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THE DAY IN **TORONTO** Sunday, July 2

Stephen Chavez
Assistant Editor



JOEL D. SPRINGER



Celebration and Service

Throughout the afternoon and early evening of the first Sabbath in Toronto, the atmosphere around the SkyDome and

Convention Center is electric. An estimated crowd of more than 50,000 crowd the Dome, sidewalks, hallways, exhibition halls, and escalators. And by the time the evening program begins at 6:30, the massive hall is jammed with tens of thousands of believers and friends from around the world, savoring the daylong menu of fellowship and worship.

The meeting opens with a variety of vocal and instrumental offerings from around the world—everything from classical sacred music to toe-tapping gospel songs, provided by musical groups and individuals of every age.

The View From Here

The North American Division (NAD) report was introduced by several individuals speaking the different languages represented in North America. Giving their names, they each announced: "This is my church." They were followed by NAD president Alfred C. McClure who, introducing himself, proclaimed: "This is *our* church."

Several video clips, announced by different officers and departmental leaders, described some of the outreach and nurture activities in North America over the last five years, featuring congregations and outreach ministries in Grand Rapids, Michigan; Salt Lake City, Utah; Toronto, Ontario; Orlando, Florida; Colton, California; and Boulder, Colorado.

Vocal and instrumental performances by an ensemble from Berrien Springs, Michigan, featured gospel songs from our church's past, as well as an anthem introduced at last year's *ConneXions '99* conference at the world headquarters, adopted as a prayer of commitment by many in North America, concluding with the words: "And open up our path/So we can have no fear/As we go out to reach the world you long to save."

Across the Pond

After a brief musical interlude by the preteen musical group Pro-Active Kids, dressed in festive African costumes, Bertil Wiklander, president of the Trans-European Division (TED), introduced that division's report entitled "Until the Lost Be Found."

The report began with a video dramatization of the experience of a Bosnian soldier, Filip Zesevic, who became converted during the war after his Army unit had commandeered a Seventh-day Adventist church. Looking for something to kill time, Zesevic, a former Muslim, began reading the Bible and eventually had an encounter with Jesus



AUDEN J. HO

Christ. The story of his conversion is contained in the book *Cover Me*, published by the Review and Herald Publishing Association.

Also featured were a congregation serving the hearing impaired in Riga, Latvia; Karachi Adventist Hospital in Pakistan; and a Messianic Adventist church in Jerusalem.

A Café Church, a unique outreach ministry in Copenhagen, was offered as an example of one way of connecting in many developed countries with an increasing secular society. Wiklander interviewed Betina Wiik, one of the founders of this unusual ministry, where young adults attend services in an informal setting and enjoy the ministry of small group Bible study and contemporary Christian music. Asked about her objective for this ministry, Wiik replied, "Every day I pray, 'Lord, let there be less of me, more of You.'" "Praise and worship renews me," she said. Her vision for her life and for the church in general is to "focus on Jesus and depend on Him totally."

After the Party's Over

In a small room on level seven of the convention center a meeting of the General Conference management committee convened at 9:30. Session manager Linda de León led the group of a dozen departmental leaders in a review of the day's activities. This is where the "bugs" and "glitches" of conducting a convention for thousands of people from dozens of countries are dissected, discussed, and (hopefully) resolved.

A major item on this evening's agenda was food service for the session. Specifically, how visitors to Sabbath's noon meal had to cope with a meal service provider that was stretched to the limits. De León reported that more than 16,500 people were served within a two-and-a-half-hour period. Until today, the convention food service had been barely utilized, there being so many inexpensive, convenient dining options so close to the convention center.

Other items under discussion included crowd control (how to keep

foot traffic moving on sidewalks, corridors, and escalators); security; audio-visual quality control (including use of the "Jumbotron" (the giant television screen in the SkyDome); handling Sabbath's offerings (nine mailbags full of cash—four from the Sabbath school offering and five from the worship service—to be counted and deposited); as well as a simplified process of distributing badges and passes to the assortment of people who attend a General Conference session: delegates, guests, family members, General Conference retirees, musical performers, etc.

The refrain spoken most often at the session management meeting was: "We'll have to remember this next time," said associate secretary of the General Conference, Don Sahly, philosophically. "We don't do this often enough to do it really well."

Night Shift

The hallways of the convention center were nearly empty when the session management meeting ended past 11:00 p.m. Where the hallways and escalators had been jammed with people of all shapes and sizes only a couple of hours before, the crowds had been replaced by convention center maintenance crews getting ready for the night shift.

In a room just off the main entrance of the Convention Center's North building, Ruthie Jacobsen, prayer ministries coordinator for the North American Division, was enjoying a quiet conversation with a handful of young prayer warriors from Maryland. Deirdre Medley, Otis Coutsoumpos, and his brother, Alex, were keeping vigil with Jacobsen in a room furnished with chairs and sofas arranged in informal settings that is open 24 hours a day, every day of the session, where people can come to pray for the session, for each other, or for any number of needs known only to them and God.

Jacobsen reports that throughout the day people drift in and out of the room to pray singly or in groups. "We've had General Conference vice presidents; conference, union, and division presi-

dents come and spend time with us," she says. "They pray in different languages—Spanish, French, whatever."

The "Prayer Room" is structured, but unstructured. Every day of the session a union from North America is teamed with one of the world divisions to make sure someone's present, praying for the Lord's Spirit to preside over the session and be reflected in the lives of those in attendance.

Back to Work

"People of Promise" is the title of the Sunday morning devotional, presented by Daniel Viloso, president of the North Philippine Union. The presentation is powerful, the musical performances are polished, and the prayers (in different languages) are devout. But nothing can disguise the fact that the pageantry of the session's Sabbath celebration is over for another week. The two or three thousand people seem insignificant in an auditorium designed to contain 15 times that amount.

The morning's agenda—mostly proposed *Church Manual* changes—holds little drama or excitement. There are no reports from the nominating committee to break up the monotony of a two-and-a-half-hour business session.

A new feature of this year's session is a 90-minute block of time each afternoon dedicated to the discussion of "Windows on Mission," an attempt to raise the profile of evangelism and outreach by on the floor of the convention center by all the delegates. Jan Paulsen, General Conference president, makes the keynote presentation, and invites comments from the floor of the convention center. "We want you to talk back to leadership," he says.

This is why delegates have traveled thousands of miles to attend a General Conference session. They've met friends, they've listened to thrilling reports from around the world, they've heard skilled and talented musicians. There will be other division reports. But there are six more days until Sabbath; and now there's work to do.

Windows on Mission: Opportunities, Threats, and Challenges

BY JENNIFER MAE BARIZO AND
ADVENTIST REVIEW STAFF

On July 2, 2000, newly reelected president Jan Paulsen launched the first ever “Windows on Mission,” an unprecedented series of assemblies designed to foster dialogue between delegates and leaders concerning key issues in the church.

Paulsen identified five windows that will be discussed during the daily sessions: strategic thinking, witnessing to other religions, clergy/lay unity, discipleship training, and financial resourcing.

“We want to open these various windows in a creative way,” declared Paulsen. “We want you to talk back to leadership. We crave your comments. This exercise is a failure if you don’t talk to us. View these windows carefully, even critically, for criticism in a church context is constructive. Share the convictions you have on your heart.

“Let’s see how the Spirit guides us through this exercise.”

Dr. George Knight, professor of church history at Andrews University, challenged the delegates to think about the future of the church from the devil’s viewpoint. Knight outlined a 15-point agenda the devil might devise in his fight against the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

“If I were the devil, I would get people to believe that there is only one way to do something and that everyone had to do it that way,” said Knight to repeated delegate applause.

“If I were the devil, I would put my best energies into getting the church to reject the ideas of the coming generation,” Knight continued, highlighting the youth of the church as “its

greatest asset” and “Adventism’s greatest opportunity.”

Knight cited church cofounder Ellen G. White in support of creative approaches to ministry: “New methods and new plans will spring from new circumstances. New thoughts will come with new workers who give themselves to the work. . . . They will receive plans devised by the Lord Himself” (*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 40).

Other key areas of emphasis should include the importance of technology to the future church and the priority of the local congregation, according to Knight.

Vice president Phil Follett and Kermit Netteburg, NAD vice president for communication, invited delegates to divide into small groups to identify strategic opportunities, threats, and challenges that the church faces.

Delegates across the floor huddled in groups of six and seven comparing notes and ideas.

A 15-minute open forum concluded the first afternoon’s session. Delegates lined up 20 deep at the microphone to report their group’s conclusions.

“I believe that the church’s secularism has become its greatest threat,” said Simion Obong’o Nyachieng’a, from the Eastern African Division.

Delegate Tunde Ojewole (African Indian Ocean Division) echoed a similar concern: “The greatest challenge of the church is the tendency of going away from biblical fidelity. We must have as our underlying concern, staying true to ‘Thus says the Lord.’”

Andrej Godina (Trans-European Division) saw an opportunity for the church in world crises: “All the suffering going on in the world gives us the opportunity to shine and share Jesus’ love.”

Luciano Nermal, Jr., Southern Asia-Pacific Division, identified the church’s ongoing need for revival and reformation as its greatest challenge.

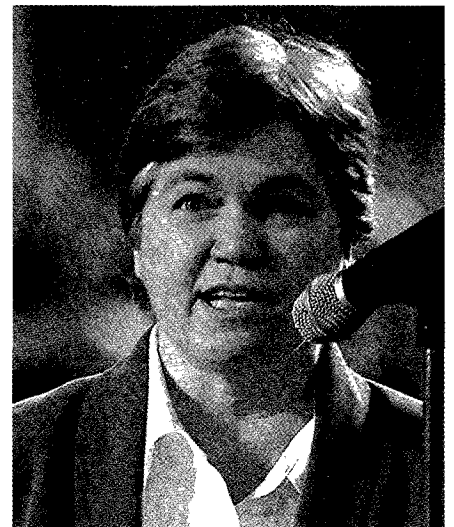
According to Nermal, materialism destroys the unity of the movement.

Eastern African Division delegate George Mwansa summarized the church’s greatest challenges in three words: “Racism, tribalism, regionalism.”

Achieving balance between young and old, tradition and principle, and between mass media and personal contact are three of the church’s greatest challenges, according to Ronald Bissell, a theology teacher in the Philippines.

Half a dozen delegates highlighted the urgency of the church’s ministry to its own youth through education and pastoral care, as well as the necessity of equipping them for service. “We need to allow young people to reshape and restate church,” said Larry J. Pitcher, from the General Conference executive committee.

U.S. Navy Rear Admiral Barry Black called for inclusiveness, especially in regard to roles for women. “We must demonstrate to the world the strength of our diversity.”



ISSUES THAT REALLY MATTER: Newbold College president Andrea Luxton was one of dozens of delegates lined up at the microphone to share their vision of the church’s future.

Promises to Keep

Devotional message presented Friday evening, June 30, 2000

Abraham! . . . Abraham!"
 "Who are you?"
 "It's the Lord."
 "What do You want?"
 "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you" (Gen. 12:1, NIV).

Abraham grabbed hold of God's stupendous promises and took off on a life detour as the most colossal dare-taker in salvation history. He never imagined he'd spend the next 115 years walking around the Land of Promise and existing on nothing but promises.

According to *Newsweek* and *Time*, we live in a world of liars: From No. 10 Downing Street to the White House, to Ottawa and the Kremlin. We live in a society in which you can't trust anybody anymore because of broken promises.

Promises, Promises

Have you ever been tempted to doubt any of God's fantastic promises? Ever wondered about Jesus' closing promise, "Surely, I come quickly"?

Why is Abraham so huge? Why are the promises to him so special that they form the backbone of Genesis? so far-reaching that it takes the entire Bible to tell the rest of the story and will take all of eternity to fulfill?

Let's fast-forward to the grand climax of Abraham's story in Genesis 22. He's 120 years old. God has patiently worked with him through a lifetime of flaws (not just one): 12 long chapters in wicked technicolor. He's down to the final issue; the last act in the drama.

"Abraham!"

"Yes, God."

"Take your son, your only son, Isaac . . . and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering" (Gen. 22:2, NIV).

"O God, speak to me again," Abraham begs. "Did I really understand You? Tell me it wasn't my old age, a bad dream." But he hears only the eerie sounds of silence.

Abraham rouses two servants and hurries to Isaac's tent. He pulls the flaps aside, steps inside, and kneels down. In the glow of dawn he can barely make out the strong, young features of



Lonnie Melashenko
 Speaker/Director,
 Voice of Prophecy

his son of promise. Oh, how he loves that boy.

