

Andrews University

Digital Commons @ Andrews University

Faculty Publications

5-1-1970

Insight

C. Mervyn Maxwell
Andrews University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/pubs>



Part of the [Biblical Studies Commons](#), and the [Practical Theology Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Maxwell, C. Mervyn, "Insight" (1970). *Faculty Publications*. 3854.
<https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/pubs/3854>

This Popular Press is brought to you for free and open access by Digital Commons @ Andrews University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Faculty Publications by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Andrews University. For more information, please contact repository@andrews.edu.

Q. Why don't Seventh-day Adventists defend this country in which they live? You get religious freedom, you can worship on the day you wish, but you won't do anything to show your gratitude. You will not bear arms and defend your country. What a shame!

Have you noticed what God did for Israel in the six-day war? Did you ever read how every man and woman in that little country bore arms to defend themselves against the enemy? What kind of country would America be if no one was brave enough to fight in its defense? Adventists are too otherworldly. They forget that Jesus said in Luke 19:13, "Occupy till I come."

A. What did Jesus intend us to occupy? The West Bank of the Jordan?

I am sure you did not mean this. I am not sure, however, that I am as clear as you are on the question of God's role in the six-day war.

I spent two months in Jordan during 1968, the year after the war, and on the other side of the river I got another side of that conflict. I saw the tent camps of hundreds of thousands of civilian refugees, many of whom had owned their own homes and farms on the West Bank but who had in consequence of the war lost homes, property, jobs, loved ones, and in many cases hope itself. Why don't we just say that "every man and woman" in Israel won that war and leave God to tell us, in His own good time, which side He was on—if He was on either?

As for whether Seventh-day Adventists are loyal Americans when they serve as noncombatant medical corpsmen, do you know by experience what it's like to be wounded in combat and have a medic (of any reli-

gion) work his way through the battle to give you first aid? Some GI's who have say they appreciate the medics a great deal.

And for what it is worth, the United States Supreme Court (*Giroud v. U.S.*, 1946) has stated (8:1) that "Bearing arms, important as it is, is not the only way in which our institutions may be supported and defended, even in times of great peril. . . . Devotion to one's country can be as real and as enduring among noncombatants as among combatants."

Q. How do you think the Federal aid to church-related schools problem is going to be solved? Do you have any ideas?

A. No one can say. Here are some straws in the wind.

Student aid. In New Mexico a bill has been introduced providing for payment of vouchers worth \$250 per child to parents of private- and parochial-school children, the vouchers being redeemable by the schools after the parents turn them in. Two hundred fifty dollars is half of what a public-school child costs the State.

Protestant school administrators (including a Baptist college president) expressed themselves as disappointed when South Carolina's governor failed to offer a child-scholarship plan for their State.

Secularization. This past winter the St. Louis Roman Catholic Archdiocese said it would seek State aid for "secular" courses, then launched a twelve-month study to determine precise future needs.

Fordham, the Jesuit University, has been working early and late to shed its religious character in order to qualify for Federal aid, as have nearly a score of other Catholic schools.

Secular-Teacher Aid. A Michigan Senate committee has recommended a plan whereby teachers of so-called "nonreligious" subjects—science, math, English, and so on—would be paid their salaries by the State on the basis that they were teaching classes the State would otherwise have to provide in the public system.

Q. What inevitably happens in a monolithic system of education is that those who believe most must yield to those who believe less, and those who believe less must yield to those who believe least. Because there is no alternative public school system for the children of dissenting minorities, the U.S. Supreme Court feels compelled to protect their rights in the one public school system which exists. The result is that Mrs. Madalyn Murray O'Hair reigns as queen over the consciences of millions. Our children cannot have Bible reading and prayer in school because Mrs. O'Hair says they can't. For the sake of present and future generations let us Christians awake, unite, and do something about this bondage.

A. You have placed your finger on a true weakness of our society, but you have grossly exaggerated your case. Prayers in public schools have **not** been forbidden by court order at Mrs. Madalyn Murray O'Hair's request, or at the request of anybody else. It is time for Christian people to start telling the truth about prayer in public schools.

