

# Adventist Review

General Paper of the Seventh-day Adventist Church

July 1, 1985

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Cover: Charming and  
colorful, the Rainbow  
Choir from Korea  
provided beautiful music.





# THE DAY IN REVIEW

Sunday, June 30

By Leo and Bobbie Jane Van Dolson

On this, the beginning of the third day of the session, one fact is becoming increasingly clear: If those shoes aren't made for walking, they should not come to the Superdome. Here, walking is big. It's a case of around and around you go, and where you stop—well, there really isn't any stopping at the Superdome. The building looks like a colossal flying saucer, so no matter which way you go, you go around.

On one of my interminable circular hikes (this one was on behalf of the Sabbath school booth) I did a double take at a sign that shouted "Saints Locker Room," and nearby one that read "Parking Reserved for Saints." They were intended to designate the dressing area of the football team, but raised some interesting questions. For instance: How do you distinguish saints from sinners at a General Conference session? And if you identify the term *saints* with the kind of people Paul wrote to in Corinth, the term takes in most of us. In that case, there probably aren't enough lockers available in that dressing room for the saints now gathered in New Orleans.—L.\*

## After the Sabbath

The Sabbath is nearly over, and the great crowd at the Superdome has been spiritually fed. Most of these saints have been in and around the main auditorium since early morning. It would seem that exhaustion would drive them to their rooms, but this is not the case. They are buoyed, perhaps, by the remarkable God-given conclusion to the 1000 Days of Reaping program and inspired by the just-inaugurated Harvest '90 thrust. At any rate, looking around the Superdome at the beginning of the evening session, I get the impression that nobody has gone home.

Just before coming into the auditorium, I took a quick trip up to the junior-earlteen meeting that was already in progress a couple of floors up. I probably wouldn't have found the room, which was reached by a rather devious route, but little Gloria Gill, of New Brunswick, knew the way and guided me there.

The huge room was alive with that atmosphere of energy that exudes from groups of young people. The decorum was surprisingly quiet and attentive, however. This was because of the excellent program being presented. During my brief stay the Heralds, a male quartet from southern California, performed, followed by a well-trained children's choir, A Joyful Noise, also based in California.

Hurrying alone down the darkened ramp to the main auditorium, I was startled to see a small group of men in the

\* For purposes of identification in this article, L indicates Leo, and B indicates Bobbie Jane.

shadows. But their heads were bowed, and the sweet tones of prayer drifted to my ears. I went on my way assured.—B.

Tonight marks the beginning of the division reports. Please don't read any theological interpretations into this, but the two to be presented this evening remind me of Daniel 11, as both feature Adventist kingdoms of the north—the Northern European and North American divisions. While the music of the Adventist Suzuki Strings medley and the Inter-America steel band still echoed in our ears, Jan Paulsen, president of the Northern European Division, introduced a 20-minute video program. It was excellent, but what followed was memorable.

On Friday, five new fields—Israel, Greece, Yugoslavia, Hungary, and Pakistan—were added to the division. For human beings, change often is difficult. This was demonstrated by the discussion that took place before the vote. Now the change had been made, and in a beautiful show of unity, costumed couples from the five new fields proudly carried their flags and joined hands with the assembled representatives of the original division on the stage. Incidentally, they are united under a new name. Henceforth they will be known as the Trans-European Division.

During the intermission between presentations, the green-gowned Pine Forge Academy choir under the direction of Gwen Foster thrilled the congregation with a special arrangement of "Lift Up the Trumpet." The response was ecstatic, and the 70 young people obliged with a second number.

The nitty-gritty must be tended to, even on such a sublime occasion as a General Conference session. Jere Patzer, master of ceremonies for the evening, cautioned against the use of flashbulbs, which were interfering with the video recordings.

Elder C. E. Bradford introduced the professional North American Division presentation, which through the theme "The Caring Church" summarized the division's response to the gospel commission. Haskell Edwards, a Toronto pastor, is a typical example. Fifty percent of his congregation meet in small group sessions every Friday and Saturday night for nurture and outreach. The result has been a better than 10 percent growth rate.—L.

## In the morning

A lovely duet by Charlotte and David Dennis sets the tone for the early-morning meeting. The auditorium is filled and sweetened by the message "A wonderful Saviour is Jesus my Lord, a wonderful Saviour is He . . ." Interestingly, the congregation applauds after each musical number, an unusual procedure in some SDA circles, but the steering committee this morning agreed that handclapping is an appropriate expression in a meeting of our world church.

Though the hour is early, there is a good attendance, with more arriving by the moment. Of course, as is true of any large gathering, there always is a group of people on the periphery. Friends have been met and must be greeted. Families are to join at a given location. Young children are restless and may disturb the quietness of the auditorium. Whatever the reason, there always is a sizable congregation outside the portals.

As I write, Carlos Aeschlimann, of Inter-America, is speaking. His message seems to lose none of its power through the translation by Charles Taylor, of the General Conference. Listening to a translated sermon is a new experience for most North Americans, of course, but folks seem to be taking it in stride.

### Serendipity in the Superdome

Although not often verbalized, the fact is that a General Conference session can be a lonely experience. I felt it in the morning as I sat in the main auditorium, surrounded by small groups of people burbling happily to one another in unknown tongues. I was definitely out of it and was suddenly aware of how many people I didn't know. What was worse, this great throng didn't know me. It is not pleasant to be an icy island in a warm, well-acquainted sea. What if I should get sick and die right there? Probably no one would notice or care. Headlines would scream in the local newspaper, "Woman's Body Found After Convention in Superdome."

From the row ahead a small pert face turned toward me. She was probably 9 or 10, and her blue eyes stared with a faint hint of amusement. (Was she thinking how unknown I looked?) I smiled wanly, and she turned around, leaving me alone again. But in a moment she was back, holding up a *Guide*. It was open to my Kitchen Korner column, and her small finger pointed to my name. In an instant sunshine burst out right there, and roses bloomed down the aisles. *Somebody knew me*. Thank you, little friend.—B.

### Computerized nominations

The Nominating Committee, chaired by Richard Leshner, president of Andrews University, met at seven-forty-five this Sunday morning. Their first item of business was the nomination of a General Conference treasurer.

On the table in front of each member was a push button hooked to a computer. This allowed an immediate vote count. An electronic board located in the front of the room



The food service, operated by the Adventist Health System/US, serves 5,000 meals within a two-hour period. The eight serving lines are sometimes long, but they move quite quickly because each delegate or guest is handed a complete meal on one plate.

read "Selection Vote/GC Treasurer." As nominations came from the floor, they were added almost instantaneously to the growing list on the board. Because I am an editor, it bothered me that some of the first few names seemed to be misspelled, but it soon became apparent that there is room for just nine characters on the board, making it necessary to drop the last part of longer names.

After the selection of ten people, the motion was made that nominations cease. I thought it fortunate, as there seemed to be room for just ten names on the board. Later I learned that the computer can handle any number of names, even though they cannot be displayed at the same moment.

When it came time for the vote, the chairman called for an eligibility test. The committee members were asked to hold their buttons down until the chimes had sounded. The total flashed on the screen was 229. In response to a second test, the number 224 appeared. The third time 228 showed up. The chairman decided that the working total would be 228.

At the end of the first vote, the top name had exactly one half of the total. A second vote taken on the top three names elected Don F. Gilbert as the new treasurer of the General Conference by a large majority.

### An item of intense interest

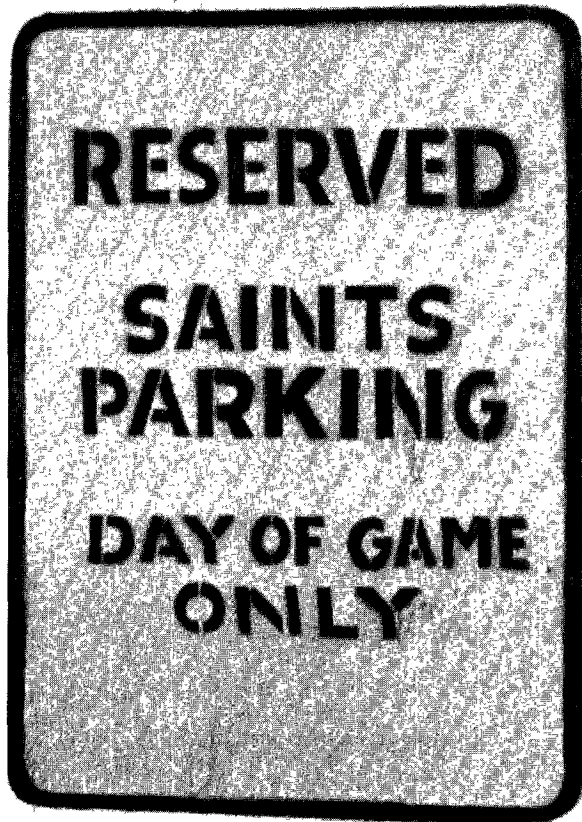
During the morning business session discussion of the role and function of denominational organizations, an item of intense interest to me as editor of the adult Sabbath school lessons came up. One of the areas specified in the role and function document as being delegated to the General Conference is "Preparing the various Sabbath school lessons." A motion to amend that line to read "Preparing the outlines of the various Sabbath school lessons" was proposed in an attempt to give various language groups more autonomy in developing their own lessons to fit cultural needs. However, many of the delegates spoke strongly against the motion, feeling that the lessons aid in developing a theological consensus and in preserving the worldwide unity of the church. Adoption of the motion would have simplified my work to a great extent, but I was gratified that the church spoke out so strongly in support of the lessons as a unifying feature.—L.

### An innovative approach

Loma Linda University has developed a fascinating and subtle approach designed to meet the challenge of reaching wider secular audiences with the gospel message. The delegates and others gathered in the Superdome today were stirred by the university-produced presentation entitled "The Ages of Man."

Narration and music provided the background to sculptor Alan Collins' transformation of an infant's head into the six ages of man. Before our eyes the infant became a child, and the child a young lover. As the skillful hands of the artist worked on, the face became that of a soldier, a man of mature years, and finally the tired features of one whose life is nearly over. But suddenly another bust was unveiled. In contrast there appeared the glowing features of man in immortal form, changed at the coming of Jesus. What a thrilling interlude this presented in the midst of a busy program!

A large number of General Conference personnel labor behind the scenes to keep the daily program flowing



Some attendees at the session may have done a double take when they came across signs like these, which refer to the football team that plays in the famed Louisiana Superdome.



smoothly. Many of these people work to the point of exhaustion, but never share the session limelight. Gilbert Bertochini is an example that I am aware of, having worked with him on the stage arrangements committee, which he chairs. His full-time job is associate director of the General Conference Sabbath School Department, but somehow he has squeezed time into his busy schedule to work with the necessary committees, make the essential pre-session trips to New Orleans, and work with artist Harry Knox in the preparation of the stage arrangements that now grace the Superdome. Since arriving in New Orleans, Gil has kept his crew hopping to make sure that everything is in its proper place on the stage at the right time.—L.

### **The session and the arts**

This General Conference session is host to the first international exhibition of Adventist art. The exhibit, featuring works of nearly 70 artists from some two dozen countries, was formally opened in the French Market section of the Hyatt Regency Hotel at three o'clock. Greg Constantine, coordinator, explained that the artist's desire is to share and to be accepted in his or her individuality. He also made the rather startling statement that the artists exhibiting here represent but a small fraction of the Seventh-day Adventist artists worldwide.

We are developing a good rapport with the city of New Orleans. E. John Bullard, executive director of the Museum of Art of this city, was warm in his appreciation. He feels that our exhibit is particularly appropriate for New Orleans, where many cultures, nationalities, and lifestyles are blended.

The impact of the General Conference session on our host city is further enhanced by a classical concert series that will feature some of the finest Adventist musicians. Featured today are Sonoko Mimura, flutist; Michelle Cleveland Ammons, soprano; Murgur Doroftei, violinist; the New England Youth Ensemble; and the Columbia Union Brass Choir.

All of us can bask a bit in the reflected glory of these artists.

### **In closing, a tale of two Helens**

I had not seen my dear friend Helen Clark in four years. Because her husband is president of the Far Eastern Division, we don't get together often. But now, on one of my swings around the Superdome, there she was. We squealed, and raced into each other's arms. The two of us picked up the threads of our friendship as if we had been apart no more than a few days, and it was sweet.

I had not seen my dear friend Helen Bingham for four days. She works next door to me at Home Study International and lives right down the road with her husband, the pastor of the Burnt Mills church in Silver Spring, Maryland. Now, in the lobby of the Hyatt Regency Hotel in New Orleans, there she was. We squealed, and raced into each other's arms. The way we talked, you'd have thought we hadn't seen each other in four years, and it was sweet.

I was hoping for some clever analogy to draw from this vignette, but there isn't any. My Helens only illustrate the loveliness of friendship, and how it enhances every occasion of life, even General Conference sessions.

Good night from New Orleans.—B.

# Christ our hope for righteousness

Devotional message presented Friday evening, June 28, 1985.

By MORRIS VENDEN  
Pastor  
Keene, Texas, Church



Several years ago a group of administrators from our church were given an interview with the President of the United States. One of the men who was there described what took place while they were waiting at the White House to be ushered in to see the President. One man adjusted his tie. Another whipped out a small pocket mirror and began checking his mustache. Another reached for a comb. And one went so far as to pull out a handkerchief and carefully dust and polish his shoes!

We smile, but we all want to look better than our best, particularly when meeting someone we respect and admire. It would be considered very poor taste, even insulting, to show up for such an important occasion wearing old paint clothes and dirty tennis shoes. But Jesus told the story of a man who did even worse than that!

"And Jesus answered and spake unto them again by parables, and said, The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son" (Matt. 22:1, 2).

Revelation gives further detail about this marriage. "Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb" (chap. 19:9). The time is coming when Jesus gets together with His bride, the church, for the marriage. So this parable Jesus told refers to last-day events just before He comes again.

Well, the king had trouble getting guests to come to the wedding. The ones who first received the invitation were not interested. So he told his servants to make a wider search. He sent his servants "out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests" (chap. 22:10).

When Jesus told this parable about the invitation going to all, both bad and good, He knew that no one is good. The apostle Paul nailed this down: "There is none righteous, no, not one: . . . there is none that seeketh after God" (Rom. 3:10, 11). The Bible makes it clear that we are bankrupt of righteousness. So what was Jesus saying here?

The invitation was to go to those who were bad and knew they were bad. But it was also to go to those who were bad but

thought they were good! Would you like to decide which group you belong to? Perhaps it isn't important, for the invitation is given to both groups. The qualification for a place at the marriage of the king's son is not how bad or how good you are, but whether or not you accept the invitation.

In this invitation to the wedding feast we can see God's justifying grace, provided at the cross, which makes it possible for God to forgive sinners. Christ brings us hope for an invitation to this wedding, not our own performance, whether good or bad. By accepting the invitation, the poorest wretch in town could be assured of a place at the feast. By ignoring the invitation, the richest dignitary would be excluded.

In the days of Christ it was customary for a wealthy person, such as a king, when he put on a wedding, not only to send an invitation but to supply the guests with wedding garments as well. This left no excuse for refusing the invitation or for showing up at the wedding improperly clothed. The king went to a good deal of expense to provide the wedding garments, and if anyone were to come to the feast without the garment provided, it would be an insult to the king, to the king's son, and in a sense to the entire kingdom.

"And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment" (Matt. 22:11). We may like to think that at least he was wearing his paint clothes and old tennies—but if you compare this analogy to Revelation 3:17, 18, he didn't even have them. The people who are without the "white raiment" described there are "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind and . . ." what? "Naked." And if you think that's going too far, about the most we could allow him, scripturally, would be the "filthy rags" of Isaiah 64:6.

Can you see him there, shifting from foot to foot in front of the king? The king speaks to him kindly, saying, "Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless" (Matt. 22:12). The man is given every opportunity to make an explanation, but he is speechless. Only then did the king say to his servants, "Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few are chosen" (verse 13, 14).

## A closer look at the wedding garment

Let's take a closer look at the wedding garment this man failed to put on. Revelation 19:6-8 describes it as "the righteousness of the saints." Some modern translations say the fine linen is the righteous *deeds* of the saints. Jeremiah 23:6 reminds us that the Lord is our righteousness. So any kind of righteousness that is seen in the saints is still the Lord's work, isn't it? Christ is our only hope for righteousness.

Christ is our hope for righteousness when it comes to covering the sins of the past. Christ is our hope for righteousness when it comes to power to overcome in the present. And Christ is our hope for deliverance from a world of sin when He comes again.

Notice how this truth applies to the man who came to the wedding without the wedding garment. Evidently he wanted the invitation; he wanted to be at the wedding, but he either neglected or rejected the wedding garment.

“Of those who accepted the invitation, there were some who thought only of benefiting themselves. They came to share in the provisions of the feast, but had no desire to honor the king.”—*Christ’s Object Lessons*, p. 309. We could paraphrase the quotation by saying that the only interest of some people is in getting themselves to heaven and escaping destruction, while at the same time they have no desire to accept Christ’s righteousness lived out in the life, for the purpose of bringing honor to Him.

“By the wedding garment in the parable is represented the pure, spotless character which Christ’s true followers will possess. . . . This robe, woven in the loom of heaven, has in it not one thread of human devising.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 310, 311.

Please don’t miss it! The wedding garment represents sanctification, Christ living His life in me through the Holy Spirit. It represents obedience and victory and overcoming—and it has not one thread of human devising. The robe of Christ’s righteousness is a gift, and all we can do is to accept it. “By His [Jesus’] perfect obedience He has made it possible for every human being to obey God’s commandments. When we submit ourselves to Christ, the heart is united with His heart, the will is merged in His will, the mind



Close to 500 primary-age children attended their own Sabbath school and church services. This girl, among many others, is intrigued by the storytellers and singers from the Far East.

becomes one with His mind, the thoughts are brought into captivity to Him; we live His life. This is what it means to be clothed with the garments of His righteousness.”—*Ibid.*, p. 312.

So the king comes in to view the guests, to examine the guests, to investigate the guests, in this preadvent judgment parable. He is looking for at least two things. First, he examines to see whether or not the invitation has been accepted—and continues to be accepted. Jesus said, “He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved” (Matt. 24:13). Second, he is looking to see whether or not the wedding garment has been put on.

