Who Killed Azaria?
Women Pastors Begin Baptizing

SPECTRUM

Journal of the Association of Adventist Forums

Volume 15 Number 2

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Odyssey of a Creationist
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Litho USA

In This Issue

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About This Issue

For many years, Adventist scientists have met just before the annual meeting of the Geological Society of America. In the autumn of 1983, Richard Ritland and Bill Hughes, both members of the Andrews University department of biology, organized three days of lectures celebrating the 25th anniversary of the founding of the Adventist Geoscience Research Institute. Ritland, a former director of the Institute, and author of *Search for Meaning in Nature: A New Look at Creation and Evolution,* selected as speakers several past members of the Institute. We thank Dr. Ritland and Dr. Hughes for permitting us to print the views of four who participated in the conference they planned. Dr. Edward Lugenbeal contributed not only his own essay, but also his editorial skills and energy in preparing this cluster of articles for publication.

Women pastors in North America have recently expanded the scope of their ministry and are well on the way to receiving ministerial licenses in the Seventh-day Adventist denomination. They have begun baptizing new members into the church. An essay in this issue explores how this has taken place, and draws attention to some of the many women in the history of the Adventist church who have received ministerial licenses.

Other changes coming in the church—particularly its structure—continue to be discussed in this issue. Some may justifiably wonder if questions about organization are the most fundamental facing our church. But even apparently unrelated issues such as whether Adventist women may receive ministerial licenses become questions of how much authority local conferences enjoy in applying General Conference policy to their regions.

Finally, we introduce to our readers the most celebrated murder case in the history of Australia. Those convicted of the crime are faithful Adventists in good and regular standing. The second and concluding installment will appear in the next issue.

—The Editors

From the Editor

A Church Of, By And For the People

by Roy Branson

In a few weeks Annual Council will be asked by a commission chaired by Francis D. Wernick, vice president of the General Conference, to recommend to the 1985 General Conference Session alterations in the way the church carries out its business. The reports of the commissions on church structure established by the Pacific and North Pacific Unions, various local conferences and the Association of Adventist Forums have already made a chorus of suggestions for improving the church (see *Spectrum,* Vol. 14, No. 4). What emerges at General Conference must be more than cosmetic, half-way measures. What is necessary is nothing less than completely reestablishing the basis for the authority of church leadership.

Adventists want to respect their elected leaders. But those officials themselves now wonder if they actually have the authority they supposed. General Conference leaders could not remove union conference officials involved with Davenport (see *Spectrum*, Vol. 13, No. 4). A local conference committee has authorized granting ministerial licenses to women, even when some General Conference officials objected (see pages 7 to 13).

Legitimation of authority differs according to which model of the church prevails. At least three have been important in Adventism: the historical, the corporate, and the representative. Recently, denominational leadership has had difficulty continuing to claim authority on the basis of historical or corporate models. Careful analysis of the structure of the church reveals that denominational leaders can also no longer say that their authority is based on the church being representative. Now, the higher the officers the less representative their selection, and in a church that claims to be "truly representative," the less legitimate their authority.

Historical Model

The historical model places authority in the hands of those providing persuasive interpretations of the inspired writings on which the church was founded. In early Adventism, those with the most convincing interpretations of the Bible were often acknowledged as the leaders of the movement. Even Ellen White usually waited until James White and other students of Scripture came to a consensus before she publicly endorsed their views. After Ellen White's death, the president of the General Conference, A.G. Daniells, continued to buttress his positions by citing his personal

knowledge of Ellen White's thinking. To a significant degree, subsequent presidents based their authority on conforming to Ellen White's writings, housed within the Ellen G. White Estate at General Conference headquarters.

However, authority to interpret Scripture and the writings of Ellen White has spread beyond the top administrators of the denomination. Milestones include the publication of the *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary* in the 1950s; it was clearly the work of Adventist scholars, not church executives. Not only the establishment of a seminary, but the requirement in the 1960s that every pastoral candidate in North America should be instructed by professors at the Seminary, acknowledged the central role of theologians in the church. A small, quiet committee on "defense literature" eventually became, in the 1970s, the Biblical Research Institute, staffed and headed by academics. The Glacier View Conference on Desmond Ford's theological views and theological Consultations I and II in the 1980s, relied on presentations by academics. Indeed, much of the subsequent controversy about those conferences revolved around just what the scholars attending them actually said and believed.

Over the last decade, interpretation of Ellen White's writings has extended beyond the personnel of the White Estate at General Conference headquarters to trained historians at Adventist colleges writing to the membership at large. However they may quarrel with a given professor, administrators have recognized that, increasingly, church members consider trained academics to have authority in interpreting inspired writings, authority distinct from that of church executives.

Corporate Model

At the 1983 Annual Council, B.B. Beach, a former history professor, who now is the director of the General Conference department of public affairs, warned that the Adventist church was more and more often being referred to as a corporation. The church, he said, must never forget that it is first and foremost a church, not a business. But Adventism, committed to spreading the gospel as widely and rapidly as possible, easily puts premiums on the corporate values of effectiveness and efficiency. Pastors and evangelists have long been evaluated in terms of numbers. The development during the 1970s and 1980s of Adventist Health Systems, U.S.—the seventh largest health system in America, after New York City's Municipal Health and Hospitals Corporation—provided the church with a concrete example of how the corporate model can foster growth. Aggressive conference administrators listened more attentively to Adventist business executives and began reading the literature of corporate America.

Within such a framework, the church, like the corporation, is understood as an organization that must achieve clearly defined—even quantifiable—goals. The church has a bottom line: baptisms, tithes and offerings, and returns on investments. Some conferences have adopted the nomenclature of the corporation and now call their secretary and treasurer "vice president for administration" and "vice president for financial affairs." The emphasis subtly underscores the hierarchical relation of all other officers to the president, rather than to the conference committee or constituency. Indeed, hierarchical relationships are not so much justified as they are assumed. If objectives are going to be achieved, decisions sometimes need to be made quickly by someone clearly in charge. If they prove to be right, an administrator is promoted to a higher position, with more people implementing his decisions. If the decisions are wrong, he is replaced.

Management-by-objective, taken from corporate America, was adopted by progressive church executives. Systems analysis has become popular. More symbolically, but

just as revealingly, local and union conference headquarters are built to the dimensions of corporate headquarters. The planned General Conference building is being placed in an industrial park setting, next to several headquarters of corporations. The General Conference building, after all, should be as impressive as any other multinational organization with total assets of over $5 billion, larger than many Fortune 500 corporations. When church officials laud each other for their sacrifices on behalf of the church, they do not refer to the prominent non-Adventist pulpits or television ministries they could have held, but to the high-salaried, corporate jobs they could have filled.

However, for the forseeable future, church members in North America will not be able to respect church officials for their management skills. For one thing, members have come to realize that in the area of publishing, hundreds of thousands of dollars are lost every year because of duplication in Adventist printing facilities in North America and unimaginative means of distribution. If denominational leaders were to persist in trying to rest their church authority on their managerial acumen, there is the Davenport case. Not only was so much money lost in certain parts of North America that salary increases of pastors and teachers have been imperiled, but some of the most prominent leaders of the denomination violated the minimum moral standards practiced in American corporations.

Representative Model

Recent developments make it difficult for church leaders to find legitimation within historical or corporate models, but the present church structure also prevents them from truly "representing the world field." The *Church Manual* says that "a representative form of government is that which prevails in the Seventh-day Adventist church." It is not surprising that the founders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church were committed to a structure similar to that of the United states, a nation they thought God had guided in its adoption of republicanism and a constitution guaranteeing self-government to its citizens. when the church was much smaller, fewer layers of administration came between the members and the General Conference leadership. The will of members could be expressed more directly than it can be at present.

Now, if the church has a "representative form of government," it is a form unknown to the democracies of Western Europe, North America, or Australasia. At least six levels separate members from the highest leaders of the church.* Members do not choose delegates to local conference constituencies of the unions; the local conference committees make those selections. The delegates chosen by conference committees to union constituencies are predominately clergy (two-thirds to three-fourths are typical ratios). The union committees elected are even more heavily dominated by church employees, and in North America, it is these clerical union committees that select delegates to the General conference Session. In preparation for the last General Conference in 1980, it was necessary to urge committees selecting delegates to at least try to see that 10 percent of the delegates elected to the General Conference Session were laypeople. Finally, the General Conference Committee also selects delegates. As recently as the 1975 General Conference Session, just those delegates selected by the General Conference comprised 40 percent of those eligible to vote at the General Conference Session.

The structure of the church beyond the local conference could be described as a representative democracy only if one thought the United States could be called a representative democracy if the governors of the 50 states (elected by people the

governors had helped to get their jobs), together with their cabinets, designated their subordinates in the state governments as 60 percent of the delegates to a convention that elected the President of the United States. The remaining 40 percent of the delegates would have been selected by the incumbent president, his staff, and cabinet, or would be delegates because they occupied certain positions in the federal government. Finally, the convention delegates—all of whom belonged to one party—would vote on only one name.

The parallel to the way the top leadership of the church is elected today is not Western representative democracy. A closer comparison is the forms of government found in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the People's Republic of China. No doubt these governments achieve goals. But whatever else those regimes are, they are not representative democracies—neither is the present structure of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Right now, the members of the church have virtually nothing to say about selecting those who decide denomination-wide policies and the allocation of the largest percentage of their tithes and offerings.

The Future

In the wake of the Davenport case, it may be tempting for church leaders to recommend to the General Conference Session that the central authority of the church should be strengthened; that, for example, the General Conference Committee should be able to convene a meeting of a union conference constituency, even if a recalcitrant union executive committee objects.

Certainly, duly-elected officials of the church must have the power to carry out their responsibilities. But the greater their power, the more imperative it becomes that denominational officials be democratically elected. Greater concentration of power in fewer hands never prevents its abuse. Instead, those in power must be made accountable. The greater the ability of lay members to determine which of their employees will lead them, the more information members will have and the less likely the secret abuse of power will become.

Now, if the church has a "representative form of government," it is a form unknown to the democracies of Western Europe, North America, or Australasia.

Fortunately, a more representative church structure will not only reflect the will of its members; it will also allow leaders to be more effective. Denominational leaders will be able to convince better well-informed members to support major, long-overdue changes without threatening the unity of the church. Now, leaders sometimes hesitate to take the decisive actions any corporate executive would put into effect to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of his organization. (One example is the long postponed reorganization of Adventist publishing, including the role and function of colporteurs.) A more representative church will bring discussion into the open more quickly and force action earlier.

The leadership of this denomination should be influential. But that influence can no longer be based on definitive interpretations of Scripture or the writings of Ellen G. White. Nor, at least for a long time in North America, can leadership expect to be followed because it enjoys a reputation for sound, corporate management.

The fastest way for denominational leaders to regain the widespread respect and confidence of Adventist members is to go directly to the people. To accomplish this,

three basic changes need to be made in the present structure of the church.

- One step is to reduce the levels of administration between the members and the General Conference (for example, in North America, eliminating union conferences).
- Another badly needed change is to see that laypeople—those not employed by the denomination—comprise at least 50 percent of constituencies electing officers at each level of the church, including the General Conference Session.
- Third, and very importantly, delegates to the General Conference Session should be elected by local conference constituencies.

Adopting the three proposals made here would overnight make the highest levels of the church leadership accountable to the membership, instead of a narrow group of fellow employees. At the same time, General Conference leaders, since they would be elected as directly by the people as any other level of church administrators, would have greater assurance they do indeed speak for the church.

Improving the structure of the church will not by itself bring a resurgence of the Adventist movement—any more than re-important than institutional frameworks is the quality of life the family of faith embodies—its sacrificial service to others, powerful preaching, and moving theology. But even if reforming structure is insufficient, it is necessary. How we act as a group significantly defines our identify as Adventists. Our structure must reflect and express our faith. Members should have an equal opportunity to participate in selecting those who lead the church because our fundamental beliefs affirm the equality of members.

God the Creator gives all members a capacity to perceive truth, to know the good. Unfortunately, the freedom given by the Creator allows us to reject Him, and to dominate and manipulate others. All of us have the capacity for insights; yet none—even in the church—can be trusted with unchecked power. God the Savior offers grace to all, equally. All respond directly to the offer of salvation; none is closer to God than another because of his or her position in the church. God the Spirit came as tongues of fire to all the disciples, and the spirit now endows all believers with gifts, calling all to be part of the priesthood of believers. As our Protestant forebears insisted, members have the right to participate in interpreting God's will for the church; indeed, as much as anyone, they are the church.

We must renew the Protestant and Adventist vision of a truly representative church. We must be faithful to our heritage.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

*First level: Local conference constituency (electing local conference officers and executive committee).

Second level: Local conference conference executive committee (selecting members of union conference constituency).

Third level: Union conference constituency (electing union conference officers and executive committee).

Fourth level: Union conference executive committee (selecting delegates to General Conference Session).

Fifth level: General Conference Session (electing General Conference officers and General Conference Committee).

Sixth level: General Conference officers and General Conference Committee

Women Pastors Begin Baptizing

by Judith P. Nembhard

On Sabbath, Feb. 25, 1984, Marsha Frost co-pastor of the Fairfax and Arlington, Va., Seventh-day Adventist churches, baptized Teresa Maria Castano, a young mother whom Frost had led to Christ. Two weeks later, on March 10, during the worship hour, Jan Daffern, associate pastor of the Sligo Church, baptized Patty Parks, a 20-year-old community college student with whom she had studied. Yet another baptism took place on June 2 at the Beltsville Church when Frances Wiegand, associate pastor, baptized 18-year-old Mike Manimbo and four seventh-grade girls, all of whom had studied with her for several months. These baptisms in the Washington metropolitan area, the first by Adventist women in North America, have touched off much discussion and debate in Adventist circles. The events have generated little or no controversy among pastors or in most local congregations; however, some General Conference officials (several of whom attend the congregations involved) have protested strongly against the baptisms. In fact, the baptisms have posed more than the question of who can baptize. They also raise the issue of the extent to which a local conference has the authority to set policy in its own territory.

In the North American Division, three conferences (Potomac, Southern California, and Upper Columbia) employ a total of nine women as pastors. Daffern, Frost, and Wiegand now hold commissioned minister licenses, a special license granted only to women, and are ordained local elders. The women have ministerial training. Frost, a graduate of Southern College and valedictorian of her 1982 class at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, holds the master of divinity degree. Wiegand graduated from Southern College with a bachelor of arts degree in religion and earned a master of arts in religion from the seminary in 1979. Daffern will receive the master of divinity degree from the Seminary this year. The three women have served from three to five years in the Potomac Conference.

On Feb. 11, 1984, the Potomac Conference Executive Committee authorized eight ordained local elders to perform baptisms. In taking this action, the executive committee noted that

> The Potomac Conference has given pastoral responsibilities to a number of individuals who are not credentialed or licensed individuals. Therefore, the Potomac Conference Committee approves the concept (to grant permission to baptize) and authorizes administration to extend the permission to baptize to credentialed and licensed commissioned ministers who are assigned a pastoral responsibility. They must be a local elder (sic) in the church/churches to which they

Judith P. Nembhard, assistant professor of English at Howard University, received a bachelor's from Columbia Union College and her doctorate from the University of Maryland.

are assigned and the authority to baptize is only valid for the duration of their pastoral assignment.

In addition to the three women, the action also involved five men who are ordained local elders. On the strength of the Feb. 11 authorization, the female pastors proceeded with plans to baptize.

Marsha Frost met Teresa Castano through Teresa's sister, who had been taking Bible studies from Frost. Teresa, eight months pregnant when she moved to the Arlington area from Minnesota, received much support from Frost. When Teresa went into labor prematurely, Frost took her to the hospital and, as Teresa's pastor, was allowed to be with her during the Caesarean-section delivery of her baby boy. Frost says that she and Teresa developed a bond which led to Teresa's decision to be baptized. She would have felt personally "let down" if she had not been allowed to baptize Teresa, Frost now says, but adds that if the conference had not given its permission, she still would have entered the baptismal water with Teresa. However, Frost's husband, Jim, with whom she co-pastors, would have done the baptizing.

For three months Jan Daffern held weekly studies with Patty Parks, a Montgomery College student who had been introduced to Adventism by a student from Columbia Union College. Then Patty, a Roman Catholic, decided to be baptized. The same executive committee action which had allowed Frost to perform the earlier baptism served as the basis of Daffern's March 10 baptizing. In preparing to perform the rite, Daffern says she found both Sligo senior Pastor James Londis and Potomac Conference President Ron Wisbey "very supportive."

Neither Daffern nor Frost told their candidates that they might not be able to baptize them, and there was no build-up of tension before the event, the women point out. In the Arlington Church, according to Frost, the focus was on Teresa. The service took place at the vesper hour, and three church members—the church clerk, the head elder, and the head deacon—welcomed Teresa Castano into church fellowship afterwards. The reaction has been overwhelmingly positive, says Frost. There was no negative feedback from the 60 people who attended the service. The head elder remarked: "You know, there was some-

Women Ministers in Adventist History: An Overview

by Josephine Benton

Spot-checking the Adventist *Yearbook* for every fifth year from 1910 through 1975 reveals 32 different women who were licensed ministers, some of them serving over a period of decades. Other women served as evangelists, pastors, missionaries, and administrators.

The early categories of ministers were credentialed (ordained) ministers, licensed ministers (licentiates), and people who held the missionary license. At the General Conference Session of 1881, the delegates voted that the following resolution be passed on to the General Conference committee for study: "Resolved that females possessing the necessary qualifications to fill that position may, with perfect propriety, be set apart by ordination to the work of Christian ministry" (*Review Herald,* Dec. 20, 1881, p. 392). The committee did not adopt the resolution but in 1904, five women in as many different conferences were listed as licensed ministers. If *every* year in the *Yearbook* were checked, one can only guess what the total might be. The following are only a few of the women who have held ministerial positions during the early years of the Seventh-day Adventist Church:

- **Dr. Caro:** Dr. Caro was a New Zealand dentist with an excellent practice. Ellen White wrote of her: "She is a queenly woman, tall, and every way proportioned. Sister Caro not only does her business, but she has a ministerial license and bears many burdens in their church at Napier" (Manuscript 22, 1893, p. 2).
- **Minnie Sype:** Mrs. Sype was an evangelist whose husband was listed as a credentialed mis-

thing different about this service. It's the first time I have seen a woman baptize. I like it." The reaction has been similar in the Sligo Church: Daffern says they have received between 15 and 16 letters of support and only one negative comment thus far. Sligo Pastor Jim Londis calls the baptism "a positive thing, a powerful symbol" for women in the congregation, some of whom came to him in tears after the service.

For Frost, the authority to baptize is not a right which she has finally achieved but "an opportunity, a fulfillment of my ministry." She finds it personally beneficial "to have the official church recognize the call God has given me." To Daffern, the baptism opens the door for the recognition of women's ministry. "It gives the congregation a heightened awareness that I actually am a minister."

Frances Wiegand's experience has been somewhat different from those of the other two women. Since January 1984, she had been studying with Mike Manimbo, a high school student. Wiegand says that she had been scheduled to baptize Mike on May 12, but there had been too much resistance to the event in the Beltsville Church; the baptism was postponed. Dan Goddard, Beltsville's senior pastor, points out that of the active church membership, about 25 percent are General Conference employees, and, says Goddard, this high concentration of General Conference personnel seems to make accepting baptism by a female pastor difficult. Between the last Sabbath in April and the third Sabbath in May, Goddard preached a series on the role of women in the church. He says that at that time he sensed among even non-General Conference employees an "antagonism to the idea of women in the ministry."

Strong objections to the executive committee action of Feb. 11 surfaced among General Conference officials, who felt that policy had been violated, that there had been a too liberal interpretation of the *Church Manual*. The *Manual* (1976 revised, p. 86) states: "In the absence of an ordained pastor, the elder shall request the president of the conference or local field to arrange for the administration of the rite of baptism to those desiring to unite with the church." The Feb.

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sionary as was the Bible worker who assisted her. She held tent meetings, debated non-Adventist ministers when necessary (she didn't enjoy it), conducted 'quarterly meetings' (communion services), and showed a cheerful, resourceful, virtually indomitable spirit. She appears in the *Yearbook* first as a licensed minister in Oklahoma in 1904, and last as a minister in the Southern Union in 1945.

- **Mrs. J.S. Wightman:** A licensed minister in the Central Union Conference during the early 1900s, she did a great deal of preaching and public speaking. During 1909, when Sunday law legislation was an issue, Mrs. Wightman addressed the Missouri Legislature on the subject.
- **Anna Lo:** She carried her ministerial license during the mid-1940s and was connected with the Kwangsi Mission in China.
- **Jessie Weiss Curtis:** Mrs. Curtis, who died in 1972 at 89, was a well-known minister in the Pennsylvania Conference during the 1940s, 1950s, and the 1960s. As a result of tent meetings which she conducted throughout northeastern Pennsylvania, she organized several new churches. Many young interns got their introduction to the ministry under Jessie Curtis' supervision.
- **Mrs. E.B. Lane:** Married to a minister, E.B. Lane, she was a highly acclaimed preacher as well as a licensed minister.
- **Mary E. Walsh:** Extremely active in the church during the 1940s, 1950s, and the 1960s, Ms. Walsh conducted evangelistic meetings and Bible studies in churches and homes in the United States and Europe, as well as in Mexico. She now lives in Glendale, Calif.

Josephine Benton, associate professor of humanities at Montgomery College, previously served as associate pastor of the Sligo Church, and for three years senior pastor of the Rockville Seventh-day Adventist Church. She is currently doing research on a history of women pastors in the Adventist church.

11 authorization notes that "in spite of the wording in the *Church Manual*, 'in the absence of an ordained minister,' leaders of the General Conference assure us it is understood that local elders can be authorized to conduct baptisms." According to executive committee member Nancy Marter, a layperson from Silver Spring, Md., "We were told that this had been discussed with people high in the General Conference, and the conference leadership thought that they were in order in interpreting in this way what was said." Londis, also an executive committee member, was "skeptical" and "apprehensive" of the General Conference's willingness to interpret the *Manual* liberally, but he had "no theological reservations" about the correctness of the move to allow women to baptize: "If the church will not see fit to change the manual, then the church is in defiance of the will of God," says Londis.

All of the principals involved in the current situation agree that there is no theological reason to exclude women from the ordained ministry.

The executive committee in the past had requested two or three times that the General Conference make some movement on the issue of women being granted the ministerial license, but the General Conference refused each time even to discuss the issue. The Potomac Conference, therefore, "had to do something," Londis says. Both the conference president, Ron Wisbey, and the Columbia Union president, W.O. Coe, believed that they had the support of the General Conference. In Nancy Marter's view, there was "a difference of opinion as to the clarity of the authorization, but I don't perceive one side to be at fault. There has been a misunderstanding, but I don't want to place blame."

On May 16, 1984, a second meeting of the Potomac Conference Executive Committee was held to discuss the issue. Present at that meeting were C. E. Bradford, vice president for North America, and J.W. Bothe, associate secretary of the General Conference for North America. Concerning his presence at the meeting, Bradford says that he had been invited by the president of the conference, who, in Bradford's words, "felt himself between a rock and a hard place." Bradford, in turn, invited Bothe to attend "as an expert witness" and because "he is a good policy man."

This meeting, Frances Wiegand explains, was a time to resolve conflicts. At issue was policy. The General Conference representatives, Bradford and Bothe, maintaining their support for church policy, asked the executive committee to withdraw its authorization of women baptizing. Instead, the committee voted to support the women in their ministry. Executive committee member Russell Isaac, an insurance representative, says that the committee thought the best way to solve the problem was to license the women, since they had already met all the criteria for licensing as stipulated in the *Manual*. The executive committee, therefore, voted 18 to one, to issue ministerial licenses to Jan Daffern, Marsha Frost, and Frances Wiegand. The committee action states:

> Because of our concern for the value of the souls now being prepared for church membership, we will continue to support the baptisms planned on the basis of our earlier action (February 11, 1984) to proceed.
>
> This is to give the North American Division appropriate time to study Potomac's concern for women in ministry. We will not implement the following action until after Annual Council 1984. . . .
>
> We recommend that the Potomac Conference Executive Committee issue them (Daffern, Frost, and Wiegand) the ministerial license.

The General Conference representatives argued in the meeting that the *Manual* had been violated since the *Manual* stipulated "in the absence of an ordained minister" and in both the Feb. 25 and March 10 baptisms there had been no "absence of an ordained minister." Bradford declares that the authorization for a local elder to baptize is given only in extreme cases, in what he terms "ad

hoc situations," to be determined case by case. In the May 16 executive committee meeting, Ronald Halvorsen, formerly ministerial director of Mid-America Union and now pastor of the Takoma Park Church, responded to the General Conference brethren. It seemed strange, he said, that at a time when the General Conference was strongly urging 1,000 baptisms a day during the 1,000 Days of Reaping, General Conference officers were urging a local conference to stop pastors from baptizing. The concern, Halvorsen contended, should be for baptisms, not for who does the baptizing.

The committee's action granting ministerial licenses to the three women, which passed with only one dissenting vote, will not be effective until after October 1984. The delay, says Isaac, is an attempt to cooperate with the General Conference. He suggests that the effective date has been delayed in the hope that the church will clarify its position on "the potential for women in ministry."

Daffern finds both the Columbia Union and the Potomac Conference leadership supportive of women in ministry. Farther afield, in California, Louis Venden, pastor of the Loma Linda University Church, which has Margaret Hempe on its pastoral staff, "is working on the matter," Venden says. He reports that in a board action which passed with only one dissenting vote, the University Church board voted to send a letter of support to Ron Wisbey. That letter, dated April 3, 1984, reads in part: "I want to commend your courage and also the principles which you have put into practice." In Venden's personal view, "Young women who have prepared for ministry the same as men should not be penalized because they are women."

For Francis Wiegand, the issue of her baptizing was still far from settled by the May 16 executive committee action affirming women in ministry. Russell Isaac, who is also chairperson of the Beltsville Church board, says that he was asked to explain the actions of the conference executive committee to his board. This he attempted to do at a Beltsville Church board meeting on May 21, 1984. However, J.W. Bothe of the General Conference insisted that the Beltsville Church board, of which he was a member, discuss Francis Wiegand's impending baptism. Heated discussion proceeded for several hours with Bothe insisting that the Potomac Conference Executive Committee was not conforming to General Conference policy. But no action was taken opposing the baptism. However, after the issue had been raised by Bothe at the church board meeting, it became sufficiently controversial that Beltsville's pastor, Dan Goddard, appealed to conference president Ron Wisbey for assistance in resolving the problem.

In response, Wisbey held an executive committee meeting of the Potomac Conference via telephone on Wednesday, May 20, 1984, from 10:00 p.m. to 11:30 p.m. with 21 of the 23 committee members on the line. At that time Wisbey reported that certain General Conference officers were recomending that the Potomac Executive Committee reverse its earlier decision. However, the committee voted unanimously to support Frances Wiegand in her ministry and reaffirmed its previous action that women should continue to baptize.

Thus on June 2, 1984, a baptismal service took place at the Beltsville Church with Wiegand and Goddard officiating. Ron Wisbey was present to preach the sermon and to read a statement on behalf of the executive committee, outlining the sequence of events leading to that particular service. Wisbey said that the executive committee had unanimously "voted to stay by its earlier motion." He cited the action taken by the committee on May 20 regarding the Beltsville Church specifically. It had voted to "express deep concern that unity

and spiritual harmony be maintained in the Beltsville Church." The conference president closed his remarks with a "prayer that this will be a high day in this church."

The covenant of baptism, led by Dan Goddard, followed, and the baptism proceeded with Goddard baptizing the first candidate. Then Wiegand stepped into the baptismal pool, and after a few remarks about the candidate, baptized Mike Manimbo into membership of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Emotions ran high, with tears coming to the eyes of church members, male and female alike. Following the service Wiegand received greetings and hugs from church members. Goddard reports that following the service, responses from church members have been overwhelmingly positive.

