

# Spectrum

The Journal of the Association of Adventist Forums

## The Road To Utrecht

CHURCH LEADERS AIM FOR MORE  
POWER AT THE 1995 GC SESSION

LET NORTH AMERICA DECIDE  
WHETHER TO ORDAIN WOMEN

WE ACCEPT WOMEN SOLDIERS, WHY  
NOT ORDAIN WOMEN PASTORS?

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UTRECHT '95

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# Spectrum

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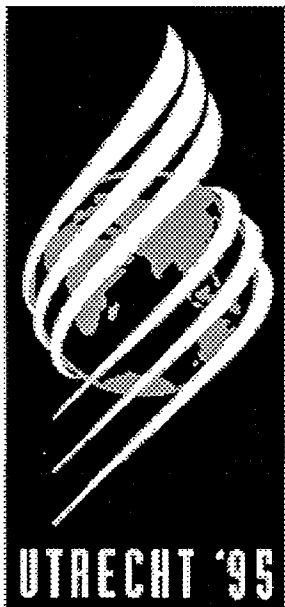
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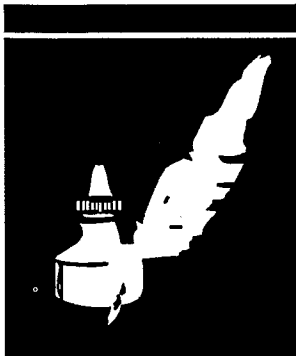
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Adapted from the official logo of the 1995 General Conference Session.





# Money, Membership, And Mission

At the end of the 20th century, the central drama of the General Conference Session is the tension between North America and the rest of the world church; between North America's money and the rest of the world's overwhelming membership. We can all hope that an even greater drama will transpire—the resolving of this tension through commitment to a common mission.

North America, the historic origin of the denomination, now constitutes less than 10 percent of the membership in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The four divisions from Africa and Latin America will come to the General Conference Session with more than 5 million members (Inter-America alone having more than 1.5 million). The Far Eastern Division includes another 1 million members. North America, with something over 800,000 Adventists, is now only the sixth largest division in the church.

At the same time, North American members provide over 75 percent of the world church's annual income. Even with a weakened dollar, all but two or three of the world divisions depend on appropriations from the General Conference, two-thirds of which comes from North American Adventists.

Until five years ago, North America dominated General Conference Sessions. The 1990 General Conference Session in Indianapolis was the first where North American delegates acted like a minority, asking for special consideration. Indianapolis was the first time North Americans addressed other delegates at the Session with words like "beg," "plead," and "please allow." In 1990, the world responded by permitting North America to authorize women pastors to perform marriages and baptisms. (However, one of the reasons delegates did not return Neal Wilson to the General Conference presidency was their irritation at his arranging for them to consider, let alone approve, this

concession to North America.)

At the upcoming 1995 General Conference Session, delegates from North America and the world divisions will probably disagree again. The two topics highlighted in this issue of *Spectrum* may well force a confrontation between membership and money.

With regard to increasing authority of higher over lower jurisdictions, delegates from the large world divisions will be inclined to support greater authority for a General Conference they anticipate dominating in the near future. Conversely, the North American Division will probably oppose such proposals, wanting to protect as much independence as possible for its less than 10 percent of the world membership.

With respect to divisions being allowed to decide for themselves when to ordain women, world divisions will very likely insist on denominational uniformity. If the General Conference Session in Utrecht should vote to allow divisions autonomy on the issue of women's ordination, it will be primarily because representatives of the world divisions have become convinced that they must avoid discouraging North America; must not alienate North American Adventists to the point that they decrease their 75 percent contribution to the world church's income.

Ideally, of course, agreement on these and other issues will come in Utrecht through conversation among fellow believers. To encourage such discussion, denominational leadership is organizing, for the first time, six formal discussion groups on how to study the Bible and how to advocate moral public policies concerning religious freedom and tobacco. We can—we must—hope that in such moments of fellowship and prayer, delegates will discover that they share commitment to a common mission, the genuine wellspring of common action.

—Roy Branson



# Illness As A Refuge And Strength

A Princeton University study explores Ellen White's illness as a spiritual resource.

by Kathleen M. Joyce

ELLEN WHITE WAS NINE YEARS OLD WHEN HER childhood came to an end. Walking home from school one day with her twin sister, Elizabeth, she was knocked unconscious when a stone, thrown by an angry classmate, struck her in the face. She remained unconscious for nearly three weeks, and although she eventually recovered from the injury, she never returned to the life she knew before. In the aftermath of what she later referred to as her "misfortune," she was burdened with a new sense of vulnerability, and began anxiously to contemplate her own death. Worried that she might die spiritually unprepared to enter Christ's kingdom, she prayed earnestly for some sign from God that her sins were forgiven.

The crisis of faith caused by her injury marked the beginning of a spiritual journey that

spanned nearly eight decades and earned Ellen White a place in the religious history of 19th-century America. Her work as co-founder and prophet of the Seventh-day Adventist Church has received less attention from historians than that of other American sectarian leaders, but it is no less significant. During the half-century that she led the church, White directed its expansion into an international denomination and laid the foundation for today's extensive network of church-sponsored schools and healthcare facilities. Even more important, she was, and is, the spiritual center of the church, guiding the lives of its 8 million members through her prophetic writings.

In view of White's accomplishments, her distinctiveness as a woman religious leader, and the continued strength of the church she founded, the dearth of scholarly studies of her life is somewhat surprising. Overlooked or perhaps underestimated by historians, the writing of White's life has been left primarily to faithful followers and disillusioned former church members who for decades have been engaged in a battle over the authenticity of her

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*Kathleen Joyce, doctoral candidate in American religious history at Princeton University, has accepted the position of assistant professor of religious studies at Duke University, beginning in the fall of 1995. This article is adapted from a presentation Joyce made at the American Academy of Religion, mid-Atlantic Region meeting, 1994.*

prophetic claims. Prophet or plagiarist, visionary or sadly deceived epileptic, passive vessel or woman of calculating ambition, these are the identities typically attributed to White. Even the best studies, those by Ronald Numbers and Jonathan Butler, have failed to set aside entirely the questions of character from which White, even in death, seems unable to escape.<sup>1</sup>

I would like to suggest a more constructive approach to the study of White's life. Ellen White became a force in the American Adventist movement when she was only 17 years old, she lived and led the Adventist faithful for a full three score and ten years beyond that. How do we account for her success and longevity as a religious leader? This is the question, I believe, with which anyone who seeks to understand White's life must begin.

Today I would like to begin to answer that question by arguing that White's experience and use of illness was critical to her success as a religious leader, providing her with a way to disarm her critics and to renew herself spiritually. Illness was the leitmotif of White's life, the theme that she returns to again and again in her autobiographical narratives and her personal correspondence, and her experience of it was closely tied to her experience of God. This connection is made quite explicitly in the story of her childhood injury with which I began today, and that first life crisis served as the prototype for all the ones that followed.

I should note here that White was by no means unique in the way illness and religious faith were joined in her life. Read the stories of the saints and prophets of Christian history and you will see how closely her experience resembled those of others who went before her. There is then, a general point to be made about the relationship between illness and religious experience, particularly conversion experiences, which should not be lost in the discussion of White.

At the same time, however, both the expe-

rience of illness and the experience of faith are historical forms that need to be examined against the backdrop of a specific social and cultural setting; to make a universal claim is to lose sight of the distinct character of each experience. In White's case, that setting was 19th-century America, and her gender played a decisive role in determining how she experienced faith and sickness in that historical moment.

## Freedom Through Frailty

It is possible that it was clear to Ellen White and her peers what society expected of them as women, wives, and mothers, but for those who have tried, a century later, to recapture a sense of that time, the expectations for and the reality of Victorian womanhood seem much less clear. Closing the gap between myth and reality, perception and practice, is difficult for many reasons, not the least of which is that there never was any such entity as *the Victorian Woman* who conformed to the ideal type promoted in prescriptive literature for women.

What is important, however, is that regardless of how individual women lived, there did exist in middle-class Victorian America some assumptions about how a virtuous woman, loyal wife, and nurturing mother should behave. Some of these assumptions still exist 150 years later, but in Ellen White's lifetime the margin of acceptable deviation was much more limited than it has been in the final decades of the 20th century. Ellen White and her contemporaries were aware of the cost of deviation, and her writings suggest that she made selective use of this Victorian model as she shaped her public image.

White's religious calling put her in a difficult position. On the one hand, she was no social radical; her views on the role of women in society were strictly traditional. Yet on the

other hand, her leadership position forced her to live a life that was quite at odds with her conservative social convictions. Illness, however, offered White a solution to the problem this conflict posed. By emphasizing her physical weakness, she was able to soften her image and deflect potential criticism of her public activities.

White's delicate constitution was one of her trademarks—the characteristic that drew attention to both her life of prophetic sacrifice and her appropriately feminine frailty. Indeed, it is one of the ironies of her life that although she made health reform the centerpiece of her own religious crusade, she never tried to hide her health problems from those around her. Her autobiographies offer an endless litany of the health crises and physical suffering she endured, from attacks of “nervous prostration” to ailments of the respiratory and digestive system so debilitating that she feared for her life.

White's personal correspondence tells much the same story. She portrays herself consistently as a weak, chronically ill woman whose life has been spared only because of the great work God expects of her. Well after her career as a health reformer was established, White still portrayed herself as a delicate woman whose life was easily and often endangered by illnesses of every variety.

When compared to the methods used by other health reformers of the period, White's willingness to emphasize her ill health seems all the more curious. For most evangelists of health, their own personal conversion to a life free of sickness was an essential part of their message, but Ellen White was never consistent in this respect.<sup>2</sup> She did recommend specific hygienic practices and therapeutic treatments that had been beneficial to her and which she understood to be divinely sanctioned, but she did not let her role as health advocate and prophet detract from the continuing saga of her physical maladies. In fact, she seems to

have embraced the role of invalid.

In the eyes of her followers, White's physical frailty seemed only to confirm their belief that her prophetic gifts were from God. This remains true even today. A pamphlet issued by the Seventh-day Adventist Church in 1983, drawing on a theme found in most sympathetic biographies of her, describes White's rise to prophecy in a chapter entitled, “The Weakest of the Weak: God's Third Choice.” In this chapter, one of White's first visions is described. “Suddenly the Holy Spirit rested upon her, and she was taken off in a vision in a manner reminiscent of the holy prophets of Scripture. She was 17 years old, in ill health, and weighed about 80 pounds.”<sup>3</sup>

While this emphasis on the prophet's youth, weakness, and appearance of being ill suited to the prophetic task is not unique to her story, it is unusual for this theme to follow, as it did Ellen White, the prophet into maturity. Indeed, the persistence of this theme suggests that White and her biographers have been concerned with something more than illustrating God's ability to achieve great works through even the weakest of vessels. Her frailty, the visions over which she had no control, her unwillingness, especially in the early years, to accept a leadership position that required her to be anything more than God's amanuensis,

Ellen White, at age 78, giving the principal address at the dedication services of Loma Linda Sanitarium, 1906.



reveal a particularly feminine pattern of religious prophecy. It was a pattern that accommodated the need for women to be servants rather than masters, and served to reinforce the comforting perception of women as passive vessels through whom God and men achieved great works. White was in truth anything but passive, but she used these cultural expectations to her advantage. At some level she recognized that by wearing her ill health as a badge of femininity, she could gain the freedom to become the religious leader that she believed God had called her to be.

## Confidence From Convalescence

White's illnesses might have served an other function as well. While her health problems guarded her from some of the criticism she might otherwise have encountered, they also provided her with a refuge to which she could flee when she felt her responsibilities were becoming too much for her. The

Ellen White, in health reform "short" skirt and pants, in front of the Health Reform Institute, Battle Creek, Michigan, in the mid-1870s.



way she described her emotional and physical state after her first call to preach the Adventist message illustrates this dual function: "After I came out of this vision I was exceedingly troubled. . . . My health was so poor that I was in constant bodily suffering, and to all appearance had but a short time to live."<sup>4</sup>

In this passage Ellen White portrays herself as a reluctant prophet, a frail woman overcome by what God had made known to her and doubtful of her ability to fulfill her service to God. Yet she did not stand cowering behind the shield of her ill health for long. Those first uncertain months in which she was consumed by bodily suffering appear to have been an essential time of preparation for White, and she emerged from them with new strength and confidence. In her autobiography, *Life Sketches*, White described what happened when she finally ventured out to bring the adventist message to a new community.

For three months my throat and lungs had been so diseased that I could talk but little, and that in a low and husky tone. On this occasion I stood up in meeting and commenced to speak in a whisper. I continued thus for about five minutes, when the soreness and obstruction left me, my voice became clear and strong, and I spoke with perfect ease and freedom for nearly two hours.<sup>5</sup>

White attributed this miraculous healing to the work of God, but it is possible too that her voice grew stronger as her comfort with her prophetic calling increased.

Just as her physical problems eased the transition to her new life by allowing White to move into the prophetic role gradually, her frailty also helped her to cope with challenges to her authority once she became an Adventist leader. In *Life Sketches*, she describes one of these challenges and her response to it. Theological differences were dividing the community, and White felt the weight of the brewing conflict acutely, writing later that "these strange differences of opinion rolled a heavy weight upon me. I saw that many errors were being



presented as truth. It seemed to me that God was dishonored. Great grief passed on my spirits, and I fainted under the burden. Some feared that I was dying.”<sup>6</sup>

She did not die, however, but instead received a vision compelling enough to quell the controversy. “The light of heaven then rested upon me, and I was soon lost to earthly things. . . . I was bidden to tell them that they should yield their errors, and unite upon the truth of the third angel’s message. Our meeting closed triumphantly. Truth gained the victory.”<sup>7</sup>

## Recovery as Spiritual Ritual

With the help of visions, fainting spells, and frequent illnesses, truth was often able to gain the victory when Ellen White was faced with a difficult situation. This is not to suggest that White’s illnesses were simply a tool that she used to manipulate people and situations. Real health problems and, I would argue, real faith were involved; White simply put them to use in a way that profited her.

To argue, therefore, that White’s strategic use of illness was one of the secrets of her success as a religious leader is not to exclude the possibility that faith itself played a role. White’s turn to illness during times of crisis was not just an effective strategy, it was also an essential spiritual exercise. Let me explain by returning again to the story of her childhood injury.

It is clear from her account that in addition to the effect the accident had on her physically, it also had important emotional and spiritual consequences. Sick, anxious, and socially isolated, she turned to God for strength and support. “I sought the Lord earnestly,” she wrote years later. “I believed that Jesus did love even me.” This admission follows immediately her quite detailed description of the rejection she suffered after her facial injuries altered her appearance.

Many times I was made to feel deeply my misfortune. With wounded pride, mortified at myself, I have found a lonely spot to think over the trials I was doomed to bear daily. My life was often miserable, for my feelings were keenly sensitive. I could not, like my twin sister, weep out my feelings. My heart seemed so heavy, and ached as though it would break, yet I could not shed a tear. . . . How changeable the friendship of my young companions. A pretty face, dress, or good looks, are much thought of. But let misfortune take some of these away, and the friendship is broken.

What distinguishes this story from others that White tells in her autobiography is the depth of emotion that her words convey and the fact that much of the account doesn’t serve an obvious purpose. So much of her autobiography is intended either to add to her stature as a religious leader or to help to establish her spiritual credentials that passages like this one stand out from the rest simply because they don’t follow the traditional script.

White’s account of the accident and its aftermath is almost certainly an exaggeration, but this fact in itself is revealing. Why does she tell the story as she does? Why does she use it to open her autobiographies when she could have begun with a dramatic account of the visions that came to her just eight years later? I believe that White’s dramatic presentation of the incident is not just another example of her tendency to distort the truth, but instead a quite important indication of how profoundly the experience affected her. The long period of convalescence that followed White’s childhood injury was the period of her first great religious awakening, and her experience of God during this period laid the foundation for the religious life that followed.

Subsequent experiences—her introduction to William Miller’s teachings, her first visions—were more directly relevant to White’s career as an Adventist leader, but that first spiritual awakening continued to have a

pronounced effect on her inner life. As an adult, illness allowed White to drink again from the spiritual well she had discovered as a child.

## Strength Out of Sickness

Illness was White's spiritual refuge and strength, and as such it was critical to her success as a religious leader. As a refuge, it protected her from criticism and served as a haven to which she could return when events seemed to move beyond her control. At a very fundamental level, it was also the source of her spiritual strength, for it both reminded her of her first decisive experience of faith and freed her to do the work she believed she was called to do.

By arguing that illness had both strategic and spiritual importance to White, I have tried also to suggest a more constructive approach to the study of her life. White was a woman awash in contradictions, some of them quite troubling, that her biographers, both sympathetic and hostile, have tried to resolve. They have done so, for the most part, by denying some parts of her story and embellishing others. The result has been a body of literature that paints White in the extremes. These works fail to satisfy not only because they distort the facts of her life but also because they do not capture its complexity. It is the ambiguity of White's life, its both/and quality, that makes it a life worth writing and reading. Central to this ambiguity, I have argued, is the experience of illness that permitted Ellen White to become and remain an honored prophet to her people.

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### NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. See Ronald Numbers, *Prophetess of Health* (New York: Harper & Row, 1976; Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1992) and Jonathan Butler, "Prophecy, Gender, and Culture: Ellen Gould Harmon [White] and the Roots of Seventh-day Adventism" *Religion and American Culture* 1:1 (Winter 1991): pp. 3-29.

2. The most relevant examples are Mary Gove Nichols and Mary Baker Eddy, both of whom were contemporaries of White. Nichols adopted women's health as her cause and, over the course of her career, promoted dress and dietary reform, hydropathy, and sexual restraint as the keys to a healthy life. Nichols' life was not entirely free of sickness as an adult, but she treated her illnesses as minor setbacks to what was in general a forward march toward health and wholeness.

Eddy's experience is also instructive. Though not technically a health reformer, she did claim to know how to free people from disease. Eddy explained the illnesses that continued to plague her even after she had made her discovery of Christian Science in one of two ways. When she could, she denied their existence. If this didn't work, she attributed them to the work of malicious animal magnetism.

3. Roger W. Coon, *A Gift of Light* (Hagerstown, Md.: Review and Herald Publishing Company, 1983), p. 23.

4. Ellen White, *Life Sketches of Ellen G. White* (Boise, Idaho: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1915), p. 69.

5. *Ibid.*, pp. 72, 73.

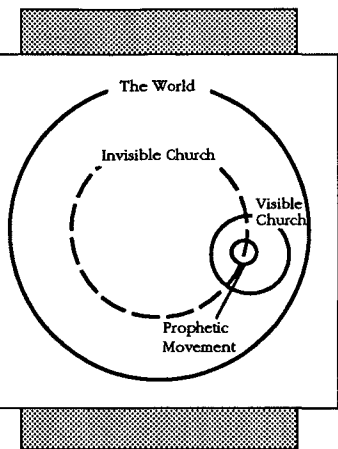
6. *Ibid.*, p. 111.

7. *Ibid.*

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# Remnant in Crisis And a Second Disappointment

James Londis' appreciation of Jack Provonsha's thought.



by James Londis

FOR ADVENTISTS ON OCTOBER 23, 1844, THE Great Disappointment flowed from the non-appearance of Jesus Christ. Out of that disappointment a movement with a “remnant church” theology was born, built upon the conviction that the sanctuary in heaven played a key role in the finishing of Christ’s “atonement” for sin.

For Adventists 150 years later, their disappointment is concerned about the relevance and power of the “remnant” theology, especially in relation to the atonement and sanctuary. His sense that this is the case prompted Jack W. Provonsha to write *A Remnant in Crisis* (Review and Herald, 1993), the summary of his lifelong theological effort to keep this second disappointment from driving a whole generation of well-educated, thoughtful Adventists out of the church. In Provonsha’s view, the church can ill afford the conse-

quences of such a second disappointment, for it is our faith in the distinctiveness of Adventist theology on the atonement that is the core of our continuing passion to preach the three angels’ messages.

