

ADVENTIST REVIEW

WEEKLY NEWS AND INSPIRATION FOR SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

JULY 4, 1995

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in Christ

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The SDA Student Association Choir of Soweto, South Africa, performed as part of the GC president's report.

in Utrecht

MONDAY, JULY 3

There are many reasons why thousands of members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church come to General Conference sessions. Some come as delegates to participate in the process of conducting our church's business. Others come as guests for the inspiration, fellowship, and worship of such sessions.

While I can use only words here to describe the gorgeous pageantry, the fascinating festivals of mission, the colorful national dress from so many countries, and the drama of a denomination in session, the excitement of Utrecht continues in *real* life. And everyone absorbs and responds to the surrounding events according to their expectations.

Many delegates come to do the business of the church.

Empowered by their local church organizations to do the sacred work of the church, delegates today listened, agreed and disagreed, spoke to issues, and voted on a variety of items.

Always highlighting the business sessions are the Nominating Committee reports. This morning the report included names for the election and reelection of division presidents. I wonder how high the stress level rises among those standing for reelection. Expectation is high as thousands of delegates and visitors listen for the names of those who will lead the work in their areas.

Herb Larsen, secretary of the Lake Union Conference, with headquarters in Michigan, suggested that unity in decid-

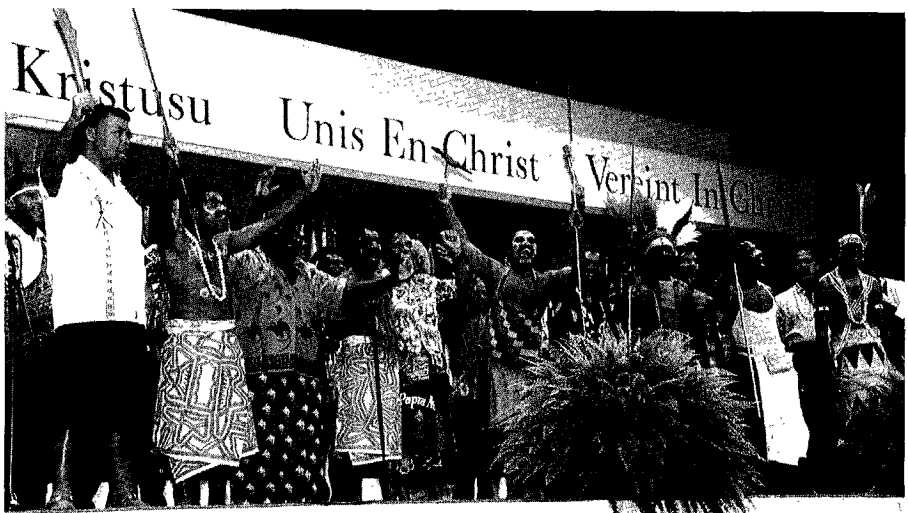
ing church governance is critical at a time when so many GC Constitution and Bylaws amendments are being proposed. And the changes that may be voted do not affect only one area of the world, but the entire church. That is why such proposals must be voted only here at such sessions with worldwide representation.

"We have to cooperate together to make policies that will enhance the church everywhere. That is the blessing of the diversity of the church—the fact that we are different and yet we work together for mutual benefit."

Thousands come for the fellowship.

The friendship factor is obvious every moment during a session. First, there's visual recognition, then running and screaming as friends converge with arms flung wide. Hugging ensues, and once again the bonding of friends in Christ occurs. Renewing longtime friendships is just an added benefit to a GC session experience. In fact, this friendship factor often holds us together as nothing else has or will.

A few years ago Gary and Alma DeBoer left for service in Africa. There were tears at parting time and they wondered what the future would hold. Now they've come here to Utrecht on their way to another position. Tears flowed freely as they said goodbye to those they had learned to love in Africa. At the end of this session their tears probably will flow again when farewells are said to their fellow church workers from



South Pacific Division representatives made an enthusiastic entrance for their division's evening report.

By Myrna Tetz
Vice President for Advancement,
Canadian Union College



The Wedgewood Trio from California, U.S.A., led the congregation in singing old gospel favorites.

the Eastern Africa Division.

And so the circle of friends grows and we begin to understand, only slightly, the capacity of God's love for every human being—billions on earth alone!

Some come to learn.

People come to learn from others and also share concepts, plans, ideas, and implementation methods. Hundreds of exhibitions beckon quick looks or longer stays as individuals walk through attractive displays.

One display features the Council on Religious Freedom, a nonprofit educational corporation dedicated to the protection of religious freedom. It includes the principles of truth in its religious liberty witness. Although it is not directly tied to the church, all officers are Seventh-day Adventists. When the church is concerned about an issue but does not wish to go public, the church still has a voice.

There are two "grave concerns in the area of religious liberty," suggests John Stevens, president of the council. "In some European countries, religions that predominated before Communism moved in are taking over. Church members may now have less freedom than they did before Communism failed. Another is the effort, in the United States, to establish religion through government by the religious fundamentalists."

In a Women's Ministries presenta-

tion, Dr. Faye Whiting, who has a faculty practice at Loma Linda University with an OB-GYN specialty and is a clinical instructor at Loma Linda University, presented "Women's Health." She is a 30-something baby boomer with a commitment to her work.

"Life is a passage," stated Whiting. "At each stage, from adolescence to our mature years, the way we deal with issues can have a profound effect on our lives, our future, and our families."

Some are here to minister to others.

More than 11,000 people eat meals prepared daily in four areas of the session's food service directed by Millie Kurtz, R.D., president of Food Systems International. She has 335 employees and 300 volunteers on staff. Kurtz says it was quite a challenge to involve these volunteers from 10 countries and many languages as a functioning team within a very short period of time!

Some are eager to hear reports of the progress of the gospel.

Pageantry was the byword as the Euro-Africa and the Eastern Africa divisions were featured on Sunday evening. One of the reports from the Euro-Africa Division described the impact of the book *Success* written by John Graz, director of the Youth and Communication departments. Members contact schools and present to

them copies of the book and ask, "Would you like the author to speak to your students?" As invitations are given, Graz presents the topic using philosophy, psychology, sociology, and the Bible. Graz says, "When 'success' is approached in this manner, the Bible answers seem normal to the negative image many people have of themselves."

Meetings follow in the evenings with attendance averaging 300, many of whom are the young people from the schools. Sometimes the audience is 75 percent youth. Invitations are then given for subsequent meetings and Bible studies.

Brad Thorp, associate ministerial secretary of the Euro-Africa Division and director of the Evangelism and Church Growth Institute, has been active in training pastors to train members through spiritual renewal, prayer, emphasis on the Holy Spirit, and practical training. From there, members are encouraged to reach their communities to help people in practical ways—through health seminars, for example. Public evangelism meetings usually follow.

In Romania our church gave great emphasis to a national evangelistic campaign featuring Revelation seminars. The goal was 1,300 seminars, but 500 pastors and 9,000 church members conducted more than 9,300 meetings with 75,000 people attending. They baptized nearly 10,000 people during a two-year period.

In Bucharest, we had seven churches. One year later, following the Church Growth Institute seminar and evangelistic campaign by Brad Thorp, we have 14 churches, with plans to build more.

After the seminar, Romanian evangelist Lucien Christescu organized a Volunteer Missionary School. This is a three-year training program for church members (5,000 volunteers in 60 locations). Now the government wants to accredit these volunteers to become Bible teachers in the public schools of Romania. Thorp describes this as "the most powerful impact of the Institute."

Eastern Africa Division members



Young people seem to be everywhere at this session. This young person is part of the 10-member Bandura musical group from the Euro-Asia Division.

covenanted to penetrate 896 unentered territories. "Because we cannot go into some of the Muslim countries and preach Christianity," explained Gary DeBoer, the former treasurer of this division, "the work must begin with a project that assists the people rather than something that goes against their religious beliefs." A dental clinic was established in one unentered territory called Djibouti, and now we have eight baptized members.

In many countries in this division, women from our Dorcas organization dress in uniform and go door-to-door to do visitation and give Bible studies. In Zambia, where 40,000 women are engaged in this work, the church has grown the fastest.

"They went beyond the usual humanitarian service," says President L. D. Raelly, as he pays tribute to these dedicated members. "They were the mainstay of evangelism and, in some places,

outdid the men in their gospel-proclaiming activities."

Some are blessed, specifically, by the music.

Reveling in almost heavenly music by groups, thousands believe the privilege of praise is at the heart of the session. The London Adventist Chorale and the Malagasy Choir sang for the evening meeting and we were thrilled with their ministry of music.

The Wedgewood Trio, which was young 30 years ago, was also warmly received as they presented old favorites such as "Morning Has Broken" and "We Are Climbing Jacob's Ladder." In retrospect, and as the audience clapped following their singing and playing, we might remember the early sixties when many church members did not accept these then-young men and their music ministry.

Now, here they are, at the biggest church convocation in history, presenting their musical talents. Not only are they here, they receive applause! We might ask if there is something we could learn as we consider the youth of the nineties and their ministry to their peers.

Throughout the complex, music is everywhere. Additional concerts happen in the lobby areas, and performers provide music at the booths in the exhibition area. This afternoon a crowd gathered at the Adventist Development and Relief area. A group sponsored by ADRA Peru was playing beautiful music on panpipes, a samponia, a charango, and a flute. They come from the highlands of Peru and call themselves Adviento of Peru.

Some come for the privilege of worship.

Praying, singing, and listening to God's Word with other Adventists who

may not even speak one's language is a dream come true for many. One lady from the Ukraine waited 50 years to come to a General Conference session. Those who have the privilege of weekly worship with family and fellow members can hardly imagine the ecstasy she has experienced as she shares these worship privileges with thousands.

This morning at the worship hour, Rose Otis, director of the Office of Women's Ministries at the General Conference, presented one of her favorite themes, "United in His Love/Fellowship." She suggested that we are created to demonstrate God's love in our own way, preferring one another. At the conclusion of her message, she invited the audience to stand "if you want, above gender, culture, and ethnicity, to be a child of God, first."

Although the expectations of the thousands attending this 56th General Conference session are as diverse as each personality, there is a common bond among believers, which, if we work at it, can last through eternity. ≡

Session Schedule

MONDAY, JULY 3

7:30 a.m.

Devotional—David Nyekwere

8:30 a.m.

Business session—*Church Manual* amendments

Women's meeting

Nominating committee Report #4—secretariat, treasury, and division presidents

11:00 a.m.

Devotional—Rose M. Otis

1:30 p.m.

Business session—*Church Manual* amendments and constitution and bylaws

Women's seminars

3:00 p.m.

Division caucuses meet to recommend division leaders

6:30 p.m.

Music program

International Festival of Mission

Southern Asia Division

Southern Africa Union

Africa-Indian Ocean Division

The People's Session

BY WILLIAM G. JOHNSON

Editor, Adventist Review

In personal remarks before presenting his President's Report at the opening of the 56th General Conference session, Robert Folkenberg pledged that all business would be "open and fair." He invited delegates to weigh each item carefully and to vote according to their convictions.

The delegates obviously have taken him at his word. As I write on this afternoon of Monday, July 3, we are nearing the close of the third day of business discussions, and not one of the major constitutional amendments has been disposed of.

Neither our daily *Bulletins* nor the GC TV telecasts can come close to capturing the dynamics of discussions here. Each day we print the Proceedings—a summary of the speeches on the floor that comes to us from a team of secretaries and editors in the General Conference Secretariat. As interesting as this account is, it is heavily abbreviated—to attempt to print each word of the 5½ hours of discussions every day would require not a *Bulletin* but a book.

The Proceedings in *Bulletin* #3, for instance, run for 3½ pages and summarize the debate of Friday afternoon, June 30. On page 15 they list individuals who spoke pro and con the item in question, but give no details of their speeches.

Nor can video clips adequately portray the business sessions. Delegates from all around the world are having their say. They are speaking thoughtfully, at times eloquently. Nothing is being rubber-stamped—hardly anything has yet passed! This is the people's session.

The constitutional agenda is ambitious, with many and weighty items. And any amendment requires a two-thirds majority to pass—something that will not be easy to get unless these free-thinking delegates have been satisfied.

Take one item that reverberated during the debates last Friday, Sunday, and today—the issue of appointment or election. The 1995 Annual Council recommended that only General Conference departmental directors be elected at a General Conference session. Associate departmental directors of the General Conference and division department directors would be elected at the Annual Council or division year-end meeting following the General Conference session. Further, only General Conference department directors would be members of the General Conference Executive Committee; currently

General Conference associate directors and division directors are members, although the latter rarely if ever get to attend.

After hours of spirited debate on this matter Friday and Sunday, with departmental personnel voicing strong opposition, the item was tabled yesterday. Those with concerns were invited to make their case before the Constitution and Bylaws standing committee. More than 50 people appeared, and the committee sat for seven hours late into Sunday night.

This morning (Monday), the committee has been meeting to consider how it should respond to the various suggestions it heard on Sunday.

As I write, Dr. Calvin Rock, chair of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee, has just appeared on the platform to present a recommendation from the committee to the session.

Although it deals with only one particular—General Conference associate department directors—he says he thinks it may be "the key to unlock the door of this impasse." The recommendation is a compromise: General Conference associate department leaders will be elected at GC sessions but will not be members of the General Conference Committee.

Debate begins on this recommendation, but soon a delegate calls for the question—meaning for closure of discussion and a vote on the motion. Closure of discussion requires a two-thirds majority to pass, but it carries easily. The vote on Dr. Rock's recommendation follows immediately; it also passes overwhelmingly.

