

Walter Carson: Our GC Trademark Attorney

PART ONE OF TWO

Over the past several years, we have heard about Walter Carson. He has been in the General Conference Office of General Counsel (OGC) longer than any other attorney. This brief report will provide you with some additional information about this man, whom we now learn has been at the heart of the General Conference trademark lawsuits since their inception.

Walter E. Carson is 56 years old this year. We know little about his background before he attended college. After graduating from Columbia Union College, he completed a history degree and a law degree at a Catholic university.

Carson then worked as an assistant law director for the City of Cleveland, Ohio. Later he was in the State of Ohio attorney general's office for a time. After this he moved back to Maryland and worked first as a congressional liaison for the U.S. Postal Service and, then, as a Democratic congressional staff member, working in the office of John J. Flynt, Jr. (D).

We will learn that Carson seems to find himself at home with Democrats and Catholics. Later in this article, we will learn his Democratic connections have continued on down to the present time. (This is unusual; since Adventists who oppose abortion, gay rights, etc., generally are conservative Republicans.)

At the age of 32, Carson joined the General Conference legal department (1976); and, with the exception of one year, he has been there ever since. It is called the Office of General Counsel (OGC).

In August 1981, Vincent Ramik initially suggested to Neal C. Wilson the idea of trademarking the name, Seventh-day Adventist, then waiting five years before suing independent groups using it; for some reason Carson was not bothered by the idea. While the concept of routinely dragging Adventist believers into court appeared somewhat abhorrent at first to most of the other staff members, Carson was different. For reasons discussed later in this report, it is likely that Ramik also obtained his law degree at a Roman Catholic school. At any rate, the two seemed to have enough in common that they both could enjoy the idea of financially ruining and destroying the faith of Seventh-day Adventists.

Carson threw himself wholeheartedly into the task of learning trademark law. He was in the prime of life (37), and had five years in which to prepare. During the mandatory waiting period before the actual trademark suits could begin, he studied trade-

mark law intensively. There was nothing in his professional work in Ohio or in the federal government to quite prepare him for this; but, by 1986, Walter Carson had become the only knowledgeable in-house trademark attorney at the General Conference. He had made himself invaluable, but at what a spiritual cost to his own salvation.

We might inquire why the General Conference did not have Carson carry on the court cases himself, omitting Ramik's expensive help. Perhaps it looked better if outside attorneys did the dirty work. Would it look good, to church members, if General Conference workers were at the front line attack and destroy team? Would it not look better if they were perceived as only hovering silently in the background, portraying themselves in the pages of the *Review* as the hapless victims of these terrible independent groups? At any rate, it was thought best to retain Vincent Ramik's expertise which, from years of courtroom experience in patent and trademark litigation, far surpassed anything Walter Carson would ever have.

Carson is acknowledged, by the General Conference legal staff, as the foremost expert on trademark and intellectual property matters within the church. From the beginning, he has played a key role in working closely with Robert Nixon in the General Conference and Vincent Ramik in prosecuting lawsuits against hapless Adventists. Nixon would write conference presidents, asking them to report on groups in their jurisdiction which were using the name without proper authorization. He would also reply to general questions from church members. Ramik was placed in charge of making threatening phone calls and writing threatening letters. Carson, with his trademark law knowledge, coordinated between Ramik, Nixon, and Wilson in selecting and going after specific targets.

If some of these men make it to heaven, they will have some explaining to do to a number of the saints who will be there.

It has been said that Walter Carson was always willing to help when integrity in the General Conference needed to be eliminated. Whether or not that is true, we are shocked at his involvement in the trademark suits. We are also surprised at how readily he stepped forward, when an opportunity came to get rid of the only whistle-blower remaining in the General Conference: David Dennis.

In the fall of 1983, Adventist Health Systems had passed \$1 billion in debt. By the spring of 1985, they had exceeded \$1.5 billion! In August 1986, they had reached \$2 billion! But AHS, working closely with the General Conference, came up with a satisfactory “solution.” On April 5, 1989, AHS officers met with General Conference officials—and voted immense salary increases to AHS leaders!