One confusing aftermath of this second disappointment is the conflicting theologies of the atonement rampant in contemporary Adventism, most of which, Provonsha feels, inadequately attempt to preserve Adventism’s unique historical role as the “remnant.” These perspectives on the atonement are either unsophisticated or misguided, leaving many church members bewildered about the special historical character and mission of Seventh-day Adventists.

To begin with, Provonsha takes issue with those who see at Calvary an innocent person dying for guilty ones, an injustice over which we should rejoice. This is only a legal metaphor, borrowed from the Roman practice of permitting the substitution of an innocent person for the guilty. Roman law was faulty in allowing an innocent person to pay the penalty for a guilty one. Only in civil law does

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present-day jurisprudence recognize the substitutionary principle. Christ was our substitute, not because of faulty Roman jurisprudence but because he is our alter ego in the heavenly sanctuary. There he is our substitute, not on the cross. Because human justice is not divine justice, God satisfies justice on his terms, not ours. "He suits the punishment to the criminal rather than to the crime" (p. 119 [this and subsequent references are from *A Remnant in Crisis*]).

## The Investigative Judgment As a Referendum on God

This last notion is crucial, for it means that "The Eternal Judge, who is by nature merciful, does what is *appropriate* rather than meting out what is *deserved*, and what is appropriate for the truly penitent sinner is forgiveness" (ibid.). It would be unjust for God to forgive unrepentant sinners. However, it is just for God—who reads the heart—to forgive repentant sinners. Divinity needs no cross to make such forgiveness possible.

God's notion of "distributive justice" is not "an eye for an eye" but "to each his or her own." Here the Adventist synthesis is needed. According to Provonsha, the reason forensic theology could never make the theory of atonement "come out whole" or sound coherent, is that the doctrine of the "investigative judgment" was missing. (This is not to be confused with the "pre-Advent" judgment that occurs only in the mind of God, who determines those who are truly in Christ.)

What Provonsha refers to is the judgment on God being done by the universe, a judgment not finished until the end of the millennium. The hour of God's judgment in Revelation 14 is not the hour when God judges, but the hour when God is judged! Thus, the investigative judgment helps reveal the truth about God, even as the cross did. That is how the sanctu-

ary contributes to the atonement.

As he moves toward the end of his argument, Provonsha distinguishes between *chronos* and *kairos*, the two Greek words for time. *Kairos* is "event time," a subjective time of opportunity and fulfillment, rather than objective, chronological, or "clock" time. The birth of Jesus was *kairos* time, when the whole of history or all of *chronos* was at stake, when the meaning of all time hung in the balance.

The cross was also a *kairos* moment that pulled back the curtain and revealed what has been true for millennia within a *chronos* perspective—that God has suffered over sin. Nothing changed on the cross other than our knowledge and trust of God due to that divine self-revelation.

The Day of Atonement is like this as well. It has happened over a sweep of time rather than at one moment. One monumental legal event is not the story. The crucifixion is crucial, but so is our High Priest's continuing ministry in the heavenly sanctuary. Satan's rebellion against God is given sufficient time "to unmask itself" (p. 130). Once the universe sees the truth about the deceiver, the justice and mercy of God will be forever placed beyond question.

In this way, Provonsha projects the atonement symbolized by the earthly sanctuary service into the sweep of history. *Chronos* and *kairos* are both figuratively in the service itself, which symbolizes the Great Controversy from beginning to end.

To repeat, the essence of traditional Adventism, rather than concentrating on one, even the main, event by itself, "wholistically" stressed that at-one-ment took time, time punctuated by significant events. This is what we have meant by Christ's continuing ministry on the "day" of atonement. The outer camp, the court, the holy place, and the Most Holy Place progression is a cosmic reality (p. 133).

For this reason, Provonsha is not worried about the exegetical issues in Daniel 7-9. What

is critical is that our Millerite ancestors were convinced that 1843-1844 was the time, and what they believed and did about it is more important than what Daniel may or may not have had in mind. History rather than exegesis resolves the issue.

Provonsha's buttresses this historical (rather than exegetical) defense of 1844 by arguing that the mid-19th century "literally marked the occasion of the beginning of the final separation of the two kingdoms" (p. 135). He suggests that a phenomenological treatment of 19th-century events supports the thesis that the conclusive struggle between good and evil was beginning, and the final phase of unveiling God's kingdom had begun. Provonsha assumes that the authenticity of the final prophetic movement's message is partly discerned in its interpretation of history. Since Adventist historical interpretation based on *The Great Controversy* is unique, it gives us the "meaning of the play" in a way others will accept.

He suggests that the Great Controversy is archetypal and may be seen in pre- and non-Christian cultures and religions. Adventists see the concept as an undercurrent in the Bible and Ellen White's Conflict of the Ages Series, and believe that the book *The Great Controversy* is the key to comprehending the three angels' messages. It paints a cosmic perspective with apocalyptic materials. We must recognize that our best guesses about it, especially in the details, are like crude, impressionistic brush strokes in an incomplete painting.

Satan's alternative to the divine order is transparent: "Human autonomy and self-sufficiency apart from God versus trustful dependence on God constitute the two sides in the great controversy" (p. 140). Ellen White defines the issue in terms of obedience or disobedience to God's law as well as two competing notions of freedom. "Doing one's own thing" is the root of a sinful autonomy.

"Absolute autonomy inevitably leads to tyranny. As individual freedoms compete for power, a struggle for dominance develops in which those with the greatest strength, power, ability (or weaponry), climb to the top of the heap" (p. 143).

One way (this reviewer gets the impression it is the primary way) God supports his side of the Great Controversy is through self-disclosure. In the words and life of Jesus the essential contrast of the two kingdoms is obvious. The whole of history may be seen as a struggle between self-serving dominance and self-sacrificing love. All of this is to argue that

something of great significance to the great controversy between Christ and Satan was taking place here on earth around the middle of the nineteenth century. The precise date—1844—may be incidental, but it is at least interesting that the completion of Charles Darwin's major essay; the birth of the philosophic father of social Darwinism, Friedrich Nietzsche; and the call of an American movement to be an instrument in the hands of God to finish His work all took place in that year. (It was a vintage year!) (p. 152)

## Finishing the Work as Catalyzing Controversy

Jesus highlighted the essential difference between the two kingdoms. "Freedom as self-sufficiency leads to tyranny and self-destruction. Freedom under God leads to eternal life" (p. 145). It seems reasonable to Provonsha—as indicated in Jesus' parables—that the world will eventually reach the point of final polarization when the two groups are clearly identified and at war with each other. This is his understanding of the "finishing of the work" SDAs talk about so much, a viewpoint that may surprise some. The "work" is not finished in either geographics (every country is entered with the message) or demographics (every person hears the message). It

is finished when good and evil are clearly delineated. For this reason, no one can predict the time of Christ's return.

To Provonsha, it does "not seem unwarranted to refer to the birth of [the Advent] movement in such a setting as coterminous with the passage of Christ into the Holy of Holies in heaven, the final progression of earth's 'day' of at-one-ment" (p. 152). These events are part of the great "final contrast" between good and evil, the beginning of the disclosure of the falsity of Satan's kingdom.

On this unique Adventist perspective, at-one-ment takes the whole of time to work itself out (*chronos*), from the original rebellion in heaven until the final consummation and restoration. There are "vertical events" (*kairos*) along the way (the Jesus-event being pre-eminent) that "further the progression of the revelation of the truth about God and His kingdom that is so essential to the reuniting of the separated" (p. 130). Thus, the prophetic movement's message is a development, a synthesis of truth that has been long on the way. This is why Christ's continuing atone-ment ministry in heaven virtually defined the Advent movement. To preserve our continuities with the past while we change and grow, we must take this concept seriously and see the doctrine's essential truth underneath its conceptual clothes.

Adventism has taught that the faithful are expected to come out of "Babylon" during the end time. Those who are still in "the world" along with those still in the fallen churches, will join the Adventist Church remnant. Conversions during this period will be "rapid" and surprise the church. Provonsha suggests a

variation of this understanding: "But what if the final remnant is mainly a quality of life and faith rather than an established institution?" (p. 163). In other words, at the end, we may not have a formal church—there will be no time. The final remnant gathering may be broader and more extensive than any formal church, as such, could possibly organize, however successful its proselytizing strategies. The Adventist Church may lose itself in something bigger than itself. "The proleptic remnant may one day be absorbed into the final remnant that it has played such an important part in bringing into being" (*ibid.*). It is to make known God's character. "The

prophetic movement is called to *be* as well as to *say*. . . . God is to be revealed *in* as well as *by* His called people!" (p. 164).

Provonsha borrows an illustration from physics. It is possible to cool water below the freezing point without its freezing. Such water should be free of impurities—preferably

distilled—and one must handle it with some care. But it can be done. "However, super-cooled water is very unstable. All that is required is that someone drop a small piece (or nidus) of ice into the water, and very quickly ice crystals will begin to form, and in a short time the liquid water will become solid ice" (pp. 164, 165). This may be the role of the prophetic movement. It is a "catalyst" in an unstable world to "crystallize" the controversy.

People will no doubt be coming from everywhere, as they do when any crisis is captured in media, and will line up quickly over the issues. When people do come out for God, where will they turn for support and

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*A Remnant in Crisis will certainly stimulate debate about those things that truly do matter most to a denomination that believes it exists for some divine purpose, and not just as some "accident" of history.*

fellowship? Those who can fill that need are “sealed in their foreheads” and they “deliver an unmistakable picture of the truth about God and His way” (ibid.).

“What God is waiting for during this time of holding back the winds, then, is for the right people to find their way to all the right places of earth. The establishment of that kind of presence is what constitutes the ‘finishing of the work’” (p. 165). This requires translating the good news into all languages, including the languages of science, art, and commerce. *People* could mean “people groups.” Only God knows when the time is right to allow the storm to break.

## Provonsha’s Remnant Is Only Partly Prophetic

Over the years, those who have either sat in Provonsha’s Sabbath school class or heard class lectures at Loma Linda are acquainted with many of these proposals, brought together in writing for the first time. It is a revered teacher’s legacy to his students and to the larger church that deserves a careful and impartial hearing. I found myself stimulated, challenged, and heartened by much of what the book contains. It is destined to become a classic example of how to do theology in a contemporary context, while affirming the fundamental validity of our historic positions. It helps provide a rational foundation for remaining a Seventh-day Adventist during a time when many feel Adventism is intellectually poor, if not bankrupt.

Some questions that remain are: Does the crisis in Adventism need to be enlarged beyond the theological one Provonsha describes? Is this doctrine of the atonement too dismissive of the richness of a forensic dimension? Can the fortuitous nature of certain 19th-century events really undergird—even partially—a defense of the special historical role of Ad-

ventism?

When Provonsha prefers to describe Adventism as a “prophetic movement” rather than “the remnant,” he says that what really distinguishes a prophet is his or her message, thus justifying the importance of the Adventist theological synthesis. This strikes me as only half a loaf. Anyone who has read Abraham Heschel on the prophets cannot forget the importance of the prophetic *passion*, the sense of God’s demands on his people, the importance of justice, mercy, and faith. All those past decades when the Advent people felt “special” and believed they had a unique message, they often tolerated racial and gender injustice within the church and said or did little to protest it in the larger culture. Neither has much been said or done about the systemic perpetuation of poverty, especially among children and women, both high priorities for the prophets.

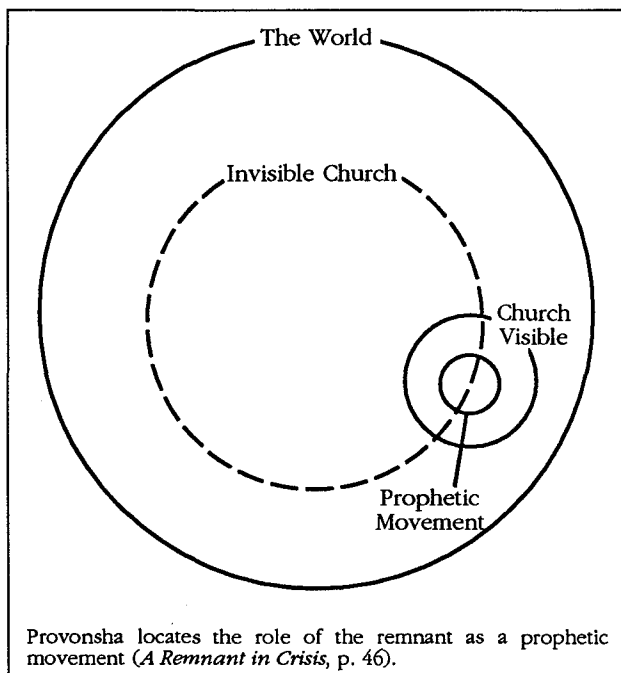
Provonsha knows all this, but fails to include it in his discussion. Before I read his analysis of the Adventist crisis, I had just finished *Resident Aliens*, a book about the crisis facing the larger Christian church—this one by Stanley Hauerwas and William Willimon of Duke University. It adds to Provonsha’s analysis by arguing that the church’s attempt to make its theology “relevant” or update it, as important as that may be for the preaching of the gospel, misses the mark when it comes to addressing the crisis of the church.

The real failure of the church is not to present its theology with greater sophistication (as Paul Tillich and others assumed), but to truly be the people of God, to sense the radical nature of the call to be pilgrims in this world, resident aliens through whom the Spirit creates a community unlike any other in history. Such a church would challenge most—if not all—the assumptions of the world and thereby incur its hostility. Its members would have learned how to help people mature in Christ, whether they were narcissistic, alco-

holic, racist, sexist, materialistic, power hungry, or lustful. The integrity of such a community would stand in constant judgment on all other communities, most especially the nation state. The loyalties evoked by the church would eclipse the loyalties all of us feel toward any and all competitors, whether race or culture or even family.

While Provonsha tends to characterize the crisis facing Adventism in epistemological/theological terms (we must redefine ourselves and recognize our special role as a prophetic movement), Willimon and Hauerwas identify the crisis of the larger church (Provonsha's invisible remnant, if you please) in moral and spiritual terms. More than redefining our theology, they ask that we be true to the theology that defines us. They suggest that the reason the church is losing members is that it has failed to be the church.

I suspect that underneath the theological confusion in Adventism there is also a confusion over identity of character. While we unquestionably need to rethink our theological apparatus (and Provonsha has surely helped us do that), we also share most profoundly in the crisis of the remnant's character. I wish



Provonsha had also addressed this issue. We need to recognize that while we may have failed rationally and theologically (our doctrines do not always speak powerfully to us and help us sense our uniqueness), we have also failed spiritually (we have not become the prophetic movement in our courage and moral commitments). In other words, while our failure to deal with modernity is a problem, a more critical challenge may be our failure to be the people of God, to be risk-takers who embrace the radical nature of God's call to us to be resident aliens in a world that must of necessity come to reject us as it did our Lord. As one recent writer in the *Adventist Review* put it: "Our young people are over entertained and under challenged" (as well as misinformed and theologically confused, I might add).

## Provonsha's Atonement Utterly Abandons the Forensic Model

Provonsha's discussion of the atonement took me back to the battles that occurred between Roy Allen Anderson and M. L. Andreasen over the views expressed (or not expressed) in *Questions on Doctrines*, our attempt to explain our theology to the evangelical Christians associated with Drs. Barnhouse and Martin.

Andreasen accused *Questions on Doctrines* of abandoning historic Adventism, when it appeared to minimize the importance of Ellen White's phrase "the final atonement" in relation to the high priestly ministry of Jesus in the heavenly sanctuary. The book suggested that the "final atonement" referred to Christ's heavenly ministry of applying the "benefits" of the atonement achieved on the cross. This approach was seen as a "sell-out" of Adventism in favor of an evangelical, reformed, more forensic model of salvation. This debate later included Robert Brinsmead (who stood on both sides of the issue at different times) and



Geoffrey Paxton, the author of *The Shaking of Adventism*.

For the evangelicals, the cross is all that is needed for human beings to be “right” with or “justified” by God in Christ. Anything added to the cross constitutes “works” righteousness. Christ was our substitute “once and for all.” On the cross, God’s victory over sin was final and complete.

Adventist theologians like Heppenstall and Anderson wanted to affirm the centrality of the forensic value of the cross (Christ was our “legal” substitute) for Adventist theology. At the same time, they also insisted that Adventism goes beyond the forensic model made popular by the Reformers, who saw it taught in the writings of the Apostle Paul, especially Romans and Galatians.

More is needed for God to win the final victory over sin, including the investigative judgment as a referendum on God’s character. Sin still exists after the cross and must be disposed of in a just fashion. Andreasen tended to see the “final atonement” in terms of the sanctification/perfection of believers who are alive when Jesus returns. This viewpoint was not supported in *Questions on Doctrines*.

As Provonsha recasts this debate, he utterly abandons the forensic model of *Questions on Doctrines* and argues that the substitutionary, legal language of the Pauline writings is metaphorical only. It stands for nothing literal, even while it is saying something quite substantive. Literally, there can be no sense in which Christ’s death on the cross substituted for what each sinner deserves. No “ontological” transaction of any kind took place. That is, God’s intrinsic relationship to us did not change in any way.

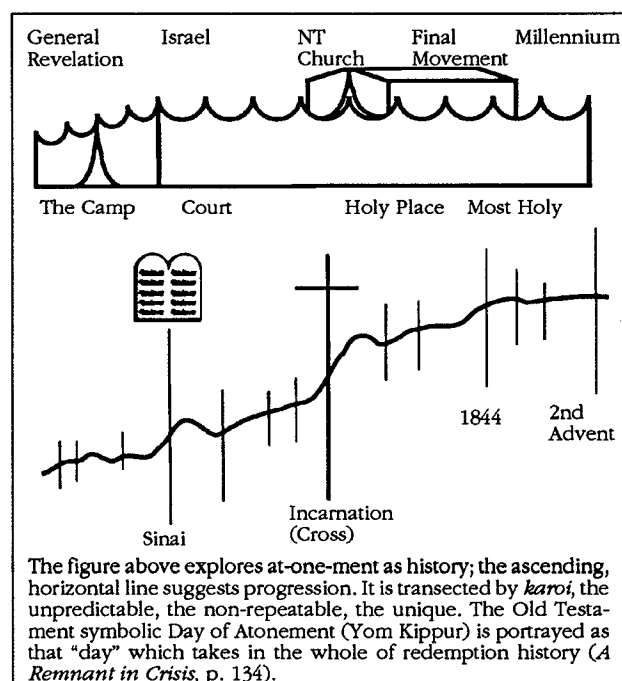
When Paul says that “In Christ God was reconciling the world to himself” (NRSV), nothing happened on the cross *beyond the fact that God was revealing himself to us*. The accomplishment of the cross was epistemological, not legal or ontological. At Calvary, we

saw God in Christ in a clarity never before seen in human history. It was the revelation that was reconciling, not the death-by-crucifixion itself. In other words, because we see God’s character more clearly in the cross, our relationship to God changes, rather than the cross changing God’s relationship to us. In this way, Provonsha breaks with Heppenstall.

At the same time, he embraces Heppenstall’s suggestion that the judgment is a referendum on God. Provonsha sees it as a continuance of God’s efforts to make the truth about himself clear to the world. What he does is project that understanding back through the cross. All of the salvation-history events are a divine referendum, an attempt to reveal God to the world.

Provonsha is willing to make the cross the central event of the many “kairoi” in which God reveals His character and unveils the nature of the conflict between good and evil.

Eschatological events are an integral part of that process. That is why doctrine and the three angels’ messages are so important. God’s character and the nature of the divine war with sin may be seen on the cross proleptically, but the war will engage every living human being only at the end. In this way, Provonsha justifies



the unique role of Adventism in history. We are a critical part of God's effort to "wrap up" a dramatic conflict of the ages that was seen in all its fury on the cross. It is a view theologians have sometimes called the "moral theory" of the atonement.

## An Alternative Model of the Atonement

I must confess a certain unease with a complete abandonment of all substitutionary, ontological language in the atonement. The notion that Jesus "bears our sins," it seems to me, cannot be explained away simply as a Pauline confusion about law and metaphor. In Provonsha's view, the death of Jesus was necessary only because it dramatized the truth about God and the nature of evil, a revelation that encouraged sinners to confess and find redemption. In the forensic view, the cross—in some sense—made it possible for God to justify sinners. Without it, the demands of divine justice would have been violated.