### The robe must be put on

When God comes into the investigative judgment, He comes to *reveal* before the universe those who have not only accepted the invitation, and continued to accept it, but also to see whether those who have responded to the invitation also have accepted the wedding garment provided in the robe of Christ’s righteousness and become overcomers through His power and grace. The robe must be put on. Revelation speaks of it, using the same imagery: “He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels” (chap. 3:5). Not only does God want us to have the invitation to the heavenly country but He wants us to be overcomers by His grace, as well. That’s what putting on the wedding garment is all about. And that’s what Seventh-day Adventism is all about.

Someone says, “Wait a minute, preacher. You’re going too far. You’re taking away my assurance and hope of salvation. You’re making me nervous talking about victory and overcoming, because I’m not doing too well on that.”

But I’d like to remind you that if overcoming were my work, I would have good reason to be nervous too. In fact, there would be nothing but hopelessness for any of us. The truth is that overcoming is *God’s* work—and that truth has evaded many of us.

We need to be reminded often that justification is a gift, that it comes through faith in Christ alone. It’s free, even though it’s not cheap. And through this gift we can stand before God as though we had never sinned. But you cannot, if you are going to be honest with Scripture, deny that there is also a robe to be worn, and the robe has to do with overcoming and with the righteousness of Christ in the life.

The man in the parable, when asked about the robe, was speechless. He had nothing to say. And only then was he dismissed from the wedding. He had nothing to say because he knew he could have been wearing the robe. Nobody will ever be speechless in the judgment unless he has had a clear understanding about the robe and has turned it down. God will never hold us accountable for truth that we didn’t have or understand (see John 9 and 15). The man must have understood about the robe, but he refused the gift. Thus he was without excuse and was shown to the exit.

Notice that putting on the robe wasn’t what took the man to the wedding feast. And our obedience isn’t what brings us salvation. But it just so happens that the gift of the invitation and the gift of the robe are inseparable. You cannot accept one while refusing the other.

Suppose I came to you and said, “I have a brand-new

Cadillac Seville that I want you to have. And I have made the down payment for you." What would be your first question? "How much are the monthly payments?" Right?

OK, the monthly payments are \$1,000 a month for the rest of your life. Are you interested? You would probably say, "Forget the Cadillac. What value is a free down payment if the monthly installments are going to finish me off?"

Some of us have heard the invitation to the wedding feast in just those terms. We have seen the down payment for our salvation made at the cross, freely offered to all who will accept. But then we have heard that obedience and overcoming and victory are necessary as well, and we've gotten the idea that we had to weave the robe ourselves. Faced with that impossibility, many have walked away from the whole package.

But some of us have missed a mighty truth—and it is truth that is part and parcel of the three angels' messages that we are to carry to the world. It is this: *The robe is just as free as the invitation!* Don't miss that. The robe is just as free as the invitation. It's good news. For if the wedding garment were something I had to produce myself, I would have no option when the invitation to the wedding came but to say, "Forget it. I have nothing suitable to wear." But the robe is free. It's a gift. It's just as free as the invitation.

What are we saying? We're saying that obedience is just as much a gift as is pardon. Victory is just as much a gift as is forgiveness. Sanctification is just as much a gift as is justification. It's not something we achieve; it's something we receive. And it is a tragic fact that many people who would be willing to accept God's grace in terms of the invitation will refuse the wedding garment. Why? Because they want to weave themselves into the work. They want to weave their own robe.

That's why the strong people in the church are the ones threatened by the complete message of Christ as our only hope for righteousness. It was the strong, capable ones who rejected it when Jesus first told this parable. But it is still the truth!

I invite you to ask the Lord to show you how this can work out in your own life. The invitation is accepted by coming to Him in prayer and in the study of His Word. The wedding garment is accepted in the same way. "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him" (Col. 2:6). All that we can do to accept the gift of both of these aspects of salvation is to come into the presence of the Giver—and the way we come into His presence is in our private time alone with Him day by day. As we continue to come to Him He makes Himself responsible for teaching us all the truth He has for us to learn and experience in preparation for eternity with Him.

In the meantime, wouldn't you like to RSVP? The King invites you to the marriage supper of the Lamb. Which way will you reply?

"To the King of kings and Lord of lords: I have received Your invitation to be present at the marriage supper of Your Son, Jesus. I pray Thee, have me excused."

Or, "To the King of kings and Lord of lords: I have just received Your urgent invitation to be present at the marriage supper of Your only begotten Son. I hasten to reply, By the grace of God, I'll be there. P.S. And thank You for the beautiful robe." □

## ADVENTIST SCRAPBOOK

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### "Meet me at the globe"

The large lighted world globe has been a landmark at almost every General Conference session since it first appeared at the 1936 San Francisco session. Amid unfamiliar surroundings and large crowds, the globe provides a meeting place for those who want to find each other.

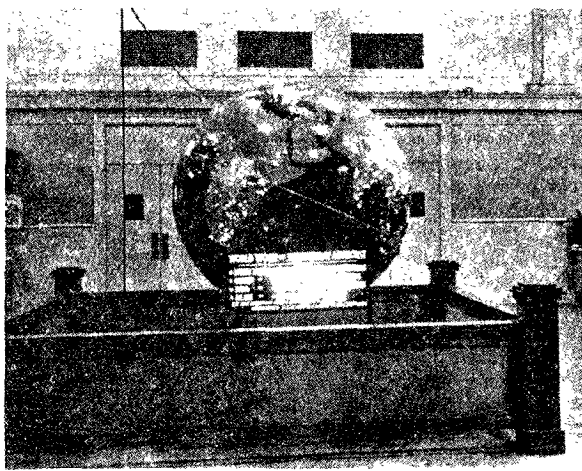
Built of aluminum in 1932 for the Century of Progress Exposition in Chicago, the six-foot-high sphere has tiny lights all over its surface that pinpoint Adventist missions and institutions. White lights represent mission stations; blue, publishing houses; red, sanitariums and hospitals; orange, mission boats; and green, colleges and academies. For years it had only 1,200 lights, but in 1962, 420 were added to represent the growing work of the church.

The globe is well traveled. After the 1932 Chicago Exposition it went to the San Diego fair in 1935. The Pacific Press secured permission to store the globe between trips and for years displayed it in the lobby of its Mountain View plant. The globe has been to the California State Fair several times, as well as to the Los Angeles County Fair. In 1962 it formed part of the Seventh-day Adventist exhibit at the Seattle World's Fair.

The globe made its longest trip to the 1975 General Conference session in Vienna, Austria. It was shipped in five crates—one for the base, one for the motor and gears, one for the drive shaft, and one for each half of the globe itself.

An earlier globe appeared at the General Conference session in 1922. Made of plaster, it had been part of the Pacific Press display at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition held in San Francisco in 1915.

Like its predecessor, the present sphere continues to mark the onward march of Adventism. Now more than 50 years old, it still serves as a meeting place for friends during General Conference sessions. Doubtless, before the New Orleans meetings are over, almost every delegate will have heard or said, "I'll meet you at the globe."

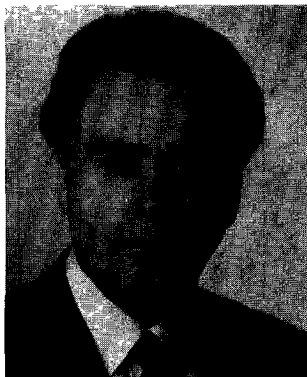


This photo from the June 10, 1936, *General Conference Bulletin* shows the globe at its first GC session appearance in 1936. Built in 1932, it is made of aluminum.

# Partners in service

Report of the  
Northern European  
Division presented  
Sabbath, June 19,  
1985.

By JAN PAULSEN  
*President*



The very idea of being included as a partner in a project that is both good, important, and clearly succeeding is an unquestionable recipe for feeling fulfilled, or at least moving steadily toward it. Living becomes worthwhile and is entered into with great expectation and zest. That is how 44,000 Seventh-day Adventists in Northern Europe experience their involvement in the mission of God in 1985. That experience relates to both what is happening in Europe and our involvement in the witnessing, healing, and teaching ministry of the church in countries far removed from Northern Europe.

When Northern Europe last reported to the General Conference session, our name was twice as long (Northern Europe-West Africa Division) and our membership three times its present figure. And yet what has happened since somehow still represents growth! At the end of 1980 the deliberate planning and ripening process that saw the establishment of a new division in Africa matured, as 96,735 members were "lost" from our division and became part of the Africa-Indian Ocean Division.

At the end of 1979 the membership of the six unions and one attached conference in Northern Europe stood at 41,255. As we now report to you five years later, a net growth of approximately 6 percent has brought that figure to 43,669. The figures are not staggering, and the growth is not explosive, but in view of the sentiments and values that predominate in Western Europe, and in awareness of what is happening to the life and growth of traditional Christianity throughout Europe, we pause to thank and praise our Lord for not giving up and for remaining close to and caring for His people there.

Membership statistics are one, albeit important, chapter in our history; there are others that we shall also tell.

The ratio of paid ministers to church members, and ministers to churches, has remained constant throughout the past quinquennium. It now stands at one minister to every 110 members and one minister to every 1.52 churches.

But "ministry" is increasingly becoming the concern of every baptized member, young and old. The motif One Thousand Days of Reaping has been good for the church in Northern Europe in that it specifically has focused attention on the church as a reaping community and on each member as part of a harvesting team. We see indications of a shift in the role of the laity from that of being somewhat reluctant supporters of the minister/evangelist to a much more active part in planning and leading out. We are not expecting a decline in support for traditional evangelistic campaigns, but an increase of smaller and more manageable instruments of our evangelistic mission in the forms of seminars and study groups.

There is enthusiasm in Northern Europe for this. Youth and other

lay members see it as something that can be handled more readily by the local church. And they are asking for instruction. The dynamics of smaller groups in study will enhance the decision-making process. The church is exploring new ways of making the Christian options clearer and more attractive to the highly secularized and at times cynical European mind.

But traditional evangelistic campaigns continue to be important gathering points for a missionary people and are in some countries very effectively achieving their objectives. The British Union Conference is a case in point. The two British conferences, enthusiastically led by growth-minded presidents, have maintained strong emphasis on evangelism. With Dick Barron, of the General Conference Youth Department, as speaker conducting an old-fashioned tent campaign in north London, 2,000 people crowded into the marquee every night over a four-week period, and 167 people took their stand to join our church through baptism.

Stories of similar campaigns, although on different scales and in churches and halls rather than in tents, come in from every country of our division. Poland in particular has a thrilling evangelistic report to bring. Led by their chief evangelist and union president, Stanislaw Dabrowski, every minister has rallied his church for evangelism. We have the opportunity to conduct public evangelism anywhere in Poland. And we are doing it. In 1984, 427 persons were baptized—more than twice the annual average of past years in Poland. Our church in that country has clearly been a part of the One Thousand Days of Reaping.

The membership figure of 4,500 does not adequately tell the story of the growth of our church in Poland during the postwar decades. A steady stream of members leaving Poland, particularly to Australia and Western Europe, has enriched other countries over the past 40 years by as many members as are presently in our church in Poland. Thus, our believers in Poland, unable to support the growth of our church around the world by their Sabbath school offerings, Ingathering, and tithe-sharing funds because of currency restrictions, have shared their own members.

## Special educational story

Adventist education has a special story to tell in Northern Europe. In the union comprising Denmark and Norway, with a church membership of approximately 9,000, 21 schools have been built and are operated by our church. One of them is the physical therapy school at Skodsborg—the oldest in Scandinavia—built in 1898. It offers a four-year professional program and enjoys a higher rating and recognition internationally than any of the similar state-run schools in Denmark. Apart from Loma Linda University, it is also the only such fully accredited program operated by our church anywhere.

Every union operates schools at primary and secondary levels. So also does the Iceland Conference, on an island in the North Atlantic, with a membership of just 550. Even in the Republic of Ireland, where the Catholics are said to be more "Catholic" than the Vatican and where we have a membership of just 70, two fledgling church schools have been started: one in Galway and one in Shannon.

Newbold College is the flagship of Adventist education in Northern Europe. After a quarter-century of fruitful ties with Columbia Union College, Newbold in 1984 became affiliated with Andrews University for both its undergraduate and postgraduate program. Its spread of programs during the past quinquennium has increased to include a secretarial science course, a B.A. in business, an M.A. in education, a regular four-quarter M.A. program in religion, and a somewhat unique six-quarter M.A. degree in religion and church growth. The latter is the route that ministerial trainees take.

Northern Europe has a high density of Adventist institutions of various kinds as compared to membership. That increases administrative complexities as well as the challenges and opportunities of mission. Brief mention has been made of the spread of



educational institutions—45 in all. Food companies are established in five unions. Nutana, in Denmark, with annual sales approaching US\$15 million, is the largest. Eight major health-care centers, mainly in Scandinavia, offer rehabilitation treatment with emphasis on hydrotherapy and physical therapy. Scores of privately owned health-care clinics are run by Adventists, most of whom are trained at Skodsborg. Two ASI-type health-care centers have emerged this past quinquennium: Enton Hall in Britain and a center at Skotselv in Norway.

We have eight publishing houses, four of which have extensive and, in part, modern printing facilities. The publishing house in Poland, until now relying on state printing presses, has permission to do its own printing once the necessary facilities have been set up. But unless extraordinary expansion in printing and publishing is achieved, the overcapacity of our facilities present other problems that will need to be addressed.

### Bible correspondence schools

In every country of our division, Bible correspondence schools offer an expanding spread of courses. During the past three to four years, local radio stations and production studios have mushroomed throughout the division, with Sweden leading the way with 13 such centers linked to local churches. These centers are in the hands of local church members who have responsibility for program production.

When the division was reduced in 1980 to one third of its previous membership, some administrative rethinking and soul-searching was necessary. Should we now concentrate on ourselves and consolidate our resources into local evangelism and the growth of the church in Northern Europe? To do so not only would be alien to Adventism as a missionary movement but would run counter to our tradition, as a church in Europe, during the past 75 years.

Northern Europe continues to be a major resource area for the world church. In finances alone we have raised during the past quinquennium more than \$27 million for the mission of our church outside Northern Europe. We wish to be partners with the rest of the world in God's service. We have people who want to go and we have considerable financial resources that can be tapped.

In April, 1983, a consultation between officers and development-aid directors of the two European divisions was held in Holland to devise ways to harness financial resources that governments of Western Europe and other donor organizations were prepared to channel through our church for projects in the Third World. The acronym ADRA (Adventist Development and Relief Agency) was born at that meeting. During the past quinquennium, \$8.5 million has been given by donor organizations in Northern Europe to our church to develop, build, or support a wide range of projects in areas of particular need around the world. We do not want to engage in self-congratulation, but government and other donor organizations recognize our well-established infrastructure, our commitment to aid especially in education and medical/health-care matters, and our reliability.

Among many projects, the following samples will indicate the range of interests that donors have supported:

1. The establishment of a girls' vocational school in Techiman, Ghana.
2. A new agricultural project in Bazega, Bourkina Fasso (formerly Upper Volta).
3. Aba Motherless Babies' Home, Nigeria.
4. Five rural health centers in the bush of Zimbabwe.
5. Wells drilled (40 new ones recently scheduled) in drought-stricken areas of Africa.
6. Lake Titicaca School reforestation program in Peru.
7. Capital expansion of Colegio Adventista de Bolivia.

Scores of young dedicated professionals (apart from regular interdivision workers) go to link up with some of these ADRA projects for periods of two to four years with salary paid by the aid



The Madera Adventist Suzuki Strings, from Madera, California, played in several of the children's divisions on Sabbath.

organization. In addition to the large number of ADRA volunteers and regular missionaries who have left Northern Europe for overseas assignments, 88 youths have gone out during the past five years as part of a rapidly growing student missionary/youth volunteer service.

The publishing work in Northern Europe needs special mention. Eight hundred persons were baptized during the quinquennium as the harvest of the publishing ministry. In just one year (1983), 225 million pages in books and periodicals were produced, sold, and distributed. Two new publishing ventures have been started: 1. The Bible story in cartoon picture strips. Three books of 150 pages each, containing key stories from the Old and New Testaments, are being produced and translated into a half-dozen languages. 2. Three five-pack book series, presenting 15 main Biblical doctrines in 64-page paperbacks. These are also translated into several languages of our division.

### Remembering what God hath wrought

As the countries of our division pass quickly before our mental screen, a few "slides" from the past five years come momentarily into focus and remind us of the presence of God and the dedication of our church members.

*United Kingdom and Ireland:* Belief in Adventist education led to the establishment of a major secondary school in north London, the John Loughborough School, which is known nationally and has been displayed on television as an inner-city secondary school that "can do it." Another major education center is being established in Birmingham. A one-week camp meeting is held in the autumn on the southeast coast of England. It is a new feature in modern Adventist history in these isles and is visited by more than 4,000 church members annually. We have purchased a beautiful Baptist church centrally placed in the city of Leicester, where nearly 200 years ago the Baptist missionary-preacher William Carey had his parish. A young Roman Catholic woman, the pride of her family as she became a nun in Ireland, was cast out of her family when she joined the Adventist church in Galway.

*Netherlands:* Three hundred thousand copies of *Houvast*, a magazine published by our church, were distributed together with 1 million Voice of Prophecy Bible correspondence school invitation cards as part of the inaugural ministry of the One Thousand Days of Reaping. The church broke new ground by building an evangelistic

center in Eindhoven in the largely unentered Roman Catholic southern part of the country. The first elementary school owned and operated by our church started in the autumn of 1984, located on the campus of our junior college, Oud-Zandbergen.

**Poland:** In the Vistula River, from which tragically the body of the Roman Catholic priest Jerzy Popieluszko was recovered, scores of Adventist youth (142 in 1984) buried "the old man" in baptism and rose up as new creations to the glory of God. The first evangelistic campaign (1,600 attending daily) to be conducted in a rented public hall (many campaigns are held in our own churches) in the city of Krakow was held in 1984 with the division evangelist as speaker. In 1983 we printed and sold 100,000 copies of *The Great Controversy* and 100,000 of *Steps to Christ*. E. G. White books sold in the public marketplace, and people queued up for copies. We established a new bookshop in the city of Katowice. Our church was a main contributor in a national program to combat alcoholism and drug abuse.

**Finland:** We established a new Lapland Mission with headquarters in Rovaniemi. Our church among the Swedish-speaking people in Finland, which heretofore was under the care of the Swedish Union Conference, is now part of the Finland Union Conference. The hand of Providence made it possible for us to acquire a beautiful church, previously belonging to the Lutheran state church, situated in the center of the city of Turku. A new translation and modern publication of the complete Conflict of the Ages Series was produced. Sixty to 70 literature evangelists from a church membership of 6,500 care for the ministry of bringing these books to the homes.

