

NEWS • ANALYSIS • OPINION

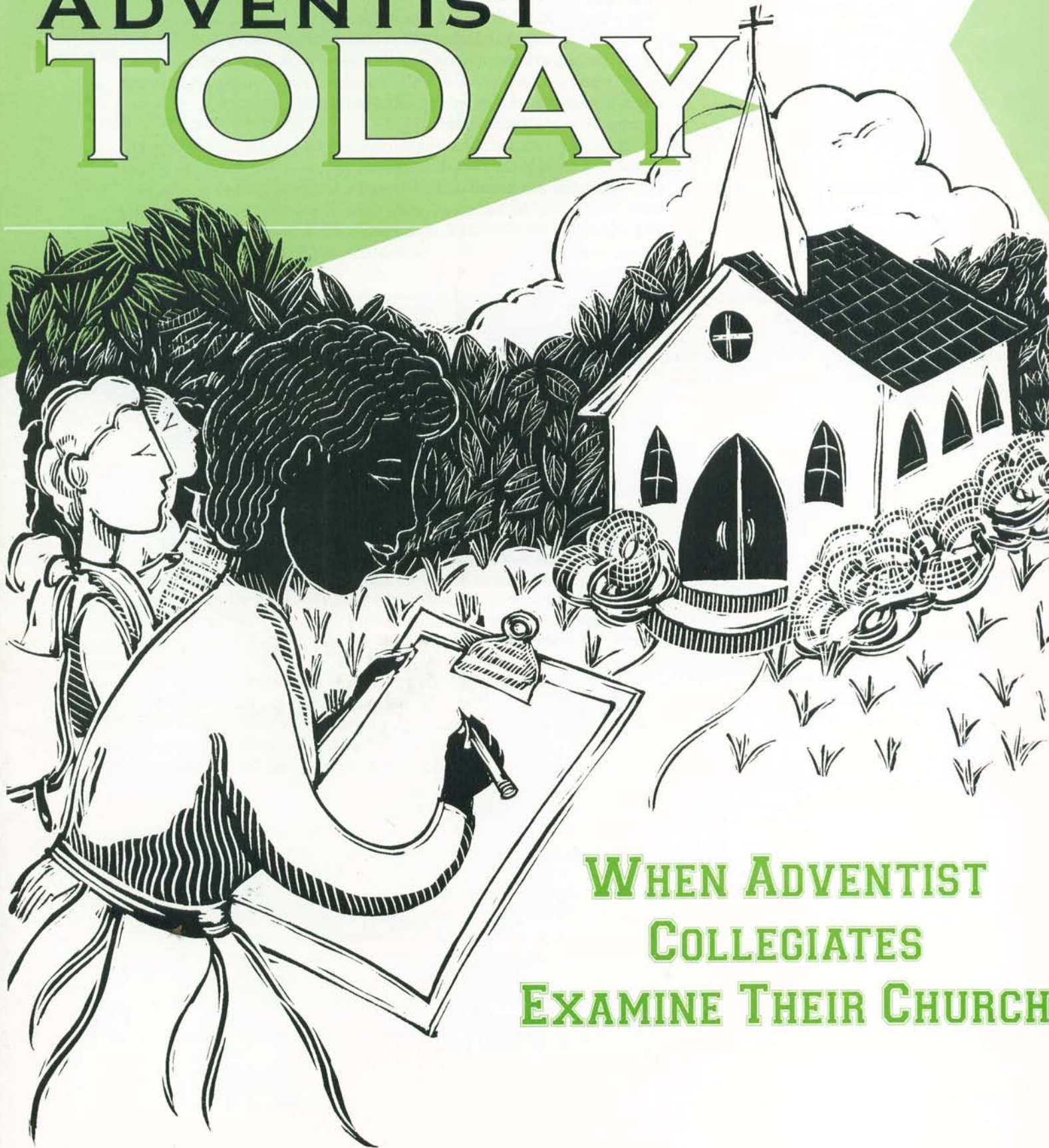
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# ADVENTIST TODAY



**WHEN ADVENTIST  
COLLEGIATES  
EXAMINE THEIR CHURCH**



# 1st Year of Publication...

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WITH THIS OUR SEVENTH ISSUE, *ADVENTIST TODAY* BEGINS ITS SECOND YEAR OF PUBLICATION. The board is pleased with the timeliness of publication and number of subscribers—2500—is considerably ahead of schedule. Editorial content is always a matter of lively debate. Subscribers live in all 50 states.

Discussion of an alternative publication began in the summer of 1992. Discussants included Richard Hammill, Ray Cottrell, Ervin Taylor, John Jones, Donna Evans, Keith Colburn and myself. We feared that very conservative forces such as the Adventist Theological Society could intellectually hijack the denomination. We desired a theologically moderate, open, journalistic publication that would report news not readily available elsewhere and would discuss important issues from multiple viewpoints. As editor Raymond Cottrell puts it, "AT is for the open-minded church member."

In January, 1993, the discussants-turned-board decided to launch the publication. "Adventist Today" was decided upon because of its crispness, its journalistic connotation and its indication of interest in the contemporary meaning of being "Adventist." An Advisory Council made AT possible by generously giving or pledging \$100,000 to assure first-year promotion and publication. And the financial needs continue. An endowment is being sought to assure AT's future, with Dean Kinsey in charge of development.



*The Adventist Today Staff. Seated (l to r): Cherie Rouse, assistant editor; Raymond Cottrell, editor; Darla Pape, administrative assistant. Standing: James H. Stirling, copy editor; Jim Walters, associate editor and board chair; Delwin Finch, managing editor; Dean Kinsey, director of development. (Not pictured: Gayle Saxby, assistant editor; Taya Pernula, clerk; Arlene Fraser, accountant.)*

To make good journalism an integral part of Adventism is the goal of AT. First-year topics included Waco, billboard evangelism, generational conflict, Adventist hospitals and health-care reform, and ordination discrimination. We are happy to have published authors as diverse as Kit Watts and Ralph Larson, Kenneth Wood and Madelyn Haldeman, Herbert Douglass and Douglas Hackleman, Gary Patterson and Anita Mackey.

We know we can do better. We are working on a graphic design overhaul. We need more humor. We need to run more pieces that handle important topics without taking ourselves too seriously. So, please write us and tell us how you think we can further improve. Regardless, we are off on a second year of publication. We're happy that you're aboard.

This is AT's first collegiate issue. Yes, we are vitally interested in seeing wonderful insights and convictions of our Adventist tradition adapted to a new generation's needs. Students from Columbia Union College, La Sierra University and Southern College contributed to this issue. Barry Casey and Lynn Sauls (a new editorial consultant), who teach journalism at CUC and SC, respectively, coordinated student submissions.

Welcome to our second year,

Jim Walters



## ADVENTIST TODAY

Vol. 2, No. 3  
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# Folkenberg: A Kinder, Gentler Conservative

by Joel Sandefur

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**N**EARLY EVERYONE IN THE CHURCH, IT SEEMS, HAS AN opinion on what direction Adventist higher education ought (or ought not) to be heading in. The opinions extend all the way to the top. General Conference president Robert Folkenberg has a burden about the future of Adventist education, one he articulated at some length during the inauguration festivities for La Sierra University's new president, Lawrence Geraty.

Folkenberg's stated aim was to challenge Geraty and the school with a vision of what La Sierra University should strive for as an Adventist institution. However, the address appeared to have a far broader aim, one not limited to a single college or university. The problem of how to integrate learning and religious commitment is not unique to La Sierra, nor is the difficulty of preserving academic freedom. In effect, Folkenberg's speech was a state of the union address for Adventist higher education.

The vision expressed by the GC president was fundamentally conservative. Adventist higher education was portrayed as, before all else, a means to a far greater end than mere intellectual advancement: "to reach people with the good news." This theme repeated itself throughout Folkenberg's speech. The mission of Adventist education has already been decided: to reach out and extend salvation to as many people as possible before it is too late. Only the practical details remain somewhat in doubt.

Folkenberg's speech could also be heard as a plea to Adventist educators to hold the line against the insidious forces of secularization and "political correctness," a term used three times in the address. Adventist colleges must resist being co-opted by the mainstream. Folkenberg termed this struggle between traditional Adventist values and those of the popular culture "a war to maintain our unique spiritual identity."

Another theme dear to Adventist academics and students that Folkenberg touched on was academic freedom. His views on the subject represent what seem a kinder, gentler version of good old Seventh-day Adventist anti-intellectualism. He warned against raising "answerless questions" and against placing doubt in the hearts of students.

Joel Sandefur is a senior French major at La Sierra University. The son and grandson of church administrators, Sandefur is an editorial consultant for *Adventist Today*.



As a soon-to-be graduate of La Sierra University, I found myself alternately encouraged and offended (or at least troubled) by what I heard Folkenberg saying. It was obvious he was speaking on a topic close to his heart, one that he has given considerable thought and prayer to. That the GC president takes Adventist higher education very seriously heartens me. Of all the priorities a church administrator can have, I think a desire to promote Christian education is one of the noblest.

While listening to Folkenberg present his remarks and then later giving his text a more thorough reading, I was struck by the fact that he had taken two different, contrasting speeches and melded them together. On one hand there was the generally positive speech, "Seventh-day Adventist Christian Education as a Positive Force in Society." On the other was the sometimes angry tone of the speech "Adventist Education Must Watch Itself Before It Is Swallowed by Babylon." These two themes were intertwined throughout, one always mitigating the impact of the other. For every progressive remark, there was a more rigid one. On the whole, rigidity won out.

It would be a mistake to take either of these two very different themes too seriously by itself. Folkenberg is definitely not, as some of his remarks might have suggested, someone who buys into the importance of the social gospel and is ready to revolutionize Adventist education accordingly. Nor do I believe he is a knee-jerk conservative waiting to purge Adventist education of progressive elements. More accurately, the ambiguity of Folkenberg's speech suggests a lack of a clearly defined ideology. His perspective is more naively conservative than rabidly doctrinaire.

I agree with Folkenberg that we live in a society that is more or less "morally illiterate" and that Christians need to be a "countercultural force." Christian education should be a training ground for countercultural citizens to help instill moral literacy in our society. Warning flags go up, though, when I hear anyone speak about the need to be intolerant of "aberrant behavior." Or when phrases like "political correctness" are bandied about as if the pressures of political correctness are threatening to wreak havoc on Adventist campuses. It is a case of setting up straw men. Who in their right mind is going to condone "aberrant behavior?" The problem lies in how one defines the term. By the same token, "political correctness" has become a far too easy target. It provokes a reflexive, negative response, but what does it really mean?