Perhaps a third position is possible. In his book *Christus Victor* Gustav Aulen searched for one and found it—he thought—in the view that the cross was a "decisive battle" in the war between good and evil. In this way, the power of sin over the human race was broken. It was a battle only Christ could fight and win.

In this sense, something about the "being" or ontology of God's relation to sin and sinners was different. This approach tried to avoid the difficulties attached to the strictly forensic view (God had to satisfy his "law" with his Son's death) without sliding into the notion that the cross was revelatory only. I am inclined to believe that Aulen's enterprise is more adequate than Provonsha's, though just how one would articulate the meaning of the atonement in this middle position has probably never gained consensus. Perhaps it is a mystery that requires us to hold both polarities

in some tension.

I am also uncertain about the value and validity of Provonsha's attempt to identify Adventism as a "prophetic movement" based on a phenomenological analysis of 19th-century events, especially those that occurred in 1844. His pointing out that 1844 included events associated with Darwin and Nietzsche as well as Adventism strikes me as grasping for straws. When he says that it is more important for Adventists to be right historically than exegetically, I do not see this in any way strengthening the Adventist claim to a unique role in salvation history.

If we grant (something not everyone is prepared to do) that we cannot "prove" exegetically that the three angels' messages and Daniel 8:14 apply in some special way to the Advent movement, it seems gratuitous to claim that the confluence of historical events in the 19th century warrants Adventists believing in themselves. Virtually any religious group, it seems to me, could go back to its historical roots and find a number of factors and events that justify the importance of its existence. I think I prefer Provonsha's emphasis on the Adventist understanding of the "meaning" of the play as a justification for believing we have a contribution to make, rather than the historical milieu in which we arose.

All of this is to say that *A Remnant in Crisis* is an important contribution to the effort for self-understanding among Adventists, especially those disaffected or confused by earlier doctrinal statements. It will certainly have many detractors and many supporters, and reinforces the idea that different theological currents flow through Loma Linda than through the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary. It will certainly stimulate debate about those things that truly do matter most to a denomination that believes it exists for some divine purpose, and not just as some "accident" of history.



# Beyond Expertise, The Good Society

America's foremost sociologist of religion talks to Seventh-day Adventists about the unique role of church-related schools.

by Robert N. Bellah

**W**HAT IS HIGHER EDUCATION FOR? My university, the University of California, has been hovering on the brink of catastrophe for several years now. We hope for better treatment from the legislature this year, but that will not be clear until the summer. The strength of our American higher education derives, in part, from its diversity: its mix of public and private universities, liberal arts colleges, and colleges and universities that maintain a religious identity. The collapse of any one sector would be a loss to all and would threaten the survival of the rest.

In the education chapter of *The Good Society*, my co-authors and I were quite critical of

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American higher education. I think we should make a virtue of necessity and use the present crisis for some serious soul-searching. Just what is higher education for?

It is my firm conviction that in answering that question, denominationally affiliated institutions are in a far better position than most of the rest of us. While such institutions have been partially seduced into the disciplinary tribalism and narrow specialization that I think plagues all higher education, they also have rich resources to counter the dangers of those trends and offer genuine alternatives. In such institutions it is easier than in secular institutions to argue for combining intellectual excellence with ethical and spiritual reflection; not just calculating how to further careers, but linking the life of learning for both faculty and students with thinking about how to contribute to the common good. While there are many who teach at secular institutions, like the University of California, who teach with these ideas in mind, institutions with a conscious Christian identity have a long history of trying to actualize such ideas in higher education.

## Technical Expertise vs. Common Sense

Our deepest problem is the profound gap in our culture between technical reason—the knowledge with which we design computers or analyze the structure of DNA; and practical reason—the ways we understand how we should live. We often hear that only technical reason can really be taught, and many of our educational commitments, from primary school to university seem to embody that belief. But technical reason alone is insufficient even to tell us what to do with technology. What we need to know is not simply how to build a powerful computer or how to redesign DNA, but above all what to do with that knowledge. Indeed, as the power of our ability to manipulate the world grows, the poverty of our understanding of what to do with that knowledge becomes more apparent.

My point is simple. Outside the laboratory, science has no trumps. Common sense, in the deep meaning of that term, takes over. Scientists with a sense of the common good must have a much broader range of expertise than their own specialties.

The task of higher education at the moment is to redress the balance between technical reason and moral-practical reason, to help us discern how to use the powers that science and technology have unleashed.

Vaclav Havel, the president of the Czech Republic and one of my few heroes in today's world, has outlined many of the most urgent issues:

All my observations and all my experience have, with remarkable consistency, convinced me that, if today's planetary civilization has any hope of survival, that hope lies chiefly in what we understand as the human spirit. If we don't wish to destroy ourselves in national, religious, or political discord; if we don't wish to find our world with twice its current population, half of it dying of hunger; if we don't wish to kill ourselves with

ballistic missiles armed with atomic warheads or eliminate ourselves with bacteria specially cultivated for the purpose; if we don't wish to see some people go desperately hungry while others throw tons of wheat into the ocean; if we don't wish to suffocate in the global green house we are heating up for ourselves or to be burned by radiation leaking through holes we have made in the ozone; if we don't wish to exhaust the non-renewable, mineral resources of this planet, without which we cannot survive; if, in short, we don't wish any of this to happen, then we must—as humanity, as people, as conscious beings with spirit, mind and a sense of responsibility—somehow come to our senses.

I once called this coming to our sense an existential revolution. I meant a kind of general mobilization of human consciousness, of the human mind and spirit, human responsibility, and human reason.

In this passage from his recent book, *Summer Meditations*, he names a series of problems facing our world, and suggests that we must “come to our senses” if we are not to be destroyed by them.

## Coming to Our Senses On the Environment

Is there something inherent in technical expertise, when it comes loose from a larger context of moral reflection, that tends to exacerbate our problems? Let me borrow from a forthcoming book by my colleague in environmental studies at Berkeley, Richard Norgaard, to consider the story of pesticides in our society. Inorganic compounds were used as pesticides before World War II, but, to quote Norgaard:

The discovery of DDT in 1939, followed by organochlorine insecticides soon after, and their expanding use after World War II changed the dynamics dramatically. By the early 1950s, the organic insecticides had driven inorganics nearly off the market because the organics were really effective.

To paraphrase Norgaard's story, DDT proved remarkably effective for a few years and then the pests came back, seemingly worse than ever. What had happened is that DDT-resistant insects had survived, and, in the absence of competition, rapidly reproduced. Not only the pests had been killed, but so had the natural predators that kept the pest population down. Norgaard tells us:

The response of agricultural researchers and the chemical industry to the occurrence of greater pest problems after the initial success of organic pesticides was to recommend more frequent and heavier spraying. More pests demand more pesticides . . . And, of course, heavier and more frequent spraying resulted in higher management costs, but now there was little choice. Many sensed that they were on a "pesticide treadmill," but few could see how to get off it.

As more and more lethal chemical compounds were used, the effects on wildlife became increasingly evident. Birds who feed on insects were one of the first species to be affected, leading to Rachel Carson's famous 1960s book, *Silent Spring*, to which many attribute the beginning of the environmental movement. As these chemicals entered the food chain, more and more of us have been affected, so that few of us lack traces of many of these elements, with consequences that are still far from clear.

Already, by the 1960s, both government and chemical companies had become alarmed and efforts to stop the treadmill, or what we might more accurately call the positive feedback, had begun. Positive feedback is like a heating system whose thermostat tells the furnace not to cut off at a particular temperature, but to increase heating no matter how high the temperature. But to go cold turkey now would not simply return us to ground zero; it would result in disastrous crop destruction because the natural ecological controls on pests had been so largely destroyed. What has been occurring is something like

handling withdrawal in a drug addict (this is no far-fetched metaphor): chemicals must still be used, but in decreasing amounts.

Further environmental examples referred to by Havel include the increasing use of fluorocarbons, leading to ozone depletion, and the biggest of all, our reliance on fossil hydrocarbon fuel for nearly 200 years, in the form of coal and oil. Our reliance on this energy resource has not only created the greenhouse effect but also allowed us to override the environmental limits in all kinds of ways: putting cities in places where there isn't enough water, such as in California; expanding agriculture in ways that involves massive soil loss through erosion and depletion of non-renewable groundwater.

## Prudent Citizens on Star Wars and Tobacco

What is the connection between education and the horror stories I have been telling? In every case, highly trained experts thought they were doing the right thing when they carried what seemed to make sense in the laboratory or the think-tank into practical application. When the experts step outside the laboratory or the think-tank they become citizens and are vulnerable to the criticism of fellow citizens who are not experts if they have the courage to ask the often obvious questions.

I remember the first time one of my colleagues at Berkeley, a professor of mathematics, asked me to join a movement of protest against the development of SDI, or Star Wars, at Lawrence Livermore Laboratory, which is run by the University of California. My first and instinctive reaction was, how could I oppose such a project? I am not a physicist. How can I challenge the experts? My colleague got really angry with me. He showed me a diagram of the basic design of SDI and asked me

what would happen if enemy submarines surfaced offshore and began firing missiles. Star Wars was designed to defend against missiles coming from thousands of miles away. It would be helpless against anything originating close at hand. Such an obvious flaw should have made it clear to any layperson that the billions to be spent on the project would be wasted. As time went on, many of the key elements of Star Wars did not perform in actual tests as they were supposed to on the drawing board. In the meantime, billions more have gone down the drain.

Science has mesmerized us with the notion that it proves things to be true. But in the practical world of multiple variables, proof is very hard to come by and practical reason, Aristotle's *phronesis* or Cicero's *sensus communis*, the classical notions of prudence and common sense, take over.

Let me give an example. The tobacco companies have for years employed scientists to show that the connection between smoking and a variety of illnesses has not been proved in the laboratory, and they are right. But when study after study shows a high correlation between smoking and an incredible variety of illnesses, plus the irrefutable fact that smokers die significantly younger than non-smokers, who in his or her right mind would make a decision based on absolute proof?

In science, absolute proof is hard to come by; some would say it is impossible. We never prove anything; we only disprove hypotheses that don't work out. If this is true, then

scientism, the belief that scientific proof is the only valid form of knowledge, which is something very different from science, puts us in a complete double bind. We may wait forever for absolute proof, but life is short and the consequences of our present actions may be very long. What are we going to do? Act on our best judgment, not scientific proof. Neither scientists nor politicians can do anything else.

The answer, clearly, is not to do away with science and specialization. Yes, we must be specialists, but we must also be part of a democratic community of specialists. I have recently joined the Energy and Resources Group, the interdisciplinary unit on the Berkeley campus concerned

with environmental issues, and have headed a search committee for a new joint appointment between the Energy and Resources Group and Sociology. Environmental problems are not just technical: they involve belief systems, the social distribution of power, the way our institutions work. We need to cross the disciplines to begin to get a handle on them.

Beware expertise! No one is entirely neutral—we all have preconceptions and particular interests. So we must move toward decisions relying on the *sensus communis* of the scientific, in the broadest sense, community in dialogue with concerned citizens. It often turns out that the farmer on the ground in the Amazon jungle understands the real problems of non-destructive tropical resource extraction better than the government expert in Brasilia, with his American Ph.D., who has never been to the Amazon Basin, yet is charged

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*Vaclav Havel, the president of the Czech Republic, found in his years in prison that he was sustained largely because of his belief in "something higher." When I met him briefly a few years ago I asked him if he still believed what he had written in prison and he said, "More than ever."*

with framing regulations for its agricultural use. Again, outside the laboratory, if all are not equal, at least no one can be legitimately ignored.

Here is where I have to bring in Havel's "coming to our sense." I do not intend "coming to our sense" to be a slogan by which some groups can badger other groups or attempt to dominate them. There is no final solutions or master plans. The level of complexity and the number of unknowns in the real world are too great to justify any such grandiose ambitions. To put it theologically, science has tempted us to imagine that we have the power of God, to the point where we are in danger of bringing on a premature Last Judgment to show us our error.

But giving up control does not mean giving up responsibility, the responsibility to take action when action is called for. We must not be deterred from tough decisions when a consensus based on reasonable judgment but not absolute proof has emerged. That is part of what Havel means by coming to our senses.

Let me conclude with a specific example of a responsible professional, a professional who is both expert and citizen, who, in her own life, in her own experience in higher education, illustrates the essential argument I am trying to make.

### Teenage Violence and a "Larger Context of Meaning"

Deborah Prothrow-Stith, presently assistant dean for government and community programs at the Harvard School of Public Health, and formerly Commissioner of Health for Massachusetts, is author of *Deadly Consequences: How Violence Is Destroying Our Teenage Population and a Plan to Begin Solving the Problem*.

Dr. Prothrow-Stith was first drawn to the problem of teenage violence after she gradu-

ated from Harvard Medical School and was serving as a resident in a large Northeastern medical center. (I will be drawing on her book, but mainly on an interview with her conducted by my colleague and co-author, William Sullivan, who is currently completing a book on civic professionalism and found in Dr. Prothrow-Stith a splendid example.) At the beginning of her residency, she was overwhelmed by the number of terribly wounded young people coming into the emergency room, many of them African-American. She points out, "More violent crimes show up in the emergency rooms of our hospitals than make it onto the police blotters." What appalled her was that all the technical expertise she had learned in medical school barely made a dent in the problem. Sometimes she managed to save the victim; sometimes he died within minutes or hours of being admitted; and sometimes the same young man would reappear later with another terrible wound.

The sense that emergency medicine was not the answer propelled her to look elsewhere for solutions to the agonizing problems she was facing every day in the hospital. She turned to the criminal justice system, with its elaborate assortment of professionals, from law enforcement personnel, to lawyers and judges, to probation officers. But here, too, as she puts it, "There is a self-perpetuating industry built around putting people away, just as there is around various forms of acute care provision in medicine."

I don't know the situation in Massachusetts where Dr. Prothrow-Stith works, but in California we have trebled the number of incarcerated criminals in the past 10 years with no change at all in the crime rate, but at enormous cost to the state budget. In California it costs more to send a criminal to prison than to send a student to Harvard, and prison guards have a higher average salary than professors at the University of California. The state prisons

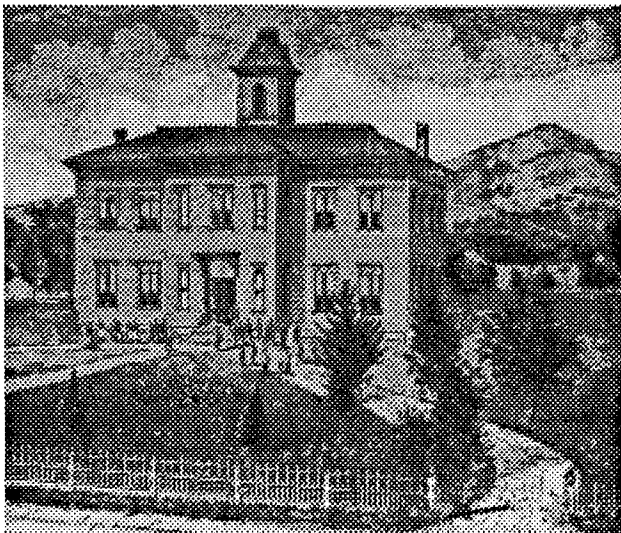
could be called the fourth system of higher education in California, after the University of California, the state university system, and the community colleges.

Prothrow-Stith next turned to the field of mental health as a possible answer to the problem of youth violence. Here it was not so much that such approaches were valueless—in particular cases they could be quite helpful—but they did not seem able to get at the systemic sources of the problem.

It was then almost by a process of elimination that Prothrow-Stith settled on public health as the institutional context within which to address her concerns. She found that a public-health approach could provide leverage to rethink more specialized efforts at problem solving. In this perspective, health becomes not exclusively a problem of medical intervention, but also of community responsibility, strengthening relationships that would counteract tendencies to socially destructive behavior. Public health perspectives can get officers on the beat to be concerned with reaching young potential offenders before they become involved in crimes, or organize groups like Town Watch that help create a community atmosphere where crime is discouraged.

Before leaving Dr. Prothrow-Stith, it is worth

Adapted from a woodcut of Healdsburg College, the predecessor to Pacific Union College, where Bellah delivered his lecture. Healdsburg College was opened in 1882 as an academy.



pointing out that her private and her public lives are intimately connected, that she is the mother of two school-age children and the wife of a minister. As Sullivan sums it up:

Dr. Prothrow-Stith seems to have come by many of her convictions naturally, as it were, having grown up in a strong family which, despite a long history of racial oppression, was supported by a vital religious and social community. With her generation, conditions of racial exclusion had finally begun to change, but it was from the context of family and church that she believes she drew the strength which propelled her career in the mainstream of professional life. She credits their Christian faith as the source of the moral truth that [as she puts it] “it was not OK just to be interested in me . . . that part of my purpose was to participate in making the world a better place.” Perhaps because of this larger context of meaning, Dr. Prothrow-Stith has been able to struggle toward an understanding of the vocation of healing that has called her, like other leaders, in forging a civic professionalism, to exploration and service beyond the comfortable boundaries of a conventional career.

## The Need for “Something Higher”

Perhaps these reflections about the source of Dr. Prothrow-Stith’s odyssey can provide a link back to what Havel means by “coming to our senses.” Now I would like to add one more. There is in Havel a concern that without an ultimate value and purpose life doesn’t make sense. There is a Platonist background that cannot be denied. The question of the good in this tradition always leads to the question of the good society: in the end spirituality, morality, and politics all mutually involve one another.

Havel found in his years in prison that he was sustained largely because of his belief in “something higher.” When I met him briefly a few years ago I asked him if he still believed what he had written in prison and he said, “More than ever.” In the case of Havel, as with



Prothrow-Stith, such a belief nourishes hope. (In the Western tradition, hope is a theological virtue, quite different from the modern notion of optimism, which derives from the idea of inevitable progress.)

What is higher education for? In the dominant concept of the university, the answer is individual advancement through the control of specialized knowledge. Just as we have marginalized theology, we have practically banished judgment or practical reason.

I imagine that graduates of your Christian Adventist college know that that is not an

adequate answer, that higher education has the task of helping us grow in understanding of the common good in a democratic society, of the need to minister to the poor of the earth and our fragile planet. If your school can give your students a glimpse of that broader understanding of what human life is all about, then, in ways that go beyond giving them the expertise to get a good job, your college will have genuinely helped to prepare students for the "practical" world of career and family. To create an education that is simultaneously temporal and spiritual, technical and moral, that is our task.



# Apocalypse Is for Everyone

An Anglican pastor explains how he is still an adventist who proclaims an apocalyptic faith from his pulpit.

by Jeffrey Smith

WHEN CHRIST DID NOT APPEAR IN 1844, most of the participants no doubt lost faith in the prophet, William Miller—and some, we may surmise, in prophecy itself. A few—only a *very* few of the large mass that Miller had gathered—simply transferred their faith to new prophets. Only a few overcame the cognitive dissonance left by that eventless day of October 22, 1844. It is in that dissonance and the heroic attempt to overcome it that we find the origins of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. A century and a half later, we find many who have grown up in that church still feeling the effects of the dissonance left in Miller's wake, many still laboring valiantly to surmount it.

I leave you to judge whether my own effort

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*Jeffrey Smith, rector of All Saints Anglican Church in Aiken, South Carolina, was raised in an Adventist home and graduated from Newbury Park Adventist Academy. He received his B.A. in history from Pitzer College, Claremont, California, and an M.A. in history from Loma Linda University. Later, Smith earned a Bachelor of Sacred Theology from Saint Joseph of Arimathea Anglican Theological College, Berkeley, California.*

has been a valiant one. I will state at the outset that it has left me still an adventist, though no longer an Adventist. Nowadays, I ply my adventism from an Anglican pulpit. I can say, with tongue out of cheek, that I left the Adventist Church with my faith in the Second Advent fully intact.

I hope never to join an apocalyptic movement such as Miller led (unless it happens to be the last), yet I am thoroughly convinced that Christianity itself is an apocalyptic faith, with or without its Millerite spin. For that reason, I make it a point to deliver as many sermons on the second advent of Christ from my non-Adventist pulpit as I would had I become an Adventist minister. My parishioners may regard the frequency with which I preach on the topic as peculiar, but it is not a peculiarity that elicits complaints, because all my parishioners recognize the second advent of Christ to be an official doctrine of the Christian church.