One small step, but perhaps a big one for the final outcome. Still unresolved is the issue of division department leaders. And even larger matters—the composition of the General Conference Committee, the proposed cap on the number of delegates to future General Conference sessions, and so on—remain to be discussed.

Two final observations: delegates seem more sophisticated in parliamentary procedure than I have noticed heretofore. Amendments, points of order, points of privilege, tabling, calling for the question—chairmen have to be alert, cool, and informed. They must be fair and also be perceived as being fair.

With all the lively participation, however, the spirit of the discussions so far has been commendable. Politeness and grace, even between those disagreeing sharply, has been the hallmark of this 56th—the people's session.

ANALYSIS

United in His Word

Joel N. Musvosvi
*Ministerial Secretary,
Eastern Africa Division*

The church that hopes to be the agent of completing the work of the gospel commission in this generation must also demonstrate the uniting nature of the gospel in a divided world. If the church cannot demonstrate in its life a sense of genuine community, it loses its credentials to stand as a herald of the kingdom of God.

The church is God's own creation. It is not a human institution existing by the genius of its human leadership or membership. It is not self-generating, self-sustaining, or self-motivating. It is not self-governing, self-propagating, or self-supporting. It is not merely an organization; it is primarily an organism. It is living. It is active and relational and responsible. It is growing and maturing. It has a Head that directs its activities. The church is the body of Christ.

The book of Ephesians expands our horizons in understanding God's eternal purposes for the church. Our salvation goes beyond our personal benefit to a larger, more exalted corporate purpose. The church exists for the glory of God. God's purpose is to bring all things together into unity under Christ (Eph. 1:10). It is crucially important for us as the church to appreciate this. And so in Ephesians 1:15-23 Paul prays for the church to have wisdom and understanding of this fact: "I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints" (verse 18, NIV). Paul is saying that when God called us to salvation He had a certain hope, a definite purpose, in mind. Paul prays that our eyes may be opened and our hearts may be enlightened to perceive and comprehend this divine purpose.

The Basis of Unity in the New Testament Church

The theme of unity is apparent all through the

New Testament. In the setting of the Last Supper, Jesus said to His disciples, "Abide in me, and [let] my words abide in you" (John 15:7, RSV).^{*} His word abiding among us is the foundation, the organizing center for our unity. Later that same night Jesus prayed to His Father, "I have given them [your] words" (John 17:8, RSV). Then He pressed on, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth" (John 17:17).



The Loma Linda Academy Symphonic Band performed at the beginning of Sabbath observance on Friday evening, June 30.

On the day of Pentecost a new experience came to the church. Peter, speaking on behalf of the church, did not say, "This feels so good. Don't you see how it can help our mission?" He tested the new experience by the Word of God: "This is that which was spoken by the prophet" (Acts 2:16). And he proceeded to quote from many more passages of Scripture. The new experience must be validated by Scripture and judged by Scripture.

The New Testament church began to experience growth. What was the basis of their life and mission? Verse 42 tells us that they continued in the apostles' teaching—the Word of God. Their fellowship was based on the Word of God. As the

*Devotional
message
presented
Sunday
morning,
July 2, 1995*

church began to move into Gentile territory there were new challenges. Peter himself was hesitant to go to Cornelius's household. When he arrived and discovered how God had opened the way by a special vision to Cornelius he said, "The Lord gave a message to Israel" (see Acts 10:36, 42, 43). Not past practice or convention but the Word of the Lord was to function as the common foundation. When the church stands on the platform of a "Thus saith the Lord," it will not be subject to all kinds of pressure. We can then demonstrate oneness in a divided and fragmented world.

Paul shows the steps that God has taken to accomplish unity of all things in Christ. First, God has by grace reconciled to Himself individuals (Eph. 2:1-10). Next, God reconciled redeemed individuals to one another by breaking the separating walls by means of His death (verses 11-22). Finally, God has joined these reconciled individuals into His body, the church. Paul calls this a mystery that was revealed to him (Eph. 3:1-6). God desires to display His manifold wisdom to the heavenly realms through the church. This means that the church is the arena for divine wisdom and grace—the showcase to the universe of what

God set out to do through the ministry of redemption.

Paul graphically paints our situation outside of Christ: "As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, . . . you followed the ways of this world. . . [You] were by nature objects of wrath" (Eph. 2:1-3, NIV). Our situation was helpless and hopeless. We were dead in trespasses. Is there a more hopeless and helpless state than being dead? We were dead. We could not act on our own behalf and for our own benefit. We were dead. From the human point of view nothing could be done. We were dead—spiritually lifeless. Our case was closed.

But please turn to verse 4. It opens with the word "but." What a small word, yet what a great meaning. Here this word introduces a sharp contrast between the situation of our dead past and the present reality. Notice that God is the source of this contrast. "But God."

This is the gospel we find in all the Scriptures. God always breaks into the human situation of hopelessness and helplessness. You may be dead, "but God." You may be a great sinner, "but God." You may be powerless, "but God." But God, "who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions" (Eph. 2:4, 5, NIV).

We are a miracle of God's loving grace. We were dead, but God has made us alive in Christ. It does not matter what our station in life was. We were

handpicked. Practically all the candidates were high on the list of weaknesses and low on virtues. They were educationally disadvantaged and socially underdeveloped. As we look at them more closely we notice a basic weakness. They could not form a team. They were too incompatible in background and temperament. No human policy or governance could keep them together for long. How could they form the nucleus of the church?

The demonstration of the power of the kingdom is vividly illustrated in the call of Levi-Matthew and Simon the Zealot to be disciples of Jesus. As a Zealot, Simon must have adhered to the maxim "No king but Yahweh, no law but Moses, no tax but the Temple tax." Simply put, the authority of Rome must be cast down by the sword. Levi-Matthew, on the other hand, was a publican, a sell-out to the Romans. Could two individuals anywhere be more incompatible than these two? Yet Jesus called these two to become part of the same apostolic team. Fully aware of their backgrounds, He called them. One writer has suggested that on some nights Jesus may have had to sleep between these two to prevent one from pushing a sword into the belly of the other. How could they

ever be part of the same team? Could Jesus ever safely leave them alone and go to heaven? Could a church built on such a foundation ever survive even for a few months?

The presence in Jesus' team of Levi-Matthew and Simon the Zealot was a declaration that a demonstration of the kingdom was under way. No one who knew anything of their incompatible backgrounds, seeing them as part of one united team, could fail to witness a Power at work, breaking down old walls of partition. No one could fail to witness the new leaven that was at work in this simple ordinary dough, permeating and effecting changes in the whole lump. A new alien Power was at work, breaking down walls, bridging the gaps, and bursting old wineskins. "For he is our peace, who . . . has broken down the dividing wall of hostility" (Eph. 2:14, RSV).



Members of the Bulgarian choir sing at an impromptu recital outside the convention center.

dead. We may have been educated and wealthy and sophisticated, or illiterate, poor, and simple, but we were dead. The great fact of our past life is that we were dead. This goes against every grain of our human pride. But our pride must be laid in the dust. This is of fundamental importance. In the church we all, without a single exception, share a common background.

But now we have been made alive in Christ Jesus. God's saving grace finds us on level ground—dead in sin—and brings us to life through one common door—grace. How then can I look for a higher status in the church? The distance that God traveled to come and redeem us is so great that it is ridiculous to talk about "our great social differences." Outside of Christ we were on level ground—dead and lost. In Christ we are on level ground—saved by grace.

Let's take a look at the team Jesus

The church is a place of contrasts; it is a place in which you find the most unlikely associates. As the gospel invaded Gentile territory this new creation continued. The slave and master barriers were shattered. On Sabbath the

master and the slave stood together singing together the same hymns to one common Lord. They sat together listening to the same word of the Lord. They knelt together praying to the same heavenly Father. The master stooped low to

wash the slave's feet, and they drank together from the same cup. God was making a new humanity—a new creation. It was no mere patchwork. The old world, blinded by sin and hatred, could not understand this. Taking from the broken pieces of an alienated and divided world, God was demonstrating the powers of a new kingdom.

The apostle introduces the imagery of the household of God in Ephesians

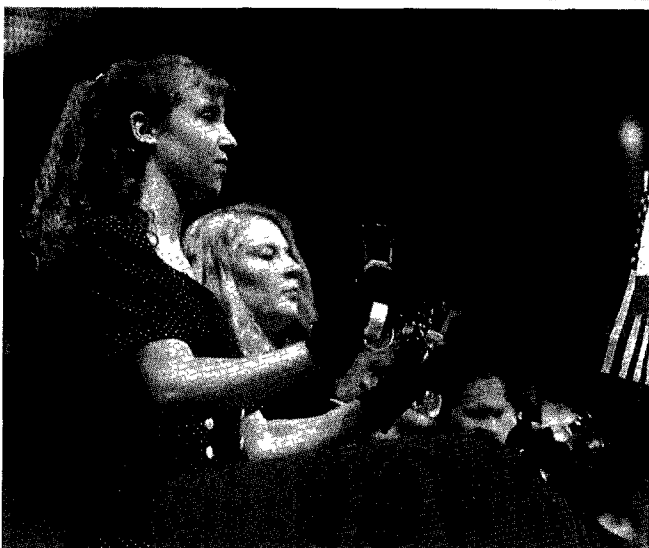
2:19. We are brothers and sisters in God's family.

Let me introduce you to my biological family. I come from a family of seven brothers and one sister. We are all different. Some are tall while others are short; some are big while others are small. We have different temperaments and personalities. But we are one family. Our differences help us to make unique and important contributions to the overall joy and richness of our family.

So it is with the church. With all our cultural diversity we are one family of God. God made many colors—Black and White and Brown and all other colors. We are richer and more beautiful as a church when we affirm all the segments of this great multicolored and multicultural family. We are one great family moving together to one great glorious destiny.

*Bible texts credited to RSV are from the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyright © 1946, 1952, 1971, by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. Used by permission.

GG SNAPSHOT



The Pinetree Academy Bellringers (from Freeport, Maine), directed by Doris Krueger, presented a musical program.

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Do Missions Pay? The African Story



By J. J. Nortey
President

The Adventist message was received in Africa early in the Adventist Church's history. In 1888 someone picked up a bundle of Sabbath tracts dropped by a ship's passenger in the fishing village of Apam in Ghana (then known as the Gold Coast). That load of tracts ignited a light that has been handed down with unabated strength and conviction.

But there was an even earlier planting. According to an entry in the *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia* (1976), Hannah More, who worked in Liberia, received the Adventist message while on furlough in the United States. On her return to Africa, prior to 1888, she shared her newly found faith with those around her before the sponsoring missionary society discovered her activities and withdrew its support.

To the Akans* of the Adventist faith in Ghana, the Sabbath message reinforced their own belief in the God whose holy day has been Saturday—"Menemeda" ("the day of the I AM")—from time immemorial. When new believers requested that missionaries be sent them, K. G. Rudolph and E. L. Sanford came out in 1894, at the head of a long line of missionaries who have since served with distinction throughout Africa.

The Cost

What has been the cost of missions in Africa? We may summarize it as follows:

First, there is the toll in human lives and agony arising from unsanitary living conditions, poor or nonexistent communication facilities, and disease—notably malaria. Lonely graves in Aba in Nigeria; Axim in Ghana; Lulengele, Songa, and Kisangani in Zaire; and Gitwe and Rwankeri in Rwanda forcibly

remind us of the great sacrifice of men, women, and children. During the past few years I have personally grieved the death of members of "our dear missionary family."

I recall Dr. Thomas Biggs, whose family was assigned to the Kwahu Hospital in Ghana. The very first Sabbath morning, Mrs. Biggs was snatched by death, never reaching the church she was to worship in for the first time in Africa. A similar fate met A. P. Cooper, who, immediately after his marriage, was sent to Rwanda as treasurer for the Adventist University of Central Africa. He and his wife went to Tanzania for a local leave, but Brother Cooper never returned to Mudende.

Yvonne Eurick served several years as a nursing sister in Ghana and Nigeria. While serving at Jengre in north Nigeria, she was fatally injured in an automobile accident while on her regular "bush visits."

Dr. William Richli, the "flying doctor," worked at Songa Hospital in Zaire, a place no one wanted to go. He too lost his life in a road accident. It is indeed painful to continue. There were many more! We cannot forget the more recent loss of Gilsemberg Araujo, a student missionary in Cape Verde. After several postings in the Sahel Union, he was going to a new position in Lomé when he was killed in a military uprising.

Many missionaries have fallen in love with the African people, and with the quiet and serenity of life on the continent. But

through it all, they've had to grapple with many negative social and psychological factors.

Also, we cannot forget the financial sacrifices of our brothers and sisters that made missionary work in Africa possible. Think of the churches, schools, hospitals, and a myriad of other projects operated for more than a century in Africa. What an enormous cost!

One outstanding characteristic of our missionaries to Africa was their exemplary selflessness. Their concern for personal comforts or the comforts of their families never stood in their way. The primary motivating spirit was that souls were perishing and must be saved at whatever cost. Without immunization or inoculation they faced malaria, polio, tetanus, smallpox, chicken pox, and tuberculosis. Their footprints in the sand tell their story of dedication.

