

From Ecology to Driving Miss Creampuff
Addicted to the Church? How to Cope

SPECTRUM

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1990 GENERAL CONFERENCE

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Women: Ordination No, Marrying Yes
Who is Robert S. Folkenberg?
North America Forces G.C. Staff Cuts

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The 1990 General Conference

Student leaders believe Adventism can address moral issues in society. They demonstrate how in the passionate essays on ecology, drugs, and human rights printed in this *Spectrum*. The moral fervor of future leaders in the Adventist community will no doubt be offended when they read in this *Spectrum* how the 1990 General Conference session officially endorsed discrimination against women in ministry.

However, student leaders and others might find some encouragement from the fact that denominational leaders did speak up at the General Conference on other moral issues. Neal Wilson, who at a previous General Conference had condemned apartheid as un-Christian, again released several statements on public policy with sentences taking a moral stand, including:

Ban on Sale of Assault Weapons to Civilians

“Pursuits of peace and the preservation of life are to be the goals of Christians...With public safety and the value of human life in mind, the sale of automatic or semiautomatic assault weapons should be strictly controlled.”

Stewardship of the Environment

“Ecological responsibility and the belief in the imminent Advent are not mutually exclusive. Both must characterize Adventists. We call upon leaders in industry to act responsibly and morally—in the interest of both the present

and the future. We call upon local, national, and international governments and authorities to enact such appropriate measures as would ensure the safety and well-being of an environment on the brink of catastrophe.”

Wilson, working with the Washington Institute for Contemporary Issues and the Loma Linda University Ethics Center, arranged for a two-hour plenary session at Indianapolis, specifically devoted to the immorality of American tobacco companies targeting their sales to third-world women and children. The newly elected president, Robert Folkenberg, concluded the session by declaring that “When big tobacco companies are making millions of dollars on the pain and death and suffering of multiplied millions, we have no option but to speak out.”

Despite the church’s action on ordination of women, on other moral issues the outgoing and incoming General Conference presidents did join students on college campuses in declaring that Adventists, as Wilson put it in his statement on *Homelessness and Poverty*, “recognize the inseparables between the physical and the spiritual.” And as Wilson concluded, “by supporting those church and public policies that relieve suffering, and by individual and united efforts of compassion, we augment that very spiritual endeavor.”

—The Editors

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From the Editor's Notebook

by Roy Branson

Neal Wilson and A Bid for Continuity

In his keynote report the first evening of the General Conference session, Neal Wilson could have avoided the subject. Instead, he teased the delegates, pulling out an envelope from his jacket, saying he was sending a letter to the nominating committee. Long pause. Long . . . No, he said, it was not a letter of resignation. The carefully planned by-play made it publicly official. Wilson would be quite happy to be re-elected president of the General Conference. That night he confidently presided over the organization of the nominating committee.

The next day, at the end of the Friday morning business session, it was announced that the nominating committee would have a report at 2 p.m. After lunch the delegate seats were uncharacteristically full. No report. Nothing at 3 p.m. Could it be? Nothing at 4 p.m. It was after 5 p.m. before the blockbuster announcement was officially made, and a new president introduced (see pp. 10-15). Less than 24 hours after teasing the delegates with a letter to the nominating committee that was not a resignation, Neal Wilson's 12-year presidency was over. Why?

At least two reasons emerged: A broad reason, having to do with shifting moods in the style of leadership preferred in a General Conference president; and a more focused reason, having to

do with the immediate attitudes of the three American divisions toward Wilson.

The broad reason was an indefinable but palpable desire by delegates to be excited, to feel deeply. Wilson has not been supported by partisans of causes he has championed. He is no Ronald Reagan or Margaret Thatcher. Apart from an unwavering concern for racial justice, which has particularly earned him the enduring loyalty of North American black leaders, Wilson has been less adored than respected. He is superb at analyzing oral and written communication. At his best, he can sit in the discussions of small committees or large assemblies and sense emotions the speakers themselves scarcely realize they are feeling. He breaks complicated controversies into manageable proportions. He patiently waits until antagonists are exhausted to the point of accepting compromise solutions. For 24 years he has been the unmatched mediator of the Adventist church. If he had worked outside the denomination he could have been the head of the United States National Labor Relations Board, and honored for settling America's most difficult disputes.

But Wilson has the mediator's invaluable skill for dissipating passion at a time when members increasingly want to be moved. Wilson's elections to high denominational office have not been ideological crusades, but the acknowledgements of his competence. They have had about them not the air of struggle, but of inevitability. When that quality of inevitability was lost on the first ballot in the 1990 nominating committee, there seemed to be no core of supporters passionately committed to keeping Wilson in the presidency.

A second, more focused and immediate, rea-

son for the nominating committee moving away from Wilson was the converging opposition—from very different starting points—of the three American divisions. Inter-America (1,177,964 members) and South America (941,527), the denomination's largest divisions, comprise more than one-third of the church's membership. Combined with North America (743,023) they approach one-half the denomination's membership and more than 80 percent of its financial support. Of course, the nominating committee reflected the membership strength of these three divisions.

Throughout the ministers' council (see pp. 8, 9), some of the unprecedented large numbers of pastors from outside the United States talked about the desires of the South American Division's commitment to making a change. South America had ideological reasons. It felt Wilson had manipulated the 1989 Annual Council into supporting what it considered an impossibly liberal approach to women in ministry—allowing divisions to individually authorize women ministers to perform baptisms and marriages.

North America opposed Wilson on non-ideological, administrative grounds. (A notable exception were the nominating committee members selected by the black caucus, who were genuinely saddened by the possibility of Wilson's departure.) The dominating presence of a veteran General Conference president, it was thought, would thwart the emergence of an independent North American Division more than any conceivable incoming president could. In addition, certain North American union presidents (all but one of whom served on the nominating committee) had clashed with Wilson when he became deeply involved in North American division crises, such as the Davenport scandal, the Harris Pine Mill bankruptcy, and the attempted consolidation of the two campuses of Loma Linda University.

Inter-America joined the successful coalition for less deep-seated, perhaps more opportunistic, reasons. Once they realized that the incumbent was not going to be re-elected as a matter of course, and that North America did not appear to have a clear picture of life after Wilson, Inter-

America quickly organized itself into the most effective bloc in the nominating committee. Twice its home-grown leaders were nominated for the presidency of the General Conference—first, George Brown, and then Robert Folkenberg.

The Dawning of the Age of Folkenberg

Organizers of General Conference sessions assume the re-election of the incumbent president. The session is spread over 10 days, but the election of the General Conference president—the absolutely essential task of the session—is expected to be dealt with immediately, certainly within the first 24 hours.

In Indianapolis, since it understandably took half a day to decide not to re-elect the incumbent, the nominating committee assumed that a new president needed to be chosen in half a working day. They chose the opening of the Sabbath as the absolutely final deadline. (One wonders if some North American union presidents had other reasons for not wanting the voting to extend from Friday to Saturday night or Sunday morning. More than other members of the nominating committee, they had seen up close how often Wilson could find a way to turn around a straw ballot, cast against his position one day, to an official vote favoring his position the next day.)

Since the expectation that a willing incumbent will be re-elected is so deeply ingrained, the Adventist church has no constitutionally mandated transition period, when the outgoing president continues to chair business meetings of the General Conference sessions. There is no period when the new president can reflect on his recommendations for his closest associates and gather his thoughts for the challenges he wishes to lay before the church in his sermon the last Sabbath of the session.

The fact is the 1990 General Conference session had less the feel of a constitutionally mandated shift of power than a *coup d'état*. Folkenberg, from the moment he was voted in Friday

afternoon, was accompanied by a bodyguard with a walkie-talkie, arranging his shuttles between the nominating committee and public presentations at the platform. Immediately, the new president had to approve the elimination of many General Conference posts and the retirement or release of well-known leaders who had not expected to be leaving the scene.

The fact is the 1990 General Conference session had less the feel of a constitutionally mandated shift of power than a *coup d'état*.

The lack of a transition period meant the preceding leader almost disappeared from sight. After introducing Folkenberg Sabbath morning, Wilson left the platform during the Sabbath morning worship service. Later in the week, Wilson did surface to make speeches from the pulpit for his (and the 1989 Annual Council's) compromise position on the role of women in ministry. In particular, the vote allowing women ministers to perform marriages might not have passed without Wilson's intervention.

But Wilson's future role in the church was never fully clarified at the General Conference session. In introductions of his successor, Wilson portrayed himself as Folkenberg's long-time mentor, and the new president said that he wished to use Wilson's ambassadorial skills. However, in this century, it has been customary for outgoing General Conference presidents—unless obvious health problems prevented it—to be elected to the position of General Field Secretary, and their knowledge utilized by assigning them the chairmanship of an institutional board. After voting him out as president, the 1922 General Conference even made A. G. Daniells (who had just completed 21 years as president) the highly visible leader of the General Conference Ministerial Association. Neal Wilson, vigorous and in excellent health, received from the 1990 nominating

committee no invitation for any post.

Every new administration at least partially defines itself in response to the perceived deficiencies of its predecessor. R. H. Pierson, widely praised as a spiritual leader, was thought by many to be less than decisive as a chief executive officer. Twelve years ago Wilson set out to show consistent, determined leadership. By the end of his term he was criticized for overcentralizing authority into his own hands. Inevitably, Folkenberg, as chairman of the nominating committee, heard repeated criticisms of Wilson. Folkenberg will make certain he emphasizes delegation of responsibility (see pp. 16-20).

Folkenberg began to delegate at the General Conference session itself. Willingness to use writers to help prepare speeches was a concrete example. A remark at the session that received wide circulation in the mass media was Folkenberg's denunciation, Sunday morning, of American tobacco companies for targeting their burgeoning international sales to third-world women and children: "It's time to speak out and speak up, for the alternative is death, destruction, and a guilty conscience" (see pp. 41-43). That arresting, cadenced phrase was Folkenberg's own, although, for other parts of his presentation, he was secure enough to draw on comments drafted for him.

He demonstrated even more confidence by quickly deciding, after his election, to ask others to start preparing his sermon for the final Sabbath morning worship service—surely the most important public act of his entire ministry. He told ministers who are his peers, but previously never so involved in General Conference matters, the themes he wished emphasized in the sermon. Folkenberg later revised their work, incorporating wording and illustrations from his own experience.

The result was a sermon emphasizing unity, but "this unity is not uniformity," and an Adventism that is confident that its 27 fundamental beliefs "are strong enough to stand the scrutiny of Christian thought"; an Adventism, therefore, determined that its "unique identity and doctrine must not be a barrier to the people, but a bridge to them."

Folkenberg stressed at the outset that he was not outlining an agenda for the next five years (“something we will have to work out together as a church”), but the 50,000 Adventists hearing their new, young president reacted as though they were hearing a state-of-the-union address. They interrupted him 21 times with applause. Some wept. Folkenberg had been confident enough to place in the hands of a new generation of church leaders the responsibility of helping him articulate a vision for the Adventist church. The result was easily the session’s most inspiring moment.

The Road From Indianapolis

While the election of a young, white, North American as president might superficially suggest a continuation of traditional American dominance of the Adventist church, North American church leaders know better. The General Conference presidency will be occupied by the new president for the next 10, maybe even 15 years. General Conference positions will be increasingly occupied by non-Americans representing the majority of the church’s members. Overseas division presidencies are no longer available, and only one person at a time can be president of the North American Division (see pp. 21-24). A generation of North American union and conference presidents are awakening to the fact that for the rest of their professional lives they will remain mid-level leaders of North American fields. However, their response may not be resentment, but a sense of release.

One afternoon, on the floor of the session, a North American leader said that he was already realizing that his contribution to Adventism would not be the result of holding the very highest executive offices in the church, but the exploring of creative new ideas right where he is. Another, even younger leader agreed. Their place in denominational history would not be secured by climbing the administrative ladder, but by successfully modeling daring innovations for the church in their own fields. The result could be

significant for the North American church: An Adventism that risks experiments in thought and action; that charts new ways to challenge, even lead, its surrounding culture.

The consequences of the General Conference Session’s actions regarding the role of women in the Adventist ministry are not as clear. Certainly the debates on women included the most painful moments of the session for North America. Even veterans of such debates were downcast at hearing the breadth and intensity of opposition, from outside North America, to ordination of women (see pp. 31-36). Hour after hour, delegates were subjected to forthright declarations of discrimination, such as one denominational leader from a third-world country declaring, “Women are mothers of pastors; they are not pastors themselves.”

Perhaps, psychologically, the nadir for North American supporters of women’s ordination came Wednesday morning, when delegates from around the world easily summoned a two-thirds majority to close off debate. Forty-five people, many of them North American supporters of women’s ordination, had lined up to speak. Some had stayed up a good part of the previous night preparing for their three-minute opportunity to share their convictions with church leaders from around the globe. After the vote to end debate, all the North Americans could do was troop back to their delegation. They knew that eventually they were going to be outvoted. They hadn’t counted on also being told to sit down and shut up.

When the vote against women’s ordination was announced, even North Americans who had always known this was how it would come out looked shaken. It was more disturbing than they had anticipated to witness their church’s official repudiation of what they considered to be simple fairness in the treatment of women.

Behind me a quiet, intense debate broke out between a lay delegate from the Pacific Union—a young professional—and his wife.

She: “Well, that’s it. This church has just officially said women are unequal. What’s the point of continuing to try?”

He: “But we’ve got to work from within.”

She: “Really? I’m not treated this way any-

where else. Why should I cooperate—identify with—an organization that makes women victims of official discrimination? A church, no less!”

He: Glum silence.

When the discussion moved from ordination to the issue of authorizing women ministers to perform marriages, and by implication baptisms, the chair of the session was C.B. Rock, a general

“We have tithe-paying, red-blooded, faithful, Sabbathkeeping vegetarians lined up here to say whatever it is they wish to say, and we want to give them that opportunity.”

— *C. B. Rock*

vice-president, and past president of Oakwood College in the United States. Rock was clearly committed to letting delegates have their say. “We have tithe-paying, red-blooded, faithful, Sabbathkeeping vegetarians lined up here to say whatever . . . they wish to say, and we want to give them that opportunity.” The next day, as opponents of women pastors performing marriages tried to repeat the cut-off of debate they had achieved on ordination of women, Rock declared, “It is the duty of the chair, not only to see that debate flows expeditiously, but that fairness is exercised, and in the opinion of the chair, any motion to close down debate at this point is not in the best interests of the group.” Further into Thursday morning, Rock refused, point blank, to recognize a Latin American delegate’s motion to stop debate. “The chair will not recognize you, sir. Maybe a little later.” He then explained. “I hope you understand, ladies and gentlemen, that a motion is not on the floor when it is simply moved and seconded. It has to have a third, and that third is from the chair. The chair does not ‘third’ you.” Because of what may come to be known as Rock’s rules of order, most of the 45 speakers who had not been able to talk the day before, were able to speak.

Two bilingual delegates of Latin American

origin, now working as ministers in California and representing the Pacific Union, figured out a way to talk directly to delegates from Latin America. They requested and received translations into English, and gave their impassioned pleas on behalf of women pastors in flawless Spanish.

They, and many other North American delegates, were surprised and delighted when the vote on Thursday went in favor of women pastors being able to perform marriages. Some thought that the final tally was affected by the fact that 272 fewer delegates voted on Thursday than on Wednesday. Quite a few delegates from sizable divisions—such as Eastern Africa and Africa-Indian Ocean—effectively abstained by skipping the Thursday business session.

In many respects, the most important question about the two days of debates and votes concerning women in ministry was their effect on seven North American leaders—four conference presidents (Ohio, Potomac, Southeastern, and Southern New England), and presidents of the three unions (Columbia, Pacific, and Atlantic) containing those conferences. In those fields, women pastors with the required educational training and experience are now—or will very shortly be—ready for ordination.

Some of the fields had taken actions before the General Conference session. The Southeastern California Conference scheduled a constituency meeting for October to discuss whether or not to ordain women as pastors. The Columbia Union approved the Ohio Conference’s proceeding any time it wished to ordain the qualified and experienced woman pastor on its payroll.

Since both the union and conference committees must approve individuals for ordination, and are highly influenced by their presidents, what the seven North American presidents attending the General Conference session now advise is crucial. Several of these leaders spoke forthrightly at the session (see pp. 31-36). In their climactic speeches on Thursday, both Neal Wilson and Floyd Bresee, director of the General Conference Ministerial Association, responded, aiming remarks directly at these leaders of some of the largest and most financially generous of

North America's fields. Wilson assured delegates from around the world that "It is my belief that our leaders in North America will abide by the decision that was made yesterday." In return, the world should allow North America—or any other division—to authorize women to perform marriages and baptisms. Bresee put the compromise more baldly. "I plead with my North American friends, 'accept no ministerial ordination at this time for the sake of the needs and problems of the world.' But, on the other hand, I ask the world church to give also, and allow a little more significant function of ministry where it is so desperately needed in North America."

It is at this point that the self-understanding of North American leadership emerging from the 1990 General Conference session intersects with what happens now concerning the session's most discussed issue. Do any of the seven North American conference and union presidents consider the ordination of women so morally crucial, that if their constituents are convicted that they should proceed, they would regard the unity of the world church as secondary in importance? Would any of these leaders be willing to lead their conference, their union, into being the first in denominational history to ordain qualified and experienced women to the pastoral ministry?

Perhaps one or two of these leaders had the same experience as a North American female delegate active in denominational committees at several levels. She came to Indianapolis a moderate, ready to wait for the entire church to move together. The 1990 General Conference session radicalized her. "After hearing all those speeches from around the world against the ordination of women, no one with half a brain can believe any longer that the world church can eventually be persuaded. If any change is going to take place, it will have to be at the grass roots."

On this issue, North American delegates repeatedly used words never before heard from the lips of North American delegates to a General Conference session: "plead," "beg," "please al-

low." North American delegates made it very clear in numerous speeches that they are conscious of how North Americans have previously offended and even mistreated members in other parts of the world. North America is also acutely conscious of its minority status within the world church. But many North American delegates do not relish returning to another session begging for permission to act in their own division with simple fairness and respect toward fellow members, including women.

By the end of the 1990 General Conference session in Indianapolis, several forces could be glimpsed pointing in the same direction. A new president was elected, who is deeply committed to delegation of responsibility, reduction of the General Conference headquarters staff, and dispersal of power. Denominational leaders began realizing, even more than before, that changing professional prospects suggest the importance of pouring one's energies, creativity, and moral capital into immediate and local responsibilities. Not all, but many, North American members became even more dedicated to the moral necessity that women be treated equally within the church, whatever other parts of the international church do.

In all these ways the 1990 General Conference Session accelerated the most significant institutional development presently taking place in the Adventist church: A movement from the center to the periphery; an increasing dispersal of responsibility, initiative, and financial resources from the General Conference headquarters in Washington to the divisions, including North America. Following a year like 1989, that brought so many momentous changes to the world, it is not surprising that in Indianapolis change overtook continuity in the Seventh-day Adventist church. Given our denomination's historic focus on a soon-coming Second Advent, perhaps it is appropriate that at the 1990 General Conference session, Adventism decided to rush into its future, its anxieties overcome by hope.

World Ministers' Council— One in Five SDA Ministers Attend

by Lyell Heise

Speakers at the plenary sessions of the World Ministers' Council, meeting at the Hoosier Dome four days before the General Conference Session, had the opportunity to capture the imagination of the majority of North American pastors and one in five of all the 16,566 licensed and credentialed Adventist ministers active worldwide. That is the estimated breakdown of the some 5,000 registrants who shattered previous attendance records. (The same meetings for pastors before the 1985 General Conference Session drew 3,770 registrants.)

Sponsored by the General Conference Ministerial Association (currently headed by Floyd Bresee), this traditional feature of the General Conference experience is usually dominated by sermons and devotional presentations at plenary sessions. This year's plenary sessions were limited to only four sermons (one by a woman) and three panels. The heart of the council was the kaleidoscope of more than 40 seminars, for which continuing education credit was available.

The subject matter of the seminars seemed to have shifted from evangelism and theology toward nurturing the local congregation. Rex Edwards, director of continuing education for the Ministerial Association, said, "We felt we needed to listen to those at the grassroots." Sensing that

pastors' interests had moved away from the intense theological discussion of the early and middle 1980s, Edwards organized more concurrent seminars on topics of practical relevance to the local congregation, such as how to nurture long-term attachments to the church, finance the local congregation, organize small groups, and improve worship services. Seminars on evangelism were scheduled, and topics such as how to obtain decisions attracted some attention. But sessions on strategies for conducting traditional crusades, and even on how to run Revelation Seminars, did not achieve the high levels of interest they had in the past.

Registrants had the option of attending any four of forty seminars. My four seminars can at least provide a glimpse of the council. With almost 400 other people, I crowded into a small ballroom to hear William Johnsson, editor of the *Adventist Review*, speak on "Living as Adventists." Johnsson's presentation was a remarkable combination of theology, sociology, and psychology. He made it painfully clear that the Adventist lifestyle, to which he is fully committed, must be more consistent and more sensitively adapted to the new social and cultural challenges confronting the church, if it is to capture the imagination of the next generation of young Adventists. Rarely have I heard as effective a presentation on the needs and challenges facing Adventist youth and young adults.

"Church Alive," presented by Eoin Giller, pastor of the Desert Valley Church in Tucson, Arizona, drew favorable reviews from those of us who packed into his seminar room. The life cycle

Lyell Heise, who earned his B.A. from Avondale College and his M.Div. from Andrews University, brings a uniquely international perspective to this report. He has been senior pastor of the College Church, at La Sierra, California, for three years, following seven years as senior pastor of the Avondale College Church in Australia.

of church congregations, methods of both outreach and nurture, and strategies for renewing worship were all explored through discussion of case studies.

Willmore Eva, who recently moved from being ministerial director of the Columbia Union to serving as senior pastor of the Kettering, Ohio, Church, brought candor to his seminar, "Revitalizing Pastoral Morale." Eva's discussion of such sensitive topics as burnout and marital tension is part of a new realism that seems to be permeating current analysis of the personal life and job satisfaction of the Adventist pastor.

My fourth seminar was "Multichurch Pastors," led by David Currie, then ministerial director of the South Pacific Division. It emphasized the training of lay pastors. Their importance for third-world Adventism was shown by pastors from New Guinea participating in the seminar.

What was missing? Well, in addition to adequate child-care, a seminar on the ordination of women. Within days, the denomination was going to make important decisions on the topic. Yet the topic was greeted with a strange silence in both the plenary sessions and seminars of the ministers' council. It would have been most helpful to have had at least a theological analysis of the whole subject of ordination.

Also, in the sessions of the ministers' council, more could have been done to demonstrate the power of worship. Far more than any panel discussion, the energy that could have been generated by 5,000 Adventist ministers singing and praying together would have shown the crucial importance of worship. To be fair, a cavernous indoor sports stadium seating 70,000 people would have dissipated the most creative worship service, but there was an appropriately sized cathe-

dral just across the street. Precisely when it is becoming more multicultural and experiencing profound change, it is time for Adventism to take worship seriously.

Eva's discussion of such sensitive topics as burnout and marital tension is part of a new realism about the personal life and job satisfaction of the Adventist pastor.