I have no argument with Folkenberg when he states that Adventist colleges and universities ought to be turning out spiritually mature graduates. Anyone leaving college



relating to her faith in the same way she did entering has been cheated. An important reason for the existence of Adventist schools is to help students develop and grow spiritually. That is, however, not the only reason for Adventist schools to exist. If they are truly going to be holistic, they cannot afford to sacrifice any facet of the student—intellectual, physical, emotional, moral, or spiritual. We cannot let any of these be, by itself, the tail that wags the Adventist educational dog. All are vital, none can be sacrificed.

There is still a need for distinctively Christian education. About that Folkenberg is correct. Today, though, that distinctiveness may need to be more nuanced than in the past. Students simply will not come to Adventist colleges if they feel the education offered there is inferior to what they find in secular institutions. If too many constraints are placed on academic freedom, Adventist education risks becoming irrelevant. An Adventist institution needs to be just as academically rigorous and intellectually open as a secular one.

What makes Christian education unique is that it offers an added spiritual dimension. That spiritual dimension cannot, however, be an excuse to neglect other aspects or to

stifle intellectual debate. This is why I find it worrisome to hear Folkenberg say that professors ought not ask “unanswerable” questions. I wonder what exactly the GC president meant by an unanswerable question. I find vague menace in this remark. It is hard to imagine a class in philosophy, theology, or theoretical physics that does not raise such questions.

While much in Folkenberg’s speech made me quite uncomfortable, I found little to make me fearful for the future of Adventist higher education. Our church’s top administrator is conservative and his view on education reflects that fact. But it is a naive, not particularly threatening, flavor of traditionalism. Folkenberg came across as a man with a burden on his heart, but not as a meddler.

The truth is that Adventist education is moving forward. The selection of Lawrence Geraty and Niels-Erik Andreassen to head our liberal-arts universities is proof of that. It is unfortunate that Folkenberg, with his immense influence within the church, holds some of the views that he does, ones that I feel reflect a bygone age for Adventist education. But we should also take heart in the progress being made within the system.

## Education and the Mission of Adventism

*The following is excerpted from an address by Robert Folkenberg in February at La Sierra University.*

The mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is to reach people with the good news of the gospel and the second coming of Jesus and prepare them for membership in the Kingdom of God. Education—and educational institutions—are key elements in reaching that goal. As a church we devote millions of dollars each year in financial resources to educational institutions at the four corners of the earth.

We are in a war to maintain our unique spiritual identity and retain a moral voice in a world that is, in my opinion, to a large extent morally illiterate.

Are we educating our young women and men to fade without notice into contemporary society, or are we educating them to be a countercultural force of the kingdom of God? Are we successful at transmitting God’s eternal values to the next generation?

What was true of Jesus should also be true of the president and professors at La Sierra University. Truth, from God’s perspective, though debated endlessly, is not a democratic function. Thus, there is no place in a confessional institution for principles that are compromised by market forces.

In today’s politically correct world, if you don’t tolerate every form of evil, you are guilty of some kind of “ism” or you have some irrational “phobia.” As a result,

society seems to put its stamp of approval on, and allows under the rubric of “lifestyle choice,” just about any aberrant behavior.

We need to be less tolerant of the focus on upscale lifestyles that selfishly consume the world’s resources, leaving an environmental wasteland. We need to be less tolerant of lifestyle choices that leave children without fathers but with drugs and guns. Being a counterculture force means going beyond toleration to conviction about eternal Christian values.

In a desire to fit in, there also has developed, I believe, a pseudo-Adventist form of political correctness that ceases to talk about the truth, the remnant, the Spirit of Prophecy, the law, the sanctuary, and other distinctive Adventist contributions to Christianity.

It is by maintaining unique identity that institutions make a difference in the world.

The truth we communicate is not threatened by discussion. On the other hand, it would be an act of moral treason if teachers were to teach as if there were no foundation and that all is up for grabs.

Academic freedom in a religious institution—as compared with that in the secular zone—is not the freedom to raise answerless questions and solutionless problems. It is not freedom to teach doubts without faith and reveal errors without pointing to solutions.

Why not measure every element of campus life against its contribution to the religious mission of this institution?



# God Cheering in the Bleachers

by Melia Boyson

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**R**EMEMBER THE FIRST TIME YOU MADE A BATCH OF CHEWY oatmeal-raisin cookies without Mom's help? It was a warm feeling. You were so proud inside.

Then you managed to pull off a perfect cartwheel and topped it all off by winning the Pathfinder canoe race. Yes, these were the times when Mom and Dad cheered from the bleachers and your little sister stared at you in complete wonder.

Then you grew up, and it was getting that coveted summer camp job as a counselor and being chosen senior class president. After that came college, and you felt so relieved when the graduate school of your dreams accepted you on full scholarship. It was that book you edited or committee you chaired. You were proud to be something others could be proud of.

Now, make a mental note of what makes you proud. What comes to mind first? Have you ever thought that it should be your religion? "Excuse me," you say, "but are you suggesting that being a Seventh-day Adventist should be what I'm most proud of?" Exactly.

If someone were to ask you *why* your church is what you are most proud of, what would you say? Munch on one of those oatmeal-raisin cookies mentioned earlier and listen to these hypothetical possibilities.

—What about the heavy chain smoker who can't kick his habit? Say that he is invited to a five-day stop smoking seminar conducted by an Adventist church. After one week he's able to begin breaking the habit that has kept him chained to a cigarette for 30 years.

—There are thousands of malnourished children in Ethiopia. Gaunt and skeleton-like from starvation, they have hungry stomachs that balloon out in ghastly shapes. Their faces are tear-streaked and crusted with flies. What a blessing it is when an Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) van arrives with food and medication. Those hollow tummies are filled with nourishment, and the love of God is shared as ADRA ministers to the needs of hungry hearts as well.

—And there's the helpless alcoholic who has abused his family unmercifully. In rage he would ransack the

house, smashing dishes and breaking furniture. It didn't end in one night, but slowly he recovered and overcame his alcohol addiction—only after an Adventist church youth group took this family on as their outreach project.

—We can't forget the single mother of two toddlers who was suddenly diagnosed with cancer. At Loma Linda University Medical Center, however, she was given the most recent treatments and rehabilitation. Her cancer, now in remission, is not holding her back from living a full and productive life.

—What about the Adventist educational system? Parents often have the option of sending their children to a Christian school. From kindergarten right through to the graduate level, Adventists continually strive for quality in Christian education.

—An expectant mother attends an Adventist cooking class with a coworker. There she is taught how to cook healthfully and eat properly so her child will be strong and healthy. A life is made better, forever.

—More broadly, think of the Seventh-day Adventist Church's commitment to global mission. We are beginning to penetrate areas previously unentered by any Adventist presence. What an opportunity for witnessing and growth!

The service and loving concern demonstrated hourly across this globe by Adventists should be looked upon by all of us with a sense of pride. Willingly should we support and participate in these mission projects initiated by our church organization. Let's make every effort to involve ourselves and our community.

Yes, your parents were beaming when you played "Fur Elise" perfectly at your first piano recital, and your grandfather was overjoyed when you followed in his footsteps and chose the medical field as your profession. But now, it's your turn.

What else should you be proud of? Your family? Your educational accomplishments? Fortunately, these can all fall under one heading. "I'm proud of what God has done for me and proud of the Adventist church and my involvement and commitment to it."

Regardless of what you may or may not have accomplished in life you have God's seal of approval. You have his vote of confidence. You have won his heart, and all the medals or certificates in the world could never make him more proud of you than he is right now. Christ is watching you with a father's loving eye. He's cheering in the bleachers, jumping on the sidelines, clapping at your performance and just proud to be your dad. Serve him proudly, and feel again that warm tingle like the time those cookies came out of the oven all moist and chewy.

Melia Boyson, from Fairbanks, Alaska, is graduating from Southern College this year with a broadcast journalism major.





# Weeks of Prayer or Opportunity?

by Beth Schaefer

**H**OW CAN I RELATE ELLEN G. WHITE TO YOUNG PEOPLE?" James Nix, associate director of the Ellen G. White Estate, asked me.

Nix told me about his first and last experience as speaker for a Week of Prayer at an Adventist academy. Nix tried to portray the Adventist pioneers and explain how God used these ordinary people. Not sure what to expect from the students, he prayed a lot; finally, observing no response, he told them he was praying for them, and so were their teachers and parents. At that, one boy yelled out, "Who are you kidding?" Nix also told them, "When you get back together 10 years from now, half of you won't be in the church." Another boy shouted, "We aren't now!"

Nix told me, "From my perspective, Christ has as many answers for this generation as he had for mine." He added, "I think the Christian life is very fulfilling and very rewarding and I wish there was some way to get the young people to try it."

Kendra Haloviak, religion instructor at Columbia Union College in Maryland, has spoken for many Weeks of Prayer, from kindergarten up to college. One of her best experiences so far was when she was able to spend a lot of time with the students. She played with them at recess, drew pictures with them at art, and participated in all the other activities that took place on campus.

Haloviak chooses a different topic for each age group. For the earlites she talks about such things as sexuality. She declared, "I'm very grace-oriented. I talk about how in Christ we can all be virgins." Haloviak likes to include real experiences of herself and people she knows. When speaking to college students Haloviak has talked on such topics as relationships, loved ones struggling with disease, and doubts about God. From the gospel of John she presents the theme that with Jesus, the ordinary becomes extraordinary. "I try to connect [the symbols] to relevant contemporary issues."

***"You have the ability to think, process, make your own decisions. I'm here this week to present some ideas, some options. I simply ask that you give me a hearing and see if it makes any sense to you."***

Haloviak pointed out the challenge she finds in the ethnic and religious diversity in Adventist schools. She advises, "Be honest, prepare, and do your homework. Be more concerned that Christ is lifted up than you."

Ron Hyrchuk, youth pastor at the Sligo Adventist Church in Takoma Park, agrees that interacting with students is very important. He told me, "I'm going in simply to interact, communicate, and spend some time with these people and give them an opportunity to make a decision."

Hyrchuk said he feels there is a fault in the name

"Week of Prayer." It implies a week of praying. Also, he says, too many speakers expect to knock the kids off their feet. This produces not only a false atmosphere but also an experience that is "absolutely unsustainable." Teachers ask, "How can you keep the fire burning?" His response frankly is, "Don't. Let it burn out. Light new ones."