As I attempted to retrace the steps of the early missionaries to the territories of the AID, I found that they always pioneered into the interior of the countries. In Sierra Leone they did not stop for the comforts in Freetown, but went to deprived Bo, more than 100 miles east. By ship they came to Abidjan in Côte d'Ivoire, but chose to start work at Bouaké, 150 miles north. In Ghana they went 200 miles into the interior at Agona and Bekwai. In Nigeria it was Erunmu, far from Lagos, the capital. In



Many delegates and guests come to the GC session wearing their national costumes, including Chief Caleb Oyelese, the Honorable Minister of Special Duties, the Presidency, Nigeria, and his wife, Elizabeth.

Cameroon they chose Nanga Eboko. The same pattern showed in Zaire, Rwanda, Burundi, and Madagascar—even though all these countries were organized under different division administrations.

A New Administrative Structure

The phenomenal growth of membership on the continent of Africa led to various calls for a division organization headquartered on the continent itself. In 1979, pursuant to this, a historic summit was held in Abidjan, the capital of Côte d'Ivoire. The meeting recommended the setting up of two divisions on the African continent.

The Eastern Africa Division (EAD) was to be headquartered in Harare, Zimbabwe, and would be responsible for the English-speaking countries south of the Sahara, with the exception of South Africa and those in West Africa. The Africa-Indian Ocean Division (AID), headquartered in Abidjan, would administer the French-speaking countries south of the Sahara, and the English-speaking countries in West Africa.

A Division Is Born

On April 17, 1980, at the General Conference session in Dallas, Texas, the AID was officially voted into existence. The occasion brought joy, hope, and a new vision to the 32 countries that made up the new unit. The first president was Robert Kloosterhuis from the U.S., and his two officer lieutenants were Gray Valleray from Martinique (secretary) and J. J. Nortey from Ghana (treasurer).

In 1980 the membership of the division was about 320,000, spread through countries with official languages of French, English, Portuguese, and Spanish. Hundreds of African languages and dialects compassed the division's territory. And the General Conference financed the needed infrastructure to make the new division work.

The establishment of the division office in Africa, coupled with the inclusion of indigenes in its administration and the blessing of the Lord, has led to the great strides in soul winning in the decade and a half of the division's existence. The tremendous interest and participation of our lay members in the

development of the church is overwhelming. No longer do they see the church as a "foreign thing."

Division Infrastructure

Enormous financial and human investment has been made by the church in the AID since 1980:

1. The Division Office Complex

The choice of Abidjan (with its comparatively high cost of living) as headquarters was an act of great faith on the part of leaders. On the plus side, however, we've had the blessing of a stable government, low inflation, and good communication facilities and airline connections.

At considerable expense the church purchased three city houses in the prestigious l'Ambassade area in Cocody, Abidjan—with the head of state and members of foreign diplomatic missions as neighbors. The three houses purchased were converted into a modern office complex with lots of office and ground space for all division offices, as well as ADRA/AID and Adventist World Radio-Africa.

2. Adventist University of Central Africa, Mudende, Rwanda

By 1980 the need for a university for French-speaking Africa was high on the agenda of the church. This was initiated by the Trans-Africa Division. With a donation of fertile and extensive land and a promise of a government charter—the first of its kind in Africa—construction work was started in earnest, guided by the enthusiastic leadership of both Dr. Elton Wallace (the university's rector) and the General Conference administration. By the grace of God, graduates from this university have already positively impacted our work in the French-speaking areas.

The creation of the Sahel Union Mission helped to focus on the great needs of a predominantly Muslim territory. Such unentered areas as Mali, Niger, and Mauritania received attention. The number of missions and mission stations has grown from two in 1980 to 10 in 1995. Valley View College, a new tertiary institution resulting from local initiative, is favorably responding to the region's needs.

3. A United Division

In 1980 the division was only a con-

glomeration of distinct units surfacing out of three separate previous divisions. Today, even though much remains to be done, quite a lot has happened for the unification of the division to the glory of God.

Today's Diary

There have been and still are political struggles in practically every one of the more than 30 countries of our division, at varying degrees of intensity and duration. The Rwanda carnage is undoubtedly the worst, taking the lives of nearly 1 million people (including probably 10,000 Adventists) and causing displacement of hundreds of thousands. It has totally disrupted the operations of the Adventist University of Central Africa.

Then there was that never-ending war in Liberia. Sierra Leone too was engulfed in a destructive and crippling conflict that has caused the closure of our foremost medical center—Masanga Leprosy Hospital.

The clouds of conflict now hang over Burundi, oil-rich Nigeria, and mineral-rich Zaire. And epidemiologists tell us that in certain areas of our territory some 30 percent of the population are HIV positive. Famine is rampant, and diseases resulting from deprived economies are prevalent in practically every one of our countries. And the list goes on and on!

Gains in Spite of Crises

The Liberia war dispersed believers throughout the subregion. And this has resulted in the work being started in previously unentered Guinea and in the northern regions of Côte d'Ivoire. Churches in Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, and Nigeria are "benefiting," in a big way, from the zeal and musical talents of the Liberian worshippers. The positive result of this "mix" continues to grow.

Global Mission Works

Apart from the accidental presence of refugee Seventh-day Adventists in unentered areas, the church, through much effort, sent a worker to Mauritania, AID's strongest Muslim stronghold. Funds are available for a program to help the population give up smoking, drugs, and alcohol. The main targeted



Delegates and visitors hurried toward morning worship services inside the vast Jaarbeurs convention complex. It is the largest convention ever to meet in Utrecht.

groups are women and children. A Better Living center is to be built in Nouakchott. Appreciable progress has been achieved in Mali, Niger, Chad, and Mayotte in the Comoros. And efforts are taking place in all other unions aimed at their unentered areas.

New Conferences: The Indian Ocean Union Mission groomed the Réunion and Central Malagasy missions to the status of conferences. The Nigeria Union Mission did likewise for the West Nigeria and the Rivers missions. Many more fields are heading toward financial independence and conference status.

Membership Growth: On December 31, 1993, the AID passed the 1 million member mark, joining three other world divisions with a million or more members. This growth was achieved despite the political, social, and economical upheavals. The Lord is still in charge of His work.

Education and Training: Because of our firm belief that *education precedes progress* in any society, we put much money and effort into helping our worker force train appropriately for

service. We are providing graduate education in theology and religion in order to provide teachers and qualified pastors for our growing city churches. Cooperation between Andrews University (AU) and the Adventist Seminary of West Africa (ASWA) has made it possible for more than 200 students to obtain second degrees. Also, arrangements have been completed for ASWA to offer an M.A. in religious education. Soon ASWA will be the second institution in the division territory to be granted a government charter to provide courses up to the doctoral level.

Arrangements have been concluded with Griggs University (Home Study International) for distance learning. This was aimed at helping augment the flow of workers from AUCA, ASWA, and Valley View College (VVC). About 10 young people have benefited from this arrangement, and some have already enrolled in the ASWA/AU M.A. program.

The division offered subsidies to workers to participate in the Ghana Institute of Chartered Accountants training program at VVC in Accra, Ghana. Arrangements have also been completed

with the AU School of Business to provide its M.B.A. and M.S.A. to be offered in strategically located centers through distance learning.

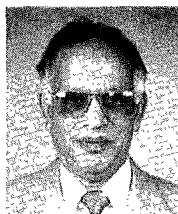
More Beyond

We recognize that there is more beyond. The message needs to go to the Kerguelen Islands and the British Indian Ocean Territory. The work in the Islamic countries needs strengthening. A concerted effort needs to be made to establish a presence in the north of Nigeria. The educational programs need strengthening. Vocational and technical training need to be emphasized in order to change the face of our employed membership. All that and more await attention as we work together to get ready for the return of our Lord.

We are confident that in the same marvelous manner in which the Lord has been with us in the past, He will continue to bless, guide, and protect His own in the AID for the future. Maranatha!

⁴ The Akans are a tribal group in Ghana.

Exploits in the Power of the Spirit



By **M. E. Cherian**
President

As we review the mission and work of the church in Southern Asia during this quinquennium (1990-1995), we humbly and gratefully acknowledge the leadership and blessings of God upon His church and its ministry. With the psalmist we joyfully confess, "This is the Lord's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes" (Ps. 118:23).

Evangelism

One of the primary tasks of the church is to evangelize—to preach, to teach, and to baptize those who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. We clearly see the hand of God in the evangelistic thrust of the church during these past five years. We have moved from the annual two-season evangelism program to year-round evangelism.

From the traditional practice of church pastors being responsible for evangelism, we now have all workers—administrators, departmental directors, teachers,

office workers, etc.—getting involved in evangelism. As a result, church growth has been remarkable during this period. Baptisms have increased from 7,737 in 1990 to 15,660 in 1994. This is an increase of 7,923 over the 1990 figure, or more than 100 percent. (See graphs on baptisms and membership.)

Global Mission

Global Mission has played a significant role. Southern Asia has about 450 population segment areas of 1 million that did not have any Adventist presence in 1990. The Adventist Frontier Service was initiated in 1991 as part of the Global Mission program. It is staffed mostly by young people and covers 91 target areas. At present we have 200 volunteers and have established companies or churches in 84 areas.

Role of Laity

Equally significant is the role of our laity in soul winning, especially through

Sabbath School Action Units. More than 800 people were brought into the message through the work of the Sabbath School Action Units.

One woman in the North Tamil Conference became interested in the message and attended Sabbath school. When the time came for her to be baptized, she brought with her six other women whom she was instrumental in bringing to Sabbath school and for Bible studies.

P. K. Gayen, Sr., and M. P. Agarwal in Calcutta are two laymen who are very active in spreading the gospel message. Gayen has been conducting evangelistic meetings. Though he is 74 years old, as a result of his work nearly 60 people were baptized in Calcutta in January of this year. Prior to this he had brought more than 100 people into the church.

Samuel Masih, one of our literature evangelists, is very active in soul winning. His work resulted in 212 people accepting the faith. We thank God for such laity and literature evangelists.

Centre for the Study of Hinduism

In 1992 the Centre for the Study of Hinduism was set up to work out a relevant strategy to reach our Hindu brothers and sisters with the gospel message. Today Southern Asia has a population of more than 900 million, nearly 85 percent of whom are Hindus. So far our work has been primarily among the 2.5 percent who are Christians.

In 1993 three villages—Ammapatti, Valayapatti, and Pannikuntu—in the South Tamil Section were chosen for an experimental evangelistic program. The entire population of these villages consisted of Hindus. At the end of the four-month program, there were 194 baptisms. Today we have a church in each of these villages. Seventh-day Adventists are the first Christian group to establish churches in these villages.

The centre conducted an evangelistic meeting in another Hindu center, Koviloor, in the North Kerala Section in 1993. This resulted in 82 baptisms. Among them was a Hindu priest. Today he is not only rejoicing in the Lord Jesus Christ but also actively witnessing for the Master.

Early in 1994 an effort was held in the Hindu village of Chikathorepalya in the Karnataka Section. As a result, there were

GG SNAPSHOT



Fellowship crosses all boundaries as delegates and guests come from around the world, including the Southern Asia Division.

18 baptisms. It seems a new day is dawning for our work among our Hindu friends. We have received requests for evangelistic meetings from several places.

Centre for the Study of Islam

India has the third-largest Muslim population in the world. Muslims constitute more than 11 percent of the nation's population and number close to 100 million. During 1994 eight Muslims were won over to the message. Prior to this five Muslims accepted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour. At Muvatupuzha in the North Kerala Section 20 Muslim women are taking Bible studies and attending church. It is our hope that they will be baptized soon.

The main purpose of these two centers is to contextualize the gospel message in keeping with the culture and heritage of these religious groups. We hope that some evangelistic models will emerge from these experimental evangelistic efforts that will be relevant to the people and effective in reaching them with the present truth.

Megacity Evangelism

We have become increasingly concerned about our gospel outreach in the large cities of Southern Asia. Bombay with its 12.5 million, Calcutta with 11 million, Delhi with 8.4 million, Madras with 5.4 million, and many other cities with a population of 2 million or more present a gigantic challenge to the church and its mission.

The Madras Evangelistic Region was formed in 1993 to concentrate in and around the city of Madras. As a result, we have been able to establish two new churches and have had 554 baptisms so far.

The Bombay Evangelistic Region came into being in 1994 and presents a great challenge. Thus far we have had 34 baptisms. We plan to conduct some major evangelistic programs in this area.

Neglected Areas

For one reason or another, in the past certain states and areas have been neglected in the matter of evangelism. These have become special areas of concern to us.

About 35 years ago we established medical work in Nepal, but evangelism and soul winning have not been very

effective in this area. In 1991 the Himalayan Region was formed, and today the work is progressing well. We now have four established churches, with nearly 300 members. In 1994 we had 80 baptisms. This nation, which until recently prided itself as the only Hindu monarchy and kingdom, is now responding in a marvelous way to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Bhutan is a small state in the northeastern region of India and east of Nepal. It is totally closed to the gospel work. We began working among the Bhutanese people who cross over the border to India daily. As a result, more than 20 Bhutanese people have been baptized and plans are under way to build a church on the Indian side for these believers. Thus, we now have Bhutanese Christians in the state of Bhutan, and they are witnessing for the Master.

The state of Sikkim, between Nepal and Bhutan, is an Indian territory in which we had no work. Many years ago we had started a small medical unit there, but it was closed down after a few years of operation. In 1994 we placed a pastor-nurse couple with the hope of reviving the work in this area. Recently an evangelistic meeting was conducted and 14 people were baptized.

