

Letter to the Editor

Anthony Vanden Berge

Dear Mr. Editor:

In the November issue of *Beacon Lights* the young people of our Oaklawn Society sounded a warning to our federation to proceed cautiously in legislating rules and regulations for controlling our publication. The warning as such should be honored by all concerned. The contents of their suggestions in general also should be heeded when they are involved. However, unfamiliarity with the situation appears to be the reason for (1) an inaccurate presentation of what occurred, (2) a failure to deal with the problem involved.

First of all, the editor was not forbidden to write on any subject because it was a matter of controversy in the church, nor because of a particular view which he took on a controversial subject. In fact, he was never forbidden to write on any subject. A request was made of him that he refrain from writing on the term condition and related subjects because of the undesirable practices which accompanied his previous writings.

Before we can show a failure on the part of the previous writing to deal with this matter, a consideration must be given to these undesirable practices. Primarily the request was made because the editor began to place certain individuals in a commonly accepted undesirable class without any justifiable reason. It might be referred to as name-calling but an escape might be sought on the basis of a technical term. In all justice to the editor, board members of that time, and all other interested parties, it is but fair to say, that the editor had previously developed much Board opposition (percentage-wise) on the matter by an unwarranted attempt to develop a pessimistic view toward the strength of our churches on the part of our readers. The latter is mentioned because it too was influential in the Board's losing confidence in the editor to handle the issue in a constructive fashion.

If the authors of the aforementioned article mean to include such practical conflicts when they refer to doubts and questions with respect to the 'orthodoxy' of the editor; then the writer would agree also with their solution to this problem. A possible reservation would be that an agreeable solution could be attained without the necessity of a dismissal. If this was their intention then the inadequacy of their article referred to is only the result of a misinterpretation.

To prevent the formulation of any undesirable restrictions which may hamper future publications, the writer recommends that the committee responsible request the next delegate board to maintain the status quo, and continue to support the action of its Board as it has done in the past year. This is done first of all because the present dispute arose out of a peculiar situation. The editor happened to be a member of the body responsible for his appointment. It is believed that much of the disturbance would have been avoided had the editor excused himself from the meetings when his position was being discussed. Now it appears that much of his action was influenced by personal opinions and not expressions of the Board.

In the second place the recommendation is made because the Board has proved itself diligent enough and capable of preventing an aggressive editor from usurping control of the Federation paper. This attempted confiscation is proved by the contents of his extensive argumentation at Board meetings. Further by the motion made on the floor of the convention contrary to the sense of the preceding action of the Delegate Board. If any action should be taken by our next Delegate Board it should be to secure the control of *Beacon Lights* within the jurisdiction of the Federation Board. It should be obvious to anyone that a person appointed to a

position can expect notification at any time; that his services are no longer desired if he is producing unsatisfactory material. It is shocking that ministers will permit a blow to be made against the respect they hold by refusing to write for *Beacon Lights* and associate the cause with the dismissal of one of their personal supporters who has failed to satisfy the Board responsible for their mutual appointment.

No other intelligible reason is evident. Certainly they have the wisdom to understand that an appointing body can dismiss those whom it appoints.

A final request of the committee appointed to study the proposals made in this connection. Should your decision alter the status quo may this request be honored: That all matter relative to the question discovered from old minutes, and your recommendation be published early in order that it may receive due consideration prior to the convention.

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