

PASTOR GENERAL'S REPORT

TO THE MINISTRY OF THE
WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD



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CHURCH N O T FIGHTING STATE

Let's make it plain once for all that God's
Church is NOT fighting the STATE.

by Herbert W. Armstrong

NOTICE NOW God's Scriptural teaching to His Church in regard to whether the Church should have "caved in" (to use an expression of the lawsuit-granting judge) to allow the State illegally to take over all Church properties in California, and to manage and operate GOD'S Church.

I have printed before the truth about Romans 13 and allied passages. But God's Church emphatically DID ACT according to God's own Biblical teaching. And the full facts FROM THE BIBLE about that have never yet been printed. I give them to you now.

First, remember this: Neither God's Church nor its leaders have broken any LAW OF THE STATE. The State has no evidence of any such unlawful acts. There were false allegations made by dissenters and former members, unsupported by any facts or evidence whatsoever.

Neither myself, Mr. Rader, nor the Church had broken any law. WE WERE NOT CHARGED WITH BREAKING ANY LAW!

It was a civil action lawsuit. UNLAWFULLY the Deputy Attorney General induced a judge in the privacy of his chambers, to appoint a Receiver --a personal friend and ex-judge--to TAKE OVER possession of Church property and the management of Church operations, without even the legally-required notice.

Now notice what we have not mentioned to you before--the BIBLICAL EXAMPLES AND TEACHING!

A demon-possessed woman was pestering Paul and Silas at Philippi. Paul cast out the demon. The woman's masters, finding their means of profit gone, induced the magistrates to beat Paul and Silas with many stripes and put them in prison.

Paul and Silas were two individuals, but the legal action was taken because of their religion--actually against the Church! Paul and Silas were seized forcibly and unable themselves to resist. BUT, IN PRISON, GOD DID THE RESISTING AGAINST THIS FALSE ARREST!

Suddenly, at midnight, there was a great earthquake. Immediately all the doors of the prison were opened, and the iron bands binding Paul's and Silas' feet were loosed. This awakened the prison keeper. Paul spoke to him, he was converted, and Paul baptized him.

Next morning, the magistrates sent word saying to the prison keeper, "Let those men go... But Paul said unto them, 'They have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romans, and have cast us into prison; and now do they thrust us out privily? Nay verily; but let them come themselves and fetch us out.'"

Paul, when he had a chance, did not "cave in." He demanded his rights from these government officials--after GOD by a miracle had loosed them in prison.

It was GOD'S WILL that HIS CHURCH be DEFENDED AGAINST false attacks by the STATE! God Himself supernaturally interposed in this defense against unjust and illegal State action. GOD'S MINISTERS and CHURCH WERE NOT FIGHTING against or harming the State--merely DEFENDING CHURCH PROGRESS! It's the same today.

The above from Acts 16.

In Acts 17, Paul went to Thessalonica, and as Paul's manner was, he went into a synagogue and three Sabbath days reasoned with the Jews out of the Scriptures (O.T.). Paul was staying at the house of one Jason. Some of the Jews believed and followed Paul. But the others were angry, and sought out some of the lower and more violent people. They assaulted Jason's home but did not find Paul. Then these angry Jews went to the CIVIL GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES with false charges against Paul and Silas.

Here is another case. Did Paul "cave in" and allow the CIVIL GOVERNMENT to STOP THE WORK OF GOD'S CHURCH? NEVER! Verse 10--the brethren secretly sent away Paul and Silas by night to Berea.

GOD WILLS THAT THE WORK OF HIS CHURCH GO ON, NEVER STOPPED BY THE CIVIL STATE!

When the angry, Church-opposing Jews at Thessalonica heard that Paul was preaching at Berea, they themselves went to Berea to stir up the people and the civil government to stop the Work of God. But Paul already had reaped a harvest at Berea. So he left Silas and Timothy there while he went on to Athens, then sending word for Silas and Timothy to join him.

Satan was to continually use the civil government powers to oppose God's Church. Paul had dwelt in Corinth a year and a half. Then when one Gallio was the Deputy of Achaia [Acts 18:12], the opposing Jews had Paul brought to Court. But here was one judge that refused to judge the CHURCH, unless its chief Apostle had violated a law. But the unbelieving Jews took Sosthenes, chief ruler of the synagogue WHO BELIEVED, and beat him in Court.

