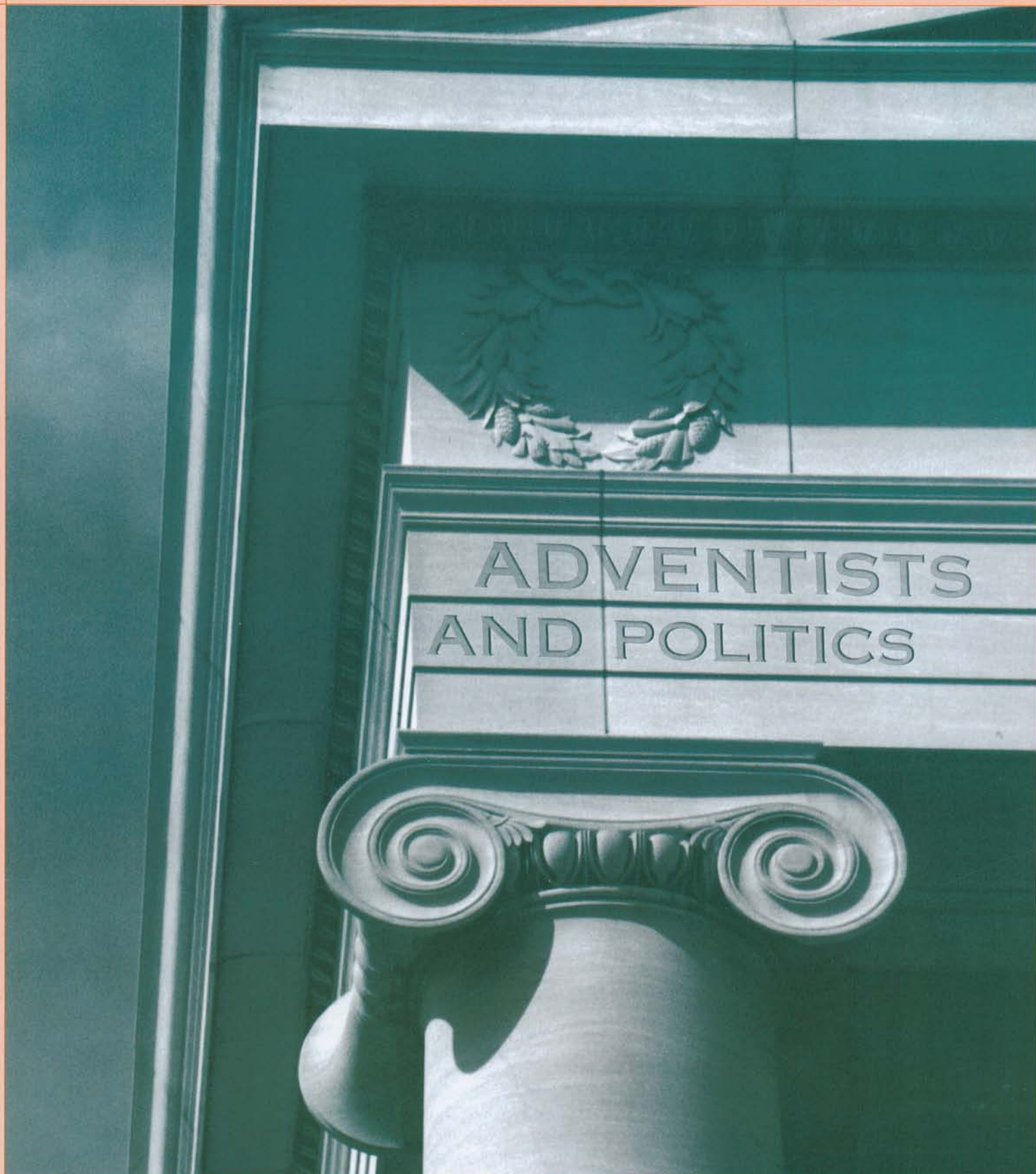


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OPINION

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For Such a Time as This: ADVENTIST POLITICS

JOHN MCLARTY

Adventists have eschewed politics in favor of something far more important: salvation. Besides, this world is not our home. And Jesus didn't challenge the political status quo in his day. And, anyway, our church was too small to make any real political difference.

Adventists have always been involved in politics. During the Civil War, our church secured the right of our young men to refuse combatant service. Next, we actively promoted Prohibition. We have vigorously lobbied judges and legislators on church-state issues.

In reality, theology always has political implications. What we believe about God's operation in the universe will affect our opinions about the proper role for human authorities. Our convictions about human nature, the activity of the Holy Spirit and the work of the church all have political implications. So what are some special Adventist flavors that should season our politics?

1. The Great Controversy. In this grand story, one of God's salient characteristics is self-restraint. God could "do more," but he limits himself. Where is the language of self-restraint in the speeches of the American president and his secretary of defense? God solves the problem of evil by allowing it to work itself out rather than by surgical intervention. Given this picture of God, we are very leery of projects to impose law, democracy, and stability on societies that are not clamoring for them. Removing evil dictators is relatively easy. But where are the peaceful, productive societies we had hoped for in the Balkans, Afghanistan and Iraq? God is not satisfied merely to be right. He will not rest until thoughtful onlookers perceive him to be right. While we Americans know we are the good guys, where is the concurrence of thoughtful onlookers?

2. Law. An emphasis on law is central to the Adventist theological enterprise. Increasingly, the troubles of the world demonstrate that there can be no healthy society without a very high regard for law. Commerce, political life, criminal justice, all require an unshakable foundation of law. Without this foundation, corruption of all kinds is

inevitable, and society withers. This is glaringly evident in Africa and Asia. It is a lesson we in the American empire easily forget.

3. Freedom and personal responsibility. Adventists have long emphasized these twins. In our evangelism we have urged people to break with ecclesiastical and family tradition and make individual commitments to keep the Sabbath. In our religious liberty work, we have presented respect for individual choice as the paramount American virtue. So when we hear the president

Removing evil dictators is relatively easy. But where are the peaceful, productive societies we had hoped for in the Balkans, Afghanistan and Iraq? God is not satisfied merely to be right.

of the United States declare that his No. 1 job is security, we demur. His first job is to uphold the Constitution and individual freedom. It is better to be insecure and free than to have the high security characteristic of a police state.

4. Creation. Our understanding of the world as the artistry of God has strong implications for environmental ethics and law. Our belief that the material world originated in God has implications for abortion and euthanasia (all of life is valuable), and earth stewardship. On the other hand, the Genesis portrayal of humans as "lords of creation" has implications for human intervention in the natural world through legislation, medical practice, health advocacy and environmental practices.

It is easier to (ostensibly) eschew politics, but until our theology teaches us how to live in our communities, even how to rule our communities, we may fall under Jesus' condemnation of those who would load people with obligations but not lift a finger to help carry the load. If we fail to bring our distinctive Adventist resources to the political table, we are robbing the world of help God has placed in our church. Who knows but that we are come to the kingdom for such a time as this? ■

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Cooney on Molesters

Thank you for the outstanding article by Cheryl Cooney describing how a very sick but shrewd minister molested her. While of course very disturbing, Ms. Cooney's experiences show how predators are very adept at methodically winning trust, blurring boundaries and grooming innocent youngsters, all in subtle, manipulative, nonviolent ways designed to convince victims that they either "misunderstood" the

Ms. Cooney and your publication have done church members a tremendous service by educating them about how sexual perpetrators go undetected and unpunished.

abusive acts or "consented" in them. Ms. Cooney and your publication have done church members a tremendous service by educating them about how sexual perpetrators go undetected and unpunished.

David Clohessy, National Director, SNAP Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests

Body Tattooing

The act of piercing or tattooing one's body, as described by Lawrence Downing in "Walking Signboards" (AT Jan/Feb 2003), is regarded by many biologists as a form of the "handicap principle." Humans who abuse chemical substances, mutilate their bodies and participate in extreme sports may be advertising—perhaps subconsciously—to prospective mates their ability to tolerate such self destruction, as do many animal species that have similarly handicapped themselves through extreme ornamentation (a product of microevolution).

To give but one example, the iridescent male peacock fans its enormous, brilliantly patterned tail while strutting in front of a female. The gaudy display attracts not only potential mates but predators as well. Rather than advertising its superior (or rather, inferior) ability to evade predators or provide food for its offspring, the male conveys a sexy signal that it is a worthy mate simply because it can survive despite its handicap. Rather than a ruse, it's an honest signal: the strongest, healthiest, most fit individuals grow the longest, most colorful tails.

The sports, entertainment and advertising industries provide a powerful testimony to the seductive charm of those humans who have proven their fitness despite handicaps. But as Christians we have the privilege of adorning ourselves instead with the righteousness of Christ, which covers all our handicaps.

**Floyd Hayes, Wildlife Biologist
U.S. Virgin Islands**

Hackleman on Cottrell History

First of all, congratulations on another excellent edition of *AToday*. I very much appreciated the timely tributes to Raymond F. Cottrell.

There is, however, an error to be corrected in Doug Hackleman's article, page 9, column 3, paragraph 1, where the author reports that [Cottrell] had made "an even dozen" presentations to the San Diego Adventist Forum. That number is incorrect. The number should

have been 17. Just for the record, the dates and titles are listed below. The titles, by the way, attest to the range of expertise this gentleman-scholar was able to share with his church.