**Sweden:** The church celebrated its 100-year anniversary, on which occasion the union president was received in audience by the king. The king was given a specially bound copy of the Swedish translation of *Faith Alive*, which describes the story and mission of our church. A countess invited friends into her stately home and asked a Seventh-day Adventist minister to begin a series of Bible studies with them. One-half million copies of one issue of *Liv i Nutid*, our main church paper, were published in the summer of 1984 and taken to homes throughout Sweden. One newspaper described the 125 student literature evangelists who every summer flock to Sweden as "missionaries on mopeds from Africa." Their sales during the summer of 1984 amounted to US\$750,000.

**West Nordic Union (Denmark and Norway):** Andreas Nielsen, Greenland missionary emeritus who is 75 years of age, returns every autumn to Greenland to solicit more than \$10,000 in Ingathering funds. Eleven local radio stations are now operated by our church in Norway and Denmark, whereas there were none at the beginning of the quinquennium. We have varied and numerous institutions, employing a total of 1,136 persons. One is the new and modern Rehabilitation Center, 300 miles north of the Arctic Circle in Tromsø, opened in 1980 with 100 beds and a six-month waiting list. The *Anna Rogde*, oldest Norwegian schooner still afloat, sailed to the glory of God, taking on board Adventist young people as her crew.

**Iceland:** The small constituency of 550 struggle to maintain their secondary school. Although the enrollment was only 35 in 1984, 11 were baptized. Our members have committed themselves to give 3 percent of their personal income to keep the school going. Literature evangelism ministry is alive and strong, particularly during the short summer months, when every house on the island is visited twice by different persons offering different series of our books. Smoking and alcohol consumption are a national problem. We are known for running effective stop-smoking clinics. Other organizations are asking us to help.

Your brothers and sisters in Northern Europe see the presence of God with His people. As they affirm their partnership with Him in service at home and in extending their resources to faraway Third World countries, they praise Him and rejoice in what He hath wrought. □

# United by a message that transcends all barriers

Report of the North American Division presented Sabbath, June 29, 1985.

By CHARLES E. BRADFORD  
President



The diversity of the North American Division is striking—multicultural, multilingual, multiracial, geographically diverse. It is two great nations, a British crown colony, several French islands, an unchartered territory, a polyglot people, 24 distinct language groups, and immigrants from almost every nation in the world. Yet it is a people united by a message that transcends all these barriers and walls of separation. It is indeed a miracle of grace.

## The Caring Church

North American delegates were challenged at the 1980 session to make the eighties the decade of the local church. A time when the local church, the congregation, comes into its own. "The eighties must, and will, see the revitalization of the fellowship, the *koinōnia*, the body of Christ in its basic manifestation where our Lord exists as community. The eighties will be the consciousness-raising decade when every organization and institution comes to a vital, new understanding of its relationship and responsibility to the congregation and begins to act on the basis of that vital, new realization. Leaders and administrators on every level will grasp afresh their role as enablers and equippers whose major function is to prepare the members for kingdom-building service. . . . Programs, policies, and plans will be configured to meet the felt needs of the communities of faith that they are called upon to serve. . . . During the eighties let every activity, program, organization, and ministry be evaluated on the basis of its contribution to the body."—1980 General Conference Session, North American Division Report.

In response to this challenge, the Caring Church strategy has been developed. This Biblically based approach to Seventh-day Adventist Church growth attempts to bring about the fulfillment of the Ellen White statement "If we would humble ourselves before God, and be kind and courteous and tenderhearted and pitiful, there would be one hundred conversions to the truth where now there is only one."—*Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 189.

The Caring Church strategy focuses on the local church and the fulfillment of its mission to proclaim the good news of salvation to the unwarned masses. The concept was approved on January 27, 1983, by the North American Division Committee on Administration. It is built on the Faith, Action, Advance philosophy that

recognizes the local church as the primary agency of church growth and the pastor as its key leader.

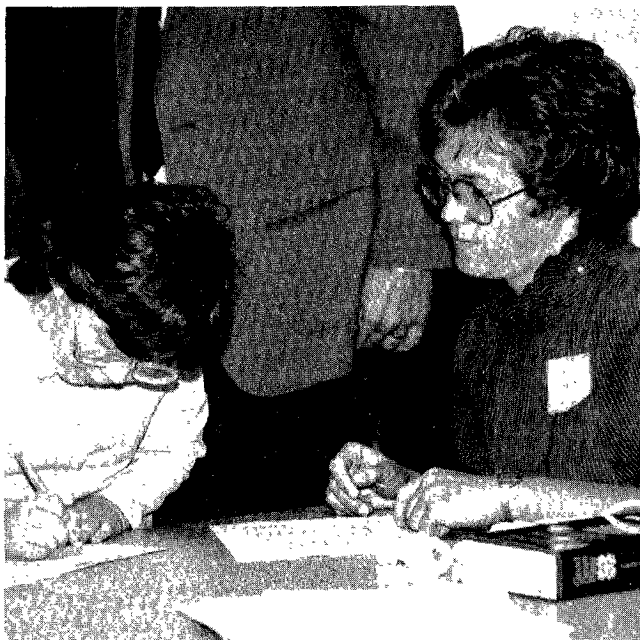
Our Ministerial Association associate secretary W. C. Scales informs us that Caring Church planning sessions have been conducted for North American Division staff and selected leaders. Numerous seminars were conducted across the division, with a total of approximately 3,000 persons in attendance. The majority of these were pastors. Also included were a representative number of conference administrators, departmental directors, and church members.

A Caring Church manual has been produced, also a slide-tape cassette presentation entitled "Building a Caring Church." Forty-four of the 58 local conferences in North America have participated in or sponsored Caring Church seminars. This is 75 percent of the conferences in this division. We hope that in the days ahead every church in North America will be a Caring Church in deed as well as in word, reflecting the glory of God as seen in the face of the lovely Jesus to every city, town, village, and hamlet in this vast territory.

### Quinquennial statistics

During the quinquennium, 181,416 were added to the church by baptism and profession of faith. The North American Division membership was 585,050 on December 31, 1979. Today North American Division membership is 676,204, an increase of 15.6 percent during the quinquennium.

North American Division members always have been liberal to the cause of God. This is evidenced by the return of \$1,381,612,430 in tithes during the quinquennium, an increase of 46.5 percent over the past quinquennium. Approximately \$118 million was given for world-mission offerings. The people of this division have given not only tithes and offerings but themselves and their sons and daughters to labor in many divisions of the world field. This is stewardship of the highest order. It should be observed also that during this period of time the church gathered in from friends and neighbors \$49,809,226 for the Ingathering program.



Sharon Salcedo registers at the entrance to her Sabbath school room. Security-conscious Sabbath school leaders gave each child a name tag with a number on it that corresponded with a number given to the parent who brought the child. Before a child was turned over to the parent at the program's end, both parent and child were asked to show their matching numbers.

North America responded also to the One Thousand Days of Reaping. Our goal was 141,000 accessions. From the beginning of the One Thousand Days of Reaping in September, 1982, to this writing, there were 82,481 accessions, or 59 percent of our goal.

One of the encouraging new outreach programs of the past several years is the Revelation Seminars. All across this division church members and ministers are conducting well-organized group studies in the book of Revelation. Whole churches are involved in supporting these seminars. As many as 100 or more non-Adventists have come together in church annexes, hotel or motel conference rooms, public school auditoriums, and various other settings. Many are being baptized. This movement is growing in every part of the North American field.

### Christian education: an Adventist essential

A Caring Church will seek to save and train its youth for service and to assist them in character development and personal fulfillment. Two major boards have been established in North America to foster the work of Christian education—the North American Division Board of Education, K-12, and the North American Division Board of Higher Education. Fred Stephan is the executive secretary for the K-12 board, and Robert Reynolds is executive secretary for the Board of Higher Education. The reports from these two boards are encouraging.

	1979-1980	1984-1985
<b>K-8</b>		
Schools	1,190	1,242
Teachers	3,650	3,864
Pupils	54,356	50,669
<b>9-12</b>		
Senior academies	87	96
Junior academies	240	247
Senior academy teachers	1,440	1,333
9-12 students	21,571	18,064
Prospective 12th-grade grads	4,644	3,752
<b>Higher Education</b>		
Schools	12	12
Enrollment	19,524	17,474
Degrees, previous year	4,061	4,094

During the past quinquennium 20,439 degrees have been awarded.

### Humanitas

In 1973 the Adventist Youth Taskforce was established. Recently they have taken the name Humanitas. Humanitas activities involve college-age youth in volunteer service in North America. During the past five years the number of Humanitas workers totaled more than 600. The calls are varied, from such positions as counselor at a county youth ranch to assistant boys and girls deans, farm worker, worker at an Indian school, or teacher of conversational English to Koreans, Japanese, or Mexican students and adults.

Most of the calls give the volunteers hands-on experience that many times leads to their career choices. The conversational English classes in Los Angeles, California, and Brownsville, Texas, also lead students to special Bible study classes and evangelistic meetings. Volunteers are privileged to see how Christ affects and changes the lives of students with whom they come in contact day by day.

### North American Missions

Joseph Espinosa is secretary of the North American Missions Committee (NAMCO), which sponsors the work among the many language groups in North America and the native American peoples.

There is a new focus on the Jewish work now with the second year of publication of *The New Israelite*, edited by Clifford Goldstein. This seems to be a time of new beginnings for the Jewish work. *The New Israelite* subscription list is growing.

The largest language group served by NAMCO is the people of Hispanic background. During the past quinquennium the Spanish Advisory Committee was organized. It meets at least annually to plan and coordinate the activities of the Hispanic people in North America. Recently the General Conference set up a fund to assist in the building of churches for this rapidly growing segment of North American Adventism, which at present numbers about 43,000 believers.

Elder Espinosa reports the following foreign language churches in North America: Cambodian, Chinese, Czechoslovakian, Filipino, French, Hispanic, Hungarian, Hmong/Vietnamese/Lao/Thai, Indonesian/Dutch, Japanese, Jewish, Korean, Native American (Indian), Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Russian, Samoan, Tongan, Ukrainian, and Yugoslavian.

One of the most exciting developments is the revival that is going forward among Native Americans. Leroy Moore, the North American representative for this work, reports scores baptized among the several nations of American Indians.

Monument Valley Hospital, located in Navaho land has now become a part of the Adventist Health System/West and is experiencing new life and viability. Nearly \$1 million worth of equipment has been contributed by various vendors and hospitals within the system, such as Glendale Adventist Medical Center. Two new physicians have joined the staff this year, and two more are expected to join before the end of 1985.

Much more could be said about the growth of the work among those recently coming to this continent, such as the Asian/South Pacific community with a 100 percent increase in membership and a 300 percent increase in tithe.

### Office of Human Relations

The Office of Human Relations is rather new on the North American scene. The people who look for their Lord to return must become more and more a family united in Christ. W. S. Banfield reports that his office has been able to assist conferences and



A number of the General Conference departments displayed items available for use by church workers, such as the Smoking Sam on display at the Health/Temperance Department booth.

institutions to approach the ideal. The wisdom of the brethren in establishing this new agency for service to the church has been proved over and over again.

### The health work

One of the great outreach programs to the North American community is the health work. The blending of the preaching/proclaiming ministry and the health ministry is peculiar to Seventh-day Adventists. There is an institutional health work, and there is also a health ministry that is carried on by individuals and churches.

During the past quinquennium the Adventist Health System/United States has become fully operative. The purpose of this new organization is to represent the General Conference/North American Division in the coordination of health ministries through institutions. There are five divisions or corporations that make up the system: Adventist Health System/North, Adventist Health System/West, Adventist Health System/Sunbelt, Adventist Health System/Eastern and Middle America, and Adventist Health System/Loma Linda.

There are approximately 80 hospitals within the system, with 13,988 total beds. Some of the divisions are developing unique outreach projects such as mall clinics, community health centers, home health care, and family-care services. Donald W. Welch is president of the AHS/US.

Adventist Health Network is a new venture in health ministries oriented to churches and conferences. The networks are experiencing phenomenal growth.

### Adventist-Laymen's Services and Industries

This organization provides fellowship and encouragement for 623 Seventh-day Adventist business and professional organizations. There are chapters throughout North America on the union and local conference level. During the quinquennium, Kenneth Livesay, executive secretary, was invited to other divisions to assist them with the development of similar organizations.

Each year ASI members at their convention choose two or more major projects. The members give liberally to assist such ventures as self-supporting restaurants, educational institutions, prison ministries, and health-care institutions. During the quinquennium, \$1,602,445 was raised for these purposes.

ASI Missions, Inc., was chartered as a nonprofit organization within ASI during the quinquennium for the sole purpose of raising funds to help the church in extra projects. ASI Missions, Inc., serves as an umbrella organization for many smaller mission projects such as the production of *Happiness Digest*, which is *Steps to Christ*, using the original text with new pictures. Donations for *Happiness Digest* to date are \$140,100.

### North American Division Evangelism Institute

One of the great challenges to the church is to prepare ministers to lead the church in vigorously carrying out its mission. The North American Division Evangelism Institute, formerly the Lake Union Soulwinning Institute, brings together Seminary graduates, laypersons, and pastors in a unique learning experience.

With General Conference assistance, a number of apartments were acquired in a western Chicago suburb where Evangelism Institute teachers and students live together. The final quarter of Seminary training is centered at the institute. The pattern is formal instruction in the mornings, visitation in the afternoons, and public evangelism in the evenings. To date, 720 persons have been baptized and several churches organized as a result of the institute's ministry.

### Literature Ministries Coordinating Board

A new publishing board has been established to take the place of the former Publishing Council. Ron Appenzeller has been appointed executive secretary. This board is faced with a challenge

to enlist not only full-time but many part-time literature evangelists. Its purpose is to make the church aware of the great possibilities in this area and to spread the printed page like the leaves of autumn.

The Review and Herald and the Pacific Press publishing houses are located in the North American Division territory. With two new plants there is greater efficiency for serving the North American church than ever before. During the quinquennium *Signs of the Times* and *These Times* merged to form the new outreach journal *Signs of the Times*. It is hoped that *Signs* circulation will reach 1 million by 1986. The publishing ministry in North America can become a great arsenal for truth. The North American continent must be lighted with the glory of God through the printed page.

### Adventist Information Ministry

I would like to tell you about a new ministry. It is called AIM (Adventist Information Ministry). It involves an 800 line and a national address where those who have been touched by our missionary literature, radio, or TV programs may call in response to offers or coupons. AIM began operation July 1, 1982. During the first 12 months AIM processed a total of 39,803 requests. During the next 12 months AIM processed more than 56,000 requests. Since July, 1984, the growth has been even more spectacular. From July through October about 25,000 requests were received, while from November through February more than 50,000 responses were processed, for a total of more than 76,000 (July 1, 1984, through February 25, 1985).

An ex-Marine read the *Signs of the Times* and saw a coupon indicating where he could request additional information or a visit. He read and reread the magazine for two weeks and then called AIM. Within 90 minutes of the time he had hung up the telephone, a pastor was at his door. March 9, 1985, he was united with the church by baptism. AIM tries to provide this kind of response for those who are inspired by our truth-filled media programs or journals to request more information about God's message for these last days.

### Unprecedented opportunities

Many have been led to believe that affluent North America has become thoroughly secular and gospel hardened. But recent studies done by Dr. Gallup and Compton Research, in Princeton, New Jersey, do not allow this. There are 61 million unchurched Americans. On the basis of the research to which I have referred, there are four groups selected that would certainly appear to be the proper focus for our major outreach campaigns:

1. Family-oriented people who want their children to have a religious background and moral training. No fewer than eight in ten in the latest Gallup poll say they would like their children to have religious training.

2. Those who want to fulfill inner religious needs. This is a compelling need among Americans. Most Americans show an interest in growing in their religious faith and would like religion to play a more important role in society in the coming years.

3. Those who seek the fellowship of social life offered by church or synagogue. Many Americans feel lonely and remote from one another. As many as four in ten, for example, admit to frequent or occasional feelings of intense loneliness.

4. Those who are genuinely interested in attending worship services but who have not been able to find a house of worship that meets their needs. The message here is clear: Churches need to step up their programs of invitation and evangelism.

A caring church is a sharing church. A caring church is a working church. A caring church is a growing church. And the prophetic picture of Isaiah 58 and Revelation 14:6-12 is of a people who care and care very deeply. These are the people whom God has chosen to prepare the way of the Lord in time's last hour. May we be that people whom prophecy describes and whom the Lord has called to represent Him in North America. □

## ADVENTIST SCRAPBOOK

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# Some things haven't changed

The very first General Conference session opened in Battle Creek, Michigan, on May 20, 1863. Twenty delegates represented seven States: New York, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Wisconsin, Iowa, and Minnesota. The meeting took place in the second Seventh-day Adventist church constructed in Battle Creek. Built in 1857 and measuring 28 by 42 feet, it cost \$881.

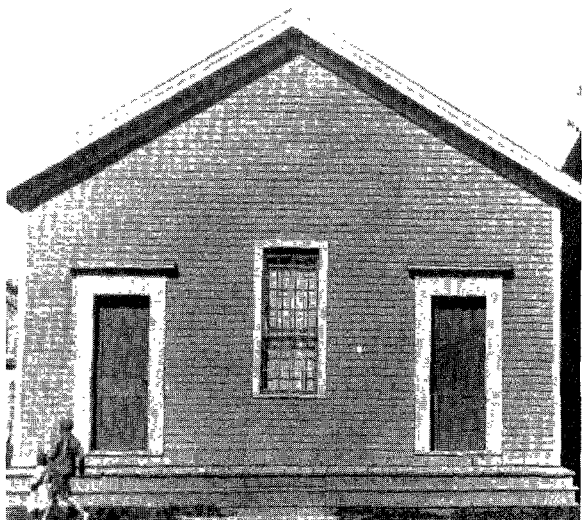
Besides organizing the General Conference and adopting a constitution, delegates elected the first officers for the church: John Byington, president; Uriah Smith, secretary; and E. S. Walker, treasurer.

Uriah Smith's appraisal of that first session could also describe such gatherings more than 120 years later.

