

Betrayal in
Budapest

Adventist
Perspective
aborted

"Neither buy
nor sell"

The Salamanca
Experience

Social Conscience
at the
General Conference



adventist currents

FROM THE PUBLISHER:

The publisher and editorial staff of *Adventist Currents* are committed to the belief that Christian freedom is enhanced by information that makes judicious choice a possibility.

Adventist Currents represents an effort to put before Seventh-day Adventists, in a careful, creative, and lively way, information and ideas not usually discussed in official, denominational publications.

Readers should find *Adventist Currents* stimulating and accurate at all times, even when they disagree with its editorial posture. Also, it must not be assumed that the publisher of *Adventist Currents* subscribes to the opinions of its contributors.

It is expected that readers will understand the humor sprinkled throughout the magazine as a useful relief to the curse of protracted seriousness. Amen.

CURRENT CURRENTS

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CURRENTS NEEDS

PEOPLE

Adventist Currents needs people in a variety of geographical locations who will report to the magazine local matters that are of interest to the general readership.

Particularly needed are individuals in or around church administrative offices who can help *Currents* to better understand the minds and actions of conference, union, and General Conference officers.

Also needed are reporters from Seventh-day Adventist college campuses — continuing sources of information and news.

Friends of *Currents* who can assist in its distribution and/or the acquiring of mailing lists are essential.

INFORMATION

Adventist Currents welcomes carefully written articles about Adventism's past, present, and future — articles about issues, events or individuals (maximum length, 5,500 words).

Currents needs brief, specific, and documented news items that provide information that is generally not available through the "General Organ of the Seventh-day Adventist Church" (maximum length, 1,800 words).

Guest editorials are welcome, so long as they do not address the characters of individuals or employ language that is untoward (maximum length, 1,200).

Letters to the editor are encouraged. Those that are not published will be polled.

CONTRIBUTIONS

Adventist Currents needs contributions to promote the growth in size, quality, and readership of the magazine.

Currents needs friends with stamina who will send tax-free contributions on a regular basis — what is elsewhere termed "systematic benevolence."

Adventist Currents' publisher, Mars Hill Publications, Inc., intends to publish books that address various issues of interest to *Currents'* subscribers. Suggestions for topics and potential authors are welcome.

Missing Tackles

by Douglas Hackleman

A gridiron metaphor graced the headline of an *Adventist Review* news item (15 May 1986): "White Estate Tackles Tough Issues."

The *Review* notice, written in advance, might have guessed, but could not have known, that all the White Estate tackles would either be missed or broken.

The "tough issues" were to be tackled in four, two-week summer workshops entitled "Contemporary Issues in Prophetic Guidance" and to be held on the campuses of four Adventist centers of higher education — Walla Walla College, Pacific Union College, Atlantic Union College, and Andrews University. I decided to attend the workshop at Pacific Union College (June 30-July 10).

The weather and the surroundings were not conducive to classroom occupation, but most of the fifty-plus workshop attendees sat dutifully through every session. And sitting through three of the four White Estate representatives' lectures was great training in patience.

Paul Gordon, Roger Coon, and Robert Olson read to us by the hour from material that they handed to us at the beginning of each class period; much of that material had been published earlier in the *Adventist Review* or *Ministry* magazine. At the end of the two weeks I told fellow classmate Leslie Hardinge that I felt very much like the jackrabbit making love to the skunk — I hadn't had enough, but I'd had all I could stand.

It would have been more profitable to provide students with the handouts the night before the lectures — giving them the opportunity to read them over and

aged their time was the nature of the lectures that were read to us and the answers to the questions that were raised. The lectures seldom demonstrated a serious consideration of the implications of the evidence available on a given topic, and often did not peruse the crucial evidence from which a problem could be deduced — much less tackled. And the responses to questions frequently missed, by accident or design, the point of the query. Most troubling, however, is the fact that the handouts and lectures continue to make assertions contradicted by clear documentation.