- 10/80 View from Glacier View
- 3/82 1844: Message for Our Time
- 3/84 The Sanctuary Problem
- 3/86 What Do the Rocks Say?
- 2/87 A Reliable Method of Bible Study
- 9/88 The Future of Adventism
- 11/89 North American Division: Myth or Milestone?
- 7/91 Current Trends in Adventist Theology
- 7/92 The Adventist Theological Society: Diagnosis and Prognosis
- 9/93 The Waco Syndrome and Its Relation to Adventism
- 10/94 Whither Adventist Creationism?
- 10/95 Biblical Hermeneutics: What Difference Does It Make?
- 8/96 The Adventist Church of Tomorrow
- 9/97 Exegetical Anomalies in the SDA Traditional Interpretation of Daniel 8:14
- 8/98 The Ethos of Adventism
- 5/00 Adventism in the Twentieth Century
- 2/02 The "Sanctuary Doctrine": Asset or Liability?

Each of the above, except for the first presentation (10/80), is available on audio cassettes from San Diego Adventist Forum. Contact ak-jk@cox.net for further details, and reference this *AToday* issue.

James Kaatz, San Diego, California

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A Response to Kenneth Richards on the Authority of Ellen White

MICHAEL SCOFIELD

It is true that there has been a shift in the Adventist church from regarding the Bible as the only authority, to that of including the writings of Ellen G. White as holding nearly equal standing with it. But the Dallas (1980) statement only acknowledged (or reflected) what had been happening for the previous 50 years.

There is a significant difference between what we say and what we do. While she was alive, church leaders spoke, wrote and acted to promote Ellen White as inerrant and authoritative, yet they denied that they were doing so. One might describe this as inconsistent; some would cry “hypocrisy.” But we see here a useful example of where official policy slowly conformed to popular behavior in Adventism. (There are many more.)

After her death, the church continued to promote her writings as authoritative, still denying in its official statements that she had equal standing with the Bible. They didn’t want to appear too radical to other members of the Protestant community. The White Estate, from its very beginnings led by the enthusiasm of the Jemisons, further promoted the authoritative stance of her writings,

ers. This was a good thing.

Another powerful mechanism of promoting the writings of Ellen White as not only authoritative and inerrant, but even dictated by God, were the painted illustrations showing her sitting, pen in hand, looking up towards the light, as if taking dictation from the angel. These images, published widely, were very influential in molding popular understanding of her role and authority, perhaps more than any written description of the mechanisms of inspiration (with any denial of that elevated status).

This assumption of authority and verbal inerrancy so permeated institutional Adventist leadership that when, in the 1980s, revelations of her literary dependencies came out, leaders were in denial. One conference president, after sitting through an official review of some of Walter Rea’s research, affirmed in the *Pacific Union Recorder* that there was still no dependency upon other sources.

Why have generations of Adventists (particularly in North America) so readily accepted by implication and example the writings of Ellen White as of equal standing with the Bible? The average Adventist member (through

The average Adventist member (through Adventist education, or as a result of the kind of converts attracted to our style of evangelism) has a strong need for security in their identity, and part of that identity is having the truth, not merely being on the journey of discovering truth.

and that view was reinforced in the church publications (particularly the style and content of the Sabbath School quarterly which continues to this day) and through the school system (particularly the design of textbooks and syllabi).

A vivid example was Walter Specht’s syllabus for religion classes, *Life and Teachings of Jesus*, used on the La Sierra campus. The answers to the questions for each lesson could be found, in precise sequence, in the appropriate chapters of *The Desire of Ages*. This taught (by implication) the authority of White. Students soon discovered that all one needed to do to find the answers was to go through *The Desire of Ages*; one didn’t need to consult the Bible.

The authoritative stance of Ellen White (as equal to Scripture) went on unchallenged for years. Indeed, early on it became an undocumented requirement of the faith. It is a testament to his charisma and character that H.M.S. Richards, Sr.’s reluctance to use her in his preaching went unnoticed (it appears) by church lead-

ers. This was a good thing. Adventist education, or as a result of the kind of converts attracted to our style of evangelism) has a strong need for security in their identity, and part of that identity is having the truth, not merely being on the journey of discovering truth. Their understanding of “truth” (epistemology was one of the three critical doctrines omitted from the Dallas statement) requires that it be detailed and specific, not merely general principles at a high level. So to feed this need for detailed instruction on every matter of life, the denomination printed, edited new compilations, and provided detailed, multivolume indices to the writings of Ellen White. This conformed with, and reinforced, the view of detailed inerrancy in her writings.

So popular Adventism (in spite of institutional denials) does have two authorities. The Dallas statement thus reflected multiple generations of ingrained supposition of her authority and inerrancy. ■

Mike Scofield is an associate professor of health information management at Loma Linda University.

Report on Adventist Colleges and Universities

JAMES STIRLING

Taken together, the schools showed modest gains; a total of 17,063 students enrolled in the fall of 2002, an increase of 6 percent over the five years.

Because the Adventist educational enterprise is such a significant part of the experience and hopes of the church, *Adventist Today* tries almost every year to gauge the relative progress of the schools in North America, especially those offering college- and university-level training. Enrollments of students at the beginning of the school year are often considered the best measure.

This year our task of gathering figures on college enrollments was made much simpler by the work of Dallas Kindopp, a researcher working with the department of education of the North American Division. He kindly sent us the table below, summarizing fall enrollment figures for the past five years. Schools use different ways of computing enrollments, but the full-time equivalency, or FTE, is a reasonably comparable measure. Florida Hospital College and Kettering College of Medical Arts have joined the roster of schools for which this record is kept.

Though the Florida school is the smallest, it registered the greatest percentage gain through the five years—132 percent. It had 383 more students in 2002 than in 1998. The school with the most student gain overall was Southern Adventist University, which with 1,990 students was 459 registered students ahead of its 1998 figure, almost 30 percent.

Other schools with appreciable gains were Canadian Union College, with 39 percent; Union College, with 33 percent; La Sierra University, with 26 percent; and Walla Walla College and Columbia Union College, each with about 13 percent. The two largest schools, Andrews University and Loma Linda University, each with over

2,000 students, both showed modest declines of 6 percent and 9 percent, respectively. The figures from Southwestern Adventist University are a little skewed because the latest figure, unlike the previous four, does not include the adult degree students.

Taken together, the schools showed modest gains; a total of 17,063 students enrolled in the fall of 2002, an increase of 6 percent over the five years.

The school year 2002-2003 was memorable for many of these schools. At Atlantic Union College, in South Lancaster, Mass., the tumultuous year saw a critical inspection by the New England regional accrediting association; the resignation in March of the president, Dr. Sylvan Lashley; the installation of an interim president, Dr. N. Clifford Sorenson; then the appointment of a new president, Dr. George P. Babcock. Dr. Babcock was the senior vice-president for academic administration at Southern Adventist University, in Collegedale, Tenn.

Walla Walla College, in College Place, Wash., saw a change of administration when Dr. Sorenson took the reins briefly, then turned them over to Dr. Jon Dybdahl at a ceremony last November. Andrews University, in Berrien Springs, Mich., is “holding its own” and rejoices in the completion of a new performing arts complex utilizing advanced architectural design. La Sierra University, in Riverside, Calif., has completed the redesign of its campus and is developing modern upscale residences in what used to be farmland. It is now constructing a new science complex. Pacific Union College, in Angwin, Calif., has taken on a new president, Richard C. Osborn, formerly with the North American Division department of education. ■

COMPARATIVE FALL ENROLLMENT REPORT

College/University	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Andrews University	2,367	2,453	2,239	2,111	2,224
Atlantic Union College	531	476	552	552	571
Canadian University College	281	364	367	367	393
Columbia Union College	751	696	749	750	852
Florida Hospital College	297	363	374	492	680
Kettering College of Medical Arts	376	361	381	0	455
La Sierra University	1,199	1,098	1,235	1,341	1,511
Loma Linda University	3,245	3,045	2,989	2,951	2,947
Oakwood College	1,633	1,599	1,642	1,637	1,615
Pacific Union College	1,586	1,712	1,517	1,545	1,378
Southern Adventist University	1,531	1,593	1,806	1,908	1,990
Southwestern Adventist University	937	902	925	950	727
Union College	640	768	754	824	852
Walla Walla College	1,513	1,617	1,616	1,635	1,721
Totals	16,887	17,047	17,146	17,063	17,916

Fraud Prompts Review of Audit Procedures

JAMES STIRLING

What can a local church or church school do when those who handle its money divert some of it for themselves? And what can the denomination do to correct the problem?

A church in Northern California recently discovered that its treasurer had embezzled something between \$170,000 and \$200,000. The church treasurer is now facing prosecution, according to a local conference official familiar with the situation.

While it's a small percentage of the nearly \$1 billion that congregations collect in the region each year—at a rate of approximately \$18 million each week—the losses are still troubling to Adventist church officials. Most of the lost money is recovered through insurance after a \$2,500 deductible. Premiums for local church coverage are paid with church expense.

Most church thefts are reported to civil authorities, but some are not. Rick Russell, treasurer for the church's Carolina Conference, with headquarters in Charlotte, N.C., says a local church sometimes may try to handle a theft without reporting it to civil authorities.

"Oftentimes the person is very well respected," says Russell. "Sometimes the members go into denial that it's happened to them and may not want to report it. They might try to handle it another way."

Karnik Doukmetzian, a vice president of Adventist Risk Management Inc. (ARM), the church's insurance unit, says a church handling theft without reporting to law enforcement authorities fails to send the message that church theft will not be tolerated. He says the denomination has no consistent policy of mandatory reporting to the authorities. He believes it's a significant enough issue that cases should be automatically reported. "It's not enough [for the offender] to make arrangements to pay it back and say, 'I'm sorry,'" he says.

"Doukmetzian may have a point," says Philip Palmer, church treasurer for the South Central Conference, with headquarters in Nashville, Tenn. Palmer also points out the filing of a police report doesn't mean the person is being charged. However, Palmer says, it's a delicate matter, and whether or not to go to authorities is a tough decision for churches.

