



SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

Office of Conference Secretary

CIRCULAR CS03/17

To: Pastors/Minsters
Volunteers
Volunteer Bible Workers
Teachers
Health Workers
Church Elders
Church Leaders
Church Members
Students

SUBJECT: CAUTION DURING THE 2017 NATIONAL ELECTION PERIOD

This Circular serves the purpose to CAUTION to the conference pastors/ministers, volunteer bible workers, volunteers, church elders, church leaders, church members, teachers, health workers and students, to be NEUTRAL IN TERMS OF POLITICAL MATTERS DURING THE ELECTION PERIOD, 2017.

Whilst the Scripture teaches that government is divinely ordained and "Christians to be subject to 'the powers that be' (Romans 13:1) and to perform their duties as faithful citizens (Mathew 22:21), it is our first and the highest duty to God, "1 to uphold the Seventh-day Adventist identity (as stated in Rev 14, and the strategic intents 5 of the Co-operate Plan) , its principles, ideals, values, and theological and practical standards that governs the Church.

The Church Manual clearly and explicitly states that;

"The Seventh-day Adventist Church believes in the separation of the church and the state and maintains neutrality towards politics. The Church respects the various political processes that exist in the different forms of government, but does not become involved in advising church members in political matters or in supporting any political parties. Church members who are involved in political or public life by their own personal choice are urged to do nothing that will discredit the cause of God or compromise the standards of the Church. They are encouraged to serve the country and community in a way that will uplift society and bring glory to God."²

¹ Church Manual, 18th ed. (Australia, Signs Publishing Company, 2010), 256-257.

² Ibid 256



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The Conference Administration has resolved to undertake the following resolutions. We resolved:

1. That the Administration will take radical disciplinary measures to Conference pastors who have political affiliations with political parties, and in/under circumstances shall their ASSOCIATIONS and ACTIONS bring DISREPUTE AND DISUNITY to the Church and the body of Christ.
2. That all Church leaders, teachers, health workers, volunteers, and church members NOT to associate with political parties. If in/under circumstances shall their ASSOCIATIONS AND ACTIONS bring DISREPUTE AND DISUNITY to the Church and the body of Christ, they will be asked to relinquish their position of church leadership etc or be disciplined forthwith.
3. Further if you are willing to contest for the coming election, 2017 you should by all means RESIGN from your leadership role first. OR after election you will be without office/leader of a local church for two years before given a responsibility as a leader. (*This does not apply to a fulltime Pastor/Minister in this regard*).

Further, in concurring with the above Administrative resolutions and for affirmation, the pen of inspiration says that;

"Those who teach the Bible in our churches and our schools are not at liberty to unite in apparent their prejudices for or against political men or measures, because by so doing they stir up the minds of others, leading each to advocate his favourite theory. There are among those professing to believe present truth, some who will thus be stirred up to express their sentiments and political preferences, so that divisions will be brought into the church...Every teacher, minister, or leader in our ranks who is stirred with a desire ventilate his opinions on political questions should be converted by a belief in the truth, or give up his work. His influence must tell as a labourer together with God in winning souls to Christ, or his credential must be taken from him...Those who stand as educators, as ministers, as labourers together with God in any line, have no battles to fight in the political world. Their citizenship is in heaven. The Lord calls upon them to stand as a separate and peculiar people. He would have no schisms in the body of believers. His people are to possess the elements of reconciliations. Is it their work to make enemies to make political enemies in the political world? No, no. They are to stand as subjects of Christ's kingdom, bearing the banner on which is inscribed, 'The commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.' They are to carry the burden of a special work, a special message. We have a responsibility, and this is to be revealed before heavenly universe, before angels, and before men. God does not call upon us to enlarge our influence by mingling with society, by linking up with men on political questions but standing as individual parts of His great whole, with Christ our head. Christ is our Prince, and as His subjects we are to do the work appointed by God..."³

Having considered the freedom of speech, religious liberty and the constitutional rights to vote, choosing a leader, voting for a party, etc, the Church and Conference Administration in no possible terms infringes the constitutional liberty and rights of the Seventh-day Adventists who are members of a State (i.e., Independent State of Papua New Guinea), but is cautioning any ASSOCIATION AND AFFILIATIONS THAT WILL BRING DISREPUTE AND DISUNITY AS THE BODY OF CHRIST AND AS BELIEVERS.

The Church must be aware that election is seasonal and is temporal. And has nothing to do with God or His Church and eternal matters.

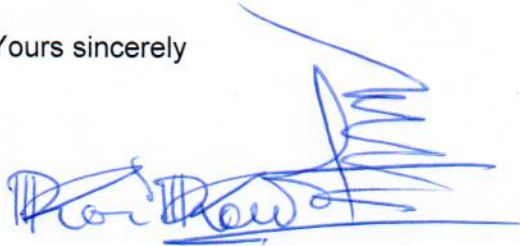
³ Ellen G. White, *Gospel Workers* (Washington: Review and Herald Publishing Association 1915), 91-93.

Therefore, the Administration calls for prudence on our part to protect the reputation of the Gospel and the identity of the Seventh-day Adventist church.

Your response in this regard will be highly appreciated.

God bless you all.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Pr Rex Koi", with a large, stylized flourish extending upwards and to the right.

Pr Rex Koi
CONFERENCE SECRETARY