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Letters from the Philippines
Child Abuse and Adventism

SPECTRUM

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THE REMNANT AND THE REPUBLIC

America—A Religious Republic?
Lawsuit Threatens Adventist Institutions
The Real Truth About the Remnant

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About This Issue

Adventists often refer to themselves as the remnant. As early as Plato the republic has signified the social-political system governing a region. In the first article of the special section of this issue Richard Neuhaus insists that those adhering to the Judaic-Christian tradition—his version of the remnant—are the legitimate leaders of at least the American republic. Charles Scriven, on the other hand, says that the biblical definition of remnant inevitably puts it into tension,

if not conflict, with the most powerful in the republic.

Mitchell Tyner and Kent Hansen review how recent court cases and decisions seem to be shifting the interpretation of the Constitutional relationship of religious communities to the government of the American republic.

For Adventists, who understand the actions of political, social and governmental institutions to have cosmic significance, the way the remnant relates to the republic involves nothing less than our self-definition as a people.

—The Editors

America—A Religious Republic?

by Richard Neuhaus

The cultural hegemony of the secular Enlightenment has collapsed. That is a general proposition which has to inform all our reflection about religion and public life in America.

However, the predominant view in American public life and its deliberations about public policy is different. Our public school textbooks from the early grades on through graduate school perpetuate the view that America is, or is fast becoming, a secular society. This view says that religion can no longer play the role it once did—addressing the ultimate questions about how we ought to order our life together. That proposition has everything going for it except the empirical evidence, and the empirical evidence is overwhelming. America today is a more religious society than it was 25 years ago, than it was 50 years ago, than it was, probably, 100 years ago.

This is not necessarily good news. There are people naive enough to believe that religion is self-evidently a human good. Those with a more sophisticated view of history recognize that religion is as riddled with the ambiguities of evil and potential for wickedness as any other dimension of human life. So, when I say that the myth that we are becoming a secular society is collapsing all around our ears, I do not mean

to be a bearer of unequivocally good news. It is simply a fact that people who presume to understand American society and politics should take religion into account more seriously than they do.

The resurgence of religion or religiousness, leaving aside for a moment the question of the authenticity, biblical integrity, or other ways of determining the quality of religion, raises some very real questions about how we order our life together. It is not only understandable but imperative that this reality of American life become increasingly evident in the public square. It is imperative if we believe in the liberal democratic proposition, if we believe in democracy, if we believe in what the late John Courtney Murray called “the American proposition.” If we believe, in whatever way, that the sovereignty and legitimacy of government and of law derive from us, the people, then there is no legitimate way by which we can exclude from public deliberation and decision making the aspirations, fears, beliefs, and hopes of the people.

Unfortunately, there are many who would exclude, in a profoundly antidemocratic way, the free flow of popular sovereignty in American life. In recent decades we have too often arrived at the conclusion that religion is some kind of disqualifying taint. We have come perilously close, at times, to reversing, or turning on their heads the two religion clauses of the First Amendment. I take it to be the case, indeed I am persuaded that it is the case, that the “no-establishment” clause of the First Amend-

Richard Neuhaus, director of the Center on Religion and Society, in New York City, is the author of many books and articles, including his recent, *The Naked Public Square*. This article is an edited version of a lecture given at a symposium on “Religion in the Public Square,” sponsored by the Washington Institute of Contemporary Issues.

ment is in the service of the “free-exercise” clause of that Amendment. That is a square-one starting point. In recent decades, in American jurisprudence and in the habits of public behavior, we have come perilously close to assuming that the “no-establishment” clause has priority over a threatening “free-exercise” clause. Again and again, in the name of “no-establishment,” we have created what I have called the naked public square, a square denuded of vibrant beliefs, denuded of the religious, Judeo-Christian, biblical character of the very people who possess the sovereignty by which legitimate government and law operate. I am a liberal. I am a democrat (upper case and lower case). I have many policy disagreements and cultural collisions with what in the last several years has come to be called the religious New Right. But I am reasonably confident that 10 years from now, perhaps 50 years from now, those who have dreamed the American dream and espoused the American proposition of liberal democracy are going to look back with enormous gratitude for the emergence of the religious New Right. That phenomenon has moved with great assertiveness—some would say with vulgar aggressiveness—into the public arena and alerted us to the need to go back again to the constituting vision of our society.

What the perturbations and confusions and conflicts over religion and politics in recent years have done at their best is to teach us again that politics, especially politics that claims to be democratic, is a moral enterprise, that is, it is an enterprise that engages questions that are inescapably moral, questions of right and wrong, of how we define justice and injustice, of what is fair and what is not fair. We should have known this all along, but, in a great cultural fit of absent-mindedness, we have in recent decades forgotten things that to those who provided the constituting vision were self-evident. We have forgotten that, as Aristotle says, “Politics is simply an extension of ethics,” and that the political question is always, “How ought we to order our lives together?” (with the “ought” being clearly and inescapably a moral term). In a society where

most of the people, for better or for worse, believe that morality is derived from religion, questions of politics involve us not only in morality but also in religion.

Are there dangers involved? There are many people who believe that the religious New Right constitutes a primary danger—a danger that is reactionary, antiliberal, and even antidemocratic. The New Right, they think, manifests an ominous populism, a raw majoritarianism that would ride roughshod—some alarmists would say in a fascist manner—over the fragile protection of a liberal democratic polity.

Certainly there are dangers. But most who speak and scream the loudest, protesting the New Right, do not understand what the real dangers

America today is a more religious society than it was 25 years ago. This is not necessarily good news.

are. They do not understand that their reaction is doubly reactionary. They speak the name liberalism, but they do not understand that the exclusion of religiously based judgments from the public arena can create a vacuum. That vacuum invites the imposition of moral judgments in the public arena which we, the people, have not legitimated, which are not democratic in character.

Many of the actors in the religious New Right also fail to understand the process of which they are part. The center I head recently sponsored a conference in Wheaton, Illinois, on biblical politics and democracy. We brought together a wide range of evangelical and fundamentalist figures in the political arena, ranging from the Moral Majority and the American Coalition for Traditional Values to Evangelicals for Social Action. The conference revealed a real danger that evangelicals and fundamentalists involved in political action in America have not carefully thought through the moral foundations of a liberal democratic society.

Some of the more prominent leaders in the

religious New Right would say that too much has happened too fast in the last six, seven, or eight years for them to care for the theoretical. I am sure there is a degree of truth in that. I am impressed by the leadership of the religious New Right, and by its awareness that there are a lot of areas in which further growth and further thought are desperately needed.

The Center on Religion and Society also recently cosponsored a conference with Temple Emanu-El, in New York City, under the rubric, "Jews in Unsecular America." We brought leaders of the evangelical and fundamentalist communities together with leaders of the diverse Jewish communities, altogether a very critical community if there is going to be a creative, genuinely democratic alternative to the naked public square.

The vast array of Christian and Jewish communities needs to be engaged in rethinking the moral and theological foundations of the

What has been called pluralism in the past has, too often, not been pluralism at all. It has been the monism of indifference.

democratic idea in a way none of us has for the last half century. We need to engage in creative reexamination if we are to renew the vitality and vibrancy of a democratic and pluralistic society.

If we have sufficient nerve, imagination, and the devotion to the American dream we may, for the first time in American life, become a genuinely pluralistic society. For the first time in American life, we may become a vibrant community of communities, a people of diverse and sometimes conflicting belief, who, within the bond of civility, ask the question, "How then ought we to order our life together?"

What has been called pluralism in the past has, too often, not been pluralism at all. It has been the monism of indifference. It has been an entering into the public arena as though we were not people of particularist dreams and aspira-

tions and notions of ultimate right and wrong. And we have come into the public arena, into that naked public square, pretending that our most significant differences make no difference. Our public life has taken on a character of unreality, indeed of surreality. We call it pluralism. But now comes the moment for genuine pluralism, the real testing of the bonds of civility. Now we encounter one another not simply to agree to disagree but to agree on the reasons we must agree to disagree. We can agree on the moral, theological, metaphysical, and philosophical reasons why it is the course of fidelity, not compromise, for the religious believer to respect, indeed to reverence those who do not share the same belief system.

That would be a new thing in American life. At one time we had the real substance, but in recent decades only the veneer of shared moral discourse. Throughout most of American history the synthesis of Puritanism and Lockean individualism, articulated and sustained by what we call the Protestant mainline (or old line) churches, supplied the terms of that moral discourse. But that white Anglo-Saxon Protestant hegemony has collapsed, and there is no way of going back to it. That is why we must learn, in a new way, to encounter one another, to engage one another, in all our particularities, diversities, and differences. We must see that it is not a matter of accident that this kind of society came into being, but that it is rather, as Adams and Madison and Jefferson and others saw, a grand experiment—an audacious experiment—rare, fresh, and as adventuresome today as when it was launched at the end of the 18th century.

The American proposition, then, is to understand that respect and reverence for differences, for a genuinely democratic and pluralistic society, is not a second best thing, it is not something you settle for when you believe that it is not possible to impose biblical righteousness upon all. Rather, in our kind of world, so far short of the coming rule of God in its finality, we religiously and theologically embrace respect for differences; we want to nurture and to sustain pluralism.

We must understand that religious liberty cannot oppose religion. Roger Williams was not

a secularist who wanted religion excluded from the way in which people order their life together. Precisely because his religious belief took priority over all else, he was not prepared to see the power of the state, which is so often in the hands of those indifferent or hostile to religion, trespass against the consciences of individuals and the beliefs of communities.

To reconstitute the vision of religious liberty is the great new moment ahead of us. It is a very exciting time. There will be confusions,

wounds, and hurt feelings, for democracy is a messy proposition, indeed a raucous proposition. Short of the coming of the kingdom of God and the return of our Lord Jesus in glory, we will never get finally settled how we ought to understand the relationship between church and state, sacred and secular. Difficult debates will continue, but I hope we will recreate in the liberal democracy's naked public square a religiously-based public philosophy.

The Real Truth About the Remnant

by Charles Scriven

From the beginning, our Adventist forebears referred to themselves as the remnant church or remnant people, and to the present day the metaphor of the remnant continues to occupy a large place in our consciousness.¹ In spite of this, however, we have not really understood the meaning of the metaphor. Except for appeals to a few stock passages, we have largely ignored what the Bible has to say about the purpose of the remnant, and this has retarded our comprehension of the church's task and mission.

In reconsidering the metaphor of the remnant church, I will show that it in fact calls the Adventist church to repent of a purely personal or individualistic religion and to embrace a radical form of social and political engagement. To do so would change us, and change us a great deal—yet change us in a way that is faithful to our past and to the legacy of our pioneers.

The pioneers of Adventism were a tiny minority who remained faithful to the Advent vision, or a reinterpretation of it, even after the disappointment of 1844. They called themselves the “remnant,” the “little remnant,” the “scattered remnant”; the meaning of this self-designation was bound up with the distinctive eschatology they were developing. Their reinterpretation of the Advent vision involved a new understanding of Christ's ministry in the heavenly sanctuary. The presence of two tables

of stone bearing the words of the Decalogue² in the sanctuary's most holy place, the site of Christ's final high-priestly work, testified to the importance of the Ten Commandments. Among these was the commandment to worship on the seventh day, and this underscored the idea, advanced by Joseph Bates and others, that Sabbathkeeping would be restored before the Second Coming. By 1847 Ellen White, building on all of this, was invoking the seventh-day Sabbath as the distinctive trait of “the true Israel of God.” Very soon it was usual to characterize the remnant as those who keep the commandments of God and have the faith of Jesus (Rev. 12:17; 14:12)—and just as usual to focus attention on the Sabbath.

The Sabbath of the fourth commandment stood out as the special mark not only of our loyalty to God but also of his loyalty to us. It was the very “seal of the living God,”³ the sign—especially in the last days—of a saving connection between us and our Maker. In ignoring the Sabbath, other churches made themselves Babylon; in upholding it, our pioneers offered the faithful in these churches the possibility of belonging to the true “remnant people of God.”⁴

In her later life Ellen White continued to emphasize the keeping of the commandments and the faith of Jesus as the mark of the remnant. She alluded often to Isaiah's image of the “repairer of the breach,” saying that it points to a people who near the end of time restore the law by reclaiming the Sabbath.⁵ By setting aside the Sabbath of the Lord the other churches, according to her, fail the true test of obedience.⁶ In light of this, Adventism's special task is to make known the truth about the Sabbath and the end of time—to

Charles Scriven is senior pastor at Sligo SDA Church. Formerly he was associate professor of theology at Walla Walla College, and an editor of *Spectrum*. He continues with *Spectrum* and the Forum in an advisory capacity.

announce the news of Revelation 14 as a final warning to the world.⁷

When in 1957 the General Conference produced *Questions on Doctrine*, an official reply to inquiries from non-Adventist scholars about our church's teachings and objectives, one chapter bore the title, "Who Constitute the 'Remnant Church'?" The chapter begins with a denial, backed by quotations from Ellen White, that Adventists claim to be the only true Christians. Yet the messages of Revelation 12 and 14 do point, so *Questions* tells us, to the Seventh-day Adventist church as "a people of prophecy" whose "solemn responsibility" is to summon the world to obey every command of the Decalogue, "the law" by which God will judge the world.

The chapter states that in every church there is a "precious remnant" who live up to the light they have. Still, it says, the idea of the remnant applies in a special way to our church: we are "the visible organization" through which God is proclaiming his final warning message about the need for full obedience and the coming of final judgment. The Sabbath, moreover, is a "basic part" of the message, a test of loyalty to God. "We believe it to be the solemn task and joyous privilege of the Advent movement," says the closing sentence, "to make God's last testing truths so clear and so persuasive as to draw all of God's children into the prophetically foretold company making ready for the day of God."⁸

We see here a certain reserve about equating our church with the biblical remnant. It is due, perhaps, to the context of discussion with other Christians. In any case, we find a similar reserve in officially approved statements published since 1957, including the paragraph on "The Remnant and Its Mission" in the present *Church Manual*. Yet the themes in this paragraph are familiar and the implication plain: the remnant arises in the last days amidst widespread apostasy; it upholds the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus; it proclaims the message summarized by the three angels of Revelation 14. We are reminded, finally, that in doing these things the remnant

effects "a work of repentance and reform on earth," a work to which "every believer" has been called.⁹

All this represents the conventional Adventist view of the remnant metaphor and its meaning for the church. But is this view biblical? In his book, *The Remnant*, Gerhard Hasel, dean of the Andrews University Theological Seminary, examines the scriptural use of the metaphor up to

This is a Sabbathkeeping bound up with fairness to workers, freedom for the oppressed, and bread and housing for the hungry, homeless poor.

the time of the prophet Isaiah of Jerusalem. Although his detailed investigation has not yet altered the conventional view of the remnant, it certainly invites reconsideration of it. The book's central challenge to our community is the bond it reveals between the metaphor of the remnant and the idea of social, indeed political, transformation.

Hasel shows that it is typical for Old Testament writers to speak of the remnant in connection with the dual themes of judgment and salvation. In both the flood story and the Abraham-Lot tradition in Genesis, for example, we find the idea of a remnant who, in receiving protection from judgment, underscore the divine commitment to salvation.¹⁰ What is striking is that in the Old Testament the remnant motif and these attendant themes bear the clear stamp of political concern, especially in the classical prophets. Consider this from chapter five of Amos: "Seek good, and not evil, that you may live; and so the Lord, the God of hosts, will be with you, as you have said. Hate evil, and love good, and establish justice in the gate; it may be that the Lord, the God of hosts, will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph."¹¹

Hasel points out that salvation is rooted in grace, yet it is conditioned upon human response

to grace: there will be no remnant without a renewed faithfulness to God¹² that entails a determination to “establish justice in the gates.” And this refers primarily, Hasel says, to “social justice.”¹³

Elsewhere in chapter five Amos condemns those who neglect justice, those who hate its defenders, those who exact unjust levies from the poor, and those who accept bribes.¹⁴ Nor does he spare the pious with their solemn assemblies. God hates mere ritual and begs his people to “take away from me the noise of your songs. . . . But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an everflowing stream.”¹⁵

Isaiah also speaks of a faithful remnant seeking to establish social justice. In chapter one, the prophet envisions a judgment that “will smelt away your dross as with lye and remove all your alloy.” From this there will emerge, as Hasel notes, a purified remnant, what Isaiah calls “the faithful city.” Instead of corruption, vain Sabbathkeeping, and vain sacrificing, those of the remnant will display a positive commitment to seek justice, correct oppression,

In Luke’s gospel, Jesus is represented as an agent of radical social change.

defend the fatherless, and plead for the widows.¹⁶

Hasel’s own study does not extend to Isaiah 40 and beyond, but the remnant metaphor does appear in these chapters, bound up with the imagery of servanthood that defines the mission of the house of Jacob.¹⁷ This shows, once again, a link between the remnant and the project of social justice, for according to the prophet it is the precise mission of the servant to “bring forth justice to the nations.”¹⁸ In Isaiah 58, the chapter in Isaiah Ellen White cites more than any other,¹⁹ the prophet tells us that service genuinely pleasing to God involves Sabbathkeeping—but this is a Sabbathkeeping bound up with fairness to workers, freedom for

the oppressed, and bread and housing for the hungry, homeless poor. The community committed to these things is the community that one day will see the ancient ruins rebuilt and the broken streets restored.²⁰

Whether Jesus himself adopted the remnant motif has been disputed among New Testament scholars. Yet if we construe the motif as referring not to a closed society, but to the number who respond to an inclusive summons, then we may very plausibly consider it a part of Jesus’ consciousness.²¹

It is true that the word remnant does not itself appear in the gospel accounts, yet words from the remnant vocabulary of the prophets do appear. Indeed, the whole story told in these accounts reflects the prophetic vision of a faithful remnant. In the parables of the shepherd and the sheep, for example, we find Jesus calling his disciples the “little flock”; this echoes a prophetic theme that in at least one passage is tied explicitly to the idea of the remnant.²² Or consider that in Matthew’s account Jesus accepts his vocation under John the Baptist, a man who envisioned the gathering of a faithful remnant.²³ All this suggests that Jesus did in fact think of himself and his disciples in light of the remnant metaphor, or at least of the theme represented by it.²⁴

What is true in any case is this: to the first Christians Jesus was part of the prophetic tradition in which we find the metaphor of the remnant. According to them, moreover, he embraced the socio-political hopes of the prophets. Although this latter point is controversial, the evidence for it to me seems overwhelming. Two fairly recent works, for example, argue that Luke, a gospel often thought to have played down any threat Christianity may have posed to the established social order, presents Jesus in fact as sharply critical of the political establishment. In one of these, John Howard Yoder’s *The Politics of Jesus*, the author argues that throughout Luke’s gospel, beginning with the birth announcement, Jesus is represented as “an agent of radical social change.”²⁵ He is one who will put down the mighty from their thrones and exalt those of low degree. He is one whose preaching invokes Isaiah’s vision of a Messiah whose coming is

good news for the poor and the captive, good news for the blind, the oppressed, and the victims of inequity.²⁶ He is one whom Herod perceives as dangerous, and whom he wants to kill. He is one who rebukes his disciples for quarreling over rank, but never for thinking that he will set up a new social order. He is one who denies that his followers will take up arms as is done in the kingdoms of this world, but never denies that he is a threat to the Jewish and Roman authorities.²⁷

Richard Cassidy's book *Jesus, Politics and Society: A Study of Luke's Gospel* advances a similar thesis. Published in 1978, six years after Yoder's book, it claims that in Luke's gospel Jesus is a critic of the political establishment and a prophet of "a new social order" that is "based on service and humility" and opposed to "the use of violence against persons."²⁸ But it is not only Luke, of course, who links the gospel with prophetic hope. For example, Matthew, citing a passage of Isaiah, tells us that Jesus fulfills the prophecy of the servant of God who will "proclaim justice to the Gentiles" and persist in it until he has brought "justice to victory."²⁹

I will not here further press the point except to consider the commonplace argument that Jesus' primary concern was salvation for individuals, not renewal for society. In Jesus' inaugural sermon in Nazareth (Luke 4), he quoted a passage from Isaiah calling for socio-political renewal. In speaking these words however, some say Jesus was thinking of personal or spiritual liberation, not of political liberation.