Palmer says another issue is whether or not a prosecuted church member will stay in the church.

Kenneth Ladd, treasurer for the Adventist church in Southern California, says the decision to report theft to the authorities should be prompted by a "case-by-case" consideration, not a mandatory policy.

Lawrance Martin, treasurer of the church's Allegheny

East Conference in Pine Forge, Penn., agrees, saying a mandatory policy might send the wrong message. "It might mean that we are more interested in getting the money back than in saving the person," he says. "But the person needs to realize it's a criminal act." Martin says it is the job of the church board and the pastor to notify the conference, who should then notify authorities.

Conference treasurers say the best guard against church theft is regular auditing, which is required of each church every two years by the working policy of the Adventist church in North America.

Two full-time auditors serve the Central California Conference, and each church and school there is audited annually. "We are not taking this responsibility lightly," says Nelson Tabingo, treasurer for the church in Central California. According to Tabingo, constant delays in church remittances to the local conference could be a signal that something might be wrong. Tabingo is also leery of the excuse of a treasurer's computer crashing constantly. "When they say, 'All the information is lost,' I am suspicious."

Arthur Blinci, a vice president of ARM, says some local church conferences are more compliant with division working policy than others. He cites one conference that regularly prepares and distributes a listing of each church and school and the date when it was last audited. "To me that sends a big statement," says Blinci. "It also reaffirms the work of the church treasurer."

"The strange ones we latch onto pretty quick," says Victor Elliott, claims counsel for ARM. Large amounts of money draw attention. What hurts, he says, is long-term lifting of small amounts. This usually occurs because of a breakdown in auditing policy. "These are harder to detect," he says.

The Adventist church in North America is addressing the issue by encouraging local audits, making people aware of the problem, and educating the local church and school treasurers and accountants, according to Juan Prestol, treasurer for the Adventist church in North America. He refers treasurers to a video with a guidebook titled, *Trustees of the Lord's Finances*, (available through AdventSource, www.adventsource.org) produced by the Adventist church in North America. It offers two hours and 45 minutes of instruction about internal control. Adventist church officials advise that the local conference treasurer or auditor should be contacted if a concern arises about the use of church money. ■

(Adapted from an article by Ansel Oliver, in the Adventist News Network.)

"Sometimes the members go into denial that it's happened to them and may not want to report it. They might try to handle it another way."

Kenyan Entrepreneur Develops Low-Cost Satellite Dish

JULIO C. MUNOZ,
ADVENTIST NEWS NETWORK

The Kenyan young man with the bright, lime-green shirt smiles proudly as he effortlessly spins the bicycle pedals with his hands. A long steel rod emerges bent into a crescent-shaped semicircle from Enoch Mogusu's handmade apparatus. The rods form the framework for ultra-low-cost satellite dishes that are assembled in this small workshop cramped in the middle of an entrepreneurial complex on a hill off a red dirt road in Kisii, Kenya.

Mogusu is the owner of Kistec Industries, which is dedicated to manufacturing low-cost satellite dishes that are made with locally available materials. These dishes can be sold to Adventist and other Christian churches at an affordable price so they may harness the power of satellites.

With the arrival of satellite technology, evangelism has changed forever. Tens of thousands can now be reached from a single location via satellite. It is now possible to present sermons by some of the most renowned preachers in the most remote areas. That is, if satellite dishes are affordable.

When satellite dishes first started popping up in Nairobi, the capital of Kenya, the cost was 150,000 to 250,000 Kenyan shillings—a luxury in a country where, according to relief groups, the national per capita income in 2001 was just under 23,000 shillings, or 340 U.S. dollars. Mogusu and his partners decided that was too much to pay.

Kistec's dishes are not only inexpensive, they are durable and accurate. Commercial satellite dishes typically have signal strength of 55 to 65 percent, while Enoch's satellites receive a signal of 75 to 90 percent.

"I said this price is relatively high," recalls Mogusu, as he stands in front of his simple workshop. "Many churches can't afford this, and the Adventist homes can't afford this. So I went ahead to design a dish, which can be used for the purpose of satellite evangelism."

Enoch and his associates started Kistec Industries in the outskirts of Kisii, which is about a four-hour drive northwest of Nairobi. He developed his first low-cost dish in 1996 using mosquito wire and other locally available materials. It was a success.

Enoch and his colleagues continued to streamline their operation. In the early days, the Kistec crew spent seven days to build one dish. "But I thought this time is too much," Mogusu recalls with a frown. "I went down to

design a machine that could make many dishes, plus save time. So I set up a machine that can make a dish within a day—so one dish per day."

After a little tinkering, Enoch created his own equipment from spare bicycle parts and his imagination. He designed a machine that could bend the steel rods into nearly perfect semicircles that formed the various parts of the dish frame.

Enoch has used part determination, part ingenuity, and dedication to create a satellite dish that is more affordable, with a price tag of 9,000 Kenyan shillings. Commercial dishes now can cost anywhere from 18,000 shillings for a 1.8-meter dish to 50,000 for a 2.5-meter dish.

Kistec's dishes are not only inexpensive; they are durable and accurate. Commercial satellite dishes typically have signal strength of 55 to 65 percent, while Enoch's satellites receive a signal of 75 to 90 percent.

The low-cost satellite dish has made the church's satellite outreach program much easier. "Since Enoch started making cheaper equipment for satellite, more people are [able] to get satellite right in their homes," says Sibiah Miyianda, satellite coordinator for the Adventist church in the South Kenya region. "People can get the satellite in their hotels, in guesthouses, in some schools and also in the churches. It's cheap now for individuals and for organizations."

The first Adventist church in rural Kenya bought and installed one of Enoch's low-cost satellites in July 2002. Since then dozens of Adventist churches and schools have begun receiving church programming via satellite.

Kistec suffered a setback recently when a fire destroyed some of its equipment, forcing Mogusu to let some of his workers go. Today he has a staff of 10, in addition to his two partners. With the mechanization of their equipment, they say it is possible to manufacture 72 satellite dishes per day using three machines. Enoch believes they will soon be able to lower the price of their dishes even more because of the increase in sales they are anticipating.

Last October, Enoch had the opportunity to teach representatives from 25 African nations his technique for building inexpensive dishes. By sharing the low-cost technology he and his partners have developed, they hope more homes and churches in Africa will have access to affordable church programming.

Not satisfied with their current success, Enoch has a new vision to reach the remote areas of Kenya: mobile satellite downlink sites. It is his dream to take the dish, aim it, and with a television running off a generator, download Adventist Television Network programming for unreached rural communities. ■

Abortion Protesting on the Local Church Level

JAMES STIRLING

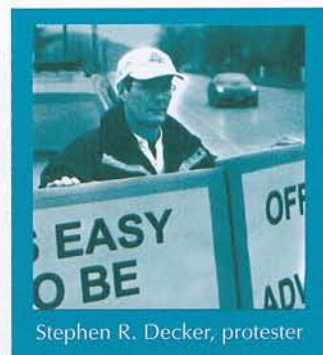
A Seventh-day Adventist pro-lifer dissatisfied with the church's stand on abortion made headlines in a local paper last April by demonstrating in front of a Washington Adventist church so often and so graphically that the church expelled him from membership. Stephen R. Decker, former member of the Redmond, Wash., church says he is trying to raise awareness among Adventists about their church's "unbiblical" stand. He says the practice of abortion violates the commandment prohibiting killing.

Chad Carlton, pastor of the church, insists that the church's action against Decker is not a response to his stand on abortion, but to his method of displaying gory images of aborted fetuses and images of baby dolls with fake blood and daggers, and to his accosting of people going by. Decker has been keeping his vigil almost every week in front of various Adventist churches for the past year, along with fellow Adventist Benjamin K. Owen, a member of the Bellevue church. According to an article by Janet I. Tu in the *Seattle Times*, the two belong to Posi-

tively Pro-Life, an informal local group of a half dozen people who have recently concentrated on demonstrating outside churches.

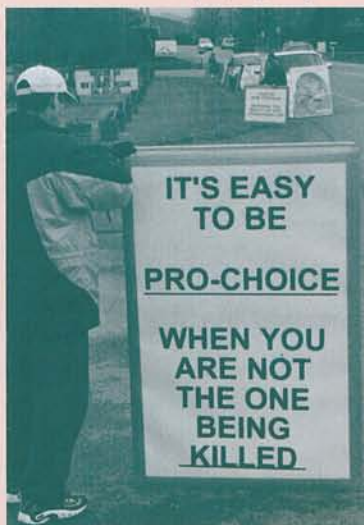
According to Gil Bahnsen, who has interviewed Decker and Owen, the church issued a statement disavowing their behavior, declaring to them that "you have overstepped the bounds of appropriate Christian behavior in your zeal to further the cause of ending abortion.... We have been disappointed by your anger, resistance and refusal to reconcile with the church. In addition, you have flatly denied a request...to not protest in front of our church again." In another statement the church said Decker was displaying the spirit of antichrist and called on him to "discontinue your demonstrations of public humiliation and join us in unity to utilize the biblical principles for resolution of sin."

But Decker and Owen remain unimpressed by the church's actions and are determined to continue their efforts to promote the cause. ■



Stephen R. Decker, protester

▼ Decker stands displaying a sign.



▲ Decker offers copies of the Adventist Church's official abortion policies to members leaving the church service. No one took any.



◀ The neighbor across the street parked his pickup here to block the view of the sign from his house. He said he disagreed with their message, but agreed with their right to protest. He just didn't want to have to look at the signs. He and a woman got into the truck a little while later and drove away.