For instance, two of the handouts Paul Gordon read from state that the first explication of the Adventist sanctuary doctrine (envisioned by Hiram Edson; studied by Edson, F.B. Hahn, and O.R.L. Crosier; and written out by Crosier) was published in early 1845 in the *Day Dawn*. This error remains in Gordon's handout and lecture despite the fact that Gordon has had presented to him in published form (see "Reviewing the Review," *Adventist Currents* vol.1 no.5), in letters, and through conversation (even with other White Estate workers), copious evidence that the first, and only, *Day Dawn* of 1845 could not have contained such an article.

To his credit, Gordon agreed in front of the workshop audience with my contention that Ellen White was sometimes "petulant" — a word that Robert Olson, in a widely circulated, eight-page "Dear Friend" letter (7 February 1984), flatly denied ever applied legitimately to White. When I further asserted that Mrs.

that topic briefly in his lecture, his handout, and his book *The Sanctuary, 1844, and the Pioneers* — none of which have been corrected for their extremely misleading statements about the relationship of Ellen White and her early visions to the postdisappointment belief that grace was no longer available to repentant sinners.

The problem and solution for Gordon's lectures, handouts, and book passages related to the shut door have been pointed out to him personally and publicly in print (see *Adventist Currents* vol.1, no.4, page 39 for the problem; and pages 13, 14, 15 for the solution).

Rather than correct himself, Gordon has accused *Currents* of a failure in ethics for publishing, in her own handwriting, a copy of Ellen White's 13 July 1847 letter to Joseph Bates explaining how her first two visions had recovered for the little band its faith in the notion that probation had ended on 22 October 1844.

When I explained to Gordon that the White Estate trustees had officially released that letter and that Estate manuscript policies did not distinguish

(concluded on page 43)

The White Estate representatives continue to picture Ellen Harmon as having managed only three grades of education.

then spend most of the classroom time discussing with the Ellen White experts what had been read.

Instead they read until their time ran out and then apologized for the fact that there was little or no time left for questions — although one or two were usually gotten off before each break. But as Roger Coon enjoyed saying, "You pays your money and you takes your chances."

More frustrating than the wasteful way the White Estate representatives man-

White sometimes wrote petulant testimonies when she was clearly mistaken, and cited her Chicago buildings testimonies as examples, Gordon rearticulated my point and provided his own example — her testimony regarding the closing of the Southern work.

While Gordon and other Pacific Union College faculty lecturers told the class they were leaving the shut-door problem to the expertise of Robert Olson (who never got around to it), Gordon did brush over



The three angels sculpture on *Currents'* cover was originally produced for Union College by master sculptor and Loma Linda University professor of art Alan R. Collins.

Debt and Accountability

The annual report of the Adventist Health System/US has been published and mailed to selected church members and thought leaders. It is a glossy, expensive-looking production featuring color photographs and text depicting "The Seasons of Life" and how AHS/US cares for those seasons from birth to death.

As in previous years, the annual report provides some discussion of operations — often quite simplistic and self-serving, ignoring or glossing over problem areas. It also contains three pages of unaudited financial data and lists the officers and subsidiaries of each corporation.

The financial data indicates that AHS/US (combined, net of intra-unit transfers) earned a net income of \$69.8 million in 1985 — down \$23.8 million from the \$93.6 million earned in 1984.

This decline in income occurred despite substantial growth in revenue (\$2.13 billion in 1985, up from \$1.85 billion in 1984).

Particularly interesting is the relative financial health of the five AHS/US entities. While Eastern & Middle America

(EMA) returned a robust \$35.1 million net income, and Loma Linda cleared \$24.7 million, Sunbelt took a bath, squeezing out only \$92,000 profit. Sources suggest that Sunbelt is still having problems with its free-standing clinics and may now be attempting to sell them. AHS/West and Sunbelt both showed operating losses, but their net income was in the black due to "non-operating income."

The annual report contains a long list of individual operating units and organizational entities subordinate to each of the five AHS/US divisions. These include acute-care hospitals (there are seventy-one) that are owned, leased, or managed; and thirty-nine long-term care facilities. The home health-care activities grew substantially in 1985. And then there are those involvements unrelated to health-care, such as Hook Travel (a subsidiary of North American Health Services), a for-profit corporation operated by AHS/Sunbelt.

