

Call for a National Sunday Law

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE: ANGLICANS AND CATHOLICS EDGING CLOSER TO UNION / FORTY-TWO YEARS OF ADVENTIST INTERFAITH MEETINGS

This is more than a call; it is the beginning of an ongoing campaign—that does not intend to stop until its objectives are fulfilled.

On March 1, 2007, at Fuller Seminary (Fullerton, CA), representatives from over 30 different denominations (including Catholic and Orthodox) met for a special planning meeting of the *Christian Coalition of America*. At this gathering, the *Updated Ten Amendments Commission* approved a ten-point agenda, which it intends to work toward having enacted by the U.S. Congress. They concluded the meeting by signing what they called “the Book of Unity.”

This organization has great political power; for, as you may know, the largest single voting block in America consists of the Evangelicals and Catholics—at those times when they are encouraged by their leaders to vote the same way. (In the past, Catholics and Protestants have not always agreed on certain issues.)

These ten points represent the key thrust of the newly energized Protestant/Catholic political action wing of the united Christian churches in America.

Several of the points (such as item 9, excessive bail) have been included to round out the numeral ten, while some (such as item 8, no flag burning) give the appearance of greater patriotism.

Although totally ignoring calls for legislation banning pornography, gambling, and lobbyists, the Coalition’s ten points obviously consider item 1 (marriage and abortion), item 2 (prayer in “all public education systems”), and item 3 (judges’ decisions) to be very important.

—But most crucial of all, they—and we—are concerned about item 7. It is a full-blown call to enact a U.S. federally enforced National Sunday Law:

“Throughout all the land, a National Day of Rest shall be honored by governments and industrial manufacturers, and public shopping facilities.”

You and I have been watching events for years; and this is the first time, since 1888, that an important call for a nationally enforced Sunday observance law has been made by a major ecumenical organization in America.

Also note item 3: **It will be required that the Ten Commandments be publicly displayed in U.S. federal and state governments.**

The immediate objective is to make America a “Christian nation.” **The central means of doing this, week after week, will be through a federally required National Sunday Law. That is the keystone which will bind the seemingly loose association of churches and the public into a singleness of worship.**

This major ecumenical organization is determined

to hurl us into events which, unknown to them,—will catapult us directly into the closing events outlined in *Great Controversy*, chapters 25 through 42. Our book, *The End of Time*, provides the most complete systematic collection of Spirit of Prophecy statements on what will occur as soon as the National Sunday Law is enacted and the unfolding of events thereafter—down to the Third Advent and the final destruction of the wicked, and eternity beyond.

CHRISTIAN COALITION OF AMERICA

March 1, 2007

Updated Ten Amendments Commission

1. **Marriage** shall be only between one man and one woman. This is to be decreed by all states. No child shall be **aborted** in the womb.

2. **Prayers**, public or private, shall be a part of our national heritage and are to continue in all public education systems.

3. The **Ten Commandments** are to be subscribed to by the nation; it is also part of the inscription of our Supreme Court Building and Lincoln Memorial, and shall be continued by Federal/State and local governments. **“One nation under God”** is to be in the salute of the American Flag, and **“In God we trust”** on coins and bills.

4. All **judges** must subscribe to their Oath about interpreting the law, to defend such; no credence shall be given to any judge to interpret said laws.

5. No government system will have the right to abuse the **“eminent domain”** [private property ownership] of any citizen or citizens’ group.

6. A well-regulated militia (being necessary to the security of a free state) is the right of the people to keep and bear **arms**, and shall not be infringed.

7. **Throughout all the land, a National Day of Rest shall be honored by governments, industrial manufacturers, and public shopping facilities.**

8. It will be declared, by all branches of government, that the U.S. **flag** shall not be set ablaze or destroyed by any groups or organizations. The phrase, “one nation under God,” shall not be abridged in any salutation.

9. Excessive **bail** shall not be required, nor excessive **fin**es imposed, or cruel and unusual **punishment** inflicted.

10. The powers not delegated to any military branch or government (Federal, State, municipal, or judiciary) is prohibited to be exercised by them; but they are reserved to the states, respectively, or to the people [private rights].

