

ANNUAL COUNCIL OF THE
GENERAL CONFERENCE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

October 5, 1998, 8:00 a.m.

DEVOTIONAL MESSAGE

The devotional message entitled "The Church as a Remnant Community" was presented by Raoul F Dederen, Professor Emeritus, Andrews University Theological Seminary. All Scripture texts are taken from the Revised Standard Version, unless noted otherwise.

I have been requested to deal this morning with the issue of the remnant as a community of faith. The remnant—the term is familiar enough among Seventh-day Adventists. Even before we chose our name "Seventh-day Adventists" we already referred to ourselves as the remnant. Eighteen months after the Great Disappointment, in April 1846, Ellen G White published a pamphlet entitled, *To the Little Remnant Scattered Abroad*. Since then hundreds of articles and books have been published among us that identify the Seventh-day Adventist Church with the remnant. In fact, Fundamental Belief number 12 states, "The universal church is composed of all who truly believe in Christ, but in the last days, a time of wide-spread apostasy, a remnant has been called out to keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." Likewise, in Fundamental Belief number 17, the phrase "remnant church" is used to refer to us.

Some today, however, are raising questions about that identification. I hear questions being asked: "Can we really call ourselves the remnant?" "Isn't the remnant something invisible that is worldwide and that God alone knows?" "Could it not be that the remnant is something that belongs to the future, the very last days and not our time?" Others ask, "Given the coldness, the worldliness, and the lack of love among us, shouldn't we accept that we really aren't the remnant?" This is an issue which Clifford Goldstein has addressed with gusto and relevancy in his 1994 book, *The Remnant*¹. Others ask the question, "Isn't it arrogant, isn't it a sign of sheer pride to claim to be the remnant, to say that we are better than any other people?" Let us try to find out where the answers are. Let us go to the Scriptures and find out what they have to tell us about the remnant.

Remnant: The Scriptural Use

If you open a concordance, you will discover that there are literally hundreds of statements in the Scriptures dealing with both the concept and the terminology of remnant. The

¹Besides the Scriptures, this presentation is deeply indebted to Clifford Goldstein, *The Remnant*. Boise, ID: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1994; Gerhard F. Hasel, "Who Are the Remnant?" *Adventist Affirm*. Fall 1993, pp. 5-13, 31; *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7. Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1957, pp. 813-815.

term itself comes from three or four Hebrew words and one Greek root. The term basically means "that which is left over," "that which remains," or "that which escapes." You will find it used in the Scriptures in what I call its natural use. Thus, in Leviticus 2, for instance, you will read about what is left, the remnant of a cereal offering brought to the Lord. In chapter 14 of the same book you will read about the part of the oil left after cleansing a leper. You will hear about the remnant of the Ammonites, or the remnant of the Moabites, or what is left of the Canaanite tribes that lived in Palestine in the days of Joshua. That is the natural use of the term. But this is not what I am interested in this morning.

I am more interested in the theological application of the term to God's people. I mean the use of the term *remnant* in the context of God's specific purpose in calling a people to a true spiritual relationship with Him. Almost without exception, the term occurs in a context of crisis or of catastrophe. The first time we find it used is very early in the Scriptures, in Genesis 6 and 7, when Moses deals with the story of the flood. In Genesis 6:12 we read that "God saw the earth, and behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way upon the earth." Then in Genesis 7:4, the Lord in addressing Noah told him, "In seven days I will send rain upon the earth, forty days and forty nights; and every living thing that I have made I will blot out from the face of the ground." Verse 23 continues, "He blotted out every living thing that was upon the face of the ground, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the air; they were blotted out from the earth. Only Noah was left, and those that were with him in the ark." "Was left" is the Hebrew root often used to refer to the remnant.

Why Noah? If you read these two chapters you will discover that a crisis was near. Destruction was to come to this earth. Noah "walked with God" (Gen 6:9). He had accepted the statement that God would destroy the earth by means of a worldwide flood, and God chose Noah to be left as a remnant. At the heart of the crisis we learn of God's purpose. He is calling a family, a group of people, for a very specific purpose, the preaching of a very specific message, the present truth for that time: in 120 years the earth will be destroyed.

Next we find the term used in connection with the members of Jacob's family. When Joseph met his brothers and identified himself as Joseph, son of Jacob, he told them: "God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors" (Gen 45:7). The family of Jacob was to give birth to the nation of Israel, a remnant among Gentile nations, a remnant with a specific mandate.

Note Israel's task. They have a knowledge of the true Creator. They have received the ten commandments and are to keep the seventh-day Sabbath. They know about the sanctuary and its message of salvation by grace. Thanks to the book of Job, they are acquainted with the great controversy between God and Satan. They are the depositories of God's will, for God has granted them the gift of prophecy. They have been set aside by God, a remnant among the

nations, with a specific purpose in mind—the salvation of a sinful world. Just as there was a purpose in saving Noah as a remnant, there was a very specific reason for setting Israel aside.

Unfortunately, Israel fell away though time after time the prophets pressed God's people to return to Him. As time went on, the people of God broke up into two kingdoms, Judah on one side with two tribes, and Israel on the other side with ten. In those days Elijah told the Lord: "I, even I only am left" (1 Kings 19:10). Here too we see the remnant concept. "I, even I only" is the Hebrew root for *remnant*. The Lord replied: "I will leave seven thousand in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal" (1 Kings 19:18). I will leave, I will *remnant* seven thousand.

Later on the kings of Assyria and Babylon invaded and ravaged Israel and Judah. Some 600 years before Christ, after the deportation to Babylonia, God declared, "I will leave some of you alive" (Ezek 6:8). Here we find again the term *remnant*. "When you have among the nations some who escape the sword, and when you are scattered through the countries, then those of you who escape will remember me among the nations where they are carried captive, when I have broken their wanton heart which has departed from me, and blinded their eyes which turn wantonly after their idols; and they will be loathsome in their own sight for the evils which they have committed, for all their abominations. And they shall know that I am the Lord."—Ezek 6:8-10 The Lord says, in effect, "I will remember them. I will leave some of you alive, who will escape deportation and captivity." The concept of remnant keeps coming back.

The same concept is found in the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, especially in the first verses of Nehemiah, when God brings back the remnants of Israel from Babylonian captivity. In the Holy Land, Nehemiah says very clearly, are those who escaped, those who have been *remnanted*—that is, the remnant that escape the sword, the crisis (Neh 1:2, 3). To them God will again entrust the promises and the privileges of the covenant that He made with Abraham.

A Composite Picture

What is a remnant? It is, from one generation to the next, a group of people belonging to Israel who in the midst of catastrophes—whether war, famine or captivity—answer God's call to belong to Him and to fulfill a particular purpose, namely the sharing of His name with surrounding nations. These catastrophes are perceived as divine judgements. Correspondingly, when a rescue occurs and God brings a remnant through or out of the crisis, the rescue is regarded as an act of divine mercy. The remnant of Israel is cleansed from its impurities and invited to belong to God in a faithful and loyal fashion. They are now to accomplish the purpose for which God has called them.

As we move closer to the coming of the Messiah, we note that the prophetic exhortations to the remnant become increasingly specific. Next to the purpose of sharing the knowledge of God with the nations, there is also a mandate to prepare the way for the Messiah.

Mark, for instance, the words of Jeremiah, another prophet serving God in the days of the Babylonian captivity: “Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture!” May I remind you that he is talking about shepherds? Those are you and me. “Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture!” says the LORD. Therefore, thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning the shepherds who care for my people: ‘you have scattered my flock, and have driven them away, and you have not attended to them. Behold, I will attend to you for your evil doings, says the LORD. Then I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the countries where I have driven them, and I will bring them back to their fold, and they shall be fruitful and multiply. I will set shepherds over them who will care for them. . . . Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch.’” I will not simply bring you back from captivity and through the catastrophe, says God, but “I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and he shall execute justice and righteousness.”—Jer 23:1-5 Here we learn about God’s interest in gathering a remnant *and* raising a “righteous Branch” to the house of David.

Several generations earlier Isaiah had already announced: “Now the LORD says, who formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob back to him, that Israel might be gathered to him, for I am honored in the eyes of the LORD, and my God has become my strength—he says: ‘It is too light a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved of Israel; I will give you as a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth.’”—Isa 49:5, 6 Unfortunately, when the Branch of David came, when the everlastingly preexistent Son of God became flesh, Israel was so isolated, so much concerned about itself, so locked in its legalism, that it did not recognize Jesus of Nazareth as the promised Messiah. Israel became almost useless for the purpose of God.

A New Remnant

But here again a remnant was raised. There were those who would not share this rejection of the will of God. Those Jews would generate the Christian church, the continuation of Israel. Indeed, the early Christian believers did not consider themselves as a Jewish sect like the Zealots, the Pharisees, or the Sadducees. They regarded themselves as the true Israel, the remnant of Israel. As their forefathers did in the past, they had been listening to the voice of God in the midst of apostasy. This is why Paul could write, “Isaiah cries out concerning Israel: ‘Though the number of the sons of Israel be as the sand of the sea, only a remnant of them will be saved’” (Rom 9:27). A little later, reminding his readers of Elijah’s claim that he was the only remnant, the only one left among the people of Israel, Paul adds, “What is God’s reply to him? ‘I have kept for myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal. So too [that is to say, likewise], at the present time there is a remnant, chosen by grace’” (Rom 11:4, 5).

It is obvious that the early church considered itself as the heir, the remnant of Israel, commissioned by God to fulfill the purpose which Israel had declined. This new remnant, however, I mean the early Christian church, was not without its difficulties and its dissensions. Still, these were small in comparison with the gigantic falling away that Paul had announced in his second epistle to the Thessalonians, the great apostasy of the Christian church which occurred a few centuries after Christ.

For some 1260 years the papal Roman power effectively scattered the people of God and almost eliminated them from the face of the earth. I thank God that through the 16th century Reformation, the Lord was able to bring some Christian groups back to a rediscovery of the Scriptures. Various Protestants reestablished point after point of the biblical message. Unfortunately, too soon they seem to have felt satisfied with what they had discovered. They did not pursue the work of reformation but continued to cling to some ancient errors. So once more God did what He had done so often in the past, He looked for a remnant among His people. Mark the third chapter of the book of Revelation and God's message to the church at Sardis, which represents the Christian community from the time of the Reformation to the 18th century. To that church is said, "Yet you have still a few names in Sardis, people who have not soiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white" (Rev 3:4). There still were some people who had not soiled their garments, who had not apostatized in matters of doctrine, faith, and practice. Doctrinally speaking, Christianity was returning to Babylon. But just as He had done some 2,500 years earlier when He called His people out of literal Babylon, God called a remnant out of spiritual Babylon to carry on the work of reformation.

The End-Time Remnant

A few chapters further down we come to the key text regarding the remnant in the book of Revelation. It tells us that there will be a remnant in the end time: "And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Rev 12:17, KJV).

Now who is that remnant? What is it? When does it show up? This statement underlines three basic characteristics. First, the remnant comes at the end-time, for it is the remnant of the woman's seed. It comes after Revelation 12:6, where we read that "the woman fled into the wilderness where she has a place prepared by God, in which to be nourished for one thousand two hundred and sixty days." This span of time, in one form or another, is found seven times in the books of Daniel and Revelation—1260 days, 42 months, three and a half years. Brought together, these passages tell of a persecution that would last 1260 days, or years. As Seventh-day Adventist Bible students have shown, it was to begin in 538 and end in 1798; that is, the end of the 18th century, coinciding with the end of the period proper of the church of

Sardis. That is when the end-time remnant is called to appear on this earth. This is the end-time remnant's first characteristic.

Its second characteristic is even more specific. They "keep the commandments of God." As stated by the angel, this characteristic is intended to help people identify the end-time remnant. So the end-time remnant does not only appear at the end of the 1260 years of persecution, they also keep God's commandments, *all* of them.

Then comes the final characteristic. They "have the testimony of Jesus." I know that some translations read that they "bear the testimony to Jesus." It is indeed possible to translate "the testimony of Jesus" in two ways, either the testimony that we give to Jesus or bear to Jesus, or the testimony of Jesus which we have received from Jesus. There is nothing in the phrase itself that enables us to settle the question. It is the context which determines it. Fortunately, the text uses the verb "to have," not "to bear" or even "to hold." The very verb "to have" is in the text. *Echontōn* is the Greek word. "They have" the testimony. It is something they possess, something that is theirs. It is the testimony of Jesus which they have received from the Lord Jesus. I certainly see no objection to saying that they bear testimony to Jesus, but this text tells us that they have received it, that they hold it.

The "testimony of Jesus" appears six more times in the book of Revelation, yet only once more is the expression "to have the testimony of Jesus" used. John says, "I fell down at his feet [the angel's] to worship him, but he said to me, 'You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brethren who hold the testimony of Jesus. Worship God.' For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy" (Rev 19:10). They hold, literally "they have" the testimony of Jesus. It is obviously something objective. They have it.

Can we know more about the testimony of Jesus that the end-time remnant have and hold? Let us compare this passage with the statement in Revelation 22:9 and note the parallelism. In Revelation 19:10 we read: "Then I fell down at his feet to worship him, but he said to me, 'You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brethren who hold the testimony of Jesus. Worship God. For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.'" In Revelation 22:9 the angel is described as saying, "You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brethren the prophets, and with those who keep the words of this book. Worship God." In the first passage the angel tells John that he, the angel, is "a fellow servant with you and your brethren who hold [or literally, "who have"] the testimony of Jesus. Worship God. For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." In the other, the angel declares that he is "a fellow servant with you and your brethren the prophets." Given the striking similarities between the two phrases, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that "your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus" and "your brethren the prophets" do indeed refer to the same group of people. Those who have the testimony of Jesus are the prophets. Besides, adds the angel in the

first statement, "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." The testimony of Jesus is the expression of the spiritual gift of prophecy, the third characteristic of the end-time remnant.