AHS/US Board of Directors

For the first time in any publication available to the Adventist membership, a list of the thirty-four-man Board of Directors for AHS/US was included in the annual report. The board is heavily dominated by church administrators and AHS management (the very ones the board should be governing), and includes

only three independently employed laymen.

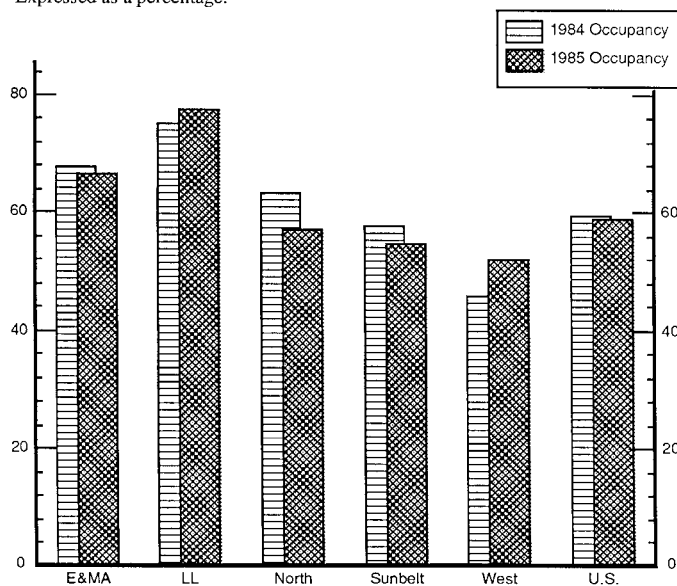
Scrutiny of the board identifies three general classes of directors. (1) There are nineteen church leaders who have risen through the ranks of the ministry (with the exception of the accountants and treasurers). Most of these have many other responsibilities, and some (particularly those with ministerial rather than business training) may not be competent to address the financial concerns that the board must review. (2) There are twelve AHS administrators whose activities and decisions this board should be governing. While it is not unusual for some officers of a corporation to sit on its board, they are generally outnumbered by independent or disinterested members. (3) There are three AHS/US Board members who are not employed either by the church or the Adventist Health System and may not have access to the informal network of communication in which the other two groups regularly participate.

Public Accountability

The AHS/US annual report for 1985 is a public relations document designed to reassure church members that the "right arm of the message" is stable and growing. It is not, however, a full, audited financial statement. Each of the divisions do have audited financial statements, but they are not easy to obtain.

Occupancy Rate for AHS Hospitals

Expressed as a percentage.

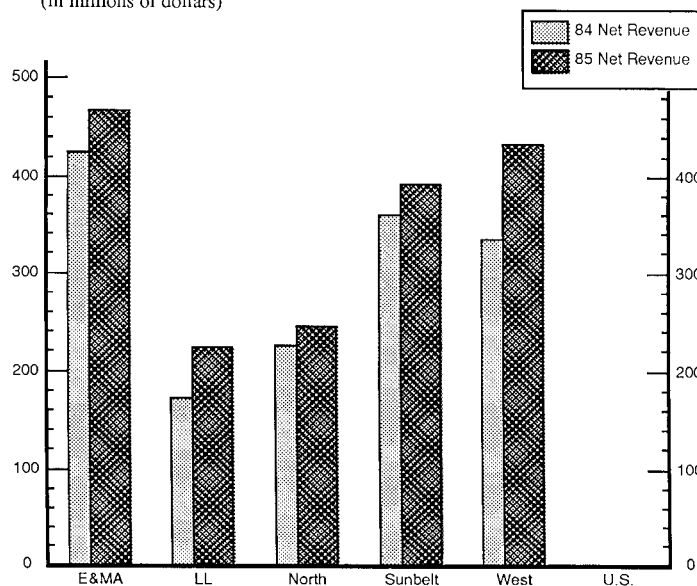


Source: AHS/US Annual Reports, 1985 and 1984

Prepared by Michael Scofield, July, 1986

AHS Net Revenue

(In millions of dollars)



Source: AHS/US Annual Reports, 1985 and 1984

Prepared by Michael Scofield, July, 1986

Michael Scofield has written twice to AHS/Sunbelt, EMA, and North seeking audited financial statements and has received absolutely no response. Two queries written to AHS/Loma Linda were responded to by a phone call from John Ruffcorn (then president of AHS/LL) seeking the reason for the request. When it was pointed out to Ruffcorn that the data was public record (available at a price from the California State Healthcare Facilities Commission), he agreed to send the material, with a threat to "cut you off" if he didn't like the use made of the material.

