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Takoma Park, Md. 20012  
Dec. 4, 1964

(Personal)

Elder R. J. Wieland  
P. O. Box 111  
College Station  
Berrien Springs, Michigan

Dear Brother Wieland:

While your note of November 1 stated that you would be writing me later, when your term papers were out of the way, I feel that after the lapse of a month, I should at least acknowledge your note, and at the same time express my continuing concern over certain matters.

You spoke of always having "conceded" that some accepted the message of Righteousness by Faith in 1888. Why this should be a concession I confess I do not know, since the leading participants so stated, including Ellen G. White. You have failed to recognize that some of the "some," who first rejected, repented and confessed their wrong course. That reduced the number in that category. And a large percentage of the third "some"--who were at first uncertain and undecided in 1888--later accepted and rejoiced thereafter in Righteousness by Faith within the nineties. That altered the picture.

I would offer this further thought for your consideration: Is it wise or safe, Brother Wieland, for you to continue to pit your personal views against the findings of a group of thoughtful scholars and devoted leaders--including men like A. G. Daniells, A. W. Spalding, L. H. Christian, and A. V. Olson, and possibly I could come within that category. And there are various others that need not be named. Their conclusions are all quite similar.

One is on unsafe ground when he implies that he only is left to discern and uphold ~~the~~ given truth, and that all others are wrong in their united conclusions. Irrespective of your good intentions, that is the impression that you have created. And I think that this is the secret of the misunderstanding that has come upon you as a result. I sincerely hope that you will think this through afresh, and change your attitude and conclusions. This regrettable state of affairs would then pass. I write this because I am sincerely interested in you and your future, and continue to hope for the best.

Pursuing this further, take Elder Olson, for example: If ever there was a conscientious, dedicated, and thorough-going student of our earlier decades, including the eighties and nineties, he was such an one. As chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Ellen G. White Publications he was in a position to have access to the full facts--the entire E. G. White witness. And for the last several years of his life he applied himself almost continuously to this very question. He assembled an amazing body of statements bearing thereon, not yet published. But His conclusions were emphatically not those that you reached. And he was asked by our leaders to make thorough and honest study of all essential facts. You initiated your own investigation, as I understand it.

I too was asked by responsible leaders at headquarters, and by the administration leaders at the University, to study the full, broader, historical evidence, including Mrs. White's total testimony. I too have been at this a long time. Not only have I had access to the E. G. White vault sources, but to the expert reference help of R. L. Odom who, as official indexer, probably has the greatest knowledge of any living man of her book material content. Miss Bessie Mount has made similar study of the E. G. White periodical articles. And Arthur White has had a lifetime acquaintance with the unpublished testimonies, and intimate knowledge of all the special Manuscript indexes and materials. I have had the full benefit of their joint help in my research.

These, I would submit, constitute a formidable group of experts. And I too was directed to go to the bottom of these facts with all these facilities available. But added to all the aforementioned sources, I have the additional eye-witness reports of 21 of the personal participants in the '88 Conference, secured back in 1930. No other person has had all this at his finger tips. These were advantages you did not possess, back when you worked out your thesis.

I too must go on record as believing that you, with access only to part of the facts, and investigating only for a relatively brief period, came to unsound and defective conclusions that have caused agitation rather than enlightenment, and have brought confusion instead of clarification.

Nevertheless, your restricted findings have been eagerly siezed upon, duplicated, capitalized, and commercialized by the Brinsmeadites. Their sale of your document helps to keep their contentions going. And to date you have made no published disavowal of accord, cooperation, and union with them. Because of this, folks have come to but one natural conclusion. The hundreds of copies of your 1888 Re-examined, now in circulation under their aegis, are doing a disruptive work without any public disavowal on your part of association, consent, and approval of their subversive positions and activities.

Evidently you do not realize it, Brother Wieland, but you are in a serious situation. Until there is an emphatic disavowal, you are justly classed as tied in with the Brinsmeads. And your reluctance to completely break with them by making a public disavowal troubles me--and a host of others. Above all you have certain inescapable moral responsibilities, because of your denominational relationships and official posts, for which you are unavoidably held accountable. You need to make a public and published disavowal, not only of such relationships, but of certain conclusions advanced by you that are unsound and unwarranted.

As I see it, that is the only way you can rectify the wrong already done as the result of inadequate study, and then erroneous conclusions, now in circulation. I repeat in all kindness, that it is a very serious situation that you have created for yourself by this actually superficial survey. And I fear that you are headed for greater trouble if you do not do something about this. The Brinsmeads are planning further aggressive moves. If, as they have announced, these should include Africa you would be in a dilemma. You surely have an inescapable moral obligation to the Church, quite apart from any effects upon you personally.

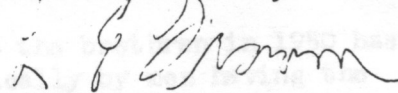
Sincerity and good intentions do not counterbalance the confusion and injury to the cause of true Righteousness by Faith, and the welfare of the Church, projected by your foray into this field--without the facilities for a competent and balanced evaluation. Your willingness to reach conclusions without a full, sound, balanced basis would surely suggest an immaturity that is regrettable.

Your emphasis, thus far, has been largely negative, critical, disruptive. Swing to the positive, Brother Wieland. Help to constructively forward the very truth that lies so close to your heart. You would have joy and satisfaction in such a course. You would counterbalance the past negativism. Try it.

There is another point to ponder. Ere long the full, documented story of the 1888 episode will doubtless be put into print. And unless you have modified your presentation, you may find yourself in a most unenviable position. The contrast will be marked.

Someone needs to awaken you into realizing your really perilous position. I have sought so to do--without personal prejudice, or any outside request to do so. There is much more to say, but not just now. There are basic principles involved as to the relationship of the individual to the Church and church authority, on which there is very explicit Spirit of Prophecy counsel. Please understand my purpose and concern. I would save you from pending trouble, for I am interested in you. Believe me to be,

Yours with concern,



L. E. Froom

LEF:ec  
cc: D. K. Short

P.S. I am sending three new items that speak for themselves. They are but samples of many others recently completed. I am crystalizing more and more of the evidence that answers objections raised by the critical. Some of the most important of all are just being finished, dealing with the Loud Cry, Latter Rain, and Angel of Revelation 18:1. You have only seen but part of the larger evidence.

LEF