In making its case, the Potomac Conference Executive Committee cited the precedent in earlier periods of Adventist history when ministerial licenses were granted to women who pastored churches or were church leaders. Ms. Welch of Massachusetts and Mary Walsh are two that the committee mentions in its May 16 statement. Why then the hesitancy on the part of church leadership today? Lowell Bock, general vice president for the General Conference, at a May panel discussion on "Ordination of Women Pastors" (sponsored by the Washington Metropolitan Chapter of the Association of Adventist Women), gave his thoughts but "not the official church policy:" Bock observed that more than half the church is female and that all of the church must be used. However, there are four million members worldwide. We cannot, he said, ignore tradition. The world church looks to North America for leadership. Commenting on this point, on another occasion, Bradford observed that the church has members in East Africa and in Arab countries that have views on the role of women in the church that are different from North America's. There are social differences in these areas alone, he says, that tell us to continue to study, and adds, "there is a hornet's nest out there."

Robert Coy, member of the Potomac Conference Executive Committee, acknowledges that some Adventist brethren probably do have a philosophy of the role of women in Adventist churches which precludes female pastors from baptizing. He appreciates that the General Conference has reached out to various cultures and has tried to understand the needs of the worldwide church, but "this can adversely affect those of us in the United States with cultural views different from Europe's. Non-American Adventist leaders are slower to recognize the kinds of equality that North Americans want." Coy sees Adventist men from beyond the shores of North America who have a more traditional view of women in ministry as "men of good will, not malicious," but as "slowing progress."

One of the issues that has emerged from the debate is the extent to which local conferences have control over their own affairs. Some participants in the discussions over church policy concerning female pastors baptizing, point out that in the present structure on certain issues, local areas in the Adventist church do have autonomy. However, Bradford insists that while conferences have the autonomy and the power to act and to create new programs, a conference is a member of a sisterhood that makes up a union. "If women can baptize in Potomac but not in Chesapeake, a dichotomy will exist. All must act in unison," he cautions.

Yet giving the local field the power to decide, members of the Potomac Conference Executive Committee argue, allows the members to live out their convictions in relation to their culture. Londis believes that local conferences in North America should decide in those cases where the local situations can bear such decisions. Isaac

thinks that the General Conference is avoiding the issue. It is the local conference that hires and licenses ministers, he points out, not the General Conference. The local conference, he believes, should be able to deal with local problems such as the one now facing Potomac.

All of the principals involved in the current situation agree that there is no theological reason to exclude women from the ordained ministry. Several executive committee members are convinced that the conference must move ahead and affirm the rights of women in ministry. "We believe we have the right to go ahead," says Coy. "There is nothing in the *Manual*, nothing in the theology of the church to prevent ordination," he says. Goddard, whose congregation has debated the most over the issue, hopes that a resolution can come "with a minimal amount of disturbance in the church. We must maintain peace in the church," he says. The May 16 executive committee statement in support of the female pastors concludes by saying, "We believe that we are acting in the best interest of the church and that we would be out of harmony with the will of God if we did not give our women in ministry this affirmation."

Potomac Conference Executive Committee Action

Because of our concern for the value of the souls now being prepared for church membership, we will continue to support the baptisms planned on the basis of our earlier action (Feb. 11, 1984) to proceed.

This is to give the North American Division appropriate time to study Potomac's concern for women in ministry. We will not implement the following action until after Annual Council 1984.

For many years the Potomac Conference Executive Committee has applauded the vision and leadership of the General Conference as it has encouraged women to qualify themselves for ministry to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Both the General Conference subsidies for women to attend the Seminary and the use of women as associates in pastoral care have received enthusiastic support in Potomac. We have hired a number of women for ministry and were among the first to have a woman on a local church pastoral staff.

A number of years have passed since our initial commitment to women in ministry began. Since that time, the women in our conference have met the requirements for seminary education and have served the required years of an internship. When this program began we all knew that the time would come when the women we have sponsored would be fully eligible for a ministerial license under the provisions of the *Church Manual* and the *Manual for Ministers.*

We find it significant that the role of women in ministry has been discussed by church leadership since the 1880's in the pages of the *Review and Herald.* In that era, a number of editorials examining the meaning of those Scripture passages that discuss the role of women in the church concluded there was no biblical reason women should not be in the ministry. Consequently, a formal recommendation to the General Conference supporting the ordination of women to the ministry was published in the pages of the *Review* on Dec. 20, 1881. While the resolution was never adopted, the fact it could even be recommended while Ellen White was alive and elicit no negative response from her, strongly suggests she was not opposed to it.

Up until recent years, this openness to the idea of women in ministry found expression in several cases where women were granted ministerial licenses as they pastored churches or occupied other roles of leadership. Ms. Welch of Massachusetts and Mary Walsh are two examples among several that might be cited.

Then, in the 1970s, a commission under the auspices of the Biblical Research Committee studied the theology of ordaining women to the ministry and concluded (as the *Review* writers did in 1881) that there was nothing theologically improper about ordaining women to the ministry of the church. On the basis of that study, the church has encouraged women to serve the church as ministers wherever it was feasible, and the Potomac Conference hired women because of that encouragement. (The church has delayed ordaining women for reasons of church unity, even though it has supported the utilization of women in pastoral roles.)

Since they have exercised the prerogatives of ministry in Potomac, our members in their churches and we on the executive committee have come to recognize their calling to the ministry. They have demonstrated that the Holy Spirit is behind their desire to work as pastors in the Seventh-day Adventist fellowship. It was because we felt so deeply the importance of affirming them in their ministry that we authorized them, if locally ordained elders, to baptize the people they lead to the church. We did not intend nor wish to be in defiance of the *Church Manual;* however, we also do not wish to rescind our affirmation of their ministry in our midst.

Therefore, to affirm the ministry of these women pastors, we affirm the following:

1. Frances Wiegand, Marsha Frost and Jan Daffern have met the requirements for seminary education and internship according to the policy;
2. The language concerning the issuing of ministerial licenses in the Manual for Ministers and the Church Manual does not exclude women;
3. All other pastors in the Potomac Conference meeting these requirements hold the ministerial license;
4. There are historical precedents for women holding such licenses;
5. They are locally ordained elders;
6. The license grants pastors the privileges of ministry only in the congregations to which they are assigned;
7. The ministerial license does not lead to ordination in every case.

We recommend that the Potomac Conference Executive Committee issue them the ministerial license.

We would be happy to participate in further discussions about our affirmation of women in ministry with the church leadership. We believe that we are acting in the best interests of the church and that we would be out of harmony with the will of God if we did not give our women in ministry this affirmation.

—May 16, 1984

Who Killed Azaria? Adventists on Trial In Australia

by Lowell Tarling

Michael Chamberlain, until a few months ago an Australian Adventist minister, and his wife Lindy have been convicted of murdering their daughter Azaria. Theirs has become the most publicized criminal case in the history of Australia. Documentaries and docudramas have been broadcast on Australian national television networks, and four years after Azaria disappeared, newspaper sales still rise when stories about the Chamberlains appear on the front page.

Several books have already been written on the case; more are coming. One forthcoming volume discusses the permanent effect the case is likely to have on the Australian legal system. Issues that have been raised for Australian jurisprudence include the rules concerning changes of venue for criminal trials, when trials should or should not go before a jury, and how scientific evidence should be entered into trial proceedings. The case has even dramatized questions about the Australian governmental system, particularly ones about the relationship of the central government to the Northern territory, still not a full-fledged state.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church has become increasingly visible during the intense media coverage of the case. Australian Adventists have been shocked to learn the misconceptions some of their countrymen hold about the church, the most bizarre of which is that Adventists practice ritual infanticide. In the face of such prejudice and what they consider a flagrant miscarriage of justice, Adventists who have recently been fighting the church and each other are working to free Lindy Chamberlain, a faithful Seventh-day Adventist who is behind bars and sentenced to hard labor for the rest of her life.

The following account of the case was written by Lowell Tarling, until this year a practicing member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. He and Michael Chamberlain attended Avondale College at the same time. Tarling is the author of *Thank You God for the Salvos: A History of the Salvation Army in Australia, 1880–1980* (Harper and Row, 1980); *The Edges of Seventh-day Adventism: A Study of Separatist Groups Emerging from the Seventh-day Adventist Church (1844–1980)* (Gailee, 1981); and *Taylor's Troubles* (Penguin, 1982), a novel based on Tarling's years at the Adventist academy in Sydney, where he attended and later taught. This telling of the Chamberlain story is adapted from an article published in the Australian edition of *Rolling Stone* (April, 1984). The story will appear in two installments; we will print the second and concluding segment in the next issue of Spectrum (Vol. 15, No. 3).

—The Editors

"Although I've felt broken at times I've risen above it. I don't cry myself to sleep much any more. I just grit my teeth as I know where I'm aiming. God forgive those involved in doing this to me and my family. Their action was the finishing touch—the ultimate act in framing an unworthy picture of justice. People can blacken my reputation but they can never change my character. I will present myself before the Judge of the Universe for His ultimate decisions."

—Lindy Chamberlain
Press statement, May 3, 1984.

Azaria Chamberlain was the daughter of two Seventh-day Adventists, Pastor Michael and Lindy Chamberlain. Azaria was born on June 11, 1980, and disappeared at Ayers Rock on Sunday, August 17, 1980. Her body was never found, but one week later most of her clothes were found at Fertility Cave, at Ayers Rock, by Wallace Goodwin, a tourist. After the first flush of public sympathy, there developed strong underlying suspicions that the Chamberlains themselves may be guilty of the murder of their daughter. As practicing Christians, they were given no points for honesty. In fact, their involvement with the Seventh-day Adventist Church only deepened public suspicion.

A rumor was started suggesting that Azaria was sacrificed as the Bearer of Sin. An inquest was held into Azaria's disappearance. Coroner Denis Barritt concluded that a dingo took the baby, but Azaria's body was disposed of by "a person or persons, name unknown." Coroner Barritt also quashed the suggestion that Azaria may have been ritually sacrificed as part of the Seventh-day Adventist religion. However, these fears have never been eradicated from the Australian consciousness. *Azaria, The Trial of the Century* by Steve Brien, published in 1984, has revived the theory that the religion is the key to the 'murder.'

The results of the first inquest did not satisfy the public. After 18 months a second inquest was held, with a new coroner, and much hostile press coverage of the Chamberlains. The inquest was largely motivated by the continued investigations of Dr. Kenneth Brown, head of the Department of Oral Biology at Adelaide University, who is, coincidently, also a Seventh-day Adventist. His forensic investigations, combined with those of the highly esteemed London expert, Professor James Cameron, led to a re-opening of the case and eventually led to Lindy Chamberlain being found guilty of murdering Azaria, and sentenced to life imprisonment with hard labor. Michael was charged with being an accessory to the murder of his daughter, and was released on a $500 three-year bond, after being sentenced to 18 months hard labor. The date was October 29, 1982.

The Chamberlains have since lodged two appeals in 1983, one before the Federal Court and another before the High Court. Both were unsuccessful. However, the matter will simply not go away. "Lindy and I are innocent people," Michael Chamberlain told the Australian press after the High Court decision. "We will not stop fighting to clear our names and the names of our family. This case is not over yet."

As far as the legal system is concerned, however, the case is over. If the case is re-opened, and if Lindy is proved to be innocent, Australians will want to know how it was ever possible for the system to run roughshod over a completely innocent person. The implications are frightening, and many icons will be broken. For example, the scientific method must be held suspect—certainly at the public level. Politicians, park rangers, police officers, public servants, government officials have all somehow strengthened the case against the Chamberlains—through negligence or design. The media has virtually governed public opinion, so much so that even those Australians who consider Lindy to be guilty somehow feel manipulated by the press.

Finally, after what amounts to five court cases, the real mystery still remains. It has cost the taxpayers too much to be answered in uncertainties. Yet, to the man-in-the-street the idea that Lindy murdered Azaria is still not conclusive. Australians view it only as the most probable explanation in a series of improbabilities. In one sense the situation is still no more resolved than when, on August 17, 1980, Lindy Chamberlain's voice cracked the nighttime silence with the words, "Michael! The dingo's got my baby!"

The Issues

Since that night, thousands of words have been written about the case. Many people are famous because of it. During the course of two inquests, one trial, and two appeals, millions of dollars have been spent by the government and by independent sources. Experts have crossed continents, three books have been published about the

A Brief Chronology of the Chamberlain Case

June 11, 1980: The birth of Azaria Chamberlain.

June 23, 1980: Four-year old Amanda Cranwell is attacked by a dingo named Ding. The circumtances have a close parallel to the attack on Azaria.

June 1980: (specific date unknown) An aboriginal child is attacked by Ding. This attack is not reported to authorities. Aborigines nickname Dingo "Kulpunya," meaning, 'the Devil Dog.'

August 1980: Chief Ranger at Ayers Rock, Derek Roff, assigns rangers Rowen Dalgleish and Stewart Mitchell to design a warning sign aimed at discouraging tourists from feeding dingoes.

August 13, 1980: The Chamberlain family—Michael, Lindy, Aidan, Reagan, and Azaria—leave Mount Isa for a holiday to Central Australia.

August 17, 1980: (approximately 8:10 p.m.) Lindy Chamberlain investigates a cry from Azaria. She sees a dingo moving away from the tent. She sees something in the dingo's mouth. Azaria Chamberlain disappears.

September 30, 1980: Detective Sergeant Graeme Charlwood makes an official approach to Lindy asking her to undergo hypnosis to help with her recollection of events at the time of Azaria's disappearance. Lindy refuses, on religious grounds. This deepens suspicion in the minds of Australians: rumors abound that Lindy killed her baby, perhaps as a sacrifice relating to her Seventh-day Adventist religion.

December 15, 1980: The first inquest into the disappearance of Azaria begins. Coroner Denis Barritt officially pronounces Azaria Chamberlain dead.

February 20, 1981: Coroner Denis Barritt's findings are televised Australia-wide. He says, "I further find that neither the parents of the child, nor either of their remaining children, were in any degree whatsoever responsible for this death. I find that the name Azaria does not mean and never has meant 'sacrifice in the wilderness.' I find that after her death, the body of Azaria was taken from the possession of the dingo and disposed of by an unknown method, by a person or persons, name unknown."

September 19, 1981: The Chief Minister for the Northern Territory, Paul Everingham, announces that because of new evidence, the Azaria case is being reopened. The new evidence included tests done to Azaria's jumpsuit, initiated by Dr. Kenneth Brown of Adelaide, and conducted by Professor James Cameron from London. Other evidence included suspect blood found in the Chamberlain's car, a Holden Torana. These tests were conducted by Mrs. Joy Kuhl, forensic biologist for the New South Wales Department of Health.

December 13, 1981: The second inquest into the disappearance of Azaria begins. Like the first, it is held in Alice Springs. A new coroner, Mr. Gerry Galvin, is appointed to hear the case.

February 2, 1982: Coroner Gerry Galvin announces that there was sufficient evidence to establish a prima facie case against both Michael and Lindy. Galvin charged that Lindy murdered Azaria at

case—all entitled *Azaria*, more are being written. Two television prime-time programs have been screened, and Australia has developed a rapacious appetite for media coverage of the latest on Lindy. But still the heart of the mystery is unsolved: who buried the body, and where is it now? That very statement is a speculation, as in the absence of a body, there is no *absolute* proof that Azaria Chamberlain is dead.

This is a murder story that begins without a body. It is an assumed murder. It later goes to court, and Ian Barker opens the case for the prosecution, saying that he will not provide a motive—no body and no motive. the on-the-spot witnesses are to be believed, there was also no opportunity. Sally Lowe, Michael, and Aidan Chamberlain all heard Azaria cry after the time at which the prosecution claimed that Lindy Chamberlain cut her baby's throat. Yet there is no shortage of murder weapons. If the prosecution's case is sound, this was not murder, but butchery. In Alice Springs, this suggestion is not thought absurd. In giving his explanation for Azaria's disappearance, one of the

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Ayers Rock, and that Michael assisted Lindy in order that she should escape punishment. They were each released on $5,000 bail.

June 7, 1982: The media announced that Lindy Chamberlain is pregnant. Friends say the couple are "praying for a girl."

September 13, 1982: The trial begins. It is held in Darwin, the capital of the Northern Territory.

October 29, 1982: At 8:37 p.m., Lindy Chamberlain is pronounced guilty. Pressman Malcolm Brown shrieks out "You bastards!" and is not charged with contempt of court. Moments later, Michael Chamberlain is also found guilty. Lindy is sentenced to life imprisonment with hard labor. Michael is not sentenced until three days later, when he is released on a $500, three-year bond, after being sentenced to 18 months hard labor.

After the trial there is a rush on the media. Two books are immediately released: *Azaria* by James Simmonds, and *Azaria* by Richard Shears. A rock musical, *Dingo Girl,* plays in Sydney University's Footbridge Theatre. A song, "I'll Be A Baby for the Dingo in Your Heart," is released by the Ratbags of Rhythm. T-shirts, badges ("Give Di a Dingo"), paraphernalia, cartoons, turn the case into something extraordinary.

November 1, 1982: Phil Ward and Don McNicol meet with Arthur Hawken. The three agree on a joint investigation of the Azaria case.

November 17, 1982: Lindy is allowed out of jail to give birth. The baby's name is Kahlia, a girl.

April 27, 1983: The Federal Court hands down its verdict on the Chamberlain case. They find no reason to overturn the verdict of the jury.

April 29, 1983: Coroner Denis Barritt supplies the material prepared by Phil Ward, Don McNicol, and Arthur Hawken to the Attorney-General of the Northern Territory, Jim Robertson. After the Federal Court Appeal, many Chamberlain support groups are formed Australia-wide.

February 22, 1984: The High Court votes three to two to reject Lindy Chamberlain's leave to appeal against her life sentence.

March 26, 1984: A Gallup Poll indicates that 53 percent of people believe the Chamberlains to be guilty.

April 3, 1984: The airing of "Azaria: New Facts" a documentary by Kevin Hitchcock by Sydney's Channel 10. Much of Phil Ward's new evidence is used, without naming him as the source. The program makes a big impact on changing public opinion.

April 3, 1984: Thirty-one scientists, including Professor Sir Gustav Nossal, release a joint statement expressing severe doubt about Crown evidence on blood during the Chamberlain trial.

April 6, 1984: The public hears of Michael Chamberlain's resignation from the ministry.

May 3, 1984: Under the initiative of Mrs. Betty Hocking and Mr. Guy Boyd, a hundred Chamberlain supporters hold a public meeting in Canberra. Some 131,000 signatures are displayed (7,000 from overseas), then presented to the Governor General Sir Ninian Stephen, who—even before receiving the petition—told the press that he could do nothing to help.

locals told me that Lindy took Azaria by the feet and smashed her head against a rock.

According to courtroom evidence, the Chamberlain's car, a Holden Torana, was awash with blood. More than one year after Azaria's disappearance, the following items gave a positive response to fetal blood tests: two army hats, one of the boy's shoes, the camera bag, a pair of scissors, inside the window winder on the driver's side, inside the door on the driver's side, a chamois, beneath the radio, a towel, a plastic chamois container, the console, the left side of the driver's seat, and a boy's parka. In fact, the whole surface of the carpet on the driver's side gave a reaction to what might have been blood—so much that 13 and a half months after Azaria's demise, that blood was still sticky. In the words of one Sydneysider, "She must have been a hell of a big baby."

In the absence of a body, a motive, and an opportunity, how did the defense lose the case? Taken on face value, the prosecution is offering as fact something like the murder scene out of Roman Polanski's *Macbeth.* Author of *Azaria, Wednesday's Child,* James Simmonds provides at least part of the answer; he writes, "Perhaps the dingo was on trial after all, and in a choice between the dingo and Lindy, she simply ran second." An Alice Springs T-shirt neatly summarized local public opinion. It read, "The Dingo is Innocent," and it was banned for contempt of court during the first inquest. Nevertheless, the slogan is partly true. Even Coroner Denis Barritt—still a strong believer in the Chamberlain's integrity—didn't believe that a dingo would use scissors to make his mark on a baby's jumpsuit, nor would the dingo leave handprints on clothes.

The Chamberlain case has gained the reputation of being a 'trial by media,' and this is very true of many aspects of the case. Almost immediately, the media narrowed its focus to only three real participants: Michael, Lindy, and the dingo. What of the other 800 at Ayers Rock that night? "We knew it wasn't a dingo and that's all we needed to know," were the words of the woman behind the counter at the Aboriginal Arts and Crafts Centre at Alice Springs. The inference was that if a dingo didn't do it, then all you've got left are the Chamberlains. All over the country, but particularly in Alice Springs, people were quick to condemn the Chamberlains, believing what they wanted to believe, regardless of the complex and contradictory nature of the evidence.

Just one year ago, investigators Phil Ward, Don McNicol, and Arthur Hawken went back to Ayers Rock and talked to a few of those others—rangers, eye witnesses, and a blacktracker, Nipper Winmatti, the traditional owner of the Rock. Gradually they pieced together an alternative explanation of Azaria's fate. They plan to reveal these facts in a private prosecution charging at least seven people with conspiracy to pervert the course of justice. Says Ward, "Lindy Chamberlain is innocent. I know who buried Azaria. I have more evidence against them than there is against Lindy Chamberlain." Before the discovery of 'fetal' blood in the Chamberlain's car, Ward might have been more popular with Northern Territory officialdom than he is now. His evidence suggests an escalating conspiracy, beginning with a cover-up that was almost humane, but leading to the forensic department of the Northern Territory Police Force receiving a public caning by Coroner Denis Barritt. For a little while, the Force was an Australian joke. But the case against the Chamberlains changed all that.

Ward's explanation has been welcomed by those around the Rock who gaze suspiciously at the new $190 million (Australian dollars) Yulara Village. Sure, the ownership of Ayers Rock has recently been given back to the Aborigines, but that decision also closes down all existing accommodation sites, thereby creating a monopoly for the managers of the Yulara

Village, who have to find some $15 million (A. dollars) a year just to keep up on interest payments. Prices at Ayers Rock are expected to rise steeply around the end of 1984, when Yulara takes control.

Yulara accommodation prices will certainly be too expensive for average-income earners in Australia. Yulara Village must then look to the overseas market and superannuated citizens. The assumption made by tourist departments is that such people dislike seeing anything unprocessed, dirty, or dangerous. That an Australian wild creature might attack a human being is seen as 'bad press' in the short term, even though a generation later they'll sell postcards of the site. Like the Loch Ness Monster, tourists might stay awake all night, hoping to catch a glimpse of Kulpunya, Devil Dog of Ayers Rock.

Australian Adventists have been shocked to learn the misconceptions some of their non-Adventist countrymen hold about the church.

Right now we're living in the myth-making period. Writers are codifying the updates on the ancient Aboriginal dreamings, and while many of the agnostic Aussie journalists have alluded to the strong religious overtones of the case, the explanations needed right now are more practical. How did the blood get into the Torana? Was the syringe plunger, found in the car, in any way linked to the placement of the blood? Is it true that Joy Kuhl's reagent reacts with adult hemoglobin and certain Dulux paint products, as well as fetal hemoglobin? Could the blood have been planted?

The question as to whether the blood found in the Chamberlain's car was fetal or not has generated new controversy. Thirty-one Australian scientists, including Professor Sir Gustav Nossal, the world-renowned immunologist and director of the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of Medical Research, have signed a joint statement expressing severe doubts about the forensic evidence. One expert, the leading defense witness at the trial, Professor Barry Boettcher, now says that further tests have revealed conclusively that there is no way the blood found in the car could possibly be fetal. Tests to replicate the prosecution's claimed findings of fetal blood have not done that job.

Significantly, all the original hard forensic evidence that put Lindy Chamberlain in jail was destroyed before the trial. Investigator Phil Ward sees it this way: "Mrs. Kuhl believed her evidence was correct at the first inquest—but after the discovery that the reagent she used to test the fetal blood was faulty, she discovered her mistake. She believed the Chamberlains were guilty. But because of her error in testing the blood in the car she felt they may escape conviction. So she did not report her mistakes to the trial—although she knew of the mistakes by then. To cover up those mistakes she destroyed the microscope slides showing her tests." Joy Kuhl, forensic biologist for the New South Wales Health Department, a key prosecution witness, testified that the destruction of the evidence was "standard procedure."

The Dingo

In 190 years of European settlement, the dingo has acquired a mythology second only to that of the wolf. The destruction wrought by the dingo has become, if not factual, at least legendary and over the years incalculable millions of dollars have been spent on its control and eradication. (Proceedings No. 36 of Course for Veterinarians, Fauna—Part B, February 6–10, 1978.)

It always seemed to me strange that people would doubt that a dingo might kill a baby or a small child. Humans do it, and they're much tamer than their pets.

Melbourne dingo-owner, Ken McVicar, owns Kuldi. He keeps Kuldi in a suburban backyard in East Ringwood. He's quick to defend the reputation of his dog. In Feb. 1981 he told the *Melbourne Truth* that, "He's a fabulous dog. He spends all day at my boat shop, then sleeps on the end of the bed at night, and he's great with the neighborhood kids." Kuldi is obviously tamer than a pet rabbit. A canary could do more damage. However, Max Williams, author of the novel *Dingo*, tells another story: "I quite believe that the dingo would've taken the child. I know how strong they are. My niece has a dingo, and it even scares me a bit. It'd put you on your back in one go, it's that big. And when you look at those eyes—they're just untamed."

The dingo's innocence is not a theory based on aboriginal or white man's history. In the aboriginal dreamings, even a nice dingo, like the repentant Gaiya-spirit, started out as a devil-dog whose immediate mission was to devour the very reasonable Chooka-chooka brothers. (Another dream-time story tells of the birth of twins to tribal women—something that happens very rarely. It is said that the weaker twin is left in the wilderness to be eaten by the dingoes.

In the absence of a body, a motive, and an opportunity to commit the murder, how did the defense lose the case?

The specific details of this story must not be publicly told. Coroner of the first inquest, Denis Barritt, apologized to the aboriginal community for even bringing the matter up.)

Unlike Gaiya, the repentant dingo-spirit, Kulpunya—the Ayers Rock devil-dingo spirit, did not repent. Some say he's still around. When I was driving to Bloods Range with aboriginal artist Ron Richards, there were some places where he refused to stop because, to him, the spirit of Kulpunya lives in these locations. Said Ron: "If you open the window and cook some meal, that dingo spirit come after you. Coming from thataway back home. Too dangerous this one, that dingo one. See the little cut over there, that one on top of the mountain? He come from thataway." Ron pointed to hills of Bloods Range, "We don't wait too long here, just pass. He live here, spirit you know. Real dangerous."

There are also those who believe Azaria's murderer to have been the devil-dingo spirit Kulpunya in another guise. They say he came back exactly three years later and possessed the driver of a road-train who got into his truck and drove through the public bar at the Inland Motel. Five were killed, 20 injured. The time and location were almost identical to that of Azaria's disappearance.

This is the story of Kulpunya, the Docker River version: *"We're going to teach the Mala people of Ayers Rock a lesson," said one of the elders of Docker River's Windulka tribe. And beginning with the backbone of a kangaroo, the medicine man began to create Kulpunya. His ears were tufts of spinifex grass, his tail was that of a bandicoot and woman's hair was plaited into his back. For three days the windulka people sang over his effigy, then the hair began to grow. Eyes grew. Teeth grew. And Kulpunya became a huge and fearsome dingo, one that roared and breathed fire. The Windulka people then headed him off towards Ayers Rock, where he massacred the Mala people, leaving only formations in the rock face. One of these is a spectacular cleft, known to tourists as 'The Brain.'"*

Professor A.P. Elkin, author of *The Australian Aborigines*, believes that we should not dismiss such stories lightly. He says, "We should not ignore the possibility that these sacred myths do often enshrine actual historical events and sequences, even though these may be somewhat symbolized and distorted." If this is true, the dingo has done some damage in its time. But aborigines never kept records of dingo attacks, and until the 1930s, injuries sustained to the blacks were not scrupulously recorded, if they are now.