▲ An Enumclaw police officer responds to a call from the church. Ben Owen (far right) gets his video camera ready for use, if need be,



to document any negative interactions with law enforcement officials. He didn't need it on this occasion. The officer verified that they were performing their protest within the law and resumed his patrol. Owen said he had contacted the police department ahead of time about this demonstration.

A church member deliberately drove his vehicle close to Sarah Thompson (middle, with umbrella) as he turned into the parking lot. When asked about his actions he told the photographer, "If my wife hadn't been in the car with me, I would have driven this close." He indicated a distance of about two inches with the thumb and index finger of his right hand. The officer returned to the church after the photographer reported this incident and maintained a presence for about half an hour.

A number of the complaints against the protestors are based on the idea of children being protected from the disturbing images displayed on the signs.

Three or four people known to the protestors stopped to talk. An Enumclaw church elder had a conversation with Ben Owen when he arrived there, but that was the only verbal interaction between the church members and protestors.

Reporting and photos by Gil Bahnsen

With God on Our Side

FELIX A. LORENZ, JR.

With Tolstoy I am convinced that not to speak out in a time of crisis like this would be “shameful and criminal.” The failure of many Christians to speak out for peace and justice from a Christian base—yea, they even support the warmongers with military rhetoric—has embarrassed this old former Fundamentalist (still a born-again, lower-case fundamentalist).

We are told that it is necessary to remove Saddam Hussein. He is an evil dictator. Wasn't he an evil dictator when we provided arms and intelligence and money for him while he was fighting Iran? And when he gassed Iranians and Kurds from American-made helicopters?

We are determined to disarm him. Has he ever threatened us? We are told he has “weapons of mass destruction.” If true, still a matter of question according to the United Nations weapons inspectors, remember that Israel has 200 nuclear bombs, the United States has 10,000, and six other countries have an unknown number. We are the only country to have used them!



I am an enthusiastic American who is embarrassed by what America has done and is doing. What most distresses me about the militant rhetoric of our leaders is history.

I remember when our leaders told us of an attack in the Tonkin Gulf in 1964.

Now we know it was pure fabrication, but it stirred up our emotions enough to “justify” a war in Vietnam, which Jay Tolson calls a “failed experiment in nation-building.”

We all remember the pictures of a little girl running down the road, a victim of our napalm. And mothers holding their babies in the trenches as GIs poured bullets into them. Of course, that's what war is all about—killing the enemy.

When those scenes came to America, we began to see the Vietnam War not as against communism, but against poor peasants, real people. Gruesome scenes. Gruesome memories.

That's when many of us became antiwar activists. Please, let's not wait until that happens again.

I remember when a president sabotaged Vietnam peace talks in 1968 to assure his election. It worked!

I remember when in 1980 a presidential candidate sabotaged the Iranian hostage negotiations to assure his election. It worked!

I don't remember, of course, the fictitious 1898 Battleship Maine incident which “justified” our bloody conquest of Cuba, the Philippines and Puerto Rico.

I do remember Marcos, a dictator on a par with Saddam. But he was our man! I do remember that we installed one dictator after another in Liberia. And I remember that we supported Franco in Spain and dictators in Cuba. Ruthless dictators. But of course they were cozy with American businessmen.

I remember that we talked democracy a lot. But who was responsible for the overthrow of the democratically elected government in Iran and the installation of the Shah? To use Biblical lingo, Saddam has killed his thousands, the Shah his tens of thousands. It was another case of helicopters made from U.S.-supplied parts. After the Shah was overthrown by his own people, CIA chief William Colby called installing him the CIA's proudest achievement. “You may think he failed, but for twenty-five years he served us well.”

While we watched our televisions in horror on Sept. 11, 2001, citizens of Chile remembered that on Sept. 11, 1973, their presidential palace was bombed. Democratically elected president Salvador Allende died in the attack. Pinochet, supported by covert operations of the CIA and the American military, became dictator, then rounded up the “dissidents” and tortured and massacred them. As I write this, a Chilean man is talking on the *Morning Show*, answering the question, “Would you have wanted some other nation to come in and eliminate Pinochet?” His answer was, “No, he was our dictator and we overthrew him ourselves.”

History indeed should make us think seriously about our role in the world.

During World War II 120,000 Japanese-American citizens were rounded up and imprisoned, and their

property was confiscated. Senator Daniel Inouye said, "The lessons learned must remain a grave reminder of what we must not allow to happen again to any group."

Arabs and others in the Third World already resent America. Our arrogant attitude and behavior have angered millions all over the world. Why are we so resented? We have simply gone into other nations and pushed them around to suit our interests. These include Haiti, Cuba, Grenada, Panama, Angola, Namibia, Ghana, Iran, Indonesia, El Salvador, the Congo, Cambodia, Laos, and Nicaragua.

What are the feelings of people who lost loved ones in the Trade Center attacks?

Amber Amundsen's husband, Craig, was killed when Flight 77 crashed into the Pentagon. He was 28, father of two. Here is what Amber has to say: "I have heard angry rhetoric by some Americans, including many of our nation's leaders, who advise a heavy dose of revenge and punishment. To those leaders, I would like to make clear that my family and I take no comfort from your words of rage. If you choose to respond to this incomprehensible brutality by perpetuating violence against other innocent human beings, you may not do so in the name of justice for my husband. Your words and imminent acts of revenge only amplify our family's suffering, deny us the dignity of remembering our loved

questions when God's on your side." "You don't count the dead when God's on your side." "Accept it all gravely with God on your side." Is God on our side?

Abraham Lincoln was once assured that God was on the side of the North. His response was, "I just want to be sure we are on God's side."

Martin Luther King, Jr.'s last Sunday sermon in 1968 in the National Cathedral included an unmistakable antiwar theme: "It is no longer a choice, my friends, between violence and nonviolence. It is either nonviolence or nonexistence...."

Jeanne Morin Buell, former Catholic nun, wrote about prayer and flags and war: "Christians throughout the centuries would pray that they would win the war, as though it were possible that you could win a war. When you wage a war and allow yourself to kill your enemy, how could you hope to be heard in prayer?"

"Instead of beating swords into plowshares, as the oft-quoted but ever-ignored Isaiah urged, the message now—with at least \$20 billion instantly added to the war chest—is beat swords into bigger swords."

As he left office, Dwight D. Eisenhower looked back over his years as president and supreme commander of the allied forces. He noted that the Cold War brought a new status to America, a perpetual war supported by a perpetual war industry. It was the confluence of

Bob Dylan is one of my favorite songwriters. He wrote "With God on Our Side," in which the eight verses trace pseudo-faith and militarism. "You never ask questions when God's on your side." "You don't count the dead when God's on your side." "Accept it all gravely with God on your side." Is God on our side?

one in a way that would make him proud, and mock his vision of America as a peacemaker in the world." (*Chicago Tribune*, Sept. 25, 2001).

Lewis Mumford wrote, "The point to be grasped has been staring Western civilization in the face for the last half-century, namely, that a predominately megatechnic economy can be kept in profitable operation only by systematic and constant expansion. Instead of a balanced economy, dedicated to the enhancement of life, mega-technics demands limitless expansion on a colossal scale, a feat that only war or mock-war rocket building and space exploration can supply."

That is the preface to Derrick Jensen's chapter, "War," in his book, *The Culture of Make Believe*. The chapter, which begins, "We may as well admit that war is the best possible thing for our economy," is primarily about past wars, but it is nearly a word-for-word prophecy of our current leadership!

Bob Dylan is one of my favorite songwriters. He wrote "With God on Our Side," in which the eight verses trace pseudo-faith and militarism. "You never ask

industry and the military, which Thomas Jefferson had warned against and tried to ban in the first version of the Bill of Rights. Eisenhower said, "Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired, signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and not clothed. The world in arms is not spending money alone. It is spending the sweat of its laborers, the genius of its scientists, the hopes of its children."

We will continue to light our Peace Candle with a prayer for "peace on earth" each week. We will pray God's forgiveness and guidance for all who are involved. God is not on our side nor on our enemy's side. God is on the side of peace and justice, truth and righteousness, for which Calvary became a reality, and for which we will continue to pray. ■

Felix A. Lorenz, Jr., is a pastor in Dearborn, Mich., and wrote this essay at the beginning of the Lenten season, 2003, while plans for the attack on Iraq were still being formulated. This is a condensed version of his remarks.

A Limbless Iraqi Child

GLEN GREENWALT

Of all the images that have come out of the Iraqi war, the one that haunts me is that of a limbless Iraqi child. I am not a pacifist. I believe that in a world of evil one should always pursue the course that results in the least amount of suffering. At times pacifism is not this course. But at the same time I can't escape the question that Alyosha poses to Ivan in *The Brothers Karamazov*: "If you were God, and you had to create a world in which only one child was to so suffer, would you create that world?"

Last Saturday night I went with friends to see a musical adaptation of Voltaire's satirical comedy, *Candide*. For readers who are unfamiliar with *Candide*, it is a story told to ridicule Gottfried Wilhelm von Leibniz's claim that despite all of the evils we experience in life, this world is the best of all possible worlds, insofar that suffering contributes to God's purpose of perfecting children in the divine likeness. In the story, *Candide* and the other characters suffer one outrage after another, from loss of home, to impoverishment, enslavement, prostitution, scourging at the hands of the Inquisitor, petty rejections, and a host of other miseries—to each of which the characters respond cheerfully that they have no complaints, because this is after all the best of all possible worlds.

The problem with all attempts to justify God's permission of undeserved hurt and suffering is that they say too much and too little. They say too much, because they make evil reasonable from the viewpoint of God; but the one thing that evil never is, is reasonable.