For example, the evangelical writer Donald Bloesch appeals to Luke 7:22, where Jesus responds to a question from two disciples of John the Baptist. "Go," he says, "and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have good news preached to them." According to Bloesch, this shows that "Jesus came to offer deliverance from the power of sin and death rather than from political and economic bondage." In the following paragraphs he cites further evidence from the

gospels that this is so: Jesus refused to be the political Messiah the Jews expected; he called his followers to a ministry of proclamation, not the building of a new social order.³⁰

Neither of these objections is convincing. The remark in Luke 7:22 is composed largely of phrases from Isaiah 35:5, 6 and 61:1, the latter belonging to the very passage Jesus read in the synagogue at Nazareth. It runs counter to clear evidence that he would quote from the book of Isaiah in order to break with it. The more natural interpretation is that in both the sermon at Nazareth and in the reply to John's question Jesus was explaining his purpose in the (socio-political) terms of Old Testament prophecy. As for the refusal of Jesus to be the Messiah the

The hierarchy upon which evangelicals often insist makes the quest for personal conversions matter more than the quest for social change, when in fact these interests should be held together.

Jews expected, that is no reason to deny that in his *unexpected* way he intended to build a new society. Nor does the fact that he called the disciples to a ministry of proclamation mean they were not also called to a political task. This would have to be shown, and Bloesch does not do so.

None of this is to deny that in the New Testament Jesus cares for the salvation of individuals as well as the renewal of society. Nor is it to deny the fundamental importance of our addressing individuals with the message of the gospel. As Yoder remarks, "The preaching of the gospel to individuals is the surest way to change society."³¹ The point is that the hierarchy which evangelicals often insist upon is a misguided hierarchy. It makes the quest for personal conversions matter more than the quest for social change, when in fact these interests should be held together as they are in the New Testament.³² Ellen White is surely right when, in a famous paragraph of *The Desire of Ages*, she

tells us that the cure for social and political abuses “must reach men individually, and must regenerate the heart.” She is also right in denying that Jesus sought “temporal dominion” as a means of establishing his kingdom.³³ Yet he did address questions of government and politics. Even though he did not act as the Jews expected the Messiah to act, he certainly condemned political abuses and sought a new form of social and political existence.

We have seen that in the prophets the remnant motif is substantially political and that, according to the gospels, Jesus himself upheld the prophetic vision. The motif appears next in Romans, where Paul simply draws upon the idea of the remnant to explain why only a few among the Jews have become Christians, and to affirm that in the new community of faith, made up of Gentiles as well as Jews, God is indeed fulfilling his promises to ancient Israel.³⁴ But it is in the book of Revelation that we find the passages on the remnant with which Adventists have always been familiar, passages that both support my claim and illuminate its distinctively Christian implications.

Consider first whether the remnant motif retains a socio-political significance. In its original setting the apocalypticist’s vision addressed precisely the relation of Christians in Asia Minor to Roman government and allied institutions. If it was written, as seems probable, near the end of Domitian’s reign, then the church’s circumstances, though not disastrous, were unsettling and precarious. A widening gap between rich and poor was creating social unrest in Asia Minor.³⁵ Jewish Christians were by now unwelcome in the synagogues and no longer benefited from the special treatment accorded Jews under Roman rule. Christians in general were despised by their Gentile neighbors, who, often embracing the imperial cult, worshiped the emperor, instead of the lowly Christ. At times actual persecution of Christians broke out. The Roman government had recently killed Antipas, and John himself was writing from exile on an island. If this was not enough trauma, there were the memories of the destruction of

Jerusalem’s temple in A.D. 70, and of the emperor Nero’s earlier campaign of terror against Christians. It was tempting now to counter all this antipathy by sidling up to the dominant culture, by softening the Christian witness and participating fully in civic life.³⁶

Just this, however, is what the author of Revelation was warning against. Scholars agree on the meaning of the book of Revelation to its first hearers. As Adela Yarbro Collins writes, the author’s message is “deeply political.”³⁷ Chapters 13, 14, and 18 of Revelation, for example, constitute an *explicit* attack upon Rome for its violence against Jews and Christians, for its blasphemous self-worship, for its flagrant economic inequalities. At the same time the book calls the followers of Jesus to take a public stand against these evils. The three angels of chapter 14 warn that “collaboration with the Roman Empire and submission to its claims will lead to eternal damnation.” The true saints endure in their public loyalty to Christ; they risk

The true saints endure in their public loyalty to Christ; they risk even death in repudiating the social and political evil around them.

disadvantage and even death in repudiating the social and political evil around them.³⁸

The Adventist pioneers identified the way of the true saints in Revelation 14 with the way of the remnant in Revelation 12. Adventists have conventionally viewed Revelation 12—with its description of the remnant who “keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ”—as a call to full and faithful obedience to the Decalogue and, in particular, to the Sabbath commandment. But this, I suggest, does not do full justice to the radical Christocentrism at the heart of the book of Revelation.

In his life and teaching, Jesus deepened the understanding summarized in the Decalogue. Commentators agree that the sixth commandment

did not prohibit capital punishment or killing in war. They agree too that both the seventh and the tenth commandments assume that women are property of men: here adultery is an offense against the husband of the other woman. Nowhere, indeed, does the Old Testament prohibit men from having intercourse with prostitutes.³⁹ Jesus himself, on the other hand, supported an all-embracing kind of nonviolence and, against all the conventions of his age, affirmed the right of women to participate as equals in the circle of his disciples.⁴⁰

In Ernst Troeltsch's famous analysis of organized Christian communities, his description of the "sect-type," with its yearning for perfection and its separation from surrounding society, defines a form of community that is certainly close to our own, or to what we have imagined our own to be. He says that such communities typically "take the Sermon on the Mount as their ideal,"⁴¹ but here it seems we are atypical. We do read and appreciate the sermon, but our piety does not focus upon it as *the* ideal. Judging from the book of Revelation, however, and indeed from the whole New Testament, we *ought* to focus on it—or rather, on the whole Jesus story of which the sermon is a part. It is this story, after all, that puts the truth about God and us into perfect focus. The Sabbath and the Decalogue will certainly remain important to us if we do this, but there is much more that will be important too.

Troeltsch further represents communities of our type as "indifferent, tolerant, or hostile" towards "the world, the State, and Society." They do not try to "control and incorporate these forms of social life" but aim usually "to tolerate their presence alongside of their own society."⁴² But if my argument so far is correct, we must at this point affirm only a carefully qualified form of sectarian existence.

When we consider the book of Revelation, the prophets, and the Jesus story, it becomes clear that the metaphor at the heart of our self-understanding requires us, if we would be truly faithful to Scripture, to stand for socio-political renewal in the world. We cannot, in other words, be indifferent toward government and

other main institutions of society, nor can we be merely tolerant nor merely hostile toward them. A large part of our business is to transform these institutions.

Yet it is important to acknowledge that this must be a project we undertake in a Christ-like way. The language of the remnant calls us to radical obedience, and our political engagement must take a radical form. It must at all times exhibit our fundamental loyalty to Christ. As we bear our personal and communal testimony we keep his commandments and embody his values—including his non-violence as well as his concern for the victims of injustice.

In a world sharply at odds with these values, we cannot expect to be fully integrated into the surrounding cultural life. We must remain an alternative society, a separate people. Yet by

The language of the remnant calls us to radical obedience, and our political engagement must take a radical form.

selective involvement in the institutions of our society and by sheer force of our example, we must at the same time be the "light of the world," summoning all humanity to the praise of God in words and deeds, and persisting until justice has been fully established. Because we are nourished by the ancient prophets we will approach the task with hope, believing that the promised future somehow emerges through the witness of the remnant. Because we are nourished also by John's Apocalypse, we will expect this witness to be marked by trial and upheaval—and to succeed in the end only through the surprises of divine grace and, most preeminently, through the final surprise of the final coming of our Lord.

All this constitutes a vision that would change us if we embraced it. But in doing so, I suggest finally, we would honor our heritage. The pioneers *grew* in understanding, and so can we.⁴³ The pioneers confronted injustice and even came to the point of participating in the political

process. If we do this now, we advance upon what they began.⁴⁴ As they were trying to define the faith of the remnant, they invoked Jesus and upheld the Sermon on the Mount. Although the emphasis came to be upon the Decalogue, we today can uphold the ultimacy of the Jesus story without offense to what they did

and what they believed.⁴⁵

We do not lack justification for considering the "remnant" and the church in a new light. It remains to be seen whether we have the courage to do so, for the way of the truly faithful has never been an easy way, nor would we expect it to be easy today.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. See P. Gerard Damsteegt, *Foundations of the Seventh-day Adventist Message and Mission* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977), pp. 146, 168, 185, 186, 191, 244.

2. According to Damsteegt, a reading of Revelation 11:19 (interpreted, presumably, in the light of Deuteronomy 10:1-5) figured importantly here. See his *Foundations*, p. 139.

3. Revelation 7:2.

4. I have been relying upon Damsteegt, *Foundations*, pp. 139, 143-45, 147, 148, 189-192, 209-212.

5. Adventists are the ones, she said, who do this; therefore, only they fit the biblical description of the remnant people. *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 677, 678; *Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 57, 58; see also, e.g., *Selected Messages*, II, 106-107.

6. *Selected Messages*, II, 384, 385.

7. For example, see *Selected Messages*, II, 101-118.

8. *Seventh-day Adventists Answer Questions on Doctrine* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1957), pp. 186-196.

9. *Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual*, rev. ed. (Washington, DC: General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1981), p. 37. For a similar understanding, set forth nearly 10 years earlier, see Raoul Dederen, "The Nature of the Church," *The Ministry*, July 1972, p. 34.

10. Gerhard Hasel, *The Remnant* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1972), pp. 135-152.

11. Amos 5:14, 15 (RSV).

12. Hasel, *Remnant*, p. 206.

13. Hasel, *Remnant*, p. 197.

14. Amos 5:7, 10, 11, 12. I follow Hasel's interpretation of these verses in *Remnant*, pp. 174, 197.

15. Amos 5:21-24 (RSV).

16. Isaiah 1:4, 13, 17.

17. Compare Isaiah 46:3 with, e.g., Isaiah 44:1 and 48:12. In his "God's People and the Remnant," *Scottish Journal of Theology*, 3 (1950), p. 82, J. C. Campbell writes that "the witness of the prophets and the Remnant culminates in the prophecy of Deutero-Isaiah where Israel, the Remnant and the figure of the Servant alternate as object, witness and agent of a final revelation and act of the forgiving love of God."

18. Isaiah 42:1, 4 (RSV).

19. Judging from the *Comprehensive Index to the Writings of Ellen G. White*, I (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1962), 67-76.

20. Isaiah 58:3, 6, 7, 12-14.

21. See Ben F. Meyer, S. J., "Jesus and the Remnant of Israel," *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 84 (1965), 123-130.

22. See Jeremiah 23:1-6. For the parables, see Matthew 18:12-14 and Luke 15:3-7, and for other allusions to the shepherd imagery see Mark 6:34 and Matthew 9:36, not to mention, of course, the crystallization of this imagery in the shepherd discourse of John 10:1-21. The reference to the "little flock" occurs in Luke 12:32. Other relevant prophetic passages are Jeremiah 13:17, 20, and 31:10, Ezekiel 34:12, 31, Micah 5:2-4, and Isaiah 40:11.

23. Matthew 3:12. John's actual metaphor is that of wheat and chaff.

24. Gerhard Hasel, for one, believes this. See his "Remnant," in *Supplement to the Interpreters' Dictionary of the Bible*. George Eldon Ladd agrees in *The Presence of the Future* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), chapter 10. This is a revised edition of his *Jesus and the Kingdom* (New York: Harper and Row, 1964).

25. John Howard Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), p. 27.

26. Yoder argues that for Jesus' listeners the phrase "acceptable year of Yahweh" in Luke 4:19 meant the Jubilee year when economic inequities would be undone. Yoder, pp. 36, 38.

27. For this Yoder relies in part, of course, on John 18.

28. Richard J. Cassidy, *Jesus, Politics and Society: A Study of Luke's Gospel* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1978), pp. 34, 48.

29. The passage in Matthew 12:18-21 is taken from Isaiah 42:1-4.

30. Donald G. Bloesch, *Life, Ministry and Hope*, Vol. II of *Essentials of Evangelical Theology* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1979), pp. 156, 157.

31. Yoder, p. 226.

32. John B. Cobb suggests that the relation between these interests is reciprocal. "Do we change individuals through structural social changes," he asks, "or do we change society through changing individuals? The

answer, of course, is that neither can occur effectively except in interaction with the other." See David Tracy and John B. Cobb Jr., *Talking About God* (New York: Seabury Press, 1983), p. 90.

33. Ellen White, *The Desire of Ages*, p. 509.

34. Romans 9-11, especially Romans 9:24-29 and 11:1-10.

35. I rely on Adela Yarbro Collins, *Crisis and Catharsis: The Power of the Apocalypse* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1984), pp. 89, 96.

36. Collins, pp. 73, 86, 98, 127.

37. Collins, p. 20.

38. Collins, pp. 115, 132.

39. See commentary on these commandments in, e.g., R. Alan Cole, *Exodus*, The Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1973); J. P. Hyatt, *Exodus*, The New Century Bible Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971); and Breward S. Childs, *The Book of Exodus* (Philadelphia:

Westminster, 1974).

40. Stephen Charles Mott, in his *Biblical Ethics and Social Change* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), argues that Jesus did not condemn violence used to protect others. This thesis is bizarre and, as I am prepared to argue, mistaken. On Jesus and women, see, e.g., Rosemary Radford Reuther, *New Woman New Earth: Sexist Ideologies and Human Liberation* (New York: Seabury Press, 1975), pp. 63-66.

41. Ernst Troeltsch, *Social Teachings of the Christian Churches* (New York: Harper and Row, 1960), I, 332.

42. Troeltsch, I, 331.

43. On this consult, e.g., Damsteegt's *Foundations*.

44. On this see Jonathan Butler, "Adventism and the American Experience," in Edwin Scott Gaustad, ed., *The Rise of Adventism* (New York: Harper and Row, 1974), pp. 173-206.

45. On this see Damsteegt, *Foundations*, p. 194.

Can Adventists Continue to Discriminate in Hiring?

by Mitchell A. Tyner

On any given day several dozen legal cases around North America involve Seventh-day Adventists who have lost, or are about to lose, jobs because they have refused to work on the Sabbath. Public affairs and religious liberty staff at the various levels of church organization in North America spend more time on Sabbath/work conflicts than on any other type of problem—perhaps as much time as all others combined. In the future, however, religious liberty staff may be spending a lot of their time helping defend Adventist employers against charges of religious discrimination.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 makes it unlawful for an employer, employment agency, or labor organization to discriminate on the basis of five factors, one of which is religion.¹ The code prohibits not only intentional discrimination, but also unintentional discrimination through a failure to accommodate religious practices—unless the defendant can show that such accommodation would cause an undue hardship.

Discrimination Against the Religious

Recent court decisions have greatly increased the likelihood that both denominational institutions and individual

church members will be involved in even more religious discrimination cases. The key case mentioned in virtually every subsequent accommodation case is *Trans World Airlines v. Hardison*.² In that case the Supreme Court ruled that an employer does indeed have a duty to accommodate religious practices, but not if such accommodation violates a union contract or other seniority agreement, adversely affects either the employer's efficiency of operation or the rights of other employees, or causes the employer to incur more than *de minimis* extra costs.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, charged with enforcement of Title VII, responded to *Hardison* with revised *Guidelines on Religious Discrimination in Employment* (1980),³ and has continued to interpret the duty to accommodate quite broadly, claiming, “[A] refusal to accommodate is justified only when an employer or labor organization can demonstrate that an undue hardship would in fact result from each available alternative method of accommodation.”

The contention of the dissent in *Hardison*, that the Supreme Court had virtually interpreted the accommodation requirement out of existence, has proven to be an overstatement. Accommodation cases have been won by plaintiffs since 1977. Nevertheless, many sabbatarians were terminated subsequent to *Hardison* by employers who felt they could no longer be required to accommodate. Of those so terminated, many have not filed charges. Of the charges filed, most did not result in court action. Of those cases that resulted in reported decisions, employers won more often than employees.

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In dealing with the accommodation requirements articulated by the *Hardison* Court (no interference with contract rights, no reverse discrimination, no more than *de minimis* cost), perhaps the deference given to labor contracts has proved the most difficult for plaintiffs. In *Rowe v. Western Electric Co.*,⁴ the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals held that an employer may not be required to transfer an employee to a different shift to accommodate his religious practices where to do so would violate a seniority system of job and shift assignment.

In the recent case of *Turpen v. Missouri-Kansas-Texas Railroad Company and Brotherhood of Railway Carmen*,⁵ the court held:

To force M-K-T to accommodate plaintiff's religious beliefs in the instant case by requiring M-K-T to breach a duly-negotiated collective bargaining agreement and to incur greater than *de minimis* costs and undue hardship would be a violation of the establishment clause⁶

It has been argued (unsuccessfully) that unions themselves have a duty to accommodate sabbatarians. Typical of the court response to this argument is that of the Eighth Circuit, holding that a union has no duty to modify the seniority provisions of an agreement in derogation of the contractual rights of its members, even though those provisions would require an employee to work on Fridays in violation of his religious practice.⁷ This issue was also raised in *Turpen*, where the court held that the union could not be required to propose to breach a collective bargaining agreement, or waive the existing contractual rights of other employees.

Another *Hardison* requirement—that an accommodation result in no more than *de minimis* cost—resulted in a decision for the employer in *Wren v. T.I.M.E.-D.C., Inc.*⁸ The court found that accommodating a sabbatarian driver by using replacement drivers would result in costs for locating a replacement driver and costs resulting from the cancellation of runs when such drivers were not available.

The third *Hardison* requirement for accommodation, that no “reverse discrimination” may result, was not directly addressed, but is inher-

ent in the decision in *Howard v. Haverty Furniture Co.*,⁹ where the court upheld a finding of undue hardship against a warehouse employee who had a second job as a Methodist minister and absented himself from his job assignment without permission on a day when his employer held a large sale. His absence was to officiate at a funeral that could have been handled by another minister. As a result, a supervisor was required to work an additional day. Even though no express additional costs were shown, the court found undue hardship.

A failure to accommodate is less likely to be found if the employee has made it more difficult for the employer to accommodate.

This issue was also involved in *Brener v. Diagnostic Center Hospital*¹⁰ in which the court ruled in favor of the hospital/employer. The hospital, which operated its pharmacy on a rotating-shift assignment basis, set schedules based on the agreement of its pharmacists and allowed shift trading. For some time a Jewish pharmacist was allowed to change his shift when he was scheduled to work on Saturday. At his request, the director then instructed other pharmacists to trade religious holidays with him. Eventually, because of the morale problem developing with the other pharmacists, the hospital told Brener that it would not direct further schedule changes but would approve anything arranged by him. Brener failed to appear as scheduled and then resigned. The court found that Brener's suggestions that the hospital hire a substitute pharmacist, have the pharmacy director substitute for him, operate without him, or direct other employees to trade shifts with him, would all involve undue hardship.

A failure to accommodate is less likely to be found if the employee has made it more difficult for the employer to accommodate, or if the employer has a past history of successful accom-

modation. Significantly, Larry Hardison had sufficient seniority in his department to bid a graveyard shift compatible with his sabbatarianism. However, Hardison bid for, and received, a day-shift assignment in another department, knowing that this would put him second from last in departmental seniority and would provide insufficient seniority to avoid Saturday assignments. Similarly, in *Ferguson v. Kroger Co.*,¹¹ the court ruled against a plaintiff who changed his holiday schedule so that it no longer coincided with his religious holidays and then asked for additional time off for religious observance.

Yet, where the facts warrant, post-*Hardison* courts have found accommodation violations. In *Brown v. General Motors*,¹² the Eighth

Circuit held that an employer did not show that it would incur more than *de minimis* cost by permitting the plaintiff to leave work early at sunset on Fridays. In this case, a readily available replacement worker had filled in for the employee for three months. This decision may be differentiated from *Wren v. T.I.M.E.-D.C.*, *supra*, in that General Motors had a pool of "floaters" constantly available to fill in for absent workers, and therefore was able to show no cost incurred because of Brown's absences. Virtually identical facts produced a parallel decision against Volkswagen of America in 1985.¹³ Both cases will be used to advantage in *Rollin v. Chrysler*, a current case involving an Adventist fired by the Chrysler plant in Fenton, Missouri.¹⁴

In *Willey v. Maben Manufacturing Co.*,¹⁵ the

1985 Supreme Court Cases on Government and Religion

CASE DECIDED

84-773 *BENDER V. WILLIAMSPORT AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT*

Question Presented: Where a public high school has created a limited open forum, does the Establishment Clause preclude granting a student-initiated and student-led religious group "equal access" to school facilities with other student groups?

Ruling Below: The district's refusal of "equal access" does not unconstitutionally infringe upon the free speech rights of students. (CA 3, 741 F2d 538; See *Court Report*, Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 11)

Held: Respondent had no standing to appeal, CA 3 had no jurisdiction, so district court opinion governs: the group can meet.