What do I recommend for the ministers' council at the 1995 General Conference in the Netherlands? More emphasis on the needs of ministers in the world divisions. Some of my friends from developing countries lamented the almost overwhelming focus of this council on the North American Adventist church. Floyd Bresee says that the consultations that have already started the planning for the 1995 Council assume a more international range of topics and participants.

The changing program of the ministers' council may point to the need for a more fundamental change—altering the purpose of the General Conference Ministerial Association. With the emergence of a stronger, more autonomous North American Division, perhaps the General Conference Ministerial Association would do well to become a resource body for the entire church, after the model of the United Nations' international agencies. Then the North American Division ministerial leadership could focus on issues of particular interest to the church in the North American culture.

The Making of a General Conference President, 1990

by Ronald Graybill

Thursday, July 5, in his keynote address to all the delegates in the Hoosier Dome, General Conference President Neal Wilson gave the audience a moment of suspense when he pulled from his pocket a letter he had written to the nominating committee. After a dramatic pause, he assured the delegates that it was not a letter of resignation. His motto, he said, was the biblical passage that admonished those who had set their hand to the plow not to turn back.

The last time an incumbent willing to continue had not been re-elected was in 1922. A. G. Daniells had been president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists for 21 years, longer than any other General Conference president before or since. Daniells dearly wanted to continue, but it was not to be. W. A. Spicer was chosen to replace him.

For 68 years, no General Conference president who wanted to continue had been denied that right. It was no small surprise, then, that 24 hours after Wilson's speech, Robert Stanley Folkenberg, 49, was chosen to replace Wilson as General Conference president.

Late Thursday night, July 5, after Wilson's address, the 224 newly selected members of the nominating committee gathered to begin their work. Wilson was on hand to lead the committee as it selected a chair.

Wilson noted that when he first became a member of a General Conference Session nominating committee, in 1954, the committee had only 62 members, including 24 from North America and

eight from Inter-America. Then he observed that the North American delegation had remained nearly static, with 26 members, while the Inter-American contingent had grown to 38. Most observers assumed the trend favored Wilson, whose support was thought to lie in the divisions outside North America.

The first order of business was selecting a permanent chair for the nominating committee. Seven names went up, and Wilson quickly outlined the service records of each, including Robert Folkenberg, president of the Carolina Conference. There followed a short discussion of the qualifications necessary for a nominating committee chair. Some contended that all that was needed was a good facilitator, but most members seemed to favor choosing someone who was both a good facilitator and who had had mission experience. Not only did Folkenberg have mission experience, but he also spoke Spanish, the language of the two largest world divisions.

When the committee first reached for their electronic voting buttons to register their preferences, many of the delegates from the Inter-American Division had not yet made their way to the committee room. Still, the top vote-getter was the man with mission service in Inter-America, Folkenberg, who received 48 votes. Richard Leshner, who chaired the previous nominating committee, garnered 45, and Tom Mostert, president of the Pacific Union Conference, got 24.

After the first ballot, Wilson commented further on the three top candidates, seeming to some delegates to linger longest on Folkenberg's qualifications. On the second ballot, Folkenberg got 65

votes, Lecher 54, and Mostert 32. A final ballot gave Folkenberg 102 to Lescher's 53. Already it was clear that Latin America was asserting itself.

Benjamin Reaves, president of Oakwood College, was chosen as secretary.

After the nominating committee adjourned, Folkenberg and Wilson talked long into the night. Among other things, the elder statesman offered advice on how to conduct a nominating committee.

Folkenberg had been on good terms with Wilson for years, ever since Wilson served as Columbia Union president in the 1960s. In those days, Folkenberg was a young, unordained singing evangelist hired by the Columbia Union to work with Roger Holly. He was on a fast track even then. Although most ministerial interns were expected to wait five years for ordination, Folkenberg was ordained in December of 1966, after only three years of internship, because he was needed for mission service in Panama.

In recent years Folkenberg and Wilson have drawn even closer. Folkenberg played an important role in bringing about the McBride Report, later used by the nominating committee to target low-ranking GC functions for cutbacks. The savings will go into Global Strategy, the church's evangelistic plan for the 1990s. Folkenberg was also involved in the development of Global Strategy.

In his farewell speech to all the delegates on Friday night, Wilson mentioned several occasions in recent years when Folkenberg had consulted him to ask whether he should accept calls that were being offered. Wilson told him No, that he was needed for wider service in the church. Nevertheless, on the eve of the General Conference session, Folkenberg did not anticipate any change in his employment.

In Indianapolis on Friday morning, after a devotional by Folkenberg, the delegates took up the task of choosing a General Conference president. Folkenberg suggested that they put names on the board and select among them, or vote first on whether a change was desirable. A local conference president from the North American Division moved that the group vote on the latter

option, but after some discussion, withdrew the motion.

A lay delegate from North America suggested that the group list the qualities they would like to see in a president. Various delegates said they wanted a candidate who could work well with people, had the sound judgment necessary to steer through divisive issues, knew how to delegate responsibility, was a leader rather than a dictator, could develop a leadership team around the world, and could foster unity of thought. He would need to be a spiritual man, a skilled administrator with overseas experience and cultural (i.e. racial) sensitivity. The list did not match exactly with Wilson's qualifications, at least as seen by North America, but it did not signal the change that was about to take place.

Russian delegates were especially strong in their support of Wilson. North American delegates, who generally opposed Wilson's re-election, were all but sure their views would not carry the day.

The floor was then opened for nominations. The committee members had received a sheaf of papers containing brief biographical information and service records for all the incumbents in the offices they might be asked to fill. This enabled them to quickly calculate the ages of the 12 nominees, given here in order of their nomination: Neal Wilson, 70; George Brown, 66; Jan Paulsen, 55; G. Ralph Thompson, 61; Robert Kloosterhuis, 57; Cyril Miller, 62; Calvin Rock, 60; Ken Mittleider, 61; Walter Scragg, 64; Ottis Edwards, 61; Joao Wolff, 60; and Bekele Heye, 53.

The next hour and a half was taken up by speeches in praise of the leadership of Wilson. Speaker after speaker, mostly from Europe, Africa, and Russia, spoke of Wilson's strong spiritual leadership and his work as the church's ambassador to heads of state. Russian delegates were

especially strong in support of Wilson. Those Latin Americans who spoke seemed divided between Brown and Wilson. Still, North American delegates, who generally opposed Wilson's re-election, were all but sure their views would not carry the day.

For some delegates, the impact of the many speeches in Wilson's favor was weakened by a simple technological factor: the only microphone in the room was on the chairman's table. The delegates had to strain to make themselves heard in the huge meeting room.

Wilson's re-election would mean that for nearly 30 years North America was under the strong influence of one man. Twenty-four years was long enough.

Microphones were brought in for the delegates, and turned on at a crucial juncture—just as a union president from North America stood to make the first strong speech against Wilson's continuing in office. Yes, said the delegate, Wilson had been a great statesman, a polished administrator, and a fine leader. Some felt he had been one of the best General Conference presidents of all time. He was a personable man, the delegate continued, with a good recall for the names of people, and a comprehensive grasp of the issues.

But the speaker appealed to the other divisions to understand North America's situation. Wilson had been president of the North American Division for 12 years. He had been president of the General Conference for nearly 12 years. His re-election would mean that for nearly 30 years North America was under the strong influence of one man. Twenty-four years was long enough.

The influence of that first clear call for change may have been further enhanced by the fact that it was followed immediately by a break in the proceedings, during which the delegates were asked to nominate choices for vice-chairman and an

associate secretary for the committee. The delegates were divided into four groups in order to speed the process. Since Folkenberg, the chair, and Reaves, the secretary, were from North America, that division did not participate. When the whole committee reconvened, the delegates chose Desmond Hills, president of the Trans-Australian Union, as vice-chairman; and Derek C. Beardsell, president of the Pakistan Union, as associate secretary.

Was that break in the action fateful? No one will ever know what might have happened had the committee rushed to a vote on the president before the break. The break gave the delegates a chance to mingle more freely with one another and to share their thoughts.

Soon after the nominating committee reconvened, a local conference president from the North American Division took the microphone. He spoke of the diversity of his constituents and the lack of diversity in the General Conference. It was the wish of his field, he said, that there be a change. The youth felt disenfranchised and believed the church's leadership was aged and "stereotyped." It was time, he said, to give the church a fresh breeze of optimism. Wilson was needed as a goodwill ambassador for the church, not as General Conference president.

Other speakers lined up at the microphones. Calls for change came more frequently. Latin Americans joined in, pointing out the merits of George Brown, Inter-America's president, and Cyril Miller, president of the Southwestern Union. Later it was said that the Latin Americans, from Inter- and South America, had agreed that they would not take the lead in opposing Wilson, but if some other division's delegates broke the ice, they would plunge in.

The women's ordination issue was never mentioned, although some believed that the way Wilson had handled the issue of women in ministry may have rankled some Latin Americans, making them more willing to seek a change.

Finally, around noon, it was time for the first ballot. Assuming all members of the nominating committee were voting (usually a few members were absent), a candidate needed 113 votes to be

nominated president. The delegates knelt in prayer, then rose to vote. Wilson garnered 76 votes; Brown got 75. Thirty-one delegates favored Jan Paulsen, and 18 voted for Cyril Miller. No one else got even half a dozen votes, and three did not even receive the vote of the persons who had nominated them.

When Brown's total, just one vote short of Wilson's, flashed on the screen, the nominating committee was electrified. The delegates decided to vote on the top four names. Of 209 voting, 88 now voted for Brown, 84 for Wilson, 27 for Paulsen, and 10 for Miller. A third ballot offered a choice between Wilson and Brown. Of the 211 voting, 130 favored Brown; 81 stuck with Wilson. Brown had picked up Paulsen's 27, Miller's 10, three of Wilson's and three who had been absent or abstained on the previous ballot. What had been unthinkable a few hours before had now come to pass.

Folkenberg and Reaves, the committee secretary, left to break the news to Wilson. According to Folkenberg's later report to the committee, when told of the desire for change, Wilson only asked if this desire was widespread on the committee. He knew North America opposed him, but what about the rest of the world? Folkenberg showed him the numbers and made it plain that the sentiment for change was widespread. "Then I must accept it," Wilson said.

Although the meeting with Wilson was doubtless very difficult for Folkenberg, some observers close to the scene believe it was fortunate, even providential, that it was Folkenberg who carried out the task. Had someone else been elected as nominating committee chairperson, someone on less cordial terms with Wilson, Wilson might have resisted. A floor fight might have been possible. It was much easier to hear and accept the news from a close friend.

While Folkenberg and Reaves talked with Wilson in Wilson's Hoosier Dome box suite, a messenger was sent to find George Brown. Unbeknownst to the messenger, Brown was being interviewed by the *Adventist Review*. It took 40 minutes to find him. Meanwhile, because of fears that the news would leak out before Brown had

been contacted, nominating committee members were not allowed to leave the committee room. The efforts to maintain secrecy did little good, for on the fringes of the main floor little knots of delegates were already whispering Brown's name.

Once the messenger found Brown and extracted him from his interviewers, Brown made his way to Wilson's box to meet with Folkenberg and Reaves. Wilson stepped out to give the three men privacy.

It was about 3 p.m. when an unsmiling Folkenberg returned to the chairman's table. Shaking his head slowly he said, "A nightmare of nightmares has occurred. Elder Brown has decided not to accept."

Brown was stunned by the news that the nominating committee wanted him for General Conference president. Both Reaves and Folkenberg used all their powers to persuade him to accept. Brown begged for time to ponder the invitation. The nominating committee took their lunch in the dining section of their committee room, then waited until nearly three o'clock for Brown's reply. After much prayer and soul-searching, and after consulting his family and several close advisors, including former Inter-American Division president B. L. Archbold, and Walter Douglas, professor of mission and church history at the SDA Theological Seminary, Brown felt no conviction that he should accept the call. He believed the changes needed at headquarters could not be made in one five-year term. At age 66, he did not believe he could see the task through to completion.

After Brown made his way to the committee room, Ron Wisbey, president of the Columbia Union, and Phil Follett, president of the Atlantic Union, made one final attempt to persuade Brown to accept. They wanted to assure him of North American support. Still Brown felt no conviction.

Consequently and regretfully, he told Folkenberg, he must decline the invitation.

It was about 3 p.m. when an unsmiling Folkenberg returned to the chairman's table. Shaking his head slowly he said, "A nightmare of nightmares has occurred. Elder Brown has decided not to accept."

The nominating committee asked that the business meeting be extended. The delegates sang, "When All My Labors and Trials Are O'er" and "In a Little While We're Going Home."

Now it was the nominating committee's turn to be shocked. What should they do? Turn back to Wilson? The question was put to a vote, and delegates raised their hands to indicate clearly that they did not want to reconsider Wilson's name. That bridge had been crossed; there was no turning back. They would start with a fresh list of names.

The new list went up on the board. It included many of the names from the morning, although Kloosterhuis and Wolff were absent. It also included four new names: Ralph Watts, Leo Ranzolin, Fred Thomas, and Robert Folkenberg.

Folkenberg was nominated by C. E. Dudley, president of the South Central Conference in the Southern Union. As Dudley had watched names go up on the board, some of them seemed to him to be virtually unknown to most of the delegates. Perhaps they were "favorite sons," he thought. Then why not nominate Robert Folkenberg, one of his fellow conference presidents in the Southern Union and a man whom everyone had now seen in action? The nomination was not something to which he had given any thought prior to the time the committee began to place names in nomination.

However, Dudley was not the first or only one to think of Folkenberg as a candidate. Even as

Dudley spoke, at least one other person waited at a microphone to make the same suggestion. After the committee had adjourned the night before, at least one other North American delegate had suggested Folkenberg's name to several friends. He got little response at first, but later, one of his friends, a retired General Conference official, warmed to the idea. The next morning he met Folkenberg in the hall outside the committee room. "Bob," he said, "before this day is over you will be nominated for General Conference president, and if it is offered, you must not refuse it." The idea seemed remote to Folkenberg, but he did remark that someone else had said the same thing to him that morning.

Since his name was under consideration for General Conference president, Folkenberg surrendered the leadership of the committee to vice-chairman Desmond Hills, and stepped out into an anteroom between the committee room and the hallway.

By this time it was 4:15 and anxious calls from the floor of the main session begged for a report before the meeting closed and the Sabbath hours began. The nominating committee asked that the business meeting be extended. The delegates sang, "When All My Labors and Trials Are O'er" and "In a Little While We're Going Home."

Time was short, so only the new names were discussed. A. C. McClure, president of the Southern Union and thus Folkenberg's superior, gave a biographical sketch, noting, among other things, the nominee's sound Adventist beliefs and his skills as a financial manager and a fund-raiser. A delegate from North America slipped from his seat for a whispered conference with the Mexican Union delegates. Would Mexico favor Folkenberg? he asked. Yes, they would be very pleased. With that news, North American committee members began to look more positively on the Carolina Conference president, even though some of them knew relatively little about his stand on the issues. For instance, nothing was said about his views on women in ministry.

Even in his well-received sermon the following Sabbath it was not entirely clear where Folkenberg stood on that issue. By that time the session had decided not to ordain women, but it had voted

to “affirm a significant, wide-ranging, and continuing ministry for women.” In his sermon, however, Folkenberg spoke of only of women’s “contributions,” not of their “ministry.”

As Folkenberg waited nervously in the ante-room on Friday afternoon, a delegate emerged from the nominating committee room on his way to another room. “Be prepared,” he said, or words to that effect. Folkenberg’s knees began to weaken. A few minutes later another delegate left the room and, passing Folkenberg, made a similar comment. With difficulty, the Carolina Conference president made his way to a chair and sat down.

When the delegates were ready to vote, Folkenberg was called back into the room. Although he was eligible to vote, having surrendered the chair, he chose not to do so, and remained in the back of the room. From there he saw the numbers flash up on the board.

On the first ballot he garnered 62 votes, just six ahead of Paulsen, who got 56. Cyril Miller got 28. No one else got more than a dozen. On the second ballot, Folkenberg got 111 votes, Paulsen 69, and Miller 35. By capturing most of the votes previously cast for lesser candidates, Folkenberg was nominated. Although his majority of the total votes cast was very slim, it was widely believed that had a final ballot been taken between Folkenberg and Paulsen, most of Miller’s votes would have gone to Folkenberg, since Miller was also viewed favorably by the Inter-American Division.

As Folkenberg walked to the front of the room, the delegates stood and applauded. If Brown had been shocked, Folkenberg was dumbfounded, almost literally speechless. He asked for time to

speak with his wife. Forty-five minutes later he returned to another standing ovation and said, humbly, to the committee members, “I hope you folks know what you are doing.”

It had all happened so quickly, so smoothly, and so unexpectedly, that many nominating committee members were convinced the Holy Spirit had been active in the process. Certainly it could not have been of human devising, they reasoned. Others were less certain, wondering if they should have waited over the weekend to learn more about the candidate.

At the 1990 General Conference Session, nomination was tantamount to election. (The delegates on the floor of the session returned only one name to the committee all week.) Folkenberg’s election was further assured by the fact that Wilson took the podium in advance of the floor vote and urged the delegates to give the nominee their “strong, prayerful, undivided support.” As for himself and his wife, Elinor, Wilson said, they had no regrets and would sleep peacefully, believing that God had indicated “his leading” and that the process was something that “we must continue to respect.”

There is something else that every Seventh-day Adventist must now learn to respect: the international character of the church and the influence of the church’s largest division, Inter-America. Ten years ago, at the 1980 General Conference Session, the Inter-American Division delegates on the nominating committee struggled to settle on a new division president. In the end, George Brown was chosen by one vote over the promising 39-year-old president of the Central American Union Mission: Robert S. Folkenberg.

From Puerto Rico to Washington: Trajectory of a President

by Bonnie Dwyer

In the glow of the honeymoon period that surrounds every new presidency come the questions of what the General Conference will be like under Robert S. Folkenberg, this 49-year-old bilingual man who stands 6'5" and is known for his skills as an airplane and helicopter pilot, an administrator, and a computer wizard. Who is this person that the General Conference Session in July pulled from the obscurity of a conference presidency and thrust into the church's highest position?

A look at his *curriculum vitae* shows a man who has touched all the rungs of the church's career ladder, starting with singing evangelism, through pastorates, and quickly on to increasingly important administrative responsibilities. He was a union conference president at age 34. The *vitae* does not include the fact that 10 years ago he was nominated for the presidency of the Inter-American Division, before he was 40, and came within one vote of winning. What it shows is that he spent five years as the assistant to the man who was elected instead. And it was because that man—George Brown—turned down the 1990 General Conference Nominating Committee's request that Folkenberg was selected.

Within the *curriculum vitae* are clues to the personality of the new president. His interest in evangelism is one. After his singing evangelism experience, he served as a conference evangelism secretary, and worked on developing lay-evangelistic methods. One person who recalls Fol-

kenberg's commitment to evangelism while in Central America is Benny Moore, who was then secretary of the Ken Cox crusade. At that time, the Inter-American Division had committed itself to holding a Ken Cox crusade in each of its unions. If any of the other unions hesitated to hold a Cox crusade, Folkenberg would add the crusade to his allotment. Moore, working as the advance man, set up three crusades with Folkenberg. In particular he remembers San Jose, Costa Rica. Finding a suitable location there proved to be impossible. Moore says he called Folkenberg and told him that there just was no place to hold the meetings. Folkenberg's response was, "We'll hold a crusade even if we have to build a building in which to have it." And that is just what they did. They rented a vacant hill in a good San Jose location, and a building was erected just in time for the meetings. On the first night, 6,000 people attended. The crusade produced 600 baptisms, and a new church was started which later spawned three more congregations. Eventually, the rented property was purchased and the crusade building became the church building. People who have known Folkenberg a long time predict we will hear a lot about evangelism.

Fund-raising also emerges from the *curriculum vitae* as one of his major strengths. He says he is a reluctant fund-raiser. Nevertheless, of the 18 significant experiences on his résumé for the years 1968-1985, more than half involve fund-raising, and several note Europe as a source for funds.

Folkenberg says that governments of countries such as West Germany were looking for local

projects into which they could put their foreign aid. These projects required matching funds from the communities. So, if an Adventist school needed a water system, Folkenberg would approach the independent agency administering the funds from Germany and ask for partial funding for a water system. He would then approach the boards of the Adventist institutions, getting their approval to also contribute money to the water system.

Folkenberg's creativity in solving problems impressed the people who worked with him while he was chairman of the board of Montemorelos University. Walter Douglas, who served as the Andrews University liaison to Montemorelos, recalls Folkenberg's thorough knowledge of what needed to go into the accreditation documents for the school. "He would bring his small computer to the committee sessions, draft the accreditation documents, and get our language down as we worked, so we could immediately evaluate it," Douglas says.

Inter-American Division Education Director Herbert Fletcher notes that Folkenberg made sure that a majority of the university's board members were at the campus during that time, so meetings could be held whenever necessary. The chairman of the board would not allow the process to slow down.

The *curriculum vitae* distributed by the Carolina Conference ends with his assumption of the presidency there. It has not been updated to include the most recent significant experiences. They include, in addition to conference president, many assignments from the General Conference: the Global Strategy committee, the Media Center Study Committee, the McBride Study of the effectiveness of the General Conference Headquarters' staff, the committee reviewing of ADRA, the Health Systems Committee, and visits to Russia with former General Conference President Neal Wilson.

Asked about significant experiences in Carolina, Folkenberg mentions the enlarging role of the laity in conference affairs. Just before his arrival in 1985, a legal crisis with the laity was brewing, and depositions were being taken. Folkenberg had six weeks to prepare for his first con-

stituency meeting. He called a lay advisory meeting and asked for a list of suggestions. One thing that needed to be done was to overhaul the conference executive committee. That was done and the laity were given majority status. Then the evangelism budget was put under the control of a lay committee.

"My first reaction to power is to get rid of it, diversify it," Folkenberg says. "I want someone out there on the limb with me."

"My first reaction to power is to get rid of it, diversify it," Folkenberg says. "I want someone out there on the limb with me." Particularly the laity. "I crave the credibility that a group of laity gives," Folkenberg says. "I want outspoken, opinionated people, because I want them talking outside the committee as well as inside."

Lay members make up 60 percent of the Carolina executive committee. Almost 50 percent of the lay members are women. Five certified professional accountants and one attorney sit on the conference committee. This use of laity has caused a little resentment on the part of some ministers, admits Benny Moore, who is now treasurer of the conference. Others appreciate it.

The pastors do feel more comfortable with how personnel matters are handled in the conference since Folkenberg's arrival, according to Ben Maxson, Carolina church growth consultant. A process has been put into effect for hiring pastors that includes more input from the churches and allows pastors to choose opportunities which they would like to pursue instead of being moved without consultation. The conference personnel committee consists of five pastors, the conference secretary, and the church growth consultant.

Maxson says Folkenberg practices a consultative type of leadership, and discusses with pastors what they want to accomplish in workers' meeting and continuing education classes.

Folkenberg also believes authority should be

process-oriented. As an example, he says the Carolina constituency has given him unilateral authority to call or terminate any pastor. He says the reason he was given that power is because of the selection process that has worked well.

Gloria Hudson, one of the lay members of the Carolina executive committee, notes his use of area meetings to get information to conference members, and to address their concerns. "I've never seen him cut anyone off, and he is willing to keep a meeting open until all questions are answered."

