Restructuring Proposal

No sooner had we completed the rebuilding of the BUC office, following the fire in 2008, than we commenced discussing another rebuilding programme. This time it is not a building of bricks, steel and mortar but the structure of the British Union Conference. For several decades the restructuring of the British Union has been a theme on the lips of some and is seen as a development that could yield certain benefits for the Church. With a proposal for restructuring, the British Union Executive Committee has placed the matter in the open arena and has requested members to express their views on the subject.

The process to change the structure of a segment of the Seventh-day Adventist organisation is clearly outlined in policy. That policy will be adhered to in seeking to change the structure of the Union. However, the Union Committee is seeking to gauge the general views of members in engaging in a dialogue with them. What follows are the personal views of some members and workers. These will be placed alongside the many other responses that have been given to the restructuring proposal. We have published the responses as they have been submitted and take no responsibility for any errors that appear in them.

Response 1 Barry Robinson
Response 2 Donath Davis
Response 3 Pastor Jones-Lartey
Response 4 Pastor S. Mathias Esson
Response 5 Andrew Puckering
Response 6 Dr Steve Thomas
Response 7 Greta Poulton
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Response 13 Richard A. Holder
Response 14 Pastor M. E. Mannix

The Messenger issue referred to in the articles above can be found by following the link, published Messenger articles can also be found by navigating to our website and selecting the Messenger publications you wish to view.
Response 1

By Barry Robinson

Proposal Response

In responding to the proposal as detailed in the Messenger (Volume 116, 13 May 2011), my first point is that the document contains no figures, if we are looking to reduce the amounts spent on administration, the current figures spent on administration should be detailed. E.g The BUC, SEC and NEC spend over their respective terms. Members can go to the Charities Commission Website in order to obtain financial information. http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk/

1. Each proposed structure should show what savings would be made and how those savings would be achieved.
2. Each proposal should then show what percentage of the proposed savings would be directed totally to mission fulfillment. Accepting that the reason for Adventist Organisation is Mission.
3. As a body we need to define what is meant by 'Mission Fulfillment' and reach agreement.

Clearly the above requires work, but without the above information the membership cannot make an informed decision, or contribute effectively to the debate.

The Proposals

In December 2010 field presidents and BUC officers concluded that urgent action was required to restructure the church in the British Union, to this end 'Mission Fulfillment' was defined, the Proposal lists 7 Objectives (See P11 in the messenger). As a result of these objectives three models were proposed.

1. Union Of Churches model
2. Fusion model
3. Rationalisation model

Union Of Churches Model

It is clear that the Union Of Churches Model was approved by the General Conference (GC) in 2007 as an alternative Church organizational structure. The Proposal also states that the Model has been adopted in other fields, namely Europe and South America. It is clearly a proven model, we can learn lessons from the other fields and modify where required.

It is clear by looking at the Seventh day Adventist Online yearbook that the figures stated in the proposal are based on 2006 membership figures, I don't know why we used 2006 figures when 2011 figures were readily available.

The proposal should have given the present figures which are easily obtainable via the http://www.adventistyearbook.org

For example the Spanish Union of conferences membership is 15,582, not 11,742. If we consider that the NEC membership is currently 8,724, the SEC membership is currently 20,744.

I would propose not a single Union of churches as proposed. These two conferences alone could form a Union of Churches in themselves, i.e South England Union of Churches and North England Union Of Churches. The missions could also form their own union if desired.

This would go some way to addressing the drawbacks highlighted in the Union of Churches Model, namely closer support for the local church, close supervision of local pastors, and finally a reduction in administrative expenditure, indeed a Union of churches would also attract greater funding from the TED/GC.

By looking at the Adventist online yearbook the South American Union of churches clearly show growth.

Fusion Model

The Proposal document does not state where the Fusion model came from, neither does it state if the model has been adopted by any other world field. This begs the question who is the author of this Model? I have found it difficult to determine facts re this model, despite searching for data online. I have therefore concluded that model does not exist in the world field, and that we would be the first field to trial it should the model be adopted.

The model appears to centralise power which could be counterproductive.

Rationalisation Model

Effectively this is the retention of the current Model, and would achieve savings by simply reducing staff. It is this model that has generated the need for change amongst the membership.

I would propose that 'Champions' be found for each proposal, individuals who can put reasoned arguments for the respective models to the membership.

Concerns

I find the timing re the introduction of this proposal interesting to say the least. The BUC is currently in session, I understand the SEC Session will meet in September 2011, followed by the NEC session in 2012. It is imperative that this proposal is not bought to the floor of the BUC session, it would be wrong for the delegates at the BUC session to endorse any of the models. My concern is that delegates have not had an opportunity to prayerfully and carefully consider all the proposals, before making any decisions. A vote at the BUC session for any one model would give momentum and an unfair advantage to that model, in that proponents of that model at either the SEC and/or NEC sessions could state that the model has the approval of the BUC. I would therefore propose that should the SEC/NEC sessions elect for change, an extraordinary BUC session can be called to make final recommendations to the TED.

My final concern re the proposal is bias, the SEC president needs to be careful not to bias the arguments in favour of any one model, I can sense bias in the proposal for a particular model, whether intentional or unintentional.

It is easy to use the words 'Mission Driven', in pursuit of our own agendas one could ask the question what was the present structure, is it not 'Mission Driven'? If we are going to effect change let us learn from the mistakes of the past.

Whatever the outcome, God is our King and leader let us put our trust in him.
Response 2

By Donath Davis

One of the questions which emerges from Pastor McFarlane’s concerns expressed in The Messenger of 13 May 2011, is ‘Is our church in Britain in trouble?’

Emanating from this are at least three fundamental issues:

1) What are the views of the entire church membership?
2) Is the structure of the church sufficiently adequate for the twenty-first century?
3) Do leaders in their different capacities perform effectively, efficiently and satisfactorily?

What are the views of the entire membership?

To my opinion the views of the entire membership can only be known if expressed by the members themselves or their representatives. I would therefore suggest that consultation should be undertaken with the objective of determining the wishes of the membership.

Is the structure of the church adequate for the twenty-first century?

The Church is, in many circles, thought to be in need of restructuring either partially or completely. This thinking may have been precipitated by a feeling that a ‘revamp’ system and/or structure may serve a better purpose than what is currently in place. Are we then to describe the church as failing, failed or needs to improve? Whatever the answer, I say let the people decide.

In the church, we are blessed with a reservoir of professionals (theological, medical, legal, counselling, teaching, business, computer experts, accountants), and academics all of whom to my estimation, have failed to verbalize or identify any difficulties or the real cause of any difficulties. It is no wonder many of our very able laymen and laywomen are sometimes disgruntled, discouraged and uninterested; I submit that they have legitimate reasons for demonstrating such attitudes.

This short article does not give scope for many details, but hopefully, it can highlight at least a few relevant points.

To my observation, there has been, over a period of time, a calculated effort to introduce, by stealth, into the church, certain methods, behaviours and/or attitudes (detrimental to our principles), that are prevalent in many non-religious, ‘worldly’ commercial or other business organisations. The list that follows is not exhausted:

1. Lack of monitoring procedures and processes
2. Insufficient accountability
3. Failure to implement induction programmes at the start of the year
4. Lack of emphasis on working together
6. Ageism
7. Segregationism
8. Inadequacy of SEC’s sessions in terms of frequency, agenda and representativeness
9. Popularity features

Evaluating, analysing and addressing the implications and impact of these features on our church, would, I believe help in churches’ performance.

As human beings, we have the tendency to inadvertently fail in many areas. Very often, failures and failings are excusable but, for them to be constantly ignored or excused, is opposed to the very nature and character of our Lord and His leaders; in effect, it is sinful. Several times God corrected and punished the children of Israel for their failures and Jethro corrected Moses when he tried to burden himself with too much work.

Remember God is a problem solver; we ‘can do all things through Christ who strengthens’ us and He loves and cares for and about all of us.

My honest feeling is that the structure and system we have in place only need to be more closely monitored and observed.

Do leaders perform effectively, efficiently and satisfactorily?

The quality of good leadership of any organisation is measured and determined by many factors including: that which inspires comparative organisational growth and success. Does our membership recognise the practice of such qualities in our leaders?

I think this question can be genuinely answered by the membership.

“Let everything be done decently and in order.”
Response 3
By Pastor Jones-Lartey

This is a critical response to Don McFarlane's restructure proposal. The first question to ask is whether the proposal is strategy, finance or ideology driven? Having read the proposal it is my view that the case for strategic development was not made. Of course, there are allusions to cost savings but no cost analysis was supplied. What appears more important to me is power and control located centrally in the Union president, treasurer and secretary. I have come to the conclusion that the proposal is ideologically driven to cut cost. The fusion model will not grow the church more than the current system.

The proposal for restructuring looked at three different models namely: rationalization, union of churches and fusion. Rationalization of the conferences simply means that departments are not duplicated at the conference and Union level. As far as Don is concerned the rationalization model was tried but did not work.

The proposal then turned to the Union of Churches model but Don quickly pointed out that the General Conference has reservations about this model. The General Conference will only consider this model in "unusual situations such as slow church growth, challenging geographical situations or peculiar administrative challenges" p22.

So the main proposal is the Fusion Model. Indeed, the BUC Executive Committee voted on March 10, 2011 in favour of the Fusion model (see p26 on implementation process). There is a possible timetable for change flowing in the face of common sense. On one hand "the process to change from the current system of organization in the British Union is rather complex one and cannot be done in a hurry" p28. Yet still on another hand 2013 has been proposed for the process to be completed.

Delegates must be careful that no wool is pulled over their eyes under the guise of urgency to reform. Yes the church may want to see some restructuring but they may not be in favour of the fusion model. I am not impressed with the reasons to fuse the Union. If the current system is not broken nobody must break it.

I propose to pick out what I consider to be salient points that I wish to respond to. This approach is selective to show that the case for the Fusion has not been made. Others contributors may take different approach to critique the proposal.

"Apart from the large number of individuals working in the three church officers, the independent nature of the three units does not escape the eye. As separate charitable organisations, the BUC, SEC and NEC operate as independent units, bound together only by church policies and denominational courtesies. Some members and workers struggle with the idea that British Union does not have the full responsibility for every aspect of the work of the church in the British Isle" p8

Who are these "some members and workers" having issues with independence of the local conferences and missions? Are these members and workers a pressure group? Do these 'members' represent the whole church? The whole process is top-heavy generated living less room for the majority to be engaged in the debate. It is one-sided affair. We are not in this together.

Don McFarlane mentioned as one example a TV program that was scrapped by one of the major players. He argues that "competition would be eliminated and hopefully, a better product would result" p6. The president is silent on the cost of programs like the Net 98 and how fees are driven by the Union supported by the Conferences but the results in terms of money spent are not there to be seen.

Life Info was flopped "process" shown by Adventists to Adventists on Adventist frequency. Local churches bought satellite dishes that have become monumental artefacts unusable today. Few years before in 1998 churches bought into the Net 98 program. There was enthusiasm by the churches to follow the Union but the corresponding effect is not easy to quantify. The jury is still out there on the impact of Net 98 in the British Union.

In the light of the above wastage it seems proper for a local conference to be concerned about TV expenditure that is likely to run out of control. The current system offers check and balances. Where a local conference feels that a particular program will not serve the needs of the constituents it has the autonomy to block it. And what is wrong with this? The Fusion Model will certainly obliterate the check and balances.

The proposal gives a lot of weight to the media departments at the Union, SEC and NEC. He argues that the Fusion Model makes a good sense of pooling resources together for the good of the church but provides no evidence to justify and or sustain that position.

Again without providing any evidence, Don jumps to the conclusion that "The leaders of the SDA Church in the BU are acutely aware of the need for the restructuring of the church in their territory for the sake of more effective mission fulfilment. At the December 2010 Field Leaders (field presidents and BUC Officers) leaders concluded that urgent action was required to restructure the Church in the BUC in order to:

- Eliminate unnecessary duplication
- Reduce expenditure on executive/departmental leadership
- Provide more resources (financial and human) for local churches, where the mission of the church is carried out.
- Position leadership closer to members and community
- Operate the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the UK as one charitable organisation.
- Streamline HR and financial services
- Have a stronger and closer leadership of pastoral staff, which also should provide for more effective support and monitoring. p8

Now these criteria were bundled around under the certificate if urgency without any evidence for cost analysis and saving. So let me deal with them one by one.

- The elimination of unnecessary duplication is worthwhile but can happen without dissolving the local conferences. This is possible when Union departmental directors stick to resourcing the local conferences rather than cross boundary and deal direct with local churches.
- Again the church can reduce expenditure without fusing the conferences and missions. The Union can reduce the number of departmental directors.
- The issue of providing more resources (financial and human) for local churches is a redherring. The case for providing more resources to the local churches by the Union has not been made. For example when the BUC reduced the number of delegates and days of session the president of the Union informed the London Ministers on May 10th 2011 that the Union saved £250k. There is no evidence that the Union reverted the savings to the local conferences and missions.
- The matter of positioning leadership closer to members and community is another unsustainable aspiration. No local conference or Union executive committee runs a local church.
- The matter of operating the SDA church in the UK as one charitable organization has never been an
The matter of operating the SDA church in the UK as a charitable organisation has never been an issue to the Charity Commission. If the UK Charity Commission is concerned then it is another matter.

On the matter of streamline HR and financial services. Again that can be done without dissolving the conferences in the same way as the Union manages the pension scheme for workers.

The proposal does not provide any one cost analysis to back the urgent assumption to restructure. The Fusion Model practically means that the local conferences and mission are eliminated in favour of one Union body. He outlined 10 features of the model. Again no cost analysis is supplied. Again the rationale for the Fusion Model is merely to bring all the conferences and missions under one umbrella with 12 glorified area coordinators (presidents). Questions must be asked about the composition of the field boards. What methods proposed to choose or elect the board?