Ruling 3/25/86

REVIEW GRANTED

85-993 *HOBBIE V. UNEMPLOYMENT APPEALS COMMISSION*

Question Presented: May unemployment compensation properly be denied where termination flowed from refusal to work on Sabbath and employee became sabbatarian after entering employment?

Ruling Below: Since employee was "agent of change" in religious acceptability of working conditions, denial was proper. (Fla. Ct. Appl., 5th Dist.)

Review granted, 4/21/86

REVIEW DENIED

Among the many cases the supreme Court declined to review was the following:

85-1071 *RAYBURN V. GENERAL CONFERENCE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS*

Question Presented: May Title VII be applied to employment of minister, where decision was allegedly discriminatory on grounds of race and sex?

Ruling Below: court scrutiny of selection of minister would inevitably lead to excessive entanglement. (CA 4, 772 F2d 1164)

Review denied 7/7/86

discharge of two employees who left work to observe the Worldwide Church of God Day of Atonement was found unlawful because (1) they had told the employer when hired that they would observe church holidays; (2) the employer had failed to make reasonable efforts to obtain replacements or to use such when available; and (3) the employer had a backlog of finished goods in inventory when the plaintiffs asked permission to leave.

An unusual decision in light of the post-*Hardison* emphasis on preserving seniority systems is *Kendall v. United Air Lines*,¹⁶ where the court upheld the employer's refusal to permit the plaintiff to fly only part of Friday night or to shift days off, but found a violation in the airlines' refusal to permit him to take a lengthy leave of absence in order to build sufficient seniority to bid for days off that would accommodate his religious practice.

Courts have also held for sabbatarians where the actions of employers have been seen as arbitrary and capricious. In *Padon v. White*,¹⁷ a sabbatarian hospital-maintenance director was willing to work on Saturdays in emergencies (and had arranged general Saturday coverage by his assistant). Yet he was fired because he refused to supervise construction of a swimming pool on Saturday. The court held that no reasonable accommodation had been made.

The most recent such case is *Maupin v. Dole*,¹⁸ in which the plaintiff, after informing his employer of his sabbatarianism, accepted employment as an air traffic controller trainee. After refusing to report for certain training shifts on Saturdays, he was fired. The court placed great weight on evidence that the employer simply concluded that accommodation without undue hardship was impossible and therefore made no effort to accommodate.

Current cases in or approaching litigation involve a railroad employee whose employer refused to accept an offered substitute,¹⁹ a postal employee disciplined because he refused to bid on a shift that required Saturday work,²⁰ another postal employee fired after he arranged a job swap that would have produced an accommodation,²¹ a small-appliance repairperson

who was told "you don't need this job—your husband works,"²² and a paper mill maintenance worker fired for refusing Friday night overtime, even though on the same night another employee was allowed to decline overtime because he and his wife "were putting up corn in the freezer."²³

A 1985 case received brief national attention when the Supreme Court overturned a Connecticut law requiring accommodation of those who observe a Sabbath, on the ground that it did not provide for consideration of the employer's needs.²⁴ Although Title VII requires such consideration, as noted by the Court, some employers have used this case as an excuse to fire sabbatarians who previously had been accommodated.

Another accommodation case on the current Supreme Court docket involves a member of the Worldwide Church of God who needed six working days per year to observe special holy days, in addition to the weekly Sabbath.²⁵ The school where he taught allowed three days paid leave for religious observance and three days for personal business. However, it specifically prohibited taking the personal business days for

Many sabbatarians who are fired are also denied unemployment benefits. The state usually characterizes their refusal to work on the Sabbath as misconduct, rendering them ineligible for benefits.

religious observance. When the teacher asked to use the personal business days for holy day observance, the school offered three days without pay. The lower court held that where both the employee and employer offer workable methods of accommodation, the employee's method must be accepted. The Supreme Court will hear the case in late 1986.

Many sabbatarians who are fired are also denied unemployment benefits. The state usually characterizes their refusal to work on the Sabbath

as misconduct, rendering them ineligible for benefits.

In 1963 the Supreme Court ruled in the case of a South Carolina Adventist that such a denial forced her "to choose between following the precepts of her religion and forfeiting benefits, on the one hand, and abandoning the precepts of her religion in order to accept work, on the other hand," and thus was unconstitutional. It said,

Government imposition of such a choice puts the same kind of burden on free exercise of religion as would a fine imposed against appellant for her Saturday worship. . . . Conditions upon public benefits cannot be sustained if they so operate, whatever their purpose, as to inhibit or deter the exercise of First Amendment rights.²⁶

The South Carolina case was upheld in a 1981 case involving a Jehovah's Witness who quit his job rather than work on munitions and was denied unemployment benefits.²⁷ The Supreme Court once again held that "a person may not be compelled to choose between the exercise of a First Amendment right and participation in an otherwise available public program."

Recently a new theory has arisen to challenge receipt of benefits in these cases. States now argue that in both Supreme Court cases the employer changed working conditions so that a job, previously acceptable, became religiously unacceptable. But in the case of a person who becomes a sabbatarian after accepting employment and is subsequently fired, the conditions are changed by the employee, not the employer. Therefore, eligibility for benefits depends upon which party was the agent of change.

The appellate court of Michigan reviewed such a case and found for the employee, holding that to do otherwise would be to protect religious beliefs held before employment, but not those acquired subsequently.²⁸ Similar challenges are now pending in several states,²⁹ and a parallel case was filed with the Supreme Court in December 1985.³⁰

Discrimination by the Religious

Note that all the foregoing cases relate to the rights of religious employees. Recently the spotlight has shifted to the rights of the religious employers, an area not frequently litigated until now.

The practice of some secular employers of hiring only those who agree with them on religious matters has not been well received by the courts. In one such case involving a health and fitness club, the Minnesota Supreme Court held that if application of the Title VII prohibition of religious discrimination in such a case burdened the employer's free-exercise rights, the burden was justified by the state's interest in eradicating discrimination in employment.³¹

This decision has potential importance for Adventist laypersons who operate nursing homes, food stores, and other secular businesses, and who prefer to hire only their fellow believers. The Supreme Court has been asked to review this case and, hopefully, will provide some guidance in the area.

But what about church-owned organizations? May an Adventist college lawfully refuse to hire a non-Adventist to teach physics? May an Adventist hospital give preference in hiring to church members, even though most of its employees belong to other faiths? The answer involves perhaps the least publicized but most far-reaching church-state issue currently in litigation: the right of church-affiliated organizations to make employment decisions based on religion—a right they say is essential in maintaining religious identity.

Specifically at issue is an exemption from the Title VII proscription of religious discrimination:

This subchapter shall not apply to a religious corporation, association, educational institution, or society with respect to the employment of individuals of a particular religion to perform work connected with the carrying out by such corporation, association, educational institution, or society of its activities.³²

Interpretation of this exemption has varied from court to court. A Mississippi court held that the relationship between a church and its minister is exempt, but the relationship between a religious college and its faculty is not.³³ A seminary cannot claim an exemption for those employees in commercial activities. But where a position falls within the scope of functions necessary to the operation of the institution, the exemption applies.³⁴ An editorial secretary at a religious publishing house is not “the type of critically sensitive position within the church” covered by the exemption.³⁵ A Methodist children’s home was “practically devoid of religious content.”³⁶

Some patterns seem to be emerging. Courts are very hesitant to interfere with a church’s choice of ministers, holding not only the final decision, but also the entire process beyond court scrutiny—regardless of allegations of sex and race discrimination.³⁷

Similarly, courts have allowed churches to discharge those not in doctrinal harmony if the employer occupied a religiously significant position. Thus the *Christian Science Monitor* could not be charged with sex discrimination in the firing of a lesbian reporter.³⁸ In perhaps the most significant church-state case of the current term, the Supreme Court will review a lower court decision approving the refusal of a fundamentalist school to rehire a teacher with an infant child. This school maintained that its doctrine held that mothers should stay at home with their children. While many will take issue with the particular doctrine in question, of far greater importance is the right of a religious organization to insist that its employees represent its doctrinal positions.³⁹

Both the teacher and reporter above were visible representatives of their employers. What about employees in positions with no obvious doctrinal link, who are not seen as church representatives?

Currently the spotlight is on three cases. The first involves Seattle Pacific University (SPU), a Free Methodist institution in Seattle, Washington.⁴⁰ Orrin Church, a Roman Catholic, applied for a job as a warehouseman at the uni-

versity. He was told that SPU hires only evangelical Christians and was denied employment. Church filed a complaint of religious discrimination with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, which referred it to the Washington State Human Rights Commission.

SPU is a pervasively religious institution. Although it admits students of any—or no—religion, it requires that all students attend worship services and take theology courses. Its self-proclaimed mission is religious, and it seeks to infuse all its activities with Christian witness. It holds that only faculty and staff who both profess and can articulate evangelical Christianity can perform this mission. All employers who might supervise student workers, including warehousemen, come under this restriction.

On receiving the complaint from the EEOC, the state commission issued a subpoena for detailed information on each university staff and faculty member. SPU maintained that the commission had no legal right to that information. In an effort to control the litigation, the university filed suit against both EEOC and the state commission.

In September 1985 the federal district court in Seattle dismissed EEOC as a defendant because it had taken no action in the case other than to defer it to the state commission. But that did not end its involvement with SPU. After the filing of the

**Of great importance is the right
of a religious organization to
insist that its employees represent
its doctrinal positions.**

Orrin Church complaint, the Seattle EEOC office accepted yet another complaint of religious discrimination against the university, this one filed by a Jew denied employment in an office position. EEOC assumed jurisdiction and issued a sweeping subpoena. This time SPU used political as well as legal methods to resist the subpoena, making contact with EEOC headquarters in Washington, D.C. On October 17, 1985, the Seattle EEOC director issued an

unexpected determination letter in that case. He ruled that SPU is indeed a religious organization for Title VII purposes and that the subpoena, although legally enforceable, was unnecessary and therefore would be withdrawn.

The Washington State Human Rights Commission saw things differently. It held that the Title VII exemption for religious organizations is an unconstitutional establishment of religion except as applied to positions which are inherently religious. It was therefore willing to exempt only the religion faculty and campus chaplains. Not even the job of the university president would be exempt, according to the

Are California and Washington making up legal theory as they go along? Not quite, but their foundation is shaky.

state; the university should hire the applicants, regardless of religious views.

This position is quite remarkable in view of the state statute that parallels Title VII. Rather than providing an exemption for religious employers, it simply excludes them from the definition of employers covered by the act.

In a surprise move apparently motivated by the Oregon attorney general's office, the state reversed its position in March 1986, and the suit was dropped. But in doing so the university petitioned the court to award it attorney's fees and to declare it the prevailing party, moving the court to produce an opinion on the merits of the case and thus establish some precedent for future use.

The second case⁴¹ involves the Christian Elementary School operated by the American Lutheran Church in Burbank, California. While the school does not require its teachers to be Lutheran, it does require that they be in good standing with their own churches. A Roman Catholic teacher, as the result of divorce, did not meet the "good standing" requirement, was fired, and filed a complaint of religious

discrimination. Agreeing with the state of Washington, the Office of the Attorney General of California has taken the position that the statutory exemption is an unconstitutional establishment of religion, except as applied to inherently religious positions. This would include religion teachers, but not other high school staff.

In an April 24, 1986, decision the trial court found a rational secular basis for the legislature's enactment of the exclusion of religious organizations from coverage under California's Fair Employment Practices Act "to avoid entanglement of an administrative agency in the complexities . . . necessary to determine whether the practices alleged to be discriminatory were a necessary part of a religious dogma." Therefore, the exclusion contravenes neither the establishment clause nor the equal protection clause. The American Civil Liberties Union has announced an appeal of this decision.

Are California and Washington making up legal theory as they go along? Not quite, but their foundation is shaky. As early as 1974 a federal appellate court observed that the Title VII exemption "appears to be violative of the establishment clause and to deny equal protection."⁴² But the only court to date to actually find the provision unconstitutional as applied to nonreligious positions is the United States District Court for Utah.

The third of the three cases we are examining involves three subsidiary organizations of the Mormon church:⁴³ a gymnasium, a garment factory, and an operation similar to Goodwill Industries. All require their employees not only to be Mormon, but "temple worthy," that is, in good standing with the church. When the plaintiffs were declared not "temple worthy" by their congregations, they were fired. They then filed suit for religious discrimination.

In a preliminary decision, *Amos I*, the court held the Title VII exemption to apply only to religious activities and devised a three-part test to determine that status.⁴⁴

First, the court looks at the tie between the religious organization and the activity at issue. Is there shared management between the two? Does the parent organization closely scrutinize and

assist in the financial affairs and day-to-day operations of the subordinate?

Second, whether or not that tie is substantial, the court looks at the relationship between the primary activity of the challenged organization and the doctrine of the parent organization. Adventism has a doctrinal imperative for the operation of schools and medical institutions that would easily satisfy that test. (For example, New Testament commands to feed the hungry and shelter the homeless are carried out through agencies such as the Adventist Development and Relief Agency.) But a furniture factory operated on an academy or college campus solely to provide employment for students might not be able to show any direct link between its activities and church doctrine.

If the operational tie (first test) is close, and the relationship of shared goals (second test) is substantial, the organization is declared religious and thus qualifies for the Title VII exemption. If either qualification is lacking the court proceeds to a third inquiry: Is there a relationship between the individual job in question and church doctrine? If so, that job is religious and exempt. Such a situation might involve a church-owned for-profit activity such as a campus furniture factory, which would fail the second test and possibly the first. Yet that factory might employ a minister as a chaplain and counselor for its student employees. Since his job shows a clear relationship with the church doctrine, his position is exempt for Title VII purposes, even though the remainder of the factory is not.

In *Amos I* the court applied the three-part test to Deseret Gymnasium and concluded that it could not be considered religious—and therefore was not exempt from Title VII. In *Amos II*, released September 18, 1985,⁴⁵ it found Deseret industries, which provides sheltered employment for the physically and mentally handicapped, to be religious in nature and exempt, and called for more evidence regarding the activities of Beehive Clothing Mills, which manufactures Mormon temple garments.

While the church says its doctrine requires

that only Mormons touch the temple garments, the plaintiffs allege that the church has, in other countries, contracted with commercial companies with no requirement to employ Mormons, and that Beehive itself continues to employ some non-Mormons. The church responds that it is moving toward direct production of all temple garments and that church control of the entire manufacturing process is necessary to shield its sacred objects from ridicule. Church leaders also contend that its practices outside the United States are not relevant to a proceeding under American law. The court disagrees, implying that rights and exemptions may be lost through inconsistent application.

What exactly defines inconsistent application? Finding an acceptable standard is made difficult by the wide variation in employment practices among religious institutions. Many institutions limit preferential hiring to faculty and key administrators. Some limit it even further to faculty in religion, theology, or philosophy. Others say they want all employees, from janitor to president, to share their religious attitudes and practices. Such institutions believe in the rel-

Do church-affiliated organizations have the right to make employment decisions based on religion—a right they say is essential in maintaining religious identity?

evance of faith to all activities. “The stand of our school is, if you’re in earnest about your faith, you can’t compartmentalize it. It weaves through everything you do,” says one college spokesperson. Most Seventh-day Adventist institutions take the latter stance.

Yet consistency is like perfection—a worthy aim but hard to attain. Seventh-day Adventist medical institutions cannot possibly find enough church members to fill all their needs, yet they maintain the necessity of filling management positions with Adventist employees. Adventist colleges and universities hold the traditional view

that religion is incorporated in some form in every class, and that such schools must be free to make religious belief a standard for employment. Yet occasionally they are tempted to hire a nonmember on a contract basis to teach a specified course—it's cheaper than adding another fulltime faculty member. Have these institutions thus weakened their claim to the Title VII exemption? At this point, any answer would be only conjecture.

Commenting on this controversy, Fernand Dutile, professor of law at the University of Notre Dame, said, "If the Notre Dame faculty were switched with the faculty of a state university, Notre Dame would no longer be a Catholic school."⁴⁶ As the administrators of denominationally affiliated schools, campus industries, medical institutions, publishers, and social agencies ponder the application of these cases to their situations, most will agree.

Are trends evident from these cases? Conclusions are perilous, especially when many of these decisions are still on appeal. Yet the following seem warranted:

1. Both case precedents and a general societal drift away from interest in minority rights will make Sabbath-accommodation cases more difficult for plaintiffs to win.

2. Religious operators of secular businesses will not be allowed to give hiring preference to fellow believers.

3. The selection and employment of ministers will continue to be held beyond the reach of judicial scrutiny.

4. Religious organizations will be permitted to give hiring preference to their own members as long as either the employer or the actual job in question is "religious," based on a test similar to that used in the *Amos* case, discussed above.

5. Churches and their affiliates will be held exempt from charges of discrimination on other bases (age, sex, race, national origin) only when the challenged action was clearly based on, and required by, the doctrine of that church.

6. The idea that churches are exempt from discrimination charges by virtue of their religious status is no longer viable.

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38. *Madsen v. Irwin*, Mass. Sup. Jud. Ct., August 21, 1985; 38 F.E.P. 1466.

39. *Ohio Civil Rights Commission v. Dayton Christian Schools*, S.Ct. No. 85-488.

40. *Seattle Pacific University v. Haas*, U.S.D.C. W.D. Wash. No. C-84-1787.

41. *Bennett v. California Department of Fair Employment and Housing*, Cal. Super. Ct., Los Angeles County No. C-496487.

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45. *Ibid.*, 38 F.E.P. 1779.

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California Case Threatens Adventist Institutions

by Kent Hansen

In April 1980, a court in California announced its decision on a case that threatens to upset the traditional Adventist institutional employment practice of hiring only Adventists. Although the Los Angeles County Superior Court ruled in favor of the present practice, the case is not over. The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) has announced it will appeal. Its lawyer believes the case will ultimately be resolved by the United States Supreme Court.

Although this California discrimination suit was brought by a Catholic teacher against a Lutheran school, the importance of the issue led the Adventist church to intervene in the case.¹

Historically, churches in the United States have been able to discriminate in favor of their own members in church employment. Title VII of the Federal Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, expressly exempts religious organizations from its prohibition against employment discrimination on the basis of religion.²

The California law under attack in *Bennett v. California Department of Fair Employment and Housing* exempts nonprofit religious organizations from all state prohibitions against discrimination in employment on the basis of race, sex, age, and religion.³

The challenge to the California exemption began in 1983 when Mary Bennett was fired as a teacher by the American Lutheran Church and Christian Elementary School in Burbank, California. The reasons stated for her firing related to job performance, but, according to court doc-

uments, Bennett believed that she was fired because she was Catholic and over age 40.

Bennett contacted the California Department of Fair Employment and Housing to file her claim of religious and age discrimination. Department representatives told Bennett that they could not help her because her former employer was a nonprofit religious organization.

Bennett then got in touch with the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and filed two actions in Los Angeles County Superior Court. In one action she sought damages from her former employer for employment discrimination.⁴ In the other action she sued the Department of Fair Employment and Housing and the Fair Employment and Housing Commission, seeking to have the religious organization exemption struck down as unconstitutional under the California constitution and the United States Constitution.⁵ In documents filed with the court, Bennett's ACLU attorneys alleged that the exemption prefers religious employers over other types of employers and therefore is an unconstitutional establishment of religion by the state. The ACLU also claims that the exemption denies the equal protection of the antidiscrimination laws to employees and prospective employees of religious organizations.

At the beginning of the litigation the ACLU sought an immediate court order from the state court of appeals seeking to have the exemption declared unconstitutional and unenforceable. At that point, the case came to the attention of Jeffrey A. Berman, a Los Angeles attorney whose firm, Proskauer, Rose, Goetz & Mendelsohn, often represents Adventist schools and hospitals in

employment matters. Berman contacted administrators of Loma Linda University and Loma Linda University Medical Center about the case and its potential impact on the institutions as two of the largest religious employers in California. Neither institution discriminates in employment on any ground except religion, but according to Berman, both believe their right to discriminate on that basis is fundamental to their mission. The university and the medical center asked Berman to petition the court to allow them to intervene in the case to protect their interests as major religious employers.