To Ben Kochenower, a certified professional accountant and another member of the Carolina executive committee, Folkenberg is like Nebuchadnezzar.

"You remember Nebuchadnezzar went all over the world picking the sharpest, brightest people, brought them back, trained them, and put them to work. He was not threatened or intimidated. Folkenberg is like that. He can work with anybody. Sometimes that's hard on the people around him.

"He is very open to new ideas, and can take people questioning him or his decisions. He does not take that personally. He is the finest administrator I've met in the church or business world. I don't think we've ever seen a church administrator like him. I have tremendous respect for the guy," he concludes.

As proof that the laity responds to greater participation with increased support, Kochenower points to a 12 percent increase in tithes, the highest in the Southern Union.

That Folkenberg gets rave reviews from a CPA does not surprise Charles Sandefur, president of the Hawaii Mission, who has served with Folkenberg on the board of VersaCare, an Adventist Self-Supporting Institutions corporation, with hospitals in California and Florida. "Folkenberg has a strong entrepreneurial spirit," Sandefur says. "If he weren't a pastor, he would be an executive in a major corporation. He's innovative and a risk-taker. He thoroughly understands financial issues."

PREPARATION FOR THE PRESIDENCY

ROBERT S. FOLKENBERG

GENERAL INFORMATION:

Born in Puerto Rico - January 1, 1941

Parents, grandparents, great-grandparents have served as missionaries in the Inter-American and Euro-African Divisions.

Married Anita I. Emerson - July 29, 1962

Anita's parents and grandparents have served as missionaries in the Inter- and South American Divisions.

Children:

Robert S. Folkenberg, Jr. - August 12, 1964
(pastor, Florida Conference)

Kathi Lynne Folkenberg - December 13, 1967
(student, Southern College)

EDUCATION:

- Primary, Grades 1-4, Puerto Rico

- Primary, Grade 5, Havana, Cuba

1951-1954 - Primary, Grades 6-8, Yuba City, CA

1954-1956 - Secondary, Grades 9-10, Yuba City, CA

1956-1958 - Secondary, Grades 10-11, Milo Academy, OR

1958-1959 - Freshman, College, Atlantic Union College

1959-1960 - Sophomore, College, Newbold College, England

1960-1962 - Jr.-Sr. College, Andrews University

1962-1963 - M.A., NT Theology, Andrews University

RESPONSIBILITIES:

8/63-10/64 - Intern, Battle Creek Tabernacle

10/64-12/66 - Singing Evangelist, Columbia Union, with Roger Holley

12/66-3/68 - District Pastor, Colon, Panama Conference

4/68-12/69 - Panama Conference Evangelist; Stewardship Director

1/70-12/73 - Honduras Mission President

1/74-6/75 - Secretary, Central American Union

6/75-5/80 - President, Central American Union

5/80-1/85 - Asst. to Pres., Inter-American Division

2/85-7/90 - President, Carolina Conference

SIGNIFICANT EXPERIENCES:

1. Airline Transport Rated Pilot with more than 2,000 hours experience.

2. 1968-1969 - Opened work in a new region where there were no members and organized a new church.

3. 1970-1973 -

a) Designed, supervised construction, staffed, fully paid for and initiated operations of an 80-bed, acute care hospital in Valley of the Angels, Honduras.

Sandefur said Folkenberg seemed to thoroughly enjoy his role on the VersaCare board, because there was a receptive atmosphere for his many ideas on things like corporate structure and salary scales. To put Folkenberg's strong managerial skills into historical perspective, Sandefur says, "If Robert H. Pierson was a pastor to the world church during his GC presidency, and Neal Wilson a secretary of state, Robert S. Folkenberg will be a manager."

Folkenberg himself says management by objective is not a classroom theory or a concept for him—it is a way of life. "If we can raise the perception of the world church that there is a job to do, the job will become more important than the differences that distract."

The differences in North America may present Folkenberg with his biggest challenges as General Conference president. Walter Douglas, who attended the seminary with Folkenberg, says North America with its institutional problems in the universities and the health-care system, and its

theological diversity, will definitely not make Folkenberg's task an easy one. Getting the church in North America to focus on evangelism and mission at a time when it is consumed with its own problems will take some doing. To some, global strategy sounds like faceless maneuvers on the other side of the world—nothing that will affect the member in the pew. Folkenberg will need to help church members personalize the mission.

In his inaugural sermon, Folkenberg talked of the church's need to build bridges, making a plea for unity in diversity. Perhaps the group that will need the first bridge built to it is the women who feel defeated after the General Conference officially rejected the ordination of women ministers. Folkenberg's passionate inaugural sermon on bridge building acknowledged the action that was taken to allow women to perform marriages, but some women felt that the new president pointedly left out women when he talked of the need to build bridges to people of all races and backgrounds.

As they say in the process of tracing the

b) Increased boarding academy enrollment, built two new dorms, secured West German financing, and built a vocational training complex.

c) Increased baptismal rate from 300 to 1,100 per year.

d) Secured funding to organize 52 new congregations.

4. 1974-1980

a) Funded and built an addition to the union office, 10 houses, and two apartments for office staff.

b) In the aftermath of the Guatemala earthquake, supervised relief activities including food and clothing distribution systems, assisting in the rebuilding of hundreds of homes, secured international financing for a large warehouse built for disaster relief materials storage.

c) Secured European funding to build a new men's dormitory at our college in Costa Rica as well as many other similar projects.

d) Funded and built an AM, FM, and SW radio station and programming production facility in Guatemala City.

e) Developed lay-evangelistic methods that contributed to the annual church growth from 3,500 to 11,000 per year.

f) Established the first orphanage in the Inter-American Division and arranged for its continuing operation through International Child Care.

5. 1980-1985

a) Served the IAD by submitting funding proposals to many European governments for various projects throughout the division.

b) Assisted in beginning a second orphanage in the Dominican Republic, also operated by I.C.C.

c) Supervised the installation of a large computer system at the I.A.D. office and managed the data processing department.

d) Secured funding for and contributed to the building of radio stations as follows: AM/FM in the Dominican Republic, AM/SW in Costa Rica, AM/FM in Haiti, FM in Guadeloupe, FM in Martinique. Installed a computerized program production facility in the IAD office.

e) Developed a funding process to underwrite an evangelism "matching" program that established 150 new congregations during the last two years.

f) Served as chairman of Montemorelos University Board during a 600 percent devaluation of the currency and 100+ percent annual inflation rate. During this time the medical program was significantly modified, the institutional administrative structure restudied, the medical center completed, and operating finances stabilized.

6. 1985-1990 - President of Carolina Conference of SDAs.

thoughts of a nominee for the U.S. Supreme Court, there is no paper trail for Folkenberg on women's ordination. It is not a topic of debate in Inter-America or the Carolina Conference. Even some of his best friends do not know his feelings on the matter. The women who serve on his executive committee claim that his manner is not chauvinistic, and point out that he has appointed women to be directors of three different conference departments.

Folkenberg says he does not want women to feel disenfranchised, and predicts that we will see more and more women in ministry. He says the level at which women function will be determined by each division, with conferences setting their own rate and pace. Folkenberg points to the vote that gave permission to women to perform marriages and says from a functional standpoint, there is no inhibition on women pastors. "Let's use all those functions," he says. "Let's make it a function-based situation and not a title-based topic." Folkenberg adds that we will lose members if we don't use women, and points to French Guinea, where, he says, the majority of evangelism is done by women, and suggests that half the soul-winning in Inter-

America is also done by women. He says he wants to remove obstacles to women functioning in the church.

However, what Moore considers Folkenberg's most characteristic trait is his spirituality. Moore, who worked with Folkenberg in Inter-America and is the Carolina Conference treasurer, is one of his closest friends. The two camp together; Moore even writes computer programs for Folkenberg to help keep his library and reading references organized. Moore says that in the past year or so Folkenberg has read the entire *Testimonies to the Church* and the New Testament.

Talking about the job that lies ahead of him, Folkenberg becomes thoughtful. He knows that the honeymoon period will be short, that the church is full of differences of opinion, even on core values. But for him, "If there is no trust, there is no mission, no Holy Spirit."

Turning personal, the activist manager becomes reflective. "You know with some jobs, when they are described to you, you feel instinctively, I can do that job. Others, you know you can't. With this one, I know I can't. If there is going to be unity, the Lord will have to do it."

A Raucus Caucus: North America Chooses a President

by David VanDenburgh

For many North American delegates, the election of a new North American Division president was the important presidential election. Most North American delegates assumed Neal Wilson would be re-elected president of the General Conference. Therefore, the crucial question was: Who could be elected president of the North American Division to replace the retiring Charles Bradford; who could give the division genuine autonomy in creatively solving its many problems?

The constitutional changes slated for approval at the General Conference Session would create a North American Division with more of the self-determination enjoyed by the other world division. That was a privilege always denied North America because of its “unique” relationship with the General Conference. Many understood that unique relationship to be the doubtful privilege of funding 82 percent of the General Conference budget, while losing more and more influence at the General Conference level, and losing strength in its own North American base. Loss of members, slow Anglo evangelism, loss of confidence in leadership, diminished tithe growth, increasing agitation by the right wing, polarization over women in church leadership roles, and disenchantment with church-related institutions had combined to make the future of the church in North America look somewhat grim.

While it would be difficult to equal the spiri-

tual leadership and breadth of vision provided by Bradford, it was hoped that a president could be found to continue providing creative, progressive, insightful leadership—leadership that would courageously stand up for the needs of North America, even where those needs might conflict with the demands of the rest of the world field.

Popular wisdom identified the leading candidates as: Alfred McClure, president of the Southern Union (and reputed to be Neal Wilson’s choice); Ron Wisbey, president of the Columbia Union; and Tom Mostert, president of the Pacific Union. Other contenders included Phil Follet, president of the Atlantic Union; and Calvin Rock, a general vice-president of the General Conference.

Each of the candidates had drawbacks for some of the delegates. McClure’s candidacy was seriously opposed because of his perceived failure to do anything to stop what looked like a witch hunt a few years ago at Southern College, resulting in the dismissal of a number of religion faculty. McClure had the reputation among some delegates as a cautious, conservative “company man.” They wondered aloud if North America didn’t need a more visionary and progressive leadership, if it was to move against its problems and send a clear signal, especially to its yuppie members, that the church is responsive to the needs of the people.

For some delegates, Wisbey was too openly and persistently supportive of ordination of women. That was certain to raise anxieties in a world field already convinced that North America was becoming less interested about overseas concerns.

David VanDenburgh is the senior pastor of the Campus Hill Church in Loma Linda, California, and a doctoral candidate at Fuller Theological Seminary.

Some delegates would not support Mostert because he had not declared himself sufficiently supportive of the cause of women in church leadership. Also, Mostert had publicly favored revising the percentage of tithes sent from local conferences to the General Conference. Both Wisbey and Mostert were known as progressive and creative union presidents; translate that “scary.”

North American delegates met at 7 a.m., Sunday morning, July 8. It marked a milestone in Adventist denominational history. Unfortunately, gathering together was the high point of the meeting. It was not a smashing success.

Many delegates wondered if the eloquent Rock would leave his post as general vice-president. Some worried that if he accepted he might prove to have a somewhat heavy-handed administrative style. In some ways, Phil Follet looked like a good compromise candidate because he was not known to have the liabilities of the top contenders. Other names were not seriously discussed, but with no clear-cut heir to Bradford, anything could happen.

Friday morning the 460 delegates from the North American Division met to organize. Before the delegation broke up into unions to choose North American representatives to the nominating committee, a delegate asked the chairman, Charles Bradford, a question: “Would it be possible for the North American delegates to meet again during the Session, as a single delegation?” Amazingly, this had never been done at General Conference sessions. The North American delegation always met together just once—to select their representatives to the nominating committee. Continuing that pattern would mean that the 460 delegates, traveling at considerable expense from all over North America, would provide no guidance to their 26 representatives on the nominating committee.

Bradford was asked if the North American delegates could meet in two days, specifically Sunday morning. Bradford wanted no official action taken, certainly nothing recorded in the minutes. Since the General Conference Officers had already denied a request from the Columbia Union for such a meeting, Bradford said that he would not chair a session of the entire delegation. However, he hinted broadly that he was not opposed to it happening, and that it might take place some other way. “Your union presidents will be in touch with you,” he said.

The traditional work of the North American delegation proceeded—picking delegates to serve on the nominating committee. First-time delegates were startled to learn that at General Conference Sessions, North America has, in effect, 10, not nine unions. When the delegates broke up into union caucuses, the black delegates gathered separately into what was called the black caucus. Just like the geographically defined union caucuses, this racially defined group chose its own delegates to the nominating committee. The number of black delegates in the North American delegation, and in the nominating committee, corresponded to the percentage of black members in North America. As a result, out of 26 delegates representing North America on the nominating committee, the black caucus chose six, as many as the largest union in the division, the Pacific Union.

Obviously, if they voted together, the black caucus could be pivotal in electing a division president. Reports indicated the black caucus would support Rock, former president of Oakwood College, for president. If that proved unsuccessful they would prefer McClure, with whom several black caucus members had worked in the Southern Union. Wisbey might find support, but Mostert would receive none. It was further reported that the black caucus did not want the North American delegation as a whole to inform the delegates on the nominating committee of their preference for division president. The black caucus believed they could be more effective within the caucus of 26 nominating committee members.

Before the Friday morning organization meet-

ing was over, just as Bradford had hinted, word was passed (except, inadvertently, in the Southern Union caucus) that Sunday morning there would be a meeting of the entire North American delegation. And indeed, North American delegates to a General Conference Session met at 7 a.m. Sunday morning, July 8, in a large ballroom, to do something besides elect members of the nominating committee. It marked a milestone in Adventist denominational history. Unfortunately, gathering together was the high point of the meeting. It was not a smashing success.

First of all, not only did no General Conference officer preside, but neither did a union president. Instead, the union presidents asked Joan Tonge, a lay woman from the Pacific Union, to be the chair. She was put in the awkward position of introducing herself and explaining her selection as the chair.

Second, and more importantly, the union presidents had agreed among themselves that no votes taken by the North American delegation as a whole would be announced either to the delegation or to the 26-member nominating committee caucus, which included all but one of the union presidents. As far as advocates for holding the Sunday morning meeting were concerned, not announcing and discussing the results of the del-

egates' balloting for president (writing down two names on each slip of paper), robbed the meeting of its reason for being.

Thirdly, some delegates were so opposed to anything perceived as threatening to the importance of the caucus of 26 delegates on the nominating committee, that they appeared to come ready to disrupt the delegation meeting. During the morning Tonge was called a dictator, and the chair warned a conference president that if he didn't sit down and be quiet he might be removed from the room. Before adjourning the meeting, Tonge apologized, and asked the conference president to offer the closing prayer. By then, everyone seemed relieved to leave the selection of the division president to the nominating committee caucus.

The caucus of 26 met Sunday evening. All of the potential presidents were members of the caucus, including the chair, Calvin Rock. He quickly removed his name from consideration. Folkenberg met with the 26 delegates, but the newly elected president did not appear to tip his hand toward any candidate, and left early. During the discussion prior to balloting, including the articulation of some characteristics desired in a president, some members of the North American nominating committee caucus perceived a differ-

PREPARATION FOR THE PRESIDENCY

ALFRED C. McCLURE

GENERAL INFORMATION:

Born in St. Petersburg, FL - Aug. 24, 1931

Parents are Elder and Mrs. A. V. McClure,
now retired and living in California

Married Mary Frances Taylor — Aug. 30, 1953

Children:

Sally McClure Lundine — June 16, 1955

(Married, two children, Brooke and Jordan; lives in Casper, WY)

Al McClure, Jr. — January 14, 1957, Collegedale, TN

Scott McClure — December 25, 1965; law student, Duke Univ.

EDUCATION:

1949-1951 - Union College

1951-1954 - BA Theology, Southern Missionary College

DENOMINATIONAL SERVICE:

1954-1956 — Evangelism, Florida Conference

1956-1963 — Pastoring, Florida Conference

1963-1967 — Pastoring, St. Louis, MO, Missouri Conf.

1967-1972 — Director, Stewardship and Communication,
Georgia-Cumberland Conf.

1972-1973 — Director, Ministerial and Stewardship,
Georgia-Cumberland Conf.

1973-1977 — President and Director, Education, Sabbath School, and
Religious Liberty, Wyoming Conf.

1977-1978 — President, Kansas Conf.

1978-1980 — President, Kentucky-Tennessee Conf.

5/5/80 - 7/9/90 — President, Southern Union Conf.

ence between progressives and conservatives. One of the caucus members later contrasted the conservative Adventism of the Midwest (Lake and Mid-American unions) and South (Southern and Southwestern unions), to the progressives on the two coasts—Atlantic (Atlantic and Columbia unions), and Pacific (Pacific and North Pacific unions). In this analysis, Canada remained unclassified. Crucially, the black caucus seemed to lean to the conservatives.

Before balloting, the caucus reaffirmed that Joan Tonge, who still had in her pocket the more than 400 ballots cast by the entire delegation that morning, should not report the tally of the delegation's vote to the caucus of 26. The caucus did not even want her to tell them which names appeared most often. For the caucus, it was as if the vote of the entire delegation, just hours before, had never happened.

When the balloting began, everyone knew that it would take a minimum of 14 votes to elect a president. Two ballots were necessary to reach that point. On the first ballot, McClure received 11 votes, Tom Mostert had eight, Cyril Miller, president of the Southwestern Union, four, and the remaining three votes went to Wisbey. On the

second ballot McClure gained the minimum of 14 votes he needed, and Mostert received 10. Two delegates abstained.

Although the caucus was evenly divided, even those who did not vote for him think that if the North American delegation votes had been counted, McClure, of all the obvious possibilities, would still have been the first choice. No one will ever know for sure. Of course, taking the election out of the hands of the nominating committee caucus, where almost one-third of the members are union presidents and potential presidents, and giving it to the full delegation, might have led to the emergence of new, unexpected names.

Unlike the election of the General Conference president, North America produced no surprises—no union conference secretary, local conference president, or pastor of a large church vaulting several levels to the division presidency. The one historic development was the convening of the North American delegates as a single delegation. Although the Sunday morning meeting left something to be desired, it was an important step towards a more representative and democratic process at General Conference Sessions.

The Debate About Women: What Happened? Why?

by Charles Scriven

Nothing was resolved or solved. Delegates to the July General Conference Session in Indianapolis refused to “recommend” the ordination of women to pastoral ministry. Yet they endorsed the policy of allowing certain unordained ministers—“selected licensed or commissioned ministers,” as the final wording put it—to perform the marriage ceremony.

The latter vote, taken with women explicitly in mind, assured an ambivalent outcome to the debate about equality and spiritual leadership in the church. A mixed signal went forth: women are neither fully accepted nor fully rejected in the Adventist pastorate. The status of women pastors—in the church, if not before God—was exactly the same as before the session began.

Whether this will energize or enervate the women’s movement in Adventism remains to be seen. For partisans of equality, hope is alive, but its full realization seems as distant as ever. Yet, judging from the defensive tactics several of these partisans employed, an even worse outcome was expected—a rollback, perhaps, of the pastoral privileges women enjoy at present, or even a policy barring women as local elders. To many, avoiding a setback was itself a surprise.

The subject of women in pastoral leadership came up at two points during the session in Indianapolis. Beginning Tuesday afternoon, July 10, the delegates considered a 1989 Annual Council document on the ordination of women. The An-

nual Council had said that “most of the world church” does not favor the ordination of women, and that world leaders do not agree on whether “Scripture and the writings of Ellen G. White” support it. For these reasons, and because of possible “disunity, dissension, and diversion from the mission of the Church,” the Annual Council had concluded: “We do not recommend authorization for women to be ordained to the gospel ministry.”

Even before debate began, it was widely believed that the delegates would adopt the Annual Council’s recommendation. Presumably with this in mind, Monty Sahlin, adult ministries coordinator in the Church Ministries Department of the North American Division and a partisan of women in ministry, moved at the start to table, or indefinitely postpone, action on the recommendation. The delegates defeated his motion.

Speakers through the afternoon and the following morning revealed a series of basic convictions that galvanize the partisans and opponents of women’s ordination. Although both sides appealed to Scripture, because of the time constraints, broad allusions were the rule, rather than subtle exegesis.

An opponent, Gabriel Boakye-Danquah, publishing director of the West African Union Mission, said that the Bible nowhere commands the ordination of women. “I tell you,” he said, “if it is in the Bible, we want it. If it is not in the Bible, this church must reject it.”

Against this, Robert Johnston, chair of the Department of New Testament, SDA Theological Seminary, Andrews University, replied that

“Pathfinders are unbiblical,” and “Quinquennial sessions are unbiblical.” He suggested that something not forbidden in the Bible can still be biblical in spirit, and held up a \$50 bill, offering it to anyone who could find a “thus saith the Lord” prohibiting the ordination of women.

Other delegates claimed to find positive biblical support for their positions. An opponent, John Stevens, director of public affairs and religious liberty, Pacific Union, declared that the Bible is “very clear on roles.” Then he added cryptically, “God gave to Adam the gift of authority, which really is a lower gift than the gift he gave to Eve, which is influence.”

Another delegate, Alfredo Aeschlimann, retired ministerial director of the Inter-American Division, said that spiritual authority belongs to men, not women. In the Old Testament only men

became priests. In the New Testament only men became apostles. Aeschlimann declared that the reason no “written prohibition” of ordination of women can be found in the Bible is that “during the world’s history for almost 6,000 years everybody could see and know that the priesthood was a function for men.”

A delegate who favored ordination for women, Scott LeMert, a pastor from Idaho, said that according to Scripture the “church of the last days will have God’s Spirit placed upon both men and women, not on men only.” At the same time, he pleaded for the church to be “careful” in its use of Scripture. The church that fails to ordain women, he elaborated, should “forbid any woman to speak ever in the church because that also has biblical authority.” He then reminded delegates that, in the past, Scripture was misused to defend slavery

Voices of Global Change?

by Kendra Haloviak

Once again I was sitting in a General Conference Session, listening to a discussion on the issue of women in ministry. Five years before, as an 18-year-old woman planning to enter college as a theology major, I had sat in the Superdome in New Orleans and heard the 1985 General Conference Session debate the role of women ministers. Since then I have often shared with church members, young people, and others in the greater community, the events I witnessed in New Orleans. Now, in Indianapolis, I again believed it would be helpful for me, as a 23-year-old intern pastor, to hear firsthand the discussions and debates at the 1990 General Conference Session.

The week before, I had received the latest issue of *Spectrum* under my hotel door in Indianapolis. Its cluster title read, “Voices of Global Change.” Reading the articles, hearing voices from six different continents, I was proud of the Adventist church as it listens to the voices and experiences of people around the globe.

Kendra Haloviak, after a year as an intern pastor at the Kettering, Ohio, Seventh-day Adventist Church, is pursuing a Master of Divinity degree at the SDA Theological Seminary, Andrews University.

But in the Hoosier Dome, listening for two days to the debate on women in ministry, some of the people representing cultures that earlier intrigued me and made me rejoice, now aggressively spoke against the acceptance of women in pastoral ministry. They reminded me of just how long it will take a world church to become united on such an issue.