Our church even has a special season of the year, Advent, in which one is instructed to

prepare for the advent of Christ both as a commemorated event (his nativity as a man) and as a future event (his return in glory). Since a yearly reminder of our Lord's second coming in the month before Christmas is part of the Anglican Church's liturgical tradition, my sermons on the subject mark me as a traditionalist in the eyes of my parishioners. The fact that I grew up in the Adventist Church is a mere curiosity to them. Most of them, having lived their entire lives in the eastern half of the country and associated with mostly their own kind, have never known a Seventh-day Adventist. Yet, as far as I know, all of them also believe that Christ will make a visible return at some time in the future. We have never seen fit to debate the issue.

And I do not see how in a church that takes its Christianity seriously it could be otherwise; for Christianity, like Judaism and Islam, is an apocalyptic faith. It was born in the apocalyptic expectations of Roman Judaism, and even though in one sense it asserts that the apocalypse has already occurred (at the Resurrection and Pentecost), it also maintains that the apocalypse must happen again in order for history really to end. Even if the Revelation of St. John (the best-known literary apocalypse) had been excluded from the biblical canon, as it almost was, Christianity would still be apocalyptic. Apocalyptic, after all, is the matrix of the gospel itself. Christ came announcing that the kingdom of God was at hand. He left the earth with the angels telling the disciples he would come again.

## The Apocalyptic Tradition

It is time now to make some distinctions. William Miller led an *apocalyptic movement*. So did David Koresh, albeit in a much less dignified manner. Both men appealed to members of an *apocalyptic faith*, Christianity. And Christianity itself began in an already

existent *apocalyptic tradition*. The doctrine of apocalypse, i.e., that history will end in divine judgment and a deliverance of the saints, is held by not only Christians but also by orthodox Jews and Muslims. It is today an integral part of each of the Abrahamic faiths—and for good reason: The idea of apocalypse developed from a logic that all three religions share.<sup>1</sup>

Most biblical scholars now think that the apocalyptic tradition began with a particular apocalyptic movement of Judaism, the one engendered by the Maccabean crisis of the second century, B.C. If the scholars are right, then belief in a cataclysmic end to history appears rather late in Jewish history, more than a full millennium after Abraham. But whether the tradition began then or earlier, the development was natural enough and—one might even argue—inevitable. For it stands to reason that any religion that views history, rather than nature, as the principal theater of God's operation must eventually begin to ask the question of where history is leading. What is its *telos*?

And if there is going to be an End, then should it not be dramatic; the denouement of a final conflict between good and evil, with the appearance of a savior to deliver those who have been chosen and have chosen rightly? We could hardly expect history simply to quit one day after everyone agreed to be nice to one another. Anyone who finds meaning in history must object to such a bland prospect at least on aesthetic grounds, even if he or she cannot accept the clear teaching of Scripture itself.

Certainly, belief in an apocalypse is integral to each of the three religions that see God's hand in the history of Abraham's descendants. Orthodox Jews await the Messiah, whose everlasting reign will begin with the resurrection of the dead and last judgment. Christians and Muslims await the return of the Messiah, whom they believe to be Jesus of Nazareth.

The scholars also say that the apocalypticism of the Maccabean crisis (expectation of the end) solidified into a tradition because it left a particular document. The Book of Daniel preserved the visions of the apocalypse for future generations, and by so doing created a new literary genre.

The actual crisis gave birth to a literature of crisis. The Seleucid tyrant, Antiochus Epiphanes, determined to gain the loyalty of his foreign subjects by forcing them to adopt the state religion. A pig was sacrificed to Zeus in the Holy of Holies. Those who clung to the faith of their fathers were severely persecuted. Then God sent deliverers, Judas Maccabeus and his brothers, who rallied the faithful to drive out the hideous beast. The Book of Daniel places those events in the context of a cosmic conflict to end all conflicts and thus gives us a symbolic pattern that may be applied to other crises in which the people of God come under attack. Since the time of the Maccabees (or earlier, if one accepts the traditional sixth-century date of the book), the apocalyptic genre has been around, lying dormant most of the time, but available to anyone who would make use of it in his or her own time of crisis.

But what is far more important than the creation of a new body of literature, from which future prophets could draw their inspiration, is the permanent mark that the initial visions of the apocalypse left on the Jewish faith. Through the persistence of the Pharisees, the doctrines of the last judgment, the deliverance of the saints from a final crisis, and the resurrection of the dead became the offi-

cial teaching of later Judaism.

The Christian evangel began with the preaching of the Baptist that the end had come, and when the end did come at Calvary a second apocalyptic faith was born. Mohammed later created a third. The vast majority of adherents to those three religions have practiced an apocalyptic faith—believing that the end will come—without experiencing the intense fervor of the apocalyptic movements that gave rise to such faith.

It is true that with the passing of time the members of an apocalyptic faith tend to forget

that their world will end—or at least it is not something they think about often. The coming of the Messiah becomes merely an article of the church's creed, something learned in catechism and ritually recited, a topic touched upon in the liturgical year. After two millennia (slightly longer for Jews and not quite as long for Muslims), one

can hardly expect people to live from day to day with the imminent expectation—at least not under normal circumstances. Yet there must be some way to renew apocalyptic faith without going to the extent of manufacturing a crisis (David Koresh's technique) in order to experience apocalyptic fervor. I would rather do it through teaching and liturgy. If the genuine faith is in place, the fervor will arise naturally when the real crisis is upon us.

What about William Miller? Were he and his followers putting apocalyptic to good use when they needed help through a crisis? Or did they merely create a crisis for themselves by misreading prophecy? I don't think any historian has yet answered the question satisfactorily.<sup>2</sup> Certainly, the Millerites did not face

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*All my parishioners believe that Christ will make a visible return at some time in the future. Christianity is an apocalyptic faith. After all, apocalyptic is the matrix of the gospel itself.*

persecution on the order of that suffered by the Jews under Antiochus Epiphanes. But I suspect that most who believed in Miller's calculations felt their way of life was being threatened. Their main concentration was in areas that were undergoing rapid industrialization (along the Erie Canal in western New York and in the Connecticut Valley). We have not yet been told the story of the personal crises experienced by those who felt the attractions of Miller's preaching. Perhaps the story is now irretrievable. I hope not, because I cannot believe that it was the lucidity of the calculations themselves that accounted for such a huge following. Most apocalyptic movements in the history of the Abrahamic faiths have risen in the wake of some kind of upheaval, if not as a result of overt persecution.

The next crisis we face will probably not be our last, although some or another preacher may try to persuade you that it is. But in some crisis yet to occur we really will be facing the End. Such a conviction is an essential component of the teleological view of history that underlies each of the three Abrahamic faiths.<sup>3</sup> The conviction that history will end in judgment may not be attended by much apocalyptic fervor in the absence of a crisis, but the conviction itself is nonetheless an integral part of everyday faith if one is a Jew, a Christian, or a Muslim. The Passover seder leaves one seat vacant for Elijah, the Messiah's herald. The Christian Passover meal or Eucharist not only recalls the sacrifice of the Lamb but also anticipates his coming again. St. Paul states that the Lord's death will continue to be exhibited through a regular obser-

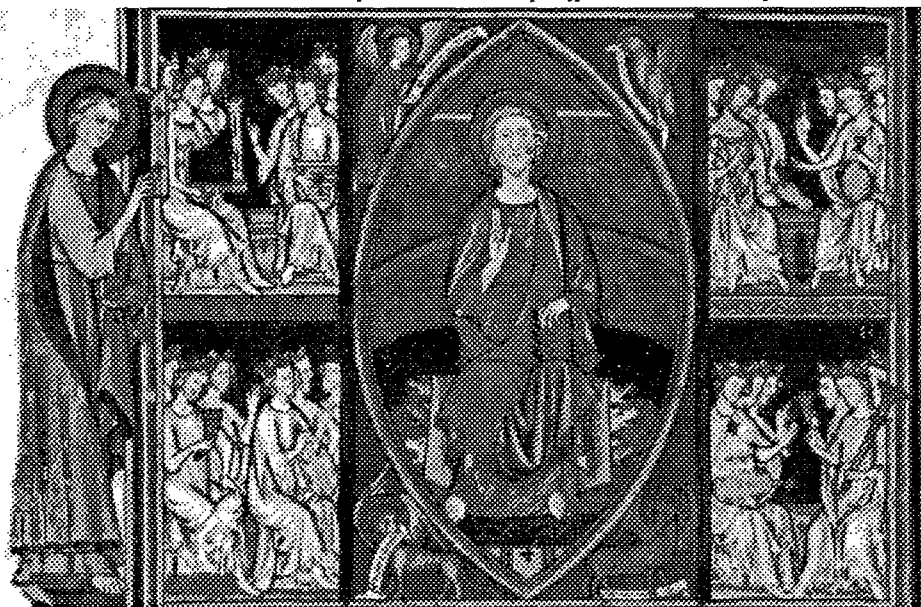
vance of the Eucharist "till he come."<sup>4</sup> The anticipation is thus woven into the fabric of all Christian liturgy—from the papal masses at St. Peter's to the services conducted in rude chapels at missionary outposts.

## Open-ended Adventism

If I have the consent of my Adventist readers thus far in my broad sketch of apocalyptic faith, they will no doubt wish to press me now for some details. I shall not leave them disappointed.

From my understanding of Scripture and the mainstream of Christian tradition, I hold the following items to be necessary components of Christian eschatology: (1) that history will end with the return of Christ in judgment; (2) that at such time not only will wickedness be condemned but also God's kingdom will be revealed in all its glory (literally, the apocalypse); (3) that this event will also serve to deliver the saints from a final crisis in history in which a diabolical power, the Antichrist, will severely test the faith of God's people; (4) that all who live through this crisis will be

Depiction of Revelation 4:1: "I looked, and there in heaven a door stood open," with 24 elders in white surrounding the throne of God. Adapted from *The Norman Apocalypse*, an illustrated manuscript, ca. 1320.



asked to make a decision whom they will serve, the Antichrist or the real Christ; and (5) that those who hold fast and endure the test will, together with all who have died in Christ, enjoy God forever in the new heaven and new earth. Those seem to me to be the obvious and least-contested components of the New Testament's apocalyptic teaching, each of them appearing in more than one passage.

If anyone now wishes to press me further, I will take refuge in the latitudinarian tradition of the Anglican Church. Even though I have read the Revelation of St. John many times and several commentaries on it, I still cannot tell whether the millennium will occur before or after the Second Coming, or whether it is purely symbolic. And I do not care to speculate on who or what institutions will play the part of the two beasts and Scarlet Whore.

I figure that if I leave the matter open, I shall be less likely to be taken unawares by any particular unfolding of events if I am alive when the crisis comes. That is why I now call myself an adventist and not an Adventist. After his disappointment, William Miller him-

self became less particular in his interpretations.

I do not discount the possibility that the Antichrist will arise in the Roman Catholic Church. Many a pious monk has believed that. Not a few Roman traditionalists today identify the popes since the Second Vatican Council with the Antichrist. Protestant bigots have no monopoly on reading Rome into the apocalyptic passages of Scripture, and it is quite evident that the seer of Patmos had Rome in mind as the persecuting beast of his own day. How far Rome extends, literally or figuratively, is the relevant exegetical question.

The seventh-day Sabbath as the final test of loyalty? I shall be very surprised if that is the case. But if, when the crisis comes, it appears that the Sabbath is an issue, then I suppose I shall begin observing it again.

But let it be known to all my Adventist friends that if it ever happens—and I have to cease using Saturday as the day for writing my sermons—I will still celebrate the Eucharist on Sunday mornings. Surely you wouldn't begrudge me that!

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#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. In the Islamic apocalypse, Christ will also reveal that he is not God; for Mohammed taught that the only incarnation of the Logos is the Koran. The Word became a book.

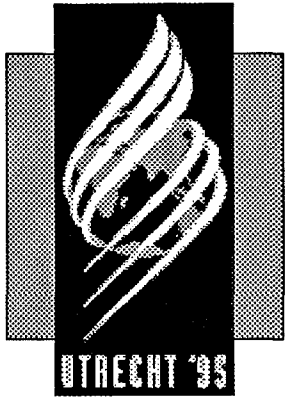
2. Whitney Cross probably came the closest to doing so in his study, *The Burned-over District: The Social and Intellectual History of Enthusiastic Religion in Western New York, 1800-1850* (New York: Harper & Row, 1965 [reprint]). It is a book that everyone interested in Adventist history should read—and from cover to cover, not just for its chapter on Millerism.

3. It is also a component of secular spin-offs (such as Marxism) which posit their own version of the peace-

able kingdom in the age to come. All atheistic creeds have adopted wholesale the biblical view of history as linear and teleological, substituting only some impersonal force that is immanent in history for divine providence.

Non-Abrahamic faiths do not view history as linear and teleological. Their rites do not commemorate historical events; rather, they are tied to cycles of nature. The great historian of religion Mircea Eliade has written most extensively on that theme. Cf. *Cosmos and History: The Myth of the Eternal Return*, W. R. Trask, trans. (New York: Harper & Row, 1954).

4. 1 Corinthians 11:26.



# Dispatch From the Governance Wars

The layperson who received an ovation at the 1994 Annual Council looks ahead to the 1995 General Conference Session.

*by Susan Sickler*

A MAJOR ISSUE FACING DELEGATES TO THE 1995 General Conference Session of the world church in Utrecht is church authority. More precisely, they will have to decide whether or not to give the General Conference and its divisions more authority over unions and conferences than ever before in the history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

A commission on which I served, chaired by the General Conference president, made several proposals to the 1994 Annual Council of the General Conference Committee that caused major controversy. The first, a recommendation that higher levels would hold the credentials for officers of lower levels, would have seriously undercut the authority of a local union or conference constituency. This was changed to exclude local conferences and unions.

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*Susan Sickler, a nurse who lives in Dayton, Ohio, has served on the two General Conference commissions studying reorganization since 1990. She was a delegate to the 1990 General Conference Session and will be again in 1995. She has also been a long-time member of the Ohio Conference and Columbia Union executive committees.*

Second, under current policy, the General Conference holds credentials for division presidents because the division is considered a branch office of the General Conference. The proposal going to Utrecht would extend this policy to the division officers, but not to lower levels. The recommendation that higher levels be free to intervene in credentials disputes at lower levels was changed: officers of higher levels may be invited in by the executive committee of the lower level, but they cannot intervene without an invitation.

The third, and most potentially divisive recommendation, declares that higher levels of church structure can merge or dissolve lower levels. When the other two proposals were significantly weakened on the floor of Annual Council, this one was left to be dealt with at the Spring Council of the General Conference Committee, which is a smaller meeting with less lower-level representation. I expect Spring Council will adopt the third recommendation of the commission, leading, no doubt, to a most interesting discussion on the floor of the 1995 General Conference Session.

Leaders admit privately that they realize that much of the North American Division will never adopt the constitution and by-laws provisions necessary to implement the linkages. In fact, the areas of the world church where leaders most want the linkages are the very parts of the world that would never consider adopting them. The obvious question becomes, "Will the world church in Utrecht vote for itself a level of subservience to higher authority that the United States will never adopt for itself?" To understand the significance of what is being proposed, it may be helpful to review how these proposals came into existence; how they reflect the views of a small group of denominational leaders; and why I believe these proposals should be rejected at the 1995 General Conference Session in Utrecht.

### Commission on Church Governance (1990-1991)

Given Robert Folkenberg's excellent article on church structure in *Ministry Magazine*, it is not surprising that one of his first actions as president of the General Conference was to establish a Commission on Church Governance. Consisting of 22 members and chaired by Robert Kloosterhuis, a general vice president of the General Conference, this commission dealt only with operations within the General Conference office complex in Silver Spring, Maryland. The commission's report was adopted at the Annual Council held in Perth, Australia in 1991.

I will always remember several things about members of this commission. They had the ability to disagree strongly without being disagreeable. Robert Kloosterhuis had a gracious but careful commitment to process. We worked each issue through until a clear majority agreed and formally adopted each recommendation. Fred Thomas, then the under-

secretary of the General Conference and the secretary of the commission, had an incredible gift for writing clear and unbiased minutes, even when he had strong opinions about the subject. Gordon Bietz and others put together a final report that was clear and concise and stated the rationale for each recommendation.

There is one item in the first governance commission report that runs dramatically counter to centralized authority, and it is something Robert Folkenberg supported enthusiastically. Because of this commission, there is now in place a new Strategic Planning and Budget Committee, with a carefully defined planning and budget cycle. Now, the world church can have wide input into the process. Previously, when two people—the General Conference president and the under-treasurer—controlled the budget process, they had awesome power. By opening up the process to include all division presidents, it removed the possibility of a president of the General Conference attempting to trade appropriations for support on certain issues. Of course, whether or not this ever happened is a matter of conjecture, but it is always good to close any loopholes that could tempt someone to abuse power. A minimal amount of networking by division presidents and others on the expanded committee should be enough to assure voting freedom for all.

### Commission on World Church Organization (1992-1994)

Because it was inappropriate for North Americans to be making suggestions about world church governance without wider representation, Elder Folkenberg formed a second group, the Commission on World Church Organization, that included all of the division presidents plus other representatives from the world field. This group was more than twice as large as the first commission, with consid-



erably more ecclesiastically prominent members. Robert Folkenberg chaired this commission, and the secretary was Maurice Battle, an associate secretary of the General Conference. The initial meeting was at the General Conference headquarters, but then the group moved twice to Cohutta Springs Conference Center, near Atlanta, Georgia, and once to a motel in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania.

Getting to know leaders from around the world was a very special experience: some of the most spirited discussions took place during hikes around the lake. We all gained a deeper appreciation for the complexities inherent in leading a world church. Discussion was quite open, both in the meetings and in small groups, at meals, and on breaks.

We worked through three areas with a good degree of harmony. First, the General Conference Executive Committee was reduced in size from more than 376 members to 240 and restructured to increase representation from the world field. The General Conference will pay for committee members to attend Annual Council, so the meeting will become more diverse and representative than in the past.

Second, it was recommended that the size of future General Conference Session delegations be capped both to reduce cost (now estimated at more than \$15 million) and to keep the size from becoming so unwieldy as to make transacting business more difficult than it already is.

Third, we dismantled the Church Ministries Department back into individual departments responsible to different general vice presidents. This last action was taken in response

to a survey sent around the world to evaluate whether people felt that the Church Ministries' concept was working well or whether they preferred individual departments. Regarding these three recommendations, while there was minor disagreement on details, it is fair to say that there was a consensus.

However, a clear split within the group did develop toward the end of the Gettysburg meeting regarding *linkages*, a term chosen by Robert Folkenberg. *Linkage* refers to how authority flows between the various levels of church structure. Bluntly translated, it means giving higher levels more authority over lower

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*Linkages, a term chosen by Robert Folkenberg, refers to how authority flows between the various levels of church structure. Bluntly translated, it means giving higher levels more authority over lower levels.*

levels. Based on speeches made before the group and from private conversations, I would estimate that about one-fourth of the members of the commission had a strong desire to "strengthen the linkages." About one-fourth were appalled by the idea, and about one-half either never spoke to the issue or fell into the category of, "Well, we do need to do something, but I am not sure of the best solution."

category of, "Well, we do need to do something, but I am not sure of the best solution."

Although there is an unwritten rule among Adventist committees that open discussion of topics stays within the room, denominational administration itself broke the rule when they took certain items from the general discussion and turned them into recommendations in the final report without an authorizing vote of the commission. Therefore, a discussion here of other items favored by those wishing stronger linkages is appropriate. Suggestions from this group included: higher levels having the power to merge or dissolve lower levels of structure; higher levels holding the credentials for officers of lower

levels; higher levels being free to intervene in credentials' disputes at lower levels; higher levels revoking a pastor's membership when his credentials are taken for cause; and last, but certainly not least, moving controversial decisions concerning an individual's membership in the Adventist Church away from the local church congregation.