He writes, "The BU is a large field, within the context of the TED, but in the context of the wider church it is comparable to a medium size conference. This is both in membership and geography. The South Eastern California Conference and Southern California Conference are 69,000 and 43,000 respectively in membership. The North Eastern Conference in the Atlantic Union has a membership of 48,500 and the Texas Conference 46,000. Several Conferences in the South America, Inter America and Africa would be even larger in membership than the figures quoted above. A field of 32,000 members would not be beyond the capacity of one set of department to serve" p11

The reference to other fields may be relevant only if these fields have adopted the fusion model. The BUC may not have the numbers but conferences and mission generate over £12m annually. Therefore, monetary control becomes a serious consideration for the Fusion Model. It is all about money. If the BUC president wants to save money he must provide comparative information.

Don contends that "A new plan would be required for the funding of local fields" p13 The question that needs to be asked is what would happen if a local field decides not go along with a Union program because in its estimation the money could be better used somewhere? Will the Union president and treasurer come down hard on the field president and the board? This question needs an answer because Don alluded that "the local fields would have control over their budgets and benefits, as they do currently, from the funds from their local churches." So we will come back to competition even in the Fusion Model.

In conclusion, it seems to me that the case for change has not been made. The fact that Don has written an academic paper expressing a preference does not mean that a case has been made for the process to kick in. Indeed, Don has provided no justifiable reasons for restructuring. The paper has no cost and saving analysis other than mere allusion to savings. For example there is no information on the current expenditure of the Union that gives it the credibility to manage a larger budget.

The paper did not show what is wrong with the current system other than provide one example of a major player pulling out of a TV program. Frankly, this reason is not enough to warrant the restructuring of the church in the British Isle.

The BUC Executive committee cannot present a half-baked proposal awaiting the delegates at the next BUC session in July to endorse the same for a future committee to put flesh on the proposal. It is like putting the cart before the horse. The Union must make its case and provided adequate cost saving information. Cost saving information would require the Union to show how it spends money remitted to it by the conferences and missions. Based on the above I recommend the ff:

- The proposal to fuse the Union must be withdrawn from the BUC Session agenda.
- The SEC must never vote to dissolve itself.
- There should be no change to the structure of the church. There is nothing wrong with the current structure. It needs to be streamlined with few departmental directors.
- The Union must rather look at reducing the size of its departmental directors to finger counting level.
Response 4
By S. Mathias Esson

Critical Assessment of the Usefulness and Viability of the Fusion Model of Church Politics as Portrayed in the Document "A Mission-Driven Structure for the British Union" (MDSBU) by Don W. McFarlane

Introduction
In this critical response, I am going to begin by making some assumptions, which, if wrong, will render this work a nonsense and a waste of time and energy. But if I am correct they are crucial and critical to the discussion at hand.

Assumptions
1. By Mission the author of MDSBU is not talking primarily about a cost cutting exercise.
2. By Mission the author of MDSBU is talking about building and expansion of the Kingdom of God both qualitatively and quantitatively.
3. By Mission-Driven Structure the author of MDSBU is talking about organizing the Church moving the troops into position and setting out practical tactics, for church growth in the British Union.

Many have pointed out the critical lack of financial analysis in the document and rightly so, since cost saving is such a central point put forward, for the adoption of the Fusion Model of church governance. Although this will be alluded to, this response wishes to point out four other critical areas for consideration, which it is hoped will form a part of the discussion on the adoption or non-adoption of the Fusion Model of church governance for the British Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventist Churches (BUC). The four points are:

1. The proposal is predicated on the notion that the current structure is the principal reason for the failure of the mission of the church.
2. The fusion model is too centralized and affords too much power in the hands of too few people.
3. The document is disingenuous and lacks careful and fair comparisons.
4. The implementation timeline - from conception to implementation is too hasty

Discussion
1. The proposal is predicated on the notion that the current structure is the principal reason for the failure of the mission of the church.

I suggest that this notion needs to be more carefully examined. First of all, structures (models) in themselves can accomplish nothing. Whether they be flat; hierarchy; matrix; or a mix of these; Union of Churches; Rationalization; or Fusion model, they in themselves are neutral. What really give life to structures are the people within it and their competencies. Secondly, the model the author of MDSBU sets forth as not working is being used with tremendous success in other parts of the world. Of course this was not pointed out in the document MDSBU.

Anyway, the salient point to consider here is this - it is not models but the people inside the models that works. If the people inside the model do nothing then it is futile to blame the model/structure. And changing the structure will not make an iota of difference to the forward thrust of the mission.

Having said that I admit that models are useful tools for organizational progress and goal achievement. However it doesn't matter what model of church governance is adopted in the BUC, the mission agenda and the fulfillment thereof are to a large extent dependent on the people within the model. In Nehemiah, there was a clear structure - organization model if you please - that had the workers strategically placed. But the real power behind the fulfillment of the task was the mindset of the workers. The people had a mind to work. Notice Nehemiah 4:6, "So we built the wall and the entire wall was joint together up to half its height, for the people had a mind to work."

Whatever model chosen, work ethics is important to fulfillment of organization goals. Work ethics, mindset, the way we do things around here, are all part of the organizational culture that impact on output.

The problem with the proposal to adopt the Fusion Model is that it does not address mindset of the models and hence would accomplish very little or even less of the mission than that which is being accomplished presently.

2. The fusion model is too centralized and affords too much power in the hands of too few people.

By the author's own admission, one of the downsides of the Fusion Model is "power" that would reside in the British Union.

On page 25 the author lists seven downsides of the Fusion Model. One of them is the power at the Union.

"The downside of the Fusion model is seen to be: centralization of power at the union" (point e in the section, "The downside of the fusion model is seen to be" p. 25).

This power issue gives rise to another problem. I call it the problem of centralization. This should not be overlooked or taken lightly, as it could irreparably harm the work for a long time to come. What is this problem?

Now go with me to page 15 of the document for the author's own analysis of what Ellen White thinks of this centralization of power.

"God has not put any kingly power in our ranks to control this or that branch of our work. The people had a mind to work. Notice Nehemiah 4:6, "So we built the wall and the entire wall was joint together up to half its height, for the people had a mind to work."

Whatever model chosen, work ethics is important to fulfillment of organization goals. Work ethics, mindset, the way we do things around here, are all part of the organizational culture that impact on output.

The problem with the proposal to adopt the Fusion Model is that it does not address mindset of the models and hence would accomplish very little or even less of the mission than that which is being accomplished presently.

According to EG White this kind of centralization the exercise of control in every line fester restriction not growth or expansion. It appears to me from the author's own work that the Fusion Model which is seeking to exercise control in every line of the work is a good structure for restriction, constriction and contraction of the work. It is not good for worker initiatives. It is not good for expansion. It is not good growth.

Not only is the Fusion Model shown to be not good for worker initiative, mission growth and expansion but it would also appear to fly in the face of the wise counsel given to the church by the prophetess to the remnant church. Time and time again it has been proven that when we go against the counsel of Ellen White, we suffer loss and failure.

Talking about growth, again of critical interest as one assesses the proposal for adopting the Fusion Model is the example given to support the adoption of the Model.
Go to page 26 the section subtitled, Norway's Experience. Basically four lines in the 27-page document are committed to convince the constituency of the structural prowess and efficacy of the Fusion Model four lines in a 27-page document. Here are the four lines

"The Fusion model has been in use in Norway for a number of years. Former Norwegian president, Tor Tjeransen, said that it has significantly reduced expenditure on the administration of the church and has streamlined operations but warned against not defining clearly the role and powers of the field president and the local field board."

It does not require rocket science comprehension and great powers of assessment to conclude from the four lines (well fine in this document but four in the original) what the Fusion Model in operation after "a number of years" has delivered. It has delivers three things

Reduce Administration cost (will come back to this point)

Streamlined operations (not sure what this means)

Confusion note the warning that comes with the Fusion Model after being in operation for "a number of years" in Norway. role and power confusion of field president and the local field board a very telling blow for any structure designed to deliver and foster growth and expansion (will return to this theme)

Note well that in the solo example given, nothing is said about growth, evangelism, or mission even after the Fusion Model is in operation for a "number of year."

The Document is Disingenuous and Lacks Careful and Fair Comparisons

The proposal while it seeks to point out that the present model is a hindrance to mission ie not mission-driven, is disingenuous. It fails to point out that in other parts of the world where the mission of the church is growing, advancing at rapid pace the structure in place is the same as the one currently operated in BUC the Union of Conferences.

This gives rise to the critical question is it the structure that is an obstruction or could it be that the problem is to be found in non-structure related areas of the BUC?

While the document was careful to single out a single example where the Fusion Model is adopted, it failed to point to the many shining examples of places where the present model in operation in the BUC is being used with great success.

The document - and notice I said the document, is disingenuous and lacks careful, fair and critical comparison for an informed decision making process.

The Implementation Timeline Express Rail to Confusion

The time-line given for such a c-change is approximately 24 months - from conception to implementation: 10 march 2011 13 July 2013; cc 24 Months (pp 26 27). Twenty-four months to deliver a structure that comes with warning of confusion from a place that it has been in operation for "a number of years."

I grew up in Jamaica. A famous saying there was, "If fish comes from bottom of ocean and tells you storm down there it would be foolish not to believe fish" (a bit anglicized but you get the point). It would be wise to listen to such a fish. To do otherwise is simply that - otherwise. Perhaps the constituency should take note of the testimony of the former Norwegian president, Tor Tjeransen, or we may be on an express rail to confusion.

The document is correct to point out the complex nature of the process of change and that it "cannot be done in hurry" (page 26). What is needed, in my view, is not just caution but a complete rethink in order to head off this 24-month hasty journey to a possible catastrophe, that may take us a lifetime to reverse.

Strategy: Structure: Culture: Mission

I now offer some general comments about mission, strategy, structure, organizational culture, and their interrelatedness. One cannot deny there is an intimate connection between organizational strategy and structure in the execution of organizational mission.

Organizations are social institutions. They consist of groupings of people whose activities are directed towards the achievement of a common purpose."

Mission in my view is a written down expression setting out that common purpose for all in the organization to sign up to and to work towards.

Culture is "an amalgam of shared values, a common mindset, characteristic behaviours (the way we do things around here) and symbols of various kinds." It is important that the culture of organization be considered, analyzed and be attended to as this is crucial in driving the strategy of the organization.

Strategy is a word originally used in the military to mean moving troops into position before engaging the enemy. Tactics described the actual engaging of the enemy. In modern organization the word strategy seem to carry a number of meanings, which in many ways seem to indicate both moving the troops into position as well as the tactics of engagement. Strategy is the bridge between stated mission and achieving the mission.

Whatever the shade of meaning, without a strategy the organization is like a ship without a rudder (Joel Ross & Michael Kami).

Structure functions as part of the organization's strategy to move the troops into position to assign roles, give clarity of roles, coordinates roles, provide support and motivation for execution of roles, establish lines of communication and chains of command between role players. If the structure confuses these roles, as is born out in the Norway's Experience of the Fusion Model, how can the organization hope to stay focused and to steer a calculated path to its strategic end?

To use some bible language, "If the trumpet gives an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself for battle?" 1 Cor. 14:8. (Bear in mind that trumpet needs trumpeters). The experience at the Tower of Babel (Genesis 11:1-9) speaks volumes to the downside of kind of confusion as attested to by the Norway Experience.

"Making a name for ourself", (verse 4) is always a dangerous premise to build on.

Cost Cutting & Reduce Administration Cost not evangelism

It appears that possibly the greatest benefit of the Fusion model is that of cost cutting. The document is
Restructuring Proposal

http://bucsession.org.uk/responses.php

Ibid.

Your reaction to this response is welcomed. You can write to me at SIMEsson@aol.com

my contribution to discussion on the proposed reform/restructure of the BUC by president Don McFarlane.

constituency to think carefully before saying yes.

The Fusion Model in its current form is a mission-driven tragedy not a mission-driven strategy. I urge the
us years, yea even a life-time.

again might not be quite so simple. If adopted in haste, recovery from the Fusion Model confusion, may cost
mission but a structure well capable of turning the motor off. It is very easy to turn the switch off. To turn it on
When carefully analyzed, the Fusion Model as presented seems to be a structure not design to drive

restrictive. She indicates that it stifles worker initiatives.

Life.Info was an expensive academic experiment. We are still waiting for the 3000 in one day well forget the
the BUC one must be careful not to confuse academia with pragmatism.

However, there is very little mention or even demonstration of how the adoption of the Fusion Model will
lead to growth either qualitatively or quantitatively (We see how it would lead to confusion of roles and how it
would fester power in the hands of a few). As a matter of fact in the one example given of where the Fusion
Model has been in operation for “a number of years” no mention is made of any growth either qualitatively or
quantitatively.

Evangelism must be at the heart of any reorganization of the church. While making saving is desirable and
making economies of scale is needful, the principal purpose of the church is not to cut cost especially if
cutting cost adds up to cutting corners. The raison de'etre, the main business of the church is evangelism.
The Fusion Model while it is shown to be a cost cutting paradigm has not been shown to be evangelistically
friendly. The constituency needs to seriously consider this factor before it is too late.

The Pesher Factor
I read a book some years entitled, Jesus the Man. In it the author, Barbara Thiering, deposits the idea that in
order to really understand the life and teaching of Jesus one has to go behind the stories of the gospel.
"Parables are clearly on two levels: a simple story with something more complex underneath." To get to the
behind of these stories, Thiering propose the pesher technique. What follows is a type of pesher for the
Fusion Model - a simple model with a complex underneath.

When one considers that one of the downsides of the Fusion Model is the "POWER" that it affords the
British Union, one is left to consider the real motive behind the strategy Growth or Control of all the lines of
work by the union president and a select small group of people.

When one stops to consider earlier calls and the reasons for those earlier calls for organizational reform; the
disbanding of a Union of Conferences in favor of a Union of Churches and then after the Harrogate Union
Session in 1991 when Pastor C R Perry was elected as Union president, the call was changed from a Union of
churches to a parallel union (it was in response to this latter call that we got rationalization), one has to
ask the question - what is the motivation behind this document? What is the pesher behind the Fusion
Model? Is it the growth of the church, the expansion of the mission, or the control of the work by a select few?

