

CREATION-SCIENCE REPORT

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THE BATTLE IS ENJOINED

California is setting a dangerous precedent regarding religious liberty and Separation of Church and State freedoms. The Attorney General's office has moved against churches in this State on the complaint by former employees of these organizations that fraudulent practices are engaged in by said church leaders. This may or may not be a result of the Jones' mass suicide and misuse of donations by the Jones' organization. The results of California's action are a matter of nationwide concern to numerous religious organizations and other groups that treasure First Amendment guarantees of religious liberty.

CHURCHES UNITE AGAINST CALIFORNIA

The National Association of Evangelicals has a service constituency in excess of 10,000,000 persons. These affiliates include the National Religious Broadcasters, Evangelical Foreign Missions Associations and the World Relief Corporation, an organization that administers to the needy and the poor of the world in times of emergency (such as famine and war) and provides a wide range of self-help rehabilitative programs to literally millions of people.

The NAE is deeply concerned about the serious consequences that will flow from California's action in regard to its receivership proceedings against the World Church of God. At stake are precious liberties that have been cherished since antiquity. The essence of the Freedom of the Church to operate without State interference as guaranteed in the First Amendment is threatened in a frightening way by California State actions in this case, according to a Statement of Interest filed by our attorney John Whitehead representing NAE's concerns in this issue.

"Quite frankly, the NAE has never before in its history encountered such a sustained and destructive governmental assault on religious liberty. In fact, the Worldwide Church of God reports of the State of California's activities would be beyond belief were they not supported in full by court transcripts and written documents," stated Whitehead in his petition to the Honorable Chief Justice and Associate Justices of the Supreme Court of the State of California on behalf of the NAE.

California Attorney General . . . New Member of the Board

The ultimate breach of the wall of separation between Church and State is the objective of California's State Attorney General. This assault upon the First Amendment rights of the churches, initiated by former Attorney General Evelle Younger, is being prosecuted vigorously by the

present Attorney General, George Deukmejian. After squashing several small, weak churches, (notably, the Metropolitan Baptist Church) Younger and then Deukmejian aimed their guns at Faith Center located in Glendale, California, a church which owns a Christian radio and television network. The crucial stage in the battle was reached last November 3, when Superior Court Judge Charles H. Phillips ruled in favor of the Attorney General's contention that all church properties and funds of all churches are subject to a public trust under section 9505 of the Corporations Code. Judge Phillips said, "But as far as I am concerned, the nature of a religious organization is such that any funds that it holds are funds that are subject to a public trust."

If the properties and funds of the churches are subject to a public trust, this means that the general public of the State has final jurisdiction over their use, acting through their representative, the State Attorney General. This makes the Attorney General an ex-officio member of the controlling boards of all the churches. He and his minions can at any time, for any reason, or for no reason, without evidence of any wrongdoing, without any written sworn testimony of wrongdoing, merely at his own caprice or the caprice or spite of an enemy of a church, demand entrance to the internal business and records of that church. If the Attorney General decides that the business of the church is not being conducted in accord with what he considers to be proper church principles, he can usurp total control of the financial affairs of that church in the name of the people of the State of California and force the church to run its affairs in accord with his mandates. He can do this without going the route of a Grand Jury hearing with sworn testimony. This means that in this State the contributions of God's people to their churches are held not for the purposes of serving God as they and their church officials determine, but for purposes suitable to the general public of the State, acting through their Attorney General! Judge Phillips' abominable ruling must be overturned. It is being appealed.

Early in 1979 Faith Center Pastor, Dr. Gene Scott, forced the Attorney General into a signed agreement in which the Attorney General states that he has no evidence of wrongdoing at Faith Center. Nevertheless, he still claims authority to conduct a fishing expedition into the church's internal affairs. Deukmejian has agreed in writing, however, not to pursue this invasion until the constitutional issue has been adjudicated by the higher courts.

World Vision and Young Life along with Forrest Home are also targets of attack by the Attorney General's office in California. Richard Turner our attorney of record for our own lawsuit is also the defense attorney in these three cases. He tells us that World Vision would be required to pay millions of dollars in taxes that would otherwise go to feeding hungry children.

Topeka, Kansas (UPI) An attorney has filed suit in federal court against the Topeka School District, seeking to prevent the district from closing for the Christmas holiday, asking the court to restrain the school district from celebrating any type of religious holiday.

NEW YORK JOINS THE CREATION ISSUE

The New York State Board of Regents had told top State Department of Education officials to examine the legal and practical implications of introducing Creation instruction into science classes. Legal counsel already has ruled there are no legal barriers and a decision on the practical aspects is expected by the time this report is mailed.

Luther Sunderland almost single-handedly has brought New York to the brink of Creation teaching by assisting in a state-wide revision of the 10-year-old biology curriculum which has been underway since 1977, to include significant space for a Creationist interpretation of science data.