Differences of opinion on these proposals were not a North American Division vs. world church split. There were North American leaders who argued strongly for more centralized control and, leaders from outside North America who argued passionately against it. On these proposals no consensus ever emerged, nor did the commission ever vote on any of the proposals. On one point, however, a clear message was heard. Any attempt to take from the local churches in the North American Division final say on membership would necessarily force the Biblical Research Institute to reassign labels for the protagonists in Armageddon.

Indeed, the commission adjourned its last meeting without ever having voted any of the linkage proposals. Furthermore, it never discussed how the final report would be developed. Subsequently, General Conference administration assigned the writing of the final report, not to the secretary of the commission, Maurice Battle, who had done a good job of producing the minutes up to this point, but to Athal Tolhurst, the under-secretary of the General Conference. Tolhurst was far more sympathetic to strong linkages.

## Annual Council (1994)

The resulting report to the 1994 Annual Council bore no resemblance to the simple, clear format of the first governance report, and it did not give any rationale for the recommendations as the first report did. While it is unclear just how many members of the com-

mission were shown a copy of the report prior to Annual Council, it is clear that quite a few were not. At no point was the report presented to the 1994 Annual Council ever voted by the commission.

Having been a member of the Commission on World Organization and having listened to the 1994 Annual Council debate, I offer the following generalizations about those who argue for more centralized control: First, the higher one's position on the hierarchical ladder, the higher value one tends to place on church authority. This is, in part, understandable because these are the people who have the big picture of all of the problems and feel keenly the burden of leadership laid upon them. Under stressful conditions like this, the fine line between leading the church and controlling it tends to blur.

The second category of supporters of greater "linkage" is more difficult to describe. Leading free peoples in emerging democracies or, in the case of North America—exasperated democracies—is a very difficult assignment. It requires advanced skills in mediation and consensus building that are not always present in all leaders. We live in an age when people are rejecting institutional authority and forcing leaders to rely on personal authority that must be earned; it is not automatically given. This sea change is highly traumatic for leaders who have developed either by nature or by nurture an authoritarian management style that worked quite well in times past. Local constituencies in the North American Division have developed effective problem-solving strategies for dealing with this type of leader, but sometimes the higher levels of church structure undermine the process by promoting people just prior to their constituency sessions.

Third, there are people who have a conservative theological agenda that they wish to impose upon the entire church. Many of these people sincerely believe that, if only we could disfellowship a few liberals and clean house in

several college theology departments, all of the people who are currently following conservative dissidents would come flooding back into the main church, bringing their tithe dollars with them.

## The 1995 GC Session: One Commissioner's Views

At this point, having analyzed what has already happened on the road to Utrecht concerning reorganization, let me frankly express my own opinions. The thinking of those who advocate greater "linkage" or centralizing control be adopted at the 1995 General Conference Session is well intended but seriously flawed in two key areas. First, they grossly underestimate the diversity of the membership in the North American Division; second, they have little understanding of the psychology and sociology of dissident movements.

Southern College takes pride in having the most conservative theology department in any North American Division college, and I applaud them for this. If we are to keep as many of our young people in Adventist colleges as possible, we need to diversify our offerings, and they meet a very real need in the intellectual marketplace. However, if that is what all Adventist parents want for their children, how does one account for the high enrollment at several of our more liberal colleges in North America? If Southern were the answer for everyone, they could fire all of their recruiters

and simply select students from a long waiting list. Obviously, this is not what is happening.

Also, the people with this mindset do not seem to comprehend that the quickest and most efficient way to destroy a conservative school is to force more liberal students to attend there. Such students tend to refuse to conform and thus undermine the conservative atmosphere. Therefore, if we want all Adventist students to be in Adventist colleges, more liberal schools are necessary to protect the chosen culture of the conservative schools as well as meeting the needs of more liberal students.

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*No possible gymnastic of logic allows one to ask that higher levels hold credentials for officers of lower levels; that higher levels be able to intervene in lower-level credentials disputes; that higher levels can merge or dissolve lower levels; and in the next breath claim one isn't advocating hierarchical authority.*

Throughout history, dissident movements have usually, if not always, centered around very charismatic, individualistic leaders. The more pages we add to the policy manual, the more we define our creed, the more we centralize authority, the more we tempt creative, charismatic, individualistic people to step outside church structure. When they do step outside, they quickly attract follow-

ers who believe in them passionately, give to them generously, and demand no accounting of how the money is spent. They have increased power, increased income, and no one telling them what they can and can't do. "Calling the church to repentance" from outside the system is much easier and more lucrative than attempting to do it from inside. Should the church move to the right, these charismatic, individualistic leaders will just move further to the right, and the dance goes on. An excellent example of this fact is that dissidents are still picketing Southern College

for having a theology department that they believe is too liberal.

I also wish to respond to two statements Robert Folkenberg made in his "From the President" message for November 28, 1994. One is that the report does not seek to centralize authority at higher levels. There is no possible gymnastic of logic that allows one to ask that higher levels hold credentials for officers of lower levels; that higher levels be able to intervene in lower-level credentials disputes; and that higher levels can merge or dissolve lower-levels and in the next breath claim one isn't advocating the centralizing of authority. Centralizing authority at higher levels of structure in a church has a proper name in any dictionary—it is hierarchical authority. There is no way one can have the increased power without inheriting the label.

The second statement of President Folkenberg's with which I disagree is that people who oppose the report are advocating a congregational form of church governance and that they reject all authority above the local church level. Whatever happened to a representative democracy? Just because someone believes that the higher levels of church structure have all of the power that they need to appropriately lead the church, are they suddenly congregationalists? With all due respect, I believe that those of us at the grassroots level have a far clearer understanding than do the General Conference officers of the forces that are propelling the North American Anglo church toward congregationalism. If I believed in congregationalism, I would *not* be opposing this report.

The move to congregationalism is not a conscious decision by local churches. Rather, individual members, feeling powerless, are shifting their focus and financial support from the leadership of a world church whose concerns, agenda, and view of church authority seem very far removed from the needs and views of their local church.

Our young adults, from the baby boom and baby bust generations, have a very low opinion of institutions in general and hierarchical institutions in particular. They have watched their parents' generation seek to change the corporate church. They have seen their parents fail to downsize bureaucracy so as to get more funds to the local churches around the world. These young North American Adventists see no reason to repeat their parents' mistakes. Instead of seeking to change the corporate church, they will focus their efforts on creating local churches that meet their needs.

To vote a more hierarchical church structure, such as the brethren are proposing, works directly into the hands of those who insist that "leadership just doesn't get the message." It will be tossing gasoline on the coals of congregational thinking and hasten a process that the brethren have every reason to fear.

Those of us on the General Conference nominating committee in 1990 saw Neal Wilson trampled under the thundering hoofs of those rejecting hierarchalism. What was rejected there was not a person but a management style that was perceived as too controlling. The committee made a deliberate choice to move toward what we believed, at that point, would be a more democratic style of administration. As unrestricted North American dollars decrease



and the divisions and other lower levels gather strength and increasing administrative sophistication, the time may come when they will choose to vote less hierarchical authority for the General Conference. It may become more of a coordinating body to facilitate the transfer of ideas and resources. But vote it more authority? Not likely.

As a church family, we are a victim of our own success. We have become one of the most heterogeneous groups on the earth, and that is obviously a key part of God's plan. If he needs to get a crucial message out to a diverse world, it is logical that he would call together a diverse group of people to do the job. Because heterogeneous groups are inherently unstable, leadership is incredibly difficult. Such groups can be led if leaders can keep everyone focused on mission and shared goals. Try to control them too tightly and they shatter into an appalling number of pieces. Only God can give us the wisdom to know how tight is tight enough to get the job done but loose enough to prevent rebellion.

Perhaps the real question is how much authority is necessary to lead the church, and how much is necessary to control it. Pressures for institutional control are always incremental. At what point do we draw the line

and say, "No more; you have enough to power to lead, and if we give you any more, we will start down the slippery slope to control"?

One of the greatest spiritual insights that we learn from parenting is the awful price that God was willing to pay in order to create beings who were free to accept or reject him. As the parents of teenagers, we tend to have moments when we think it would have been so much easier if he had compromised just a bit in the freedom area. Surely church leaders who struggle daily with terrible problems around the world can be forgiven for having nostalgic thoughts about how much easier it would be to lead if they just had more power in certain situations. However, if God was willing to give his own Son to preserve his relationship with free beings, even ones who were clearly in rebellion, should we not be very careful about how we use or abuse freedom and authority in the church?

In the end, each delegate to the 1995 General Conference Session in Utrecht is going to have to search his or her soul, and pray for wisdom that God will give us the balance we need on this important issue. The good news is that he has promised to do exactly that. We are not alone!



# Let Divisions Decide When to Ordain Women

A G.C. officer strongly urges taking the next step.

by Gary Patterson

**T**HE 1995 GENERAL CONFERENCE SESSION IN Utrecht will have the opportunity to vote yes or no to the following motion:

The General Conference vests in each division the right to authorize the ordination of individuals within its territory in harmony with established policies. In addition, where circumstances do not render it inadvisable, a division may authorize the ordination of qualified individuals without regard to gender. In divisions where the division committee takes specific actions approving the ordination of women to the gospel ministry, women may be ordained to serve in those divisions.

Importantly, the 1994 Annual Council voted to ask the 1995 General Conference Session to vote on the issue of the authority of world divisions, not approval of ordination of women

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pastors. In other words, the General Conference Session will be deciding to vote on an issue of policy, leaving to divisions to debate the theological questions.

## Policy: Authority of World Divisions

**I**t is realistic to give authority in such matters to the divisions. The concern is often expressed that such an ordination would not serve the world church, as there are places in which a woman would be unacceptable in the cultural setting. But we must be fair in addressing this matter. There are just as surely places in the world where people of one ethnic group would be unacceptable to another ethnic group. One would hardly send a pastor of Jewish origin to the Arab world. Yet this is not to demean in any way the ordination of such a pastor, nor does it suggest that Jews should not be ordained merely because there are places in the world where they would not be welcome to serve. Rather, it recognizes the

social realities of the complex world in which we operate.

The church has arrived at this point concerning ordination of women pastors long after it first addressed ordination of women. As far back as the Annual Council of 1974 the matter of ordaining women to local church leadership was addressed. It was voted at that time "to request the President's Executive Advisory to also arrange for further study of the election of women to local church offices which require ordination." Ten years later the 1984 Annual Council voted "To advise each division that it is free to make provision as it may deem necessary for the election and ordination of women as local church elders."

Having already made such a determination on this matter of ordaining women to church office, subsequent action as to just which ordinations are available to women and which are not seems at best to be theologically dubious. As A. C. McClure, president of the North American Division stated at the 1994 Annual Council, "it appears to be theological hairsplitting to say that we will recognize ordination of women on one hand and refuse to recognize it on the other hand, while calling them both scriptural positions."

Since the initiation of the practice of electing women as local elders, hundreds of churches have ordained women to these posts. At the present time more than 1,000 women are serving in such capacities. Again McClure stated, "There is no turning back. Can you imagine the havoc that would be wrought if we were to attempt to tell the churches that they could no longer elect and ordain those who for 20 years have been serving effectively and with acceptance by those congregations?"

Some say that the North American Division has sought to go its own way in these matters, threatening the rest of the world church if they do not go along. But quite to the contrary, North America would not now be making this request of the world body if it had determined

to ignore the policies and actions of the world church. In fact, the actions of the North American Division have carefully and respectfully followed church policy in these matters, at times much to the frustration of those who saw the process as taking much too long.

Not until 1985 did an agenda of a General Conference Session include ordination of women as a topic. Subsequently, the 1987 Annual Council appointed a commission on the role of women to give major study to the issue. The 1989 Annual Council, in turn, placed the matter on the 1990 General Conference Session agenda.

It is significant to note both what was and what was not voted in this recommendation to the most recent, 1990 General Conference Session. While the action does say, "we do not approve ordination of women to the gospel ministry," it does so in the context of preserving church unity, not on theological grounds. The action clearly states that it "does not have a consensus as to whether or not the Scriptures and the writings of Ellen G White explicitly advocate or deny the ordination of women to pastoral ministry." As A. C. McClure asked the 1994 Annual Council, "Does it not speak for itself that after more than 20 years of serious study the church has not taken a theological position?"

It is because North America has followed church policies on this matter that it has ordained hundreds of women to local church office, but not to the pastorate. It is because North America has followed General Conference policies that, as McClure stated to the recent 1994 Annual Council, "The position in which we find ourselves is, therefore, clearly untenable. North America has not been running independently ahead of the world or acting on its own. Because this division has applied these General Conference actions in a way that was felt to be fair and right, we now find ourselves in a position that is seen by

many in this division as discriminatory, unethical, and even immoral.”

McClure, speaking in favor of divisions acting differently on the issue of ordination of women pastors, went on to say,

The Seventh-day Adventist Church is a very diverse family. We are a multitude of cultures, each with its own perspective on issues that affect the life of the church. Our objective must be fidelity to God's word, providing unity in diversity, while recognizing and preserving the ability of each member or region of "the body" to best function in its unique sphere.

It may not be an easy choice. But we must go with the risks, for to stop short is to close ourselves off from even the possibility of discovering truth in its broadness. Should such permission be granted to the divisions, there would remain for them the delicate process of determining the course to follow. The matter of scriptural authenticity would be addressed, and the hermeneutical process joined.

## Principle: Scriptural Teaching

Of course, the vote at the General Conference Session on the policy of world divisions deciding for themselves whether to ordain women will be affected by assumptions concerning what the scriptures say, or don't say, about women in ministry. Deep in the heart of Adventism is a noble and proper desire to be Scripturally authentic. It is a yearning that at the same time both informs and distresses the present discussion of women in ministry and women's ordination, not only in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, but also in most other denominations as well. Scriptural authenticity is at the core of a valid faith, since any other approach to both religious belief and practice is, by definition, cultic. Yet at times a misguided quest for scriptural authenticity leads to extremes in doctrinal interpretation. The result is often an ignoring of

both the context and the original meaning of the Bible in an attempt to buttress a given position through the quoting of Scripture.

Often when caught in a struggle over the meaning of Scripture we resort to the assertion that the Bible is for everyone, and everyone is mandated to understand and interpret it individually. This motif sees reflection in the rather confrontive bumper sticker that declares, "God Said It—I Believe It—That Settles It." There is inherent in this statement the noble ideal that everyone is both capable of and responsible for an understanding of God's Word, and thus accountable for the choices that result from that understanding. But it is naive to assume that every individual is equally, or for that matter, even adequately equipped to be the arbiter of all scriptural interpretation, regardless of intellectual ability, educational background, or doctrinal predilection. Even though this seems to be a noble ideal, it is not a practical reality.

That salvation is available and understandable to everyone is a position that we vigorously support. But to say that all Scripture is equally understandable by all people is egregious. Were it not for the scholarly devotion of Greek, Hebrew, and Aramaic linguists, most of us would be either crippled or totally dysfunctional in our relation to Scripture. And were it not for the aid of scholarly analysts of scripture and theologians, we would individually draw broad ranging and perhaps strange conclusions on the meaning of the Bible, a fact clearly demonstrated by the plethora of fanciful interpretations that abound in the world of religion, and from which we ourselves are not exempt.

Within the vastness of the spread of cultures in the world—both presently existing, and existing over the time span of scriptural history—it would be naive, even presumptuous to assume that any one individual could comprehend it all in isolation from religious and scholarly communities. It is these commu-



nities that save us from the folly of our own narrow views and the limited information that is available to us individually.

In any search for the meaning of Scripture, the obvious truth must be understood—that it means exactly what it says. 1 Corinthians 14:33-35 for example is not obscure. It is not a problem text. Despite its frequent usage in the debate over the ordination of women to ministry, it does not refer in any way to the ordination of women. Ordination is not the context in which it was written. It says, “As in all the congregations of the saints, women should remain silent in the churches. They are not allowed to speak, but must be in submission, as the law says” (NIV).

A text could hardly be much more straightforward than that. It is not a problem text to translate. Rather, it is a problem to interpret. It does not, in its straightforward declarativeness, seem to fit into current-day perceptions of the way things should be—or for that matter—even into the practice of Paul and the church of his day.

We cannot manipulate or change the text to say other than what it says. The issue we struggle with here is not what the text says, but whose departure from it is acceptable and whose is not. However, no one individual's departure from it has any more authority than another. The text says “silence”—and anything beyond that is a departure. Despite the ongoing struggle over the meaning of this text, rarely do we find anyone willing to accept it for what it plainly and simply says.

Then, injected into the discussion process are the speculations as to who will leave or refuse to join the church over the issue of the participation of women in ministry. And no doubt anecdotal evidence can be marshaled to indicate that there are significant numbers from both sides of the issue who will make this a pivotal matter in their decision to be or not to be part of the church. But this threat of refusal to be part of the church—despite its

painfulness—is not the criteria on which such issues are to be resolved. We must not decide what is right on the basis of who can count the largest number of disgruntled members or potential members. Rather, each world division must decide what is right on the basis of the principles of sound biblical interpretation and scriptural authenticity.

The outworking of the hermeneutical process is sometimes a conundrum for us. While we struggle intently over the matter of exact adherence to one particular Scripture, we are quite comfortable explaining—or perhaps at times even ignoring—other clear scriptural instructions. When it comes to Sabbath observance, the scriptural mandate is clear and the penalty for violation specific. Yet we neither advocate nor follow the straightforward and unequivocal position of Exodus 31:12-17. It is startlingly clear:

Then the Lord said to Moses, “Say to the Israelites, ‘You must observe my Sabbaths. This will be a sign between me and you for the generations to come, so you may know that I am the Lord, who makes you holy. Observe the Sabbath, because it is holy to you. Anyone who desecrates it must be put to death; whoever does any work on that day must be cut off from his people. For six days’ work is to be done, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord.



Whoever does any work on the Sabbath day must be put to death. The Israelites are to observe the Sabbath, celebrating it for the generations to come as a lasting covenant. It will be a sign between me and the Israelites forever, for in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day he abstained from work and rested” (NIV).

This Scripture was taken quite literally. When a man built a fire on the Sabbath—a matter which would seem quite innocuous to us—the people took him out of the camp and stoned him, following strictly the instruction of Scripture. And in a similar situation, it was the intervention of none other than Jesus himself who saved the woman taken in adultery from the same fate. He did not allow for the stoning that was advocated by her accusers who, by the way, had scriptural precedent for their position.

Likewise, Scripture proscribes the collection of interest on loaned money. And from time to time there are those among us who protest the investment of church funds on this basis. But we generally ignore them. There are also scriptural instructions regarding the manufacture of clothing from multiple materials. Yet little of what we wear today complies with this instruction.

The struggle with our sacred texts is not so much with what they say. That is quite clear most of the time. Rather, the problem is that we must derive present truth out of the vast scope of their historic and social settings. This search for meaning in context does not always mesh smoothly with proof-text methodologies. Yet the search for meaning must not be abandoned just because there are problems and dangers in the process.

Theology is not something that exists somewhere by itself, waiting in tidy form to be discovered by the church. It is rather a work that must be done ecclesialogically. Unless we take the text literally as it reads—which obviously we do not do regarding women being

silent in church, as well as in many other instances—then the work of interpretation becomes the work of the church. In this search for meaning, we find our security in the community of faith, thus saving us from the pitfalls of narrow individualism. And when we stand apart from that community, insisting on our own individual positions, then we are in apostasy—for that is the meaning of the word—“to stand apart.”

This is not to say that the church never errs, or that it never moves from its prior positions, as though at any point in time it has arrived at all truth. Indeed it does err. And indeed it does move. Such is the nature of present truth in the community of faith. Matters that in the past seemed crucial to the maintenance of the faith may today be seen today as irrelevant. And a society that refuses to acknowledge this fact can see its future reflected in the Amish community. Indeed, these people have preserved some matters of value in their separatist life-style. But to live in this kind of splendid isolation is not an acceptable response to the gospel commission.