"The majority of those present from any considerable distance were the delegates from the different churches in this State, and from abroad, and were consequently those whose hearts were all aglow with love for the glorious present truth. Their happy and hopeful countenances, and cordial greetings, as they arrived from their various, and in many instances far-distant, localities, are among the pleasant scenes which it is not for the pen to attempt to portray. . . .

"The influence of this meeting cannot fail to be good. We are certain that those who were present, as they look back upon the occasion, will not be able to discover an unpleasant feature. And as they separated to go to their homes, courage and good cheer seemed to be the unanimous feelings."

That pleasant scene of friends and fellow workers greeting each other—now from the four corners of the earth—is repeated at each General Conference session. Happily, some things have not changed.



The second Seventh-day Adventist church in Battle Creek, Michigan, erected in 1857, had separate entrances for men and women. The church's first officers were elected here in 1863 at the first General Conference session.

# Called to proclaim

## Report of the Euro-Africa Division presented Sunday, June 30, 1985.

By EDWIN LUDESCHER  
President



Whoever takes the trouble to look at the map comprising the fields of the Euro-Africa Division will be surprised at the extent of the territory and the variety of countries, languages, and cultures. Thirty-one countries, with a population of approximately 425 million people, give an idea of the importance of the task God has entrusted to us.

The table below shows the unique condition of our division, characterized by the fact that its territories extend from Eastern and Western Europe down to the African continent. The figures are to September 30, 1984:

Area	Number of Countries	Population	Members	Churches
Eastern Europe	7	99,419,000	90,799	1,453
Western Europe	18	260,453,000	58,088	834
Africa	6	65,128,000	110,630	751
	31	425,000,000	259,517	3,038

As one reflects on these figures, he cannot help remembering the words of Jesus: "Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest" (John 4:35). "Called to proclaim"—this is our deep conviction. Our hearts are moved as we think of the 425 million people for whom we carry a great responsibility.

### Soul-winning: our priority task

The Euro-Africa Division has set a goal of 65,000 baptisms for the quinquennium. Our hearts are filled with gratitude as we realize that by the grace of God and the faithful cooperation of our ministers, literature evangelists, workers, and church members, 65,363 precious souls have been baptized and added to the church by profession of faith during the period from July 1, 1980, to September 30, 1984—that is, within four years and three months. Before long, we may be able to report 75,000 baptisms. This will be the largest number ever in the history of the Euro-Africa Division. To God be the glory, for He has shown Himself to be the Lord of the harvest.

### Evangelism at all costs

Only sowing brings harvesting. I like to think of the thousands of evangelistic campaigns, seminars, Five-Day Plans, and efforts of all types that have been organized in our fields within the One Thousand Days of Reaping.

The Hanau church in West Germany worked out a special method of contacting people with our message. Eleven groups were given

assignments in a concentrated health program. These activities cover, among others, the preparation of healthy food and controlling stress by healthful exercise such as swimming and hiking. Non-Adventists took such an interest in the program that an appropriate location had to be found to plant a second church in Hanau. As a result of these activities four people have been baptized and three more are being prepared for baptism.

One of the churches in Zurich, Switzerland, with about 270 members, reports ten home-study groups organized by lay members. An average of eight to nine non-Adventists attend these groups, and as a result several baptisms have taken place.

J. Lozano, Ministerial Association secretary of the Spanish Union, keeps up his evangelistic campaigns in unentered areas. In July of 1984 such a campaign ended in Badajoz, in southwest Spain, with 45 souls baptized and a new church planted. Spain is a growing field. By the end of 1984 it had gone beyond the 5,000 mark in membership.

Peter Joseit, evangelist of the West German Union, held evangelistic campaigns last year in both Minden and Hamburg. Twenty-seven souls were baptized in Minden. And in Hamburg where the campaign was held the latter part of 1984, several people are receiving Bible studies and are prepared for baptism.

H. Grossmann, a successful evangelist in Austria, has been transferred to Vienna to start work in a section of the city that has been reorganized in the course of the past 20 years. By means of health seminars, which led to Bible study groups, a new church is to be organized. Fourteen people are already receiving Bible studies and preparing for baptism.

E. Long, president of the Italian Union, reports a daring campaign that is taking place at the present time. Fifteen unentered cities are to be worked with a view to planting groups and churches. Encouraging experiences are being recorded.

In Portugal, 13 new churches have been organized in new territories within three years. H. Knott, division lay activities and Sabbath school director, held a four-week evangelistic campaign in April of 1984 in the city of Porto, in north Portugal. An average of 115 non-Adventists have attended. Some 160 addresses were collected. During the first call 25 people asked for Bible studies and expressed the desire to be baptized. So far, 66 people have been baptized as a result of this effort.

West Berlin, with its 2 million inhabitants, offers one of the greatest challenges to the church in West Germany. During November, 1984, 34 literature-evangelists and seven publishing directors launched a special public effort. They were accompanied by the president and the secretary of the West Berlin Conference and by 11 ministers and 16 lay members. At present local workers are following up 29 contacts that were made. Literature to the amount of DM25,000 has been sold.

### Our work in Africa

Beginning with January 1, 1981, some Euro-Africa Division territories were transferred to the newly organized Africa-Indian Ocean Division. The following remained with the original division: Angola, Mozambique, São Tomé Príncipe, and the three North African fields—Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia.

It is most gratifying to witness what has happened in both Angola and Mozambique in the course of past years. Our churches have grown by leaps and bounds and that in spite of war and hunger.

Angola has a population of 7.5 million people. On December 31, 1979, the membership stood at 47,038. Baptisms increase from year to year:

1980	3,850
1981	4,755
1982	5,886
1983	8,473
1984 (January-September)	6,948

By September, 1984, the membership has reached the 76,306 mark. Every church member is aware of his part in preaching the message. The field was organized into four local missions during the past three years. This allows for more thorough watchcare over the local churches.

Our Bongo hospital has been deprived of a physician ever since June of 1982 because the missionaries stationed there were taken away. Dr. and Mrs. F. Sabaté and their child, nurse Victoria Duarte, of Brazil, and Mr. and Mrs. R. D. Oliveira and child were kidnapped by the UNITA and released only after three and a half months. There is tremendous hardship for the population. The people urgently need medical care. Our African workers are making desperate efforts to meet those needs. The division makes regular shipments of medicines and equipment. We hope that medical doctors soon will be able to return to Bongo.

Mozambique, with its more than 12 million inhabitants, offers an encouraging picture in spite of desperate needs, hunger, ever-present danger, and loss of workers on account of warfare. On December 31, 1979, the membership stood at 22,374. With the number of baptisms increasing constantly, the membership has reached the 34,301 mark as per September 30, 1984.

Some 120 young men from both Angola and Mozambique are being trained as preachers, evangelists, teachers, doctors, and nurses, 18 of them in European schools and universities. This will take care of the future of these fields as far as workers are concerned. It is gratifying to witness the devotion and the spirit of sacrifice of both workers and members.

Conditions are altogether different in the three countries of North Africa: Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia. The population of 45 million is 96 percent Muslim. In Algeria at the present time, six members are letting their light shine. Since January, 1984, Missionary Gilbert Carayon and his family have been stationed in Algiers. Morocco has 20 members. Great efforts are being put forth to preach the gospel also among the Muslims of Europe, especially in France. What a challenge! The only church member we had in Tunisia passed away last year.

### Growth in socialist countries

The Advent message is going forward also in socialist countries. The gospel bears fruit. It is remarkable that many young people accept the message, confess it, and carry it, as it were, like a burning torch.

As heretofore, the work in Romania is making the most rapid progress. Whoever pays a visit to this country will find everywhere that our chapels have grown too small. The present membership stands at 54,846. Matka is a village of 11,000 inhabitants. In February of 1984 a chapel with a seating capacity of 1,600 has been built—a real “cathedral”! According to D. Popa, the president, since inaugurating the chapel some 80 people have been added to the church by baptism. I shall never forget the sight of more than 2,000 members and friends streaming into the Lord’s house on the day of dedication.

Our denomination is not recognized in Bulgaria. However, our churches grow from year to year in spite of many a hardship. Our membership stands at 3,263. This is the Lord’s doing!

In the German Democratic Republic our school is becoming a real international center. Students from Angola, Mozambique, the Soviet Union, other socialist countries, and, of course, from the GDR itself are being trained there for service. A gigantic building project is being planned with a view to making needed improvements to the school.

Five years ago I mentioned right here a special project in Prague, Czechoslovakia, which is being completed presently. A superb evangelistic center with a seating capacity of 800 has been erected. All of the construction work was done by our church members. Every Sunday some 60 to 80 brothers and sisters joined in working to complete their house of worship. As I visited the building site one

particular Sunday and watched the busy activity, I could not help but think of the song: “Thine is the cause, Lord Jesus, in which we stand, and because it is Thine, ever it will stand.” Wherever so much love and dedication is shown for God’s cause, there is no need worrying about the future of the work.

In the past five years 50 chapels have been built or renovated. Albania is the only socialist country in Europe where we have no Adventist church. Only radiobroadcasts are able to penetrate.

### Openings for our radio work

The past years witnessed a very encouraging development in radio work. Thanks to new rulings in various countries of our division, local radio stations have been installed that broadcast our programs around the clock. They are cared for by the local churches of the respective cities. We have ten such stations in Italy at the present time; eight in France, aside from 13 other stations from which we broadcast; Belgium has two stations; in Portugal eight have been rented; Spain has 13.

Everywhere baptisms have been recorded as a result of this activity in radio. The Franco-Belgian Union has set a very attractive goal: Within three years an evangelistic program combined with follow-up work, home visiting, and Bible studies is to be broadcast in 100 cities in France. By now 25 cities are involved. Daring times require daring activities.

For years we have looked for a suitable site in Italy to install a denominationally owned radio station in order to broadcast our programs east and west, north and south. Mike Wiist, our Adventist World Radio Europe station manager, in cooperation with the Italian brethren, found an ideal site in Forli. A radio station is being installed on a hill with an antenna that will put out a signal with 100,000 kilowatts of effective radiated power. The plan is to broadcast 40 hours a week in some 15 languages. By the time these lines are read, this station will be working. What a God-given opportunity to hasten the proclamation of the Advent message through this medium!

### Proclamation through the printed page

Our literature evangelists and publishing houses are responsible for much of the progress of the work in the Euro-Africa Division. I am proud of our 932 literature evangelists, who, in spite of almost insurmountable difficulties at times, carry the printed page into millions of homes in all countries of Western Europe.

In the course of the past five years they sold literature worth \$42 million.

Braz Soutéro, literature evangelist in Setúbal, Portugal, sold *The Great Controversy* to a college history teacher. He was so impressed by the book that he recommended it to his students as a textbook for studying the Reformation. Soon he placed an order for 40 copies.

José Pacheco moved from Angola to Portugal on account of the civil strife. In nine years he sold more than 15,000 copies of *The Great Controversy* and won more than 40 people to the truth.

Our literature evangelists in Spain recorded 253 baptisms during the past five years. Alberto Walls, elder of the Majorca church, in cooperation with María Estebanell, instructed and prepared at least 40 people for baptism.

During the One Thousand Days of Reaping, a new category of literature evangelists, called “free-time literature evangelists,” came into being. They have been most successful in Paris. So far, more than 400 members have taken part in the program. Within a period of two years, nine baptisms were recorded as a direct result of this teamwork. These “free-time literature evangelists” sell literature in their neighborhood, give Bible studies, and introduce local pastors to the homes of interested people. During 1984, 35 baptisms have been recorded as a result of this particular activity in France.

In Italy *Life and Health* has a circulation of 75,000. The literature

evangelists combine *Signs of the Times* with the health paper, thus increasing the circulation of the missionary paper.

The four-volume health book by Dr. E. Schneider in West Germany is a best-seller. Within 30 years 2 million copies have been sold: 1 million in the German language, 290,000 in French, 120,000 in Spanish, and 90,000 in Portuguese.

### Our educational work

The Euro-Africa Division has 11 kindergartens with 187 children, 15 elementary schools with an enrollment of 1,005; 12 secondary schools, 1,534 students; 11 theological schools, 392 students; and 371 students enrolled in other departments. This makes a total of 3,489 students. It is worth mentioning the evangelistic impetus our schools are giving. During the quinquennium, more than 400 young people were baptized in these schools.

Our theological school at Collonges came to an official agreement for affiliation with Strasbourg University. This allows the theological students to obtain their "licence" and their "maîtrise," granted by the French Government.

We are giving special attention to religious instruction for our children. Since many Adventist children do not attend denominational schools, we recognized the need a few years ago to offer weekly Bible courses in all our churches during the official school year. At the present time 6,500 children are taking part in this program. Thousands of children will be enrolled during the coming two years.

### Religious Liberty

Our "Conscience and Liberty" brochure is being published in seven languages: French, German, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, Croatian, and Serbian. It is much appreciated in political, cultural, juristic, and religious circles. Universities in various countries have subscribed to our religious liberty magazine.

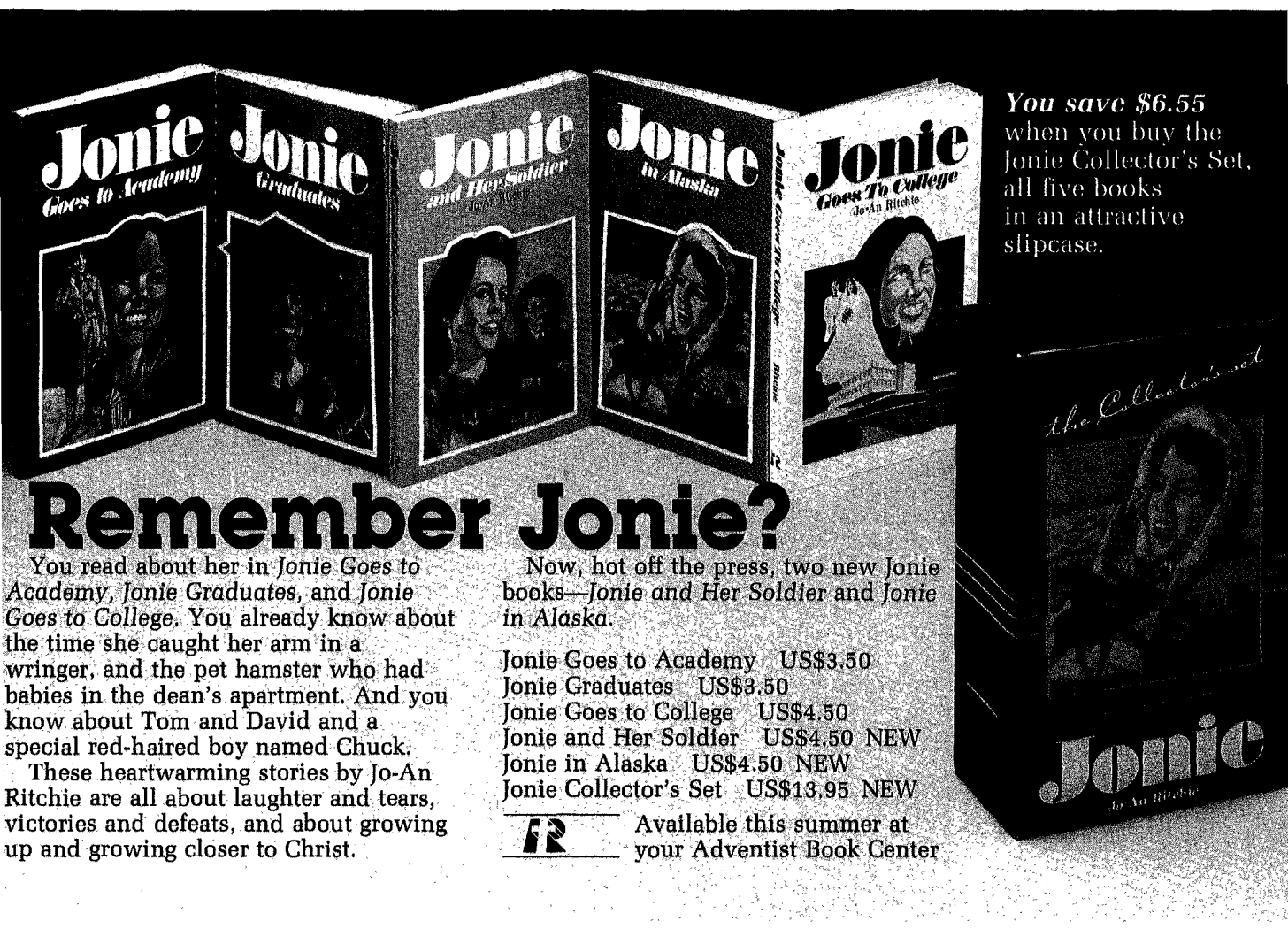
A World Religious Liberty Congress was held in Rome September 3-6, 1984. Fifty journalists took part in the daily program. The Italian media and Vatican Radio gave a daily report, and 60 articles were published in the Italian newspapers.

### Church growth seminars

Since 1982 G. Oosterwal has held yearly church growth seminars in our fields. All the ministers in Western Europe and many from Eastern Europe have taken part. Three such seminars, attended by representatives of 125 churches, were held during 1984. These seminars have led to encouraging results, and we plan to increase their number in the future.

### Toward the future

As we look back during the past five years we do so with deep gratitude for the Lord's blessings. We have undaunted confidence for what lies ahead. We are deeply convinced that the great days of evangelism in the Euro-Africa Division are not behind, but ahead of us. To this end we are determined to plan, to live, and to work. "Called to proclaim" is our motto. May God bless to this end! □



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# “The Lord has done great things for us”

Report of the South American Division presented Sunday, June 30, 1985.

By JOAO WOLFF  
President



The territory of the South American Division of Seventh-day Adventists covers 5.9 million square miles and encompasses the countries of Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, the Falkland Islands, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay. It extends from the Strait of Magellan in the south to the immense Amazon Basin in the north, where the largest tropical forest on earth is located, as well as the mighty Amazon River. The east and west extend to the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. Within these perimeters, the majestic Andes Mountains cut a rugged profile with towering snowcapped peaks.

The two official languages spoken in South America are Spanish and Portuguese. The population already has exceeded 200 million. Some of the world's largest cities, such as Buenos Aires, Rio de Janeiro, and São Paulo are experiencing an almost uncontrolled population explosion. This rampant population growth, the inherent sociopolitical conditions and unstable economies, along with a swelling tide of charismatic movements, contribute favorably to the preaching of the gospel in South America.