On the other hand, the dingo is said to have accompanied the first aborigines to Australia. Such was their respect for *Canis familiaris dingo* that they brought the family dog on their travels. Whatever its vices, it fit easily into a small canoe. This was a significant point in favor of the dingo, Australia's only indigenous creature to be classified as vermin, meaning it can be killed on sight, and must not be fed or kept as a pet. Has the dingo been largely misunderstood by whites? Or has it deteriorated over the last 40,000 years?

Bardios, from Alice Springs, was raised on a cattle station in Maryborough, Queensland. "Ask any cattle man or sheep man,

Australian Editorial Comment on the Azaria Case

The following is a reprint from an April 4, 1984, editorial of one of Australia's most respected newspapers, the Sydney Morning Herald:

The Chamberlains: a case for review

The Chamberlain case needs to be reviewed. It is quite clear that the High Court decision supporting the jury's verdict of guilty is not accepted by a substantial, growing and well-informed section of the community. It is equally clear that this group is mounting a case against the verdict that is becoming more vocal virtually by the day. The growing pressure of this sort of opposition allows the Northern Territory Government only two options: either it can order a review now, or it can wait until it is forced to have a review.

A peculiarity of the Chamberlain case is that no body has been found, no murder weapon has been produced and no motive has been brought forward by the Crown to explain why Mrs. Chamberlain may have done what it accused her of doing. The absence of any one of these elements in a murder case would be enough to cast some doubts on a guilty verdict. The absence of all three places a requirement on the Crown to make its case virtually watertight. That clearly has not been done. As justice Murphy pointed out in his dissenting High Court judgment, the Crown's case was essentially based on a demolition of the dingo theory.

The approach enabled the Crown to win a verdict. What is happening now is that its specific case against Mrs. Chamberlain (such as it is) is being torn to shreds by experts who have had time to analyze its content. Forensic evidence of the type raised against Mrs. Chamberlain is always liable to create controversy. But it is unprecedented in Australia for 31 scientists to express, as they have, "severe doubts" about the Crown's evidence on blood stains. The scientists are not saying the Crown is wrong; they are saying, just as importantly, that it did not establish its evidence beyond a reasonable doubt.

This attack from the scientists has been matched by a similar assault on the verdict from eminent lawyers. For example, a former Supreme court judge, Sir Reginald Sholl, says "I feel that, on probabilities, there has been a very grave miscarriage of justice." Professor Stone, of the Faculty of Law in the University of NSW, has argued that the law itself may be responsible for "a miscarriage of justice." He has proposed that if there is another murder trial similar to the Chamberlain case the jury be given "a special warning that only the very highest degree of cogency of circumstantial evidence can ever warrant conviction in the absence of a plausible motive by the Crown."

And on top of all this, we have the remarkable spectacle of witnesses who gave evidence at the Chamberlain trial, some for the Crown, speaking out publicly about the way what they said was disregarded in the contentiousness of the trial process.

The main argument against a further review of the case is that "the umpire's decision must be respected." There must be a time, in other words, when enough is enough. After all, the original jury decision has already been the subject of an appeal before the Full Bench of the Federal Court and an appeal before the High Court. The question becomes, then, whether the Chamberlain case has reached this point of judicial exhaustion. The mounting attacks against the verdict suggests that it has not. What should happen next then? In South Australia, the Government asked a QC to investigate all the evidence, old and new, and to make a finding about a further judicial review when a public campaign several years ago established that a convicted murderer, Edward Splatt, may have suffered a miscarriage of justice. Perhaps this is a precedent the Northern Territory Government could look at.

you'll see full grown cows attacked by one dingo. They'll attack a sheep and drag it away, and half-grown wallabies. They're incredibly strong. I've seen this sort of thing many times, and it's always a terrible sight. You go to any wild cattle sale and you'll see it in every truckload—one or two with their tails bitten off. Full-grown steers! That's why they build dingo fences. Why do you think they've got dingo fence spread halfway across the country?" This is the world's longest continuous fence; the dingo fence runs for 5,531 kilometers. "It's to keep them in one area, so they don't attack the livestock."

President of the Dingo Foundation, Les Harris, was called as a witness for the defense. He believes that the dingo is not a dog, but a wolf. For years his group has been telling the government of the state of Victoria that the dingo is a dangerous pet, and existing laws should be enforced. Harris told the first inquest that he knew of "12 recent dingo attacks." When it comes to dingo attacks there is no shortage of examples. In 1981, any sort of dingo attack made headlines, ahead of wars, murders, and strikes. "Dingo Savages Baby" was the *Sunday Telegraph's* account of a dingo attack on Toni Plumb, aged four. More relevant was the story of the girl who was attacked six weeks before Azaria's disappearance. This dingo was wormed, fed, and partly housed by the family of Ian Cawood, the assistant park ranger. There is a growing suspicion that this may have been the same dingo that took Azaria.

Cawood was asked about this attack during the first inquest. He explained that the Cranwell family had checked into the camping area, and shortly afterwards their four-year-old daughter Amanda was being dragged by a dingo out of her parents' car. Cawood said, "The father came back holding the little girl in his arms. He said a dingo had attacked the girl. She had abrasions around her neck." Cawood admitted that this dingo had been in his home and was almost domesticated. The dingo had at least three names. Whites called it 'Ding' or 'Scarface,' and among aborigines it had earned the dangerous nickname, 'Kulpunya' or 'Devil Dog'. The dingo had an all-round bad track record, even among the aborigines. He had also attacked Kitty Connor's little child.

This was the dingo that blacktracker Nipper Winmatti claims took Azaria Chamberlain. Not Kulpunya the spirit-dingo, but Kulpunya the 'proper dog.' He told me this in Sept., 1983, as we sat in the red Ayers Rock dirt and talked. "I bin seen tracks," he said. "Two of 'em come running. Go around. He might be get 'em from there. Then leave blood. Dog run away. Not run away—quicker. We call 'em two names, Ding Kulpunya." Those words were transcribed from my taped interview with Winmatti, who tracked Ding. When I asked him if he was referring to the aboriginal dreamtime story he said, "Proper dingo one. Proper dog."

Shortly after the attack on Amanda Cranwell, but before the attack on Azaria, warning signs were posted around the Rock. The signs read like a confession, and the capitalization is their own. They say, "Dingoes are wild. Feeding or touching wild animals breaks down the natural gap that separates them from humans. Dingoes CAN and DO bite. For your own safety and to maintain the dingo's integrity as a wild animal, PLEASE DO NOT TOUCH OR FEED THEM."

Despite all this, the dingo didn't get the rap. Journalist Jim Oram described the scene in a wine-bar when the verdict came down. "Hey, I've got great news!" shrieked the disc-jockey, "The dingo's been acquitted."

To be continued

Special Section

The Conservative Restoration At Geoscience

by Edward Lugenbeal

Don Neufeld, an associate editor of the *Adventist Review* and of the *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, had given a nontraditional interpretation of Genesis 1. Eric Magnusson, a research chemist from Australia and later president of Avondale College, logically and clearly defended the scientific validity of radioactive dating techniques and by implication, life on earth that was millions (if not billions) of years old. Listening to these presentations during the 1968 Field Conference conducted by the Geoscience Research Institute were leaders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and the leaders were becoming increasingly mutinous. After Magnusson's presentation, some even wanted to abort the conference. The leaders were angry that scientific evidence was not being provided by all speakers to support the creation of the world 6,000 years ago.

Reassurance did come from biologists Ariel Roth and Harold Coffen, who expressed the minority views of the Geoscience Institute. Before the end of the conference, Harold Coffen defended the notion that the layer-upon-layer of fossil forests at Yellowstone Park was due to the Flood. At the end of his presentation, the General Conference president, R. H. Pierson, stood to offer a fervent speech of gratitude. Dr. Coffen responded with equal emotion. "Someone has to do it!"

The Adventist church had passed a decisive turning point. As it had never done before the 1968 Geoscience Field Conference, Adventist church leadership endorsed one side of a deep and continuing debate among Adventist scientists and theologians concerning creation.

In the decade of the 1960s, a conflict developed in Adventism. For the first time in its history, a whole generation of scholars with doctorates from secular universities became active in church institutions. Probing, open to change, skeptical of tradition, imbued with the values and culture of higher education, this new breed of "progressive" Adventist intellectual soon began to reevaluate Adventist tradition. A conflict with church leaders, who represented the Adventist mainstream, was predictable.

During the early 1960s the conflict did not flare into an open fire. Perhaps the church did not yet clearly understand where the progressives were heading. Progressive theologians, for example, did not attack traditional views. They used traditional terminology and concepts but infused them with new meanings. It may have taken a while for conservatives to sense that although the words and symbols were familiar, the theological perspective was new.

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But the arrival of R. H. Pierson to the General Conference presidency brought a dramatic change. The new administration concluded that the progressives threatened the very soul and mission of Adventism. Policies based on that perception altered the course of the Geoscience Research Institute and of the Adventist study of geology.

The Philosophies

A conflict between "conservative" and "progressive" philosophies was central to the history of the Geoscience Institute from the start. The Institute began its life with two staff members, Frank Marsh and Peter Hare. Before long a third, Richard Ritland, joined the team. Soon a split developed that persisted for two decades. Ron Numbers described the conflict this way:

> Before long this Institute was split down the middle. On one hand you have Marsh insisting that the group . . . adopt the traditional and historical Adventist interpretation of the Bible and the writings of Mrs. Ellen G. White on science. Marsh thought the function of the scientist was to study the Bible and Mrs. White's writings to discover what was true, and then to go out into the field and to verify what you had discovered. Hare and Ritland took a different position. They believed . . . it was just as easy to make a mistake in interpreting the book of Revelation as it was to make a mistake in interpreting the book of nature. This "open-minded approach," . . . [Marsh] regarded as satanic. He . . . believed this was a real threat to the future of the Seventh-day Adventist church.[1]

After Marsh's banishment to the "Siberia" of the Andrews University biology department and Hare's departure to the Carnegie Geophysical Laboratory, the players changed, but the conflict continued. The "open-minded" approach of the progressives and the "tradition-minded" approach of the conservatives vied for ascendency.

The difference was not intellectual capacity. It is not necessary to administer I.Q. tests to observe that both sides had their quota of brilliant and pedestrian minds. The difference was not scientific training. Many progressives felt that once their conservative brethren (scientists, administrators or educators) saw the data they would take the only course open to reasonable men and reevaluate their traditional positions. This assumption was naive.[2] Nor was the difference loyalty to the church. While the historical record shows that it is harder for progressives to retain their loyalty to the church (often because of the obstacles placed in their path by conservatives), it is important to recognize that many progressives were profoundly loyal to the church. However, the two camps were very different.

Conservatives and progressives pursued different strategies in the search for harmony between Genesis and geology. Progressives were willing to accept the weight of contemporary scientific evidence and change their theology in order to achieve harmony. They were willing to keep open multiple theological hypotheses and live with uncertainty. This is what Marsh meant in the early years when he characterized his colleagues as endorsing an open-minded approach.

By the mid-1960s, the progressive's study of the issues led them to conclude that harmony between Genesis and geology required some kind of theological accomodation by the church.

Conservatives were willing to achieve harmony only by trying to revolutionize contemporary science. They steadfastly refused to compromise what seemed to them "fundamental" theological positions whose alteration undermined the essence of Adventism. Included in these fundamental positions were the age of the earth, the literal creation week, and the universal Flood. The real differences at the Geoscience Research Institute were theological, not scientific. The theological differences

came down to a disagreement concerning what aspects of Adventist religious ideology were negotiable. If the two sides had ever reached theological agreement, the so-called scientific differences would have vanished.

The Scientific Authority of Scripture and Ellen White

Conservatives and progressives had significantly different views of the doctrine of revelation and inspiration. Both groups accepted the authority of Scripture in Christian life. Both groups believed Ellen White was a divinely inspired prophetess. Both gave lip service to the concept that inspiration did not require inerrancy. But in practice these affirmations didn't mean the same thing to the two sides. For conservatives, the Bible, as interpreted by Ellen White, was crystal clear. Did you accept or reject the Bible and Ellen White?

For progressives, that was not the issue at all. They too acknowledged the inspiration and authority of these sources. For them the issue was traditional interpretation versus an objective examination of the relevant scriptural and scientific evidence. Ellen White was a key. Progressives believed inspired messages could come in fallible wrappings. They believed it was unnecessary to defend the inerrancy of every historical, scientific, or exegetical statement made by a prophet. Conservatives agreed in theory that Ellen White was fallible, but their actions indicated otherwise. They consistently defended every one of Ellen White's published scientific comments—no matter how incidental to the message of the passage. When asked, for example, about her statements attributing vulcanism to the burning of coal or her assertion that giant men had been found in the fossil record, not once did the Geoscience Research Institute conservatives suggest these statements might illustrate the fallibility of a prophet. Without fail they defended each statement's validity in terms of contemporary scientific knowledge. In short, they treated the entire corpus of Ellen White's writings as inerrant.

Given this view of Ellen White, conservatives could not compromise on the age of the earth or a universal flood (Ellen White was crystal clear about them). Ellen White probably played an important role in the conservatives' conclusion that no intermediate position between the traditional Adventist view and naturalistic evolution was viable. All compromise positions were, at worst, in direct opposition to the clear teaching of the Bible as interpreted by Ellen White, or at best empty speculations, unworthy of serious consideration. There was no room for compromise. The Adventist faith, with its glorious eschatological hope, was a sham unless its traditional views of earth history were true.

Because of their views on authority, conservatives and progressives had different levels of tolerance for diversity. During the early 1960s, when progressives were in positions of leadership at the Geoscience Research Institute, conservative points of view coexisted in the Institute and were given ample opportunity for expression. During the 1970s, when conservatives controlled the Institute, progressive points of view were not allowed free expression. This is not because conservatives are rigid and intolerant persons. The differences flow logically out of the philosophical commitments of the two groups.

In any human institution, revolutionaries are not handled with *laissez faire* tolerance. If the identity or existence of the institution is at stake, confrontation may be necessary. Conservatives believed that the identity of the church was at stake. Church institutions did not dare tolerate progressive views that would eventually destroy the institutions that tolerated them. Of course, progressives felt just the opposite was true. They believed that a diversity of theological ap-

proaches, instead of threatening the identity of Adventism, would contribute to a clearer understanding of truth and ultimately to a firmer and more viable definition of the Adventist mission. An asymmetry of acceptance is characteristic of conservative-progressive religious conflicts. The progressive is philosophically free to accept the legitimacy of the conservative's point of view, but the conservative cannot accept the legitimacy of the progressive point of view without compromising his conservatism.

Role and Function of the Institute

The progressives saw the Geoscience Research Institute as an open-ended research institute dedicated to helping the church discover the truth about origins within the context of Christian commitment. For progressives, the founding of the Institute was a call for help by the church. The Institute had been established to generate information and analysis needed to allow management to act wisely. They certainly did not see it as a corporate public relations department with a mandate to place the best possible face on management's previous actions. By the mid-1960s, the progressives' study of the issues led them to conclude that harmony between Genesis and geology required some kind of theological accommodation by the church. This had consequences for their view of the day-to-day role of the Institute. For example, the Institute under Ritland hired two new staff members (Harold James and Edward Lugenbeal) with backgrounds in theology. Since at that time the most theologically flexible products of the Adventist educational system were its seminary graduates, the Geoscience Research Institute was signaling that theological flexibility was vital for reaching a resolution of the problem of creation and science and for educating the church regarding the resolution.

During this time, the Institute placed great emphasis on educating thought leaders and administrators in the church to the severity of the problems posed by the geologic record for traditional views concerning the age of the earth and the Flood. A primary consideration in collecting data became the ease with which it could be grasped by scientific laypeople. The best example of this is the attention devoted to the Fossil Forests of Yellowstone. The Fossil Forests are a fascinating but relatively minor slice of geologic history. The Fossil Forests were enormously exciting to progressives precisely because Yellowstone's levels and rings made it easy for the layperson to grasp the problems with the traditional timescale. The Fossil Forests were an excellent apologetic tool.

In general, progressives conducted a limited number of detailed field and laboratory studies of the Fossil Forests. Most of their work was (as conservatives complained) essentially descriptive. Why? Because the progressives were quite satisfied

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with descriptive information. The implications seemed obvious. Why miss the Forests for the trees? Progressives were sensitive to the criticism that their focus on illustrating time problems was too negative, and they involved themselves in other kinds of study. One type of research aimed at locating the Flood in the geologic record. The progressives said: "Let us define portions of the record that could not be Flood deposits because they contain evidences for the passage of time. If we find a punctuation mark (a temporal break) in the record, we can conclude the Flood occurred either before this point in the record or after."

The search for the Flood in the record also led previous progressives to collect a large quantity of data about the distribution of fossils. This information provided some critical tests of the Flood model. Unfortunately, this research program also evolved into a "negative" effort. The progressives found much evidence for time in the geologic "column." Responding to this evidence, the Adventist geoscientist community began to restrict the portion of the record attributable to the Flood. However, perceptive students soon saw where this approach was leading—pushing the Flood out of the entire record. Evidences for time could be discovered throughout the geologic column. Hence this tack slipped into a means of falsifying Flood geology, instead of a "positive" effort to locate the Flood in the record.

In yet another effort to make a more "positive" contribution to the life and faith of the church, the progressives began to collect scientific information that suggested fundamental patterns of design in nature that called for a Designer. This effort never found a significant market in the Adventist community.

Conservatives, of course, had a completely different view of the role of the Institute and what constituted legitimate work. The conservative view is well-stated in an unofficial document in the 1970s entitled, "The Role of the Geoscience Research Institute Within the Seventh-day Adventist Church."[3] Although this document was never adopted formally, I believe it candidly and clearly reveals the true feelings of the conservatives.

The document makes several points. In the second paragraph it states flatly: "The Institute is not an open-ended research organization . . . free to investigate all possible ideas and reach whatever conclusions may appeal to investigators."[4] It later states that "the Institute should conduct and stimulate original research if that research gives promise of providing data that would increase the effectiveness with which the church can maintain its position, accordingly, the Institute is obligated to work within the framework of the established beliefs of the church and to seek interpretations of available scientific data from the viewpoints of these beliefs."[5] The document goes on to list several conclusions that a staff member of the Institute must support. Included in the list of ready-made conclusions are the supernatural origin of life, the six-day creation week, the universal Flood, and a less than 10,000 year age for the earth. In the next to last paragraph, the document states: "In its work the Institute must be taught by the understanding of divine revelation that is held by its supporting church; it is not warranted to attempt the role of an instructor of the church in these matters."[6]

This document clearly expressed the basic strategy of the conservatives. For them, as for the progressives, the Geoscience Research Institute was primarily an apologetic instrument. But for conservatives, the Institute's open-ended scientific research ultimately must bow to traditional beliefs. The conservative and progressive views of the role of the Geoscience Research Institute were both vulnerable to criticism. Inherent in each were internal contradictions or ethical dilemmas. The difficulties with the conservative view were stated eloquently by a conservative critic: "Our intellectual approach in Geoscience can raise a serious question about a lack of integrity that we need to be careful about. Unless we are willing to take the risk involved in the openness of scientific investigation, we cannot honestly claim the support of science in our work. Our act is and appears a sham. Much of the basis for the authority of science comes from its openness and willingness to look for truth wherever it may lead."[7]

Conservatives were vulnerable to the charge that they posed as scientists working in a "research" institute (which enhanced the effectiveness of their defense of traditional beliefs) while they actually operated

on a dogmatic nonscientific basis. For example, was there any natural data they would accept as falsifying a short chronology for life on earth? Their treatment of evidence from ancient history, archeology, and geology suggested their commitment could not be altered by any conceivable body of natural evidence. Progressives were vulnerable too—for being less than candid about their true aims. Conservatives could rightfully complain that progressives, while never clearly stating their goal of influencing the church's traditional belief system, were in fact working hard to undermine the very beliefs they were paid to defend.

The Transition

During most of the decade of the 1960s, progressive staff members exerted the greatest influence over the operation of the Institute. But this ascendancy was soon to end, and began ending in 1966 with the arrival of the Pierson administration, which moved to counter what it saw as the threat of creeping (or perhaps galloping) liberalism. The attempt to minimize or isolate progressive, intellectual influences in the church became a conscious policy. The 1968 Field Conference, the last organized by the progressive forces, was a watershed for the Geoscience Research Institute. Field conferences had provided numerous show-and-tell forums for the progressive message concerning the problems posed by the geologic record. In the early years of the institute, the progressives were the most geologically knowledgeable Adventists. They were the only ones attending, for example, the annual Geological Society of America meetings, and had much to tell and much to show their Adventist confreres. They led conservative colleagues to the tops of many mountains, the brinks of many canyons. Conservatives lost their geological virginity. They too recognized the problems. But finally they returned from the brink of an abyss. The horror of its depths was too much. By the 1968 Field Conference, the time for problems was over. The time for answers had come.

At the 1968 Field Conference, conservatives took a public stand. By then they knew the progressives would never solve the problems they could so effectively present. They suspected that the progressives had no intention of solving those problems. They sensed that the problems were presented in order to create pressure for theological change. So, in order to protect the church, they made a consistent effort to provide answers for all problems, or at least to suggest problems with all problems. "Blowing smoke," and "throwing sand in peoples' eyes" is what the progressives called this tactic. "Presenting a balanced picture," and "exhibiting true scientific rigor and caution" is what the conservatives called it. Church administrators at the 1968 Field Conference recognized kindred spirits among the conservative scientists. The actions of R. H. Pierson after the 1968 Field Conference left little doubt where his sympathies lay. In an *Adventist Review* article, in 1968, summarizing the conference, he wrote: "In our controversy with the proponents of the evolutionary theory we must keep in clear perspective the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy are not on trial." Even more telling, at a Geoscience meeting shortly after the conference, Pierson introduced a resolution that called upon members of the Geoscience Research Institute to refrain from presenting problems in all public and semi-public meetings. Asked if a field conference was a semi-public meeting, he answered, "yes."[8] The era of a progressive approach to problems was over. After the 1968 Field Conference, the Pierson adminis-

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tration exerted increasing pressure on the Institute to abandon its problem-oriented approach. Altering the course of the Institute was politically easy (unlike the difficulties in controlling the universities and seminary). At Geoscience there was no tradition of academic freedom to overcome, no accrediting bodies to worry about, no independent-minded board to contend with (board members were almost exclusively General Conference officers). All that was needed was a change in the leadership of the Institute.

Richard Ritland's decision to resign from Geoscience and accept a position as professor in the Andrews University biology department provided an opportunity for the board to alter the course of the institute. So by 1971, new interim leadership (Ariel Roth), and by 1972 new permanent leadership (Robert H. Brown), was firmly in place. The Pierson administration could look with satisfaction at the Institute, which had accepted the administration mandate to become a conservative apologetic institute for traditional Adventist views of origins. The influence of the two progressive scientists on the staff was minimal. By 1979, both were gone.

The Rise of the Present Geoscience Institute

The immediate challenge for the 1972 Geoscience Research Institute was to be both positive and visible. The Pierson administration was eager to use the Institute in its struggle against "liberalism" and the newly transformed Institute was eager to be used. Under the strong leadership of R. H. Brown, an impressive array of new programs was instituted, aimed at communicating broadly with the church, increasing the visibility of the Institute, and creating an image of greater productivity. Indeed, these programs may have saved the Institute's budget. There was some apprehension that dissatisfication with the Institute's lack of positive results might lead to its dissolution. Many a union conference president looked hungrily at the hundreds of thousands of dollars swallowed by the Institute budget.

Some of the communication vehicles used by Brown were traditional. Beginning in 1976, a cycle of three field conferences was arranged—one geared for the Union Conference presidents. The hope was that the Institute's new answer-oriented approach would build political and therefore financial support. Another conference was directed more at academically-oriented individuals.

Other programs were newer. At the request of W.J. Hackett, chairman of the Institute's board, the Institute arranged to visit one or two Adventist college campuses each year. These visits provided an opportunity to promote confidence in the church's traditional beliefs, regarding origins, among students and faculty. The apologetic outreach of the Institute also included the organization of several secondary or elementary teacher conferences and a steady parade of visits to workers' meetings, ministerial retreats, and other Adventist gatherings. The Institute also intensified its use of the print media in the church. It sponsored a regular feature in *Ministry* magazine and provided an increasing flow of articles for various church publications. Its most ambitious venture was the publication of an excellent scholarly journal, *Origins*.

The Pierson administration was eager to use the institute in its struggle against "liberalism" and the newly transformed Institute was eager to be used.

The materials printed often set a new standard of excellence for creationist literature. A final important contribution (and one with quite a history of its own) was the

complete revision of the painfully outdated creation and geology articles in the *Seventh-day Adventist Commentary*. After the transition to conservative control, the Geoscience Research Institute cooperated closely with the Pierson administration in its efforts to contain progressive influence in church institutions. On several occasions, efforts were made to influence Seventh-day Adventist institutions not to hire progressive geoscientists. The Institute also became involved in the Pierson administration's effort to develop and promote statements that defined the acceptable limits of belief for scientists employed by the church. The creation statement sought to control the growing diversity of views in the church concerning origins. Its affirmation of the traditional views was used as a tool for screening employees.

The first discussion of a creation statement took place in an informal group at a Geoscience Field Conference. Progressive participants at the conference were pointedly excluded from these discussions. Throughout the controversial and divisive life of the creation statement, the Geoscience Research Institute leadership supported it. This was consistent with the Institute's commitment to narrowing the range of acceptable discourse in Adventist creation science. In general, the Geoscience Research Institute supported the Pierson administration in its using administrative authority to protect the church from infiltration by progressive modes of thought.

Another result of the transition at Geoscience Research Institute was a change in the character of the Institute's interaction with Adventist theologians. In the progressive era, interaction with seminary theologians was frequent. Seminary professors would gather with staff for informal and formal discussions and seminars. A consultant's committee composed of administrators, Bible scholars, and scientists met periodically with the staff of the Institute.

After the transition, the institute's theological interactions were restructured. The administration created a science council for the Geoscience Research Institute and channeled theological interaction through it. The consultant's committee (accused of liberal leanings) was disbanded. Throughout the decade of the 1970s, the Geoscience Research Institute faithfully reflected the conservative views of the Pierson administration instead of the views characteristic of the seminary.

In the 1980s, the Geoscience Research Institute began to reach out, for the first time, to its counterparts in non-Seventh-day Adventist creationist organizations, and to become involved in the public debate regarding the propriety of teaching creationism in the public school systems. In spite of the commitment of Adventism to a meticulous separation of church and state, and the reservations expressed by many Adventist geoscientists, some staff members of the institute vigorously promoted the teaching of creation in state-supported schools. This support culminated in the highly publicized Arkansas trial at which Geoscience staff members played prominent roles as witnesses. The movements to cooperate with other creationist groups were made with caution and hesitation. Institute staff members were generally embarrassed by the low quality and tone of the publications of other creationist groups and hesitated to be identified with them. Nevertheless, there was a recognition of common ground. Some very tentative and minor steps toward rapprochement evolved.

Research in the post-transition Geoscience Research Institute proceeded along two different lines. First, the persuasive force of the progressives' most effective exhibits had to be neutralized. Progressives called this the fire-fighting function. Clearly, the most damaging progressive fire was raging in the Fossil Forests, therefore the institute used its new research fellowship program to fund numerous projects related to them.

Second, a conscious offensive effort was launched. Many of the problems raised by the progressives were put on the shelf as Institute conservatives determined to build a Flood Model. Justification for an essentially selective approach to geological data was garnered from the writings of the philosopher of science, Thomas Kuhn. The Geoscience Research Institute staff members concluded they could (in a Kuhnian sense) step outside the mainstream and build their alternate paradigm, nurtured by the knowledge that science progresses because of the courage of visionaries whose radical new paradigms can eventually revolutionize their disciplines.

A Model for the Future

Between 1966 and 1972, a significant transition altered the course of the Institute. Appropriately, the transition was not evolutionary, but the competitive replacement of one species of thought (progressive) by another concurrent species of thought (conservative). Given the political environment of the Pierson administration, we might justifiably conclude, however, that the selection that occurred was natural. Although the conflict between progressives and conservatives no longer enlivens the Geoscience Research Institute, the conflict continues in Adventism. An important factor that could influence the future history of the conflict is the momentum given to new views of Ellen White by recent discoveries of her extensive literary dependence on contemporary authors.

