

**T**HIS STARTLING proclamation of the State of California was recently made in court by Deputy Attorney General Lawrence Tapper.

The declaration was made in order to induce a judge to appoint a receiver to enforce the State's claim of ownership to all of the Worldwide Church of God's churches, administration buildings, and contributions.

This intention of the State to claim public ownership of all Church property, was, prior to that date, kept a secret from the public.

The Church has dedicated all of its resources to oppose the State's intended takeover. It is doing this to preserve its own freedom to proclaim the gospel and on behalf of all churches and individuals believing in the principle of the freedom of religion and separation of church and state.

The circumstances giving rise to what the Church attorneys denounce as a confiscatory proclamation are as follows:

### **Dictatorial Threats**

Shocked church personnel were told January 3rd that I, Herbert Armstrong, leader of the Church, and Stanley R. Rader, my personal advisor, were fired and that the Church was in receivership. The State, they said, was now in control of the Church, its finances, property and personnel. Any resistance by any church employee would be met with immediate dismissal.

This terrifying raid of church offices was described by horrified employees as a "gestapo-type nightmare."

The deputies took possession of innumerable cartons of Church documents, records and confidential material, which have not been returned or accounted for.

### **Church Rights Non-existent**

Constitutional attorneys and church members alike were shocked to hear the State officials proclaim that the Worldwide Church of God has "no interest to

court." That the church's funds are "public money." And that the church is a trust, and the people of the State of California "are the beneficiaries."

These statements punctuated the attempt in court by the California Attorney General's office to seize control of the Worldwide Church of God. Historically, this incident marks the most blatant attack on individual and collective religious constitutional rights since the institution of the Bill of Rights.

In effect, the State claims that the tithes and offerings sent to the Church from all over the world by some 100,000 members and 300,000 co-workers, to be used in spreading the Gospel of the soon-coming Kingdom of God, belong to the State of California.

This strikes at the very heart of the rights guaranteed by the Constitution of this great country!

### **State Invasion**

On that fateful day, without notice (as required by law), government attorneys, investigators and law enforcement officers *stormed* Church headquarters, disregarding the character of the institution, the religious and sacred nature of its responsibilities both in the United States and internationally, and its many other cultural and charitable activities.

Exploding into the executive offices in an emotionally violent takeover of Church property, the court-appointed receiver stated that I was "*fired and out!*"

The State insisted that the Church's spiritual leader for more than forty years, was *no longer responsible* for the Church and demanded access to and control of all aspects of the organization's financial assets, bank records, physical facilities, computer files and addresses of the Church's confidential 100,000-person membership.

This unprecedented invasion was taken *outside the bounds of the law*; yet, employees of the Church were threatened with jail if they did not submit to the demands.

### **Illegal Hearing**

The basis for this takeover by the State is a suit filed by six former members of the Church. Supported only by the unproved and factually untrue allegations concerning financial misconduct, these dissidents filed their complaint with the Deputy Attorney General only after they had received assurances from a judge that their action would result in the paralyzing receivership.