So what do we know regarding the end-time remnant? Something quite interesting. God is calling a people, a remnant in the end-time, that should be rather easy to identify. It is a people described as coming up at the end-time, keeping all of the commandments of God, and enjoying the manifestation of the gift of prophecy. Where can you find such a people, a church that in all humility may claim to fit these characteristics? The possibilities are unquestionably narrow. It is on the basis of these characteristics that Seventh-day Adventists feel entitled to claim the title.

The Remnant: Implications

At this point, however, it seems important to me to call your attention to a few implications of the conclusion we just drew. What does it mean to be the remnant? What is implied in being the remnant? How does being the end-time remnant affect our lives?

As a student of Scripture, as I listen to God's repeated calls to the Old Testament remnant, I am struck first and foremost by His endless exhortations to self-examination and repentance. Notice just one expressed by Jeremiah. When one studies his writings, one is shocked to discover how cocksure his contemporaries were of themselves and of their destiny. Whatever their shortcomings, they were God's people, the sons of Abraham. They kept the seventh-day Sabbath and attended the temple services. God was on their side! Whatever they did, God would never forsake the temple. Nor would He ever desert Israel. They felt quite safe and secure in spite of their sinfulness and their lack of proper moral living. They kept God's commandments. They were very careful about that. Listen to what Jeremiah tells us: "The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD: Stand in the gate of the LORD's house, and proclaim there this word, and say, Hear ye the word of the LORD, all you men of Judah who enter these gates to worship the LORD. Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, Amend your ways and your doings, and I will let you dwell in this place. Do not trust in these deceptive words: 'This is the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD.'"—Jer 7:1-4 God is pressing them. They attended the temple services and religiously kept the Sabbath. Still, their lifestyle needed to be radically changed. There was need for self-examination and repentance.

How about the end-time remnant? Are we, commandment-keepers, in need of self-examination and repentance? Do we need to amend our ways? Are there things in our lives that should not be there? I am not talking about doctrine right now. Are there things in our lives that are not in harmony with God's will?

Let me go to the next point. Have you noticed how a movement of reform may, as it starts, bring reform and blessings with it? Say that a major crisis approaches and you answer God's call to belong to the remnant. You accept God's message, and you praise Him. Then, sometimes without realizing it, arrogance and pride show up. Am I imagining things? Look at Israel, at how exclusive and arrogant they became. They just about believed that if the sun rose and set on this earth it was because of their self-righteous observance of God's commandments. They were a unique people, God's people. The other nations hardly deserved to be regarded as children of God. See the disdain with which they looked at the inferiority of other faiths. Have we transformed the blessing and grace of belonging to God's remnant people into spiritual pride and arrogance, considering ourselves holier than others?

You will also discover, to your dismay, that one of the major catastrophes of Israel was that they suffered time and again from vacillating, undisciplined, and compromising leaders at all levels. Look at King Ahab and Queen Jezebel who killed Naboth to get his vineyard. Consider Manasseh, described in the second book of Chronicles as leading the people of Israel in greater sinning than the nations around them. Listen to the princes of Judah who insisted that King Zedekiah kill Jeremiah because he was in their way. These were vacillating leaders, deviating from the word of God, leaders who led Israel from one compromise to another to the point where Israel could hardly be of any use to God. Is there something here that we need to listen to, brothers and sisters, we who are leaders in Israel today?

You will tell me, "Preacher, what you tell us is true; but we are still the remnant. Do we deserve so much castigation this morning? What about the commendable things among us?" There certainly are commendable things. How could I overlook them? And yet, while we are God's end-time remnant, we are also Laodicea. As strange as it may seem, we are both the end-time remnant and Laodicea.

What is God's message to Laodicea? Let me read a few verses of this message to God's end-time church: "I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were cold or hot! So, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of my mouth. For you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing; not knowing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked."—Rev 3:15-17 But this is not where the message ends, for what follows are words of counsel along with an urgent appeal to repent and to let the Lord in (verses 18-20).

Ellen White has repeatedly applied these words to the Seventh-day Adventist church. "If ever a people was represented by the Laodicean message, it is the people who have had great light, the revelation of the Scriptures, that Seventh-day Adventists have received" (MR 18:193). She also wrote: "As a people we are triumphing in the clearness and strength of the truth. We are fully sustained in our positions by an overwhelming amount of plain Scriptural testimony.

But we are very much wanting in Bible humility, patience, faith, love, self-denial, watchfulness, and the spirit of sacrifice. We need to cultivate Bible holiness. Sin prevails among the people of God. The plain message of rebuke to the Laodiceans is not received" (3T 253).

It is to us Seventh-day Adventists that her call is addressed. We have received great light, our doctrines are solidly established on the testimony of the Scriptures; but we are wanting, very much wanting, she says, in Bible humility, patience, and love, among other things.

As so often in the biblical past, God is calling His end-time remnant to self-examination and repentance. He is also eager to have us consider whether we are faithfully proclaiming the message entrusted unto us. I mean the three angels' messages of Revelation 14:6-12. For as Jere Patzer has so eloquently shown in a recent article,² not only are the authority and integrity of the Seventh-day Adventist Church challenged today as never before, but so also are our message and our mission. What are we preaching today? What shall we be preaching in years to come? The three angels' messages, as commissioned? Have we come to be so much in harmony with what other Christians preach around us that in spite of our distinctive views on creation, the Sabbath as an end-time test of loyalty, the seal of God and the mark of the beast, as well Christ's heavenly ministry, that they regard these differences as superficial? Where is the emphasis of the end-time remnant in our proclamation of the everlasting gospel?

As has happened repeatedly in the past, the end-time remnant has been called out for a purpose. Let us, without pride or arrogance, humbly praise God for calling us to be the end-time remnant of faith. But let us at the same time remember the experience of Israel, bearing in mind that what has been written in the Scriptures has been written for our instruction, for our admonition, we upon whom the end of the ages has come (1 Cor 10:11; Rom 15:4). It may be that the well-known statement of the servant of the Lord has never been more relevant than today: "In reviewing our past history, having traveled over every step of advance to our present standing, I can say, Praise God! As I see what the Lord has wrought, I am filled with astonishment, and with confidence in Christ as leader. We have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history" (LS 196).

Jan Paulsen called the eighth business session of the 1998 Annual Council to order.

²"The Challenges We Face," *Adventist Review*, July 23, 1998

98-270

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H G Harker, President of the Trans-Tasman Union Conference, opened the business session with prayer.

IDEPol&ProcRev/PolRev&Dev/ADCOM/PolRev&Dev/ADCOM/GC&DivSec98AC/
GCDO98AC/98AC to AHT(DIV)

187-98G VISITS TO FAMILY (AUTHORIZED DESTINATION
POINTS) (FURLOUGH AND OPTIONAL ANNUAL LEAVE
FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS) - POLICY AMENDMENT

VOTED, To amend GC P 40 25, Visits to Family (Authorized Destination Points), paragraph 2., to read as follows:

2. In the event of the death of an interdivision employee's spouse, the eligibility for a visit visit, at denominational expense, to the parents of the deceased spouse and to biological and/or adopted children of the marriage is not jeopardized by the death of the spouse. ~~In the case of a prior marriage, the privilege of visiting the parents of the deceased spouse ceases, but the furlough destination of the of the dependent children of the first marriage shall be addressed by the division committee in consultation with the General Conference Interdivision Employee Remuneration and Allowances Committee.~~ In the case of remarriage, however, authorization to visit the parents of the deceased spouse at denominational expense is granted only if the furloughing family includes biological and/or adopted children of the prior marriage.

IDEPol&ProcRev/IDERem&All/PolRev&Dev/ADCOM/GC&DivSec98AC/GCDO98AC/98AC
to AHT(DIV)

248-98G FURLOUGH FREIGHT ALLOWANCE - POLICY REVISION

VOTED, To revise GC P 40 60, Furlough Freight Allowance, to read as follows:

P 40 60 Furlough Freight Allowance—1. Qualifying Countries—All countries except those listed in M 55 10.

2. Formula—A cash allowance to assist with the cost of crating, packing, freight, and customs for a furlough freight shipment or to assist with purchase of goods in the host country which may be at a higher cost shall be granted to interdivision employees from qualifying countries on the following basis:

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Husband and wife	=	US\$900
Single parent accompanied by a dependent child/children	=	US\$750
Single interdivision employee	=	US\$600
Additional for each dependent child	=	US\$150

3. Freight Allowance for Every Third Furlough—For each third furlough after arrival in the field, where there has not been an intervening permanent return, the dollar amount of the formula in paragraph 2. above shall be doubled.

4. Transition Provisions—Interdivision employees commencing their furloughs on or before August 1, 2000 may choose either the new policy or the previous policy which provided for a furlough shipment at denominational expense. Those who were in interdivision service as of September 1, 1998 and who have taken two or more furloughs since arrival in the field, without an intervening permanent return, are eligible for the higher amount provided for in paragraph 3. above at the time of their next furlough and then for each third furlough thereafter.

IDEPol&ProcRev/PolRev&Dev/ADCOM/GC&DivSec98AC/GCDO98AC/98AC to AHT(DIV)

196-98G RETURN TO THE HOST DIVISION TO PACK HOUSEHOLD
GOODS (PERMANENT RETURN OF INTERDIVISION
EMPLOYEES—GENERAL PROVISIONS) - POLICY ADDITION

VOTED, To add a new section GC Q 10 50, Return to the Host Division to Pack Household Goods, to read as follows:

Q 10 50 Return to the Host Division to Pack Household Goods—When it becomes necessary for an interdivision employee whose furlough or optional annual leave is changed to a permanent return (see Q 10 40 and Q 10 45) to return to the host division in order to pack household goods, only one member of the family will be authorized to return to the host division at denominational expense, unless otherwise approved by the Interdivision Employee Remuneration and Allowances Committee.

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IDEPol&ProcRev/PolRev&Dev/ADCOM/GC&DivSec98AC/GC&DivSec&Tre98AC/
GCDO98AC/98AC to AHT(DIV)

250-98G FINANCIAL SETTLEMENT WITH INTERDIVISION
EMPLOYEES WHO ELECT NOT TO RETURN TO THE BASE
DIVISION - POLICY AMENDMENT

VOTED, To amend GC Q 40 05, Financial Settlement With Interdivision Employees
Who Elect Not to Return to the Base Division, to read as follows:

Q 40 05 Financial Settlement With Interdivision Employees Who Elect Not to Return to
the Base Division—1. If an interdivision employee chooses not to return to the base division
when the return is voted, such an individual shall be granted as settlement all allowances for
which he/she is eligible, 80 percent of the airfare equivalent, and one month of salary at host
division or base division rate, whichever is greater, by the host division at the time the
interdivision appointment ends.

2. Such an interdivision employee - No change
3. In cases where - No change

IDEPol&ProcRev/PolRev&Dev/ADCOM/GC&DivSec98AC/GCDO98AC/98AC to AHT(DIV)

251-98G RETIREMENT (PLACING PERMANENTLY RETURNED
INTERDIVISION EMPLOYEES) - POLICY AMENDMENT

VOTED, To amend GC Q 45 50, Retirement, to read as follows:

Q 45 50 Retirement—An interdivision employee permanently returned for retirement
shall be supported for one month from the date of leaving interdivision employment, after which
the provisions of the base division retirement plan shall apply. Any retirement policies of the
base division country which provide for a retirement allowance, period of subsidy to full salary,
or continuation of full salary by the previous employer shall apply following the one month for
visitation and getting settled. The costs of such provisions shall be distributed among previous
employers in accordance with the policies of the base division. Costs assigned to interdivision
service, up to the equivalent of three months salary at base division country rate, shall be borne
by the General Conference for those on Code 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6 budgets, and by the employing
organization in the host division for those on Code 4 budgets. If the amount, including the one
month of permanent return salary, exceeds the equivalent of three months of salary at the base

division country rate, the expense shall be borne by the General Conference regardless of the budget code involved.

An interdivision employee who elects to remain in the host division when he/she reaches retirement age and who is eligible for retirement benefits in the host division is not eligible for the one-month continuation of salary but only to unused accrued vacation time at time of retirement.

TRE/ADCOM/GC&DivSec&Tre98AC/GCDO98AC/98AC to REL

238-98Ga PROPOSED POLICY CHANGES FOR INTERDIVISION
EMPLOYEES—BASE DIVISION COUNTRY AND FAMILY
ADOPTED DIVISION ISSUES

VOTED, To approve the Proposed Policy Changes for Interdivision Employees—Base Division Country and Family Adopted Division Issues, with the understanding that they will be brought to the 1999 Annual Council as changes to the General Conference *Working Policy*, as follows:

The following proposal is designed to deal with legal issues relating to base division country status, social security/national insurance regulations, laws governing denominational retirement plans, and tax reporting issues. (These proposals do not relate to nor do they affect division policies that relate to intradivision employees, nationals returning, or nationals returning under special arrangement, regardless of their citizenship or resident status. Citizenship does not entitle anyone to any of the provisions of the policies outlined under the interdivision section of the General Conference *Working Policy*. Citizens of the same country, employed by different local employing organizations, can be treated under different policies even though those organizations are denominational organizations. In the case of those appointed by the General Conference Appointees Committee as interdivision employees, there are unique requirements because of their special relationship to the General Conference.)

1. Base Division Country for Interdivision Employee Service—a. An interdivision employee who meets the requirements for base division country status in more than one country, at the time of appointment, may choose the country he/she prefers. This is a one-time choice for any continuous period of interdivision service and may not be changed unless there is a change in citizenship, gaining of resident status in the family adopted division country, or a loss of permanent resident status in the country chosen. The interdivision employee should consider all the ramifications of his/her choice including the following:

1) Retirement fund regulations including vesting requirements, medical insurance available at retirement time, transferability of currency in which retirement benefits would be received, etc.

2) Social security/national insurance regulations including vesting requirements, medical insurance issues, currency transferability, etc.

3) Interdivision employee policy implications including base division deposit amount, preembarkation/furlough/optional annual leave/permanent return salary rates, extended interdivision service allowance, educational allowance policies for dependent children, etc.

4) If choosing a base division country different from that of his/her spouse, the implications of such a difference as relates to furlough, permanent return, and retirement issues.