The U.S. Supreme Court has forbidden boards of regents to write out prescribed prayers and to require teachers to pronounce these prayers in the classroom. That is all. It has not forbidden individual teachers or

students to pray in the classroom. And certainly it has never forbidden Christian teachers to let their personal Christianity radiate in kindness and sympathetic understanding, et cetera, during school hours. Thus the most impelling witness for Christ—"the loveliness of a loving Christian"—has never been interdicted from public schools by the Supreme Court, and doubtless never will be.

Q. This past January the Protestant pastors where I live joined the Catholic priests in holding a prayer-for-unity week. The very thing I have protested for so long is happening. When will America wake up? If all the churches unite, and if they get the government involved on their side, there'll be persecution of minorities without fail. Please shake the country awake before it's too late!

A. Catholics and Protestants held joint services for unity not only in your town but all over America this past January. The week of prayer for Christian unity was, in fact, cosponsored by the World Council of Churches and the Vatican Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity. The idea for the week stemmed directly from the Catholic "Church Unity Octave [Week]" founded some sixty years ago.

Protestant-Catholic unity is indeed rushing pell-mell into reality. Dr. John Coventry Smith, one of the six presidents of the WCC, thinks the Roman Catholic Church will be a member of the WCC within ten years. Dr. Robert Dodds, NCC Director for Economic Affairs, thinks the vast majority of Christians around the world—Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox—will be looking to the Catholic

Church as the "symbolic center of their faith" within two generations.

America may well ponder Voltaire's penetrating observation that when there are many churches in a nation they defend one another's freedom, but when there is only one, it always persecutes.

Q. One of your recurring arguments in defense of the seventh-day Sabbath is that it is a memorial of God's creation of man "in his own image." This ignores all the evidence that proves evolution. Just recently Stanford scientists have created a living virus. How can you still maintain your thesis of creation? [New York]

A. Stanford scientists Kornberg and Coulian have created life in newspaper headlines but not in their test tubes.

Far from creating a virus, they have simply learned a way to make a virus reproduce itself on artificial instead of natural food.

Ordinarily a virus cannot reproduce itself except inside a living cell. This means that the DNA of a virus cannot assemble a reproduction of itself unless the necessary amino acids and nucleotides are present in its immediate environment. This is one reason that many scientists believe a virus is not truly a living organism.

Ordinarily the necessary amino acids and nucleotides can be found only within a living cell. The Stanford scientists, however, managed to prepare a chemical soup which contained these necessary ingredients, and then placed in it the DNA ribbon from a PhX 174 virus and watched it reproduce itself as successfully as if it had been in a living cell. They did not cause this mixture of chemicals to form

a DNA molecule; they simply provided an artificial environment for the DNA molecule to use in lieu of an ordinary cell.

Far from disproving basic creationist theory, this experiment tends to authenticate creationism. The creationist insists that life could have begun on this planet only as a great Intelligence guided the process. The amount of research, skill, and expense that went into the Stanford experiment shows again how unlikely it is that life could have started on this earth merely by chance.

Q. I was fascinated with your issue on Kirby J. Hensley, pastor of the Universal Life Church in Modesto, California, who ordains anyone to the ministry, even dogs, for a fee. Do you have any recent word about him? How long will the Government let him get away with it?

A. Apparently the Government is going to let him get away with it for some time. In fact, the field seems to be broadening. The pastor of the Hollywood, Florida, Universal Life Church, is now offering divinity degrees (plus a ten-pack of easy lessons) in exchange for a "freewill offering" of \$20.

And the staff director of the [Florida] State Senate Consumer Protection Committee, while grumbling that Florida is becoming a "cesspool" for such operations, recently allowed "that it is all quite legal" and that owners of the degree are eligible for the same tax exemptions enjoyed by ministers of the established churches.

A Selective Service spokesman took a more hardheaded view, however. Degrees from the ULC, he ruled, will not qualify men for deferment from the draft.