But when Dennis wrote Wilson a pleading letter on April 17 to rescind this action, it led to Dennis’ later firing. He had become the problem, and problems must be eliminated. (*See our book, Collision Course, 56 pp., 8½ x 11 \$5.00 + \$1.50 p&h.*)

That December (1986), John Marik was jailed in Los Angeles for having refused to stop calling his nine-member group “Seventh-day Adventists.” Carson, Ramik, and Wilson were jubilant. The experience so shook Marik that he later left religion entirely. Yet, from 1981 to 1990, all in-house trademark expenses have been paid from the sacred tithe. From 1990 up to the present day, all other trademark costs have been paid from other church funds (which would have to be Ingathering or overseas missions).

You will recall the incident, back in late July 1990, when newly elected President Folkenberg was trying to find ways to secretly get money to his wife and Al McClure’s wife. When Donald F. Gilbert, then GC treasurer, said that this would be unethical, Ron Wisbey, president of the Columbia Union, arranged to have the money laundered through their “Worthy Student Fund” and secretly given to the two wives. (In our recent report of the Shady Grove Hospital salary scandal, we reported on how Wisbey was handsomely rewarded for this money laundering scheme, by being later transferred to extremely lucrative AHS executive positions. In 1996, his salary was \$161,000; in 1997, \$447,000; and, in 1998, \$364,000. When he tried to silence the *Washington Post* for an article they printed, they investigated and published data on many high salaries he had approved in committee.)

The payments to the two wives would have continued down to the present day, if David Dennis had not reported the situation. Embarrassed by the disclosure, in a June 19, 1991 letter to Gilbert, Folkenberg wrote that he had asked the Columbia Union to discontinue this unethical action because “I only know that it is vital that my integrity be unsullied.” He was not worried about his integrity until he was found out. The wives had by that time collected \$20,520. Once again, it was David Dennis who was blamed as the troublemaker. Was it not he who had dared to mail an auditor’s report of the scheme to every officer in the Columbia Union Conference?

Two months later John Marik, who had been hounded by the General Conference trademark attorneys for four full years, abandoned Christianity entirely. Who will answer in the judgment for what happened to him?

Two months after that (October 1991), a Los Angeles federal court decided in favor of Kinship. This put all further GC trademark suits on hold till they could find a suitable group for another frontal attack. But what would happen if David Dennis ever learned about the latest money-laundering scheme, the one with James Moore which, by 1984, had already involved many letters and phone calls? (More about this below.) Dennis must be eliminated.

In October 1984 at the age of 40, Carson was very willing to accept the assignment of leading out in verbally attacking David Dennis, calling him a liar, a child abuser and adulterer—in order to get Dennis fired. Without corroborating evidence, Carson charged Dennis with having had a long history of sexual misconduct. But he was careful to make those charges in a closed meeting where the promised court reporter was told not to appear.

“On October 4, and with Mittleider present, Dennis was called in to Carson’s office. Dennis was presented with the affidavit which Carson got Adels to sign and summarily told that he must resign his post.

“Dennis refused. It is an interesting fact that, when church workers are framed by false memory syndrome charges, leadership generally sides with the defendant—not with the accuser. But Dennis was different.

“The next day David was again called in for a second interrogation by Carson and Mittleider. This time a different approach was used. Dennis was accused of alleged improper financial dealings and other accusations! They were untrue, and he refused to resign. Every possible avenue of impeaching his character and frightening him into quitting was being attempted.

“On October 9, Dennis was again ordered to meet with his persecutors. This time a third tactic was used. He was summarily told that the General Conference leaders could, and would, destroy his reputation if he did not resign immediately! When he said the charges were untrue, he was called a liar. Once again, he was told that leadership intended to totally destroy his reputation and slander his character if he did not immediately resign.

“Two days later, on October 11, in desperation a fourth tactic was employed. This time, Dennis had engaged an attorney with him, who listened, by conference call, while Dennis was

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told that he must resign immediately—because the General Conference now had documentary proof of each and every charge leveled against him. David knew this claim was as unfounded as all the others, and he challenged them to produce the documents. At this, in bursts of anger they demanded his immediate resignation.

