



QUARTERLY REVIEW

ORGAN OF THE SOUTHERN EUROPEAN DIVISION OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF S.D.A.

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“All one in Christ Jesus”

Memories of the 1963 Winter Council

Bernard E. Seton

“Pastor Figuhr, what overriding impression are you taking with you from this Council?”

The president of the General Conference paused only for a moment, and replied: “I have, above everything else, appreciated the evident spirit of unity that has prevailed here, in spite of the bewildering diversity of languages and nationalities within the Division. This I shall never forget.”

And that was not a prepared statement. The speaker made it in the twinkling of an eye, as he was about to enter the basement hall of the Gland church where the committee meetings of the Winter Council of the Southern European Division were held from December 5-11, 1963. The venue was beautiful, comfortable, and convenient. The new church, set on a slope above La Lignière, gave a lovely setting for the Sabbath and evening services, while its basement provided a large-enough hall for the morning devotional meetings and day-long committees, as well as the additional offices for secretarial work. The sanatorium staff, under the direction of Sylvain Meyer, offered La Lignière's customary comfort, fine vegetarian food, and cheerful Christian hospitality. If local cir-



The Divisions Officers unite with the General Conference visitors to plan for evangelizing all the peoples within our Division (left to right - W. A. Wild, M. Fridlin, R. R. Figuhr, O. A. Blake, B. J. Kohler).



The beautiful new church at La Lignière, where the Council meetings and committees were held.

cumstances determine the success of a council, then the conditions under which ours was held weighed heavily in its favour.

But come, let us ask the president of the North African Union Mission what he thinks about the meetings.

“What picture of the Council are you going to carry away with you this year, Brother Pichot?”

“I am impressed with the committee’s serenity, with its quiet confidence in the progress and triumph of our missionary movement in spite of the size and gravity of the problems that confront it.”

And here is Dr. Zurcher, president of the Séminaire Adventiste. He has torn himself away from the school’s incessant responsibilities to meet in council with his 37 fellow-workers. His opinion should be worth recording. He offers it in two words—“Realiste” and “Encourageant”, from which we deduce his conviction that the Council faced its difficulties with a courage that augured well for the future.

Wait a moment longer while we speak with the under-treasurer of the General Conference. He has been with us before, and should be well able to gauge the quality of the meetings.

“How would you describe the conduct of the Council, Brother Blake?”

Without hesitation, there came the reply: “I think it has all been well organized, very well organized indeed. This has greatly contributed to the smooth and efficient management of the meetings, and made them very enjoyable.”

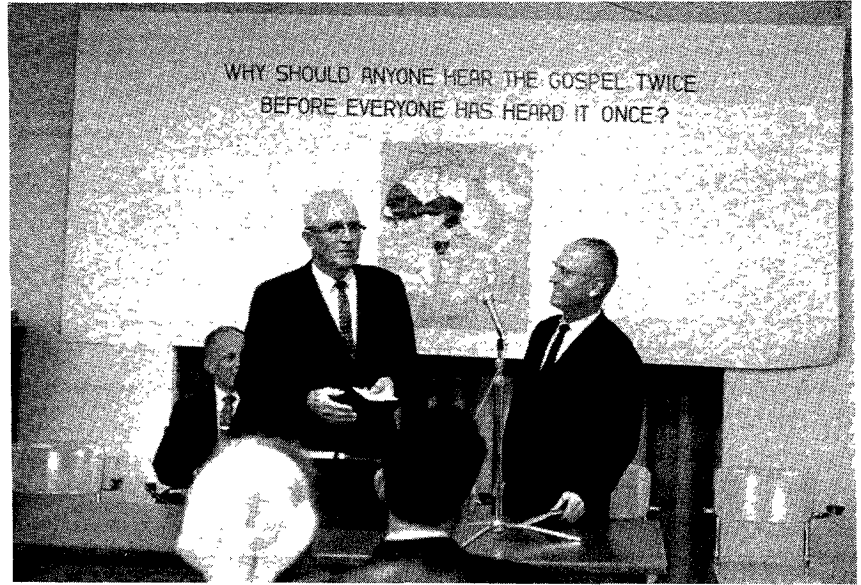
But these are backward looks, taken on the morning when the Council closed. Let us return to the first service on Thursday evening December 5, when Pastor Fridlin welcomed the 38 delegates, gave an optimistic spiritual message that urged the Church “to pass over this Jordan” into the Promised Land, and reported 7,000 baptisms during the first nine months of 1963 while expressing the hope of having a 10,000 total for the whole year. But detailed reports of progress in the different parts of the Division he left to the respective presidents who were each given the opportunity of addressing the full assembly. Charles Monnier, supported by H. Möschinger and W. Ruf, led the way with news from the Swiss Union. «Our country is small, but our hearts are large», he explained, as he welcomed the delegates to lovely, af-