Considering the present ethnic composition of the Union staff, one has to wonder how representative of the
church the officers of the Union under the Fusion Model would be? A simple strategy but could it be that
hidden behind the reform, hidden just out of view is a complex underneath? The constituency may do well to
look carefully.

Duplicity
Many have sighted duplicity as a problem in the present system. And in deed the duplicity argument (page
8) is used in document MDSBU as a driver for the velocity of the change. But I believe that the problem is not
duplicity. To the contrary the problem is a lack of understanding of roles, as they should work within the
present structure. As I see it the Union at present wants to and behave as if it is the local conference.
This confusion is being perpetuated simple because senior management at the Union level does not seem
able to deal with this clarification of roles issues.

What might be at stake here is the organizational culture. Addressing this area of the work at every level is
crucial to achieving mission objective. Is the mindset one of control or one of service? Do the people have a
mind to work? How is this mindset created and cultured? What part does the institutions of training:
colleges, the internship programs for workers, the examples of administrators and leaders, the support
systems etc. How do they conspire to culture a mindset for evangelism? In the strategic plans is there a
clarity of mission? Is there anything to sign up to? What are the organization's expectations of her employees?
The answers to all of the above are crucial to organizational success. Structure is simple one factor in the
strategic process of any organization to include the church.

Perhaps the leader of our church could look to those areas of the world field where the Union of
Conferences model of church governance is working, ask some questions with a view of oiling the said
system here for service. It is an extraordinary vision that looks at a system that offers role confusion, and
nothing by way of growth for implementation as a mission-driven strategy in the BUC.

Conclusion
As one considers these four critical points set out above one has to conclude that the Fusion model is more
of a tragedy than a strategy for a forward thinking missional movement as the Seventh-day Adventist
Church in the twenty-first century. Sure we want to cut out waste. Sure we want to cut out unnecessary
bureaucracy. But as one considers the alternative presented to the present pattern of church governance in the
BUC one must be careful not to confuse academia with pragmatism.

Life.Info was an expensive academic experiment. We are still waiting for the 3000 in one day well forget the
repeat of Pentecost, we are still waiting for the daily addition to the church as a result. The one example
sighted in favor of the Fusion Model comes with warnings of confusion of roles.Â The Fusion Model is too
centralized. Ellen White warns against such a system of control in every line of the work and warns it is too
restrictive. She indicates that it stifles worker initiatives.

When carefully analyzed, the Fusion Model as presented seems to be a structure not design to drive
mission but a structure well capable of turning the motor off. It is very easy to turn the switch off. To turn it on
again might not be quite so simple. If adopted in haste, recovery from the Fusion Model confusion, may cost
us years, yea even a life-time.

The Fusion Model in its current form is a mission-driven tragedy not a mission-driven strategy. I urge the
constituency to think carefully before saying yes.

Pastor S Matthias Esson, BA MA MBA EdD (Card). This work is intended for discussion purposes only. It is
my contribution to discussion on the proposed reform/structure of the BUC by president Don McFarlane.
Your reaction to this response is welcomed. You can write to me at SIMEsson@aol.com


Ibid. p. 14


Response 5

By Andrew Puckering

As the proof-reader for the Messenger, I studied the President's proposal for restructuring very carefully and in great detail. I have also read every letter in the Messenger over the last few months calling for restructuring. Pastor McFarlane's document aims to answer those calls in a very practical way, and it should be welcomed by all church members who think seriously about the purpose of our Church in the British Isles - not because it imposes a greater centralisation of power upon a hesitant nation, as some members seem to suggest, but because it opens up the issue for discussion and debate.

What, for instance, is the purpose of having separate conferences for North and South England? Some members say there is no need to dissolve them. But is there any real need to keep them? Why must we have a distinction between North and South? What useful function does such a distinction serve? Surely, if one of the major 'weaknesses' of the fusion model is that it disbands the SEC and NEC, we should be able to say why that should be a genuine weakness, and what we would really lose.

I am aware that members, and to a greater extent leaders, of the SEC and NEC might identify strongly with their particular conference; might be comfortable in it; might view the different conferences as 'other' and hence be unwilling to pool their resources and talents. I have heard some say that there is a racial disparity between the conferences, and the financial disparity is well-known. However, there should be no racial or financial disparity in the LORD's Church! The Bible is very clear that there is no white or black (or African or West Indian), neither Jew nor Gentile nor Greek nor man nor woman nor slave nor free in Christ Jesus. God is 'colour-blind', and so should we be as well. As for financial disparity - in the early Church, when the apostles first preached the risen Christ with power, did they not sell all that they had and share everything in common? And when some of them tried to keep a part of it back for themselves, they were struck down dead before the LORD to whom they had lied for their own greed and selfishness. Who would we be, then, to maintain a distinction between 'black' and 'white' conference, or between 'poor' and 'wealthy' conference? Let the two be merged; let the two be fused. Yes, the funds and resources of one conference might go to serve areas currently administrated by another. But the poorer regions are those where fewer members are tithing - and if there are fewer tithing members there, then that is the area of greatest need, and so should be supported by the resources of the more blessed region, to encourage evangelism and growth.

Now concerning the 'centralisation of power' that some say the fusion model entails - would power really be more centralised than it is presently? Instead of having power in the hands of the SEC, NEC, and BUC, we would have power in the hands of the BUC. But the ordinary member would not lose power; in fact, as members identify more closely with their local fields (according to the fusion model) there would be greater opportunity for more local leadership. The NEC and SEC officers might lose their 'power' in an office, sitting behind a desk - but their power - real, genuine power - to plant new churches and establish new congregations and minister to the needs of their local members would be exponentially increased. Is that not one of the most pressing needs of the Church today? We don't need so many tiers of leadership - we need active, engaged leadership; leadership which can promote local evangelism and meet the needs of ordinary lay members who are struggling to make an impact for Christ. This is what Pastor McFarlane refers to as 'mission fulfilment' - and I wholeheartedly welcome it.

Let there be restructuring, and soon - the fusion model seems wholly commensurate with both our needs and our present abilities, and, more importantly, with our mandate from Christ to share the Good News of salvation with the people of the British Isles.
Response 6
By Dr Steve Thomas

STRUCTURAL CHANGES FOR THE CHURCHES IN THE UK
STRUCTURAL CHANGES FOR THE CHURCHES IN THE UK
RESPONDING TO ARTICLES IN MESSENGER
Pastor Steve Thomas

With a membership of over 15 million worldwide, it is very important for the Seventh-day Adventist Church to have a sound working structure. At present this consists of four layers:

- General Conference (split into a handful of Divisions)
- Union (usually following national boundaries)
- Conference or Mission (subdivisions of Unions)
- Local Church Congregation

Historically

George R. Knight summarized the history of Adventist’s reorganization by saying

The history of Adventist church organization has been rhythmic, with the first part of the rhythm being a felt need, the second a restructuring, and the third a testing and refining of the new structural pattern. Historically the denomination has gone through two full cycles and has entered what appears to be a third. The first cycle witnessed agitation for change in the 1850s, church organization between 1860 and 1863, and refinements between 1863 and 1900. The second cycle began with calls for change in the late 1880s, reorganization between 1901 and 1903, and refinements between 1903 and the beginning of the twenty-first century. The 1980s saw the beginning of sustained agitation in what appears to be the start of a third cycle. The real question underlying the so-called “third cycle” is whether the denomination is still flexible enough to change, or whether the onset of structural rigor mortis will win out. Church leaders may choose to ignore the agitation, but, given the amount of dissatisfaction in the churches, it will not go away.¹

The early church (Sabbatarian movement) was mission-driven, with a deep sense of the need to be effective—cost and time. This generated many organizational needs. Quoting Ellen White, suggests that the organizational structure of the early church was rather dynamic rather than static. Structure was determined by the growth of the church and the need to avoid confusion whilst providing support of the ministry, for carrying the work in the new fields, for protecting both the churches and the ministry from unworthy members, for holding church property, for the publication of the truth through the press, and for many other objects.²

In addressing the current discussion on restructuring, Knight admitted that Ellen White made comments on the organizational structure of her time, by saying “it has cost us much study...to erect this structure. It has been built up his [God’s] direction. .... Let none of our brethren be so deceived as to attempt to tear it down. ... In the name of the Lord, I declare to you that it is to stand, strengthened, established, and settled.”³ However, Knight felt this comment was only for Ellen White’s time and that it was not applicable for the structural changes that had taken place, nine years later. One could, however

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² Ibid.
³ Ibid, 45
reason that, historically, this is where the church, after the departure of the prophet, made decisions that has led us down the road of repetitive organizational restructuring.

Two of several lessons learnt, according to Knight, are that of first, the positive nature of the Seventh-day Adventist Church restructuring that intended to create some balance between unity and diversity. However, Knight felt that the church has done well in the area of unity but has not yet capitalized on the possibilities of diversity as it operates in the vastly different cultures. Secondly, the financial crisis brought about in the 1861/1863 and 1901/1903. The church rallied to the pressing needs and made some affordable organization restructures these moments, with mission being the core of the structural change.4

It can be reasonable said that the history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is one that is vibrant and dynamic. We are willing to make the necessary adjustments in order that the mission of the church may receive sufficient resources (money, machinery and human). That change is necessary in order for us to be effective in the dissemination of the gospel. Historically, change has helped the church to better reach the community. What is not possible to say is what would have happened had the church remained steadfast and sure with the structure Ellen White saw as God given.

The Future

According to Lowell C Cooper

Change is constant and inevitable. On a global scale the ways that people and organizations conduct their activities and define their relationships varies with the passage of time. Every organization and individual is affected in some way or another by changes beyond their control. Similarly, the environment in which the Church lives out its mission is dynamic, not static. The forces of change are ever at work. One of the tasks of leadership is to anticipate, monitor and respond to change while ensuring that the Church is anchored to those realities that do not change. The response to change may be proactive or retroactive. The greatest risk lies in ignoring or not recognizing that change is occurring.5

Reviewing the church organization and structure, Cooper summarize by stating that the features were adopted over the course of several decades and represented a culmination of careful, prayerful study combined with the pragmatism of experience.6 This same approach can help us within the British Union as we continue to examine or reexamine the churches organization and structure.

In addition, it is also important to commit to the church’s core values of a worldwide mission and worldwide unity that calls for a global identity and structure. In supporting Cooper’s, I took believe that the Seventh-day Adventist Church, both in the

4 Ibid, 49
5 Lowell C Cooper, Reasons for Considering Adjustments to Seventh-day Adventist Church Ministries, Services and Structure (presented to the commission on Ministries, Services and Structures), http://www.adventist.org/world-church/commission-ministries-services-structures/cooper-reasons-for-considering.html
6 Ibid.
United Kingdom, and worldwide, must continue to be an one world Church with strong linkages amongst all its parts—from local church to General Conference.

I strongly uphold the belief that “any structural revision must preserve a sense of ownership and responsibility for mission at the local level along with a sense of identity as a worldwide family engaged in fulfilling the Gospel Commission on a global scale. Therefore, the connectedness of the Seventh-day Adventist Church must continue to remain theological, structural, and experiential. Any revision or restructure should uphold and keep such rich God-given links.

Further, it should be noted that we are looking at God’s church, His organization that He Himself has set in place and continues to setup and remove kings. We must not forget that this is not a secular, but spiritual organization. Therefore, “neither designs in corporate business nor government provides an adequate model for Seventh-day Adventist Church structure. That precise arrangement will have to be planned and adopted by the membership (stakeholders). It is important to note that fundamental characteristics of our Church organization is that of the preservation of a dynamic and voluntary relationship of mutual service and support for the growth of God’s kingdom (that is for the mission and vision given by Jesus Christ to be the foremost in our minds and actions).

In our quest for the best, it is vital that everything is brought to the table. Nothing is off limit and preserved/reserved. That is to say, both the Conferences, Missions and the Union must be rationalized and established or modified in terms of their efficiency and effectiveness in facilitating mission and strengthening unity (efficiency and effectiveness should be based on past output, impact, results and verifiable). At the same time, we should allow for evaluations and adjustments.

Patrick Boyle, in the Messenger dated 13th May 2011, echo a vital element, deliberately missing from the procedures taken by the author of the proposal (Don McFarlane). This should have been the first step in any such discussion to restructure. Patrick Boyle said

If the work of God in the British Union is to be restructured, would it be correct to say that all those it will affect should be involved for it to have any hope of success? Without their involvement an effective outcome could be put in jeopardy.

It is fair to say, it is rather late to include everyone as the horse has already bolted. And it does appear that the dates outlined in the proposal and the voting of the document makes it very difficult to adjust the proposal. It is difficult because the experience gain within the Seventh-day Adventist church mode of operation tells us that it is set in stone. Changing will be difficult and rather than allowing the members to decide what is best, the author has already proposed a pathway that excludes nearly all of the body of Christ in the United Kingdom.

Boyle wisely asked
Is it not more important to have a clear vision and picture of intentionality as to what any restructuring is intended to achieve before embarking on such an exercise? Change of any kind, without measured and well-thought-out intention as to what it will achieve, is an unsure path to tread.

Boyle goes on to provide us with some timely examples, saying
The church changed Home Missionary to Lay Activities to Personal Ministries-to what end?
We should have, from inception, been open, frank, and honest. Any hidden agendas will only give birth to distrust and suspicion, the impact of which is a lack of cohesiveness. However, we should never forget that the denominational structure should be a structure that serves the church and encourages unity (a servant of unity rather than its master).

Marcos Dove, a former British Union Conference Treasurer, wrote

The biblical principles involved in organising God’s work in both Old and New Testament times, as well as in our own Church’s experience, indicate administrative structures robust enough to support and promote the work. They also provide for 'manageable management.'

Messenger, 1 January 2011, Volume 116, Tony Welch commented on the structure of a number of letters relating to the Church in the UK being over-managed. In his comment, he mentioned that none have offered an alternative management structure.

Tony went on to say, “to me the conferences are a wasteful luxury that we can no longer afford and which are completely outdated.” His understanding of the history of the conferences showed a disparity between the spirit given directions received from the early fathers, but rather focused on money.

