

PORTER HOSPITAL

NOW CONTROLLED BY THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

You will recall our earlier study (*Introducing the Three New Sisters of Charity Hospitals [WM-675]*), in which we disclosed the merger of a large Adventist hospital, plus two smaller ones, into a Roman Catholic hospital system.

In that earlier analysis, all we had to go on were several newspaper articles, which in turn were based on information released by those Adventist and Catholic hospitals.

But now we have discovered that the situation is far worse than earlier portrayed.

On the first two pages of this two-part tract set, we will overview several of the new findings. Then, on the following six pages, we will reprint most of a private document prepared by an attorney on April 17, 1996. It is essentially self-explanatory.

The people of God have reason for grave concern when millions of dollars in Adventist denominational property and equipment is handed over to the Roman Catholic Church.

On Friday, December 16, 1995, at a press conference in Denver, Colorado, a three-hospital Adventist entity in the greater Denver region (PorterCare Adventist Health System, comprised of Porter Hospital, in Denver, and two smaller hospitals, in nearby Avista and Littleton), announced that it was entering into “partnership” with a Roman Catholic Church-owned hospital system (Sisters of Charity Health Services Colorado, composed of 16 hospitals, nursing homes, and clinics in Denver, Colorado Springs, Pueblo, Florence, and Canon City).

When, earlier this spring, we published on this, we declared that three hospitals combining with 16 facilities could only mean that our institutions had essentially been taken over by the Catholic Church. Surely, in spite of talk of a “partnership,” we would wind up with an extremely small voting power on any and every operating and financial board.

And now we have the facts: This is exactly what happened!

But you were not supposed to know this! Even though, over the years, our people sacrificially paid for the erection of those institutions—yet the final “partnership” agreement stipulated that neither party was to divulge information as to its actual terms! Why not? That clause was not inserted because the facts would displease the Catholics; but because our people would rise up in protest if they knew the actual conditions of the agreement.

That secrecy proviso was inserted to keep our people from learning the facts! Well, in this present two-tract study, you will now learn what the contract

actually called for.

In early April 1996, a Mid-America Union Constituency Meeting was convened, to select officers. Efforts were made to throw Charles Sandefur out of office. On March 28, a six-page typed letter was mailed to the delegates slated to attend that meeting, in the hope of keeping Sandefur from being re-elected to the Mid-America Union presidency.

You see, it was Charles Sandefur, working closely with Terry White, President of PorterCare Adventist Health System, that arranged that entire sellout arrangement.

But when the delegates convened, they chose to re-elect Sandefur to another term in office. Apparently the delegates did not care, even though they had received that six-page letter prior to going to the meeting.

Four months earlier, on December 16, newspapers carried the breaking story of the amazing Adventist/Catholic merger. On January 4, 1996, the *Christian Science Monitor* spread the news across the nation. After this, the largest weekly Catholic newspaper in America, *Our Sunday Visitor*, carried the news on page one of its January 7 issue (*reprinted in WM-675*). The Vatican was extremely proud of its accomplishment.

On February 16, Sandefur sent out an announcement of the merger, in which he repeatedly called it a “partnership” which our hospitals could harmlessly withdraw from at any time.

You are about to learn that the truth was remarkably different.

Recently, the present writer received a packet of materials in the mail. In it was an April 17 analysis of the legal contract binding PorterCare to the warm embrace of the Catholic Church. So you can now learn what the iron-clad specifications of that contract actually were! It is true that modifications may have been made before the final signing of that contract, but we can assume that they may have been even more disadvantageous than the contract under analysis. Why would we say this? Because Sandefur never denied any of the facts disclosed in that 12-page April 17 analysis.

That 12-page document is reprinted on pages 3 to 8 of the two-part tract study you now have in hand. It is so thorough that we will not take the space to also reprint the six-page March 28 appeal to the union constituency delegates (which was also well-said).

Here is the origin of that 12-page document: A concerned Seventh-day Adventist believer was able to obtain a copy of the agreement, combining the Ad-

ventist and Catholic medical systems into a single new one, called “Centura.” He then asked a capable Adventist attorney to go through the document and analyze it. You will read the results on the pages to follow. The whole thing is horrifying. To think that Adventist denominational leaders would do this,—and that, afterward, would be retained in office!

