage.

Justice Stevens, dissenting, got it right. Vouchers constitute “the government’s choice to pay for religious indoctrination.” This is constitutionally impermissible. He said the decision “increase[s] the risk of religious strife and weaken[s] the foundation of our democracy.”

Justice Souter, also dissenting, provided valuable historical perspective. He accused the court of descending to “verbal formalism.” The establishment clause now means nothing more than a principle of equality. Treat everyone alike, religion and non-religion, and among religions.

Justice Breyer, in his dissent, observes that the Supreme Court has historically rejected this equality approach to the establishment clause, in favor of separating church and state. The equality approach would approve of school teachers including prayers to all gods in all religions, rather than exclude coercive mandated prayer entirely. Of course, Breyer is right. In practice, this would mean that Jesus gets more than equal time in America’s schools, and that children of minority faiths would have to endure prayers of other faiths most of the time. It’s hard to see this is as equality in fact, only in some bizarre theory.

The majority says that vouchers are simply a matter of private, parental choice, not government sponsorship of religion. But in spite of what they say, they have reduced the Establishment Clause to a subset of the 14th Amendment’s Equal Protection clause. In other words, it now has little meaning. In effect, government funding of religion is now a matter of majority vote, not constitutional principle. The rights of the minority, and with it, liberty of conscience, are no longer relevant or protected.

This is consistent with what the Supreme Court did to the Free Exercise Clause. In 1990, the infamous peyote case, *Employment Division v. Smith*, adopted the same principle of formal neutrality that is now the rule for the Establishment Clause. Some of us saw it coming, and warned of the consequences.

For Seventh-day Adventists, these developments are consistent with our prophetic understanding that the United States will repudiate our fundamental constitutional principles of liberty of conscience and the separation of church and state.

Tuition vouchers are neither the beginning nor the end of this process.

Ironically, in the name of equality, the majority ignored the basic inequality built into the Ohio voucher statute. The Ohio law had two provisions that, if applied consistently, would exclude many church schools from the program. Voucher schools could not discriminate on the basis of religion. Most church schools will discriminate on the basis of religion, at least in hiring religion teachers, if not for all faculty positions. Some schools will admit only students from Christian families.

The Ohio law also excluded schools that teach “hate.” All church schools that teach an exclusive approach to salvation could be excluded under this statute, including Protestant, Catholic and Muslim schools.

So much for equality. What the equality principle really means is that the older, larger, more established religions will have a tactical advantage, and will be more equal. It is unlikely that Catholic schools will ever be excluded from a voucher program, but an independent Protestant or Seventh-day Adventist school might be excluded.

We made these arguments in a friend-of-the-court brief filed in this case. The dissenting justices heard us, but it was not enough. The Voucher decision must also be read in light of developments in state law. California has introduced yet another coercive bill to require religious institutions to violate their faith, this time providing domestic partner benefits. [See previous e.lets on AB 1080.] Those who imagine that religious institutions can accept Vouchers without compromising their very existence are deluded and, to be blunt, suicidal. Administrators in all denominations need to revisit policies to prevent ministries from becoming dependent on government funding. Adventists have long anticipated coercive religious legislation taking the form of Sunday laws. I have long said that a change in our constitution was not required for this to take place.

The real issue in the battle for religious freedom is not so much doctrinal as philosophical. The American people, and our courts, are quickly losing sight of our fundamental principles, of our reasons for protecting liberty of conscience. In his popular song, replayed repeatedly after September 11, Billy Joel sings: “I have no more reasons, I’ve left them all behind, I’m in a New York state of mind.” When Americans leave behind our reasons for protecting the separation of church and state, we become vulnerable to the historic abuses that led to the Establishment Clause in the first place.

THE IMAGE OF THE BEAST FORMING

There is only one definition of the “image of the beast” in prophecy. Sister White sets forth the definition in a few ways, but it always means the same thing:

“The ‘image to the beast’ represents that form of apostate Protestantism which will be developed when the Protestant churches shall seek the aid of the civil power for the enforcement of their dogmas. The ‘mark of the beast’ still remains to be defined.” *The Great Controversy*, 445.

Notice that the “mark of the beast” and the “image of the beast” are two different things. The “mark of the beast” is Sunday keeping, whereas; the “image to the beast” is the way and means that Sunday keeping is enforced.

“But what is the ‘image to the beast’? and how is it to be formed? The image is made by the two-horned beast, and is an image to the beast. It is also called an image of the beast. Then to learn what the image is like and how it is to be formed we must study the characteristics of the beast itself—the papacy.