Founded in 1916 with less than 5,000 members, the division now has a membership of 656,529 believers, meeting in 7,941 local congregations. We are organized into six unions, with three union conferences and three union missions. In 1986 a seventh union will be formed with the division of the burgeoning South Brazil Union. The local fields are comprised of 36 conferences and missions.

At the beginning of this quinquennium, leaders from all around the division gathered and prepared a plan of action, from which I would like to highlight a few points to demonstrate the spirit and objectives that have been our goal.

*Only by His Spirit.* Human resources, whether economic, institutional, or strategic, will have value only if directed by God's Spirit.

*Sowing, Reaping, and Keeping.* Truly effective evangelism cannot ignore the complete cycle of sowing, reaping, and keeping. For this reason the activities of this quinquennial plan pivot on this motto.

*Emphasis upon local congregation.* This plan recognizes that it can reach its objectives only if the local congregation, through the leadership of the pastor, receives the complete support of the whole organization, for "the body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts" (1 Cor. 12:12, N.I.V.).\*

\* Texts credited to N.I.V. are from *The Holy Bible: New International Version*. Copyright © 1973, 1978, International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Bible Publishers.

"Put out into deep water" (N.I.V.). In evangelism we attempted the "deep water," according to the command of Jesus to Simon that, as recorded in the story of Luke 5:1-11, resulted in a marvelous catch of fish.

With the great campaign of the One Thousand Days of Reaping launched by the General Conference, the program of evangelism in our division gained greater strength and added new dimensions, particularly in the development of a new concept in intensive metropolitan evangelism.

What does metropolitan evangelism involve? It unites the efforts of all entities within the organization—each local church, department, and institution—to work simultaneously toward the shared goal of evangelizing an area.

After extensive planning and preparation, our first experiment in intensive metropolitan evangelism was conducted in 1982 in the sprawling metropolis of Guayaquil, Ecuador. The effort was directed and coordinated by division evangelist Daniel Belvedere, with all the area churches participating, as well as 30 ministerial students from the Inca Union University's School of Theology, located near Lima, Peru. The series lasted three months—90 consecutive nights. Meetings were held in every Adventist church in the city. At the final climax, 1,007 people were baptized, which doubled the area membership.

Another example of metropolitan evangelism occurred in Aracaju, capital of the state of Sergipe, in northeastern Brazil. At the beginning of the series, the city had one church and a small group, with a total of 700 members. Under the direction of Severino Bezerra de Oliveira, associate evangelist for the division, 50 workers (39 of whom were theology students from our nearby college) participated in holding meetings for 90 consecutive nights in eight locations. On a Sabbath afternoon at the close of the series, 1,240 people were baptized in a mammoth Olympic-sized swimming pool. Our total membership in Aracaju now stands at approximately 2,000 in seven congregations.

Inspired by this innovation in soul winning, every union conducted a major metropolitan series during 1983. Then in 1984 the goal was for every local conference and mission to do the same. During the climactic hours of the One Thousand Days of Reaping, each district pastor around the division was challenged to conduct his own metropolitan series.

By God's Spirit, metropolitan evangelism has become a cornerstone of the sowing, reaping, and keeping cycle in the South American Division. Though the miracle of conversion in people's lives supersedes statistical analysis, it is nevertheless encouraging that 309,841 baptisms occurred during this quinquennium, signifying a 50 percent increase over the previous five years. The number of Sabbath schools, groups, and churches grew from 5,825 at the end of 1979 to 8,233 in 1984, representing a 41 percent increase. In 1979 we had one Adventist for every 413 inhabitants. We see both progress and a continuing challenge in the 1984 ratio of one Adventist for every 320 inhabitants.

## Progress notes from the field

While space does not permit a complete report of the great things the Lord has done for us in soul winning, the following are some brief progress notes from around the field.

■ In Manaus, a teeming city of 700,000 and capital of the great Amazon jungle state, 12 Adventist congregations existed ten years ago. After continual efforts through the years, including an intensive metropolitan series in 1984 by Leo Ranzolin, director of the General Conference Youth Ministries Department, and a dramatic televised baptism of 676 people in the Amazon River, we now have approximately 6,000 members meeting in more than 50 churches and groups.

■ In Peru, after Catholicism, Seventh-day Adventists represent the largest church in the country. In the capital of Lima alone, we have more than 100 congregations.

■ São Paulo, the industrial center of Brazil, has approximately 300 Adventist churches and groups. In the spring of 1985 we were engaged in massive metropolitan evangelism with more than 600 large and small simultaneous nightly meetings being conducted by pastors and laymen, youth and adults.

■ In each of the 7,941 congregations around the division, at least one baptismal class is permanently maintained. Special training seminars are held for the lay leaders of these classes. Most of the local fields, with assistance from the unions, furnish Bibles to be used in these classes. During the past five years, approximately 1 million Bibles were distributed for use in baptismal classes and evangelism.

■ Office and institutional workers throughout the division have participated in the metropolitan evangelism as Bible workers.

### Sabbath school and lay activities

These two departments provide great inspiration and impetus for personal Bible study and outreach.

At the end of 1984 our Sabbath school membership exceeded 700,000, a 50 percent increase over the previous quinquennium. The following list of outreach activities also demonstrates the momentum with which our laymen are sharing their faith:

Activity	1980-1984	Growth Over 1975-1979
Missionary contacts	29,649,137	174%
Literature distributed	41,205,616	109%
Bible studies	12,495,823	173%
Persons helped	13,233,855	183%
Clothes given—pieces	17,751,671	226%
Hours of social assistance	20,393,338	289%

Another soul-winning strategy, which involves many laymen, goes into action each Easter season. Because of the strong Catholic influence throughout South America, intense focus is placed on the celebrations of Holy Week, and people everywhere keenly sense their spiritual need. All around the division, Adventist congregations take advantage of this opportunity by inviting the public to Holy Week series of meetings held in churches, halls, tents, auditoriums, schools, and homes. These meetings are frequently conducted by laymen, and the results have been overwhelming. Thousands of people have flocked to hear more of their risen Lord, His saving power, and soon return to this earth.

With pockets of interest springing up everywhere in the wake of



Three representatives of the Southern Asia Division, Wilfred Benwell, Robin Riches, and Lowell Cooper, work on a booth.

these Holy Week meetings, a need was recognized to establish churches in the newly entered neighborhoods to foster the spiritual growth of the new contacts. So a concept known as Pioneer Project was developed, in which a small group of 15 to 25 laymen would be prepared to leave their home church to form the nucleus of another congregation. With locations chosen and pioneer groups readied in advance of Holy Week, the evangelistic meetings flowed smoothly into the growth of new groups.

One such Pioneer Project occurred in the glittering tourism capital of Rio de Janeiro. The administrator of our widely respected Silvestre Hospital tried with great difficulty to find a good, permanent location for a new church group. In his search he was recognized by a former patient of our hospital who was also the manager of the city's most exclusive hotel. This gentleman offered the free use of the hotel's elegant top-floor convention room. Since our church has started meeting there it has spawned two more Pioneer Project groups.

We are realizing our goal of establishing one Pioneer Project for each day of the One Thousand Days of Reaping. To make the venture financially feasible for these fledgling congregations, the division, unions, local fields, and mother churches work together to provide each new group with \$4,000. This has largely been made possible by gifts of more than \$300,000 from the Quiet Hour.

### Adventist youth and temperance

Approximately 70 percent of the South American church is composed of youth and children. At the end of 1984, they numbered 400,000, which is a 50 percent growth over 1979. They are undoubtedly a great army for God.

More than half of our youth are involved in some type of missionary work. Many have been enthusiastic participants in metropolitan evangelism and the Pioneer Projects. More than 100,000 have received certificates for reading their Bibles through in a year, and more than 60,000 have experienced one of the 1,500 exciting and inspirational youth camps held during this quinquennium.

Within the ranks of our army of youth is a special platoon—Pathfinders. Nearly 40,000 strong now, they meet weekly in 1,168 clubs. A big event for them during this quinquennium was the first division-wide camporee, with more than 4,500 Pathfinders in attendance from eight countries in South America, plus representatives from both North America and Inter-America. It was held in December, 1983, close to the famous and enchanting Iguacu Falls, where the borders of Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay meet.

Several special outreach activities of the church are regularly led by our youth. On the Sunday of Mother's Day, groups of Adventist youth and children form parades in the streets, singing and distributing hugs, kisses, and flowers to the delighted mothers among the roadside bystanders. This campaign has always received wide media coverage.

Catholics observe a yearly memorial day known as the Day of the Deceased. They go to the cemeteries and give homage to their dead loved ones. Adventist youth find this a good opportunity to share their faith by visiting with these people in the cemeteries, giving them attractive and appropriate tracts and forming musical groups to sing hymns of comfort, hope, and cheer. Thousands of young people participate annually in this campaign.

Much of our temperance work is also led by the youth. More than 130,000 were involved in some type of temperance activity during this quinquennium. More than 1 million pieces of temperance literature were distributed. There were more than 7,000 showings of films on the harmful effects of drugs, smoking, and alcohol. Approximately 10,000 stop-smoking and other health-related seminars were conducted, with a participation of 300,000 people, 70 percent of whom chose to quit smoking and/or modify their lifestyles for better health. There were also 227 chemical dependency courses offered, many of which were in São Paulo. One

of the principal concerns of the church is to link all of these temperance activities in one way or another to soul winning.

### **Communication and media evangelism**

The Lord has done great things for us in media coverage of our church activities as well as in evangelism through secular publications, radio, and television.

In many countries, beyond excellent reporting of our public campaigns such as Ingathering, Mother's Day, and Day of the Deceased, the most prestigious newspapers have permitted us to print entire books in serial form on their pages. Not only have we been able to share the Spirit of Prophecy and other inspirational books in this manner, but this approach has created a receptive environment for the educational, welfare, and evangelistic programs of our church.

Fifteen radio and TV programs are beaming the gospel throughout South American countries, in addition to the numerous programs produced locally by pastors and laymen. Altogether, more than 600 programs are reported as being on the air, with a total of 2,400 weekly radio and TV hours.

Correspondence schools connected with these programs have received requests from more than 1 million persons for Bible lessons during this quinquennium, with 600,000 who wish to become active students, a 77 percent gain over the previous five years. Those who have received certificates for completion of these lessons now number 452,546, a 69 percent increase over 1979. Of these, 365,515 have indicated interest in further Bible study; and so far, more than 100,000 have been baptized. Some pastors believe that 80 percent of their baptisms are a result of the interest generated through these radio and TV programs.

### **Publications**

"Scatter them like the leaves of autumn."—*Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 72.

The church in South America accepts and affirms the multitude of Spirit of Prophecy quotations that establish the importance of our publishing work. The publishing work is one of the most effective means of proclaiming the three angels' messages at this climactic hour of earth's history.

Our force of 7,506 literature evangelists (86 percent more than in 1979) was instrumental in scattering 7,430,571 truth-filled books and 34,675,524 magazines during the quinquennium, representing increases of 163 percent and 278 percent, respectively, over the previous five years. The dollar value of their sales was \$99,338,900, for an increase of 211 percent. The eternal value of their work is reflected in the baptism of 10,965 people, 90 percent more than in the previous quinquennium.

Another exciting venture has been the united goal of both literature evangelists and church members to sell and distribute 1 million copies of *The Great Controversy* during this quinquennium. Many literature evangelists include a copy of this book in every sale they make. Churches and individual laymen buy the book for missionary campaigns and personal outreach. Olvide Zanela, an agricultural equipment dealer in the southern Brazil city of Medianeira, bought 10,000 copies of *The Great Controversy* to share with his clientele and friends.

Our two publishing houses, located in Argentina and in Brazil, have used 10,000 tons of paper this quinquennium to keep up with the demand for "autumn leaves" inscribed with the golden message of God's love.

### **Medical evangelism**

Medical evangelism in South America had its beginning, although humble, at the end of the past century. Our doctors, nurses, and other health-care workers have written brilliant and heroic pages in the history of Adventism here. Many regions, and even entire countries, identify the Adventist Church with its medical work.

At present we have 24 hospitals with a total of 1,400 beds, which have served the needs of 300,000 people during the past five years. Fourteen medical launches travel the Amazon and other rivers to bring physical and spiritual aid to remote jungle peoples. Our medical institutions have played a key role in promoting community health education, such as stop-smoking seminars, and providing support for evangelistic programs of the church.

### **Education**

High hopes and expectations are focused on our educational work because it is through the halls of our schools that our youth will enter leadership roles in the church. Education is also a prime evangelistic medium, as evidenced by the 20,467 students who were baptized during this quinquennium.

Throughout the South American Division we now have 684 elementary schools, showing a growth of 18 percent during the past five years. The number of our academies has grown by 138 percent to a total of 62; and our five colleges have a combined enrollment of 3,516 students. The total student enrollment on all three levels is 113,864, an increase of 41 percent. A team of 4,601 dedicated teachers works toward the physical, mental, and spiritual development of these students.

The education department desires to have one boarding school for each local field. At present we have 20 established boarding schools, with eight more in the planning or construction phase.

An average of 250 ministerial students have graduated each year from our five schools of theology during this quinquennium. In some years this has represented 20 percent of the Adventist theology students graduating around the world.

The opportunity of attending an Adventist seminary has been made available to our ministers this quinquennium through the development of SALT (Seminário Adventista Latinoamericano de Teologia). By attending SALT classes for several weeks each year, along with following a recommended course of independent study, a minister may earn his M.A. in religion in three years or an M.A. in theology in four years. The seminary already has more than 100 graduates.

### **Health foods**

Two denominationally owned companies, Granix in Argentina and Superbom in Brazil, are producing tasty vegetarian health foods for distribution around South America. Eight vegetarian restaurants operated by these companies enjoy excellent reputations for their high-quality food. A total of more than 4.1 million meals were served during this quinquennium at restaurant locations in Buenos Aires, Belo Horizonte, Rio de Janeiro, and São Paulo.

### **Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA)**

ADRA's work is both highly diversified and far-reaching. A complete list of its projects during this quinquennium covers two and one-half typewritten pages. It includes community nutrition programs (with more than 16 million pounds of food distributed), health education, and social relief services; construction of schools; hospital projects, including medical supplies and equipment; agricultural programs; disaster relief with food, clothing, and tents for temporary shelter; and assistance in a variety of educational programs.

One example of ADRA's community involvement comes from the Lake Titicaca region of Peru, where agricultural assistance and training were given to enable the people to grow their own gardens. In just a few months, more than 6,000 families succeeded in producing thriving gardens. Appreciative local authorities have affirmed that ADRA's program has changed the entire concept of agriculture in this area.

We believe that the most appropriate words to close this report are those of Psalm 126:3: "The Lord has done great things for us, and we are filled with joy" (N.I.V.). □

# Third business meeting

Fifty-fourth General Conference session  
June 28, 1985, 2:00 P.M.

## Session proceedings

C. B. HIRSCH: [Called the meeting to order.]

DEEP THAPA: [Prayed in Nepalese.]

C. B. HIRSCH: We now will deal with the report of the Role and Function of Denominational Organizations Commission. Elder Wilson will make a statement to us.

NEAL C. WILSON: For several years questions have been asked of the General Conference with respect to efficiency at the headquarters office, its role, functions, relationship to other organizations, and what it is that keeps us together as a world body.

How does one evaluate the General Conference in terms of its contribution to the world family? We asked ourselves, Can we do our job better and more efficiently? Is there a way to develop more strength? What is the best use of our resources? What is the image of the General Conference? How is it perceived by the world family?

Some of you are aware that several surveys have been made. The results of these will be revealed a little later by Elder Wernick when he gives the background of the Commission on Role and Function, which he chaired. The possibility of coordinating our human resources was studied, as well as better coordination of departmental publications. Another factor studied was how to make the work of the pastor easier. Ultimately, most of what is done on every administrative level finally reaches local pastors, who for some time have asked that we

find ways to make their ministry more effective. We could do some things better. Could total evangelism be better coordinated? Could winning souls be accomplished more efficiently?

Many people have expressed the opinion that we are reorganizing to save money, which may or may not be so. Perhaps on some levels money could be saved by coordination or pooling resources, but this was not the target, by any means, of the Role and Function Commission. The two basic guidelines that constantly were kept before the commission were (1) to look at the total picture of how this church stays together and accomplishes its God-given mandate, and (2) to find better ways to serve the local church congregation.

The modern trend in our world today is toward decentralization. Many corporate bodies feel that decentralization is a very wise and effective way to develop more thrust, and I think there is some merit in that concept. We must remember, however, that we have a world church, not a national church. There are some things we need to do together. We cannot allow even the beginnings of a congregational-type church government, which could ultimately totally destroy the thrust of our world mission and dilute our message.

All these factors were kept in perspective by the Role and Function Commission, as well as the extent of church authority. How can we keep a great world family together and protect it from fragmentation? Some people speak with a degree of pride about independence rather than about membership

in a world family. All this will become much clearer as this document is studied.

There are some things that you will agree with. There may be some areas of disagreement, and certainly ample time will be provided for study and discussion.

F. W. WERNICK: This commission was appointed by the General Conference Committee on September 8, 1983, to study several areas of our church structure: (1) to define the functions and programs on all levels of denominational organization, (2) to analyze how functions on each level relate to those on other levels, (3) to identify the organizational level on which specific functions could be most effectively administered, and (4) to recommend functions that might be shifted, eliminated, or modified.

As we got into our work our terms of reference expanded. We began to study not only functions on the various levels but also the levels themselves and the way they relate to each other.

Thirty-three members were appointed to the commission from the General Conference headquarters and all of its divisions, and several union and local conferences in North America were represented. Materials generated by several North American union conferences who made their own studies, as well as some independent group studies, were reviewed. A notebook of materials gleaned from Ellen G. White's writings and church leaders of the past who had participated in the formation of our church structure was provided to all of the commission members. Many helpful personal letters were received from interested church workers and laypersons.

To my knowledge, there has never been a study by a General Conference committee that has generated so much interest or that has had such wide input from so many organizations within the church. The recommendations finally drawn up and made available to the 1984 Annual Council reflected this extensive input.

The appointment of this commission grew out of concerns expressed over a period of several years that conference, union, and General Conference office staffs had grown quite large and that overlapping materials were being duplicated. Some expressed a concern that the programs and services of the church were more numerous than local churches could absorb.

I want to assure you that the commission did a very thorough survey, not only of the world field, but of the functions of the church

itself, before it drew up its recommendations.