In that packet of papers, the present writer was also sent a letter from an Adventist minister, commenting on the Sandefur sellout, he said this:

“Back in 1988 in Minneapolis, I was approached by a General Conference man just back from the Vatican with the message, ‘If you want to continue your career in Adventism, you will have to stop preaching these subjects. The Vatican is upset with you!’ Can you believe it, one Adventist minister warning another Adventist minister to stop preaching the Three Angels’ Messages! Now mark this, he wasn’t talking about style or presentation, but about content.”—*Letter dated February 21, 1996.*

STATEMENTS WHICH ARE NOT CORRECT

“PorterCare is still a completely Adventist Healthcare System . . . The president of PorterCare will always be a Seventh-day Adventist as will the on-site managers of the PorterCare institutions.”

“Mrs. White wrote that we should take advantage of the opportunities God presents. Since this partnership gives us the opportunity to perpetuate and expand our mission, we believe that Ellen White would want us to grasp this opportunity for ministry. She wrote to leaders frequently, urging them not to shrink from opportunities which allow our mission to expand.”

“Our primary objective in this, or any, partnership is guaranteeing that the mission of PorterCare be assured and expanded. To that end, we have followed the guidelines set out by the North American Division and the General Conference.”

“PorterCare sought a system compatible with our

own. We looked for a partner with a deep sense of community responsibility and one that would honor and respect our desire to control our own mission.”

“Sisters of Charity, a Catholic-affiliated [i.e., not church-owned] non-profit organization, shares with PorterCare similar historic roots in the community.”

“This is a partnership, not a merger.”

“Each will continue its individual mission without interference from the other.”

“Our agreement gives us the option of dissolving the partnership [apparently easily] at any time we feel our mission is compromised.”—*Charles Sandefur*

—How many falsehoods can you count in the above statements, made publicly by Charles Sandefur, Mid-America Union president in his February 12, 1996, statement?

Read on.

WE GAVE ALL; THEY TOOK ALL; THEY CONTROL ALL; THEY CAN SELL ALL

“To summarize, the Centura Agreement:

[1] is *not* a partnership; [2] is a perpetual corporation that the Roman Catholic Church can withdraw its assets from without penalty if the Church decides the assets are subject to its own church law; [3] does *not* contain a similar provision for withdrawing SDA assets; [4] does *not* allow the SDA member to withdraw for a non-cause without a devastating penalty; [5] requires an apparently substantial cash start-up contribution from PorterCare—that could be as high as \$30 million; [6] provides for a [Adventist] minority ownership share of the new management corporation and all assets it may acquire in the future—30 percent with the provision that the Sisters of Charity can unilaterally force it down to 20 percent by bringing in other Catholic health care assets; [7] provides for minority [Adventist] representation on the Board of Trustees (Board of Directors)—5 to 12, and 1 of 3 on the Executive Committee that will, in all probability, make most of the critical management decisions; [8] provides that the CEO, who is elected by the Centura 12 to 5 Board, has authority to appoint *all* other managers and executives with the additional requirement that executives of PorterCare be subject

to approval of the PorterCare Board; [9] does *not* provide that all future managers and executives of SDA facilities must be SDA church members [or believers]; [10] makes numerous references to the requirement that all Catholic activities will strictly conform to Catholic Canon Law and Directives, which is a detailed [and immense] body of written law similar to government statutes, while the similar provisions for PorterCare only make reference to the ‘mission and vision of Adventist Health System’ and the ‘values of the Mid-America Union of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and the Adventist Health System’—whatever that amorphous definition might entail from time to time; [11] results in total, 100 percent surrender of all [Adventist] management functions to Centura, including the right to dispose of existing assets; [12] provides that Centura will hold legal title to all new assets acquired with Centura funds; [13] is primarily performance and profit driven; and [14] *requires* all individuals employed by or involved with the Centura organization, to keep the terms and provisions of the Agreement confidential. That means secret.”—*Twelve-page analysis, pp. 9-11 [emphasis his].*