“When the early church became corrupted by departing from the simplicity of the gospel and accepting heathen rites and customs, she lost the Spirit and power of God; and in order to control the consciences of the people, she sought the support of the secular power. The result was the papacy, a church that controlled the power of the state and employed it to further her own ends, especially for the punishment of ‘heresy.’ In order for the United States to form an image of the beast, the religious power must so control the civil government that the authority of the state will also be employed by the church to accomplish her own ends.” *The Great Controversy*, 443.

Notice that both the “image” and the “mark” reach fulfillment prophetically at the same time, but they are two different prophetic symbols.

“But in the very act of enforcing a religious duty by secular power, the churches would themselves form an image to the beast; hence the enforcement of Sunday keeping in the United States would be an enforcement of the worship of the beast and his image.” *The Great Controversy*, 448-449.

The “image of the beast” is the combination of church and state. It is when secular power is used to sustain and uphold religious decrees and institutions. The “image of the beast” therefore is a principle that develops in the United States over a period of time and ultimately reaches its full maturity when the Sunday law of Revelation 13:11 is fulfilled as the United States “speaks as a dragon”. “Speaking” in Bible prophecy is also a symbol that should be understood:

“The ‘speaking’ of the nation is the action of its legislative and judicial authorities.” *The Great Controversy*, 442.

When the USA “speaks” at the passage of the Sunday law the “mark of the beast” will have arrived into history and the “image of the beast” will have reached maturity. I emphasize maturity, because the “image of the beast” or the combination of church and state grows over a period of time. It is the growth of this principle that allows the student of prophecy to recognize the nearness of the Sunday law!

When the thirteen colonies came together to develop the principles of the Constitution, twelve of the colonies believed it was acceptable for state governments to provide money to pay for religious schools. Only one of the colonies disagreed, and because of their disagreement there was a large debate on the issue. When the debate finished the one had prevailed and all thirteen colonies agreed that to use government money to support religious schools was a denial of the heart of the Constitution, which is the separation of church and state.

Two weeks ago the US Supreme Court ruled that it is now acceptable to use state monies to support religious schools. The heart of the Constitution was attacked. The principle that was upheld by the Supreme Court is there very essence of the definition of the “image to the beast”. It allows the state to “sustain” religious “institutions”!

"When the churches of our land, uniting upon such points of faith as are held by them in common, shall influence the State to enforce their decrees and sustain their institutions, then will Protestant America have formed an image of the Roman hierarchy. Then the true church will be assailed by persecution, as were God's ancient people." *The Story of Redemption*, 382.

This ominous development is even more significant if we understand that the formation of the "image of the beast" is the test by which the eternal destiny of Seventh-day Adventists is depending on.

"Already preparations are advancing, and movements are in progress, which will result in making an image to the beast. Events will be brought about in the earth's history that will fulfill the predictions of prophecy for these last days.

"The Lord has shown me clearly that the image of the beast will be formed before probation closes; for it is to be the great test for the people of God, by which their eternal destiny will be decided.

"This is the test that the people of God must have before they are sealed. All who proved their loyalty to God by observing His law, and refusing to accept a spurious sabbath, will rank under the banner of the Lord God Jehovah, and will receive the seal of the living God. Those who yield the truth of heavenly origin and accept the Sunday sabbath, will receive the mark of the beast" *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, volume 7, 976.

We at *Future for America* pray that the Lord will awaken His people to the fact that the "image of the beast" is well on its way to being formed and that we are rapidly running out of time to develop the character which qualifies for the seal of God. We would recommend the reader to obtain the video or audio study by Jeff Pippenger that addresses the "image of the beast test" more specifically. The study demonstrates that probation closes at the Sunday law, and that prior to the Sunday test, Adventists are tested by the formation of the "image of the beast" in the United States. They are tested, in the sense that to not recognize the "movements, preparations, and events" connected with the formation of the "image of the beast" is to parallel the antediluvians refusal to understand that the animals entering the ark was their final warning!

GOD OR JOB

God or job—no American should ever have to choose between the two. Yet employers increasingly are demanding workers leave their religion at the door or risk termination. Something must be done, and your help is needed to keep this the land of the free. Please go to [ConservativePetitions.com](http://www.conservativepetitions.com) and read about how the *Workplace Religious Freedom Act (S-2572)* will remedy this problem. Here's the address:

http://www.conservativepetitions.com/petition.html?name=freedom_in_workplace

The WRFA, now before US Senate, will strengthen existing civil rights laws protecting workers against religious discrimination. The bill has momentum and an excellent chance of passage—but only if people of faith let their leaders know how important the bill is to them. Act now!