“In the months which have passed since then, none of that supposed evidence has ever been presented. This is because no such evidence exists. It was a lying report.

“Documents and paperwork were fabricated, and slanders continue against Dennis and his family. No proof has been found to support these charges, and Dennis staunchly and consistently maintains his complete innocence.”—*Collision Course*, p. 41.

On December 29, Dennis was fired. Carson had done his part, and Folkenberg was proud of him.

After the 1992 money-laundering scheme to the wives had failed, Folkenberg went to Walter Carson and asked him to figure out another way to privately get money into his, Folkenberg’s, hands. Of course, this was highly unethical; and, in the manner in which it was done, it was far worse in scope than the sneaky “Worthy Student” scheme had been. The two knew it would have to be done in utmost secrecy; otherwise it would ruin both of their reputations in the church.

In mid-1992, at Carson’s request, the Chicago law firm of Sonnenschein, Nath & Rosenthal (SN&R) set up the Elder and Mrs. Robert S. Folkenberg Trust. The objective, obviously, was to provide a secret money channel to Folkenberg. In return, he would provide special favors to donors.

Such a practice would be enough to ruin a high-placed Adventist leader, if discovered. But Folkenberg had always been a risk taker. And, after working in the General Conference for years, doing “the Lord’s work” in suing faithful Adventist believers, Carson had become hardened. Whether it involved working up documents on David Dennis or dragging innocent people into federal court, Carson was ready to brave his way through the latest leadership project presented to him.

One of the men who wanted to funnel money through that Chicago trust fund to Folkenberg was none other than James Moore, the Sacramento businessman who had been imprisoned from 1989 to 1992 on eight counts of grand larceny. (“Larceny” is the crime of unlawfully taking away another person’s property, with the intent of depriving him of it permanently. Theft of money is frequently involved. Folkenberg knew all about this; but, in the hope of

personal profit, he continued working with James Moore in spite of it.)

In order to render the fund even more secretive, Carson set in motion arrangements to transfer the moneys from the Chicago fund to a Channel Islands fund on June 15, 1992. (The Channel Islands are located in the English Channel, south of Britain. Like a number of other locations in the world, it is a financial haven for people who want to hide financial transactions.)

Thomas Opferman, a SN&R attorney, sent Carson and Moore a draft of the Trust agreement and a Ruling Request. Upon receiving those papers, Moore told Opferman that he would send the documents to his Channel Islands lawyer, who would draft documents to set up a new foundation there to receive donations to the Folkenberg Trust.

But Opferman sent a letter, dated June 24, 1992, to Carson, informing him that this new account would have to be cleared by the IRS, and they might give it very careful scrutiny. Whether this worried Carson and Folkenberg is not known. But we do know that the Channel Islands Trust was never set up. (The present writer has the impression that Moore regularly stalled Folkenberg, in order to get as many favors as possible with the least payment of money.)

If it had been, the plan provided for a check for \$700,000 to have been immediately placed in it by Moore, for making “distributions at least quarterly to Elder Folkenberg.”

That same year, Robert’s brother, Donald Folkenberg was hired without approval as an “associate treasurer.” His assignment: disbursing all overseas money for Robert’s new project—Global Mission. (Some now believe that Global Mission was an invented project, to provide Donald a treasury to be in charge of.)

By November 1992, the man who had been trained by Jesuits could no longer take the shark-infested environment at world headquarters. Walter Carson tendered his resignation and went back to Ohio and entered private practice.

Without his help, Robert Folkenberg relied more heavily on secret phone calls to James Moore which, unknown to him, Moore was secretly taping. (When you go into financial partnership with a man earlier convicted of larceny, you should expect some unusual treatment.)

As Folkenberg’s involvement in Moore’s Kanaka Valley Associates mess deepened, he pled for Carson to return, which he did in December 1993. He also needed to streamline his personal messenger-boy services, on behalf of Moore, on church-paid flights to national leaders throughout the world.