Leibniz's point was not, of course, that the evils and suffering of this world are something to cheer. He believed that a great deal of evil existed in this world, but of all possible worlds, the goods of this world best outweighed its evils. Still, this defense is inadequate. If God could imagine various possible worlds, and gave reality to this world rather than another, then even though God is perhaps not accountable for the choices that lead to the particular evils in this world, God is accountable for creating the world that contained these particular evils.

In another world, the Iraqi boy may not have lost his limbs, and perhaps you or I would have.

How can we come to terms with the possibility of evil in this world? More than free will must be at stake. None of us is fully free, after all, to make decisions. The options available for us to choose are always limited at best, and in many situations none exist. Our Iraqi boy never had a choice whether or not there would be a war. And seldom if ever do we see the full consequences of our decisions. Even when we believe we are choosing the best course of action, our actions often turn out to cause hurt to others and ourselves. The American coalition never set out to hurt this Iraqi boy. They set out to bring an end to Saddam Hussein's torture of innocent victims.

The problem with all attempts to justify God's permission of undeserved hurt and suffering is that they say too much and too little. They say too much, because they make evil reasonable from the viewpoint of God; but the one thing that evil never is, is reasonable. The very nature of evil is that it is irrational. Any attempt to explain it away is to somehow make allowance for it. On the other hand, every attempt to explain evil says too little, for no answer is ever given to the victim's cry, "Why me?" Even Leibniz sidestepped this question, saying that its answer lay in the providence of God, which of course leaves the victim with no answer for his or her own suffering.

Rather than creating a theodicy or justification of God's handling of human suffering, examples such as the limbless boy have driven me to conclude that we need to take the side of victims in their complaint against God. This complaint, I believe, arises not from

outside of faith, but from the heart of faith. The very act of complaint, I also believe, is the best testimony to God's goodness at a time when God appears silent and absent. I take my model for what I prefer to call a therapeutic of suffering, in contrast to a theodicy or justification of evil, from Jesus' cry on the cross—"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

I have set out in bold type the elements of the therapeutic of suffering I find in Jesus' complaint. I do not mean thereby to suggest ordered steps or stages. The sufferer may not identify with each of the elements, but each of these elements is a legitimate aspect of suffering from a Christian perspective. Nor will the sufferer necessarily proceed from complaint to identification with suffering in an orderly fashion. One may, for example, accept one's suffering without complaint. What I learn from the cross is simply that complaint should not be ruled out as a legitimate response to suffering.

Complaint

The problem with all attempts to justify God's goodness in the face of the horrendous suffering of the innocent is that they pacify complaint—the very thing unfairness and injustice deserve. Certainly Job, the psalmists, the prophets, and even Jesus himself complained against their apparent abandonment by God at the time of their suffering.

Elie Weisel encapsulates the darkness of the Holocaust experience in the story of the hanging of a young Jewish boy, who was too emaciated to have weight enough to break his neck when he fell, and so strangled slowly before the watching prisoners. Weisel, in recalling that story, says that to this day he refuses to believe that an answer can be given for such cruelty. "I have never renounced my faith in God," Weisel writes in his *Memoir*, "I have risen against His justice, protested His silence and sometimes His absence, but my anger rises up within faith and not outside... Abraham and Moses, Jeremiah and Rebbe Levi-Yitzhak of Berdichev teach us that it is permissible for man to accuse God, provided it be done in the name of faith in God. If that hurts, so be it. Sometimes we must accept the pain of faith so as not to lose it."

Weisel goes on to say, "I will never cease to rebel against those who committed or permitted Auschwitz, including God. The questions I once asked myself about God's silence remain open. If they have an answer, I do not know it. More than that, I refuse to know it." It is this refusal to know that speaks most powerfully of Weisel's faith, for it expresses a confidence that the evil of Auschwitz is incompatible with any notion of The Good that he finds acceptable. Weisel simply finds it unacceptable to connect God's name in any way with giving permission for the torture and death of a single innocent child. In the words of Scripture, better that a millstone were tied around one's neck and that person be cast into

the sea than that one of God's children be hurt. God must live consistently with God's own teaching.

Knowledge

The complaint of faith is made in the name of God. Interestingly enough, it is in our complaints against the suffering of the innocent that God is truly defended, for all such complaints are made in God's name. Evil exists only if the possibility of an alternative good exists. In a world governed by chance and forces of natural selection,

I take my model for what I prefer to call a therapeutic of suffering, in contrast to a theodicy or justification of evil, from Jesus' cry on the cross—"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

as the eminent British biologist, Richard Dawkins, has noted, such an assumed good that is free of accidents and conflicts does not exist. Only by supposing the childish myth of an omnipotent protector can a complaint against human suffering be made.

Yet we continue to complain, despite Dawkins' logic. And we might suppose that were Dawkins himself removed from his professorial sanctuary, and burned at a stake by religious fanatics, as happened to colleagues of an earlier century, he himself might complain. He already complains about the stupidity of religious fundamentals in his writings and the obstacle they pose to science—yet by his own logic they too must be selected for survival.

If we have any comfort at all that the universe is not finally meaningless, we can find that comfort only in the existence of some good that transcends what we see. This is a risk, not a proof. It is, as David Larson, professor of ethics at Loma Linda University, has written in an unpublished manuscript, "an informed wager that love is more pervasive than indifference, beauty more enduring than ugliness, health more basic than illness, peace more normal than conflict, anticipation more realistic than dread, truth more victorious than falsehood and grace more abundant than sin." We have no proof that any of this is true. But neither can we make any plan or undertake any endeavor without wagering that it is true.

Jesus in crying from the cross did not cry blindly. He cried out in the name of "my God." We have no other basis for crying out against the violation of an innocent child.



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A Limbless Iraqi Child

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Acceptance

Complaint gives way to acceptance only in the transcending of complaint in the knowledge of a higher good—not in the removal of grounds for complaint. This higher good is in part, as we have already seen, a realization that a radical complaint against undeserved hurt and injustice can only be made in the name of The Good itself. Only on the grounds of what Anselm called “That Than Which Nothing Greater Can Be Conceived,” can we establish a foundation to name undeserved hurt and injustice.

Perhaps, however, acceptance can go beyond even this knowledge to a kind of empathy for all suffering creatures. Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn commented that he was never able to accept his suffering in the Gulag until a rabbi asked him why he believed he should be ex-

empted from suffering. Did he believe that he was superior to any other creature? From the moment Solzhenitsyn identified himself with the lot of all creatures, he says he was not afraid of his tormentors. From that moment he was free of all fear.

empted from suffering. Did he believe that he was superior to any other creature? From the moment Solzhenitsyn identified himself with the lot of all creatures, he says he was not afraid of his tormentors. From that moment he was free of all fear.

And still there may be even a deeper empathy—empathy for God’s own suffering. During the Allied bombing of Germany, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, the Christian pastor who was imprisoned for plotting against Hitler, was taken from his cell and asked how he could believe in God when God permitted such terror against the German people. To which Bonhoeffer replied by asking, “How can we do this to God?” Weisel expresses similar empathy for God’s suffering in his *Memoirs*. He writes, “One can—and must—love God. One can challenge him and even be angry with him, but one must also pity him.” Weisel says that he came to this conclusion when his Talmudist master showed him a passage in the Midrash where God wept. “His tears fell upon his people and his creation, as if to say, What have you done to my work?” Weisel concludes from this passage that one may therefore invoke God’s name “not only in indignation but also with sadness and compassion.” Our

Identification

I am not sure all are called to identify their lives with suffering. Certainly, not all are called to the same level of suffering. There is no virtue in suffering for suffering’s sake. Still, by viewing oneself as an agent in God’s creative suffering, one is able to move beyond victimhood.

Here the metaphor of an artist may be helpful. An artist knows that every creative act includes a struggle in which the artist attempts to form some medium such as clay, paint, words, notes, or whatever into some conceived shape, image, story, score, or other end. This task is seldom easy and most often entails a great deal of anguish and even pain. Yet the artist persists in his or her art, not in order to suffer, but to accomplish something of beauty and/or truth.

In a recent pottery class, I became convinced that God’s attempts to mold us into works of beauty and truth

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must involve a struggle similar to the human artistic struggle. What I learned from my early attempts to throw a piece of clay and shape it into a vessel was that clay resists being manhandled into some intentional shape. Clay has a mind of its own. As one potter told me, one must listen to what the clay is trying to tell you, or you will never succeed as a potter.

In creating beings with their own autonomy, God created objects that could resist the divine shaping. We may be clay in the potter’s hand, but a good potter listens to the clay. Taking the pottery analogy seriously, we may agree with David Larson that “God rarely intervenes overwhelmingly; God always participates helpfully.” To identify with God’s creative work means that we are not victims but fellow servants with God in shaping the world into a place where all complaints are finally resolved. That world is not yet come. I am deeply troubled by the limbless Iraqi boy, and my complaint goes directly to God. But I also hear the call to take up my creative cross and follow God in the slow, arduous, and at times baffling and traumatic task of redeeming this fallen, crumpled vessel of a world fit for destruction. ■

Glen Greenwalt is a theologian and an artist.

Regarding Just War

DAVID REYNOLDS

Among the common justifications for war used by Christians are the examples of war in the Old Testament.

If the Israelites could fight the Canaanites with God's blessing, so the reasoning goes, we can fight the Nazis, Iraqis, Iranians, North Koreans, etc. with God's blessing now. But those who argue from these ancient examples don't tell the whole story. When the early Israelites went to war, they slaughtered every man, woman, child and beast. Yet many Christians use this ancient war-making to "prove" that war is acceptable to God.