Tony’s article highlighted, in my opinion, the desperate need to reexamine the purposes of not just the Conferences, but also the Union. **We should assess whether we are indeed “over-managed” and whether, if “over-managed,” we need certain element of the structure.**

In examining the structure, we must be open and honest with the entire Church and ourselves. We should examine costs, effectiveness, purpose for the element and whether we can effectively transfer the functions, without increasing costs (human, machine, Methods and material resources) while improving the mission and ministry given to us.

I am of the same opinion of M R Dove, who wrote (Messenger 26 November 2010)

“I believe that most organisations (our denomination included) would benefit from regular, formal reviews of their overall purpose and aims, and how they can best organise themselves to accomplish these. Certainly, the present economic crisis is a sufficient enough prompt to do so. However, while it is perfectly in order to be informed by the actions of other organisations in this respect, and while the decision-making principles involved may be common currency, each organisation has to determine for itself, and with significant reference to itself, whether or not it is over-managed.”

Further, Dove highlighted pertinent facts, which I believe should push us to serious reconsider the steps we appeared to be initiating. That of a move towards another of the same fusion with enough evidences to suggests man-driven models are fill with problems. Here I like Dove’s statement

“Joining the two conferences together would likely leave one unwieldy unit. Attaching missions to conferences has been tried and rejected by the membership (witness the disbandment of the North British Conference in 1991). The joining together of three missions into one ‘Celtic’ mission was unsuccesssfully mooted a
few years back. Whatever the permutation, none, to my mind, appears to be as suitable as the current configuration.”

Not only do we have past experiences in the UK to help us, but we also have statistical data from the General Conference archive. On examining the raw data, (without any proper explanation to clarify the data), one can see a decline in the impact those who are operating Union of Conferences and the Fusion Model within Europe. Norway for example has decrease in numbers and is currently not doing well. This is alarming!! Any effective organization would tell you that the output and results of a system would determine whether you would accept or reject it in your process of restructuring for growth. It therefore seems rather strange that we are looking at ineffective system or model as the best to replace our existing model that is out performing it both in tithe and membership.

Where there are structural, administrative and decline in effectiveness, to the extent that there is a decline rather than growth, it is reasonable to say, “This is not the model to adopt,” unless more thorough evaluation (quantitative and Qualitative) is done to ascertain the reasons for the poor results. The questions stakeholders may ask are why are you wasting our resources on a system without any apparent benefits. Added to the fact is that the problem of the model or any model has not been addressed. That is the right people in the right place, with the right qualifications (spiritually and academically) for the right reasons. You can restructure and restructure and yet you will still have the same problems. This is because it requires the right people to be in the right place. People who understands their roles and functions at each level, rather than doing the job of others.7

Similarly, we need to seriously evaluate all models and take quality time in study and prayer for God to direct us. We need not a Samuel approach, but rather God’s approach to selecting what is right for God’s church. Samuel was so caught up with the way thing looks, and would have gone home early. However, God told Samuel, as much as He is telling us today, man looks at the outward appearance, but God looks at the heart. Therefore, much is required to get to the inside track rather than the outside.

In the Messenger (4 March 2011), the suggestion was “that we do away with the SEC and NEC.” However simple that may look, it is rather complex.

When making decisions, it is necessary to truly seek to understand the nature and functions of the conferences. It is important to remember their roles. It is important to take on board that they do a fantastic work. They are in touch and in contact with the local churches. The Conference undertakes the task of giving direction and help including vision. Though at times there maybe errors, difficulties and mistakes, yet we must never forget the leadership are not gods, but mere men and women of God. Giving their lives as servant-leaders. Their work is one of sacrificial and stressful. It is the conference, working with the pastors and elders of the local churches that have enabled us to maintain our heads above the economic turbulent waters. Without the Conference, the work would be

7 Department directors at the Union level are known doing the job designated for the Conference department director. For example, the Ministerial at the Union level is suppose to work with the Ministerial Director at the Conference level in assisting him to better help the pastors and elders within the churches. If that Ministerial Director decides to step over the Conference director and seek to communicate directly with the Pastors or Elders, he is really competing with his lower level colleague rather than assisting him. This is not in accordance with the guidelines and job description voted at sessions.
much more difficult for the pastors and the churches. Having a unit that is there for you and can help you is important. To have one single unit with the added stress and strains of the churches and not having enough time, would mean that both pastors and elders and officers would not be able to get the ears of the overloaded Union (if it were a Union of Conferences or a single unit). Here we must not forget that the system of spreading the workload is that which Moses was encouraged to undertake. Are we now saying that we are better able than Moses to cope?

The General Conference, under the leadership of Dr. Jan Paulsen, set up a sub-committee (the Union of Churches) to study the advantages and disadvantages of a union of churches model as an alternative structural arrangement for the Seventh-day Adventist Church. In so doing, it was noted, in the recommendation presented at the Annual Council (Silver Spring, Maryland, October 15, 2007) that “In order for a ‘union of churches’ to be an acceptable model it must respond to the realities of the world we live in and the needs of a church that is placed in the twenty-first century.”

The committee outlined the procedure for proposing and voting such restructure as:

**B 65 21 Organizing New Unions of churches** (and Fusion Model)

1. If it is proposed to organize a new union of churches, the proposal shall be considered by the respective division executive committee at its midyear or year end meeting, or at a division council. Proposals to organize groups of churches or missions/conferences into new unions of churches, or to reorganize a union mission or union conference into a union of churches, may be initiated by a group of missions/conferences, a union conference or union mission, a division, or by the General Conference.
2. When a group of conferences/missions initiates a proposal to organize a new union of churches the officers of the division and union/s shall consult with the officers of the organizations making the proposal.
3. When a union conference or union mission initiates a proposal to organize a new union of churches the officers of the division and General Conference shall consult with the officers making the proposal, including the officers of the conferences/missions.
4. If the division executive committee initiates and/or concurs with a proposal initiated elsewhere, and the conferences/missions to be formed into a new union of churches are part of an existing union conference, the division shall request the conferences involved to convene constituency meetings to consider the proposal and if there is concurrence to initiate appropriate dissolution procedures as per policy. In the event of a positive action by the constituency, or where the organizations involved are a part of an existing union mission, the division shall request the General Conference to appoint a survey team, including General Conference and division representation, to consider the merits of the proposal.
5. When the General Conference initiates a proposal to organize a new union of churches it shall request the division to consider the matter and in the event of division concurrence shall implement the processes outlined in 4 above.
6. Further consideration of a proposal to organize a union of churches will be discontinued when the specific proposal is not approved by:
   a. a constituency meeting action of any local or union conference involved in the proposal;

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b. an executive committee action of either the division concerned or of the General Conference Executive Committee.

7. The survey team, after its investigation, shall report its findings to the General Conference and division executive committees.

8. If, after considering the findings of the survey team, the division chooses to proceed with organizing the new union of churches, it shall record an action to this effect at its midyear, yearend meeting, division council or at a time when adequate representation is available, and forward its recommendation to the General Conference Executive Committee for consideration.

9. The General Conference Executive Committee shall consider the report of the survey team and the recommendation of the division and shall take the appropriate action.

10. In any situation involving constituency meetings pertaining to the establishment of a new union of churches the division shall oversee the process of constituency decisions, dissolution of entities, reorganization, determination of organizational status, adoption of constitution and bylaws/operating policies, clarification of operational obligations, and the selection of leaders.

11. The new union of churches shall be presented at the next General Conference Session for acceptance into the sisterhood of member units.

In addition to the above procedures, the following process are recommended, as a result of change in status and territories of the entities (Union, Conferences, and Missions):

When the entity under consideration is a union conference/mission or union of churches the decision to adjust status shall be made, after appropriate consultation with the entity concerned and the division executive committee, by the General Conference Executive Committee at a Spring Meeting or Annual Council.9

And

If the territory of a conference, union conference is involved (as in the British Union context), the administration of the next higher organization (the Trans European Division in our context) shall use its discretion to examine constitutions and legal requirements to determine whether a constituency meeting should be called and, if so, at what point(s) in the procedure.10

Taking note of the procedure outlined by the General Conference and approved in 2007, it is imperative that we embark on an open discussion (with the stakeholders) to agree the procedures (whether agreeing to follow the already voted GC constitution or a modified version) to the facilitate the process. A clear outline of the procedures (agreed) would avoid any questions relating to constitutional interpretations and disagreements that can become obstacles of change. Such obstacles, as one person or group dictating the direction the church should go, iron fist approach, which may lead to accusations that distracts from the discussion.

Ellen White gave similar warnings when she wrote

Laws and rules are being made at the centers of the work that will soon be broken into atoms. Men are not to dictate. It is not for those in places of authority to

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10 Ibid, B 80 Adjustments in Territory Of Organizations, Union of Churches Final Recommendation, 12.
employ all their powers to sustain some while others are cast down, ignored, forsaken, and left to perish. None are to exercise their human authority to bind the mind and souls of their fellow men...If the cords are drawn much tighter, if the rules are made much finer, if men continue to bind their fellow laborers closer and closer to the commandments of men, many will be stirred by the Spirit of God (not the spirit of apostasy) to break every shackle and assert their liberty in Christ Jesus

In addition to the need to agree upon procedures, it will be necessary to also agree upon the mechanism or method which can evaluated the proposals for effectiveness and cost efficiency.

According to Cooper
Revising/adjusting structure does not automatically mean that increased resources will be available for organizational mission. Church members everywhere deserve a clear understanding as to how denominational structure encourages, facilitates and sustains mission and unity. Revising denominational structure must result in greater effectiveness and/or increased efficiency. This does not happen automatically. Deliberate strategies will have to be employed to ensure that operational savings and efficiencies, if any, that flow from organizational adjustments are dedicated to mission accomplishment and strengthen the bond of unity in the Church.

Currently, the restructuring project (doctoral dissertation) by Don McFarlane fails to provide any information on the mission aspect. Rather, the project seems to focus solely on costs without having done or provides any costs. It is also important to note that

Neither designs in corporate business nor government provide an adequate model for Seventh-day Adventist Church structure. The precise arrangement of denominational structure will have to be planned and adopted by the membership. Some elements of denominational organization may be analogous to certain features of business or government. However, the fundamental characteristic of Church organization is the preservation of a dynamic and voluntary relationship of mutual service and support for the growth of God’s kingdom. The New Testament (1 and 2 Corinthians, 1 and 2 Timothy, etc.) does contain some specific guidance on the organization of a local Church but has relatively less guidance on how a multitude of local churches express their collective identity and collaboration. Bible imagery (including such expressions as shepherd and sheep, body of Christ, vine and branches, household of faith, family of God, building, bride of Christ) provides insight regarding relationships and attitudes that should characterize the Church but these do not provide definitive guidance on the shape of a global structure.

11 Ellen White, John Loughborough Book, 1907, quoted in Church Order and Discipline page 154
12 Lowell C. Cooper, Commission of Ministries, Services and Structures.
13 Ibid.
In addition, any or all proposals should preserve and strengthen the ability of the local church and the world church to remain in dynamic and effective communication. Therefore, it is imperative that a suitable strategic model be selected, agreed upon, that would make it possible to review and compare each proposal without having to wade through wads of paper or pages.

It is my belief that the Logical Framework Matrix is one of many tools that would facilitate the proposals (called program logic model) as well its evaluation.

**The What and Why of the Logic Model**

According to W K Kellogg,

A logic model is a systematic and visual way to present and share your understanding of the relationships among the resources you have to operate your program, the activities you plan to do, and the changes or results you hope to achieve. And that

A logical model will help; especially in light of the changes envisage, to carefully examining several areas of any proposal or options of a proposal in order to gain a clearer understanding of the pros and cons as well as any difficulties in implementation.

An example of follows

![Diagram of Logic Model]

**Figure 1. The Basic Logic Model.**

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14 Cooper said, “the local church pastor is viewed as a key leadership link between denominational structure and church members. Yet there is relatively limited "systems-based, two-way" communication between the world church (i.e. General Conference) and the local church pastor. The Church does not utilize the prevalence of ubiquitous instantaneous communication systems to the fullest advantage. Some might claim that technology offers, even to a local church, such a wide array of resource possibilities that the need for historic denominational structure, as a resource system, is becoming optional. The Church must address the question of how the local congregation and the world church remain in dynamic communication, obtain feedback and provide timely response. Most pastors have limited direct engagement with the decision-making bodies of the Church.”

15 W. K. Kellogg, Logical Model Development Guide (A program logic model is a picture of how your program works – the theory and assumptions underlying the program. ...This model provides a roadmap of your program, highlighting how it is expected to work, what activities need to come before others, and how desired outcomes are achieved. W. K. Kellogg Foundation Evaluation Handbook (Battle Creek, Michigan: W. K. Kellogg Foundation, 1998).

16 Ibid.
In the above illustration/example, the following are the definition of each step:

**YOUR PLANNED WORK** describes what resources you think you need to implement your program and what you intend to do.

1. **Resources** include the human, financial, organizational, and community resources a program has available to direct toward doing the work. Sometimes this component is referred to as Inputs.

2. **Program Activities** are what the program does with the resources. Activities are the processes, tools, events, technology, and actions that are an intentional part of the program implementation. These interventions are used to bring about the intended program changes or results.

**YOUR INTENDED RESULTS** include all of the program’s desired results (outputs, outcomes, and impact).

3. **Outputs** are the direct products of program activities and may include types, levels and targets of services to be delivered by the program.

4. **Outcomes** are the specific changes in program participants’ behavior, knowledge, skills, status and level of functioning. Short-term outcomes should be attainable within 1-3 years, while longer-term outcomes should be achievable within a 4-6 year timeframe. The logical progression from short-term to long-term outcomes should be reflected in impact occurring within about 7-10 years.

5. **Impact** is the fundamental intended or unintended change occurring in organizations, communities or systems because of program activities within 7-10 years.

The term logic model is frequently used interchangeably with the term program theory in the evaluation field. Logic models can alternatively be referred to as theory because they describe how a program works and to what end.