In 1994, Carson submitted a Trust funding proposal to the board of Geometra, Inc., another of Moore's business interests. In a memorandum dated September 8, 1994, addressed to Moore as an executive committee member of Geometra, Carson proposed opening three foreign bank accounts in the name of "Foreign Geometra, Inc." The letter further stated that it would be set up in one of the 57 countries which had signed the Patent Cooperation Treaty, "thus providing confidentiality on banking matters and financial affairs" (*i.e.*, even more secretive fund transfers to Folkenberg).

Why did Folkenberg need so much extra money? Why did James Moore want to give him so much? When Folkenberg was ousted in 1999, it was disclosed that he had not only arranged for Moore to visit key national leaders in other nations,—but even went along to introduce him! This gave Moore opportunity to arrange many lucrative business deals.

(*Example:* In an August 1, 1994, letter to Desmond Tutu, Folkenberg attempted to sue the GC president's office to legitimize Moore and the "humanitarian potential" of his activities.)

(*Example:* A memorandum to Shareholders of Geometra Engine and Fuel Systems, Inc., from Nicholas LaPolla, secretary of Geometra. La Polla was sitting in Moore's office on January 30, 1995, when Moore received a phone call from Folkenberg. La Polla overheard Folkenberg tell Moore that he had set tentative appointments for Geometra to show its equipment to the presidents of Malawi, Tanzania, and Uganda and that Folkenberg would try to secure appointments for Geometra with the presidents of Pakistan and Egypt when he met each of them in a few weeks.)

This is what our General Conference president was doing. And the man he was working with was James Moore, a faithful Roman Catholic, who among other duties, was on a Vatican-owned corporate board, *Vicariatus Urbis Foundation!* (See our book, *Robert Folkenberg's Resignation*, third edition, 70 pp., 8½ x 11, \$4.75 + \$1.50.)

Moore was known to have given a number of large donations to high-placed Catholic entities. Folkenberg and Carson knew this, but continued working with him. Carson's letter further specified that certain directors of Sharing International Tennessee would have authority to access these foreign accounts for several purposes, including "to provide funding of the ___ Trust." Blank lines were typed in by Carson to add to the secrecy; Carson well-knew that church

leaders would never tolerate this secret slush fund if they ever learned about it.

Yet, when later called upon to explain his relations with Moore, Folkenberg said that his association with him did not involve "any expectation of any personal profit."

What did Folkenberg gain from being Moore's errand boy, traveling all over the world to promote his business? Consider this example: One month after Folkenberg wrote to Desmond Tutu in South Africa, Walter Carson submitted a proposal to Moore for funding the Folkenberg Trust through foreign bank accounts—in order to keep the transfer of money to Folkenberg secret. How much was transferred? It is difficult to ascertain the full scope of this, since the overseas accounts were so carefully placed and so many devious methods were used to transfer funds.

Walter Carson must have been a beneficiary also. Surely, he was not carrying on such a personally risky operation for his health. Although Carson was fully implicated in all these transactions, only Folkenberg was fired. A primary reason was that Carson is the only in-house expert in trademark and property rights litigation in the General Conference. They needed him in order to continue with their efforts, to erase Adventism from the hearts of faithful believers; ostensibly, "to protect the Adventist name."

It is interesting to note that, on December 8, 1992, the GC Executive Committee voted to approve new guidelines for the operation of the Office of General Counsel (OGC; the GC legal department, in which Carson worked), which included the following stipulations:

It "will provide or coordinate all legal services [including trademark suits] to the General Conference entities operating within the General Conference complex . . . and will provide legal services, as requested, to General Conference institutions and world divisions. Additional legal work will be limited to other constituent church organizations and institutions. *Staff lawyers shall not have private legal practices.*"

Although the OGC held a staff meeting once a month, when the attorneys could discuss their activities and counsel with one another, Carson never mentioned his involvement in helping to launder funds through foreign banks, to secret Folkenberg accounts.