Adventists have long taught that truth is progressive. If it is truly progressive, then we must allow the Old Testament to be superseded by what Jesus taught in the New Testament. (Didn't Jesus say, "you have heard it said in old times...but I tell you...? Matthew 5:21)

This concept of progressive truth applies to the New Testament as well. In New Testament times slavery was unquestioningly accepted. Jesus never spoke a word against slavery, and Paul sent Philemon back to his master. Paul never told his master to release him from slavery. In today's world slavery is considered morally offensive. Should we go back to the "truth" of apostolic times, or progress?

Ideas have consequences, and sometimes they take centuries to reach their full potential. Jesus was a liberator, but it was not until the 19th century that slavery was abolished as an intolerable moral evil. Women were not given the vote in the United States until the 20th century, and it was not too long ago that they were liberated from being property. In these areas, should we go back to "New Testament morality?" I don't think so.

If every man is your brother or neighbor, as Christ implied, then going out to kill him in war seems inherently

wrong. Jesus further strengthened this assumption by saying that the peacemakers of this world are especially blessed.

For those who think that pacifism is not powerful enough, consider three men who changed the world through pacifism: Christ changed the whole course of history with the power of his ideas. Gandhi brought down the mighty British Empire through passive resistance of evil. Martin Luther King, Jr. changed the entire course of American history and of bigotry through his passive resistance of evil.

What do we do about the Hitlers of this world? There isn't an easy answer. But it must be noted that Christian passivity (in contrast to pacifism) strengthened Hitler. If a majority of Christians had actively opposed Hitler early, on the grounds that his entire doctrine was morally offensive, he never would have gained enough power to do the evil he did. Christian inaction paved the way for Hitler's undisputed sway over the German populace.

As Mark Carr pointed out, pacifism is not nonactivism. Christian pacifism is an active force against evil in the world. We must actively combat evil, but our methods must always be good. For a Christian pacifist there is no such thing as doing necessary evil. Perhaps part of the reason Janine Goffar objects to pacifistic Christians is that too often they have stood back and hidden behind those willing to actively fight evil with war, rather than being active early enough to be effective. The key is to recognize evil early and actively oppose it from the start. It is all well and good to stand up and oppose war, but far more noble to devote ourselves to opposing the evil that the war tries to address.

If Christians are going to be truly effective in opposing war, we must proactively address the causes of war before the saber-rattling becomes too loud. Then, perhaps, we can earn a solid reputation as peacemakers and prevent the carnage of more "just wars." ■

Editors note: This article is a response to Janine Goffar's article "War is Sometimes Moral," AT Mar/Apr 2003.

What do we do about the Hitlers of this world? There isn't an easy answer. But it must be noted that Christian passivity (in contrast to pacifism) strengthened Hitler.

Adventist Faculty Surveyed Again on Creationism Views

FLOYD PETERSEN

Five years ago we surveyed the science faculty in North American Division (NAD) Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions of higher learning concerning their beliefs about the origins of life on this earth. The results of that survey generated considerable interest.

The survey has been done again with some modifications to the questionnaire. This time it was sent to religion faculty as well as science teachers. Names of current faculty were abstracted by querying Web sites and by contacting the academic departments within each institution. As before, the survey was completely anonymous. 337 surveys were sent out (205 to science faculty and 132 to religion faculty). The response rate was 34.7%. An informal tally of postmarks indicated that every one of the church's North American schools were represented by a number of respondents.

Results

Of the 117 returns, 116 indicated that they were current faculty in an Adventist institution; with 65 in science (56 males, 5 females, 4 unknown) and 42 in religion (41 males, 0 females, 1 unknown). Of the 8 respondents who did not state their academic discipline, 7 were male and one was unknown. Academic science and religion in NAD Adventist institutions of higher education appears to be very much a male world. In both science and religion faculty over 80 percent came from a home where at least one parent was Adventist. Seventy-eight percent of those in science and 74 percent in religion had attended a non-Adventist graduate school. A number (28.1 percent science and 12.5 percent religion) of respondents indicated that they would not want revealed to their students or employer how they had marked their survey. Over 70 percent of both science and religion faculty felt that publishing the results of the survey would be useful and constructive in the church's current dialog over these questions.

In Tables 1, 2 and 3 the responses on key questions from the science faculty in the 1994 survey are compared to the

science and religion faculty in the current 2003 survey. Several things stand out: (a) a smaller proportion of science faculty are likely to hold traditional Seventh-day Adventist beliefs on these questions than religion faculty; (b) fewer science faculty hold traditional Adventist beliefs in 2003 than in 1994; and (c) though almost 80 percent of religion faculty hold to traditional Adventist beliefs concerning the timing of the creation of humans, only 50 percent do so about the creation of other living organisms.

Table 4 deals with attitudes toward the importance of these items. Faculty were asked to indicate on a scale of 1 to 9 how important to their personal salvation (1 = not important, 9 = critically important) was their belief in the timing of events surrounding the origins of our natural world. They were also asked to indicate on the same scale how important to their salvation was their belief in who/what caused our natural world to come into existence. The results of these two items are summarized in Table 4. A minority (17.3 percent, science; 32.5 percent, religion) felt that their belief in when it happened was critical to their salvation. As would be expected, a much higher percent (48.4 percent, science; 64.3 percent, religion) felt that their belief in who/what caused it to happen was critical. It was interesting to note that a significant percent of both science and religion faculty (21.4 percent, and 33.8 percent) indicated that their belief in who/what was of little or no importance for their salvation.

Have faculty changed their views? After each item the respondents were asked if they would have marked the same response at the beginning of their professional career. On their belief about the origin and development of living organisms including humans (see bottom of tables 1 and 2)

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Table 1. Origin of Life Other Than Humans

	1994 Science faculty (n=121) ^a	2003 Science faculty (n=65)	2003 Theology faculty (n=42)
All living organisms other than humans were created by God over a literal six-day period:			
less than 10,000 years ago.	43.0	27.7	50.0
less than 20,000 years ago.	— ^b	10.8	9.5
less than 50,000 years ago.	— ^b	1.5	2.4
less than 100,000 years ago.	19.0	9.2	4.8
God created all living organisms over an indeterminate length of time over the last 100,000 years.	6.6	7.7	4.8
God created life millions of years ago and then over this period guided its development.	18.2	20.0	11.9
Life as recorded in the fossil record has evolved over several billion years by exclusively natural means.	3.3	9.2	2.4
Other	— ^c	13.8	11.9
Those indicating that they would not have marked the same statement at the start of their professional life		43.1	36.6

Table 2. Origin of Human Life

	1994 Science faculty (n=121) ^a	2003 Science faculty (n=65)	2003 Theology faculty (n=42)
God created the first humans:			
less than 10,000 years ago.	44.6	33.8	79.3
less than 20,000 years ago.	— ^b	12.3	13.8
less than 50,000 years ago.	— ^b	1.5	0.0
less than 100,000 years ago.	26.4	6.2	6.9
No one knows when God created humans.	16.5	23.1	16.7
Humans have developed over millions of years from less advanced forms of life, but God guided this process.	6.6	13.8	9.5
Humans have developed over millions of years from less advanced forms of life, but God had no part in this process.	3.3	9.2	2.4
Other	— ^c	1.5	2.4
Those indicating that they would not have marked the same statement at the start of their professional life		47.6	34.1

^aPetersen, Floyd. "Science Faculty Vary in Views on Creationism," *Adventist Today* 2(6): 19 (November-December 1994). Total n=121, margin of error=±9%

^bThe 1994 Science Faculty survey did not include the "less than 20,000 years ago" and "less than 50,000 year" categories.

^cMost included written comments describing a combination of the above choices.

In both science and religion faculty, over 80 percent came from a home where at least one parent was Adventist. Seventy-eight percent of those in science and 74 percent in religion had attended a non-Adventist graduate school.

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Adventist Faculty Surveyed Again on Creationism Views

Table 3. The Biblical Flood

	1994 Science faculty (n=121) ^a	2003 Science faculty (n=65)	2003 Theology faculty (n=42)
Which statement comes closest to describing your views about the biblical Flood?			
Most of the fossils are a result of the worldwide Flood.	64.5	46.2	73.8
It was a local flood somewhere in the Near East. The worldwide fossil record is not a result of this flood.	21.5	41.5	19.0
The story of the Flood is a myth.	5.0	4.6	0
Other	—	7.7	7.1
Those indicating that they would not have marked the same statement at the start of their professional life	—	32.3	17.9

^aPetersen, Floyd. "Science Faculty Vary in Views on Creationism," *Adventist Today* 2(6): 19 (November-December 1994). Total n=121, margin of error=±9%

Table 4. Beliefs and Salvation

Scale*	Not Important		Critically Important	
	1,2,3	4,5,6	7,8,9	
With respect to your personal salvation:				
Belief in when it all happened				
Science Faculty	57.8	24.2	17.3	
Religion Faculty	52.5	15	32.5	
Belief in how it all happened and Who/What caused it				
Science Faculty	33.8	17.1	48.4	
Religion Faculty	21.4	14.3	64.3	

*Respondents were asked to circle a number on a scale of 1 to 9.

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a large minority (approximately 45 percent, science; 35 percent, religion) of respondents indicated that they had changed their views on when it happened and who/what caused it to happen.

The results of this survey do indicate that there are widely differing beliefs surrounding the origins of our natural world among both religion and science faculty.

In the last paragraph of my article published in *AT*, Nov/Dec 1994, I suggested that we might be surprised to find out how it all happened when someday we hear it from the one who was there. I have thought about that statement a lot since I first wrote it. I now hope that he does not tell us

but continues to let us struggle over this issue. I'm not sure I would enjoy an existence where there were no profound questions to ponder.