**How to “Read” a Logic Model**

When “read” from left to right, logic models describe program basics over time from planning through results. Reading a logic model means following the chain of reasoning or “If...then...” statements which connect the program’s parts. The figure below shows how the basic logic model is read.17

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17 Ibid., 2.
According to Kellogg

The purpose of a logic model is to provide stakeholders (members of the church, including pastors and officers) with a road map describing the sequence of related events connecting the need for the planned program (the proposed models) with the program’s desired results (the areas proposing to changed or the issues to resolved). Mapping a proposed program helps you visualize and understand how human and financial investments (resources) can contribute to achieving your intended program goals and can lead to program improvements (improvement in the execution of the mission). A logic model brings program concepts and dreams to life. It lets stakeholders try an idea on for size and apply theories to a model or picture of how the program would function.¹⁸

Kellogg followed by providing us with an example of how the logic model approach works. We are proposing an inexpensive family trip from Charleston, South Carolina, to Des Moines, Iowa, to visit relatives during December school holidays. The seasonal trip we dream of taking from Charleston to Des Moines is the “program.” Basic assumptions about our trip “program” are:

- We want to visit relatives between 12/10/00 and 1/5/01 while the children are out of school.
- We will fly from South Carolina to Iowa because it takes less time than driving and because frequent flier (FF) miles are available.
- Using frequent flier miles will reduce travel costs.

We have to determine the factors influencing our trip, including necessary resources (a resource schedule should be drawn up for each proposed model), such as, the number of family members, scheduled vacation time, the number of frequent flier miles we have, round trip air reservations for each family member, and transportation to and from our home to the airport. The activities necessary to make this happen are the creation of our own family holiday schedule, securing our Iowa relative’s schedule,
garnering airline information and reservations and planning for transportation to and from the airport.

In the above example, the results of our activities – or outputs – are mostly information, such as family schedules, flight schedules, and cost information based on the timeframe of the trip. This information helps identify outcomes or immediate goals. For instance, if we make reservations as soon as possible, we are able to find flights with available frequent flier slots and probably have more options for flights that fit within the timeframe. Knowing this, our outcomes improve – reservations made in advance result in flight schedules and airline costs that suit our timeline and travel budget. Longer-term impact of our trip is not an issue here, but might be projected as continued good family relationships in 2011.

Using a simple logic model as a trip-planning tool produced tangible benefits. It helped us gather information to influence our decisions about resources and allowed us to meet our stated goals. Applying this process consistently throughout our trip planning positions us for success by laying out the best course of action and giving us benchmarks for measuring progress – when we touch down in Charlotte and change planes for Cincinnati, we know we’re on course for Des Moines.

The same approach is possible for the proposals to restructure the church management system within the United Kingdom. The Gantt chart that follows will help as we examined one of the proposed models, namely fusion model.19

According to Pastor Don W McFarlane (president of the British Union Conference, the leaders (field presidents and BUC officers) concluded that urgent action was required to restructure the Church in the British Union. The benefits (output or results of restructure) would:20

1. Eliminate unnecessary duplication
2. Reduce expenditure on executive/departmental leadership
3. Provide more resources (financial and human) for local churches, where the mission of the church is carried out
4. Position leadership closer to members and community
5. Operate the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the UK as one charitable organisation
6. Streamline HR and financial services, and
7. Have stronger and closer leadership of pastoral staff, which also should provide for more effective support and monitoring

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19 Don W McFarlane, *Mission Driven Structure for the British Union (A paper emailed to Pastors on March 23, 2011)*. 8. Perhaps Pastor McFarlane should have conducted a survey in order to determine the areas to focus on in restructuring, rather than taking a top down approach, it should have been a bottom up approach (from the people of God, rather than field leaders to the people, omitting department directors and Conferences etc)
20 Ibid.
Pastor McFarlane added that in responding to the Field Leaders desire and call for restructuring three models will be considered, namely Fusion, Rationalisation and Union of Churches. These models were later examined in terms of structural strength and weaknesses. However, no model was actually examined in terms of qualitative or quantitative studies. In addition the paper did not appear to clearly outline a logical approach whereby it is possible for the stakeholder to clearly see the results, activities to accomplish the results nor any cost information (possible by creating a resource schedule), nor whether the resources committed to the model would see any real benefit to the stakeholders. It was therefore difficult to see any real tangible benefits. The positive elements had not indication of the assumptions (condition that were presumed to be necessary in order for the result to be accomplished) nor did the paper provide us with any verifiable indicators for assessing the project. Added to this is the timeframe for changes to take place, which although necessary, may impinge on or constrain quality discussions leading to sections of our stakeholders feeling disenfranchised.21

With the missing elements, the following attempt to transfer the benefits into a logical model may fall short in areas. The logical framework matrix for the proposal benefits follows, where:

1. **Gantt chart**: A method of presenting information graphically, often used for an activity schedule22

2. **Goals**: The ultimate results that the project seeks to accomplish. All projects are goal-directed. The overall goals of a non-profit organization are usually described in terms of its mission, or purpose.23

3. **Impact**: The effect of the project on its wider environment and its contribution to the wider objectives.

4. **Intervention Logic**: The strategy underlying the project. It is the narrative description of the project at each of the four levels of the 'hierarchy of objectives' used in the logical framework (logic model)

5. **Logical Framework Approach**: A methodology for planning, managing, and evaluating programs and projects, involving problem analysis, analysis of

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21 Pastor Don McFarlane. The inclusion of the proposal on the Trans European Division agenda, for May 2011, as well as the apparent implication of it being included on the agenda for the British Union Conference Session culmination weekend, 2-3rd July 2011, could lead us to a state of ‘what’s the uses discussing an item that has already been voted in part of whole?’ It may also restrict the amount of amendments necessary. Constitutionally, the inclusion of the document on the business agenda, after the BUC session had already commenced, will pose some serious questions. As, to date, no agenda was agreed at the first meeting of the BUC session, it is technically inappropriate to introduce a new item to the business not duly voted by delegates (based on the previous constitution and session practice where the business of the session are voted before the selection of the recommendation and nomination committees. The selection process clearly indicates that session has already commenced and therefore all other significant business/matters falls under the statue of limitation.) The circulation of the document only to pastors and not to include the delegates, makes it now very difficult to include on the agenda of the BUC session as well as on the Trans European Division midyear meeting agenda.


objectives, strategy analysis, preparation of the logical model, and activity and resources schedules.

6. **Monitoring:** The systematic and continuous collecting, analyzing, and using of information for the purpose of management control and decision-making.

7. **Objectively Verifiable Indicators (OVI):** Measureable indicators that will show whether or not objectives have been achieved at each level of the logical model hierarchy.\(^{24}\)

8. **Resource Schedules:** The project budget that contains a list of items, costs, and quantities necessary for the project to be viable.\(^{25}\)

9. **Sources of Verification:** The means by which the indicators or milestones will be recorded and made available to project management or those evaluating the project performance.\(^{26}\)

The major question here is that of how will we implement the models suggested. What procedure should we adopt and adapt? Who should be included on the committees and what will be the composition of the committee as it relates to diversity and inclusiveness? Will it follow the capped system or will be remove all restrictions so that all can participate in the discovery stage? Certainly, the logical framework model provides us with sufficient clues in relation to the venture we would like to undertake. Such venture can benefit the entire body of Christ in such a way as to commence a move towards unity while being diverse.

As we move towards change, it is important to compare the proposed models as well as any other model currently marginalized. This I will attempt to do prior to creating a logical framework matrix for the seven benefits (objectives) outlined by Pastor Don McFarlane.

Pastor McFarlane outlined the following model:

1. Rationalisation

2. Fusion model (taken from Norway...)

3. Union of Churches

In addition to the above three models, one marginalized model should also be included, being the Reduction and Rationalised upgrade model (some call it the Consolidate Conference, here I will simple refer to it as the 2RU model).

The 2RU model is one where the British Union Conference is reduced to a small administrative level and the conferences rationalized the offices (reduce the number of officers and budgets and to upgrade the status of the Area coordinators roles). The structure follows:

\(^{24}\) European Commission, 73.

\(^{25}\) Ibid.

\(^{26}\) Ibid.
R= Reduction of duplications by Union of departments at Conference level. Union continues to provide the administrative and missional advices to the Conferences including sitting on the ADcoms and executive committees. Finance reduced to 10%. Union and mission with Conference presidents form a new Exec Officers committee in seeking to facilitate growth in the Missions areas.

PLUS ADDING OF REGIONAL COORDINATORS TO THE STRUCTURE OF THE CONFERENCE (Below)
DEPARTMENTS ARRANGEMENTS POSSIBLE
AT CONFERENCE LEVEL ONLY

SUGGESTING THAT WE CONSIDER
RATIONALISATION AND REORGANIZATION OF CHURCH GROWTH AND PERSONAL MINISTRIES DEPARTMENT INTO ONE COMBINED DEPARTMENT
## LOGICAL FRAMEWORK MATRIX
DEVELOPING HEALTHY SUSTAINABLE LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE

### RESTRUCTURING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intervention Logic (Objectives and Goals)</th>
<th>Verifiable Indicators</th>
<th>Source of Verification</th>
<th>Assumptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Overall Goal</strong></td>
<td>A Healthy Seventh-day Adventist Church in the UK</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Purpose of the Goal</strong></td>
<td>To be effective in the fulfilling the Mission and Vision of the SDA Church in the UK</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Results/Output</strong></td>
<td>1. Unnecessary duplications eliminated</td>
<td>What percentage per year?</td>
<td>Credible verification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Results are dependent upon the activities outlined on page 88, 89.</strong></td>
<td>2. Departmental leadership and Executive committee expenditure reduced</td>
<td>What are the current expenditures and how much reduction will there be per year?</td>
<td>Credible verification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Members and community close to the leadership</td>
<td>How will we be able to measure this?</td>
<td>Credible verification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Financial and human resources combined/streamlined</td>
<td>What percentage and what data do we have to compare our output?</td>
<td>Credible verification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Pastoral staff more effective in the delivery of the mission</td>
<td>What are the indicators and by how much?</td>
<td>Credible verification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. Senior Pastoral staff strangulation cured</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ACTIVITIES**

1. Unnecessary duplications eliminated

Results are dependent upon the activities outlined on

What activities will produce the desired output?

2. Departmental leadership and Executive committee expenditure reduced

3. Members and community close to the leadership
Response 7
By Greta Poulton

Dear Pastor McFarlane,

I thank you for publicly acknowledging the need for change. Your willingness to envisage change will strengthen trust in the Church's management.

We pray for the Lord to bless you with humility, wisdom, strength and courage as you lead the way forward.
Dear Editor

I was delighted to read President McFarlane's paper in the MESSENGER of 13 May. I congratulate him on his comprehensive review, which I very much welcome.

The objectives are well set out. Surely everybody will agree that we should strive for greater administrative efficiency, so releasing resources to focus on 'the great commission' (Matthew 28:19, 20).

Since we have set our minds to revitalise our leadership and administration, I believe we should take the bull by the horns. It is no time for tinkering. Let us be brave and go for radical reorganisation.

To me the only starter in the reorganisation stakes is the fusion model. By cutting out a complete layer, it brings individual churches and members closer to our leadership. It also releases resources (people and funds) to work at the 'coalface'.

One of the challenges concerning the division into fields is the disparity in number of members. Inevitably big cities, especially London, have a greater membership density than the largely rural fields. However, it is often in these rural fields that the Church is struggling; so we must devote significant resources to preventing the Church dying in the countryside. Thus I see no problem in utilising ministerial resources released by the reorganisation.

As part of the reorganisation, I would urge the BUC to seek a higher profile for our Church in the life of the UK. We have a powerful message, so let us shout it from the rooftops. Let us co-operate with other like-minded denominations to ensure there is a clear Christian input into government and national life.

Also I would encourage the use of suitably skilled lay people in our administration. This would bring in technical and management skills, as well as releasing experienced ordained staff to work in the fields.
Response 9

By Paul Hersey

A Proposal for the restructuring of the UK & Ireland Church Administration

There has been much recent discussion around the need to develop a new structure for the bodies responsible for the administration of the Church in the UK and Ireland. The most detailed so far has been the proposal put forward by Pastor McFarland, the current BUC President which was published in the recent Messenger (volume 116 issue 9 Mission driven structure for the future church) which laid out a number of options and approaches which draw responsibility away from the existing conferences and missions and place these functions solely under the control of the BUC. While providing a clear description of the various options for restructuring the current organisations to achieve this goal, we believe that this approach contains a fatal flaw.

We as the Norbury/Horley Gatwick district would like to put forward an alternative suggestion for consideration, the details of which are outlined briefly below:

Taking as a model for our proposed reconstruction the Union of Churches approach that was approved by the General Conference in 2007 we would like to place before you the following ideas for discussion.

1. The current organisation is top heavy and suffers from significant duplication in its different structures.
2. Many skilled Pastors are removed from the members that they are pledged to support by different layers of unnecessary administration.
3. Significant resources are tied up in assets that could be liquidated and released to give a boost to the mission work that is being carried out by the members at the "grass roots".
4. Communication and decision making is being delayed and disrupted by the need to route all discussions through multiple layers of church administration.
5. The current structures were established early in the 20th Century to meet the operational and communication restraints that existed at that time of inception, and while all organisations under consideration have instigated programmes to update and adjust their operation over the years the same basic structures have remained in place for over 100 years.

With these considerations forming the starting point for our argument we would like to put forward a radical restructuring proposal that we believe would build on the existing strengths of the organisation and lay the ground for an intensive evangelistic and mission based group of organisations to take the Church in the British isles forward towards that longed for time of Jesus Christ return. We following a time of prayer and discussion, propose the following changes:

1. The Dissolution of the British Union Conference and its associated departments. Removing at a stroke considerable area’s of vertical duplication.
2. The creation of three new unions that report directly to the Trans European Division
   1. The South England Union (membership 21,183 (2010), up from 13,157 (2000)), using wherever possible the existing structures and resources of the SEC.
   2. The North England Union (membership 8,862 (2010) up from 5,907 (2000)) using wherever possible the existing structures and resources of the NEC.
   3. The Irish, Welsh & Scottish Union (combined membership 1,617 (2010) up from 1,046 (2000)) with a single president, treasurer, HR department and executive secretary, with the other existing mission departments remaining so that local expertise might be retained - but with access to the extra resources that the combined organisation would be able to provide.