The hermeneutical problems we face are largely problems we have created for ourselves. We maintain that Scripture never contradicts itself. And given a definition of Scripture that sees its task as presenting the broad scope of the truth of God, this is a tenable position. But when we perceive this notion of no contradictions as the core of an inerrant view of Scripture, then the reality of the actual text overwhelms us. In this mode we are forced to struggle with such minor issues as the order of the temptations in the wilderness, for example. Matthew lists them as bread, temple, and worship. Luke’s order is bread, worship, and temple. If we are truly consistent with an inerrant viewpoint, then the authority of Scripture is threatened by this rather unimportant discrepancy.

As long as we seek to do hermeneutics in a proof-text mode, we will not resolve the problem. We must make a choice. Either we do exactly what the Scripture says in all instances, and quit trying to make it say what it does not say—or say what is comfortable to us—or we must truly enter the hermeneutical process and deal with the nature of inspiration in our search for truth.

In the context of honesty to Scripture, it is strange that a text such as 1 Corinthians 14:33-35 should be used to oppose ordination (to which it does not refer) while speaking in church (to which it does refer) is broadly deemed acceptable today—even encouraged. In a strictly technical sense, women could well have done the work of those who were set apart by the “laying on of hands” without violating at all this stricture of silence in the church.

In actuality, the first “laying on of hands” in the life of the young church was for the purpose of “waiting on tables” and not for preaching or church leadership. The point of it all was to leave the apostles free for “the ministry of the word of God” (Acts 6:2, NIV). Furthermore, Philip is recognized as an evangelist not on the basis of this “laying on of hands” but as a result of his witness and preaching, which bore fruit for the kingdom of God. In fact, his act of performing baptisms while a deacon was seen as the proof of his call to preaching. Scriptural evidence shows no connection whatever between the matter of who was ordained, and the restrictions of 1 Corinthians 14:33-35 regarding women speaking in church.

To decry the ordination of women as an

action that forsakes the teaching of Scripture, demeaning such a position as a dangerous new understanding of Scripture, while allowing women to participate in church activities verbally, is an amazing mental stretch. If we are going to allow for any deviations in this plain and straightforward statement regarding silence in church, it must be a decision that is taken in the open community of the church with fairness and intellectual honesty in all the discussion.

It is a difficult dilemma. On the one hand, the work of the church body saves us from the folly of our own individual biases. Yet on the

other hand, we must not assume that truth is somehow found at the level of the lowest common denominator of world opinion. Rather than waiting till truth is acceptable everywhere simultaneously, we must be leading and calling the church on to higher ground whenever possible. Had we not done so in the past, we might yet be supporting slavery—

which, by the way, Paul refers to and accepts in some of the same discourses in which he discusses the role of women.

To the Galatians he says, “There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” To the Ephesians he says, “Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church. . . . Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ.” We cannot claim honesty in our interpretations of Scripture while picking and choosing what is comfortable to us and what is not in these

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*We cannot advocate freedom from slavery in our day on the basis that the social setting directed the words of Paul on the slavery issue, and then refuse to use the same understanding of scripture in addressing the issue of women in ministry.*

comments of Paul. The issues of women and slavery are part of the same texts. We cannot advocate freedom from slavery in our day on the basis that the social setting directed the words of Paul on the slavery issue, and then refuse to use the same understanding of Scripture in addressing the issue of women in ministry.

Anything less than full and honest investigation of the Bible deals only with isolated scriptural particles, which are not allowed to interrelate in our minds or our theology, because of the apparent contradictory nature. The choice is ours. We can continue the process of amassing texts that seem to support one position and destroy others. Or we can seek the fullness of meaning and truth in Scripture, even in the face of apparently conflicting stories, statements, and texts that, for whatever reason, appear to us to be in contradiction.

This is the work of the church community, and it is our only safe haven. We must work

together in this process of ecclesologically developed theology as an ongoing process. Thus we are saved from both the isolationist disaster, where our own individual positions are advanced in a manner which seeks to dominate all others, and from the alternate, smothering control of an authoritarian system, a system in which Scripture is interpreted only by church leaders.

We must come to recognize that our perception of truth—both as individuals and as community of faith—is not complete. It is dynamic, not static. This is what present truth is all about. We are part of a community of faith that is on a journey with truth. And the fullness of this truth of God will be our eternal study and wonderment. As the poet James Russell Lowell puts it:

New occasions teach new duties,  
Time makes ancient good uncouth;  
They must upward still and onward,  
Who would keep abreast of truth.



# Why *No* to Women But *Yes* to Killing?

Divisions going their own way on ordination of women would *not* set a precedent.

by *Ronald Lawson*

**T**HE WORLD CHURCH HAS LEARNED TO ACCEPT diversity in its ranks on military service: While Adventists in some countries refuse, on principle, to carry weapons, in others they are willing to drop bombs or pull triggers to kill people. It should therefore not be so difficult to accept diversity concerning whether hands can be placed on women to ordain them to the gospel ministry.

Approving diversity of practice among world divisions will be a central issue at the upcoming 1995 General Conference Session in Utrecht. The issue will arise most starkly when it is time to vote on whether to allow world divisions to decide for themselves whether to permit ordination of women as ministers. Many who oppose the ordination of women argue that the church cannot permit diversity of its practice on such an important issue. In fact, the

world Seventh-day Adventist Church has for many years maintained its unity while accepting diversity of practice.

For example, Adventists have agreed that in certain parts of the world the church will accept government money to operate Adventist schools. In Africa particularly, and more recently in other areas, such as Australia, we have accepted government funding of Adventist schools. Clear differences in lifestyle have also not rent Adventists asunder. Vegetarianism is much more frequent among members in North America than in the rest of the world. For years, members in Europe wore wedding rings while conscientious American Adventists shunned the practice. Even something so central to Adventism as the Sabbath has been observed differently in different parts of the world. The church has accepted the fact that for years denominational officials in some areas approved members' playing games and even sending their children to public schools on the seventh-day Sabbath.

As delegates from around the world reflect

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over the next few months on how they will vote in Utrecht on allowing divisions to decide for themselves whether to permit ordination of women, they can benefit from a case study in diversity within the world church. The Seventh-day Adventist Church has not disintegrated while different parts of the world church have approved different positions on something so basic as whether members can serve their governments by killing other human beings. It is relevant to consider carefully the variety of practice within different parts of the international Adventist Church toward conscription and military service, and to ask how, historically, the church came to endorse such diversity.

The case study is part of a large research project that included more than 3,000 in-depth interviews with church administrators, teachers, hospital administrators and medical personnel, pastors, students, and leading laypersons in 54 countries in all 11 divisions of the world church. The project's policy is to refrain from citing the names of interviews when they are quoted, except when they are major figures in the church. For its historical sections, the essay also draws on official pronouncements and the work of other scholars.

There is considerable diversity today in how the international Adventist Church relates to conscription and military service around the globe: Adventists in most of Western Europe continue to hold the traditional "modified pacifist" noncombatant position. (The evolution of this position is described below.) When conscripted, most of them opt for the civil alternative available to them, even though this often means a longer commitment. They frequently expressed shock in interviews at the number of Adventists volunteering for service with arms in America. Those in the former West Germany have reacted against their history, in common with many of their countrymen, and are especially strongly noncombatant, anti-

war, and for disarmament, and wonder about the flow from the United States of Adventist military volunteers and chaplains doing tours of duty in their land. The church in Italy felt so strongly about the issue that it voted to urge denominational leaders to strengthen the present position which, by recommending that conscripted Adventists not bear arms but treating the decision as one of individual conscience, removes any possibility of disciplining a member who acts otherwise. They asked that conscripts choosing to bear arms in countries with a legal alternative to service face church discipline. However, their request prompted no response.<sup>1</sup>

In contrast, in most of the countries of Eastern Europe (while under Communism), Latin America, and several countries in Asia, Adventists have abandoned the weapons issue and have limited their focus on military conscription to attempts to gain Sabbath privileges and, in some instances, alternatives to a pork-based diet. Church leaders have feared that any attempt by Adventists to avoid armed service would sharply escalate tensions with governments.

Consequently, there was little concern in Communist Eastern Europe about the weapons issue, which Adventists associated with the Adventist Reform Movement and Jehovah's Witnesses, who regularly faced prison for their beliefs. Adventists there typically trained with weapons but attempted the often daunting task of observing the Sabbath and securing an Adventist diet while in the military. These problems were so great in Romania, for example, that many Adventists chose to delay their baptisms until after completing military service so that they would feel less obligation toward Sabbath observance.

Civil alternatives to military service became available during the last years of Communist control in most of these countries, and these were typically chosen by Adventists—but for

reasons related to Sabbath observance problems rather than to their convictions about training with weapons. The one exception to this among the satellite states in Eastern Europe was East Germany, where a strong aversion to arms rooted in 20th-century German history led Adventists to choose alternate service as soon as it became available in 1967. In the Soviet Union, taking the alternative of being assigned to construction did nothing to ease the difficulties associated with Sabbath observance until Gorbachev's perestroika improved the situation considerably.<sup>2</sup>

Adventists in Latin America have also refrained from making an issue of military service. Church leaders in Brazil explained that this enables them to avoid conflict with the state and also the stigma and individual penalties that accrue to Jehovah's Witnesses. The Adventist Church cultivated ties to military regimes throughout the region during the 1970s and 1980s, often forming exchange relationships with them.<sup>3</sup> Students in Argentina participate in military parades and compete in marksmanship.

When a missionary teacher wanted to teach noncombatance as part of an ethics course in the Adventist college there, he was discouraged from doing so. Church leaders explained that training with arms did not worry them unduly, for they felt that Argentina would never fight a war. Argentine Adventists were therefore greatly surprised to find themselves fighting and dying in the Malvinas (Falkland Islands) War.<sup>4</sup>

In Asia, Singapore, Thailand, Taiwan, and South Korea have conscription.<sup>5</sup> Adventists

made a formal accommodation with the government of Singapore some years ago that granted them Sabbath privileges and the right not to carry weapons. In Thailand, most Adventist conscripts are also able to arrange to protect their Sabbath observance, but they train with weapons. On the other hand, Adventists in South Korea and Taiwan have no option but to bear arms, and they also face considerable difficulties over Sabbath observance.<sup>6</sup>

Although there is no general conscription in the Philippines, there is considerable government pressure on colleges to include military training within their programs. Mountain View

College in the south has been under great pressure to train with weapons. The senior Adventist college, Philippine Union College (PUC), in the north, has avoided these pressures because its program to train medics is recognized. Both colleges are located close to insurgencies. There is controversy because PUC chose to hire armed guards who, at last count, had killed

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*Adventists are the third-largest religious group among these Karens, behind Buddhists and Baptists, but they provide much of the military and political leadership. The general who heads the state, Bo (General) Mya, three of his top deputies, and several other leading military figures are Adventists.*

four intruders.<sup>7</sup>

The most remarkable involvement of Adventists with weapons and military conflict, however, is found among the Karen rebels against the Burmese government, who have declared the independent state of Cawthoolie along the Thai border. Adventists are the third-largest religious group among these Karens, behind Buddhists and Baptists, but they provide much of the military and political leadership. The general who heads the state, Bo (General) Mya, three of his top deputies, and several other leading military figures are Adventists. Since the Adventist churches and

schools there cannot be linked to the denominational structure through Burma, they have been linked instead to the Thai structure.

A missionary was stationed there for several years until recently, and church leaders in Thailand visit there frequently to nurture, evangelize, collect tithes, and pay the salaries of clergy. Several of them reported having been asked to pray with soldiers before battles. Neither they nor leaders from the church's Southeast Asia Union have taken a stance on the military issue—"We have not made bearing arms an issue at all, have not said they should not be shooting"—but have kept their role spiritual: "Our hearts are with them, but officially we cannot take sides—it would jeopardize missionaries elsewhere." They have not had advice from the General Conference or the Far Eastern Division on how to handle this very unexpected situation, and leaders from these higher levels of the church structure have not visited Cawthoolie. Indeed, the church leaders at these levels seem nervous about the situation. They want to dissociate the church from Cawthoolie, and to keep missionaries and tourists away from there in order to prevent stories of Adventist-led armed struggle from surfacing.<sup>8</sup>

## Adopting a Position in the 19th Century

Just as Adventism was creating its organizational structure between 1860 and 1863, the American Civil War forced the church to grapple with the issue of military service. Since Adventists expected to be persecuted by the state before the imminent return of Christ, and felt that they had the responsibility of spreading God's last warning message to the world, there was widespread reluctance among Adventists to volunteer for service. When he discovered that they were being accused of disloyalty, James White, editor of the *Review*

and *Herald*, wrote in favor of participating: "in case of drafting, the government assumes the responsibility of the violation of the law of God."<sup>9</sup>

This editorial initiated a debate, which revealed deep divisions over the issue. Adventist ranks included many who had been touched by pacifism through the abolitionist movement. These regarded military combat as a violation of the sixth commandment and of the nonviolent teachings of Jesus. They embraced the examples in the book of Daniel, where the three Hebrews and the prophet defied orders from the state.

On the other hand, since Adventists were at that time concentrated in the North, and key church leaders had taken positions against slavery, there was also considerable sympathy among them for the Union side. Some became protagonists for active participation in the military struggle. They found biblical support for their position in passages in the Epistles granting considerable authority to the state<sup>10</sup> and in the Old Testament stories in which God sent Israel to war. They also restricted the meaning of the sixth commandment to murder, thus removing war from its purview.<sup>11</sup>

The issue became urgent when conscription was instituted in March 1863. The infant church eventually took a position against military service. However, consensus was reached primarily on practical, rather than ideological, grounds. It was agreed that participation in war was impossible for Adventists because it would make it unfeasible for them to observe the Sabbath or their diet restrictions, and would expose them to a multitude of evil influences, such as drinking, smoking, gambling, and cursing.<sup>12</sup>

Adventists usually chose to avoid the draft by paying the standard commutation fee of \$300, and churches helped poor members raise this sum. When provision for noncombatant service was passed in February 1864, Adventists initially made no attempt to gain



recognition as noncombatants under the act because they were generally using the commutation fee to avoid service. "Only in July of 1864, when the privilege of buying commutation was restricted to those recognized as conscientious objectors, did the church act to secure such recognition for itself."<sup>13</sup> Having accepted a position, Adventists then enforced it, disfellowshipping members who volunteered for military service.<sup>14</sup> The third annual session of the General Conference, held in May 1865, shortly after the end of the war, affirmed the new pacifist position: It declared that while Adventists "recognize civil government as ordained by God," they were "compelled to decline all participation in acts of war and bloodshed because this was inconsistent with the teaching of Jesus, the 'Prince of Peace.'"<sup>15</sup>

## New Issues Abroad

Meanwhile, Adventism had begun to spread internationally. Some of the countries where it took root lacked the tradition of concern for individual conscience that had spawned the legislation creating noncombatant status in the United States.

Military training in peacetime came to the fore early in the new century in several countries. In a very distant America, Adventist leaders gave little direction to these situations. In Argentina, where there had been conscription for many years, Adventists had refrained from requesting special privileges for fear of incurring severe punishments—that is, they typically trained with weapons and on the Sabbath, in effect abandoning their scruples rather than risk heightening tensions with the state. However, in 1907, one church member there chose instead to endure torture and imprisonment. When this drew publicity and critical comment, Adventists were exempted from military work on the Sabbath. Their focus on the Sabbath rather than on bearing arms

pointed to future trends. However, when the governments of Australia and New Zealand introduced compulsory military training in 1909, the local Adventist Religious Liberty Committee petitioned them successfully for noncombatant status.<sup>16</sup>

Meanwhile, German Adventists conscripted in the years prior to 1914 faced considerable pressure concerning both the use of weapons and Sabbath observance. Some who were imprisoned became the focus of scornful press coverage. When they were taken to court, they refused to train with arms; however, they expressed a willingness to serve in time of war. Consequently, when war broke out suddenly in 1914, their leaders, focusing on the New Testament passages asserting the primacy of government authority, agreed that German Adventists would bear weapons in the service of the Fatherland. Moreover, their announcement stated explicitly that "under these circumstances we will also bear arms on Saturday."<sup>17</sup> This decision resulted in a bitter schism, which concluded with the members making up the pacifist opposition—the "two percent"—being disfellowshipped from the official church and forming the Seventh Day Adventist Reform Movement. The patriotism of the official Adventists, together with their realization that Imperial Germany would not countenance a noncombatant option, led them to reduce their tension with the state and to discard those who insisted on maintaining high tension.

## The American Church and World War I (1917-1918)

Because of the late entry of the United States into the war, the American church had more time to prepare its position. This was just as well, because once again there was considerable debate over the intent of the Scriptures.<sup>18</sup> In April 1917 the North American

Division, declaring that “we have been non-combatants throughout our history,” adopted the 1865 General Conference declaration of noncombatancy as principle, and filed this with the War Department.<sup>19</sup> However, it now defined noncombatancy quite differently: instead of being pacifists who refused to be involved in war, Adventists would now respond to the draft but refuse to bear arms—as unarmed soldiers, they would do good and not kill. Adventists were eager to express their patriotism and to modify positions that could heighten tensions with the state.

Unlike the Quakers, Adventists sought to avoid only actual combatancy. They did not see it as a contradiction to help the wounded to recover and so fight again: They were helping people, and what those they helped did afterwards was up to their own consciences. Their patriotism made them proud to offer service to their nation that was compatible with what their consciences allowed. Adventist leaders even urged members to purchase war bonds.

However, being part of the military initially increased tensions when Adventist conscripts were punished because of problems with Sabbath observance during basic training. Church leaders were eventually successful in

arranging for Adventists to be excused from all unnecessary military activities on that day. Nevertheless, at the end of the war there were still 35 Adventists in prison, with sentences ranging from five to 20 years, for disobeying officers on this account. They were then released by proclamation.<sup>20</sup>

## Further Trouble in Europe

Once the war ended, the General Conference was faced with the problem of how to deal with the rift in Europe, which had already spread through several countries there. Finally, in 1923, it made an incongruous decision to side with the official church in Germany, which had the effect of leaving the schism in place, while, at the same time, establishing that the official position of international Adventism toward war was non-combatancy.<sup>21</sup>

However, the official position was soon breached once more by the Stalinist crackdown on religious freedom. The beginning of this was signaled at the church’s 1924 All-Russian Congress, when its leaders were forced to sign a statement that military service was a matter of private conscience. This statement was strengthened considerably at the next congress, in 1928, with the proclamation that military service was a Christian duty, and that anyone teaching otherwise was a heretic and should be disfellowshipped. Meanwhile, new laws proscribed proselytizing activity and charitable work by religious groups. By accepting these conditions the Adventist Church was able to function openly but in very compromised circumstances.

This situation resulted in another schism, for some of the Russian Adventists refused to compromise with the authorities. Instead they broke away from the officially recognized church and went under-



ground, thus placing themselves in a position where they attracted persecution. The schismatics called themselves the True and Free Adventists: “true” because they were faithful to the commandments to observe the Sabbath and refrain from killing, which they accused the official church of breaking, and “free” because they refused to be registered or connected to the government.<sup>22</sup>

Two approaches to military service had emerged within international Adventism. One, which was declared the official position, was noncombatancy—now redefined as participation in war without arms. However, it was confined largely to the English-speaking world, where it had been secured fairly easily as a legally available option. The second approach was utilized where governments firmly refused to allow any such alternative, when Adventists usually chose to avoid conflict by serving with arms. That is, in both cases tension with the state tended to be relatively low, at least as measured by military service. Indeed, in two cases the official Adventist Church had chosen to cut off minorities that resisted government military policies rather than risk raising tensions.

## World War II (1939-1945)

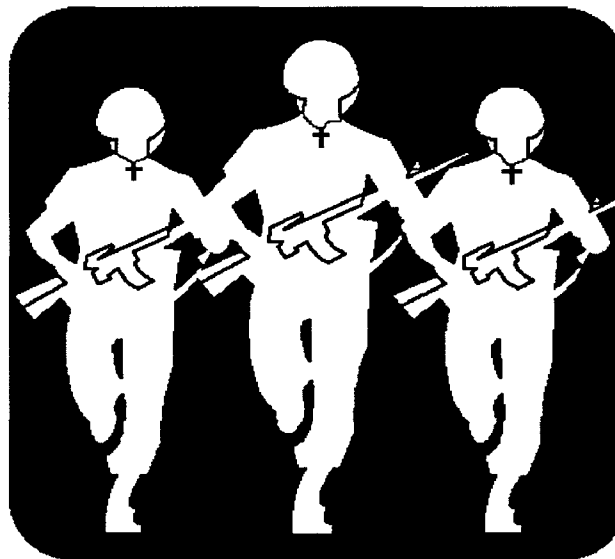
As the international situation began to heat up again in Europe, the General Conference reaffirmed the church’s noncombatant position once more. It issued a pamphlet in 1934, “Our Youth in Time of War,” which urged Adventist youth to prepare for noncombatant service by graduating in medicine, nursing, dietetics or some other medically related field, or to at least get experience as cooks, nurses aides, etc.