Both the state court of appeals and the state supreme court refused to issue the order declaring the exemption unconstitutional. Both

argued that the exemption allows religious organizations to apply unconstitutional “tests of faith” to employees engaged in secular enterprises, including colleges of religiously affiliated universities

with entirely secular curricula, such as law or business administration. . . . The exception here is sweepingly overbroad. There is no reason to suppose that inviting a . . . religiously-affiliated university to deny tenure to a physics professor because he is a Jew, will serve religious freedom. Yet [the exemption] invites [this], and far more. The exemption cannot be justified as required to safeguard religious liberty.⁶

The state Fair Employment and Housing Commission and the Department of Fair Employment and Housing took conflicting positions in response to the ACLU's motion. The department that administers California fair employment laws and regulations argued that the exemption is constitutionally valid. The commission, which decides cases alleging employment discrimination and enacts the regulations implementing the fair employment laws, argued that the exemption is constitutionally valid only when religious belief is a bona fide occupational qualification for such sectarian positions as the ordained pastoral ministry or hospital chaplaincy. In other words, an Adventist employer could not prefer Adventists for positions such as janitors, secretaries, classroom teachers of nonreligious subjects, hospital administrators or employees, because those positions do not inherently require that the employee be Adventist.

Attorney Berman and his associate, Steve Drapkin, representing Lodi Academy, argued that elimination of the exemption would result in a direct conflict between state employment law and church employment practices in the religious and “business activities” of religious organizations. The academy's brief identified Adventist educational and medical institutions as part of the church rather than affiliates and argued that:

A religious body clearly must have the right to select its own members for jobs involving clergy positions, internal administration, and explaining, teaching, or transmitting its beliefs or values. Many religious groups, including the Seventh-day Adventist church, believe that all jobs include such

Title VII allows religious organizations to discriminate on the basis of religion.

also refused the university and medical center's petition to intervene as moot and the state supreme court sent the case back to Los Angeles County Superior Court for a trial on the merits.

The Office of the General Counsel of the General Conference then stepped in to coordinate the position of the Adventist church in the case. Lodi Academy, supported by all institutions of the Pacific Union, asked the court to intervene and, by stipulation with the ACLU, the petition was granted. Lodi Academy was chosen for this role because it is representative of the traditional beliefs and practices of the Adventist church, according to Rick Johns, assistant general counsel of the General Conference.

Bennett settled her case for damages against the Lutherans, but the ACLU proceeded with the action to declare the exemption unconstitutional. On March 27, 1986, the ACLU asked the court to grant a summary judgment in its favor, without trial.

In written argument to the court, the ACLU

functions and that employees are “missionaries” and church representatives in their interactions with each other, other church members, and the public at large. In any religious group, a policy extending preference of employment to members of the faith also promotes a social welfare objective in assuring that the group’s resources are allocated among its members. Why should a religious body be required by law to expend its resources to support nonbelievers? A related consideration in providing preference of employment to members is to protect them from employment discrimination in the secular job world. For instance, a Seventh-day Adventist may be far freer to observe the Sabbath when working for the church than when he or she is employed by a private sector employer. Finally, religious groups often desire to maximize employment of their own members in order to avoid religious disagreements in the work place and, indeed, the prospect of adherents to other religious beliefs engaging in proselytization of member employees.⁷

After the hearing, the Los Angeles County Superior Court ruled that the exemption for the antidiscrimination statute is constitutional. In its strong decision for the church’s position, the court stated:

A literal application of the statute [to religious employers] might well result in cease and desist orders by the commission requiring employment of Christian ministers in Islamic mosques, female Moslem rabbis in Jewish temples, and married Roman Catholic priests. Such an order would clearly violate the religious liberties of such institutions.⁸

The court concluded that the exemption is constitutional, as it prevents excessive entanglement by agencies of the state government into the affairs of religious institutions. But since the Bennett case will be appealed, it continues to pose a threat to church employment practices. The danger is especially serious for Adventist schools.

“An adverse decision in this case,” says Malcolm Maxwell, president of Pacific Union College, “would substantially change the basic character of our educational institutions.” Part of the employment agreement with Seventh-day Adventist teachers is that they function as role models for Adventist students. Maxwell believes losing the case might not close the colleges, but “it would damage the confidence of our constituency.”

The entire Adventist church educational system in North America is almost totally dependent on denominational subsidies and tuition dollars for operation. Recent criticism from denominational leaders and conservative members for “liberal” teaching and practices,⁹ would probably intensify if Adventists could no longer hire only Adventist teachers or insist that an essential job qualification was adherence to Adventist doctrine.

In other words, an Adventist employer could not prefer Adventists for positions such as janitors or teachers of non-religious subjects, because those positions do not require that the employee be Adventist.

The church can find support for its position in several recent cases. In 1983 a federal district court ruled that the *Christian Science Monitor* could deny a reporting job to a non-Christian Scientist because First Amendment protection for the religious activity of a religious organization does not decrease “merely because it holds some interest for persons not members of the faith or occupies a position of respect in the secular world at large.”¹⁰

In June 1985 a federal court of appeals ruled that an Ohio antidiscrimination statute could not constitutionally be applied to regulate the employment practices of a Christian school.¹¹ The school refused to renew a teacher’s contract after she became pregnant, based on its belief that “a mother’s place is in the home.” When the teacher consulted an attorney, she was fired because she did not follow a “biblical chain of command” for resolving disputes between believers. The court held that application of the antidiscrimination statute would interfere with parents’ fundamental right to choose the manner of their children’s education and the right of the school’s constituents to the free exercise of their religious beliefs.¹² An appeal of this decision is pending in the United States Supreme Court. A new ruling also upholds the right of the Adventist church to

discriminate on any ground it wishes in the selection of church pastors.¹³ On September 23, 1985, a federal court of appeals held that the Potomac Conference of SDAs was immune from government regulation of its decision not to employ a woman, Carol Rayburn, as an associate pastor at Sligo Church. The court stated that “[b]ureaucratic suggestion in employment decisions of a pastoral character, in contravention of a church’s own perception of its needs and purposes, would constitute unprecedented entanglement with religious authority.”¹⁴ The court ruled that neither pastoral selection procedures nor the qualifications of those chosen or rejected for pastoral positions could be reviewed by civil authorities.¹⁵ Rayburn’s appeal to the United States Supreme Court was denied a hearing before the Court.

These decisions are helpful to the church’s position because of the high concentration of Adventist institutions in California and because California court decisions often have national impact. Yet church officials are concerned because *Bennett* is not an isolated attack on the practices of religious employers. Seattle Pacific University, a Free Methodist institution, has gone to federal court to fight a decision of the Washington Human Rights Commission that it cannot give preference in employment on the basis of religion.¹⁶ The labor commissioner of Oregon has recently stated that religious belief

should only be a bona fide occupational qualification for ministers.¹⁷ In Texas a federal court of appeals has ruled that a legal distinction can be made between the ministerial and nonministerial staff members of the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in the application of Title VII reporting requirements to that institution.¹⁸ The court, however, stopped short of saying that the seminary could not discriminate on the basis of religion in hiring its staff members.

The potential impact of *Bennett* and similar cases on Adventist hospitals has been noted by church officials who amended the *Church Manual* at the last General Conference session to describe church hospitals as an essential ministry.¹⁹

The issues in the *Bennett* case are markedly different and even more important than those in Lorna Tobler and Merikay Silver’s landmark action against the Pacific Press.²⁰ Tobler and Silver were challenging discrimination between church employees on the basis of sex. *Bennett* involves the fundamental right of the church to hire its own members as employees. Unlike the *Pacific Press* decision, a church loss in *Bennett* could lead to the closing of some institutions. Church leaders and constituents might well refuse to support educational or medical institutions which cannot be staffed with their own members.

The *Bennett* case bears close observance by Adventists concerned about the future of their church.

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Letters From the Philippines

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This is a compilation from letters Agdon sent to Robert Bainum, a member of Sligo Seventh-day Adventist Church, and founder and president of Volunteers International.

— Editors

Exhilaration. . .

June 1986

Right after the February 1986 revolution everybody felt exhilaration and disbelief. Families like mine who suffered imprisonment and death under the Marcos government were especially happy. But we almost couldn't believe the revolution was real. We couldn't believe that Juan Ponce Enrile, Marcos' right-hand man, had turned against him and joined the opposition to bring down the government.

The revolution also gave us a sense of national pride. Sometimes I feel Filipinos project a devil-may-care attitude and indifference to the outside world. But at last when our patience finally reached its limits we showed we cared for our country and we demonstrated our bravery. Civilians and reformist military groups stood their ground against Marcos' well-armed soldiers. As Juan Ponce Enrile recently said, we regained our freedom "not with the force of arms, but with the use of people-power and prayer." We are proud of being Filipinos and that our leader, Cory Aquino, a common housewife, led us in a fight for freedom and democracy. Above all, we are thankful to God that he did not abandon us during those critical moments.

Hard Choices. . .

But the hard core communist leadership is one group that is not happy and proud about the revolution. In my judgment, they are the big losers. During the election and before the final fall of the Marcos government things were looking good for the communists. They had correctly predicted that Marcos, even with foreign observers present, would use dirty tricks to win. When this prediction started to be fulfilled during the ballot counting, everyone felt that the winner in this whole exercise would be the communists.

In their press releases before the February 7 election, the communists forecast that in five years they would reach a strategic stalemate—their forces would become equal with those of the military. They predicted that Marcos would cling to power against the will of the people, and thousands of disgruntled Filipinos would join them in armed rebellion. They played their anti-Marcos propaganda to the hilt because he was their best recruiter.

So when the Marcos government fell, things started to fall apart for the hard core communist leadership. For example, in my home province, Zamboanga del Sur, the foot soldiers of the New Peoples Army, the military wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines, rejoiced and celebrated Mrs. Aquino's victory.

Also Mrs. Aquino released several top communists who had been held prisoner by Marcos. Two important communists released, Jose Maria Sison, the founder of the communist party, and Commander Dante, the first chief of the New Peoples Army, declared their intention of joining the democratic process by organizing a legal political party. However, Commander

Dante was not sure if the guerilla army he once headed would end their violent rebellion unless adequate reforms were instituted. He has said that "we still have feudalism in the country" and that "the landlords thrive on the exploitation of the peasants." He is looking for signs that the government is serious about land reform. While the social ills that spawned the communist rebellion are still here, many seem to be defecting from the party.

Reports reached the newspapers that an entire NPA command in the Mabate province had surrendered. This was followed by similar reports in other parts of the country. The communist leadership soon panicked. On March 10-18 they ordered a coordinated offensive on many fronts. I believe they did this to get headlines, keep their fighters busy, and demonstrate to the new government that the communists were a force with which the government must reckon.

But weeks later, events clearly indicated that the communist party and the New Peoples Army had split between the hardened ideologues who wanted to continue fighting and the moderates who now wanted to join the mainstream of society. The rift surfaced May 18 when the newspaper, *Veritas*, bannered the split between Father Conrado Balweg, a top commander of the New Peoples Army in Northern Luzon, and the main guerilla organization. Father Conrado and his hundreds of followers declared themselves a separate revolutionary force called the Cordellera People's Revolutionary Army, and hinted they were willing to negotiate with the government. Recently there have been news reports that many New People's Army moderates were killed by their own hardline comrades because the moderates wanted to surrender to the government.

While we are jubilant about some of the political changes, we are still faced with our people fighting each other and poor economic conditions. Our country is reeling in poverty due to the stealing and massive corruption of the previous government. According to statistics, 70 percent of Filipinos live below the poverty line. Many poor families still feel hopeless; thousands are suffering from hunger, malnutrition, and diseases.

Picking Up the Pieces . . .

I sincerely believe my work since 1983 has had some real success in providing technical assistance and loans to poor farmers and fishermen. I hope Volunteers International can help a small fishing village obtain a larger boat and assist rice farmers by designing and providing them with small threshing machines. I am optimistic that with a new government, which is not working against the poor, such efforts will be more productive.

Those whose lives have been shattered by tyranny are now slowly picking up the pieces, hoping to build an atmosphere of freedom. Most have nothing left to start with except raw courage and a strong faith in God. We Filipinos are facing the odds unafraid and hope that somehow, somewhere, some kind of miracle will happen. Although this is still a dream to most of us, hopefully it will become a reality. If that happens, fighting ourselves could be a thing of the past, and we will come out of this present situation better Christians, a greater people, and a great nation.

*Franny Agdon
Palawan, Philippines*

Child Abuse and Adventism

by Priscilla and James Walters

Our daughter was recently the victim of an attempted abduction at a large Adventist church in California. Following her usual practice, our seven-year-old left her Sabbath school room to go to her little sister's room where we routinely meet them. She walked down the stairs of the Sabbath school building and noticed a man staring at her as she entered the lower hall. Calmly he told her, "Your mommy said for me to take you to her." The man, dressed in a white shirt and tie, appeared to be in his thirties and was a stranger to Wendy. However, to our daughter he was not noticeably different from hundreds of other male worshipers.

Although Wendy knew she shouldn't accompany a stranger, she dutifully obeyed what she thought was her mother's request. She followed the man through a gate, across a broad street and into the expansive parking area. When she lagged behind, he told her to hurry but used no physical coercion. A couple of hundred feet into the parking lot, he took out his keys explaining, "Your mommy told me to take you home." Wendy hesitated, thinking, "I can't get into a car with a stranger."

"Come on. I can't wait. I've got to go," the stranger demanded.

At that, Wendy turned and ran back toward the

church. The man pursued her, but went no farther than the street. Wendy returned to the Sabbath school wing and went to her sister's room where we had been waiting for a couple of minutes outside. She sheepishly explained her tardiness: "Some man tried to take me somewhere." The gravity of the situation obviously eluded her young mind.

After giving a detailed police report, attending three conferences with detectives, viewing mug shots, and attending a county jail lineup, our daughter continues to be very uncomfortable with the memory of the incident, even though her life seems to have returned to normal.

That this could so easily occur on Sabbath morning within an Adventist church seemed incredible to us—at first. It prompted us to study the deep entrenchment of child abuse in Western society, to explore how conservative Christianity is especially susceptible to it, and to suggest corrective steps which the Adventist church could take to counter this evil.

Child abuse is found among people of every religious, socio-economic, educational, and geographic background.

According to a recent major study, believed to be the first nationwide survey of the extent of child molestation, at least 22 percent of Americans have been victims of child sexual abuse. Twenty-seven percent of the women and 16 percent of the men polled said they were victims of sexual abuse.¹ Another study states that one out of eight girls and one out of 11 boys will be molested before their 18th birthday.²

Sexual molestation of children by adults is much too common, but it is merely the most fla-

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grant manifestation of child abuse. More widespread is the physical and emotional abuse of children by parents. The leading cause of childhood death is violence at the hands of their own parents.³ Roughly 25 percent of all fractures seen in children under the age of two are caused by parental abuse. Ten to 15 percent of children under age three who are treated for trauma are child-abuse victims, regardless of what their parents say or the socio-economic class of their families, says Henry Kempe, a pediatrician and leading authority on child abuse.⁴ The cases of child abuse which are reported are miniscule. Some authorities say only 10 percent of child abuse is reported, while others believe there are at least 100 cases for every reported case.⁵

The roots of child abuse go deep in the collective psyche of humankind. A child abuser's feeling of powerlessness and insecurity is redressed at the expense of the physical helplessness and emotional vulnerability of the young. The abuse may be physical, emotional or sexual, but the common denominator is child exploitation. The emotionally and physically weak of society have long been exploited, but exploitation of the weakest and most innocent is intolerable. A first step toward curbing child abuse is recognizing a salient fact: for millenia children have been devalued as human beings.

The child's powerlessness is historically balanced by the powerful person of the father—and husband. History has literally been his story—not that of women and children. The

Case Studies in Adventist Child Abuse

by Dolores Kennedy Londis

Each of these cases is based on actual events in Adventist academies, though the details and names in each incident have been altered to protect the privacy of the parties involved. They illustrate both emotional and physical child abuse.

Nora

When I arrived at my office, Nora was waiting with a suitcase in her hand. In previous weeks, she had talked with me about her anger at the church and her frustrations with her parents. As an academy senior, Nora felt she had the right to make her

own decisions about the way she looked. And today she looked different than she did the day before—her ears had been pierced. Small gold studs were hidden neatly under her long hair.

Before Nora left for school that morning, her father noticed the earrings and immediately flew into a rage. While she and I talked in my office, he was at the other end of the building kicking in her locker in an attempt to confiscate the jewelry he was sure was hidden there.

The bell rang. Nora went to class while I tried to discuss the problem with her father. He was adamant. "If she insists on wearing those earrings, she cannot come home." She would not take off the earrings, and he would not have her at home with them.

One of Nora's best friends was the Bible teacher's daughter. Aware of what was happening, she and her father invited Nora to stay with them for the weekend. We all felt this would give Nora and her family time to cool off and, hopefully, lead to a relatively calm discussion of their feelings sometime on Sunday. Nora had been humiliated in front of her friends and made to feel she was not worth loving simply because she had defied her father's will.

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offspring. Under the primitive religious rite of *patria potestas* the mother would lay the newborn at the feet of the father, who would either nod or point to destruction. "From this position as high priest in the family worship came that life-long authority over the other members of his household bestowed by this archaic society upon the father."⁶

Traditionally, the wife and children were seen by men as personal chattel. A Greek perception of father-child relations was expressed by Aristotle: "The justice of a master or a father is a different thing from that of a citizen, for a son or slave is property, and there can be no injustice to one's own property."⁷

Reflecting the patriarchal spirit of his society, the apostle Paul reasoned that since "the head of

Christ is God," the head of every man is Christ, (and therefore) "the head of a woman is her husband" (1 Cor. 11:3). Thirteenth-century Dominican Nicolas Byard exceeded Paul, counseling, "Since the husband is head of the wife, while the man's head is Christ, every wife who is not subject to her husband, that is to her head, is guilty of the same offense as the man is when he is not subject unto Christ his head."⁸

Given such a contrasting view of human life, inhumane treatment of supposedly inferior humans was the norm. Byard elaborated: "A man may chastise his wife and beat her for her correction; for she is of his household and therefore the Lord may chastise his own, as it is written in Gratian's *Decretum*." In the *Decretum*, a 12th-century Christian work, "the husband is

Erica

Sitting in the blue easy chair beside my desk, head in her hands, Erica sobbed uncontrollably. For some weeks, her story had unfolded in measured, controlled phrases. Today, her agony could no longer be concealed. Here was a beautiful fifteen-year-old being pulled apart by the hate she was feeling for the father she ought to love.

Once an honor student, Erica's grades were dropping, and she was skipping classes more often. Her father reacted angrily by imposing even tighter controls on her life. The minute school ended, he was there to pick her up. If he saw her talking with a boy, he got furious. As far as he was concerned, socializing with the other sex was not permitted. In his culture, young women did not date. Marriages were arranged by the parents. Consequently, she could not attend any school functions outside of regular school hours. The only other time she was allowed to leave the house was to attend church on Saturday morning. Wanting more freedom and privileges, she was unable to tell her father how she felt, for he would only increase the physical abuse that had brought her to the breaking point. She was made to kneel before him while he whipped her with his belt. This had gone on day after day. She was now planning to run away from home. I took her threat very seriously.

When I talked with Erica's father, he justified his behavior by telling me stories about his boyhood whippings while tied to a post. What he was doing to Erica, he said, was nothing by comparison.

"How I punish my daughter is my business, not

yours. Stay out of it," he told me.

Knowing my legal and moral responsibility, I called the Child Protection Agency. Erica was taken out of her home for a considerable period of time.

Jodi

Divorced two years before, Jodi's parents felt, given her home situation, that a boarding school would be better for her. However, only 16 years old, she missed her friends and her mother and wanted to spend more time with them. So she left the academy in the South to come back home.

She found adjusting to a new school in the middle of the year very difficult. Furthermore, her mother was now living with a man, and Jodi had to fit in with this arrangement. She seemed anxious and upset most of the time.

One spring morning, breathless and wide-eyed, she burst through my office door and asked: "Where's the nearest abortion clinic?"

After I had calmed her down so she could talk, she told me she had been raped by her mother's boyfriend. She had been alone in the house and defenseless. Drunk and violent, he smashed a glass sitting on her nightstand and held it to her face, threatening to gash her if she uttered a sound. Now circumstances had forced her to buy a home pregnancy kit and verify what she already suspected. Frantic, she felt her only recourse was to have an abortion.

I again called the Child Protection Agency. As is often the case, Jodi's mother and her boyfriend denied anything had happened. Eventually Jodi did have an abortion. Her mother never acknowledged there had ever been a problem with her boyfriend.

bound to chastise his wife moderately unless he be a cleric, in which case he may chastise her the harder."⁹ Such was the legacy bequeathed by antiquity.

In colonial America a father not only had the right to beat his child, but he could enlist the colony officers to assist him and was not legally culpable if death ensued from the severity of the punishment. It was "common to flog children without provocation . . . to break them of their willfulness and make them tractable, ostensibly for the good of their souls." A widespread belief in "infant depravity" was the theological rationale behind such behavior.¹⁰

The fundamentalists, like the abusing parents, indicated a low and pessimistic view of humankind.