5) If the interdivision employee's options involve countries in more than one division, it must be remembered that the choice may also determine the division in which furloughs and optional annual leaves can be taken under denominational policy.

b. The interdivision appointee/employee and spouse may choose to have different base division countries, and in some cases may be forced to choose different countries if both do not have legal status permitting employment and accrual of retirement benefits and contribution to social security/national insurance in the same country.

c. To qualify for base division country status in a country, the interdivision appointee/employee or spouse must:

1) Be a citizen of the country chosen or

2) Have permanent resident status in the country chosen and the resident status must meet the following requirements:

a) Resident status must be of a nature that is expected to be permanent and/or lead to citizenship.

b) Resident status must be able to be maintained during absence for interdivision service.

c) Resident status must include the legal right to employment in the country, and the right to participate in the social security/national insurance plan of the country if there is one, and must make the individual eligible to participate in any denominational retirement plan involved.

d) The individual must have been resident in the country for at least two years immediately prior to entry into interdivision service, except if his/her spouse is a citizen of that country and it is the spouse's base division country. [Residence referred to here must include physical presence in the country of residence for at least 20 of the 24 months immediately preceding entry into interdivision service and the entire time must have been under a visa status that meets the criteria of paragraphs a) to c) above.]

e) The requirement in paragraph d) above is waived for children of interdivision employees who may go directly into interdivision service without ever having been resident in the parents' base division country so long as the criteria in paragraphs a) to c) above are met.

f) Residency in the host division country while serving as an interdivision employee/spouse does not qualify for purposes of meeting this requirement. (An interdivision employee could not take a permanent return and then take a new interdivision appointment choosing the host division country where he/she just served as the base division country. If the interdivision employee became a citizen of the former host division country, he/she would be eligible to select that country as his/her base division country.)

d. Base division country status determines the following:

1) Preembarkation, Institute of World Mission, and permanent return salary rate, for salary and loss of income calculation and related service credit, and social security/national insurance contributions.

2) Base division deposit rate.

3) Furlough salary top-up rate (see P 40 20).

4) Retirement fund contributions and service credit, if the interdivision employee chooses the base division country for retirement and social security/national insurance accrual. (Also involves long-term disability insurance in Canada and the United States of America where the retirement fund does not provide disability benefits.)

5) Contributions to social security/national insurance and assistance under duplicate social security/national insurance policies (see O 25 10 and O 25 15).

6) Permanent return salary continuation/subsidy rate and policies and which division is responsible for bearing costs if payments extend beyond three months.

7) Basis for Workers' Compensation insurance rates and benefits.

8) Basis for wage factor rate used in calculation of extended interdivision service allowance (see Q 35).

9) Basis for social security/national insurance subsidy on allowances (see O 25 25).

10) Basis for retirement allowance subsidy (see Q 45 50).

11) Basis for continuing education allowance rates (see P 50 25).

12) Basis for professional membership fees (see O 95).

2. Interdivision Status Cannot Apply if Appointee/Employee is Citizen of Host Division Country—If the potential appointee/employee is a citizen of the proposed host division country, the employment could not be on the basis of interdivision service but would have to come under the terms of E 25 15, Service in the Home Division on Special Arrangement, or T 50, National Employees Returning to the Home Division. The spouse of an interdivision appointee/employee could be a citizen of the host division country and would be treated as an interdivision employee for purposes of furloughs only, but would not be eligible for assignment to any interdivision budget code and would not receive any base division deposit, expatriate allowance, service credit in another division or employer contributions to the social security/national insurance of another country. He/She would be treated as a local employee but would receive furlough travel and travel related allowances on the same basis as a spouse who was not employed. The same would apply in the case of a single interdivision employee who marries a citizen of the country where he/she is serving.

3. Family Adopted Division for Interdivision Employee Service—a. Where an interdivision employee and spouse have base division countries which are in two different divisions, they must choose a family adopted division.

b. The choice is a one-time choice for any continuous period of interdivision service and may not be changed unless there is a change in citizenship or a loss of resident status.

c. The family adopted division must be the base division of either the interdivision appointee/employee or his/her spouse.

d. Family adopted division status determines the following:

1) The division for appointee/furlough/optional annual leave/permanent return travel, freight and related allowances as follows (does not involve remuneration rates):

a) Visits to parents/children (see N 05 25, P 40 25, P 40 45, and Q 10 20).

b) Medical allowance rates and policies.

c) Freight shipments.

d) Baggage allowance.

e) Furlough freight allowance (see P 40 60).

2) The base division for application of educational allowance policies (see O 50 and O 55).

3) The base division for application of Visits of Older Children/Parent(s) policy (see O 60).

4) The base division for application of the Return of a Deceased Employee or Family Member policy (see M 75).

5) The location for attendance at an Institute of World Mission (see N 15).

6) The base division for application of Child Adoption policies (see O 85 15).

7) The base division for application of Parents Living in Third Division policy (see P 35 45).

8) The base division for application of Furloughs/Optional Annual Leaves—Parents and Children Serving in Different Divisions policy (see P 35 40).

9) The base division for application of Financial Settlement With Interdivision Employees and Their Children Who Elect Not to Return to the Base Division policies (Salary would still be based on base division country for the individual involved.) (see Q 40).

4. Implementation and Phase-in Provisions—a. These policy changes will be approved in principle at the 1998 Annual Council and will become effective on January 1, 2000, to allow time to work out details and to communicate options to all current interdivision employees. Interdivision employees could elect to retain their current base division country and family adopted division status for their current uninterrupted period of interdivision employee service even if it does not meet the new policy requirements. Any subsequent terms of service after a permanent return would come under the new policy.

1) One spouse may change base division country status without affecting the phase-in provisions for the other, providing that at least one of the spouses has a base division country that is in the family adopted division.

2) The option of accruing denominational retirement benefits in the host division country rather than the base division country (new recommended policy) could still be exercised even if taking advantage of the phase-in provision to retain base division country status that would not be allowed under the new policy.

3) Where the denomination could not contribute to the denominational retirement fund or the social security/national insurance of the current base division country because of lack of legal status on the part of the interdivision employee or spouse, notification would be given to the interdivision employee and his/her options outlined.

4) Those wishing to change status under this new policy, and who are already in the field, would be allowed until June 30, 1999 to make that choice. Only requests that involve a change in citizenship, gaining of resident status in the family adopted division country, or a loss of permanent resident status in the base division country chosen would be accepted after June 30, 1999 for those in the field. Any such changes will become effective at the beginning of the month following the date of the request, or the date of the change in status, but in no case would retroactive adjustments be made beyond six months from the time of the request.

TRE/ADCOM/GC&DivSec&Tre98AC/GCDO98AC/98AC to REL

238-98Gb PROPOSED POLICY CHANGES FOR INTERDIVISION
EMPLOYEES—RETIREMENT PLAN ISSUES

VOTED, To approve the Proposed Policy Changes for Interdivision Employees—Retirement Plan Issues, with the understanding that they will be brought to the 1999 Annual Council as changes to the General Conference *Working Policy*, as follows:

1. Retirement Plan Issues—Currently the wording of Z 43 10, Interdivision Employees (Rates of Beneficiaries in Other Divisions), paragraph 1., states that “A beneficiary who has been an interdivision employee and who has served continuously in church employment in the host division for at least ten years or until retirement may elect to remain in the last division to which he/she was called and receive benefits according to the Retirement Plan policies of that division even though it is not his/her base division.”

a. The wording of Z 50 10, paragraph 4., states “The provisions of Z 43 10 shall apply only if both the calling and sending divisions maintain defined benefit plans.”

b. Policy Z 50 10 basically treats the choice required under a defined contribution plan as if it were an independent transfer with loss of service credit if not vested in the other plan. More than fifty percent of interdivision employees will either be from or serving in a country with a defined contribution plan by January 1, 2000 (if the United States of America moves to a defined contribution plan, the terms and conditions need to be clear). In some cases there will not be a choice as to whether to participate in the host division plan and the vesting issues will become more acute.

c. With the General Conference making contributions toward the retirement plan, the current option of a choice at retirement time is not workable and in many countries even with defined benefit plans, retirement service credit cannot be credited retroactively as there are tax implications and legal restrictions.

d. With the change to a defined contribution plan, it is not possible to grant retroactive benefits for past service in a previous plan and a clear definition of how the transition is handled needs to be defined in policy.

2. Retirement Plan Recommendations for Interdivision Employee Service:

a. Discontinue, for individuals appointed to interdivision service after December 31, 1998, the option under Z 43 10 of receiving benefits in the host division for all past service.

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b. Allow Z 43 10 to still be in effect for anyone that is in current interdivision service so long as he/she meets the requirement at retirement time, but only service accrued through December 31, 1999 would come under this policy. Anyone that goes on permanent return and then reenters interdivision service after October 1, 1998 would not be eligible for the provisions of this policy, unless he/she already has ten years required, under the old policy, at the time of permanent return.

c. Request all divisions to provide a reciprocity agreement, for vesting only, in their retirement policies that would count total years of service in both the host and base division towards vesting in each plan, but service credit or contributions would only accrue in the plan chosen by the interdivision employee at the time of entering interdivision service or as of January 1, 2000 for those currently in service.

d. Require each interdivision employee to choose between the host division country and base division country plans and only receive credit in one of the plans. Changes would not be allowed unless there was a change in citizenship, loss of resident status, or a change in host country involved. There would be no retroactive changes allowed and any choices would be limited to what was allowed or required under the laws of the countries involved.

e. The interdivision employee would need to take into consideration all the implications listed under the section on choice of base division country. The appointee/interdivision employee and spouse could make different choices if they desired.

f. The choice of denominational retirement benefits could be different from that of the choice for social security/national insurance providing:

- 1) The laws of the country allow a choice.
- 2) The denominational plan is not coordinated with the social security/national insurance plan.
- 3) The host and base division countries both have denominational plans. There are cases where the social security/national insurance plans provide a level of income that provides the total retirement benefits.

TRE/ADCOM/GC&DivSec&Tre98AC/GCDO98AC/98AC to REL

238-98Gc PROPOSED POLICY CHANGES FOR INTERDIVISION
EMPLOYEES—TERMS OF SERVICE

VOTED, To approve the Proposed Policy Changes for Interdivision Employees—Terms of Service, with the understanding that they will be brought to the 1999 Annual Council as changes to the General Conference *Working Policy*, as follows:

1. The current policy on terms of service requires different terms of service, based on marital status, to qualify for the full permanent return allowances. There are only a couple of allowances that differ but these could constitute discrimination based on marital status.
2. Policy change recommendations relative to terms of service:
 - a. Delete all references to “terms of service” and replace these with the term “period of continuous employment.” The current references to “terms of service,” “subsequent terms,” etc. can be very confusing since the change to a choice of a furlough every two years or an optional annual leave every year and how these relate to two-, four-, and six-year terms.
 - b. Keep suggested length of commitments because of the understandable differences in the costs of sending larger families as compared to single individuals, but change policies so there are no financial penalties that are different based on marital status.
 - c. Provide a reoutfitting allowance based on 1/22 of the new appointee amount for each month served up to a maximum of 22 months regardless of whether single or married.
 - d. Ship back the same weight as was sent out in the case of any permanent return, but if goods are not shipped or less than a container van shipment is made, any underweight freight settlement be limited to 1/72 of the authorized weight for each month served, up to a maximum of the new appointee authorized weight—regardless of whether single or married.
 - e. Refer to “subsequent terms” after a permanent return on the same basis as the original term. Since there are no penalties that differ from the current two-year term except for the underweight freight settlement, policy would not require that a married couple stay the full six years, but longer commitments should be encouraged.

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f. Provide a choice for those currently in the field, who would be coming on permanent return within 24 months after approval of the new policy, to come under the old or the new policy.

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238-98Gd PROPOSED POLICY CHANGES FOR INTERDIVISION
EMPLOYEES—VISITS TO PARENTS LIVING IN THIRD
DIVISION

VOTED, To approve the Proposed Policy Changes for Interdivision Employees—Visits to Parents Living in Third Division, with the understanding that they will be brought to the 1999 Annual Council as changes to the General Conference *Working Policy*, as follows:

Considering the recommended change to allow citizenship or permanent resident status to govern the choice of base division and family adopted division status, and the fact that this choice will more frequently involve a division other than the one where the parents live, and

Considering that the current policy on ticket purchases allows considerable flexibility on ticket purchases including visitation of parents in a third division, and

Considering that the individual would not have the privilege of being paid to visit the parents in a third division at denominational expense if they were employed in their base division, the following recommendations are being made:

1. To delete P 35 45, Parents Living in Third Division, but to retain P 35 40, Furloughs/Optional Annual Leaves—Parents and Children Serving in Different Divisions.

2. To make a phase-in provision that those who, with their current base division country and family adopted division status would be eligible for the provisions of the old policy, be allowed to remain under the old policy for a maximum of four years (would allow one visit under the old policy).

TRE/ADCOM/GC&DivSec&Tre98AC/GCDO98AC/98AC to REL

238-98Ge PROPOSED POLICY CHANGES FOR INTERDIVISION
EMPLOYEES—EXTENDED INTERDIVISION SERVICE
ALLOWANCE

VOTED, To approve the Proposed Policy Changes for Interdivision Employees—Extended Interdivision Service Allowance, with the understanding that they will be brought to the 1999 Annual Council as changes to the General Conference *Working Policy*, as follows:

In view of the fact that an interdivision employee and the interdivision-employed spouse may each have different base division countries under the proposed policy changes which would result in a different calculation basis of the extended interdivision service allowance, it is important to be very clear as to which individual's service is considered in calculation of that allowance. Therefore, it is recommended

1. To amend Q 35, Extended Interdivision Service Allowance, to clearly indicate that the extended interdivision service allowance is based on the base division country and service record of the interdivision employee and not on that of the interdivision-employed spouse.
2. To take into consideration the following, in the calculation of extended interdivision service allowance entitlement: if there has been a change in which one was the interdivision employee and which one was the interdivision-employed spouse, as could be the case if there was a transfer during the period of interdivision service without having gone on permanent return, determine the applicable percentage to be used by adding the years that the husband served as the interdivision employee to the years that the wife served as the interdivision employee, and then apply that percentage separately to each individual's qualifying years at the appropriate salary percentage and base division country wage factor.
3. To reaffirm that the first six years of interdivision service are the qualifying years in all circumstances, thus allowing for consistent accruals and charging out for Code 4 budgets and tax reporting.