Adventist Health System secrecy contrasts sharply with the response of non-Adventist health care organizations. The for-profit corporations (such as Humana and AMI) are required to make audited financial statements available, and they generally respond promptly to such requests.

Michael Scofield wrote to several Protestant and Catholic health care corporations seeking financial statements and lists of directors. The response was generally positive and prompt. Sisters of Providence in Seattle, Washington, for instance, responded in less than a week with a complete annual report — including full financial statements, footnotes, signed auditors' opinions, etc., as well as a Board of Directors list. Sisters of

Providence did not ask if the request was from a communicant in the Catholic faith!

One other striking aspect of the management discussion of operations provided by Sisters of Providence was their concern over rising costs and their ability to provide medical care to anybody who walked through the door, regardless of their ability to pay. This contrasts somewhat with discussions by AHS/US management in which one will find no resolve to treat anyone who seeks assistance, regardless of their ability to pay.

AHS/US management is receiving criticism from several quarters. Some conservative Adventists want the health system to adhere to the "blueprint" and ignore modern trends in medical treatment. A different but intersecting group expresses concern over its inability to distinguish Adventist hospitals (by character) from non-Adventist hospitals. They feel that the rising percentage of non-Adventist employees is diluting the "witness." Yet another group views the rapidly accumulating debt (in the neighborhood of \$2 billion now) as courting disaster. One expert fears that a crunch in profitability and/or increase in the prime rate could severely cripple the system.

The debt is a topic of continuing discussion at the General Conference; yet

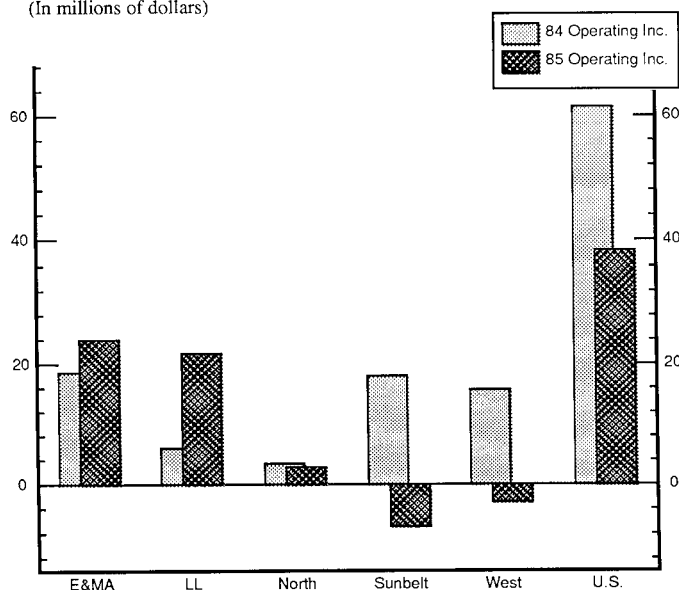
its officers seem reluctant to engage the expertise available from the ranks of the Adventist laity. Charles Bradford, in a letter to Michael Scofield, pointed to the inclusion of Dr. Saleem Farag (then a high official in the state of California's Department of Health) as a measure of the caliber of a special committee set up by Neal Wilson to evaluate the debt risk. Farag did attend one session at which he made many members uncomfortable by presenting detailed and comprehensive financial analyses prepared with the assistance of Dr. Ordel Calkins, associate chairman of the School of Business Administration at California State University, Sacramento. Farag was not invited back to subsequent meetings of the special committee.

Health System management is further criticized by those who believe that it is top heavy and that it spends excessively on its own salaries, travel, and other perks. AHS management's response to this criticism generally has been expensive public relations efforts to convince the Adventist membership that the system is well managed, profitable, and adhering to the traditional mission of the medical work — the entering wedge.

