The Rt. Honourable Tony Blair
Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London SW1A 2AA.

Dear Prime Minister

RE: SEXUAL ORIENTATION BILL

I write on behalf of the Seventh-day Adventist church in the British Isles to express concern regarding the proposed Sexual Orientation Bill. On behalf of the Church’s 26,500 members in the British Isles, Union president Pastor D. W. McFarlane wrote an open letter to Prime Minister Tony Blair, the full text of which appears below:

ANNUAL INGATHERING APPEAL 2007 ON BEHALF OF ADRA-UK
31 March – 15 April (22 April in London)

Union opposes Sexual Orientation Regulations

In the days preceding the debate on the Sexual Orientation Bill many Seventh-day Adventists in the UK wrote either to their local Member of Parliament or to the Prime Minister expressing their opposition from a Christian perspective to the new Sexual Orientation Regulations. On behalf of the Church’s 26,500 members in the British Isles, Union president Pastor D. W. McFarlane wrote an open letter to Prime Minister Tony Blair, the full text of which appears below:

1. Churches currently meeting in public buildings or those receiving public funding could be open to litigation if they hold to the Bible’s teaching on moral beliefs and sexual ethics. The Bill overrides freedom of religious expression on fundamental core beliefs.

2. Without proper protections the new laws will lead to courts adjudicating on what is and what is not authentic Christian teaching and practice. This would be in breach of religious liberty.

3. At present it is lawful for a Christian B&B to refuse a double room to unmarried heterosexuals. Under the proposed legislation Christian B&Bs which refuse to give double beds to homosexuals or Christian old people’s homes that only allow double rooms for married couples could be closed down or fined. Most Christians will continue to hold to the view that sex is to take place between a man and a woman within marriage.

4. The new regulations threaten to promote homosexuality in all schools and in various subjects. They also will frustrate the parental right of withdrawal from sex education. The new gay rights laws should not override the national curriculum and remove existing safeguards for parents. The majority of Christian parents will not want homosexuality promoted to their children.

5. The gay rights activists have sought to ban Christian Unions from university campuses. It appears that under the new regulations this could easily become a reality.

6. Churches who refuse membership or baptism to practising homosexuals could be fined for so doing or for the way in which their decision is explained.

7. Many good law-abiding Christians could be made to break the law as a result of the new legislation, in that they will feel obliged to live in harmony with deeply-held beliefs that are based upon the Bible and in so doing break the laws of the country.

There is a vital need for exemptions in the proposed regulations to protect religious liberty and schools. The Equality Act 2006 provides reasonable exemptions to protect most of the major activities of religious groups. Unless parallel exemptions are included in the Sexual Orientation Regulations, the Government would be indirectly discriminating against religious believers as they are proportionately more likely to believe that homosexual practice is wrong.

It is clear that the new laws will benefit only a few people. The 2001 Census revealed that less than 0.2% of all households in England and Wales are headed by a same-sex couple (Census 2001). It seems unfair then that such sweeping new laws are being created for such a small number of people, while ignoring the views of the majority.

The new proposed sexual orientation regulations come under the category of civil, not criminal laws. As such they are relatively easy to use and activists could launch legal actions against their opponents with little difficulty. We would not want our Church or any Christian organisation to be sued for upholding basic Christian teaching on sexual morality.

We therefore urge you, Prime Minister, to reconsider the implications of this Bill to the religious liberty of the many sincere Christians in the UK who want to exercise their right to religious freedom and expression of beliefs and practice.

Yours respectfully
Don W McFarlane
PRESIDENT
Research into psychoneuro-immunology reveals indisputable evidence highlighting the effects of negative thoughts and how thoughts and emotions flood the body with hormones that depress the immune system. Conversely, positive thoughts and emotions release immune-enhancing hormones.

Mind, Character and Personality, G. White states: ‘The mind needs to be controlled, for it has a most powerful influence upon the health.’ (Volume 2, page 681)

In the book Mental well-being, Valerie Austin talking to children in one of the orphanages called for distributing 4,450 beautifully wrapped gift boxes for orphans in Liberia surprised us all. Together with other humanitarian goods, including beds and other hospital furniture, two containers were prepared for shipment to the country still suffering the effects of the long civil war that ripped it apart.