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238-98Gf PROPOSED POLICY CHANGES FOR INTERDIVISION
EMPLOYEES—CONTRIBUTION TO THE BASE DIVISION
RETIREMENT FUND

VOTED, To approve the Proposed Policy Changes for Interdivision Employees—
Contribution to the Base Division Retirement Fund, with the understanding that they will be
brought to the 1999 Annual Council as changes to the General Conference *Working Policy*, as
follows:

1. Prior to 1995 the base divisions bore the full cost of contributions to the base division retirement fund for service by interdivision employees from their divisions.
2. Starting in 1995 a phase-in program was initiated whereby the General Conference, for those on Code 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6 budgets and the local employing organization or base division for those on Code 4 budgets, contributes to the base division retirement fund. The local employing organization is responsible for the equivalent cost of what contributions would be, at the same phase-in rate, for a local employee based on the local wage factor of the position held by an interdivision employee. The contribution by the General Conference to each division for Code 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6 budgets will be the net of the contributions for interdivision employees receiving service credit within the base divisions, less the amount that would be contributed by their employing organizations, based on the relevant local wage factors, if the positions currently held by interdivision employees were held by local employees. If the deductions exceed the contributions, no credit will be sent from the General Conference, but in no case will the base division be sent a charge.
3. The contribution for 1995 was based on 2.4 percent of the base division deposits for the North American Division-based interdivision employees. The 2.4 percent of base division deposits is the equivalent of .6 percent of the unpackaged wage. The 1995 contribution only applied to the North American Division.
4. Starting in 1996 contributions are based on a percentage of what the homeland salary rate would be, rather than on the base division deposits. The contribution as a percentage of the unpackaged wage factor will be phased in on the following schedule until it is equal to what institutions within the same country contribute to the retirement fund for their employees (The General Conference is not responsible for unfunded costs for past service which was earned while the retirement fund contribution was the responsibility of the base division. Guidelines are to be developed to deal with countries where the retirement fund contribution and the social

security/national insurance programs have been merged or where the contribution rate for local institutions does not appropriately reflect the cost of new accruals of service.):

All countries except United States of America		United States of America
1996	1.500%	1.500%
1997	4.375%	4.375%
1998	7.250%	5.625%
1999	10.125%	6.875%
2000	13.000%	8.125%*
2001	15.500%	9.375%*
2002	18.000%	10.725%*
2003	Fully implemented	11.875%*
2004		13.000%*

*Plus 4% to 5% direct contribution under proposed defined contribution plan.

5. If interdivision employees choose to receive service credit in the host division, the host division or local employing organization will be responsible for such contributions even for interdivision employees on Code 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6 budgets. But because such contributions would normally be made by the host division, the local equivalent for those positions would not be included in the calculation of paragraph 2. above.

SEC/PolRev&Dev/ADCOM/GC&DivSec98AC/GC&DivSec&Tre98AC/GCDO98AC/98AC to AHT(DIV)

213-98G INTERDIVISION VOLUNTEER SERVICE - POLICY REVISION

VOTED, To revise GC R, Interdivision Volunteer Service, effective January 1, 1999, to read as follows:

R ADVENTIST VOLUNTEER SERVICE

R 05 Adventist Volunteer Service

The Adventist Volunteer Service (AVS) plan for the worldwide Church is designed to provide service opportunities for Seventh-day Adventists who want to share in the joy of taking the gospel to the world. It includes both the intradivision and interdivision plans.

R 10 Intradivision Adventist Volunteer Service

R 10 05 Intradivision Adventist Volunteer Service Plan—1. Divisions desiring to adopt an Adventist Volunteer Service plan for their territories may do so following the guidelines outlined in the Interdivision Adventist Volunteer Service policy.

2. Service in the Division—When a local Adventist Volunteer Service office proposes sending volunteers to projects within its own division, it will do so according to a financial and insurance coverage plan mutually agreed upon by the sponsoring organization and the field to be benefitted by the service.

R 15 Interdivision Adventist Volunteer Service

R 15 05 Interdivision Adventist Volunteer Service Plan—1. Seventh-day Adventist Church members, 18 years of age and older, may offer their services as volunteers under this plan.

2. The most common needs are for volunteers who are able to minister in the following areas of service: lay-evangelism, church planting, door-to-door work, preaching, Bible studies, pastoral counseling, teaching, medical and dental care, building and construction, office work, etc. Retired denominational and nondenominational personnel are also needed for short-term programs or for temporary (relief) positions.

R 15 10 Selection and Assignment Procedures—1. Carefully selected volunteers may be offered the opportunity of serving in the Adventist Volunteer Service plan.

2. The essential factors considered in assessing the eligibility of an Adventist Volunteer shall include, but not be limited to, the following: confirmation of membership in a Seventh-day Adventist church, recommendations from a local church board and pastor (including screening for unlawful conduct), educational qualifications, a health evaluation, "Accident and Sickness Protection for Volunteers" insurance, satisfactory financial support, and compliance with immigration requirements.

All applications shall be sent through the regular channels to the division volunteer service director. In the North American Division, student volunteers on campuses of Seventh-day Adventist colleges/universities shall apply through the campus ministries director while students on other campuses shall apply directly to the North American Division. All other applicants from the North American Division shall apply to the General Conference Center for Volunteerism.

3. The service of volunteers shall generally be for periods up to two years. Organizations should be discouraged from taking advantage of volunteers, encouraging them to stay for long periods of time.

4. Service credit is not generally given to those who serve on a volunteer basis. Exceptions are made in specific cases if recommended by the requesting organization and approved by the base division, and if allowed under the retirement plan policies of the base division.

5. Volunteers shall not receive a salary but may receive a stipend to meet the expenses incident to the volunteer service, provided it does not contravene the employment laws of the country of service.

R 15 15 Interdivision Adventist Volunteer Service Procedures—Organizations sponsoring volunteers for interdivision service shall be guided by the following:

1. The General Conference Center for Volunteerism, in consultation with the General Conference Secretariat and General Conference Transportation and International Personnel Services, shall give direction to the division Adventist Volunteer Service program. Each division shall appoint a director to coordinate the Adventist Volunteer Service program and to serve as the liaison person with the General Conference Center for Volunteerism. The General Conference Center for Volunteerism will:

a. Publish electronically all officially approved volunteer requests from the division Adventist Volunteer Service office on the General Conference Secretariat web page: www.adventist.org/gc/secretariat/volunteers

b. Assist the division in its responsibility with promoting, recruiting, and processing Adventist Volunteer Service volunteers within its field.

1) When an applicant has been approved on each level of church administration, the division secretary/Adventist Volunteer Service director shall send a copy of the application form and references to the General Conference Center for Volunteerism. The General Conference Center for Volunteerism shall notify the requesting and sending divisions of the listing number assigned to the volunteer or, if required, will contact the requesting division, sending copies of the application form and references to verify the assignment before notifying the sending division of the assigned listed number. Requests shall normally be reserved for applicants for a period of two weeks to allow them time to submit an application form. In the event that an application form is not submitted during that time, the request becomes an open listing.

2) The division, or in the case of the North American Division the General Conference Center for Volunteerism, shall assist the volunteer in obtaining all travel documents and shall apply for the "Accident and Sickness Protection for Volunteers" insurance coverage through Adventist Risk Management. The division will also have the option to advise volunteers as to where they should purchase their airline tickets, and may consult with General Conference Transportation and International Personnel Services to compare prices and travel routing.

c. Approve and produce a variety of forms for all divisions as required, such as: "Health Evaluation Questionnaire," "Volunteer Service Request," "Personal Evaluation," and "Application."

2. Volunteers should have been members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church for no less than one year, and in regular standing.

3. Volunteers should be in good health and shall be required, if serving for more than nine months, to respond to a health evaluation questionnaire, unless they are fifty years of age or more, in which case they will be required to undertake a medical examination by a qualified practitioner.

4. All requests for college and university volunteers for the ensuing year shall be approved by the division committee and shall be sent to the General Conference Center for Volunteerism by August 15 of each year. Other requests for volunteers, approved in a similar manner, may be submitted at any time. All such requests shall include the following:

a. The level of education and job skills required of the applicant.

b. The time period the volunteer is required to serve.

5. For Global Mission projects, the General Conference Center for Volunteerism, in cooperation with the General Conference Global Mission office and the administration of the division, shall select an unentered territory within that division and

a. Select the type of activity to be used to establish a church presence.

b. Promote the evangelism project.

c. Recruit and train an international volunteer team (the size to be determined by the project directors).

- d. Determine the length of service for the project (one year or longer).
- e. Recruit and train a new team to complete the project as deemed necessary by the directors.

The General Conference Global Mission office shall share in the funding of volunteer projects in harmony with the General Conference Global Mission Operating Committee's funding criteria.

6. All volunteers shall be screened by the local church for their suitability for a particular assignment and for their commitment to the mission of the Church. Should the requesting organization fail to follow normal screening procedures or choose to ignore the advice of the home division regarding volunteers, there is no longer any responsibility on the part of the home division to resolve any difficulties that may arise during the period of service.

7. In the event that volunteers need to be disciplined and sent home prior to completing their terms of service, it shall be the responsibility of the requesting organization to arrange for their repatriation, which may include the cost of air fares. The home division shall not be responsible for any repatriation expenses.

8. In cases where the volunteer assignment is expressed in contractual terms, the requesting organizations are bound under the law to honor such agreements.

9. The programs, activities, and supervision of volunteers while in the field shall be approved by the requesting division.

10. Volunteers who participate in Adventist Development and Relief Agency projects may do so under special arrangements.

R 15 20 Basis of Division Requests—1. The division requesting the services of volunteers shall do so on the following basis:

- a. Work assignments for volunteers shall be limited to short-term programs or to temporary (relief) positions.

- b. Volunteers who are serving currently and who wish to extend their term of service may be granted approval to do so after the General Conference Center for Volunteerism and the sending division have been consulted by the requesting division.

c. The General Conference Center for Volunteerism shall publicize the Adventist Volunteer Service plan and the list of service opportunities submitted by the divisions.

R 15 25 Financial Responsibility—Division—1. The division that receives volunteers shall be financially responsible for the following:

- a. The cost of airfares, when applicable.
- b. The cost of premiums for insurance which provides the following coverages (to be arranged by the home division or, in the case of the North American Division, the General Conference, prior to departure):

- “Accident and Sickness Protection for Volunteers” insurance policy (limited accident and sickness coverage as outlined in policy brochure)
- Workers’ Compensation for Volunteers
- Personal Effects and Property Insurance (Personal Effects Floater)

The receiving organization shall be financially responsible for insurance deductibles under the “Accident and Sickness Protection for Volunteers” insurance policy. The receiving organization shall be responsible for assuring that insurance coverage is in place for all volunteers extending their service beyond the limit of initial coverage. The receiving organization shall also be responsible for any claims incurred during this period should it fail to arrange the coverage.

c. The liability of the denomination shall be limited to the cost of the insurance premiums and deductibles for the above coverage. Volunteers who are 21 years of age or older (parents or legal guardians if under 21) shall sign a release of liability form absolving the denomination from any liability arising out of any loss, injury, illness, disability, damage, or death sustained while serving in the Adventist Volunteer Service program or resulting from service in the Adventist Volunteer Service program. (See R 15 45 for a sample release form.)

d. Additional medical coverage not included in paragraph b. above may be provided to the extent specifically provided for in the contract or Volunteer Service Request listing.

e. Lodging provisions plus a living allowance to cover food, local travel, and other expenses may be provided.

f. Travel and other financial arrangements shall be approved by the base division or, in the case of the North American Division, by the General Conference Interdivision

Employee Remuneration and Allowances Committee or the General Conference Center for Volunteerism.

R 15 30 College/University Volunteers—1. Each Seventh-day Adventist college/university shall direct the Adventist Volunteer Service program on campus. It shall provide instruction and general orientation materials for the volunteers. The Adventist Volunteer Service screening committee in each college/university shall be composed of both faculty and students and shall be responsible for approving the candidates' fitness for service. The college/university campus ministries director or Adventist Volunteer Service sponsor shall be the chairman of the screening committee and shall be the liaison officer between the college/university and the division Adventist Volunteer Service Director in processing the volunteers for overseas service. Volunteers who apply from nondenominational colleges/universities, or who are no longer students, shall be screened by the local church board and pastor of the church where they are members or are in regular attendance.

2. Volunteers may be sent out by each college/university Adventist Volunteer Service office on the following basis:

a. The college/university, through its related Adventist Volunteer Service office, shall be responsible for:

1) Satisfactory financial arrangements for round-trip transportation, with the students providing as much as possible through personal financing and the balance provided from a campus Adventist Volunteer Service pooling fund, unless provided for by the requesting organization. All arrangements for ticketing shall be made through the travel office connections of the division unless otherwise authorized.

2) The cost of passports, visas, inoculations, and health evaluations.

b. The requesting organization shall be financially responsible for the cost of insurance premiums (to be arranged by the home division or, in the case of the North American Division, the General Conference, prior to departure).

3. The raising of funds for the Adventist Volunteer Service program in each college/university shall be in harmony with the policies of the local and union conferences/missions and the division in which territory the college is located.

R 15 35 Service by Secondary/Academy Students (13 to 18 years of age)—When projects similar to college youth volunteer activities are requested for secondary/academy

students, these shall be operated as group undertakings and supervised by adults personally acquainted with the youth.

All plans for such programs must be approved by the local and union conference/mission in which the secondary school/academy is located and in which the project is located.

R 15 40 Responsibility of Volunteers—1. Generally volunteers provide their own round-trip transportation, but on occasions transportation expenses may be provided.

2. Volunteers who are liable for national military service shall be responsible for securing deferment or clearance from the appropriate government office before leaving the home country.