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PART TWO OF TWO

Continued from the preceding tract in this series

Carson's September 6, 1996 letter, completing the Settlement Agreement, by which he and Folkenberg pulled out of the Kanaka Valley Associates scheme, greatly angered James Moore, and he vowed to sue both men.

In a letter dated October 31, 1997, Moore angrily told Folkenberg that he wanted more money.

"I want some income stream, Robert; and I want it now. I don't want to be made [to] feel like a heel with my business associates due to non-timely payments, when in fact it is not due to my doing; rather to the mishandling on the part of Carson through the [Kanaka Valley Associates] settlement agreement for your benefit."

Although Folkenberg and Carson had not wanted to displease Moore, they got out of the Kanaka scheme just in time to avoid a lawsuit against the General Conference by one of the investors who had been defrauded of a large amount of money. (Kanaka Valley is a waterless, useless valley in the Sierra Nevada foothills, above Sacramento, which Moore extracted money from investors to develop.)

In that same letter, Moore demanded that Folkenberg pressure ADRA (Adventist Disaster Relief Association) to become involved in one of Moore's financial schemes. Folkenberg dutifully applied pressure to ADRA (which handles more money than any other single church entity), but they refused to associate with Moore.

Moore finally went ahead with his threatened lawsuit against Folkenberg, Carson, and the General Conference. Papers were served at world headquarters on December 28, 1998; and an "earthquake" was produced.

Phil Hiroshima, a conscientious Sacramento Adventist attorney, was hired by the General Conference to investigate the matter. The massive amount of information he uncovered has helped provide data for this present report.

In February 1999, Robert Folkenberg resigned; and, in March, Jan Paulsen was elected president by the Spring Council.

Because so much incriminating evidence had already been uncovered (linking Carson closely to the entire Moore-Folkenberg affair) immediately after his election, Paulsen appointed an Ad Hoc [special purpose] Group to look into Carson's conduct and make

a recommendation as to what action should be taken.

Ralph Thompson, the secretary of the General Conference, chaired the group. The other members were Matthew Bediako, a GC vice-president, and B. J. Christiansen, assistant to the North American Division president. But they had a problem: Carson was the only in-house attorney able to keep the trademark suits going. So it was decided to ask Robert Nixon to survey church leaders, to see if Carson still had their trust. Nixon and Carson had been working closely for years on the trademark lawsuits and were extremely close friends. Nixon reported back that most of the leaders felt that Carson could remain if he showed enough remorse.

When the Ad Hoc Group reported back to Paulsen, essentially on the basis of Nixon's conclusion he issued a report to the General Conference Administration Committee (ADCOM), which on May 18, 1999, approved the following action:

"As a result of Walter E. Carson's role in the dealings with James E. Moore and the Moore/Folkenberg connection while in the employ of the General Conference Office of General Counsel, it was

"VOTED, To stipulate that Walter E. Carson's continuing employment in the Office of General Counsel will be contingent on the following:

"1. A letter of reprimand placed in his file.

"2. A six-month probationary period for his employment, at the end of which his standing will be reviewed by the Legal Affairs Committee.

"3. An acknowledgement of his mistakes and poor judgment in dealing with James E. Moore."

Nixon, head of the Office of General Counsel and one of Carson's closest friends, stated that he was satisfied with the disciplinary measures and very pleased that Carson would continue working in his department.

Carson was privately told what ADCOM was going to decide,—before they decided it. So, in a letter dated the day before (May 17), Carson wrote a letter of remorse to President Paulsen. It was accepted, and Walter Carson's probationary period ended satisfactorily in the middle of last November. One OGC attorney privately noted that it all amounted to nothing more than a "slap on the wrist" of the repentant

Carson.

As for the first condition in the ruling, the “letter of reprimand” was never written. Ray Dabrowski, the GC public relations officer, said that a later committee action decided to rescind that requirement. Without that letter in his employment file, no prospective employer would ever learn about what Carson had done.

The 1993 General Conference guidelines had stated that its attorneys were not to carry on private practice outside of their work for the church. Carson had clearly violated that guideline.