ADRA-UK’s office manager, Valerie Austin, was in Liberia when the shoebases arrived and was personally involved in some of the distribution to orphans. Her story is compelling.

The joy in each child’s eyes as I handed them a present was a truly overwhelming experience! I was in Liberia delivering shoebases filled with toys and small gifts to over 4,000 orphans. Some couldn’t contain their excitement, others sang songs of joy, writes Valerie.

Following the civil war there are some 50,000 orphans in Liberia.

Brain foods

- Omega 3 fatty acid – includes plant-based foods and flax seed
- Avocado – rich in anti-inflammatory and potassium which helps to combat mental confusion and depression
- Sweet potatoes and carrots (beta-carotene rich)
- Walnuts
- Grains
- Alcohol can interfere with vitamin A, B6, B12, C, and magnesium, leading to fuzzy thinking and poor recall.

Refined sugars and processed foods create toxins.

Water: 2 litres daily help to eliminate toxins, boost concentration and alertness.

Is your Sat-Nav working?

David Marshall

So what identifies the disciple? A few things:

- Obedience to the rules of the road?
- No cutting up? No overtaking on the inside? That’s a start.
- No honking? Definitely no honking! If disciple has to be exercised on the S&N Motorway to the Kingdom, however it is exercised, there is no role for honking. And the disciple applies to drivers of white vans and those lumbering heavy goods vehicles, too!
- Churlish the discipleship conveyance is identified by its destination. It is Kingdom-bound. As far as other motorists are concerned all that matters is that they are on the road and aimed in the right direction. Concerns as to engine capacity, fuel consumption, speed, performance, streamlining optional accessories are for the individual driver – each disciple. A further consideration: you may have to be four-door.

The New Testament, you see, requires disciples to undertake discipleship and engage in discipling. Does that sound fancy? It isn’t. It just means that stranded and broken-down drivers, not to mention those trundling along but clearly in trouble – and the pedestrians wandering on the hard shoulder and the central reservation – are the concern of on-the-road drivers with spare capacity.

Above all, the discipleship conveyance needs the spark – initiation, access to Power. How would Dad explain that to Paddy? He would say, ‘That’s prayer, son. Talking to God as a Friend. Tapping into the Power Source.’

In addition to ignition, there’s the need for pit stops.

‘What’s “pit stops”, Dad?’

‘That’s the point of church, son. To take on fuel. Oils. Maybe a bit of air for the tyres. A long look at the map, some slight adjustments of direction – then on towards the Kingdom.’

Above all things, a disciple is defined by his relationship with Jesus Christ. That’s where sat-nav comes in.

‘What’s “the map”, Dad?’

‘The map is the Word of God. Paddy, we tap into Power through prayer and prayerful thought about the Word of God. Unless we tap into Power our sat-nav won’t work and we’ll be travelling every which way but the right one.’

‘That’s what happens when we’re lost, Dad?’

‘Is that what happens when we’re lost, Dad?’

‘That’s about it, son.’


Five-year-old Paddy had a carriers voice. The word ‘Christian’ had cropped up repeatedly in the sermon, and Paddy wanted an explanation.

While he was receiving one, the people in the pew in front of us were busy nodding with amusement at one another.

After receiving an answer from his dad, Paddy came in with an unexpected subsidiary question: ‘D-a-a-a-d! Do I know any Christians?’

After that the folks in the row in front, behind and across the aisle were covered with confusion until, suddenly, they decided it was time to exit the sanctuary.

‘Do I know any Christians?’

Ouch!

The word ‘Christian’ crops up only three times in the New Testament, whereas ‘disciple’ occurs 259 times and applies to a group of people.

If Paddy had asked, ‘What’s a disciple?’ what would Dad have said?

The words ‘disciple’, ‘discipleship’ and ‘discipling’ have acquired a whole new currency among Christians – including Adventists – in the last few years. Hence a definition is needed.

It’s a start. Just a thought. When a definition is given it becomes a start. The words ‘discipling’ have acquired a whole new currency among Christians – including Adventists – in the last few years. Hence a definition is needed.

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Another church for Bristol

November 4 was a special Sabbath for two reasons. It was the very first Bristol District Day of Fellowship and the formation of South Bristol church as a company. Pastor C. R. Perry, former BUC president, who cut short his visit to Montenegro so as to witness and officiate on the day, gave the morning address. He spoke of the indispensable hope and its importance to the growth and well-being of the church. With a congregation of over three hundred, primarily made up of the four Bristol churches, the excitement of the day was interspersed with lively music from Kindred and the North Bristol Choir.