3. Volunteers shall make appropriate arrangements to care for deferred educational indebtedness while absent from their home countries.

R 15 45 Release of Liability Form—All volunteers shall be required to sign the following Release of Liability form:

ADVENTIST VOLUNTEER SERVICE RELEASE OF LIABILITY

WHEREAS _____ (hereinafter "Volunteer") has accepted a temporary volunteer service assignment to the _____ Division of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists (hereinafter "Division"), a nonprofit, religious organization; and

WHEREAS the Volunteer has agreed to and will serve on this assignment and desires the Division to provide insurance for the benefit of the Volunteer during the term of service

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS AGREED as follows:

1. The division will procure insurance coverage for the benefit of the Volunteer as specified in the General Conference *Working Policy*, section R, which provides:

The requesting organization shall be financially responsible for the cost of insurance premiums providing the following coverages (to be arranged by the home division, or in the case of the North American Division, the General Conference prior to departure): "Accident and Sickness Protection for Volunteers," Personal Effects and Property Insurance (Personal Effects Floater), Workers' Compensation insurance coverage.

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The liability of the denomination shall be limited to the cost of the insurance premiums, deductibles, and copays for the above coverage. Volunteers who are 21 years of age or older (parents or legal guardians if under 21) shall sign a release of liability form absolving the denomination from any liability arising out of any loss, injury, illness, disability, damage, or death sustained while serving as a volunteer or resulting from service as a volunteer.

2. In consideration of the Division procuring said insurance, it is agreed that the payment of benefits from the above-described insurance coverage shall be accepted by the Volunteer as payment in full for all claims of any kind from illness, accident, wrongful death, and/or any other personal injury of whatever kind and nature occurring during the term of the Volunteer's service—either related or unrelated to such service—against the Division, the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, or any of their officers, directors, trustees, members, agents, conferences, subsidiaries or affiliated institutions. If said insurance is not procured, liability against the Division, the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, or any of their officers, directors, members, agents, conferences, subsidiaries, or affiliated institutions shall be limited to the amounts of insurance benefits which would have otherwise been paid had said insurance been obtained.

DATED _____ SIGNATURE OF VOLUNTEER _____

Approved by Parent or Guardian* _____

DIVISION OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF
SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

BY: _____ (Adventist Volunteer Service Director)

*If the Volunteer is not twenty-one (21) years of age, this Agreement must also be signed by a parent or guardian.

StratPl&Bud98AC/98AC to FMY(DIV)

277-98G SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET - 1998

During the early part of 1998 the General Conference has been able to arrange for the release of \$17,452,283.40 in blocked currency. A portion of this is needed to strengthen the

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financial position of the General Conference but it is felt that a large percentage should be used to care for financial obligations that could be cleared in 1998 and thus free funding for the world budget in future fiscal periods.

VOTED, To approve a 1998 supplemental budget in the amount of \$13,310,190.12 to pay off a number of committed but unpaid obligations and to provide funding for endowments and future projects for which the General Conference will be expected to make financial provision.

Obligations

Euro-Asia Division - Churches in former Soviet Union	\$ 750,000.00
Euro-Asia Division - Office complex	1,007,249.22
Andrews University - Debt reduction	942,401.00
Oakwood College - Women's dormitory	2,098,101.44
Loma Linda University - Dental building	1,562,438.46

Future Projects and Endowments

Andrews University - Seminary building renovation	\$2,200,000.00
Oakwood College - Business Technology Complex	250,000.00
Adventist World Radio - Argenta endowment	2,000,000.00
Adventist Risk Management - Capitalization repayment	1,000,000.00
Geoscience Research Institute - Operating endowment	1,000,000.00
Adventist Heritage Ministry	500,000.00

StratPl&Bud98AC/98AC to FMY(DIV)

GENERAL CONFERENCE BUDGET - 1999

VOTED, To approve the 1999 General Conference Budget as shown on the attached sheets.

98AC to GRT

YTREBERG, F MARTIN—APPRECIATION

VOTED, To express appreciation to F Martin Ytreberg for his work as Undertreasurer of the General Conference.

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Jan Paulsen, Chairman

Lowell C Cooper, Secretary

Athal H Tolhurst, Editorial Secretary

Carol E Rasmussen, Recording Secretary

**General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists
1999 Appropriations Budget**

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Summary:

		1998				1999			
		Tithe	Non-Tithe	Ingathering	Total	Tithe	Non-Tithe	Ingathering	Total
Income									
	Unallocated	1,000,000	3,000,000	0	4,000,000	0	0	0	0
S-61	Restricted Offerings	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
S-62	Ingathering	0	0	12,218,000	12,218,000	0	0	0	0
S-70	Tithe	59,323,500	0	0	59,323,500	62,034,500	0	0	62,034,500
S-73	Unrestricted Offerings	0	45,077,500	0	45,077,500	0	41,265,000	0	41,265,000
S-74	Unrestricted Donations	0	0	0	0	0	500,000	0	500,000
S-76	Unrestrict Invest Earn	0	2,994,000	0	2,994,000	0	3,681,000	0	3,681,000
S-77	Endowments	0	800,000	0	800,000	0	0	0	0
S-79	Miscellaneous Income	0	375,000	0	375,000	0	235,000	0	235,000
		<u>60,323,500</u>	<u>52,246,500</u>	<u>12,218,000</u>	<u>124,788,000</u>	<u>62,034,500</u>	<u>45,681,000</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>107,715,500</u>
S-71	Additional Tithe	25,000,000	(25,000,000)	0	0	25,000,000	(25,000,000)	0	0
S-95	Trfs fr Other Functions	(5,833,677)	6,333,677	0	500,000	0	500,000	0	500,000
S-96	Trfs From Other Funds	0	422,000	0	422,000	0	450,000	0	450,000
		<u>79,489,823</u>	<u>34,002,177</u>	<u>12,218,000</u>	<u>125,710,000</u>	<u>87,034,500</u>	<u>21,831,000</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>108,665,500</u>
Expense									
I.	GC Operations	24,750,496	0	0	24,750,496	22,132,112	0	0	22,132,112
II.	GC Administered Funds	3,438,000	633,983	0	4,071,983	3,328,000	890,111	0	4,218,111
III.	IDE Funding	17,908,180	0	0	17,908,180	19,239,823	0	0	19,239,823
IV.	Appropriations	33,393,147	28,410,694	0	61,803,841	37,390,252	22,384,202	0	59,754,454
V.	Special Funding	0	4,957,500	0	4,957,500	0	3,321,000	0	3,321,000
VI.	Ingathering Appropriations	0	0	12,218,000	12,218,000	0	0	0	0
		<u>79,489,823</u>	<u>34,002,177</u>	<u>12,218,000</u>	<u>125,710,000</u>	<u>82,090,187</u>	<u>26,575,313</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>108,665,500</u>

**General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists
1999 Appropriations Budget
Tithe**

	<u>Actual 1997</u>	<u>Budget 1998</u>	<u>Budget 1999</u>
I. Office Operating (Tithe) [Cap: 4.85% of world tithe (1999 - 4.25%)]	<u>24,008,552</u>	<u>24,750,496</u>	<u>22,132,112</u>
II. GC Administered Funds (Tithe)			
White Research Centers	0	80,000	100,000
Elmshaven Repairs and Renovations	20,000	20,000	20,000
Elmshaven Supervision Assistance	8,000	8,000	8,000
World Dept. Special Projects	480,987	400,000	400,000
Annual Council	95,672	150,000	100,000
Annual Council Travel	450,000	760,000	450,000
Annual Council Message & Mission	58,429	25,000	25,000
Exchange, Monetary	186,271	50,000	100,000
GC Session	300,000	300,000	600,000
Offerings Promotion - General	0	50,000	100,000
OGC Special Counsel & Litigation	100,000	50,000	50,000
Pre Media Opportunity	200,000	200,000	200,000
Pre Video Production	550,000	550,000	600,000
PRE OMA SS Offering Promotion	175,000	175,000	200,000
Spring Meeting	28,497	100,000	100,000
Temp. Offering Reversion	92,545	100,000	0
WHA Satellite Television	0	420,000	275,000
Total GC Administered Funds (Tithe)	<u>2,745,401</u>	<u>3,438,000</u>	<u>3,328,000</u>
II. GC Administered Funds (Non-Tithe)			
Contingencies:			
General	461,082	533,983	790,111
Crisis Committee	6,514	50,000	50,000
Legal	139,188	50,000	50,000
Total GC Administered Funds (Non-Tithe)	<u>606,784</u>	<u>633,983</u>	<u>890,111</u>
Total GC Administered Funds	<u>3,352,185</u>	<u>4,071,983</u>	<u>4,218,111</u>

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**General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists
1999 Appropriations Budget
Tithe**

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	<u>Actual 1997</u>	<u>Budget 1998</u>	<u>Budget 1999</u>
III. IDE Funding (Tithe)	<u>8,444,744</u>	<u>17,908,180</u>	<u>19,239,823</u>
IV. Appropriations (Tithe)			
Divisions	23,408,306	22,876,718	22,831,386
Institutions	6,672,328	6,800,877	7,966,103
Excess Aviation - Liability Insurance	768,515	800,000	880,000
Evangelism	6,779	100,000	100,000
Graduate Scholarships	137,840	200,000	180,000
Global Mission (Const. Oversight)	0	0	100,000
Hope 2000 Project	0	0	100,000
Southern Africa Affairs Committee	391,605	383,000	392,000
TED Special	1,211,711	1,200,000	1,150,000
	<u>32,597,084</u>	<u>32,360,595</u>	<u>33,699,489</u>
Separate Board Units			
Adventist World Radio	0	0	244,739
Auditing Services	0	0	650,000
Geoscience Research Institute	0	0	635,371
White Estate	0	0	866,757
White Estate Branches	0	0	256,263
	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2,653,130</u>
Publishing Programs			
AR Monthly Edition Subsidy	221,000	230,052	239,133
AR World Edition	80,000	30,000	50,000
Ministry Magazine	80,000	80,000	84,000
YTH AMICUS	85,000	87,000	89,000
Jrnl Adv Educ - English Edition	110,000	110,000	100,000
Jrnl Adv Educ - International Edition	0	20,000	20,000
S.D.A. Periodical Index	6,500	5,500	5,500
Commentary Volume 11	0	20,000	0
SOP Bks Subsidy for Transl/Print	350,000	350,000	350,000
PARL Liberty Magazine	100,000	100,000	100,000
	<u>1,032,500</u>	<u>1,032,552</u>	<u>1,037,633</u>
Total Appropriations (Tithe)	<u>33,629,584</u>	<u>33,393,147</u>	<u>37,390,252</u>

**General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists
1999 Appropriations Budget**

	<u>Actual 1997</u>	<u>Budget 1998</u>	<u>Budget 1999</u>
IV. Appropriations (Non-Tithe)			
Divisions	11,385,975	11,174,192	11,106,875
Institutions	10,990,502	10,990,502	11,191,327
Donations	63,100	60,000	60,000
Global Mission Appropriation	0	4,155,000	0
Thirteenth Sabbath Special Project	0	1,800,000	0
Maranatha Type Projects - Travel	390	6,000	6,000
Missions Extension Reversion	<u>0</u>	<u>225,000</u>	<u>0</u>
Total Appropriations (Non-Tithe)	<u>22,439,967</u>	<u>28,410,694</u>	<u>22,364,202</u>
Total Appropriations	<u>56,069,551</u>	<u>61,803,841</u>	<u>59,754,454</u>
V. Special Funding (Non-Tithe)			
Divisions	3,414,896	2,570,000	1,805,000
East Asia Association	0	50,000	45,000
Southern Africa Affairs	417,500	167,500	160,000
Others & Institutions	<u>2,146,881</u>	<u>2,170,000</u>	<u>1,311,000</u>
Total Special Funding (Non-Tithe)	<u>5,979,277</u>	<u>4,957,500</u>	<u>3,321,000</u>

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**General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists
1999 Appropriations Budget**

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	Base Appropriations				Special Appropriations		
	<u>Tithe</u>	<u>Non-Tithe</u>	<u>Ingathering</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Non-Tithe</u>	<u>Ingathering</u>	<u>Total</u>
Divisions:							
Africa-Indian Ocean	2,723,799	2,009,229	0	4,733,028	70,000	0	70,000
Eastern Africa	2,900,426	1,578,603	0	4,479,029	90,000	0	90,000
Euro-Africa	2,766,936	840,945	0	3,607,881	70,000	0	70,000
ESD Affairs Committee	907,013	256,811	0	1,163,824	90,000	0	90,000
Inter-America	1,478,897	1,038,268	0	2,517,165	600,000	0	600,000
North America	0	0	0	0	300,000	0	300,000
Northern Asia Pacific	1,262,697	189,807	0	1,452,504	50,000	0	50,000
South American	2,065,883	1,037,349	0	3,103,232	70,000	0	70,000
South Pacific	1,349,000	796,766	0	2,145,766	50,000	0	50,000
Southern Asia	1,638,802	926,812	0	2,565,614	95,000	0	95,000
Southern Asia Pacific	2,360,935	1,224,097	0	3,585,032	50,000	0	50,000
Trans-European	2,743,527	1,003,209	0	3,746,736	270,000	0	270,000
East Asia Com - HK	0	0	0	0	45,000	0	45,000
Southern Africa Union	633,471	204,980	0	838,451	160,000	0	160,000
	<u>22,831,386</u>	<u>11,106,875</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>33,938,261</u>	<u>2,010,000</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2,010,000</u>
Others:							
ADRA	278,709	0	0	278,709	0	0	0
Advent World Radio	1,350,000	0	0	1,350,000	300,000	0	300,000
AGCN - Satellite	1,600,000	0	0	1,600,000	0	0	0
AIAS	400,050	165,315	0	565,365	91,000	0	91,000
Andrews University	1,519,344	2,207,296	0	3,726,640	175,000	0	175,000
Home Study Int'l	60,000	190,000	0	250,000	220,000	0	220,000
Int'l Health Food Assn	35,000	0	0	35,000	0	0	0
Loma Linda Univ	2,723,000	7,552,356	0	10,275,356	300,000	0	300,000
Oakwood College	0	1,076,360	0	1,076,360	0	0	0
Servicemen's Center - Korea	0	0	0	0	35,000	0	35,000
WHASt - Equipment	0	0	0	0	90,000	0	90,000
Adventist Historic Properties	0	0	0	0	100,000	0	100,000
	<u>7,966,103</u>	<u>11,191,327</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>19,157,430</u>	<u>1,311,000</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1,311,000</u>

ANNUAL COUNCIL OF THE
GENERAL CONFERENCE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

October 5, 1998, 3:20 p.m.