Kashmir is a predominantly Muslim state in which we hardly had any work. However, we have been able to establish a school and initiate an outreach program in Leh Ladakh, the northeastern part of this state.

The followers of the Sikh religion are concentrated in the state of Punjab. Up to 1993 we hardly had any Adventists among the Sikhs. However, during the past two years there has been very encouraging response from the Sikh people to the gospel message, and last year we had six baptisms.

Pastoral Workers' Wives

Church pastors' wives have played a substantial role in the evangelistic outreach program of the church. During 1993-1994 unemployed pastoral work-



Delegates, including former Southern Asia Division president Gerald Christo (right), line up at the microphones—marked "for" and "against" or "point of order"—to make comments regarding the proposed changes in the GC's Constitution and Bylaws.

ers' wives were given training in gospel work. A plan was initiated to have them do part-time gospel work, and this has proved to be a blessing. They have entered into this program with dedication and enthusiasm, and were instrumental in bringing 293 souls into the church. They are involved in giving Bible studies and in other activities of the church.

Nurturing the Believers

There has been perceptible progress in the matter of stewardship and self-support. On February 27, 1993, R. S. Folkenberg, the General Conference president, inaugurated the Mizo Conference—the first conference to be organized in Southern Asia. Then on January 11, 1995, the North Tamil Conference was inaugurated in Tiruchirapalli, southern India.

Four other sections—Maharashtra, Gujarat, Meghalaya, and South Tamil—have initiated plans to attain conference status within the next two years (see map).

An increasing awareness of the place of stewardship in the nurturing and maturing process of the believers individually and of the church collectively is evident. There has also been a greater commitment to more faithful and careful management of the financial resources of the church.

Community Outreach

ADRA has played a major role in the area of community outreach during this period. In 1991 a devastating earthquake hit Uttar Kashi in northern India. ADRA responded by helping to rebuild that village. At the time of the 1993 Annual Council in Bangalore another major earthquake struck about 190 miles (300 kilometers) east of Bombay. In a generous response to this tragedy, the world church raised more than \$300,000 to rebuild a village in Latur. ADRA also provided timely assistance during the plague epidemic in Surat, 130 miles (200 kilometers) northeast of Bombay. Many other relief projects were undertaken during this period.

Two industrial training schools are under construction at Rajahmundry in Andhra Pradesh, southern India, and Champhai in Mizoram, northeastern India. These institutions will go a long way in helping the youth in these areas to learn trades that will benefit them.

The division operates a network of 296 schools scattered throughout the country. As a result of their influence,

Adventists are fairly well known in many parts of the country.

The 10 hospitals in our division are committed to our health-care message. A new and modern hospital building in Bangalore is nearly complete. Giffard Memorial Hospital in Nuzvid, Andhra Pradesh, one of our oldest hospitals, is being rebuilt to offer modern facilities. A new hospital is under construction in Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu, southern India. Plans are under way to put into operation a clinic located in Aizawl, Mizoram. We hope that the ministry of these hospitals will greatly support and strengthen the mission of the church.

Radio Programs

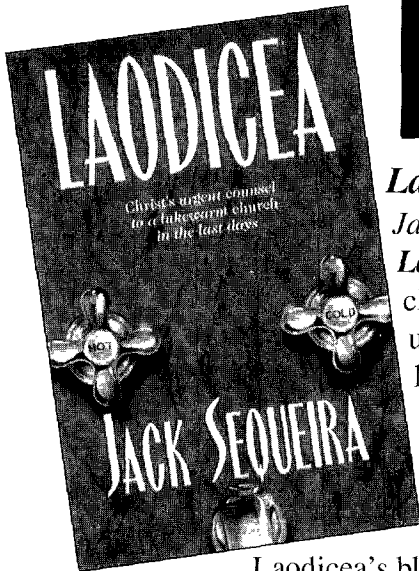
We have introduced three new radio programs—in Nepali, Kanarese, and Punjabi. With these broadcasts, most of the division field will be well covered by our radio ministry. The Punjabi and Nepali radio programs are of special significance, as they cover two areas of the field where our work has hardly penetrated.

Our Commitment

As one moves around the field, there are two main concerns expressed—evangelism and self-support. The church administration is committed to promoting these two facets of our work. We must attempt great things for God and expect great things from God.

Our limitations have been many and serious when compared to the challenges we face and the task at hand. Yet during these past five years we have had abundant evidence of what the Lord can do and will do among us and through us if we commit ourselves to Him and to His mission. When the Lord calls and we respond, He enables. This is a blessed experience.

We are constrained to confess that “we have nothing to fear for the future, except as we shall forget the way the Lord has led us, and His teaching in our past history” (*Life Sketches*, p. 196). In that assurance we press forward with faith and confidence to finish the work that is committed to us and to wait with the blessed assurance that the Lord will come soon to receive His people. ☞



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By **D.W.B. Chalale**
President

Southern Africa Union Conference

The year 1994 will go down in history as a year when South Africa moved away from its apartheid policies and became a democratic country with the government being chosen by the majority of the people.

Many people expected a political explosion in South Africa, but we thank God that things did not happen that way. Many Christians of different denominations prayed that God would intervene in the affairs of South Africa. Many Adventists also prayed earnestly for this. We believe God did intervene.

The year 1992 will also go down in Adventist history as the year in which the two churches we had in South Africa became one. Unfortunately, for many years the Adventist Church had been affected by the politics that ruled South Africa; we had two unions divided by color and race. But the Lord, in preparing the church for Jesus' second coming, brought the church together. We thank God that this time the church was ahead of the government for at least two years.

When the two unions came together and became one, the membership of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in southern Africa was 64,182. Today, after just two years, the membership stands at 68,230. We thank the Lord for that.

Since 1992 there has been much work in merging the two unions. Each union, with its own fields and conferences, was also divided on racial lines, although they occupied exactly the same area. To avoid future problems and external criticism, it was felt that the conferences should also merge.

At a special session on November 11-14, 1994, the Natal Field and the Orange-Natal Conference merged and

became the Kwazulu-Natal Free State Conference. Many challenges face us in such a merger.

But the Lord has already worked a miracle for South Africa, and we believe He will do the same for our church in South Africa. We solicit the prayers of our brothers and sisters around the world that the church in South Africa may keep abreast of the times and fulfill its mission so that Jesus may come.

Global Mission

For the first time in the history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa the Voice of Prophecy lessons have been translated into the Tsonga language. Michael L. Mhangwana volunteered to translate the materials.

Brother Ebersohn, a retired teacher, gave his time to help erect church buildings in this area.


The Helderberg students also came all the way from Cape Town, more than 1,000 miles (1,600 kilometers), to help build the churches in the Venda area.

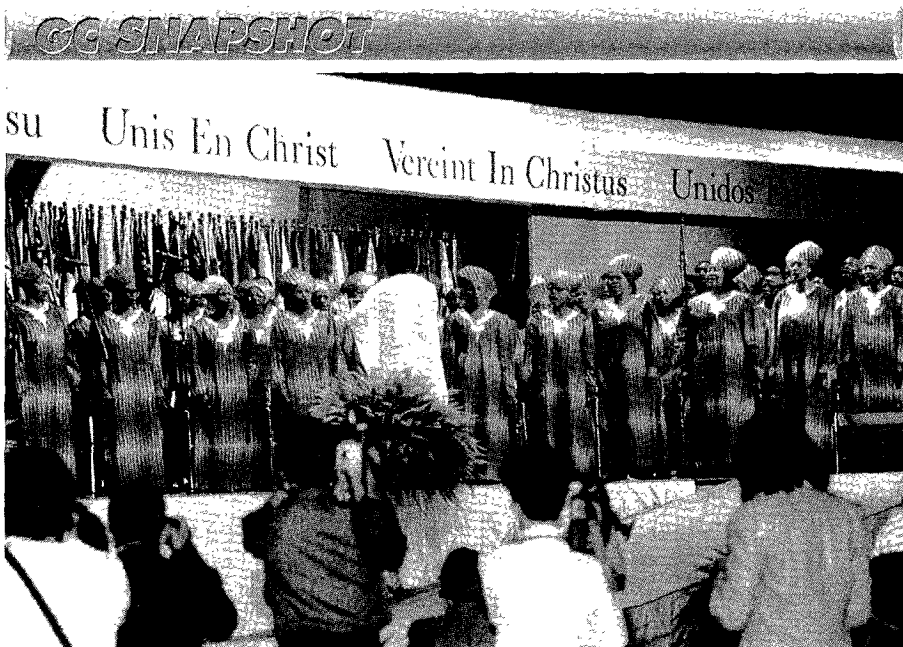
Global Mission is being taken seriously in the Cape area, Southern Conference. In at least 13 places where we had no Seventh-day Adventist presence, we now have one. Some young workers have now been placed in these areas to follow up.

At the time of writing, at least four of these companies have been organized into fully fledged churches. Another company in a place called Alexandria has a membership of 50 baptized people.

In North-East Namibia Field, eight areas where we had no Adventist presence have been entered. We now have an organized church in one of these areas.

Among the San three companies have been formed since the launching of Global Mission in 1992. In a place called Omega 1, there are five baptized San. In Omega 2 there are 11 baptized San. In Omega 3 we have 60 baptized San. We thank the Lord for these precious souls.

As soon as the mergers are complete, it appears that the church in South Africa will be ready to go on with its mission in full swing. Remember the church in South Africa in your prayers. 



The Seventh-day Adventist Student Association Choir of Soweto, South Africa, performed as part of the General Conference president's report.

Images

fresh faces

1. A group of French-speaking children enter a garden setting for cradle roll Sabbath school. —Photo by Ron Quick/ANN.

2. To decorate their Sabbath school environment, juniors and earliteens spraypainted the outline of their hands on a painted backdrop. —Photo by Kurt Fattic/ANN.

3. Edward Paatof performed with the Loma Linda Academy Symphonic Band for the youth Sabbath worship service. —Photo by Jason Wells/ANN.

4. A drama group from Nordrhein, Westfalen, Germany, performed a drama for the juniors and earliteens Sabbath morning. —Photo by Kurt Fattic/ANN.

5. From Collegedale, Tennessee, a group of 22 youth, under the direction of Cynthia Spears, provided music for a business session. —Photo by Joel Springer/R&H.

6. On opening night the Young Ambassadors from Pasay Adventist Academy in the Philippines delighted delegates and visitors with their music. —Photo by Joel Springer/R&H.



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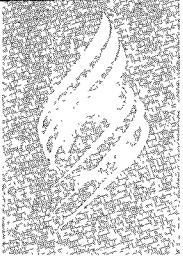


4



5





Fellowship—The Gift of God's Love



ROSE OTIS
Director, Women's Ministries, General Conference

*"And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity" (Col. 3:14).**

Jonathan was alone in a city filled with old friends. A sinner discarded by the authorities. A paralytic existing in a living death. He had been a fisherman just like many others, a hardworking, fast-living fisherman. Then one day he noticed the shaking. It had begun in his hands, making it difficult to control the nets filled with fish. Then it grew worse, uncontrollable. His friends kept their distance. Maybe his condition was contagious.

Finally the boat owner asked him not to come back to work. "Jonathan," he said as he handed him his last pay, "I think you had better go see the rabbi. Maybe he can help."

The rabbi examined him and pronounced a "death" sentence. "Jonathan, God gave you a pure and healthy body, but you have thrown it to the prostitutes and have picked up one of their diseases. You are cursed by God for your sinful choices. Go away!"

Jonathan, broken and shaking, went to a tiny gray hut on a hill beside the sea. He was alone, an outcast on the edge of a city filled with old friends.

Then one day he heard about Jesus, a carpenter who turned water to wine and hatred to love. Some said He had the power to forgive sins.

Jonathan's heart raced with hope. Maybe, just maybe, God could forgive him. Maybe heal him! Maybe . . .

Then one morning an incredible thing happened. Three of his old friends rattled the door of his hut. "Jonathan, we've missed you. Fishing's just not the same without your laughter and friendship. We brought you some of last night's catch."

They baked the fish and talked as they ate. About boats, fish, women, families—and about Jesus.

Jonathan asked about Jesus. "Has He healed anyone?"

"Oh yes, many." And they told of healings—of

crippled limbs, of blinded eyes, and of sores—all made whole again by the touch of Jesus.

"Has He forgiven anyone?" Jonathan's voice was soft, yet edged with hope.

"One—a leper."

Jonathan's heart skipped a beat. Leprosy couldn't be healed without forgiveness. Maybe it was possible! If God could forgive and heal a leper, He could also forgive a paralytic. Maybe!

Then one day they came with some old sailcloth, two oars, and a length of rope. "Jesus is at Simon's house today, and we're taking you to Him!" They placed him gently on the cloth and then tied the oars into a makeshift litter for their friend.

They went directly to the front door of Simon's house, but they found it impossible to get through the huge crowd.

They tried another street, only to be turned back again. And again. And again. There seemed to be no way to Jesus.

Except the roof. They ran through the outdoor cooking area and up the stone steps to the roof. Strong hands pulled at the tiles. The roof gave way with a joyful scraping sound. In a moment they lowered the stretcher bearing the paralytic.

Jesus looked at the paralytic. He saw his faith, his friends' faith. And He said, "Son, your sins are forgiven." The words filled every corner of Jonathan's mind.

"Forgiven! Forgiven at last!"

Jonathan looked up and saw Jesus smiling at him. And the shaking stopped. In a moment Jesus had made an outcast whole. Through the broken roof Jonathan heard his friends shouting for joy!