fluent Switzerland and told of progress in his field. Then, on successive evenings and on Sabbath afternoon the other presidents took us on verbal journeys into their countries, describing the conditions confronting the Advent message, and enlisting our informed interest in evangelistic progress in their territories.

It would be invidious to single out one report as better than another, but there is no doubt that news from far countries, especially the mission fields and certain eastern lands, together with the infectiously enthusiastic report from Greece, made special impact on the listeners. In any case, who could resist J. Pechtöl’s cheery charm, conveyed through his own private brand of German, or fail to be reassured by Anton Lorencin’s report of steady growth in his field and of God’s providences at Skopje? We gained courage from the story of progress in Spain, of the larger-than-ever baptisms, the youth camps, and the church schools in that catholic land. From North Africa, with its daunting Moslem problem, there came hope as we heard of the favourable influence exerted by our welfare and educational work, and of the prospects of a break-through by means of the Press and colporteur-evangelism. Our veteran missionary, Brother A. H. Cosendai, with 26 years’ service in the Cameroun, told of the providential openings for three radio broadcasts in his union, and of exploratory work in unentered Gabon and Chad. In Belgium, our brethren are helping to care for some of the 80,000 abandoned children who have drifted into their country and find that this compassionate work opens the hearts of a public that has long been indifferent to the Gospel. But if we say any more we shall be reporting every speech, and that would leave little space for dealing with other aspects of the Council, so let us turn aside to look at some of these.

The morning devotional hours, faithfully attended by delegates and sanatorium workers, were addressed by Pastors Figuhr and Blake. Their Biblical messages gave a good beginning to each day and offered spiritual nourishment for future service. In fact, the basement of the church became a veritable Upper Room!

No sooner had the meetings swung into their stride, however, than the Sabbath came, and with it a very special Sabbath School, 70 minutes in length, according to General Conference recommendations. With cooperation from the local officers and contributions from visiting ministers, with a Scripture-filled lesson taught by Raoul Dederen who had been accorded his doctorate by the University of Geneva only three days earlier, the one hour and ten minutes moved easily along to a punctual conclusion, and left the platform free for divine service. In that solemn worship hour, the General Conference president posed a disturbing question—"Who is my neighbour?" The answer stressed the need for showing Christlike compassion to the multitudes within our Division. The simple, scriptural message is being long remembered by the attentive congre-



Pastor Figubr speaking, with P. Steiner translating, at one of the morning devotional meetings.



Our happy family – the group of smiling delegates assembled at the front entrance to the church.



Officiating ministers and a section of the congregation at the Sabbath morning service, December 7.

gation, and surely we may hope that its principles will be increasingly practised by us all.

With delegates from at least thirteen different countries, multiplicity of tongues was to be expected. Naturally, French predominated since it is the Division's principal language and the meetings were held in French-speaking Switzerland; but German and English were popular, while Italian, Portuguese, Spanish, Greek, Berner Deutsch, and Serbian took the air, for official or private purposes, at less frequent intervals. But do not for one moment think that the gathering bore any relation to the Tower of Babel. Oh no! It was rather a miniature United Nations where difference in language made no perceptible difference in fraternal spirit. All were "one in Christ Jesus". All were fluent in that spiritual Esperanto, the language of brotherly love eloquently spoken through a handshake, a smile, a nod of understanding, an expression of sympathy, and a few disjointed words in an unaccustomed tongue. These exchanges, of course, were not adequate for preaching of the Word, nor for committee discussions. For those occasions, there was a battery of quickminded, agile-tongued, patient interpreters. Whom shall we mention?