Two convictions warred at the core of my being. On the one hand, I appreciated and respected the diversity of cultures within our church—cultures whose voices must be heard. On the other hand, I believe that our church, in the congregations that have affirmed the ministry of women, should ordain qualified women as pastoral ministers. For several days at Indianapolis, as I listened to voices in the cafeteria and hotel lobby, voices in forum meetings and in business sessions on the main floor, the tension between my two convictions increased. I was no longer celebrating the voices from around the world.

Thursday, at the morning business session, the ordination of women was at the top of the agenda. In a speech to the delegates, Elder Neal Wilson, immediate past president of the General Conference, joined his voice to the opponents of the ordination of women. After reviewing the work of various General Conference commissions on women in ministry—which he had chaired—Wilson launched into a 25-minute rebuttal to arguments in favor of the ordination of women.

and the divine right of kings, which “turned out to be nothing more than the divine right of tyranny.”

The implication was that the Holy Spirit advances the church’s understanding, a point made also by Lourdes Morales-Gudmundsson, chair of the department of modern languages at the University of Connecticut at Stamford and a member of the Atlantic Union executive committee. God called Ellen White to be a prophet, knowing “that according to Paul, women should not exercise teaching authority over men.” That, she said, was a message to the “last-day church”—God would “call whomever he would.” Speaking for the ordination of women, she declared that the church today is “called upon to allow the Spirit to work.”

However, on the use of Ellen White to support ordination of women, one delegate, Ernesto Ugarte, a layman from Chile, remarked, “Let us

not forget that Ellen White was never ordained.”

As a North American had begun the Tuesday afternoon session with an effort to postpone a vote on the Annual Council recommendation, at the end another North American came forward with a similar effort. Leon Trusty moved to send the recommendation back to the commission that had written it—“with consideration,” he said, “of allowing the divisions to make a decision.” The chair, General Conference Vice President Robert Kloosterhuis, refused the motion, saying the delegates should decide the matter, not refer it back.

The debate the next day, Wednesday morning, began with a long speech from Neal Wilson, by then the former General Conference president. He defended the Annual Council recommendation against ordaining women, reviewing the his-

He concluded by rejecting the concept—urged especially the day before by North American conference presidents—that each division should be able to decide the matter for themselves. Ordination, he said, should be universal, for “this is a universal church.” The dome resounded with applause.

Shortly after Wilson concluded, dozens of delegates lined up at the “debate” microphone. Before the first speaker could begin, a delegate from the Inter-American Division called question on the motion. The chair ruled that it was a nondebatable motion and that a vote must be taken. Following a poll of the delegates, the chair’s announcement of the necessary two-thirds approval—1,058 in favor, 222 opposed—ended further discussion.

That was the moment I felt utter disappointment in my church. I had never anticipated that *discussion* would be voted down. What would I say to the college-age Adventists back home at Kettering? Can one continue to work for change within a church where voices of the global majority insist on drowning out the voices of the minority? For me, the most discouraging vote of the session was the vote to silence voices.

Quickly, the vote followed to declare officially that “we do not approve ordination of women to the gospel ministry:” 1,173 voting Yes, and 377 voting No. Thus ended another five years. What will the vote be in 1995? 2000? Will the issue of the ordination of women even get

to the floor? In the future, as the membership of the Seventh-day Adventist denomination expands around the world, what voices will be permitted to be heard? Will the inclusion of more voices from Latin America, Africa, and the Soviet Union completely exclude the voices of young American professionals? It is disconcerting to feel threatened by the international voices of Adventism.

For me, the issue of the ordination of women is no longer only a moral issue, with implications for the presentation of the gospel. Now, it is also an ecclesiastical issue. How will congregations in Zimbabwe, and Hong Kong, and Brazil affect my church in Kettering, Ohio? Should not divisions, unions, and conferences be permitted to decide how to share the gospel in ways that enhance Global Strategy in their continents, including North America? A growing number of North American churches would insist that such a Global Strategy includes the ministry of qualified, ordained women.

I long not to be torn between the conviction that women should be ordained to the gospel ministry and my conviction that the “Voices of Global Change” enrich our appreciation for the power of the gospel. I want, once again, as the introduction to the last issue of *Spectrum* states, to “start genuinely celebrating the rich and exciting diversity of an expanding multicultural denomination.”

tory that led up to it and considering several objections.

One objection, he said, grows out of Galatians 3:28, which says that in Christ “there is neither male nor female” (RSV). This text prompts the claim that failure to ordain women is discriminatory and immoral. Wilson denied this claim on grounds that Jesus’ 12 disciples were male.

In a few moments the main motion—affirming a ministry for women but denying them a place as ordained pastors—passed. The vote was 1,173 for, 377 against.

Another objection, he said, is based on the analogy of slavery. The fact that this practice was once defended by the church but later opposed invites us today to “move away from” our policy against the ordination of women. Wilson denied this, citing Ellen White’s opposition to slavery and silence on ordination. “We don’t believe [the two issues] are similar,” he said.

He considered, too, the objection that without a consensus on the question of ordination for women, the church’s divisions could decide individually. Wilson said No, ordination is “universal,” and so is the church. Allowing the divisions to decide would “fragment” Adventism, leading to “further steps of pluralism” and “the danger of congregationalism.”

Some 45 delegates, in line the previous afternoon, had been authorized to speak and were now at the “debate” microphone. But speakers at the nearby “procedures” microphone, meant for questions of order, amendments, and the like, took precedence. Harold Camacho, secretary of the Southeastern California Conference, proposed an amendment to the Annual Council recommendation that would have given “fields” the authority to decide for themselves about ordination for women. Robert Kloosterhuis, again at the chair, ruled that it was “not truly an amendment”

since its effect was to “destroy the motion.”

Russell Standish, health and temperance director for the Southeast Asia Union Mission, then proposed an amendment to an early paragraph of the Annual Council document that would have expressed the world church’s disapproval, not only of ordained women pastors, but also of local women elders. Kloosterhuis said the suggestion pertained to the “report” section of the document and not to the recommendation itself and was therefore irrelevant to the main motion.

Next, Ruben Ponce, health and temperance director for the Northeast Mexican Conference, offered a motion to close debate. It passed by far more than the necessary two-thirds vote, and the 45 delegates lined up at the debate microphone reluctantly returned to their seats. In a few moments the main motion—affirming a ministry for women but denying them a place as ordained pastors—passed. The vote was 1,173 for, 377 against.

The actual recommendation from Annual Council concluded the first part of a document originally written by the church’s Role of Women Commission. The 1989 Annual Council had approved the entire document, but determined to take only the first part to the 1990 General Conference Session for a delegate vote. The second part gave “commissioned” or “licensed” ministers, including women, the right, under certain conditions, to “perform essentially the ministerial functions of an ordained minister.” But according to an agreement worked out at Annual Council and meant to conciliate the partisans of women in ministry, this was presented in Indianapolis as a nondebtable “report.”

Opponents of ordination of women, unhappy about the Annual Council agreement, knew that a proposed *Church Manual* amendment on the marriage ceremony would provide an opportunity for resistance. The *Manual* authorized only “ordained ministers” to give “charge, vows, and declaration of marriage” at a wedding. The proposed amendment allowed the charge, vows, and declaration to be given, where division committees approved it, by certain unordained ministers, or as the final wording had it, by “selected li-

censed or commissioned ministers.” The amendment also substituted gender-inclusive language for the pronoun *he*.

Under a broad interpretation of a *Church Manual* passage on “licensed ministers,” unordained male ministers had, at least in North America, been conducting baptisms and marriages for several years. The amendment was meant to resolve the conflict between that interpretation and the restrictive language of the passage on the marriage ceremony. It would also bring the *Church Manual* into line with the 1989 Annual Council action authorizing certain women pastors to perform “essentially” the functions of an ordained minister.

Opponents of gender equality in the pastorate saw recent history in North America and the 1989 Annual Council vote as incompatible with the spirit of the vote that had been taken the day before by the General Conference Session against the ordination of women. Debate began Thursday morning and again the focus was on the place and role of women in the church. Calvin Rock, the General Conference vice president serving as chair, refused efforts by some opponents of women marrying and baptizing to hurry the delegates to a vote. “We just can’t proceed with something this important,” Rock said before the lunch break, “without giving a representative portion of individuals who wish to speak the opportunity to do so.”

A call to end discrimination had been sounded in the discussion about ordination, and it was repeated now. Susan Sickler, a laymember of the Columbia Union Executive Committee, linked this theme with the pragmatic argument that the church must move toward justice to save its children. She declared that young people who feel that the church has a “lower standard for treating all people with justice and equality than the secular society has” conclude that the church “has nothing to offer them and they leave.” And this, she went on, costs money as well as loved ones. “Who is going to bear the burden of world church finance if our children leave?” she asked.

A pastor and delegate from Germany, Heintz Ottschoffsky, echoed the point. The amendment

is important beyond North America, he said, for in Euro-Africa, too, “many loyal Adventists will be driven to the end of their acceptability” if it fails to pass.

Opponents also mustered pragmatic arguments. Theirs focused on the possibility of schism. Rick Blythe, a pastor in the Marshall Islands, said the amendment would move the church toward “disunity.” Paul Yeboah, from the African-Indian Ocean Division, decried how the amendment would shift decision-making power downward to the divisions. “[T]here is no telling what we can bring into the church,” he said. Then he referred ominously to a future of “homosexuals” and “abortion rights people” lining up for privileges and input.

Susan Sickler declared that young people who feel that the church has a “lower standard for justice and equality than secular society” conclude that the church “has nothing to offer them and they leave.”

F. W. Wernick, a retired General Conference vice president from North America, objected that the amendment allowing unordained pastors to conduct marriages would “further erode the importance and sacredness of ordination.” Earlier, James Coffin, editor of the South Pacific Division *Record* and himself a defender of the amendment, had remarked that the Bible contains no record of the “ordination of pastors, per se.” Before that, during debate about whether to recommend the ordination of women, Faye Haupt, a member of the Carolina Conference Committee, had suggested that “the problem is probably in ordination itself.” She asked, “How much emphasis have we put on this, or do we believe in the priesthood of all believers?” The real meaning of ordination provided an unspoken background throughout the discussion, but remained unresolved to the end.

Debate stretched far into the afternoon, affording delegates unfamiliar with the issue an opportunity to hear the arguments for the first time. Many had never heard a woman express the pain connected with exclusion. Fay Blix, an attorney and a member of the Southeastern California Conference Committee, said she favored the amendment even though having women do the work of ministry while withholding ordination was like having a “common law wife without giving her the dignity of a marriage license.” Her stand was a “compromise” made “because I know that my sisters in ministry in this country are in pain today.” She wanted them to see the fruits of their labors. “I don’t want them,” she went on, “to have to choose between the call of God and the call of their church.”

By late afternoon, the chair, now Kenneth Mittleider, another General Conference vice president, recognized a motion to refer the amendment back to the *Church Manual* Committee. The pressure to do this came in part from North America, still jittery about the vote. The motion was defeated.

Mittleider then called Floyd Bresee, General Conference Ministerial Association director, to the main podium. Contradicting many North Americans, including two conference presidents, Ed Mottschieder (Ohio) and Steve Gifford (Southeastern California), who had spoken earlier, Bresee said that ordaining women division by division would bring disunity. But he nevertheless appealed to delegates from outside North America to respect the need here to “encourage women in pastoral ministry.” He asked, “Can we—both sides—give a little, meet in the middle, and go out from Indianapolis united?”

Then Neal Wilson came to the podium. He, too, spoke for the amendment. He believed North

American leaders would “abide by the decision” taken the previous day against ordaining women. “I do not believe,” he declared, “that we are going to find insubordination or rebellion or defiance on the part of the North American Division.” But a defeat of the amendment allowing unordained ministers, male or female, to conduct marriages would put North America’s cooperative spirit at risk. “Parents,” he said, “provoke not your children to anger.” It was a pointed allusion, if not a fully apt one. The application was obvious.

Soon after Wilson’s remarks, the delegates voted. Those in favor of the amendment numbered 776. Those opposed, 496. Despite their overwhelming resistance to the ordination of women, delegates had approved an action meant, as Floyd Bresee had said, “to encourage women in pastoral ministry.”

But if in the end nothing was fully resolved, at least one opponent of women pastors thought the momentum had turned against his own position. Russell Standish, from the Far Eastern Division, approached a delegate who had spoken on behalf of women and said, “You won.”

The assessment is a guess, not a certainty. Can opponents come to accept the claim that the New Testament overcomes the ideology of roles and the masculinity of the priesthood? Can they welcome a Holy Spirit who guides the church to faithful transformation of itself? Can they embrace a unity among all members that is distinct from uniformity? Can North America persist in its struggle when assurances of cooperation and nondefiance seemed to abet passage of the amendment? Could a fresh look at the meaning of ordination reveal a new path to the goal?

No one knows for sure. Meanwhile, a few women in pastoral positions continue to work, and, like good Adventists, continue to hope.

Speaking in Turn: Excerpts From Delegates' Speeches On the Ordination of Women

The role of women in the Seventh-day Adventist church dominated the General Conference Session for three days, July 10-12. The following excerpts from the speeches in that debate are divided into two parts. On Tuesday and Wednesday the delegates discussed a motion that "we do not recommend authorization for women to be ordained to the gospel ministry." A speech in favor of the motion was a speech against ordination of women. The delegates adopted that motion 1,173 for, 377 against.

Thursday, the delegates discussed changes in wording of the Church Manual that would allow "selected licensed or commissioned ministers" (including unordained men and women pastors) to give the "charge, vows, and declaration of marriage" at a wedding. A speech in favor of the motion was a speech for expanding the role of women in ministry. The motion was adopted, 776 for, 496 against.

Careful readers will notice that the number of pages in these selections, on either side of the two motions, are not exactly even. However, the excerpts do reflect the distribution of comments on the opposing sides during these three days of debate.

— The Editors

I. Ordination of Women, Tuesday, Wednesday—July 10, 11

HERMAN KIBBLE, ordained SDA minister and commissioned officer in the U.S. Navy Chaplain Corps.

I am definitely in favor of the ordination of women to the gospel ministry. Even as I speak, on the staff of chaplains at the United States naval hospital in Oakland, where I am the senior supervision chaplain, a female chaplain is serving efficiently and effectively so that I can attend this session. For over 20 years I have served with ordained clergy of various denominations who are

women. You might also be surprised to know that on ships . . . women [chaplains] are assigned. . . . These women have been well accepted in the military. . . .

Our organization, our church, was founded by a woman, and when I listen to sermons preached all around the world where I am stationed, in Adventist churches, I want you to know that a woman is quoted as the final authority about Peter, James, John, and Jesus Christ himself. . . .

We cannot push the church forward by putting our foot on the gas

pedal, while keeping our foot on the brake pedal. . . .

God is waiting for us to release the enthusiasm, the energy of women and young women in our churches to help us push the work of God forward. . . .

I am in favor of the ordination of women.



GABRIEL BOAKYE-DANQUAH, publishing director for the West African Union Mission.

Mr. Chairman, the issue that we are dealing with right now is whether the Seventh-day Adventist church will allow itself to be governed and ruled and influenced by sociological factors or whether we will just simply go by "thus saith the Lord." You see, when we listen to these great preacher evangelists of our church, any time they have a crusade, the first week they begin to put in the minds of the hearers a simple statement: if it is in the Bible we want it; if it is not in the Bible, we don't want it. The challenge of the question that faces us now: is it in the Bible that we should ordain women?

I know a whole host of women—some classmates of mine—who are now pastoring. But you see we should not go beyond that fact. . . . We are not here to listen to a whole lot of pleadings and a whole lot of preachings, we are here simply to hear "thus saith the Lord." The Bible is silent on women's ordination. The writings of Ellen G. White are silent on women's ordination. And I tell

you, my brothers and sisters, that we also need to be silent on women's ordination. . . . My brothers and sisters, I am only a small boy but sometimes it is good to listen to the small boys also. I tell you if it is in the Bible we want it. If it is not in the Bible this church must reject it. I speak for the motion.



JOHNSON A. ADENIJI, *director of Church Ministries, Nigerian Union Mission.*

I'm speaking in favor of the motion. The Holy Spirit worked through the early church. The Holy Spirit worked through Mrs. White. In the early church, Acts, to mention the book, we have records of ordination. No woman was mentioned. Mrs. White, highly respected as a leader and used by God, was not ordained.

It is true that they say what a man can do a woman can do it. Somebody else also says what a woman can do a man can do it. So I read of a man who had a surgical operation and turned himself into a woman. I don't know if they had children before then, whether he will be called a mother or father; that is left to him.

What I'm after is that there is a list of many ladies in the Bible that did positive work for God, but there is no record of any one of them being ordained. And it is true that, with God, sex makes no difference when it comes to salvation. But it appears it does when it comes to ordination. In short, women are mothers of pastors, they are not pastors themselves.



L. STEPHEN GIFFORD, *president of the Southeastern California Conference.*

I wish I could have been a Seventh-day Adventist way back in the 1860s. The embryonic Seventh-day Adventist church waged [a] battle for equality. I would have been proud then to have been a Seventh-day Adventist and watch Joshua V. Himes and other abolitionists fight for

equality and justice. Today we stand at another injustice in the history of mankind. There are many here who have suffered from racial inequality and injustice. There are many here who have suffered and continue to suffer from political repression. There are many here who have suffered from religious persecution, and today I believe that we stand . . . at another crossroads that again shows inequality.

We do not ask for something that cannot be done in other parts of the world. We ask for something that can be done in our part of the world. We say we must stay together. That does not mean we are to be in lock-step with one another. That is not the Seventh-day Adventist church. I believe in unity in diversity.

I realize that what is acceptable in one part of the world may be different in another area. When I was a boy in the deep South in the United States, I rode the trolley. I always sat in the front. African-Americans always sat in the back. In rush hour the two races would become closer and closer together and you could simply feel the tension in the air, until finally blacks and whites were sitting together. Today we see how wrong that system was. Today we know better.

Yet, we still perpetuate injustice. Many have their Bible quotes to be sure that women are kept out of the ministry and cannot be ordained. Recently, Dr. Lyn Behrens became president of Loma Linda University. Our General Conference president said, "It gives me special satisfaction to announce that such an outstanding woman has accepted a key leadership role." She is qualified to be president of that university, but she is a woman. She cannot pastor my smallest church. Today I speak in favor of equality for women in ministry.



ERNESTO UGARTE, *layman from Chile.*

. . . The idea of ordaining women . . . is not found in Scripture. Instead,

we find it in the secularism and its influence on other churches, especially Protestant churches. On the other hand, we take, as an example, the ministry of Ellen White as a basis for the ordination of women. Let us not forget that Ellen White was never ordained, and the ministry which she exercised was given to her or delegated to her by the Lord himself. It is for this reason that I am totally opposed to the ordination of women.



ROBERT JOHNSTON, *chairman of the New Testament department at the SDA Theological Seminary, Andrews University.*

I agree with those who ask for "Thus saith the Lord." What does it mean to be biblical? What does it mean to be unbiblical? Is something only biblical if it is commanded? If so, Pathfinders are unbiblical. Religious liberty departments are unbiblical. Quinquennial sessions are unbiblical. Breathe Free antismoking plans are unbiblical. None of these are commanded in Scripture.

Perhaps, then, biblical means something which is not forbidden in Scripture. When I look through my Bible, and particularly the New Testament to see if the ordination of women is forbidden, I don't find anything yet. I have found that the apostle forbade women to speak in church, but I don't find any place where ordination is forbidden to them. Now, it may be that I have missed something. But it seems to me if we allow women like Ellen G. White to speak in church, but we forbid ordination, we are straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel, for we are going contrary to something which I do not find forbidden.

Perhaps I have missed something. I hold here in my hand a \$50 bill. I will give this \$50 bill to anyone who can show me a "Thus saith the Lord" forbidding the ordination of women. Now, an inference will not be good enough. I can find texts where the

ordination of women can be inferred, but I would not impose that on my brethren who disagree with me, and so I will not accept any inferences. I want a plain "Thus saith the Lord."

Mr. Chairman, the argument that a prohibition is not found because priests in the Old Testament were male doesn't really wash, because that was an hereditary office. One had to be a Levite, a descendant of Aaron, and in the New Testament, we believe in the priesthood of all believers. Mr. Chairman, before a vote is taken, may I ask that you ask me whether I still have my \$50 bill? If I have relinquished it, I will vote for this recommendation.



ED MOTSCHIEDLER, *president of the Ohio Conference.*

I would like to tell my brothers and sisters in South America that there are zero ordained women in North America. There was a reference made to that. There are zero ordained women in North America.

... In the lack of a clear message from the Lord, the church should not legislate. I believe that divisions that would like to ordain women should have the right to be able to do that. We are not asking South America to ordain women. We are not asking our African brothers and sisters to ordain women, or any culture, or division, or conference, or union that feels uncomfortable doing it. ... Let's let the Holy Spirit lead the local church leadership, who have been entrusted with that assignment, to lead the church in that portion of the world.



JEAN ZURCHER, *former secretary of the Euro-African Division.*

I support very strongly the document which is in front of us, for the reason which was indicated. Many said that we restrain the Holy Spirit by not ordaining women. I believe in the whole inspiration of the Bible. The Holy Spirit inspired the Bible, and I could not find in the Bible that the Holy Spirit is in favor of ordain-

ing women. I am very sorry if Andrews University went ahead by giving the possibility of women to prepare for the ministry. I believe this was not inspired by the Holy Spirit.



RALPH MARTIN, *president of the Potomac Conference.*

I am not certain how many of our delegates have actually seen the Holy Spirit fall on a women pastor. I've had that privilege. We have pastors on whom the Holy Spirit has fallen and God has placed his ordination. They are effective in their church.

... I have called many hundreds of pastors over the last decade or two.

... Not every part of the world would want a woman pastor. But there are churches that do want women pastors. They feel that they can make a contribution that is significant and unique. It is unfortunate when one part of the world would deny another part of the world the ministry of a person on whom the Holy Spirit has been poured out.

II. Performance of Marriages, Thursday, July 12

A. C. McClure, *president of the North American Division.*

We believe ... that the matter that is before us is one that does not divide the church but rather provides for some diversity while maintaining unity. ... Here in North America, for 16 years we have been following these practices. We would hope that we would not be forced to turn back the clock, thereby posing multiple problems. We would, therefore, plead for the understanding of the world, while we are not asking that this be imposed upon every area of the world. ...



PETER BATH, *provost of Kettering College of Medical Arts.*

The issue before us is more than the form and function of ministry, but involves deeply our understanding of the theology and doctrine of ordination, and even more profoundly what it means to be a world church; a world church that is called to be united but does not practice uniformity. ... On Friday, Elder Folkenberg told us that the true president of the General Conference is Jesus Christ. I would remind you today that it is the Body

of Christ that we could possibly divide if we defeat this motion.



RONALD GRAYBILL, *chair of the History Department, Loma Linda University Riverside.*

... The delegates should know that many of us who favor the ordination of women, voted yesterday not to ordain women. The reason we did this is because our fellow delegates from many world divisions said it was necessary in order to maintain the unity of the church. Today we need your help to maintain the unity of our church. In about a thousand churches, women function peacefully and effectively as local church elders. In a handful of churches they sometimes baptize and perform wedding ceremonies. These

are matters of practice, they are not matters of doctrine. The Bible does not forbid any Christian from performing these functions. . . . My 16-year-old daughter is waiting at home tonight for a telephone call. "Daddy," she'll say, "what did they do about women in ministry?" She doesn't want to be a minister, but she wants to know that her church affirms her full personhood. Yesterday I had to disappoint her and beg her to understand that this is a world church. What can I say to her tonight? That the world church does not care? No, I believe you do care, and I believe that just as we helped you to maintain the unity of the church yesterday, you will help us today to maintain the peace and harmony we enjoy in our churches.