Jonathan Edwards, the famous 18th-century New England Calvinist preacher, is illustrative. He viewed unruly youngsters as "bad" children whose wills must be broken: "As innocent as children seem to us . . . they are young vipers, and are infinitely more hateful than vipers, and are in a most miserable condition. They are naturally very senseless and stupid and need much to awaken them."¹¹

Children have always worked in the family, but the industrial revolution brought widespread physical exploitation of children outside the home. Children as young as five years of age worked up to 16 hours a day, and sometimes had irons riveted around their ankles to keep them from running away. Starved and beaten, they often succumbed to various occupational diseases. When parents rebelled against these conditions for their offspring, orphans from workhouses were transferred to the mills.

A child reform movement in Britain led to an 1802 parliamentary act which broke up the pauper apprentice system. However, with parental consent, children still worked 12-hour days under inhumane conditions. Supervisors often whipped the young workers with leather

thongs and dipped them headfirst into cisterns of cold water to keep them awake.¹²

The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, founded in New York City in 1871, was originally created to protect a girl whose legal rights were less than those of dogs and cats. Mary Ellen was regularly beaten and malnourished by her adoptive parents. Local church members tried to persuade authorities to take legal action against the parents, but to no avail. The right of parents to chastise children was still sacred, and no legal mechanism existed for interference. Finally, the concerned Christian citizens appealed to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. Acting immediately, this group had Mary Ellen removed from her parents on the grounds that she was a member of the animal kingdom, and as such came under the laws against cruelty to animals.

Traditional attitudes change slowly. The practice of beating children as a form of punishment was widely accepted until very modern times. As recent an authority as Sigmund Freud wrote that insufficient "beating" of children was the cause of an increase in masochism.¹³ As late as January 1974 the state of Texas instituted a law declaring that "the use of force, but not deadly force, against a child younger than 18 years is justified: (1) if the actor is the child's parent or stepparent; (2) when and to the degree the actor reasonably believes the force is necessary to discipline the child."¹⁴

The autonomy of the man to freely superintend his "property" has a long history in the West, and only in the last century has the millenia-old practice been drastically curtailed. Family autonomy, long the cover for much male violence, is still highly respected in America, but increasingly the autonomous dignity of children is gaining recognition and curbing excessively abusive parental behavior. Children's rights may be dictated by law, but observance of these rules must overcome a long and deeply entrenched legacy.

The typical sexual abuser of children is male, in a position of authority, 20 years older than and acquainted with the victim, and more often uses persuasion than force. The danger posed by the

proverbial “dirty old man” from across the tracks is small compared to the threat of an acquaintance, friend, or relative—frequently a person possessing an authoritative role in the life of the child.

The social sciences are increasingly recognizing certain environmental factors which form our person. The personality profile of child abusers likely includes one or more of four features:

1. *Personal deprivation.* Abusive parents often have a history of emotional deprivation, if not child abuse, by their own parents. Child abuse is largely a learned behavior. Henry Kempe has extensively documented the battered-child syndrome—the phenomenon of a battered child often becoming a battering parent.¹⁵

2. *Abject loneliness.* Many abusive adults suffer from a poor self-image stemming from a lack of basic nurture in their own childhood. Lacking the skills necessary in building emotional bonds within their own homes, and in establishing meaningful outside social contacts, child abusers often lead lives of emotional isolation. Sexual molestation of children is frequently a desperate attempt to meet deep emotional needs.

3. *Unmet needs.* A high need for comfort and love leads abusive parents to make strong and premature demands on the child. When these deep emotional needs are unmet, frustration, anger, and often abuse, follow.¹⁶

4. *Conservative religion.* Abusive parents who are affiliated with a religion are most likely to belong to a “strong, rigid, authoritative, fundamentalist type of belief.”¹⁷

The first three points deal with personal conditions which are gained inadvertently. The final point deserves further attention since it concerns concepts about God and reality which are explicitly taught and may foster a potential for child abuse.

Although there is little information on the relationship of child abuse to religious belief, two studies are instructive. In the early 1960s two psychiatrists at the University of Colorado, B. F. Steele and C. B. Pollock, intensively studied 60 abusive families, the great majority of whom

were practicing Jews or Christians from various denominations. “It was our impression,” concluded Steele and Pollock, “that among those who were actively involved in their religion, there was a greater than average adherence to a strong, rigid, authoritative, ‘fundamentalist’ type of religion.”¹⁸

A more thorough study of religion and child abuse was conducted by Kathryn Neufeld, who did a sociological analysis of the question, “Do abusive parents and parents with a strong religious affiliation have the same basic attitudes toward child rearing?”¹⁹ Her basic conclusion was that they do.

Neufeld compared the attitudes of identified abusive parents with those of parents from the Jewish faith and four Christian religious groups: Liberal—(Congregational, Methodist, and Episcopalian); Moderate—(Disciples of Christ, Presbyterian, American Lutheran, and American Baptist); Conservative—(Missouri Synod Lutheran, Southern Baptist, Sectarist, and Roman Catholic); Fundamentalist—(Church of the Nazarene, Assembly of God, and Pentecostal

**The nature of God’s authority
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Assembly. The respected Parental Attitude Research Instrument was used to ascertain such attitudes as suppression of affection, breaking the will, strictness, martyrdom, seclusion of the mother, and dependency of the mother.

An analysis of the survey results showed that the religiously affiliated persons, in general, had healthier parental attitudes than did the abuser group, except that “no difference was found between the fundamentalist group and the

abusers.”²⁰ That is, fundamentalists’ attitudes toward child-rearing were similar to those of abusive parents. The fundamentalists, like the abusing parents, indicated a low and pessimistic view of humankind (i.e., children are bad and selfish). Steele and Pollock’s impression that a fundamentalist religious stance often accompanies abusive behavior appears to have sociological support from Neufeld’s study. However, Neufeld did not study child abuse in homes, only attitudes among adult groups that may have a bearing on child abuse; her modest conclusion is that a significant potential for abuse is present in fundamentalist homes.

Significantly, Neufeld found that Christians in general had a more positive attitude toward children than did the population at large. Central biblical themes support a high view of the child: God’s image as the mold of all human beings; Paul’s view of oneness in Christ—slave and free, male and female, adult and child. The gospel teaches that God fully accepts each Christian, regardless of personal inadequacy. It is understandable, therefore, that Christians would be less prone to child abuse. Christians should have less need to gain esteem through dominating the young or robbing them of their innocence.

However, why should Christians who take the Bible most literally—the fundamentalists—be closest to demonstrated child abusers in attitude?

Some of the most devout Christians worship a stern taskmaster God who grants acceptance conditional on good behavior.

Neufeld’s conclusion concerning their similarities seems preposterous and ill-conceived at first glance. Yet the answer to this irony may lie in the conception of God as a vengeful, demanding judge, a concept which many conservative Christians possess. It is not that they choose a distorted picture of God, but that they may fail to distinguish the fundamental biblical teaching about God from its ancient cultural embodiment.

Put another way, the underlying biblical message about a God of mercy and love can be lost among strands of biblical thought about a stern, unaccepting God that arose from early cultural assumptions about all gods.

Some of the most devout Christians worship a stern taskmaster God who grants acceptance conditional on good behavior. God’s justice is emphasized over his divine mercy; humanity’s successes and failures are constantly lived under the Damoclean sword of an uncompromised justice. Such a view of God engenders a deep personal uncertainty, an ontological insecurity, which finds a parallel in the lack of human nurture and acceptance, and which is the demonstrated experience of many abusive adults.

A frequent corollary to the concept of God as stern taskmaster is his supposed demand upon his subjects for moral perfection. God is perfect, the reasoning goes, and he holds humankind to his own absolute standards. “Be ye therefore perfect as your father in heaven is perfect” is taken with wooden literalness. The transference of God’s expectations for believers to parents’ expectations for their children becomes difficult to avoid. Even if such reasoning were not conscious it would be difficult to counter on the subconscious level.

The enduring teachings of the gospel have great power, but they can finally be overwhelmed by minor and opposing aspects of tradition. In particular, those who place the Bible in high regard must ensure that the genuine gospel is conserved. Because of the gospel’s high regard for children, Christians having the highest view of Scripture ought to be in the vanguard of child abuse prevention.

Adventism has a rich heritage of advocating thorough Bible study and encouraging good parent-child relations. Ellen White, who wrote no less than four books on proper child rearing, cofounded a church committed to proper child nurture and helped develop an extensive parochial educational system. Given Adventism’s stake in children’s well-being, the mounting data on child abuse prompt the need for a re-examination of church programs and procedures

to lessen the internal incidence of child abuse. Although we know of no study of child abuse in the Adventist church, informal discussion with several Adventist family counselors suggests this social illness is no respecter of Adventist believers. Incidents of laypersons', teachers', and pastors' insensitivity to the phenomenon of child abuse, to say nothing of unmentionable stories of physical and sexual abuse, could be elaborated—though with little edification.²¹

Five areas may be considered in an Adventist appraisal of child abuse.

1. *The church's view of God.* God is the ultimate authority in a Christian's life. But is that authority viewed as sensible and reasonable or as arbitrary and illogical? The nature of God's authority can have a decisive effect on how parents view their own authority and how children view all authority. If God is believed to exercise arbitrary authority and parents govern with unreasoned authority, children may be very compliant, but their obedience will be blind. Child-abuse specialists are increasingly aware that children's blind obedience to parental and adult authority makes them more vulnerable to sexual abuse.

2. *The church's view of itself.* No one claims that the church is without sin, but many subconsciously believe that members' sins are relatively minor. Many Protestant churches include a prayer of confession as a standard part of their liturgy. Perhaps confession of sin is not more pronounced in Adventist worship because of our sense of the high standards to which we are called and our difficulty in admitting failure. But if the church is to take child abuse seriously, the first step is to recognize that such abuse can happen and is happening among us. The Neufeld comparison of various religious groups and child abusers is particularly sobering for conservative denominations.

3. *The church's need for education.* The local church leaders' consciousness of child abuse needs to be heightened. One Adventist teenager confided to her pastor that her father

had beaten her with a two-by-four and then tried to strangle her. The pastor counseled her on her duty to honor her parents through obedience. Scared, the youth told her church-school teacher of her abuse, only to be instructed that since the punishment was so harsh, she must have deserved it. The girl, later also found to be the victim of incest, felt as though no one cared about her welfare. Local church leaders need information on the nature of child abuse, its extent, and how to deal with its victims and perpetrators. The professional preparation of pastors and teachers could contain material on child abuse, and for practicing professionals, workshops and continuing education courses could convey information and concepts.

4. *The church's need for responsibility.* Society takes child abuse so seriously that every state in the union now has laws requiring

If the church is to take child abuse seriously, the first step is to recognize that such abuse can happen and is happening among us.

school teachers to report suspected cases of child abuse to the Children's Protective Agencies. Local church and school leaders could profitably discuss procedures for dealing with suspected child abuse in addition to reporting such incidents to government agencies. Mere discussion of the topic can help raise consciousness to the point where the following would be unlikely: A Sabbath school teacher alerted her pastor concerning a three-year-old who regularly attended bruised. The pastor curtly responded that the father was a deacon and that the child was from a wonderful Christian family.

5. *The church's need for preventive care.* The children's departments in large churches are especially vulnerable to child abductions. Some suggestions would be to allow children under

age eight to leave their Sabbath school room only when a parent arrives or other arrangements have been made; initiate periodic instruction in Sabbath school divisions about the potential dangers of speaking to and going with strangers; and assign a deacon to the parking area to discourage intruders and report any irregular activity.

Child abuse is as old as human history, but only in this decade has its pervasiveness become

so widely recognized. This social plague should particularly occupy the attention of conservative Christian bodies. Any tranquility gained from not discussing this unfortunate topic is achieved at the expense of innocent children. Surely the church has something to offer to the study of child abuse. The first step, however, must be to verify that its own concepts and procedures are informed and sound.

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Adventist Tithepaying— The Untold Story

by Brian E. Strayer

The 1985 Annual Council has revised the North American Division tithe policy (D-55-20). Calling tithe paying a “basic tenet of the church,” the revision mandates that it become a clear condition of employment for all *credentialed* employees. Prospective credentialed workers should be informed of the requirement to pay tithe before they are hired, the revision states, and that “their tithing practices will be audited annually.” Consent forms, already being circulated in the Columbia Union, authorize local church treasurers to send tithe records to the union office.¹

Those employees not paying “a faithful tithe” would first be approached with “a pastoral concern with the view of helping the individual understand that he is depriving himself of a blessing and is following a course that will be harmful to his own relationship with his Creator.” But if sweet reason fails to bring the desired results, “the matter must then be referred to the appropriate administrative body for resolution.” Should efforts at that level prove unavailing, “the employee has thereby disqualified himself for continuing denominational employment, and discontinuance of employment will result.”²

From 1859 to 1986, Adventist attitudes toward giving have been shaped by a plethora of articles, tracts, sermons, and *Church*

Manuals, few of them in total agreement on the method of tithing. This body of literature, before 1880 largely apologetic and defensive, but since 1880 rather didactic, has itself been shaped by external events. Some of these molding influences have included the panics of 1857 and 1873, and the depression of the 1930s; the ever-expanding missions outreach of the church; the internal debate as leaders grew in their own understanding of true biblical tithing and their willingness to enforce it in the church; and the ever-inspiring influence of Ellen White’s pen. This article examines the changing view of tithing in Adventism, leading to the recent Annual Council actions.

Many Seventh-day Adventists think our 19th century pioneers’ giving habits probably outshone those of their 20th century descendants. Hence, tithing—practiced by 86 percent of all Seventh-day Adventists today in some form³—must indeed be one of the oldest financial traditions within our church. In truth, however, this method of systematic giving entered the pantheon of Adventist practices quite late in the 19th century. While most Adventists have been sacrificial givers, they have *not* always given systematically.

Unsystematic Givers— 1844-1859

From 1844 to 1859, sabbatarian Adventists had no plan for regular giving at all. Itinerant preacher-evangelists like the young

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John Norton Loughborough worked for months and received only freewill donations from interested hearers. In Loughborough's case, three months of hard labor in Illinois netted him \$10 in cash, a buffalo skin overcoat, and his board and room in 1857. The next summer, for four months' labor in Wisconsin and northern Illinois, he garnered \$20 in cash plus board, room, and traveling expenses. "My case was not an exception," he wrote; "other ministers fared equally well, and we were happy in the Lord's work."⁴

As early as 1852, James White, editor of the fledgling *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, had appealed through its pages to Advent believers: "The dear servants of the Lord who go out to teach the unpopular truths of God's Word must be sustained."⁵ His implication

The inevitable result of unsystematic giving was sporadic labor for the cause: have money, will preach; no money, must farm.

should have been clear: no money, no messengers. To a Wisconsin inquirer in 1855 who asked where John H. Waggoner had gone, White replied: "The last we heard from Brother Waggoner he was laboring with his hands to support his family."⁶ The inevitable result of unsystematic giving was sporadic labor for the cause: have money, will preach; no money, must farm.

During the late 1850s James White grew increasingly aggravated over this lack of a financial system for ministerial support. Around 1855 he wrote, "Is it not too late to talk about working on the farm part of the time, and going as a preacher with a tent the rest of the time? Should not every tent company be free from worldly care and embarrassment?" Clinching his rhetorical queries with an appeal, White urged: "Brethren, think of these things, and may the Lord direct His people."⁷

But the brethren, alas, proved slow at thinking on these things. Lack of support for ministers like Loughborough and Andrews led to discouragement and temporary withdrawal from the preaching ministry. In mid-1856, James and Ellen White, growing annoyed at the Laodicean laxity of believers, began to sound the alarm and warn of the spiritual dangers of such lukewarmness.⁸

In her *Testimony* for October 8, 1857, Ellen White emphasized that Adventists, like the rich young ruler, placed worldly wealth and greed for gain above the cause of God. She told believers that their giving should bless the needy, advance the cause of God, and secure them eternal life. The touchstone of giving, she said, was genuine love for Christ. Several times in her testimony she used the word sacrifice. Those who "give a little now and then to ease their conscience" have not yet "overcome their love of this world" and "do not sacrifice for God." She called for sacrificial, freewill offerings.⁹

The idea of frequent freewill funding dawned slowly upon the Advent mind, however. In February 1859 James White cited one case in which "one of our most acceptable preachers," after driving a team of horses on a 200-mile, three-week circuit, during which he preached 14 times at four of the largest Advent meeting houses, returned home with only \$4 in his pockets. "But is it not time," White pleaded, "that such evils were remedied among us?"¹⁰

Growing increasingly irritated that such evils continued, White wrote in May 1859:

I am tired of seeing statements of want among our preachers and appeals for funds in the *Review*. I am tired of writing them. These general appeals to everybody, and nobody in particular, do not amount to much besides filling up the paper, and paining the reader. These things hurt the *Review*, and are a blot on the cause.¹¹

Later, in December of that same year, White made an appeal through the quarterly *Good Samaritan* magazine, urging property owners to become God's stewards, giving a portion of their real estate to help tent evangelism prosper.¹²

But as the foregoing events have shown, up to 1859 no regular giving plan emerged in Adventist

circles. While many sabbatarian Adventists gave sacrificially, most members gave sporadically. The three angels' messages given to the Philadelphia church in prophecy could not be spread like the leaves of autumn using the Laodicean methods of 1850s Adventists. Somehow, a new financial program had to be shaped to fit the urgency of the message.

A Systematic Giving Plan—1855

Samuel Rhodes of Brookfield, New York, unwittingly became the catalyst to spark church dialogue on a giving plan when in December 1855 he sent \$2 to the *Review*. He told James White that he believed 1 Corinthians 16:2 defined his duty: Let every believer set aside funds on the first day of the week. Encouraged by this gesture, White replied: "We recommend to all Christians a careful consideration of this text. It is evidently an individual work which 'everyone' should attend to in the fear of God." If every Adventist did as Brother Rhodes, "the Lord's treasury would be full of means to advance the precious cause of truth."¹³ Three weeks later, when another reader sent money to the *Review* citing 1 Corinthians 16:2, White responded: "No better plan can be devised than the one introduced by the apostle." He hoped to hear from others on the subject of regular giving and challenged *Review* subscribers: "Take hold of it [the 1 Corinthians 16:1-2 plan], brethren."¹⁴

The brethren, however, did *not* take hold; so three years later in April 1858 White wrote: "Repeated discouragements are saddening and discouraging our preachers." Itinerant Adventist preachers had "moved out expecting to be sustained by their brethren . . . but their brethren have often failed to do their duty." Consequently, several workers "are sunken down under poverty, broken-down health and discouragement." To alleviate this unfortunate

situation, White suggested a second plan completely apart from the proposed biblical giving program. He urged believers to send an amount equal to their yearly state taxes to help with evangelism.¹⁵ What Caesar demanded, that much also should God receive.

Perhaps the Battle Creek church was ready to give systematically, but out in the field, consent to a new plan was far from unanimous. Adventists had proved reluctant to adopt the 1 Corinthians 16 plan, and they seemed even more hesitant to respond to a church tax plan. Apparently the scattered flock loved to hear Advent preaching, but were not yet willing to deplete their own funds to adequately provide for itinerant ministers.¹⁶

The Systematic Benevolence Plan—1859

The third giving plan—Systematic Benevolence—actually originated with a church committee at Battle Creek, and not with any one individual. James White explained to *Review* readers in February 1859 that on the previous January 16, a group of men had met to consider what he called "a System of Benevolence" that would induce every member to give regularly to fully sustain the cause while relieving the few who had given beyond their means. J. N. Andrews, J. B. Frisbie, and James White joined forces to propagate the Battle Creek plan in the *Review*.¹⁷

In his February 3 "address from the Church of God at Battle Creek, to the churches and Brethren and Sisters in Michigan," White emphasized the biblical principles for the new Systematic Benevolence plan. 1 Corinthians 16:2 mandated a regular Sunday offering be collected by the church; 2 Corinthians 8:12-14 stressed the equality of all sharing in the financial support of the church; 2 Corinthians 9:5-7 emphasized the principle of reaping as we sow, and the fact that God loves cheerful givers; finally, Acts 11:27-30 set the precedent of collecting offerings for the Jerusalem church. Perhaps White unconsciously

saw parallels between Jerusalem, the center of first-century Judaism and early Christianity, and Battle Creek, the center after 1855 of sabbatarian Adventism. At any rate, he urged believers to honor God by adopting this divinely ordained giving plan which specified a *time* to give (Sunday), *who* should give (every member), and *how much* to give (proportionate as God has blessed).¹⁸

Reluctant, however, to state principles and to leave their specific application in the hands of heretofore unwilling givers, White felt compelled to spell out the monetary guidelines of the new plan. Males from 18 to 60 years should give 5¢ to 25¢ weekly; females of 18 to 60 years should give 2¢ to 10¢; and both groups should add 1¢ to 5¢ more for every \$100 worth of property owned. Each local congregation should choose a treasurer to collect and record their offerings, which White averred could then be disposed of as the local church wished.