Four men travel north. No one speaks in the barren solitude. It's the most poignant and eloquent hush of all literature. Brow furrowed. Body swaying. Abraham's worried lips move silently in prayer: "O Lord, speak to me like before—You know, all those times in my painful past. You were there leading me, step by step—as I struggled with my fears I learned I had You for a friend."

Abraham's Struggles

Abraham's mind flashes back to his fears when he first got to the Promised Land. Famine. Pull up stakes. Move down to Egypt. Live by your wits.

Then as he got near Egypt he took one look at his gorgeous wife and said: "Sarah, I'm afraid.

Listen: To save my neck, lie to Pharaoh." His fears got him into more trouble. Poor Sarah was taken to the royal harem. But God proved faithful.

Abraham remembers another night when he threw Molotov cocktails at Chedorlaomer and the Palestinian Border Patrol. He came home quaking so badly God had to appear to him in vision (see Gen. 15).

And now, as he journeys to Moriah, again he feels so apprehensive.

And of course Satan is right there, pressing in on him. "Abraham, you're no 'man of faith.' Remember your tryst with Hagar? You trusted righteousness by virility. Salvation by sperm. This trip to Moriah? You're going to offer *human* sacrifice after all these years you've preached to the heathen. No, Abraham. Go home."

All day Abraham prays. All night he wrestles with his thoughts. When the sun comes up in the morning his tears mingle with the dust of the Palestinian soil.

Lord, Deliver Me From Fear

Have you ever been frightened? so paralyzed you are filled with dread?

For me it was June 1978. I was 31 years old. The dreaded words: Cancer. Melanoma. Fourth level. I'll never forget Jeannie and me slumping to our knees and crying out, "O God, no! We're scared. Am I going to die? Lord, speak to us!"

And more recently an AVM (arteriovenous malfunction)—I would have died just a year ago. For nine months I had a terrific pounding inside my head. Doctors couldn't find the problem until specialists at Loma Linda University and Medical Center diagnosed a rare "dural fistula"—just in time to save my life when I was at the University of California at Los Angeles. For nine months Jeannie and I wrestled with God.

I thank God for a world church that prayed for me; for God's miracle power that got me through two terrifying times. We were traumatized. But God is faithful. Jeannie and I claimed Psalm 34:4: "I sought the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears."

Abraham has fears. Suddenly he shakes himself awake from his inner thoughts and realizes that after he and Isaac and the two servants had been traveling all day it was time to make camp again. After supper Abraham slips away from the campfire, kneels down, and begins to pray as he's never prayed before: "O God, please! Speak just one more time. Lord, You know I love You. But my son—the promise! My only son. . . I'm so afraid!"

Abraham's Reward

As he prays, Abraham remembers something he learned despite his debacles of breakdown and moral collapse when he chose *not* to trust—God came through! He was faithful. Time after time God rewarded his faith despite Abraham's fears and failures.

Abraham remembers the time he even remonstrated with God. He got so frustrated with God's promise—he even told Him so during the argument: "God, Sarah is barren. I've figured out a logical, legal way to make Eliezer the lawful heir of promise."

Dialoguing with God. Objecting. Protesting. Getting personal with daring questions. Amazingly, God kept right on loving him.

God told him He enjoyed this new, deeper level of intimacy. He patiently smiled, "Trust Me. You and Sarah will have a son of your own—not Ishmael."

Abraham remembers finally letting go, and simply exclaiming: "OK, God,

You win. You said it. I believe it." "And he [Abraham] *believed* in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness" (Gen. 15:6).

Do you have fears about your future? Fears when you go back home to Bangladesh? Haiti? Sudan? Afghanistan? You wonder how you are going to face your future in your homeland? Civil war . . . disease . . . destruction . . . famine . . .

Cutting the Covenant

Abraham remembers something he can cling to. He remembers that God "cut a covenant" with him in Genesis 15. God swore; staked His own life on His promises.

Abraham remembers the time he split apart the sacrificial animals and laid out the pieces facing each other, and God came down and passed between the two rows of dead animals.

God swore by an oath of self-malediction (calling down a curse on Himself): "If I *ever* break My promises may My own body be torn in pieces just as these animals are split in two. As sure as I am God, My covenant promises shall be fulfilled. Always. Forever."

This is a promise that swells with cosmic significance down through redemption's story. God's pledge to the death foreshadowed the cross of Calvary, where He staked His very life on His promises, promises that echo down the corridors of time through the New Testament. On to the Second Coming. Resurrection. Reunion. Heaven. Eternal life.

Abraham *has been* learning to walk and talk with God. When he began the process—learning to walk by faith at Ur and Haran—he wasn't ready to climb Mount Moriah. But now he is.

"Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off" (Gen. 22:4).

Moriah. Abraham knows that God is waiting for him there. The final issue; the final branding into the mind and soul of Abraham this thing called "faith." The old man is tired. No sleep for nights. His heart breaking. For nearly 120 years he barely had faith to live with the promise in view. Now does he have the faith to put the promise on the altar and cancel out the only concrete fulfillment

of the promise he has experienced?

Finally everything is ready: the fire, the altar, the wood. Except no lamb. No miracle. No voice from heaven.

This is the most awkward pause in the plan of salvation. Isaac turns to his father. "Father, what now? Where is the lamb?" That is the greatest question of the ages.

Abraham long predates John the Baptist's statement in the New Testament, "Behold the Lamb of God . . ." (John 1:29). But in absolute faith Abraham replies: "God will provide himself . . ." (Gen. 22:8).

Little does Abraham realize that those are the very words God has been trying to teach him for 100 years. In every circumstance God will provide.

Slowly the old man gets up and moves near to the altar. He places his trembling hand on Isaac's shoulder and draws him close, his 120-year-old arm quivering.

Abraham must walk down one of two pathways. On the one side total trust.

The other path? Fear. Rejection of all his past experiences with God over 45 years. All the hopes and promises he's clung to for every mile he's walked since Haran—all hallucinations, including the fact that his son was *not* born a miracle.

Abraham makes his decision. With great hot tears flooding down his cheeks Abraham announces, "Isaac, my son—you are the sacrifice."

With terror and amazement Isaac's whole being trembles, repulsed with the thought. "Child sacrifice? No, Father!" It would have been so easy for Isaac to push him aside and walk away.

But the greatest tribute ever given by any child to any parent is given by Isaac to Abraham. Isaac looks trustingly into those loving, tear-filled eyes and knows that his father is a man of God.

Last words of love are spoken.

The last tender embrace is given.

The last kiss.

Then laying his only visible hope for the future on the altar, Abraham raises the dagger and begins to bring the knife down, when suddenly an invisible force stays his arm.

And then a voice: "Abraham! Abraham! Stop! It is enough! You have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me" (see verses 11, 12).

They hold each other and weep in love and relief. They hear a sound in the bushes. They both turn and look. God Himself has provided a lamb! God just wanted to make sure Abraham really *wanted* His provision (instead of his own) before He let Abraham see it.

Life Lessons

Why did God ask Abraham to do this? To test him? Yes, that's one reason.

To show us that faith takes time to develop? Yes. It takes time to trust someone you hardly know; to trust them with your home/wife/family/business/future.

There's a far more meaningful reason. All of the universe had been watching for 120 years, but especially the last three days—focusing on Abraham and Isaac.

Two thousand years before—in Eden (Gen. 3:15)—God announced to the entire universe His plan to redeem humanity. He'd allow His precious Son to die to restore men and women back to the original image designed for them.

Here on Mount Moriah God the Father was now using Abraham and Isaac as a great object lesson about the personal agony God would go through to save humanity. Abraham and Isaac had become a type of God the Father and God the Son.

And nearly 2,000 years later at that very spot, on Mount Moriah in Old Jerusalem, another Father and Son together climbed that very hill. And when they got to the top of that mountainside, that Son, too, voluntarily laid down His life.

Only this time there was no hand to reach out to say, "That's enough!" This time the knife came down and plunged, not into the heart of a mere man, but into the very heart of God Himself. God went to hell and the grave because *God is faithful to His promises*. "God will provide Himself a lamb!"

The single most important message we can preach—the final message to a dying world—is God's character of love: *God will provide*.

Paul tells us in Romans 4 and 5 we are coheirs with Christ. We have an equal inheritance with Christ. Imagine walking right into the throne room of God on an equal basis with Christ.

Someday we'll sit on God's throne. Jesus promised: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne" (Rev. 3:21).

Hebrews 11—that marvelous "Hall of Faith"—says that whoever you are, this promise is for you: "God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they [all the heroes just listed] be made perfect"

(verse 40, NIV).

World church, God says tonight: "I have a plan—for you. I had a plan for Abraham and Isaac and Jacob. And Jesus. And Paul and Martin Luther and William Miller. But I promise: It won't be fulfilled until you're there."

Do you love Jesus this evening? Do you love the Father? Why don't we tell Him so just now as we pray?

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Unlimited Opportunities in ESD

Sunday evening, July 2, 2000

Big. Large. Gigantic. Massive. Mammoth. Enormous. Titanic. It is not possible for one word to adequately describe the territory of the Euro-Asia Division (ESD). Twelve countries. Eleven time zones. Eight and a half million square miles. One country alone in ESD, Russia, is 70 percent larger than Canada and nearly twice the size of China or the United States. Lake Baikal in Russia is the size of the country of Belgium.

There are more than 285 million people in the ESD who must hear the gospel story before Jesus can return. Although the Seventh-day Adventist Church has grown tremendously since the fall of Communism, only a very small percentage of the population are Adventists, about 135,000.

The largest number of Adventists in the division is in the Ukraine and Russia. Adventism first began in ESD in 1886 with the baptism of 19 people in the Crimea. Although many members were persecuted and imprisoned during the Communist era, by the time the Euro-Asia Division was formed in 1990, the church had grown to 30,000. By 1995 the membership was about 99,000.

Tremendous Contrast, Different Methodology

Naturally there are tremendous contrasts in a territory of this size. There are 4,800 miles of arctic coastline in Russia, while in Central Asia, the highway follows the old Silk Road, which merchants traveled on camelback. Camels are still an important

part of society in Central Asia, while at the same time the Siberian tiger is facing extinction in the far east of Russia.

Volcanoes. Glaciers. Deserts. Taiga. Siberian remoteness and Moscow congestion. Wheat, silk, cotton. Grapes, melons, sunflower seeds. Coal, oil, iron ore, gold, diamonds.

Just as different methods are needed for growing and harvesting various crops, and different methods are needed for extracting various natural resources, a variety of methods are needed to reach the people of the ESD for Jesus Christ.



C. Lee Huff
President

Culturally Sensitive Worship

In the past year an Adventist "mosque" was opened and dedicated in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. Sabbath services will be held in this building, which is called a spiritual and cultural center. The people will worship God in the culture and traditions of Islamic people. Sabbath school and worship services will be conducted in both the Russian and Kyrgyz languages. The men will wear the traditional Kyrgyz skullcap, and the women will cover their heads. National music will be used. On both Friday and Sabbath evenings a prayer service, similar to the Muslim evening prayer service called namaz,

will be conducted. At that time the worshipers will sit and pray on the carpeted floor.

The Central Asia Conference president says that as secularism increased, Kyrgyz people departed from Islamic principles. He asserts that today the people of Central Asia are returning to their cultural roots and are reviving their interest in religion. He hopes this culturally sensitive approach to worship will attract many of those seekers.

Through the years the growth of the Adventist Church in the republics of the U.S.S.R. came primarily from the Russian populace in those places. Very few nationals, especially Muslim nationals, were reached. Even though the Russian language, in many respects, was a uniting factor throughout the nation, the church seldom met the language and cultural needs of the various people groups. Most of the world recognizes the names of Lenin



OUR FIRST HOME: This is the first church building that Adventists have ever owned in Moscow, Russia. It is built next to the division office and was dedicated in October 1998.

and Stalin as Soviet leaders, but only history buffs can trace the events of Tamerlane, who reigned and conquered vast areas of the present ESD from 1360 to 1405. Samarkand in Uzbekistan was Tamerlane's headquarters. The area is replete with Muslim history and is called the cradle of Islam. The dry desert climate helped preserve many centuries-old mosques and fortresses. Today many of these edifices stand proudly restored with the blue of their tiled mosaics matching the cloudless blue Uzbekistan sky.