Friends. Friends who never give up on you. Friends who stand by when the world has turned its back on you. Friends who will do whatever it takes to bring you to Jesus, when you can't make it on your own!

Fellowship Today

Mark recorded that story of friendship (Mark 2:1-11). And Paul speaks of the fellowship that is ours: "Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and

Devotional message presented Monday morning, July 3, 1995

early loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity" (Col. 3:12-14).

The fellowship of friends was the difference between life and death for Jonathan. And we've all known examples of extraordinary Christlike fellowship in every culture represented here today!

I experienced some of the richest fellowship in my lifetime when my husband, Harold, and I worked among our believers in the former Soviet Union. Prior to this, however, I had never thought about the possibility of fellowship with believers living in the Soviet Union. Everything I'd read or heard about this nation described invisible barriers that kept people apart. When we

first traveled to the former Soviet Union in the mid-1980s, those invisible barriers seemed to surround not only the country but individuals as well.

But what a contrast when we mingled with our spiritual brothers and sisters. It seemed that a hunger for fellowship had intensified among our believers through the years of isolation. Now the very sight of brothers and sisters from abroad unleashed a flood of emotion.

I remember one weekend in particular. It was the first time we were able to spend the night in a private home. As we entered through the front gate, I noticed that the garden was impeccable and the house sparkled. The snow-white sheets had been turned back in the main bedroom, and we fell asleep soon after our heads hit the pillows.

The next morning I woke to the sound of a tinkling bell. I tiptoed across the room to an open window. Through the lace curtains I saw two women. An elderly sister was seated on a small stool, milking the family cow. The woman of the house was preparing a feast in large white pans on the porch.

Suddenly my stereotyped opinions

vanished as I understood what it meant to be one in Christ. To be God's child first transcends ideology and nationality; it looks far beyond gender and skin color. These women and I were "sisters." Children of the living God, created to demonstrate His love to a dying world—each in our own way, in our

searching for her biological mother. After a year of searching, no success. What Tammy didn't know was that her mother too had been looking for her for 20 years.

There was one other thing Tammy didn't know. Her mother worked with her at a small grocery store. One day

Tammy's mother overheard her talking to another worker about the search for her mother. The next day when Tammy laid a copy of her birth certificate on the counter of the grocery store, her mother laid an identical copy beside it. With disbelief Tammy and her mother fell into each other's arms and wept. The loss of 21 years of mother/daughter relationship gave way to the joy of love that comes in knowing they belonged to each other.

Our experience may not be as intense as Tammy's and her mother's, but every day our lives do touch others who, like Jonathan, long to be accepted and supported by Christian

friends. They are hungry for Christlike fellowship.

Fellowship That Bridges

In the video series *Hidden Keys to Loving Relationships* Gary Smalley, a popular marriage and family lecturer, describes what happens when marriage partners "close their spirit" toward one another. He tells how early in a relationship couples come together with an expectancy of oneness, with a longing to be able to speak and not be misunderstood, with a desire for a relationship built on trust. But if the marriage partners fail to honor one another's uniqueness as children of God, if harsh words are spoken, or, worse yet, if fidelity and trust are broken, the wounded partner begins to "close their spirit" toward the spouse.

Dr. Smalley illustrates this by using the palm of his hand—open when the relationship is warm to receive good things in marriage; closed if the relationship begins to deteriorate. The spirit begins to close when the once-open hand becomes a fist.

Sadly, this phenomenon happens in



The halls of the Jaarbeurs Center rang out with "Lift Up the Trumpet" as a Romanian choir shared the fervency of their faith in song.

own corner of the world.

Our Christian love had slumbered silently in a corner of our hearts through wars and human barriers that encompassed land, sea, the skyways, and even the post office and telephone lines. But at last the evil one lost his grip, and love began to express itself across the Soviet Union in a way that has cheered the Christian world like nothing else in modern history.

"Dobra Ootra, Sistra," I said, parting the curtains. "Slava Bogoo, Sistra," my Moldovan sister responded, lifting her apron to dry tears that ran down her cheeks. "Slava Bogoo, ["Glory to God"]," she repeated.

This was a thrilling experience in my spiritual journey. One that I will take with me throughout eternity!

Although this incomparable fellowship with my sister in Moldova happened thousands of miles from my home, you too can find similar fellowship close to home. But you must look for it.

You may find someone like Tammy. Tammy was given away for adoption when she was born. But at 21 she began

the church family as well. In the fellowship of Christ there is room for the uniqueness of culture; for honored, healthy traditions; for differences of personality and temperament. But there is no room for hatred, for destructive words or behavior, for exclusion or rejection. And so the theme of 1995—Year of the Adventist Woman, “An Affirmation of Women and Mission”—speaks to a commitment of diversity in our church.

Fellowship in Christ goes deeper than ideology, deeper than ethnicity, deeper than skin color or gender or social status. It’s a God-given love that is capable of bridging all these differences in a

Greek believers, who filled their minds with the words and love of Christ, were more interested in sharing the gospel than in arguing with their Jewish friends.

Before long the citizens of Antioch noticed this change in their behavior. They observed that followers of Jesus no longer wounded one another with words and accusations. They were no longer jealous. Rather, they related as brothers and sisters—as a loving family. And the people of Antioch called them “Christians.” In Antioch, discipleship came before culture.

The news of this multiethnic community of faith in Antioch reached Jerusalem, and the apostles sent Barnabas to investigate the Antioch experience. Barnabas witnessed the power of God at work. He saw the tearing down of existing barriers and the opening of some fists. He described the miracle as “the evidence of the grace of God” and encouraged the Antioch church “to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts” (Acts 11:23).

As Seventh-day Adventists we need the fellowship of the Antioch congregation. We need “to remain true to the Lord.” We can’t

afford to place culture, tribe, or gender before our Christianity. It’s too easy to think and live as Tutsi or Hutu, American or Russian, Bosnian or Serb. We must instead live first as Christians, as Adventists, as partners in the worldwide fellowship of the Creator.

Faith and Fellowship

In the story of Jonathan, “Jesus saw their faith.” Not just the faith of Jonathan, but also the faith of the friends who loved him. The friends who

wouldn’t give up until they had brought him to Jesus.

Christian fellowship begins when we know that we are sons and daughters of God. But Christian fellowship at its best is when we choose to eliminate anything that comes between us and God, or between us and each other.

I shared Smalley’s video with my daughter and her husband. They too were impressed by his emphasis on the importance of keeping our spirit open toward those we love. One day my daughter overheard her husband having a conversation with their 3-year-old daughter. After a little scolding from her father, Heather began to walk away from him, when Dan suddenly remembered the illustration of the open and closed spirit.

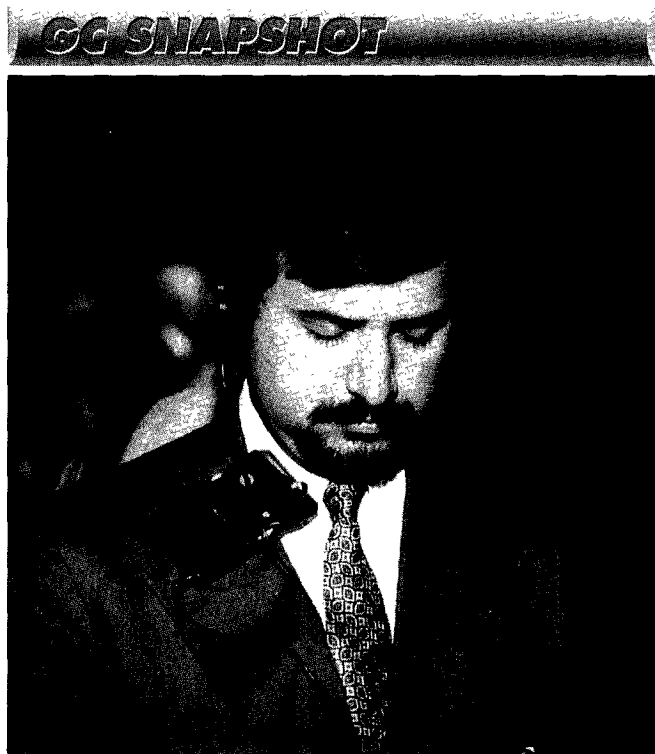
“Heddy, come back here,” he said. Looking down from his six-foot-five-inch position into her downcast little face, he said, “I’m sorry. I can see that Daddy was about to close your little spirit, wasn’t he?” She shook her little blond head up and down. “Sweetheart,” he continued, “your daddy loves you, and he never wants to close your little spirit, OK?”

“OK,” she said, not fully understanding the “open spirit” and “closed spirit” concept.

But she knew that her daddy was telling her, “I love you. I never want to say anything that would cause you to doubt my love for you.”

My brothers and sisters, this is the kind of commitment we need to make: to love one another, to live together in unity because of what God has done for us. Through the blood of Jesus God has given us forgiveness. Through that blood we are called the children of the living God and brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ. Through that blood we are enabled to have an uncommon loyalty among us. Wherever we are, in small towns and villages or in one of the crowded megacities of the world—such as São Paulo, New York, Nairobi, or Bombay—we need to live as God’s witnesses. What better witness can we be than to tell the world that we love our Lord and that we love each other? ☞

*All Scripture passages in this article are from the New International Version.



Throughout the session delegates and visitors often are in prayer asking for God’s blessings and the success of the GC session.

miraculous way to make us one. Like what happened in Antioch.

The Antioch Miracle

Soon after Pentecost the gospel was taken to Antioch, but it was given only to Jews at first. Then a few disciples shared the good news with Greeks as well. The Greeks loved it! And they accepted Jesus Christ.

Miracles began happening in Antioch. As Jewish believers focused their attention on Jesus they forgot that those across the aisle were Greeks. And

Publishing Department



By **R. E. Appenzeller**
Director

The plan for the publishing ministry of the Seventh-day Adventist Church was conceived

in heaven. Responding to his wife's vision in 1848, James White began a publishing program that today encircles the globe.

From that humble beginning in the living room of the White home Seventh-day Adventists now operate 56 publishing houses producing literature in more than 200 different languages. Some institutions, including those in Brazil and the Philippines, operate around the clock five and a half days a week to ensure a constant flow of literature.

In North America, Christian Record Services fulfills a unique role in reaching hearing- and sight-impaired persons. They print materials in braille and books for sighted children and blind parents. These books contain braille print along with regular text and pictures so that blind parents can read to their sighted children. Signed or captioned videos and books in Easy English are available for the hearing-impaired. CRS is also conducting programs for blind persons in the Asia-Pacific Division and cooperates with our publishing program for the sight-impaired in Switzerland.

World Editors' Council

A world council for editors was held in Frankfurt, Germany, in October 1993. Editors from every division attended this meeting and shared ideas on how to better communicate and improve the content of our publications. Their motto

was "The Written Word Endures"—even in the computer age.

More than 20,000 literature evangelists are taking literature to homes and shops around the world. It can truly be said that the sun never sets on this "book" army. The Philippines, dubbed the literature evangelist capital of the world, has 4,913 literature evangelists, more than any other country.

In February the Seventh National Philippine Literature Evangelist Convention was held in Baguio, North Philippines, with 2,300 licensed and credentialed literature evangelists along with leaders and guests attending. The convention center in Baguio was packed to capacity. Sales by Philippine literature evangelists in 1994 totaled more than US\$10 million.

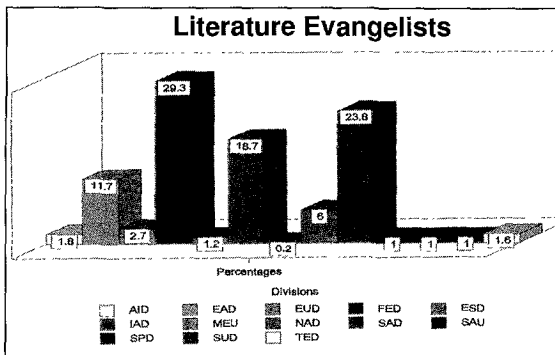
The Asia-Pacific Division counts 7,000 literature evangelists and leads all divisions in the total number. Inter-America and South America boast 4,467 and 5,634, respectively. Sales by literature evangelists during the last quinquennium amounted to US\$472,229,480. The top literature evangelist in sales is Glen Striemer of British Columbia. In the past two years alone he has sold more than \$500,000 worth of books. Soul winning is always uppermost in the minds of literature evangelists. Their goal is to prepare people for the kingdom of God through literature and personal contacts. As a result of their work, 179,546 persons have been baptized this quinquennium.

