

425 N. Imperial
Brawley, California
January 11, 1966

Dr. L. E. Froom
6940 Eastern Ave., N. W.
Washington 12, D. C.

Dear Elder Froom:

It is my privilege to acknowledge your letter of November 23, and to thank you again for writing.

I have read and reread your letter and have often knelt in prayer seeking guidance from Him who is the wonderful Counselor. You are Adventism's foremost scholar, in my estimation; and I know myself to be nothing, less than the least of all saints, most truly. I respect you highly for your achievements and your wisdom, and esteem you in love for your work's sake.

Still I must lay your counsel before the Lord and seek His guidance, for I dare not abdicate my conscience to anyone, whomsoever.

Although your various letters have given an impression of severity, I do not in any sense resent it. God bless you richly for your desire to help me. "Let the righteous smite me; it shall be a kindness: and let him reprove me; it shall be an excellent oil, which shall not break my head."

As best I can understand you, you wish me to retract certain positions expressed in 1950 and maintained ever since; and yet you have not presented me with pertinent Spirit of Prophecy evidence.

In 1951, when Brother Short and I received the General Conference letter condemning our manuscript, we noted that the brethren had not dealt with the thesis of the document. We never felt it our duty to agitate the matter, and requested others not to do so. We resigned it all to the disposition of Providence, appealing to the Lord to vindicate truth, regardless of our own fate. I trust Him to do so in His own good time and way.

The matter is still in His hands today, although I stand ready to retract or modify any position when evidence is forthcoming that requires it. We are not in any way connected with the Brinshead group nor with any others who may have agitated our manuscript. What they have done is entirely their own responsibility over our express refusal to grant approval or consent for its publication. They consider themselves impelled by the Lord to publish the matter, and we do not at this stage feel competent to judge them. We believe that the Lord, to whom we appealed the unresolved issues, is well able to handle the situation, and that the General Conference will cooperate with Him.

I enclose herewith some quotations from your earlier writings that seem to be very pertinent in this present time. I agree very

much with what you said some years ago, and pray that I may never in future "retract" the truth you therein express so clearly.

May the Lord be gracious to you, to bless and prosper you in this New Year.

Sincerely yours,

"There are those who feel that untrammelled utterance of honest thought by our workers is dangerous, that it should be controlled by restraining limitations. Let such never forget that in the free expression of opinion this advent movement was born, and in such expression of opinion every advancement has been made. It is our historic heritage, and constitutes the vindicated method of arriving at sound and united conclusions, and of achieving effective and concerted action. Thank God for free expression in the advent movement." (L. C. Froom, Ministry, January 1940).

"Unity upon doctrinal or prophetic truth springs from free and open discussion. Such unity will prove genuine, abiding, and satisfying; and this alone will settle agitation. The apparent oneness that sometimes comes through repression of discussion is but a seeming unity, destined to inevitable collapse." (Ibid., May, 1936).

"Outward unity concerning doctrine or interpretation that comes through mere authoritarian decision is perforce of spurious and transitory character. It is only submission to a decision made by a council, committee, or group, and not true acceptance of a position, springing from the personal conviction of a persuaded mind. That unity is alone genuine and abiding which comes through weight of evidence and personal perception of light—from conclusions based upon free and full discussion and the manifest leading of the Holy Spirit. This is the only kind of doctrinal unity that harmonizes with the spirit and genius of this movement, or that has rightful place in its operations. We should eschew all other." (Ibid., May, 1940).

"The stifling of discussion is contrary to the very genius of both civil and religious democracy, for truth is a living, expanding principle. Repression of discussion is ever characteristic of autocracy, with its centralized power and its fear of disturbing the status quo. History marks it as notoriously the tool of tyranny and the instrument of error. Freedom to ask questions, to differ, to discuss, fosters truth and exposes error. Controversy occupied a large part in the formation of the New Testament canon. Debate lifts fallacy from fact and error from truth; but stagnating conservatism, with its accompanying frown upon discussion, tends toward ultimate ineptitude and disaster; and repression of investigation often ends in upheaval." (Ibid., November 1934).