Hyrchuk always begins the week telling the students, "I believe in you. You have the ability to think, process, make your own decisions. I'm here this week to present some ideas, some options. I simply ask that you give me a hearing and see if it

makes any sense to you." Hyrchuk believes in letting the students know he's not there to preach at them or to transform their lives.

Hyrchuk said he refers to altar calls as "opportunities." The first day of the week, students are made aware that they will have many opportunities during the week to respond or take Christ as their Savior. By the end of the week he tells them that if they're going to make that decision, it's going to have to be with people looking at them. "It's the right thing to do, and today's a good day to do it," he encourages them.

Young people are leaving the church and few people can figure out why. Even fewer people are able really to communicate with them. It is important for people conducting weeks of prayer or devotional activities to ask young people themselves what they need. I am convinced they need to feel accepted, loved and needed like all other human beings. What issues are they really dealing with? What guidance can a week of prayer speaker or counselor offer them about decisions they need to make in their lives today? They need someone to understand and show them how to live for Christ.

Beth Schaefer, from Ohio, is a junior communications major at Columbia Union College, Takoma Park, Maryland.





# Southern Conservatives Come to Blows

by James W. Walters

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**T**HIS SPRING THE RIGHT-WING ADVENTIST LAYMEN'S Council leveled a broadside at Southern College's president, Don Sahly, and religion faculty, calling for their resignations. Twelve years ago the same group accused the religion department of teaching heresy, and their action resulted in factional fighting, resignations and a severe drop in Southern's enrollment. This time around, Southern is strongly fighting the similar criticism.

The catalyst for the broadside was Southern's hosting of the annual regional meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society in 1993, an event criticized as too ecumenical. The council also accuses Southern's religion faculty of teaching erroneous doctrine, even though it has the reputation for being the most conservative religion staff in the denomination.

The attack on Southern came in February and March issues of the Council's *SDA Press Release*, a six-page newsprint paper. The paper's articles are unsigned or run under pseudonyms such as "Dr. B.J. Alonzo" and "Dr. Uriah 'A.T.' Jones." John Felts, 62, is the publisher of *SDA Press Release*. He is a printer and longtime resident of Collegedale, Tennessee, the home of Southern College.

The March issue of *SDA Press Release* ran a large front-page picture of John Felts supposedly behind jail bars, with the headline "Adventist Jailed in Collegedale." The photo caption says Felts was arrested and jailed on February 28, 1994.

Collegedale police chief Dennis Cramer said that on March 7 Felts was observed passing out literature in the college plaza parking lot, which is private property. Campus security officers asked him to leave. When he refused, the Collegedale police were called, and they also asked him to leave. When he again refused, the police arrested him for trespassing.

Cramer stated that Felts was "never actually locked up in a cell and left for a period of time," and the chief was not aware of any picture being taken of Felts except for the routine mug shot. The picture of Felts behind bars appears to be contrived, and Collegedale's city manager confirmed for the college's student newspaper, the *Southern Accent*, that "the picture that appeared in the *SDA Press Release* was not a picture of the Collegedale jail."

Various Southern College entities took concerted action in March to counter Felts' efforts to discredit the college. The board of trustees, faculty and student senates gave

votes of confidence to the the college president and religion department.

Further, under the leadership of concerned faculty members, an 8-page newsletter entitled *The Board Speaks* was produced and sent to all Adventists in the Southern Union. The publication is subtitled "a report published by the Board of Trustees of Southern College of Seventh-day Adventists," and its headline reads, "Board, Faculty, and Students Rally Behind Southern's President and Religion Department." It contains an open letter from the Southern Union conference president, and an interview with Robert Folkenberg, president of the General Conference, and Al McClure, president of the North American Division. Lynn

Sauls, professor of journalism at Southern and a senior faculty member, also criticizes the *SDA Press Release* for posing as an official publication of the church, and he extolls the credibility of those attacked in the publication. Pamela Harris, another journalism professor, details the *SDA Press Release* as a "textbook case study of propaganda."

The March 24 *Southern Accent*, in one of its frequent polls, asked students to rate their college's handling of the recent *SDA*

*Press Release* situation. Most of them generally approved what the college had done.

The *SDA Press Release* incident is not the first time this school year that Southern College has heard from detractors. Last fall a physician, Deone Hanson, who had been protesting against McKee Baking Company's use of chocolate, caffeine and other "evils," was confronted by city and college officials. President Sahly announced in a memo that "in order to gently persuade those who park opposite Wright Hall with all their signs and papers displayed on their trucks to leave our premises, we are putting *No Parking* signs along that side of the street."

That street in question is a public road, however, and the city manager said the signs went up for simple reasons of "safety and traffic control." A group of SC students formed a protest group, *Christians for Peace and Justice*, went to city hall and demanded that the city take down the signs, pass a protesting ordinance and consider a 90-day assessment period. The city held its ground and the signs are still up.

In a related incident, Hanson's car, this time parked on another campus road, was towed away, and four of his protest signs were confiscated by campus security officers, though later returned. The Collegedale police then charged three of these officers with theft.

**Even though it has the reputation of being the most conservative staff, the council accuses Southern's religion faculty of teaching erroneous doctrine.**



# List Perplexes and Bewilders

by David Larson

**P**ERPLEXED. BEWILDERED. MYSTIFIED. THESE ARE MY reactions to *Schindler's List*, Steven Spielberg's recent cinematic triumph. So far, I have seen this movie four times. Each time it has left me almost speechless, like the other viewers, who exited in solemn and stunned silence. How can one respond to so powerful a portrayal of good and evil and their messy mixtures in human life?

I wonder what the Holocaust was, really. Those who survived it declare that this movie is an accurate but "muted" or "softened" account of what happened. I find it difficult to imagine that things could have been worse than this film portrays them.

I wonder how people could be so cruel. Those in power came to view Jews and others as "not persons in the strict sense," the movie suggests. Perhaps that is why they could destroy human life so casually, with no more regret than when swatting flies. Now I understand somewhat more fully what survivors of the Holocaust mean when they say that the opposite of love is not hostility but indifference.

I wonder where the Christian churches were during the Nazi reign of terror. The movie portrays them mumbling through their liturgies as if nothing unusual was happening, so oblivious to what was going on around them and within them that their worship services provided ideal circumstances for meetings of traders on the black market. Congregations like these reversed the words of Jesus: they were *of* the world but not *in* it.

I wonder how Oscar Schindler could have been so good and so evil. He was a "saint" who rescued more than a thousand people from torture and death and eventually exhausted his own great wealth doing so. But he was also a "sinner" who was casual about his marital infidelities, blithe about the pain his promiscuity caused his wife.

I wonder whether Oscar Schindler ever changed. Some believe that until the very end he viewed the Jews he saved as nothing more than valuable slaves who made him rich by working for next to nothing in his factories. Others believe that from the very beginning he prized his workers not merely for what they could do for him but also for their own sakes. But both the movie and the book upon which it was based leave me with the impression that Schindler did

change. He probably always valued his Jewish workers both for his sake and for their sake. But at first he seems to have been more concerned about what they could do for him. Eventually at long last, he focused on what he could do for them. Did this shift merely make manifest that which was always latent in Schindler's character, or was it a moral transformation, a true conversion?

I wonder when Schindler's moral transformation occurred and what triggered it. Was it when one of his handicapped workers was arbitrarily shot? When he witnessed the "cleansing" of the Jewish ghetto? When he visited the concentration camps and saw the conditions there? When he was arrested and jailed for kissing a young Jewish woman in public? When he thought about the slaughtered  
~~continued on page 21~~

## Schindler's Salvation

by Jeannie Garcia

**S**CHINDLER'S LIST IS AN AMAZING STORY, ONE THAT all Christians must see. It will challenge faith, it will cause doubt about who this God is that we serve, but more importantly, it will remind us that all life is of great value. It will even challenge our sense of security, showing that this slaughter happened to everyday people in an everyday world, and it could someday happen to us.

*Schindler's List* is definitely not entertainment, rather it is an education, an awakening. It teaches us exactly what went on, and shocks us that it could have happened so recently. After all, we are a civilized people. Or are we?

It is easy for the Christian to find similarities between Oscar Schindler's story of salvation and God's story of salvation. Schindler's list was to the Jews what the Book of Life is to Christians. If their name was on the list, they were saved, and if our name is on the List, we too are saved. Oscar Schindler spent his entire fortune to save 1,100 Jewish lives, and God spent his most important fortune, the life of his only Son, to save our lives. Both gave self in order to save others.

David Larson teaches Christian ethics at Loma Linda University.

Jeannie Garcia, from Pennsylvania, is a senior English major at Columbia Union College who plans to attend law school after graduation.





# If You've Ever Thought of Leaving

by Andy Nash

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**T**EAM LOYALTY. THOSE OF YOU WHO SUPPORT A SPORTS team know what it's like to rise and fall with your team. I do.

My whole life I have loved one football team—the Minnesota Vikings. At age six, I attended my first Vikings game with my dad; the Vikings won with a thrilling fake field-goal attempt/touchdown pass to beat the Bears in overtime, except that I didn't see the play because two large men leaped up and blocked my view. I still haven't forgiven them. At age nine, I had my first letter published in the *Viking Report*, a weekly journal that every serious Vikings fan subscribes to. The VR editors titled my piece, “Young Fan Optimistic.”

Not too many people know this, but the Minnesota Vikings are undoubtedly the greatest football team of all time, and one day they will push aside such pretenders as the Dallas Cowboys and New York Giants, and Vikings fans all over the world will collectively say, “Yes, indeed, it was worth the wait!” Win or lose, the Vikings will always be my favorite football team. Desert them? No way—we've been through too much together.

There are, of course, more important loyalties than team loyalties. Our society encourages loyalty to family, friends, and country. But what about loyalty to church?

Last fall, *Adventist Review* associate editor Myron Widmer wrote an editorial entitled, “If You've Ever Thought of Coming Back.” His piece targeted Adventists who had left the church, and it gently pled with them to return, to reconsider, to give their old church another chance. A worthwhile idea, for sure.

It's sad, though, that Widmer had to write this editorial at all. If we weren't losing so many thousands of members—if we just hung on to them tightly while they were still with us—we wouldn't need to have reclaimed editorials and reclaiming Sabbaths, and our church records might even faintly reflect our current membership.

And, so, I ask you: Have you ever thought of leaving? Our recent poll shows that 97 percent of us at Southern plan

on staying, an impressive number. Yet, the facts disagree. Half of our “official” members are missing from church each Sabbath. And sometime, some place, many of you will feel like leaving, too.