Truly a Mission Work

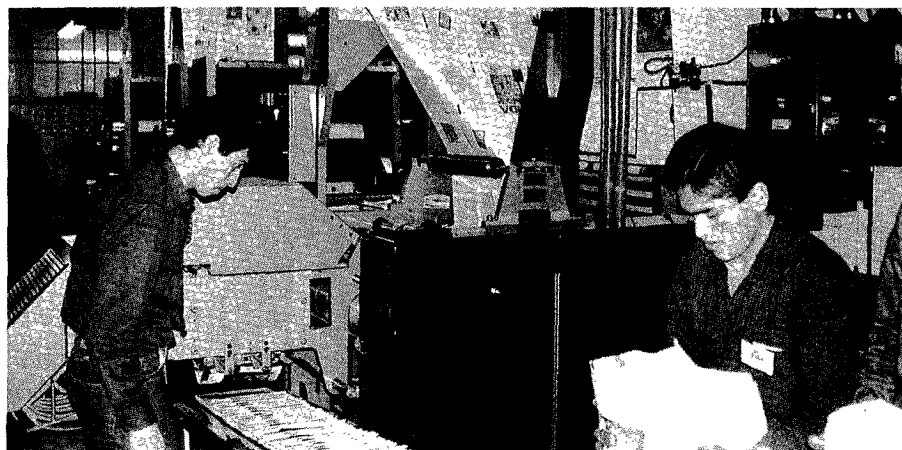
Literature evangelism truly is missionary work, and we make no apology for selling our literature, because many people will find the truth in no other way. In addition to selling, literature evangelists distributed 23,076,066 pieces of free literature and enrolled



Glen Striemer



1,039,968 people in Bible courses. Approximately 20,000 young people participated in the scholarship program



The Adventist Buenos Aires Publishing House in Argentina



Russians can buy Adventist literature from the Mobile Book Center in Moscow.

by selling books and magazines during holiday periods. Many would be unable to attend our schools without the benefit of literature evangelist scholarships. This ministry also helps young people to develop people skills and engage in soul winning.



The Publishing Department provides numerous training materials.

During this quinquennium four new training programs were developed by the General Conference Publishing Department. They include a textbook and syllabus on closing the sale; *Happy Homes*, a course designed to strengthen the home and family; an intermediate sales course; and one for leaders. In all, the department offers six courses for the development of professional literature evangelists. These courses are used in various literature ministry seminaries, which give three to four weeks of professional training to new recruits and advanced courses for career workers.

Adventist Book Centers continue to

provide literature to our own people for nurture and evangelism. These book centers help to equip the saints for service by providing the complete line of SDA publications.

In North America the Adventist Book Center sales exceed that of literature evangelists.

The General Conference subsidizes

the translation of Ellen G. White books into various languages. During this quinquennium 207 books were translated. This was made possible by a subsidy of US\$1,361,535 from the General Conference and matched by divisions and unions. *Steps to Christ* continues to lead the way as the most translated book in the church. It has been made available in more than 142 different languages. *Steps to Christ* was published in the Kinande language just a few months before the civil war broke out in Rwanda. Several thousand of these books were shipped into Kigali, the capital, destined eventually for Zaire. When the war broke out, communication and transportation broke down completely, and the books never reached their destination. Since Kinande is also spoken in Rwanda, it is hoped these books will do their appointed work in that country.

Ellen G. White books are particularly popular in Russia. *The Great Controversy*, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, *The Desire of Ages*, and *Steps to Christ* have been printed by the hundreds of thousands. The latest production from the Source of Life Publishing House is a bilingual *Steps to Christ* with Russian and English in columns side by side on each page. This book has been an instant hit with those who wish to learn English.

Policy Changes

The Publishing Department reviewed policies and recommended drastic changes to the 1994 Annual Council. Two important effects are that divisions are more responsible for their publishing program, and that steps have been taken in the direction of open territory and free

market. The Publishing Department feel that this latter concept will lead to lower prices, greater distribution, and better cooperation among publishing houses.

A number of new approaches to literature evangelism are being tried in various parts of the world. For example, the South Pacific Division operates the literature evangelist program in Australia and New Zealand. Literature evangelists there are totally independent, but trained and supported by the division rather than a union or conference. They serve as independent contractors with the ability to choose their own territory, pricing



Bob Enoch, a literature evangelist in Papua New Guinea

structure, and selling plans.

In North America the Pacific Press Publishing Association is operating a literature evangelist program in three unions, and Family Enrichment Resources also operates a triunion literature evangelist program. Both of these systems have streamlined the chain of command, lowered contributions from the conferences, and decreased operating costs through consolidation of offices.

In Germany and South Africa the publishing program is operated totally from the publishing houses. This includes both the literature ministry and Adventist Book Centers.

The publishing ministry will continue its important role in finishing the work. ☞

Fifth business meeting

Fifty-sixth General Conference session, July 2, 1995, 8:30 a.m.

JOHN FOWLER: [Opening prayer.]

P. S. FOLLETT: We welcome all of you to this first business session of the new week. The first item we would like to present before you will be brought to you by B. B. Beach.

B. B. BEACH: We are very happy that many Seventh-day Adventists occupy positions of importance in government as we increasingly understand our sociopolitical responsibility as Christians in the world today. We have in our midst today one of the cabinet ministers of the federal republic of Nigeria, the Honorable Minister C. Wole Oyelese, and his wife. His grandfather was the king of Erunme in Nigeria, and in 1914 welcomed Seventh-day Adventist missionaries to his territory. Mr. Oyelese was ordained as a local elder in his church 10 years ago, and he is a strong Seventh-day Adventist. Let us welcome the Honorable Minister and Mrs. Oyelese. [Applause.]

P. S. FOLLETT: We concluded our meeting on Friday with a discussion on proposed changes to the constitution and bylaws. We would like to suggest that before we bring that item off the table, there are two other clusters of constitutional amendments that the leaders of the Nominating Committee would like to have us address so that their work can be moving ahead during the time that we are continuing to discuss other items.

A. H. TOLHURST: In Article XIII we have a few minor amendments. You will observe that we have added to the phrase "for cause" (where a person may be removed for cause) an asterisk that takes you to the end of the particular bylaw and indicates that when the phrase "for cause" is used in connection with removal from an elected position, it shall include, but not be limited to, misdeeds, incompetence, incompatibility, or lack of teamwork by an elected person.

We'd also like to recommend that a Section 7 be added to this bylaw.

"Section 7: Local conference/mission presidents shall be invited to attend Annual Council meetings of the General Conference Executive Committee when it is held within the territory of their division. Such invitees shall be extended the privileges of full participation in all discussion and decision-making processes of the meeting."

DR. BRIAN BULL: I would propose to amend the quorum clause, enlarging it to at

least 75 under circumstances in which termination of employment is under consideration. I so move it.

P. S. FOLLETT: The procedure that we voted for on Thursday evening and were informed of on Friday would be to refer this section to the Constitution and Bylaws Committee, before whom you may make your presentation of a recommended amendment. So I think the appropriate motion is that this section be referred to the Constitution and Bylaws Committee.

DR. BRIAN BULL: I withdraw my motion and substitute for it a motion to refer it back to the Bylaws Committee. [Motion was seconded and voted.]

P. S. FOLLETT: Let's turn now to a proposal to realign departmental structure within the General Conference. In essence it changes the church ministries group that have been clustered together for the past decade. It is not quite identical to what it was before 1985. Annual Council action recommended this realignment.

COLLEEN BUXTON: I move that we refer this entire section to the Bylaws Committee. [Motion was seconded but failed to receive a majority vote.]

P. S. FOLLETT: Now we have a constitutional item concerning departmental directors and their associates that we would like to place on the floor for your discussion.

DR. HAROLD BUTLER: If we vote this, the departmental associates will be appointed and not elected any longer. If we come back to the other agenda item and vote that down, it says just the opposite of this. So how can we vote on this particular item when it is in direct contradiction to the other that we have tabled?

A. H. TOLHURST: There are two or three actions here that are so interlinked with each other that it's difficult to deal with one without impacting the others. The recommended amendment to this article says that the department directors are to be elected (the wording of the constitutional item says "elected") and that the associates are to be appointed.

C. B. ROCK: I think Dr. Butler, as Elder Tolhurst has commented, has a very valid point. If someone moves to table this item, we can go right at the appointment versus election principle.

DR. HAROLD BUTLER: I move to table

this item. [The motion was seconded and voted.]

A. H. TOLHURST: In light of the action to table, we need to turn to the recommendation of the General Conference Executive Committee in the Annual Council of 1994, to approve the proposal that certain General Conference and division personnel be elected and certain other General Conference personnel be appointed. You have your two lists, the elected list and the appointed. It's recommended that the General Conference president be elected, the secretary, the treasurer, the vice presidents, the division presidents, the General Conference undersecretary, the General Conference undertreasurer, the General Conference associate secretaries, the General Conference associate treasurers, division secretaries, division treasurers, General Conference field secretaries, General Conference departmental and association directors, and the General Conference Auditing Service director. The second list is of those appointed, including associate and assistant departmental directors.

I would move that we approve the amendments to Article V, Election, as presented. [Motion was seconded.]

DR. HAROLD BUTLER: We discussed parts of this item on Friday. Elder Folkenberg gave some of the reasons the General Conference Committee needs to be downsized and how these people would be appointed in the future. I think it is safe to say there has been tension between the departments and administration for quite some time. Elder Folkenberg made a reference in the past that when the General Conference Committee used to meet on a weekly basis, there was some tension between the numbers of departmental people on the General Conference Committee and the Administrative Committee. That being a factor in itself is significant, but I think it's more important to ask the question that if that indeed was the case, why did that exist?

I think the departments have felt neglected, unguided, not sure what their role and function is anymore. But I think this action is not going to improve the situation.

The other situation that concerns me is that associates would be appointed. But we were told that they were going to be elected by the Nominating Committee, so I am a little confused. Are associates appointed or elected? I guess they are going to be elected by the Nominating Committee at Annual Council. So whether that is an appointment or election I am not sure.

The associates are now elected by a large Nominating Committee of people from around the world who don't know some of these people, and it would be better to have the department heads take time to study the different people that could come into these positions, which is rational to me.

NEAL C. WILSON: This particular item, discussing the work of the commission and of the Annual Council, is a key issue in what you are going to discuss today. I think this should not be discussed without the presence of the General Conference president. This is sweeping, it's somewhat radical, and I feel that it would be most unfortunate for this whole thing to be discussed without the president, who really has had a key role in presenting this whole thing to the church.

P. S. FOLLETT: I think Elder Folkenberg has indicated that he wants us to go ahead and discuss it now.

ISRAEL LEITO: I look at the bigger picture on this whole issue. When this was first proposed I was a department director a year and a half ago. When we look at the bigger picture, I have to support the amendment as proposed by the Constitution and Bylaws Committee. The thing that we are aiming for is representation on the General Conference Committee. I stand firmly on a reform for the General Conference Committee to have more and better representation from the world field.

MAX MITCHELL: This action affects the division auditing services around the world because it removes them from the elected position to the appointed position. Our world church has on a number of occasions had problems with large financial matters. These could have been addressed if people had taken notice of the auditors, or even if the auditors had been involved. Once auditors are appointed, rather than elected, they become tame. They become auditors who will not stand up and tell administrators what to do, because they fear for their jobs. You cannot do this. Industry as a whole does not do this. Shareholders elect auditors; administration does not appoint them.

JEREMIAH DUNCOMBE: I am in support of the amendments. I have read carefully this document on restructuring the church, and I find that the objectives of the documents and the amendments, the procedures followed, and the conclusions arrived at are extremely laudable. They are consistent with our church, and so I find myself very comfortable supporting the amendments.

DON CRANE: While we love the effort

of the officers to bring in these major reorganization recommendations, some of these recommendations, I feel, may bring weakness to the departmental structure. We remember that in 1901 the General Conference in session brought in the auxiliary departments, the independent organizations, the institutions, and the organizations that became the departments of the church. This session has an opportunity to reaffirm this historic stand and support the departments of the church.

While we see that there is international representation in the General Conference Committee and we applaud this increased permanent representation from the international church, there is an area that concerns us as far as the departments are concerned: that the associates will be appointed at the Annual Council following the General Conference session. This means that all the departments of the church will be affected by this action. Although I favor the international representation of the new Executive Committee, I believe that appointing the associates at the Annual Council would lead to a weakening of the departments of the church. I am not in favor of this action.

RUDI HENNING: The book that has been handed to us lists the constitution as it is presently in force. When I compare the new with the old, it seems to me that there is very little difference. What are the major reasons for this change? Could you please give me an answer so that we can clearly see

why there's a new proposal?

C. B. ROCK: I would prefer waiting until Elder Folkenberg arrives.


RONALD APPENZELLER: In principle I support the concept because I believe in the downsizing of committees. I think the committee is probably too large. On the other hand, I'm not sure that we are really gaining the balance we're trying to gain in the committee. Of all the committee members the maximum departmental representation will be about 12 department heads from the General Conference. Twelve out of a committee of 240! That hardly seems like balance. Second, it seems to me that this will weaken the departments. General Conference associates travel the world field, and they're supposed to be familiar with what's happening in the field and at the General Conference headquarters. And that information cannot be given fully and completely through minutes or through a briefing by someone.

RONALD CARROLL: My opposition is more addressed to the appointment issue. It would be better to have it be more at the grassroots levels.

A. H. TOLHURST: Some have expressed themselves as approving the downsizing aspect of the committee but wondering why we don't have the associate directors on the committee. There would be 17 more persons on the Executive Committee if the associates were members of that committee. As was pointed out by our president, the associates

\$130 million of assets for the preservation of Church resources

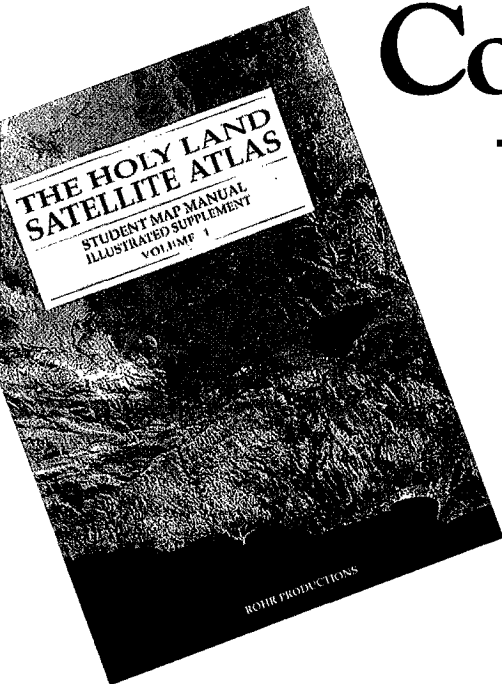
Property
Revenue
Risk
Personal
Liability



Make BIBLE LANDS

Come Alive

These beautiful
full-color
satellite maps
and atlas are
perfect for
school
and church
classrooms.