Eight of the ESD's 12 countries lie in the 10/40 window. Many of these Muslim people are cultural Muslims only. Remember also that their religion was taken away from them during Communist times. Many Muslim people are searching for God and for peace that only a relationship with God can bring. They remember their grandparents telling them Old Testament stories; they remember seeing their grandparents praying and worshiping God. Many are attracted to the Adventist health message, which is so similar to their own beliefs.

Reaching the Oppressed

Fierce opposition to the Adventist Church often comes in various Orthodox communities; however, the most unbelievable and cruel opposition came last year in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan. A bulldozer, pickaxes, and a wrecking ball destroyed a new Adventist church, the only Adventist church in the country. Nothing but a pile of rubble remained. City officials said that the building had to be destroyed to make way for a new road; however, it has been stated publicly that no religions except Islam and Orthodox will be allowed in the country. New methods of evangelism must be developed for these oppressed areas.



A CONSECRATED EVENT: Dedication of the mosque-like church in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, in 1999. Alexander Shvarts (center on red carpet) is the president of the Southern Union.

Adventist World Radio (AWR) is a vital component of the overall evangelistic plans of the ESD. It may be the only means of reaching some people in the Muslim territories. Besides the expected broadcasts in the Russian and Ukrainian languages, programs are now being produced in the Kazak, Kyrgyz, Uzbek, Armenian, and Georgian languages. In addition to the good work of AWR, programs continue to be prepared for radio and television at the Voice of Hope media center in Tula. Baptisms from the Bible correspondence courses offered by their programs are ongoing.

The publishing work has historically been a strong evangelistic tool in the Adventist Church. For many years the production of Adventist literature in Russian and Ukrainian was done secretly underground. Now the Source of Life Publishing House (SOLPH) in Zaoksky, Russia, boldly churns out more than 18,000 pages a month. In the past five years more than 12 million pieces of literature have been produced.

Russian is the major language for publication, but Adventist literature has also been printed in Armenian, English, Georgian, Latvian, Tatar, Ukrainian, and Uzbek. The new two-color web press at SOLPH will easily increase production 10 to 20 times this amount.

In 1991 evangelists from Australia, the U.S., Germany, Canada, and other places eagerly began coming to the ESD to preach the gospel and to harvest the fruit of their labors. The hearts of people who lived for years in spiritual darkness were like blank pages on which were drawn the lovely face of Jesus. New churches sprang up as new freedoms were experienced. Although opposition was faced in some places, in many cities the visiting foreign evangelist was treated as a celebrity and as a messenger from heaven.

Getting Organized

Next came a period of constructing and acquiring buildings in which the new congregations could worship. (Unfortunately there are still more congregations across the division that worship in rented halls than in their own church buildings.) Expanding the organizational structure of the church was another needed step, thus conferences and unions were organized.

Today most of the division's departmental directors are well-qualified nationals who are devoted to the task of training union and conference leaders in the various ministries of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The ESD is an infant division, but it is taking adult-sized steps in training and

evangelism. Some of that evangelism is in the form of health evangelism. The Adventist Health Center in Moscow, for example, is expanding as a dental clinic. Stop-smoking programs and other health programs are regularly a part of community outreach across the ESD.

Higher Learning

Although it is very difficult to establish elementary church schools in the ESD, Zaosky Theological Seminary (ZTS) is growing both in the number of students and in the programs that it offers. The 1999-2000 school year saw the biggest enrollment the school has ever experienced. There were 337 students on campus with several hundred in the extension programs that are taught at various sites throughout the division.

ZTS has always been a miracle school. Construction on the ZTS buildings began before the fall of Communism. And that was just the beginning of the miracles. The students and staff experience miracles every single day. In addition to the original theology, music, and agriculture courses, programs are now offered in business, secretarial, and religion/English. Graduates from these courses are already strengthening the work of the church and the community.

With the present economic conditions in the ESD, it is impossible for a student to pay his or her own expenses at ZTS. Sponsors from around the world are lifting this load. In many respects, the future of the church in the ESD depends on the training of its young people. ESD and ZTS are forever grateful for the generosity of members of the world church who have had the foresight to train pastors and other leaders to work in ESD.

Wide-open Spaces

Although some areas seem to be

closed to Adventist expansion, other areas are wide open. As new freedoms came to the former U.S.S.R., materialism and other ideologies replaced atheism. Immediately following the fall of Communism in 1991 many hearts and minds were completely open to new

ideas. In many cases the religious group that first appealed to these people was the one that harvested them. Often—but not often enough—Adventism was the first new way of life the people met. All the evangelistic campaigns that were conducted during those early years represented just a drop in the bucket of what could have been done when it was so much easier to get results. However, we do praise God for all the evangelism that has been done in the

ESD, by both foreigners and nationals, since the division was formed in 1990. Many of the pastors throughout the division were baptized during the past four to seven years. Scores of successful campaigns are held each year by local pastors and by local church administrators. And there are several women evangelists in the ESD who reach people that men could not. It's especially important to have female workers in the Muslim countries.

Vast Potential

As we look ahead into this new millennium, it seems that there should

be three points of focus. Number one, evangelism and soul winning should continue to be the main purpose of every church activity and every institution. Number two, training leaders of this growing church is an ongoing priority. Number three, procuring church buildings for the ever-increasing membership is a basic and very real need.

Siberia is wide open to the gospel at this time. The Adventist work began in many Siberian cities by those who had been exiled there. In the new earth many believers who gave their lives in remote Siberia will smile when they learn that their blood acted as seeds for the gospel. There is a frontier-minded, pioneering, open spirit in Siberia.

The potential for the Adventist Church in Siberia, and in all of the ESD, is as vast and indescribable as is the territory itself. Yes, the diversity of geography and culture is a challenge, but it's also a very exciting and imaginative aspect, because it's impossible to be locked into one method! More precious than the diamonds of Siberia and the ancient treasures of Central Asia are the multitudes of people who will respond to the call of Jesus—once they hear it. As they enter this new millennium, the administrators, pastors, and laypeople in the ESD are committed to making sure, with God's help, that the 285 million people in their territory will have the opportunity to hear the call of Jesus. They want others to know the joy that they know. They want to go home!



A LEADER FOR CHRIST: Olga Pivovarova from Ekaterinburg, Russia, is a successful evangelist in the ESD.



A CULTURAL EXPERIENCE: Worshipers in native costume at the dedication of the Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, church

Knowing the Time

Devotional message presented Sabbath morning, July 1, 2000

In Romans 13 Paul outlines the duties of the Christian believer in society:
 “Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. . . . Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor” (Rom. 13:1-7).*

Why is the Christian to do all these things?
 Why is the Christian to be a good citizen?

The answer is outlined in verses 11-14: “And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed.”

What time is it? When we look around us, we see a world in revolt, enveloped in violence, destruction, and protest. The old norms of conduct are no longer respected, the old clichés no longer work, the old formulas no longer produce the results they used to.

In this technological, computerized age, the world has become one global village. Knowledge has increased with incredible speed. All the scientific wonders of the past have now coalesced, forming a peak upon which to stand ready to hurl this generation into the full and final glory of human scientific outreach. Once it was the moon we aimed for, then it was the planets, next time it will be the stars. After that, who knows?

What Time Is It?

It's the time when humans will keep on pressing their claim for the conquest of outer space. This age of scientific exploration is indeed the great second renaissance, the glory of which is destined to reach its peak in our generation.

It's the time of a new religion abroad in the land, a religion created by science. The computer, satellite communication, and the communication highway are causing millions



G. Ralph Thompson
 Secretary,
 General Conference
 of Seventh-day
 Adventists

of their devotees to bow the knee in adoration. This new religion makes us into our own god, worshiping at the shrine that we have dedicated to ourselves. As one scientist has said, science has opened the gateway to heaven.

In the area of morality we have reached a new low. Collapsing moral standards are strewn in great profusion along the pathway of our decadent society. The moorings have been removed, and we are being buffeted back and forth by the winds of loose passion, sexual promiscuity, marital infidelity, and the so-called new morality. This ever-rising flood of immorality threatens to engulf all of society. The few minority voices raised in alarm at the approaching disaster sound strangely off-key and unreal. In fact, very few are even listening or concerned. We cannot begin to

fathom the great depths of moral decay into which our society has fallen. We even have the sad spectacle of clergy and religious leaders putting their approval on homosexuality and premarital sexual relations. Such is the situation that even the clergy is brainwashed and sin is being called righteousness.

Our cities are sick, our society is sick, our generation is sick. A terrible plague has broken out in epidemic proportions, and a moral cesspool threatens to engulf us all.

And what is the picture like in the field of religion? I wish things were brighter here. I wish I could tell you that there is evidence of a great revival.

Unfortunately, the opposite is true. Religion in general has become formal, dead, and arctic-like. Here and there can be found a little stirring and flurry. But the cruel fact is that the church in general is not being taken seriously by the world at large. To most people, God is dead. Most religious people are content to have their ministers drug them to sleep on Sunday mornings, and sometimes Sabbath morn-

ings, with some soporific potion of attractive, secularistic, materialistic, and ecumenistic concoction. Religion, for most people, is something to be put on and taken off like a coat, to be worn only in church. It must not affect their private lives. They want just enough religion to cover them with a veneer of respectability.

It is time for us as Seventh-day Adventists to go out into this sick and dying world and declare the binding claims of God's holy law as exemplified in the life of Christ. "The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts" (verses 12-14).

God's remedy for sin is found in Jesus Christ. In this battered, bleeding, sin-sickened, dying world of ours, we confidently point men and women to the soon return of Jesus Christ our Lord.

So Little Time

Time is running out on us. It could very well be that we are nearer to the coming of Christ than we even think! Ours is a wonderful opportunity to witness with our own eyes the fulfillment of Bible prophecy. This is the period that is destined to witness the climax of the ages.

Today the human race finds itself sitting on top of a rumbling volcano and crying out desperately, "What shall we do?" Brothers and sisters, this is our opportunity to tell them that all things are now ready for the return of heaven's King and that the kingdoms of this world are soon to become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ. As James Stewart of Edinburgh, Scotland, once said: "Our task is to confront the rampant disillusionment of today and smash it with the cross of Christ and shame it with the splendor of the resurrection." And, I add, shatter it with the glorious news of the second coming of Christ in apocalyptic glory. Whatever department of the

church we serve, this is the touchstone of our hopes, the *raison d'être* of our service, the ultimate consummation of our earnest desires.

Now let me say this, my fellow Seventh-day Adventist Church employees: we must not be mercenary servants; we do not work just for the dollars and cents. Our service for God and His church is based on His love for us and our love for Him.

Permit me also to say a word to our vast number of highly educated, beautiful young people of this church. You have great talent that God can use in the proclamation of His message and the finishing of His work on earth. You should bring to the cause of God an alert mind, a dedicated life, and a surplus of good common sense.

What a great blessing it is to the church for our young people to be well trained academically, and then have that training baptized by the Holy Spirit!

I say to you today, young people, get all the education you can and then use it for the glory of God.

In the *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald* of November 13, 1913, Ellen G. White wrote: "All heaven is astir, engaged in preparing for the day of God's vengeance, the day of Zion's deliverance. The time of tarrying is almost ended. The pilgrims and strangers who have so long been seeking a better country are almost home. I feel as if I must cry aloud, Homeward bound! Rapidly we are nearing the time when Christ will come to gather His redeemed to Himself."

Brothers and sisters, the times demand that we take an agonizing reappraisal of our objectives and our methods. We must keep pace with the demands of this tremendous hour. This is no time for timid leadership or play-it-safe techniques. The times demand bold, adventuresome, untried methods in order to keep abreast of the exigencies of today.

We are nearing home, and I believe that the revival we so much need will indeed come. There will be a revival among us not seen since the days of Pentecost. It will come with ten times

the power of Pentecost. Under the Holy Spirit's outpouring and unction, this Advent movement will not peter out on the rocks of oblivion, but rather it shall gather momentum with every passing day until it reaches a grand and glorious climax.

Send Out the Music

Many years ago John Evelyn visited Amsterdam and went into the Tower of Saint Nicholas to observe the playing of those marvelous chimes. He found a man way below the bells with a type of wooden gloves on his hands pounding away on the keyboards. The nearness of the bells, the clanging of the keys when struck by the wooden gloves, and the clatter of the wires made it impossible for him to hear the music. But many people in the town paused in their work and listened to the chiming and were glad.

And so it may be, fellow laborer, that in your watchtowers when you are wearily pouring the music of your lives out into the empty lives of others, the rattling of the keys, the heavy hammers, the twanging of the wires, and the very nearness of the work may all conspire to prevent you from catching the music. But across the crowded cities and villages full of weary sin-sick souls, and far out on the eternal sea, the melody of your work will blend with the song of the angels. Do not ever be discouraged in your work for the Master.