Later, at Jerusalem, unbelieving Jews raised a tumult against Paul. Finally he was seized by Roman officers and soldiers, and taken to the palace [Acts 21:37]. Paul begged the chief officer to allow him to speak to the people. Speaking in Hebrew, Paul said, "Men, brethren and fathers, hear ye my defense which I make now unto you."

Paul DID NOT FIGHT AGAINST the Roman government, nor against the Jewish people. But he DID DEFEND HIMSELF AGAINST FALSE CHARGES! And

that is precisely what God's Church is doing today. We are NOT fighting against the State of California. We are DEFENDING God's Church, God's Work, and God's ministers--not attacking or fighting against the State.

Now continue the Apostle Paul's experience being attacked by disbelieving Jews and Roman Government authorities:

The unbelieving Jews listened a while, then set up a loud tumult, shouting, "Away with such a fellow from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live." The chief Roman captains ordered Paul brought into the castle, and bound with thongs [Acts 22:22-25].

They were preparing to beat him with stripes. Instead of so meekly SUBMITTING as enemies of God's Work today think the Church ought to do, Paul said to the Centurion standing by, "Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned?" [verse 25.] The State of California was trying to TAKE POSSESSION of Church property, and Church management--firing Christ's chosen Apostle and the Treasurer, and appointing Wayne Cole (whom we know now was in on the conspiracy several weeks before January 3, 1979) as Chief Officer of the Church under the Receiver. We DEFENDED the Church and its property, as PAUL DEFENDED HIMSELF WHEN FALSELY ACCUSED! Continue:

Next morning, they allowed Paul to face his accusers. Now Acts 23. Paul now used strategy to divide his accusers, DEFENDING himself and the WORK OF GOD. Some of the Jews were Pharisees, some Sadducees. The Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection, but Pharisees did. Paul cried out, in this Roman Court, "Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee: Of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question" [verse 6].

Immediately this stirred a dissention between the Sadducees and Pharisees, and Paul's accusers WERE DIVIDED! Incidentally, OUR accusers in this civil lawsuit today are now pretty well divided among themselves! Men filled with malice, resentment and bitterness do not make good bed-fellows!

The Pharisees then cried out that they found no evil in Paul. The chief Roman Captain, fearing for Paul's safety in the fight between Pharisees and Sadducees, commanded the Roman soldiers to take Paul from these fighting Jews and take him to the castle. That night Christ spoke to Paul to be of good cheer--there was much more for him to do. Paul learned of a conspiracy of Jews to kill him the next day. Paul got word to the Chief Captain [verses 16-17].

Then the Chief Captain of the Roman army called two centurians (over 200 soldiers) and 200 spearmen and horses, and by night Paul was sped to Felix, the Roman Governor. Governor Felix insisted Paul face his accusers, who were commanded to come to Caesarea.

Now Acts 24. After five days Ananias the high priest and Jewish elders appeared before Felix, Paul facing them. They accused Paul of sedition against Rome, plainly showing that Paul was preaching the KINGDOM OF GOD.

Felix delayed judgment. Our courts today give us delay after delay. Paul was delayed there two years. Then one Festus was sent to take over the Governorship.

Now Acts 25. The Jews came down from Jerusalem to accuse Paul, standing before Festus. They accused him of many things, just as our former resentful members have accused us--BUT COULD PROVE NOTHING--as neither can our accusers!

But the politician Festus was willing to do the Jews a favor, and suggested Paul go to Jerusalem to be tried. Then said Paul: "I stand at Caesar's judgment seat where I ought to be judged" [verse 10]. Paul DEFENDED HIMSELF. Some of our former members would say Paul was surely wrong. Then Paul APPEALED TO CAESAR, just as we today are appealing to the Supreme Court, and by prayers to the Supreme Court of Heaven where Jesus Christ sits with the Father on the Throne!

The Apostle Paul did not fight against the Jews at Jerusalem, nor against Caesar's Government. We today do not fight against, to harm, our false accusers, and we do not fight against the State of California.