Future historians may conclude that the Geoscience Research Institute's most important contribution was that it stripped Adventism of geological innocence. It thereby set the church on a course with an uncertain destination. That course now is taking a new turn. Adventist geology has grown beyond the Geoscience Research Institute. The church has a department of geology at Loma Linda University and a growing community of professionally trained geoscientists whose primary focus is not on apologetics but on the study of geology as a discipline. Do church leaders realize that the course followed by the Institute since 1972 has increasingly isolated it from this broader community of Adventist geoscientists?

Although in its first 25 years the Geoscience Research Institute has been the primary force molding the character of Adventist geology, it may be hard pressed to retain this primacy in the future.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Ron Numbers, unpublished manuscript in my files (transcription of presentation to a forum group at Loma Linda), no date.
2. The Geoscience Research Institute did have great difficulty recruiting a single professionally credentialed conservative geologist for its staff.
3. Robert H. Brown, "The Role of the Geoscience Research Institute Within the Seventh-day Adventist Church," unpublished manuscript circulated among staff members of the Institute, 1979.
4. *Ibid.*, page 1.
5. *Ibid.*, page 2.
6. *Ibid.*, page 3.
7. Ariel Roth, unpublished letter to Robert H. Brown with copies sent to other Geoscience staff members, May 10, 1979.
8. Richard Ritland, personal communication, 1969.

Fifty Years of Creationism: The Story of an Insider

by Richard Hammill

Since I was a member of the guiding committee for geoscience from the time it was set up in 1957 until my retirement in 1980, I must bear some of the responsibility for its history and for the relationship between geology and religion within the Seventh-day Adventist Church. I have been asked to elaborate on my own role in those developments, and to give my personal viewpoints concerning them. My comments are bound to be subjective, although I have attempted to be as objective as possible.

Origins

Although various Seventh-day Adventist ministers and teachers published articles on the relationship of geology to the biblical teaching on creationism in the late 19th century, Adventists did not take geology seriously until George McCready Price began to write on the subject at the turn of the century. His teaching and writings resulted eventually in sufficient interest for the church to help some of its science teachers get professional training in geology.

My first acquaintance with Professor Price and the subject of creationist geology occurred at Walla Walla College in the fall of 1934, when it turned out that my teacher for Greek II and Dogmatic Theology was George McCready Price, a new member of the faculty. In these classes, for which Professor Price had little or no training, he often diverged from the assigned topic to his geological interests. His public debate in England with a noted evolutionist was a favorite topic. As a new Adventist, who had read quite widely on evolutionary geology while in high school, I was fascinated with his views and later enrolled in one of his courses in creationist geology. That sparked in me an interest lasting for the 50 years since.

As a very young man, Price attended Battle Creek College for two years (1891–1893), after which he engaged in colporteur and evangelistic work. A Canadian, in 1896 he enrolled in a teacher-training institute in New Brunswick, and

Richard Hammill, former vice president of the General Conference (and before that president of Andrews University longer than any in the school's history), is now retired and living in Washington state. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Chicago.

FORUM

1984 National Forum Conference Renews Adventist Heritage

by Bonnie Dwyer

Two Forum conferences have come and gone; each provided perspectives on Adventism, but each slanted its new perspectives in different directions. The first conference (held in Washington, D.C., in 1982) featured theological discussions of, among other subjects, the sanctuary, Ellen White, and divorce and remarriage. The second conference, entitled, "The Search for a Usable Future," took place in Grand Terrace and Loma Linda, Calif., in March 1984, and provided a sociological look at the church today and in the future. This issue of *Forum* recounts some of the activities of the second conference, and future issues of *Spectrum* will include many of the papers presented there.

Discussions at the second conference covered everything from the general principles and patterns of current Seventh-day Adventist church growth through options for improving church structure to some personal experiences of Adventists today. There were also presentations on social issues and on institutions within the church.

In addition to providing more and varied perspectives on Adventism, the conference gave insights into the Association of Adventist Forums, because those who attended represented the 'visible Forum.' The picture which emerged is of a middle-aged, Caucasian people. Both conferences drew about the same number of attendants, 300, who came from small as well as large towns in the United States and Canada. Although both conferences were held in "Adventist ghettos," a large portion of the attendants were not local. Very few students attended either conference. Neither of the conference crowds accurately reflected the ethnic diversity of the North American Adventist Church.

According to the questionnaires which attendants filled out after the conference, people came to discuss issues, to share frustrations, consider the future of the church, and simply to brainstorm. They came to see old friends and to talk about Adventist identity and tradition. When asked what they saw as the main goal of the conference, practically everyone described a different one, but all said his or her own goal had been met.

Ron Lawson, who responded to the session on patterns in church growth, noted the graying of Forum, which he said has been mostly unsuccessful in attracting the generations younger than that of its founders, the graduate students of the late 1960s. Lawson discussed the effect of doctrinal diversity in the church and said that while parents may be fascinated with the theological changes afoot in the denomination, their children apparently are not. Some people there noted the lack of academics attending the second conference, given that it was held on the front step of Loma Linda University—a question parallel to why so few individuals from the General Conference attended the first conference even though it was located close to the General Conference.

Both conferences seemed to renew enthusiasm about Adventism. "I went to both conferences with questions running through my head about the church," wrote one participant. "The conferences did not answer all my questions, but they helped me understand the importance of asking questions and reinterpreting Adventism for myself. I came away from both meetings proud of my Adventist heritage."

Bonnie Dwyer holds a masters degree in journalism from California State University, Fullerton, and is news editor of Spectrum.

Newsweek Religion Editor says SDA's Must Reinterpret Traditions

by Bonnie Dwyer

Kenneth Woodward, the religion editor for *Newsweek,* gave the opening address for the Second National Conference of the Association of Adventist Forums, full of stories and wit.

First, he joked about sermons, how he hated them and used to pinch his children to make them cry so he could leave services. Then he talked about the Mafioso type who regularly read the Scripture at his church, and taught him that you can learn from people with whom you would rather not associate. He laced the talk with Scripture and poetry, too, turning his feelings and observations into a special kind of sermon on the usefulness of religion. To Woodward, religion is less a way of doing things than a way of being. Religion is not useful, in the Ben Franklin sense of usefulness, and when people try to make it useful, they abuse it.

Woodward talked about the wonder, mystery, and grace which religion can bring to life, and reminded his listeners of Christ's admonition to become as little children. "The world is charged with the grandeur of God. It will flame out, like shining from shook foil; it gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of oil crushed," he quoted from Gerard Manley Hopkins' poem "God's Grandeur," and used the poet as an example of someone with that gift of religious wonder.

Plying the audience with metaphors like the church as extended family or home, the church as a people to belong to, and the church as the repository of a people's common stories, he gave new meaning to the experience of denominationalism. Woodward went on to talk about reinterpreting the traditions of a church. Traditions are posts and horizons telling us where we have come from and where we are headed. Every church must reinterpret its traditions, he said, and absolute certitude is the enemy of faith and wonder. "Jesus did not teach certitude," he reminded the audience.

Poet, traveler, lover of people and culture, Woodward became a journalist when he realized that one could not make a living as a poet. Journalism also supports his wanderlust. After a recent trip to China, he wrote about the mental health of the Chinese people for *Psychology Today* and another article for his alma mater's publication, *Notre Dame* magazine. *Geo* bought a story about his trip to Nicaragua. Retracing Martin Luther's steps in Germany produced the background for stories in *Newsweek* and *Notre Dame.* He has completed a trip to San Antonio which will end up as a story for *Smithsonian.*

Although certain religions see themselves as antithetical to culture, Woodward tries, in his *Newsweek* stories, to relate religion to culture, saying that religions give insight into common human interests. For Woodward, the way, the truth, and the light, in the modern world, become a quest for relationship and understanding.

Oxford Sociologist Explores the Effect of Secularization

by Russell Staples

Among the galaxy of "stars" invited to make presentations at the conference of Professor Bryan Wilson, Fellow of All Souls College and Reader in Sociology at Oxford University. Inasmuch as the Forum "Search for a Usable Future" is inextricably intertwined with the future of the Adventist Church, a perfectly logical starting point was Wilson's sociological analysis of patterns in the maturation and development of Christian sects.

If this was a fitting note on which to open the conference, then Professor Wilson was the most appropriate person to be asked to make such a presentation. He has specialized in the sociological study of religious sects and related topics, and at one time planned a major publication on the Adventist Church (a project which I hope has not been entirely abandoned). He presented two papers at the Centennial Conference on Missions conducted at Andrews University in 1974 and has addressed Adventist audiences on numerous occasions.

The paper presented by Professor Wilson, "Patterns of Church Growth," explored patterns of development along the sect-denomination continuum within the secularizing rationalism of contemporary society—concerns which are very different from, and not to be confused with, those of the evangelical "church growth" movement. (Sect in the sociological sense has no pejorative implica-

tions.) Sects in the process of development almost inevitably relinquish their sectarian characteristics and become denominations with the second generation. Wilson affirmed this general tendency: "Denominationalization—the loosening rigor; the loss of the sense of dissent and protest; the reduction of distance from other Christians; and the muting of claims that the sect's distinctive teachings are necessary for salvation—is a current that exerts some pressure on all contemporary movements." But he also affirmed that "every sect has its own distinctive stance and orientation, and not all sects . . . become denominationalized" (p. 5). He then discussed factors that hinder and factors that promote denominationalization. The major categories under which he pursued his argument are particularly appropriate to a discussion of the Adventist Church —charismatic leadership, organizational structures, denominational distinctiveness, and the growth and effects of secularization.

Professor Ronald Lawson (professor of Sociology in the Urban Studies Department, Queens College, City University of New York) responded with an interesting paper on "The Future of Seventh-day Adventism." In part, this paper meshed with Wilson's analysis and complemented it—Wilson's analysis was broad, and conducted at a comfortable level of generalization and abstraction, whereas Lawson's was specific, although not without sociological sophistication. Unfortunately, Lawson did not use Wilson's categories, nor interact directly with Wilson's arguments. Perhaps this indicates the greatest failure of the conference. While it certainly did not lack interest, it failed to sustain continuity. The bedazzled conference members were constantly jolted from one experience, and from one universe of thought and discourse, to another. Strangely, although several currents of thought in subsequent sessions moved directly into the orbit of concerns systematically analyzed by Wilson—i.e., in conference sessions having to do with church organization and in a session which explored the tension between Adventist beliefs and values on the one hand, and academic respectability and rationality on the other—no attempt was made to relate these discussions to Wilson's earlier presentation which laid down a platform facilitating precisely such discussions.

Of course, a conference organized around a broad central presentation might not be as entertaining as a kaleidoscope of events by renowned performers, but surely it would be more solidly rewarding.

Russell Staples is the chairperson of the Department of World Mission at Andrews University.

Respondents to AAF Report Clash Over Elections, Structure

by Bonnie Dwyer

Reviews of the AAF Task Force Model Constitution were mixed during the official presentation at the recent national conference. Of the four people who responded to the documents, two gave high marks, and the other two faulted the suggestions contained in the proposals. Al Kwiram and Charles Sandefur, Jr., liked the constitution. Thomas Mostert did not, and Earl Amundson disagreed with the suggestion that unions be eliminated.

Kwiram, who chairs the chemistry department at the University of Washington, responded as a layperson. He said he had no major disagreements with the Task Force proposal, but felt a broader look at the organization was also needed. Taking a quotation from an earlier talk by Bryan Wilson, Kwiram said his theme was, "An organization is always in danger of manipulation, which tends to force the good of the greater ends to become subservient to the lesser means." Then he compared the plight of the church to that of America's smokestack industries in competition with the Japanese. He noted how American industry's overemphasis on the bottom line and on short term gains has been identified as one of the most serious and damaging factors to its competitiveness. Japanese industry forced American industry to move to the next level of focus—management—and to ask how the organization should be structured to accomplish its purpose.

The church has also focused on the bottom line, he said, by overemphasizing statistics (baptisms and tithe dollars) while blissfully ignoring the impoverished character of the enterprise. Recent controversies such as Davenport and Ford have forced the church to re-examine its approach to administration. The Task Force has not addressed church management. But the church cannot stop at this level of evaluation, he suggested, just as industry cannot look just at management. The third level on which we must focus is that of value. This is the conceptual level of an organization and is the level on which we address the question "why?" It is concerned with societal values for neighbors and for individuals. Asking why, he suggested, will lead us to the individual and the local church, because that is where value is created.

Corona Church pastor Charles Sandefur, Jr., responding from a pastor's viewpoint, focused on the

experience of Adventism and its implications for church structure. He said the church is already being decentralized, but through apathy, and in the individual's eye, Adventism is shrinking from a world church to a local congregation.

In his Sabbath School class, Sandefur often takes surveys. He has discovered that many church members do not know who the local, union, and General Conference presidents are and that the question, "What does it mean to be a Seventh-day Adventist?" generates an amazing diversity of responses—from no tea and coffee to great theological constructions. "We now do not share the same belief system," he said, "so we hear more overtures to centralizing the system to make what was hidden (in early Adventism) less transparent. Now we need to dismantle that." On a scale of one to 10, 10 being best, he gave the Task Force a 10−, and said he agreed with most of what had been suggested.

While praising lay involvement in the church, Sandefur said he did not think that the church's total solution would come from more and more lay participation in the decision-making process of the church committees. "I feel it lies in a much more vigorous election process, and I would advocate that no clergy whatsoever serve as voting members at constituency meetings."

Thomas Mostert, president of the Southeastern California Conference, was the Task Force's most severe critic. While commending the group for its work, he said he was not convinced that a government-based model (such as the Task Force suggested) is the answer. He foresaw many more opportunities for manipulation and control, adversarial relationships, and career church workers forced to the side. "While I am committed to meaningful change in the church," he said, "taken as a whole, the Task Force constitution is not the way to go."

The church is already being decentralized, but through apathy.

Mostert had several criticisms. He thought there was a hidden agenda in the constitution, which he called "organizational overkill." Next, he noted that the document moves away from a world church to a congregational form of government with a conference flavor. Both Old and New Testaments recognize authority past the local congregation, he said. (A more complete version of Mostert's remarks may be found in this issue of *Spectrum,* Vol. 15, No. 2.)

Earl Amundson, president of the Atlantic Union Conference, responded to the Task Force with a defense of the unions. While supporting the proposal for a separate North American Division, he said that removing the unions would centralize too much authority in the General Conference and turning eight unions into five would make them less responsive than they presently are. (For a more complete presentation of Amundson's remarks, see *Spectrum,* Vol. 15, No. 1.)

These formal presentations were followed by approximately two hours of discussion among the Task Force's executive committee, the presentors, and the audience.

Four Professionals Reminisce and Recount Religious Experiences

by Bev Connors

During the March 16 Forum Conference session entitled "Varieties of Religious Experience," four young professionals spoke with candor of their pilgrimages within the church. As summarist Gregory Schneider noted, these were not mystical tales of conversion, but "chiefly testimonials about the strains of living out some occupational roles within Adventist institutions."

Common to all speakers was the certainty that an unresponsive church bureaucracy can and does interfere with genuine concern for workers and laity. As noted by Steve Daily, Lorna Tobler, and Gregory Schneider, the spirit and practice of justice cannot exist in a patriarchal system that denies representation to women, minorities, and laypeople in general.

Pastor Steve Daily, chaplain of the La Sierra campus of Loma Linda University; Lorna Tobler, legal secretary and graduate student in political science; Jonathan Butler, Loma Linda University historian; and respondent Gregory Schneider of the behavioral science department at Pacific Union College are too wise and educated to be wistful, yet that is the impression that remained.

Steve Daily longed for openness and honesty (a phrase he used often) in addressing problematic issues, in following the dictates of a Spirit-guided conscience, and in openly communicating on all levels, which he feels will promote a new spirit of optimism in the church. He declared that participatory democracy and a cooperative network must replace dictatorial and hierarchical structures

within Adventism, saying that unless this happens, the result will be the apathy and cynicism that arises from helplessness. His personal anecdotes illustrated the tensions between those who believe in the benefits of higher education and those who view it with suspicion, as something which weakens faith in traditional beliefs.

Referring to the identity crisis currently afflicting Adventism, he said, "I find an increasing number of people in the church who have no clear vision of what Adventism stands for. They end up advocating what Robert Jewett calls "a faithless tolerance," an apathetic approach to religion which lacks conviction or commitment. On the other end of the spectrum, we find those who react against this mentality by proclaiming an identity for Adventism that is based on an understanding that majors in exclusivity and triumphalism. Instead of faithless tolerance, this approach produces an intolerant faith which says, "Define Adventism as I do or leave the church."

Lorna Tobler, having grown up in a "believer's priesthood honestly professed if not perfectly practiced," found herself questioning, redefining, and re-evaluating "the church" during her 10 years of litigation with Pacific Press. Having sued Pacific Press for sex discrimination, she and Merikay Silver were told that clerical authority was more important than justice, "not that sex discrimination was good, but that it was more important to support the authority of those who practiced it than to question its justice."

Tobler has been asked repeatedly how her lawsuit affected her relationship with the church. In this presentation, she answered that she was changed more by the sex discrimination itself, and by its defense on grounds of clerical authority, than by the actual confrontation in court. Tobler defined her relationship to the church as depending on which definition of church you choose. Calling the church a body of believers, Tobler declared she was left with a warm reaffirmation by the strong support she received from her fellow church members. However, her response to the "church" as defined by the General Conference—"people who wield power over fellow members"—has been much different.

After quoting several statements made by various General Conference representatives both in and out of court (the "church is free to ignore, even to flout, measures which bind all others," "the authority of a church over its members is more important than justice," and "individual judgment must be surrendered to ecclesiastical leaders") Tobler turned to the Gospels for a model for her changed relationship to the church.

She asked some new questions: How did Jesus relate to the powerless and the powerful? How did they respond to him? What is the *purpose* of our relationship to each other and to the church? Emphasizing that love that foregoes power and the will to rule is the locus of all relationships, Tobler declared that we must not vest the organization, which is merely an instrument with which we accomplish tasks, with spiritual authority. She takes as her model "to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God," and asked those present to remember that Jesus bid us not to be servants, but friends.

Jonathan Butler opened with a Larry Zif quote: "The essence of America is democracy and plumbing," noting that the history of Adventism and Adventist education might be characterized the same way. Plumbing, the enervating proliferation of policies and power structures, "can get rusty and drain off the soul of an institution." He cited Loma Linda University policy that "anything we write has to be submitted to our chairman, in turn should be submitted within a 10-day period to the vice president for academic affairs, and all this must be reviewed before it's sent in to an academic journal to be reviewed by the scholarly community. You cannot really write if someone's looking over your shoulder." Also in this vein, he spoke of the irony in church institutions of "academics who are so cynical about their tradition that they do not engage in transforming it or creatively advancing it. They receive no criticism because they have done nothing wrong. But those who do take their tradition seriously and try to come to terms with it, with some passion and interest, they come under criticism." Butler extends his loyalty to the fundamentally egalitarian peer relationships which exist among fellow academics, rather than to institutions and plumbing.

We must not vest the organization, which is merely an instrument, with spiritual authority.

Respondent Gregory Schneider portrayed the Adventist experience as "a lonely quest for salvation which issues in an individualistic and competitive pursuit of prestige within the circumscribed arena of the Adventist community." Seldom taking seriously the biblical metaphor to be interdependent organs of the body of Christ, Adventists instead get attention within the reassuring framework of the local church and the school system on the basis of four Ps: piety, probity, professionalism, and patriarchy. The system stirs Adventists up to good works, if not to love, and provides them with a relatively stable claim for prestige, no small feat in the midst of America's impersonal and unstable social and religious validation.

Schneider described Daily, Tobler, and Butler as uncommon frogs in a small ecclesiastical pond who have remained infected with the idealism inherent in their Adventist upbringings, and who remain singularly immune to the status fevers that are more caught than taught in Adventist institutional life. Tobler had "no desire to turn the world upside down, only a concern for simple justice when she challenged what turned out to be a symbol of patriarachal priority, the head-of-household inequity in denominational wage scales." Daily speaking as both pastor and academic, saw the need for cooperative structures, and voiced his hope that "we who compose the ordained clergy in Adventism will choose to surrender our monopoly on power in the 1980s. If this fails, Daily hopes that change will be forced upon us, so that laypeople can share equally in the decision-making processes of our church."

Schneider concluded, "People like this can be dangerous. They don't respond to the carrot-sticks that the status hierarchies use to keep about the essence of true religion, which serves humanity as Christ served." This sort of talk is the most subversive of all, "for it is a reminder that those who would enter the kingdom of God will have to temper, perhaps abandon, the competitive pursuit of attention. We will have to notice one another. More than that, we will have to notice the powerless."

Beverly Connors, a graduate of Walla Walla College, is a writer living in Oshawa, Canada.

In Sabbath Worship Beasts and Remnants Battle Again

by Karen Bottomley

The confrontation between the beast and the faithful remnant was the theme of the 'Church at Study' on March 17 at the University Church in Loma Linda, Calif. Charles Teel, Jr., coordinator of the service, invited the audience to approach The Book of Revelation in the manner of our spiritual forefathers Uriah Smith, James White, and J.N. Andrews, who "read with one eye on the newspaper and the other on the Bible." They understood that the victory of the baby over the dragon signifies the ultimate triumph of God's people, yet they also believed that the struggle between the remnant and the beast takes place anew in each generation. This conviction emboldened them to denounce social customs and institutions of their times, particularly slavery, as "beastly" and "demonic." In the tradition of these pioneers, the service celebrated the lives of Christians who have fought the beast in our times.

Lorene Jabola told the story of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a German theologian who opposed the Third Reich so he joined a conspiracy to assassinate enced pastor, university lecturer, and participant in the European ecumenical movement when he became a leader of the Confessional Movement in 1931. This group, comprised of Christians of various denominations, soon clashed with the new government of Adolph Hitler by publicly affirming the Bible as their ultimate authority. Bonhoeffer became increasingly convinced that Christians must use more than words to combat the evils of the Third Reich so he joined a conspiracy to assassinate Hitler. However, before this plan could be enacted, the Gestapo intervened and imprisoned Bonhoeffer and other Christian leaders in 1943. During the next two years Bonhoeffer wrote letters, poems, and books from his prison cell, calling for Christians to take up the cross of radical discipleship and confront the evils of their times. In 1945, Bonhoeffer was executed by the Nazis.

Marla Osborne recounted the actions of Rosa Parks, who confronted the beast of racial discrimination. On Dec. 1, 1955, this weary black seamstress challenged the racial segregation laws of Montgomery, Ala., by quietly refusing to relinquish her bus seat to a white passenger who had boarded the bus after she did. She was arrested for this act of civil disobedience. But, as Osborne pointed out, her small stand for human dignity continues to capture the imagination of many others faced with oppression who likewise declare, "I can take it no longer." Her protest holds out hope for blacks exhausted with the wait for freedom and opportunity, for women fed up with staying in their place, and for the poor robbed of dignity and self-esteem in their struggle to survive.

Roy Branson shared with the audience his encounter with four young girls in southern Thailand who had been abducted, raped, and abandoned in the ocean by marauding fishermen as the girls attempted to flee South Vietnam. Their experience is frightfully common among the 2,800 Indochinese boat people who land somewhere in Southeast Asia each month. Since 1979, an estimated 50,000 of these refugees have died, victims of pirate attacks or of unseaworthy vessels. Branson also described the response of Christians to the suffering of these boat people. Father Joe, a Jesuit priest, has helped

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Old Testament Scholar Raises Sabbath / Sunday Issues

by Donna Carlson Reeves

"The Day of the Lord and the Lord's Day" was the title of Dr. Samuel Terrien's controversial presentation of Sabbath morning, March 17. Dr. Terrien, a warm, passionate speaker, is Davenport Professor of Hebrew and Cognate Languages at Union Theological Seminary in New York. In his presentation, his purpose was to examine the biblical origin of the seventh-day Sabbath and its religious function in Old and New Testament times.

Terrien first traced the uses of the phrase "The Day of the Lord," which appeared, he says, about 1275 B.C. at the time of the Exodus. The Jews were fleeing the Egyptians and the miracle, or "providential coincidence," of the Red Sea tidal patterns saved the former slaves from their pursuers. Thus "Yom Yahweh," The Day of the Lord, was shown to be a day of triumph over one's enemies.

Following their years of nomadic wandering, the Israelites settled in Canaan. After defeating a series of tribal enemies including Amalekites, Canaanites, and Moabites, The Day of the Lord continued to be identified with military victory. In turn, Nebuchadnezzar's armies in 587 B.C. dealt the Jews a major defeat and carried away the 3,000 survivors of the sack of Jerusalem. The prisoners were eventually settled in the marshy farmlands of lower Mesopotamia where they worked in the oppressive heat for their Babylonian overloads. It was here, Terrien proposed, that the "true miracle of the Bible" occurred. Captives from many conquered city states were sent to the same hell, and all simply disappeared from history. Only the Jews retained their faith, and thus their identity, and were able to transmit this faith to their children and eventually to the world.

This miracle of survival occurred through the transformation of sacred *space*, which the Jews had lost when they lost Jerusalem and the temple, into sacred *time*. They kept the religious days, Sabbaths, feasts, even creating new ones, like Rosh Hashanah, the autumn New Year, and offering hymns and laments instead of sacrifices. No longer just a reminder of past victories, The Day of the Lord was now in the future—evidence that despite his refusal to intervene in Israel's current history, God was still in control. Someday, they believed, he would establish justice and harmony on earth.

Terrien proposed that it was also during the exile that Sabbath first became a sacrament celebrating creation, and was then identified with the seventh day of the Babylonian week, or "haptomed." Before the exile, it was most likely a monthly event celebrating the full moon. Its actual origins are obscure and "remain a subject of scientific inquiry. . . . What we can say is that originally a seven-day week and the Sabbath were separated," he insisted.

The Sabbath commandments as reproduced in Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5, Terrien argued, were elaborated or amended forms of the original commandment which was expressed in a more pithy form like "thou shalt not murder." He supported the "lapidary skeleton" tradition, which says simply that all the original 10 commandments were in this short form. Further, the commandments were originally given to nomadic people who must care for their flocks on all days. For them an injunction to rest would have had no meaning. Therefore, Terrien felt the Sabbath commandment in its present forms was designed for a later, agricultural society as Israel was during and after the exile. In this agrarian culture, the Sabbath was an expression of a humane ethic were even animals were allowed to rest one day a week.

After providing this extensive Old Testament background, during the last few minutes of his presentation, Dr. Terrien moved into the New Testament and more specific Christian practices. Jesus, he said, deliberately violated the Sabbath on several occasions to illustrate the priority of compassion for fellow humans over legal institutions. All such legal systems, Jesus showed, are intrinsically relative, thus he "de-absolutized" the Sabbath, and delivered men from its tyranny.

Terrien also pointed out the great significance for the disciples of the resurrection of Jesus on the first day of the week. The Sabbath of that weekend was a dark day, a day of death and despair. Sunday was a day of light, of new life and hope. "We cannot ignore the importance of Sunday for the early Christians," Terrien insisted, quoting Acts 20:7, which tells of Paul and the disciples meeting on the first day of the week. He went on to interpret Colossians 2:16, in which Paul advises the church

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AAF Conference Saturday Night Live and on Film

by Carol Richardson

Improvising on the familiar post-Sabbath, "film-as-social" formula, the Forum put together a lively, engaging program Saturday evening, March 17, in the ramshackle Redlands cinema: an evening of wit and conversation, culminating with the premiere of the first Seventh-day Adventist-written-and-produced television film with prime-time aspirations. Host Jonathan Butler opened the program with a monologue and playful mock interview, aided by his wife Marianne.

Three serious interviews followed Butler's send-up, each featuring an Adventist involved in some uncommon enterprise. From John Kelley, interviewed by Loma Linda theologian Richard Rice, we heard an insider's account of monitoring the upcoming elections in El Salvador. Kelley's responsibilities included managing voters with multiple IDs or guarding the integrity of ballot boxes in a country where corruption and violence have become commonplace.