This sense of celebration continued into the afternoon in which the formalities of the church organisation got under way. Beginning with a brief history of the South Bristol Church, it was revealed that they were a year old on November 5, 2005, with a membership of twenty-two. Another stirring message was given by Pastor Perry, who stated that the church was "born out of love and not mere affection." The message was given by Pastor Perry, whose words stirred the congregation to feel the presence of God and the possibility of a new beginning. The service ended with a prayer for the new church and its members.

Pastor Butoiu’s Ordination

Tottenham West Green church was packed to overflowing on Sabbath afternoon 9 December, as members of both the Tottenham and Romanian churches joined together for the ordination of Pastor Nicolae Butoiu. Pastor Butoiu has served as a minister both in Romania and in the Southeastern California Conference but, with the growth of the Romanian community in London, he agreed to come to the UK in the summer of 2005. As Pastor Don McFarlane, the charge by BUC Ministerial Association secretary Pastor Alan Hodges, and a warm welcome by SEC president Pastor Humphrey Walters, Pastor Butoiu gave an emotionally charged response.

Long Eaton baptism

It was a big day in Long Eaton. Two souls were won for Christ. Nick and Karen Hickey were impressed in the waters of baptism.

Novey Medley had previously held some evangelistic meetings at our church. Leaflets had been distributed and posters had been placed in shop windows, but long after the series was over, a poster which should have been taken down was still displayed in a shop window. Karen took down the details, came along to our services and has never stopped coming. Later her husband joined her and as they studied our Bible-based teachings, they decided that they wanted to become members of our church. Novey Medley, who is at Newbold College completing her ministerial training, Pastor George Rum and Pastor Patrick Herbert officiated in this service, which was held at the Long Eaton Baptist church.

Golden couple

Contratulations to Lloyd and Maude Bert who have been married for fifty years. They were married on 22 September 1956 and have been blessed with seven children, seven grandchildren, and seventeen great-grandchildren.

Pastor Humphrey Walters delivered the short address. Lloyd and Maude are grateful to church members, family and friends who attended.

Pastor Butoiu immediately began conducting evangelistic campaigns and served as evangelist for the Romanian Union and director for Prison Ministries until 1998. He was then invited to serve as pastor of the Romanian Adventist church in London. The church prospered under his evangelical leadership and he also began to feature on the Hope Channel.

Another service to celebrate their many happy years of togetherness was held at Lewisham church with SEC president Pastor Humphrey Walters, which was read by Pastor Daly. For more information on the Croscombe Family, please visit the website.

Croscombe remembers

A n Adventist church was started in the small village of Croscombe, Somerset, almost a century ago as a result of the work of a colorer, Charles Johnson. Among those who responded to his invitation was the Hardy family, which included three young men. Children of the founder members still faithfully attending Croscombe church are 97-year-old Jim Hardy and his wife Doris, who celebrated an amazing 73 years of marriage on 26 December. During the World Wars, because of the Church’s stand against bearing arms, the male members were ostracised and vilified, being accused of cowardice despite the fact that they were doing ‘work of national importance’ on the land and in a local quarry. One was even sent to prison because of his beliefs, as were a large number of Adventist men, including ministers, during World War I. Nevertheless, from this small rural group have come several ministers, two doctors, several other medical professionals, and many faithful lay-workers, who have made a significant contribution to God’s work, not only in Somerset, but around the world.

We are presently compiling a historical record of the Croscombe church, and would be glad to hear from former ‘Croscomites’ who have memories. If we can include email: stiens@ukonline.co.uk.

Dr Burton’s message to the candidates was to hold on. ‘When you feel like giving up, remember that you have the assurance of salvation. Don’t let anybody spoil your joy. The Lord’s time is always right on time. No matter what we’re going through, God is going to reward our faith. Be faithful unto death and God will give you the crown of life.’