Alan J. Reinach, Esq., President Seventh-day Adventist Church State Council P.S. The larger this petition grows, the more influence we will have and the more difference we can make. YOU are the key to our growth! Your support of this nationwide grass roots petition drive will send a clear signal to Congress about the urgent need to outlaw religious discrimination in the workplace.

CHRISTIAN COALITION EXPRESS SUPPORT FOR ROME

Christian Coalition of America President Roberta Combs today expressed support for the American Catholic Church. Combs urged the public to put the current controversy in perspective, noting that only an insignificant minority of priest are guilty of misconduct. "What happened was horrendous, and no excuses can be made for clerics who violated their trust," Combs declared. "But it's important to recall that the overwhelming majority of Catholic clergy are guiltless and indeed lead exemplary lives of service and sacrifice."

Combs added that Catholicism is a potent force for traditional values and morality in America. "The Church is steadfast in its opposition to abortion, cloning, pornography, gay militancy and sexual license," the Coalition president observed. "America will suffer if the Catholic Church's moral authority is damaged by this scandal."

"Those who've historically opposed the Church's ethical teachings are using the crisis at hand to attack an institution they view as an obstacle to the advance of their values." Combs urged all people of good will to pray for the American Catholic Church in its time of trouble. The Coalition's over 2 million supporters are overwhelmingly Protestant. *Christian Coalition email news alert.*

"Romanism is now regarded by Protestants with far greater favor than in former years. In those countries where Catholicism is not in the ascendancy, and the papists are taking a conciliatory course in order to gain influence, there is an increasing indifference concerning the doctrines that separate the reformed churches from the papal hierarchy; the opinion is gaining ground that, after all, we do not differ so widely upon vital points as has been supposed, and that a little concession on our part will bring us into a better understanding with Rome. The time was when Protestants placed a high value upon the liberty of conscience which had been so dearly purchased. They taught their children to abhor popery and held that to seek harmony with Rome would be disloyalty to God. But how widely different are the sentiments now expressed! . . . Many urge that it is unjust to judge the church of today by the abominations and absurdities that marked her reign during the centuries of ignorance and darkness. They excuse her horrible cruelty as the result of the barbarism of the times and plead that the influence of modern civilization has changed her sentiments.

"The papal church will never relinquish her claim to infallibility. All that she has done in her persecution of those who reject her dogmas she holds to be right; and would she not repeat the same acts, should the opportunity be presented? Let the restraints now imposed by secular governments be removed and Rome be reinstated in her former power, and there would speedily be a revival of her tyranny and persecution." *The Great Controversy*, 563-564.

AMERICAN CHRISTIAN POLITICAL AND SPIRITUAL ARMS JOIN TOGETHER

Recent events clearly illustrate the need for concerned Christian citizens to join together in taking a bold stand for the future of our country.

Just consider - the Supreme Court struck down the virtual child pornography section of the Child Pornography Prevention Act of 1996 and prosecutions against pornographers have ground to a halt because the Supreme Court says, "If it's not real, it's free speech" the liberal Senate Judiciary Committee continues to block the nominations of our President's pro-family judges and Israel is being buried under the bodies of children killed by children in homicide bombings while our country advocates a Palestinian state. Given these and other shocking events, the upcoming election could well be the most important in our nation's history. Christian Coalition of America is here to help make your voice be heard.

President Roberta Combs says,

"We can't stand by and watch as our Supreme Court and Senate Judiciary Committee seek to destroy our children and our way of life! We can't stand by, as Israeli children are bombed in public. We can't stand by as Christians, fail to vote and not be informed which candidates are really pro-family!! We must act."

Mrs. Combs and the CCA staff are working hard on the *Real and Virtual Child Pornography Prevention Constitutional Amendment*. The Amendment is a bold step for Combs and her veteran staff who are reluctant to amend the Constitution but feel that this is the only way to stop the courts from hurting our children. Rep. Henry Brown, R-SC, and Ralph Hall, D-TX, are sponsoring the Amendment on the House side. Many Senators are ready to lead on the Senate side.

This is an opportunity for Christians to send a message that, if we have to, we will bypass the Supreme Court when common sense and sound judicial reasoning eludes them.