Grenada-born Walter Douglas, of Andrews University, was the second guest, interviewed by *Spectrum* editor Roy Branson. Dr. Douglas, shared both his pride and the varied reactions of church leadership to the honor of his being nominated to the post of Grenada's ambassador to the United States.

The final interview of the evening, conducted by Carol Richardson, Loma Linda librarian, was with film maker Donald Davenport, best known for the award-winning "Westbrook Hospital" series produced by *Faith for Today*. Davenport spoke briefly about the challenge facing the Adventist film maker who continually forges an uneasy alliance between a secular, commercial market and an orthodox, often ambivalent denomination. Davenport then introduced the feature of the evening, the premiere of his first film, a made-for-TV movie, *A Lesson in Loving*, starring Lee Merriwether and Richard Hatch.

The film, based on a true story, recounts through a series of flashbacks a couple's struggle to adopt a child with cystic fibrosis, after having reared two children of their own, each with the crippling respiratory disease.

Carol Richardson is a reference librarian at the Loma Linda University library.

Prime Time Film Premiers at Conference

by Carol Richardson

Donald Davenport's *A Lesson in Loving*, which premiered at the second conference of the Association of Adventist Forums Saturday evening, March 15, is such an important work on so many levels that to carp at its cinematic flaws seems downright mean-spirited. To begin with, for an Adventist writer to be taken seriously in the cutthroat world of prime-time television is not only a credit to Davenport's considerable talent, but represents a radical shift in Adventism's approach to the medium as well. *Faith for Today*'s willingness to commit the funds necessary to compete in the sophisticated prime-time market indicates that perhaps the "talking heads" of pre-dawn community service television have too limited an appeal. Extending the boundaries will mean venturing into costly territory.

However, *A Lesson in Loving* might just do the trick. Free of the deadly impulse to sermonize, *Lesson* tells the story of a young couple's losing one daughter to cystic fibrosis and possibly losing a second, yet reconciling themselves to these tragedies enough to seek to adopt a third child with this incurable malady.

Lee Merriwether plays a placement agent whose job it is to screen prospective adoptive parents. Still smarting from a placement gone bad for which she feels reponsible, Merriwether is especially wary of these two fresh faces. She will not be duped by sentimental do-gooders: why should an apparently healthy, happy couple seek out a child with this debilitating disease?

Through a series of flashbacks, we learn of John and Mary as childhood sweethearts, college students, newlyweds, and too-soon parents suddenly burdened with studies, debts, and a sick baby. After extensive testing, baby Angela is at last diagnosed to have cystic fibrosis, a chronic pul-

Catholic Bishop and SDA Diplomat Debate Central America

by George Colvin

Talk of liberation theology and the U.S. presence in Central America filled the conference session on the Third World. The principal participants were Don Sergio Mendez Arceo, retired Roman Catholic bishop of Cuernavaca, Mexico; John Kelley, an Adventist who directed the El Salvador election project for the United States Agency for International Development (AID); and Walter Douglas, professor of theology at Andrews University.

Speaking in Spanish with John Kelley translating, Don Sergio indicated the principles important to him: that God is understood through history, and that history itself is relative; the recent emphasis in Catholic theology on understanding Christ primarily as man, rather than primarily as God; and the liberation theology that stresses God's working in the world. These principles had led Don Sergio to stress Bible reading in the worship at Cuernavaca cathedral, and to become involved in advocating social change in Central America through liberation theology and socialism. He denounced militaristic "North American imperialism," the U.S. exploitation of other countries, and the U.S. "anti-communist crusade," which he thought ignored the fact that misery and poverty—not communism—are the roots of the problems there. While he urged the United States to impose limits on itself, he praised socialistically inclined groups like the World Council of Churches.

Though Don Sergio suggested that socialism was the "only way" for Christians to follow and that capitalism (because it pitted man against man) was "anti-Christian," he defined the socialism he supported as "democratic, participatory socialism" rather than historic socialism. In this "true socialism," capitalism is stripped of its political power and economic equality is established. This would enhance liberty and promote political and economic equality, he said.

In his comments, Kelley downplayed the relevance of theory and "isms" to events in Central America. He saw the peasants, in particular, functioning as both socialists, by working in common to produce products, and as capitalists, by selling them for the highest price. In Kelley's view, the work of earning day-to-day subsistence excluded "the luxury of ideology." In the same way, he said Christianity's eternal destiny transcended both capitalism and socialism.

Kelley hastened to distance himself from U.S. policy in Nicaragua and Honduras, which he said was "totally wrong," and confined himself to El Salvador. Tracing recent developments in El Salvador, Kelley said U.S. efforts had broken the "monopoly capitalism" that previously existed and supported the extensive land redistribution that

monary disease that results in early death. Feeling cheated of a "normal" firstborn, John and Mary gamble with Mendelian odds. A second daughter is born with the disease, and the parents face for the second time their child's ceaseless cries, choking bouts, life in and out of hospitals, and inevitable death.

They face, too, the knowledge that they choose to gamble, and while dealing with the resultant guilt and rage, John and Mary search for divine explanations for their daughters' short cruel lives. They do not find them, but do find an unexpected well of love for children afflicted with cystic fibrosis, which leads them to try to adopt another child with the disease after their own eldest daughter dies.

Where *Lesson* falters is not in the somewhat sentimental story, but in its telling. Flashbacks, though not unusual, can still be innovative (as, for example, in the backward flow of time in Harold Pinter's *Betrayal*, or in the three perceptions of a single event in Alan Ayckbourn's *Norman Conquests*). But the flashbacks in *Lesson* are so uniform, so linear, so literal, that the evocative power of reminiscence, with all its possibility for distortion and character revelation, is lost. Here it is mere reportage: two people tell the same story to a mostly distressed Lee Merriwether. (Never mind that the flashbacks were used to salvage old footage. Television does not necessarily reward thrift.)

Nevertheless, *Lesson* is certainly no worse than other TV movies of the death-and-dying ilk, and is better than most, sparing us maudlin *Love Story* death scenes or the manipulative mock heroics of *Terms of Endearment* and *Brian's Song*.

A Lesson in Loving is admittedly an experiment, but one that will be watched closely by those who hold the purse strings of the television ministry. A stronger commitment to prime-time will mean upping the ante—more money, less preaching—to reach that 94 percent of viewers for whom George Vandeman is indistinguishable from the test pattern Indian. The boundaries might prove to be well worth extending.

Carol Richardson is a reference librarian at the Loma Linda University library.

occurred after 1979. For this effort, the lives of U.S. workers were placed in danger from both left-wing guerillas and right-wing "death squads" seeking to restore previous conditions. Kelley also emphasized that the Catholic hierarchy in El Salvador agreed with U.S. efforts at social justice, though it disagreed with U.S. military assistance to the El Salvador government in its struggle against Marxist guerillas. While recognizing the dangers in escalating violence, Kelley defended the military assistance effort and attacked the guerillas as being interested primarily in obtaining power and excluding the United States from Central America rather than in social justice. Kelley concluded that his experiences had led him to believe that the United States was acting in Central America in a way that Christians could support.

Responding to Don Sergio and Kelley, Douglas said that theology must be related to social realities. Christianity could not be limited to personal salvation. He said liberation theology was rooted in God's liberating activity in Scripture, and defended liberation theology from the charge that it was identical with Marxism. In Douglas' view, the only similarity was that liberation theology borrows some "social theories" from Marxism, as theology in general commonly borrows from the social sciences. Classical Marxism emphasizes the urban workers, is concerned only with "economic salvation," opposes religion, and asserts that economic structures alone determine society. By contrast, liberation theology values the poor, is concerned with salvation of the whole person, emphasizes economic and spiritual realities, and believes that spirituality is a vital social force. Liberation theology also challenges the prevalent conformity of the church to its culture by presenting the idea of Christianity as a minority position.

As in most discussions, the speakers left at least as many loose ends hanging as they tied. Both Don Sergio and Douglas lauded socialism and liberation theology, but neither troubled to define them, or to examine their outcomes. Neither Don Sergio or Douglas discussed whether democratic capitalism might serve the liberty and equality of human rights better than socialism does. Douglas, in stressing that there was "no option between prayer and politics, between transformation of individuals and transformation of social conditions," left some apprehensive that his position risked unification of church and state—a persistent tendency in Catholic countries.

Although Douglas distinguished historic Marxism from liberation theology, he did not compare liberation theology with Marxism as it presently functions. The positions taken by Don Sergio, a leading figure in liberation theology, also suggested the similarity in social goals between liberation theology and Marxism.

Kelley, too, seemed to leave some questions open. In deprecating the importance of theory for everyday living, Kelley left some listeners wondering whether he had rated theory too lightly—especially in view of the mobilizing power historically shown by such theories as Christianity, Marxism, Zionism, and Nazism. In the context of the meeting, too, this approach left substantially unchallenged the theoretical assertions made by Douglas and Don Sergio.

Because the meeting occurred three days before the El Salvador election, the speakers' comments attracted the local press. A report of the meeting appeared on the front page of the San Bernardino *Sun* the next day.

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Adventist Women Meet To Discuss Equality and Liberation Theology

by Elizabeth Wear

More than usual excitment prevailed at the breakfast-lecture, March 18, hosted by the Inland Empire chapter of the Association of Adventist Women. The audience of approximately 150 was made up of physicians, conference and union officials as well as pastors, laypeople—with a fairly equal balance of men and women. The meeting took a non-aggressive, middle-ground look at the role of women in the Adventist Church. The featured speaker, Steve Daily, chaplain of the La Sierra campus of Loma Linda University, examined five theological themes in Adventist thought that have had important implications in how the church deals with sexual inequality. The themes were presented in the context of liberation theology and limited to those motifs most prominent in Adventist thought.

Daily asked first that Adventists re-examine their understanding of the gift of prophecy. He said that Ellen White was a gifted woman who used the talents she was given to God's glory, and that other women in the church may also give their talents to God's glory if the church will recognize their gifts.

Daily's second theme was that Adventist theology has failed to live up to the wholistic theology that it espouses. It has failed to develop the notion of social justice. Instead, it has adopted a hierarchical church structure which conflicts with its own theology. He saw the potential for change in this area as encouraging.

A third consideration Daily examined was eschatology. While Adventist eschatology has traditionally been linked with other-worldliness, isolationism, and a suspicion of socio-political movements, the church at the same time operates tremendous worldwide medical, educational, and institutional services. Daily's position was that the church has generally avoided and discouraged socio-political involvement even when issues of social justice have been at stake. This has been particularly true in the field of women's rights.

In regards to the matter of inspiration, Daily said that the church has never really outgrown its 19th century antipathy towards the feminist movement. With broader understanding of the nature of inspiration joined with higher education, and the application of the historical critical method to both Scripture and to the writings of Ellen White, the church is now better able to address the issue of sexual equality and to formulate a hermeneutic which will be sensitive to the concerns of liberation theology.

Lastly, there is a glaring contradiction between the strong Protestant emphasis, in Adventist theology, on the "priesthood of all believers," and the church's hierarchical subordination of women and laypeople in general. The church must be willing to consider new models and creative options in the 1980s.

Following the presentation, Alyce Pudewell, Pacific Union director for the Association of Adventist Women and chairperson for the morning session, opened the floor for questions. The audience expressed considerable concern over the lack of official response to women's issues. However, there was a sprinkling of encouraging comments on the fact that at least two churches have allowed women to baptize and that more churches are moving in that direction.

The Association of Adventist Women was started under the aegis of the Association of Adventist Forums. Membership information for the association, as well as a more detailed copy of Steve Daily's presentation, may be obtained by writing the Association of Adventist Women, Box 3884, Langley Park, MD 20787.

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Terrien on the Sabbath, *continued from page 7*

members to ignore criticisms regarding "new moons and Sabbaths," as evidence that Paul saw these celebrations as temporary, as shadows of reality. Reality for the Christians, was the fact that Jesus was alive.

In closing, Dr. Terrien maintained he was not suggesting a substitution of Sunday for Sabbath, but he did seem to chide his listeners for ignoring the great meaning Sunday should have for all Christians. Sabbath, he said, is a celebration of creation, a looking back. Sunday is a celebration of re-creation; it points forward to the hope of the resurrection and eternal life.

Although there was no time for formal audience response to Dr. Terrien's presentation, many questions were later raised by individuals who had heard him. Some felt he had virtually ignored Genesis 1 and a seven-day creation week as the real basis for Sabbath observance. Biblical scholars who heard him, question the 1275 B.C. date for the Exodus and also challenge the idea that the calendar provided the basis for Israel's initiation of a weekly Sabbath. In opposition to Dr. Terrien's assertion that the Sabbath commandment was given late, to a purely agrarian people, results of recent research have indicated that as early as patriarchal times the Hebrew economy was a mixed agrarian-nomadic system.

Dr. Terrien maintained he was not suggesting a substitution of Sunday for Sabbath.

Some pointed out that Jesus' violation of rules of Sabbath observance can be interpreted as his teaching the true meaning of the Sabbath, not an attempt to free mankind from the day's "tyranny." Further, despite the fact that the Sabbath of Passover weekend was doubtless a dark day for the disciples, some members of the audience suggested that Dr. Terrien failed to give clear New Testament evidence showing early Christian substitution of a hopeful Sunday for a somber Sabbath. Finally, some objected to his definition of Sabbath as simply a celebration of creation. It also points forward to re-creation; as Rabbi Heschel has said, Sabbath is, in fact, a "taste of eternity."

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thousands of orphans resume their educations in some other part of the world. Dr. Nguyet Mehlert, a graduate of Loma Linda University's School of Medicine, has provided counselling and access to abortions for rape victims since 1981. Robert Bainum, of Washington, D.C., has organized the Coalition for the Protection of Vietnamese Boat People to combat governmental indifference to the plight of the refugees. This group lobbies for such measures as linking U.S. financial assistance to Thailand with demands for the arrest and prosecution of the pirates. Branson concluded by urging the audience to take the part of the responsive remnant by lobbying public officials to act on behalf of the boat people.

The struggle between the remnant and the beast takes place anew in each generation.

Alex Kucharski recounted the sacrifice of Maximillian Kolbe within the confines of Auschwitz prison camp. Kucharski, who was arrested by the Gestapo in 1940, became friends with Father Kolbe, a former missionary to Japan, as they hauled rocks together for the camp's roads. Then, in July of 1941, a prisoner escaped from Auschwitz and, as was the custom, the guards randomly selected 10 other prisoners to die in retribution. As one of the 10 stepped forward, he exclaimed "My wife and children—I won't see them again." Father Kolbe immediately requested to take his place, explaining to the S.S. commander that he had no family. Surprisingly, the guards accepted Kolbe's offer and locked him in a solitary cell to die slowly from hunger. After the nine other prisoners had died, another prisoner was able to give Father Kolbe an injection of poison to end his suffering. For his part, Kucharski was transferred to Buchenwald in 1943 and survived the war. Today he continues to bear witness to the horrors of the Nazi regime.

Jonathan Butler presented a life sketch of Vladimir Shelkov, the former head of the All Union Church of True and Free Adventists in the Soviet Union. These Adventists believe the beast of the 20th century is their oppressive, athiestic government, and that to register with this government, to bear arms on its behalf, or to send children to its schools on Sabbath is to accept the mark of the beast. Shelkov provided a strong leadership for this group through his indomintable spirit and his fiesty pen. Over the years he personally wrote 110 works on religious freedom, church history, and civil rights; edited eight volumes of the writings of Ellen G. White; and circulated the works of numerous other writers by means of a clandestine press. The authorities never located the press, but Shelkov served a series of prison terms totaling more than 25 years for relentlessly arguing that Christians have the right and moral responsibility to oppose both state religions and athiestic governments. Shelkov died in prison in 1980 at the age of 84, his opposition to the beast undiminished to the end.

Nancy Bailey described the efforts of Amnesty International to obtain the release of "prisoners of conscience" throughout the world. This term applies to anybody who has been arrested for his or her beliefs, religion, sex, language, or race, and who has neither advocated nor participated in violence. Bailey presented a brief, bleak glimpse of prisoners who have recently been on Amnesty's files: a young woman in Paraguay who was beaten, burnt and drugged by local authorities, but never charged with any crime; a university professor in El Salvador who was abducted and tortured by the police, and then forced to sign a phoney confession to prevent his keepers from chopping off the ears of his 18-month-old son; a Catholic bishop in China who was sentenced to 10 years in prison for maintaining "subversive" ties with the Vatican; a former Justice Minister of Malawai and his wife who have received the death sentence for expressing political ideas in opposition to the government. Amnesty International assists these prisoners of conscience by publicizing the abuses of their civil rights and in rallying public support for their release.

The All Union Church of True and Free Adventists in the Soviet Union believe the beast of the 20th century is their oppressive, atheistic government.

Charles Teel, Jr., concluded the service by challenging the spiritual descendants of the Adventist pioneers to continue to recognize the "Babylonian" powers at work in this world, to respond as a faithful remnant community, and to cherish the hope for the day when the desert shall blossom as a rose.

Karen Bottomley, who is completing her doctorate in European History at the University of Toronto, is an executive with a seismic exploration firm in Calgary, Alberta, Canada, that surveys the ocean floor for oil.

then taught for several years in Canadian public schools. During this time, he read extensively in the field of geology and began to publish articles in Adventist journals on the subject of creationism. In 1902 he published his first book, in which he sought to refute the idea of a geologic column of fossil-bearing strata. Meanwhile, he obtained teaching positions in several Adventist secondary schools in California. According to the *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia,* he received a bachelor's degree from Loma Linda College in 1912, and a few years later a master's degree from Pacific Union College, both of them honorary degrees. Price then taught geology successively in the College of Medical Evangelists, Pacific Union College, Union College, Stanborough College, Emmanuel Missionary College, and Walla Walla College, where he retired in 1938.

Professor Price's main thesis, which he propounded in about 20 books (some of them published at his own expense), was that the geologic column of fossils, increasing in complexity from the bottom strata to the top strata, was a theory, advanced by evolutionary geologists, that was not true to geological facts. He tried to show that the different sedimentary strata occurred in many places in a sequence different from that advocated by evolutionary geologists, and that there is no verifiable order of fossils from the simple to the complex in the strata of the earth. He asserted that the Genesis flood was responsible for all the major sedimentary strata, and that they were all laid down within the short time of the flood. All life forms preserved as fossils had been created about 6,000 years ago in six literal, 24-hour days, and there was no order to the fossils in the geological record.

Not having had academic training in geology, nor being psychologically interested in field studies, Professor Price was mainly a theoretical critic of evolutionary geologists. Often in class, while showing us pictures of some geological feature high on a mountainside, he would remark, "Why should I risk my neck trying to climb up there when the pictures show it very clearly?" (I had the impression that physically he was not a strong nor an active person. Sometimes in class he could become very emotional, particularly if he discovered a student cheating or being unruly. But Professor Price was a compassionate man, always keenly interested in his students. While I was enrolled in his classes he discovered my lifelong affliction of poor eyesight. Every time I chanced to meet him in the next 30 years he inquired with much concern about further visual impairment.)

Despite being handicapped by his lack of scientific training, Professor Price must be credited for creating a very deep-seated interest in geology and scientific creationism in the Adventist church. His influence eventually led the church to finance training in geology for some of its gifted science teachers, and to support the Geoscience Research Institute. He was a brilliant man who remained mentally active and interested in geology up until his death at age 91. When a group of us, who had been his former students, asked what we could give him for his 90th birthday, he provided the titles of two large scientific books on the new discipline of oceanographic geology.

About the time Professor Price's work was drawing to a close, two biology teachers in our colleges began to write on aspects of geology that related to Adventist views of cosmology (a branch of philosophy dealing with the origin, processes, and structure of the universe). These were Harold W. Clark, of Pacific Union College, and Frank L. Marsh, of Emmanuel Missionary College. Though neither of them had received academic training in geology, their graduate studies in biology enabled them to write penetrating material on creationism which was much appreciated by Adventists. Apparently Professor Clark was the first Adventist writer who accepted the validity

of the geologic column and attempted to explain the fossils in it by his unique "ecological zonation" theory.

The first Adventist with specific training in geology, of whom I know, was Clifford L. Burdick, who, near the end of World War I, earned a bachelor's degree with a minor in geology from Milton College, a Seventh-day Baptist institution in Wisconsin. He then taught chemistry and geology in public high school, during which time he became a Seventh-day Adventist. Despite advice from W. E. Howell, educational director of the General Conference, not to attend university, he enrolled in a graduate program in geology at the University of Wisconsin (soon dropping out because of Sabbath problems). Burdick published several dozen creationist articles in Adventist journals; one article caused him trouble when it came into the hands of his professors at the University of Arizona, where he was enrolled as a doctoral candidate in 1958, when I first met him.

About this time, a significant event took place in the study of geology in the Adventist church. As an associate secretary in the education department of the General Conference, it was my responsibility every summer to arrange "the college teacher section meetings." For 1956, the group of teachers were from the applied arts and natural sciences departments, and met at Union College in August. The papers and discussions among the science teachers centered on the increasing difficulties they were encountering in answering some of the problems modern geology presented to believers of the biblical account of origins of the earth and life upon it. The science teachers recommended that the General Conference should finance some Adventist scientists for graduate studies in geology so they could conduct research and write effectively on problems geology presented to creationists.

One of the major responsibilities of the leaders of our church is to provide an atmosphere in which Adventist scholars can conduct research scientifically and responsibly without suspicion coming upon them.

E. E. Cossentine, the director of the Department of Education, and I presented this recommendation twice to the Adventist college presidents. At Canadian Union College, in the summer of 1957, they approved the idea and E. E. Cossentine presented it to R. R. Figuhr, the president of the General Conference.

Commitment to Truth: 1954–1966

Reuben Figuhr had gotten his professional experience largely in missionary service. In 1923, a year after his graduation from Walla Walla College, he accepted a mission appointment to the Philippine Islands, where he served for 18 years, the last 10 as president of our work in that country. He was elected as president of our work in South America in 1941, where he served for nine years until becoming, in 1950, a general vice president at the General Conference in Washington, D.C. Four years later he was elected president of the world church.

Though not a trained scholar, Reuben Figuhr was much interested in intellectual matters and was a strong supporter of Adventist educators. During his administration, with his strong leadership, the church established two universities: Andrews University in 1957, and Loma Linda University in 1961. Figuhr helped get approval of the suggestion of F. D. Nichol, editor of the *Adventist Review,* that a Seventh-day Adventist bible commentary be published. With the General Conference president's leadership, the General Conference Committee set up two study groups which developed two ground-breaking books: *Seventh-day*

Adventists Answer Questions on Doctrine (1957) and *Problems in Bible Translation* (1954). It was due to Figuhr's sensitivity to concerns expressed by biblical scholars, about the denomination's theological problems, that a committee of biblical scholars, editors, and a few administrators was appointed to study sensitive problems in the biblical book of Daniel.

The recommendation that the General Conference financially support trained geologists was well-received. Figuhr shepherded the recommendations through the General Conference officers (August 28, 1957), the General Conference Committee (August 29, 1957), and the Annual Council of the General Conference Committee (October 25, 1957). The last authorization provided an annual budget of $13,500 to finance graduate study in geology for "two mature, experienced men of proven loyalty." The General Conference Committee also approved the appointment of a standing committee to administer the project, and "to make such recommendations as may be necessary to implement the progressive development of the program," including recommending names of people to be appointed for study. R. R. Fighur was elected chairperson of the committee on October 28, 1959, and chaired it until he retired in 1966.

My teacher for Greek II and Dogmatic Theology (for which he had no training) was George McCready Price, who often diverged from the assigned topic to his geological interests.

Early minutes of the committee show that it saw as its function to encourage the colleges to give leaves-of-absence to certain science teachers, who would then take graduate studies in geology, supported by financial grants from the committee's budget. These teachers were to return to their posts to teach classes in creationism and to help their faculty colleagues answer questions posed by evolutionary geologists. The committee authorized E. E. Cossentine to explore, with their respective college presidents, the possibility of such training for P. E. Hare, Ray Underhill, Harold Coffin, and Earnest Booth. (The minutes indicate that a longer period of study, and special assignments, were envisioned for Dr. Booth.)

The college presidents were cool to the overtures of the committee, for they did not want to lose the services of some of their best teachers. This caused a change in planning. The committee concluded they would have to employ a staff of their own and give them professional training in geology. Following this preparation, the geologists would be assigned to full-time research, writing, and field conferences and institutes for Adventist science and religion teachers, not only in the North American Division, but also in the overseas fields.

The committee invited Dr. Frank L. Marsh, who had an established reputation as a defender of creationism (April 17, 1958). to join the endeavor. He was granted a one-year leave-of-absence for geological studies, which he chose to take at Michigan State University. The committee discussed the possibility of inviting Clifford Burdick to join the staff, but because in 1958 he was already 65 years old, and was just starting work on an ambitious dissertation project, they turned away from it. (They did authorize a $1,000 grant to encourage him in his research.) Instead, on May 8, 1958, the General Conference Committee invited P. E. Hare, of the Pacific Union College chemistry department, to join the staff, and granted him a two-year leave to earn a doctoral degree in geochemistry, which he chose to do at the California Institute of Technology. Hare was already studying

geology part time at the University of California, Berkeley.

In January of 1960, the committee appointed Richard Ritland to the staff. Ritland was the first appointee who was already professionally trained, having earned a doctorate in paleontology and comparative anatomy from Harvard University before he started teaching anatomy at Loma Linda University. Dr. Ariel Roth was invited in 1963 to participate in the new endeavor, but declined. Instead, he joined the biology department of Loma Linda University. Later he accepted half-time employment with the new project, also studying geology at the University of California at Riverside. He joined the staff full time in 1971. They invited Dr. Harold Coffin in 1964 to join the group for research in the paleontology of invertebrates. In the summer of 1965, Harold James, who was studying geology at the University of Massachusetts, was appointed to the staff and financed to complete his doctoral studies in sedimentology at Princeton University. Finally, in 1967 the committee called Edward Lugenbeal and financed his doctorate in the anthropology of early man at the University of Wisconsin. Thus, the guiding committee sought to build a research staff with competence in the various specialties of geology. The original authorization for "two mature persons" had indeed gone through a "progressive development."

In February 1962, the Committee on the Teaching of Geology and Paleontology, whose membership was made up of people who could administer the business affairs and guide the general direction of the project, recommended, and the General Conference Committee voted, the appointment of another group composed of people able to counsel the staff in their research and publishing activity. This committee, which was known as the Consultant Committee on Geoscience Research, was authorized to invite various scientists and religion teachers from our colleges and universities to join them in listening to and counseling the staff about their research and publications. This group met once or twice a year and served as a sounding board on sensitive problems in geology and creationism.

In the meantime, after fumbling with several names, the project was named the Geoscience Research Institute. The Committee on Teaching of Geology and Paleontology became the Board of Directors of the Geoscience Research Institute.

I have given this historical development as the background for my evaluation of R.R. Figuhr's administration in its relationship to the study and teaching of geology in the

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I have been told on reliable authority that the Institute staff were not in favor of including a reference to 6,000 years in the "Statement of Affirmation" *(see page 59).*

Adventist church. Much of the impetus given to the study of geology among Adventists from 1957 onward was due to his wisdom and insight. Figuhr not only led out in providing organization and funding, but also encouraged the new staff to do basic research. He encouraged field travel and provided funds to purchase equipment for a carbon-14 laboratory, becoming greatly disappointed when this equipment was sold after Edward Hare left the staff of the Geoscience Research Institute in 1964. Figuhr provided funds to purchase a building for the Institute staff, and for an excellent research library in geology.