It is well worth noting that whenever James White or others discussed the Systematic Benevolence plan, they usually emphasized its nonsacrificial nature. White saw the giving ratios as low enough so those in the poorest circumstances (except widows, the infirm, and the aged, he felt) could give, while those in better circumstances, he hoped, would give even more than the stipulated amounts.¹⁹ At no time did anyone in 1859 mention Malachi 3:8-10, nor did any *Review* writer stress the personal blessings of faithful giving. Writers placed primary emphasis on the needs of the cause.

The church has never existed in a socio-cultural vacuum. It is surely no mere coincidence that the evolution of a systematic giving plan among Adventists coincided with the Panic of 1857, a nation-wide depression that witnessed bank failures, mortgage foreclosures, and economic hard times for laborers and institutions alike. Sabbatarian Adventism *did* need more funds, but in many areas of the United States for awhile, the Systematic Benevolence plan may have been like trying to pump water from a dry well.

Later on in the mid-1870s the shift from the Systematic Benevolence plan to full tithing also came at a time of depression, the Panic of 1873. In truth, necessity (need for funds exacerbated by economic depressions) became the mother of invention (new giving plans to sustain the cause).

In March 1859 I. C. Vaughan of Hillsdale, Michigan, wrote to the *Review* that his church followed the Systematic Benevolence plan "and like it much."²⁰ To most Adventists, however, the Systematic Benevolence plan seemed too new and too abstract yet for immediate compliance. Their tardiness to give led an exasperated James White to propose his own plan: If the 500 adult male believers in Michigan gave 10¢ a week and the 500 female believers gave 3¢ a week, the cause would receive \$3,380 a year—enough to fully sustain the work in Michigan and send five

**Giving, said James White,
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pious living, develops obedience,
fights materialism, helps the poor,
and sustains the cause of truth.**

workers to the West. This, he felt, could be done "without the least sacrifice of property on the whole, or any privation of the necessities of life." In fact, he declared, "the friends of the truth" could meet "all the wants of the cause ten times over, before they could begin really to sacrifice."²¹

White's strenuous efforts soon gained wider acceptance for the Systematic Benevolence plan.²² In his lengthy June 9, 1859, article White stressed the scriptural support for the plan in 1 Corinthians 16 and 2 Corinthians 8 and 9, its reasonableness, and its necessity. For the first time, the editor also considered the personal, spiritual benefits of systematic giving. Giving strengthens and manifests our faith; encourages pious living; develops obedience and honesty in our characters; fights materialism; helps the poor and sustains the cause of truth. He then presented a revised giving chart. Men could give 2¢ to 25¢

a week; women, 1¢ to 10¢ a week; and all should give 1¢ to 5¢ per \$100 worth of property each week.²³

In practical terms, how did the faithful implement this plan? James White described the procedures in Battle Creek in 1861. Every Sunday the Systematic Benevolence treasurer visited each member's home, carrying his hand trunk and the Systematic Benevolence record book. "All expect him, and all get ready for him, and meet him with open hands and benevolent feelings." A few hours' labor netted \$25. Yet "no one feels poorer but all feel happier after casting their small sums into the treasury."²⁴ To assist the treasurers and each member in keeping track of his weekly giving, the *Review* prepared ledgers with columns for dates, names, weekly giving amounts, and monthly totals.²⁵

One sample ledger, printed in the January 6, 1863, *Review* leads one to draw several enlightening conclusions regarding early Adventist giving. First, the emphasis is upon the giving of adult property owners; the ill, aged, and those under 18 need not participate in the full Systematic Benevolence plan. Second, the plan stresses regular giving of "donations," not tithes and offerings as such. Finally, as will become clearer later on, the Systematic Benevolence plan asked believers to give a tithe or 10th of their *increase*, not from their *income*. James White and others would later specify that one's increase represented about 10 percent annual growth of one's assets; so a 10th of that really amounted to only 1 percent of one's total assets or income.²⁶

Following the new plan actually allowed some members to *decrease* their benevolence from \$20 to \$30 a year to only \$5.20 a year, and still be within the guidelines James White established. But *Review* writers stressed that equal distribution of the financial burden would enable all to share in the rewards.²⁷ Some conferences, like Ohio, apparently asked for 2 percent Systematic Benevolence on property. There, the conference treasurer, a local elder, and any available minister annually took a census of members' property and assessed

them at 2 percent of its value (less mortgages) each January for the support of evangelism. R. A. Underwood recalled that "each member was *expected* to pay" this annual church tax.²⁸

Early Resistance to Regular Giving—1860s

Other pockets of resistance to Systematic Benevolence plagued the church well into the 1860s. In January 1861 White reported that while the churches at Monterey, Parkville, and Wright, Michigan, "gladly received the word," many others did not support S. B. He preached on the subject of giving everywhere he went that year, emphasizing that "no one has a heavy burden" by adhering to it.²⁹ In June, Loughborough asserted that Systematic Benevolence "has been the salvation of the cause of present truth from bankruptcy." Yet he too acknowledged and tried to meet certain objections to the plan. For the very first time, an S. B. proponent cited Malachi 3:9-10 in support of equal giving by all, and repeated 2 Corinthians 8 and 1 Corinthians 16 in support of church members' pledging weekly amounts.³⁰

Probably the most effective proponent of the plan, Ellen White, added the divine dimension of inspiration to clinch all previous arguments in its favor. In her *Testimony* No. 5 for 1859, she stressed that the Systematic Benevolence plan pleased God, who sent the Holy Spirit to guide in its adoption. This giving program enabled all to participate in the support of ministers, widows, and orphans with system and order reflecting the organization in heaven. Alone among the plan's supporters, however, Ellen White spoke plainly of the need to *sacrifice* for the cause and to kill covetousness and selfishness in believers' hearts.³¹

If Systematic Benevolence, nicknamed "Sister Betsy" by some local and conference treasurers,³² gradually gained respectability, it still did not provide adequate support for the rapidly expanding cause. One of the reasons for this, as previously mentioned, proved to be another

depression—the Panic of 1873—with all of its economic stress, bank failures, mortgage foreclosures, and unemployment. A more fundamental reason, however, rests in the fact that while Adventists for a decade had been paying lip service to tithing, they had not yet become full tithe-payers on their incomes.³³ Again, necessity (the Panic of 1873) proved to be the mother of invention (the full tithing plan).

Evolution of Tithing Rhetoric— 1860s-1870s

New light on tithing dawned slowly upon the Adventist mind. True, an early *Good Samaritan* (c. 1860) stated: “We propose that the friends [of the cause] give a *tithe*, or *tenth*, of their “*income*,” but the article clarified income as “ten percent on what they possess.” Thus S. B. represented a tithe of a tithe, or 1 percent of one’s income. (Ten percent also corresponded to the normal rate of interest or “increase” banks charged in the 1860s.)³⁴ In 1861, the Battle Creek church discussed a biblical tithing plan, but rejected it in favor of the amounts stipulated in *The Good Samaritan* No. 5.³⁵ But many believers were confused as to how to calculate this tithe. Should everyone estimate his income as 10 percent and give a tithe of that, whether real income is less or more than 10 percent? Or should each member give a tithe of his *real* income, taking into account his family situation and real estate holdings?

James White replied in the *Review*:

We do *not* urge the Israelitish tithing system as embracing the whole duty of the believers in the third [angel’s] message That system was necessary in God’s plan of the Levitical priesthood; but the closing message presents a far *greater call* for something of the kind.³⁶

He then proceeded to explain how the plan worked in Michigan. Adventists there paid 10 percent or a tithe of the increase on their property (with the increase gauged at 10 percent

of the property’s value), so that “a tithe of this would be one percent.” Leaders also urged believers to give free-will donations. White concluded that those members worth \$5,000 to \$20,000 (one wonders how many there were!) “should give all their increase (a full 10 percent) to be considered consistent with their faith.”³⁷ He apparently overlooked the inherent inconsistency in his own argument rejecting just this 10 percent plan as “Israelitish tithing.” He seemed instead to be postulating a graduated tithing plan for the rich.

From 1861 to 1868, Ellen White reiterated those personal spiritual blessings to be gained from tithing.³⁸ She emphasized to Ohioans in 1861 that tithing develops character and tests devotion to the cause. “The Lord is testing and proving His people,” she wrote.³⁹ In 1862 she rebuked one Wisconsin worker for not impressing believers with “the necessity of sacrificing” through the S. B. plan.⁴⁰ She called this plan a God-ordained one in 1863 and declared it “has worked like magic. It liberally sustains the preachers and the cause.” Paradoxically, however, she found ministers to be the chief opponents of the plan, and warned them to “stand out of the way.”⁴¹

If in 1863 Ellen White felt S. B. funds liberally sustained the preaching ministry, however, by

Ellen White reiterated the personal spiritual blessings to be gained from tithing. She emphasized in 1861 that tithing develops character and tests devotion to the cause.

1867 she began telling Adventists that their duty had “claims upon them that they do not realize.”⁴² She reminded “Brother D” that God, “whose wisdom is unerring,” had ordained the S.B. plan to save financial confusion, kill covetousness in believers’ hearts, and share the burden of supporting the cause with everyone.⁴³ In 1868 she could still complain that “Systematic Benevolence is dragging,” and blamed ministers

for not boosting so disagreeable a subject in their sermons. She accused them of passing this hot potato to James and her to handle as they perambulated among the churches.⁴⁴ But Systematic Benevolence, and gradually the full tithing plan, did catch on among Adventists in the 1870s. In December 1875 J. N. Andrews presented the plan to new converts in Bienne, Switzerland, and recorded pledges for \$460.⁴⁵

A certain "C.E.B." in 1876 wrote the *Review* for clarification on whether S. B. meant giving 10¢ on a dollar to God or 5¢ to the S. B. fund and 5¢ "to the cause as I see fit?" He or she also wondered if S. B. money could be used to pay church operating expenses and maintenance costs. The answer (probably written by James White) stated that believers' contributions should "as near as possible [be] equal to the tenth which God anciently required of his people." The respondent admitted, however, that "just what proportion of a person's earnings [sic] should be given, has been a question of no small study." He felt that if one earned \$1 a day and necessary expenses totaled 95¢ a day, "it clearly would not be his duty to give 10¢ a day to S. B." As for local church use of the funds, the respondent suggested sending as much as possible to the conference treasurer for evangelism, although he admitted that some churches kept a portion for their own use.⁴⁶ The clearest, most specific articles on tithing in the 1870s came from the pen of Dudley M. Canright. In a series of articles in February, March, and April 1876, he emphasized Malachi 3:8-11 as "the Bible Plan of supporting the Ministry." He urged Adventists to adopt this plan to glorify God, to fulfill his will, and to become better stewards for him in regularly supporting the ministry. "God requires that a *tithe*, or *one-tenth*, of all the *income* of his people shall be given to support his servants in their labors." Citing the biblical precedents of Abram, Jacob, Moses, and the Israelites, he urged Adventists to "come up" to this tithing plan now, for the gospel costs as much now as it did then. Canright then in one sentence reversed all previous Adventist thinking on tithing: "Notice," he said, "the

Lord does not say you should *give* me a tenth, but he says one-tenth *is* the Lord's."⁴⁷ Since the tithe already belonged to God, believers merely returned it to Him.

Reiterating many of these points in his March article, Canright went on to condemn certain common Adventist giving practices as contrary to the spirit of true tithing. Believers should not wait to tithe until the end of the year; instead, they

Canright felt Adventists, of all people, should be the most liberal givers, because they saved thousands of dollars annually by eschewing tea, coffee, tobacco, and alcohol, dances, theater, and jewelry.

should tithe their earnings as soon as they receive them. "This is God's plan," he declared; "this is Systematic Benevolence; nothing else is." Canright also accentuated the positive benefits of tithing more than anyone else save Ellen White. God, he said, rewards the liberal giver. Giving enhances our love, cheerfulness, and liberality. He told stories of how Providence intervened to save tithepayers from disasters. He felt that Adventists, of all people, should be the most liberal givers, because they saved thousands of dollars annually by eschewing tea, coffee, tobacco, and alcohol as well as dances, the theater, and jewelry. "I am thoroughly satisfied," he testified, "that the special blessing of God does attend those who are prompt and liberal in paying their S. B."⁴⁸

Those who waited to pay their tithes until they had liquidated all their debts, however, suffered under "a delusion of the devil." "Our obligations to God are just as sacred as those to our fellow men," Canright asserted. "We have no right to rob God to pay our neighbor." To those who defined the tithe as a 10th of what they actually cleared above expenses, Canright replied, "This is wide of the mark . . . This is not the Lord's

plan.”⁴⁹ During a speech to the 1876 General Conference session, he estimated that if all Adventists paid a faithful tithe, the GC treasury would receive \$150,000 yearly instead of only \$40,000. He therefore led the brethren in adopting three resolutions: 1) It is the *duty* of all Adventists to pay tithe on *all* their income; 2) ministers should preach on tithing in the churches; 3) Uriah Smith, James White, and Canright should prepare a tract on this subject for wider distribution.⁵⁰ They also resolved in October that “we believe God justly requires of us a *tenth* of our *income*.” The church could never expect to receive the promised blessing of Malachi 3 “till we comply with the condition upon which it is suspended.”⁵¹

A Didactic Approach to Tithing—1876-1932

The 32-page 1876 tract “Systematic Benevolence” came out under James White’s name, but in reality represented an amplification of Canright’s lengthy articles in the February, March, and April issues of the *Review*. White advanced no new texts, arguments, or ideas that Canright had not already presented, but the fact that the editor who had earlier rejected the “Israelitish tithing plan” now put his name to a pamphlet endorsing this plan shows how far James had come in his understanding of biblical tithing.⁵²

From 1875 to 1880 Ellen White’s *Testimonies* (Nos. 24 and 29) show her personal growth in a deeper understanding of the subject of true tithing and its benefits. In 1875 she explained that the current “coldness and unbelief” in the church stemmed from a lack of “self-sacrificing love” among believers. She emphasized the role of Adventists as stewards of God’s means to help the poor and spread the gospel. Covetousness of his means, she warned, is idolatry. She stressed that those who willingly sacrificed for God (as he did for them in sending his Son) would have renewed

spiritual life.⁵³

Even in 1875, Ellen White referred to the giving plan variously as “Systematic Benevolence” and the “tithing system.”⁵⁴ “God’s plan,” she stated, is “the tithing system.”⁵⁵ Yet she referred as well to paying “one tenth of the *increase*” (not income) as the amount God requires today as he did according to the Mosaic law. While she quoted Malachi 3:8-10, Ellen White still averred that tithing should be voluntary. “Systematic Benevolence should not be made systematic compulsion,” she warned.⁵⁶

Her real burden was to persuade Adventists to “make giving a habit without waiting for special calls.”⁵⁷ In her *Testimony* No. 29, she warned believers who, like Ananias and Sapphira, withheld tithe funds from the church thinking “the brethren will never know it,” that God’s curse would hover over their lives here and in the judgment day.⁵⁸

Gradually by the 1880s, Adventists adopted the full tithing plan as a replacement for the old “Sister Betsy” plan. While the General Conference in 1878 still referred to state conference funds as S. B. funds (a total of \$47,637.29 was received in that year), it also commissioned a five-man study group which published a 72-page pamphlet on *The Bible Plan of Supporting the Ministry* in 1879.⁵⁹ Church leaders began urging members to practice the weekly tithing plan (rather than monthly or quarterly), for, said White, Canright, and Haskell, “We are fully satisfied that this is the scriptural plan, and that no Christian can fail to see it so.” To aid members with poor spiritual eyesight, however, leaders drew up the following pledge for them to sign:

We, the undersigned, believing that the Holy Scriptures require each person to give for the support of the ministry one tenth of all that the Lord shall give him or her, do hereby solemnly pledge ourselves in the sight of God and in the presence of each other, to faithfully set apart each week one tenth of all that the Lord shall give us, this tenth to be paid into the systematic benevolence treasury at least once a quarter.

Local church treasurers were told to canvass each home persuading members to sign the pledge.⁶⁰ Pastors must read the pledge and incorporate points from the 1879 tract into a

sermon on tithing at least once every year.⁶¹

One of the chief proponents of biblical tithing whose role in popularizing it has never received its just due, Dudley M. Canright, wrote a letter to W. A. Colcord (Review and Herald book editor) in 1913 concerning the changeover from the S. B. plan to tithing. Speaking of the former plan, Canright said, "It never worked well." In fact, by 1878 James White liked the new tithing plan so well that he persuaded Canright to let him publish his tract on the subject under White's own name. According to Canright, however, Stephen Haskell at first opposed tithing, but after watching it work in Michigan, "he fell in line." Canright—not White—explained the tithing system to the 1879 General Conference. Therefore, the ex-Adventist preacher in 1913 told Colcord "the denomination can credit me with millions of dollars brought in to the treasury" through the tithing plan.⁶² The *Review* for April 24, 1879, attests that Canright did indeed address the General Conference on tithing on April 18.⁶³

James White, one of the five who wrote the 72-page pamphlet on systematic benevolence in 1879, stated: "We regard the plan of pledging a sum equal to one percent annually on our property defective in several respects." He then enumerated the following points: S. B. was not a true tithe of income; tithing involves everyone; freewill offerings should also be given. "It is our conviction," the tract's authors declared, "that our people have robbed God of more than one-half of the tithes which are his, while acting upon the defective plan of paying S. B. to the amount of only 1 percent per annum on their property."⁶⁴ One wonders whether James White winced at those words directed at the very plan he himself had helped originate and propagate.

By October 1880 the 19th General Conference session testified of its satisfaction "at the manner in which our people have responded to the Bible plan of supporting the Gospel." Resolution No. 4 stated that no local church should use tithe funds for repairs "without the free consent of the State Conference Committee."⁶⁵ This consent,

unlike the situation in 1859, would become more and more difficult to obtain as the worldwide mission work expanded and funds for evangelism became hard to find.

While Adventists accepted tithing in principle by 1880, statistics reveal that they did not flood the church with their funds. In 1882 the average annual tithe per member was only \$6.25. Some new state conferences like Alabama, Missouri, and Virginia showed tithes of only \$2 to \$4 per member that year; while older ones like New York, Ohio and Iowa showed \$5 to \$7 per member. California led with \$11.16 tithe per member.⁶⁶

In 1883 GC President George I. Butler published a 112-page booklet largely reiterating what White and Canright had said earlier. Both its contents and title, *The Tithing System, or, The Divine Plan for Supporting Laborers in the Cause of God*, show a complete metamorphosis from Systematic Benevolence thinking and terminology to a biblical tithing mindset. After tracing the biblical roots of tithing as God's plan for the support of his ministers in all ages, Butler then gave detailed support to tithing as a reasonable, timeless, and equitable plan, practiced in the past by Jews, pagans, and Christians, and obligatory for Adventists today. "The Sabbath tests man in

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regard to his time," Butler said; "tithing does the same in regard to his means." "As the Sabbath is holy time to God, so tithes are His holy means."⁶⁷

Not to pay a faithful tithe, Butler warned, is robbing God (Mal. 3:8-11), a grave sin. Tithes should be paid on all our *income*, Butler emphasized, *not* on our increase alone.

Specifically he defined income as wages, profits, receipts, or any gain from business, labor, or property. While this might be paid in cash or in kind, he felt the tithe should never be used for the poor, building, or maintenance expenses, but only for the support of the ministry.⁶⁸ Confessing that in his early ministry he himself had allowed the use of S. B. funds for building and repair costs, he

GC President George Butler believed “the tithing system lies at the foundation of our financial prosperity as a people.”

now—like James White—backtracked by admitting he had done so without scriptural authority.⁶⁹

Butler then spelled out just how faithful farmers, day-laborers, merchants, manufacturers, and church workers should tithe their income. “The tithing system,” he concluded, “lies at the foundation of our financial prosperity as a people.”⁷⁰ Significantly, only *after* he had marshalled 108 pages of biblical, logical, and historical arguments in favor of tithing did Butler pull out four pages of Ellen White quotations “for the benefit of those of our people who believe in the testimonies of the Spirit of God.”⁷¹

The following year, Ellet J. Waggoner penned his *Honor Due to God: Thoughts on Tithes and Offerings* (1884), a 64-page tract enlarging upon the deeper meaning of tithing. Withholding the tithe from God, Waggoner declared, constitutes embezzlement, for it already belongs to God. Therefore, we do not show our liberality by returning tithes, but only by giving freewill offerings.⁷² Waggoner also described how the local church treasurer in 1884 continued to visit members once a month to collect their tithes, just as the S. B. funds had once been collected.⁷³ Adventists still seemed reluctant to collect the Lord’s tithes in

the Lord’s house on the Lord’s day!