ANGLICANS AND CATHOLICS EDGING CLOSER TO UNION

“Churches Back Plan to Unite under the Pope. *The Times (British)*, February 19, 2007—Radical proposals to reunite Anglicans with the Roman Catholic Church under the leadership of the Pope are to be published this year, *The Times* has learned.

“The proposals have been agreed by senior bishops of both churches.

“In a 42-page statement prepared by an international commission of both churches, Anglicans and Roman Catholics are urged to explore how they might reunite under the Pope.

“The statement is being considered by the Vatican, where Catholic bishops are preparing a formal response.

“This comes as the archbishops who lead the 38 provinces of the *Anglican Communion* meet in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, in an attempt to avoid schism over gay ordination and other liberal doctrines that have taken hold in parts of the Western Church.

“The 36 primates that are gathering will be aware that the Pope, while still a cardinal, sent a message of support to the orthodox [non-homosexual] wing of the Episcopal Church of the U.S. as it struggled to cope with the fallout after the ordination of the gay bishop Gene Robinson.

“Were this week’s discussions to lead to a split between liberals and conservatives, many of the former objections in Rome to a reunion with Anglican conservatives would disappear. Many of those Anglicans who object most strongly to gay ordination also oppose the ordination of women priests.

“Rome has already shown itself willing to be flexible on the subject of celibacy, when it received dozens of married priests from the Church of England into the Catholic priesthood, after they left over the issue of women’s ordination.

“There are about 78 million Anglicans, compared with a billion Roman Catholics, worldwide. In England and Wales, the Catholic Church is set to overtake Anglicanism as the predominant Christian denomination for the first time since the Reformation [!], thanks to immigration from Catholic countries.

“As the Anglicans’ squabbles over the fundamentals of Christian doctrine continue—with seven of the conservative primates twice refusing to share communion with the other Anglican leaders at their meeting in Tanzania—the Anglican Church’s credibility is being increasingly undermined in a world that is looking for strong witness from its international religious leaders.

“The Anglicans will attempt to resolve their differences today by publishing a new *Anglican Covenant*, an attempt to provide a doctrinal statement under which

they [all Anglicans] can unite. But many fear that the divisions have gone too far to be bridged and that, if they cannot even share communion with each other, there is little hope that they will agree on a statement of common doctrine.

“The latest Anglican-Catholic report could hardly come at a more sensitive time. It has been drawn up by the *International Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission*, which is chaired by R__ David Beetge, an Anglican bishop from South Africa, and the R__ John Bathersby, the Catholic Archbishop of Brisbane, Australia.

“The document leaked to *The Times* is the Commission’s first statement, *Growing Together in Unity and Mission*. The report acknowledges the ‘imperfect communion’ between the two churches, but says that there is enough common ground to make its ‘call for action’ about the Pope and other issues.

“In one significant passage, the [joint Anglican-Catholic] report notes: ‘The Roman Catholic Church teaches that the ministry of the Bishop of Rome [the Pope] as universal primate is in accordance with Christ’s will for the Church and an essential element of maintaining it in unity and truth.’ Anglicans rejected the Bishop of Rome as universal primate in the 16th century. Today, however, some Anglicans are beginning to see the potential value for a ministry of universal primacy, which would be exercised by the Bishop of Rome, as a sign and focus of unity within a reunited Church.

“In another paragraph, the report goes even further: ‘We urge Anglicans and Roman Catholics to explore together how the ministry of the Bishop of Rome might be offered and received in order to assist our Communion to grow towards full ecclesiastical communion [total union].’

“Other recommendations include inviting lay and ordained members of both denominations to attend each other’s synodical and collegial gatherings and conferences. Anglican bishops could be invited to accompany Catholic ones on visits to Rome.

“The report adds that special ‘protocols’ should also be drawn up to handle the movement of clergy from one Church to the other. Other proposals include common teaching resources for children in Sunday schools and attendance at each other’s services, pilgrimages and processions.

“Anglicans are also urged to begin praying for the Pope during the intercessory prayers in church services, and Catholics are asked also to pray publicly for the Archbishop of Canterbury.”