Maybe you will be badly disappointed in our church leaders. Maybe you will be hurt by another member. Maybe other churches will seem to be more “on fire” than we are. Maybe you will get frustrated with a church that on paper seems to have it all right, but in practice seems to falter. Maybe you have some concerns right now. I do.

- I'm concerned with the ever-increasing push towards church image. During Waco, we were worried that the world might associate us with the Davidians, so we kept silent and distanced ourselves from the situation. Except that silence and distance tend to deter compassion.

- I'm concerned with “cradle roll legalism.” What are we first teaching our children: the miracles of Jesus or the evils of smoking?

I've seen too many church school students who can recite the laws of diet and dance, but have not a clue about what salvation really is. And they've had enough.

- I'm concerned with a false sense of mission success. In a world that has roughly 5 billion people, we have 8 million members (on the books, that is.) The real ratio of non-Adventists to Adventists is about 600 to 1. For our 8 million members we should rejoice. But let's not be satisfied. Where's the urgency? Time is short.

I have these three concerns, these three frustrations, with my church, and many more. Is the solution, then, to desert my church altogether? No way. Because I know in my heart that the central message of the Adventist church is true.

At a time like this, when 55 percent of us believe our Savior is returning soon (from another recent Southern poll), when 99.9 percent of the world has not accepted our message, when our leaders are trying to find ways to reduce that number, the last thing we should be thinking about is leaving. *Not now.* Our church needs us now more than ever. If we're not getting heard, we need to speak up.

Do you believe in the Adventist message?

If you do, then stay with us and make things better. And like loyal football fans whose team finally reaches the glory of the Super Bowl and *wins*, we will soon be able to say, “Yes, indeed, it was worth the wait!”

*A longer version of this editorial appeared in the January 13, 1994, issue of Southern Accent.*

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Andy Nash is graduating from Southern College this spring with majors in journalism and English. This year Nash edited the student newspaper *Southern Accent*.





# African-Americans Ask for Their Own Conference in California

by Anthony W. Paschal

**O**N MARCH 2, 1994, MORE THAN 250 AFRICAN-AMERICAN Adventists peacefully demonstrated outside Pacific Union headquarters in Westlake Village, California, to protest union president Thomas Mostert's refusal to hold a hearing on a proposal to form a sister regional conference administered by African-Americans. Demonstrators were dismayed to see the doors of the union offices locked, police tape sealing off various places, and the escorting of women across the parking lot to other buildings. These reactions were seen as a strong indication that race relations still have a long way to go in the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Discussion of whether or not people of color should be in charge of their own work has taken place since the mid-40's. At that time, other areas of the United States voted to form African-administered conferences, resulting in nine different regional conferences in the North American Division. Only the members in the western United States voted to remain within the existing structure. It has been hotly debated ever since, whether people of color are better off in a structure that has predominantly white membership or a structure predominantly made up of African-Americans. Proponents believe that the church should have a structure that addresses the priorities of the African-American constituents. Opponents believe separation is not the answer but that we should work within the system to accomplish ethnic sensitivity and goals.

In 1988, clergy and Bible instructors in the predominantly black churches throughout the Pacific Union Conference met in Soquel, California. They voted to once again study the feasibility of a regional conference to deal with the priorities of the black work. This study resulted in a union-wide survey of the black membership. The majority of the 2,800 respondents favored modification of the present system, 80 percent stated they would remain in their churches no matter which conference they were a part of, and 85 percent stated that African-Americans should set the priorities in their own work.

In Southeastern California Conference, many African-Americans felt that further dialogue needed to take place. Of the large conferences within the Pacific Union, this con-

ference had the highest proportion of survey respondents favoring a regional conference. Therefore, black members in Southeastern formed a steering group called Westerners United for a Regional Conference (WURC). Since 1991, WURC has gone to the 10 African-American churches to promote self-determination through a regional conference.

On July 11, 1993, WURC convened a meeting of representatives from the 10 African-American churches in Southeastern. Of the 10 churches, 9 sent delegates, and when the votes were counted, 183 expressed "Yes, I favor starting the process to establish a regional conference," and 26 expressed "No." Each church was to follow with a separate vote in its own business session. By October, 1993, 8 of the 10 African-American churches had voted to start the process of forming a sister regional conference.

On January 4, 1994, Thomas Mostert, president of the Pacific Union, met with representatives of the 10 African-American churches. After expressing that this movement, in his opinion, was not of God, he stated that if Southeastern's Executive Committee sent in the request, he would consider placing it on the Union Executive Committee agenda. Subsequently, at its January, 1994, meeting, Southeastern's Executive Committee voted to refer this matter to the Union Executive Committee. The administration of the Union responded, however, by saying it will not address this issue at this time but wishes to assist in bringing resolution to the issues that brought this matter to the fore.

On March 2, 1994, while African-American protesters demonstrated outside, the Union voted to send the proposal back to Southeastern for validation and a recommendation. A blue-ribbon committee has subsequently been formed in Southeastern to look at the proposal. WURC members plan to meet soon and discuss further steps.

## Ethnic Diversity in Southeastern

In the 8-million-member Seventh-day Adventist Church, the Southeastern California Conference is the largest local conference. Of 55,000 members in Southeastern, 34,000 belong to white churches (6,000 in the Loma Linda University church alone), 11,800 to Hispanic churches, 5,200 to black churches, and 4,000 to Asian churches. Anthony W. Paschal, Southeastern's VP for black ministries, states that many in the conference "have made strides to be sensitive" to ethnic needs but "economic strains and priorities have mounted small tensions." He calls the movement for a regional conference an attempt to "be proactive rather than reactive."

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Anthony W. Paschal is vice president for black ministries in the Southeastern California Conference.



# Why We Need a Regional Conference

by Timothy P. Nixon

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SOMEONE PERHAPS IS SAYING, "HERE WE GO AGAIN, another regional conference debate." I concur. The time has passed for debate; it is now time to act. African-Americans are not monolithic. As all other people, we have divergent views on a host of subjects, this being one. This diversity should not invalidate the legitimacy of the goal sought by many African-American constituents in Southern California. In presenting this perspective I speak only for myself, and hope that my thoughts will open a window into one perspective.

Whenever African-Americans discuss the need for their own conference, white members respond, "Why do you want to separate?" suggesting that the African-American community is pulling away from white members who vigorously seek integration. The reality is that it is the white community that pulls away from minorities in general, and African-Americans specifically. "White flight" describes the movement of white people when confronted by integration. When African-Americans move in, white people move out. There is no significant data to suggest the opposite. Of suburban whites, 86 percent live in communities that are less than 1 percent African-American, according to Cornel West in *Race Matters*. The maximum out-movement of whites takes place when the percentage of minorities reaches 20 to 25 percent, reports Robert Wegman.

White people, not African-Americans, have been the separatists in our society and our church. They are the ones who move out of churches when blacks move in, or direct them to the "black church" when black people visit their congregations. White people move their children from our schools when too many "black children" enroll. There is no significant movement among the white masses to integrate with African-Americans. There are those exceptions who join and/or remain members of predominantly African-American churches; however, they are not the rule.

African-Americans have always been the ones to initiate racial integration. It is dishonest and insulting to suggest that our desire for self-determination is an attempt on our part to separate from white people. Lawrence Lucas says, "Black people are not leaving the church. They are waking up to the reality that the church has left them and is

not making any steps towards them. So they have stopped running after the White church just as they have the White everything-else." Economically, socially, psychologically and physically we have been racially separated since the inception of this experiment called America. The Seventh-day Adventist Church is no exception to this reality.

The only kind of integration white people are comfortable with is political. Within our church that means white leadership with black participation. In other words, a white person will serve in the position of president or treasurer, while a member of a minority group serves as secretary or vice-president. White members seem happy to integrate when it comes to administering financial matters, but in little else. This unspoken attitude suggests that only white people are capable or qualified to serve as chief administrators and treasurers.

## The Reality of Separation

The idea of separation engenders passionate feelings among our members. A sister conference and separation have become synonymous ideas. Whenever one speaks of forming a new conference that would be administered by African-Americans, there is the notion that this kind of proposition is evil and separatist. May I remind naysayers that what we are proposing to do has already been done, with great success and spiritual benefits. We are not proposing to begin a new denomination or offshoot movement. We are proposing to do that which the General Conference policy, voted in April, 1944, allows: the formation of a sister (brother) conference comprised of African-American constituent churches of the southern region of California. Our proposal is not a move to separate, but rather to expand.

This kind of separation is not new to the church historically. When the church began, the necessity of reaching the diverse cultures and backgrounds of the "gentile" world grew. The racial prejudice of Peter intimates a prevailing bias that hindered his ability to evangelize the gentiles. God, in selecting apostles to work in the gentile world, took into account the issue of racial diversity and selected apostles (Paul and Barnabas) who came from lands outside Judea. Barnabas was a Levite from Cyprus. Paul, though a Jew, was from Tarsus, which was heavily settled by Greeks. Living in this diverse culture, Paul spoke four languages.

The most effective means of evangelism is when indigenous people work for members of their own ethnic community. Similarities in culture, heritage, language, dress and idiosyncrasies avoid barriers that are inherent among di-

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verse peoples. This kind of separation, to accomplish a task such as evangelism, is not negative but positive.

### Needs of Black Communities

Today's society is becoming more and more segregated. Redlining has helped to maintain distinct ethnic communities. More white people are moving to outlying suburbs, leaving African-Americans and other minorities in our large urban areas. Businesses, federal government support, local government services, and jobs are leaving the central cities. This abandonment has left a disproportionate number of minority residents jobless, homeless, with inadequate health care, inferior education and a general feeling of hopelessness. This is particularly true of African-Americans. Who will meet the needs of the millions of these nameless, faceless people who are routinely ignored and forgotten?

Jesus' teachings leave a legacy of social responsibility to the church. Yet these issues are not priorities for our white brethren. Their primary concern is for those issues which impact upon their lives and communities. Their administrative and financial budgeting reflect those priorities.

We would not want to argue over whose priorities are more just. Rather, we choose to acknowledge the importance of each agenda and seek the administrative apparatus to most effectively address our particular concerns. We must be proactive in meeting the challenges that face our communities. Other religious organizations are aggressively pursuing our African-American communities, addressing their needs without the benefit of the three angels' messages of Revelation 14. It is our desire to reach these specific communities before the Second Coming.