While all these carefully prepared defenses of tithing gained new adherents to the plan by 1885, the statistics of church giving continued to argue against the myth of the liberal Adventist tithepayer. While total annual church income increased by 2,500 percent from 1859 (est. \$5,000) to 1885 (\$124,000), annual per capita giving grew by only 330 percent from \$2.29 (1859) to \$7.36 (1885).⁷⁴ As late as the 1920s, Albert M. Dart’s 20-page pamphlet *Systematic Benevolence* (c. 1925) urged each member to “get a box” and place weekly tithe, Sabbath school, and poor fund monies therein. “There must be *system* in our giving,” he cried. Then, reminiscent of James White in the 1850s, Dart said, “This would obviate need for urgent calls for means.”⁷⁵

Church Manuals Emphasize Tithing as Duty—1932-1981

As calls for funds became especially urgent during the 1930s depression, church leaders decided to spell out tithing duties for officers and members in a *Church Manual*, the first of which was published in 1932. In this first of 11 *Manuals* (1932 through 1981), the duties of the local church elder to be a tithepayer received emphasis. “A man who fails to set an example in this matter should not be elected to the position of elder,” the 1932 *Manual* stated, adding, “*all* church officers should be tithepayers.” Elders must encourage members to “pay a full and faithful tithe” by preaching sermons on the topic of stewardship and by personal visitation “in a tactful and helpful manner.” But what they learned about members’ tithing habits, the *Manual* warned, must be kept confidential.⁷⁶ Later manuals in 1938, 1940, and 1942 repeated this counsel to local church elders.

The 1932 *Manual* also began the practice of including a lengthy section on “Gospel Finance,” which all subsequent manuals have done. In this

segment, leaders stressed that not paying tithes is robbing God (quoting Mal. 3:8). The *Manual* then told readers: "From its early days the Seventh-day Adventist church has followed the scriptural method for financing its work." But as this study reveals, never before the 1880s at the earliest had the church followed anything like the "scriptural method" of true tithing. Statements drawn from the 1930 edition of the Constitution, By-Laws, and Working Policy of the General Conference informed believers that the tithe was used only for the ministry, Bible teaching, conference administration, and field mission work.

Then, establishing a 50-year tradition, the 1932 *Manual* asserted that while tithe paying "is not held as a test of fellowship," those "conference workers and church elders and other officers and institutional leaders who failed to pay tithe, should not be continued in office."⁷⁷ Also for the first time, tithing entered the roster of "Fundamental Beliefs." No. 18 stated:

That the divine principle of tithes and offerings for the support of the gospel is an acknowledgement of God's ownership in our lives, and that we are stewards who must render account to Him of all that He has committed to our possession.⁷⁸

The 1938, 1940, and 1942 *Church Manuals* represent carbon copies of the 1932 *Manual* insofar as the section on "Gospel Finance" is concerned.⁷⁹ The 1942 *Manual*, however, did clarify just who should be considered as tithepayers. If the head of the household (defined as a male wage-earner) paid a faithful tithe, his nonworking wife and minor children should be counted as tithepayers, so long as they held local church membership.⁸⁰ This stipulation continues to apply today, according to the 1981 *Manual*, despite the vast number of women employed outside the home. The 1942 *Manual* also strengthened the warning to church treasurers (continued in subsequent manuals) to keep strictly confidential all matters of individual members' tithe paying and offerings. The treasurer "should be careful never to comment on the tithe paid by any member or upon

his income or anything concerning it, except to those who share the responsibility of the work with him." The *Manual* did not define who those "sharers" might be.⁸¹

The first major revisions of the *Church Manual* in matters of finance came in 1951. For the first time, a section on "Doctrinal Instruction for Baptistal Candidates" was included, and doctrine No. 15 read:

The tithe is holy unto the Lord, and is God's provision for the support of His ministry. Freewill offerings are also part of God's plan for the support of His work throughout the world.

This statement, backed by eight texts, was repeated virtually unchanged until the 1981 revision.⁸² Also listed in the 1951 *Manual* were the baptismal vows, No. 10 of which asked: "Do you believe in church organization, and is it your purpose to support the church by your tithes and offerings, your personal effort, and influence?" Candidates have usually answered "Yes" to this same question for more than 30 years.⁸³

The 1951 *Manual* also tightened some loopholes in tithe-paying rhetoric. Church elders who failed to be faithful tithe payers now faced not only expulsion from the office of local elder, but also found themselves barred from any other church office.⁸⁴ This regulation also has been repeated in subsequent manuals.

The most significant changes in the 1951 *Manual*, however, appeared in the revised chapter

The 1932 *Manual* asserted that tithe paying is not held as a test of fellowship, but also stated that workers who failed to pay tithe should not be continued in office.

11 on "Gospel Finance." The new emphasis appeared to be on total stewardship of time, influence, and service as well as means. By faithful stewardship, members acknowledged God's sovereignty over their lives and stood ready to benefit from his grace and blessings.

The *Manual* clarified the pattern of tithe paying from the individual to the local church, conference, union, and General Conference, describing tithe paying as “one of the great unifying factors of the Advent Movement.” Members were urged to pay their tithes to their local church; any deviation from this practice should be cleared with the conference or union concerned.

A baffling alteration in the 1951 *Manual* defined tithe as “one tenth of all their *increase*,” a reversion to Systematic Benevolence terminology wherein James White had defined the “increase” as 10 percent of one’s annual assets, and urged believers to give a tithe of that, or one percent of their “income.” It is doubtful that church leaders expected members to revert to a one-percent giving plan; yet this word “increase” has continued to show up in all subsequent *Church Manuals*.⁸⁵

Three years later in 1954, the *Manual for Ministers* tightened the noose around nontithe-paying, church-employed workers’ necks by stipulating that “no worker shall be continued in denominational employment who is found to be unfaithful in tithe paying, nor shall he be transferred to another conference unless he reforms.”⁸⁶

The *Church Manuals* of 1959, 1963, 1967, 1971, and 1976 have virtually reproduced the material in chapter 11 (“Gospel Finance”) of the 1951 *Manual* word for word with no significant changes.⁸⁷ The last complete manual revision occurred in 1981. In that edition, the “Fundamental Beliefs” statements on tithing (now No. 20) emphasized that members are God’s stewards of their time, opportunities, abilities, and possessions, responsible to him for their proper use. By returning tithes and giving offerings, believers acknowledged God’s ownership, helped further the gospel work, and fought selfishness and covetousness in their lives. Stewardship is now defined not as a duty, but as “a privilege given to us by God for nurture in love.” The true steward “rejoices in the blessings that come to others as a result of his faithfulness.”⁸⁸

One very important additional statement on

page 252 of the 1981 *Manual* clarified the relationship between tithe paying and church membership. It stated:

A member should never be dropped from the church rolls on account of his inability or failure to render financial help to any of the causes of the church. Church membership rests primarily on a spiritual basis, yet it is the duty of every member to support the work of the church in a financial way to the extent of his ability.⁸⁹

The church, in short, should not be seen as an exclusive spiritual club in which nonpaying members are not welcome.

Confusion Over Tithing Today

Although no completely revised *Church Manual* has been printed since 1981, the recent 1985 Annual Council proposed several significant revisions in the area of tithing, offerings, and church employment. The new definition of tithe, even more puzzling than that of 1951, states that a faithful tithe is “one tenth of their *increase* or personal *income*.” Dudley M. Canright, were he alive and in the church today, would have good reason to wonder whether Adventists were moving backward toward S. B. terminology. As this study has shown, by the 1880s church leaders saw “increase” and “income” as mutually exclusive terms implying two totally different giving plans. The first meant giving essentially 1 percent of one’s annual worth (S. B.); the second meant paying a full 10 percent (tithing). Regardless of terminology, however, the leaders now described tithing as “an act of worship.”⁹⁰

Rather significantly, as impending actions have since revealed, the Annual Council also broadened the definition of “church workers” to be released from employment if found wanting in tithe paying. This group now included conference workers, church elders, “other officers,” and institutional leaders.⁹¹ Many today wonder, however, whether Adventist Health System employees—many of them non-Adventists—and

college and university personnel would accept such discipline or even authorize local church treasurers to disclose their tithes and offerings to union or G C officials.

While a concerted effort by church leaders and Ellen White did alter Adventists' attitudes toward systematic giving, it appears that even today, the nest-egg of Adventist systematic benevolence in tithes and mission offerings still has a few cracks in it. As Roger Dudley pointed out in the October 17, 1985, *Review*, the burgeoning number of appeals by local churches and independent Adventist institutions for a share of the member's dollar has drastically reduced mission offerings from a

high of 28.6 percent of the tithe dollar in 1934 to a low of 6.5 percent in 1985. Furthermore, while 68 percent of church members figure their tithe on gross personal income, 29 percent base their tithe on net income after taxes; and about 3 percent figure it on the amount left after major living expenses.⁹² It is not uncommon for some Adventist ministers and other church workers to support tithing net income today. Others zealously urge giving a double tithe, while some conferences trumpet the 10 + 10 + plan of tithes and offerings. Thus, in a very real sense, the Adventist concept of tithing and systematic giving is in a state of flux today and may evolve for decades to come.

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2. North American Division "Tithing Policy Revision," D-55-20, 1985, parts 3-5.
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4. Loughborough, cited by E. K. Vandevere, *Windows* (Nashville: Southern Publishing Assoc., 1975), p. 133.
5. James White, *Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, 9 December 1852, p. 120. [Hereafter cited as *R&H*.]
6. James White, *R&H*, 20 February 1855, p. 183.
7. James White, cited by M. E. Olsen, *A History of the Origin and Progress of Seventh-day Adventists* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1925), p. 247.
8. Olsen, p. 228.
9. Ellen White, *Testimonies* (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1948), I, 170-76.
10. James White, *R&H*, 17 February 1859, p. 104.
11. James White, *R&H*, 26 May 1859, p. 8.
12. James White, *Good Samaritan*, No. 2 (1859), p. 7.
13. S. W. Rhodes and James White, *R&H*, 4 December 1855, p. 75.
14. James White, *R&H*, 27 December 1855, p. 101.
15. James White, *R&H*, 8 April 1858, p. 164.
16. Arthur W. Spalding, *Origin and History of Seventh-day Adventists* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1962), I, 296-97.
17. James White, *R&H*, 3 February 1859, p. 84.
18. James White, *R&H*, 3 February 1859, p. 84.
19. James White, *R&H*, 3 February 1859, p. 84.
20. I. C. Vaughan, *R&H*, 3 March 1859, p. 120.
21. James White, *R&H*, 26 May 1859, p. 8.
22. In June 1859 John Loughborough, John Waggoner, John Andrews, J. B. Frisbie, Meritt Cornell, Samuel Rhodes, and John Byington expressed their satisfaction with the giving plan. Only Rhodes—somewhat prophetically—felt that the individual giving amounts had been set too low to sustain the cause.—*R&H*, 9 June 1859, p. 20.
23. James White, *R&H*, 9 June 1859, pp. 21-23.
24. James White, *R&H*, 15 October 1861, p. 156.
25. James White, *R&H*, 10 February 1859, p. 96.
26. James White, *R&H*, 6 January 1863, p. 45.
27. D. E. Robinson, "Prophetic Guidance in the Advent Movement," unpub. ms., p. 161.
28. R. A. Underwood, *R&H*, 1 May 1919, p. 10 [italics added].
29. James White, *R&H*, 15 January 1861, p. 72.
30. J. N. Loughborough, *R&H*, 18 June 1861, p. 30.
31. *Testimonies*, I, 190-94.
32. *R&H*, 1 May 1919, p. 10; 4 June 1926, p. 4.
33. George I. Butler in 1883 admitted that Adventists since 1859 had felt tithing to be obligatory and scriptural, but they had not understood it fully. For one thing, leaders described Systematic Benevolence as a donation or gift to the church, not as payment of what God already owned and expected from believers. "The tithe," Butler clarified, "is in no sense benevolence. It is not ours to give, but the Lord's all the time."—*The Tithing System* (Battle Creek, MI: Review and Herald, 1883), pp. 68-69.
34. *Good Samaritan*, No. 5 (c. 1860), cited by G. T. Anderson, "Sectarian Organization," in "Adventism in America: A History," unpub. ms., ed. Gary Land, p. 88.
35. James White, *R&H*, 22 January 1861, p. 80.

36. Admitting that "it is an utter impossibility to find a plan that would insure perfect equality in every particular," White expressed his view that even the "Israelitish tithing" plan promoted inequality, adding the caveat that "it was the result of Infinite Wisdom." He believed, however, that the S. B. plan "comes close to insuring equality."—*R&H*, 9 April 1861, p. 164.

37. James White, *R&H*, 9 April 1861, p. 164.

38. Ellen White's mixing of the terms "tithing system" and "Systematic Benevolence plan" may indicate that she herself was growing in a more mature understanding of true biblical tithing.

39. *Testimonies*, I, 237-238.

40. *Testimonies*, I, 316.

41. *Testimonies*, I, 376.

42. *Testimonies*, I, 483.

43. *Testimonies*, I, 545.

44. *Testimonies*, I, 120.

45. Olsen, p. 305.

46. "C.E.B.," *R&H*, 20 January 1876, p. 21.

47. D. M. Canright, *R&H*, 17 February 1876, pp. 50-51 [italics added].

48. Canright, *R&H*, 2 March 1876, pp. 65, 66.

49. Canright, *R&H*, 2 March 1876, pp. 65, 66.

50. Canright, *R&H*, 6 April 1876, p. 108.

51. *R&H*, 5 October 1876, p. 106.

52. James White et. al., *Systematic Benevolence* (1876), pp. 1-32.

53. *Testimonies*, III, 381-383, 386-387.

54. *Testimonies*, III, 389, 393. The very act of writing "systematic benevolence" with lower-case letters implies that while Ellen White might use outdated S. B. terminology, she was moving away from rigid adherence to S. B. methodologies. In this same *Testimony* she declared: "There are but few who invest in God's cause in proportion to their means." "We are not doing a twentieth part of what we might do if we were awake" (pp. 398, 407). She also stated: "Those churches who are the most systematic and liberal in sustaining the cause of God are the most prosperous spiritually" (p. 405).

55. *Testimonies*, III, 388.

56. *Testimonies*, III, 394, 396, 408, 546.

57. *Testimonies*, III, 411.

58. *Testimonies*, IV, 469-70.

59. *R&H*, 17 October 1878, p. 121. The five men were Andrews, White, Haskell, Smith, and Canright.

60. White, Canright, and Haskell, *R&H*, 12 December 1878, p. 188.

61. Canright, introduction to *Systematic Benevolence* (1876, 32-page edition), pp. 1-2.

62. Canright to W. A. Colcord, 15 May 1913, ms. DF351, E. G. White Research Center (AU), pp. 1-5.

63. *R&H*, 24 April 1879, p. 133.

64. In a call for reformation, the authors urged Adventists to give a trespass offering equal to all withheld tithes from 1859-1879 plus 20 percent! Adventists who neglected to perform this *volte face* would be cursed for robbing God. Stories of God's blessing faithful members (such as Dan Palmer and J. P. Kellogg) encouraged believers toward sacrificial giving—White et al., *Systematic Benevolence*, pp. 32-49.

65. *R&H*, 14 October 1880, p. 252.

66. Butler, p. 101.

67. Butler, pp. 5-31, 32, 34.

68. Butler, pp. 36-59, 61-65, 71-73.

69. Butler, pp. 74-75.

70. Butler, pp. 86-91, 94-96, 97.

71. Butler, pp. 108-111.

72. E. J. Waggoner, *Honor Due to God* (Oakland, CA: Pacific Press, 1884), pp. 18, 24-25, 29-32, 36.

73. Waggoner, p. 51.

74. Robinson, p. 170.

75. Albert M. Dart, *Systematic Benevolence* (n.p.: n.p., c. 1925), pp. 1-20.

76. *Church Manual* (1932), p. 29. This *Manual* also stipulated that funds for church use, like tithes and offerings, should be placed "in the usual tithe envelopes" (p. 40). This may be the first official printed reference to tithes and offerings being collected in church on Sabbath. The 1932 *Manual*—and all subsequent ones to 1981—informed members that these tithe funds "do not create a trust fund for the future benefit of givers. These funds are used for the current purposes for which given" (p. 126).

77. *Church Manual* (1932), pp. 119-23.

78. *Church Manual* (1932), p. 184.

79. *Church Manual* (1938), pp. 119-132; *Church Manual* (1940), pp. 119-132; *Church Manual* (1942), pp. 129-141.

80. *Church Manual* (1942), pp. 43-44.

81. *Church Manual* (1942), p. 44.

82. *Church Manual* (1951), p. 53.

83. *Church Manual* (1951), p. 57.

84. *Church Manual* (1951), pp. 81-82.

85. *Church Manual* (1951), pp. 181-186.

86. *Manual for Ministers* (1954), p. 53.

87. *Church Manual* (1959), pp. 182-194; *Church Manual* (1963), pp. 181-193; *Church Manual* (1971), pp. 190-203; *Church Manual* (1976), pp. 202-215.

88. *Church Manual* (1981), p. 41.

89. *Church Manual* (1981), p. 252.

90. *Adventist Review*, 7 November 1985, p. 28.

91. *Adventist Review*, 7 November 1985, p. 28.

92. Roger L. Dudley, *Adventist Review*, 17 October 1985, pp. 9-11.

Lifted Up

“Lift up your heads, O ye gates,
and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors;
and the king of glory shall come in.”

Psalm 24:7

Does even the inanimate pearl
Tremble and stretch in its luminous
Skin, and the marble doorpost stand
On tiptoe?
How else to express the eagerness
Of all atoms everywhere to celebrate
The coming of One Whose voice
Was the first they ever knew:
Newly-made world that loved
That voice, world content with
Its beautiful self, only guessing
At what the music meant.

(Not suspecting an enemy,
not even knowing the word . . .)

The world now: never anything
straight,
Or plumb, or aligned or perfectly
Balanced, all purity gone, only
Shadows of newness left, perhaps the
Original light glimmering through in
Springtime—or at other
Birthings.

Sensing in all our nuclei
What we have lost,
We too raise our heads—
Let us be pearl, be pure,
Be doorposts lifted up—
O let the king of glory
Please come in!

Ye Shall Rejoice

“. . . and ye shall rejoice in all that ye put
your hand unto. . . .”

Deuteronomy 12:7

Slicing tomatoes,
I said to my heart,
“Rejoice:
Praise Him for neat wheels
of color and goodness,
Praise Him for juice and
Seed, for new plants
Springing, blossoms,
Bee-humming vines
And forests of red fruit
In future years.”

In the classroom, I said,
“Rejoice:
Praise Him, heart,
For happy hard work,
For minds like spring earth
Cracking open,
And especially praise for those
Sunflower souls,
Turning toward Him
In your most fortunate
Presence.
Praise for ordinary joy of
New books, their
Fragrance and texture;
Warm sun on bent heads,
Fresh-sharpened pencils,
Deep pleasure of shared thoughts.”

“Rejoice,” I told my heart.
“This machine was made
By man—its intricate parts
No match for his synapse
And sinew, working together.
All made things reflect him,
Reflect Him, Whose gift
Each ingenious thought is:

From simple winch winding
Rude bucket down to cool water,
To great engines crouching
In lakes and rivers;

* * * * *

From sliding wood beads,
To clever, man-voiced,
Million-motioned computers;
From little looking glass,
To meteor-sized, many-eyed
Mirrors gazing
At the far heavens—”

“Whatsoever your hand
finds to do—”
These and so much else call
Forth praise!

Praise to One
Who moved about the dirt floor,
Made the chips fly,
Rejoiced as His fingers
Fashioned the easy yokes
In the carpenter’s shop
At Nazareth.

History of Adventist Opposition to Labor Unions

Robert C. Kistler, *Adventists and Labor Unions in the United States* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1984), 127 pp., \$8.95 (paper).

Reviewed by Gordon Engen

Robert C. Kistler has prepared an objective view of the development of Seventh-day Adventist relations with labor unions in his recent *Adventists and Labor Unions in the United States*. His account traces the turbulent early years of the labor movement in the United States, continues through its early development, and reveals its present mature structure—the product of internal changes often made in response to impositions brought on by courts and Congress.

