

House Bans Special Days Legislation

In five brief paragraphs, legislation affecting special days of observance has been banned from the U.S. House of Representatives.

This action is declared to be wide-ranging, and could adversely affect the manner in which the National Sunday Law is eventually mandated upon the people of America.

On the first day of the first session of the present 104th Congress, January 4, 1995, *House Resolution 6* was passed.

Because this resolution only dealt with rules for the House, rather than a proposed law for America, it was only a House resolution—and not a congressional bill which needed to be sent on to the Senate for secondary approval. But the ramifications of this action are significant to historic Advent believers.

On the first afternoon of the 1995 Session of the House of Representatives (January 5), Richard Arney (R-Tx) introduced *House Resolution H. R. 6*. The avowed purpose of this document was to adopt the rules governing the operation of the House. But mingled in the resolution were several modifications. The entire document was approved by a majority vote of the House that same day.

Section 216 of HR6 (pp. 57-58; reprinted on the next three pages) will be of special interest to you. It consists of five paragraphs. Let us consider them:

Paragraph One: “(1) amend clause 2 by inserting ‘(a)’ after ‘2.’ and by adding the following new paragraph at the end of the bill:”

This paragraph says this section is to be placed in the House Rules as a new requirement, governing, hereafter, the type of proposed legislation which the House will consider.

Paragraph Two: “(b) (1) No bill or resolution, and no amendment to any bill or resolution, establishing or expressing **any commemoration** may be introduced or considered in the House” [all emphasis ours].

This means the House will not consider any bill concerning commemoratives. Some other branch of the fed-

eral government will have to be in charge of that task.

The crucial question is this: What is a “commemorative?” As we have reported to you since 1989, General Conference leaders have steadfastly maintained over the past six years that, if commemoratives were banned from Congress, it would only affect *yearly days*, such as Father’s Day, not a *weekly day*, such as Sunday. But paragraph three disproves that claim!

Paragraph Three: “(2) For purposes of this paragraph, the term, ‘commemoration,’ means any remembrance, celebration, or recognition **for any purpose through the designation of a specified period of time.**”

The above paragraph clearly defines the term, “commemorative.” It is any time period of any type or length, **and can therefore include a National Sunday Law.** It can be a yearly, monthly, or daily special time period. It can be a single day, several days, a week, or a month in length. ALL special times are included in the generalized ban.

The concern that no time-span enactment of any kind be made by the House is intensified by the wording of paragraph four:

Paragraph Four: “(2) amend clause 3 by striking ‘or private bill’ and inserting **‘or bill or resolution.’**”

No legislative proposal, involving special time spans of any kind, will henceforth be considered by the House.

But who will henceforth make those decisions? Will this ban hurt or help Advent believers, intent as they are on keeping the Bible Sabbath in spite of government requirements?

The concluding paragraph, in Section 216, calls for a House committee to decide on a means of doing just that:

Paragraph Five: “(b) The *Committee on Government Reform and Oversight* shall consider alternative means for establishing commemorations, including the creation of **an independent or Executive branch commission** for such purpose, and to report to the House any recommendations thereon.”

We have been reporting on this matter since it began being agitated in

Congress in 1989. But, prior to this January, each time the proposal was tabled. **The plan earlier recommended was to appoint a small committee of only a few appointed politicians, who would meet quarterly and make these decisions in a relatively private meeting. Their conclusions were to be announced as a presidential Executive Order. Everything would be quietly done, with little advance notice to the public.**

Without House participation, Congress will no longer be enacting special days bills. In a preceding tract study, we noted that the Spirit of Prophecy speaks of the Sunday Law synonymously as a “law,” “decree,” and “edict.” A law would be issued by Congress; a decree or edict by the president. So either federal branch of government could be used for its eventual proclamation. (The small committee would include congressmen.)

Well, the ban is now in place, thus barring it from the well-publicized actions of the House and Senate (unless the Senate is willing to take over the task by itself, which it probably would refuse to do).

For your information, the *House Subcommittee on Civil Service* has been assigned the task of devising the pattern to be used. It will probably favor the small committee recommended in earlier congressional bills. The *Civil Service Subcommittee* is just now reviewing *House Bill H.R. 624* of the previous (103rd) Congress. Several years ago, hearings were held on similar bills and, **it was noted that nothing in the proposed legislation forbade that small committee from establishing Sunday as a national day of rest.**

Whatever your position may be, you may wish to have this address: Mr. Dan Moll / House Subcommittee on Civil Service / Committee on Government Reform and Oversight / B371C Rayburn Building / Washington, D.C., 20515.

“Great changes are soon to take place in our world, and the final events will be rapid ones.”—9 Testimonies, 11.