ENRIQUE BECERRA, *field secretary of the South American Division.*

. . . Brother delegates and Mr. Chairman, do we have to accept a compromise because of one situation in one division? Would it not be better to effect a study for the entire world based on Scripture and based on the Spirit of Prophecy? I love North America and the missionaries who brought us the message; I love the philosophy of the education which they taught me, a philosophy which, in many ways, South America is practicing better than North America—philosophies, for instance, in respect to health areas in which North America has had to change. For instance, those of us in South America maintain closer the ideas of the Spirit of Prophecy in regards to the medical work. Let's look for a solution for the North American problem without impact or affecting the world field.



GEORGE REID, *director of the General Conference Biblical Research Institute.*

. . . We had decided that we would retain our historic position with

regard to ordination. That was done yesterday. Now we are proposing functions which would alter, or perhaps are even incompatible with, the integrity of ordination as we have understood it. The effect is to create a most unpleasant situation in that we are going to tell certain persons that we are not prepared to ordain them, but that we expect them to perform these functions, such as the one addressed in this particular issue, without ordination. To my mind this creates a very strange situation. I think that the solution to the problem. . . . is that we return to our long-standing practices as Adventists prior to 1976; that we set aside the question of gender, which is involved here, and treat all persons in certain categories, ordained or nonordained, in an equal manner.



DAROLD F. BIGGER, *senior pastor of the Walla Walla College Church.*

. . . I expect I may be able to speak with more experience, having worked longer with women pastors, than anyone else in this room. For nearly 10 years as senior pastor of my church I've had a woman on my staff. . . . Mario Veloso was gracious enough last night to spend some time visiting with several of us. He mentioned that the issue involved here, he thinks, is the authority of the church. I would suggest that the best way to establish and maintain the authority of the church is to open up the process and include those who have been unheard from; to allow those to participate who have been restricted. Those who have felt eliminated from discussions and decision-making in the past ought to sense that most intensely.

Let me speak on behalf of my sister pastors with whom I have worked through the years. They have brought to our congregation, and, our conference president tells me, to our conference territory, a sense of commitment, of settledness, of refocusing on the mission of this

church. If we are now asked to back away from that; this which is not for us a peripheral concern but is what the gospel is, a preaching of freedom for those that have been oppressed, and announcement of acceptance by those who have been rejected; that central gospel message will be severely impaired in the congregation which I serve, in the field in which I work.



MARIO VELOSO, *secretary of the South American Division.*

. . . I would like to speak against the motion because it is against the pattern of ordination in the Bible. We've heard that there is nothing sure or clear in the Bible about ordination of women. Even, we say, there is silence in the Bible. You know, when you have a pattern clearly stated and followed through all the way, through the Old Testament and New Testament, how could we say there is silence on ordination? . . . I recognize that we do have a problem in the church. Inequities? Yes. We do have. Ladies are not treated fairly. I agree. They are not. We have discrimination in salaries, in accessing of different positions and activities in the church. We should solve those problems. But this solution we are trying to present as the one that is going to solve the problem is not the solution. It is bringing more problems even for them because we will create a new inequality, not giving the ordination to those persons to whom we are allowing to do all the functions of ministry. That's why, Brother Chairman, I'm against this motion.



RON M. WISBEY, *president of the Columbia Union, North America Division.*

I stand here today in favor of this church manual amendment. . . . It is a recommendation that will allow each of the divisions to make up their mind about this function. This dramatically affects North America. This dramati-

cally affects the future of North America, and even more so it dramatically affects our young people in the 20-40 age group category, that we are losing a whole generation of in this division just now. This dramatically affects our recruitment of pastors with the quality and professional skills that we need. As an administrator in this division, it greatly complicates how we proceed in the training and the internship programs that we have in place and have been following for the past 12 to 15 years. Yesterday or the day before, I was invited to spend time with the college delegates who are observers here at this session. They are concerned about what we do. This is highly symbolic to this division and the future of this division. We must be allowed to empower our people to function. . . . There must be unity in diversity. So Brother Chairman, around the great circle of this world we must be allowed this diversity. . . .



DUMITRU POPA, former president of the Romanian Union Conference.

It was not my intention to comment on this recommendation, but I wish to express my concern and a concern of many of those of whom I represent and hear regarding such action; an action that can divide our church and destroy the unity of our church. We are a world church. We have a unique doctrine, and a unique organization and we are obliged by our mission to remain united. By the way, it seems to me that this recommendation comes in conflict with the recommendation on p. 17 on ordination of women that was already voted. The work that we have accomplished today asks for a complete unity of the entire church. Therefore, let us remain on the old waymarks and standards of our church. Thank you.



SUSAN SICKLER, laymember, Columbia Union Executive Committee.

I think that it is time that someone

speaks for the most valuable resource this church has—our children. They are the ones who are going to suffer because of the decisions that we make in this room. Yesterday, when this body voted not to ordain women, a young pastor of a large college church was sitting near me. He put his head in his hands and said, “What am I going to do? When I get home young people are going to be lining up outside my office door waiting to resign their membership in the Seventh-day Adventist church.” When our young people feel that their church has a lower standard for treating all people with justice and equality than the secular society has, they tend to feel that the church has nothing to offer them and they leave.

The group most affected by this issue is that of young adult professionals, who have a good education and bright financial prospects for the future. In previous times, this was the group who could be expected to provide a major share of tithe income to the church during their middle years. This loss cannot help but affect the work of the world church. So, in the end, all of our children will suffer and our mission will be severely compromised.

When you look at the more accurate figure of tithe per capita adjusted for inflation, tithe for the North American Division has decreased 20 percent in the last 10 years. We have a situation where our best givers, our senior citizens, are dying. Most of our new converts are poor people who need our help to subsidize their children’s education. Our young adults are hemorrhaging out the back door of our churches and an increasing number of members are withholding or diverting tithe for a number of reasons, including the church’s refusal to ordain women.

Brothers and sisters, we crave your help and your understanding. Who is going to bear the burden of world church finance if our children leave? We need each other. Our children need each other. Our grandchildren

need each other. I can’t begin to describe what it feels like to sit in this room and watch my brothers and sisters vote things that may drive my children or my grandchildren out of the church that I love. Please, I beg of you, we need all of our children with us if we are to follow faithfully One who said, “Suffer the little children to come unto me; and forbid them not.”



F. W. WERNICK, retired General Conference vice president.

. . . This amendment, in my opinion, will further erode the importance and sacredness of ordination to the gospel ministry by granting functions of an ordained minister to those who will never be ordained, unless this session changes its mind according to its vote yesterday, and I think that would be a mistake.

. . . I’ve read it as well as heard it, that granting these functions to our ladies who we highly respect and regard in their ministry, that granting these functions—the functions of an ordained minister of which this particular item is one—will inevitably lead to ordination of women whether we vote for it or not. . . . It seems to me that before we grant these functions, we should decide the issues involved and then let the functions flow from that decision. For that reason I cannot vote for this amendment at this time.



CHARLES SCRIVEN, senior pastor of the Sligo Seventh-day Adventist Church.

A few months ago an energetic youthful couple in my church came to me and said, “We can no longer support a church with an official policy of discrimination.” Over half the members of our church are now excluded from one of God’s most precious opportunities, the opportunity to be the pastor of a flock, and this young couple told me that they could no longer in good conscience be

members of such a church. The couple symbolize a terrible fact about the church in North America. Not only are young people leaving in droves, they are leaving from conviction. From the conviction that this church no longer has the courage to be the remnant and live up to its own ideals. Now, if we vote down the action before us just now, many Adventists, and especially young Adventists, will read our vote as an official endorsement of discrimination, and it will give them a moral reason to leave the church. Doug and Trina know that you can quote Scripture to unjust ends. You can quote Scripture to justify apartheid. You can quote Scripture to justify the headship of men over women. They also know that the Christian who reads Scripture takes Jesus to be God's highest authority on earth, the only human being who bears the stamp of God's being. . . . They know, too, that Paul the great apostle crystallized the Jesus story into his magnificent vision of a family where every distinction, whether slave or free, Jew or Greek, or male or female, dissolves into the magnificent unity of new life in Christ. . . . You may appeal to the Old Testament priesthood, which was limited only to men, but Doug and Trina know that the apostle did away with the priesthood of few in order to establish the priesthood of

the many. I appeal to us to send to Doug and Trina at least this much: a signal of respect for views that, although not everyone agrees with them, have to be taken seriously. We'll lose them and many others if we don't.



W. FLOYD BRESEE, secretary of the General Conference Ministerial Department.

I would like to appeal to my brethren and sisters in the North American Division and others of you who are strongly in favor of women's ordination. I hope that this debate of the last two days has been helpful to you in assisting you in understanding that it is not the leadership that is in opposition to your wishes. I hope that as you have listened patiently to the world church you understand the issue is a world church problem and issue. . . . The issue of world-wide unity is at this moment in the church a greater issue than the ordination of women to the ministry. And if any should choose to go back and say we are not going to pay attention, we are going to ordain anyway, you would be in rebellion not so much against the leaders of your church as against the whole united world church.

Let me say this very carefully. The world does not want to be told by

North America what to do, but the world does tend to want to do what North America does. And if North America began ordaining women it puts undue pressure upon our church and our leaders around the world who say, "Well, we ought to do it to keep up with North America." And that is why our leaders have taken a stand against the idea of doing this thing of ordaining women to ministry, division by division. . . . North America has sent to the whole world field its sons and its daughters and its dollars for generation after generation because the world field had a need. Dear brothers and sisters, you now have an opportunity to reciprocate. The North American Division has a great need, and they are asking you, not out of obligation because of what they have done for you, but . . . out of the depths of their need, please allow them to encourage women in pastoral ministry.

I plead with my North American friends, accept no ministerial ordination at this time for the sake of the needs and the problems of the world church. But on the other hand, I ask the world church to give also, and allow a little more significant functioning of ministry where it is so desperately needed in North America. Can't we both sides give a little, meet in the middle, and go out from Indianapolis united and get on with the finishing of the work?

Tantie Buy Ah Video Camera for GC

by Slimen Saliba

Indianapolis was not Tantie's first appearance at a General Conference Session. Slimen Saliba, dean of the School of Business at Andrews University, first brought her from his birthplace of Trinidad, West Indies, to the General Conference in New Orleans in 1980. She was such a hit at a Caribbean Union College alumni banquet that Saliba brought her back to Indianapolis for an even larger bash attended by more than 500, including Ralph Thompson, the newly re-elected secretary of the General Conference, and George Brown, the General Conference president-elect (declined) and re-elected president of the Inter-American Division.

Slimen had first made Tantie's acquaintance when he was a college student and she was a celebrity, making star appearances on the Trinidad literary stage. A product of a matriarchal culture where the aunt plays a central role, Tantie was an irascible, irrepressible, bruising character who also could cherish and be cherished.

Slimen went off to the United States, finished an M.A. at the SDA Theological Seminary, served as secretary of the South Caribbean Conference, and received a Ph.D. from Northwestern University, but he never forgot Tantie. And, probably, neither will you.

— The Editors

All yuh know full well how Tantie did fraid to fly on airplane. Whenevah she did have was to travel from St. Vincent to Port-of-Spain, is only passenger boat

she takin.

One time near Kick-em-Jenny, Boysie get so seasick he nearly dead. Tantie say, "Boysie could trow up all he want, ah go wash he clothes out for him aftah. Is bettah to trow up in de sea than to crash in de air."

But evah since de las GC in New Orleans, Tantie get hot foot. Dat same Tantie who make Boysie trow up taking boat because she fraid plane, dat very same Tantie when yuh miss she now, is either she in Brooklyn or she visiting somebody in Toronto. And is gone she gone on de self same plane she used to wash she mout on. Dat same Tantie.

So dis time, when Tantie hear that GC set for Indianapolis, she announce in two-twos, "Ah dey wid dem. Ah going to Indiana to the Hoosier Dome."

Nex ting ah hear is Tantie buying ah video camera for de GC. Every day she singing, "Memories, like the corners of your mind, Misty water running over . . . Memories, oh, oh, oh, memories." Dat is what life is all about. Memories—ah needs a movie camera to capture memories.

All yuh tink Tantie easy? Dis time when she leave Piarco for Indiana, is de basket, she pink parasol, and she new video camera. She might be smelling like a snackette, but she was looking like Hollywood.

Tantie call Meena in de States long distance to ask if Meena could make a booking for she at de GC. Yuh remeber Meena? Meena is Boysie's brother wife. Tantie did nevah like she.

No sooner Tantie get orf de phone, than she start quarrelling.

“If yuh hear de heavy American Meena talking! De gurl confuse up mih head. Ah tought ah had de wrong number ! Ha-ya, hi. If you hear de gurl! Auntie, is that you? How are you doing? Are you calling from Trinidad?”

But look at mih crosses nuh! Is wha wrong wid Meena at all! She forget when Boysie brother bring she home by me, is I who did have was to teach she de Queen’s English! Now she trying to make style on me wid language.

So ah say, “Tantie, doan be so hard on de gurl if she trying to improve sheself wid better lanuage.”

Bettah language! Tantie say. “All ah allyuh young people feel dat yuh have to go to college to learn bettah language. We ole people doan know better language! All ah allyuh waiting for Webster to give allyuh permission to talk. “Well, lemme tell yuh something. We in de islands have some words dat even

Shakespeare can’t dream to use yet.

“Take de word, *jook*. When ah say ah nail jook—improve dat. See if you could say it bettah.

“Take de word, *hard*. When yuh say dat Vibert leg tin and hard, improve dat. See if you could say dat bettah.

“When yuh say dat de dawg looking *magger*, improve dat. See if you could say it bettah.

“And if yuh doan stop provoking me, ah lick you and Boboloops and Meena dong. See if yuh could improve dat, too.”

Anyhow, Meena make de reservation in de Hyatt and Tantie didn’t lick she dong. Is so much loving up kissing up when she and Meena meet. Ah had was to pinch mihsself. To tell yuh de truth, Meena was on some special diet to lose weight. I thought she was looking okay—a lil pull down, but not bad. Tantie say she looking dry like a raisin and offah she a piece of sweetbread from de basket. Meena say is too much calories. Anyhow, we had a nice room in de Hyatt, jus across from de meetings.

Well, ah tell yuh, dis was a historic General Conference. On de outside, Tantie nearly mash up de building. On de inside de delegates and dem nearly mash up de GC.

When yuh enter de dome, yuh have to go thru a funny kine of door. It does spin yuh rong and rong and den fling yuh in, yuh have to throw yuhself in dis narrow space between two glass doors and hope for de bes. Well, Tantie stick in de door. To dis day, ah doan know how she parasol wedge like dat, but day had was to call security to unjam de door and let she out.

Meanwhile, de boys and dem on de inside was movin. Las GC dey was movin motion and making action. Dis time dey was moving people an’ making waves.

Yuh know something? Ah still cyan figure out why George didn’t tek de ting. Some say is too much hard wuk; some say is too much travel; some say he getting ole.

But Tantie say, is Douggie to blame. Is Douggie who tell George not to tek de people job. An yuh know Douggie, if he say so, is so. So much a women in de church lookin for

GLOSSARY

Boboloops: A woman who is well endowed, heavy.

Commess: A pleasant, happy meeting, complete with general confusion.

CUC: Caribbean Union College

Dong: Down

Douggie: Walter Douglas, originally from Granada. Douglas is professor of church history and mission at the SDA Theological Seminary. A long-time member of the board of the Association of Adventist Forums, he is currently the president of the Caribbean Union College Alumni Association.

George: George Brown, president of the Inter-American Division, who turned down the nomination for president of the General Conference.

Hard: A scrawny, bony, thin leg.

Jook: To be punctured by a nail, the act and the sound.

Kick-em-Jenny: A section of water known for its rough seas.

Liming: To stand around in a small group, joking and ogling passers-by.

Magger: Scrawny, mangy, flea-bitten.

Piarco: The airport in Trinidad.

Snackette: A place where candy is made and sold.

Two-twos: Immediately, without hesitation.

Washcong: Sneakers

Zafa: That’s for . . .

wuk an dey doan know what to do wid dem!

Well, dis GC really had plenty action. For two days dey battle ovah de role of women in de church. It was like de cricket match in de Oval, de one ah did take Tantie to—combined islands against North America—and Tantie was in de middle of de match. She say, combine islands ent fair. Dey forget is woman bring dem here.

She say, whedder is African or Spanish, Chinee or Indian, she doan care, is de same ting. De way how dey carrying on it look like woman good to cook and good to wash but women ent good to know what is right and what is rong. Only man know de difference—not woman. Combined islands doan want women to preach to man.

Anyhow, by Thursday night, match tie. Dey agree to let women preach, baptize and marry. But dey musn't ordain dem.

Tantie say is cheap dey cheap. Now de women an dem have to do de same wuk for less money. Ah have to talk to Duggie. He should talk to dese fellows.

Anyhow, she say ah sorry ah wasn't ah younger woman, ah woulda put mih name in for president jus to see what dey woulda do wid me.

Ah still trying to figure out what she bring de video foh.

De fust Sabbath, dey ask Tantie to usher. She dress up wid she hat, gloves, and washecong. For Sabbath school she had on pink gloves. For divine service she change to white gloves. For de whole day Tantie was conducting traffik in de aisle.

In de evening when she finish, she decide is time to do some recording. We still trying to figure out de pictures.

Every now an den someting wud come in focus and before yuh could ketch it, it turn fuzzy again. One ting ah know, we have plenty picture of roof and seat. Half de time Tantie forget de camera on and de odder half she had it outa focus.

De nicest ting bout dese meetings is de fellowship. Yuh does meet everybody here. Who ah ent see, ah hear was dere. Ah ent know

where people get money from, but dey come.

Everybody mek dey own service. De teenagers was outside on de steps liming; de young marrieds was in the corridors walking up and dong wid dey crying babies. De middle age ones was inside listening to de meetings and den dose pass middle age was dere too, but dey was sleeping.

But when she pack she grip to leave Indianapolis, she going home praying for —

**Uction in de pulpit
Action in de pew and
Drama in de parish**

Improve dat if yuh can. See if yuh could say it bettah.

It was nice commess. Some make dey rooms a snackette; some decide to eat out in de restaurant; some of dem licking dong dey chicken and dey beef. Odders of dem is only macaroni and cheese. Worthington foods make dey name. Some of dem pay for dey lunch before Sabbath; odders of dem pay for dey lunch on Sabbath. Tantie say, as long as she pay before Sabbath, is none ah she business who want to wuk and cook de food; she hands clean. She has done she part. Zafa dem who want to break de Sabbath.

De final coup was of course de CUC banquet. Everyone was dere. Wid de steelban in de background, at tought ah was back home. De food was good. De music was sweet. Even de College Heralds try dey hand. And we had all kinda church big shot dey too numerous to mention. De first lady of the Secretariat was de Madame Chairwoman and Tantie was in and out wid massive camera lights capturing memories.

De meetings finish; de preaching is ovah; de voting is done. De Mission Spotlight was de las

ting dat cap off de 10 days. De music, de pomp,
de ceremony, de orchestra—ah-h-h, yuh have to
be dere to see it, to feel it, to enjoy it, to be
bless by it.

Las GC it was Harvest '90; dis GC is Global
Strategy.

Tantie say, dis strategy ting is allyuh college
educated way of speaking, an she doan know

what dat means.

But when she pack she grip to leave Indian-
apolis, she going home praying for —

Unction in de pulpit

Action in de pew and

Drama in de parish

Improve dat if yuh can. See if yuh could say
it bettah.

The Media and the GC Session: Women Make the Most News

by Ronald Knott

American newspaper readers as a group may not know much about Adventists, but after the General Conference Session in Indianapolis, they are certain to know that Adventists don't ordain women to the ministry.

Newspaper clippings sent to the General Conference communication department this summer from national clipping services show that the women's ordination issue overwhelmingly dominated press interest in stories about Adventism and the session.

Associated Press wire stories and a syndicated feature article by *New York Times* religion writer Ari L. Goldman (see box) were responsible for the majority of the coverage. Two Associated Press stories, covering the denial of ordination and approval for women pastors to perform marriages and baptisms, were picked up and reprinted in various forms in hundreds of papers across the nation. Versions of Goldman's feature article showed up in many papers, though apparently not as widely as the Associated Press stories.

Headlines attached to the Associated Press stories ranged from the inflammatory "Adventists Reject Women," and the inaccurate "Seventh-day Adventists Bar Women From Pulpits," to the more charitable "Adventists Decline to Ordain Women."

Church communication leaders were pleased with the volume of news about the church that

went into media around the world during the session, according to Herb Ford, session news director. Ford, who has worked in or directed news operations for several General Conference sessions, said that new technology, particularly FAX transmissions, was the most significant factor in pushing stories about the church into the public eye. In addition, the local, national, and international press expressed greater interest in Adventist news than in previous sessions, Ford said. The Soviet News Agency TASS called twice. "This has never happened before," he said.

"The FAX machine helped us get news out in a manner that hasn't been possible before," Ford said. Even as recently as the New Orleans session in 1985, the General Conference news operation was dependent on the telex machine. Ford said he was particularly pleased with the steady stream of information sent to news agencies in Paris, London, the Soviet Union, and to church communication offices in overseas divisions.

Ford noted that writers from Associated Press were on the floor of the session for three days, something that has never happened before. He also said that the Associated Press Indianapolis news bureau chief told him that "Adventists ran the best news machine of any religious body to hold a convention in that city."

Ford, who worked under Shirley Burton, director of the General Conference Communication Department, supervised a staff of more than 30 newswriters from conference, union, division, and institutional communication departments.

In addition to the role of women, the major item of interest to the press outside Indianapolis was

Ronald Knott, a graduate of Atlantic Union College and formerly director of public relations at Andrews University, is on a special writing assignment at the General Conference.

the election of Robert S. Folkenberg as General Conference president. A third Associated Press story reported on a two-hour plenary session devoted to how trans-national corporations are focusing their marketing toward third-world women and children. The result is 2.5 million tobacco-related deaths each year. The story not only ran a quote from one of the guest speakers, Ronald M. Davis, director of the Office of Smoking and Health of the U.S. Public Health Service, but also from Robert Folkenberg's speech to the delegates: "When big tobacco companies are making millions of dollars on the pain and death and suffering of multiplied millions, we have no option but to speak out." Another Associated Press story, which told of the church's vote to establish a division in the Soviet Union, ran in many papers at the end of July, two weeks after the session ended and nearly four weeks after the fact.

The most significant newspaper to run a story was the *New York Times*. The feature piece by Goldman ran in the July 18 issue. Goldman flew to Indianapolis on Friday, July 13, after being contacted by Betty Cooney, a session newswriter

and communication director of the Greater New York Conference. Goldman spent Friday evening and Sabbath conducting interviews with delegates and church officials.

According to Ford, Goldman said he came to Indianapolis admittedly "looking for controversy." His article focused on the women's issue as a barometer of the church's changing political power base.