Writing with a researcher's approach, Kistler attempts to present the development of the Adventist position on labor unions from a neutral standpoint which examines the labor views of early Adventist leaders and writers, as well as more recent Adventist observers. For example, he examines the suggestion that the Seventh-day Adventist position against membership in labor unions was "influenced by its role as a major employer" (p. 69). He refutes that conclusion by pointing out that, although the church today has an extensive chain of hospitals, schools, and other institutions with a payroll of "literally thousands of workers" (p. 70), the "position that the denomination has taken on labor unions developed before such growth began" (p. 71).

Skeptics have implied that Ellen White was

merely "a child of her times," reacting, as did many of her contemporaries, to the turbulent developmental years of organized labor. Kistler argues that rather than being reactionary, she viewed labor unions from a spiritual and prophetic perspective, quite apart from contemporary critics of the movement (pp. 44-47).

Kistler uses many pages to examine the theological and practical bases for the church's beliefs on labor unions, and lists what he considers to be seven major reasons for the church's position.

1. Each person is a free moral agent and must remain free from any organization that would inhibit "complete freedom to serve God" (p. 89).

2. We must avoid entanglement with unbelievers in a way "which the Bible expressly condemns" (p. 90).

3. Unions force believers to take sides in social and/or economic struggles (p. 90).

4. They place Christians in the position of supporting coercion and violence with their money and personal involvement (p. 91).

5. They place members in the position of supporting confederacies seeking monopoly (p. 92).

6. Unions sidetrack Christians from their gospel commitment, leading them to expend time and energy that should be used to fulfill the gospel commission (p. 93).

7. The prophetic counsel given by Ellen White should not be rejected (p. 93).

Kistler recounts the efforts of church leaders to develop a conscience exemption from compulsory unionism on the basis of religious liberty. Earlier efforts to implement what was termed a "basis of agreement" had only short-lived success. However, these efforts paved the way for an eventual formula, worked out by Congress and the courts, which has been generally accepted by labor, management, government, and Adventists. The formula is an accommodation both to conscientious objectors and to

union security clauses in labor contracts.

Strikes and violence, earmarks of labor's developmental years, receive special emphasis. Kistler points out that many unions have recorded no strikes or violence, but does not develop this—perhaps because little has appeared in Adventist literature on the subject. According to Kistler, Adventist opposition to labor union involvement is based on the theory that the fundamental principle governing the formation of labor unions (as well as other types of organizations) is the same as that used by Lucifer in his rebellion in heaven: an appeal

to selfishness and the love of power. Kistler perceptively observes that “here, basically, is the central focus of the problem” (p. 97).

Church members facing labor union problems, as well as Adventist ministers and workers who may have to advise them on the issues, should read this book for a better understanding of the labor union movement.

Gordon Engen is director for North America of the General Conference Department of Public Affairs and Religious Liberty.

Seventh Day Baptist Applauds Adventist Book on the Sabbath

Kenneth Strand, ed., *The Sabbath in Scripture and History* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1982), 391 pp., appendices. \$19.95.

Reviewed by Herbert E. Saunders

It was Ralph Waldo Emerson who said that "the essential ground of a new book or a new sermon is a new spirit." Kenneth Strand and the authors of *The Sabbath in Scripture and History* have produced "a new book dealing comprehensively with the two main days of Christian worship" (p. 15), and have lived up to the sentiments expressed by Mr. Emerson. Certainly this book captures a new spirit in the theological dialogue on Sabbath and Sunday, and will make a significant impact on the future of this important topic.

Combining a discussion of history and theology, the authors provide the most recent information on a debate that has enlivened the halls of the Christian church since its inception and more so during the past few years as the world has looked to a new vision of "sabbath" as a means of personal fulfillment and renewal. The book focuses on the Sabbath as a liberating element in the human search for God without ignoring the viewpoint that religious faith is based on God's redeeming search for humans. The authors carefully, and I believe successfully, make the point that the Sabbath is relevant for those who are seeking new meaning for troubled lives. Raymond F. Cottrell, quoting Sakae Kubo, writes: "Observance of the seventh-day Sabbath today demands a radical, conscious, deliberate decision to follow Christ" (p. 261).

The book begins with a discussion of the Sabbath in the Old Testament, and traces its

development and impact on the life of Israel, the early church, and contemporary times. Attention is given to the scriptural background of Sabbath observance, the rabbinic devotion to Sabbath, and the value and sanctity that Jesus and the apostles declared was evident in God's plan for Sabbath observance.

The authors also review at great length the development of Sunday observance and the theology that followed its introduction into Christian life and witness. Reviewing scriptural passages often cited as giving apostolic credence to the change of the church's day of worship from Sabbath to Sunday, the authors agree that there is no evidence Sunday had assumed, for the early Christian converts, the sanctity and holiness God had given to the seventh-day Sabbath. Samuele Bacchiocchi concludes that "the origin of Sunday [observance] was the result of an interplay of Jewish, pagan and Christian factors" and much of its development in the early centuries of the Christian church "was solicited by external circumstances" (p. 144). Whatever the causes, the early church gradually shifted its allegiance from God's Sabbath to its own understanding of the importance and significance of Sunday.

The development of the idea of "sabbath" as the new Christian doctrine of "the Lord's Day" continues the thread of the Sabbath throughout history. Yet there has always been a remnant who has regarded the keeping of God's commandment to "remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy" as a significant response of love for God. From Asia and Africa, through Europe in the Middle Ages and into the Reformation era, the authors trace the continuing allegiance to God's Sabbath as it was kept alive, ultimately reaching the shores of the New World.

The authors review the development of the Sabbath from the early life of Seventh Day Baptists in the New World to the rise of Seventh-day Adventists and other Sabbath-observing groups. Since the book is Seventh-day Adventist in origin, it reflects most prominently the significant role that Sabbath played in the development of Adventist theology and life. The "phenomenal growth of the Seventh-day Adventist movement" is attributed to the combination of the theology of

the Second Advent of Christ and the Sabbath.

The final chapter focuses attention on contemporary Sabbath theologies as presented by a wide range of authors—Jewish and Christian. Hans K. LaRondelle's discussion of the contemporary authors who have unsuccessfully attempted to refute modern seventh-day sabbathism in favor of Sunday is thorough and valuable. LaRondelle writes that "all Sunday theologies are found wanting, in that they create an unbiblical dichotomy between the work of the Creator and the work of the Redeemer, the Re-Creator" (p. 293). Raoul Dederen's essay on a "Theology of the Sabbath" concludes the volume by addressing the relevance of the Sabbath as a "basic affirmation about God" (p. 295). God desires to enter into partnership with us and provides the way through a twenty-four-hour period of time devoted solely and completely to worship and reflection of God's goodness, mercy, and redeeming love. Its weekly return symbolizes the power of God to create and re-create—that is, to redeem. We are reminded that "God has given us His love."

Also helpful are the eight appendices and the reviews of scriptural passages that carry on the debate.

If the book has any distractions, they are due to the fact that it is primarily historical in nature, with little new Sabbath theology. Still, it presents a picture of the Sabbath and its relevance throughout history with honesty and openness. It is a significant contribution to Sabbath literature for that focus alone.

The Sabbath in Scripture and History lives up to its name as a scholarly, well-thought-out review of the Sabbath in our day. It will contribute greatly to the ongoing search for sabbatical qualities in the lives of evangelical Christians.

Herbert E. Saunders, pastor of the Seventh Day Baptist Church of Milton, Wisconsin, was formerly dean of the Seventh Day Baptist Center on Ministry, where he taught Sabbath philosophy to students training for the ministry. He is the author of *The Sabbath: Symbol of Creation and Re-Creation*, published by the American Sabbath Tract Society in 1971.

Adventists Confront Homelessness

by John Fritz

During a particularly cold week in January, when all the Montgomery County, Maryland, shelters were full, Sligo Seventh-day Adventist Church slept approximately 85 men in its new youth Sabbath school rooms. According to several General Conference officials, Sligo's sheltering 12 to 14 men every night during the week of January 16-25 constitutes the first time a public shelter has been operated in a Seventh-day Adventist church in North America.

Warren Zork, associate pastor of Sligo Church, was responsible for the innovation. Since the winter of 1983, Sligo has been part of an emergency network of 25 to 30 churches and synagogues providing daily hot meals for homeless people bound for county shelters. When Zork and colleagues in the Silver Spring/Takoma Park Group Ministry noticed an increasing number of hungry and homeless people seeking help from their churches in Maryland's affluent Montgomery County, they started a soup kitchen known as "Shepherd's Table."

Zork, who chairs the "Shepherd's Table" ministry, knows providing a meal is just part of dealing with the increasing number of homeless Americans. Thus, the ministerial group also organized a rotation among 12 area churches to provide emergency overflow shelter for the homeless seven nights per month. These facilities supplement the 35 to 100 beds the county government contracts on a continuous basis with the Salvation Army and Catholic charities.

Since 1984, churches in Montgomery County have sheltered 300 homeless people each year; Zork estimates that Washington area

metropolitan churches sheltered around 2,000 individuals during the 1985-1986 winter alone. "When the county shelter called," he says, "I felt it was our turn to help."

According to Zork, there were no behavior problems among those housed at Sligo Church, and volunteers generally felt they had learned a lot from the experience. "The only hitch was that someone spilled a hot drink on the new carpet," he says.

It should be noted that several conferences throughout the North American Division do substantial work for the homeless within the scope of Community Services. For example, the blue and white vans of the Greater New York Conference are a common sight in New York City, where volunteers have been feeding the hungry and providing health screenings for more than ten years.¹ Nevertheless, with the exception of Sligo, Adventist churches are not part of cooperative, multichurch programs to provide overnight shelter for homeless individuals.

The Anaheim Seventh-day Adventist Church tried in May of 1986 to establish such a shelter, but their efforts were blocked by the community. Michael Elias, a member of Anaheim SDA Church and director of the Christian Temporary Housing Facility in the city of Orange, California, has been on the forefront of efforts to work for the homeless. Elias, a founding member of the National Coalition for the Homeless, serves as a United Way consultant, and seven years ago helped advise New York City Mayor Ed Koch in his efforts to provide shelter for the poor.

Elias proposed that Anaheim SDA Church rent its Pathfinder building to his organization. It could, he reasoned, provide overnight shelter for as many as 50 persons every month. But while the church board, in a business meeting, approved the proposal, as did the Southeastern California Conference, the community around the church felt differently. Three days after the "Hands Across America" event in May the Anaheim city council refused to grant a conditional use permit. The council was responding

to community opposition that included, according to Elias, "threats on my life."

Elias has not always received support from the Adventist community. Ten years ago, while temporarily homeless himself, Elias went to a local Adventist community services center to seek help. "It suddenly dawned on me," he says, "that all that could be offered me was a box of macaroni and some clothes. Where was I going to cook it, and with what? I had no kitchen, no place to change, and nowhere to go. I began to wonder about all the other people who came for help, not just drunken men, but husbands and wives with little children. I realized then how far off target we were."

From that point on, while working at Christian Temporary Housing Facility, Elias went to Adventist camp meetings, workers' meetings, and churches, pleading for more realistic and substantial welfare reforms. "Everyone was proud of what I was doing, and I got a lot of pats on the back," says Elias, "but nothing was ever accomplished."

Elias believes ignorance is one reason why many people, including Adventists, don't get involved with the problem of homelessness. "We seem to think that the homeless are single males or bag ladies," he says, "but that just isn't a true picture at all." A recent article in *U.S. News and World Report* corroborates that "the most stunning increase is in the number of good, solid, middle-class families. They are the people who had good jobs and their own homes, but lost it all and hit the road."²

In an effort to provide more relief and to foster a more contemporary Adventist response to homelessness, Elias has presented General Conference officials with a proposal outlining three broad programs. First, he would like to see a public shelter offering temporary housing in every North American conference by 1987. Second, a hotline could be set up at Andrews University and published nationally, so people could call for information on where to find help. Switchboard operators would refer them to a network of regional Adventist or multichurch-operated shelters in their location.

Finally, churches could establish "Good Samaritan Clubs," groups of individuals or families who agree to house and stabilize homeless persons while they are looking for jobs, housing, or counseling.

Elias believes that Adventists *can* become more involved. The key to turning his or anybody else's ideas into reality, he thinks, involves cooperation and compassion. "Deep down, I am a believer in the Christian faith," says Elias, "especially the heritage of Isaiah, who made service to others his worship to God."

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. Clifford Goldstein, "They Do More Than Just Screen Blood Pressure," *Signs of the Times*, December 1985, pp. 25-27, 30.

2. James M. Mildreth, et al., "America's Wandering Homeless," *U.S. News and World Report*, 17 January 1983, p. 23.

John Fritz is a recent graduate of Columbia Union College, where he majored in religion and English and worked with the homeless through CUC's Metro Ministries program. He is the assistant director of development at Columbia Union College.

Asian/South Pacific Adventists in NAD Meet Diverse Challenges

by George Atiga

One of the highest growth rates in the North American Division is among the Asian/South Pacific people. The percentage of Asian/South Pacific people who are Adventists is four times as high in North America as in the Far Eastern and South Pacific Divisions. While Adventists in those divisions make up about .1 percent (685,900) of the more than 561 million population, Asian/South Pacific Adventists in the United States account for .4 percent

(15,000) of the over 3.5 million Asian/South Pacific immigrants.

In the North American Division there are approximately 87 Asian/South Pacific ministers pastoring 83 churches and companies, with a total membership of approximately 15,000. Annual tithe from this group is close to \$5 million.

Asian/South Pacific peoples immigrating to the United States will continue an upward trend which the Immigration and Naturalization Service indicates began in 1970 when the number of Asian and Pacific Islanders admitted leaped from 1.5 million to 3.5 million. Koreans led the growth rate with a rise of 412.8 percent. The Chinese population, with a growth rate of 85.3 percent, became the largest Asian group in the United States, with Filipinos moving into second place, and the Japanese third.

A study done by the Center for Continuing Study of the California Economy forecasts that Asians and those in smaller ethnic categories who made up 2.5 percent of the population in 1980, will account for 4 percent by the year

2000—about 10.6 million.

Accordingly, Adventist evangelism will need to adapt to meet the continuing challenge posed by diverse groups such as the Asian/South Pacific peoples, sometimes characterized in the popular press as a “model minority.” From the standpoint of church growth principles, however, it is during the difficult adjustment period to a new environment that the influence of the gospel is most keenly felt.

Asian/South Pacific coordinators have recommended to the North American Division the following measures:

- That an Asian/South Pacific coordinator be elected or appointed on the division level to coordinate the work throughout North America in association with the director of North American missions.

- That a division-wide Sabbath offering, together with additional appropriations from North American missions, be set aside for the following needs:

- Training of pastors for countries like Vietnam, where ministerial education is not possible. At present, Vietnam has only two active

Profile of Asian/South Pacific Adventists in North America

Asian/South Pacific SDAs in North America

| | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| Asian Indians..... | 311,953 |
| Cambodians..... | 18,102 |
| Chinese..... | 894,453 |
| Filipinos..... | 795,255 |
| Indonesians..... | 25,873 |
| Japanese..... | 791,275 |
| Koreans..... | 376,676 |
| Laotians..... | 55,598 |
| Taiwanese..... | 16,390 |
| Thais..... | 64,024 |
| Vietnamese..... | 215,184 |
| Samoans, Tongans, and others..... | 105,632 |
| | <u>3,670,415</u> |

Asian/South Pacific Churches in North America

| | |
|------------------|-----------|
| Korean..... | 46 |
| Filipino..... | 14 |
| Samoan..... | 8 |
| Japanese..... | 7 |
| Chinese..... | 4 |
| Indonesian..... | 2 |
| Mixed Asian..... | 2 |
| Vietnamese..... | 2 |
| | <u>85</u> |

Vietnamese pastors, both over 55 years old; young Vietnamese interested in the ministry cannot afford the expense.

—Translating and printing of more literature in the many languages of Asian/South Pacific peoples.

—Task forces to begin gospel work in “dark cities.”

—Radio and television programs.

—Asian/South Pacific ministers in the North American Division should be given an opportunity to upgrade themselves through continuing education, seminars, and additional university coursework.

George Atiga is director of the Asian and South Pacific Ministries department of the Pacific Union Conference.

Asian/South Pacific Growth Trends in Membership and Tithe

| Year | 1980 | 1981 | 1982 | 1983 | 1984 |
|---------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Membership | 5,528 | 6,206 | 6,953 | 7,588 | 8,242 |
| Tithe (in millions) | 2.5 | 2.7 | 3.0 | 3.3 | 3.7 |
| Per Capita | 446.71 | 442.38 | 444.10 | 439.29 | 447.73 |

Asian/South Pacific Churches by Union Conference

| | <u>Atlantic</u> | <u>Canadian</u> | <u>Columbia</u> | <u>Lake</u> | <u>Mid-American</u> |
|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------|---------------------|
| Korean..... | 3 | 2 | 6 | 6 | 2 |
| Filipino..... | 2 | 2 | | 1 | |
| Samoan..... | | | | | |
| Japanese..... | | 1 | | | |
| Chinese..... | | 1 | | | |
| Indonesian..... | | | | | |
| Mixed Asian..... | | | | | |
| Vietnamese..... | | | | | |

| | <u>North Pacific</u> | <u>Pacific</u> | <u>Southern</u> | <u>Southwestern</u> |
|------------------|----------------------|----------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Korean..... | 4 | 17 | 5 | 1 |
| Filipino..... | | 8 | 1 | |
| Samoan..... | 2 | 6 | | |
| Japanese..... | | 6 | | |
| Chinese..... | | 3 | | |
| Indonesian..... | | 2 | | |
| Mixed Asian..... | 1 | 1 | | |
| Vietnamese..... | 1 | | 1 | |

Responses

Challenges for Adventist Education

To the Editors: I read with great interest Richard Osborn's "Adventist Academies in Crisis" article in *Spectrum*. He made some excellent points. His reference to the teaching profession is right on target. The need for recruiting new blood into the profession and retaining the quality personnel in classrooms is of paramount importance to our schools' long-term health. Clearly the economic trends have been working against these goals, and they must be reversed. It also reminds me of Secretary Bell's address several years ago to Century III scholars (102 students from the 50 states and the District of Columbia). He asked the elite group of high school academicians how many intended to enter the teaching profession. A deadly silence followed; no hands were raised. The secretary was very distressed by this fact. That dramatic event epitomized the increasing difficulty of attracting the strongest candidates to one of society's most important professions.

The article also pointed up an issue I had not considered regarding graduation requirements. Certainly, I have heard many complaints from vocational education people regarding the increases in graduation requirements in math, science, etc., but I can clearly see that increased graduation requirements could, in fact, squeeze out a very important mission—a thorough examination of the Bible and other electives to mold a balanced Christian youth.

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Future Welcomed; Past Explained

To the Editors: I read with interest the recent reports of the New Orleans General Conference session (*Spectrum*, Vol. 16, No. 4), and for the first time in a long while took heart on the future of organized Adventism. More and more of our clergy, particularly from the Third World, are joining the real world. Contributions from African, Caribbean, and Pacific delegations suggest that we are beginning

officially to widen our view from the Adventist particularisms of health reform, apocalyptic dogma, and isolationist, other-worldly evangelism. As we become demographically a church of the poor, the oppressed, and the decolonized, we shall hopefully become theologically a church of relevance and wholeness in which economic, political, and social challenges are part of one spiritual experience.

There were also reports on Adventism in socialist countries. As the process of economic and political liberation continues, more socialist countries will emerge, particularly in the Third World. Adventist theology, pastoral practice, and organization will have to come to terms with these trends. Otherwise, large sections of the future world church will be torn between the logic and justice of their social aspirations on the one hand, and the demands of a church whose ideas were formed in 19th-century capitalist North America on the other. In such a scenario many, particularly among the younger, now better-educated generation, will choose the former. The increasing demythification of the Ellen White legacy (thanks largely to *Spectrum*) will go a long way toward removing the necessity for this contradiction, not to mention an administrative structure less North American in its personnel and assumptions.

Michael Allen
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To the Editors: I personally do not have a bit of trouble explaining the apparent "conflict" between the geological record and the literal six-day Creation as outlined in Genesis. To me it is as simple as this: God created the Earth *with* an age. One week after Creation a scientist would look at Adam and declare him to be a mature adult and several years old, certainly not one week old. As everyone knows, humans one week old sleep a lot, drink mostly milk, and weigh about eight pounds. Likewise, a scientist might cut down a tree in the garden of Eden, count the rings and declare the tree to be at least 100 years old, certainly not one week old. Likewise, the rocks and soil, indeed all processes of life, could have been started in mid-cycle, with an apparent age. Is this too simple an explanation?

What difference does it make if we accept a long chronology or short? "Worship him who made heaven and earth" (Rev. 14:7).

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