In addition, he had carried on activities which no church worker should engage in. For several years, he had been the person who arranged for secret payments of money through offshore banks to be paid to Folkenberg; part of it, very likely, was split with him.

What Walter Carson had repeatedly done was definitely not in the best interests of the church. Indeed, church leaders were totally shocked when they learned about the Folkenberg/Moore activities which he had been coordinating.

Someone may say that Walter Carson did not realize the seriousness of what he had been doing. Yet he was very well-aware of the importance of preserving the “good name” of the church. In a *Review* interview, dated June 25, 1998 (ironically, only two months before Moore filed his lawsuit), Carson defended the right of the General Conference to carry on its systematic trademark attacks on small groups of Adventist believers. He said this in defense of that ongoing persecution:

“A name, particularly the name of a faith community, identifies it and its value system as distinct from all others. Those who could co-opt that name or trade on its potential for goodwill are acting unethically and illegally. They confuse the public, the media, and at times, even our own members.”

Ironically, while he was managing frontal attacks against small groups of Adventists “to defend the good name of the church,” he was secretly overseeing secret activities which were well-able to destroy the confidence of many—in and out of the church—in that name.

Yet another tragedy is that, ultimately, the ongoing trademark lawsuits are likely to destroy the confidence of many in the church in the basic integrity of leadership. The denomination, especially in North America, is more likely to destruct—rip to pieces—because of the many wrong things that are being done, strangely enough, in order to hold it together. Things like women ministers and church officers, Pentecostal Celebration church services, trademark

lawsuits to eliminate competition, and high salaries to a few.

At the Florida Trademark Lawsuit on March 13-16, 2000, Robert Nixon, head of the OGC, was a witness and Walter Carson, the attorney who had been in OGC the longest, was the General Conference representative. Although he knew more about trademark law than anyone else in world headquarters, it was Vincent Ramik, sitting beside him, who wrote the notes, nodded his head in signals, and directed the plaintiff’s attack throughout the trial. As a key member of a special hit squad, Walter Carson will have to answer for it in the Judgment.

At that trial, one of their key arguments was that the notorious U.S. Supreme Court decision in the Oregon Smith case was that government can overrule the individual practice of religion! Therefore, the General Conference had a legal right to trample on the rights of conscience. (*See our book, Florida Trademark Trial, 100 pp., 8½ x 11, \$7.50 + \$1.50.*)

Before concluding this brief paper, do you sense as I do that very real trouble is ahead? Does it not seem that retribution will eventually overtake each of the primary leaders in this nefarious trademarking persecution of innocent Seventh-day Adventist believers? This is a very real possibility. The God of heaven guards His own, and He will take vengeance on those who attack His defenseless ones.

As I write these words, there comes to mind a passage of Scripture. Looking it up, I am struck with the words. Carefully read it for yourself: *Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 300. It tells of another group, many years ago, which decided to harass and injure God’s faithful—and frequently so defenseless—people. It is possible to err in many ways, and we all err frequently. But when a group of men set their hand to deliberately and systematically destroy God’s little ones, trouble will inevitably return upon their own heads.

“Concerning this wicked people the Lord declared, ‘The hand of Amalek is against the throne of Jehovah.’ Exodus 17:16, margin.

“The Amalekites were not ignorant of God’s character or of His sovereignty, but instead of fearing before Him, they had set themselves to defy His power . . . They had taken oath by their gods that they would destroy the Hebrews, so that not one should escape, and they boasted that Israel’s God would be powerless to resist them. **They had not been injured or threatened by the Israelites. Their assault was wholly unprovoked.** It was to manifest their hatred and defiance of God that they sought to destroy His people. The Amalekites had long

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been high-handed sinners, and their crimes had cried to God for vengeance, yet His mercy had still called them to repentance; **but when the men of Amalek fell upon the wearied and defenseless ranks of Israel, they sealed their nation's doom. The care of God is over the weakest of His children.** No act of cruelty or oppression toward them is unmarked by Heaven. **Over all who love and fear Him, His hand extends as a shield; let men beware that they smite not that hand; for it wields the sword of justice.**—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, 300.