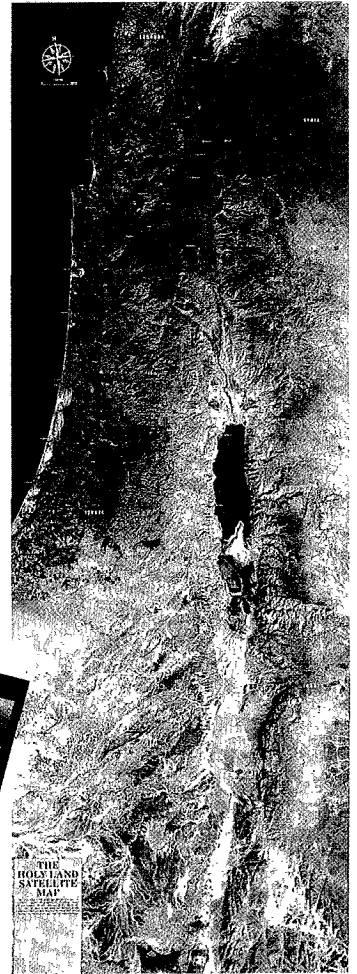


Holy Land Satellite Atlas, vol. 1

This full-color atlas of the Holy Land features topographical photographs (both landscape and aerial) of biblical sites. Streets and individual buildings of modern Israel are visible in the satellite photographs. Size: 9½" x 12¾", 273 pages. Hard cover, US\$49.95, Cdn\$72.45.

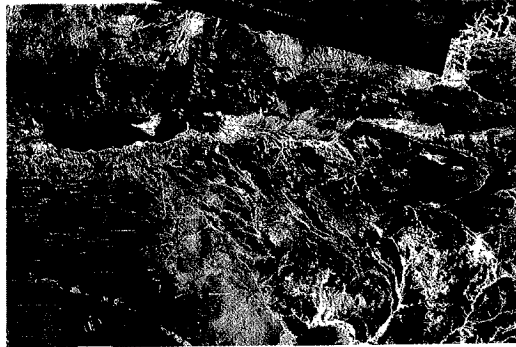
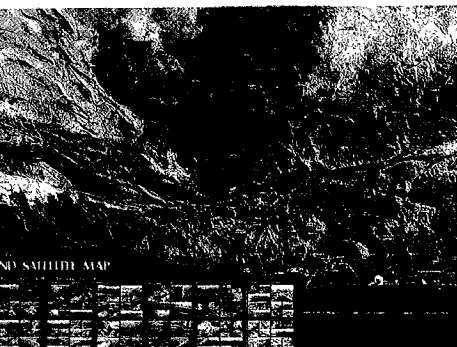
Bible Lands Exhibit (8 posters) Satellite Map (2 parts)

This series of eight posters presents satellite, aerial, and landscape views of each of the eight regions of Palestine. Included is a two-part satellite map (shown below) of the same region. Posters: 38" x 24¾". Map sections: 38" x 28¾". 10-part set, US\$49.95, Cdn\$72.45. Satellite map also available in 10-foot size [6 parts] (US\$9.95, Cdn\$17.35.)



Bible Lands Satellite Map (Student)

Full-color satellite photograph of modern Israel showing the region from Mount Hermon to Gulf of Aqaba. Derived from the U.S. Landsat-5 satellite that passed over the area at a height of approximately 580 miles. Size: 55" x 18¾". US\$11.95, Cdn\$17.35.



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at the General Conference level are on the same level structurally as the departmental directors of the divisions. And if we add the associates at the General Conference level to the Executive Committee, we ought to add the division directors of departments, and that would add another 73 persons to the Executive Committee!

SILAS N. MC KINNEY: The problem here is the proposal for a change in a process of election. Once that is out, all the others will go with it. I opposed it at every level in which I took part, and I'm just being faithful to my own conscience today to make this final speech on it. I believe it's not only wrong but illogical.

P. S. FOLLETT: Are we now ready to receive another report from the Nominating Committee?

BENJAMIN REAVES: First I would like to call on Elder Folkenberg to make a statement.

ROBERT S. FOLKENBERG: During the past few years the General Conference team has been enriched by the services of Elder and Mrs. Kenneth Mittleider. He has served in church leadership and evangelism for most of his ministry. He served in church and conference leadership not only in the North American Division but also on the continent of Africa for many years. During his stay and his work at the General Conference he has been known as an individual who is forthright, a standard-bearer for truth, a promoter of evangelism, and an individual who has acute business sense. They have notified us of their intent to slow down and take a different pace of life as of this General Conference session. I would like to know if this body would like to express its appreciation for Elder Mittleider.

P. S. FOLLETT: It would be appropriate for someone now to move a resolution of appreciation that can be recorded in the minutes. [Motion was made, seconded, and voted.]

K. J. MITTLEIDER: I want this group to know that we have enjoyed the 44 years that my wife and I have been able to give to the church. If we had it to do over again we'd do the same thing. We will be retiring, but we're not quitting our work for the church. For the past several years I have not been able to hold an evangelistic series. This will allow me to do more evangelism. Stay strong in the Lord. Let's push this movement through so we can see our Lord face-to-face.

DR. LYN BEHRENS: The Nominating Committee has a partial report. The positions that are being recommended to this body are

for election to the vice presidency of the General Conference. The first name is for the reelection of Matthew Bediako. [Motion was made, seconded, and voted.]

The second name is for the reelection of Philip Follett. [Motion was made, seconded, and voted.]

The third name is for the reelection of R. J. Kloosterhuis. [Motion was made, seconded, and voted.]

The fourth name is for the reelection of Leo Ranzolin. [Motion was made, seconded, and voted.]

The fifth position is for the reelection of C. B. Rock. [Motion was made, seconded, and voted.]

ROBERT S. FOLKENBERG: It is a pleasure to be able to bring the name of Jan Paulsen for the position of general vice president. He brings to this position an enormous reservoir of background and experience, having served on both the European and African continents. He served as teacher, registrar, and college president in West Africa, serving for quite some time as president of the Adventist Seminary of West Africa in Nigeria. He served as president of Newbold College for many years. Subsequently he served as secretary of the Northern European Division and then became its president, and most recently has served as president of the Trans-European Division. His commitment to the mission of this church and its message is above reproach. He brings not only a clear set of values but also a perspective, an international flavor, that will contribute much to enrich the perspective of the role of the General Conference in this world church. It is a pleasure for me to affirm this. After this is voted, I am going to ask Dr. and Mrs. Paulsen to come up here so the delegates have an opportunity to see who it is they are voting. [The motion was seconded and voted.]

JAN PAULSEN: I don't have a readily constructed phrase that will capture this moment or how I feel about it. It obviously is a major change for us, but we have attempted to serve the Lord where we have been, and will continue to do so. In whatever assignment I am given I will seek to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God.

P. S. FOLLETT: Elder Folkenberg, there was a request from the floor that you give a summary of the advantages and intentions of this cluster of constitutional amendments. It was observed that many of these link together, and the body felt that to vote one

was almost tantamount to a voting of all, so they would like to have another summary of the most salient advantages you see to this cluster of amendments.

ROBERT S. FOLKENBERG: The two points are fairness and accountability. Fairness because it deals with the ratio of North American representation as the proportion of the total attending General Conference Committee members. The effect of this cluster of actions is to shift dramatically, almost reverse, the proportions so that the vast majority of those in attendance would represent the world church. This was an initiative begun in North America.

Second is the issue of accountability, particularly the accountability of those within the General Conference complex reporting to all the church outside the General Conference complex. We were not distinguishing between whether that accountability is to church employees or nonchurch employees. Both constitute accountability in that they are not employed by the General Conference, and it is the desire to see the ratio of accountability dramatically increased.

The issue of accountability between nonchurch employees and church employees, though different from my use of accountability, is also valid. The first was by increasing, though admittedly the numbers are still small, the number of nonchurch employees from what has been in the past. The second was by reducing the discretionary number that can be appointed by the General Conference Committee from 80 to 30. An additional significant issue was ensuring that those who are members come. We increase accountability when members are present, and it is in the interest of the world church to have its spokespersons, be they union presidents, who are elected to speak, or laypersons who have been designated by those divisions.

It has been noted that there is some kind of confusion as to the role of divisions. I don't find it confusing at all. I suppose those who function in a division find it less confusing. But in effect, when a division makes a recommendation it is in fact the division committee functioning as the sum of its unions. The unions are the dominant force within the configuration of the division committee. So when individuals are recommended to form on the General Conference Committee, the division committee, not the General Conference Committee, is making the recommendation. They are separate committees, but they are one and the same in

erms of, shall we say, stratification.

When a division committee meets, a major portion of its members are on the unions. That group then tells the General Conference that there are the two or three names that they want to include, and the General Conference Committee then registers that. That recommendation comes from the division. So it's not a matter of the General Conference Committee appointing itself. It is looking for the world church through the divisions to send representatives.

Now, the point has been made about the proposal with regard to the election versus appointment of departmental staff. That's the issue directly on the agenda. The divisions appoint. I just listened to my dear friend of many years, Elder McKinney. One thing we learned in Inter-America was that you can disagree passionately and still love each other, and that's the case with Elder McKinney.

When the three officers in this proposal are elected, they are elected as officers with backing of the entire world church. Those officers—the president, the secretary, and the treasurer—sit together and develop world church policy. Management of retirement, interdivision travel, and a myriad of other issues are addressed regularly, annually, by all of the officers of those divisions.

Therefore, it stands to reason, the commission and Annual Council concurred, that whether it is the president or the secretary or the treasurer, all of those officers from all the world divisions should stand accountable, not just to the delegation of their division, but in fact to the whole world church. Thus the recommendation is, and it is not taken lightly, that those names be elected by the world church, and that they come to the full Nominating Committee before they come here. That's the rationale for the three officers being brought to the world church. It is not the same for the division departmental directors.

It was felt that the division departmental directors are accountable primarily to the unions within the divisions that they serve, not to the world church. By describing the election process of those individuals as an appointment by the division committee, we felt that there would be again a step-up accountability to all the delegates from that entire division. Far from reducing the role, it strengthens the linkage between that individual and the constituency of that division. The primary effect is exclusively within that division, as opposed to the officers, who have a significant effect on the world church

operating policy.

The others who are affected under this proposal are the associates of the General Conference. In order to be consistent, both levels—that is to say, the division department directors and the General Conference associate directors—needed to be dealt with in the same fashion. It is critical that we distinguish between “informed” and “decided.” What do I mean? The steps are in place and have been in use for some time, and these can all be improved, in which the General Conference associate departmental directors are informed.

Furthermore, the recent appointment of an interdepartmental strategic planning committee brings the department and the associates into a role of interdepartmental strategic leadership. It also provides a very careful selection process that must match two things. I take them sequentially, not in order of priority. The first provides the opportunity to match under careful scrutiny the job description of a position with the individuals in all the world who might be best qualified to provide that position. When there are 13 to 20 people in a department, that matching is not quite as critical. When there are two, one cannot afford a mistake, because the consequences are so serious. Then the second element comes to play. You need to be able to say when this nominating grid is finished, “Are we being fair? This is a world church. Are we in fact providing the opportunity for the skills from all of the world to be brought to bear?”

We together need to look for the best solution and to welcome opposing ideas. The Lord will guide us into the best decision.

RENNOX MWIINGA: I do support the principle that is enshrined in the recommendation. But at the same time I find that there is tension within this recommendation. Now, I want to express my appreciation for the explanation that our General Conference president has given us regarding this issue. But having listened carefully to everything that he has said, I still come to the conclusion that my observations have not been addressed.

P. S. FOLLETT: There seems to be a general consensus of an interest in limiting debate.

TERRY JOSHUA: I propose that the time limit for speeches be two minutes. [The motion was seconded.]

MAJOR WHITE: I believe that in order to be fair, this action should not limit those individuals who were standing at the microphone on Friday who did not get an opportunity to speak, and who were promised that

they would be able to speak this morning. Those individuals should be allowed to speak, and then the time limit should apply to those who came after those that you have on your list.

ALVIN KIBBLE: Earlier the chair expressed some desire to show some favor toward the limiting of discussion in regard to the motion that has been placed before us. My concern is simply that many of the items that are presented before us are very challenging and have very far-reaching effects upon how our church will continue to do business. Some are hearing these recommendations for the very first time, and I know that while some may be able to speak to the issues, others find it rather difficult. I would like to appeal to the chair simply to use the power of the chair to counsel those who are speaking to limit their time at this early stage in the discussion process. [The motion was passed.]

SUSAN SICKLER: I would address the part of the constitution changes that states that now we are saying that other persons are to serve as members of the Executive Committee. It no longer states a minimum number of laypersons to be selected, and it also gives the Executive Committee the right to name their own members, which is essentially the right of administration to name their Executive Committee. I oppose this. We do not do it at any other level in church structure.