The recommendations, seven in number, state basic principles as well as some specific solutions. They reaffirm the structure and levels of our church organization as being sound and give reasons why. However, these recommendations do suggest a new direction for some departments and seek to better define relationships of the North American Division to the General Conference. [F. W. Wernick read the eleven points of Section A of the commission report.]

CHARLES MAKOMBE: Unity, "that they all may be one" (John 17:21). This is basic to the nature of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Ellen G. White admonished, "God wants His people to counsel together, to be a united church, in Christ a perfect whole."—*Selected Messages*, book 2, p. 374.

Does this apply to the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa?

C. B. HIRSCH: Elder Wilson, would you speak to this question?

N. C. WILSON: I would like to. I think Brother Makombe has raised a question of deep concern in the minds of many. A church must continue to state the ideal, must stand for certain great principles. A church sometimes, however, is limited in its ability to implement its objectives and ideals. That does not change its position.

We regret that there are many places in this world where we have not fully been able to reach the ideal of God's plan for the church. We regret this, and we pray about it. We intercede with our Lord; we appeal to authorities to relent or to relax, making it possible to reach some of the ideals inherent in the Christian faith and in the basic philosophy of Seventh-day Adventists.

This problem is something over which the church in some cases has no control. Many forces operate in our world today, forces that would seek to tear us apart. To suggest superiority on the basis of color or race is deplorable. We regret it. We continue to seek to resolve these matters within the church, and, wherever we are not forbidden by law, we certainly urge and endeavor not only to urge but to legislate within the church. We must not allow ourselves ever to lose sight of where we want to go and what we believe is right, simply because we cannot implement what we want to in some places.

I wish that somehow these barriers could be torn down, but some things are prevented by law, and while we don't like them, I am not sure that we ought to become

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disobedient and defy law when it does not require disobedience to God. Nearly all laws have latitude or flexibility. We have urged our brethren to press the matter, to reach across the gulf wherever it is not actually a violation of law. Those who are denied by law certain privileges and opportunities cannot take steps toward unity without immediately being in trouble. Those who have privileges—in this case the white population—must take advantage of every opportunity to reach unity. While there are some places where we are not yet able physically to achieve God's ideal, we should never stop pressing toward that mark.

I think our brother has brought up a very good point here, and I think the statement is still correct. We are sorry that we haven't reached the ideal in several places, but let's keep pressing. [Applause.]

**JONATHAN THOMPSON:** I have a question on the portion of Article 9 that is in parentheses, which says, "Church officials not able or not willing to do this [operate "in their area of responsibility in full harmony with the *General Conference Working Policy*"] should not be continued in leadership positions." My question is How would the General Conference or administration propose to implement this concept without destroying the autonomy of a conference or body? Is this a move toward unity, or is it uniformity?

**F. W. WERNICK:** This has been in our policy book for many years. If leadership has no burden to maintain unity by working in harmony with policy that is developed by the world church either in this session or at an Annual Council, should they be continued in leadership? The General Conference cannot reach down into a union or a local conference and discipline. This must be done by the constituency or the committee. It's the responsibility of the church, conference, or union to say to its leader, We want you to work in harmony with the world church. [Sections A and B of the document were approved.]

Section C is titled "General Conference Delegated Powers." Who delegates powers to the General Conference? The church in session delegates to the General Conference Committee the powers that the session intends it shall have.

**NEAL C. WILSON:** I am a little uneasy, because I sense uneasiness among the delegations on the voting. The vote on both the previous motions was very weak. I don't mind people expressing different views. I don't mind someone chal-

lenging these positions, but when we complete the discussion I would like to feel that there is a strong vote from this body in support, and I am not sensing that at this point. If we aren't together, then let's take some more time to look at it. Perhaps because we are so scattered, we should vote by a show of hands. Organizationally there is no real autonomy in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Autonomy means, "I can exist on my own. I don't need you." My brothers and sisters, there is no such thing in this church as existing in isolation. We are a world church; we are not a loose affiliation. I am anxious that during this session we learn how to interact.

Ellen White warns us that there will be those who will advocate that we don't really need a tight organization, that we should be very loose and flexible, letting everybody do what seems to fit his particular situation. But that is not the way to have a world church. It is a miracle what the Seventh-day Adventist Church demonstrates to the entire world community of nations and other religious bodies. People often ask, How do you stay so close together?

Organization is critically important. God gave to this church three things: a world mission, a message, and an organization to help us accomplish our world mission with this world message. If any one of these three elements is missing, this church will not continue as a world church. The basic philosophy of Seventh-day Adventism will be lost. The genius of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is seen in a meeting like this, where we wrestle with each other until we find a way through our problems, and then we stand together. We need well-chosen rules and regulations that we all are willing to support. In session we try only to state certain principles.

There are those who say, "Let the Holy Spirit speak, let the Holy Spirit lead differently in different places." I don't subscribe to that philosophy. The Holy Spirit always and in every place speaks the same language, and He will keep us together as a body, as a group, as a church. This body needs to speak. And when we have spoken and ultimately reached a consensus, let us confirm it by a strong vote, that we may know the whole body is in harmony. Some things we need to do together; some conformity is needed. There may even need to be some uniformity. I think the church must decide where those lines are drawn.

**RUSSELL L. STAPLES:** I believe that the church worldwide

must be united, that it must maintain discipline, and that the Holy Spirit speaks the same language in every part of the world. I refer, however, to a sentence that has been in the *Working Policy* for decades delegating to the General Conference certain authority and areas of responsibility. For years in the *Working Policy* a division has been defined as the General Conference performing its work in world divisions. When I worked in Africa I would read this, and it seemed to me it pointed in the direction of defining the church as the General Conference and not strongly enough affirming the selfhood of the local church. I am reacting against that phrase. The General Conference conducts its work in worldwide divisions as if the General Conference is the church, while the people are the church. The church delegates its powers to the General Conference, and it seems to me there is a slight tension between this first concept and the second one toward the church (the people) delegating authority to the General Conference.

**F. W. WERNICK:** The General Conference does not stand isolated from the church. There is a section in the *Working Policy* that explains

this in a way that has helped me to understand. The General Conference is the sum, overarching all the local congregations that have been associated into conferences, and the conferences into unions. The General Conference simply is the sum of all of these organizations. It is the means by which all our churches in the world field unite in order to move and work together.

**NOEL IDIODI:** I personally believe that every delegate to this General Conference should be able to participate when necessary in matters of policy. However, the *Working Policy* of the General Conference is not clear to many delegates here. I suggest that it be mandatory that the *Working Policy* be made available to every delegate.

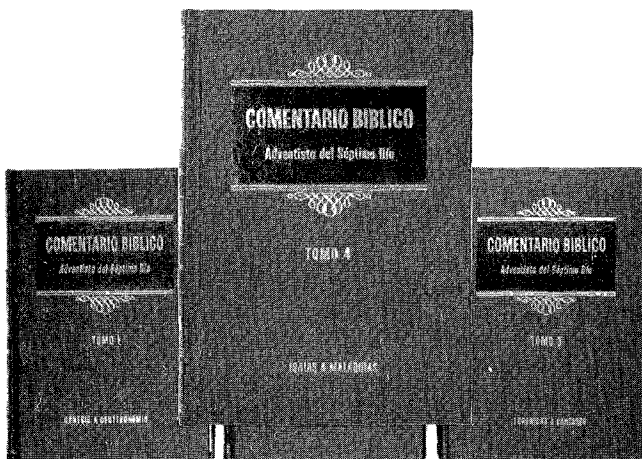
**F. W. WERNICK:** I think our brother has expressed a very important thought. I am sure that many have not read and studied the policies of the General Conference. We would like to see them available to everyone, and read more widely.

**C. B. HIRSCH:** We might suggest that the *Working Policy* is not a confidential or secret document. It is available at Adventist Book Centers, and every church member and delegate should have his own copy.

**ROBERT LLOYD:** I would hope

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that in the area of church doctrine we do not give our members the impression that we decide what they ought to believe and they simply consent to it. As a pastor, I am very much concerned about unity of doctrine in the church and hope that we will continue to work toward it. I am also concerned by a trend among many of our members away from

individual Bible study and careful investigation of our beliefs. I hope that our members will be encouraged to give careful scrutiny to our Biblical faith.

R. R. NDHLOVU: [Benediction.] C. B. HIRSCH, *Chairman*  
D. R. CHRISTMAN, *Secretary*  
C. D. WATSON and  
D. A. ROTH, *Proceedings Editors*

## Fourth business meeting

**Fifty-fourth General Conference session  
June 30, 1985, 9:30 A.M.**

### Session proceedings

LARRY R. COLBURN: [Opening prayer, and special prayer for Mrs. Kay Dower.]

L. L. BOCK: We have much to do this morning. We do have some pleasant interludes, and we would like to bring one to your attention. I now ask Dr. B. B. Beach to introduce a special guest this morning.

B. B. BEACH: I take great pleasure in introducing a distinguished visitor who represents the Mennonites at this session, Dr. Paul N. Kraybill, executive secretary of the World Mennonite Conference.

PAUL N. KRAYBILL: It is a great joy to greet you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. I bring you greetings from Dr. Ross Bender, president of our Mennonite community of 750,000 in 60 nations. It is a joy to be among you, to sense your convictions, your concerns, your caring, and your way of proclaiming the message that we all take so seriously. We share and applaud your concern for stewardship of our bodies as the temples of the Holy Spirit. We share a concern about those elements of force and evil that destroy human freedom, respect for life, and even life itself. We join you in preaching the good news of the gospel, the reconciling love of Jesus Christ, and the peace of God

that leads us to resist all those weapons of evil that destroy life and that mar the image of God in His human creation. I pray for you much wisdom, for God's Spirit to be upon you with strength as you carry on your deliberations and as you return to your tasks around the world.

B. B. BEACH: Last Wednesday, I believe, the Supreme Court handed down a decision regarding the Connecticut Sabbath law. Gordon Engen, associate director of the General Conference Department of Public Affairs and Religious Liberty and director for the North American Division department, will make a statement.

GORDON ENGEN: Many have expressed a great deal of concern over a news item that sounded like the United States Supreme Court had ruled that employers were no longer required to accommodate Sabbathkeepers' requests for Sabbath off from work. This is not what the Supreme Court actually ruled, but because many people *think* this is so, some Adventists may suddenly experience Sabbath problems that had not existed before. The Supreme Court did strike down a Connecticut law that mandated that employers accommodate every request for being off on Sabbath or Sunday, regardless of the unique or undue hardship it caused the employer.

The Supreme Court did not overturn the Civil Rights Act provisions, which are still very much alive and well.

R. F. WILLIAMS: The Cuban delegation has not yet arrived. I move that Virgilio Zaldivar, president of the Cuba Adventist Seminary, be approved as a delegate. [Motion was seconded and voted.]

L. L. BOCK: Yesterday we were thrilled with the results of the One Thousand Days of Reaping. Just think of it—1,171,000 new believers in five years. Harvest '90 is the new challenge to the church during the next quinquennium. [Motion was made to include in the minutes the statement on Harvest '90. It was seconded and voted.]

We now turn again to the Role and Function Commission report.

HARALD WEIGT: I refer to item C 10 of the commission report regarding Sabbath school lessons. The church family lives in various civilizations with different cultural backgrounds and needs. Our Sabbath school lessons would give deeper and greater blessings if each language group were allowed to put in its own questions and make its own comments. I move to amend this item to read as follows: "Preparing *the outlines* of the various Sabbath school lessons." [The

motion was seconded and defeated.]

L. L. BOCK: Now let's go on with our business.

ALLAN BULLER: Last Friday someone noted that "General Conference" could mean General Conference in session or it could mean General Conference Executive Committee. It appears to me that there are places where the General Conference in session is specifically referred to and other places where it is General Conference Executive Committee. In Section C two or three items probably apply to the General Conference in session only, but it seems to me that it should be made clear to everyone exactly which is meant. I move that the wording of Section C be clarified to make the distinction clear. [The matter was referred to the Editing Committee.]

GIANFRANCO ROSSI: In order to avoid misunderstanding in a very delicate and important matter, I should like to have some clarification of Section C 1, which reads as follows: "The church has delegated to the General Conference certain authority and areas of responsibility: 1. Church doctrine." I should like answers to the following three questions: 1. When and how was authority on church doctrine delegated to the General Conference? 2. What is the meaning of the word *church* in this sentence? 3. Is it implied that the church member has delegated to the General Conference the authority to establish his beliefs?

F. W. WERNICK: Your second question has to do with what is meant by *church*. The church expresses itself in the full body worldwide. This statement does not refer to local churches except as they make up the congregations scattered around the world, which are bound together by conferences, unions, and finally by the General Conference.

You are representatives of the world church here in session, and the administrative functions you delegate to the Executive Committee express the will of the church in matters of doctrine. This statement does not intend to say that individual believers cannot study and decide for themselves what they want to believe. But individuals who state on behalf of the church what its beliefs are must have some common statement to which the world body has agreed.

The General Conference is the sum of all of our churches worldwide, tying all the organizations together, but it has two administrative bodies. One is the fundamental constitutional body, the church here in session, which meets every five

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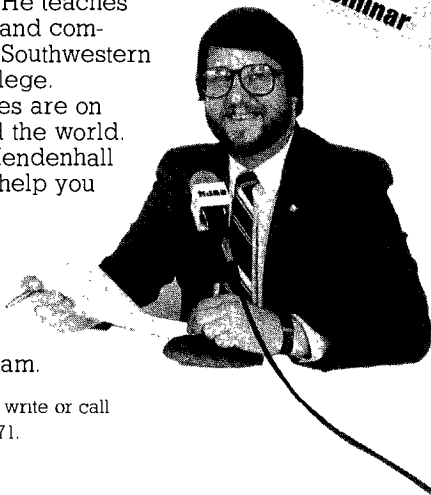
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years at the present time. This session delegates to the Executive Committee its responsibilities between sessions, as expressed in the Constitution and Bylaws.

There are two annual meetings of the General Conference Committee other than those that meet each Thursday morning at the headquarters office. Annual Councils have full representation from the world field; Spring Meetings are more limited, but have wider representation than the weekly meetings in Washington. The General Conference headquarters office is not in itself the General Conference. It is the headquarters of the Executive Committee, but the General Conference Committee is made up of all the division committees—sections of the General Conference Committee. This unique style of organization provides for unity of action and at the same time provides for a great deal of decentralized administration.

J. T. KNOPPER: I think we are dealing with a most important document regarding maintenance of church unity throughout the world field. I realize that as the church increases rapidly in membership this is more difficult. In times gone by we numbered our members by hundreds of thousands, but in millions today.

My question is What sort of mechanics can we develop to make sure that what we decide here will be implemented equally throughout the world field?

How can such unity be implemented so that people moving from place to place, from one continent to another, feel at home, seeing the same Adventist lifestyle as taught by the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy?

L. L. BOCK: You ask about implementation. There are elements of implementation in the document, but you understand, I am sure, that this is a general statement involving principles, and that implementation will have to be left to the various levels of the church. That is the best we can say at this time.

RUSSELL L. STAPLES: I speak again to the issue I raised on Friday. Elder Wernick seemed to feel that I was advocating some kind of congregationalism. Now this is not the case at all. With your permission, I will try to make my intent more clear.

The *Working Policy* defines a division as the General Conference doing its work in other countries. The General Conference in the days of Elders Daniells and Spicer was really a gigantic mission society, with hardly a church elsewhere. But now younger churches have come

into their own and fully accept the responsibility of the gospel, as we learned in such a dramatic way yesterday, and this is something to rejoice about.

Perhaps the danger of congregationalism could be just as much addressed by a little freeing up at the bottom as well as by tightening at the top. The two should certainly be balanced.

Now I would like to make a move that we eliminate the sentence "The General Conference conducts its work through the division sections." [The motion was seconded and discussed. Then the motion was withdrawn.]

W. DUNCAN EVA: I move that we insert the words "The worldwide work of the church is conducted by the General Conference" and delete the words "conduct much of its work through its division sections." [Motion was seconded and voted.]

L. L. BOCK: Elder Wernick, do you have anything more to say before we go to the microphones?

F. W. WERNICK: Not really, except that I do hope we can come to a vote on it soon.

H. R. PREMDAS: I would like to speak to a concept that is interwoven throughout this document. I grew up in the church with the concept that there are five levels of church organization, and it is a little difficult to accept the concept that now there are only four. However, I see at least a couple of advantages to establishing the fact that the union is the level of the church that now makes up the General Conference.

I am just wondering if in fact we are not recognizing the division level in one way and then ruling it out by the Constitution and Bylaws in another way.

It is very difficult to describe in a few words how the General Conference functions. We have only four constituent levels. Your local conference is one level and has its own constituency. The union also has its own constituency. Then the General Conference has its constituency. Divisions are a new constituent level.

There is only one General Conference constituent level. We here are the constituency of the full General Conference worldwide.

The General Conference Committee operates by sections. For example, one section operates as the General Conference division in Inter-America, which, by the authority of the Constitution and Bylaws, deals with the problems of that field. Its actions are final so long as they harmonize with the Constitution and Bylaws and the actions of the Annual Council, which is the full

General Conference Committee.

D. H. BAASCH: The section referred to by Elder Premdas is lifted right out of the Constitution. I refer to the Bylaws, Article 14, Section 3, which reads, "The actions taken by the division committees pertaining to the administration of affairs in division fields shall be considered final, provided they are in harmony with the plans and policy of the General Conference as set forth in the Constitution and Bylaws, and with the Executive Committee actions at regular Annual Councils." There are no division constituencies as such. While we do speak of four constituent levels, the General Conference actually divides its work into two sublevels, (1) the general level in Washington and (2) the other at divisions around the world.

SOLOMON WOLDE-  
ENDREAS: I think we are being sidetracked sometimes by experts who could have inserted phrases in their original reports, and sometimes, of course, by people who, when hearing the words *unity*, *equality*, and so on, are provoked by their experience of not having these rights. I am very grateful to our world leader, who recognizes these feelings and is patient to give an answer. When I read this document

I thought the main concern was restructuring departments. I feel now that when we finally come to the main issues we may be so hasty that those who are very much concerned may not have time to express their ideas. We should really move more quickly to the main issue of restructuring the departments. [Motion was seconded and voted.]

F. W. WERNICK: Section D simply deals with relationships between church organizations. It does not state any new relationships, but perhaps more clearly outlines those relationships than they may have been in the past. I would like to move that we adopt this section as part of the document.