The table below illustrate the changes in membership that have occurred in the three proposed organisations since 1945, while the second table illustrates the growth in membership of the BUC since its establishment in 1902. We believe that the recent figures illustrate how effective the conferences and missions have been in their evangelistic work and that our outline proposal will allow this momentum to be maintained by limiting the disruption in communication between the proposed new unions leaders and the members in the field. While the release of skilled pastors and the tangible and fiscal resources from the dissolution of the BUC could be directed at those areas within the new unions that would best be served by the newly available resources.

While we accept that this proposal is brief we feel that it is available alternative to the current proposals that have been presented to the membership and is worthy of further discussion and investigation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>SEC</th>
<th>NEC</th>
<th>Missions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>21,183</td>
<td>6,862</td>
<td>1,617</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>17,222</td>
<td>7,111</td>
<td>1,196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>13,157</td>
<td>5,907</td>
<td>1,046</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>11,932</td>
<td>5,559</td>
<td>1,074</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>6,806</td>
<td>3,766</td>
<td>1,240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>3,268</td>
<td>2,123</td>
<td>942</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: (i) BUC annual membership Stats 2006-10
(ii) World Church Stats, General Conference 05/11

Table 2. Changes in the population, 1920 - 21

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>3,343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>11,812</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>18,565</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>31,661</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources as above.
Response 10

By Geoffrey Wastling

67, Meadow Road,
Erley,
Reading, RG6 7EX
3rd June 2011.

Letter to the Editor Messenger:

Dear Editor,

Reference “A mission-driven structure for the British Union” 13th May 2011

The denomination is not immune from the economic woes at home and abroad, resulting in inevitable cut backs all round. The church cannot escape the need for reform. Faith in God is not enough. We are also expected to show prudence in planning so as to be able to operate efficiently.

Having looked at the proposals outlined and the pros and cons explained, I think the document is honest and fair.

As the present structures stand, I have heard lots of comments, and I agree, that the Administrations, in general, are too heavy, resulting in repetition of roles, and duplication. Ministers are being used in offices rather than in the field where they should be.

Of the three optional methods described, there seems to me to be a strong case to go for the “Fusion model.” As far as I understand there are already in place within the BUC Areas with a Co-ordinator and church Representatives, who meet every few months. Their roles could be expanded and adapted to oversee BUC policies locally. The Co-ordinators with the local representatives, would be responsible to the churches in their Area. The Co-ordinator, or leader, would of course need a reduced ministerial work load to be able to do their job effectively.

One question that I would like to ask is, within the structure there is a Department for Women’s Ministries, and not for men. What is the reason for this? I cannot see an adequate call for either.

Whatever recommendations for radical changes are made, I do not believe the Executive, and its appointed Delegates, has a mandate to implement changes without, first conducting extensive research, at local church level, so as to be able to evaluate what the majority view is.

It seems reasonable to suggest that a simplified explanation of the three models could be sent to all the churches for its members to vote and let them, and vote, yes, or no, so a majority opinion can prevail.

I have been a member of the Seventh Day Adventist church since 1955. There has been progress, but I am also aware that some poor decisions have been made, in my view, with unfortunate re-percussions to this very day.

Thank you for looking at my letter

Kind regards.

Yours sincerely

Geoffrey Wastling

Copy to the BUC President
Response 11
By Marcus R Dove

I refer to "The proposal" document on denominational reorganisation (Messenger, 13 May, 2011) in response to which I would respectfully submit the following comments:

1. Net savings

The major impetus for organisational change appears to be a saving in administrative salary/wage costs for use in driving forward mission at local church level. In this regard, to help better evaluate the respective merits of the three options proposed it would be useful to have a summary of the major structural costs of each (inclusive of support/ancillary staff costs), set against the same costs for the present structure, to give an indication of the net saving of each option.

The proposal should then indicate how that net saving might be deployed in each case.

2. Governance

Bearing in mind that a charity's trustees "can generally delegate certain powers to agents or employees, but will and must always retain the ultimate responsibility for running the charity" it would help if the proposal was to broadly outline the role and powers of the twelve field presidents and field boards under the Fusion model.

3. Fusion vs. Union of Churches

It is difficult to see any material difference between the Fusion model and the Union of Churches model, particularly if the latter were to incorporate the twelve field presidents/boards.

If the General Conference is backing away from the Union of Churches model then what indications do we have that they would countenance the (broadly similar) Fusion model? It would also be helpful to know the reason behind the GC's retreat from the Union of Churches model.

4. Pastoral re-deployment

A substantive part of the rationale for organisational change (i.e. that presently too many pastors "are not engaged on a daily basis with local churches and local communities" through being "office bound") appears compromised by the warning that "Local fields may not be able to absorb all the ministerial employees released from the offices" and that, worse still, "creative ways might have to be found to utilise the services of (these) workers."

If having more pastors in local church ministry is essential to drive forward mission, and if the salaries of office-based pastors are released through structural change, and if funds are available to 'create' jobs for those pastors that local fields could not absorb, then one has to assume that both the funds and rationale exist to absorb all those released pastors into local church ministry in the first place?

5. Control

The proposal document appears to promote the view that we are over-controlled at present whilst at the same time decrying, from a union perspective, the lack of control represented by the current autonomy of local conferences. It would be helpful to have an unequivocal statement of what principles of control the proposal document espouses and to what degree each option meets these criteria.

It is perhaps worth noting here that both the 'Fusion' and 'Union of Churches' models involve an increased centralisation of executive control...and that executive control under these options would be in the hands of significantly fewer individuals than at present – i.e. one board of trustees as opposed to six at present.

6. Divine guidance

The proposal states that "the structure of the church is not divinely appointed". Whilst we may debate the semantics of the term "divinely appointed", it is clear that the Old and New Testaments both contain principles of organisation. These appear better reflected in our present structure / Rationalisation model than in the Fusion and Union of Churches models, and would be even more so if the present conference Area committees were to be helped and encouraged to function more effectively than has generally been the case in the past.

These principles include inter alia placing no more responsibility upon individuals than they can carry effectively, and distributing the leadership function over several layers of 'manageable management' each with its specific remit.2

In addition to this, Ellen White was emphatic about God's leading and approval with respect to our organizational structure. In December, 1892, talking of the church's initial organisation she wrote in a letter entitled "Organization" that "At an early stage in the work, God gave us special light upon this point" continuing "What is the secret of our prosperity? We have moved under the orders of the Captain of our salvation"3

At the 1901 General Conference session, where the expanding work demanded a change in organisational structure to cope, the delegates turned to the model of organisation introduced in Australia during Ellen White's stay there. This involved the introduction of union conferences together with its specific remit.4

In addition to this, Ellen White was emphatic about God's leading and approval with respect to our organizational structure. In December, 1892, talking of the church's initial organisation she wrote in a letter entitled "Organization" that "At an early stage in the work, God gave us special light upon this point" continuing "What is the secret of our prosperity? We have moved under the orders of the Captain of our salvation"3

At the 1901 General Conference session, where the expanding work demanded a change in organisational structure to cope, the delegates turned to the model of organisation introduced in Australia during Ellen White's stay there. This involved the introduction of union conferences together with its specific remit.4

In the 1892 setting above Ellen White penned those oft quoted words "We have nothing the fear for the future, except we shall forget the way the Lord has led us...in our past history"5. Yes! Our organizational structure has been divinely inspired, there are biblical principles involved, and we ignore or diminish this to our detriment.
Perhaps the most telling attitude of Ellen White in 1892 was that whilst she decried situations in which the machinery had become too complicated, this was in her mind an argument against, not organisation, but the perversion of it. Perhaps the over-management we presently perceive in our field should be laid at the feet of how we have misused our organizational structure, or malfunctioned in it, rather than at the feet of the basic structural framework itself.

Indeed, maybe the fact that the Union of Churches model has generally "not led to growth" where adopted indicates to us that structural change alone (if at all at this time) is not the cure for 'mission wilt' we may be tempted to think it is.

2For example: Ex. 18:17-26, Deut. 1:9-18, Acts 6:1-7, AA 87-96
3Letter 32, 1892. Ellen G. White
5General Conference Bulletin, page 68, 1901
6Letter 32, 1892. Ellen G. White
Response 12

By Albert A. C. Waite

As a lay-member in the SDA Church, had I read only Pastor McFarlane's paper, A MISSION-DRIVEN STRUCTURE FOR THE BRITISH UNION, I would primarily conclude that he has written his Doctor of Ministry (DMin.) dissertation, which is a practical/professional qualification requiring the selection of an issue in the SDA Church, pose the problem, propose and discuss several possible solutions to the problem noting their favourable and unfavourable points, then select one of the solutions discussed and justify it Â as the best one to solve the problem.

The paper is clearly written, is easily understood and there is no ambiguity as to which solution McFarlane perceives to be the best fit for the problem.

To a large extent, but subject to Andrews University's specification for the qualification, Pr. McFarlane has done what I perceived he set out to do.

I would see the title A MISSION-DRIVEN STRUCTURE FOR THE BRITISH UNION as well chosen one to kill another bird (which has been flying around within the British Union constituency for many years) with the same stone, which in effect is secondary to acquiring the DMin. qualification.

If I had then venture to read some of the responses to McFarlane's paper, I would conclude that some were trying to act as his professors, suggesting where other sociological theories and models could be included, and at the same time I would wonder why they were taking this reorganisation of the BUC territory so seriously: to the extent of criticising rather than critiquing.

But then my research found a covering letter to Pastors in the British Union Conference that went out with McFarlane's paper, which upgraded A MISSION-DRIVEN STRUCTURE FOR THE BRITISH UNION to at least equivalent in importance to fulfilling the DMin. requirement.

The letter clearly states the authority for the relevance of McFarlane's paper as a discussion document:

"I [McFarlane] was tasked with the job of formulating a proposal based on the discussion at the Field Leaders' meeting."

Then it infers that the paper should be available to the entire constituency for "consultation":

"My fellow leaders in the Union office and in the Conferences and Missions are all aware that restructuring cannot be imposed on the Church. It will happen on the basis of consultation and widespread agreement. Should we sense that there is not an appetite among the members for change, we will not seek to force the matter." (emphasis added).

And promise to make the document (probably an abridged version) available to the membership via the Messenger:

"I plan to have the Restructuring proposal document published in the Messenger, so that the membership in general can participate in the discussion. This will allow leaders to take the temperature of the Church on this subject."

The letter also offers to discuss the paper with the pastors:

"We will also seek to discuss the subject with pastors throughout the Union at various pastors' Meetings to ascertain their views."

In the paper itself, which is largely anecdotal, McFarlane sets out what I would term a break-neck schedule to complete his proposed mini-consultation with the pastors and then implement his chosen Fusion Model.

I find it extraordinary that none of the responses that I have read from some pastors recognise the fact that Pr McFarlane had indirectly given them the responsible to consult with their members and feed the information back to their presidents. On the other hand, it could be argued that the procedure McFarlane has put in place does not allow for an effective consultation and that one was not intended. The problem therefore seems to be: not enough thought was given to modify a paper that was meant to meet the requirement of a DMin qualification, to make it suitable for the more demanding requirement of restructuring the Church in the British Isles for effective evangelisation of all its people groups.

Pr. McFarlane's Fusion Model, devoid of a truly independent body - similar to the Stewards function in Formula One motor racing - would place too much power in the hand of one person, which recent history tells us could easily be abused. It lacks any effective strategy to fulfill its 'Mission-driven' objective for Britain.

Some of the responses to his proposal, however, are but knee jerk reactions of interest groups that would only maintain the present unacceptable situation. However, all alternative or modified models proposed, together with McFarlane's, should be given careful thought and presented to the constituency for discussion.

There is no question in my mind that if a truly transparent strategic approach were taken to restructure the Church in Britain, each member, during a proper consultation process would have an opportunity to contribute to the restructuring debate; suggests what roles their representatives should do on their behalf; suggest how the church could be more representative of every people group (with none being disadvantaged) and there would be fewer secret interest groups while the view from heaven would be a more pleasing one.

There should be no alternative to a complete consultation process. The days are long gone when the pastors or administrators of the SDA Church in Britain are the most educated and experienced in the congregation. The available skills and ability within the membership should be pooled, under spiritual leadership, to effect such a major change as that which is proposed.

PS. I read in one of the responses to Pr. McFarlane's paper that God is blind to the colour of people. I beg to differ. God certainly does not see colour the way some of us do. He sees us as we see flowers: different variety and intensity of beauty in His garden. His "eternal Good News" is for "every nation, tribe language and people." (Rev. 14:6, NCV)
Response 13
By Richard A. Holder

RESPONSE TO THE BUC PROPOSAL FOR RESTRUCTURE
RESPONSE TO THE BUC PROPOSAL FOR RESTRUCTURE

By
Richard A. Holder

June 2010
I. WHY ARE THE BUC CONSTITUENTS BEING ASKED TO MAKE A CHANGE IN THEIR ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE?

The absence of basic definitions offers the assumption that members of the BUC are informed about the roles and functions of the conferences and missions that comprise the BUC.

The Seventh day Adventist organization is governed by five levels of organizational systems of leadership that have been approved from its world headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland.

Whilst they are positioned at the bottom of the organizational structure, the local churches are pivotal to the survival and existence of all tiers of organization above them. Without the local church no conference union or division office can survive. It is at the level of the local church that the work of spreading the gospel is mobilized. Offices and officers receive their glamour and sustenance from the cooperation and benevolence of the members in our churches. The mission and systems of the Seventh day Adventist Church are sustained by the faithful, systematic giving of spiritually dedicated members.
In 2010 delegates from across the globe convened in Atlanta GA USA, to select and appoint officers for the General Conference and The World Divisions. A similar quinquinium (5Year) pattern of voting is reflected in the term and election process for the Unions. In the case of the BUC, delegates are generated from The South England Conference, The North England Conference, the Irish, Scottish and Welsh Missions. The voting and appointment of officers is mandated by the approved constitution of the BUC. The British Union and the South and North conferences are mandated by law to follow the rules of the constitution. The officers of the conferences operate by virtue of seasonal delegated powers that are voted and entrusted to their stewardship.