Was Paul wrong?

Are we wrong, following the same identical procedures?

Romans 13 I have gone into a number of times. That is referring to any citizen of a country being subject, as an individual, to the law of man. In that respect we are all SUBJECT in the same way. But this is NOT a CHARGE of law violation against an individual. It is an attack to TAKE OVER, CONFISCATE ALL PROPERTY, AND RULE GOD'S CHURCH, on no evidence. This is a horse of an altogether different color!

The High Court of Heaven will give us the victory. Meanwhile GOD'S WORK GOES ON STRONGER THAN EVER!

We expected persecution. Satan has thrown at us his "trump card" this time. Jesus Christ has never, and will never, forsake us!

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THE BIG NEWS RIGHT NOW

by Herbert W. Armstrong

The BIG NEWS in world "progress" backward toward the GREAT TRIBULATION and ARMAGEDDON is what's going on secretly between heads of European nations and the Vatican--and what's going on with equal secrecy between Leonid Brezhnev and other Kremlin leaders.

Important news is happening right now--but the newspapers and TV news are not getting it.

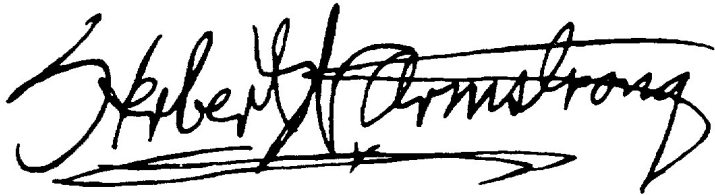
Meanwhile sports-minded people in the U.S.A. are recovering from watching the Winter Olympic Games on ABC-TV and the winners being embraced by President Carter at the White House. And, of course, politically-minded America is awaiting breathlessly the results of the first Presidential Primary in the small-population state of New Hampshire. TV news this evening [Feb.25] is showing political candidates in New Hampshire showing off their best smiles (smiles won the election for President Carter) and the usual kissing of babies.

But the already-elected King of the whole world, Jesus Christ, does not have to campaign in that fashion.

The winning of five gold medals might teach some of us a lesson in perseverance and determination. Eric Heiden did not really win those five skating records at the Olympic Games. He won them by long, continuous weeks and months of grueling training, even with special machines to develop leg muscles. That arduous training put him in better condition and with stronger muscles where skating requires them than his Russian or East German or Swedish competitors. He simply had what it takes. It might be a lesson in some of the laws of success. It required patience, steadfastness, determined endurance--the same as our battle against ourselves and the devil in overcoming.

But be sure important NEWS has happened during this past week, even if not exposed to the public as yet.

President Tito seems to be living on--no news the past days about his supposedly imminent death. Maybe he's outliving those who proclaimed him dead or dying, just as I am. Incidentally, although during this flu epidemic I've had a sore throat and head cold, it has never been serious and is about gone. Regardless, don't stop praying for me, please.



ATTORNEY GENERAL THWARTED IN ATTEMPT TO HAVE CHURCH HELD IN CONTEMPT

Monday, February 25th, Church attorneys appeared in L.A. Superior Court to hold off the strivings of the California Attorney General. Deputy A. G. Lauren Brainard urged Superior Court Judge Weil to hold the Church and its officers in contempt of court. Brainard was not happy with the results of Mr. Rader's court-ordered deposition, nor with the other legal measures the Church had undertaken to protect its rights.

Judge Weil refused to hold the Church or its officers in contempt. The Judge said that he could see no willful refusal to obey any court order. He felt that the Church was acting properly to protect itself in light of the fact that it was awaiting higher court rulings on several of these issues. He perceived accurately that much was at stake if the Church were to neglect its rights.

Judge Weil also granted a stay for thirty days of all discovery by the State, pending decisions by the California Supreme Court and the U.S. Supreme Court on different matters before them. Although this ruling does help the Church and we can be glad that Judge Weil showed some sensitivity to the enormously important issues in the case, nevertheless the legal matters continue to be a day-by-day struggle. The unrelenting prayers of all the ministry and the local brethren are still vital in staying the hands of those who would attempt to disrupt and destroy the Church and Work of God Almighty!