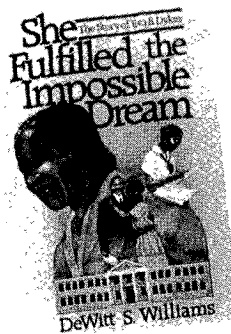
LOUIS VENDEN: I particularly appreciate the clarification that has already been made on a point that concerned me that has to do with the de facto five-level administrative operation, and I would only suggest that that be acknowledged in the document.

CHARLES MAKOMBE: The whole issue boils down to the fact that some people just don't want to operate according to this document.

F. W. WERNICK: I think our brother made a good statement that if we could actually see these points implemented and carried out, it

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## Nominating Committee Report—2

*Voted, To approve the following partial report of the Nominating Committee:*

*General Conference*

Treasurer, Donald F. Gilbert

would solve many problems. It is to be hoped that this document will be read and studied by our leaders throughout the world field and serious attempts be made to implement it.

AMOS SIMORANGKIR: I am speaking to Section D 6, where it is stated that the union represents the church officially to government. In countries with a centralized form of government, containing two or more unions (involving different constituencies), it is very difficult for one union to represent an entire church to the government. In these countries the government would prefer—in fact, require—that the

church make a unified representation.

F. E. WERNICK: Yes, I think it can be edited to reflect the thought suggested.

WILLIAM BLYTHE: My concern about this and other sections of the report has to do with the use of the phrase *General Conference*. In some cases the term refers to the General Conference in session. In some cases it refers to the General Conference Executive Committee, and perhaps in other instances it may refer to the General Conference headquarters office.

I move that this entire document be referred to a committee for the

single purpose of clarifying the meaning of the use of the term *General Conference* throughout the document. [Motion was seconded and defeated.]

L. L. BOCK: We've had a good open discussion. I think we have moved in on some very sensitive areas, and it is right here that work needs to be done. This is probably the most important document we'll deal with, and we need to take sufficient time to do it right.

Are you ready to vote on the section that we have just been dealing with? [Motion was voted.] Now we go to Section E.

F. W. WERNICK: Section E is a special section to deal with the relationship of the General Conference and the North American Division. This needs a little special attention because there has been through the years a very special relationship between the North American Division of the General Conference and the General Conference. This short statement gives the basis for maintaining that special relationship with some modification. I move that we adopt Section E. [Motion was seconded and voted.]

F. W. WERNICK: The next section is an attempt to state the importance of all our churches, all our conferences, and all our unions throughout the world field, maintaining that world vision. I move that we adopt Section F. [Motion was seconded.]

L. L. BOCK: This would complete Section I.

HAROLD PREMDAS: I would like to raise a question, probably for a statement of intent and maybe clarification. The concern I have is that I am aware that "everywhere to everywhere" seems to exclude the North American Division as a calling division from other divisions of the world field. I just wonder if we may have an explanation.

NEAL C. WILSON: You would be surprised how many calls there are to the North American Division from other parts of the world. A list of all those who would like to receive a call to the North American Division would fill a book. The North American Division could easily fill all its needs with people from other parts of the world and exclude North Americans. There are hundreds of individuals from

*Continued on page 26*

## Session adopts Harvest '90

*On June 30 the General Conference session voted to adopt the following plan for the church's mission during the next five years:*

*"Look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest" (John 4:35).*

We are in the days of the harvest. The times demand that the church arise and direct her energies to reaching every region and every ethnic, cultural, and social group. A vast multitude waits to be gathered from "every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people" (Rev. 14:6). Said the Lord Himself, "The harvest is the end of the world" (Matt. 13:39).

The final harvest of souls is far beyond our human resources. We need the promised latter rain of God's Spirit (see Joel 2:23) in pentecostal blessing and power to prepare the church for evangelizing the world. To seek this should be our first work. The proclamation of the everlasting gospel and its power demonstrated in the lives of a Spirit-filled people

will be used by God to call forth the final events of earth. "If we would humble ourselves before God, and be kind and courteous and tenderhearted and pitiful, there would be one hundred conversions to the truth where now there is only one" —*Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 189.

During these closing events of the great controversy, we, as leaders of God's people, beseech the Lord of the harvest to pour out His Spirit on the church. We call upon our members to commit themselves to the goal of Adventism: the completion of the gospel commission in the setting of the three angels' messages in preparation for the coming of Jesus.

Realizing that the goal of completing the gospel commission will be reached only with revival and reformation, we call the church worldwide to:

- Renewal and personal growth through Bible study,

intercessory prayer, fellowship, and worship.

- Revitalization of family religion, that our homes may become centers of love, care, and witness.

- Recognition of the local church as the center of evangelism, nurture, and training of members for ministry.

- Renewed proclamation of the Biblical-prophetic message of the Seventh-day Adventists.

- Reclamation of inactive members of the church, and emphasis on maximizing church attendance.

- Reaffirmation of the principles and standards of the church, calling for reformation in appearance and lifestyle.

- Reaching the large numbers of people who as yet are unreached by the gospel.

In view of our solemn responsibility to this desperate world, we urge each member to seek the "double portion" of the

Spirit (2 Kings 2:9), and we prayerfully commit ourselves to doubling the strength of God's worldwide spiritual family during the quinquennium of 1985-1990. By God's grace it is our united desire and decision to:

1. Double, in every division, union, conference, local field, and church, the number of accessions that were achieved during the One Thousand Days of Reaping.

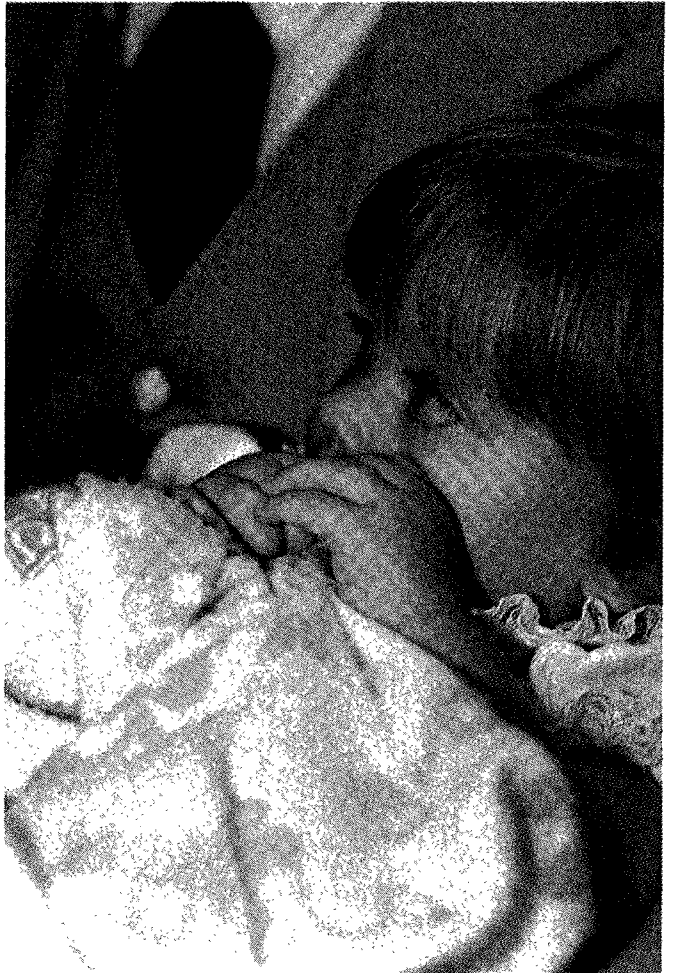
2. Double the number of members equipped for soul-winning activities according to their spiritual gifts, making every Seventh-day Adventist church a center of training for service.

To Jesus, the Lord of the harvest, we give glory as we launch Harvest '90. We pray that every member will join together in prayer, sacrifice, and commitment to doubling the strength of the church between now and 1990.





# “All are precious in His sight”



Children attending the General Conference session may not understand the significance of all that is going on, but they add to the colorful collage of participants and enjoy seeing groups like the Rainbow Choir from the Korean Union Conference.

other divisions who want to come to North America on any basis. They will come without a call, if they may just be assured that when they arrive they will have denominational employment. There is interest not only in work in North American missions or language groups but also in English-speaking positions.

At one time nearly all our Hispanic churches in North America were actually pastored by individuals from other countries, either by official call or on an independent transfer basis. Many multilingual North American youth with ability were thus denied opportunities.

North America faces a great many problems peculiar to it. Unfortunately, it seems to be attractive and to offer certain opportunities to citizens of other countries.

On balance, I think North America has done remarkably well by absorbing a large number of interdivision workers in a variety of responsibilities. We do have calls to North America from other parts of the world.

L. L. BOCK: The Nominating Committee is ready to report.

W. R. LESHNER: This morning the Nominating Committee again gave careful study to another officer of the General Conference, the treasurer. And after having given careful consideration, we finally have a name and the consent of the person to serve, and we are glad to bring you that report at this time.

C. B. ROCK: The Nominating Committee is pleased to submit for your consideration as treasurer of

the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists for the next quinquennium the name of one of our present assistant treasurers, Donald F. Gilbert. I move that we accept the report. [The motion was seconded.]

NEAL C. WILSON: It has not been my good fortune to be very closely associated with Elder Gilbert. For the past six months or so, he and his wife have been with us in the General Conference. I have met him on a few occasions and have admired his Christian approach to every situation. I have been impressed by his deep commitment to this church.

He is a soft-spoken man. He is a technician. He is a fair-minded person. He has good judgment. Elder Gilbert, 55, was born in South Dakota. He began his denominational service in treasury work in educational circles. From there he moved on to other positions of a more general nature in the church.

He has been the treasurer of a union, an assistant treasurer of the Far Eastern Division, then treasurer of the Far Eastern Division. He returned to the United States in 1981 and was a local conference treasurer in North America until six or seven months ago, when he joined the General Conference. So he has both current knowledge of the North American situation and a very good understanding of many of the challenges and economic situations that exist in our world today.

The Nominating Committee has certainly selected a person whom

you will learn to appreciate, to admire, and to respect as he has opportunity to serve this church. [Motion was voted.]

D. F. GILBERT: Right at this point I feel almost speechless, but I do want to say that I believe in the leading and direction of God. I know that in the Treasury there are so many basic major problems today, but I also know that God has the answers. We must just search for them.

The financial area is not a controlling part of the church, but it is a supporting part of the evangelistic program of this church. If we ever lose that goal and that desire, we've lost the point for which we exist. I just earnestly solicit your prayers and your support. I do not have the wisdom or the background, but I will do what this church has asked me to do to the best of my ability. I appreciate working with Elder Wilson and Elder Thompson.

I read a little comment again in the Spirit of Prophecy. It says, "As you ask the Lord to help you, honor your Saviour by believing that you do receive His blessing. All power, all wisdom, are at our command. We have only to ask."—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 514. So I ask that I might serve properly.

NEAL C. WILSON: You could not have made a more significant statement than to say that Treasury is a supporting element of the great evangelistic outreach of this church. Keep that in mind at all times, and God will certainly use your ministry and your leadership.

L. L. BOCK: On this high note we will conclude our work for this morning.

DANIEL LU: [Benediction in Chinese.]

L. L. BOCK, *Chairman*

R. F. WILLIAMS, *Secretary*

B. E. JACOBS and

D. A. ROTH, *Proceedings Editors*

## Session actions

[The fifty-fourth General Conference session is considering several lengthy documents. During the course of discussion of these items, the ADVENTIST REVIEW will report fully the proceedings but will not print any actions that are incomplete in nature. When each document has been voted in its entirety—whether in original or amended form—the ADVENTIST REVIEW will print it in full.]

### Seating of Additional Delegates

*Voted*, To seat the following delegate-at-large under the 25 percent provision:

#### Inter-American Division

Virgilio Zaldivar—Cuba Union Conference

### Harvest '90—Reaching the Unreached

*Voted*, To adopt Harvest '90 as the special outreach plan for the coming quinquennium, as follows:

We are in the days of the harvest. The times demand that the church arise and direct her energies to reaching every region and every ethnic, cultural, and social group. A vast multitude waits to be gathered from "every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people" (Rev. 14:6). Said the Lord Himself, "The harvest is the end of the world" (Matt. 13:39).

The final harvest of souls is far beyond our human resources. We need the promised latter rain of God's Spirit (see Joel 2:23) in Pentecostal blessing and power to prepare the church for evangelizing the world. To seek this should be our first work. The proclamation of the everlasting gospel and its power demonstrated in the lives of a Spirit-filled people will be used by God to call for the final events of earth. "If we would humble ourselves before God, and be kind and courteous and tenderhearted and pitiful, there would be one hundred conversions to the truth where now there is only one."—*Testimonies*, vol. 9, p. 189.

During these closing events of the great controversy, we, as leaders of God's people, beseech the Lord of the harvest to pour out His Spirit on the church. We call upon our members to commit themselves to the goal of Adventism: the completion of the gospel commission in the



The Hinsdale Male Chorus from Illinois, directed by John Baldwin, sang Friday and Sabbath.

setting of the three angels' messages in preparation for the coming of Jesus.

Realizing that the goal of completing the gospel commission will be reached only with revival and reformation, we call the church worldwide to:

■ Renewal and personal growth through Bible study, intercessory prayer, fellowship, and worship.

■ Revitalization of family religion, that our homes may become centers of love, care, and witness.

■ Recognition of the local church as the center of evangelism, nurture, and training of members for ministry.

■ Renewed proclamation of the Biblical-prophetic message of the Seventh-day Adventists.

■ Reclamation of inactive members of the church, and emphasis on maximizing church attendance.

■ Reaffirmation of the principles and standards of the church, calling for reformation in appearance and lifestyle.

■ Reaching the large numbers of people who as yet are unreached by the gospel.

In view of our solemn responsibility to this desperate world, we urge each member to seek the "double portion" of the Spirit (2 Kings 2:9), and we prayerfully commit ourselves to doubling the

strength of God's worldwide spiritual family during the quinquennium of 1985-1990. By God's grace it is our united desire and decision to:

1. *Double*, in every division, union, conference, local field, and church, the number of accessions that were achieved during the One Thousand Days of Reaping.

2. *Double* the number of members equipped for soul-winning activities according to their spiritual gifts, making every Seventh-day Adventist church a center of training for service.

To Jesus the Lord of the harvest, we give glory as we launch Harvest '90. We pray that every member will join together in prayer, sacrifice, and commitment to doubling the strength of the church between now and 1990.

### Nominating Committee Report—2

*Voted*, To approve the following partial report of the Nominating Committee:

#### General Conference

Treasurer, Donald F. Gilbert  
Adjourned.

LOWELL L. BOCK, *Chairman*

ROY F. WILLIAMS, *Secretary*

J. W. BOTHE, *Actions Editor*

MARTHA HORN  
*Recording Secretary*

## Board of Higher Education

### Report presented at the General Conference session

By ROBERT L. REYNOLDS  
*Executive Secretary*



The educational system of the Seventh-day Adventist Church was created by our early leaders to provide a special education that would enhance our people's spiritual experience and also provide training for the workers of the church. Our pioneers developed schools that met the special needs of the church for that day, and the church continues to need its educational system for its children today. Though specifics may have changed, the basic thrust of our educational system has remained the same—to provide students with a Christ-centered education and every possible inducement to accept Christ as their Saviour.

As the church continues to fulfill its mission in today's world it depends on a strong and vibrant educational system. The church and its educational system must move together with clarity and firmness to achieve their common purpose. As goes the educational system of the church, so goes the church. A healthy, thriving educational system is essential for a healthy, vibrant, growing church. Any decline in the spiritual thrust of our schools will adversely affect the thrust of our entire church.

Some people question the viability of the Christian college and university in today's world. Some of our own members ask whether Christian education is really needed and claim there is little difference between a secular education and an Adventist education.

Students cannot gain a Christian education in a non-Christian atmosphere, where they are taught by teachers with entirely different values. Not only do Christian teachers see academic excellence as necessary, but they value the framework of freedom that allows them to teach the Christian dimension of learning, recognizing that education must be more than a collection of facts. In our colleges principles of tolerance, honesty, and fairness are taught by teachers who hold Christian values. The campus atmosphere encourages a better way of life and provides many inducements to Christian growth. The greatest asset of our Christian campuses is the freedom that permits them to be unashamed and unapologetic in every facet of their mission.

Another great asset of the Adventist college is the wholeness of its program, the thrust of the entire institution being a united belief and common commitment to the same values and purposes. In contrast to the unity of the Christian college, non-Christian schools tend to be a collection of fragmented departments with either contrasting beliefs or none at all. Christianity cannot be departmentalized. In an Adventist college people share their beliefs and commitments, learning together as they inspire and encourage one another.

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In recent months I have visited every one of our North American Division higher educational institutions to attend their board meetings, visit with administrators and faculty, talk with students, and read reports of their activities. My conclusion is that our schools are different, alive, and healthy.

One measure of our campuses comes from evaluation organizations, both Adventist and non-Adventist. Another source of information comes directly from reports made by the college administrators.

Throughout the reports appear stories of baptisms, foreign and domestic missionary activities, strong commitment to common beliefs, academic achievements, and other good news.

Space precludes extensive reports, but here are brief excerpts.

At Southwestern Adventist College (Keene, Texas) 25 percent of the students participated in off-campus soul winning, with 24 students baptized. The committee examining the college's nursing program said that it "reflects the school's philosophy of nursing and nursing education. They believe man is cared for in an attempt to restore him to a state of wholeness in harmony with God."

A report on Union College (Lincoln, Nebraska) reads, "There is considerable evidence that Union College lives by the objectives it has set forth." This school received nationwide publicity when it installed computer terminals in every dormitory room. Last year 34 Union College students served overseas in mission posts, and students at home painted homes for the elderly and handicapped.

Southern College of Seventh-day Adventists (Collegedale, Tennessee), with its new name that fully describes its denominational ties, continues to have many success stories of students who find God and are sharing His love. Ninety-seven percent of nursing students pass their State board examinations; more than 20 percent beyond the national average pass the CPA exam; nearly 100 percent of all education and theology majors are placed in jobs.

A portion of a report on Atlantic Union College (South Lancaster, Massachusetts) states, "The principles and values of the founding religious denomination remain strikingly evident. . . . Thus Atlantic Union College pursues its higher educational mission with the added wholistic concern that its students should become committed, thoughtful, and active Christians, prepared to live useful and purposeful lives that will serve the needs in the world and in the church. . . . There is no doubt as to the institution's basic religious commitment to the Adventist faith and its implications for wholistic learning."