O God, Creator
Please don't tell.
Allow us to struggle
to learn, to grapple
With Ideas.
O God, Creator
We will search
We will find the answers
We will find You. ■

Lay Members and Church Reform

NICOLE HIGGINS

During all my years at Adventist schools, first grade through college, no one ever told me how the Adventist church is put together.

In civics classes I learned how the United States government is run and when our country's presidential elections are held. Yet, as a young adult, I still did not know when my local church conference elects its president. I never heard discussions, even rumors, about conference elections or constituency meetings. No one else seemed to know or care. My grandparents were both raised in the church and served as missionaries, yet my grandpa couldn't tell me how often constituency meetings were held or when our conference president was most recently elected. My grandma, who has been on five conference committees and still carries out many responsibilities on several, knew how often the constituency meetings were held, but couldn't tell me when the next one was to meet. She also could not tell me how she was picked to be on the conference committees. Something is noticeably wrong when very active members of an organization do not know how it functions.

According to Stanley Deetz's *Critical Theory of Communication Approach to Organizations*, there are four main organizational practices available to any enterprise—strategy, involvement, consent and participation. Each company or organization employs one or another, or even all, of these. *Strategy* is the overt practice of managerial control, where a person's choice is to comply or get out. *Involvement* allows employees or members to speak freely and openly, but it gives them no voice in decision making. *Consent* is practiced when someone actively, though unknowingly, accomplishes the interests of others in a faulty attempt to fulfill his or her own interests, or sometimes the best interests of the whole group. Employees or members of the group consent to the managerial mentality that wants to expand control of the organization. *Participation* happens when employees and employers alike have meaningful, democratic discussion, which leads

to better choices in the organization, and this should be the goal of every organization. The Adventist church makes use of all four of these approaches in its structure and applications in one way or another.

The strategy approach unfortunately characterizes the practice of almost all churches to some extent, including the Adventists. Alonzo T. Jones, a church pioneer and opponent of organization, claimed that the tendency to become more centralized and controlling was "built into the very structures [of the churches] themselves." (Cited in Barry Oliver, *SDA Organizational Structure: Past, Present, and Future*.) Ellen White noted several factors leading the church to employ authoritarian principles of governance, and some of those are present even today. Pastors often manage two or three churches. Conference officers sit on many committees and have multiple positions of authority, sometimes linking different institutions. Local conferences can dominate churches and church schools. With no stiff term limits, unpopular leaders stay in power for long periods of time and perpetuate "authoritarian attitudes."

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The involvement approach is often used by the church, inviting people to express ideas, but never putting them into action. Conference constituency meetings are held about every three to five years, attended by delegates chosen by local churches who make representative votes. When the conference secretary, who arranges the constituency meetings, was asked how often the delegates meet, she mentioned that though their conference met every three years, it would be easier if they met every four or five years.

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Lay Members and Church Reform

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Their voices have little effect on the organization's operation.

The consent approach is represented by the fact that these local delegates give power to their designated leaders, and thereby are supposed to achieve their goals. Unfortunately, consent only makes people "complicit in [their] own victimization," according to Deetz's theory. Consent leads church members to find themselves with no power and in a position of weakness.

The participation approach. The church does use this approach sometimes. It is policy that committees at all levels of organization must include laymen. Within the last 15 years, lay members' participation on committees has been on the rise. Dr. Skip Bell, associate professor of church leadership and administration at the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Andrews University, estimated that about half the conference committee members in most conferences are not em-

ployed by that conference. He also noted that the "stress on pastoral leadership has increased the need of local church participation. It causes people of faith to exercise their spiritual gifts and lead their church to change." Constituency meetings are potentially an avenue for participation by church members. Most conferences send delegates the agenda (set by the administrators), with the conference's constitution and additional reports, about a month ahead of meetings. The delegates may share the agenda with all the other members and discuss the topics with them. Thus, the members can be said to have a say through some direct, and some indirect, representation even if they are not delegates. Obviously, knowledgeable constituents could give the the best kind of participation at these meetings.

When I tried to learn more about the church's

organizational structure at my university's library, I found only three substantive articles and a doctoral dissertation. But in none of these did I find any information about how my conference president is elected. I looked on church-sponsored Web sites and asked my father, a former pastor. Still no good information. I called a union conference office, and five other state conferences.

In the end I spoke to one secretary who provided me with information about her respective conference. She said the conferences are required to publish the dates for their constituency meetings in the union's publications. She also informed me about how a president is elected to or kept in office.

Why is this kind of information so hard to come by? How can church members not be indifferent when they can't find out what the church is about? The fact that it took me a couple of months of research to learn what should have been common knowledge by now should be proof enough that something needs to change.

Was Jones right in saying that organizational structures will always have built-in problems? We need some organization to accomplish the church's goals, but does it have to stand in the way of participation by members? I had to exert a lot of energy finally to be knowledgeable enough to feel that I could make a difference by my participation. Though Ellen White pushed for a decentralized administration, our basic organizational structure has remained the same since 1903. This centralization eliminates the effective voice of the laymen. Though the local churches have the greatest ability to do good, most of the power in the church resides in a limited number of administrators.

When it comes to making major changes in the church structure, it will probably not be lay members but leaders and administrators who will see the light and decide to involve and educate the masses. Church administrators will have to look at themselves and their departments to discover just how autocratic they have become. Self-aware and driven leaders are going to be the ones to reinvent the church's structure. It will have to be a structure that "flows from a careful examination of Scripture," as Dr. Bell advocates. This will take hard work and dedication. There is no over-the-counter solution. Fortunately, there are many people who are devoted to this church. With some knowledge and the Holy Spirit's guiding, we can change the system to have full participation. Without it, the worldwide church will never be able to function at its full potential. ■

Nicole Higgins is a schoolteacher in South Lyon, Mich.

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Exploring Church Organizational Reform

JAMES H. STIRLING

The need for organizational reform in the Seventh-day Adventist Church has been a perennial concern for *AT* readers. The Adventist church has four levels of administration above the local church—local conference, union conference, division, and General Conference. As historian George Knight, a faculty member of Andrews University, points out here, we may be the most tightly knit worldwide ecclesiastical organization in the history of Christianity, and certainly are the most top-heavy.

How we got that way is a curious story, the more so because in our beginnings in the 1830s, the pioneers declared they abhorred the suggestion of organizing at all; any structure beyond a local congregation was surely of the devil. In fact, followers of the Christian Connexion, of which James White and Joseph Bates were members, disavowed any control over the individual believer in Christ. It was with reluctance that these early groups allowed congregations to organize, primarily under the stimulus of protecting their movement from people and doctrines they considered heretical.

Knight says he sees the beginning of sustained agitation for what may be a new cycle of reform. The real question is whether the denomination is still flexible enough to change, or whether the onset of structural rigor mortis will win out. So he offers suggestion for a model consisting of three levels.

As the time approached for the predicted Second Advent in 1843, followers of William Miller were thrust out of the Protestant and Catholic churches to which they had belonged, and Millerite preachers began to refer to all such churches as “Babylon.” They quoted passages from the book of Revelation urging members to “come out of her, my people.” However, following the Great Disappointment of Oct. 23, 1844, there was so much confusion and even fanaticism in the ranks of the Millerite Adventists that Miller likened the anarchy and confusion among their ranks to Babylon, and he participated in a conference to bring order out of the chaos.

Knight outlines the steps by which the growing numbers of Sabbath-keeping believers, recognizing the need to have legal status and ownership of meeting halls, as well as defining boundaries for members and excluding fanatics and impostors, decided to take an official name

and become organized. In 1860 they debated several possible names and settled on “Seventh-day Adventists.” Through the next three years they developed the idea of a state conference for Michigan, then a General Conference for the region. By May of 1863 there were about 3,500 members divided into 6 conferences and 125 congregations served by about 30 ministers. Its field of labor consisted of northern states running from the Atlantic coast to Iowa. But it was poised to extend its mission in several directions.

Through the next 40 years the growing church operated with this model of organization, adding state conferences and many institutions, including health-care facilities, publishing houses, and more than 200 schools. To manage its different lines of work the church had “associations,” as for medical work, schools, Sabbath Schools, publishing, and missions recruitment and support. It not only spanned all of North America but also had missions in all parts of the world. However, the model proved impractical for some of these missions and their leaders. In South Africa and Australia the leaders experimented with other forms of structuring their work. They found that when they needed a decision from General Conference officers in Battle Creek, Mich., the mail might take a month to go in each direction, and sometimes the decision-makers might be out of town when the mail did arrive. On top of this, the cumbersomeness of the structure was aggravated by financial problems; there was little centralized control over what the “associations” spent money on and borrowed money for. Foreign mission outreach was slowing down.

Thus by 1903 the times were ripe for change. After many heated debates the delegates to a General Conference voted to establish a system of union conferences and missions with decision-making powers and to move the work of associations into departments of the General Conference. A few years later, in 1918, they adopted the concept of “world divisions” of the General Conference.

Under this organizational structure the church continued to grow in membership and mission outreach. During the depression years the church leaders began to look at the cost of the system, and they recommended that the union conferences be either eliminated or at least reduced in number. The proposal met with resistance, however.

Knight points out that the first two cycles of change were prompted when the church was on the verge of



BOOK: *Organizing to Beat the Devil*
AUTHOR: George Knight,
Review and Herald, 2001

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Belief Beyond Reason?

ERVIN TAYLOR

The jacket of *God, Gödel and Grace* says it is Clifford Goldstein's 15th book. Some of his other books include *1844 Made Simple*; *Day of the Dragon: The Great Controversy Vindicated*; and *The Remnant: Biblical Reality or Wishful Thinking?* These titles might seem to hint at Goldstein's theological orientation. His sermons on various topics are available for a small fee from American Cassette Ministries, the same company that distributes the Adventist Theological Society tapes.



