

Box 111, College Station
Berrien Springs, Mich.
Dec. 9, 1964

Elder L. E. Froom
6840 Eastern Ave. N. W.
Washington 12, D. C.

Dear Elder Froom:

Thank you for your letter of Dec. 7. Again, I appreciate your frankness, but of course am very sorry you feel as you do about my writing to Mrs. Pearl Waggoner Howard to ask if she could confirm the matter.

The fact is that in 1938 or 1939 I had heard from Dr. W. A. Semmens and Elder Washburn statements that Waggoner's book The Glad Tidings was a resume of the eleven studies he had presented at the 1938 General Conference Session. I have read that book rather carefully several times through the years, and have often wondered about how accurately it represents Waggoner's views in 1938 because there is a tinge of pantheism evident here and there.

In the light of the statement of these two elders (it was made to the ministerial class at WFO), I have assumed that the Signs articles of 1939-91 and Christ and His Righteousness also represented Waggoner's 1938 teaching on righteousness by faith. I began reading the Signs articles in 1943, and have read further during furloughs since that time. You can appreciate my interest in your verbal statement to us October 23 that Jessie F. Moser took the studies down in shorthand, and my interest in reading the notes in the document you lent to us. Because you had mentioned the fact to us as you did, yourself verbally, with no suggestion that it was necessarily a confidential piece of information, I never thought of the possibility that I was betraying a confidence to ask Mrs. Waggoner if she would care to confirm anything about it. Had you said to us at the time you mentioned it that that particular bit of information was confidential, or that what you were discussing was itself in general confidential, I would have acted differently. I understood that what you were presented to us in the main was what you presented to a group of workers in the Atlantic Union Conference earlier this year. I understood, of course, the details in the Classified document you lent us would not have been presented to them; but this other matter of the shorthand notes you had mentioned to us yourself.

I re-read Christ and His Righteousness here at the library after my return from Washington recently. In it I noticed two points (one was called to my attention by a student) that induced me to try to seek further information or confirmation of the extent to which this book

does indeed reflect the teachings of Waggoner at the Minneapolis Conference: (a) his views on the nature of Christ in the Incarnation that seem to be at variance with views promoted amongst us today; (b) his view that Christ was a begotten Being, which, it seems to me, was still semi-arian. If Waggoner himself was tinctured with Arianism at the 1888 Conference, that fact would deserve careful study in the light of what I understand is your general 1888 thesis.

I did not mention any of these things to Mrs. Howard. I only told her of my interest through the years in Elder E. J. Waggoner, and my desire for any confirmation or comment she might like to make about the shorthand notes, and about Elder Waggoner personally.

This letter is to present my view of the incident. Until your letter came today I had not the slightest idea that you would take exception to my personal use of that item of information that actually coincided with and confirmed an opinion I had heard expressed since about 1939. Since you did mention it to us in connection with your resume of what you presented at a workers' meeting with no injunction that I recall that the bit of information was particularly confidential, I regret that you would choose to withdraw confidence from me thus. You may regard me as being overzealous in my desire to know and to understand as much as is possible for me to know and double-check about the Minneapolis history. Admittedly my interest is a deep one. I feel that to know the truth is a very important duty for us at this time in our history. I can hardly apologize to you for this interest.

But I do apologize for giving you or Mrs. Howard the impression that I did not trust your statement of fact made to us October 23. I had no doubt of the fact. My request for personal confirmation from Mrs. Howard I don't consider challenging your statement; I intended it as a request that might bring more information to light in view of the problems I mentioned above.

If you still feel that I betrayed a confidence, I am very sorry. I did not realize that I was doing so. Perhaps that is inexcusable in your eyes. I hope not; and I hope it may be possible for you to reconsider your cutting me off from your confidence as your letter says you do.

Sincerely yours,


E. J. Waggoner