Some may say that only a few men are trying to remove Adventism from the public worship of faithful believers. But when lower echelon officers, and church members alike, do nothing to put a stop to these horrible trademark lawsuits, the responsibility for these actions spreads. This is a very serious matter.

If I told you that you could no longer be a Seventh-day Adventist, what effect would that have on your life if you obeyed me? That is what these men are trying to do to God's little ones. They will pay for it. Mark my word, for I have the authority of God's books underwriting it.

One would expect that this report would end here. But Walter Carson's latest adventure is to eliminate one of the anti-abortion, anti-gay members of the U.S. House of Representatives! As every thinking American knows, it is only by a very slim majority that conservative Republicans continue to hold on to the House. Both the Senate and Executive Branch are essentially liberal.

We have in hand an undated Spring 2000 news clip from a Maryland newspaper, which reports that Walter Carson has been trying to unseat Roscoe G. Bartlett, a Seventh-day Adventist Republican U.S. Congressman from the 6th Congressional District in Maryland.

As you might expect, Carson is running on the Democratic ticket, and is one of four contenders for the Democratic slot in the 6th Congressional District. Bartlett, in contrast, is a very conservative Republican.

We have watched Mr. Bartlett from a distance and have noted that he has appeared to be quite consistent in his defense of the right in his statements and votes in the U.S. Congress.

As we already knew from other sources, this news clip mentions Walter Carson's history and law degree training from Catholic University of America (located in the District of Columbia), and also mentions his "Civic activities: Active in Rotary." Why is he active in the Rotary Club, a very secular organi-

zation, when all his work is supposed to be exclusively done for the General Conference?

Walter Carson obtained his graduate degree (MA) from one of the most prestigious Jesuit university in the U.S. After completing it, he liked the people there so much that he remained for additional years of training and earned a law degree.

Why would a Seventh-day Adventist attend Catholic University of America, when he could just as easily drive down into the District and go to American University?

While in attendance at the Adventist Seminary in Washington, D.C., I regularly drove by CUA and saw the Jesuit priests walking in the garden, as Ignatius Loyola instructed them to do each day. In my 1981 research on the Jesuits, I concluded that every Jesuit university seeks to cautiously recruit agents from among its students. Young Adventists, once they obtain their degrees, make excellent agents!

I cannot help but wonder how many other graduates of Jesuit universities are employees of our church. (Catholic University of America is situated rather close to Takoma Park.)

In a recent statement on the internet, Tom Wetmore, another OGC attorney, inadvertently gave significant information when he told that *he has also worked extensively on the trademark cases!* Only the Judgment will reveal the full extent of those lawsuits and the full cost in damaged and destroyed lives.

The other trademark attorney managing our ongoing trademark litigation also has a Catholic background. After we revealed, early on, that Vincent Ramik was said to be a Roman Catholic, it was later claimed that Ramik had been a faithful Protestant all his adult life! What are the facts on this matter? I mention this again, because it is so frequently controverted by church leaders.

The September 17, 1981, issue of the *Adventist Review* said he was a Roman Catholic. (You will find those articles reprinted on pages 53-54 of our book, *The Story of the Trademark Lawsuits*.) In that issue, twice the *Adventist Review* said Ramik was a Roman Catholic, and twice Vincent Ramik said he was a Catholic! Are we then to believe Nixon's 1990 statement, that Ramik had been a Protestant his entire adult life?