Matthew A Bediako called the ninth business session of the 1998 Annual Council to order.

Ted N C Wilson, President of the Review and Herald Publishing Association, offered prayer.

ADVENTIST DEVELOPMENT AND RELIEF AGENCY - REPORT

Mario Ochoa, Executive Vice President of the Adventist Development and Relief Agency, presented the Agency's annual report.

PRE/EDU/PRE/GC&DivPre98AC/GCDO98AC/GCDO98AC/GCDO98AC/98AC to CBR(DIV)

215-98G INTERNATIONAL COORDINATION AND SUPERVISION
OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST MINISTERIAL AND
THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

VOTED, To approve the International Coordination and Supervision of Seventh-day Adventist Ministerial and Theological Education document, which reads as follows:

The Seventh-day Adventist Church, in its 150-year history, has experienced dramatic growth and has entered most nations of the world. The gospel message, as understood by the Church, has been embraced by millions of people from different cultures, enriching the denomination with their diversity. These cultural, national, and linguistic differences present a challenge to maintaining theological unity. The primary way by which the Church fosters a common understanding of its message is through the work of its spiritual leaders—pastors, theologians, Bible/religion teachers, chaplains, and administrators. The Church, through its teaching ministry, needs to continue to preserve its message and mission within this diversity.

Preserving the Message and Mission

1. The Church has the responsibility of defining the type of training it requires and provides for the ministers/evangelists, theologians, Bible/religion teachers, and chaplains that it

employs in order to carry out its mission. (In this document these individuals will be referred to collectively as leaders in ministerial formation.)

2. This important responsibility will be implemented by representative bodies chosen by division and General Conference leadership and includes decisions on the professional training required for entrance into the practice of ministry in each division, the admission requirements for that training, the basic series of subject areas, quality assurance, the selection and endorsement of the faculty involved, the institutions where such training will be offered, and the professional internship.

3. The need to assure church unity and coordination in these areas has become urgent in view of the international growth of the Church and the development of multiple programs for training leaders in ministerial formation offered by a number of institutions around the world.

4. The General Conference and its world divisions and educational institutions will work in close cooperation through interconnected boards, policies, standards, and procedures to foster unity, determine quality standards, and strengthen focus on the Seventh-day Adventist message and mission in graduate, undergraduate, and other levels of education for leaders in ministerial formation.

5. The framework recommended below builds on the action taken by the 1994 Annual Council of the General Conference Executive Committee, which placed all graduate programs in ministry, religion, and theology under the direct supervision of the respective world division.¹

6. This proposal envisages that organizations employing leaders in ministerial formation shall employ individuals who have received their ministerial training in schools/

¹1994 Annual Council action, 286-94G Graduate Ministerial/Religious/Theological Education Programs—To be Under Supervision of General Conference or Division

“RECOMMENDED, To place all graduate ministerial/religious/theological education degree programs offered by church colleges and universities under the responsibility and supervision of either the General Conference (for Andrews University) or the respective division, in order to strengthen the worldwide unity and mission focus of these programs.

“New graduate ministerial/religious/theological education degree programs may be initiated only with the formal approval of the respective division and the International Board of Education.”

colleges/universities in which the basic series of subject areas and teaching faculty involved have been endorsed as provided for in these guidelines. Any exception shall be voted by the next higher organization.

Proposal

This proposal envisages the establishment of an integrated structure at both division and General Conference levels; and, where applicable, the replacement of the Ministerial Training Advisory Council. On the basis of the rationale and objectives listed above, the procedures as outlined below are to be followed by the world Church:

1. Each world division shall establish a Board of Ministerial and Theological Education (BMTE) to provide guidance and oversight to all programs for leaders in ministerial formation, such as pastoral ministry, theology, Bible/religion, and chaplaincy offered within its territory.

a. Duties:

1) To authorize programs for the development of leaders in ministerial formation, as follows:

a) Designate the institution(s) in which professional training for leaders in ministerial formation will be offered.

b) Review and recommend to the International Board of Ministerial and Theological Education (IBMTE) (see paragraph 2. below) new undergraduate and graduate programs for leaders in ministerial formation, as proposed by the institutional boards where such programs are to be offered.

2) To engage in dialogue with the leadership of the relevant departments involved in the programs so that the BMTE, in recognizing the importance of effective pastoral training and the vital role of the faculty in achieving that goal, is better prepared to fulfill its responsibility to ensure the highest quality of training for leaders in ministerial formation. Informed by the dialogue described above, the BMTE will:

a) Establish appropriate requirements for entry to the program of professional training for leaders in ministerial formation.

b) Stipulate such additional basic subject areas, to those determined by IBMTE, as may meet its division's specific needs for all students in pastoral ministry, theology, Bible/religion, and chaplaincy.

c) Provide guidance to each institution on the design of the overall curriculum for the training of leaders in ministerial formation.

d) Monitor quality assurance and establish outcome expectations necessary for employment.

e) Design the internship for each of these professional areas referenced in b) above.

f) Review and endorse the recommendation of one or more candidates for president/dean/director of the theological entity as identified by an institutional search committee. This search committee should have participation from the institution and from the division. After review, and subject to endorsement, the candidate(s) will be referred to the institution's administration for submission to the college/university board or council.

g) Affirm the faculty authorized to teach in these programs through a process of denominational endorsement implemented by BMTE [see paragraph 2. a. 3) below]. This endorsement may be valid for up to five years, as long as the faculty member is teaching in the program for which he/she was endorsed, and it may be renewed.

3) To monitor the implementation of the goals and objectives of Seventh-day Adventist training for leaders in ministerial formation.

b. Alternative Procedures:

Divisions wishing to operate under alternative procedures to those described under paragraphs a) to g) above, may do so provided the following is observed:

1) The alternative procedures lead to the achievement of the same outcomes.

2) The proposed alternative procedures are submitted to and authorized by the IBMTE at its meeting to be held in conjunction with the 1999 Annual Council.

3) Approval is granted by the IBMTE before the alternative procedures are implemented.

- c. The membership of the BMTE shall be as follows:

Division President (chairman)
Division Vice President or Secretary (vice-chairman)
Education Department Director (secretary)
Ministerial Association Secretary (associate secretary)
Division Treasurer
Appropriate representation from union/conference leadership
Appropriate representation from relevant institutional training programs
Experienced pastors
Active laypersons

Members who are not ex officio members will be appointed by the division executive committee and will serve on staggered three-year terms, to ensure continuity. Members may be appointed to serve for more than one term.

- d. Meetings:

The BMTE will meet at least once a year to conduct its business.

2. The General Conference shall establish an International Board of Ministerial and Theological Education (IBMTE) to work with the divisions' Boards of Ministerial and Theological Education in coordinating and supervising all undergraduate and graduate programs in pastoral ministry, theology, Bible/religion, and chaplaincy offered by the Church.

- a. Duties:

- 1) To establish the general goals and objectives for Seventh-day Adventist undergraduate and graduate education for leaders in ministerial formation in the world field.
- 2) To establish a basic series of subject areas, international guidelines, standards and policies for admission, and faculty selection that will meet the needs of the field and foster the mission of the Church through undergraduate and graduate programs for leaders in ministerial formation.
- 3) To provide guidelines to be used by BMTEs for faculty endorsement and to design the faculty application procedure. The IBMTE will consider, for approval, both the guidelines and application procedure at its meeting in conjunction with the 1999 Annual Council.

4) To arrange for surveys and to grant recognition to new programs for leaders in ministerial formation recommended by the respective division BMTE.

5) To facilitate the exchange of endorsed faculty from among the recognized programs offered in the world divisions.

6) To grant or to renew denominational endorsement for faculty at General Conference institutions who teach courses for leaders in ministerial formation.

b. Institutions in which the approved programs are offered shall follow the normal process for accreditation from the Adventist Accrediting Association.

c. Membership:

*General Conference President or designee (chairman)

*General Conference Vice Presidential Advisor for Education and Vice Presidential Advisor for the Ministerial Association (co-vice-chairmen)

*Education Department Director (secretary)

*Ministerial Association Secretary (associate secretary)

*General Conference Secretary

*General Conference Treasurer

*Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries Director

*Biblical Research Institute Director

Division Presidents

Additional members selected from among college/university board chairmen, presidents, presidents/deans of graduate programs in the divisions, department chairmen of undergraduate programs in ministry, religion, or theology, and individuals experienced in religious education.

d. Meetings:

The IBMTE will meet at least once a year to conduct business.

*Members of the Executive Committee of the IBMTE plus up to six individuals appointed by the IBMTE.

PRE/GCDO98AC/98AC to AHT(DIV)

278-98G INTERNATIONAL BOARD OF MINISTERIAL AND
THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION (IBMTE) (GCC-B)—APPOINTMENT

VOTED, To appoint an International Board of Ministerial and Theological Education (IBMTE) (GCC-B), with membership as follows:

MEMBERS

FOLKENBERG, ROBERT S, Chairman
Rock, Calvin B, Vice-chairman
Bediako, Matthew A, Vice-chairman
Rasi, Humberto M, Secretary
Cress, James A, Associate Secretary

Allen, Gregory
Andreasen, Niels-Erik
Baker, Delbert W
Becerra, Enrique
Behrens, B Lyn
Birkenstock, David
Blanco, Jack
Bocala, Violetto F
Chun, P D
Daniel, Luka T
Evans, Laurie J
Ferreira, Teofilo
Frikart, Ulrich
Han, Sang Woo
Huff, C Lee
Kloosterhuis, Robert J
Leito, Israel

Mayer, Carlos
McClure, Alfred C
Mueller, Ekkehardt
Nagel, Ruy H
Paulsen, Jan
Rawson, Robert L
Raely, L D
Reid, George W
Remmers, Rick
Rodriguez, Angel M
Stenbakken, Richard O
Thompson, G Ralph
Vyhmeister, Werner K
Wade, Eloy
Watts, D Ronald
Wiklander, Bertil
Winslow, Gerald R

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October 5, 1998, p.m.

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PRE/GCDO98AC/98AC to AHT

279-98G INTERNATIONAL BOARD OF MINISTERIAL AND
THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
(IBMTE-Ex) (GCC-B)—APPOINTMENT

VOTED, To appoint an International Board of Ministerial and Theological Education Executive Committee (IBMTE-Ex) (GCC-B), with membership as follows:

MEMBERS

FOLKENBERG, ROBERT S, Chairman
Rock, Calvin B, Vice-chairman
Bediako, Matthew A, Vice-chairman
Rasi, Humberto M, Secretary
Cress, James A, Associate Secretary

Allen, Gregory
Becerra, Enrique
Ferreira, Teofilo
Mueller, Ekkehardt
Rawson, Robert L
Reid, George W
Remmers, Rick
Rodriguez, Angel M
Stenbakken, Richard O
Thompson, G Ralph
Vyhmeister, Werner K

98AC to AHT-ADCOM+98AC

282-98G INTERNATIONAL BOARD OF MINISTERIAL AND
THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION (GCC-B) - MEMBERSHIP
PROPOSAL

VOTED, To request the General Conference Administrative Committee to select four or five women of diverse backgrounds and ages to serve as additional members of the International Board of Ministerial and Theological Education (GCC-B), and to refer the names to the General Conference Executive Committee.

98AC to AHT(DIV)

281-98G BOARD OF MINISTERIAL AND THEOLOGICAL
EDUCATION - MEMBERSHIP PROPOSAL

VOTED, To request divisions that have women involved in pastoral training to include at least one woman who is serving in a pastoral capacity on each division's Board of Ministerial and Theological Education.

ADCOM/GCDO98AC/98AC to FMY(DIV)

280-98G ANNUAL COUNCIL VENUES—2000-2005
QUINQUENNIAL

VOTED, To rescind the action of the 1998 Spring Meeting which reads "To hold all Annual Councils in Silver Spring, Maryland during the 2000-2005 quinquennium."

Matthew A Bediako, Chairman
Vernon B Parmenter, Secretary
Athol H Tolhurst, Editorial Secretary
Rowena J Moore, Recording Secretary

ANNUAL COUNCIL OF THE
GENERAL CONFERENCE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

October 6, 1998, 8:00 a.m.

DEVOTIONAL MESSAGE

The devotional message entitled "The Church as a Prophetic Movement" was presented by Leslie N Pollard, Special Assistant to the President of Loma Linda University. Scripture texts are taken from the New International Version, unless noted otherwise.

My imminent colleagues have blessed us during this devotional period by discussing a full range of concerns about the church membership and church authority.

This morning I stand with you, my fellow leaders, in the absolute conviction that our church is a church of Bible prophecy. Its appearance on the stage of world history is neither coincidence nor accident. Just when Darwinism and Marxism were marking out their intellectual territory, our church appeared after the 1260-year wilderness sojourn of the church of the Middle Ages. In Revelation 13, where the beast and the dragon team up to enforce a death decree, John points out a resisting people.

One Catholic scholar translated the word *hupomone* as protest. She said, these are a people who protest. "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God" (Rev 14:12, KJV). But more than that. John goes farther to show that this people are not a Jewish sect, for they also have "the faith of Jesus." This remnant group is a part of the final plan. In fact, our church is so integral to God's plan that, if you believe the testimony of the pioneers, He personally named it. Ellen White says "We are Seventh-day Adventists. . . . It is the name the Lord has given us" (2SM 384). "The name Seventh-day Adventist carries the true features of our faith in front, and will convict the inquiring mind" (1T 224.) In Hebrew tradition, the one with the power to name has authority over the one named.