G. Haberey, P. Steiner, E. Naenny—yes, let's have them all—L. Belloy, G. Cupertino, A. Vaucher, A. Henriot, H. Stöeger, R. Dederen, A. Kanacki, L. Erdmann, G. Krebs, and W. Ruf: and may no helpful linguist have been omitted, for we were all

in debt to one or more of them many times.

Another kind of gratitude sprang from another kind of pleasure when we listened to the music brought to us by Mr. Buser and his twenty-voice Girls' Choir from Collonges, and by groups of singers from La Lignière church. Such music lifted our hearts and helped us worship the Lord in a little more of the beauty of holiness. We were grateful for its harmonious aid.

And, having skimmed lightly over the pool of memories that remain after the Council has closed, what can we say of its main business, its committees that occupied about thirty hours of the programme? Well, there is not much that may be said for, after all, they were not public assemblies; but a few highlights can be caught to bring the prevailing atmosphere into print. The Division secretary gave a bird's eye view of our present status and with his usual dynamism graphically introduced the question of unentered territories. The treasurer's report, with its picture of healthy finances, brought widespread hopes for more funds for more work in more places, and earned high praise from those who were qualified to assess its merits.



The twenty-voice Girls' Choir from Collonges sings during the Sabbath morning service, under the direction of Mme Buser, with M. Buser at the piano.



Leaders from some of the Eastern countries: M. Sudarevic, J. Pechtöl, A. Lorencin, R. Dedic and A. Kanacki. They are standing below the mural that adorns an inside wall of the La Lignière church.

Each department secretary gave a brief but stimulating review of the work for which he was responsible and submitted resolutions that were designed to foster further advance in 1964. Opportunities were also given and taken for Dr. J. Zurcher to tell of the prospects for progress at the Séminaire Adventiste, for E. Bénézech to report on the publishing house, for Dr. A. Vaucher to give a summary of advance in Research, and for Dr. J. Nussbaum to brief the brethren on latest developments in calendar reform and religious liberty.

Of paramount interest for the future of the Church was the time spent in considering baptismal goals for the coming year. Decisions then taken received added strength from Brother Fridlin's earnest appeal for more intensive evangelism and from Pastor Figuhr's wholehearted support of that appeal. With larger plans in mind, the union presidents awaited the final item on the agenda, "the dessert", as the president traditionally termed it, the distribution of available funds to each executive section of the Division—in other words, The Budget. Relief, satisfaction, hope, sanctified ambition could be read on the leaders' faces as they scanned the figures that revealed the financial resources that would be at their

disposal during the coming year. Then came the gratitude, so spontaneously, so movingly given. It would have done every member a world of good to have seen those leaders rise, one after the other, to express in simple but obviously sin-

cere terms their deep appreciation for the support the Church was giving them. They dedicated themselves, their fellow-workers, and the monies being entrusted to them to the one great task of evangelism that the Gospel might be preached to all the people in their countries that the kingdom of God might come. It was moving, we say, to listen to such heartfelt resolves, especially when given by men whose responsibilities lay in peculiarly difficult places. Many an eye grew moist and many a throat tightened with emotion before the presidential testimonies came to an end.

That was a good note on which to close. We could go our several ways knowing that conscientious leaders were watching over the interests of each section of the Division, and that dedicated ministers would be administering the funds and directing our thin but courageous line of workers in the supreme task of saving men and women from sin in preparation for our Lord's return.

May the reading of this report and a study of its accompanying photos renew in each of us a desire to hasten the appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.