Christian Coalition of America fully supports Christian solidarity for Israel! We will not waiver in our stand while a Terrorist Palestinian state is created with the intent of destroying Israel! In order to display our support for Israel, the Christian Coalition of America and John Hagee Ministries will hold a 100,000 person-strong Christian Solidarity Rally for Israel on the White House Ellipse! Christian Coalition of America is holding the rally as part of our "God Bless America, One Nation Under God Road To Victory 2002 National Conference". This conference is essential in enabling thousands of Christians to learn first-hand where the candidates running for office in November 2002 stand on pro-life and pro-family issues. It is the largest event ever bringing the political and the spiritual arms of the pro-life and pro-family movement together. *Christian Coalition email news alert*.

"By the decree enforcing the institution of the papacy in violation of the law of God, our nation will disconnect herself fully from righteousness. When Protestantism shall stretch her hand across the gulf to grasp the hand of the Roman power, when she shall reach over the abyss to clasp hands with spiritualism, when, under the influence of this threefold union, our country shall repudiate every principle of its Constitution as a Protestant and republican government, and shall make provision for the propagation of papal falsehoods and delusions, then we may know that the time has come for the marvelous working of Satan and that the end is near.

"As the approach of the Roman armies was a sign to the disciples of the impending destruction of Jerusalem, so may this apostasy be a sign to us that the limit of God's forbearance is reached, that the measure of our nation's iniquity is full, and that the angel of mercy is about to take her flight, never to return. The people of God will then be plunged into those scenes of affliction and distress which prophets have described as the time of Jacob's trouble. The cries of the faithful, persecuted ones ascend to heaven. And as the blood of Abel cried from the ground, there are voices also crying to God from martyrs' graves, from the sepulchers of the sea, from mountain caverns, from convent vaults: 'How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost Thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?'

"The Lord is doing His work. All heaven is astir. The Judge of all the earth is soon to arise and vindicate His insulted authority. The mark of deliverance will be set upon the men who keep God's commandments, who revere His law, and who refuse the mark of the beast or of his image." *Testimonies*, volume 5, 451.

"If our people continue in the listless attitude in which they have been, God cannot pour upon them His Spirit. They are unprepared to co-operate with Him. They are not awake to the situation and do not realize the threatened danger. They should feel now, as never before, their need of vigilance and concerted action.

"The peculiar work of the third angel has not been seen in its importance. God meant that His people should be far in advance of the position which they occupy today. But now, when the time has come for them to spring into action, they have the preparation to make. When the National Reformers began to urge measures to restrict religious liberty, our leading men should have been alive to the situation and should have labored earnestly to counteract these efforts. It is not in the order of God that light has been kept from our people--the very present truth which they needed for this time. Not all our ministers who are giving the third angel's message really understand what constitutes that message. The National Reform movement has been regarded by some as of so little importance that they have not thought it necessary to give much attention to it and have even felt that in so doing they would be giving time to questions distinct from the third angel's message. May the Lord forgive our brethren for thus interpreting the very message for this time.

"The people need to be aroused in regard to the dangers of the present time. The watchmen are asleep. We are years behind. Let the chief watchmen feel the urgent necessity of taking heed to themselves, lest they lose the opportunities given them to see the dangers.

"If the leading men in our conferences do not now accept the message sent them by God, and fall into line for action, the churches will suffer great loss. When the watchman, seeing the sword coming, gives the trumpet a certain sound, the people along the line will echo the warning, and all will have opportunity to make ready for the conflict. But too often the leader has stood hesitating, seeming to say: 'Let us not be in too great haste. There may be a mistake. We must be careful not to raise a false alarm.' The very hesitancy and uncertainty on his part is crying: "'Peace and safety.'" Do not get excited. Be not alarmed. There is a great deal more made of this religious amendment question than is demanded. This agitation will all die down.' Thus he virtually denies the message sent from God, and the warning which was designed to stir the churches fails to do its work. The trumpet of the watchman gives no certain sound, and the people do not prepare for the battle. Let the watchman beware lest, through his hesitancy and delay, souls shall be left to perish, and their blood shall be required at his hand.

"We have been looking many years for a Sunday law to be enacted in our land; and, now that the movement is right upon us, we ask: Will our people do their duty in the matter? Can we not assist in lifting the standard and in calling to the front those who have a regard for their religious rights and privileges? The time is fast approaching when those who choose to obey God rather than man will be made to feel the hand of oppression. Shall we then dishonor God by keeping silent while His holy commandments are trodden underfoot?

"While the Protestant world is by her attitude making concessions to Rome, let us arouse to comprehend the situation and view the contest before us in its true bearings. Let the watchmen now lift up their voice and give the message which is present truth for this time. Let us show the people where we are in prophetic history and seek to arouse the spirit of true Protestantism, awaking the world to a sense of the value of the privileges of religious liberty so long enjoyed."

Testimonies, volume 5, 714-716.