Pastor Perry, who oversaw the baptismal service of twenty-two souls, baptised Tuso Novey Medley had previously held some evangelistic meetings at our church. Leaflets had been distributed and posters had been placed in shop windows, but long after the series was over, a poster which should have been taken down was still displayed in a shop window. Karen took down the details, came along to our services and has never stopped coming. Later her husband joined her and as they studied our Bible-based teachings, they decided that they wanted to become members of our church. Novey Medley, who is at Newbold College completing her ministerial training, Pastor George Rum and Pastor Patrick Herbert officiated in this service, which was held at the Long Eaton Baptist church.

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John Wilby

With a title reflecting how some non-believers might regard the Advent Message, An Inconvenient Truth has an important supplementary message for us all. How, in these last days, are we going to fulfill our duty of stewardship for God’s creation? In this 90-minute documentary, former President Al Gore, the US presidential candidate who narrowly lost, and with whom he famously shared a stage, presents a persuasive argument that global warming is no longer a political issue but the biggest moral challenge facing global civilisation. Conflicting briefs reference a one-time crusading senator facing a harrowing family tragedy that altered his perspective, to the man who almost became a US president in a sometimes humorous, constantly engaging, and passionate account of the threat he calls our ‘planetary emergency’, he exposes the myths and misconceptions behind it.

As George W. Bush in the 2000 election, offers a passionate and inspirational look at one man’s fervent crusade to halt global warming’s deadly progress, to a young senator facing a harrowing family tragedy that altered his perspective, to the man who almost became a US president in a sometimes humorous, constantly engaging, and passionate account of the threat he calls our ‘planetary emergency’, he exposes the myths and misconceptions behind it.

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Send Off for Gap Year Students

Newbold’s first Gap Year students received a supportive send-off from their friends as they completed their four months of studying anthropology, international polity and other subjects and finalised plans for the placements where they can do what they came to prepare for: make a difference.

The Newbold Students Association (NSA) gave each of them a gift, presented by NSA president, Daniel Thompson. On the second Friday in December, students, staff and church members gathered to participate in a small service of blessing on them, and two other Newbold graduates, now a husband and wife team, David and Ann-Katrina (Stolen) James who are about to leave on a short-term contract.

The four Gap Year students began their placements early in 2007. Merika Tuononen from Finland is teaching English in a Language School in Bangkok, South African, Lyle Katzen, is working for ADRA in new projects in Salvador, Brazil, Scottish Kenyan, Charles Onoka is working as Dean of Men in Zasikiki, the Adventist Seminary in Russia. Irishman Michael Langan has travelled the shortest distance for his placement and is spending six months as a work supervisor at Yeldall Manor, a drug and alcohol rehabilitation centre in Tynwald, about ten miles from Newbold. The Jameses, who married last July, both like working with children. David graduated from Newbold with a Business Management degree and has since trained as a social worker. Ann-Katrina has a theology degree from Newbold. They will spend seven months working with the primary school aged children on an Indian reservation in New Mexico where the Lavada Mission works with the Navajo people. ‘Newbold has provided a place to grow and to grow up,’ said David.

‘I’m very excited about the opportunities for these students,’ said Newbold principal, Dr David Penner. ‘The College has provided them with a home base for these tasks and offered them time to be thoughtful and intelligent about what they are going to do. It is fitting that Newbold, which used to be called Newbold Missionary College, has a growing twenty-first-century concept of service.’

The Gap Year is the newest educational experience now available at Newbold College. It gives young people a unique opportunity to make a difference in the world and to reflect on who they are and what they have to offer. Newbold’s Gap Year Experience will consist of a fifteen-week semester at the College followed by a six-month assignment for ADRA (the Adventist Development and Relief Agency), Adventist Volunteer Services, or another church organisation.

For further details log on to www.newbold.ac.uk or contact the course director: Henrik Jorgensen – T: 01344 401791 E: hjorgensen@newbold.ac.uk.

Other Newbold Stories

Send Off for Gap Year Students

For upcoming events and more news pictures, visit www.adventist.org.uk

THE STANBOROUGH PRESS LIMITED

Notice is hereby given that the twenty-fifth Annual General Meeting of the Seventh-day Adventist Trust Company Limited will be held on Thursday 7 June 2007 at 2.10pm in the Board Room of the British Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Stanborough Park, Nettled Herts.

On behalf of the Board of Directors

P. Ramond (Secretary)

The Newbold Students

February 2007

Newbold College

Newbold

Sunday, 4 February 2007

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