God determined that, unlike any other church, in a peculiar way the Seventh-day Adventist Church should arise out of the Great Disappointment of 1844 to carry out the prophetic ministry of proclaiming present truth to earth's final generation. "I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach . . . to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, 'Fear God, and give glory to him, for the hour of his judgement is come'" (Rev 14:6, 7, KJV).

Make no mistake about it, the Protestant reformation will be completed. "God is leading a people out from the world upon the exalted platform of eternal truth, the commandments of

God and the faith of Jesus. He will discipline and fit up His people. . . . Through the diversity of gifts and governments that He has placed in the church, they will all come to the unity of the faith.”—TM 29

Our message—pointed in its claims, convicting in its content, radical in its commitment, and urgent in its appeal—is no common message. “And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ” (Rev 12:17, KJV). No other church proclaims it. Our message calls on the world to accept Jesus in the light of a closing judgement. In every age God has called out a people to bear testimony to this mission. In the Old Testament God called Israel and her prophets to bear prophetic witness.

God placed His people in Palestine, the crossroads of the ancient world, and provided “them with every facility for becoming the greatest nation on the earth” (COL 288). It was His purpose to set them “on high above all nations of the earth” (Deut 28:1, KJV), with the result that all people of the earth would recognize their superiority and call them blessed (Mal 3:12). Unparalleled prosperity, both temporal and spiritual, was promised them as the reward for putting into practice the righteous and wise principles of heaven (Deut 4:6-9; 7:12-15; 28:1-14; PK 368, 369, 704). It was to be the result of wholehearted cooperation with the will of God as revealed through the prophets, and of divine blessing added to human efforts (DA 811, 827; PP 214).

The success of Israel was to be based on and to include:

1. Holiness of character (Lev 19:2; Matt 5:48). Without this, the people of Israel would not qualify to receive the material blessings God designed to bestow upon them. Without this, the many advantages would only result in harm to themselves and to others. Their own characters were to be progressively ennobled and elevated, and to reflect more and more perfectly the attributes of the perfect character of God (Deut 30:9, 10). Spiritual prosperity was to prepare the way for material prosperity.
2. The blessings of health. Feebleness and disease were to disappear entirely from Israel as the result of strict adherence to healthful principles (Exod 15:26; Deut 7:13, 15; PP 378, 379; COL 288).
3. Superior intellect. Cooperation with the natural laws of body and mind would result in ever-increasing mental strength, and the people of Israel would be blessed with vigor of intellect, keen discrimination, and sound judgment. They were to be far in advance of other nations in wisdom and understanding (PK 368). They were to become a nation of intellectual

geniuses, and feebleness of mind would eventually have been unknown among them (PP 378; DA 827; COL 288).

4. Skill in agriculture and animal husbandry. As the people cooperated with the directions God gave them in regard to the culture of the soil, the land would gradually be restored to Edenic fertility and beauty (Isa 51:3). It would become an object lesson of the results of acting in harmony with moral as well as natural law.

5. Superior craftsmanship. The Hebrew people were to acquire wisdom and skill in all “cunning work,” that is, a high degree of inventive genius and ability as artisans for the manufacture of all kinds of utensils and mechanical devices (Exod 31:2–6; 35:33, 35).

6. Unparalleled prosperity. “Obedience to the law of God would make them marvels of prosperity before the nations of the world,” living witnesses to the greatness and majesty of God (Deut 28:11–13; DA 577).

7. National greatness. As individuals and as a nation God furnished the people of Israel “with every facility for becoming the greatest nation on the earth” (COL 288). He purposed to make them an honor to His name and a blessing to the nations about them (Ed 40).

As the nations of antiquity should behold Israel’s unprecedented progress, their attention and interest would be aroused. “Even the heathen would recognize the superiority of those who served and worshiped the living God” (COL 289). Israel would reply, “Accept our God as your God, love and serve Him as we do, and He will do the same for you.” All nations of earth were to share in the blessings so generously bestowed upon Israel (PK 371).

Note the seven characteristics of prophetic functioning in the Old Testament and some examples of what we can learn from them:

1. The Hebrew word for prophet is first applied to Abraham, who is first referred to as a prophet in Genesis 20:7.

In contrast to a priest who inherits his office, a prophet operates as the result of a call (*qara*). Moses stepped on the stage of salvation history to providentially liberate the Israelite slaves who had drowned in 400 years of suffocating bondage. He brought the prophetic word to Pharaoh, “This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: ‘Let my people go’” (Exod 5:1). But before Moses could go to Pharaoh, he had to go before God. When a prophet is called, he is brought into the presence of God, commissioned to speak for God, and equipped to speak for God’s people. The call is the foundation for his leadership—he is now able to challenge Pharaoh, and to pass on the word that he has received.

God set His word on Jeremiah's lips (Jer 1:9). When God gives the word, the prophet must speak it (Jer 1:17). The word is the decisive feature of Old Testament prophecy. It is the dividing force in Old Testament prophetic functioning.

2. Judgment will fall on those who hamper the prophet (Jer 5:11-15).

3. God's word is said to come (2 Sam 7:4). "Thus says the Lord" is a common prophetic formula (Exod 4:22; 1 Sam 10:18; 2 Sam 7:5). The content is mostly in the first person of God who gives the commission (2 Sam 12:11; Amos 6:14).

4. The prophet speaks the will of God to the enemies outside of God's people, and to the enemies within God's people. Amos was a prophetic witnesses against Israel's neighbors—Damascus, Gaza, Tyre, Edom, and Moab; but he also witnesses against Israel by bringing them into account (Amos 2:6).

For instance, the same prophetic word that calls God's people out of the world, also calls the world out of God's people. The word is a two-edged sword. One edge cuts into the world and calls out God's people. The other edge cuts into His people and carves out the world.

5. The prophet operates from a promise/threat posture. The saying is usually about an imminent act of salvation or judgment and is thus a promise or a threat.

6. To be prophetic is to be under the influence of the Spirit of God. The hand of the Lord came upon Ezekiel and he went out into a valley full of dry bones (Ezek 37:1). He led Ezekiel back and forth among them and he saw a great many bones on the floor of the valley, bones that were very dry. "Can these bones live?" he inquired. (As leaders we might wonder, after we tour some of our little churches with their drowsy singing and their lifeless liturgy, "can these bones live?")

Ezekiel was told to prophesy unto the bones that they might hear the word of the Lord. Ezekiel prophesies. Suddenly there is a clacking of bones clapping together. Tendons and muscle and skin appear on the bones. Then the wind swirls—violently gusting funnel clouds of spiritual life, tails reaching for the nostrils of these lifeless forms—and suddenly the energized forms come to life, stand on their feet, and become a great army. That is the power of the Word of God.

7. The prophets do their work at great personal sacrifice. Prophetic work invites ridicule, persecution, and/or martyrdom (Jeremiah 37-38; Isaiah 53). The Hebrew worthies stood before the most powerful man in the world, King Nebuchadnezzar, and heard, "As soon as you

hear the sound of the . . . music, you must fall down and worship the image. . . . Whoever does not fall down and worship will immediately be thrown into a blazing furnace” (Dan 3:5, 6).

Hear them reply, O king, “the God we serve is able to save us from it. . . . But even if he does not, . . . we will not serve your gods or worship the image of gold you have set up” (Dan 3:17, 18). These prophets are remnant prototypes because they are among the persecuted minority (Matt 5:12; 23:29-37; Luke 6:23; Rev 1:9).

It seems to me that few prophets capture the essence of prophetic witness like Micaiah speaking to the coalition of Israel and Judah—Ahab and Jehosaphat who are preparing to attack Aram in an effort to reclaim the lost area of Ramoth-Gilead (1 Kings 22:1). Ahab asks Jehosaphat, “Will you go with me to fight against Ramoth Gilead?” (verse 4).

Jehosaphat replied to the king of Israel, “First seek counsel of the LORD” (verse 5).

So the king brings together 400 of the prophets and asks them, “Shall I go to war against Ramoth Gilead, or shall I refrain.” The 400 choose the path of political expediency and answer, “Go . . . for the Lord will give it into the king’s hand” (verse 6).

Jehosaphat asks, “Is there not a prophet of the LORD here whom we can inquire of?” (verse 7).

Ahab answers Jehosaphat, “There is still one man through whom we can inquire of the LORD, but I hate him because he never prophesies anything good about me, but always bad. He is Micaiah, the son of Imlah” (verse 8). They send for Micaiah. He comes in, and all the others are prophesying smooth things.

And the messenger who had gone to summon Micaiah said to him, “Look, as one man the other prophets are predicting success for the king. Let your word agree with theirs, and speak favorably” (verse 13).

Now Micaiah the prophetic witness answers, “As surely as the LORD lives, I can tell him only what the LORD tells me” (verse 14).

Part of the story that we don’t often hear is that Micaiah is assaulted and imprisoned for his faithful witness.

A prophetic church replicates the word and witness of the prophets. Listen to the Word: “And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh” (Joel 2:28, KJV). God predicts that a movement will arise in the last days that will be prophetic. However,

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a prophetic movement cannot be prophetic if its leaders lose the original vision. "The people will seldom rise higher than their minister. A world-loving spirit in him has a tremendous influence upon others. The people make his deficiencies an excuse to cover their own world-loving spirit."—GW 342

Here is the work of a prophetic church. Its mission is to articulate God's Word to the human family. God has a vision that He needs communicated to the whole world. I know it sounds old fashioned, but what is the specific word for the church today? We are in a Laodicean state. We boast about our educational system, our tithe, and our hospital system. The message to Laodicea is, "Thou sayest, I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" (Rev 3:17, KJV).

"The typical Laodicean Christian is content with things as they are and proud of the little progress he has made. It is almost impossible to convince him of his great need and of how far he is from the goal of perfection" (7BC 761).

"The sin that is most nearly hopeless and incurable is pride of opinion, self-conceit. This stands in the way of all growth" (7T 199, 200).

What is God's prophetic word for us as leaders? "How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her, for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow" (Rev 18:7, KJV).

"If my people, who are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land" (2 Chron 7:14, KJV).

In order to be a church that functions prophetically, we need the righteousness of Christ—the gold of pure faith and the eyeslave of spiritual enlightenment, so we can see our true condition, and white raiment which is the righteousness of Christ.

He says, "I stand at the door knocking"—

in 1888 in Minneapolis

in 1891 in Michigan

in 1901 at the reorganization

in 1919 at the Bible Conference

in 1952 at the Bible Conference

—and He is knocking today.

I trust that we as leaders will accept the challenge to be prophetic, for the movement will be as prophetic as we are.

“Those who are working for Christ today may reveal the same distinguishing excellencies revealed by those who in the apostolic age proclaimed the gospel. God is just as ready to give power to His servants today as He was to give power to Paul and Apollos, to Silas and Timothy, to Peter, James, and John.”—AA 278

May the Grace of God and the Power of His Spirit, rest, rule, and abide with us always,
Amen.

Calvin B Rock called the eighth business session of the 1998 Annual Council to order.

Joseph E Gurubatham, President of Home Study International and Griggs University, opened the business session with prayer.

98AC/ADCOM/98AC to AHT(DIV)

INTERNATIONAL BOARD OF MINISTERIAL AND THEOLOGICAL
EDUCATION (GCC-B)—MEMBERSHIP ADJUSTMENT

VOTED, To adjust the membership of the International Board of Ministerial and Theological Education (GCC-B), as follows:

Add	Davidson, JoAnn M
	Gurubatham, Joseph E
	Gustin, Patricia J
	Luxton, Andrea T J
	Kwesi, Ifeoma
	Tutsch, Cindy

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98AC/ADCOM/98AC to AHT

INTERNATIONAL BOARD OF MINISTERIAL AND THEOLOGICAL
EDUCATION EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (GCC-B)—
MEMBERSHIP ADJUSTMENT

VOTED, To adjust the membership of the International Board of Ministerial and Theological Education Executive Committee (GCC-B), as follows:

Add	Davidson, JoAnn M
	Gurubatham, Joseph E
	Gustin, Patricia J
	Luxton, Andrea T J
	Kwesi, Ifeoma
	Tutsch, Cindy

PRE/ChMan/ADCOM/ChMan/GCDO98AC/98AC to JP-ChMan

255-98G *CHURCH MANUAL*—POSSIBLE FORMAT CHANGE

VOTED, To request the Church Manual Committee to propose, for the 1999 Annual Council, a *Church Manual* revision which distinguishes essential and universal characteristics of a local Seventh-day Adventist church from those elements of local church life and activities which may be unique to a particular location (e.g. relation to auxiliary organizations, departments, meetings, and programs). The proposal should include a recommendation regarding:

1. The process of communicating, in published format, the distinction between essential characteristics of a local church and areas of church life and activities where local adaptations may be appropriate.
2. The process by which variations, other than in the essential characteristics of a church, shall be described, approved, circulated, and reviewed.

ChMan/ADCOM/141-97G/CHM/ChMan/ADCOM/GCDO98AC/98AC to JP-00GCS

114-98G REASONS FOR WHICH MEMBERS SHALL BE
DISCIPLINED - *CHURCH MANUAL* AMENDMENT

RECOMMENDED, To amend the *Church Manual* pages 168-170, Reasons for Which Members Shall Be Disciplined, to read as follows:

Reasons for Which Members Shall Be Disciplined

Among the grievous sins for which members shall be subject to church discipline are the following:

1. Denial of faith in the fundamentals of the gospel and in the cardinal doctrines of the church or teaching doctrines contrary to the same.
2. Violation of the law of God, such as worship of idols, murder, stealing, profanity, gambling, Sabbathbreaking, and willful and habitual falsehood.
3. Violation of the seventh commandment of the law of God as it relates to the marriage institution, the Christian home, and biblical standards of moral conduct.
4. Such violations as fornication, promiscuity, incest, homosexual practice practice, sexual abuse of children and vulnerable adults, and other gross sexual perversions, and the remarriage of a divorced person, except of the "innocent party" in a divorce for adultery or for gross sexual perversions.
5. Fraud or willful misrepresentation in business.
6. Disorderly conduct which brings reproach upon the cause.
7. Adhering to or taking part in a divisive or disloyal movement or organization.
(See p. 164.)
8. Persistent refusal to recognize properly constituted church authority or to submit to the order and discipline of the church.
9. The use, manufacture, or sale of alcoholic beverages.
10. The use, manufacture, or sale of tobacco in any of its forms for human consumption.