In 1939, as war broke out in Europe, the church in the United States again established a program to provide medical training to Adventists who were potential draftees. This

time, however, the program was much more sophisticated than during World War I, for it secured the cooperation of the armed forces: Called the Medical Cadet Training Program, it was directed and supervised by regular army officers.<sup>23</sup> The official church paper commented: “Refusing to be called conscientious objectors, Seventh-day Adventists desire to be known as conscientious cooperators.”<sup>24</sup>

However, the historic noncombatant stand was already being compromised again in Germany, where Adventists praised Hitler and his National Socialists with enthusiasm, and many conscripts bore arms willingly even though they had been granted the right to opt for orderly or medical duties. In so doing they sharply reduced the tension between their church and the state, surviving untouched in spite of the similarity of several of their beliefs and practices to Judaism. Their experience was in marked contrast to that of the Reformed Adventists and the Jehovah’s Witnesses, who suffered greatly, often to death, because of their unswerving commitment to their pacifist positions.<sup>25</sup>

Nevertheless, during World War II the General Conference affirmed yet again that “throughout their history Seventh-day Adventists have been noncombatants. . . . the non-combatant position taken . . . is thus based on



deep religious conviction.”<sup>26</sup> Some 12,000 American Adventists served during World War II as noncombatants in medical branches of the services. Church leaders were especially proud of their military heroes such as Desmond Doss, whose bravery earned him a Congressional Medal of Honor.<sup>27</sup>

## Korean and Vietnam Wars (1950s and 1960s) and Transformation of the Adventist Position

The Medical Cadet Corps, which had been allowed to lapse after World War II, was revived at the time of the Korean War. Once again conscripted American Adventists served in large numbers in medical units. The major innovation during this time was the appointment by the church of military chaplains, who were paid by the armed forces and had military careers. During World War II the General Conference had refused to endorse Adventist clergy for such posts, which had had the effect of keeping them from being appointed.<sup>28</sup>

However, it now not only agreed to endorse them, but also to give financial aid to some would-be chaplains in order to help with their ministerial training and to ordain them immediately after graduation, since this was necessary for their appointment as chaplains, rather than having them wait several years, as was the normal procedure with Adventist clergy. Thus American Adventism took another step in normalizing its relationship with the military.

South Korean Adventists were also taught during the Korean War that it was the church's position not to undergo military training with arms—a position that was reinforced by visiting General Conference officials. Consequently, following the American model, the Adventist college in Korea gave basic medical training to those expecting to be drafted, who then asked

the authorities to assign them to medical units or other noncombatant positions where they did not have to bear arms. But not all were able to obtain such positions, and the unlucky ones sometimes found themselves with an unsympathetic commander who would not respect their religious restrictions. Two of these were executed at the front line during the war when they refused to bear arms.

About 100 Korean Adventists were sent to prison for as long as seven years during the 1950s and 1960s for failure to obey orders concerning arms or Sabbath activities; many more were beaten or otherwise mistreated. Appeals to President Park were successful in securing the release of some of these men, but this approach never solved the basic problem. Indeed, the prison terms to which Adventists were sentenced became notably longer during the 1960s than they had been during the previous decade.<sup>29</sup>

In many other countries without provision for alternatives to military service, ranging from Franco's Spain to Communist Eastern Europe to Latin America, Adventists would also have faced severe difficulties and even imprisonment if they had tried to avoid training with arms. In some countries, such as Argentina, the church provided youth with some medical training during this period, once again hoping that the possession of these skills would shape their paths when they were conscripted. However, the major concern of local church leaders was often the preservation of Sabbath observance for conscripts rather than the avoidance of training with weapons. They frequently concluded that the General Conference did not understand their situation, so that its statements reflected an American situation that could not be applied to them.<sup>30</sup> In this way they avoided the tension with the state over military service that the Korean Adventists were experiencing.

Nevertheless, in 1954, following the Korean War, the Quadrennial Session of the General

Conference voted a major statement that not only confirmed the traditional noncombatant position but also provided for it to be included in the church manual as a fundamental belief throughout the world field:

... The breaking out of war among men in no way alters the Christian's supreme allegiance and responsibility to God or modifies his obligation to practice his beliefs and put God first.

This partnership with God through Jesus Christ, who came into this world not to destroy men's lives but to save them, causes Seventh-day Adventists to take a noncombatant position, following their divine master in not taking human life, but rendering all possible service to save it. In their accepting the obligations of citizenship, as well as its benefits, their loyalty to government requires them to serve the state in any noncombatant capacity . . . asking only that they may serve in those capacities which do not violate their conscientious convictions.<sup>31</sup>

However, when the next edition of the church manual was being readied for printing in 1959, the General Conference Committee voted to omit the above statement from it.

Church leaders were becoming more aware of the problems of observing noncombatancy within many portions of the world church, and some felt it would be inhumane to discipline members caught in such a bind—a likely result of including the position among the fundamental beliefs of the church.

In the years following the Korean War, relationships between the church in America and government and military leaders became notably closer.

In 1954 the U.S. Army established a special camp at Fort Sam Houston in Texas where all noncombatants could receive their basic training. This removed them from regular units, where their refusal to bear arms had been a regular source of confusion. More than half the men who trained there were Adventists.<sup>32</sup> "It was a program engineered for the needs of conscientious cooperators."<sup>33</sup>

That same year the U.S. Army Surgeon General contacted the General Conference seeking approval for the Army to ask Adventist draftees to volunteer for a research program designed especially for them, which would "contribute significantly to the nation's health and security."

The upshot was the creation of "Project Whitecoat," under which volunteers from among drafted Adventist noncombatant servicemen participated as guinea pigs in biological warfare research for the U.S. Army at Fort Detrick, Maryland. Thanks to the enthusiastic encouragement of the General Conference, 2,200 Adventists participated in the program between 1955 and 1973.<sup>34</sup> In taking this

*When Korean leaders contacted the General Conference seeking advice, the latter reversed its position, arguing that it was not worth risking serious trouble with the government: Training with arms should be a matter of individual choice. Almost every Adventist student and conscript in Korea thereafter trained with arms.*

position, church leaders subordinated a church doctrine, healthful living, to cementing relations with the U.S. military.

During these years the church continued to urge young men at Adventist schools to take medical training through participating in the Medical Cadet Corps before draft age. The most enthusiastic of these did intensive field training at a roving Camp Desmond T. Doss, which was usually located at Adventist campgrounds. The military staffed the camp and

spent large sums setting up a field hospital.<sup>35</sup>

However, the ideology surrounding the antiwar movement of the late 1960s led to a spurt in the number of American Adventists choosing the 1-O classification (conscientious objector choosing alternate service). Although their choice offended the Adventists who had become militant patriots, the church was obliged to deal with them. The Annual Council of the General Conference voted in 1969 that such Adventists should be told that the historic teaching of the church was noncombatancy (1-A-O), and urged to consider this first; however, if they persisted in pursuing the 1-O classification, pastors should provide the needed help if the draftee's wish was consistent with his religious experience.<sup>36</sup>

When disagreement and debate on the military issue persisted among American Adventists, the General Conference formed a Study Committee on Military Service in 1971. This large committee received and debated many papers, and remained deeply divided.<sup>37</sup> When Annual Council took up the matter in 1972, it declared that military service was a matter of individual conscience, and thus adopted a position that could include both the militant patriots and the pacifists. Its vehicle in

this was the statement on military obligations voted by the General Conference Session in 1954 (quoted above), which it transformed by adding a new ending:

This statement is not a rigid position binding church members but gives them guidance, leaving the individual member free to assess the situation for himself.

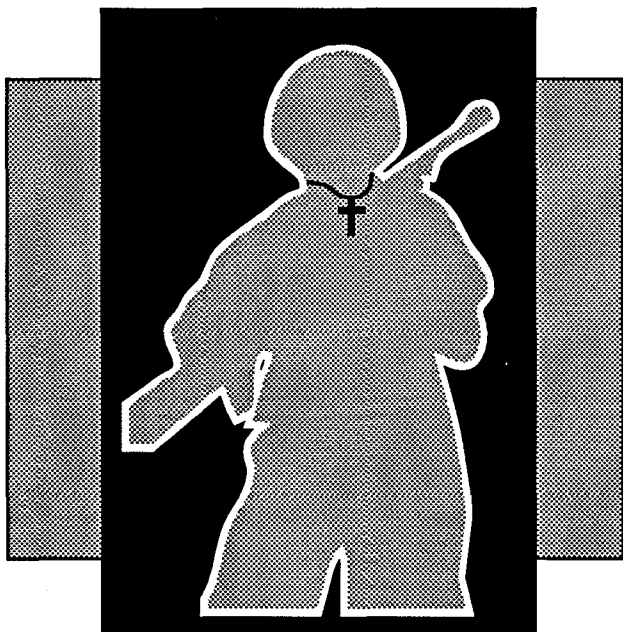
The document interpreted this by confirming that, for members in the United States, the statement was best reflected in the traditional 1-A-O (noncombatant) classification, but that the church would also facilitate members applying for a 1-O (conscientious objector) classification. However, it then added:

For those who conscientiously choose the 1-A classification (military service as a combatant), pastoral guidance and counsel should be provided in ministering to their needs since the Church refrains from passing judgment on them.<sup>38</sup>

Clearly, this decision represented a sharp break with the position that had, in 1954, been declared a fundamental belief.

The new flexibility was tested and confirmed in Korea the very next year. It was noted above that young men there had endured beatings, imprisonment, and even death, rather than renege on their commitment to noncombatancy. However, as time passed, younger Koreans began to question whether the costs were worth the stand, and increasing numbers of them opted to violate the recommended church policy in the late 1960s. Then the military situation in South Vietnam deteriorated, and Korean troops were withdrawn from there along with American troops. The Park regime panicked and insisted that all conscripts train with arms (which thus removed the noncombatant alternatives previously available to some Adventists), and that such training be included within college curricula.

The latter demand placed the Adventist college in a dilemma: Should it conform to the



new policy or reject it and face closure? When Korean leaders contacted the General Conference seeking advice, the latter reversed the position it had advocated in the 1960s, arguing that it was not worth risking serious trouble with the government: Training with arms should be a matter of individual conscience. The college consequently conformed to the government's demand that it train students with weapons, and left the choice of whether to comply to the individual consciences of the students, not urging them one way or the other:

If the College had refused to do the training, the Ministry of Education would have closed it, unless the Lord performed a miracle. . . . We decided that the college was more important than noncombatancy.<sup>39</sup>

The result of this decision was that almost every Adventist student and conscript in Korea thereafter trained with arms. Moreover, the church, which had formerly had a reputation with the authorities for taking a stand on training with weapons and Sabbath observance in the military, lost this reputation. The church's abandonment of its noncombatant position was a wrenching experience for those who had earlier endured prison to stand up for it, and more than half of them have since cut their ties with it.<sup>40</sup>

Meanwhile, Adventism in America had backed away from the serious teaching of noncombatancy through Sabbath schools, youth programming, and the church school system.

## The Volunteer American Army

When the United States switched to a volunteer army in 1973, recruiters began emphasizing educational and vocational benefits that appealed to those of lower socioeconomic status and racial minorities, includ-

ing many Adventists. These began to volunteer for military service (an act that removed the noncombatant option available to draftees) in unprecedented numbers. The church now directed its main effort into chaplaincy, and by 1992 the Adventist chaplaincy corps had grown to a total of 44. The National Service Organization, which was originally staffed by pastors and evangelists and whose object was to handle the problems of draftees with noncombatant status and Sabbath observance, was taken over by chaplains socialized into military values, who now tried primarily to serve the spiritual needs of the Adventist volunteer soldiers. Its new focus was confirmed when it was renamed the office of Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries.<sup>41</sup>

## The World Church and Military Service Today

To understand the international diversity on this issue, one needs to study the evolving position of the church on conscription, particularly how the church in America has modified its position over the years as church leaders became increasingly patriotic and determined to foster a supportive relationship with the federal government and the U.S. military. Within the United States in the 1990s, "military recruiters come to Adventist school campuses, and school and university bulletin boards display posters advertising the benefits of service in the armed forces."<sup>42</sup> It is not surprising, then, that "most young Adventist adults are unaware of the strong pacifist thread in the fabric of Adventist history."<sup>43</sup> In contrast with earlier generations, many young Adventists have enlisted, thereby agreeing to kill America's enemies if ordered to do so. The office of Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries estimated the total number of military personnel listing Seventh-day Adventist as their "religious preference"—that is, of Adventist back-

ground—as 6,000 to 8,000 in 1991, and that 2,000 of these participated in the Gulf War. One Adventist Marine, the son of a conference youth leader, was the only survivor when his tank was hit by friendly fire.<sup>44</sup>

Adventist attitudes became much more openly jingoistic during the Gulf War:

Not only have [Adventist volunteer soldiers] been to the Persian Gulf and back; they have come home to welcoming applause in Sabbath worship services and patriotic accolades in the church's publications.<sup>45</sup>

A non-Adventist church attendee wrote of being told by church members, "We should nuke them," that "according to the Bible 'there is a time for war,'" and that "God instructed the slaughter of women, men, and children."<sup>46</sup> This mood was matched by the majority within the General Conference headquarters. An official there who was troubled by President Bush's decision to launch the war told of a sense of isolation from his colleagues because of widespread enthusiasm there for American participation, for "sending in the missiles and the bombs."<sup>47</sup>

The Adventist message concerning military service has become blurred and confusing. Pamphlets available from Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries at the General Conference warn that "the Adventist Church strongly counsels its members NOT to enter military service voluntarily if they have conscientious beliefs that they either cannot bear arms or be available for routine military training or duty during Sabbath hours," but then they add that views on these questions are a matter of individual conscience. Similarly, an article in a church periodical reviewed the biblical evidence:

"The attitude of the Christian should always be of loyalty to his government," says Charles Martin, director of the National Service Organization of the Adventist Church. "But when the government conflicts with the requirements of God, he must obey God, at whatever cost." . . .

"Whether defensive or offensive, just or unjust, war means killing," says Martin.

"It's hard for some to believe that a soldier who shoots, stabs, shells, napalms, or bombs another human being is in harmony with One who said 'Resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.' . . . Many Adventists and other Christians agree with Tertullian: Christ, in disarming Peter, ungirt every soldier."

But the article then concluded:

The Adventist church recommends that its youth, if drafted, enter the armed forces as noncombatants. But the church also recognizes the right of individual conscience. An Adventist bearing arms is in no way a second-class church member.<sup>48</sup>

Since the Adventist Church operates internationally, military service has often had to be addressed, and here two distinct patterns have emerged. The noncombatant option was sought successfully in the English-speaking world and, more recently, in Western Europe. Consequently, Adventists stand out as more different on this issue in these countries than they are today in the United States. However, because they are merely making use of options that are legally available to conscripts, this indicates that tension with these societies is not especially high—although it is higher than in the United States. This is because Adventists there have often remained more separate because of a lower level of upward mobility, a small membership, which renders them politically insignificant, especially within democracies, and minor institutions, which leave Adventists with less of a communal stake in society.

On the other hand, in those countries where any hesitancy to heed the call to arms would have generated tension with the state (these include the formerly Communist region and much of the developing world), Adventists rarely raised the issue. In general, they left the high tension on this question to the Jehovah's



Witnesses and the schismatic Adventists. This does not mean that tension between Adventists and these societies was minimal, for conflict was also possible over such issues as Sabbath observance or interference by the state in church affairs. But even here Adventists typically cooperated with the authorities and took opportunities to reduce tension: They sent their children to school on the Sabbath in several countries, established exchange relationships with military and Communist regimes, allowed Communist governments to control appointments to church leadership, and, when

disgust with toadying to the state resulted in schisms,<sup>49</sup> then-General Conference President Neal Wilson twice announced that the General Conference would recognize only the organization "recognized by the authorities."<sup>50</sup>

The patterns found reveal the importance of political context. Adventists have not been likely to seek noncombatant status where the cost could be high. They have been wary about heightening tension with governments. When the situation has been threatening, they have proved willing to compromise.

While building comfortable relationships with government rulers throughout the international church has been embraced as a prime goal by General Conference leaders, the origins of this policy were local, in individual countries: it was the church leaders in such countries as Argentina, Germany, and the USSR who first chose to ignore what was then the official church policy on military service in order to avoid heightening tension with their governments.

How did these varying patterns impact on the official denominational position on military service? The Adventist Church was spawned in America, its headquarters has always been here, the bulk of its income originates here, and its leadership has been dominated by Americans throughout its history. The noncombatant stance was formulated in America in response to an American problem, and the church here continued to reaffirm it strongly and to shape its programs accordingly until the Vietnam War. It is not surprising that the General Conference, which

was then a creature of the North American church, followed suit. Indeed, the proclamations of the General Conference over the decades showed little awareness that the official church position was not being adhered to in many countries.

The decision by the General Conference in 1972 to become much less dogmatic on the issue was triggered by divisions within the American church in the

wake of the antiwar movement of the 1960s. But the other reason was the growing importance of the world church. There was increased awareness of the persecution in South Korea and the failure of much of the world field to implement the official policy. Even more important, was the realization that the balance of power within the world church was shifting beyond the United States. Maintaining the unity of the world church depended on accepting the prevailing diversity in practice concerning serving in the military and killing others in combat.

We have seen that church leaders have not

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*Church leaders have seen diversity among Adventists concerning military service as necessary to sustain worldwide church unity. What has been true of killing for one's country is true of ordaining women for one's church. Lasting unity can only be achieved by accepting diversity of worldwide practice.*

only allowed considerable diversity among Adventists concerning military service. They have seen it as necessary to sustain worldwide church unity. What has been true of

killing for one's country is true of ordaining women for one's church. Lasting unity can only be achieved by accepting diversity of worldwide practice.

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. From interviews. The major exception to this pattern in Western Europe is France, where the majority choose to train with weapons rather than face the longer alternative service. However, most of them still try to arrange release from work on the Sabbath.
2. From interviews.
3. Ronald Lawson, from "Church and State at Home and Abroad: The Governmental Relations of International Seventh-day Adventism," a paper presented at the meeting of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, 1991.
4. From interviews.
5. From interviews. The issue of training with weapons has not been raised in many countries where conscription is not a present practice or a recent memory. These countries include India, Bangladesh, Japan, and Hong Kong, and also much of Africa.
6. From interviews.
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8. Ibid.
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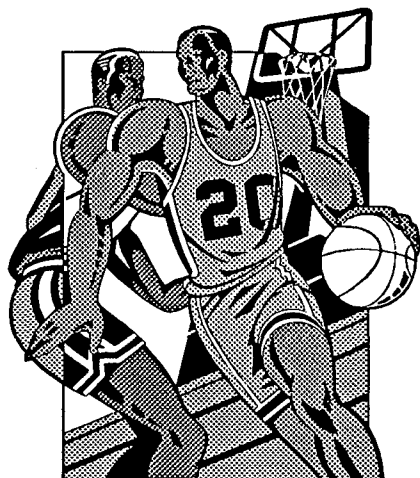
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## Washington Post on the Prospects Of a Seven-Foot Sabbath-Keeper

by Michael Sandler

Sam Randolph, a 6-foot-11, 245-pound Takoma Academy senior playing his first season of high school basketball, has already attracted national attention from Division I colleges. But if recruiters hope to sign the stalwart center, they had better be willing to shuffle their schedules for the next four seasons.

Randolph played little organized ball before transferring this fall to the Takoma Park school from Walla Walla, Wash., in the hope of developing his basketball talent. He is a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, whose followers celebrate their Sabbath from Friday evening to Saturday evening. If Randolph improves into a major college player, which many recruiters believe is possible, colleges interested in him would have to balance his ability with the business of college basketball. That necessitates many games be played on weekends for attendance and television purposes.