Those who have stood on the heights above the city of Naples, Italy, tell us that as the sound comes up from that populous city and reaches the upper air, it meets and mingles on a minor key. There are the voices of traffic and of command; the voices of affection and rebuke; the shouts of sailors and cries of itinerant vendors in the street, as well as the chatter and laughter of children. But they all come up, forming an indistinguishable moan in the air.

That moan in the air is the voice of the world as it reaches the throne of God. It is a cry for help. Christ, who poured out His soul unto death that the world might be saved, hears that

cry and waits with unutterable longing for souls to hear the message, for channels through which His divine love can flow to every part of the world.

Will you become involved in its proclamation? Will you go forward with fortitude and resolute purpose to point men and women heavenward? I believe God is counting on you and me, for He has made no other plans.

Time to Act

Now is the time and, thank God, we are the people. I am sure that we all recognize that we have come to the *now* time. If ever the time was auspicious for striking out for God, it is *now*! If ever the time was ripe for the harvest, it is *now*!

Now, while the hearts of humanity are failing them for fear; *now*, when men and women have become disillusioned with the fleeting pleasures of earth; *now*, when the universal cry is for something lasting and eternal; *now*, while the forces of good and evil are consolidating for the last great struggle to the death; *now*, while science is exploding in ever-breathhtaking marvels; *now*, while men are reaching for the planets of outer space and on to the stars; *now*, while the doors of opportunity are still open for the preaching of the gospel; *now*, while the stupefying, crippling, corroding epidemic of sin seems about to envelop the whole of society; *now*, while the youth of the world are looking for a challenge, something to live for, something to die for; *now*, while the confused, bewildered masses of earth are groping blindly in the darkness of misery and despair; *now*, while our decadent society seems bent on destruction; *now*, while moral laxity and marital infidelity and the new morality are doing their destructive work; *now*, while the angels of God are holding back the winds of strife from increasing into a global hurricane; *now*,

when the prophecy of Joel concerning the outpouring of God's Spirit upon His people in latter rain proportions is about to be fulfilled; *now*, in this hour of history, God's call to service comes to each of us to do our part to bring to a great triumphal conclusion the sharing of the Advent message throughout this great, challenging, desperate period of the world's history.

We are a people of prophecy, a people of destiny, a people with a mission, a people with a deadline. We are the people with the message for these times. We are the people of the remnant, and our redemption draweth nigh.

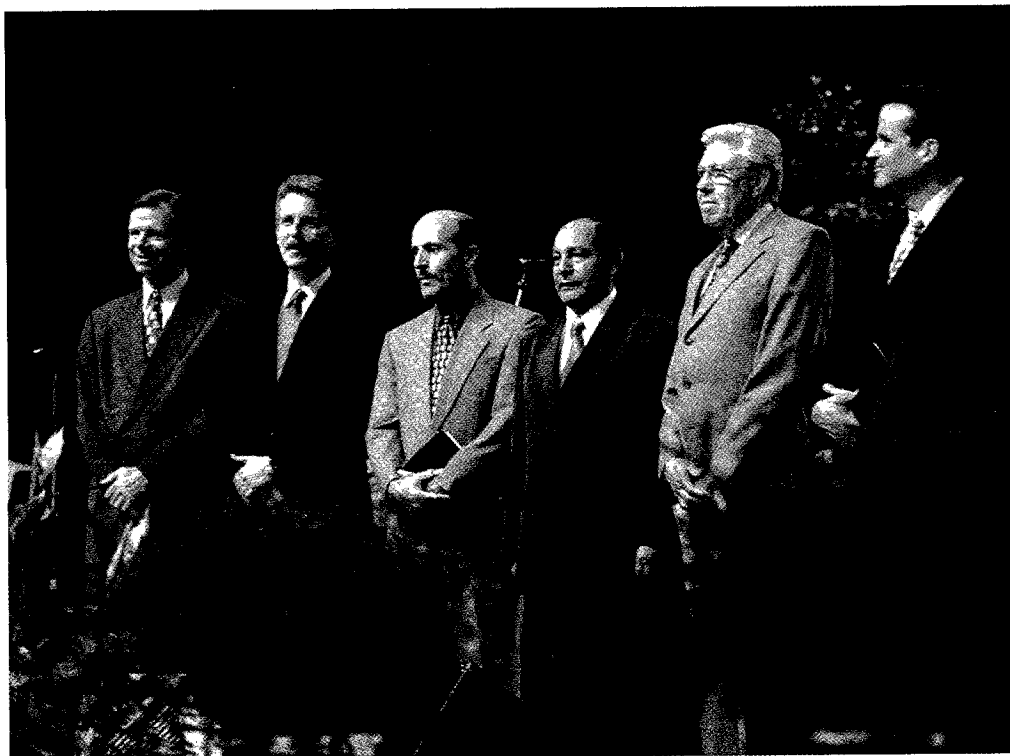
The time is ripe, the message is right, and God is ready! The question is, are we ready?

Someone has said the church's whispers must become shouts, her lethargy must become enthusiasm, and her subdued light must become a beacon upon the hilltops of the world. We are the people of the book—we love

the Bible. We are the people with a Saviour—we love the Lord. We are the people of hope—we look for Christ's return. We are the people of prayer—we talk with God. We are the people of law and order—we love God's commandments. We are the people with the Sabbath—we keep holy the seventh day of the week. We are the people of principle—we hold high standards. We are the people with a program—the globe is our limit. We are the people with a heart—we help the needy. We are the people with a past—we go back to Pentecost. We are the people with a future—heaven is our home.

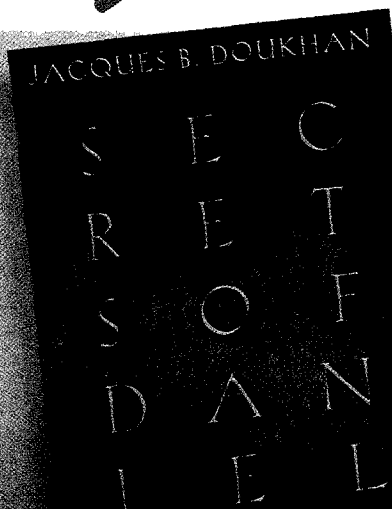
So, knowing the time, let us awake and join hands together in the glorious proclamation of the third angel's message as it sweeps to its mighty climax.

*Unless otherwise noted, Scripture texts are taken from the New King James Version.



CAUGHT IN THE NET: During the North American Division report on Sabbath evening, six leaders were recognized for their participation in the development and production of the NET evangelism series since 1995. They are (left to right) Mark Finley, Dwight Nelson, Doug Batchelor, Alexandro Bullon, Jim Cox, and Frank Gonzales.

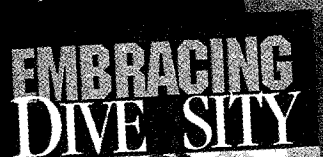
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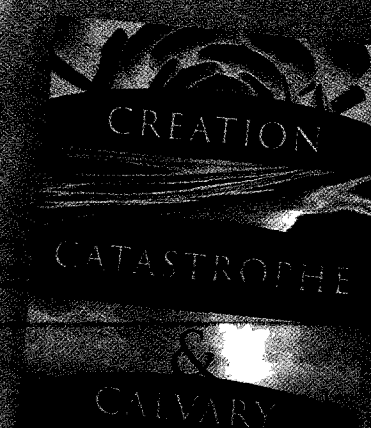


Embracing Diversity

Written by Seventh-day Adventist leaders from many cultural backgrounds, this book describes the values, beliefs, mores, and perspectives that motivate people groups and provides a rich resource for effective cross-cultural service. Leslie N. Pollard, editor. 0-8280-1543-0. Paperback. US\$12.99, Can\$19.49.

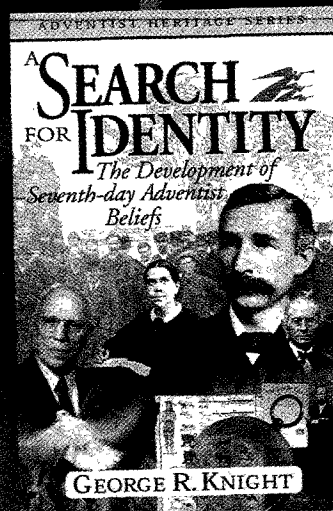
A Search for Identity

How did we come to believe what we believe? George R. Knight captures the ebb and flow of the doctrinal currents within Adventism, including controversies over the shut door, the law in Galatians at the 1888 General Conference session, the Trinity, pantheism, fundamentalism, the nature of Christ, and inspiration. 0-8280-1541-4. Paperback. US\$9.99, Can\$14.99.



Creation, Catastrophe, and Calvary

These essays by some of the leading creationist voices in the Seventh-day Adventist Church cover such topics as: Are the "days" of creation literal days? How can we explain the two divergent creation accounts of Genesis 1 and 2? Bible evidence for a universal flood. Problems with the theory of evolution. The geologic column and Calvary. John Templeton Baldwin, editor. 0-8280-1323-3. Hardcover. US\$14.99, Can\$22.49.



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Helping Others Prepare for Eternity

Tuesday's Child

BY WILLIAM G. JOHNSON

Third of five sons, he was named Kwabena, "born on Tuesday." His grandfather was a fetish priest, and the boys grew up steeped in the practices of traditional African religion.

One day when he was 8 some Christian students came to the village in Ghana and began to hold public meetings. The five boys went along to cause trouble, but eventually they all accepted Jesus and were baptized.

When Kwabena became a Christian, he dropped his given name and took instead "Matthew."

Meet Matthew Bediako, newly elected secretary of the world Adventist Church. His is a story so full

of wonder, so full of grace; a story that captures the essence of our movement with its demonstration of the power of the living Christ to take a child from an African village and nurture and lead him to the second highest rung of leadership of this world church.

For 12 years I have had opportunity to observe the life and leadership of Elder Matthew Bediako, field secretary 1986-1990, and a general vice president of the General Conference for the past 10 years. I respect and love this man. Two qualities in particular stand out: integrity and wisdom.

Matthew Bediako is a straight arrow. He lives and administers by principle; he is open to hear all sides and fair in his handling of disputes.

And he is wise. He combines academic preparation (M.A. in church administration from Andrews University, M.S.P.H. from Loma Linda University) with the ability to see the

big picture, the threads of truth and justice in a complex situation. These qualities will serve the Adventist Church well in the years ahead.

But above all this Tuesday's child is like the old rhyme—full of grace. "Because the Lord loves me," he says, "I am struggling to love, to appreciate, and to dedicate my life to the One who has done so much for me."

You can't talk to the new secretary very long before another name comes up—his Bible teacher in secondary school and college. That teacher, a young missionary, took a chance on an African teenager, standing financial guarantor so he could work as a student literature evangelist.

The teacher? Dr. Jan Paulsen, president of the General Conference. In another wonderful turn of grace, teacher and student, one born far beyond the arctic circle, the other on an African Tuesday, stand side by side to lead the world Adventist Church.

"Step Up Humbly, Step Down Graciously"

On Friday, June 30, Elder G. Ralph Thompson completed his fourth five-year term as General Conference secretary, making him the longest-serving secretary in the church's history. Adventist Review editor William G. Johnson interviewed him in a relaxed Sunday morning session.

What are the things that really move you, that you're most passionate about?

I'm passionate about this church. I wasn't born into an Adventist home; I grew up as a Sunday School boy in the Pilgrim Holiness Church. But I became convinced of the truth at age 17, and was baptized that year. My whole life after that has been Adventist-oriented. I'm absolutely convinced that the Seventh-day Adventist Church has been raised up by God, and I think the future, as Ellen White says, is as bright



as the promises of God.

In your 20 years as secretary, what has happened as a result of your administration that gives you the most satisfaction?

I've always felt that the role of the secretary was to assist the president as much as a person can. I'm also proud of the rapport in the Secretariat department among those who work there. We have an excellent spirit of camaraderie among us. [Our motto is] "Don't take yourself too seriously. Hang loose in the saddle."

What are your plans for the near future?

Fifty years ago I made a speech at Caribbean Union College where I said, "In the future, if the Lord sees fit to call you up to higher or wider service, please step up humbly. When the time

comes, as inevitably it will, step down graciously. Don't get mad at anybody. Thank the people and thank God for the privilege you have had of serving Him." That's still my motto.