Human interest aspects of the remarkable session, reportedly the longest-running religious convention held at the Hoosier Dome, earned almost as much attention in the local press as hard news. Indianapolis newspapers, which supplied their own writers, ran stories on vegetarianism, the large food-service operation, the massive increase in city-wide fruit consumption, visitors from Eastern Europe and Pitcairn Island, surgeon Ben Carson, healthy octogenarian Mavis Lindgren, and others.

A video clipping report of what appeared on Indianapolis television stations listed 23 stories or mentions of Adventists or the session, totaling more than 40 minutes of air time. This was in addition to a series of paid spots run before and during the session by the General Conference Communication Department.

THE NEW YORK TIMES NATIONAL TUESDAY, JULY 17, 1990

Foreign Influence Gains In the Adventist Church

By Ari L. Goldman
Special to The New York Times

INDIANAPOLIS, July 15 — Thirty-five thousand members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, a faith born and nurtured in 19th-century America, came to terms this past week with the stark fact that theirs is no longer an American church.

At a 10-day convention at the Hoosier Dome that was attended by church members from 184 nations, delegates resoundingly rejected a resolution favored by members from the United States that women be ordained as full-fledged ministers. The change was vigorously opposed by delegates from Latin America and Africa; the vote was 1,173 to 337.

That vote was the most striking sign that overseas Adventists hold increasing power in the church and are not afraid to use it. While the church's newly-elected president, the Rev. Robert S.

Folkenberg, is an American, he is also the son of Puerto Rican missionaries and he spent two decades serving the church in Latin America.

Many Americans at the convention said it was paradoxical that Americans who founded the church no longer controlled it. "But it's not anything to be sad about," said Roy Branson, a writer and editor who is a son and grandson of American Adventist preachers. "Maybe it's something to celebrate. Aside from the Catholic Church, the Adventists are now the most international church."

With 6.2 million members worldwide, the Adventists, who emphasize winning converts, have been remarkably successful in spreading their message. The church has grown by about 40 percent over the last five years. Virtually every nation in the world

has an Adventist church.

Founded in 1863 in Battle Creek, Mich., the Adventist Church is based on the belief that these are the "last days" and that the end of the world is near. Out of the chaos of destruction, they believe, a new earth will emerge in which those redeemed by Christ will live eternally. Unlike some other apocalyptic groups, however, the Adventists do not set a date for the end of the world.

And, while waiting, they are very much concerned with matters of this world. They have put a great deal of emphasis on health care and have built a network of hospitals. Adventists do not drink alcohol or smoke tobacco.

While faithful to the New Testament, Adventists give great authority to the laws enunciated in the Old Testament. Invoking the Fourth Commandment, they observe Saturday rather than Sunday as the Christian Sabbath. They also distinguish between "clean" and "unclean" meats as spelled out in Leviticus, observing a modified form of the kosher laws kept by observant Jews.

According to church statistics, Adventism has grown by 1.8 million members since the church held its last world convention in 1985, although the rate of growth is much higher abroad than in the United States. In 1989, for example, there were 90 conversions to the faith each day in North America, while there were 361 a day in East Africa.

F. Donald Yost, the denomination's director of archives and statistics, says the number of Adventists abroad has exceeded those in North America since 1922.

Until now, however, Americans were able to retain control of the direction and policies of the church, in part through their financial dominance. Even today, 80 percent of the \$160 million annual budget of the church's world headquarters in Silver Spring, Md., comes from American donors.

Today, only 12 percent of Adventists live in North America. About 30 percent live in Africa and 40 percent in Central and South America and the Caribbean.

On the question of whether women should be fully ordained, both sides invoked the name of an early church leader, Ellen White, whose written accounts of visions of heaven continue to shape the

theology of the church.

"It's not only ironic but appalling that we can't ordain women when our leading founder was Mrs. White, someone we quote more than St. Peter or St. Paul," said Capt. Herman Loris Kibble, an Adventist minister who is a Naval chaplain based in Oakland, Calif.

The Rev. Mario Veloso, a church official based in Brazil, responded: "But Mrs. White never accepted ordination. Instead she followed the biblical pattern, in which only men were ordained for service by God."

Captain Kibble quoted another California delegate in appealing to third world church members to support the ordination of women. "We sent our sons and daughters to the mission field where they adjusted to your culture," he quoted the woman as saying. "Will you now give us back a little consideration for our own culture?"

For most of the American delegates, Captain Kibble said, there was no option but to ordain women. "It's impossible for us to turn back the clock," he said.

Hurdles in Industrial Nations

Mr. Folkenberg, the newly elected president of the international church, said in an interview that Adventists had a much harder time winning adherents in "first world countries, where materialism and humanism predominate."

One American associate pastor said that she was worried that the effort to evangelize in North America would be badly hurt by the vote not to ordain women to the full church ministry. The associate, the Rev. Esther Ramharacksingh Knott, was ordained an elder of her Maryland church, but does not have the full authority of ordained men.

Mrs. Knott, 31 years old, said the lack of support from the third world members for the full ordination of women came as a great disappointment to her. She said Adventists abroad had both a religious and financial interest in keeping the American church healthy and growing. "By crippling us, they will cripple themselves," she said.

North America Forces General Conference Staff Cuts

by Evert McDowell

“My heart aches for you during these unsettling times. . . . Change is always difficult; and when it’s accompanied by so many unknowns, it’s even more disturbing. . . . Anita and I have been praying for all of you since we learned of our own revised plans.”

Robert S. Folkenberg was not referring to his new position as president of the General Conference, but was expressing concern for the approximately 390 people employed at the General Conference headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland, many of whom were facing the loss of their jobs. The first personnel cutbacks in the institution’s history were starting to take effect. This was the beginning of the estimated \$2 million reduction in General Conference headquarters annual expenditures insisted upon by the North American Division. Further cuts are being discussed, with one scenario showing a final reduction in General Conference personnel of up to 40 percent. If this takes place it, will ultimately mean a new role for the General Conference.

In the current round of cuts, the Health and Temperance Department was hit the hardest. Prior to the General Conference Session in Indianapolis, it had eight elected positions. Six of these positions have been eliminated. The Communication Department dropped from three elected positions to one. Most other departments had reductions of one or two elected positions.

Rumors of cutbacks at General Conference headquarters had circulated for months. Faced with decreasing tithe revenues, conferences and unions in the North American Division had made cuts of their own for over a decade. In the wake of the Davenport scandal of the 1970s and the Harris Pine fiasco of the 1980s, many North American Adventists became less willing to hand over their money to the church. Since the early 1980s, conferences in North America had tightened their belts by hiring fewer pastors and, in some instances, even letting pastors go. Costs were also reduced by increasing the size of the districts pastors had to cover—sometimes up to as many as five churches for one pastor. Like the unions, conferences cut back or eliminated certain office personnel and services. All the while, North America continued to pass on the same tithe percentage to the General Conference for the funding of its operations. Many in North America felt that they were being “squeezed at the bottom to help expand the top.”

At the 1985 General Conference Session in New Orleans, North America demanded that belt-tightening also take place at General Conference headquarters. As a result, the Commission on Personnel Reduction was set up to conduct an efficiency study and report on the personnel needs of the General Conference.

The study was completed and given to Neal Wilson. Subsequently, in 1985, an across-the-board hiring freeze was implemented. The Church Ministries Department was created by combining five previously separate departments. Employee cuts, however, were not implemented, and the re-

Evert McDowell is a graduate of Union College, where he was one of the editors of the *Collegiate Quarterly*. He is currently the office manager of the Association of Adventist Forums and editorial assistant for *Spectrum*.

sults of the study were never released.

With continued budgetary pressures facing them, union and conference officials became increasingly frustrated with the apparent lack of action on the part of the General Conference. The same personnel sacrifices they had been forced to undergo were not being made at the the General Conference level. The frustration came to a head in November 1988, at the North American Division Year-End Meetings. Here conference and union officials pressured Wilson to implement the recommendations of the 1985 Commission on

Personnel Reduction. North American leaders felt that a message had to be sent to their constituents. As noted in the minutes, the consensus was that "The time has come when something must be done to give a clear signal to the constituency that less will be spent on internal operations and more on outreach programs. It is feared that failure to do this will result in the drying up of some sources of income."

It was voted:

"1. To request that the General Conference and the North American Division administrations

GENERAL CONFERENCE HEADQUARTERS ELECTED POSITIONS

<u>Administration</u>	<u>1985-1990 (Number of positions)</u>	<u>1990-1995(Net change)</u>
President	1	No change
General Vice Presidents	4	5 (+1)
Secretary	1	No change
Undersecretary	1	No change
Associate Secretaries	6	5 (-1)
Treasurer	1	No change
Undertreasurer	1	No change
Associate Treasurers	5	No change
General Field Secretaries	4	3 (-1)
Archives and Statistics	1	No change
Auditor	1	No change
Associate Auditors	8	No change
 <u>Departments, Associations, and Services</u>		
Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries	1	No change
Church Ministries	13	11 (-2)
Communication	3	1 (-2)
Education	4	3 (-1)
Health and Temperance	8	2 (-6)
Ministerial Association	4	No change
Public Affairs & Religious Liberty	5	4 (-1)
Publishing	3	No change
Trust Services	3	No change

present to the 1989 Annual Council a comparative report for the years 1985 and 1988 with the following data and pertinent information:

“a. A list of personnel including elected, non-elected, secretarial and other help, full and part-time, for every unit (departmental, administrative, and service organizations);

“b. A list, by category, of the cost of operation covering salaries, travel, health, all perquisites and allowances;

“c. A list of the functions, and actual services or materials developed by personnel.

“2. To require administration, when considering requests for personnel, services, and projects, to submit such proposals to the appropriate committee with full data, estimated costs, and source of funding.

“3. To request the General Conference and North American Division administrations to present a plan for implementing the recommendations of the 1985 Commission on Personnel Reduction.

“4. To request the conferences, through their unions, to present to the Administration of the North American Division and the General Conference a list of the services most appreciated and desired in order of priority.”

The North American Division made its report to the 1984 Annual Council in response to this action. However, the General Conference made no response. Instead, a few months earlier at Spring Council, Neal Wilson announced that Duane McBride, a professor in behavioral science at Andrews University, had been asked to do a personnel needs and efficiency study at an estimated cost of \$40,000. Some felt this study unnecessarily duplicated the efforts of the 1985 commission already presented to Wilson.

At the 1990 Spring Council it was announced that the McBride Report had been completed and that cuts would be made at the General Conference headquarters, with the goal of reducing elected staff by 20 percent. The cuts, which would reduce about \$2 million from the yearly operating budget of approximately \$168 million, would be achieved by eliminating positions, downsizing departments, and moving various

people to the North American Division. The savings, said Wilson, would then be put directly into Global Strategy. North America had consistently maintained that any cuts made by the General Conference must come from the headquarters alone, and not affect overseas divisions.

However, the full results of the McBride report were not released. Many of those who saw partial releases held conflicting interpretations of the report's recommendations. No department heads were notified as to how the report was going to affect the people working under them.

Not until the General Conference Nominating Committee met at Indianapolis did the results of the McBride Report become evident. Wilson prepared a document recommending cuts of specific positions and gave it to the nominating committee. Thus, for the first time in the history of the Seventh-day Adventist church, the nominating committee of the General Conference Session not only elected General Conference officials, but also became the agent for making personnel cuts at General Conference headquarters.

As of this printing, cuts are still being made to nonelected personnel at General Conference headquarters. The final tally is not yet available. The North American Division continues to study the personnel reductions it in turn will make. What it decides is crucial, as it will determine what and how many positions the division will assume from the General Conference.

Even more crucial, however, will be this fall's Annual Council where the North American Division will propose between a two and five percent cut in its annual tithe allocation to the General Conference. If adopted, this would mean as much as an additional \$10 million pared from the complex's operating budget. While this cut represents less than six percent of the complex's operating budget of \$168 million, a \$10 million reduction could have a tremendous impact on the headquarters itself. If a cut of approximately \$2 million results in a 20 percent reduction in elected staff, what staff reductions would be necessary with a five-fold increase in cuts? Surely, such additional reductions would ultimately affect the role and function of the General Conference.

How to Love the Church: Breaking the Cycle of Co-Dependency

by Smuts van Rooyen

I love the church. I'm moved within me when I say I love the church, and so are most of you. But some of us need healing from our love for the church. That may sound strange, but it is possible for us to love with such desperation that our love destroys us and harms the church. It becomes crucial to learn to love the church in a healthy way.

Let me tell you about my mother and my father. My dad lived in Rhodesia (which is now Zimbabwe). One day my father went out in the family's field and found his father dead, a native's spear pinning his right arm to his throat. It was so traumatic an experience for my dad that he left for South Africa. There he began to work in the mines. He would go underground before the sun came up. He would come up above ground after the sun was down. Basically, he lived a life of deep depression, and was soon into alcoholism.

My mother was a bright, supportive, ambitious woman. In our home town, she had her own fashion business. She made excellent clothes, was extremely creative, cooked great food, and was always the life of the party—a marvelous mother.

My father's drinking progressed into an addiction. The first symptom was his denial. He didn't have a problem, he said, because he hadn't missed one day of work for 25 years. He argued that a man who is working cannot possibly be an alcoholic. It

didn't matter that he came home every night stoned out of his head. He had been to work. Dad was caught up, of course, in the illness of denial. Denial is not a lie. It's just that the mind does not allow us to see what is truly painful.

As Dad was in denial a very interesting thing happened to my mom. She began to mimic Dad. When people would speak about Dad's drinking, her reaction was, "Well, you know he's a good husband. Oh, he oversteps the mark once in a while." She was also in denial.

Dad's tolerance for alcohol began to go up. He could drink a half jack of brandy every night. What would have killed other people, barely gave my dad a buzz. Every now and then Dad passed out, and we'd have to rush him to the hospital. He reached the point where what it took for him to get a buzz and what it would take to kill a man was very, very close. He was on the edge.

As Dad's tolerance for alcohol went up, so did Mom's tolerance for his bad behavior. Behavior that should have been utterly intolerable was accepted as perfectly normal. One night my brother and his girlfriend were sitting, kissing, in our living room. Dad came out of his room drunk, leaned right over them on the couch, and closed the windows behind them. He was stark naked. Mom's response—and ours—was to laugh about it. One morning, at five o'clock, Dad slipped in his own vomit and broke his arm. For weeks we teased him about his broken arm.

Dad tried to control his drinking. He said, "I'm no longer going to drink during the week. I'm going to drink only on the weekends, and I'm going to change from brandy to wine." He tried

Smuts van Rooyen is the director of Pastoral Counseling at the Riverside, California, SDA Church. He has taught theology at Southern College and Andrews University. This essay was first presented as a sermon at a regional meeting of the AAF in Atlanta, June 1990.

desperately to control his drinking, and Mom mimicked him. She frantically began trying to control Dad. She tried everything. One morning after a big argument, Mom ran outside with Dad's brandy and poured it out in the street. Later she'd insist, "You've got to come home at night right after work, and I'll pour your drinks for you." Dad was out of control, and as Mom tried to control him, she also spun out of control.

Occasionally Dad would stop drinking; then he'd have withdrawal problems. When Dad argued with Mom, and pulled away from her, she too would have withdrawal problems. She could not stand it if my father would not speak to her.

My father was preoccupied with his drinking; he would hide alcohol by putting it in a thermos flask, which he stashed in a World War II backpack propped in the closet. Just in case sometime he couldn't get a drink, he would know that it was there. His day was organized, not around work, not around the family, but around his drinking. A strange thing began to happen to Mom. Her day was also not organized around her work or her family; it was organized around Dad. As Dad was addicted to alcohol, Mom was addicted to Dad. As Dad became progressively worse, Mom, too, became progressively worse. Then came the time when Dad was so bad, he started to collapse morally. He slept around; he lied. And Mom lied to protect him. She even started to drink. When I was 12 she died of cirrhosis of the liver, 30 years before my father.

I have seen what love gone wrong can do. My mother's fundamental problem was that she loved my father in a way that enabled him to destroy himself. In the process, she destroyed herself. Anne Schaeff's book, *The Addictive Organization*, deals with the problem of how people working for big companies become addicted to the organization. As the company begins to do all kinds of harmful things, they just go along with it.

There was a time in my relationship to the church when no matter what the church did, it did nothing wrong; I couldn't even see it. I was in denial. As the church made more and more mis-

takes, my tolerance of them grew proportionately.

As the church began to lose some control of itself, I began to try to control the church. I recall a time when my main mission was to rescue Seventh-day Adventism. I truly believed there was no limit to the usefulness of one person devoting himself, committing himself, totally to the Work. I was certain I could get the church to see and do things my way, and in the process I lost control of myself.

In the past, I had a preoccupation with the church. My whole life—every single little angle of it—was tied up with religion. There was no secular part of my life at all. *Everything* was tied up with the church. My life did not revolve around family, my work, or others. Rather, my work and others all revolved around the church. It had become a central preoccupation, an obsession, an addiction. My love for the church had gone wrong and was threatening to destroy me.

This is not a new phenomenon. Throughout religious history, preoccupation with the church has been a problem. God gives the temple to Israel and he says, "I will be in your midst," and before long they are worshiping the temple, and not the God in the temple. Jeremiah says to them, "You say, 'The temple . . . the temple . . . the temple!' And you think that the temple will preserve you, no matter what. It won't!"

When Jesus came he said to the Hebrews, "You search the Scriptures, for in them you *think* you have eternal life. But they are they which testify of me." They were reading the Scriptures without seeing Jesus; they worshiped the Scripture and not the God of the Scripture. They were more enamored with the preciousness of the earthen vessel than with the treasure inside.

So, it is an old problem, this tendency of mine. It is a tendency that many people have—to focus on what is God-given, rather than on the God who gave it.

The issue remains: how do I love the church, but not more than the God who gave it to us? How am I to love the church in a healthy way? The church is not simply a human institution; the church is something that Christ instituted. I cannot imagine myself living as a Christian and not

being involved with the church. If Christ died for the church, how can I neglect it? But how do I love the church appropriately, in a way that encourages it to flourish and permits me to be healthy? How can I love the church without being addicted to it?

A partial answer is what I would do to help my mother. I would tell her to take responsibility for herself and to stop trying to change my father. I would say to her, "You have tied your health to Dad, and you need to get well regardless of what happens to Dad." I would say to her, "You have to differentiate." Differentiation means that you say, "I will be in a relationship with you, but the condition will be that I have input into the relationship. I will not get into a relationship where someone else lays down all of the terms of the relationship, where someone else determines *me*."

That was exactly what had happened to my mom. My dad determined her. The relationship was totally and wholly on his terms.

It takes an enormous amount of strength to say, "I love you, Church. I will suffer for you, Church. But I will not let you determine me. I will not let you say, 'If you are going to have a relationship with me, here are the terms. You follow those terms, or else there is no relationship.' No. I will have some input into what that relationship is, and I will begin to insist on some of my own terms. We're going to have a bit of a stormy session, but ultimately it's going to help you and it's going to help me. If we're going to save this relationship, somebody has to be strong enough to say, 'I'm not simply going to let you tell me what to do.' What is more, I'm not going to let you decide unilaterally whether or not we have a relationship."

People say to me, "Smuts, you're not a Seventh-day Adventist, because you don't believe everything." And I say, "Who are you to decide whether or not I am a Seventh-day Adventist? I will decide whether or not I am a Seventh-day Adventist. It is my life. I know what I am. Who set you up in judgment over me? I know my heart, I know my loves, and I know I am a Seventh-day Adventist."

To differentiate means that you put a bit of space between you and the other person, but you remain sensitive to the other person's wants. Differentiation is not simply a matter of, "Hey, look, I have my own fulfillment to consider; I'm headed toward self-actualization, so forget you, friend. I'm going to self-actualize regardless of you." No. When you differentiate you put a space there, between you and the other person, but you also say, "What are your needs? What is it you want? I can bend here; I can make a concession there without feeling that I'm compromising. I am idealistic, but life is really a matter of trade-offs, and I'll make some trade-offs with you. I am going to stay in the relationship, and I'm going to be tough because I love you."

In a healthy relationship, there comes a time when you say to the church, "I love you, and I'm staying in the relationship, but you will no longer control me by means of the fears that are within me."

That's the key: tough love. Not tough anger; that's easy. Tough love; that is hard. But I believe that ultimately that is what heals.

To differentiate is to discover the mechanism by which a person is controlling you, and defuse it. My dad controlled my mother because he was always threatening to leave. My mom was desperately afraid of being alone, and she would do anything to keep my dad, including destroying herself. I would have said to Mom, "Mom, you need to identify the mechanism by which Dad controls you, and have another look at it."

In my relationship to the church, the church had a mechanism by which it controlled me. It was central; it was crucial. Somehow, the church had convinced me that it was the agent of my salvation. And I will do *anything* to be saved. Somehow I believed that I could not be saved if I were not a Seventh-day Adventist. If you say

to the average Adventist, “Do you think you’re saved by the church?” the answer will be “No.” But if you ask, “Will you be saved if you leave the church?” it’s a different story. By saying this, I’m not saying that people ought to leave the church. All I’m saying is that if I believe that the church is responsible for my salvation, I am in a terrible position—I am in an impossible position. No matter what I’m asked to do, I will do, and I will be afraid of questioning.

But in a healthy relationship, there comes a time when you say to the church, “I love you, and I’m staying in the relationship, but you will no longer control me by means of the fears that are

You know, one of the marvelous things about the Adventist community is that it is so able to question.

within me, because I have given up those fears.” It’s been a marvelous experience for me, to learn that the church in no way, shape, or form determines my salvation. I have been set free to love the church in a new way. It no longer is something I have to do—it’s something that I *want* to do. It’s as if I can now choose the church, whereas before I couldn’t choose the church.

In Acts, chapter 2, Luke says, “The Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.” Martin Luther saw that that text explained both the impotence and the value of the church. Catholicism turned the text on its head. It asserted, “The church added to the Lord daily such as should be saved.” In other words, the church was the mediator between Christ and the individual.

To which Luther said, “No! There is no mediator between Jesus and the individual. We are saved by Jesus.” Then he added, “But, Christ brings those people to the church.” Indeed, Luther loved the church. Because he did he said “No” to the church. That “No” rescued his relationship to the church—made him free to truly love the church. And that “No” transformed the church—freed it to be more genuinely the church.

Now my mom could never do what Luther did: challenge the authority, and say No to it. My mom wouldn’t think or act for herself. Dad did all the thinking. People who are alcoholic, especially men, often control others by means of intimidation. My dad would growl, and my mom would cower. She wouldn’t even think of opposing him.

I’ve learned very well from my mom. I’ve grown up as a co-dependant. I’ve found that, at times, my relationship to the church has been very much that of an addicted person. It is possible to have an addiction to a chemical substance, to work, to sex, to gambling, to food, even to an organization. I love the church, but I have had to face the challenge of redefining my love for the church.

The Scripture establishes a healthy tension between the church and the believer. On the one hand it gives the church the right to teach—its great commission is to teach all nations (Matthew 28:19-20). The commission is not to legislate belief, but to persuade, to teach. On the other hand, the believer is given the right to question what the church teaches. When the prophets speak, the believers are to “weigh carefully what is said” (1 Corinthians 14:29).