### Institutional Failure

Many of our denominational institutions have not been minority-friendly. The horror stories of racial discrimination in our schools, hospitals and other institutions persist. Most of our institutions neither seek nor retain African-Americans beyond a token few. There is no authoritative advocate addressing these issues for our constituents. Our most talented African-American professionals are neither desired nor sought. African-American college graduates, whose parents send them to our schools for tens of thousands of dollars, are not vigorously recruited by our institutions. African-Americans have no chosen, independent leaders to speak for them on the boards of these institutions. We African-Americans no longer desire other voices, chosen by other constituencies, to speak for us. We desire to speak for ourselves on

equal standing with our white brothers and sisters—not as antagonists, but as colleagues. We will accept nothing less.

Our children, our most valuable resource, need role models and mentors who look like them, to instill in them esteem and vision. They need to see African-Americans as teachers and superintendents, as college professors and presidents, as hospital workers and administrators, as conference treasurers and presidents. Psychologists have shown that our visual capacity is dominant among our five senses. It is therefore imperative for our children and youth to see African-Americans as leaders in their church. Black leaders portray limitless possibilities and responsibilities to our children, and one day, should Christ delay his coming, this church will be left for them to lead.

### Conservative Rhetoric

The Seventh-day Adventist church is one of the most conservative religious organizations in America, and white people are known for their conservative Republican leanings. One of the cornerstones of conservative Republican rhetoric is the notion that African-Americans should pull themselves up by their own bootstraps. They should stop relying on handouts and affirmative action programs and do for themselves. In our quest for a sister/brother conference we are putting this conservative Horatio Alger ethic into practice. To those conservative white people who oppose our resolute efforts for autonomy and self-determination, I say, "Be true to your own ideology and support us as we strive to achieve independence." Our desire is to finish the work God has given us to do and hasten his return.

There are some who feel that our journey toward a sister/brother conference is "unwise and untimely." In 1963, a similar criticism was leveled against the Southern Christian Leadership Conference during its desegregation campaign in Birmingham, Alabama. From a Birmingham jail, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. wrote:

*I have never yet engaged in a direct action movement that was "well-timed" ... For years now I have heard the words 'Wait!' It rings in the ear of every Negro with a piercing familiarity. This "Wait" has almost always meant "Never." It has been a tranquilizing thalidomide, relieving the emotional stress for a moment, only to give birth to an ill-formed infant of frustration.*

We Adventist African-Americans have also heard that word, "Wait!" I, for one, can wait no longer. A sister/brother conference, administered by the constituent African-American churches, is an idea whose time has come.

*The only kind of integration white people are comfortable with is political. White members seem happy to integrate when it comes to administering financial matters, but in little else. This unspoken attitude suggests that only white people are capable to serve as chief administrators and treasurers.*



# Why I Am Opposed to Regional Conferences

by Anita J. Mackey

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**W**ITH MALICE TOWARD NONE, AND BASED ON MY HONEST conviction regarding the matter, I can take no stand other than against a proposed colored conference."

That was my opening statement at a special constituency meeting held in the Shiloh Seventh-day Adventist church in Chicago, Illinois, on September 26, 1944, to consider a regional conference, and that is my stand now. Never did I dream that 49 years later I would be repeating that position against a current movement to establish a regional conference in the Pacific Union Conference.

In 1944 I believed the proposed colored conference would be competently handled and the work would go forward in the colored field. However, I objected because it seemed that the proposed colored conference would be an outgrowth of alleged grievances aggravated by the unchristian attitudes of some white brethren.

The grievances I heard at that time were:

—Unentered fields of colored souls not reached because of the inadequacy of the present setup.

—Marked limitation of opportunities for the Seventh-day Adventist colored youth under the existing organization.

—Insufficient appointment of funds for the advancement of the colored work in the light of the large contributions from the colored constituency.

Those issues have been addressed and the changes are not inconsequential. Much progress has been made!

From the Christian point of view, one wonders why such grievances can't be addressed and dealt with within the present system. When I asked such a question 49 years ago, I was told by sincere proponents that the white brothers and sisters were "prepared to die and forfeit their privilege to dwell in the kingdom of God before they would adopt a Christian attitude on the matter." Whatever may have been the case then, I say today that this is not true.

Why do you, contemporary proponents of a regional conference, feel obligated to discredit the church? Why, as

*Let us work together as multicultural children of God.*

Seventh-day Adventists, do you promulgate racial divisiveness? How do you think others perceive such a move today from a Christian body such as ours?

Further, how can a regional conference have more money to do its work than the church now has to do the same work? Look at the territory to be covered. How can the compensation of the envisioned number of workers be placed on a sound fiscal basis? Have you studied these matters?

Those proposing a western regional conference need to consider the result if other ethnic groups also decide to have their own conferences. These would send an incoherent message about Seventh-day Adventist teachings. We need to promote more understanding and togetherness, not less.

I hear a loud and clear message in the recent debate: there is a dearth of self-esteem and an insatiable need for power and recognition in high places. I have been appalled and saddened by the obvious emotionalism in public portrayals of perceived injustices that, in the opinion of some, can be remedied only by breaking away and setting up a regional conference.

I write as an active member of the Seventh-day Adventist church since the age of 21, and now in my 80th year. Having visited 112 countries, I have a global view of the Adventist church. Adventism does not generate hostility or divisiveness, but rather brotherhood and sisterhood, unity and a common objective to spread the third angel's message.

For 10 years I was a member of a regional conference. The grievances I read regarding the church in 1944 are being alleged again today: favoritism in the allocation of funds and placement in positions, undue longevity in office, little opportunity to advance, only now within the regional conferences. I do not think that a regional conference in the Pacific Union will be a panacea for the eradication of those grievances.

We do not need the turmoil and confusion that this reorganization movement is bringing about, diverting our attention from that which we ought to be doing. It is a hindrance to soul-winning efforts. I will continue to work within the structures of a united church, knowing that God is over all. Let us work together as multicultural children of God, doing his work on his terms.

Anita J. Mackey worked for 53 years as a clinical social worker and now serves on the Fire and Police Commission of Santa Barbara, California.





# Conferees Urge Change and Optimism for Church Hospitals

by Raymond Cottrell

**F**EBRUARY 19, 1994, BROUGHT ADVENTIST HEALTH-CARE leaders from across the nation to Loma Linda University for a conference on the future of Adventist health care in relation to the impending health-care revolution in the United States. Attendance and response to the presentations reflected the widespread interest in the subject, in the health-care-oriented community of Loma Linda.

## Import for Adventist Mission and Future

One participant, Winton H. Beaven of Kettering Medical Center, defined the import of this revolution for Adventist hospitals: "Changes in health care require us to reexamine our whole mission....We may have to decide if health care is part of the mission [of the church] in the United States; it is not part of our mission in New Zealand, for example. We have discovered that countries with socialized medicine have, in effect, removed the church from health care. It could happen here."

The conference featured 17 speakers. Larry Mitchell of Adventist Health System/West discussed the evolving mission of Adventist health care, and Fred Harder of the Paradise Valley Medical Center explored historical precedents and prospects for the future of Adventist health care.

## Leland Kaiser: Adapt to Survive

Keynote speaker was Leland H. Kaiser, an acknowledged authority on the changing American health-care system.

Kaiser asked, "Honestly, can the Adventist health mission survive?" His answer was a resounding *Yes*—if we can be wise enough to adapt our thinking and our methods to the vast changes now in process. His address outlined the adjustments he considers necessary in a series of 18 "old paradigm/new paradigm" propositions. (The text of the address can be found on pages 17-18.)

Collectively, the "new paradigms" chart the course the Adventist system should take in order not only to survive but to fulfill its mission in the new health-care world. These concepts are valid irrespective of the particular form universal health-care in the United States eventually takes. Each will require deep soul-searching and wise planning on the part of the church.

Kaiser injected comments such as: "The purpose of Adventist health care is to fulfill the healing ministry of Jesus Christ" and to "promote scientific principles of healthful living." He said, "Our uniqueness is in understanding the spiritual dimension of health" and "unless non-Adventists

working in our institutions catch a vision of our concept of the healing ministry of Jesus Christ we will fail." (A majority of employees are not Adventists.) Denying that any of the paradigms reflect a departure from basic Adventist principles, Kaiser identified himself as "a dedicated Adventist." He asserted, "I think Adventism is the greatest expression of truth in this world, or I wouldn't be one."

## Ted Hamilton: A Vision of Doing Good

Responding to Kaiser, Ted Hamilton of Florida Hospital reminded the audience that Adventist health care began with a vision and little else. That vision, he said, included commitment, sacrifice, sharing, and service, "and maybe it's time for those concepts to be reconverted into the reality of today." Maybe sacrificing today means sacrificing the way we do some things, our institutional bureaucracy and political ways of doing business, for instance. "Are we willing to do good for good's sake—without hooks?" he asked. "Are we willing to do good on the Sabbath day?" He continued, "Are we willing to do good without the right hand knowing what the left hand is doing? Are we willing to do good for Gentiles and Samaritans?" This paradigm, Hamilton concluded, would bring "not just the vision of survival to Adventist health care, but a vision of thriving into the future."

## Brian Bull: Personal Morality

Brian Bull of Loma Linda University Medical Center, also responding to Kaiser's paradigms, was impressed with his proposal that "if Seventh-day Adventist hospitals can go into a community and change the health of that community for the better, then they will have accomplished something that government programs, so far, have failed to do."

"It takes me back to the beginning of the health work of this church in the early part of this century," Bull continued, "when a group of our forebears came up with what appeared to be a relatively innocuous notion, and that was the idea that to do something that knowingly damaged one's health was not only a bad idea, but that it was also morally reprehensible." That, he said, was the foundation of our health work; it has done more for those who have adopted it than any other notion of which he was aware. "As we head into the future, the new paradigm must encompass that notion and empower it, for it is one of the few ideas that has led to a dramatic change in health and longevity on the part of the people who have espoused it."

A panel representing five Adventist health entities addressed the question as to whether Adventist health care is



compatible with the emerging health-care reforms. They concluded that it can be compatible and it can make a significant contribution to those reforms. Panelists were Adrian Zytoskie of Adventist Health System/West, James Boyle of Shawnee Mission Medical Center, Ted Hamilton of Florida Hospital, Fred Harder of Paradise Valley Medical Center, and Dalton Baldwin and David Larson of Loma Linda University.

### Vision For the Future

Four speakers set forth their vision for Adventist health care 10 years from now. Winton Beaven noted that we are in the midst of a permanent and irreversible health-care revolution that emphasizes primary care and de-emphasizes the role of hospitals. It will call for commitment to community service, with emphasis on healthful living and wellness. The alternatives will be to close or to consolidate hospitals, to compete and to collaborate. Above all, Beaven said, we must emphasize our concept of wholeness, and our mission to make human-kind whole.