Over the years I've observed in you a deep concern for fairness and equality. I know this is an abiding issue for you.

Absolutely. We've got to treat people as they ought to be treated, as we like to treat ourselves. We are a multinational, multiracial, multicultural, and multigenerational church. And we've got to prove that the gospel means what it says: at the foot of the cross the ground is level.

What concerns do you have for the world church?

I'm concerned for the world unity of this church. We must stick together. We cannot become national churches. The acid test of the gospel is to prove to the world what many experts say is impossible: to get rid of tribalism and racism in the church.

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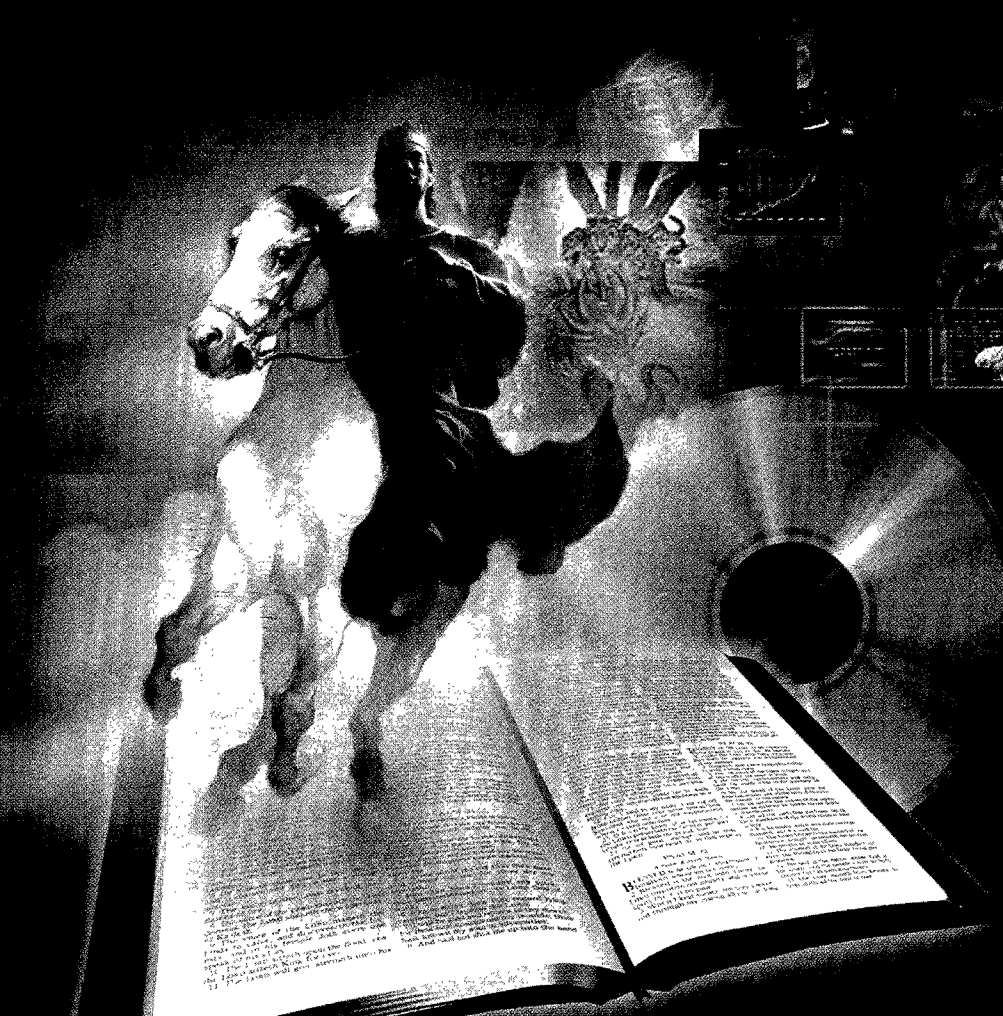
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Challenges and Opportunities

Presented Sunday evening, July 2, 2000

The Northern Asia-Pacific Division, together with its twin, the Southern Asia-Pacific Division, was born on

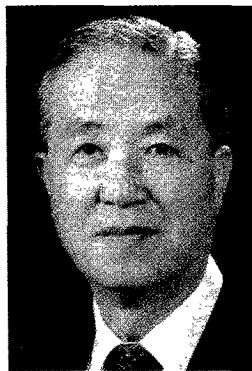
January 1, 1997.

As the Adventist message progressed in Asia, a succession of divisions emerged. The Asiatic Division, organized in 1909, was the mother of the Far Eastern Division, the Southern Asia Division, the Australasian Division (which later became the South Pacific Division), and the China Division. The Far Eastern Division later became the Asia-Pacific Division, a distinction that lasted only two years.

As it considered the great challenges and opportunities in the emerging Asia-Pacific region, the General Conference sought to strengthen evangelism in this territory by creating one more division. The Asia-Pacific Division was divided into the Northern Asia-Pacific Division and the Southern Asia-Pacific Division. At the same time, mainland China and Mongolia, former territories of the General Conference, became part of the Northern Asia-Pacific Division.

The two divisions decided to leave the beautiful and well-organized city-state of Singapore, where the Far Eastern/Asia-Pacific Division head-

quarters office had been located for more than 60 years, in order to decrease operating expenses. The Northern Asia-Pacific Division settled in Seoul, Korea, while the Southern Asia-Pacific Division developed a new headquarters near Manila, Philippines.



Pyung Duk Chun
President

The Northern Asia-Pacific Division (NSD) is the largest world division in terms of population and the least penetrated with the gospel message. The greatest challenge, therefore, is Global Mission. In China alone there are more than 600 population segments of 1 million people

where there is not a single Adventist member, and there are 465 cities of a half million people with no Adventists at all. A bold five-year project is under way to establish an Adventist presence in each of these 465 mega-cities through Global Mission pioneer workers.

Since China is a Communist

nation, many restrictions are imposed on church activities, especially those with international involvement. Despite these restrictions, Adventist World Radio broadcasting has become a major means of evangelism and leadership training. One of the greatest needs of churches in China that can be met by outside assistance is church construction. In the past, Adventist congregations were not allowed to own their own church buildings; now it is permissible in many places to build churches funded from outside sources.

Publishing work plays a significant role in China as well in providing spiritual nurture and promoting unity among scattered Adventists. *The Desire of Ages*, *Christ's Object Lessons*, and *Bible Readings for the Home* have been translated and circulated with the full blessing of the authorities. Many other Ellen G. White books have been printed and circulated privately in China. Some 6,000 copies of the *Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide* are circulated every quarter, and the number of publications is steadily growing from year to year.



Language school teachers in Taiwan

New Horizons in Mongolia

The country of Mongolia was an unentered territory when worldwide Global Mission was launched in 1990. Adventist Frontier Missions volunteers Brad and Cathie Jolly and Joan Park cultivated the soil of this long-forgotten country with the gospel message. Brother Jolly offered everything to the people, including his own life on the altar of Mongolian evangelism. That sacrifice was not in vain, as the team was able to witness the first baptism of eight souls in 1993.

The Adventist Church is now officially registered with the government. Membership has grown to 59.

Four congregations are currently meeting every Sabbath. An English Language School has recently been opened to reach educated young people. Pastor Dale Tunnell and his family arrived in 1998 in Ulaan Baatar, Mongolia, the first official Adventist missionaries in the land of Genghis Khan.

The Largest Union Mission

Have you ever imagined a union mission whose population exceeds more than one fifth of the world's population? That is the Chinese Union Mission, organized in 1999 by merging the former South China Island Union Mission and the former East Asia Association. The need for Global Mission in this territory is as great as its population.

The immense population is not the only challenge: the political environment also presents a formidable obstacle. Any form of outside influence or involvement is illegal. Any form of organization beyond the local congregation is not tolerated. Denominational distinction is opposed by government policy. Nevertheless, there are more than 2,600 local Sabbathkeeping congregations and 250,000 baptized members in mainland China.

1000 Missionary Movement—The Greatest Challenge of the Century

The 1000 Missionary Movement was launched in order to meet the two greatest challenges of our church—to

proclaim the everlasting gospel to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people, and to keep our young people strong in the faith. There are numerous cities, towns, and villages in our division in which there is no Adventist presence, and planting an Adventist presence in these unentered territories presents a tremendous challenge.

Every year tens of thousands of young people are baptized. Sadly, though, we lose thousands of them each year as well. The NSD has discovered that the most effective means of retaining our young people is to train them for service to others.

A training center was established

persons have been baptized, 204 new congregations have been established, and 187 new chapels have been erected.

These wonderful results are still insignificant when compared with the tremendous impact upon each volunteer's personal spiritual life, and with the continued results that will be produced throughout their lifelong commitment in their home fields. The volunteers firmly believe that their commitment is not only for one year in the mission field, but rather to a lifelong dedication to the Lord and His work. Their motto is "Once a Missionary, Forever a Missionary." They will sus-



The Northern Asia-Pacific Division includes the Mongolian people.

near Manila, Philippines, in 1992 to which young volunteer missionaries are recruited from far and near. After five weeks of intensive training they are dispatched to remote, unentered territories to establish new Adventist congregations. According to the report of Kim Si Young, the 1000 Missionary Movement director, the center has trained and sent out 1,426 volunteer missionaries to 26 countries of the world. These volunteers have come from 34 different countries, and as a result of their dedicated efforts, 17,048

tain the same spirit, dedication, and enthusiasm in their home mission field as they exhibited in foreign mission fields.

Perpetual Peace Through Gospel Power

Ruth Im, a Korean 1000 Missionary, and her Filipino partner were sent to an area where there is no Adventist presence—Talaingod Municipality, a remote mountain area in the southern part of Mindanao Island in the Philippines. When these two young

missionaries arrived at the entrance of the community, armed guards stopped them. Although they explained their purpose in coming, the guards remained adamant and would not allow them to enter, saying, "No Christian has ever been allowed to enter this town." When the two young women persisted in their request to enter, the guards reported them to the municipality chief. Upon learning that they were Seventh-day Adventist missionaries, the chief gave orders to let them in and allowed them to freely go about their work. Because the chief had once attended an Adventist mission school many years ago, he felt kindly toward Adventists. These two young women were the first Christians to be allowed to enter that area, for which they gave God the praise.

It didn't take long for the missionaries to discover that the entire community consisted of Manobo and Ata tribes, so warlike that killing was part of their everyday experience. The tribes had been constantly fighting with and killing their neighboring village people for hundreds of years, even though the police and military forces had tried everything to stop the killing. Though the two missionaries were very frightened, they trusted in the Lord's protecting power and began their ministry to the women and children. They taught Christian songs and Bible stories, and also swept the streets, cleaned kitchens and toilets, and treated wounds. Gradually the people opened their hearts and accepted the gospel—first the children, then the women, and last, the men. Almost everyone in the village accepted Jesus Christ and was baptized.

But a new worry befell the people. If the neighboring tribe over the hill attacked them, they would not fight or kill the intruders because as Christians they could not kill people and would be in great danger of being killed or captured. The villagers entreated the two missionaries to go to the village over the hill and teach the same gospel. Accepting this challenge, the two young missionaries went to the next village and repeated the ministry.



Kim Si Young, P. D. Chun, L. R. Colburn (left to right) at the NSD opening ceremony, October 30, 1997

The result was the same. The whole village accepted the gospel and became Adventist Christians. But the same worry came to the minds of these villagers, and they asked the missionaries to evangelize the next neighboring village. This process was repeated from one village to another until all 11 villages in the Talaingod Municipality became Adventist villages.

Now 11 Adventist churches stand on the hilltops of Talaingod Municipality, and more than 1,700 baptized members flood the churches each Sabbath to praise and worship God. The fighting and killing have ceased. Former warriors carry Bibles instead of weapons. Peace, perpetual peace, prevails over the land. Songs of praise echo from mountain to mountain, from valley to valley.

All these changes took place within two years. Such conversions are the most powerful arguments for the transforming power of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

From English Learning to Gospel Learning

The demand to learn English is a worldwide phenomenon, but few capitalize on such a demand for gospel out-

reach. Japan and Taiwan have experienced a certain degree of success along these lines, but Korea has been tremendously successful. This year the Korean church celebrates its thirty-first anniversary of conducting an English Language School program. In spite of skepticism and criticism, the SDA English Language School program has been successful from its inception in winning many educated young people to the Lord. Every year 200-300 people become Adventists through SDA English Language Schools. More than 100 pastors, teachers, physicians, and nurses who had their first contact with Adventism through this program are serving in various capacities of denominational work.

