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5-1-1971

Insight

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Recommended Citation

Maxwell, C. Mervyn, "Insight" (1971). *Faculty Publications*. 3874.
<https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/pubs/3874>

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Q. Is there any connection between Seventh-day Adventists and Armstrong's Church of God in Los Angeles? Both stress Sabbathkeeping and Bible prophecy. I am just wondering.

A. No connection at all—theological, organizational, or historical.

Herbert W. Armstrong accepts neither the Trinity nor the bodily resurrection of Jesus and he places himself completely outside the pale of Christian theology when he insists that every man can become God even as God is God.

Armstrong has repeatedly insisted that though he has read some SDA literature he has never so much as darkened the door of an Adventist church. In turn, Seventh-day Adventists emphasize that Armstrong is not and never has been one of their number.

Q. As I see it, one hundred years ago Catholics had a right to establish their own school system. Public schools were often anti-Catholic, and Catholic parents needed to protect their children from harassment. But for at least seventy years now public schools have been virtually free of such bigotry. . . . On the other hand, most Catholics are middle-class whites and are choosing to perpetuate their anachronistic system today only to segregate their children from poor nonwhites.

A. If "all generalizations are false including this one," surely yours must be too. I expect there is some truth in it, however. Though most people are unaware of the fact, Catholicism has appealed to only a few Blacks in the United States and this is probably one reason why leading Black organizations oppose parochialism. They know it

will take money away from public schools in urban ghettos, without benefiting the schools attended by most of their race.

And Catholics being people, it is probably true that many, like other middle-class people everywhere, would like to have their children go to school with "nice people."

But surely it does the teaching nuns and teaching priests an injustice to suggest that they conduct schools only for sociological reasons. Unquestionably many of them are sincerely committed to the promulgation of what they believe to be God's only truth. I think a statement in the January 10, 1970, "America" must be accepted as having at least a good measure of validity: "The key issue is not simply to have or not to have parochial schools. It [the key issue] is Christian education."

Q. What kind of country would America be if everyone were a Seventh-day Adventist conscientious objector and NO ONE was brave enough to fight in its defense? I asked this question once before and you evaded it. I now call on you to answer it clearly and stop pulling the wool over our eyes.

A. Aren't you begging the question? It has always seemed to me, anyway, that medics who rescue wounded buddies under enemy fire while carrying no defensive weapons themselves are rather courageous chaps.

I think that if every single person in this country had the moral stamina of a medic—that is, the inner fortitude to serve his fellow man willingly, actively, unarmed, at the peril if necessary of his own life—America would be such a great country and its moral leadership in the world so profound that God

would not only protect it but would also do great things for it and through it.

"A king is not saved by his great army. . . . Behold, the eye of the Lord is on those who fear him, . . . that he may deliver their soul from death" (Psalm 33:16-19, R.S.V.). "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord" (verse 12).

Q. Out of curiosity I attended one of your [Adventist] churches last weekend. The minister had an interesting Bible message, but he carefully avoided social concerns. Is he typical?

A. Typical Adventists believe that if society is to be changed, people must be changed from the inside. Since only Jesus Christ can effect this change, preaching Christ is not ignoring social issues, but is treating them in the best way possible.

Yet Adventists have a social program, all right. They have been operating city welfare centers for all races and creeds since the 1890's and have greatly augmented this program recently. One of the first half dozen or so Settlement Houses in Chicago history was opened by Seventh-day Adventists. In a recent year Adventists in North America gave away 7,092,130 pieces of clothing to the underprivileged, and their hospitals provided nearly 2 million dollars' worth of charity.

Religious News Service lately reported that Lutheran Pastor L. L. Ferking, of Charlotte, North Carolina, whose congregation has been notable for race-reconciliation attempts since the 1930's, uses his church on weekdays for social issues, but on Sunday preaches and teaches the Word of God, because he believes that saving souls comes first. We commend his attitude.