Although there were other contributing factors, it was Elder Figuhr's insistence that the staff engage in basic research which led in 1964 to a change in leadership of the Institute, when it became apparent that the current director, Frank L. Marsh, did not care to engage in basic research. This was

due in part to Marsh's minimal training in geology, partly to his age, and partly to his firm belief that the record in the earth's strata was misleading on the subject of origins. He preferred to discuss origins on the basis of interpreting inspired writings. While recognizing the necessity for guidance from such writings, the committee wanted the Institute to apply itself to scientific research. Dr. Ritland was appointed the next director of the Institute. At that time, 1962, I was president of Andrews University and was assigned the chairmanship of the newly formed Consultant Committee on Geoscience Research. I made a special effort to become acquainted with the issues which the geoscience group were addressing. I read all the papers produced by the staff, and relevant material which they recommended. One of the major problems that led to some polarization within the staff and also within the interested Adventist scholarly community concerned the Genesis flood, namely: are all the major periods and systems of the geologic column the result of Noah's flood, or are the flood deposits to be found only in the upper layers in the Cretaceous or Tertiary?

Discussion centered largely around two sets of data: first, did the layered fossil forests of the Yellowstone and Nova Scotia areas grow successively in their present locations? One member of the staff advocated that such was the case, and that the data collected by counting the annual growth rings in the successive layers of trees requires far more time than allowed for in the 6,000-year chronology for life on the earth.

The staff member had also done extensive reading and research in phylogeny, or the historical development of a species of plants or animals, as seen in the fossil record. He introduced a second set of troublesome data that the majority of organisms in the lower levels of the geological column are not found in the upper levels, apparently having become extinct when those strata were laid down. In contrast, a large part of the forms of life living today are found as fossils in the upper layers of the geologic column.

This staff member's studies in biogeography, the biological study of the geographic distribution of animals and plants, had made it clear to him that some orders and many families, genera, and species unique to specific areas of our present world (armadillos, ground sloths, anteaters, certain groups of marsupials, rodents, and many other forms) were also unique to those same geographic areas in the fossil record. The obvious conclusion is that the strata in which these fossils are preserved (mainly those of the Cenozoic period) were laid down subsequent to the Genesis flood, for if all the strata of the geologic column were laid down during the flood, and present life forms are the descendants of animals and plants saved in the ark, one would expect to find fossils of these plants and animals in many places and not just where those plants and animals now live on the earth. No issue raised as much heat among some members of the staff (and still does!) as these arguments from phylogeny and biogeography.

Conversely, others on the staff advocated that the fossil forests had been floated in to their present locations in a short time by successive waves of Noah's flood, and concentrated their research on trying to develop scientifically supportable flood models to account for the geologic column.

As divisiveness increased over these and other issues, including the validity of various geochronometers (radioactive materials used to date fossil records), someone accused me of being a "fence straddler" and one who held "liberal" views on creationist issues, particularly in regard to a short chronology for life upon the earth. I thought that it was premature to take a definitive position for either theory about the fossil forests, and that much research needed to be done on the subject. As chairperson of the Consultant Committee, I tried to play mediator. I encouraged open

investigation and discussion, believing then, as I still do, that creationists must look at all the facts and be wary of developing creationist models built on selective data. But at that time, 1964, a letter was sent to the General Conference president alleging that the consultant committee was "stacked" with people who did not accept the teachings of Ellen White on earth history, and implying that the chairperson was one of them.[1]

About that time, several professors in the theological seminary were heavily criticised by various conference presidents for liberal theological views. One of the influential senior conference presidents talked to me about it: "Reports are being circulated that you, too, President Hammill, do not believe that life on the earth is only 6,000 years old." I thanked him for his frankness and immediately arranged a meeting with President Figuhr and his chief advisors to explain my views about the 6,000-year chronology.

Before becoming an Adventist in college, I had been exposed in public school to teachings about evolution and had read fairly widely about it. However, when I converted to Christianity, I wholeheartedly accepted creation in six literal days, and have believed it ever since that time. In Professor Price's classes I accepted the position he held at that time, that God had created the universe *ex nihilo* a long time ago, but it was only about 6,000 years ago that God had made the earth fit for man. I had also studied under Dr. Marsh at the theological seminary and believed that I stood in the mainstream of enlightened Seventh-day Adventists.

When I studied at the University of Chicago, one of my comprehensive examinations for my doctorate was on ancient Egyptian history. At the Oriental Institute, I studied about the long period of pre-history leading up to the formation of Egyptian civilization and the successive kingdoms of more than 30 different dynasties. I had been surprised to learn that in strata underlying the ancient pyramids of the early dynasties there were evidences of a very long development of various cultures, including the primitive hand-ax, stone-age culture similar to the Acheulian in France and Germany.

At the meeting with Reuben Figuhr, I explained to him and some of his associates my views about the great age of Egyptian civilization. I referred to the discovery by Lynn H. Wood, a professor in the Adventist seminary, of a record of an ancient eclipse mentioned on an Egyptian inscription, which fixed without question the beginning of the 12th Egyptian dynasty of kings at 1991 B.C. On the basis of this datum, it was impossible for the flood to have occurred at 2348 B.C., as Bishop Ussher's chronology asserted, because there is no way that all the events that had happened in Egypt up to that time could be crowded into the 357 years between 2348 B.C. and 1991 B.C. Thus, the 6,000-year chronological scheme has to be expanded, and life on earth has existed longer than 6,000 years.

The data collected in the layered fossil forests of Yellowstone requires far more time than allowed for in the 6,000-year chronology.

I stated that I trusted implicitly in God's inspired word, but that word does not mention 6,000 years and I could not accept chronologies, based on interpretations of certain passages of the Old Testament, which my knowledge of the Hebrew Bible made it impossible for me to accept. My major field of graduate studies had been in the Hebrew literature of the Old Testament, and I was aware of how imprecisely some Hebrew writers often used round numbers. Many generation gaps could be demonstrated by comparing the various biblical geneological lists. Moreover, whenever we have duplicate accounts in the Bible of the

same event or series of events, we often find different lengths of time cited. If we had duplicate accounts of other events recorded in the Bible, this human element of inspiration, of which Ellen White speaks, would no doubt show itself also.[2] But in all this, God's purpose in revealing to mankind His will and the way to salvation always stands out clearly and unmistakably. I explained that with the vast explosion of knowledge in recent centuries, data accumulates to the extent that reasonable men must acknowledge certain historical dates as proven, no matter what philosophical or religious beliefs they hold. I was convinced that historical data concerning the history of civilizations in the Mesopotamian and Nile valleys proved that life has existed on the earth for more than 6,000 years, however, I did not think in terms of hundreds of thousands or millions of years. Moreover, evidences from geology, such as the successive periods of glaciation on top of fossil forests, and of ancient, superimposed drainage basins (such as those of the Green River and Colorado River) compelled me to look beyond the 6,000-year chronology which some claim the Bible supports. R. R. Figuhr and his associates seemed satisfied with my explanation, and I had no further problems on that issue during my administration.

The policies and programs R. R. Figuhr instituted and supported, as well as the type and quality of people he helped appoint to the Institute staff, bear witness to the openness of his mind to new ideas and approaches. In my capacity as chairperson of the Consultant Committee on Geoscience Research, I often discussed sensitive areas of geology and biblical cosmology with Reuben Figuhr. I found him very interested in ideas developed by scientific research. This General Conference president was not panicked by critical "fan mail," nor could he be pressured to back away from the study of sensitive areas of denominational thought and life. When an "*Omega* attack" was made against ideas contained in the book *Seventh-day Adventists Answer Questions on Doctrine,* he met it decisively. Reuben R. Figuhr's commitment to theological and scientific truth was very great. Seventh-day Adventist scholars and teachers owe a very large debt of gratitude to this quiet, but determined and thoughtful church leader.

The Conservative Defense: 1966–1978

When R. R. Figuhr retired in June of 1966, he was succeeded by Robert H. Pierson. After finishing the two-year ministerial course at Southern Junior College, Robert Pierson had become an active evangelist, first in this country and then in India. There his spiritual qualities and native leadership ability quickly led to administrative positions. He served first as a top-level church administrator in the Caribbean, then in local conferences in the United States, and finally as president of two world divisions of the Seventh-day Adventist church: in Southern Asia and later in Southern Africa. While serving in the latter post, Pierson was elected to the presidency of the Seventh-day Adventist world church.

I worked closely with Elder Pierson on various projects and committees from 1954 onward, and it was always a pleasure to serve with him, partly because one could disagree with him without his getting upset. Robert Pierson was intelligent, quick to grasp the implications of facts and ideas, and always cheerful and energetic. He also had a fine sense of humor. Above all, Pierson was a deeply spiritual leader who always sought divine guidance when dealing with difficult situations.

Since most of his career had been spent in the mission fields, when Elder Pierson became president of the General Conference he was not well-acquainted with the theological tensions which had led to the establishment of the Geoscience Research Institute, nor with the mushrooming problem of academic freedom in our colleges and rapidly growing new universities. However,

Elder Pierson diligently became knowledgeable about these aspects of the church. He appointed M. V. Campbell, one of his general vice presidents, to serve as the chairperson of the Geoscience Institute, but he himself faithfully attended the board meetings.

Despite constant demand for his time and attention, Elder Pierson attended the second major geology field conference during the summer of 1968. Noticeable tension and polarised views, existing both within the Geoscience Institute staff and between some Adventist scientists and church administrators, dominated this field tour. In the earliest years of the Institute, the staff had had to concentrate on helping the church understand some fairly simple concepts about geology. There were still quite a few teachers and church members who denied that dinosaurs had ever existed, or that glacial ice sheets had at several successive times covered large parts of North America and Europe. As a holdover from the teachings of Professor Price, many Adventists still believed that the concept of a geologic column of sedimentary rocks was a figment of the geologists' imaginations. The Institute staff addressed itself to such issues in their early days. Articles in our periodicals, and books such as Dr. Ritland's *Search for Meaning in Nature* (1966) and Dr. Coffin's *Creation—Accident or Design* (1969), were very helpful to the church on these matters.

With the vast explosion of knowledge in recent centuries, reasonable men must acknowledge certain historical dates as proven, no matter what philosophical or religious beliefs they hold.

But by the time of the geology field tour of 1968, questions not so easily answered were being discussed. How much of the geologic column was a result of the Flood? Where does the Flood fit in the column? How much time is necessary to account for the successively layered fossil forests of the Absaroka area in Montana and Wyoming, and in Nova Scotia? How much time transpired in the development of the many successive basalt layers of the Columbia River basin, and of the evidence of extensive glaciation above them? What is the validity of the various geochronometers? How long did it take for the coral reefs to form or for the superimposed drainage basins of the Tertiary and Quaternary to develop?

The Geoscience Research Institute staff had prepared excellent background material and sent it to the delegates ahead of time. Due to his heavy program, Elder Pierson, as well as some of the other denominational leaders on the tour, had not read many of the articles and there was no time to do so on the trip. Moreover, Elder Pierson's extensive mail was waiting for him at the end of most days, and sometimes he had to miss important lectures to read and answer it. This made it difficult to get the facts lying back of the ideas being discussed on the trip. One lecture, by a physical chemist about the length of time indicated by certain geochronometers, was particularly upsetting.

The influence of this tour on Elder Pierson was significant. Although he wanted to support scientific investigation, his strong conservatism and his implicit faith in the inerrancy of Ellen White's statements on biblical chronology led him to reject the view of many that Ellen White's understanding of early biblical dates was based on Bishop Ussher's dates, which were printed in the margins of the Bibles of her time. He instinctively reacted against research data which looked like it might prove more than 6,000 years of earth history. Several years after Elder Pierson became president of the General Conference, questions about my beliefs were again raised when several seminary teachers left the faculty under

heavy criticism. Again, I tried to make clear to Robert Pierson, W. J. Hackett, and the other leaders my views of the 6,000-year chronological interpretation of biblical data. Their reaction was not quite the same as that of Reuben Figuhr,, although they did not regard my views as outside the borders of acceptable Adventist beliefs. They expressed confidence in me and continued to support me in my work at Andrews.

At the Annual Council following the 1968 field tour, W. J. Hackett was elected as a general vice president of the General Conference, and as soon as he arrived at world headquarters he was assigned to serve as chairperson of the Geoscience Research Institute board of directors (January 9, 1969), replacing M. V. Campbell. Elder Hackett had attended the 1968 field tour, and he had reacted the way Elder Pierson had. Under his conservative leadership, important changes took place in the Geoscience Research Institute. The Consultant Committee on Geoscience Research was terminated and a new emphasis was instituted for staff activities. Research tended to concentrate on selected areas where the data were most supportive of the 6,000-year biblical chronology of Bishop Ussher. Before long, the tacit policy arrived at in the 1950s during the General Conference presidency of W. H. Branson (to the effect that the 6,000-year chronology need not be emphasized in Seventh-day Adventists publications) was abandoned. Moreover, the new plan called for the Institute staff to devote more of its time to holding creationism conferences on college campuses and to participating in public hearings relative to the teaching of evolution in public schools, plus similar activities. This was not congenial to Dr. Ritland, the director of the Institute, who was most interested in pure research. He resigned in 1971 and was replaced a little over a year later by Robert H. Brown, who was willing to support the new emphasis. In the next few years two other staff members left. These vacancies were filled with individuals who were comfortable with the new orientation of the Institute.

In the spring of 1976, Elder Pierson invited me to become a general vice president of the General Conference and to work with him on two special projects: reorganizing the division structure in Africa and establishing four or five full-fledged theological seminaries in key places around the world. At that time I had served as president of Andrews University during 13 years of rapid development of the facilities, the curricula, and of a faculty oriented to university level teaching and research. I was worn out from the heavy work load and the tensions of helping our leaders and people understand what a university really is and the role it would fill in the church. High inflation was making it increasingly burdensome to operate Andrews University on sound financial and academic bases. I was ready for a change, and I think quite a few others were also.

There were still quite a few teachers and church members who denied that dinosaurs had ever existed. . . .

In the following four years during which I served as a general vice president, I tried to present a viewpoint not often expressed on that level of church administration. I emphasized basic research on the part of all members of the Geoscience Research Institute staff. I urged that we not impede free inquiry, and that those sometimes labeled as liberals should be encouraged to state their views.

During this period of my participation in General Conference leadership, something occurred that has resulted in a number of inquiries, namely, the development of a more or less official statement of consensus about biblical teaching on the subject of the creation and early history of the earth,

initiated by W. J. Hackett. The first draft was made by an *ad hoc* group drawn from the participants in a geology field trip conducted by the Institute during the summer of 1976. Intended as the starting point for discussion of current Adventist beliefs about creationism, the document underwent many revisions. I was not closely associated with developing the document, although I was present when it was discussed by the General Conference officers and presidents of our world divisions in October, 1977, and at a lengthy discussion at the Nosoca Pines Conference in February of 1978. I also participated with Elders Hackett and Eva when that document and the companion statement on inspiration and revelation were discussed with the religion and science faculties in several of our colleges.[3]

The statement was eventually published in the *Adventist Review* (June 17, 1980). The clause that caused the most debate reads: "Accepting the Bible time-frame, which clearly indicates a short history for life and the human race upon the earth . . ." Quite a few people wanted the statement to assert that the extent of earth history was embraced within 6,000 years, and at some stages in the development of the document, a clause to that effect was embodied in it. In all these discussions, the staff of the Geoscience Research Institute consistently favored including only a reference to a "short chronology for earth history."

Robert H. Pierson resigned his post as president of the Seventh-day Adventist church in October of 1978, to alleviate physical problems caused by long years of heavy work and stress. The Annual Council delegates did not take long to decide upon Neal C. Wilson as his successor.

Maintaining the Defense: 1978–1984

Elder Wilson had spent his youth with missionary parents in Africa and India, where he had taken his elementary and secondary education before attending and graduating from Pacific Union College. After studying at the seminary, Elder Wilson was appointed to mission service in Egypt, where he subsequently spent more than a decade. After returning to the United States, he served successively in several posts on the local conference level, then as president of the Columbia Union Conference, and finally for eight years in close association with Elder Pierson as vice president of the North American Division of the General Conference. He served as chairperson of both the Board of Higher Education for North America and the Board of Trustees of Loma Linda University. Thus he was well-acquainted with the theological and academic stresses within the church in North America.

Recently, another "Statement of Affirmation" relative to creation and the chronology of earth history was published jointly by the *Adventist Review* (December 8, 1983) and *Ministry* (December, 1983). The document ascribes its source as "the participants of the 1983 Geoscience Field Conference," and the names are given at the end. Participating in the trip were most of the presidents of our world divisions, most of the key officers of the General Conference, and several editors of our church papers. The affirmation on time reads: "That the biblical record requires a short chronology of approximately 6,000 years in contrast to tens of thousands or millions of years." Although the Geoscience Research Institute staff planned and directed the field trip, none of the staff are included at the end of the document. I have been told on reliable authority that the Institute staff were not in favor of including a reference to 6,000 years, although they certainly do not advocate "tens of thousands or millions of years." In such statements about time, the staff have consistently argued for letting the matter stand as "a short chronology of earth history."

While he was still vice president for the

North American Division, Elder Wilson showed considerable interest in the work of the Geoscience Research Institute. As a member of its board of directors, he attended meetings faithfully and had been on one of its earlier field tours. He heartily supported the concept of a geology field tour for North American Division administrators; when it was arranged for the summer of 1977, he put considerable pressure on the union presidents to be present. On the tour, he attended all the meetings and was an interested participant, asking questions and making observations. Elder Wilson seemed to be better informed than most church leaders on the problems of a short chronology for earth history. During his many years of service in Egypt, he had become acquainted with the long span of ancient Egyptian dynasties, and did not seem to be unduly disturbed by the fact that they did not fit with the conservative Adventist interpretation of a 6,000-year maximum for earth's history. As far as I can discover, Elder Wilson has not published any views on the problems of geoscience, but he has encouraged research and publication by others. During his administration, funds have been provided from the general church treasury for Seventh-day Adventist scientists to research geological problems related to biblical creationism. (One would wish that more Adventist scientists would participate.)

During Elder Wilson's administration as vice president of the North American Division and as chairperson of the Loma Linda University board of trustees, approval was given for Loma Linda University to offer bachelor's and master's programs in geology: a giant step forward for Seventh-day Adventist geologists. The General Conference provided a $125,000 annual grant to support these and the graduate program in biology. this was gratifying for those of us who for decades had wanted geology taught in the Adventist educational system. To give greater breadth and depth of faculty for this new curriculum in 1980, the headquarters of the Geoscience Research Institute were moved from Berrien Springs, Mich., to Loma Linda University in Calif.

Examining the Evidence

In our effort to understand what the Book of Inspiration has to say about origins and earth history, too little attention is being given to analyzing the Bible with carefully thought-out and rigorously applied interpretive methods comparable to the methods scientists use to study the Book of Nature. Correctly understanding biblical cosmology requires carefully evaluating the assumptions, literary devices, and technical terms which the biblical writer brought to his effort to set forth God's message.

Neal Wilson had become acquainted with the long span of Egyptian dynasties and did not seem to be unduly disturbed by the fact that they did not fit with a conservative Adventist chronology.

This neglect is understandable, in a way, for most people who study what the Bible has to say about origins assume that the Bible writers had the same knowledge about the universe and the solar system which we have today. Moreover, most Adventists, including ministers, give preference to Ellen White's writing on cosmology because she wrote in our language and time, whereas they are unable to read the Bible in the languages in which it was written. They know that in reading the Bible in translation they are coming to it through another person or people. They do not have the skills to dig into the full implication of words or the shades of meaning in the syntax, tenses, and modes of the ancient languages. But those who don't understand the biblical languages ought to give more weight than they do to the counsel of those who are able to conduct research into the Bible as it was

originally written. (I am thankful that the number of Adventists with such training is considerable, and is being augmented year by year.)

No doubt those who neglect the study of the Bible in preference for Ellen White's accounts of early history are unaware of what they are doing and would, in fact, warmly deny it, but my close acquaintance with many ministers and leaders indicates this is indeed so. I appreciate the difficult theological and administrative problems our leaders face, and I concur in their desires to preserve the unity and fellowship of the Adventist church. At this stage in our denomination's history, I prefer that we have conservative leaders, for conservatism is in line with the central consensus of our members. Our leaders, in the face of the many problems now present in the church, must steer a course that will enable the church to live, to grow, and to solve its problems as the providence of God shall indicate. In the meantime, they should support those who keep the Bible in a predominant place while discussing doctrinal problems. This is the *sine qua non* of the church's continued existence. One of the major responsibilities of the leaders of our church is to provide an atmosphere in which Adventist scholars can conduct their research scientifically and responsibly without suspicion coming upon them.

Adventists should allow no theory to stand in the way of the search for truth, for truth is a part of ultimate reality, and our commitment to it must be absolute. If we cannot accept concepts that seem to numerous believers to be fully supported by incontrovertible biblical and scientific data because to do so would change past teachings, then we will be in a critical condition spiritually. God is the embodiment of truth, and in our search we must keep close to His revelation of truth. The church is God's church, and responsible scholars will cherish its unity, making a distinction between research and advocacy. They will not create divisiveness by the premature or sole dissemination of unsettling concepts. Scholars and church leaders must have confidence in one another and work together, realizing that it is best to move very slowly when there is no clear consensus on belief and action.

At the same time, all Adventists need to be aware of certain human tendencies as expressed by Lester C. Thurow in another connection: "Facts are difficult to deal with when they conflict with theory. And before changing theories most human beings will spend long periods of time pretending that the facts do not exist, hoping that the facts will magically go away, or denying that the facts are important. Only if the facts are very painful and very persistent will they deal with the fundamental inconsistencies in their world views."[4] As a church, we are encountering some very persistent and painful facts which require calm, thorough, and honest investigation. Among these are geochronometers, and early man and his place in the geologic column. We look to the staff of the Geoscience Research Institute to help us all in these particular investigations.

As originally conceived, the General Conference's purpose for preparing key individuals with expertise in geology was, first, that they might help our science and Bible teachers find solutions to the problems being raised for creationists by the evolutionary geologists; and second, to help our ministers and interested laypeople become acquainted with scientific support for creationist views. The Institute has succeeded quite well in achieving these goals through its publications, geology field trips, and creationist classes and seminars conducted on the campuses of our colleges and universities.

In recent years, a few in the Adventist scholarly community have asserted that the Geoscience Research Institute staff give so much emphasis to what the staff terms "creationist apologetics," that they may be inadvertently minimizing the importance of

geology as a valuable discipline in itself. If this were to happen, it would be a reversion to approximately the same view of geological studies held by Professor Price, who conceived of himself mainly as a defender of creationism and the 6,000-year life span for earth, rather than as a scientist using geology as a means for finding out what the rocks and strata of the earth might teach us about their own history. The policy of appointing to its staff only arch-conservatives has isolated the Geoscience Research Institute from many in the community of Adventist scholars, and reduced its ability to help them.

Geology is an academic discipline in which careful study and research can help us to learn more than we now know about the early history of the earth. It is God who gave us inquiring minds and logical ability. As Christian scholars we must examine carefully all geological data that is available, and exercise great care against ignoring or passing lightly over data that does not mesh with models of early earth history established by religious faith. Such models are extremely important to Christians, but in scientific inquiry all available data must be taken into account as we try to understand the twin books of revelation and of nature.

I am extremely grateful that God in His providence led me to the Seventh-day Adventist church. Its interpretation of God's Word is closer to the true intent of that word than that of any other religious group. Life within the Adventist church has been infinitely richer and more satisfying than any other I could have chosen. I am also grateful for the contribution Adventist geologists and scientists have made to my life. George McCready Price, Frank Marsh, Richard Ritland, P.E. Hare, Harold Coffin, Robert Brown, Ariel Roth, and Ed Lugenbeal have all helped open my eyes to the wonders of the universe and in the earth to which I had been blind before my association with them. One of the greatest blessings in life is to understand what has gone on in the earth before you came along, and what is happening to you and others as you live out your days. The Adventist church and the Adventist geologists and scholars in many fields have all helped me to achieve such an understanding, indeed, to achieve an inner serenity. But my curiosity has not dulled one iota. I remain committed to the search for truth and to understanding about all that is and is coming to be in every area of human activity and thought.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Other members of the committee were W.G.C. Murdoch, Ariel Roth and E. R. Thiele, all from Andrews University, and H. W. Lowe, General Conference field secretary, who was serving as chairman of the Daniel Committee and of the Defense Literature Committee. I considered all of them to be conservative Adventists.

2. *Selected Messages*, Vol. 1, pp. 19–21.

3. At the request of Elder Pierson, I wrote the first draft of the statement on inspiration and revelation in the fall of 1976. It was then sent out to various Bible teachers, editors, and church administrators around the world, soliciting their suggestions; in the light of their written comments the document was revised. Before the document was sent to the Bible and science teachers in our North American Division colleges, it was drastically revised at the Nosoca Pines Conference in February of 1978. Two sections of the document were excised: one of these dealt with the human element in revelation and the resulting problems of contradictions or differences where there are multiple accounts in the Bible of certain events; the other excised section dealt with the role of reason in seeking to understand inspired writings. I was not included as a member of the subcommittee which excised these sections and further revised the document, no doubt because I had just made known my views about that in a paper on inspiration which I had presented earlier in the conference.

4. *Newsweek*, August 8, 1983, p. 66.

Odyssey of an Adventist Creationist

by Roy Benton

Dr. P.E. Hare, one of the two original scientists in the Geoscience Research Institute was interviewed by Roy Benton, consulting editor for Spectrum *and chairperson of the Mathematical Sciences Department at Columbia Union College.*

Benton: Please tell us about your background. Have you always been a Seventh-day Adventist?

Hare: I am a third generation Adventist. My grandfather, Robert Hare, was a poet, teacher, evangelist, and editor. He immigrated to New Zealand from Ireland in the 1860s, and was a boat builder in his 20s when Stephen Haskell came through as a missionary. Robert Hare was one of the first Adventist converts. He went to Healdsburg College in California, married my American grandmother Henrietta Johnson, and returned to New Zealand and Australia for the rest of their careers. They even served for a time on Pitcairn Island.

My mother's parents—J.E. Fulton and Susie Newlon—were also students at Healdsburg College and went to Fiji as pioneer missionaries. In fact, the college in Fiji is known as Fulton College still. My mother and father met at Avondale College and went to Burma as missionaries for 20 years.

Benton: Your father is Eric B. Hare who tells the stories that we all grew up with?

Hare: That's right: "the man with the eyebrows." I was the youngest of four children, all born in Burma. However, my earliest memories were of California where Dad was in conference work. After moving to Takoma Park, I finished grade school at Sligo Elementary School and attended Takoma Academy. I finished college at Pacific Union College, with a chemistry major in 1954, and went to Berkeley for a master's degree, then taught at Pacific Union College in the chemistry department for three years before going on to the California Institute of Technology (Cal Tech) for my doctorate in geochemistry, which I finished in 1962. I stayed on one year as a postdoctoral fellow and then joined the Geophysical Laboratory at the Carnegie Institution of Washington, where I have been since 1963.

Benton: In what ways are you active as a church member?

Hare: I enjoy working in the church. For several years I helped out in Sabbath Schools for college age and earliteen youngsters. At Sligo Church I am at present an associate head elder, as well as one of the Sabbath School superintendents.

Benton: Can you tell us what attracted you to your career in geoscience?

Hare: My interest in science goes back to my Takoma Academy teachers; one was Robert Hatt, who I believe is still teaching there. I took physics and general science

from him. I can't think of a more outstanding teacher that I had, and that includes some Nobel Prize winners at Berkeley and Cal Tech. Lester Harris, then a Columbia Union College biology teacher, was another motivating force. He took time to take us on camping trips and introduced me to the world of rocks and fossils. In college I took a chemistry major as well as several physics and math courses. I recall discussions on the age of the earth in atomic physics class when we covered radioactivity. I think that these topics interested me in the geological problems that the church faced.

Benton: How did those come up?

Hare: It was quite clear to me in some of the conversations during my college days that people like Harold Clark, Frank Marsh, Ernest Booth, and other stalwart Adventists, had gone into science and religion issues from the biological side. While I was in college, new developments such as the radiocarbon dating method had become the center of conversation; it seemed to me that in order to provide answers, a physical rather than a biological scientist was needed. I felt that my commitment to the church, my background, and my interest in science would help me make some significant contributions to the church.

