

To All Lovers of Freedom: WARNING

THE RIGHT of Christians to worship and serve God according to the dictates of conscience is a precious heritage. The history of the British people is closely identified with this right. A concerted effort is being made to interfere with this liberty of worship. It behooves all who rightly appreciate this freedom to be on guard. When the right of worship is taken away from one group of people, eventually it will be taken away from all.

LIBERTY OF WORSHIP

For more than 60 years Jehovah's witnesses in Britain have enjoyed the right to worship God in the manner prescribed in His Word, the Bible, which they accept as their guide. It is a treasured possession to them. But in these days of stress their enemies are combined in their efforts to interfere with liberty of worship and service to the Most High God. They freely resort to lies and misrepresentations in the hope that they might influence the law-making bodies to stop the witness to God's name. They have gone so far as to accuse them of being subversive of the interests of the country wherein they reside. In this they lie. The same class as operated in Jesus' day are at it again. Of Jesus they said, "And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, saying that he himself is Christ a King."—Luke 23:2.

DEVOTED TO THE THEOCRACY

Jehovah's witnesses are law-abiding citizens and at all times they obey the law of the land wherein they reside. Only when such laws are enacted as would take away their liberty as Christians to serve God in the way that he has appointed is it necessary for them to "obey God rather than men." (Acts 5:29) Jehovah's witnesses are not affiliated with any political body, nor are they involved in the political affairs of this world. Their interest is in the New World, the Kingdom of God under Christ the King, and for this they pray and serve. Because they persist in their right to tell of that Kingdom and devote their lives to it, they are bitterly opposed by religious leaders, as was their Master.

PERSECUTION BY DICTATORS

Jehovah's witnesses exist in most nations of earth, and they meet with similar experiences because of their devotion to the Theocracy, God's Kingdom of righteousness. They have suffered persecution and death itself at the hands of the Nazi and Fascist dictators as is witnessed to by the press reports herein:

"Ludwig Curnaek, chairman of the International Bible Society in Germany, has been sentenced to death by a Dresden tribunal. Justifying the sentences, the tribunal said that their activities endangered the social and national welfare of the German people and hampered the war effort."—**Sunday Express**, March 23, 1941.

"A peasant in a small Hungarian town has been sentenced to ten months' imprisonment for spreading the teaching of the 'Witnesses of Jehovah' sect."—**Cavalcade**, May 2, 1941.

"It is not without interest to note that these same Jehovah's witnesses have been in evidence in Germany. A group of them were tried by a German Military Court. . . . Ludwig Zyranck, their leader, was sentenced to death. Sentences passed upon the others ranged from three to five years' hard labour."—**Eastern Daily Express**, October 31, 1941.

"Several members of the International Bible Searchers movement, which is prohibited in Germany, are now on trial before a Munich special court, it is reported. The movement is described in a legal paper as one which 'spreads pacifist ideas, thus endangering the nation.' For this reason, it is added, it must be suppressed without mercy."—**Manchester Guardian**, July 13 1939.

"On September 16, 1939, for example, the following report was broadcast from Hamburg: 'August Wigmann has been executed for refusal to join the ranks. He was a member of the Bible Society, and said that being 'Jehovah's witness' he could not take part in warfare.'"—**Eastbourne Gazette**, February 28, 1940.

"Leading members of Jehovah's witnesses have been arrested in Hungary and are to be court-martialled say Hungarian newspapers reaching Zurich. It is alleged they were 'subsidised by British Jews to undermine the determination and discipline of the home front.'" (Reuter)—**Birmingham Gazette**, October 29, 1942.

The Nazi dictator has suppressed them in Germany. He is evidently afraid of the message of God's Kingdom. These and many other news reports testify that the same accusations are made against them in all parts of the earth. It confirms the words of Jesus at Matthew 24:9: "And ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake."

PERSECUTION IN BRITAIN

In Britain today, do not the following facts give evidence that this same hatred and intolerance is rampant? Do they not prove interference with Christian worship?

Are not these facts cause for serious investigation on the part of all who value Christian freedom?

1. The American resident director from the London headquarters of the Society of Jehovah's witnesses was deported after refusal to vacate his God-given commission. This was done without any explanation given for the deportation order. There can be no reason, as he faithfully discharged his duties as an ordained minister of the gospel; he being recognized as such in the United States. He was expelled on August 19, 1942. Over 350 full-time servants of God have refused to forsake their commission as God-ordained ministers and have served terms of imprisonment in this land. Some have served terms of imprisonment twice and now await a third sentence.

2. On the 18th, 19th and 20th Sept., 1942, Jehovah's witnesses arranged for ten assemblies in Britain. These were part of a world-wide Theocratic Assembly held concurrently in all countries where Jehovah's witnesses are located. These assemblies were arranged purely for worship of the Most High God. All the arrangements were carried through according to plan. Only two days before the time for assembly a ban was placed upon the gatherings at Manchester and Nottingham by order of the Home Office. This ban was enforced despite the fact that Jehovah's witnesses gave assurance that the meetings would be held in private at both places. Thousands of Christian people travelled to these assemblies but were denied the right of assembly to worship God. Ten assemblies were arranged for and at eight cities the assemblies were held without any interference and with much profit to those who attended. In London alone over 3,000 Christians assembled in an orderly manner. There was no untoward incident of any kind, nor was it to be expected. Not since the days of the Pilgrim Fathers has there been such interference with this right of worship in Britain.

3. On the 2nd November, 1942, a Control of Communications order was issued in which the Minister of Information placed a ban on the receipt and despatch of certain of the Society's publications from America. Included in these is The WATCHTOWER and CONSOLATION. The WATCHTOWER is a bi-monthly magazine published in the United States and exclusively devoted to Bible study. It has been

in circulation in this country for over 60 years without interruption. CONSOLATION is a Christian educational magazine containing items of information in relation to world events and Bible prophecy. Neither of these magazines have any political significance whatsoever. An explanation for the issuing of this order has been refused. Both magazines are bitter opponents of the Nazi and Fascist practices and have consistently exposed these as opposed to God's Kingdom and the highest interests of the peoples. There are thousands of subscribers to the magazines in the British Isles and because they are vital to their spiritual life and worship of the Most High God, Jehovah, the loss to them of these magazines cannot be overstated.

In these days when Britain is fighting for the right of all persons to worship and serve God according as they choose, as expressed in the Atlantic Charter, is it not strange that such action as is related above should be taken against Christian worship?

FIGHTING AGAINST GOD

All sincere Christians who still believe in the Bible know that it warns of these very conditions as accompanying the incoming of the Kingdom for which they have prayed. To interfere with this right to serve God means to fight against God. Jehovah's witnesses know that their Leader and Exemplar, Christ Jesus, was persecuted, accused of being subversive and seditious, and finally nailed to a tree in popular disgrace. They are no better than their Leader, Christ Jesus, nor better than his twelve apostles. They will follow the course set for them in God's Word and let God be Judge as to whether they are right.

As the day of deliverance draws near, and as the persecution increases, Jehovah's witnesses are mindful of the words of Jesus: "They shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, . . . And it shall turn to you for a testimony." (Luke 21:12, 13) As a warning, the King, Christ Jesus, says: Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.—Matthew 25:40.

These facts are presented that all lovers of righteousness may take warning and heed these words of wise counsel given by Christ Jesus.