Dr. H. Stöger, Division M. V. Secretary (front right), translates for a group of German-speaking delegates.

Statistical Report of the Southern European Division of S. D. A. for the Quarter Ending December 31, 1963

Name of Conference or Mission	Number of Churches	Previous Membership	Baptism	Vote	Letter	Total Gains	Letter	Death	Apostasy	Missing Members	Total Losses	Net Gains	Present Membership	Ord. Minist. Active	» » Honorary	Cred. Miss. Active	» » Honorary	Cred. Bible Instr. Active	» » Honorary	Lic. Ministers	» » Honorary	Licensed Missionaries	Lic. Bible Instr.	Elementary School Teachers	Literature Evangelists	All other regular Workers	Total Workers	No. of Sabbath Schools	Sabbath School Membership	Average Attendance	
SOUTHERN EUROPEAN DIVISION																															
AUSTRIAN U. C.																															
Line Conference	19	1213	9	2	24	35	12	8	25	—	45	-10	1203	4	2	4	1	—	—	1	—	12	—	—	—	2	26	19	1393	935	
Tube Conference	21	1464	15	1	18	34	13	10	20	—	43	-9	1455	6	1	2	—	1	—	4	—	2	1	—	—	—	25	22	1623	1047	
Totals	40	2677	24	3	42	69	25	18	45	—	88	-19	2658	16	3	6	1	2	—	9	—	15	1	—	16	2	71	41	3016	1982	
CZECHOSLOVAKIAN U. C.																															
Bohemian Conference	16	1113	5	2	—	7	5	2	4	—	11	-4	1109	6	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	7	15	18	970	830	
Bohemian Conference	75	4299	27	5	115	147	103	11	8	—	122	25	4324	36	7	4	2	—	—	8	—	3	6	14	1	33	4	115	70	4300	3745
Totals	91	5412	32	7	115	154	108	13	12	—	133	21	5433	50	11	4	3	—	—	11	—	10	14	1	35	12	151	88	5270	4575	
HUNGARIAN U. C.																															
Totals	153	5875	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5875	32	—	—	—	—	—	8	—	4	—	—	—	6	50	175	6168	4317	
ROMANIAN U. C.																															
Totals	511	34069	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	34069	108	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	127	—	—	—	—	235	645	35772	24839	
SWISS U. C.																															
French Swiss Conference	29	1609	8	3	21	32	6	2	2	3	13	19	1628	11	2	—	—	—	—	3	—	4	—	2	15	1	38	28	1456	1184	
German Swiss Conference	30	2028	15	1	34	50	36	9	5	—	50	—	2028	14	3	1	2	3	—	2	—	8	—	2	14	2	51	30	1939	1312	
Totals	59	3637	23	4	55	82	42	11	7	3	63	19	3656	27	5	2	2	3	—	5	—	12	—	4	29	3	92	58	3395	2496	
YUGOSLAVIAN U. C.																															
Totals	232	9000	333	14	309	656	104	69	309	20	502	154	9154	34	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	5	—	—	—	—	86	300	9450	6615	
AFRICAN U. C.																															
Ango Mission	23	5391	7	—	19	26	21	1	62	—	84	-58	5333	5	1	—	—	—	—	2	—	30	—	—	2	—	40	49	131	7080	5967
Ango Mission	1	2266	63	—	—	63	—	1	30	—	31	32	2298	3	—	—	—	—	—	3	—	3	—	37	—	—	52	74	6618	4120	
Ango Mission	1	607	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	607	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	23	—	16	—	4	46	10	906	545	
Ango Mission	1	384	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	384	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	12	—	—	16	85	5261	2500	
Ango Mission	7	2374	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2374	4	—	—	—	—	—	4	—	1	—	36	—	—	45	33	2389	2376	