42 Years of Adventist Interfaith Meetings

Three months after his October 28, 1958, papal election, on January 25, 1959 at the conclusion of a prayer service for church unity, John XXIII announced his intention to convene “an ecumenical council for the universal church.” The three sessions were held from October 1962 to December 1965.

Although John died on June 3, 1963, shortly after the first session had ended, his successor, Paul VI (1963-1978) quickly announced that Vatican II would continue on to its end.

As we look back on it today from our vantage point, the most significant development produced by Vatican II was the way Catholicism began extending itself outward in dramatic new efforts to “dialogue” and work toward “unity”—and ultimate “union”—with the other churches of Christendom.

Even before John ascended the papal throne and Vatican II began, our denominational leaders were deeply involved in an ecumenical project of their own. This is what became known, at the time, as the Martin-Barnhouse Conferences; today it is called **the Ecumenical Conferences**.

The only fairly complete history of what happened back then is to be found in our book, *The Ecumenical Conferences and Their Aftermath*, which vividly portrays developments from the beginning of the conferences, in 1954, to their end in 1956 and onward down to 1981.

Several hundred secular and religious reporters attended Vatican II. In addition, leaders from most Protestant and Orthodox denominations were present as “observers.” During that time, they had many opportunities to quietly meet with one another and with Catholic dignitaries.

These unofficial meetings gave a great impetus to the modern ecumenical movement. You will find the most complete account of our denominational involvement with the other churches in my *Seventh-day Adventist/Vatican Ecumenical Involvement, Books 1 and 2*. Book 1 (8½ x 11, 80 pp.) provides the history and book 2 (8½ x 11, 148 pp.) contains a wide range of reprinted documents.

The above three books provide you with a remarkably full understanding of this problem. —And it is a problem, if you believe *Great Controversy*.

“Evangelical alliance, and universal creed! . . .

When this shall be gained, then, in the effort to secure complete uniformity, it will be only a step to the resort to force.

“When the leading churches of the United States, uniting upon such points of doctrine as are held by them in common, shall influence the state to enforce their decrees and to sustain their institutions, then Protestant America will have

formed an image of the Roman hierarchy, and the infliction of civil penalties upon dissenters will inevitably result.”—*Great Controversy*, 445.

According to the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy, (1) the National Sunday Law will hurl us into final events and the final crisis in earth’s history. (2) **It will be an ecumenically caused union of the churches, on points of doctrine which they hold in common, which will lead them to be so bold as to coerce the U.S. Congress to enact that law.** (3) It will be the Sunday which will be the one doctrine which they are successful in holding in common.

It was the “venerable day of the sun” which brought the churches together in the time of Constantine I, during his Sunday law of A.D. 321. And so it will be again in our time. (The most complete description available on the attempted change, back then, of the Bible Sabbath to Sunday will be found in my book, *The First Centuries of Christianity*.)

“In the issue of the contest all Christendom will be divided into two great classes—those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, and those who worship the beast and his image and receive his mark. Although church and state will unite their power to compel ‘all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond’ (Revelation 13:16), to receive ‘the mark of the beast,’ yet the people of God will not receive it.”—*Great Controversy*, 450.

As a result of many private meetings at Rome during Vatican II, two denominations—the Roman Catholic Church and the Seventh-day Adventist Church—which had never been represented at the World Council of Churches’ headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, agreed to begin going there. For political reasons, they chose not to be “full members” of the WCC; but, from the beginning, their representatives were voting members of a new ecumenical doctrinal committee which was set up for this purpose. **Bert Beverly Beach, a General Conference representative, soon became chairman of that committee.** There were four reasons for his rise to committee leadership: Born in Switzerland, he was fluent in over half-a-dozen languages. He was the only committee member who served from its inception in 1965 until his retirement about the year 2000. WCC headquarters was anxious to please the Adventist denomination, in the hope of drawing us into full membership. Lastly, Beach always got along well with everyone.

Over the decades, it has been B.B. Beach who has brought a wide variety of Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant leaders to our General Conference Sessions and introduced them; so they could speak to our delegates and pronounce upon them the blessings of their respec-

tive denominations.