The believer has the right to question not only the church but even to question God. Job, David, Paul, Jesus—all questioned God. And he allowed it. Now I ask you, if the believer can question God, can he not question the church? Is the church greater than God?

You know, one of the marvelous things about the Adventist community is that it is so able to question. People say Adventism is a cult. Well, there may be cultish things about Adventism, but a cult is not filled with people questioning. I am grateful that Adventism has encouraged the teaching office of the church. I have been deeply blessed through the years as the church has taught me. I have grown, I have gotten insights. I have learned. But I also came to see that I have to have freedom, to say as a Christian, as an Adventist, “Sorry, I don’t see it your way.” I wish I could. It would make my life a lot easier. There are certain things I have come to believe that I sometimes wish I didn’t believe, but I do.

Ultimately, in the judgment, I will stand before God and he will not ask me, "Smuts, what did the church teach you?" God will ask me, "Smuts, what did you do with your mind as you interacted with the Scripture, and with the church, and with others?" And I will have to answer for myself. I have to assume responsibility for me. To give that responsibility to someone else is to put myself and the church in grave peril.

When we look at the church we often go to two extremes. One is to say it is divine. If so, we should

bow down and worship it. The other extreme is to say that the church is only human, just an organization of people making decisions that we all know to be fallible. Both extremes are wrong. The church is a divine event that occurs when Christ appears within our corporate humanity.

What we need at this time is to give up our sickness that masquerades as love. Give up that illness that destroys individuality, the mind, even love itself. What we need to find again is the mature, perfect love that casts out all fear.

From Ecology to *Dead Poets Society*: Campus Voices, 1989-1990

compiled by Harvey Brenneise

New writers are constantly appearing in the campus newspapers of Adventist colleges and universities. Their reports, reviews, and opinions provide a clue to the direction the church is taking. We are delighted, as a new school year begins, to share examples of two kinds of writing that appeared in North American Adventist college campus publications during the 1989-1990 school year. First are editorial, opinion pieces, and personal reflections. A number deal with topics of national and international significance. Second, are reviews of films. All of those reviewed are currently available on video cassette.

Harvey Brenneise, an associate professor of library science and the head reference librarian at Andrews University, surveyed North American Adventist campus newspapers and picked out what he considered to be the most interesting pieces. His work was supplemented by Norman Wendth, who teaches in the English department at Pacific Union College, and Rennie Schoepflin, who teaches American social and intellectual history at Loma Linda University, Riverside.

—*The Editors*

Opinion Pieces

The Future Isn't What It Used to Be

by Mark Cimino, Pacific Union College
Campus Chronicle, April 20, 1990

So when you have babies, are you going to use cloth or disposable diapers? For a while it seemed that convenience would be preferred. But in this age of ecological sensitivity, that is changing. Diapers now are a debatable topic. It is difficult to say which is better. "While disposables do account for more garbage, one study found that laundering diapers produces nine times as much air pollution and 10 times as much water pollution, consumes six times more water and

three times more energy, and produces 50 percent more sludge."¹

As diapers and other things were highlighted during Earth Day's 20th anniversary, many people were critical of the media bash, paying only token or symbolic gestures to an important issue. In addition there was some controversy over corporations turning "green" for positive public image. Industry representatives cited significant changes and contributions achieved on their behalf,² while skeptics thought some corporations to

be hypocritical. "I think it's going to backfire on these corporations that think a plain, green wrapper is going to turn them into an environmentalist in the public's eyes," says Christina Desser, executive director of Earth Day 1990.³

The concern for the environment is hardly a passing fad. What we have seen since the first Earth Day in 1970 is the consistent development of conscience. Today the "Big Ten" environmental groups have more than 5 million members and some \$220 million in funds. To make the story more exciting, there are a growing number who are convinced that the "Big Ten" aren't moving fast enough. Among these is a group called EARTH FIRST! Or, call them eco-guerrillas who do a lot of "monkey-wrenching" and who "tear down power lines and pull up survey stakes; they sink whaling ships and destroy oil-exploration gear."⁴ EARTH FIRST! claims 15,000 members and believes the militant faction of the movement is rapidly growing.

But most Americans don't identify with those "Kaddafis of the movement" and their illegal methods. Rather, Americans—and other people around the globe—are creating an ecological ethic as evidenced by new lists of "dos and don'ts" in our everyday lives. Developing this ethic doesn't come easy in an age when almost everything we consume has environmental repercussions. Take, for instance, the family who saves cans, bottles, and newspapers for recycling, but every morning Father,

alone, drives his truck to work; Mother, alone, drives her Cadillac to the women's club; and daughter, alone, drives her Corvette to the university. Here we have inconsistencies in "environmental ethics" that many struggle with. But the very fact that people are asking "What is right?" and "Is it better to . . . ?" is a positive step.

At this point, let's shift gears a bit and ask several questions. Do you think we, as Christians, have any spiritual or moral responsibility to nature? When we sing "This Is my Father's World" or "All Things Bright and Beautiful" in church on Sabbath, should it prompt us to act in certain ecologically sound ways? Lynn White, Jr. in 1967 gave a whopping blow to Christianity in *Science* magazine by stating that Christians' attitudes of neglect and domination of the land provide the historical roots of our ecological crisis. While Eastern religions often worshiped nature, Christians conquered it. "If so," he says, "Christianity bears a huge burden of guilt."⁵ After careful research you may conclude that his use of history may be somewhat unfair and simplistic, but his point must be taken seriously.

And what about Adventists? Has the hastening of the Second Coming caused us to ignore other important social issues such as ecology? Would focusing on these social issues cause us to ignore our gospel commission? Here we could have a long debate. Ideally, we could emphasize both without compromising either. In a recent article in the *Adventist Review*, A. Josef Greig pointed out that some of our important doctrines such as the Sabbath, Creation, nonimmortality of the soul, and the health message are pro-ecology.⁶ Will Adventism play an active role in this issue for the future?

And one last point. According to *The Washington Post*, a leaky toilet wastes 9,000 gallons of water a year; the average person uses the equivalent of seven trees every year; if every

person recycled one-tenth of his or her newspapers, 25 million trees would be saved; commuter cars carry only 1.3 riders on average; and each person uses about 190 pounds of plastic a year.⁷ Do we call this economic development? Or is it overconsumption and materialism and greed? Beware, for these issues may radically change the way we live in the future.

Notes

1. *Washington Post* (April 18, 1990), p. A22.
2. *Washington Post* (April 20, 1990), editorial, "Earth Day and Corporate America."
3. *L. A. Times* (April 20, 1990), p. A1.
4. *Newsweek* (February 5, 1990), p. 24.
5. *Science* (March 10, 1967), p. 1203, "The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis," by Lynn White, Jr.
6. *Adventist Review* (April 19, 1990).
7. See note No. 1.

Witness to The Earthquake

Darrin Dee
Pacific Union College
Campus Chronicle
October 26, 1989

I dunno, I guess I was driving out of San Francisco, well—and—so we were on the bottom part of the Bay Bridge. We just passed Treasure Island and the Bay Bridge—it bends twice, so after the first bend we were going along and then I noticed the car started to shake really violently, left to right. So I was concentrating on really trying to keep the car going steady and all the cars started to slow down and it dawned on me, "Maybe we're in an earthquake." So we slowed down and we came to a stop. It was really bewildering to me 'cause I thought, "If we were in an earthquake, I would wanna get outta there as quickly as possible." But we came to a stop. Some people got out of their cars and were like pointing down the road. And so I was trying to look down the road. About a hundred yards down I could see the

top of the freeway 'cause it kinda collapsed down in front and I could see it but I couldn't understand what it was and so I was sitting there staring at it and all of a sudden this water pipe on the left side broke and all the water started flooding out and I was in real confusion and so I thought for a second we were sinking, because you know you see the water coming out. But then, I was sitting here trying to evaluate it saying, "We're on a bridge," you know, "The water's below us," and stuff like that. And Anjelica, who was one of—Anjelica Eclar—she was one of my passengers. When we stopped she ran out to look around and she came back in at this point and she said, "We gotta get outta here." And the other passenger, who was sitting in the passenger seat, her name was (I was driving) Claire Gonzales. It was at that point that some people outside started screaming that the bridge was collapsing and people were starting to run back toward us going toward Treasure Island. So we got outta the car and we started, like, moving away from the car real quick, we were like five or ten feet away and you have your skeptical people sitting around, and they're going, "Well, the bridge is not gonna collapse, it's built better than this." So I looked at the two of them and they were looking at me like they wanted to know what we should do. And I said, "Well, let's grab our stuff." So we ran back to the car, grabbed our stuff, I locked the car and then we proceeded to make our way to Treasure Island. Just before we started running, or jogging, I told them, "Don't answer any questions. Don't say anything to anyone. Let's just get to the island and then we'll sort all this out." Well, we were just making our way out to the island. It must have been at least, well, it was almost a mile to get to Treasure Island, 'cause we were running forever. But then you know when you're panicked a little bit, time flies a lot faster than you realize. But it was a long ways and we finally got

back there. The girls stayed on the island the next couple hours and I went back to make sure they were okay but I was kinda checking on the car, finding out what was going on. (The bridge) was about one hundred yards (ahead of me) and I went back to check on my car and it was at this point, it was like, two hours after it actually happened that I decided I wanted to get as close to the collapse as I could so I walked about fifty yards, it was at that point that there was a CHP sitting there and he was stopping the people from going and I saw this car like teetering on its middle, like up front there 'cause that's where, you know, we couldn't get any closer than that, but it was just really eerie seeing the whole top just like, collapsed down like that pushing our deck down also and then I went back to visit the girls again to make sure that everything was okay. Claire was trying to make a phone call. Then about an hour later I ran all the way back to the car and drove it back out and we made our way through San Francisco, Golden Gate Bridge and then we came back up, got here about 11:30 p.m.

We'll Spend a Mint on the Drug War

Harold Gamityan
La Sierra, *The Criterion*
November 16, 1989

As everyone probably knows by now, President George Bush and drug czar William Bennett have declared war on drugs and are seeking \$7 billion in ammunition. We can guess how this war is going to turn out if we look at such other multi-billion dollar wars as the war on illiteracy, the war on urban blight, and the war on dependency. Years and hundreds of billions of dollars later, the battlefield is strewn with would-be beneficiaries turned victims, taxpayers out of a lot of money, and government grown bigger while the

profiteers who waged the wars whimper, "Not enough commitment." Instead of declaring war we should decriminalize drugs.

Along with the sins of prostitution and gambling, drug usage has been with humankind for centuries. Do President Bush, Bennett, and the U.S. Congress expect us to believe that they will succeed when all of humanity before them has failed?

It is possible to eliminate drugs. Mao Zedong wiped out opium use in China by summarily executing drug sellers and users. Americans want to deal with the drug crisis, but do they want direct encroachments on our Constitution? Our task is to find solutions to the drug problem that will do the least damage to our liberties and to society.

The production costs of drugs such as heroin, cocaine, crack, and marijuana are very low. The street price, on the other hand, is steep, because prohibition requires sellers to bear the costs of smuggling and payoffs to officials, and to face the risks of going to jail or being murdered by a competitor. The addict, who would otherwise be able to get a week's fix for a few dollars, must pay hundreds of dollars.

For a people to use drugs and risk destroying themselves is tragic. But the tragedy isn't lessened when society creates conditions whereby addicts are desperately driven to destroy the lives of innocents through muggings, holdups, burglaries, and murder in order to have the wherewithal to feed their addiction. In addition, users and pushers have financial incentives to get others hooked. Streets become unsafe, like in the days of Prohibition, as a result of turf battles to establish a monopoly. Plus, there are incentives to corrupt public officials and infiltrate legitimate businesses.

The best way to put a dent in the crime wave associated with drugs is to decriminalize drug consumption. Drug pushers would be out of business because they could not

compete with low-cost legal production. We could establish age requirements, penalties for driving under the influence of drugs, and other laws to protect society; but more important, we could educate people against their use.

Some people might say, "Harold, if we decriminalize drugs, wouldn't more people use them?" I can't honestly say; but I'd ask you, "Is the fact that heroin and crack are illegal the only deterrent to your using them?" I'd bet not. Most aspects of our behavior are not governed by laws; they're mostly influenced by values taught to us by parents, family, community organizations, and churches, and enforced by social sanction, not law.

Here's my prediction on the war on drugs. President Bush and Congress are going to call for more drug-fighting money next year, and more the next year. This year or next, the White House will say, "Forget reading lips; we'll have to raise taxes to fight drugs." The drug problem will only continue, and will grow worse.

Adventism and the Spirit of Democracy

R. James
Walla Walla College
Collegian, November 2, 1989

The other day I received my weekly issue of the *New Yorker* magazine. In it was a short story of a Chinese student dissident who organized the group of artists who created the "Goddess of Democracy" in Tianemmen Square. He managed to escape China when the massacre took place, five days after the statue was completed. He now lives on the East Coast of the United States.

His story was recounted to an author as they were on their way to see the Statue of Liberty, the inspiration behind the making of the

“Goddess of Democracy.” His awed comment upon seeing Miss Liberty went like this: “Wonderful! . . . Not as big as I thought. Should be bigger. But wonderful, yes.” In his mind our Statue of Liberty—what it stands for, the meaning it holds—stood very tall, an ideal for all humankind. A beacon of true freedom, only let it be taller.

This stirs my own fascination with the freedoms I enjoy as an American, providing opportunities I can take advantage of with my own will. I hope I never see a time in America’s future where my freedoms are taken away in the good of a national will. But many Americans may be too apathetic about exercising the rights they have now to guard against such national will.

Currently, Americans seem to be too divided over smaller, insignificant issues to see the big picture. Most Americans, I believe, have lost the zeal and true meaning of democracy. To me, democracy means more than my rights—it’s an ideal, an imagery, a way of thinking and doing. Not only does it mean I can exercise my will to vote or to voice an opinion, but it is a way I believe, a way I think and act. Of course what I believe, or the way I act or think, could infringe on another’s rights. But there are laws set up to prevent such infringements from happening and it is morally wrong to push your own rights onto fellow members of humanity.

We, as Adventists, tend to be very apathetic. Our beliefs have interfered with the good of humanity. We have been taught to be good stewards of this world and then counseled against getting involved politically or otherwise. We’re to “spread the good news” of Christianity, help the poor, the sick, feed the hungry, clothe and house those who have nothing, and yet we build hospitals and admit those who can pay, educate those who can afford it. We are more concerned with how to make more money for ourselves than in helping the homeless or the hungry.

Get the point?

The spirit of our belief is very much like the spirit of democracy . . . how to concern ourselves. I admire organizations like the Red Cross, Peace Corps, Amnesty International, and Greenpeace. Their causes and efforts to make us more aware of our situation on a global basis are commendable. They ask only that we be involved to help correct the wrongs imposed by ignorant people.

If we, as Adventists, believe in helping the hungry, the homeless, the environment, then we must become activists and become involved. When the second coming of Christ becomes reality, I believe Christ needs only to ask one question: “Were you a good steward?” Most of us, I’m afraid, must say No. It’s not enough to take part on community service day, to be in the Dorcas Society or Pathfinders, or to be a student missionary.

The days of missionaries are gone and the day of activism is now. Many forms of activism are available—many issues face the future of humanity. We, as Adventists, should have been concerned about the new \$20-plus million General Conference World Headquarters that appears to be extravagantly unnecessary. That money could have been better spent on housing the destitute families in the D. C. area. Protesting for clean air, or for freedom from apartheid in South Africa are worthy causes—as worthy as protesting human rights abuses in China or Panama.

Apathetic insolence is a sin—a sin against humanity. We in America have freedom to make choices, but soon, I believe, someone else will make a choice for us if we continue our present course. Our beacon of freedom will become a hollow image for the rest of the world, those who look toward our statue as a symbolic ideal to be achieved.

We, as Adventists, are part of the human family. We should start participating in that family. There are many issues and concerns. The question is, Are we willing to stand for a cause?

Woodstock and Me (and You)

Brent Geraty
Atlantic Union College
Lancastrian, August 29, 1989

No, my connection to Woodstock didn’t begin by being conceived during a “love-in.” I don’t even believe my parents have ever been to that field in Sullivan County, New York. In fact, when I asked my mom and dad how they remembered Woodstock, they replied, “On Snoopy’s doghouse.” No, it has nothing—or everything—to do with my parents (and their generation).

I’m certainly no expert on what happened at Woodstock, but I’m not convinced it was as special as the participants would like us to think it was—at least not as important. Woodstockers were protesting the senseless dying in the war in Vietnam; one person died of an overdose at Woodstock . . . senselessly. They protested the structured life of their parents, and yet they called Woodstock “An Aquarian Exposition.” “Exposition” is defined as “a setting forth of facts, ideas, etc.; a detailed explanation.” They protested the suffocation of individuality; they got naked and exchanged venereal diseases. Yes indeed, pretty important and effective protesting. Do you get the idea they might have been fooling themselves?

Woodstock simply represents to me a generation’s rejection of a perceived set of values. And under that guise, I continue to participate in “Woodstocking.” We all do. We see clearly (at times) the faults of previous generations, and we steadfastly claim that we’ll never be like that.

What are the values that our generation is rejecting? The half-generation before us has been labelled the “me generation,” and we have tried to distance ourselves from the very threatening notion that we, too,

may someday discover ourselves to be shallow. We have become increasingly convinced of the importance of service as a way of life, and become more keenly aware of personal and societal responsibility . . . we hope.

Teilhard de Chardin writes, in *The Divine Milieu*, "The more I examine myself, the more I discover this psychological truth: that no one lifts his little finger to the smallest task unless moved, however obscurely, by the conviction that he is contributing infinitesimally (at least indirectly) to the building of something definitive." Our generation has embraced this

understanding that we cannot feel comfortable with our lives unless we are contributing to something more important than a boom economy.

And yet we want the "me generation's" material comforts, without the acquisition of such being the driving force in our lives. We want it all—wealth and a clear conscience. We want to have a house dripping with charm, in the neighborhood of our choice, while developing a society that is more sensitive to the homeless. We want to be able to afford any car we want, while we speak out about the disturbing number

of people who are falling below the poverty line. We want to affirm minorities through various programs, unless it means we'll lose out on a lucrative government contract.

We've all been to Woodstock, because we've all rejected the values of previous generations. Our generation has now rejected the "me generation," because of its insensitivity and greed; and we certainly couldn't be part of it, because if we were, we'd then be aware that we're fooling ourselves, too.

Film Criticism

Steel Magnolias

L. Monique Pittman, Andrews University
Student Movement, April 9, 1990

"I'm not crazy, I've just been in a very bad mood for 40 years!" This acid quip of Shirley McClaine's in *Steel Magnolias* typifies that film's witty and yet poignant examination of the nature of life. One of my male friends refused to see the movie because he thought it was "just another female bonding movie." This dismissal is certainly not merited and misses a major theme of the film. *Steel Magnolias* is much more than a female bonding movie; it is an honest look at life, death, and the continuing cycle of human existence.

The movie focuses on the interrelationships of a group of women in a small Southern town. Following a theme that intertwines femininity with life cycles, much of the movie takes place in a typically female location—the beauty shop. Another structural device used to further the theme of cyclical existence and its relation to the female as mother of the earth, is

the passing seasons and holidays. Throughout the movie, we watch as the beauty shop is decorated for Easter, Christmas, and Halloween. The movie opens with an important life change, a marriage that takes place at Easter, and, rather significantly, ends at Easter several years later, with the birth of a child to another character in the story. The sense of continuity in life is very much connected with the female capacity for reproduction, and this idea of renewal seems the focal point and hope of a movie that takes a serious, yet humorous, look at life.

Much of the humor of *Steel Magnolias* lies in the intriguing characters created by the author, who is, curiously enough, male. The eccentric, wealthy widow played by Shirley McClaine, the conscientious mother portrayed by Sally Field, and the busy-body hairdresser depicted by Dolly Parton, are just three of the

women comprising an impressive cast of characters. By highlighting the peccadillos and eccentricities of the various characters in the movie, the writer has enabled his viewer to laugh at and accept his or her own foibles, thus making life a little less difficult.

One of my friends objected that there were no strong or positive male characters in the movie. However, while at first the males seem either obnoxious, slovenly, or lazy, they, like the female characters, develop over the course of the movie and their inner, positive qualities are revealed. For example, Dolly Parton for most of the film has been supporting her husband financially, and yet he does not seem particularly appreciative. However, near the end of the movie, he surprises her by building her a second beauty shop. Her ecstatic response, "I'm a chain!" shows how she recognizes her husband's contribution and importance in her life.

The final scene of the movie asserts the validity of both sexes and caps off the theme of the cyclical nature of life. All the main characters are at a park at an Easter egg hunt.

During the course of the afternoon, Daryl Hannah's character goes into labor, and all the men work together to get her to the hospital, exemplifying their importance as well as the female's in the regenerating of humanity.

Ultimately, *Steel Magnolias* validates human existence, despite its sufferings, and affirms both genders and the ways in which they complement each other. The movie declares that even though men are supposed to be made of steel, as Sally Field's character comments, neither males nor females are of such metal, and as a result, both sexes share the same hardships and must learn to rely on each other to survive. Because it deals with the essence of human reality and is entertaining at the same time, *Steel Magnolias* is well worth seeing.

Driving Miss Creampuff

Craig van Rooyen
Andrews University
Student Movement
April 25, 1990

The cemetery scene in *Driving Miss Daisy* is a representation of the entire movie. The old widow, tending her husband's grave, hands Hope, her black chauffeur, a bunch of flowers to put on a friend's grave two rows over. Hope looks at the rows and rows of headstones, shakes his head and tells her that he can't find the Bauer grave because he can't read. "Well, you know your letters, don't you?" she replies.

"Yes'm."

"Bauer starts with a 'B' and ends with an 'R,'" Miss Daisy coaches. "You'll be able to recognize it now. Go on."

Hope looks doubtful. "Just a 'B' and an 'R'? You ain't worried about what's in the middle?"

Driving Miss Daisy is a 'feel good' movie. It's funny and nostalgic

and sentimental, but it leaves out "what's in the middle." Maybe that's why it won Best Picture. It's safe.

Set in Georgia during the 1950s and 1960s, the movie chronicles the relationship between an old crotchety Jewish woman and her black driver. Miss Daisy, who claims that she's not prejudiced, treats her hired help like children and tells her son to "stop socializing with Episcopalians." Hope accepts Miss Daisy's attitude with a subservient dignity, but takes every opportunity to assert his own manhood and make Miss Daisy face up to who she really is.

When Miss Daisy refuses to allow Hope to stop the car to relieve himself during a long trip, he stops anyway and says, "Miss Daisy, I ain't no child, and I ain't no back of a neck that you look at. I'm a man, and I know when my bladder is full. That's all there is to it." Hope refuses to be defined by the society he lives in and the people he associates with.

When Miss Daisy's synagogue is bombed, she refuses to believe it, claiming that the police are lying. Hope forces her to face reality and deal with her emotions. He tells her a story of sudden loss in his childhood—when he found his uncle hanging from a tree one morning with his hands tied behind his back. Miss Daisy starts to cry.

Of course a bond of friendship develops between the old black driver and the old Jewish woman. It had to happen. It was telegraphed from the first frame. It's a bond between two people who are fighting to maintain dignity in a society that doesn't place much value on old people or black people. The misfit nature of the two is verbalized by a traffic cop, who, after stopping the car to check for registration and Hope's license, turns to his partner and says, "Look at that old nigger and old Jew woman taking off down the road. Ain't that a sorry sight."