II. WHAT DO THEY DO?

The Conference.
It is the role of the Local Conference to organize and coordinate the promulgation of the gospel within every city and hamlet of its territory.

Local Pastor
It is the role of the Church Pastor to organize and coordinate the global mission within the territory of his local church. Pastors are the front line soldiers of the gospel. Jesus himself gave the commission to “Go ye therefore and preach.”

The Seventh day Adventist Church operates the largest protestant church educational system in the world. Local pastors receive their training at our Colleges and Universities. Pastors are required to complete a four year degree course in Theology. The BUC requires that their pastors are also equipped with a Master’s degree in Religion or a Masters of Divinity.

In addition to preaching the gospel, a vital role of the Pastor is a duty to train and equip members for mission service. Nurture of church members is also pivotal to pastoral success. The local Pastor does not operate as a one man/woman band, but he or she is assisted by the local Church Board. Together, the Pastor and the principal officers of the local church coordinate the work of the church. The Pastor and the Church Board are subject to scheduled monitoring of the local church at its schedule business meetings. The Pastor is also subject to the monitoring of the organizational leadership.
Departmental Directors
At appointed constituency sessions, church members vote to appoint officers to serve in specific departments for the purpose of assisting the local church and the management of denominational resources. Each departmental director and assistant is meant to have some experience and or qualification in the area to which they have been appointed. Departmental directors are appointed to serve as resource personnel to the local churches, hence they are not meant to be novices. Because of the nature of church organizations, departmental directors are also meant to possess good communication skills and sociable manners. The ability to interact favourably with church members is vital. The performance of Departmental Directors is monitored by the Executive committee of the local conference, and each director is required to give an account of their stewardship by written and or audio visual report at appointed constituency sessions. The SEC officers serve for a term of four years. At constituency sessions it is the privilege of church members to retain incumbent officers of recommend and vote the appointment of new directors. In rare cases constituents have swept the majority of their directors out of office and voted for new replacements.

Executive Officers.

The principle officers that bear responsibility for guiding the direction of their respective conference are the president, secretary and treasurer. Thousands of pounds are expended to organize constituency sessions where these officers are elected.

The President carries overall responsibility for the objectives and strategy of the organization. A church organization is service oriented, therefore, whilst the person’s spirituality is paramount, and equally important are the social skills of the individual. All things are not equal. One who is highly regarded for their perceived spirituality may not be an efficient communicator or manager and would result in consequently demotivating the people that he has been appointed to lead.

History testifies that whilst God is willing and able to communicate directly with His people, He has delegated communication to recognized leaders that people themselves have endorsed. The endorsement of a particular leader is a litmus test of the cumulative intelligence of the people, demonstrating the quality of their judgement of character, competence and qualifications. The endorsement of a particular leader also reflects the degree of qualitative contact that delegates have with the Lord. Acceptable past performance of a particular individual’s leadership may not be relevant and applicable for current and future leadership. This is
precisely why the church spends so much money to organize and attend constituency sessions.

The church does not, and should not reflect the practice of government and opposition – tearing and disparaging each other’s policies and actions every day of the week. The vote of the church should reflect its willingness to abide to the ethical leadership of its appointee until the relevant juncture for change. No person is appointed to the office of president indefinitely. There are exceptions to the norm. The General Conference has demonstrated, (In the term of Pastor Robert Folkenberg) that in the event of the miscarriage of duty, the church has the right duty to terminate the office of a leader before his or her term of office has reached the conclusion of its appointed term.

**The Treasurer** carries responsibility and accountability for directing the management of liquid and plant assets that have been entrusted to the church. People are motivated by financial reward. The tithe income for the South England conference in 2010 exceeded £11,500,000. It is the responsibility of the treasurer to demonstrate fair and equitable use of those assets according to the dictate of established accounting principles, the requirements of the Charities Commission, faithful and benevolent members, and demand of our generous God.

**The Secretary** is responsible for maintaining accurate records of voted transactions of the executive staff and committee and the correspondent follow-up action that decisions may demand. The executive three are also committed to maintaining ethical and fair conduct of all individuals within the employment of the organization.

### III. HOW ARE THEY FUNDED?

The members of the Seventh day Adventist Church are models of faithfulness. Despite the fact that less than 50% of its members are faithful in the return of tithe, in 2010 The South England Conference recorded a gross tithe income of £11,691,922.

The Seventh day Adventist Church is supported and sustained by tithe, free-will offerings and gifts. The church does not manage any institution that generates sufficient income to sustain its annual operations. The revenue of local conferences, Unions, and Division offices, are generated from the contributions of members in local churches. The figures below reflect the contribution of members to our institutions over the past decade.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Tithe from local churches to South England Conference</th>
<th>Tithe from SEC to BUC (16% of annual tithe)</th>
<th>Tithe from SEC to TED (6% of annual tithe)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000 - 2010</td>
<td>£93,237,469.</td>
<td>£14,917,995.04</td>
<td>£5,594,248.14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

BUC QUINQUENNIUM Membership Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Jan 2006</th>
<th>Dec 2010</th>
<th>Gain/Loss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SEC</td>
<td>17,220</td>
<td>21,183</td>
<td>3963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEC</td>
<td>7,111</td>
<td>8,862</td>
<td>1751</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IM</td>
<td>398</td>
<td>579</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SM</td>
<td>332</td>
<td>487</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WM</td>
<td>459</td>
<td>551</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The treasurer of the BUC stated in his report; “The British Union is not a primary receiver of Tithe and Donations. For the most part we depend on agreed arrangements with the Conference and General Conference between whom we are accountable.” p.27

IV. RESPONSE TO THE PROPOSAL

There are many areas of discomfort with this proposal. Two biblical statements come to mind:

“He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much...” (Lk16:10)
“By their fruits ye shall know them...” (Matt7:20)

This proposal assumes that the shortfalls in evangelistic growth and numerical success can be remedied by adopting an organizational model that has no demonstrable track record of success in an organization of compatible size to the BUC. It also assumes that assumes the collective new leadership and potential reshuffle of the workforce will produce greater results than is currently realized by the total field. Given that the BUC is not a membership based administration and that its survival and maintenance is handsomely supported by the SEC and NEC, would it not be prudent to encourage and facilitate the fine tuning of the models that work rather than an unproven proposal that disrupts the entire system? This proposal is akin to the audacity of Adonijah who approached Bathsheba to ask for permission to marry Abishag the Shunamite – the former concubine of King David. (2Kg 2:13-25)

This is indeed an audacious proposal that lacks substance to substantiate its ambitions.
1. At the close of 2010 the membership of the BUC was recorded at a total of 31,662. The achievement of such growth has been due to constant dedicated efforts and success of the brethren in the North and South Conferences. The missions, for which the BUC have direct responsibility, have not reflected any significant increase over a twenty year period, much less the past quinquennium. The basic qualification for a mission driven proposal should be reflected in the success of the achievements in the evangelistic fields that it currently manages. There is biblical precedence in withholding greater privileges from someone who demonstrated their inability to significantly manage and increase what they have within their scope of influence. “He that is faithful in that which is least will also be faithful in that which is much.”

The argument for growth cannot be sustained from the office of the BUC. There is evidence to insinuate that the BUC office may not even understand or grasp the dynamics that lend toward evangelistic growth. How can the office that previously eliminated the Personal Ministries Department from its portfolio,(1996 BUC Session) and has not seen the wisdom to maintain an evangelist among its officers, how can such an organization presume to take the reins for the chariots whose wheels are demonstrably in motion with effort and achievement? If an office that has the custody of a sizeable largess cannot demonstrate successful growth within the three weakest fields within its territory, how could that office dare to covet the resources of the greater portion of the union? Perhaps an understanding of this scenario can be garnered from its admiration of the operative model, in Norway.

2. The Norwegian Model.
The Norwegian Union has been cited as a model to be emulated. The UK is comprised of four countries; England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland. These are the comparative statistics for the two territories.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Union Territory</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Sq Miles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>British Union</td>
<td>UK</td>
<td>60,394,259</td>
<td>94,226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>England</td>
<td>52,023,684</td>
<td>50,337</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>5,222,100</td>
<td>30,415</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wales</td>
<td>3,016,487</td>
<td>8,022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>4,670,796</td>
<td>5,452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norwegian Union</td>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>4,810,071</td>
<td>125,182</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Norwegian population of 4,810,071 covers a region of 125,182 sq miles.

The Adventist membership in Norway is comprised of 4,700 members in 65 churches, **3 Conferences**. The Union manages all legal and formal issues for the
church and employment issues for all pastors including salary payments (about 50), handles bookkeeping for three conferences and 11 church schools. The conferences have primary responsibility for evangelism in each conference. The conferences only have a president. Departmental work is handled at the union level. Conferences relate directly to the local churches. This model has been in operation since 1992. (Tor Tjarensen. President Norwegian Union)

There is a difference of contrasts between the two territories. The BUC covers a territory that is 75% of the territory of Norway, however Norway’s population is 8% of the population of the UK. The membership of the Norwegian Union is less that 15% of the BUC.

**In summary:** The BUC is recommending that its members adopt a model that has been embraced by a Union that boasts a membership that is 53% of the total of the NEC. I hesitate to give my opinion of this analysis, but I am sure that astute minds are able to draft an appropriate conclusion.

3. **Organisational Layer**
   In its ambition to foster efficiency the BUC has targeted the dissolution of its tributaries, citing illumination of duplication of administrative functions; the need for one charity status, the need for one office that relates to the public, the need to position leadership closer to members and community, the need for stronger and closer leadership, the need for reduction in administrative buildings and the need to undertake whole church projects.

   If we should analyse the ambitions of this proposal by the yardstick that the BUC has adopted, there would be some amazing revelations.

   - Compare the success rate of the BUC with the success of the Conferences. The total membership of the Missions is 1,617; 7.6% of the size of the SEC whose membership is 21,183. The BUC has had the opportunity to maximize its budget of £14,917,995.04 over the past decade. (This does not include appropriations received from the NEC) With so much desire for efficiency, so much ambition for evangelistic growth and so much money in its coffers, ought not the proposers to demonstrated how efficient these ambitions can be exercised before they seek to manage the resources of the sister conferences.

   The counsel from St Matthew is totally appropriate: “And why shoudest thou behold the mote that is thy brother’s eye, and considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye.” (Matt 7:3)
- Given that the Conferences have not had the privilege of a fire to enable them to demolish and rebuild their facilities, how successful have been the usage of the conferences offices?
- The BUC has been the stewards of Granose, Roundlewood, Stanborough Press, Stanborough School and the ABC. What has happened to these institutions?
  - Granose has been sold.
  - Roundlewood has been sold.
  - Stanborough Press has been down sized
  - Stanborough School exists due to the patronage of SEC.
  - The ABC is dependent upon the patronage of NEC and SEC.
- The SEC and NEC administrative buildings are not a burden to the BUC, however can one envisage what would happen to the proceeds of the sale of those buildings and how much leverage those sales would add to the promulgation of the gospel in the British Isles?

The existence of Administrative buildings that have no debt should not be liquidated and cast into the BUC’s treasury of forgetfulness. The word advises that we should lay up treasurers in heaven not at the BUC. It is the right of the membership of the respective territories to retain their existing administrative buildings. It is administrative folly to cast the eggs of the UK membership into one basket.

4. **Leadership Strength and Efficiency.**
The church has not been established to operate along the lines of operation of a manufacturing agency. The central purpose for our existence is for the promulgation of the gospel. The strategic positioning of administrative offices is for the facilitating of the larger objective. The selection of officers who oversee those offices is due to the need of human resources to assist the field workers. When an officer loses effectiveness and is demonstrably out of touch with the needs of the field, he or she should be assigned back to a local field in order to regain a balanced equilibrium for the needs of the field.

No matter how great the technology, the success of our mission is 99% dependent upon the labourers in the field. Charity status does not win souls. HR initiatives should not be the driving force for major restructuring. Televised programmes, regardless of their excellence, depend on the efficiency of the foot soldiers of the gospel in order to realise the increase of new members in the pews.
One of the errors of the visionaries of this proposal is their inability to realize that local conference leaders are currently positioned close to their membership. **It is the leaders of the BUC that are distant and out of touch.** There is already a system in place that places coordinators in touch with local membership. It does not take rocket science analysis to observe and consider that north and south conferences are implementing this very process. If the members of our conferences are not persuaded with the relevance of their current structures, Matthew is able to advise.

“If the blind lead the blind, they shall both fall into the ditch.” (Mat 15:14)

Perhaps the biggest irony of this strand of the proposal is the perceived disconnection of the proposers with the wishes of the people.

*** Caution must be exercised to avoid opening a door of opposition that will be most difficult to close. General responses from moderate members are indicating their dissatisfaction with the proposal. Comments which seek to infer that this is a proposal that has been generated from the grassroots are not endorsed by the people at the grassroots. It would be a grave mistake for those who have voted to approve this proposal to assume that the members at the grassroots are not in touch with the discussion.

*** Disagreement for the proposal should not be interpreted as a dislike for any individual leader, neither should the assertion of individual dislike seek to dilute the strength of robust opposition to the proposal. The strength of leadership, regardless of how inefficient a leader may be, is measured by a leader’s ability to generate appropriate following. If you are a leader and no one is following, it can be argued that you are merely taking a cool walk in the breeze.

The membership is in the midst of a BUC session, the proposal has come from the office of the BUC, and therefore any negative reaction should be accepted corporately just as endorsements would be happily accepted corporately.

The resultant process that has precipitated open discussion has highlighted too many errors, namely:

- The error of presumptuousness.
- The error of assuming that the acute perception and analytical abilities are limited to a few.
- The error of assuming that the few are correct in their analysis.
• The error of shallow analysis.
• The error of submitting a proposal for financial efficiency without the demonstration of any financial analysis.