BOOK: *God, Gödel and Grace*

AUTHOR: Clifford Goldstein, *Review and Herald*, 2003

The author is also a regular contributor to the *Adventist Review*. A recent article describes his 1980 conversion from what he characterizes himself to have been, a "hard-core naturalist" (his characterization) interested in the occult and spiritualism, to a hard-core Seventh-day Adventist (my words). I would characterize him as a hard-core Adventist on the basis of one of his previous opinion pieces, "The Pythagoras Factor." In this article he argued that Adventist "leaders and administrators not only must define the parameters of our faith; they have the right—even the obligation—to enforce them."

Goldstein is known for not being lukewarm about anything. He believes everything he believes passionately. But he is also smart enough to be aware of the downside of his enthusiasm. In a sermon

he once said, "People always say to me, Cliff...you are not ambiguous about what you believe, are you?" Then, in a partly reflective and partly humorous tone, he continues: "The only problem is that I have been...dogmatic about things I have been wrong on."

Readers will certainly recognize the words "God" and "Grace" in the book's title. But who or what is Gödel? Kurt Gödel was the most influential mathematical logician of the 20th century (he died in 1978). A close friend and colleague of Albert Einstein for two decades at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, Gödel is most widely known as the author of a mathematical proof of two theorems first published in 1931 that bears his name. Those who understand the mathematics in them say that both of Gödel's Incompleteness Theorems state that within the confines of any logical mathematical system there are propositions or arguments that cannot be proved or disproved using the axioms of that system. Gödel's proof has been characterized as one of the landmarks

of 20th-century mathematics.

What do God and Grace have to do with Gödel and his Incompleteness Theorems? Goldstein's take on Gödel is that he "showed that no system of thought, even scientific, can be legitimized by anything within the system itself. You have to step outside the system...in order to appraise it." He concludes that "reason itself—the foundation...of modern thought—can't be validated." In fact, I am told by those possessing mathematical sophistication that Gödel's theorems concern only mathematically delimited systems of reasoning. He never addressed scientific questions as such and certainly was not commenting on the nature of ordinary human reasoning. Any other use of Gödel would involve "applications" or "implications" of his theorems, and this is what Goldstein has done.

As a reader proceeds through Goldstein's book, he or she finds that the author quotes or refers to an impressive cross section of major Western figures—ancient, medieval, modern and postmodern, from literary, scientific, and philosophical fields and including (listed in alphabetical order) Aristotle, Augustine, Becket, Camus, Cicero, Darwin, Derrida, Dostoyevsky, Euripides, Foucault, Goethe, Heisenberg, Hobbes, Nietzsche, Pascal, Sartre, Sophocles, Tolstoy, Weinberg and Whitman. Because Goldstein is such a master wordsmith and crafter of sonorous phrases, the book and its material does not come across as stuffy or pretentious, despite this quoting and referring to these intellectual heavyweights.

Goldstein addresses the problem of existential "meaninglessness" in modern thought and a scientific worldview limited "to rationalism, to materialism, and to scientific atheism..." He comments that "maybe truth is more poetic than geometric, more hormonal than metaphysical, more like wind than rocks."

However, his impressive literary rhetorical skills are no substitute for a statement early in the book as to the main theme and purpose of writing it. A careful reader is forced to ferret this out in the manner of a detective looking for clues.

A hint is in the book's subtitle—"A philosophy of faith"—and in its dedication—"To all whose desire for truth transcends the joy of seeking it." On the back

cover there are several questions posed: “Does anything matter?” and “Is faith a leap into the absurd, or a leap over it?” There are also several other back-cover statements: “Belief has never made so much sense,” “Why can Kurt Gödel’s incompleteness theorem [sic] be a powerful tool in the hands of believers?” and “Though one can never ‘prove’ what needs to be taken on faith, [this book] shows just how reasonable it can be to believe in what goes beyond reason.”

Goldstein addresses the problem of existential “meaninglessness” in modern thought and a scientific worldview limited “to rationalism, to materialism, and to scientific atheism....” He comments that “maybe truth is more poetic than geometric, more hormonal than metaphysical, more like wind than rocks.” Goldstein states that “belief ultimately has no bearing upon the truth or the falsity of its object. No matter how fervent, ...belief can’t make the false true or the true false.” In the end, however, Goldstein cannot abide this possibility, asking whether there exists “some ethical norm...a value system independent of what ‘proves itself to every man and woman,’ something eternal, unchanging...even, perhaps, divine?”

He argues that the conclusions of modern quantum theory in physics defy all that human logic and reason tell us about the world. On this basis, he concludes that

it is “arguably more ‘rational’ to believe in what the apostle Paul has called the ‘foolishness’ of the gospel than in what physicists have called the ‘absurdness’ of quantum theory.” Faith, he insists, is a “little more logical, a little more rational” than quantum physics. If “science can’t explain everything,” Goldstein argues, “perhaps there exists a dimension beyond the stubby, blunt reach of rationality and science alone—a spiritual dimension, a transcendent dimension, a dimension that only God could create.”

In a recent piece by Goldstein in the *Adventist Review* titled “The Problem of Knowledge,” Goldstein expresses agreement with Stanley Fish, a contemporary postmodern literary intellectual, that it is appropriate to assert and believe something without qualification (passionately?), without believing that it is possible to (quoting Fish) “demonstrate its truth to all rational persons.” Goldstein then suggests that having many valid reasons to believe something “doesn’t necessarily make that belief true.” While, he says, one cannot say that one “knows” some distinctive Adventist beliefs to be true, he declares, “I can say I know that I believe them to be true.” This sophisticated apologetic distinction of Goldstein could have been included as a thesis sentence in *God, Gödel and Grace*, for that seems to be what the book is basically about. ■

Knight’s book explores organizational reform

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financial disaster and organizational dysfunctionality. Now, he says, the church with its 12,000,000 members in highly diverse world fields may again be approaching such a crisis. Increasingly local churches are turning to forms of congregationalism with minimal regard for the overall structure.

Knight says he sees the beginning of sustained agitation for what may be a new cycle of reform.

The real question is whether the denomination is still flexible enough to change, or whether the onset of structural rigor mortis will win out. So he offers suggestion for a model consisting of three levels.

First would be the General Conference in a trimmed-down state, largely a coordinating, advising, and facilitating body, providing general guidelines to help the world field attain both unity and diversity. The second level would be regional divisions, functioning not only as do the present divisions but also assuming many of the coordinating and supporting tasks being presently handled by the union conferences. The number of divisions might be raised to about 20 from the current 12. The third level would be a kind of regional administrative conferences. North Americans have argued for years whether it would be best to get rid of or combine some of their

58 local conferences or to disband their 9 union conferences. The best solution, Knight says, might be to do away with both levels, creating in their wake some 20 regional administrative units on one level that could serve constituencies that have moved out of the horse-and-buggy era and now have access to modern means of communication and transportation.

Although Knight acknowledges that such a move would come only with much struggle, he says it would put more Adventist tithe dollars back into the work of “real ministry” and would redeploy large numbers of personnel. Many people, he says, believe the tithe has too long subsidized a massive “bureaucratic industry.” If we could do the same or better, with less than a third of the cost, we might be able to do far more for ministry and mission.

Knight concludes his treatise with the solemn admonition: “The time to dream dreams and make significant change is now. Change will come. The only questions are who will control that change and will it be toward more functionality or less in terms of Adventism’s mission? It is wiser to take charge of the transformation process than it is to just let it happen. Perhaps the greatest question facing Adventism in the next decade is whether significant change will come about by accident or by Christian planning and sanctified action.” ■

SPECIAL E-MAIL REPORTS: Read the news as it happens

The next few years may well be critical ones for the future of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Several major events may influence the direction of our faith community for decades to come. The 2005 General Conference to be held in St. Louis, Mo., may elect a new General Conference president. And right now, in 2003, another major event is already under way.

AT readers have been informed over the past year of an unprecedented three-year series of conferences initiated by the leadership of the General Conference to deal with controversial issues associated with the intersection of faith and science. These are especially focused on our church's traditional theological and scientific understandings of the Genesis creation narratives.

The first conference, held in August, 2002 in Ogden, Utah, brought together Adventist scientists, theologians, and church administrators from around the world. AT was there to report on the proceedings. This year the divisions will hold separate sessions, and the North American Division will convene its conference at Glacier View, Co., in August. A third and final conference, another international one, will take place in 2004.

The North American Division 2003 Faith and Science conference is being held at the same location as the highly controversial conference in 1980 convened by the General Conference to deal with the issues surrounding our traditional understandings of the Investigative Judgment and Sanctuary doctrine. In many ways, "Glacier View II" is shaping up to be even more important than that first Glacier View conference, and perhaps even more so than the 1919 Bible Conference, in its potential impact on how the church is going to address the diversity of theological views now represented within our faith community.

If you are an AT subscriber, you will be able to receive periodic reports throughout the seven-day Glacier View conference. To send you these reports, all we need is your e-mail address. Just send us a brief note at hanan@atoday.com asking for the reports. If you are not on our mailing list, you can become an AT subscriber by calling us toll free at 1-800-236-3641 and asking to subscribe. At the same time you can ask for the reports. If your subscription is kept current for the next two years, you will also be on the list for reports from the 2004 International Faith and Science Conference and the 2005 General Conference session in St. Louis.

If you are interested in the future welfare of our church and want to know about these important events, we the editors look forward to providing you with news as it happens. Please let us know your wishes. ■

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