

# ANDREWS UNIVERSITY

BERRIEN SPRINGS, MICHIGAN

LEROY EDWIN FROOM

Professor Emeritus of Historical Theology

6840 Eastern Ave., N.W.

Washington, D.C. 20012

March 30, 1971

Elder Robert J. Wieland  
Banning Seventh-day Adventist Church  
2369 West Nicolet  
Banning, California 92220

Dear Elder Wieland:

As to the "complimentary copy" aspect of your recent undated letter--based on "position," as you put it--presentation copies have been placed with the more than fifty appointed readers of the Movement of Destiny in its Ms. form. Also the scores who furnished priceless historical documents and data, and who sought out and secured elusive vital items for me, etc., etc.

Such were some of the special categories included. And certain individuals whom I felt should, for various reasons, have them. This included a sizeable number. That is how "official" the list was. For example, neither your local nor union president received a copy from me.

Now to the main content of your letter. I noted with deep regret that apparently you were reading primarily--or at least initially--to see how I might possibly refer to you and Brother Short, directly or indirectly. You say you even xeroxed certain pages and sent them to him. That was not necessary, for I had already started on its way to him a complete copy. I would not do otherwise. He, like everyone else, needs the complete context, not selected pages. Context is basic, and the overall picture is imperative to fair understanding.

You have apparently concentrated your search upon a particular aspect of a really vast, comprehensive portrayal. And may I say, just here, that there has always been a thin line of men, almost back to 1888, who have taken a stance akin to yours--usually very tenaciously. And I am sorry to say that most of them have, alas, ultimately dropped out along the way--nearly all, I believe. It is a dangerous path. That is why I have been concerned about you. You must not drop out. We need you, and you need us.

I had earnestly hoped that you would follow, with an open mind, the whole tracement of the developing life=stream of the Movement, and see how God has actually been leading a people "ever onward and upward," to borrow Ellen White's significant words. And this despite their human frailties and shortcomings. I have, before God, sought to give a fair and faithful portrayal of things as they have been.

There would emerge a thousand things of vital worth to you from such a reading. They are there, and you would revel in them. Our goals and objectives are the same, I believe.

I am sorry that you still feel, apparently, that practically all others are out of step, and out of line but you, on this particular point--which is but a minor part of the coverage of this extensive volume, comprising 686 pages of text. Look for the other appealing things, I urge you. Whether you relish it or not, your positions and actions are, of course, an inescapable part of the record of our history. That which is past cannot be changed.

I am likewise very sorry that the last I knew four Brinsmead outlets still exploit and distribute your 1888=Re=examined, without being checked or publicly disavowed. They seemingly look upon your item as one of the choicest sustainers of their positions. This has led many to conclude that there is at least close sympathy between the two of you, which you say is not true. But you can see how, unrebuked, it would so appear.

Brother Wieland, how I wish we could pull along together. I most sincerely mean this. Such a move would change your whole ministry and bring new joy into your life. But you apparently consider your emphatic personal judgment to be superior to, and to outweigh all others combined. Many do not trust your judgment because of the way you base your case upon partial evidence on which you rest your unyielding judgments.

You will never know how sadly disappointed all the members of that last hearing-committee were over your final stand. We seemed so close to a common understanding, at one time: but you adamantly reverted, it seemed, at that last meeting--on that one point. That is the tragedy.

I fear that in the light of your initial reaction and procedure in reading Movement of Destiny, you will not get much out of the larger and really vital, constructive contribution of the volume. That I most deeply regret. Why stand so apart from your brethren on this point? Are you alone the recipient of divine light? Are you alone competent to evaluate and judge? Is your judgment superior to all others? That is a pretty bold stand. Could you possibly be wrong? Movement of Destiny would help to clarify the whole picture, I believe, if you would only let it do so.

With deep concern,

Most sincerely,

L. E. Froom

P. S. You state that you accept the "clear, reiterated, and over-all testimony of Ellen G. White above that of the opinions or impressions

ANDREWS UNIVERSITY

of men who are not necessarily inspired, regardless of their position." Do you think that such a principle or procedure is limited just to you? Do not all thoughtful, loyal, competent Adventists hold essentially the same? Are you more honest and conscientious than all the rest of us?

Nor am I sure of your word "reiterated." If Mrs. White said, "It is the Third Angel's message in verity" but once, isn't that sufficient? Or in but one instance that "Deity did not die"? How many times must she reiterate one clearly expressed truth? Neither do I understand your term "necessarily inspired." No Adventist, as I understand it, aside from Ellen White--neither you nor I--are "necessarily inspired." To this I am sure we both agree. Semantics should not be permitted to separate us. Let us seek common ground. Negativism is neither safe nor sound. "Press together" is Ellen White's reiterated urge.

My heart goes out to you, Brother Wieland, for I know you are lonely. Your face and your eyes show it. Others note and comment upon it. Come and join hands with us.

L. E. F.

LEF:am

cc: D. K. Short