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11. The misuse of, or trafficking in, narcotics or other drugs.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church recognizes the need of exercising great care to protect the highest spiritual interests of its members, to ensure fair treatment, and to safeguard the fair name of the church.

In some cases a case of transgression of the commandments of God where there is deep repentance and full and free confession, giving evidence that genuine conversion has taken place, the church may administer discipline by placing the transgressor under censure for a stated period of time.

In cases However, in a case of flagrant violation violations of the law of God, which have brought public reproach upon the cause, the church may deem it necessary, even though a sincere confession has been made, to disfellowship the member to protect its fair name and its Christian standards. Later, when it is evident that the individual's life is consistent with church standards, the offender may be received back into the fold after rebaptism. The church cannot afford to deal lightly with such sins, nor permit personal considerations to affect its actions. It must register its decisive and emphatic disapproval of the sins of fornication, adultery, all acts of moral indiscretion, and other grievous sins; at the same time it must do everything to restore and reclaim the erring ones. As the world continually grows more lax in moral matters, the church must not lower the standards set by God, but must take prompt and decisive action where moral lapses have occurred.

ChMan/ADCOM/GCDO97AC/97AC/97AC/145-97G/ChMan/ADCOM/ChMan/ADCOM/
GCDO98AC/98AC to JP-ChMan

118-98G CHURCH OFFICERS AND THEIR DUTIES, MEMBERSHIP
REQUIRED FOR ELECTION - *CHURCH MANUAL* ADDITION

VOTED, To refer to the Church Manual Committee the addition of a new section, Membership Required for Election, to page 45 of the *Church Manual* before the section, Term of Office, to read as follows:

Membership Required for Election

Only those who are members in regular standing on the roll of the church making the appointments are eligible for election as officers or assistants of that local church. (See pp. 128, 130.) The only exception is a licensed employee of the conference assigned as a district leader. (See p. 121.)

ChMan/152-97G/ChMan/ADCOM/ChMan/ADCOM/ChMan/ADCOM/GCDO98AC/98AC to JP-00GCS

120-98Ga *CHURCH MANUAL* AUTHORITY - *CHURCH MANUAL*
ADDITION

RECOMMENDED, To add a new Chapter 1, *Church Manual* Authority, to the *Church Manual*, on a new page 1, before the chapter, The Church of the Living God, to read as follows:

Chapter 1

Church Manual Authority

The content of the *Church Manual*, based on biblical principles, is the expression of the Seventh-day Adventist Church's understanding of Christian life and church governance and discipline. It expresses the authority of a duly assembled General Conference session. "God has ordained that the representatives of His church from all parts of the earth, when assembled in a General Conference, shall have authority."—*Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 261. This covenanted authority of the *Church Manual* makes its content binding for every local church/company and every level of its organization throughout the world.

ChMan/ADCOM/GCDO98AC/98AC to JP-00GCS

120-98Gb RENUMBERING OF CHAPTERS - *CHURCH MANUAL*
DIRECTIVE

RECOMMENDED, To renumber all chapters of the *Church Manual* to allow for the inclusion of a new Chapter 1.

ChMan/ADCOM/GCDO98AC/98AC to JP-00GCS

120-98Gc GENERAL CONFERENCE THE HIGHEST AUTHORITY,
CHURCH MANUAL AUTHORITY - *CHURCH MANUAL*
ADDITION

RECOMMENDED, To add a new section, *Church Manual* Authority, to the *Church Manual*, in the section, General Conference the Highest Authority, pages 25 and 26, to read as follows:

General Conference the Highest Authority

The General Conference in session, and the Executive Committee between sessions, is the highest organization in the administration of the church's worldwide work, and is authorized by its constitution to create subordinate organizations to promote specific interests in various sections of the world. It is therefore understood that all subordinate organizations and institutions throughout the world will recognize the General Conference as the highest authority, under God, among Seventh-day Adventists. When differences arise in or between organizations and institutions, appeal to the next higher organization is proper until it reaches the General Conference in session, or the Executive Committee at the Annual Council. During the interim between these sessions the Executive Committee shall constitute the body of final authority on all questions where a difference of viewpoint may develop. The committee's decision may be reviewed at a session of the General Conference or at an Annual Council of the Executive Committee.

"I have often been instructed by the Lord that no man's judgment should be surrendered to the judgment of any other one man. Never should the mind of one man or the minds of a few men be regarded as sufficient in wisdom and power to control the work and to say what plans shall be followed. But when, in a General Conference, the judgment of the brethren assembled from all parts of the field is exercised, private independence and private judgment must not be stubbornly maintained, but surrendered. Never should a laborer regard as a virtue the persistent maintenance of his position of independence, contrary to the decision of the general body.

"At times, when a small group of men entrusted with the general management of the work have, in the name of the General Conference, sought to carry out unwise plans and to restrict God's work, I have said that I could no longer regard the voice of the General Conference, represented by these few men, as the voice of God. But this is not saying that the decisions of a General Conference composed of an assembly of duly appointed, representative men from all parts of the field should not be respected. God has ordained that the representatives of His church from all parts of the earth, when assembled in a General Conference, shall have authority. The error that some are in danger of committing is in giving to the mind and judgment of one man, or of a small group of men, the full measure of authority and influence that God has vested in His church in the judgment and voice of the General Conference assembled to plan for the prosperity and advancement of His work.

"When this power, which God has placed in the church, is accredited wholly to one man, and he is invested with the authority to be judgment for other minds, then the true Bible order is changed. Satan's efforts upon such a man's mind would be most subtle and sometimes well-nigh overpowering, for the enemy would hope that through his mind he could affect many others. Let

us give to the highest organized authority in the church that which we are prone to give to one man or a small group of men.”—*Testimonies*, vol. 9, pp. 260, 261.

Church Manual Authority—(See Chapter 1.)

STW/ChMan/ChMan/ADCOM/GCDO98AC/98AC to JP-00GCS

205-98G BAPTISMAL VOW AND BAPTISM - *CHURCH MANUAL*
AMENDMENT

RECOMMENDED, To amend the *Church Manual* page 30, Baptismal Vow and Baptism, to read as follows:

Baptismal Vow—Candidates for baptism or those being received into fellowship by profession of faith shall affirm their acceptance of the doctrinal beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the presence of the church or other properly appointed body. (See p. 29.) The minister or elder should address the following questions to the candidate(s), whose reply may be by verbal assent or by raising the hand.

Commitment Vow

1. Do you believe there is one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, a unity of three coeternal Persons?
2. Do you accept the death of Jesus Christ on Calvary as the atoning sacrifice for your sins and believe that by God's grace through faith in His shed blood you are saved from sin and its penalty?
3. Do you accept Jesus Christ as your Lord and personal Saviour believing that God, in Christ, has forgiven your sins and given you a new heart, and do you renounce the sinful ways of the world?
4. Do you accept by faith the righteousness of Christ, your Intercessor in the heavenly sanctuary, and accept His promise of transforming grace and power to live a loving, Christ-centered life in your home and before the world?
5. Do you believe that the Bible is God's inspired Word, the only rule of faith and practice for the Christian? Do you covenant to spend time regularly in prayer and Bible study?

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6. Do you accept the Ten Commandments as a transcript of the character of God and a revelation of His will? Is it your purpose by the power of the indwelling Christ to keep this law, including the fourth commandment, which requires the observance of the seventh day of the week as the Sabbath of the Lord and the memorial of Creation?

7. Do you look forward to the soon coming of Jesus and the blessed hope when “this mortal shall . . . put on immortality”? As you prepare to meet the Lord, will you witness to His loving salvation by using your talents in personal soul-winning endeavor to help others to be ready for His glorious appearing?

8. Do you accept the biblical teaching of spiritual gifts and believe that the gift of prophecy is one of the identifying marks of the remnant church?

9. Do you believe in church organization? Is it your purpose to worship God and to support the church by through your tithes and offerings and by your personal effort and influence?

10. Do you believe that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit; and will you honor God by caring for it, avoiding the use of that which is harmful; abstaining from all unclean foods; from the use, manufacture, or sale of alcoholic beverages; the use, manufacture, or sale of tobacco in any of its forms for human consumption; and from the misuse of or trafficking in narcotics or other drugs?

11. Do you know and understand the fundamental Bible principles as taught by the Seventh-day Adventist Church? Do you purpose, by the grace of God, to fulfill His will by ordering your life in harmony with these principles?

12. Do you accept the New Testament teaching of baptism by immersion and desire to be so baptized as a public expression of faith in Christ and His forgiveness of your sins?

13. Do you accept and believe that the Seventh-day Adventist Church is the remnant church of Bible prophecy and that people of every nation, race, and language are invited and accepted into its fellowship? Do you desire to be a member of this local congregation of the world church?

~~Certificate of Baptism—~~ Each of the above questions will be stated on the Certificate of Baptism as a personal affirmation to provide for the candidate a covenant document. Certificate of Baptism and Commitment—A space will be provided for the new member to sign the certificate as an affirmation of this commitment. Following the baptism, a Certificate of Baptism

and Commitment will be presented to the candidate as a covenant document. The commitment will read as follows:

Commitment

1. I believe there is one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, a unity of three coeternal Persons.
2. I accept the death of Jesus Christ on Calvary as the atoning sacrifice for my sins. I believe that by God's grace through faith in His shed blood that I am saved from sin and its penalty.
3. I accept Jesus Christ as my Lord and personal Saviour and believe that God, in Christ, has forgiven my sins and given me a new heart, and I renounce the sinful ways of the world.
4. I accept by faith the righteousness of Christ, my Intercessor in the heavenly sanctuary, and accept His promise of transforming grace and power to live a loving, Christ-centered life in my home and before the world.
5. I believe the Bible is God's inspired Word, the only rule of faith and practice for the Christian. I covenant to spend time regularly in prayer and Bible study.
6. I accept the Ten Commandments as a transcript of the character of God and a revelation of His will. It is my purpose by the power of the indwelling Christ to keep this law, including the fourth commandment, which requires the observance of the seventh day of the week as the Sabbath of the Lord and the memorial of Creation.
7. I look forward to the soon coming of Jesus and the blessed hope when "this mortal shall . . . put on immortality." As I prepare to meet the Lord, I will witness to His loving salvation by using my talents in personal soul-winning endeavor to help others to be ready for His glorious appearing.
8. I accept the biblical teaching of spiritual gifts and believe that the gift of prophecy is one of the identifying marks of the remnant church.
9. I believe in church organization. It is my purpose to worship God and to support the church through my tithes and offerings and by my personal efforts and influence.

10. I believe that my body is the temple of the Holy Spirit; and I will honor God by caring for it, avoiding the use of that which is harmful; abstaining from all unclean foods, from the use, manufacture, or sale of alcoholic beverages; the use, manufacture, or sale of tobacco in any of its forms for human consumption; and from the misuse of or trafficking in narcotics or other drugs.

11. I know and understand the fundamental Bible principles as taught by the Seventh-day Adventist Church. I purpose, by the grace of God, to fulfill His will by ordering my life in harmony with these principles.

12. I accept the New Testament teaching of baptism by immersion and desire to be so baptized as a public expression of faith in Christ and His forgiveness of my sins.

13. I accept and believe that the Seventh-day Adventist Church is the remnant church of Bible prophecy and that people of every nation, race, and language are invited and accepted into its fellowship. I desire to be a member of this local congregation of the world church.

Welcoming Candidates—After the candidates have satisfactorily answered the foregoing questions, have, in the presence of the church membership, answered the questions of the vow in the affirmative, or assurance has been given to the church that such answers have already been given, the church body should be asked to vote on their acceptance into the church, subject to baptism, which ordinance should not be unduly delayed.

Receiving Members Who Are Not Known—In preparing for the baptism of his converts, an evangelist should invite the pastor or elder to visit his baptismal classes and become acquainted with his converts. Such contacts will enable the church to be better prepared to receive the new members into church fellowship. This general procedure should not apply in the case of isolated believers who wish to unite with the conference church.

Baptismal Ceremony—At this ceremony the deacons should make the necessary preparation and assist the male candidates into and out of the water. (See p. 53.) The deaconesses should assist all female candidates. (See p. 54.) Care should be exercised to see that proper attire is provided for the candidates. Robes of suitable heavy material are preferable. If such are not available, the candidates should dress in such a manner that they will be modestly attired. The baptismal ceremony should be followed by extending the right hand of fellowship and the giving of a few words of welcome by the pastor or elder in behalf of the entire church.

98AC-JP

CHURCH MANUAL AMENDMENTS—HELD UNTIL 1999 ANNUAL
COUNCIL

VOTED, To hold action on the remaining *Church Manual* amendments until the 1999 Annual Council, in light of the proposed reorganization of the *Church Manual* which will be brought to the 1999 Annual Council.

98AC-JP

CHURCH MANUAL REORGANIZATION—INCLUSION OF
CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES AND WOMEN'S MINISTRIES
DEPARTMENTS

VOTED, To consider the Women's Ministries Department and the Children's Ministries Department on an equal basis with other departments when the reorganization of the *Church Manual* is considered, given that there is insufficient time to consider the proposed *Church Manual* additions for these two departments at the 1998 Annual Council.

PRESIDENT'S CLOSING REMARKS

Robert S Folkenberg expressed appreciation for the time spent together discussing issues in the Church; for the extraordinary welcome provided by the South American Division—including transportation from the airport, the special menu arranged with the hotel, and the tours provided to many beautiful sites; for the excellent arrangements made by session management; for the fact that we have all stayed in good health; and especially for the presence and power of the Holy Spirit which holds us together as a Church.

Adjourned.

Robert S Folkenberg, Chairman
Mario Veloso, Secretary
Athol H Tolhurst, Editorial Secretary
Carol E Rasmussen, Recording Secretary