#### Richard Hart: Service to Sick Society

Richard Hart of Loma Linda University was torn between pessimism and optimism as he looked to the future. He was pessimistic with respect to where society is going. Society is sick and increasingly dysfunctional. His optimism grew out of the quality of young people coming to Loma Linda for training in the various areas of health care, especially the increasing number of non-Adventist applicants who evidently believe that we have something worthwhile to offer. The challenge as we look to the future is to prepare them for the new era of health care, to place far more emphasis on the concept and philosophy of disinterested service.

#### William Loveless: Control Kills

For several reasons William Loveless, pastor of the Loma Linda University Church, was more pessimistic. One major reason is the issue of control, which has recently killed some of our hospitals. Another is destructive criticism of our health-care system, even in high places. Collaboration with other hospitals will be essential, and this raises the

question of what alliances with others we should and should not have. Unless we can find a way to overcome these negative factors, Loveless fears that we will still be squabbling over minutiae, control, and criticism, and will wake up to find many of our hospitals gone and health maintenance organizations dominating the health-care market. Loveless foresees Loma Linda as a wellness center for the Inland Empire community it serves.

#### Adele Waller: Networking and House Calls

*Maybe it's time for concepts such as commitment, sacrifice, sharing, and service to be reconverted into the reality of today. Maybe sacrificing today means sacrificing the way we do things, our institutional bureaucracy and political ways of doing business. Are we willing to do good for good's sake? Are we willing to do good on the Sabbath day? Are we willing to do good without the right hand knowing what the left hand is doing? Are we willing to do good for Gentiles and Samaritans?*

Adele Waller, a Chicago-based health-care attorney, until recently on the board of Hinsdale Hospital, referred to the recent crisis involving Hinsdale Hospital in which the issue of control has done incalculable damage that leaves the hospital's future uncertain. The crisis at Hinsdale, she said, provides a graphic example of how *not* to relate to the health-care revolution. Her vision of the future focuses on delivering superior health care and at the same time being true to our concept of service.

Waller sees three directions in which Adventist health care will move: (1) We will give less and less care in institutions, but will contact people in their own homes, with the opportunity to be involved in a caring way. (2) We will learn to carry out our health-care mission by networking with other health-care entities over which we will have little control. We *can* be the "salt" of the networks and the communities they serve. (3) Capitation will open the way for creative ways, not only to remain afloat, but also to offer loving care in the name of Jesus Christ.

#### Optimism—If...

The conference closed on the optimistic note that the future offers Adventist health care creative opportunities to implement our health principles in new and more effective ways—if we recognize and remedy the factors that would otherwise eliminate Adventist health care from the wave of the future.

The health-care conference was a project of *Adventist Today*, with Adventist Health System/West, Shawnee Mission Medical Center, Paradise Valley Medical Center, Kettering Medical Center, Florida Hospital, Loma Linda University, and the Loma Linda University Church as co-sponsors.



# Survival of the Open-Minded

by Leland Kaiser

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**H**ONESTLY, CAN ADVENTIST MISSION SURVIVE THE COMING health-care reform? “Honestly”—that’s a word I hesitate to use. I would like to give you some false reassurance. But this wording does not allow me to do that, and so I want to talk honestly about the Adventist health system. Can it survive? I’m a committed Seventh-day Adventist. I work within the Adventist health system and I work outside it. What I want to share with you is an inside/outside perspective.

As Adventists we suffer the same problem as the ancient Ptolemy when he held that the earth was the center of the universe. The church replied, “That’s a good idea” and it held Ptolemy’s notion for a long time. When Galileo said, “Just look through the telescope and see that we’re not the center,” the church said it didn’t need the telescope and the new information.

## Breakdown or Breakthrough

The challenge we have as Seventh-day Adventists is to realize that the world is changing rapidly around us, and we must also change. We must change our minds and some of our practices. In a word, we must change our *paradigm*. And if we do not change our traditional ideas about health care we shall not survive. The chances are very high that we could lose some or all of our hospitals in the next 5 to 10 years. I would suggest that Adventist health care is at the breakpoint—and that may lead to breakdown or breakthrough.

Our challenge is to do three things at the same time. Adventist health care must be rooted in our past and true to our tradition. It must also accommodate the changes of the present while simultaneously projecting a powerful vision of the future.

The future is a particular challenge to Adventists. We like to call ourselves “the remnant,” but the remnant is often the last thing you see before the entity disappears. So it is important to begin changing our mind. The challenge is a change of consciousness.

Leland Kaiser, a nationally recognized health care consultant, is an Adventist based in Colorado. Kaiser recently led General Conference and Adventist hospital leaders in a series of strategy conferences.



## Old Versus New Paradigms

I will contrast the old paradigm of Adventist health care with a new paradigm, and present the challenge to change from one mind set to the next. If we don’t change, we shall disappear.

The old paradigm kept us separate from the world. “Live on the hill, talk to each other and remain unspotted”—is a prescription for extinction. New paradigm: work cooperatively with the community, reach out and embrace others, acknowledge them as allies in our health mission—to fulfill the healing ministry of Jesus Christ. We’re not alone in that mission. We have an important role to play, but we are simply one member of a cast of thousands, and we should acknowledge that.

The old paradigm stresses our uniqueness. New paradigm: focus on the thousands who share our mission. The old paradigm stresses our religious differences with other Christians. New paradigm: emphasize our religious similarities with other Christians. We must focus on what we share with others in Jesus Christ—not our differences. A humorous example of the old paradigm is our obsession to keep meat and pepper out of the Adventist hospital cafeteria. The new paradigm invokes scientific principles of healthful living—quite a difference in focus.

Under the old paradigm we hire and promote Seventh-day Adventists in our hospitals whether or not they are the best qualified people for the job. New paradigm: hire and promote the people best qualified for the job.

With the old paradigm we favor men over women in our institutional policies. New paradigm: achieve gender equality in all of our institutions.

The old paradigm considers all religions other than Seventh-day Adventism as inferior. New paradigm: celebrate the spirituality in all people—a significant difference.

The old paradigm makes the Sabbath a burden to non-Adventists that work in our institutions. New paradigm: make the Sabbath a delight for nonmember workers. Good working conditions for employees not of our faith is imperative, for the mission of our hospitals cannot be accomplished by Seventh-day Adventists, because there are not enough of us. We have a minority of physicians, nurses, and other employees who are Adventist members. Unless the nonmembers catch our vision of the healing ministry of Jesus Christ we will fail. Unlike Adventist employees of the past, today we are the minority in our own institutions.

The old paradigm says to give a Bible study to a patient or an employee whenever you can. New paradigm: be a liv-



ing example of our own religion. Some examples of failure to live our religion are today causing us much trouble in our health-care system.

The old paradigm prohibits joint ventures with the non-members unless we exercise absolute control. Our control orientation is alienating us from the world. New paradigm: develop trust relationships based upon mutual respect for Adventist as well as non-Adventist beliefs and values.

The old paradigm says to view Roman Catholic hospitals as the enemy. New paradigm: view Catholic hospitals as important allies in the healing ministry of Jesus Christ. Although I'm a committed Seventh-day Adventist I spend much time working in Catholic hospitals, and they have the most outstanding examples of the healing ministry of Jesus Christ and very important national programs that create healing in communities. When it comes to medical care, we should take a bow because we are in the major league here at Loma Linda University. But when it comes to creating healthier communities, we have not even entered the minor leagues. We have so much to learn.

Under the old paradigm we walk around afraid that the world might contaminate us. New paradigm: walk around uplifting the world. The old paradigm tells us that Seventh-day Adventists must finish God's work in this world all by ourselves. New paradigm: invite people of all spiritual persuasions to work with us in the mission of God. There are three concentric circles in religion: a broad circle that includes all people who have a spiritual interest regardless of their religious belief, a circumscribed Christian circle, and a smaller circle of Seventh-day Adventists. I think Adventism is the highest expression of true thought, or I wouldn't be a member. But I will be quick to say that all those who have a spiritual nature and interest are a brother and a sister of mine in God's family. We can journey together, not separately. Adventists are not unique; we are not on a hill.

Executives of Adventist hospitals sometimes make apologies for their religious beliefs in conversations with leaders of managed care companies. New paradigm: take pride in being a Seventh-day Adventist, but honor people of all religious perspectives. Celebrate all spirituality wherever it is.

In the old paradigm, health is the right arm of the Adventist message. New paradigm: the message is the right arm

of health. The uniqueness we have is the uniqueness of understanding the spiritual dimension of health. The body, the spirit, the mind and the emotions cannot be separated. Because of good counsel from Ellen White and others, we can offer a service and a perspective not shared by many others in the world.

The old paradigm suggests that we resist government reform of our health-care system. New paradigm: develop a prototype of healthier communities that will be a model for

the government to study and emulate. Why do we take a defensive position? If our healing message means anything it must be able to improve the health status of a community. And when that's accomplished the government will want to know.

The old paradigm teaches that Seventh-day Adventist hospitals are slipping, that things will never be as good as they once were. This is one of the favorite conversation topics I hear around the Adventist dinner table. New paradigm: know in your heart that Seventh-day Adventist hospitals are about to enter the very best stage of their fulfillment and they will soon become world leaders in health education, disease prevention, and healthful living.

The old paradigm encourages reliving the past of our Adventist health-care institutions. New paradigm: through God's grace generate a powerful vision of the future.

### **It Could Go the Other Way**

Honestly, can Seventh-day Adventist hospitals survive? Consider this tale:

A very high churchman knew he was about to die, and he had heard that a certain man had expertise in such matters. So he called him to his bed, and he said, "I'm about to die and pass over to another country. Would you pray for me?"

The reply: "Yes, your eminence, I will." And he prayed and said, "God help this man." After a pause, the man added, "Devil help this man."

The churchman was scandalized. He said, "I understand why you would talk to God, but why did you talk to the devil?"

The reply: "Your eminence, a man in your position can afford to take no chances, and I must tell you honestly that it could go the other way."

***If we do not change our traditional ideas about health care we shall not survive. The chances are very high that we could lose some or all of our hospitals in the next 5 to 10 years. The future is a particular challenge to Adventists. We like to call ourselves "the remnant," but the remnant is often the last thing you see before the entity disappears.***



# A Big Man with a Tiny Adventist Inside

by Jim Walters

19

**S**EVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS, SERIOUS BY NATURE AND emotionally conservative, may have inadvertently given rise to one of the greatest political humorists of this century: Art Buchwald. In his recently published *Leaving Home, a Memoir*, Buchwald devotes a chapter to the loss of his mother, followed by his formative years in a religiously rigid Adventist shelter for kids.