"When the scouts come, I like to clear initially that I am a Seventh-day Adventist," said Randolph, who has helped Takoma Academy to its best start (8-3) by averaging 19.5 points, 10 rebounds, 5.1 assists and shooting 80 percent from the free-throw line. "I will not break the Sabbath. I will not be able to play from sundown Friday to sundown Saturday. If they say they cannot work with that, then it is not an

option for me. But if they will work with that, I can go from there."

Odds are some will make an effort. He quickly made an impression this fall playing in pickup games at the University of Maryland with members of the men's basketball team and at the Charlie Weber Invitational, a showcase for top high school players on the East Coast. In his high school debut last month against No. 14 Laurel Baptist, he scored 29 points.

"He already has the skills to contribute to a Division I program," said Largo Coach Lou Wilson. "He catches the ball well, squares up to the basket, has a great touch and can shoot the three-point shot."

More than 40 colleges have expressed interest in Randolph, including Division I powers Duke, Florida, Maryland, and Wake Forest. Though schools can control their regular season schedules, they cannot make adjustments for conference tournaments and the National Collegiate Athletic Association tournament.

The NCAA has already faced similar circumstances. Brigham Young, a Mormon school, requests not to be scheduled on Sundays in the NCAA basketball and baseball tournaments, said Dave Cawood, NCAA assistant executive director. That request has been honored in the past, but "that may be subject to review in the future," he said.

In the 1993 NCAA men's basket-

*One of several nationally recognized Adventist athletes gets diverse advice on Sabbath-keeping, even from fellow members.*

ball tournament, Northeast Louisiana requested that it be scheduled to accommodate the religious beliefs of its star, Ryan Stewart, a Seventh-day Adventist. The school was scheduled to play its first-round game on Thursday, but if it had won, it would have had to play its second-round game on a Saturday.

"If a kid came to me with that kind of problem, I would try to talk to the head of the church and see if they could get a special dispensation for him," said George Washington University Coach Mike Jarvis. "If that did not happen—if he was that good—I would make sure we did not play on Fridays. [However] if I felt over a four-year period, he was not going to play on Fridays, I would have to make a decision on whether or not to recruit him. . . . My first instinct is I would probably pass."

Rick Murray, coach at Columbia Union, a small Seventh-day Adventist college in Takoma Park, said there have been Seventh-day Adventists who have played college basketball but few who kept the Sabbath.

"I do not know of any that have kept the faith and been able to" excel at college basketball, said Murray. "The ones that have become role players. But a lot have

left the church and done extremely well. It is hard for a coach unless you completely restructure your schedule and figure you are not going to make the playoffs."

Randolph has already been lobbied by both sides of the debate. "People are saying that if I do not break the Sabbath right now—and play—then years down the road I will look back on it and feel bitter, and maybe drop out of the church," said Randolph.

Takoma Academy's Todd Sterling, a 6-3 point guard who has received several small college offers, also is a Seventh-day Adventist. He said if faced with Randolph's situation, he would have to weigh all of the factors. "I would make the decision based on what I could get out of the situation and what other people could gain," said Sterling. "If going to that school was based on playing Friday night, I probably would not go there."

One reason Randolph may not waver is that he carries a 4.0 grade-point average and scored 1360 on the Scholastic Assessment Test. He also sings in the choir and plays piano.

"He is looking at so many excellent areas as opposed to a kid who says, 'This is the only thing I have got—this is my ticket out,' said Takoma Academy Coach Brad

Durby. "Unfortunately, what too many kids do not understand is that the only reason [basketball] is all they have is that it is the only thing they have given their heart to."

The pressure on Randolph to choose between his religion and basketball future will likely mount in the coming months. And those associated with his church realize the position he is in.

Dunbar Henry, an ordained minister of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, said Randolph's commitment is exceptional for someone his age. "I wish I could say it is characteristic. There are many that, if they had the same opportunity as Sam, would choose basketball," said Dunbar. "In every situation you have some more settled than others."

Should Randolph play, "All of us would raise our eyebrows and ask why?" Henry added. "The Sabbath is very basic to our belief. People keep it in a different way but playing a sport on the Sabbath—in an organized situation—would not be acceptable."

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*Michael Sandler wrote this article as a special to the Washington Post. It appeared January 5, 1995, and is reprinted by permission of the Washington Post.*



## Desmond Ford Applauds Glen Greenwalt on the Sanctuary

The article "The Sanctuary—God in Our Midst" by Glen Greenwalt (*Spectrum*, Vol. 24, No. 2) was both thoughtful and thought-provoking. I, for one, am very grateful for it. Of particular importance is the following extract:

It was only some thirteen years after the Great Disappointment that the view was established that Jesus had gone into the most holy place, there to begin a work of investigating the books to see who would be saved and who would be lost. Today this view, like other explanations before it, is losing its persuasive appeal. As time continues, the explanatory power of our interpretation wanes (p. 47).

This is a very honest comment, and I hope the leaders of the church observe it closely and with similar openness echo it. A recent vice president of the General Conference, in a private article issued to friends, declared regarding the traditional dating schema supposedly based on Daniel 8 and 9: "That our time projection is off has already been proven by the inexorable passing of around 150 years since that time schema was first projected." The writer but articulated what has been in the minds of many Adventist leaders for decades.

I do have a problem with Dr. Greenwalt's references to the "vision" of Hiram Edson. He uses the word repeatedly on pages 46 and 47, but it is misleading. There was no such vision. Adventist historians for decades have come to that conclusion and published it in denominational literature. Furthermore, Hiram Edson himself was a highly erratic and eccentric individual. This also is known to church historians. He left a strange manuscript to be published after his death. Leaders of the church inspected it and decided against its publication, and his wife heartily assented to this decision. What Edson experienced in the cornfield that day was a conviction. It was neither visionary nor inspired. Neither was it accurate.

In my Glacier View manuscript (*Daniel 8:14, the Day of Atonement, and the Investigative Judgment*), now in print, on pages 174-176, I have set forth more than 20 of the non-scriptural assumptions involved in the traditional Adventist teaching on Daniel 8:14. The Glacier View Committee, which met with me prior to the convention, begged me to reduce this list, but it did not seem either honest or wise to do so.

Dr. Raymond Cottrell, dean of all Adventist scholars, has written a very lengthy and very learned manuscript on the Book of Daniel.

*Readers comment on Glen Greenwalt's fresh view of the sanctuary and Malcolm Russell's analysis of low college teachers' salaries.*

It is a summation of his more than 60 years of study of the book. A devout Adventist, he has been unable to find a scintilla of evidence supporting the traditional exegesis of Daniel 8:14.

Dr. Greenwalt's article is a welcome change from what has recently been published in denominational papers concerning the 150th anniversary of the Great Disappointment. Of similar quality are the 18 cassettes on the same topic

available through La Sierra University, recording the lectures recently given by Adventist scholars on the topic. They too, like Dr. Greenwalt, have come a significant distance from the traditional Investigative Judgment teaching.

My gratitude to *Spectrum* for daring to be different in the interests of truth and righteousness.

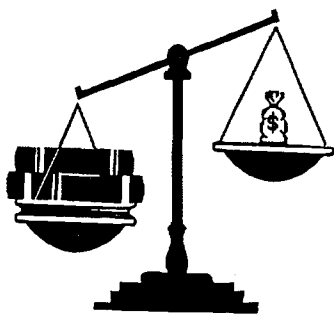
Desmond Ford  
Auburn, California

invalid or not useful. First of all, he cites the business faculty turnover and its rapidity to address the problems of getting qualified teachers in the field of business. We do have a horrible turnover, and there are not enough professors. However, I would point out that in every university in my area, the turnover is not significantly different, and the search for professors in the field of business goes on continuously as well. I do not think the business faculty turnover has much to do with Seventh-day Adventist pay scales. It has to do with the fact that in the business world, education cannot offer competitive salaries to what business can offer.

My main concern with the article is the reference to healthcare and healthcare wages. It states that the church pays certain salaries in hospitals. To be strictly accurate, the church pays no salaries in hospitals, except possibly that of a chaplain(s). In North America, the church does not run hospitals anymore, or to put it another way, there are no church hospitals left in the United States. What we have are community hospitals operated and/or owned by Seventh-day Adventist leadership. The number of employees who are members of the church is usually a minority, and sometimes a huge minority. The salaries paid in healthcare are paid from the income from patients. The church never has the money.

The evidence of the separation of healthcare from the church was finalized in 1991 when the separate retirement system was created for healthcare workers. There is no likelihood that healthcare workers in the United States can now operate in any other way except community wage payment. However, since these salaries are not paid by the church, do not in any way cost the church, and deal with monies the church does not see and cannot

## Winton Beaven Responds to Malcolm Russell on SDA Salaries



I have read with a great deal of interest Malcolm Russell's article (*Spectrum*, Vol. 24, No. 1). I congratulate him on an excellent article, and his call to study of the wage scale. This is a topic which has been central to my fiscal life for 56 years. I have worked under every scale the church has ever had for workers who were non-physicians, including starting at Madison College at a self-supporting rate of \$30 per month.

I have also fathered seven children, all of whom have finished at least 14 years of education in the Seventh-day Adventist school system. I consider myself an expert on family finance, that this has been achieved without bankruptcy.

I agree with many of Russell's main analysis points. I do have some minor and one major disagreement. It is clear that in com-

parison to clergy, Seventh-day Adventist teachers have traditionally been underpaid. They are still, but the degree is considerably less when one considers the self-employment tax for Social Security that ministers must pay if they choose to be covered by Social Security.

The question, of course, is what can be done about it? I would suggest the following: We will never be able to solve the problem unless there is an element of sacrifice involved. The question to be settled is, how much sacrifice? If the answer is none, then our system, in my judgment, cannot survive.

There is a factor of tuition assistance for children which all workers enjoy, which for periods of time in the raising of a family greatly increase their income. I have a daughter who has just finished a four-year college in the Seventh-day Adventist system where tuition runs more than \$9,000 per year and the subsidy from the supporting institution runs in the neighborhood of \$7,000 per year. This is often not evaluated in the processes of comparison.

I would like to challenge two of Russell's analogies as being either

use, it seems to me that analogically, there is no case for comparing healthcare workers' pay in hospitals operated by the church with our school systems, which are entirely church funded, and whose salaries are paid from the funds generated by the church.

It has been my observation over many years, that if we are to look at a revision of our system, we need to address the problem of salary for associate and full professors.

With this letter I am including the latest data from *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, which covers the school year just completed. It shows, as we have always known, that the salaries for the lower ranks of instructor and assistant professor are much closer to national averages than are those for associate and professor ranks. We must, in my judgment, develop a system that provides greater rewards for those who stay in the system, grow with it, and are productive. The data on faculty in the national publications like the *Chronicle* always covers a nine-month salary period. Consequently, the salaries of Adventist educators in colleges and universities compared to other such educators in church-related baccalaureate institutions runs 20 to 30 percent below. Some solution must be found to narrow that gap if we are going to be able to operate a representative system.

In my judgment, it is not fair to compare salaries in Seventh-day Adventist institutions of higher education with salaries paid in public institutions, doctoral institutions, or comprehensive institutions (with the exception of Loma Linda and Andrews). We should compare ourselves with like institutions, and that means church-related.

You clearly point out in the solutions offered that every one of them has problems. I am certain there is no single solution. There are ways to improve the condi-

tions, however, if we have a will to recognize the size and nature of the problem, and can develop a smorgasbord of solutions that will not produce envy among various segments of the faculty. I have had the personal experience at Union College in Lincoln, Nebraska, where in view of particular needs of faculty members, of which I was one, variations were made in the remuneration scale to recognize the size of families. Arrangements were also made to permit certain members of the faculty to do some part-time work off campus. Both of these produced a great deal of hostility toward me personally, and toward the board and to the others who

profited from these changes.

No solution of course will be universally acceptable, but it seems to me that the nature of the gap between remuneration for Adventist college and university teachers and their peers in other like religious institutions is large enough to merit a restudy of the whole pay scale and program.

Thank you for cogently presenting the size and nature of the problem; may this article lead to study and activity to address what is a continuing, festering problem.

Winton H. Beaven  
Kettering, Ohio

## A Call for More Efficient Adventist Colleges

Thank you for Malcolm Russell's article on how underpaying teachers is cutting into the quality of individuals willing to work for denominational wages. Dr. Russell taught two of my children, who both have a great deal of respect for his knowledge of economics and his classroom skills.

The solutions that he suggests for the problem of the underpaid college teacher are creative and merit consideration.

An additional solution that he did not discuss seems always to be left out whenever the subject of low college teachers' pay or high college tuition is discussed in church circles. That solution involves greater productivity in the business of running a college.

Two of the major costs of running any college are the cost of teachers' salaries, and the cost of operating each square foot of building space. As new programs have been started, additional new buildings have been built to house these

programs. It appears that little consideration has been given to student-teacher ratios that new programs will generate. Rarely have percentages of time that classrooms are in use even been calculated.

It may seem rather brash to assert that departments and majors seem to have been put in place because there was a teacher with a Ph.D. who wanted to start a program in his discipline without regard to students or incidentally jobs for those students when they graduate. The assertion rings true, however, when you look at the college statistics and ask how many departments had fewer than five graduates last year?

It may seem ungrateful to assert that buildings have been built because donors were there to pay for them without regard to need. But if you see how many square feet of classrooms on the campus are in use fewer than 10 hours per week, the idea seems on point.

Is it true that the student-teacher



ratio around most of our colleges is around 12 students per teacher? If it is that would explain why personnel costs are totally out of reason on many college campuses even though the teachers are underpaid. Maintenance costs on under-used classroom space adds to the problem.

Together, these inefficiencies may be the culprit in pushing tuition and fees to the level where the benefit-to-cost ratio of a Christian education is questioned by many students and parents. The loans that have been pushed as the solution to student financial problems have put many recent graduates in the position of entering the work force with large debts that do not match their earning power.

Perfect solutions to these major structural problems are not accomplished overnight in an imperfect world. But big improvements can be made when these fundamental problems are discussed and administrative decisions made with them in mind.

Employers are looking for people who can read, communicate, do basic math, think, plan. . . . More and more instruction in specific tasks takes place on the job.

Adventist education should offer a core of majors in liberal arts. Mathematics, Science, Religion/Philosophy, English/Communications (and maybe two or three more) should have strong programs that both serve the whole college community with general education classes and offer one strong undergraduate degree.

Additional majors should be limited to those in which the college has demonstrated excellence and those that have high opportunity for jobs. Majors not fitting the above criteria should be eliminated.

As an example of the problem, (my recollection of the last time I saw it) the Name Deleted College bulletin listed five majors in the communication department: Speech, Journalism, TV Broadcasting, Radio Broadcasting, and Advertising. A quick look at the list of graduates showed that these degrees had one or two graduates every two or three years. It is difficult to believe that any of these programs were very strong academically due to lack of peer interaction and one or two persons teaching most of the classes in the major field. Resources of the college must be spread very thin.

Student-teacher ratios must be very low. One might conclude that a student interested in a career in journalism would be better prepared and more employable with a strong major in English with an emphasis on writing than with a weak degree in journalism. This scenario could be repeated over any number of majors and colleges.

By sticking to basics, the student-teacher ratios could be raised to a more efficient level. Quick arithmetic indicates for a college with 100 teachers, every change of 1 in the ratio (i.e. a move to 13 to 1 from 12 to 1) puts a little more than a million dollars on the bottom line of the income statement of the school. At the larger universities the numbers are even more dramatic. Tuition could be lowered, attracting even more students and further improving the ratios. Teacher salaries could be raised at the same time, thereby attracting better-qualified teachers who would attract more students etc., etc. The last time I looked (10 years ago), Calvin College in Grand Rapids was a working example of the type of numbers I am talking about.

No new building should be built until it can be demonstrated that the ones that are already built are being used to their maximum capacity.

The physical plant could be made to pay more of its way by adding programs that bring people and their pocketbooks to the campus. Many universities have professional continuing-education programs, adult evening programs, programs that cater to the elderly. These are not traditional college programs, but that when properly organized and priced bring in dollars that help pay the fixed cost of the plant. How many of our colleges have a conventions director?

Voluntary contributions might even go up if donors were convinced that their dollars were being

*Letters to the editor are always welcome, and will be considered for publication unless otherwise specified. Direct all correspondence to the editors, Spectrum, P.O. Box 5330, Takoma Park, Maryland 20913-5330 (U.S.A.). The editors reserve the right to condense letters prior to publication.*



used efficiently.

For any significant structural change to take place, academic leaders will have to have the courage to discuss and face the facts of needed improvement in the student-teacher ratio. Accountability for student-teacher ratios will need to be placed with the professors for every department and major.

Alumni associations can become a forum for suggesting management improvements for the university.

Public relations and development departments can provide the college and university constituency with the rationale for the necessary structural changes.

I believe that Seventh-day Adventist education serves an important role in the lives of many people. It must be managed in a way that attracts high-quality, productive teachers. It must not be allowed to price itself out of the market. If it is to thrive in the 21st century it must assess its goals and improve its management of resources given it to reach those goals. It can be done!

*Spectrum* is to be congratulated for again providing a forum where ideas can be exchanged, and thereby provide some of the solutions for the future.

Wesley A. Flory  
Burtonsville, Maryland

## The Case for Moving From “Equal Pay” to “Equal Sacrifice”

**H**urrah for Dr. Malcolm Russell! (“How Sacrificial Must Teachers’ Wages Be?” Vol. 24, No. 1). Recognition of the level of sacrifice, although taught by Christ (Mark 12:41-44; Luke 21:1-4; Matthew 25:15), has been completely ignored by the Seventh-day Adventist Church both in concept and in practice. Like the Pharisees “who loved money” (Mark 16:14), we give credit and recognition to large gifts from the wealthy, while ignoring the larger sacrifices of some church workers who could (outside the church) have been wealthy.

Admittedly it is easy to measure the tangible gifts of money, stocks, or property that have already been quantified for tax purposes. It is tougher to determine what a worker on the church payroll has sacrificed (or profited) by being there. But this is no excuse for not trying.

Christ observed, “the people of

this world are more shrewd in dealing with their own kind than are the people of the light” (Luke 16:8, NIV). How could we follow His recommendation to be more shrewd?

A good place to start is with the definition for “sacrifice” Russell proposes. “The ‘sacrifice’ of working for the Adventist Church is the pay relinquished by not working ‘outside.’” This is not hard to determine in the United States, where salaries of administrators, teachers, and preachers continue to be the subject of analysis studies and publications.

The second step would be to come up with a definition of “equal sacrifice.” I would recommend this be quantified in percentage, rather than absolute, terms.

The third step would be to formulate a new salary scale based on “equal sacrifice” rather than “equal pay.”

Ask yourself, What would hap-

pen to enrollments in our colleges if the most exciting and *best* academically qualified teachers were teaching in the departments that attract the most students? Currently many of our colleges can’t even field a Ph.D. in business to chair their business department! If these departments can attract students without qualified faculty, what could they do with qualified faculty? (I feel I can pick on business teachers because I was one for 25 years.)

The equation is simple. If faculty earn it (tuition generated, study grants, etc.), the church can afford to pay them. The church has already proved that if it doesn’t pay, the revenue will never be generated.

Finally, I would point out that a shift from “equal pay” toward “equal sacrifice” will affect more than the supply of workers to the church. Such a shift will dramatically change what is demanded from those workers. Many of the new workers will be expected to do things (*higher* student-teacher ratios, more research, better teaching in fields of greatest demand) that hardly anyone is doing now. Some workers already on the church payroll may be asked to take cuts in pay!

When salaries are correct the church need not worry about budgets or how much to spend. The church could focus on how much of the demand generated by the Holy Spirit it can afford to service. I think, like the faithful servants in Christ’s parable, our Master would put us in charge of more than we dream (Matthew 25:14-30).

Fred L. Harder  
Austin, Texas

*Correction: “Adventism and the Church of Baseball” was incorrectly attributed on p. 41 of the December 1994 issue. Garly Land was the actual author.*

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