The radiocarbon method was showing ages far in excess of 6,000 years for organic material and this, of course, was causing great consternation. It figured prominently at the 1952 Seventh-day Adventist college teachers' convention. Among the papers given at this meeting were several on the process for dating ancient objects with Carbon 14. R. E. Hoen, a long-time chemistry teacher at Pacific Union College, acted as a moderator at a roundtable discussion on the subject. The Adventist science teachers recognized that the Carbon 14 method gave dates that were almost always in harmony with the historical dates determined by counting tree rings, etc. Since it was quite clear that in many cases the Carbon 14 method of dating was valid, we Adventists wondered, "Why wasn't it valid when it gave ages greater than 6,000 years?"

An interesting paper Hoen gave discussed scientific errors in denominational publications, including the *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary,* which came out the next year, 1953. Fears were expressed that scientific accuracy might suffer because of the pressure of deadlines and lack of review time. Interestingly, it was considered unfortunate that only one person's philosophy

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I was answering questions that people hadn't even thought of asking as yet, and so I decided to lie low, keep studying, and do more research.

(that of George McCready Price, the pioneer Seventh-day Adventist geologist who was the most prominent creationist of his time but who never encountered Carbon 14) would appear in the *Commentary* when some of the science teachers, for instance Clark, who had been studying Genesis for years, were completely ignored. So the 1952 conference recommended that all *Commentary* manuscripts be critically previewed by qualified scientists.

At the 1956 Quadrennial Session of Adventist science teachers, the biology subgroup recommended to the college administrators that the General Conference approve the idea, and in 1958 Frank Marsh, a biology teacher at Emmanuel Missionary College, and I were selected to begin what later became the Geoscience Research Institute. Within about a year Richard Ritland joined us. Marsh and Ritland were both at Berrien Springs, Mich., while I continued my doctoral program at Cal Tech.

Benton: At first, did you have any inkling that the church's traditional positions were in any danger?

Hare: Not really. In fact, I felt that if we could interpret the scientific evidence from a different point of view, we would find loopholes that would preserve most of our

church's traditional views. I felt some of the views might need to be modified somewhat, but not completely replaced.

Benton: Is it fair to say that the areas which you pursued as a graduate student and researcher were in many ways governed by the Adventist agenda on the question of science and religion?

Hare: No question about it. In 1956, while I was still teaching at Pacific Union College, I read an article entitled "Paleo-biochemistry" in *Scientific American* which showed that amino acids in the proteins of mollusk shells and bones were still present even in very old fossil shells and bone. The idea intrigued me, because if these materials were as old as they were claimed to be, then the presence of relatively unstable organic material might be very difficult to explain. On the other hand, if all or even most fossils were formed as a result of the flood, one should be able to show as well that the organic material, no matter what stratigraphic layer the fossil is found in, would have substantially the same sort of pattern since it was all essentially the same age.

Later, for my dissertation at Cal Tech I studied a sequence of fossil shells and showed that there was clearly a progression in the pattern of amino acids that correlated closely with the age determined by radiocarbon methods. We later developed techniques which are now used in probably a dozen laboratories throughout the world.

Benton: So the reason for your research was that you wanted to evaluate Carbon 14 and other dating methods, particularly as they applied to organic, or living things?

Hare: That's correct. The question always arose: what inherent problems do these age-dating methods have? When we talked about radiocarbon dating (which seemed to show a convincing progression of ages), we looked for weaknesses. But my independent method (relying on amino acids) ended up corroborating the Carbon 14 technique, which scientists considered reliable up to about 20,000 years. In fact, my method raised additional problems, because it seemed to indicate ages for organic material in the millions of years.

Benton: When you came to your first preliminary results, how did this affect you as a scientist and as an Adventist?

Hare: The results were so consistent that I was forced to conclude that all fossils were not the same age, that there was indeed a definite progression in time with various fossil layers. I thought, "There must be some way of harmonizing this data with our scriptural views. I remember feeling, "It may be that we are going to have to reinterpret some of our traditional concepts in order to make the two harmonize." It was clear that a single event like the flood was completely inadequate to explain the geologic record. This, of course, did not fit with what George McCready Price had said. We constructed new models, and ironically, found ourselves repeating the efforts of 19th-century scientists who first seriously challenged the flood model as geologic evidence began to accumulate in the early 19th century.

I wonder if Ellen White really intended for her statements on science to be the last word or ultimate truth.

Benton: Did you find that exciting, or painful?

Hare: It was painful, there is no question about that. But I also found it exciting. I remember reading in Ellen White that God's word in nature and God's word in Scripture shed light on each other if we read them both correctly.

Benton: Was that excitement shared by your colleagues at the Institute?

Hare: Ritland had reached somewhat similar conclusions a few years before I had. Marsh started with traditional interpretations of the Spirit of Prophecy and then looked to science as a support or vindication of those views.

Benton: When and why did you leave the Institute?

Hare: I actually moved back to Berrien Springs to join the Institute in 1961, a year before I had finished my degree, and had set up a laboratory and was doing work for my dissertation. Frequently, Ritland and I found Ellen White statements on science on our desks, left there by Frank Marsh, with which our scientific findings were supposed to harmonize. I left partly for that reason and also because it seemed the purpose of the Institute was to reinterpret results already published rather than to do original research, which was what I was most interested in. George McCready Price had been heavily criticized for doing all his geologizing from an armchair and never once going outside and hammering off fossils and rocks. We had said that we would be different; we wanted to see the evidence firsthand, to find out how serious the problems really were. Soon after the Institute began, fieldwork became a real hallmark of what we wanted to do. Even before Ritland joined us he took Marsh on a field trip on essentially the same route that almost all other Institute trips have followed since.

Benton: When you decided to take a leave of absence did you feel evangelical about your views on creation and geology?

Hare: One of the reasons I left the Institute was based on the fact that my evangelical fervor on these points was dampened by the people that I came in touch with. I would say, "Look at this data!" and I would often be met with hostility. I was answering questions that people hadn't even thought of asking as yet, and so I decided to lie low, keep studying, do more research, develop methods and only answer questions people asked me. I did not rule out the possibility that I would rejoin the Institute at some future time if it was mutually agreeable.

Benton: But you kept studying amino acids. Isn't that true?

Hare: Well, that became my pet area, because it looked very promising.

Benton: You developed a new, independent method for time-dating which suggested that the earth and life on the earth are very old if this evidence is taken at face value.

Hare: That's right. The method doesn't provide dates different from other methods so much as it confirms what other methods have already concluded. For example, at first we had assumed that even if the inorganic part of the earth may be billions of years old, the organic materials might date only from creation week some thousands of years ago; yet the evidence for the antiquity of organic materials is really as strong as it is for inorganic materials. One of the greatest evidences for this antiquity—and something which I never see written up in any of the creationist literature today—is the depth of the biological sediments on the ocean floors.

Benton: This is something that you have directly studied.

Hare: Yes, the deep sea sediments. In many areas of the earth's ocean floors there is an accumulation of tiny single-celled shells which actually grow near the ocean surface where there is photosynthesis going on. After these forams live out their cycle, their tiny shells rain down just like snow onto the ocean floor and can accumulate to an enormous thickness, even kilometers-thick blankets of sediment. Consider what those enormous accumulations of biological material imply: a vast period of time. As you go down the column of sediments you get radiocarbon (Carbon-14) dates of 10,000 years when you are hardly down more than a meter and there are kilometers still to account for which are too old for radiocarbon dating.

Benton: "Too old for radiocarbon dating" means older than, say, 50,000 years by anybody's count?

Hare: By anybody's count the total age is probably millions of years and that is just on our modern ocean floors. Some people would like to argue that these are washed in . . .

Benton: . . . when they are trying to maintain a flood model?

Hare: Right. But the fact is that some of these are on top of flat-topped mountains that were eroded at the surface of the ocean once upon a time, but because of movements in the earth's surface have sunk now to below the surface and these accumulations are on top of these flat-topped mountains which means they must have formed after they sank. It is very difficult to imagine these as being washed up on top of the table, if you will. In addition, the oxygen 18/16 isotope ratio in these foram shells tells you the temperature the surface water was when the organism lived. These ratios all correlate from different areas as diverse as the North Atlantic and the Caribbean and reveal alternating warm and cold periods occurring worldwide. The idea of them being washed in just begs the question. They had to grow *somewhere.*

Benton: You were instrumental—no pun intended—in developing supersensitive equipment that was able to detect smaller levels than ever before of certain amino acids.

Hare: Yes. Our instrumentation has become very sensitive and, more recently, portable. We can even run it off the battery of a car, and it has been used in some remote places for geologic mapping, determining relative ages in deposits, and the like.

Benton: Speaking of remote places, you were well-known in some circles as being one of the first to examine some of the rocks that were collected from the moon. Why?

Hare: Before the Apollo project we had been looking at minute amounts of organic matter in fossils, rocks, and sediments, and we had developed very sensitive instrumentation. One group working on the lunar samples was interested in looking for any possible organic material or residues of organic materials.

Benton: What did you find?

Hare: We found carbon, nitrogen, and hydrogen materials, but not what we interpreted as *in situ* amino acids. There was certainly something there, though probably from solar wind and cosmic activity, things like that. It was an interesting exercise, which certainly taxed our equipment to the very limit.

Benton: You have spent a lot of time thinking about the Geoscience Institute. Some say that any such institution operated by the denomination inevitably has its answers decided in advance, and then sets out to support them. They think that truly scientific research on these topics must be done by independent scholars in universities. Do you think Adventists should try to operate such an institute?

Hare: Looking back, I think it is a good thing that the Institute was established. Back in 1960, Richard Ritland and I went to the annual Geological Society of America meeting, the first Seventh-day Adventists who had ever gone to one. For some years we were the only two that ever went. But it wasn't long before a few others came, and now we may have 20 or 25 Adventists going. The last several years we have had an Adventist fellowship group that meets before the meetings start. I consider this a sign of progress.

When I was with the Institute, more than once I was accused by people of starting off with the answers and then trying to twist my laboratory data to match them. They said our situation at the Institute was analogous to a tobacco institute (supported by tobacco companies) which does research on cancer and its association with smoking. I remember not being very happy about that accusation, but there is an element of truth to it, because the sponsoring organization of an institute is obviously going to expect some degree of support and not answers that differ widely from what the group wants to hear.

Benton: Certainly a lot of change has taken place at the Geoscience Institute. The head of it today obviously holds that the inorganic material of the earth is very old, a position that was probably unthinkable to many of the people involved in the founding of the Institute. Do you feel that there has been change in the church's position, or at

least in its tolerance of divergent positions, over the last 25 years?

Hare: No question that there has been an increase in tolerance. Some of us feel that it has been too slow or too little; but there is no question that it has happened. If you compare typical Adventist views of, say, 25 years ago, there is a much broader range of views that are accepted today. Even 25 years ago there were some who felt that the earth's inorganic materials were very old; even Price during some stages of his career believed this.

Statements such as "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" stand on their own. We don't need to worry about how science is going to vindicate them.

Benton: Certainly one very large factor that looms in the science and religion debate in the Adventist Church is the role of Ellen White and the effect of subsequent Adventist history upon the discussion. What if it turns out that she got some of her ideas about science—for example, the earth being 6,000 years old—from her 19th-century contemporaries? Can there be room for a wide diversity of Adventist opinion that is true to the Bible and yet different from the views we have held in the past that can bring people like you back into the public life of the Adventist church?

Hare: I definitely think that's coming, and I base that on the fact that those of us who came across some of these problems 20 years ago when we read Ellen White's statements on geological subjects concluded that she was incorporating accepted contemporary scientific material. For example, her views on 'volcanoes and coal,' and 'fossils, trees, and animals much larger than any that now exist' were once popularly accepted concepts. Like a pendulum, it's easy to swing from one side to the other, and this worries me a bit. It makes it sound as if in order to make any progress one has to jump this hurdle with Ellen White. It helps to remember that she also said, "Scripture and science shed light on each other."

Benton: Still, it must come as some relief to find apparent confirmation of what you had already been thinking.

Hare: Yes. Now, when I find she was borrowing liberally from her contemporaries in areas other than science, I wonder if she really intended for her statements on science to be the last word or ultimate truth. I think she would be appalled at the way her statements have been used by many.

Benton: There has been a lot of debate in the popular press over the last few years concerning "creation science" and the public schools. In fact there was a trial in Arkansas at which several Adventists testified, including some from the Institute. Should "creation science" be taught in public schools?

Hare: I would like to see it taught in a historical context, emphasizing, "How did these different concepts develop?" rather than, "Are they scientific?" I also would like to see evolution taught, not as ultimate fact or law, but as a working model. Most of the high school and elementary textbooks are taking out statements that lead you to believe evolution is the last word. I would not like to see creation taught from a science standpoint. For one thing, there is such a wide diversity of views among creationists. "Scientific creationism" usually represents a very extreme view—a 6,000-year-old earth and a very definite set of conditions that gave rise to our geologic framework. Then, at the other extreme, we have the atheistic dogmatic view of evolution, which includes spontaneous generation of life, and represents, I feel, too extreme a view. Truth lies somewhere between these polar positions. There's room for study; the more diversity we allow, the better.

Benton: Even as a church?

Hare: I would like to see the Geoscience Institute sponsor more open group discussions, rather than just asking, "How did the

flood do this?" or "How did the flood do that?" They should consider, "To what extent can a creationist also believe in evolution?"

Benton: The Institute should act as facilitator rather than final arbiter?

Hare: Yes. They spent a number of years on flood models, and that's fine, but they ought to also consider some alternatives, because in the history of science and religion conflicts very rarely does it turn out that our original ideas are correct. They have to be modified frequently.

Benton: When it comes to the question of origins, would you call yourself a creationist?

By anybody's count the total age is probably millions of years and that is just on our *modern* ocean floors. . . .

Hare: I wish I could answer that simply; unfortunately, the words "creation" and "creationist" have been misused. Because of that, the "scientific creationist" view has been interpreted so narrowly that I hesitate to identify myself as one, though I do believe in a personal creator-God who created life, and that life is more than just chemistry and physics. On the other hand, I don't feel comfortable identifying myself as a mechanistic evolutionist either, because too many times people think you believe in the spontaneous generation of life—that something occurred by pure chance to produce what we see today. There is no question that there has been a lot of change. All 'evolution' really means is change, in a strict sense. There's a real need to study possible views that attempt to harmonize our religious and scientific concepts.

The real issue, as I see it, is the role of God in the universe (past, present, and future), and that cannot be determined by scientific methods. Each individual by some act of faith must make a choice. All of us see and interpret evidence differently. We must be prepared to allow divergence in models of creation and earth history. If a person rejects any role for God in the history of the universe, he does so by choice and not from some overwhelming scientific evidence. If a person comes to the conclusion that life has been around on the earth for three billion years or so and makes a serious attempt to find a creation model to harmonize his religious views, we should encourage him rather than denounce him as an evolutionist! Let's widen the circle and keep him in it. Perhaps together we can come closer to truth.

Benton: Stephen Gould is an eminent naturalist and is also a very popular spokesman for the theory of evolution. He claims that no "creation scientist" has ever come up with anything but small chinks here and there in an otherwise fairly comprehensive, undeniable main body of theory which suggests that human life on this earth has evolved. Is that accurate?

Hare: That's hard for me to say because my own views have changed considerably over the years at different stages. At one stage I thought, well, creation week had to do with man and the domestic animals as we know them, and the whole geologic record preceded what I would call creation week. But the evidence for early man seems to be growing; the dating element is difficult to explain away; is early man of the anthropologist related to Genesis man? I have a lot of questions but few answers in this area. But Gould is correct in that most creationists have attacked evolution rather than provided a theory of their own. Evolution or creation is a false dichotomy because evolution in and of itself indicates that everything progresses without any intervention, and the mathematical improbability of molecules getting together to form proteins and cells is pretty impressive to me. Under some conditions in the laboratory you can make amino acids out of carbon monoxide, methane, ammonia, water vapor, and those kinds of things. For example, by adding enough energy such as ultraviolet light to cyanide one can get protein-like polymers—

but is that really the route for the origin of life? I recognize the "God of the gaps" argument—that given time, science will be able to explain even spontaneous generation in the way it has explained other actions formerly attributed to God. But again, I wonder if that isn't going from one extreme—where you have all the gaps explained by God—to the other. Maybe the pendulum will come to rest and we will find out yes, evolution occurs but at times there has been intervention as well, perhaps in the origin of life, and perhaps later for man during creation week. We need a lot more study before we can sort out the answers in some of these areas.

Benton: You are known among your friends as a very serious, reliable and conscientious Seventh-day Adventist. Can you tell us why you find Adventism still palatable despite the problems?

Hare: That's an easy one. I haven't found anything better. If I based my religion on a few scientific facts I would be in trouble. At one point the Bible was interpreted so that "the four corners of the earth" meant that the earth must be flat, and because it was shown later that it wasn't, some people gave up their belief in Scripture. Today, if I were to base my theology on the fact that science has to prove that the earth is 6,000 years old and everything that we see, including the universe, the sun, and the moon, and the stars, were created in six literal days at the beginning of the 6,000 years, then I would have a difficult time; the scientific evidence to me seems strongly against that. But I don't think the Bible needs to be defended in that sense. Statements such as "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" stand on their own. We don't need to worry about how science is going to vindicate these statements. Each generation, in fact each individual, is going to have to find its own relationship between science and religion. We cannot go back to Galileo's time and put the sun as a satellite of the earth. There were people who argued that if the world revolved around the sun, you would do away with the plan of salvation. Yet today we live very comfortably with the fact that the earth is not the center of the universe. We explain the Scriptural passages as reflecting the popular contemporary view of the author.

Benton: Do you see as one of your goals as a church member to help other people confronted with the same evidence make the difficult transitions you have?

Hare: I do. I see many people come to a critical point where they see the scientific evidence and its implications and cannot reconcile their traditional views. They say, "If the scientific evidence is right then my traditional view is wrong and I have to throw the whole thing out." What I try to tell them is that perhaps some "traditional background" has no basis and shouldn't interfere with science, because God is the author of science as well as the ultimate author of Scripture; if there are differences, we must either say that God is lying in one or the other, or else we are misinterpreting one source or the other.

Perhaps we don't take Paul seriously enough when he said, "When I was a child I thought as a child." We should realize that even some of our dedicated teachers do not have the last word in many of these areas. If we see a problem arise, I would like to back off and say that I don't see any way out right now, but let's not get discouraged! People hundreds of years ago never saw any way out of comparable dilemmas. Ultimately the answers came and were compatible with the scientific evidence. I rely a lot on the concept of nature and Scripture shedding light on each other. We find unity in the whole. Some of the things we were taught may not stand up today in terms of recent scientific evidence, but this should not be any reason to deny evidence from either nature or Scripture or to reject our religious heritage!

Beyond Arithmetic: The Truth of Creation

by F. E. J. Harder

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." If I should ask, "Do you believe that declaration to be true?" I suppose you would unanimously say yes. If I should then ask, "Do you believe that statement refers to the *ex nihilo* fiat creation of the entire universe in six literal days about 6,000 years ago?" I assume you would just as unanimously say no. If my suppositions are correct, we have all made some very basic accommodations relative to a literal reading of Genesis 1:1–2:3.

Throughout the Old Testament the phrase, "the heavens and the earth," is used as the nearest Hebrew equivalent to our term, "universe." The earth is that on which man stands. "Heaven" is all there is beyond the earth. Sometimes the expression is extended to "the heavens, the earth, and the sea" to include not only the sea on which ships sailed but also the primordial "deep" over which the Spirit of God hovered, moved, or strove in the act of creating.

> Thou are the Lord, thou alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them . . . (Nehemiah 9:6).

> Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all their host. [After six days of creating (Genesis 2:1.)]

> . . . in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in *them* is . . . [The antecedents of "them" are heaven, earth, the sea (Exodus 20:11.)]

We must not overlook the fourth day of creation week which specifically describes the making by fiat of the sun, moon, and stars (Genesis 1:14–19).

Finally, if we diagram the literary structure of the creation narrative, it appears that Genesis 1:1 is a summary of what follows and that Genesis 2:1 is a summary of what has gone before. Of course, most of us want to separate in time the creation of the heavens and their hosts—the sun, moon, and stars (at least the stars) from creation week. Some would also subtract from the activity of creation week the stuff of the earth and the dark deep. However, we must recognize that we do so on other than biblical grounds and that we encounter difficulty in making our interpretations compatible with a literal reading of Genesis 1:1–2:3. There are those who hold that divine revelation of truth is indivisible. This view insists that theological truth is not revealed aside from the scientific or historical context within which it is embodied. This is what many mean by "plenary inspiration"—that there is no human element in the revelatory process.

Others hold that truth is divisible. According to this view, a Bible writer may reveal truth about God without having complete or accurate knowledge about science or history. In other words, an idea may be true theologically but not neces-

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sarily true in every detail of expression. Ellen White was clear on this matter:

> The Bible is written by inspired men, but it is not God's mode of thought and expression. It is that of humanity. God, as a writer, is not represented . . . God has not put Himself in words, in logic, in rhetoric, on trial in the Bible. The writers of the Bible were God's penmen, not His pen. (E.G. White, *Selected Messages,* Vol. 2, p. 21)

Poets and artists may give very effective portrayals of truth in symbols which do not stand up under close scrutiny. A minister may be a true representative of God and teach divine truth without himself being a scientist, historian, or even theologian. Did not Jesus teach theological truth within a vehicle which was false theologically? For example, there is the parable of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19–31). The Psalmist uses the mythic imagery of the Babylonian epic in which Marduk creates heaven and earth by slaying Tiamat, goddess of chaos.

> Thou didst divide the sea by thy might;
> Thou didst break the heads of the dragon on the waters.
> Thou didst crush the heads of Leviathan. . . .
> Thine is the day, thine also the night;
> Thou hast established the luminaries and the sun.
> Thou hast made summer and winter (Psalm 74:13, 14, 16, 17).

Those who seek to destroy the value of Genesis 1 assume that truth must be total and indivisible. If this premise is accepted, the discussion of the creation narrative must remain in the realm of science. It is not good apologetics to admit the premise of the attacker without critically questioning it. If this premise is not agreed to—if theology and science are not necessarily bound together—then Genesis 1 can be discussed as a theological statement.

The Bible student should not be satisfied with any explanation which makes the Scriptural record even apparently dependent upon the changing views or findings of science. For careful thinkers, using science, history, or philosophy as bases for Christian faith is becoming increasingly less effective. Such an approach allies the Christian faith with the destiny of human theory. When Christianity is tied to any particular world view, it stands or falls with a human concept. In rapidly changing times such as ours this means that Christianity is liable to rejection before it has had a hearing.

The doctrine of creation does not stand by itself but depends upon and elaborates the redemptive activity of God in history. What makes it so ultimately vital is that fundamentally it is Christological and eschatological.

The beginning:

> In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth (Genesis 1:1).

The end:

> Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. . . .
>
> And he who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new. . . . I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end (Revelation 21:1–4, 14, 12).

Between the beginning and the end stands the central affirmation of the Christian faith:

> In the beginning was the Word,
> and the Word was with God,
> and the Word was God.
>
> All things were made through him,
> and without him was not anything made that was made. . . .
>
> In him was life, and the life was the light of men. . . .
> The true light that enlightens every man was coming into the world. . . .
>
> And the word became flesh and dwelt among us full of grace and truth. . . .
>
> To all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God. . . . (John 1:1–4, 14, 12).

The opening imperative of the three angels' messages proclaims the judgment of the eschaton in the context of the original creation:

> Fear God and give glory to him, for the hour of his judgment has come;
> And worship him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the fountains of water (Revelation 14:7).

From the beginning of the world to its end, the continuing providence and sustain-

ing activity of God in Christ are proclaimed by the doctrine of creation:

> He (Christ) is the image of the invisible God . . . for in him all things were created in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible. . . .
> All things were created through him and for him.
> He is before all things, and in him all things hold together (Colossians 1:15–17).

Symbolizing this entire process is the divinely ordained Sabbath. In the beginning:

> Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. . . .
>
> So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all his work which he had done in creation (Genesis 2:1,3).

At the end:

> . . . as the new heavens and the new earth which I make shall remain before me, says the Lord . . .
>
> From new moon to new moon, and from Sabbath to Sabbath, all flesh shall come to worship before me, says the Lord (Isaiah 66:22, 23).

Between the beginning and the end:

> You shall keep my sabbaths, for this is a sign between me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I, the Lord, sanctify you. You shall keep the Sabbath, because it is holy for you. . . . (Exodus 31:13–15).

I keep the Sabbath as a memorial of creation and of the Creator's becoming one with his created beings. I keep the Sabbath as a witness to my faith in the Creator's sanctifying activity in creating a new heart within me. I keep the Sabbath as a foreshadowing of Sabbaths to be celebrated when the heavens and the earth will be created anew.

I do not keep the Sabbath because of the thousands of years I may think have passed since it was instituted. I believe in a seven-day creation week—irrespective of where such a week may fit into the astronomers' light-year scheme, or into the geologists' fossil strata. Yes, I believe in a literal creation week, but that is not why I keep the Sabbath.

I keep the Sabbath because God blessed and hallowed it. I keep the Sabbath because God imbedded within his eternal law an unequivocal command to do so. I keep the Sabbath because the Son of God declared himself to be Lord of the Sabbath and because Jesus of Nazareth reaffirmed the holiness with which he had invested it as the Creator. I keep the Sabbath because I look forward to entering God's rest as described in the fourth chapter of Hebrews:

> And God rested on the seventh day from all his works . . .
> So then there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God; for whoever enters God's rest also ceases from his labors as God did from his (Hebrews 4:4, 9, 10).

I repeat again, I believe in a seven-day creation week, although my concept is flexible respecting what may have been included in it. This is a faith statement for which I neither seek nor expect scientific confirmation, and for which I know of no scientific disproof. However, if it were ever undeniably demonstrated to be untenable, I can't conceive of any possible change that it would make in my theology or religious practices. Even if I admit that the world was not created in six days, I would still keep the seventh-day Sabbath.

If Christianity is not dependent upon contemporary scientific discovery, it follows as a corollary that the value, authenticity, or authority of a divinely inspired messenger must not be made dependent upon his or her inerrancy in science.

A prophet is one who sees things that do not lie in the domain of natural sight and hears things which human ears don't ordinarily hear. If he or she speaks in the realm of the ordinary, the contribution of inspiration lies not in a repetition of that which can be known by natural means, but rather in an apprehension of its spiritual significance, or of its providential nature, or of its place in the divine plan, or of how God's will is thereby fulfilled or revealed. The problem of distinguishing human error from divine truth raises the basic question: how do we distinguish any truth from error? How can we know anything for sure?

A first principle is a proposition that

conforms to related evidence, is coherent, and is consistent with the operation of rational processes. This can be a complicated achievement, even respecting mundane questions. It becomes even more complex when applied to pronouncements on matters outside the realm of ordinary sense perception. There are no simple, definitive answers to our problem, but we have been given some helpful guidelines.

> If you say in your heart, how may we know the word which the Lord has not spoken?—when a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if the word does not come to pass or come true, that is a word which the Lord has not spoken . . . (Deuteronomy 18:21, 22).

This is an application of the principle of coherence. When a prophet speaks about matters that can be tested by natural means of discovery, what he says is subject to such test. If there is no coherence between validated fact and the message, then that message was not from God, irrespective of how truly this prophet may have spoken for God in the past, or how fully he may represent him in the future.

This principle is illustrated in I Kings 13. In obedience to a divine command, a prophet went from Judah to rebuke the heresy of Jeroboam. Also in obedience to his instructions, he declined the invitation of the king to have dinner with him and began his return journey immediately after delivering his message and seeing it confirmed before Jeroboam by several miracles. Upon being overtaken by an older prophet he again obediently refused his invitation to supper. To this the old prophet said:

> I too am a prophet as you are. And an angel said to me by the word of the Lord: Bring him back with you to your house so that he may eat bread and drink water (I Kings 13:18).