RON MATAYA: The point that is being discussed here looks as if it's the rest of the church against church administration. While I support the restructuring at the General Conference level, I would like to say that perhaps we would have discussed this issue less if the commission on the restructuring of the church had been chaired by somebody other than the president of the General Conference.

TOM MILLER: I wish to speak on a matter of some delicacy, and I would request that those involved not read more into what I am saying than I actually mean. I have been in auditing work for 30 years, 20 of them for the General Conference, five of them in the Africa-Indian Ocean Division. My skill lies in figures, not in words. We are, however, dealing with ministers, whose expertise is in the area of language. They are very good at expressing themselves. Sometimes those with whom we deal have rather fragile egos.

It is our unhappy lot to write unpleasant reports sometimes. Some of our administrators adopt the custom of the Roman emperors of killing the messenger, killing off those who bring bad news. At the moment, we have

a degree of protection in that we are elected. I believe the action before us will strip us of that protection, and the Auditing Service will be gutted. It will be emasculated.

P. S. FOLLETT: The division auditors are not to be appointed by the General Conference Committee, but by the Auditing Board. As I understand, the intention of those in Auditing Service was that they be set up so they are more independent of administrative control. Therefore the church has established an Auditing Board. The chief auditor is elected by this constituent body. All other auditors will be elected or appointed by this Auditing Board so that they will maintain a degree of identity and autonomy away from just being service of the administration.

WALTON WHALEY: There is a great deal of confusion, and my point of order is that we seem to have failed to do what was done in 1901. I would hope that the chair will give time for us to slow down, to pray, and to ask God's special blessings, to help us to get through this point on which we seem to be

gnarled together and unable to function.

HARRY LEONARD: I would like to make a privileged motion that we reconsider the two-minute motion, and turn it to three minutes at a minimum. [Motion was seconded and lost.]

PETER OSEI-MENSAH: I want to support this motion; it will help the church to be fairly represented worldwide. The problem I see is what is meant by "elected" and "appointed." Perhaps this problem will be alleviated by acknowledging that all the members are elected, only by different groups.

ALAN REDFERN: I would like to make a motion to refer the item regarding the Executive Committee to the Constitution and Bylaws Committee. [Motion was seconded and voted.]

JOHN FOWLER: [Benediction.]

PHILIP S. FOLLETT, *Chair*
H. W. BAPTISTE, *Secretary*
D. A. ROTH and L. R. COLBURN,
Proceedings Editors

Sixth Business Meeting

*Fifty-sixth General Conference session
July 2, 1995, 2:00 p.m.*

A. C. MC CLURE: It is time for the beginning of the afternoon session.

H. LALNILAWMA: [Opening prayer.]

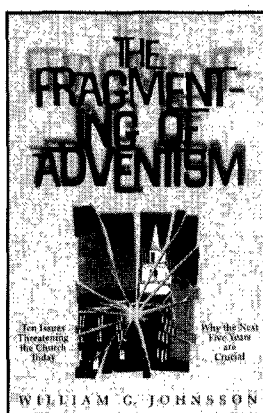
A. C. MC CLURE: You may have noted that we still have several items on the agenda to consider. That of course is a great understatement. We begin our discussion of *Church Manual* items.

MARIO VELOSO: This is an inclusion of a definition of regular standing for church members. They are considered to be in regular standing unless they are under church discipline.

You can see there is another element here. We usually say "good and regular standing." The motion is to state it only as regular standing with the definition I just read. [Motion to accept was made, seconded, and voted.]

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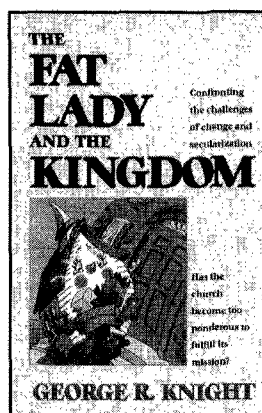
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We have two paragraphs to be included concerning transfer of church members.

“Transferring Church Members—When a church member moves to a different area, the church holding membership should write to the secretary of the relevant conference/mission requesting that a pastor in the new locality make a pastoral visit to the individual. This pastoral intervention may facilitate the transfer process.

“The church holding the membership should also notify the member of its intention to give the member’s new address to a pastor in the new locality.” [Motion was made, seconded, and voted.]

The next item is an amendment related to organized companies. There have been more problems related to this item. There was a need to state clearly for the companies how they should be organized and how they should be dismissed, and in which circumstances each should apply. Where a number of isolated believers reside in proximity to one another, a company of believers may be organized for fellowship and worship with the objective of growing into an organized church.

Such a group of believers may be organized as a company by approval of the conference or mission committee, and may subsequently be dissolved by action of the conference or mission committee. When a conference or mission committee approves the organization of a company, such an organization may be effected by the district pastor, and the rest is the way it was before.

Then we have an amendment that the reader of such a company shall not be ordained to that office and shall not have the authority to perform those functions that are vested in an elder of the church. However, where exceptional circumstances warrant, the conference may appoint a person of church experience and leadership ability to serve as elder of that company. [Motion was made, seconded, and voted.]

Now we are dealing with the matter of receiving members by profession of faith. This is the reading that we are now presenting. There are four types of individuals who may be accepted by profession of faith:

1. A committed Christian coming from another Christian communion who has already been baptized by immersion.
2. A member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church who, because of world conditions, is unable to secure a letter of transfer from his or her home church.
3. A member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church whose request for mem-

bership transfer has received no response of any kind from the church in which he or she is a member. In this case the assistance of the conference/mission shall be sought. In case the requesting church is located in another conference/mission, the assistance of both conferences/missions should be sought.

4. An individual who has been a member but whose membership has been misplaced or has been withdrawn because he or she was a missing member, yet who in reality has remained faithful to his or her Christian commitment. [Motion to accept was made, seconded, and voted.]

KEITH ALBURY: I would like to commend the committee on this amendment. However, I would like to suggest that it be more clearly stated that persons who are accepted from other Christian communions be individuals who have accepted all the fundamental beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

HENDRICK STEENBERG: I think the word “immersion” needs some definition. As you know, immersion may mean many things. In some instances, even babies of a few days have been baptized by immersion. In some cases some charismatic movements

would baptize a person three times, and this would not be acceptable to us. I move that we refer this item back to the *Church Manual* Committee. [Motion was seconded and voted.]

MARIO VELOSO: This next *Church Manual* item has to do with church officers and their duties. A new paragraph on term of office is being included. “The term of office for officers of the church and auxiliary organizations shall be one year, except where the local church in a business meeting votes to have elections every two years in order to facilitate continuity and development of spiritual gifts and eliminate the work involved in having yearly elections. While it is not advisable for one person to serve indefinitely in a particular position, officers may be reelected.” [Motion was made and seconded.]

CHARLES FERGUSON: I have been a pastor for more than 20 years, and I wish to speak against the motion. This works well when a church has a sense of well-being, and it is easy for us here in an environment of well-being to vote this through. I think there ought to be a yearly audit of the elders. I wish to move that this be referred back to the

“Be Strong & of a Good Courage”

Deut. 31:7

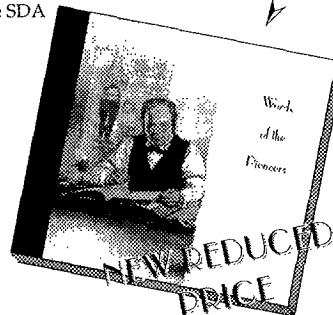
E.G. White affirmed:

We are to repeat the words of the pioneers in our work, who knew what it cost to search for truth as for hidden treasure, and who labored to lay the foundation of our work. . . . The word given me is, Let that which these men have written in the past be reproduced.

- RH 5/25/05, (CWE 28)

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folio

Church Manual Committee to consider excluding the elders from serving for two years. [Motion was seconded.]

Perhaps there are some here who could vote for this if we were sure that the elders would be audited every year. I could not vote for it not knowing that. But if I knew that the elders were excluded, then I could happily vote for it. [Motion was lost.]

A. C. MC CLURE: We are back to the main motion. [Motion was voted.]

MARIO VELOSO: Now we come to the elder of the church, and we are suggesting to change this in relation with what we already voted. The title would be "The Church Elder, Term of Office" instead of "The Church Elder, Elected for One Year." The new first sentence would read: "Like all other church officers, the elder is elected for one or two years as determined by the local church." [Motion was made and seconded.]

CHARLES FERGUSON: I am pleading with you folks. If ever an extremely liberal or extremely conservative, imbalanced element gets hold of your board of elders, you'll have to live with that a year longer than you will right now. I plead with you not to vote for this motion.

G. RALPH THOMPSON: I think I hear Brother Ferguson's plea. But isn't that accommodated in the reading of it? It says, "Like all other church officers, the elder is elected for one or two years as determined by the local church."

CHARLES FERGUSON: We took action

just a moment ago to take "good" out of "good and regular standing." There are some people who are in regular standing but they're not really good. Sometimes they may end up being elders. Sometimes they may be good and turn bad. And if we take an action to allow the elders two years, then we'll have to live with that. I just think it's best to limit the office of elders to one year.

RAY BAILEY: I agree with Charles on this. When you have elders who are not what you want to be, they will take the previous motion that we just voted and compound that with this one and gather around them those who support them. And then pastors have a very difficult time.

A. C. MC CLURE: Are we ready to vote on the motion? [Motion was voted.]

MARIO VELOSO: This item is to add a section in the *Church Manual* related to the church elder—training and equipping the local elder. "The Ministerial Association, in cooperation with the departments, promotes the training and equipping of local church elders. While the pastor has the primary responsibility for training local elders, conference/missions/fields are encouraged to schedule periodic meetings designed for training them. In order to support a pastor-elder team relationship it is recommended that pastors also attend these meetings. Leaders of companies who function in the place of local elders should also be invited to attend." [Motion was made, seconded, and voted.]

DON GRAY: [Benediction.]

A. C. MC CLURE, *Chairman*

L. C. COOPER, *Secretary*

D. A. ROTH and L. R. COLBURN

Proceedings Editors

Session Actions

Fifty-sixth General Conference session, July 2, 1995, 8:30 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE—GENERAL CONFERENCE CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS AMENDMENT

Voted, To refer the proposed amendments to Constitution Article VI, Executive Committee, to the standing Constitution and Bylaws Committee for further study.

DEPARTMENTS—DIRECTORS/SECRETARIES, ASSOCIATES AND ASSISTANTS—GENERAL CONFERENCE CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS AMENDMENT

Voted, To table the proposed amendments to Bylaws Article X, Departments—Directors/Secretaries, Associates and Assistants so the issue of appointment versus election can be decided first.

MITTLEIDER, KENNETH J—APPRECIATION

Voted, To express appreciation to Kenneth J Mittleider for his service as vice president of the General Conference, and for his 44.5 years of service to the church, and to Barbara Mittleider for her support and her service.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT #3

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

General Conference

General Vice Presidents,

Matthew A Bediako

Philip A Follett

Robert J Kloosterhuis

Leo Ranzolin

Calvin B Rock

Jan Paulsen

TIME LIMIT FOR SPEECHES

Voted, To limit each speaker to two minutes, or to three minutes if a translator is necessary, when addressing items on the floor for discussion.

RESULTS

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But those months at UCA changed me. That faculty, staff, deans, they loved me. Friends? We still write, 45 years later. The desire to serve my church was planted in my heart and has never left.

How grateful I am that, long before I needed it, people I do not know and may never meet, decided to build a school. They sacrificed. It cost a bundle. I shoveled coal a lot of nights to help on my bill. But I wouldn't trade it for anything. Without christian education, well, I shudder to think of the decisions I might have made without that warm nurturing womb to give me time to grow. Grateful, yep, eternally grateful.

- Don Jacobsen, Assistant to the President of the North American Division, Headquarters of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.



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ELECTION—GENERAL CONFERENCE CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS AMENDMENT

Voted, To refer the proposed amendments to Constitution Article V, Election to the standing Constitution and Bylaws Committee for further study, with the request that all of those now standing to address this item refer their concerns directly to the Constitution and Bylaws Committee which will meet immediately.

Adjourned. Philip S Follett, *Chair*
Harold W Baptiste, *Secretary*
Athol H Tolhurst, *Actions Editor*
Larry R Colburn, *Proceedings Editor*
Carol E Rasmussen, *Recording Secretary*

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Nominating Committee Report—4

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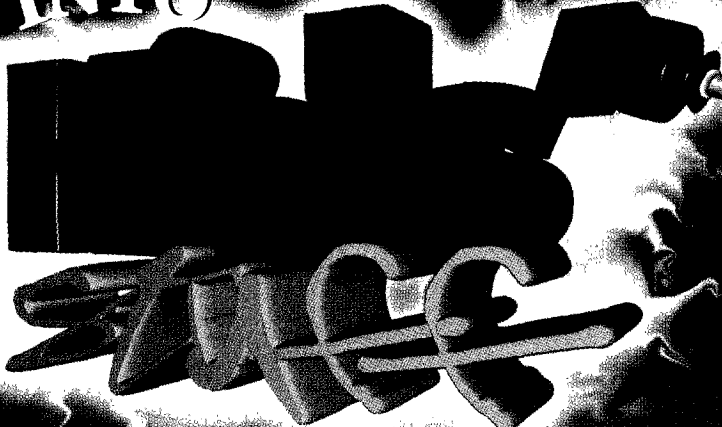
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