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— Now Controlled by the Roman Catholic Church

SANDEFUR: “PorterCare Adventist Health System of Metro Denver recently entered into a strategic agreement with Sisters of Charity Healthcare Corporation to form Centura Health, a joint operating company.”—*Charles Sandefur, President, Mid-America Union, Letter to Colorado pastors, February 13, 1996.*

“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness?”—*2 Corinthians 6:14.*

“The Lord is testing His people to see who will be loyal to the principles of His truth . . . To bind ourselves up by contracts with those not of our faith is not in the order of God. We are to treat with kindness and courtesy those who refuse to be loyal to God, but we are never, never to unite with them in counsel regarding the vital interests of His work.”—*7 Testimonies, 107-108 [context specifically discussing our medical institutions].*

SANDEFUR: “Since this partnership gives us the opportunity to perpetuate and expand our mission, we believe that Ellen White would want us to grasp this opportunity for ministry.”—*Op. cit.*

“ ‘Thou shalt make no covenant with them,’ God had said; and those who had recently rededicated themselves to the Lord at the altar set up before the ruins of His temple, realized that the line of demarcation between His people and the world is ever to be kept unmistakably distinct. They refused to enter into alliance with those who, though familiar with the requirements of God’s laws would not yield to its claims.”—*Prophets and Kings, 570.*

SANDEFUR: “Without this partnership we are not confident that we would be able to survive financially.”—*Op. cit.*

“The principles set forth in Deuteronomy for the instruction of Israel are to be followed by God’s people to the end of time. True prosperity is dependent on the continuance of our covenant relationship with God. Never can we afford to compromise principle by entering into alliance with those who do not fear Him.”—*Prophets and Kings, 570.*

SANDEFUR: “PorterCare sought a system compatible with our own.”—*Op. cit.*

Are we becoming just another Protestant church? “As the Protestant churches have been seeking the favor of the world, false charity has blinded their eyes. They do not see but that it is right to believe good of all evil, and as the inevitable result they believe evil of all good.”—*Great Controversy, 571.*

SANDEFUR: “Sisters of Charity, a Catholic . . . organization, shares with PorterCare similar historic roots in the community.”—*Op. cit.*

“It is the purpose of God that a health institution should be organized and controlled exclusively by

Seventh-day Adventists; and when unbelievers are brought in to occupy responsible positions, an influence is presiding there that will tell with great weight against the sanitarium. God did not intend that this institution should be carried on after the order of any other health institute in the land, but that it should be one of the most effectual instrumentalities in His hands of giving light to the world.”—4 *Testimonies*, 556.

SANDEFUR: “We looked for a partner with a deep sense of community responsibility and one that would honor and respect . . . [us].”—*Op. cit.*

“Romanism is now regarded by Protestants with far greater favor than in former years . . . Let the restraints now imposed by secular government be removed and Rome be reinstated in her former power, and there would speedily be a revival of her tyranny and persecution . . . The pacific tone of Rome does not imply a change of heart. She is tolerant where she is helpless . . . It is not without reason that the claim has been put forth in Protestant countries that Catholicism differs less widely from Protestantism than in former times. There has been a change; but the change is not in the papacy.”—*Great Controversy*, 563-565, 571.

SANDEFUR: “Each will continue its individual mission without interference from the other . . . Our agreement gives us the option of dissolving the partnership at any time.”—*Op. cit.*

“The papacy is just what prophecy declared that she would be, the apostasy of the latter times (1 Thessalonians 2:3-4). It is a part of her policy to assume the character which will best accomplish her purpose; but beneath the variable purpose of the chameleon she conceals the invariable venom of the serpent. ‘Faith [agreements and contracts] ought not to be kept with heretics, nor persons suspected of heresy’ (*Lenfant*, Vol. 1, p. 516), she declares.”—*Great Controversy*, 571.

SANDEFUR: “We are happy to be working together as Christian partners who genuinely respect each other’s efforts to serve with compassion.”—*Op. cit.*

“Shall this power [Roman Catholicism], whose record for a thousand years is written in the blood of saints, be now acknowledged as a part of the church of Christ?”—*Great Controversy*, 571.