One individual vote does not equate to a majority approval, therefore the assumption of error is levied at the entire committee that has endorsed the proposal.

The call for change that is represented in the proposal can be interpreted as a call that highlights the spiritual ideological ambitions of a few people. The proposers should acknowledge the spiritual ambitions of the greater membership who have expended sterling effort to reach the mass population of this Union.

Whilst leaders are not expected to be perfect in their analysis, they are expected to have their fingers on the pulse of the organization. This proposal leads one to assume that our BUC leaders are testing the pulse of the wrong patient.

5. The Financial Proposal
The financial strength of this proposal leaps out as its greatest ambition and equally its greatest oversight and weakness. The absence of transparent financial analysis suggests that the proposers are presuming that the membership will follow their submissions in blind trust. There is a need for accountability.

Analysis of major projects with substantial financial outlay reveals that the BUC is adept at spending, however, without the consummate success that it assumes. The evangelistic projects of Net 98 and Life Development, cost in excess of £1.5m but without measurable numerical growth. In simple terms, there were few baptisms that accrued from both events. This proposal is seeking to lay hold on the goose that lays the golden eggs for the purpose of embarking on “whole church projects” without the hindrance or obstruction of checks and balances that currently exists in both conferences.

In the argument for evangelism and finance, it can be argued that the BUC has not demonstrated efficient use of their financial resources in any significant evangelistic venture. The lack of financial transparency in this proposal is harmful to this cause, especially when the conferences have demonstrated less expenditure with realized growth.
6. **The Evangelism Proposal**  
There is a minor issue of presumption that deserves mention. Whilst the SDA church sponsors the largest private education system among protestant churches, there is no evidence to suggest that academics and the pursuance of terminal degrees is the benefit that the church needs to generate a groundswell of success. The church in the UK has been the experimenting ground for previous doctoral thesis of selected individuals. The members of this Union do not appreciate such experimentation and thus there should be an apology for linking this proposal to the office of the president and his doctoral thesis.

The amalgamation of personal academic pursuance with the proposal from the office of the British Union places the office and the student in a position of conflict of interest. If a soldier dresses in combat uniform and assume a position on the battle field, he or she cannot claim immunity when the battle is ensued. Unfortunately, the president of the BUC, by virtue of the adoption of his posture as an academic and an administrator, cannot claim immunity from constructive criticism. This proposal is subject to the critique of every member, every delegate and the academic advisors of the relevant doctoral programme of the BUC president. The decision to endorse this amalgamation is an error by the proposers.

Education is an excellent gift, however, the word of God stands clear. The success of the work is achieved... “Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.” (Zec 4:6)

7. **The Response.**  
During the days of Samuel Israel acknowledged their desire to have a King as their ruler. The Lord advised otherwise. Despite His omnipotence the Lord did not enforce His wishes upon the people, but gave them the right to determine their own destiny.

One of the greatest compliments that any leadership can bestow upon the membership of this Union would be to engage the membership in a referendum on this very significant proposal. This suggestion would be wise, transparent, and provide a safety net for the future progress of the work in the UK.
In Summary:

1. It is my opinion that the ambitions of this proposal are premature and needs much more thought and discussion.
2. The Fusion model and the citing of Norway as a recommendation for its adoption is not an equal comparison.
3. The presumption that competition between conferences is unhealthy is not biblical. The North and South conferences have constantly and amicably borrowed and been inspired by each other’s successes. “Iron sharpeneth iron.” (Prov 27:17)
4. The amalgamation of all systems into one will dilute the current systems of checks and balances.
5. The BUC office has not demonstrated efficient management of its current systems to merit the custodianship of the entire system.
6. The proposed model, even if cost efficiency could be demonstrated, cannot ascertain the delivery of evangelistic success.
7. There is no evidence that thorough cost analysis has been conducted by SEC, NEC, or BUC offices.
8. To dispose of vital building assets would be economically unwise.
9. The Fusion model, on the basis of this proposal, is a model for confusion.
10. The suggested timetable for implementation and the recent vote in March at the BUC to adopt the Fusion model and recommend such a proposal at the session gathering on 3rd July 2011 is misleading and in conflict with the strict compliance of the current BUC constitution.
Response 14

By Pastor M. E. Mannix

Has Democracy died in the BUC?
Has Democracy died in the BUC?

To begin with let me state that I have no agenda. I write this with a genuine spirit for truth to reveal itself. One has to say this because these days if a worker speaks upon an issue that is dear to their heart and conscience, and the administration seems to be going in an opposite direction, the person is branded a trouble maker. Also through the sophisticated SDA media the person who dares challenges the system, is said to be looking for office within the administration. It would be a good time to stress that I am not looking for office. I have nothing personal against any of our administrators as they do have a work to do and it is not an easy task to lead God’s people. So I speak plainly out of my love for the Church.

My only ambition is for this short paper to reveal the truth on what is really happening to democracy in the BUC. Inside the SDA Faith gone are the days of feudalism, when Church members are treated like peasants and their lord’s ruled relentlessly over them. The tithe from the pockets of the
average church member is what runs the church. The state does not fund the Seventh-day Adventist church, the average member does and therefore they should be part of the present debate going on about Restructuring. Presently it seems as if they are being railroaded to accept a concoction of propaganda that they are not really sure about. Nobody is talking about the side effects of such an action (Democracy dying).

We the SDA church, prides ourselves upon the doctrine of democracy. The whole reason for us having Union and Conference sessions is to reflect this principle of liberty. There are four forms of church government, Episcopal, Papal, Independent and Representative. I will explain the four forms of government briefly.

‘Episcopal: - the form of church government by bishops, usually with the three orders of Ministers, as bishops, priest, and deacons.
Papal: - the form of Church government in which the supreme authority is vested in the Pope. From him the church is governed by cardinals, archbishops, bishops and priests. The Local church or individual member has no authority in church administration.

Independent: - the form of church polity that makes the local church congregation supreme and final within its own domain. This is usually referred to as congregationalism.

Representative: - the form of church government which recognizes that authority of the church rest in the church membership, with executive responsibility delegated to representative bodies and officers for the governing of the church. This form of church government recognizes also the equality of the ordination of the entire ministry. The
The principle that the Laity, being filled with the Holy Spirit, puts in power as to who the leaders should be is the basis that the church prides itself upon the principle of democracy through the Representative form of Government.

Somehow the church, in Britain, has lost its spirituality and the members are not really developing true relationships with their creator. The administration has allowed the church to be lethargic by not providing resources for good bible study. Instead we have allowed Ecumenism to dictate to us to the point that we are bordering on losing our identity. (Why are we using the ‘Alpha Course’ to win SDA’s?) The Ministry is suffering in silence under the cloud of disillusion, innocent or not they are expected to lead churches that disrespect them. Everything is

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1 P25, 26 SDA Church Manual 2005 The whole process is explained here and lets the ordinary church member understand clearly how the church operates.

2 P28 SDA church Manual 2010 in the latest edition the explanation of the four forms of government are taken away therefore the ordinary member upon reading this for the first would not be able to appreciate the importance of democracy within the representative model.
unclear in the church in the UK because it has been allowed to drift and float on into the state of Laodicea. Now it seems there are some who are questioning our right to have democracy in our union.

The real Question is this, are there forces inside the Adventist church trying to take away our liberty to be democratic. I have heard the argument that the present system needs to be restructured. Probably it does but if it changes the rights of the local church member to exercise their democracy then that is a step backwards which is not good for the church. It would seem that there are those inside the Adventist church in Britain that would gladly take away this privilege of democracy simply because they have lost being in control by becoming the minority³.

³ P2 ‘messenger 4th February 2011 Volume 116 issue 3. Allan Kissack from Weymouth erroneously brands the UK church as made up of ‘immigrants and students’ seeing that a great deal of the membership was born in Britain. It would seem that what the author is saying is that there are not enough white people in the church and he agrees with the restructuring because it makes the ‘indigenous’ have a chance to power.
The British people voted in May 2011 ‘NO’ to the new AV system because it was felt that a town had the right to send whom they think should be sent, and not for bureaucrats to decide for them, to parliament. It would also seem the minority parties have pushed for this AV System because it was a way to give them Power. Have the minorities, in our church, (even though they may be the indigenous) sort a way to take power away from the majority in our Laity in order for church bureaucrats to decide who the leaders should be? If we have restructuring it should benefit the masses (the laity), not the administrators (the clergy).

On 2009 May 17th the BUC held an extraordinary session, to bring about changes this paper does not seek to critique the rights or wrongs of the matter but just to deal with the facts as they came. There a number of issues that sprung from the famous ‘green paper’\(^4\) which posed serious problems to our liberty to vote, which I will not go into. Instead I wish to focus

\(^4\) The green paper was given to each delegate to study and it was a detailed form of what was to be in the Messenger Magazine in the months prior to the session
upon two of the points that affected our democratic rite to choose our leaders. The Administrators wished to take the power from the delegates to choose the people to be on the Recommendations committee and give it to the Missions or Conference committee, even though the Union officers would sit on that committee\textsuperscript{5}. The other point is the delegates would have lost their power to vote in the nominating committee, because the recommendation committee chosen by the executive committee would have voted it in instead of the delegation\textsuperscript{6}.

However those that had proposed the changes did not get their way. The delegates felt there was a conflict of interest in allowing the executive committee to decide the recommendation comm. and the delegates were given back the power to decide. Also it was felt that the recommendation comm. exceeded it power to decide the people on the nominating committee so

\textsuperscript{5} P2 the green paper stated ‘In the same way members of the recommendations committee represent their conference/mission and it would be appropriate that they also should be appointed by the executive committee. This should be done at the same time as delegates are appointed and at least four months prior to session’.

\textsuperscript{6} Ibid stated ‘The Recommendations Committee will need to meet at least 14 weeks before session to appoint the Nominating committee, the constitution committee and any other committees required. And to inform delegates of the selection’
power was given back to the delegates\textsuperscript{7}. Thankfully democracy has been restored back to the delegates because of the amendments that were made to safeguard the rite of the laity to determine their leaders.

Tempting fate, what would have happened if those who had proposed the changes had their way? We in the BUC would have only in name the representative system of Government, because the delegates would have no democratic power. Unfortunately the role would only be to advise the administration what to do for the next five years. The Laity would be at the mercy of the church’s administration and they put in power whoever they chose. So we would be at the mercy of an Adventist pope who sat upon his throne at the BUC.

To go a step further let us for argument sake say Pastor Macfarlane’s proposal has been accepted as stated. The question

\textsuperscript{7} Pastors Holder and Peake wrote papers arguing that the church should be democratic and let the delegates decide who is upon those committees. However because they had not been asked to use their papers one could not actually produce the documents for the use of this paper. However at the time their papers circulated the BUC in 2009.
of democracy is strangely silent. Now at the London Ministerial Council Meeting I did raise this concern with Pastor Macfarlane. Only to have the admission that those details were not sorted out yet and he realised that it need to be done quickly. Yet he told us that there were going to be 12 Presidents and we are not clear who is going to elect them. Or should I suggest that the elections would not be from the ground level but only from the union office because that will spending too much money unnecessarily. What democratic system would be in place at the Sessions (Rubber stamping or real election)? Again this has not been thought through. One must be wary of anybody who does not take seriously, or respect, our liberty to choose who should lead our church.

Should not the paper brought forward by Pastor Macfarlane be put to the test by having the whole constituency vote upon the Proposal? The Debate so far has not been about what we need to change in our governing system, but rather to accept a model that has been thrust upon us. Church members are still in the dark as to what these changes are about. In order for the change
to be done fairly, something as important as this must be decided democratically.

In the 1970’s I do remember the question of regional conferences came up. This was also about Democracy (or rather the lack of it) dealing with the issue of ‘Taxation without Representation’. Each church on the Sabbath Morning had to vote it up or down. The Whole Constituency had decided not to have regional conferences; the decision was made very clear. This proposal must be voted by the total constituency so that the change must be valid. However it seems there are those in leadership who mistrust the democratic vote and would frown upon such a move. Is this the level of democracy we are seeking? Has all the steps been taken to ensure what is rightfully ours remains ours.

Areas like London should have the rite to decide whether they wish to be split or stay together. Why has London been split
into two sections and received a home counties as part of one of the districts. (Yes I have noted Pastor Macfarlane has stated this was to be a proposal but I could not find the way to respond to this paper, apart from using this Paper to respond.) London has always enjoyed the freedom to come together for various activities.

Now my issue is not whether London should be split or not, but why was London not allowed to choose whether it should continue to be a unit or for the unit of London to be split. Again the ‘Democratic Process’ is not the focus here as far as our administrators are concerned. The West Midlands can be another area that can be brought to our attention with the same capabilities of London to a certain extent.

With respect to this proposal and at a time when the SDA church’s truths and existence are under attack (Internally and externally) one wonders what or who is influencing our leaders to move in this direction? It should be clear that the Episcopal
and Papal system forms of church government are diametrically opposed to what we hold dear as SDA’s. The members are what make the church what it is, not the leadership. If there is a need for restructuring then it should be done, with the democratic/representative process in place and not without it.

‘Where no counsel is, the people fall: but in the multitude of counsellors there is safety’

The Episcopal system is very similar to the papal system. Has democracy died in the BUC one has to wonder? If the 12 presidents were taken and you put in the word Bishop and the same for Union president and Archbishop you would great difficulty seeing if this church was an Anglican or SDA church. Democracy does not work within these systems. Yet without the democratic/representative process the Adventist church could not work here in Britain. So I do think we have need for Democracy in the form of the representative church. Why is it then that the SEC and NEC are being punished for being

8 Proverbs 11: 14 the people must be allowed to speak for this reason.
successful? One would hope the Jethro principle\(^9\) be used here rather than Consolidation as it does not help out the church’s cause. No we have not outgrown Democracy.

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\(^9\) In this instance that would be to lighten the load of the Administrators so they can be affective while continuing with their duties inside the realm of Administration.