In addition to English, there are Japanese, Chinese, and Spanish programs. About 30,000 young people come to 24 SDA English Language Schools five days a week. What a golden opportunity to witness to the students about the saving power of the gospel! Language Schools are not only self-sufficient, but also provide significant funds for general evangelistic outreach activities.

First Business Meeting (continued)

57th General Conference Session, June 29, 2000, 6:45 p.m.

[Tom Neslund and Reg Burgess made a presentation concerning "Walk Around the World."]

CLAUDE SABOT: [Prayer in French.]

GERRY KARST: Good evening, delegates, special guests, and friends. I am Gerry Karst, the assistant to the president for the General Conference. On behalf of the General Conference it is my privilege to welcome you to this fifty-seventh session of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. We thank God for your safe arrival, and we look forward with anticipation to the part that each one will play in this important session. Thousands have been praying daily for this very time when the church in session anticipates the outpouring of the Holy Spirit to guide and direct the proceedings of this important meeting. I invite you to be constantly in prayer throughout this entire session. We are pleased for the good facilities and accommodations, for this clean and friendly city, for the good public transportation system, the fine selection and availability of food in the area. The city of Toronto and its officials have rolled out the welcome carpet to all Seventh-day Adventists from around the world. And so, as you learn to find your way around this huge complex, as you bump into friends new and old, and as we sing, pray, and worship together from nearly every country of the world, let us consider what a privilege it is to belong to the great family of God. Can you collectively say "Amen"?

ORVILLE D. PARCHMENT: I don't know if you heard what I heard yesterday, but while I was listening to the 6:18 news on the radio, the announcer made a very significant statement. The United Nations has declared Canada to be the best country in the world in which to live [applause], followed by Norway, the United States, and Iceland. From the scenic island of Newfoundland to the mountains of British Columbia we members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada welcome you to the fifty-seventh session of the General Conference. For years we have been planning and dreaming, and now tonight it is a reality. And so on behalf of all of the members and all of the people who are coming from around the world I welcome you, delegates and guests, and to everyone, welcome to the best country to live in—Canada.

DERRICK M. NICHOLS: Ontario is honored to have this fifty-seventh session of our world church here in Toronto. On behalf of the membership of the Ontario

Conference and in the love of Jesus, our Saviour, we welcome each one of you warmly from near and far, from across the continent of North America and every country around the world. We are pleased to have you here. I want you to know, ladies and gentlemen, that Ontario is beautiful. It is yours to discover. Please enjoy your stay here. Now as we gather here it might be Israel's last encampment before we cross the Jordan. Our prayer here in Ontario is that God will give us all in this session the unity, the wisdom, the faith, and the power to move God's church forward and into the Promised Land. Welcome again, and God bless you all.

B. B. BEACH: President Paulsen, delegates and friends, it gives me great pleasure this evening to introduce to you some distinguished visitors and guests here at the session of the General Conference. I am happy to introduce to you, first of all, the Honorable Chris Hodgson, the minister responsible for the management board of the cabinet for the province of Ontario. He is here this evening to bring not only his greetings but also greetings on behalf of the premier, the Honorable Mike Harris. Chris Hodgson is a friend of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada, and his assistance to the organizing committee is greatly appreciated. In his work and in his home Chris represents many of the ideals that Seventh-day Adventists try to achieve. Having said this, may we ask the Honorable Chris Hodgson to come forward and address the General Conference session.

CHRIS HODGSON: Thank you for that very warm introduction. It is an honor to be invited here today to convey greetings on behalf of the government of Ontario and the premier of our province, the Honorable Michael Harris. Premier Harris regrets that because of a previous engagement he is unable to be here this evening. However, he has asked me to express thanks on behalf of the people of Ontario for the commitment made by the Seventh-day Adventist Church to hold the fifty-seventh General Conference world session here in Ontario. It has been nothing less than astonishing to see the amount of work and the details that the organizing committees have put on to host this event. And it is evident that this effort has paid off. We are truly appreciative of the hundreds of volunteers and staff. The significance of this gathering has not escaped the people of Ontario. Not only is it good for tourism and our economy, but now more than ever

we need the presence of people whose goal for others in our society is vital to the keeping of the message that we must all be our brother's keeper. I know that the Seventh-day Adventist Church has a long history here at home, and around the world, of helping others through their many programs of aid and education.

Here at home we are proud and grateful to acknowledge the many good works done by Adventists that benefit so many members of our communities. Like the Adventist Church, we in the province of Ontario are blessed by the presence of many nationalities who strengthen the social fabric of our province. To all of you who have made this your first visit to Ontario I give you a special welcome. It would not be fitting to address a gathering of Adventists without also noting that we are grateful for the freedoms of our society, including the freedom to worship and the freedom to live and practice our faith in peace, which is so much a part of your message. It is my hope—indeed, it is the wish of the people of Ontario—that this general council will be the most successful ever. God bless, and thank you so much for inviting me to be a part of this tonight.

B. B. BEACH: We are very honored to have with us this evening one whom we might call Mr. Toronto. Mel Lastman's contributions as mayor of Toronto not only are legion, but have almost become a legend, allowing him to put his personal stamp on Toronto, Canada's largest city and one of the largest metropolitan areas in North America. He has created a climate of confidence, and when we had the raising of the flag the other day we were told that he controls not only the climate of investment and business but also the meteorological climate. And this afternoon when we heard thunder, Mel Lastman spoke to the thunder, and the sun came out. He has boundless energy and enthusiasm, and this makes him a doer and an archpromoter of Toronto. He has had positive relations for some years with the Seventh-day Adventist Church, especially with the North York Branson Hospital. Ladies and gentlemen, let us welcome the mayor of Toronto.

MEL LASTMAN: Thank you very much, Bert. There is no amount of flattery that I find offensive. Pastor Jan Paulsen, president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church; Pastor Orville Parchment, president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Canada; the Honorable Chris Hodgson; platform guests; distinguished guests and

delegates to the Adventist world session 2000, welcome to Toronto, the greatest city in the world. Now, Pastor Parchment was saying that Canada was declared the greatest country in the world. This was not done by me. This was not done by the prime minister. This was done by the United Nations. And this has been done for seven consecutive years. Welcome to a city of friends, a city of harmony, a city of serenity. We guarantee you a great time and a great city. You will find everything here. No other city in the world offers so much to their visitors. You represent the largest convention in our city. More than 60,000 people will participate in your world session 2000. We're very proud that you selected the city of Toronto. We wish you well for your business and fellowship meetings. And we guarantee a perfect environment for your convention. When your meetings end or you have free time, the city is at your doorstep. Enjoy our clean, safe streets; our rapid transit, including the most efficient subway in the world; and our thousands of restaurants. We have every type of food in the world. And enjoy the great spirit of this great city of Toronto. But I want to set something straight. In Canada we honor our distinguished visitors, we honor our prime minister, we honor our premier, we honor our lieutenant governors, we honor our ministers in government, we honor our judges, but in the city of Toronto we worship our mayor. Now, you may have heard that I control the weather in Toronto. Don't believe it. It's a myth. Sometimes I have a bad day. This was one of them. But I would like to see you come back for your fifty-eighth world session so we can open this roof and you can see what it's like under the stars. No matter where you go in our communities and neighborhoods, you will feel at home. We are the most culturally diverse city in the world, with people from 169 countries speaking more than 100 languages, and we get along. We live, work, and play together, and that is the magic of this great city, and that is the magic of the Adventist Church. You are a great worldwide church without barriers that now has 11 million members in more than 200 countries. You were among the first to adopt the strong moral and lifestyle principles that others emulate today. You said no smoking when everyone thought that it was stylish, and that it could do no harm. You knew before everyone else. You advocated vegetarian food and a healthy lifestyle when everyone else was wallowing in high cholesterol. You instilled wonderful family values in your children and taught them the benefits of a drug-free lifestyle. Ladies and gentlemen, your children are a credit to you. They never get into trouble with the police. They are young people with a wonderful spirit. They respect their parents, and they maintain and uphold the Adventist sense of values. Our city alone has nearly 20,000

Adventists, including two members of the mayor's staff. Toronto is a special place where everyone, regardless of race, creed, color, or religion, can practice their faith and celebrate their heritage. On behalf of Toronto's city council and the 2.4 million people of our great city I would like to present two keys to our city, to Pastor Paulsen and Pastor Parchment. These keys are our city's highest honor.

Ladies and gentlemen, enjoy your world session. You have been fantastic, and the city really enjoys what you are doing and how you are doing it. There aren't any problems with the Seventh-day Adventists. You are terrific. Enjoy your world session, and please enjoy Toronto. Thank you very, very much.

ORVILLE PARCHMENT: Honorable Gentlemen, the warmth and generosity of the reception that the city has extended to us by the Honorable Chris Hodgson on behalf of the premier of Ontario is truly heartwarming, and the response of the people here is an indication of how well we feel at being in the city of Toronto. What you see before you is the sampling of what will flood this city during the two coming weekends. We would like to share with you a gift for you to take away from here as a memory of this visit with us.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, for the unveiling of the Seventh-day Adventist stamp, I invite you to stand as Harold Helman sings the national anthem.

[Orville Parchment and Barry Bussey made a presentation concerning the special stamp that has been released by *Canada Post*.]

[Jan Paulsen led out in a ceremony in which a sculpture fashioned by Victor Issa was unveiled.]

[The theme song, "We Have This Hope," was sung.]

NILTON D. AMORIM: [Scripture reading: 2 Peter 1:19-21.]

JAN PAULSEN: I want you to meet my wife, Kari. This weekend (maybe I should have said "recently") she discovered she is the preacher in our family. She's in a Norwegian national costume. This weekend we will have been married 45 years. She is to be commended for her endurance, and tolerance, and many other gifts. But beyond that, she joins me because I want to honor the women of the Seventh-day Adventist Church tonight—the mothers and the wives, the unsung heroes of so many private situations and a part of so many public major undertakings by our church. They are the majority of our family, and they are the heart of the church. I honor the women of the Seventh-day Adventist movement.

And also tonight I want to honor the children. Stephanie from Peru joins me, and Wesley from Brazil. There are at least 5 million children in the Seventh-day Adventist family around the world, and we so often

take them for granted. Workers' children, ministers' children, evangelists' children, often move with the furniture as if they were part of the furniture. They have to be uprooted, they have to find new friends, they have to get used to new schools. They have to grow up quickly. I honor the children—the 5 million children of the Seventh-day Adventist family. Thank you!

[The report of the General Conference president can be found in *Bulletin* 1.]

[At the conclusion of his report Jan Paulsen asked a number of individuals to join him in a season of prayer.]

LEO S. RANZOLIN: What a blessed time we have spent together here this evening, and before the benediction we have an item of business. I want to ask each one of you, if you have time, to assist Ruthie Jacobsen in the prayer room.

I would like to call a brief business session at this moment and call on G. Ralph Thompson for a brief announcement.

G. RALPH THOMPSON: Brother Chairman, during the break the caucuses met, and they have chosen their names for the Nominating Committee, and at this time I hope that we'll have the names for the Nominating Committee, and then we will vote to record them. So those of you who have the material, can we have those names given out at this time?

LEO S. RANZOLIN: The divisions met for their caucuses, and they have selected the members of the Nominating Committee. This was done right after the business session today. Their names should be there, and the secretary is preparing this list so that this committee can start working immediately tonight. So we expect all of you here as we start our devotions tomorrow. This will be, as Elder Paulsen said to us, a wonderful time of fellowship. As we await this I again ask you to remember Ruth Jacobsen's request for volunteers to participate in prayer. We thank you, and we will wait a few moments as we bring the list to you.

G. RALPH THOMPSON: Brother Chairman, we are very late in getting the names together. So what we are suggesting is that we take a few more minutes to get all of these things in order. My suggestion is, Brother Chairman, that we have the benediction and ask the delegates to wait. We will get those names to you later.

We are fighting against time. It is going to take a little while. We will have the benediction, and our faithful delegates will stay by while others and visitors can leave.

DAVID JAMIESON: [Benediction.]

G. RALPH THOMPSON: Brothers and sisters, ladies and gentlemen, Brother Tolhurst has explained to us a little bit of the problem that we are faced with here, and he has been working with it, so let's give him our ear.

ATHAL TOLHURST: Thank you, Brother Thompson. Just for your informa-

tion, we are working as speedily as possible to make the Nominating Committee lists available. It may be quite a few minutes before we can get the lists distributed to you, so we pray for your patience. Thank you.