“In the movements now in progress in the United States to secure for the institutions and usages of the church the support of the state, Protestants are following in the steps of papists. Nay, more, they are opening the door for the papacy to regain in Protestant America the supremacy which she has lost in the Old World. And that which gives greater significance to this movement is the fact that the principal object contemplated is the enforcement of Sunday observance . . . It is the spirit of the papacy—the spirit of conformity to worldly customs, the veneration for human traditions above the commandments of God—that is permeating the Protestant churches and leading them on to do the same work of Sunday exaltation which the papacy has done before them.”—*Great Controversy*, 573. (Also read GC 571.)

“God’s Word has given warning of the impending danger; let this be unheeded, and the Protestant world will learn what the purposes of Rome really are, only when it is too late to escape the snare. She is silently growing into power. Her doctrines are exerting their influence in legislative halls, in the churches, and in the hearts of men . . . Stealthily and unsuspectingly she is strengthening her forces to further her own ends when the time shall come for her to strike. All that she desires is vantage ground, and this is already being given her.”—*Great Controversy*, 581.

Ignoring the counsel to not draw close to leadership of the other churches, our leaders have doggedly sought to develop closer and yet closer contacts with the other churches. This has had an effect of muffling our teachings which embarrass the other churches, because they cannot answer them from Scripture.

Regular theological conversations have taken place by Adventist representatives with those of the World Council of Churches on an annual basis at WCC headquarters in Geneva since the end of Vatican II.

Some of the more recent “dialogues” between our church leaders and those of other churches include the Lutheran World Federation (1994-1998); the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (2001); the Salvation Army (2004-2005), and the World Evangelical Alliance, an organization which includes 420 million Evangelical Christians (November 2006, with a second round to be held in 2007). Exploratory conversations were also held with the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Istanbul (1996) and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity (2001-2003).

A national dialogue was held with the council of

Ecumenism of the Conference of Bishops of the Roman Catholic Church in Poland (1984-1999).

Two of the most recent dialogues include one with the World Evangelical Alliance (August 8-11, 2006) in Prague, Czech Republic; another with leaders of the Presbyterian Church (USA) at SDA headquarters in Silver Spring, MD (November 2006); and a second session to be held at PCUSA headquarters in Louisville, KY on August 22-24, 2007. Reports on these two gatherings reveal that B.B. Beach, although retired, is still in attendance at these interchurch doctrinal meetings.

As a recognized Christian world body, the Seventh-day Adventist Church has been represented, since 1968, at the conference of secretaries of Christian World Communions, an organization which holds yearly meetings. (Some of our readers will recall that it was at one of these meetings of the CWC, held that year in Rome, that B.B. Beach presented that infamous gold medal to Pope Paul VI on May 18, 1977, as an expression of close friendship from our denomination. (See our tract, *Gold Medal to the Pope [MB-54]*.)

According to a January 24, 2007, General Conference news report by John Graz (current director of the Adventist Department of Public Affairs and Religious Liberty after Beach’s retirement), church leaders have voted to change the name of our *Council on Inter-church/Inter-faith Relations* to *Council on Inter-church/Inter-religion Affairs*; so, as we are told, our church will be better able to extend the hand of warm friendship outward to the leaders of non-Christian religions as well.

In 1997, B.B. Beach was sent as a representative of the church to meet with leaders from ten other denominations at a special World Council of Churches gathering, where they sought to work out an agreement by which all churches throughout the world would begin observing Easter on the same Sunday each year.

It is significant that the document was signed by everyone present at that meeting; and it included this statement: “The churches need to address the renewal of . . . **the recovery of the meaning of Sunday**” (*WCC, Faith and Order Commission, “Towards a Common Date for Easter, item 3; at the WCC/Middle East Council of Churches Consultation, Aleppo, Syria, March 5-10, 1997*).

In other publications we document the astounding new ecumenical organization, founded by Catholic priests in Baltimore, which is composed of mostly Protestant churches in America, and the Catholic and Orthodox churches. It will probably lead out in coercing the U.S. government into a Sunday law. (See *Christian Churches Together [WM-1252]*, *Edging Closer to the Sunday Law [WM-1253]*, and *The Protestant-Catholic Union [WM-1309-1310]*).

—vj