Ango Mission	1	1296	—	—	—	—	—	—	59	59	—	-59	1237	2	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	1	—	18	—	—	23	81	4830	3706	
Ango Mission	22	3018	37	—	26	63	293	1	3	—	297	-234	2784	5	—	—	—	—	—	10	—	1	—	29	—	—	45	12	560	318	
Ango Mission	1	199	18	—	2	20	—	—	—	—	—	—	20	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	14	—	—	17	8	685	555	
Ango Mission	1	273	22	—	—	22	—	—	—	—	—	—	22	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	3	—	—	—	6	10	5	1033	689	
Ango Mission	5	340	17	—	4	21	2	1	—	—	3	—	18	4	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	4	—	2	—	—	11	8	737	639	
Totals	63	16148	164	—	51	215	316	4	95	59	474	-259	15889	35	1	—	—	—	—	31	—	68	—	207	2	10	354	447	30099	21415	
AFRICAN U. C.																															
Ango Mission Station	1	47	13	—	—	13	—	—	—	—	—	13	60	2	—	6	—	—	—	1	—	17	—	—	—	39	65	—	—	—	
Ango Mission	4	1310	81	4	—	85	—	8	2	—	10	75	1385	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	1	6	—	—	18	62	—	4340	—	
Ango Mission	4	642	31	—	—	31	—	—	—	—	—	31	673	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	14	23	—	—	—	40	—	2294	—	
Ango Mission District	2	93	10	—	—	10	—	2	—	—	2	8	101	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	5	—	—	—	8	—	234	—	
Ango Mission District	5	359	12	—	—	12	—	—	1	—	1	11	370	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	8	25	—	—	1	35	—	1269	—	
Ango Mission	12	3406	137	2	2	141	8	45	27	—	80	61	3467	2	—	—	—	3	1	1	—	1	47	39	—	2	96	—	6602	—	
Ango Mission	2	598	102	—	—	102	4	1	7	—	12	90	688	3	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	3	11	6	—	2	31	—	2416	—	
Ango Mission	3	938	78	—	—	78	—	11	—	—	11	67	1005	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	16	30	—	—	—	47	—	2029	—	
Ango Mission	4	492	26	—	2	28	4	3	13	5	25	3	495	3	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	8	31	—	7	52	—	1269	—	
Ango Mission	3	289	4	—	1	5	—	—	—	—	—	5	294	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	24	—	—	—	28	—	2433	—	
Totals	40	8174	494	6	5	505	16	70	50	5	141	364	8538	19	—	8	—	14	1	6	—	24	123	209	—	69	473	199	23399	19244	
PACIFIC OCEAN U. C.																															
Ango Mission	9	223	33	—	14	47	—	—	—	—	—	47	270	3	—	2	—	—	—	—	6	—	—	—	—	—	11	—	—	—	
Ango Mission	11	337	12	—	—	12	—	1	—	—	1	11	348	1	—	—	—	—	—	3	—	2	—	3	—	—	9	13	509	175	
Ango Mission	11	539	36	—	4	40	4	4	12	4	24	16	555	4	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	9	—	—	15	13	782	512		
Ango Mission	14	1283	49	2	1	52	1	—	2	—	3	49	1332	5	1	1	—	—	—	1	—	5	—	24	—	5	39	28	1671	1350	
Ango Mission	9	543	—	—	5	11	—	—	—	—	11	-6	537	2	—	1	—	—	—	2	—	1	—	—	—	1	7	9	668	529	
Ango Mission	1	60	4	—	—	4	—	—	2	—	2	2	62	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	2	1	75	52	
Ango Mission	10	369	5	—	—	5	—	—	—	—	—	5	374	4	—	—	—	—	—	3	—	9	—	—	—	16	11	939	554		
Ango Mission	37	1770	72	—	1	73	—	3	—	—	3	70	1840	6	1	—	—	—	—	4	—	4	—	25	4	11	55	36	3130	2075	
Ango Mission	1	70	12	—	2	14	29	1	1	—	31	-17	53	2	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	2	—	—	—	6	5	199	175	
Totals	103	5194	223	2	27	252	45	9	17	4	75	177	5371	31	2	4	—	—	—	1	21	3	30	—	80	5	18	195	130	9259	6327</