G. RALPH THOMPSON: I propose that we close the meeting as of now. [The motion to adjourn was seconded and voted.]
LEO S. RANZOLIN, *Chair*
G. RALPH THOMPSON, *Secretary*
LARRY R. COLBURN and FRED G. THOMAS, *Proceedings Editors*

First Business Meeting, (cont.)

57th General Conference
Session, June 30, 2000,
9:00 a.m.

G. RALPH THOMPSON: We now have the recommended list of the members of the Nominating Committee. I move that we record these names as comprising the session Nominating Committee. [Motion was seconded and voted.]

LEO S. RANZOLIN, *Chair*
G. RALPH THOMPSON, *Secretary*
LARRY R. COLBURN and BILL BOTHE, *Proceedings Editors*

Second Business Meeting

57th General Conference
Session, June 30, 2000,
9:15 a.m.

GENERAL CONFERENCE SESSION 2000—NOMINATING COMMITTEE— APPOINTMENTS

Voted. To appoint the following as members of the standing Nominating Committee of the 57th session of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists:

Abayon, Harlin
Agotha, Elizabeth
Agoki, George
Aliddeki, Christian S M
Allen, Dave
Andreasen, Niels-Erik
Anthony, Garth
Anthony, Wijetunge Don
Antic, Radisa
Baker, Delbert W
Banks, John
Barbosa, Jose Clodoaldo

Behrens, B Lyn
Bignall, Derek A
Bisanda, Elifas T
Bishop, Joseph
Bocaneanu, Adrian
Boma, Emmanuel
Bustamante Villabona, Eliseo
Campian, Ioan
Camps, Sandra
Cardosa, Izeas dos Santos
Carter, Jean
Castillo, Ismael
Castillo Santander, Eleodoro
Christian, Graeme
Christopher, K
Connelly, Bonnie
Coston, Cynthia
Crysothem, Arattukulam John
Cubenda, Vasco
Davila, Gregorio
Dee, Sandy
Diaz, Paterno M
Doom, Darryl
Eldridge, Gloria
Elias, Teodoro
Ewoo, Andrews L
Faber, Birgid
Fontaine, Daniel
Gaikwad, Samuel
Garcia Lopez, Hipolito
Gomez, Julian
Gomez, Raul
Gordon, Malcolm D
Gorski, Nevil
Gorski, Rodolpho
Gulfan, Alberto C Jr
Gungadoo, Stenio
Gustin, Patricia
Habingabwa, Uzziel
Handia-Ben, Priscilla H
Hendriks, Alex
Hengen, Alfredo
Henry, Elie
Honore, Elie Simon
Hsu, Eugene K Y
Jensen, Sven Hagen
Jeremiah, Gladys
John, Choudampalli
Jones, Theodore T
Kasaji, David
Katele, Bryson
Kawona, Samuel
Kesaulya, Reinhold
Khiminets, Ivan F
Kim, Eun Bae
Kinjo, Kenyu
Konig, G Henk
Krupsky, Vladimir
Kwakfut, Jael
Kyte, Robert E
Lee, Harold L
Lehmann, Richard
Levterov, Ntkola
Lewis, Willie J
Liske, Bruno
Lukumbi, Monga Espoir
Luxton, Andrea
Lyakhu, Iliya

Lyngdoh, Lionel F
Macalintal, Efinito
Machamire, Paminilo
Madridondo, Leonilo
Mahapure, Sadanand G
Malopa, Benford E
Mamarimbing, Ronnie
Marapaka, Joseph
Martinez, Rene
Mason, Owen
Matak, Dragutin
Mayer, Carlos R
Mayr, Siegfried G
Mbwana, Geoffrey
Mensah, Peter O
Miranda, Armando
Monnier, Eric P
Mostert, Thomas J Jr
Mtike, Geoffrey G
Mugiraneza, J N
Musema, Kasereka
Muyunda, Mavis
Nam, Daegeuk
Ndlezanie, Patrick
Nelson, Dwight
Ng, Wai Chun (Stanley)
Ngalamulume, August Mwanba
Niconde, Victor
Nixon, Robert W
Noltze, Ronald K
Nowak, Karel
Ola, Joseph A
Oliveira, Carlos A Rosa de
Oliveira, Wandyr Mendes de
Omana, Ivan H G
Ongombe, Job G
Ostrovsky, Ivan N
Othoo, Johnson
Parchment, Orville D
Patzer, Jere D
Perez, David Javier
Perla, Juan O
Perla, Pablo
Perry, Cecil R
Pheirim, Chinaongai
Pierre, Saint-Louis
Pohjola, Pekka T
Polok, Wladyslaw
Punch, Nord
Ramos, Orlando
Ramos-Suau, Miguel
Rathinaraj, John
Ravonjariavelo, Samuel
Reichel, Benjamin
Riches, Robin D
Roberts, T J
Robertsen, Roger
Rodriguez, Bernardo T
Roger, Guy
Rosat, Denis
Rupp, Reinhard
Saggia, Hezron
Sandefur, Charles C
Sarli, Tercio
Sarli, Wilson
Sazhin, Vladimir
Scheuneman, Byron
Schneider, Don C

Continued on page 27

We've been curled.



Twirled.



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Doodled on.



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JOEL D. SPAINGOL

FRIENDS FOREVER: Three young men ready for worship to begin the first Sabbath of the session

MOVING APPEAL: Tens of thousands gathered for the Sabbath morning worship service in the SkyDome. They heard a powerful message from G. Ralph Thompson, in which he declared that "God's love is still in force, and sin is still sin."

Images From Toronto



ALDEN J. HO

EVANGELIST EXTRAORDINAIRE: Having conducted more than 200 evangelistic campaigns in two and a half years with 1,312 baptisms, Olga Mulgar from the Soviet Union reported during the Sabbath afternoon lay participation program that she plans dozens more.



ALDEN J. HO

TWINS? Clifford Goldstein (left), editor of the *Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide*, found a look-alike, Reinaldo W. Siqueira, professor of theology, Seventh-day Adventist University of São Paulo, roaming the exhibit area. Siqueira replaces previous look-alike, Roy Adams. (Regular readers of *Give & Take* will understand that last reference.)



ALDEN J. HO

SINGING FOR THE LORD: Hundreds of Toronto church choir members including Lois Meyers, sang for the worship service.



RIDING HIGH: There's more than one way to get to church

ON TO WORSHIP: Dee Testa, as she is carried to the SkyDome, clutches a copy of the program for the 57th session.

ALDEN J. HO

MISSION TRIPS: Rosa Banks, associate secretary and director of human relations for the North American Division, introduced the NAD report segment on missions, highlighting a Colorado church's youth group.



JOEL D. STANFORD



ALDEN J. HO

THE U.N. ALSO CAME: Before he addressed delegates and visitors the second evening of the session, United Nations Under secretary General, His Excellency Joseph Verner Reed, was introduced by his "good friend," former world church president Neal Wilson.



ALDEN J. HO

THE AUTHOR HIMSELF: Carlos G. Martin, from the Northern Asia-Pacific Division and author of the current Sabbath school lessons, joined *Adult Sabbath School Study Guide* editor Clifford Goldstein for the lesson presentation in the Dome the first Sabbath of the session.

NEW!

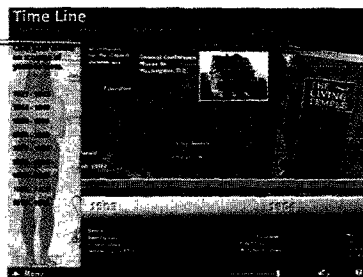
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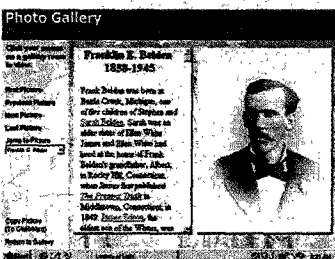


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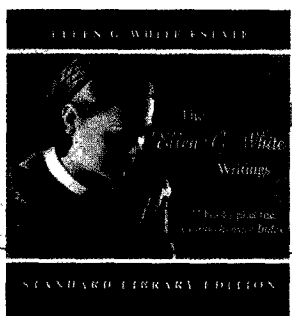
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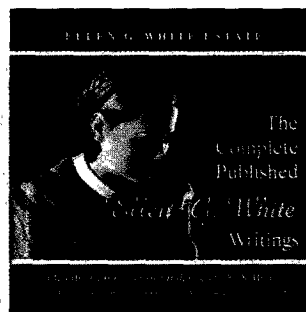
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- Shin, Kei Hoon
- Shiraishi, Takashi
- Shvarts, Alexander
- Silva, Helder Roger C
- Sonii, Adoley
- Stele, Artur
- Stephen, Wilson W
- Stolyar, Vasily
- Toledanes, Jemuel M
- Tombokan, Jay Marx
- Torkelsen, Max C II
- Torres, Jairo Emerick
- Trevino, Max A
- Trotman, Jansen
- Trujillo, Arnold
- Tshimanga, Mulumba
- Villoso, Daniel B
- Wakaba, Velile S
- Watts, Neil
- Wellington, Leon B
- Wolde-Endreas, Solomon
- Wollan, Harald
- Wondim, Agegnehu
- Yamashiro, Naomi A
- Ytreberg, F Martin
- Zoogones, Iris

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Voted, To receive and accept the report of the General Conference Secretary, G Ralph Thompson.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT #1

Voted, To approve the following partial report of the Nominating Committee:
General Conference
 President, Jan Paulsen

STATISTICAL REPORT

Voted, To receive the statistical report from the Director of Archives and Statistics, Bert B Haloviak.
 Calvin B Rock, Robert J Kloosterhuis,
Chairmen
 Mario Veloso, *Secretary*
 Athal H Tolhurst, *Actions Editor*
 Carol E Rasmussen, *Recording Secretary*

Third Business Meeting

Fifty-seventh General Conference Session, June 30, 2000, 2:00 p.m.

ROBERT J. KLOOSTERHUIS: It gives me pleasure to introduce to you a gentleman, a Christian, and a treasurer, Elder Robert Rawson, treasurer of the General Conference.
 ROBERT L. RAWSON: It is certainly an honor to be able to stand before you in this

capacity today and to bring you a report, but I have to acknowledge right up front that I am nothing without the advisors and consultants and associates who stand by my side day by day. I would like to introduce them to you today. [Elder Rawson then introduced members of the Treasury staff: Robert E. Lemon; Gary B. DeBoer; Dennis C. Keith, Sr.; Juan R. Prestol; Donald E. Robinson; Steven G. Rose; Verland V. Erntson, con-

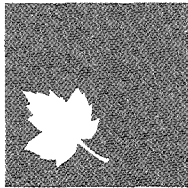
troller; Linda de Leon, assistant treasurer; W. Dean Rogers, assistant treasurer; and Roy Ryan, assistant to the treasurer. The full text of the treasurer's report appears in *Bulletin 2*. A motion to accept the report was made, seconded, and voted.]
 It now gives me great privilege to introduce to you our external auditor, Mr. Jack Powers. Mr. Powers is a partner in the firm of Maner, Costerisan & Ellis, located in

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Lansing, Michigan. Jack Powers is a Seventh-day Adventist Christian. He is a member of the Lansing Seventh-day Adventist Church. Mr. Powers has been auditing the General Conference records since 1978.

He tells me that this is his fifth General Conference session to report to the delegates. I am pleased to introduce and welcome to the podium Mr. Jack Powers, who will present the certificate of audit. I trust all of you have received the auditors' statement, which was to have been passed to you some time ago. He will present the certificate of audit and make any comment he feels appropriate for our understanding. And then following his presentation, Elder Robert Lemon will bring to you some facts relevant to the material you have in your combined financial statements booklet, which we hope will summarize the information for easier understanding. Following that, we will be glad to entertain questions that you may have. Mr. Jack Powers.

JACK POWERS: Thank you, Elder Rawson. The auditors' opinion appears on pages 1 and 2 of your financial statement document, identified as the combined financial statements for the years 1999, 1998, 1997, 1996, and 1995. Referring to the

independent auditors' report: We have audited the accompanying combined statements of financial position of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists as of December 31, 1999, 1998, 1997, 1996, and 1995, and the related combined statements of activities and cash flows for each of the years then ended. These combined financial statements are the responsibility of the management of the General Conference. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these combined financial statements based on our audits.

NIELS-ERIK ANDREASEN: Your Nominating Committee has been at work again, and we now have the second report, dealing with the two senior officers in the General Conference: that of secretary and that of treasurer. I will ask our committee secretary to read the first name.