An evaluating team commenting on Walla Walla College (College Place, Washington) wrote, "A common religious commitment expresses itself in a common dedication to service. . . . Interviews with students revealed that they are proud of the college and their departments. Most of them felt they were getting a good education within a framework of a Christian community." Walla Walla College also has an extensive student missionary program. A letter to the president from a student missionary gave this report: "After my regular working hours I have been giving Bible studies to 17 individuals, and I am delighted to tell you that in the next week or so four of them will be joining God's family through baptism."

Oakwood College (Huntsville, Alabama) has grown rapidly in the past few years and continues to spread its influence throughout North America and the world. The college recently had the exciting experience of having a visiting teacher become so impressed with her Oakwood experiences that she was baptized. Oakwood gained nationwide recognition when "the Association of American Medical Colleges reported that Oakwood ranks fourth among all colleges and universities in producing black applicants for medical schools and ranks eighth in the number of students accepted into medical schools."

The success of Andrews University (Berrien Springs, Michigan) as a Seventh-day Adventist university was recognized by professional observers in their recent report. They said, "Students at Andrews cannot be evaluated by the normal or average standards

applied in traditional colleges and universities. . . . The Adventist dimension is always present." The visitors noted that student life at Andrews was "significantly different" from that on their own campuses. They evaluated the Andrews faculty and staff as "unusually devoted," individuals who were "committed in the fullest sense of the word." Andrews students, they concluded, "came because they wanted a good education in an atmosphere in which they could develop their religious experience."

A report from Pacific Union College (Angwin, California) tells of the many indications of God's blessings. "There is evidence of a spiritual vitality that pervades the campus. This is demonstrated by the high level of student involvement in such activities as small, informal Sabbath schools and a variety of outreach programs both on and off campus. Currently the students are leading out in a revival series, and Friday evening vespers is the best attended student activity on campus." More than 27 student missionaries and Taskforce volunteers are serving throughout the world field, and more than half of the seniors polled in last spring's graduating class expressed readiness to serve their Lord and their church overseas as needed.

Canadian Union College (College Heights, Alberta), reporting through its president, spoke of the work being done. "Thanks to the campus ministries organization, which directs both on-campus and off-campus spiritual programs and witnessing activities, the campus is vibrant, alive, active, and involved. Both the students and faculty testify to God's blessings and leadership. Academically Canadian Union College is offering more degree programs through affiliations with our U.S. colleges and the teaching of transfer courses from the University of Alberta on their own campus. Recent legislative action opens the door for future degree-granting programs."

Columbia Union College (Takoma Park, Maryland) continues to take advantage of its unique location to serve not only the students of the Columbia Union but also the people of its community. In keeping with church educational philosophy, its cooperative education program combines work and study in a balanced program. A denominational evaluation team recently commended Columbia Union College for its "efforts in maintaining a distinct and unique SDA environment on campus."

The faculty at Kettering College of Medical Arts (Kettering, Ohio) are, to use one student's phrase, "people who care about me." "They are highly motivated as individuals by the number who have sought advanced degrees. They appear to be dedicated to do whatever is necessary to meet the needs of their students. . . . It must be noted that there are few two-year colleges where 80 percent of the clinical facilities can be reached by walking a short distance from dorm and classrooms to a superb hospital facility such as at Kettering College of Medical Arts. . . . The college has clearly and publicly stated purposes consistent with its mission. It is accomplishing those purposes."—North Central official evaluation report.

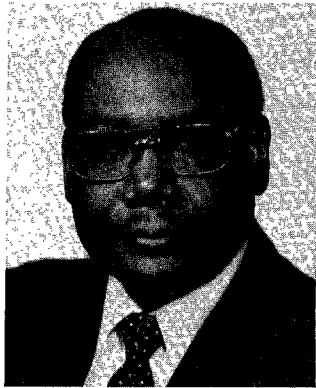
Loma Linda University (Loma Linda, California), the largest of our institutions, has approximately 5,000 students enrolled on its two campuses and in its seven professional schools. A recent accrediting team compiled this report on Loma Linda University: "Not only the commitment of Loma Linda University faculty—which is extraordinary—but its general competence deserves explicit commendation. . . . A dedicated faculty—especially one showing a similar religious belief. . . . Loma Linda University students appear to be remarkably loyal to Adventist principles and supportive of their institution."

There can be little doubt that these institutions are fulfilling their God-given task of educating our students in a distinctive Adventist way. Their work is Christ-centered and committed to the teachings of the church. They are Seventh-day Adventist colleges, united with the church in its task. There are no better places to obtain a Christian education. □

# The hour and the end

Sabbath morning  
sermon presented  
June 29, 1985

By G. RALPH  
THOMPSON  
*Secretary  
General Conference*



Ezekiel 7:6, "The hour has come, the hour is striking, and striking at you, the hour and the end!" (Moffatt).\*

Revelation 6:14, "And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places."

Revelation 18:1, "And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory."

These three texts form the basis of my message today. Those of us who have been staying abreast of world events will note the peculiar relevance, the fitting application, the linguistic accuracy, the descriptive journalistic expression of Moffatt's translation. The whole of Ezekiel 7 is a description of God's judgment upon Israel. In forceful, vivid language God tells the prophet about the judgments upon Israel because of its sins, disobedience, and abominations.

But the chapter seems peculiarly applicable to our day and our time. The prophet, by inspiration, seems to project himself into our day, for his words aptly describe the present worldwide situation. Never before in this world's checkered history have the chimes of the clock of time struck out the hours so distinctly, so ominously, so filled with warnings of a sudden holocaust of world destruction.

We can look at current events and see the handwriting on the wall. Instead of traveling the broad, sunlit paths of science to world brotherhood, prosperity, and the extirpation of disease, poverty, and hatred, we are using technology to ensure world destruction. What is wrong with humanity? Don't we have enough sense to avoid war and destruction? Haven't we learned from history that the evils of war leave a heritage of hatred, distrust, and corruption? And yet today we balance on a precipice, and the earth beneath our feet is beginning to shake.

There is something wrong with man. His heart needs a change, for it "is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." But neither refinement, nor education, nor civilization, nor science can change the human heart. The fruit is like the tree, and the tree is vile. The words of Jesus to Nicodemus come down to us today with all the accumulated

force of the ages: "You must be born again." The human race as it is today would ruin a perfect Eden in a few days. Why? Because imperfect people are not capable of living in or building a perfect society.

We are faced with a strange paradox. Instead of humbly seeking God, asking for forgiveness and a change of heart, man has an overwhelming sense of his own importance. He is content with a form of godliness while he denies the power thereof.

That is what makes the world situation so desperate. The do-it-yourself craze has hit us in every way. We are desperate, we are doomed, but we are also proud, boastful, blasphemous, unholy, treacherous, and pleasure loving. Need any help? No! we shout defiantly. We can do it ourselves! All we have to do is bring out the best that is in us, and we shall experience the power of positive thinking. We shall surmount our difficulties.

We live in an age of wonder and scientific marvel. Give us enough time, say some scientists, and we will banish poverty, pain, disease, and who knows, maybe even death itself. We are carrying out our design for the conquest of outer space. As one scientist put it, science has now opened the gateway to heaven. Belief in science is gradually taking the place of belief in God, for man is now worshiping at the shrine that he has dedicated to himself. What use is there for God when man can do it all by himself? But man's moral and spiritual achievement has not kept pace with his scientific progress. He is a scientific giant, but he is a moral and spiritual dwarf. Herein lies a strange paradox.

Take a look at our society today:

1. Teenage crime and juvenile delinquency are rampant and on the increase—the result of adult degeneracy.
2. Our age is characterized by pills—pills to keep us awake, pills to put us to sleep, and pills to keep us going.
3. There is corruption in business and labor, in politics and in the church.
4. Racial hatred and antagonism are on the increase. We are divided by color, race, and national origin.
5. There is international tension and distrust.
6. Weapons of destruction are being piled up. Humanity seems to be driven on by sinister spirits that are bent on its complete destruction. Here we stand, helpless and afraid as we near the brink of disaster.

More than 100 years ago the French scientist Berthelot listened to two young scientists predict that in 100 years men would discover the secret of the atom and would be able to light up the heavens like the sun. In response to their idea Berthelot said, "Gentlemen, when that time comes God will come down with His long white beard swinging a bunch of keys and will say, as we say in Paris at five o'clock every evening, 'Gentlemen, it is closing time.' "

It is indeed closing time. God has given people freedom to choose whom they will serve. In general, they have chosen the way of rebellion. Now it is time for God to bring down the curtain. But now just before He does this, He gives the world a last chance to repent.

## Our opportunity

In all this a challenge confronts us as Seventh-day Adventists. The hour too is striking at us, announcing the approaching end. Are we ready to face God's call to service

\* From *The Bible: A New Translation* by James Moffatt. Copyright by James Moffatt 1954. Used by permission of Harper & Row, Publishers, Incorporated.

in this critical hour? Are the issues facing us clear, and is our path of duty also clear? Never was a time in the history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church more propitious for the proclamation of the everlasting gospel than today. Never were people so prepared to listen to what we have to say as now. No longer are we viewed as dangerous fanatics when we talk of the end of the world. Two world wars and the sobering sad story of man's inhumanity to man during these postwar years have changed all that. And now people are asking, "Could it be that the course of human history is headed for an abrupt, fiery, cataclysmic end? Could it be that our proud boast of progress and achievement is but the hollow sound of brass and tinkling cymbal? Maybe the Adventists are right after all."

We have not followed cunningly devised fables. We have not concocted some strange theory that has no basis in Biblical fact. But rather, we declare on the authority of God's Word that this planet of ours is due for a visit from a man from outer space. Not from Mars, or Venus, or Jupiter, but from heaven itself. We declare the hour has come, and it is striking. The hour and the end.

Our message to this world is Prepare to meet thy God. Cast off the works of darkness. Put on the armor of light. What an hour in which to be alive! I would rather be living today than at any other period in the history of the world. This is the hour when God will stretch forth His hand to recover the remnant of His people. This is the hour when God is going to pour out His Spirit upon all flesh. This is the hour when God is willing to take young men and women whose lives have been dedicated to Him and make them blazing firebrands for Him.

The greatest days of the Advent message are just ahead. Thousands will be converted in a day. The gospel message is not to end until we have a second pentecostal visitation of Holy Ghost power. Revelation 18:1 applies to us, the Advent people today—"And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory."

Are we ready for the great things God is about to do? Do we sense the solemnity of the times to which we have come? Do we realize that the coming of our Lord is not just an expression but a reality? Are we living up to our name, Adventist? The Advent message is not going to die with a little whimper in some obscure corner. Under the power of the latter rain the Advent message is destined to end when every part of the world will be lightened with the glory of God. Daily thousands of men and women will take their stand with the commandment-keeping people of God, getting ready for the coming of the King. The prognosis for the future of the Adventist Movement is as bright as the promises of God.

### **Demands of this hour**

We are a people of destiny. We have a rendezvous with God in this tremendous hour. This is the Adventist hour of history. A time like this demands:

1. Complete consecration to God. We have no time for halfhearted service.
2. Complete loyalty to the church. We must restudy the fundamentals of the Advent message and reassure our minds that it is the truth.
3. Renewed zeal in preaching this message. Our pulpits

must ring with the distinctive features and truths of Adventism.

4. A revival of true godliness among us. This is our most urgent need.

5. Praying for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

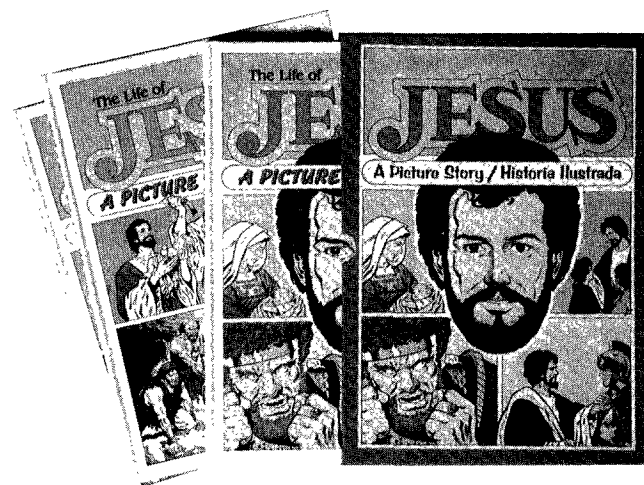
"And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places" (Rev. 6:14). In this hour to which we have come, when the scientists are talking about conquering outer space, we are startled by the fact that the heavens are split wide open not by man going up, but by the Son of God coming down!

Mountains shake at their foundations and are moved out of their places. The islands of the sea simply disappear. The Son of God is on His way from His throne in heaven, back to this world to claim His church, His remnant people, as His own. The gospel has been preached, and God's complement has been made up. "Here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus" (chap. 14:12).

And so we reexamine some of the great truths concerning His second advent, so that we need not be deceived when Satan makes his last great deception, that of impersonating Jesus Christ Himself.

1. 1 Thessalonians 4:15: "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a *shout*, with the *voice* of the archangel, and with the *trump* of God." The announcement will be public.

2. Acts 1:11: "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you . . . , shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." This same Jesus. Not a dispensation, not a



# The Life of Jesus

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spirit, but the Lord Himself. This same Jesus who was crucified. This same Jesus who was literally raised from the dead. This same Jesus who said, "Handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." This same Jesus, who in the clear sight of His assembled disciples was taken bodily up into heaven and received into a cloud. This same Jesus will come again.

3. Luke 9:26: "He shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels." 2 Thessalonians 1:7, 8; "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God." The whole heavens will flash with the awful splendor of His divine presence. Revelation 1:7: "Every eye shall see him."

When Jesus came the first time most of the world took no notice, but this time His coming will light the world. Before, He was a sacrifice on Calvary; now He is a judge upon a great white throne. Before, His enemies crowned Him with thorns; now He is crowned King of kings and Lord of lords. Before, He came in humility and weakness; now He comes with power and great glory.

The first advent of Christ was like the slow dawning of a summer morning. The vast machinery of the universe felt no jar as the Son of God stepped across the threshold of humanity into the life and experience of those He came to redeem. Heaven was stirred from center to circumference, and the attention of the heavenly host in all the far-flung dominions of the universe was centered upon that stupendous event. But earth was quiet and calm and still, and very few knew or realized that the greatest event in all the world's history was taking place. But the greatest demonstration of power in all the history of humanity will take place when Christ comes again.

His coming will be a literal, personal, visible, public coming. It will be the most public event of all the ages. No televisions will be needed to flash the news of Christ's coming to the world, for the glory of the returning Son of God will envelop the earth. The King of kings will travel in the greatness of His strength, and the wide-spreading skies will open. The great Captain of our salvation will marshal the hosts of the Lord.

Christ is not only coming *sometime*; He is coming *soon*. He is coming quickly. He is at the door. His feet are on the threshold. His hand is on the latch. Soon and suddenly it will come, for the hour is striking—the hour and the end. When the world is dreaming of pleasure, peace, and safety He will come. As the blinding glare of lightning suddenly stabs across the heavens, Jesus will come. Yes, soon and very soon, we are going to see the King.

### Why is He coming back?

1. Jesus is coming back to receive His people unto Himself.

2. He's coming back because He promised, and He will keep His promise.

3. He is coming back to raise the blessed dead (1 Thess. 4:16; John 5:28, 29).

4. He is coming back to translate the living righteous (1 Thess. 4:17). "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye" (1 Cor. 15:51, 52). What an hour of triumph that is going to be! "O

death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

5. Christ is coming back to take us home to glory. He will take us to that land where dreams come true and where we'll never grow old.

6. He is coming to redeem the earth, to restore all things, to reign forever and ever.

7. Christ is coming to put an end to sin. The saints will reign with Him a thousand years, and when the thousand years are passed, the great white throne judgment will take place. Sin and sinners will be no more, and God's people will have peace for eternity.

"There, immortal minds will contemplate with never-failing delight the wonders of creative power, the mysteries of redeeming love. There will be no cruel, deceiving foe to tempt to forgetfulness of God. Every faculty will be developed, every capacity increased. The acquirement of knowledge will not weary the mind or exhaust the energies. There the grandest enterprises may be carried forward, the loftiest aspirations reached, the highest ambitions realized; and still there will arise new heights to surmount, new wonders to admire, new truths to comprehend, fresh objects to call forth the powers of mind and soul and body."—*The Great Controversy*, p. 677.

The question is Are you ready for Jesus to come? Are you living the kind of life that testifies for Him every day? For the promise is sure—He's coming again!

### Time for action

It is time for action. It is time for us as Seventh-day Adventists to rise and shine, for the light has come and the glory of the Lord is risen upon us. As James S. Stewart of Edinburgh said: "Your task is to confront the rampant disillusionment of the day and smash it with the cross of Christ, and shame it with the splendor of the resurrection." And I add, shatter it with the glorious news that Christ is coming again. For when all hope seems to have vanished from the sky and the best efforts of statesmen to ensure world peace have miserably failed, when our world seems engulfed in the blackness of despair, then that glorious light from heaven will appear, shattering the darkness of despair, announcing the dawn of a better day. Then riding down the blazing skies with His heavenly armies will be Jesus Christ coming back to settle the great controversy.

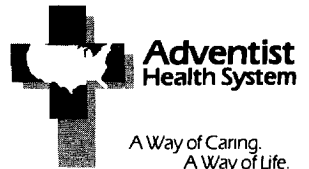
In World War II, Col. Warren J. Clear was asked by his superior officer to leave Corregidor just before it fell. He was to board a submarine at midnight. In his orders were these words: "Be ready to go aboard. No personal baggage." When you and I embark for heaven there will be no personal baggage—only the righteousness of Christ.

How is it with you today? Are you ready for Jesus to come? Have you cleared the King's highway? Do you know the joy of sins forgiven? Do you know the blessedness of communion with God day by day? Jesus stands ready to exchange our sins for His righteousness, our weakness for His strength, our hypocrisy for His honesty, our hatred for His love. Now is the moment of decision. Jesus Christ is standing here asking you to make this decision for time and eternity. If you have made it before, renew it now. If you've been slipping, won't you make that complete consecration and unconditional dedication now? For the hour is striking, and striking at you—the hour and the end. □



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