Buchwald's mother was taken to a mental institution only weeks after his birth and was hospitalized for 35 years until death. His father, a financially successful New York City businessman, placed Arthur and his three older sisters in foster homes and visited them weekly. So traumatic was the son's sense of abandonment by his mother that he never visited her, although she died in 1960 in a mental hospital when Art was in his thirties. Buchwald's revelation of this

deeply personal experience shows the candor of this autobiography. But still the author cannot suppress his natural humor. For example, early on he warns the reader not to be "surprised to find that I am the hero of all the stories, and I present a magnificent profile in courage."

Although Buchwald feels that many strange ideas were thrust upon him by his Adventist attendants, he recognizes their sincerity, kindness and good intentions. Coming to the home when one year old and leaving when five, he knew this as his only home during the most impressionable years. It was finally time to leave the foster home when his Jewish father, who was less than orthodox, heard his son singing "Jesus loves me, this I know...." Arthur clung to the screen door as his father took him away. He was still crying 45 minutes later, and his father decided to calm him by taking him

## An excerpt from *Leaving Home, A Memoir*, by Art Buchwald, (Putnam, 1993).

SOMEBODY RECOMMENDED THAT I BE SENT TO A SMALL boarding house for sick children in Flushing, New York, run by Seventh-day Adventists. A German nurse named Mrs. Schneck was in charge of the home, and she occupied the house with her husband and two daughters, and eight to ten child boarders. When my sister Doris was discharged from the hospital, she was sent to the same place.

I lived there until I was five years old, and it played a vital role in my development. It was a large, warm house, set back on a generous piece of land with plenty of room for children to play. My memories of particular incidents from that time are rather dim, but I remember that they had a dog. There were several photos of me with him—including the one on the cover of this book—and he was shaggy and very friendly. But I have no recollection of his name.

My strongest impression of the home was the strict religious upbringing I received. The nurses were God's messengers on what constituted sin and what didn't. I am talking about serious sin now. They practiced their religion faithfully, and they expected us to do the same. Eating meat, fish, and eggs was a sin. Dancing or listening to the radio was a sin. The German nurses filled my head and heart with hell and damnation, and if you broke the rules, their demons were waiting to shovel you into the fiery pit down below, somewhere near China.

I have no memories of the weekdays but I have total recall of attending church on Saturdays in New York on Riverside Drive. We were bundled up and taken on the trolley to Jamaica, and then the train into New York, changing many times, until we got off on Riverside Drive.

The church was enormous and had scenes depicting the life of Jesus on many of the windows. But it was the area around the altar that intrigued me the most. There was a stage, and below the stage was what I took to be a swimming pool.

I remember people standing in line to have the minister submerge their heads under the water. Baptism is very much part of the Seventh-day Adventists' religion. I was fascinated when people were dunked into the water, and I was sure that it was being done against their will. I was constantly waiting for someone not to come up, but it never happened, which disappointed me very much. There was a little thrashing around, but once everyone dried off they looked very happy.

"Did you have any desire to want to dunk your own head in the water?" Doris once asked me.

"No, I didn't. That is the funny part of it. Somehow I knew I wasn't a Seventh-day Adventist. I also knew that I didn't belong to the people who were taking me to church. Although they took care of all our physical needs, they showed no love or affection that I can recall. They scared me with all their religious dogma, and even though I attended the rituals I had no interest in becoming a member of the congregation and being drowned on stage."



to a movie. "He couldn't have come up with a worse idea, because it had been drilled into us from infancy by the Seventh-day Adventists that movies were your ticket straight to hell. As he tried to drag us into the theater to see Laurel and Hardy, we were fighting to get out."

For years after his time in the Adventist foster home, young Arthur had dreams of that period. The household was run by a kind German nurse whose strict Adventist vegetarianism made a vivid impression: "I once had a bull with four horns attack me in a dream because I had eaten steak for dinner that night. To this day, I can't eat fish with scales on them. I have made my peace with shellfish and meat, but there is still a tiny Seventh-day Adventist inside of me screaming to get out every time I make a pass at a tuna fish sandwich."

"By the time I was six or seven, I said to myself, 'This is ridiculous. I think I'll become a humorist.'" And what a humorist little Arthur became: published in 750 newspapers biweekly, member of the prestigious American Academy of Arts and Letters and Pulitzer Prize winning author of some 30 books of his humor. *Leaving Home* is Buchwald's first "serious" book, and early this year it appeared on various best seller lists. Leading newspapers have featured this volume, calling attention to Buchwald's Adventist connection. For example, the *Los Angeles Times* in a February issue ran a large photo of Buchwald and an extended story on the front page of its feature section. Buchwald's sense of aban-

donment and his Adventist relationship received primary attention.

Art's lack of contact with his mother and his abundant contact with Adventists were the major issues he later dealt with as an adult in psychotherapy: "During my sessions with Dr. Morse, I concluded that somebody had been messing around with my head during those early years and they left footprints on my brain. I have spent almost as much time on the Seventh-day Adventists in my analysis as I have on my mother. I am willing to bet that this place was responsible for many of my hang-ups."

Conventional wisdom holds that traumatic childhoods can yield very creative adults. Still, few adults and fewer Christian denominations espouse aberrant child-rearing practices. Some Adventists may get some strange pride in knowing that Art Buchwald had Adventist ideas impressed upon him in childhood. But many of us are ashamed that sincere members of our faith are remembered, not for their love and emotional warmth, but for their dietary restrictions.

Our maturing church desperately needs some Adventist behavioral scholars to study the effect on children of traditional church mores and beliefs. Detailed ideas of good and evil may be a comfortable guide, if one stays with childhood views. But how serviceable are these ideas in more contemporary forms of Adventism—or for those who leave the church? Art Buchwald's autobiography presses such important questions for Adventists today.

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# Letters to the Editor

## The Priesthood of All (Some?) Believers?

Kit Watts' "Historical Outline: Adventists and the Ordination of Women" (March/April 94) should have started with 1844, when the Lord chose Ellen Harmon to be his messenger. I have always wondered why the ordination of women should be an issue in a church which was founded by a woman.

It is sometimes argued that Sister White is no argument for women's ordination, because she was not ordained. But who could have ordained her? Who ordains the founder of a church?

Ralph Neall  
Lincoln, NE

Having read *Adventist Today* (March/April 94), it seems to imply (for lack of a stronger word) that women are not being given a fair shake in the church because of a non-ordination policy.

I think we need to begin with the Bible, and then stand on the findings of 1 Timothy 3:1-7.

It seems blatantly clear by the text that it is men, man, or male that is under consideration for the office of elder. Furthermore, in counting the pronouns (he-him-his), some versions support the use of the male gender 15 times.

~~List Perplexes, continued from page 9~~

children? When he played a game of cards in hopes of saving the life of another beautiful Jewess whom he had earlier embraced saying, "Don't be afraid. It's not that kind of kiss"? Or when he watched the excavation and cremation of the remains of thousands of Jewish men, women, and children who had been buried in a nearby forest? I don't know. I'm inclined to think that, like most conversions, Schindler's was gradual, that all these events, together with others like them, contributed to his eventual reorientation.

I wonder how we can prevent another Holocaust. "Never again," like so many other things, is easier said than done. This is especially true in times like ours, when tribalism—religious, ethnic, political, and philosophical—once again is on the rise. Somehow, despite these very real threats, we must find common ground. We must refuse to retreat into isolated enclaves from which we attack all others. We must discover and develop ways of living together without bloodshed. We must learn that "God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him" (Acts 10:34,35).

About that I am not perplexed.

**Letters to the Editor**  
Adventist Today  
PO Box 1220  
Loma Linda, CA  
92354-1220

The Bible teaches that the husband and father is the head of the household. How can a woman be a husband, or a man be a wife? It would appear that the whole concept of the priesthood is in opposition to the ordination of women.

Women have a definite place in the church, but let them stick to teaching and lecturing. Some women are better than men in that capacity, but I honestly believe that we need to follow God's biblical teachings in this matter, and ordain men only as priests, pastors, and elders.

Paul Chapman  
Rochester, NH

The first time I ever saw *Adventist Today* was the four views of Adventism issue. (Jan/Feb 94). I enjoyed and appreciated the openness I saw in that issue and looked forward to seeing more in the future.

The next issue—women and the church—was a great disappointment for me. I found the issue unbalanced and so biased as to be "sickening" for lack of a better word.

Folks, with all due respect, there are sincere and intelligent Adventists who disagree with the ordination of women, a fact your issue downplays and ignores. Those that hold this position are not without feeling. They instead seek to allow doctrine to be voiced by Scripture and not culture.

I'm not a theologian but a layman who can see good arguments on both sides. Your magazine issue seemed more of a political advertisement than a balanced theological treatise. For me the issue was distasteful! (Though I did have much appreciation for Cherie Rouse's Perspective.)

I challenge you to seek balance in each issue. While you may hold a particular view I saw you as unforgiving of others as the "ultra-right" are to those that aren't "historical." Of course, if your purpose is to push only your chosen agenda then state that and remove the statement in your masthead that your publication "strives for fairness."

Ron Vozar  
Fredericktown, OH

## To The Sexually Abused Writer in Vol. 2 No. 2

The woman who wrote in the March/April 94 issue of *Adventist Today* regarding her years of sexual abuse in an SDA elementary school has the power to stop this pervert at once and she must do so! She also needs an attorney and a mental health professional to assist with her interests in dealing with this tragedy.

This woman was not the first little girl he molested and certainly not the last. He has had over 20 years to ply his pedophilia since he seduced this lady. Somewhere he continues to lead young women and/or boys into the same lonely personal hell which he inflicted upon her as a teenager.



There is no need to fear disrupting his home life. In most cases, the wife has known and covered for his behavior for years. In many cases, such predatory individuals will have abused their *own* children as well. I suspect she will receive the utmost compassion from her own family.

When such antics are exposed, other victims magically appear to support the case against the pedophile. Each of them thought they were the only one and guilt kept them quiet. A local clergyman was recently exposed in just such behavior. One Sunday, a female parishioner, who had been victimized by this "man of God" as a youngster, chanced to see him approach a beautiful teenaged girl with the same words, looks, and caresses which she remembered from her first encounter. She had no lack of support when dozens of women and men joined her in documenting his perverse behavior over the years. The wife had known all along.