The following statements, from 1981 contrasted with 1990, clearly do not agree. Here they are:

1981 ADVENTIST REVIEW: RAMIK IS A ROMAN CATHOLIC—"Vincent L. Ramik, senior partner of Diller, Ramik & Wight, Ltd, a lawyer who practices patent, trademark, and copyright law in Washington, D.C. . . . Ramik, a Roman Catholic, spent more than 300 hours

researching 1,000 relevant cases [for the E. G. White plagiarism issue].”—*“Ellen White’s Use of Sources,” Adventist Review, September 17, 1981, p. 3, para. 1, 3.*

“*Ramik*: Mrs. White moved me [as I read her writings]! In all candor, she moved me. I am a Roman Catholic; but, Catholic, Protestant, whatever—she moved me.”—*Op. cit., p. 2, para. 18.*

“I’m not a practicing Roman Catholic. I was born one; but my wife happens to be a Protestant; one child is baptized a Catholic, one is baptized a Protestant. I guess you could say we are an ‘ecumenical’ family!”—*“There Simply Is No Case,” p. 4, para. 22.*

“*Review*: Did the fact that Mr. Ramik, a Roman Catholic, would of necessity have to read *The Great Controversy* in its entirety (which some Catholics find personally offensive) concern you as you contemplated retaining him?”

“*Johns*: We recognized that some Adventists might wonder about whether he could be objective. But, on the other hand, if we hired an Adventist lawyer and he came up with a favorable conclusion some perhaps would say, ‘Oh, well, he had an ax to grind—what else would you expect?’ Anyway, we already knew Mr. Ramik to be highly professional and objective, and, most important, we wanted to know the truth—let the chips fall where they might.”—*Op. cit., p. 7, para. 7.*

Next, we turn to the 1990 statement, issued by Robert Nixon:

1990 GENERAL CONFERENCE STATEMENT: RAMIK HAS NOT BEEN A ROMAN CATHOLIC FOR OVER 25 YEARS, BUT HAS BEEN A PRESBYTERIAN FOR 25 YEARS—

“You may also wish to know that our trademark counsel, Mr. Vincent Ramik, who is often described as a Roman Catholic by independent publications, is a Presbyterian. Mr. Ramik was raised in a Roman Catholic family, but abandoned those beliefs as a college student. After marriage, he and his wife joined a Presbyterian church, of which they have been members now for a quarter century.”—*Robert W. Nixon, Associate General Counsel to the General Conference, letter dated February 8, 1990, paragraph 4.*

The chief architect of the trademark lawsuits is

an individual who said he was Roman Catholic. After we disclosed Ramik’s religious affiliation, he denied the fact, declaring he had been a Presbyterian all his adult life! If that is so, then either he told a mistruth to our General Conference and Review leaders, or they lied out of whole cloth. But why should we expect anyone to have fabricated a claim to lifelong Catholicism?

If Ramik’s wife has been a Protestant all her adult life, and Vincent has been a Protestant all his adult life—why did they arrange to baptize one of their two children as a Roman Catholic?

Now we learn that the chief in-house architect of the trademark lawsuits received his graduate and doctoral training in a leading Jesuit university. Carson and Ramik have worked closely on these cases for nearly twenty years.

We have been asked about the latest news on Robert Folkenberg. We know that both he and his brother, Donald, have moved their families to southern Virginia, where they are involved in a land development project south of Roanoke. Robert remains on full salary and benefits till July 1; and friends, who he earlier helped move into key offices, are trying to get a nice church job for him, so his salary can continue. By the time this tract set is printed, more news may have surfaced.

Meanwhile, church leaders have inexplicably been quite concerned to bring Robert back into the spotlight. Conference presidents have been arranging for him to speak at camp meetings in various places, in both summers of 1999 and 2000 and at various occasions throughout the year. Why this is being done is somewhat of a puzzle to us.

So many things are being done to hold the church together, which are tended to controversy and dissolution.

Surely, this is a time for earnest prayer. The Final Crisis of the Sunday Law cannot be far off. The church will appear as about to fall, but it will not. The church, which we are told are the commandment-keeping people of God, will be greatly lessened in the Sunday law crisis; but, purified, it will go forth and give the final warning to the world and many will come in.

How very thankful we are that the God of heaven is in charge! Fear not, little flock. Look up, for your redemption draweth nigh!

News note: We have learned that Walter Carson did not win the Democratic primary. He did not even get 2% of the vote! He also served as “Parliamentarian,” to decide all procedural questions at the Toronto 2000 Session.