The climax of the movie is reached when Miss Daisy, after a fit of senility, gathers herself together,

takes Hope's hand and tells him, "You're the best friend I have, you know."

It's definitely a feel-good moment, but I wonder about "what's in the middle." It's too simple—just like Hope's reading lesson in the cemetery. Miss Daisy's prejudice is too easily resolved. The movie barely touches on the civil rights movement, and never shows Hope in his own environment, away from the comfortable surroundings of his employer. Issues that the country was tearing itself apart over were candy-coated in the relationship between Miss Daisy and Hope.

Of course a "feel-good" movie is not necessarily a bad movie. Parts of *Driving Miss Daisy* were superb. It's worth seeing just for the performances of Jessica Tandy and Morgan Freeman. They play roles that could easily have been overacted and sentimentalized to the point of nausea. Freeman especially succeeds in portraying a dignified human being through the shell of a subservient black who has been socialized to take off his hat while talking to white people and say "Yes, sah," and "No, ma'am." Freeman's body posture and mannerisms say "servant." His eyes say "man."

Technically the movie succeeds too. The lighting is very strong. In many of the indoor scenes directional light streams through venetian blinds and casts strong diagonal shadows on the set and the actors. For the most part the light is warm and yellow, adding to the nostalgia and sentimentality of a bygone era.

There are some interesting camera techniques. Often, when both characters are in the car, Miss Daisy is shown in the rear view mirror. In the scene when she comes out of the synagogue, the camera looks down from her vantage point on Hope at the bottom of the steps with the car door open and waiting. The strong angle emphasizes her superiority complex.

Driving Miss Daisy is a feel-good movie. I definitely felt a lot better

after watching it than when I left the theater after watching "Mississippi Burning." But that doesn't mean that it should have won Best Picture.

From the Hip

Donna Teal

La Sierra

The Criterion

April 19, 1990

“Objection, Your Honor!”
“Overruled!”

Sidebar . . . guilty . . . not guilty.

Robin Weathers loves it all. He wants to object and be sustained, pound on the table, wave his hands wildly in the air and raise his voice.

In his first year out of law school, Weathers is tired of doing research and filing for other lawyers at the firm where he is employed. He wants to be a part of the action and the limelight. He wants a case NOW. In his desperation, Weathers comes up with a scheme to finally be able to practice law and to get the attention of the partners of the firm.

His dream comes true due to a conveniently misplaced memo, and Weathers is given the Torkenson case. The client is being sued for \$50,000 for punching another man. In the scenes that follow, Weathers' brilliance is shown as he gains national media attention and a reputation as "Stormy" Weathers from his not-so-traditional methods. Among these are asking for a hearing concerning the admissibility of a profane word. Although the firm is unsure of Weathers' style of defense, they reluctantly make him a partner, since he brings in business.

The success of the Torkenson case leads Dr. Douglas Benoit to specifically ask for Weathers to defend his case, a certain "no-win" situation. Benoit is accused of murder due to incriminating evidence in his car, although a body was not found.

Weathers accepts, and proceeds to tear at the prosecution using means

such as a caged rabbit, a vibrator, and a hammer. Then he is faced with a revelation and must grapple with the question, "How can the ethical thing not be moral?" His agony in making this decision gives the audience something to think about in their own professions.

Judd Nelson stars as the high-strung Robin Weathers. He gives a riveting performance, and his intensity can be felt on screen. John Hurt plays Dr. Benoit, the seemingly benign English professor of Boston University, who is accused of killing a young woman. Elizabeth Perkins also makes an appearance as Weathers' supporting girlfriend.

The cast works together to make this movie worthwhile to watch. The arrogant Craig Duncan, the outraged Matt Cowens, and Weathers' two fun-loving coworkers make *From the Hip* a movie you won't want to overrule.

Dead Poets Society: A Marrow-Filled Movie

David Valdes

Atlantic Union College

The Lancastrian

October 13, 1989

“I wanted to put to rest all that was not life . . . so that when I had come to the end of my life I would not find that I had not lived.” This quote from *Walden* by Thoreau serves as both the personal creed of Keating, a teacher in *Dead Poets Society*, and a foreshadowing of events to come in this bittersweet movie. Keating, played engagingly by Robin Williams, is an English teacher who inspires the older students at the private Welton School for boys in 1959, and serves as the catalyst towards self-discovery—and tragedy—in the movie. The plot follows the awakening of spirit and self-expression in the boys, especially the characters of roommates Neal and

Todd, with the help of unusual teaching practices by Keating. The lack of orthodoxy results in a clash between the boys' desire for independence and the repressive traditionalism of the parents, which leads to the surprising suicide of one of the characters. The movie, in plot and dialogue, seems to encourage its viewers to "carpe diem" (seize the day) and not only seize it but fill it up with "the marrow of life."

The strong points in this movie are numerous. Leading off, the acting is amazingly strong across the board (with the exception of the character Chris, a debutante). Greatest recognition goes to Robert Sean Leonard who played Neal with candor and appeal, making it nearly impossible not to be interested in his character. He'll get an Oscar nomination for sure, but likely as supporting actor in deference to Robin Williams. Williams himself is warm and remarkably understated in spite of his character's antics, and he manages to retain some of his comic style while exploring his dramatic capabilities. Kudos also to Ethan Hawke who was the essence of vulnerability as Todd and, with four words in the last scene, delivers the most memorable line of the movie, "O Captain, my captain."

Also noteworthy are the cinematography and direction by Peter Weir. The first half of the movie is filmed in the subdued half-light of late fall, intentionally symbolic of the waning days of youth and innocence. As the end of the movie approaches, winter takes over (in the spirit of Shakespearean metaphor) and acts as a harbinger of the sorrow to come. There is plenty to please the senses from the sound of bagpipes (played, at one point, by a lone piper on a mist-shrouded dock) to a scene where a flock of geese, disturbed by the clanging of the school bell, swirl into a scene of raucous boys running down a circular staircase. The images (and the imagery) in this film are impressive.

As with any film, there are flaws

in *Dead Poets*. The teen-romance subplot could have been a gentle portrait of passage to adulthood, but instead came off as the weakest part of the movie, using every cinematic cliché it could: the blonde cheerleader, the football captain, the nerd, et cetera. The director's eye for detail is more knowing in the larger sense than in attention to small things such as a chemistry textbook that is glaringly recognizable as a 1980s text. Lastly, I'm not convinced that the

suicide was necessary, but it did serve to graphically illustrate one of the film's morals.

It is its potent message that sets this movie apart from other recent movies with good acting. The movie would be uncomfortable for parents or educators who firmly believe in subjugating the will of young people to carry on the banner of their own values, unknowingly (or worse yet, knowingly) treading on the dreams of the young for the sake of "what's

best." The grave consequences of such narrowness, as seen in this film, should bother anyone who deals with teenagers, or anyone else for that matter. This movie is destined to be a classic and an Oscar winner. It is likely to be shown at AUC someday by well-meant SA officers who recognize its value, and, sadly, it may even be turned off by zealous educators who will never even recognize the irony of their actions.

Rabbinic Parables for Christian Preaching

Harvey K. McArthur and Robert M. Johnston.
They Also Taught in Parables: Rabbinic Parables From the First Centuries of the Christian Era (Zondervan, 1990).

Reviewed by Sakae Kubo

This book is based on Johnston's 1977 doctoral dissertation, "Parabolic Interpretations Attributed to Tannaim," written under the direction of McArthur at the Hartford Seminary Foundation. Johnston is, at present, chair of the New Testament Department of the Seminary, Andrews University.

The book is divided into two parts. Part One is a selection of 115 rabbinic parables from the Tannaitic period, i.e., before A. D. 220. These are arranged according to the rabbinic work in which they are found. Each parable is supplied with appropriate information: title, teacher, date, and location within the work.

Part Two discusses the parables, analyzing the various parts of their structure, contents, and use. The authors then compare these elements with the parables of Jesus. They devote a chapter each to rabbinic parallels, to the gospel parables, and to values for Christian teaching and preaching. An annotated bibliography provides useful evaluation of relevant literature.

The value of this work is threefold. First, it provides a handy collection of Jewish parables in English with careful documentation regarding the authors of the parables and their dates.

Second, it provides information in this interesting area that a popular audience can appreciate. Almost all the works on this topic are highly technical and written in German or Hebrew.

Third, it provides data that should help us

evaluate the ongoing debate regarding the nature of parables. The highly influential work on the parables of Jesus, by Jülicher, set forth the dicta that the teller of a good parable did not append an explanation to his parable and that there could be only one point of comparison. Consequently, scholars doubted the authenticity of parables where these things had been done. Of course, Jülicher's work was a needed correction to much allegorizing of the parables carried on by scholars and preachers beyond what the Gospels included. But his application of these insights to the parables of Jesus went too far, and sooner or later would have had to be modified. McArthur and Johnston, by providing examples of such usage among Jesus' contemporaries, show that such practice was assumed without the kind of excesses witnessed later in the church fathers.

On the other hand, the phenomenon of recycling or reapplication of parables did take place, and gives room for the application of the parables of Jesus to different circumstances. This is very easy to understand since we find this practice taking place in our own experience.

When considering the value of Jewish parables for preaching, the authors emphasize the dissimilarities between Christian and Jewish parables in application and function, and in their message. The authors have been extremely careful not to make invidious comparisons by making Jesus' parables much superior to those of the rabbis. I believe that they have been too hesitant. But perhaps such judgment should be made by one who is neither Jew nor Christian.

The book is written very clearly, though it seems to me that, perhaps because of limitations on length, it is more concise than it should be and, therefore, discussion is too limited in certain chapters, especially the last.

Sakae Kubo received his Ph. D in New Testament from the University of Chicago. He is the author of many books, including *A Reader's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Zondervan), the standard text in the field.

A Good Word In Season

White, Ellen G., *The Voice in Speech and Song—As Set Forth in the Writings* (Nampa, Idaho: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1988).

Reviewed by Loren Dickinson

Although Ellen White is recognized as having been one of the outstanding women preachers of her time, she is today remembered, not for her sermons, but for her writing.¹ Nevertheless, as *The Voice in Speech and Song* gives evidence, she did have a great deal to say about communicating—speaking, preaching, and performing music.

Even though this volume is focused, the book offers widely ranging subtopics: Christ, the ideal speaker (he was clear, sensitive, and direct); advice on appropriate conversation (it ought to be courteous and elevated); counsel on the use of humor and illustrations (avoid levity, she advised; teachers, “teach by illustration”); and the place of music in home and public services. Prayer and singing, she feels, are coequal acts of worship. Hymns ought to be simple, and musical instruments “should be skillfully handled.”²

The book’s strength lies in what the Pacific Press set out to do—collect into a single volume widely scattered writings (some from manuscripts and letters, plus more than 40 previously published sources) about speech and music. Most selections are clear and straightforward, a characteristic that follows advice Ellen White gives others. A number of quotes are unusually long, in some attempt, presumably, to preserve context.

The edition suffers, not altogether seriously, from editorial decisions made by the press. Subtitles are sometimes misnomers; topics announced are not necessarily what the statements describe; and some inclusions carry only the faintest connection to speech, voice, or music—the subject of the book. Chapter 32, “Faith, A Topic of Conversation,” is a relevant example.³ Also,

many selections are redundant, differing from one another by only minor word changes. Perhaps the more serious problem with *The Voice in Speech and Song* is that there is relatively little attention given to song. Out of 469 pages, only 60 discuss music.

What, then, is helpful in the book? Ellen White does offer a number of useful recommendations that are in tune with contemporary views of speaking and remind one of the value and power of thoughtful communication. Take, for example, her statement on the first page of the book: “We may have knowledge, but unless we know how to use the voice correctly, our work will be a failure.” And even though she doesn’t often take her own advice about illustrations—a weakness—many of her views in this book are self-evidently true. More importantly, and centrally in this book, Ellen White counsels that not only should the voice be trained to sing, pray, and speak distinctly, clearly, and without strain, but one’s speech should exude kindness and purity towards others.

Would the new White compilation make a good classroom text for students in speech or music? Not likely. On the other hand, all teachers of those subjects, as well as all communicators and musicians, would be better for paying attention to Ellen White’s recommendations.

NOTES

1. White, Ellen G., *The Voice in Speech and Song—As Set Forth in the Writings* (Nampa, Idaho: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1988), from the introduction.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 439.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 162.

Loren Dickinson is chair of the communications department at Walla Walla College.

Responses to “A Bold Precarious Faith”

To the Editors: Thank you for the recent *Spectrum* describing “A Bold and Precarious Faith.”

To exist, faith requires a person trusting or believing in another person, idea, or thing. Our denominational search for a bold and progressive faith brings to my mind a picture of ladies and gentlemen sitting at the toll gate to the Golden Gate Bridge, surrounded by architectural drawings, committee reports, and commentaries characterizing the bridge. The group has accumulated facts and knowledge about the bridge based on sound evidence and inspiration. Their knowledge about the Golden Gate Bridge is accurate, though not infallible; in fact, they regularly debate other bridge experts as to the strength, durability, and history of the bridge.

Standing at the toll gate, they share with the world and among themselves a bold and progressive faith in the Golden Gate Bridge. I claim such an expounded faith is an illusion and precarious; it is equivalent to no faith at all in the bridge. They have confused the blueprints and insightful knowledge about the bridge with a progressive faith in the bridge. To have a bold or progressive faith in the Golden Gate Bridge they must choose to walk out on the bridge, entrusting their bodies and minds to the power of the bridge. Progressive or living faith will continue to occur by daily walking across the bridge, experiencing the strength and consistency of the bridge that keeps them from falling into the bay. As they walk onto the bridge they will also find that the toll gate was a mirage.

If these good people choose to daily walk across the bridge, will they cease to seek new knowledge about the bridge? Of course not, for new knowledge will guide and confirm their experience of faith in the bridge. Before they chose to cross the bridge, was their attempt to acquire accurate knowledge about the bridge wasted effort? No, for having correct information about the bridge allowed them to confidently choose to walk out on the bridge. But never should their knowledge of the Golden Gate Bridge be confused with the experience of crossing the bridge.

Ronald E. Reece
Redding, California

To the Editor: DuNesme’s plea (in *Spectrum*, Vol. 20, No. 4) for lay and delegate action at the North American Division level appears to have

had about as much impact at the General Conference Session as *Adventist Review* editor Johnson’s call a few weeks ago for the church to become a “just society.”

The pleas of many North American Division delegates, hat and tin cups in hand, to the rest of the church that it be “fair” (after all, look at all we have done for you) was degrading. That plea was in behalf of letting local “ordained” North American Division elders, chiefly women, to continue to baptize, perform weddings and funeral services, et cetera. The ho-hum response to that concern was a vote of only 42 percent of the delegates, nearly half of whom were from North American Division units, reluctantly acquiescing. Incidentally, only 58 percent of the delegates voted the day before on the “burning issue” of the ordination of women! Were these reciprocal groups? Were they out to lunch—literally or figuratively—or just late in getting back from the Indianapolis zoo?

If it is high time for “North American Division lay members” to act, as DuNesme says, why don’t they? One response to that question is burnout, a very widespread frustration with a poor or non-responsive church structure to amply stated and restated member concerns. A second, painful, response is that lay members are already reacting to these issues in a “catastrophic” way, leaving the North American Division branch of the church in wholesale numbers—some clearly articulating their frustration, others just vaguely uncomfortable with a church that seems not to know or to care that they feel ignored, uninvolved, and disenfranchised.

Now there is an issue that is worth talking about, instead of the nearly endless hot air that arose over redefining the Sabbath or whether the minority (men) in the church should treat the majority (women) as equals before God. Bradford, in his report on the status of the North American Division, gave some numbers that should have been reworked to horrify the delegates and observers. During the previous five years, the North American Division had the least growth of any division. That distressing fact is exponentially magnified, however, by recognizing in his numbers what he did not pause to point out. During the past five years, while 161,785 people were coming into the church (“accessions”), net membership growth was only 66,819. That means that, simultaneously, almost 95,000 were heading for the exits! I would have been somewhat impressed with a church that could recognize this as a problem; more impressed with one that could come to grips with the problem. The little spasm we had last year over “missing members” ain’t gonna do it.

Well, I hope DuNesme and his like don’t weary completely. A new kind of effort needs to begin at the local church level in which constituents are challenged, educated

to the system, trained to move it, and sent out to succeeding constituency and board meetings. Constituents need to be prepared to act effectively, in concert, on their agenda. When that happens, and spreads, then there is some chance that conference-by-conference, union-by-union, and, eventually, division-by-division, changes will take place in which the concern and will of the membership will finally be heard and heeded.

Frank R. Lemon
Beaumont, California

To the Editor: After reading your last issue of *Spectrum*, I felt sad, almost cheated, by the lack of vital and progressive insights into most current problems of Seventh-day Adventism.

The essays you printed are somewhat entertaining to read, but to me they delivered only one message: Any reformation, if it is to come from within the Seventh-day Adventist church, must come from members or lay workers, not from those who are in any capacity tied to the organization of the General Conference.

Dr. Desmond Ford has issued a challenge to debate anybody, anyplace, on the investigative judgment. I have not seen any of our theologians jump at the opportunity as much as they have unanimously disclaimed his studies. I personally believe that you and your organization of the Association of Adventist Forums have the clout to make something like that possible.

John Lee
Cypress, California

To the Editor: Your most recent issue of *Spectrum* (Vol. 20, No. 4) has no less than three items respecting the Adventist Church in what we used to call "the third world." It arrived shortly after I returned from attending the General Conference Session in Indianapolis.

One of the items in *Spectrum* mentioned how long it was that almost no representatives who were themselves African attended the sessions. The last session was well attended by persons from Africa. The leadership of the African divisions is now black. Not only that, the South American and Inter-American divisions are all led by people from those divisions. All of them are growing much faster than the North American Division, which by now has only a little over 10 percent of the world membership.

As a result, the North American Division was out-voted and the proposal to ordain women was resoundingly defeated, by the votes of those we trained to take over their own divisions.

In one sense we can properly congratulate ourselves. A church that was once almost exclusively North American, with the other divisions led by missionaries from North

America, is now led by nationals. But we may find ourselves in the position of a professor who carefully and lovingly trains a student, only to find him taking a view the opposite of his own. Will this be the response of the more articulate part of the North American Division, the part we see leading the fight for the ordination of women? I hope not. We need to remind ourselves that this is not a matter of individual conscience in which each person can act for himself or herself; rather, it is one in which the church as such must act each time it ordains someone.

In some of the arguments I had heard, those in favor of such ordination accuse those who are opposed to it of sin because of their position. Once I heard this said by a pastor of what may be the largest church in North America.

Surely this is an occasion for those who support the ordination of women to examine the position of those opposed to it. They should listen to the arguments of its opponents, and not do as was done to me, cut them off without listening. If after doing so the supporters are still convinced of the rightness of their position, they will be better able to make arguments to meet those of the people who prevailed in Indianapolis.

Kenneth Harvey Hopp
Yucaipa, California

On Abortion

To the Editor: My fellow Sabbathkeeping Adventists: How many lives have been lost in the last couple of decades due to the keeping of the wrong day? How does this compare with the estimated 25 million lives lost due to legalized abortion in the United States since 1973?

From our early childhood we have been indoctrinated to fear what the "Beast" might do to us in the future. We dread the "time of trouble," without realizing that for the unborn, the time of trouble has already arrived, and the "death decree" has already been issued. But while the "Faithful Remnant" is hiding, the dreaded "Beast of Revelation" is fearlessly fighting to save those doomed to destruction. Which is more beastly, I wonder: Keeping the wrong day of the week, or condoning the murder of millions of unborn children? Isn't it time that we removed the blinders from our eyes? Is the "Beast of Revelation" among the "Faithful Remnant"? Yes, as far as the sixth commandment is concerned. Is the "Faithful Remnant" acting in a beastly fashion regarding the abortion issue? Yes.

Is abortion really murder? We need to be consistent here. If we define death as the absence of a heart beat, of brain waves, and physical movement, it follows that if these indicators of human life are present in the unborn, then we are dealing with a human being. If a man kills a pregnant

woman, why do the courts impose two sentences, one for killing the mother and one for killing the unborn?

How will future generations judge us? History will reserve its harshest judgment for our present generation, because, while past generations killed in war, we kill in peace. Former generations killed adults; we target our mass destruction on the unborn. They killed enemies; we annihilate our own children.

Come, fellow Adventists. Let's become God's remnant people, and not merely pharisaical Sabbathkeepers.

Nic Samojluk
Loma Linda, California

On Not Ordaining Women

To the Editor: In the Adventist church we have voted down accepting the ordination of women, the only reason being to maintain diverse cultural integrity. In principle, something tantamount to ordination is allowed where culture finds it aesthetically permissible. We are behaving in typical Adventist fashion. Our decision is diplomatically conservative, yet lenient, maintaining respectability within the church as well as vis-à-vis the public. In political terms, we have made a wise choice in being lukewarm. We've placed ourselves in a position that has the widest appeal both to those who are ordinarily moderate, and to those who are weary of either ultra-conservative or ultraliberal extremism. We offer satisfaction with just a modest investment of patience.

In the physical realm God created us male and female, whose differences are no mere matter. We are by design complementary beings originally set in the universally perfect world of Eden. Our differences are more than skin deep, even as deep as our cerebral functions. We both run, but differently. We both speak, but differently. We both think, but differently. Being believers of one Truth, we

appreciate our form as uniquely divine design. No matter how far we get, we accept that we are sinfully mortal. God has consigned us to a fateful existence in this world, that of men working to bring sustenance from the earth, and of women bearing in labor. We are chained to these conditions.

It is as incorrect to say that we are masters of the physical world as it is to claim that we have sinless characters. In all honesty, true oneness between man and woman can only exist in Eden, not in a sinful world. The conflicting coexistence of good and evil, life and death, beauty and ugliness, order and chaos, remains perpetuated until Christ returns. We can only prepare for him. We cannot precede him.

Isn't the presently perceived higher plane of Eden-like equality between the sexes in truth only a byproduct of technological exploitations? Without microwaves, cars, computers, et cetera, could we enjoy such freedoms? Our sexual equality in the Western world is, in fact, a result of capitalism and the likes of the Bill of Rights. There is no biblical foundation for the equality of men and women as is applicable to the sinful world.

The symbolic gesture of granting women ordination is, in fact, a potentially formidable trap. The integrity of the family unit, as well as adult relationships, are critically dependent on how we proceed with this issue. Jesus did not ordain women for fundamental reasons, definitely not culturally diplomatic ones. If we ordain women, we might seem to have freed ourselves from our allotted roles and achieved a more heavenly lifestyle. Actually, we would only further publicize our Laodicean nakedness. A pure equality between man and woman under sin is simply unattainable. If it is permissible to translate spiritual equality into physical dimensions in a sinful world, there remains little to deny homosexuality, polygamy, or whatever else, since these are logical extensions of such a principle.

The ordination of women will not speed the message. Until Jesus returns, we must not allow wealth and humanistic knowledge tempt us to define ourselves on this earth as if we were supernatural beings not bound to a finite and evil globe.

Oliver Wellington
Laurel, Maryland

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