The record says that he lied. But the younger man deferred to seniority and did that which he had refused to do even at the request of the king. That evening at the table:

> The word of the Lord came to the prophet (the lying prophet!) . . . and he cried to the man of God who came from Judah: Thus says the Lord, Because you have disobeyed the word of the Lord . . . your body shall not come to the tomb of your fathers . . . And as he went away a lion met him and killed him (I Kings 13:21, 22, 24).

The fact that one message of the old prophet was in error—even a deliberate lie—did not mean that the Lord never spoke by him. The very next time he claimed to be speaking for God he actually was, and his message was quickly verified.

This example raises another question: how does one validate a prophet-given message not subject to ordinary criteria of evidence? The first declaration of the lying prophet was of this kind—"An angel said to me . . . bring him back . . ." How could this be tested? It could be tested simply by another application of the principle of coherence—that is, coherence with previously confirmed revelation. The Judean prophet had seen ample assurance that his commission to Bethel was of divine origin. The representation made by the old prophet did not cohere: it was inconsistent and contradictory. It was a word that the Lord had not spoken.

Representative of various scriptural confirmations of this principle are:

> Don't listen to a prophet who asks you to follow gods you have not known, even though he works miracles to substantiate his mission (Deuteronomy 13:1–3).
>
> The well-known "To the law and to the testimony" test (Isaiah 8:20).
>
> Paul brands those who forbid practices which God has previously approved as "deceiving spirits . . . taught by demons . . . hypocritical liars" (I Timothy 4:1–3).

Even though we recognize that all human apprehensions of truth are partial and may appear contradictory at first sight, a careful study of all related factors should reveal a basic harmony in spite of illusions with respect to some details.

If, while standing at the edge of a pond, I thrust a stick halfway into the water, my eyes will tell me that the stick is bent. When I retrieve it, I will see that it is straight again. So I formulate the proposition: putting a stick part-way into water bends it and

returning it to the air straightens it. The trouble with that is that I didn't use all the available evidence. If I put the stick back into the water and slide my hand along its entire length, my sense of touch tells me that it hasn't been bent at all. Now the evidence of my two senses is inconsistent—there is no coherence. Not until I get more evidence with respect to the nature of light and learn that it is refracted when passing from thin to dense matter, for instance, from air to water, will I by a rational process achieve harmony of the data and arrive at truth.

It is the coherence principle that gives us trouble with Genesis 1. How can the concept of a seven-day creation week be harmonized with the apparent evidences respecting origins found in the natural world? (Of course, there is even a problem of the creation account in Genesis 1 being consistent with Genesis 2 where the creation of man is placed *before* the creation of vegetation instead of three days later.) To find harmony between the biblical and natural data will require continuing intensive study of all relevant factors in both—I repeat, *both*—sources. Too much of the time we have assumed that we totally understand the Scriptural materials and that it is up to our scientists to make the data from nature fit the Procrustian biblical bed we have so uncriticially inherited, and in which we seem to be so comfortable.

I suggest that creation is a fundamental, vital doctrine, a religious afffirmation about the sovereignty of God, his redemptive activity, and the absolute dependence of his creatures. As such, it merits the broadest and deepest investigation by theologians concerned with proclaiming the everlasting gospel. To the extent that the doctrine relates to discoveries in the natural world, it requires cooperative studies between theologians and scientists, both respecting the others' dedicated scholarship and neither trying to usurp the role of the other.

For such ongoing research and dialogue to be fruitful requires mutual respect, humility—another name for teachability—and the ability to exercise patience. There should be careful model-building and theory development. These are philosophical endeavors and must be subjected to philosophical challenge, criticism, review, and revision. Of course, the attacks should always be directed at the philosophy and not at the philosopher, and the philosopher should not identify himself so inseparably with his philosophy that this becomes impossible!

The doctrine of creation and the flood narrative are not primarily concerned with genetics, species variation, fossil deposits, or the geologic column. They are above all a revelation of God, the nature of humanity, and God's redemptive activity. Nearly one-third of Genesis 1 and more than half of the creation record of Genesis 2 are devoted to the creation of humanity. All of the third chapter deals with humanity's failure and God's continuing concern for humanity, which sets the theme for the rest of the Bible.

For a few moments let us go back in our imagination to that day when the God of heaven skillfully fashioned the clay of Eden into the intricate design of a human body. As we watch, the Creator pauses, apparently viewing his handiwork. Actually he is looking beyond at the consequences that would follow. Is he counting the cost?

He sees the day this man will hide from him in fear, and because of His rebellion will have to be evicted from the Edenic home. He views the stained feet of Cain on ground wet with the blood of his brother. He hears the filthy clamor emanating from the thoughts of mankind so degenerate that every imagination is only evil continually, followed by the horrible spectre of the flood. He looks far beyond to a night when he himself will lie in a stinking Bethlehem barn, a helpless offspring of and fully identified with the descendants of this inert form before him. He anticipates the pain of another night when he will sweat blood in

agony and be betrayed by the kiss of a friend. He feels the thrust of nails being driven by men whom he had come to save through the hands that have just formed their first father.

Then, momentarily, he recoils—not from the suffering but from that dark abyss that could signify eternal separation from his heavenly Father. Is this lump of clay worth that? But then the troubled brow is replaced by a majestic smile as the Creator of heaven and earth stoops, and in tender love embraces that cold form of clay and bestows the kiss of life, transmuting it into a creature of whom the Psalmist would sing:

> Thou has made him little less than God,
> and dost crown him with glory and honor
> Thou has given him dominion over the works of thy hands;
> Thou hast put all things under his feet (Psalm 8:5, 6).

That is at the heart of the doctrine of the first creation. The significance of the second creation is like unto it, for it is not primarily concerned with peaceful wolves, tame lions, harmless snakes, luscious vineyards, pearly gates, and golden streets. Rather, the new creation fulfills the design for the first creation, culminating in universal recognition of God's sovereignty, the acknowledgement of the triumph of man through the grace of the Word made flesh, and a celebration of the ultimate union of creature with Creator.

> Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth . . .
>
> I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,
> "Behold the dwelling of God is with men.
> He will dwell with them,
> and they shall be his people,
> and God himself will be with them . . .
>
> And he who sat upon the throne said,
> "Behold I make all things new. . . .
> He who conquers shall have this heritage,
> and I will be his God
> and he shall be my son" (Revelation 21:1–7).

Statement of Affirmation

We, the participants of the 1983 Geoscience Field Conference, affirm our belief

1. In the validity of the scriptural record as an authentic and historical description of the origin of our world. We rejoice in the creative power of God, and with the psalmist declare, "The Lord, he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture" (Psalm 100:3).

2. That the biblical record requires a short chronology of approximately 6,000 years in contrast to tens of thousands or millions of years.

3. That the Old Testament narrative of a global flood is supported in the New Testament by our Lord, who compared earth's final destruction to that of Noah's day. It is spoken of also by the apostle Peter, who reminds us of "the longsuffering of God [who] waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water" (Matt. 24:37–39; I Peter 3:20).

4. In the importance of honoring the seventh-day Sabbath as a memorial of a literal Creation week in accord with God's Ten Commandments, the Sabbath being a vital element of God's last appeal to the world, calling every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, to "worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters" (Rev. 14:7).

5. That secular, humanistic theories such as the evolutionary model or those theories intermediate between Creation and evolution that extend the creation process into a long, indefinite period have no place in the belief system of our church. (See 2 Peter 3:3–6.)

6. That there is fundamental agreement between God's book of nature and the revealed Word when they are correctly interpreted.

7. That the creationist/catastrophic model best explains that information derived from revelation and science. At the same time we recognize that limits of understanding and a personal belief system characterize all approaches to interpreting data touching on the earth's past. We further believe in the value of scientific study as a method of approaching natural phenomena, a premise that underlies denominational sponsorship of the Geoscience Research Institute.

Participants

C.E. Bradford, vice-president of the General Conference for the North American Division.
G.W. Brown, president of the Inter-American Division.
L.L. Butler, treasurer of the General Conference.
G.J. Christo, president of the Southern Asia Division.
W.T. Clark, president of the Far Eastern Division.
E.A. Hetke, secretary of the Southern Asia Division.
B. Heye, president of the Eastern Africa Division.
B.R. Holt, executive editor, *Ministry* magazine.
R.J. Kloosterhuis, president of the Africa-Indian Ocean Division.
E. Ludescher, president of the Euro-Africa Division.
K.J. Mittleider, president of the Trans-Africa Division.
E. Oliveira, vice-president of the General Conference.
G.W. Reid, associate editor. ADVENTIST REVIEW.
D.J. Sandstrom, secretary of the Eastern Africa Division.
W.R.L. Scragg, president of the northern European Division.
J.R. Spangler, director, Ministerial and Stewardship Department of the General Conference.
G.R. Thompson, secretary of the General Conference.
G.S. Valleray, secretary of the Africa-Indian Ocean Division.
F.W. Wernick, vice-president of the General Conference.
N.C. Wilson, president of the General Conference.
J. Wolff, president of the South American Division.

Responses To AAF Report on Church Structure

A Conference President: No

To the Editors: When I was first invited to meet with the Task Force on Church Structure, I accepted because of my great interest in finding ways to expand lay involvement within the church. However, the task force concluded that lay participation could best be facilitated by modifying existing church structure. In fact, church structure is not the major factor influencing lay involvement in the church's mission.

A careful look at other churches organized along the lines of the model shows less, not more, lay involvement in the outreach of the church than is shown in the present Adventist Church. The model draws heavily on United Methodist, United Presbyterian, and Lutheran organizational concepts; yet these are churches in decline, accomplishing far less, in almost any category you wish to compare, than the Adventist Church does. You may have greater percentages of lay members involved in operating the church, but what is it all accomplishing in reaching people for God's kingdom?

I have great respect for the integrity, good intentions, and wisdom of the Task Force members and find myself in agreement on many of the ideas proposed in the model. But I am strongly convinced the proposed model constitution, as a whole, will destroy many of the present strengths of this church. I have time to mention just a few of the many examples that illustrate my concerns.

First, the hidden agenda, behind this proposed constitution is the assumption you cannot trust clergy or teachers to lead the church, even when they are devoted to it full time. I see reflected an accumulation of all the failings of leadership through the years wrapped up into one composite picture of a leader who is not responsible, fair, or trustworthy; who controls the press; oppresses ministers; and deceives the laity. I submit that the norms are nowhere near this composite model. Leaders do not need the heavy restraints and the divided powers proposed in order to successfully lead. As a pastor, I worked under five different presidents in three different conferences, none of whom reflected the composite model characteristics. For this reason I believe the model represents organizational overkill that will be slow, cumbersome, and ineffective.

Second, the proposed constitution moves away from a world church to an autonomous conference unit claiming to be an integral part of the world church, yet deriving its power solely from the constituent churches which it recognizes as its highest authority. World policies of the church are optional and all church leaders above the conference level are non-voting guests. This is actually a congregational form of government with a conference flavor, very little different from what Southern Baptists have now in their convention structure. Both Old and New Testament church models support recognized authority beyond the local congregation.

Third, this structure destroys meaningful and effective leadership. Proposals brought to sessions must be presented with no indication of leadership thinking. Committees systematically exclude full-time church workers who are in the best position to be knowledgeable on the issues and know the background of qualified people. For instance, the nominating committee is composed of two-thirds laypeople, most of whom will have little or no information beyond their own perceptions, what they read in compiled material, and have gained from campaign speeches.

Four commissions or boards operating between sessions with self-contained power and authority are actually in charge of all conference operations and activities. The president is simply a figurehead coordinator surrounded by part-time lay members who control everything. Try as I might, I cannot imagine what criteria would be used to evaluate the president's job performance. He is simply an advisor to committees, and is not even included on the board of information. The fact remains that even in the governmental approach on which this model is based, in order to have a dynamic, moving organization, there must be strong leadership given sufficient authority to get the job done. Responsibility without authority is the ultimate frustration for leader and people.

In this model no one person is really in charge, setting direction. The potential is strong for competing chairpeople struggling for power and sending the conference in many directions at once.

Fourth, the Adjudicatory Commission is a contradiction to the whole concept of an "open church" where "each (member) will have a meaningful role in the decision-making process." Here are seven people serving six-year terms, making their own rules and regulations, determining their own jurisdiction (within the broad

framework of the constitution) with more power than the local churches who elected them. Seven people can veto the membership decision of a 5,000-member congregation. They have more power that the 16-member executive committee, more power than the constitution committee, more power than the board of information. They have access to *any* and *all* information they deem necessary, and hold the final determination as to what documents can be published. These seven people make decisions that are final and beyond appeal.

Fifth, I have saved my greatest concern over this model constitution until last—running several candidates against one another. Picture, if you can, the church running a political campaign. For two months, candidates for 46 positions will campaign. That means a minimum of 92 people, and as many as 100 or more, engaged in personal appearances at our churches, spending thousands of dollars on mailings, wooing members, (especially those with money and influence), courting pastors and church boards for access to pulpits and other meetings. Two months of debates, with focus on researched weaknesses of opponents, putting others down, criticism, division, choosing sides, and backroom deals.

"It's unavoidable," said John Sears, who was campaign manager in 1976 and 1980 for Ronald Reagan. "You can't have a race without attacking opponents, and to the degree that the attacks are sharp, people hurt each other."

Charisma will be more important than commitment and the controversial issues will be set aside. Large centers are bound to dominate the process, and minorities who are unknown and without money won't stand a chance. Imagine the atmosphere at the session: sessions will be known for their political infighting rather than for focusing on the spiritual objectives.

I find the whole picture out of harmony with heaven's principles of love, humility, and unselfishness. How could a dedicated leader committed to Romans 12:10, "Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves," possibly go around the conference bragging about himself and criticizing his opponents? Will a hundred people involved in this process end up with the unity Jesus prayed for in John 17? Will leaders critical of one another be able to work together later? Or will we end up with warring camps, as have other churches that use this process? Others survive because they are basically congregational and need not work together in between elections. That is not God's plan for this church. What little you gain in openness you more than lose in divisiveness!

It has been suggested one way to avoid the campaign aspect of the electoral process is to not announce the names until the session. Such a solution is both impossible and in conflict with the openness so important to church life.

Although I commend the Task Force for their many hours of research, discussion, thought, and improvements of the document as it developed, the government-based model is more subject to manipulation and control by a few than what we have now. It will cause an administrative nightmare less effective in accomplishing our mission than what we have now. Adversary relationships will abound. Unity will be impossible. Career church workers will be forced to the side and will have little or no influence on the very church to which they have devoted their lives. Instead of increasing lay involvement, few church members will be interested in serving under these conditions. Why trade our present success for a formula that is bound to prove *less* successful?

Thomas J. Mostert
President of the
Southeastern Califorina Conference.

The AAF Task Force Replies

To the Editors: Pastor Mostert makes a general criticism of the Task Force: its work, he says, was motivated by distrust of church leadership. The Task Force did not distrust individual clergy. Rather, it recognized that when humans (even clergy) occupy positions of authority they may well, unless checks are placed upon their power, misuse their authority. Mostert is 100 percent correct in asserting that "leaders do not need the heavy restraint and divided powers of a constitution in order to successfully lead"—unless, of course, they lead organizations that purport to be representative. Pastor Mostert is right in the short run; centralization of power may well make the church more efficient and effective. But in the long run, if representative structures are to be maintained, meaningful checks and balances are absolutely necessary. Without them there is a great danger that office holders in the organization will arrogate to themselves as much power as possible, all in the name of furthering the mission of the church.

In its infancy, the church's mission evolved from lively exchanges between individuals spiritually bound together by the expectations of 1844 and the experiences that immediately followed. Different and incompatible missions often grew side by side. As the movement became more institutionalized, it appears that strong leaders either assumed offices within the organization or were driven out. The high credibility of Ellen White was used by denominational leaders to strengthen their own positions.

Pastor Mostert seems to assume that the church now has a mission which exists independent of the laity, that the mission of the church is actually dependent upon the abilty of its leaders to wield political power. From this perspective, it is easy to understand his fear that decentralization of power wll destroy effective leadership and thereby weaken our mission. Pastor Mostert ignores the fact that God's church has never been solely dependent upon organizational office holders for leadership. The checks and balances in church structure the Task Force proposed will ideally facilitate the emergence of more of the prophetic, non-institutional leadership the church desperately needs.

When Mostert makes more specific criticisms he sets up straw men, substituting for analysis, depiction of

hypothetical disasters resulting from implementation of the task force proposals. For example, Pastor Mostert paints a horrifying picture of political campaigning, with dozens of candidates running about, tearing each other down in a divisive process terribly destructive to the church. Perhaps if Mostert examined the existing political processes in other churches he would be assured that his fears are groundless. Besides, does he seriously contend that backstabbing, divisiveness, and backroom deals are not now a part of present Seventh-day Adventist church politics? In other churches, opening the political process has reduced rather than increased destructive politicking.

Mostert makes another specific charge. Unfortunately, his statement that the seven-member Adjudicatory Commission has too much power because it can veto the decision of a 5,000-member congregation is simply inaccurate. The commission can review only the decision of a local congregation to disfellowship. If the commission disagrees with the congregation, the congregation is not forced to retain the person as a member in the local church. Rather, a member can be given membership in the conference church. Administrative reactions to the evangelical movement in the Seventh-day Adventist Church have amply demonstrated the need for such a safeguard.

The modest structural changes proposed in the model constitution come with no guarantees, but they are predicated on the belief that legitimate authority in the church rises from the most basic unit—the member. The task force insists that changes are needed if church administrators at all levels are going to truly represent the membership. Pastor Mostert has hurled the loaded term "congregational" at the proposals of the Task Force. While the model constitution is less hierarchical than the present structure, it is far from being congregational. The proposed constitution actually makes proposals that emphasize the power of the local conference constituency, not the individual congregation.

As Pastor Mostert must well know, the Task Force has not proposed congregationalism. Actually, what he objects to is the Task Force taking representative government too seriously. The Task Force has suggested concrete ways Adventism can achieve what the *Church Manual* says the denomination has already committed itself to: "a representative form of church government." It is the hope of the task force that the church will truly become what it claims to be.

E. Nathan Schilt
Member of AAF
Task Force on Church Structure

Hospital Administrator: No

To the Editors: This is not to discourage the desire of the Task Force to improve the discharge of God's affairs on earth, but the call to "open" the church raises some apprehension. I fear any changes that would tend to make the clergy more subject to popular opinion and current whim than they already are.

As important as the independence before God of the membership, is the equal need for an independent clergy. The ideal church government is that which the Holy Spirit can most easily control. Those aspects of our present form of church government which may make it too responsive to a church leader's manipulation, also can make it more responsive to the Holy Spirit's guidance. Those procedures which presently make the church structure seem unresponsive to the membership may also help protect us from a politicised and fawning clergy.

A clergy who as individuals have felt God's call to His service, validated by the membership who also see evidence of that call, must be allowed a lot more freedom to direct and lead the church than we would allow, say, the officers in charge of a consumer's co-op.

The ache for a purified and God-directed church must not tempt us to solve an apparent lack of the Holy Spirit by substitution of democratic procedures and expanded lay participation, as "the next best thing." Let us leave him a system that he could relatively easily control, and concentrate on removing the abusers or abuses of that system.

John B. Hoehn, M.D.
Mwami Adventist Hospital
Chipata, Zambia

A North Pacific Layperson: Yes

To the Editors: Hats off to the AAF Task Force for its masterful work in developing a model constitution. It speaks to the heart of basic issues and is to be seriously considered at this time when the church is searching for ways to increase participation and accountability at all levels of denominational organization. Forms of structure can be argued successfully from many angles. However, participation and accountability, the lifeblood of every excellent organization, are not optional.

The relationship that most often exists between church administrators and laypeople is suggested by the old rhyme:

"Mother may I go to swim?"
"Oh yes, my darling daughter.
Hang your clothes on yonder limb,
But don't go near the water."

Plenty of support is voiced for the idea that laypeople are an asset to the church—and indeed they are. The church's papers speak warmly of "dedicated laymen." Just give them a financial, baptismal, or subscription goal to reach, laypeople will make their pastors look good almost every time. More often than not they do it willingly and unquestioningly. In these situations, no one ever suggests the need for a constitution, representation, or for adjudication.

However, along comes a Merikay who asks for more than words of support, who asks only that she be *given* what the policy already states is hers, and the church administrators cry "foul!" Making good those promises of support is where the current administration falters, not on making the promises themselves. The Task Force Report provides another look at what those promises are or

should be; the primary weakness of the church today is the lack of understanding and trust between administration and laypeople.

Our church administrators—even on a world scale—are far too often the same age, were reared in the same communities, have spouses who were college roommates, and children who are married to their colleagues' children. They don't have to listen to each other in committee because they have been sitting together in a variety of committees for so long that they know each other's thoughts. The local congregation, on the other hand, is a far more heterogeneous group. They are bankers, farmers, market analysts, advertising executives, engineers, teachers, researchers, economists, carpenters, insurance salesmen, and secretaries. They were born in different places, educated in different schools, have spouses who have yet another whole set of different backgrounds. Some are fourth- and fifth-generation Adventists, but some have just been baptized.

While the members of the local congregation share an intense love of the church with their administrative brethren, their participation and expertise are not sought by those same brethren, and if given are not appreciated, let alone used by the brethren. A typical committee has administrators who have known each other for years but who don't know the laypeople sitting on the committee. On the other hand, the laypeople sitting on a committee are frequently younger than the administrative brethren, their spouses are completely unknown to anyone the administrators or their spouses know; perhaps the laypeople have been Adventists for only 10 years. Maybe they weren't educated in Adventist schools and they now work for companies none of the administrators have ever even heard of. A typical layperson might be awed by the committee itself and not know how to speak in Adventist cliche. Of course the administrative brethren reason that since laypeople work in "outside firms," they will not understand the workings of the church; consequently, they cannot be taken seriously around a boardroom table. A very simple example of Adventist administrative thinking is that the reason given why the General Conference does not turn over its books for an audit by an independent Certified Public Accountant firm is that "outside firms" don't understand our financial structure.

Constitutions have mandated "lay representation" at all levels of church structure for many years. But, Donald J. Davenport did not become a household word for lack of lay representation on various boards and committees. He became a household word because representation does not mean the same as participation. Too often those who were chosen as representatives came after the fact. The money was already sent—all that was needed was a vote in favor recorded in committee minutes. Which all brings me to the point. Good policies exist. Good constitutions exist. The words that are written and spoken are just fine. But attitudes and entrenched traditions cannot be changed by the typestrokes on paper. Neither can accountability be legislated. Accountability is comparable to keeping the law—supreme love of God makes the law no burden. Trusting church administration makes accountability a by-product, not an issue.

Lest there by any misunderstanding, accountability is a two-way street. If we execute our responsibilities properly, accountability is academic and hiding behind political skirts is unnecessary. Trust should be mutual in order to build accountability. Developing this trust requires increased lay participation at all levels of the organization, particularly the union and division levels, by tapping the resources that are vital for an organization whose mission it is to tell the Good News and to nurture those doing the telling.

The time is ripe to revise the system. Perhaps the best "model constitution" of all can be found in 1 Corinthians 12. Paul's homely illustration of the human body is obvious and yet profound. The head cannot go anywhere without the feet, and if the feet hurt, the head certainly knows it. Paul reminds us that the nose is of no more value than the hands and "if the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing?"

How long will those in the pew continue to distrust church administrators? How long will church administrators continue to call them "just laymen?"

Len Harms
Vice chairman, North Pacific Union
Commission on Church Structure

Chastizing A Beloved Son: Oliveira on Weiss

To the Editors: After a stormy night, some people enjoy the beauty of a sunny morning, while others complain about the mud left behind by the storm. When Dr. Weiss visited his home country after an absence of 30 years, he failed to see the bright aspects of a church motivated by a strong sense of direction and purpose.

He failed to see the beauty of a church on fire with a contagious sense of mission, in which the family is still a monolithic unit (the divorce rate is almost zero), homosexuality is almost unknown, and our historical theological views remain unchallenged.

He failed to appreciate the wonderful work performed by dozens of dedicated physicians, among them his own brother, who serve the Lord with intense dedication for the same salary as a regular worker. It would be a source of inspiration for him to see them working tirelessly in our institutions without being affected by the materialistic philosophy of monetary reward.

It appears that he also failed to grasp the widespread influence of the Granix Food Factory and its vegetarian restaurants which comprise one of the most successful financial operations of its kind in our denomination. Is it possible that a man like Dr. Weiss, with his bright perceptions, is more concerned with mud than with the sunshine?

While it is true that our lay members in Argentina have little participation in the decision-making process of the church, Dr. Weiss overlooks the important fact that they are so involved in the church's mission that they have no desire to spend time on administrative problems.

Evidently Dr. Weiss wants to see more hands on the helm of the church, thus reducing the number of hands on

the oars. Is he implying that there is need to reduce the speed at which the ship of Zion is moving forward in his country? If so, he will find that the members will not agree. They are more concerned with the dynamics of the church than with its mechanics.

In his article, the author mentioned the name of Elder John Livingstone, who was his Bible teacher at River Plate College more than 30 years ago. While it is true that his knowledge on righteousness by faith was inaccurate, we owe him a tribute of respect and affection because he was able to mold and inspire a generation of preachers who are still proclaiming the gospel with power and contagious conviction.

We do not deny that in Argentina some faithful church members, because of their high regard for God's law, feel uncomfortable with the idea that we are saved by the doing and dying of Christ alone. But is the church in Argentina unique on this important point? How many church members in North America or other places have a real understanding of the meaning of Christ's completed atonement on Calvary? If Dr. Weiss believes that the majority of lay members in the North American Division are free from legalistic influences, we must conclude that he is living confined in his theological ivory tower, completely isolated from grass roots realities.

I am positive that Dr. Weiss is capable of describing in a more fair and accurate way the accomplishments of our church in his home country, Argentina, the cradle of our message in South America. In writing this response to his article I have no intention of being defensive or apologetic. I am not from Argentina. My only purpose is to correct as much as possible the distorted image of the church in Argentina as presented by one of its beloved sons.

Enoch Oliveira
Vice-president of the General Conference and
former President of the South American Division

Outrage At Graybill's Departure

To the Editors: In an ancient barbaric age, the messenger who brought bad tidings about the tide of the battle to the king was promptly killed. Ronald Graybill, has been a respected member of the General Conference-affiliated, Ellen G. White Estate. Over many years, he has had daily access to the archives of White memorabilia. Drawing on a wealth of research material, he has recently written a biography of Ellen White, as part of a doctoral dissertation for Johns Hopkins University.

At last, we have an authentic, well-documented biography that reveals a flesh and blood woman, with all her foibles and human frailities. The General Conference, like the ancient kings, has not looked kindly on the adverse information contained in the biography. They have fired Graybill. What next? Will the General Conference mandate a new version of the Scriptures, with the frailties of the prophets carefully expunged? Shall we censor the story of David and Bathsheba?

The church has, unfortunately, consciously fostered and promulgated, over all these decades, a totally false, "Virgin Mary" infallibility for Mrs. White. The firing of an honest biographer, in an inept attempt to throw doubt on his research, will surely compound the problems already resulting from the previous course of action. Graybill is to be commended, instead of censured, for an honestly researched and scholarly study of a church prophet.

As the spate of adverse evidence against E.G. White escalates to a cumulative flood, the dissident members among us find ready ammunition for their assertions that they have been fraudalently used. Those of us who are loyal, mainstream Adventists cannot refute their allegations.

Most Adventist laypeople are mature enough to accept the fact that the church's prophet had feet of clay. What we cannot stomach is the dismaying discernment that the official church body is engaged in a massive cover-up and whitewash of the now well-documented evidence. Just as loyal Republicans deplored Nixon's devious dealings during Watergate, so loyal Adventist laypeople repudiate the lack of candor on these matters by the church body. Watergate was disastrous for Nixon. We fear that a less than open and candid approach by the brethren, will be equally disastrous for the church we love.

If, as it now appears, we have labored for many decades under misconceptions about Ellen G. White, it is certainly high time that the authentic, true facts emerge.

Robin A. Vandermolen, M.D.
Glendale, California

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