As a naive college student, I was very strict in my lifestyle. I thought I was qualified for sainthood until I was exposed to both hetero- and homosexual advances within a period of only 5 days. In order to escape the one, I opted for the other—a **no-win** scenario. The bottom line: None of us can stay on our knees forever!

Anonymous (at editor's discretion)  
Huntington Beach, CA

#### Letters to the Editor

Adventist Today  
PO Box 1220  
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#### Mace Gets Basted

When I finished reading the Perspective by Doug Mace (Jan/Feb 94), I did not know whether to laugh hysterically or grind my teeth in sheer frustration! At best, it was a very poorly written piece of satire. At worst, it was rife with stereotypes regarding both non-SDA and SDA women, overlaid with a heavy dose of masculine arrogance. (I wonder why Mr. Mace chose to accept a "call" to the Loma Linda University Church when it obviously bothers him that the women in the LLU church wear "heavy makeup, expensive clothing and lots of jewelry.")

Lest I be guilty of jumping to rash conclusions about this article, I took an "unscientific" poll of my friends. The group was composed primarily of men and women in their 30's and 40's. Some were married to SDA's and some were (gasp!) married to non-SDA's. Several like myself, had married "up standing" SDA men (sons of ministers, doctors, etc.), only to watch our marriages disintegrate due to physical, emotional, and/or sexual abuse. I asked each of my friends to read the article and give me some feedback. (I did *not* comment on the article at the time I asked them to review it, for fear that my own impressions might "contaminate" the review process!) Interestingly enough, their reactions were similar to mine.

A number of them, including myself, have many non-SDA girlfriends who would never dream of treating an SDA man as Mr. Mace described in his essay. On the contrary, they have dated SDA men and treated their religious beliefs with respect and dignity. They have never maligned SDA

men as a "group", as Mr. Mace managed to conveniently stereotype all non-SDA women as a "group."

My peer group also felt that Mr. Mace is somewhat naive about the current state of male/female relationships in the 30-50 year age bracket. Present statistics are suggesting a ratio of 11 single SDA women for every single SDA man. Is Mr. Mace suggesting that we single women should all take a number and stand in line, *just* so we can proudly state that we married one of the "saints"? Mr. Mace projects an increasingly prevalent condescending attitude of many SDA males, i.e. *because* I am an SDA, I am automatically a wonderful human being and a perfect husband!

Mr. Mace might be amazed to discover that I have received only minimal support from my SDA friends (both married and single) for signing up with *Adventist Contact*. There seems to be a growing opinion that Adventist males, via a mixture of home environment, SDA educational processes, and prevailing theological ideas, are becoming increasingly controlling in nature and seriously lacking in manners, compassion, and a sense of humor. As a "group," they are beginning to bear an uncanny resemblance to the particular stereotype known as a "male chauvinist." I wish that I could reassure them that this was really an unfair assumption; however, to date, my experience with *Adventist Contact* men has only reinforced these current impressions of SDA males.

We say, IF YOU ARE AN ADVENTIST WOMAN... BEWARE OF ADVENTIST MEN IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING!

(signed)

Jaydine R. Munsey    Nadine Munsey    Ruth Pickens  
New Meadow, ID    Rebecca N. Hyer  
(with) Betty M. Buell    Denise L. Serack

#### General Appreciation

*Adventist Today* represents a new and fresh approach which helps my wife and I to maintain a positive attitude toward the church and helps to renew our faith.

I commend your writers on facing and dealing with the real issues facing the church and its members in these times. I believe that the church must look at change constructively and positively and also maintain the principles on which it is based.

Thanks for bringing these messages to us and may the Lord continue to support your efforts.

Francis E. and Ruth Hecker  
Lovell, WY

#### Corection

In our last issue we incorrectly listed the number of people infected with HIV. Over 15 million people are infected globally, with the number expected to rise to 100 million by the year 2000. There are 1.5 million U.S. citizens currently infected. —*the editors*



by Bonnie L. Casey

A RECENT ISSUE OF *NEWSWEEK* (MARCH 21) CARRIED an alarming story about the end of the world as we know it—or at least as alligators know it. It seems that on top of the danger of ending up on the feet of somebody named “Tex,” these giant reptiles now face extinction on another front. According to this article, male alligators in certain parts of Florida have extremely low testosterone levels and abnormally small penises. (We can use that word now thanks to Lorena Bobbitt.)

The culprit turns out to be chemical pollutants that have leached into our soil, water, and food supply during the postwar age. Apparently, chemical compounds in PCBs, pesticides, plastics and chlorine can mimic the human hormone estrogen. Both males and females produce estrogen, but high levels of it in the male have a decidedly unmanly effect. Some birds that feed on fish from the highly polluted Great Lakes are becoming biochemical hermaphrodites, with the reproductive organs of both sexes.

Those of us higher up the food chain have not escaped these dire developments. According to those who study such things, since the 1930s human sperm counts in industrialized countries have declined by 50 percent and testicular cancer rates have tripled. This leads me to believe that Paul McCartney’s lament wasn’t so far off the mark: “I’m not half the man I used to be.”

Under the heading of “the good news,” *Newsweek* reported that how we eat might have a mitigating effect on this public health disaster, an idea that should not surprise Adventists. Broccoli, of course, was mentioned. (One begins to wonder if there is any malady the proper amount of broccoli won’t cure.) Another food given a big thumbs-up was soybeans. Apparently, soy protein has a “good” form of estrogen that does no harm and might even combat cancer.

Now here is an interesting idea indeed. Who of us Adventists has not felt a little shiver of pride and self-satisfac-

***Think of the surge of communal self-esteem if a study showing that Adventist males who dutifully ate their vegeburgers while growing up were now testosterone-charged dynamos, outmanning the competition and assuring the survival of humankind.***

tion when we read those studies showing Adventists live longer and have lower rates of lung cancer and heart disease? Think of the surge of communal self-esteem—not to mention the public relations gold mine—if a study could show that Adventist males who dutifully ate their vegeburgers while growing up were now testosterone-charged dynamos, outmanning the competition and assuring the survival of humankind. Think of the Five-Day Plans we could market on that concept! Think of the boost to our health-food industries. It could give a whole new meaning to Tender Bits. It might even justify that baffling practice of

putting 10 Linketts in a can when there are only 8 buns in a package. A little insurance, perhaps?

But such thoughts are just a distraction from the less cheerful issues arising from our callous treatment of the natural world. My generation and the next, in our quest for parenthood,

have faced infertility in proportions unheard of before our time. This has most commonly been blamed on women who put off motherhood a few years to pursue education and career. In other words, greedy, selfish, “feminists.” While the advancing age of first-time mothers is undoubtedly a factor, so too are skyrocketing increases in endometriosis and male infertility, both now linked to chemical pollutants. Meaning, perhaps that the blame—and the outrage—should be shared more equitably.

*Newsweek* reports that while studies on the unmanning of life on earth are ongoing, “lawmakers may not wait for an answer.” I’ll just bet. After decades of ignoring canaries in the coal mine, both animal and human, news of this reproductive Armageddon could turn conservative congressmen into tree-huggers faster than you can say “sperm count.”

And speaking of Armageddon, haven’t we always thought of the destruction of the earth in cataclysmic terms? Signs of the end usually come in the form of earthquakes, floods, wars—short-term events over which we have little or no control, not the slow but inexorable destruction of the natural order, which we can control, and which we still have time to halt. The question is whether our stewardship of the world God gave us extends to these matters, and whether we have the courage to confront them. What do you think those Florida alligators are expecting of us? How would they vote?

Bonnie L. Casey lives in Takoma Park, Maryland, and is an editor at a Washington, D. C., law firm, as well as a freelance writer and editor.





# As We Go To Press

## Santa Fe Bishop Offers a Different Message

CALL IT A BATTLE OF THE BILLBOARDS.

Billboards posted recently in Albuquerque, N.M., feature a message referring to Pope John Paul II as a "man of sin." Santa Fe Archbishop Michael Sheehan has countered with a billboard message of his own: "Let us all live as sons and daughters of God."

It started when signs erected this winter showed a caricature of the pope along with the words: "The Bible says ... 'The man of sin shall be revealed.'" The billboards were placed around Albuquerque in December by a fundamentalist Christian group based in Troy, Mont., called Printed Page Ministries. Printed Page is an offshoot of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, but the message was disowned by the mainline Adventist church.

A local advertising company offered six billboards to the Santa Fe archdiocese for a free message to run through February.

"I'm really happy about this," Sheehan said. "There was just no reason for the Catholic people to be quiet while the Holy Father was being ridiculed."

—(Reprinted from the February 4 issue of the **National Catholic Reporter**.)

## Adventist HealthCare Mid-Atlantic Reorganizes

DURING THE LAST TWO MONTHS SHADY GROVE ADVENTIST Hospital, Washington Adventist Hospital and other organizations of Adventist HealthCare Mid-Atlantic (AHM) have taken steps to work more closely together in response to expected changes in the health-care environment. A common board of directors will now govern the activities of the AHM system, which includes acute- and tertiary-care hospitals, home-care agencies, nursing and rehabilitation centers and several specialized health services. President of AHM, Bryan Breckenridge, serves as chief executive officer of the hospitals and continues to oversee the other AHM organizations.

These structural changes will enable the AHM system to effectively negotiate contracts with managed care organi-

zations and other purchasers of health-care services. Cost savings have already been realized through joint purchasing activities, and, as their needs change, patients and physicians should now find it easier to utilize services from the various organizations in the system.

## Colloquium on Adventist Creationism

THE PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE OF ADVENTIST CREATIONISM held the attention of a standing-room-only audience of more than 300, Sabbath afternoon, April 2, at the Loma Linda University Church. Panel responses to written questions from the audience kept the colloquium in session for more than an hour beyond the intended closing time.

The purpose of the panel discussion was to explore ways by which to correlate the observed phenomena of the natural world with the Bible account. The first speaker, who was primarily responsible for the founding of the Geoscience Research Institute, was asked to recount its founding. The two following speakers were asked to pinpoint problem areas at the interface between science and religion. The last three speakers—all present and former GRI personnel—were asked to relate what Geoscience has done and is doing to reconcile the disparate data of science and religion.

*In connection with the April 2 panel discussion of Adventist creationism I have been falsely and maliciously accused of attacking the historicity of Scripture and the Genesis account of creation. Nothing I said then, or have ever said (or even thought), can be cited as evidence for such an accusation. Let it be known and clearly understood that I submit without reservation or qualification of any kind to the inspiration and authority of the entire Bible.*

~~Raymond Cottrell, editor.

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