DELBERT BAKER: Mr. Chairman, we have a second report from the Nominating Committee, and we submit the following partial report for the position of secretary of the General Conference. The name is Matthew A. Bediako.

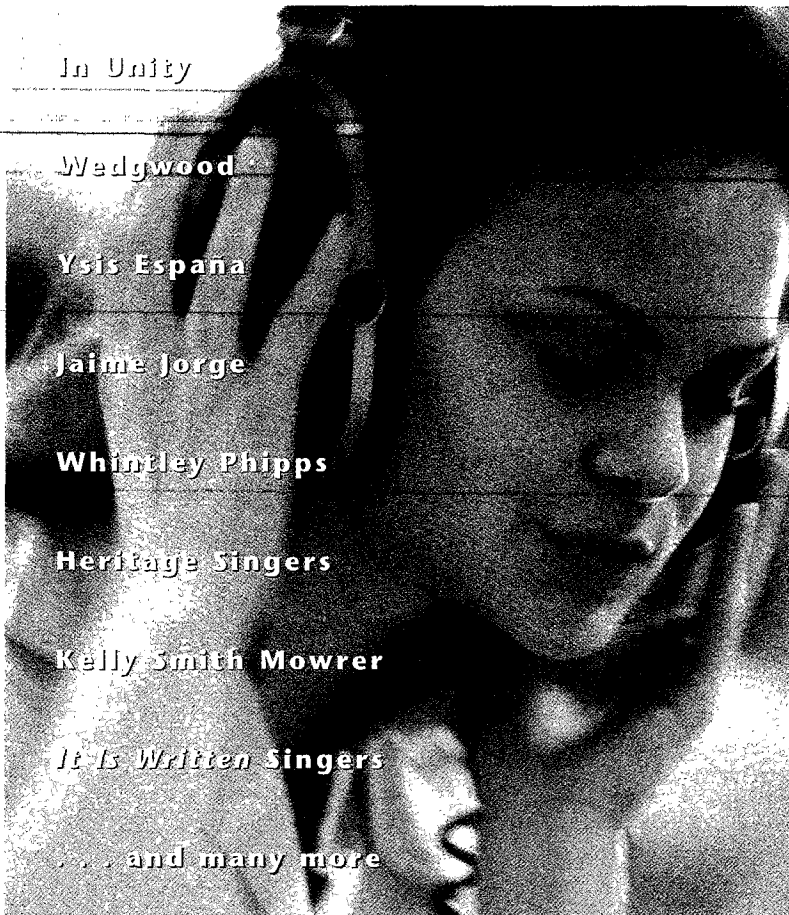
ROBERT J. KLOOSTERHUIS: You have heard the name of Matthew Bediako as secretary of the General Conference; is there support for that? I see some support. Does

everyone have their voting card? We will call for the affirmative vote first and then those that would oppose, if any. All those who are in favor, please lift up your voting card. Thank you. And those opposed, by the same sign. I think that is nearly unanimous. Thank you; that is carried.

JAN PAULSEN: We would like to ask Elder and Mrs. Bediako to join us on the platform. While they are joining us, I could make a long speech about Ralph Thompson and the magnificent contribution he has made to the church over these past 20 years as secretary. He is to preach here tomorrow morning, and we will in that connection make our public acknowledgments to Elder Thompson. But it is truly a valiant service he has rendered to the church as secretary for 20 years.

Matthew and Elizabeth Bediako. Matthew has served the church in many capacities in Africa and also internationally, and is one of the knowledgeable men of the international Seventh-day Adventist family. I am truly delighted that Matthew can be a team member of the General Conference leadership.

MATTHEW BEDIAKO: What can I say! We are accepting this responsibility because I believe that God's people have



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spoken. And God will touch me when everybody has deserted me. I know He will stand by our side. Who is sufficient for this job? This afternoon I just want to claim the statement from Paul: "My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:19). I have been privileged to know Elder Thompson since 1977. Since that time I've called him my chief, and he and his wife are like parents to us. And today I'm called upon to step into his shoes. In Ghana we call him the secretary who preaches his report, and it was most certainly that today. What an awesome responsibility! I have just two requests to this church: We need your prayers; we need them because we are not able unless God provides us the power and wisdom. I want to thank the previous General Conference presidents who have given me the opportunity to serve this church in various capacities. And I am looking forward to working with the reelected president and the treasurer to be elected, to counseling with them and doing God's business until He meets us in heaven.

Once more, thank you, church, and I want to thank God for what He has wrought in our poor lives. Thank you.

ROBERT J. KLOOSTERHUIS: And

now I would like to ask our Nominating Committee to read the nomination for General Conference treasurer.

NIELS-ERIK ANDREASEN: Mr. Chairman, we have the final name for treasurer of the General Conference. The name is Robert L. Rawson.

DELBERT BAKER: Mr. Chairman, I would like to put that nomination in motion. [Moved, seconded, and voted.]

ROBERT J. KLOOSTERHUIS: We welcome Elder Rawson as our treasurer again.

JAN PAULSEN: I'm delighted that Robert Rawson has accepted to continue to be treasurer for the General Conference. Bob Rawson and I have worked well together and will continue to do so. I know of no man who is better equipped in skills or better committed in his heart than he is to the assignment that you have just reelected him to. He and Carolyn are a wonderful couple whose company we treasure very much. Thank you, Bob, and I wish you many, many blessings from the Lord.

ROBERT L. RAWSON: I thank you, I pledge myself to serve God and His church as best I can, as He provides the strength for me to do so. I must tell you that my wife promised me that she was going to spend the time during my report today in prayer. And

you must know that that is what gave me courage and strength to stand before you today with confidence. You know I have a wife that is committed to me to that extent, so thank you, honey. I look forward to seeing you soon.

ROBERT J. KLOOSTERHUIS: The chair would like to invite any delegates who have questions concerning the financial statements to come forward.

DAVE WEIGLEY: Thank you, Elder Rawson; we appreciate the detailed report. Just one question about the sharing of the division now going from 1 percent to 2 percent. I am concerned how that may impact some of our divisions where the resources aren't there to do that. Will we have a reversion coming back from the GC that will offset that extra expense? And on top of that, will that be hard currency that we will have to come up with? Could you just help us on that a little bit? It seems odd that these divisions that really struggle to meet their budget are now expected to give another 1 percent to support the General Conference.

ROBERT L. RAWSON: North America, in my opinion, has been a greatly blessed division by virtue of the fact that it has reached out to the world. That has been a tradition of North America, and I think North America



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has reaped tremendous benefits from that. It is my opinion and, I think, the opinion of many. There are many divisions of the world that could be able to be a greater help to the operation and expenses of the world church. We think that the benefit to the world division will be significant as we look to future opportunities. "As we reach out to help those of afar, we will be blessed at home."

ROBERT J. KLOOSTERHUIS: The chair recognizes the gentleman at microphone 1. Would you identify yourself, please?

ROGER ROBERTSEN: Roger Robertsen, president of the Norwegian Union in the Trans-European Division. I would also like to comment upon this same issue. Today I actually stand here to thank the NAD for its generous and enormous support of the world team. I am impressed that this has been and still is possible. We, who are based in other divisions, were actually proud to have such a generous family member, so thank you, NAD.

ROBERT J. KLOOSTERHUIS: The chair now recognizes the gentleman at microphone 2. Please identify yourself.

GARLAND DULAN: I have a question on page 4 of the booklet here in terms of the difference in the endowment earnings between 1998 and 1999. Would you explain that difference?

ROBERT E. LEMON: Because of trying to finish in a short time, I didn't mention it, but there is an error in the recording of the endowment earnings. They were shown under the investment line above instead of under the endowment earnings. In 1999 we made some changes in the accounting for Global Missions, and the earnings on the endowment fund for the Global Mission are shown under the function of investment earnings. You will see that it is \$6.7 million as compared to \$4 million from the previous year. So it isn't that the earnings weren't there. It is a very legitimate question.

DONALD GILBERT: I would just like to say how much I appreciate this financial statement. I congratulate Elder Rawson and his Treasury staff, and God has really blessed. These past five years have been marvelous, and I just thank you, Bob, for this wonderful, wonderful report. May God bless you as you start a new quinquennium.

B. B. BEACH: Brother Chairman, delegates and brothers and sisters and friends. During the General Conference session we have the privilege of having a number of observers who are attending the session from other churches, other denominations. They are honoring us with their presence, and some of them will be introduced over the next few days. We are very pleased to have one of the high officials of the Salvation Army in Canada among us this afternoon. He has been here already for a day or two, and we are delighted that he can be with us. We have Colonel Earl Robinson and Mrs. Benita Robinson. He is the secre-

tary for external international relations of the Salvation Army world headquarters. We have known each other for some time. We have attended meetings together, and I would just like to tell him before he gives us his greetings that we Seventh-day Adventists hold the Salvation Army in very high esteem. [Applause.] They meet crying human need around the world and are an example of devotion to us, and we respect them for that. Colonel Robinson, we are happy to have you and your wife with us. Please tell us a few things, whatever you want to tell us.

EARL ROBINSON: Thank you very much, Bert, and thank you for the invitation to attend this splendid occasion as observers. Benita and I bring greetings from General John Gowens and the International Salvation Army as a Christian world communion. Several of you have already indicated something of the way in which there are close working relationships with the Salvation Army and the Seventh-day Adventist communion in your regions, and we are pleased to know that evidence of partnership in the gospel.

When I was a youngster growing up in the prairies of Canada our next-door neighbors were Seventh-day Adventists. I learned then that the Salvation Army and the Seventh-day Adventists share similar lifestyle expectations of their members. Since then, and particularly through recent associations with Bert Beach and John Graz and other Seventh-day Adventists whom I have met in international conferences, I've become aware of other amenities. Things that we share in common. We date back to

a similar beginning date—1863 for you, and 1865 for the Salvation Army. We share a similar passion for the fulfillment of our great Lord to make disciples of all nations.

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Already today that passage of Scripture has been referred to a number of times. Perhaps most significantly, in our witness to the church of Jesus Christ as a whole, we share a wholistic gospel emphasis in seeing social responsibility as an integral component of the mission of the church. We view with importance the call of God to the whole church to take the whole gospel to the whole world. May I inform you of a mission phrase used by the Salvation Army that is also attributable to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Serving with heart to God and hand to mankind—our priority, as with you, is our love to God, our devotion to the Lord Jesus Christ, and it is because of that priority that we love the world as God so loved the world and gave His only begotten Son for it. We pray that you might be keenly aware of the Lord's continued guidance during these days as you seek more clearly to understand what God wishes you to be in His name and to His glory as you enter the third millennium and do His work in His world until He returns to take you home. May the Lord bless you abundantly. [Applause.]

B. B. BEACH: We thank Colonel Robinson for his kind words. They resound in the Seventh-day Adventist heart, and we would just like to ask our public affairs director, John Graz, to give a little gift of remembrance to Colonel and Mrs. Robinson.

ROBERT J. KLOOSTERHUIS: Thank you so very much for those words. We appreciate that. Now the chair declares a session recess until Sunday morning, as is scheduled. And we would appreciate your standing for prayer at this time.

MANOEL ABDORAL DE FREITAS CINTRA: [Benediction.]

ROBERT J. KLOOSTERHUIS, *Chair*
MAURICE T. BATTLE, *Secretary*
LARRY R. COLBURN, BILL BOTHE, and
FRED THOMAS, *Proceedings Editors*

Session Actions

57th General Conference
 Session, June 30, 2000,
 2:00 p.m.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT #2

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

General Conference

Secretary, Matthew A Bediako
 Treasurer, Robert L Rawson

TREASURER'S REPORT—APPROVAL

Voted, To approve the report of the General Conference Treasurer, Robert L Rawson.

AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENT—APPROVAL

Voted, To approve the audited financial statement for the General Conference for the years 1995 to 1999, as presented by General Conference Treasurer, Robert L Rawson, and Undertreasurer, Robert E Lemon, and as approved by independent

auditor Jack E Powers of Maner, Costerisan & Ellis, Certified Public Accountants.
 Adjourned.

Robert J Kloosterhuis, *Chairman*
Maurice T Battle, *Secretary*
Athal H Tolhurst, *Actions Editor*
Rowena J Moore, *Recording Secretary*



FEET WORTH STANDING ON: Max Martinez (coordinator of the Native American work for the NAD) and his wife Mary pose at the NAD Native Evangelism Initiative display.

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