While AHS/US officials remain reluctant to address specific, critical concerns, *Currents* hopes that this lack of candor does not conceal deeper problems. □

AHS Operating Income

(In millions of dollars)

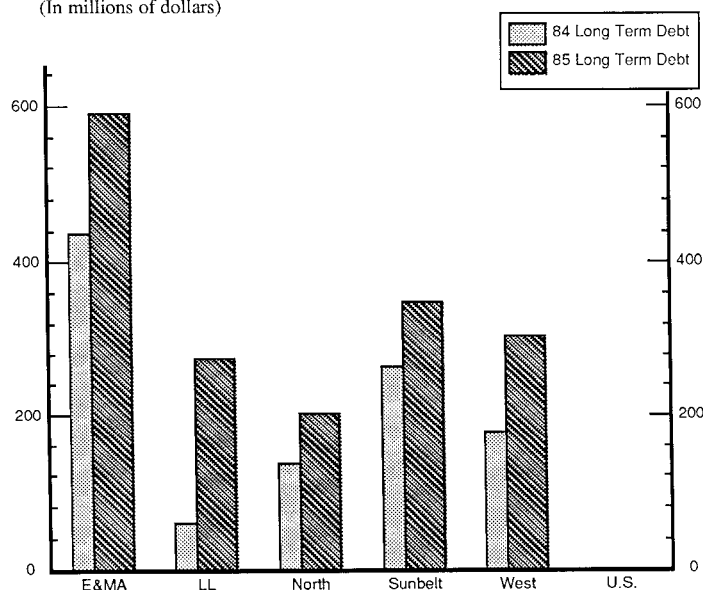


Source: AHS/US Annual Reports, 1985 and 1984

Prepared by Michael Scofield, July, 1986

AHS Long Term Debt

(In millions of dollars)



Source: AHS/US Annual Reports, 1985 and 1984

Prepared by Michael Scofield, July, 1986

Pawtucket update

There have been some developments in the Pawtucket Nursing Home scandal since Michael Scofield's article, "Resigning in Protest," appeared in the April 1986 *Adventist Currents*. The special commission set up by the Southern New England Conference constituency has continued to gather evidence and to take testimony from a variety of witnesses — mostly in closed session.

A court reporter was hired to take record of the proceedings (presumably also to assist commission members who could not attend every meeting). Testimony was heard from those complaining about the handling of the Pawtucket affair as well as from board members, certain Adventist Health System officials, and other "expert" witnesses. Gerald Shampo was invited to testify, but it is not known if he finally did. It is also rumored that Lawrence Schalk (president of AHS/North) was willing to testify, but not under oath.

The commission will present its report to a special session of the Southern New England constituency. That session was planned for this summer but has been postponed until October 1986 because of the large volume of material that the commission has had to consider. Some commission members have been complaining that they are weary of spending their Sundays away from their families, performing work that the AHS/North board should have accomplished in the first place. But the commission is attempting to maintain its objectivity concerning the facts, and members refuse to discuss testimony or anticipated findings.

A recent *Atlantic Union Gleaner* announced the retirement of Gerald Shampo. The article cited his many contributions to the church but did not mention the problem he left the constituency to solve.

Stanley Steiner, president of the Southern New England Conference, was the only respondent to take exception to Scofield's Pawtucket article. He felt that the article conveyed the impression that he might have done more to resolve the problem.

Steiner also pointed out four mistakes in the article: (1) He, Steiner, had not resigned — as Atlantic Union Conference president Earl Amundson had in protest — from the Fuller Memorial Hospital Board. (2) Gerald Shampo had retired from his position with AHS/North (announced after *Currents* published Scofield's piece). (3) Fuller Memorial Hospital has 83 beds, rather than the 100 attributed to it in *Currents*. (4) Rick Trott had resigned from the special commission

established to investigate the Pawtucket problems (Scofield was working from the commission's own documents that included Trott's name).

Scofield caught one additional mistake himself. It is John Hamer, Sr. — not his son — who is on the board of AHS/North. Scofield also suggested to Steiner that he write a rebuttal to his *Currents* article, but none has been received.

AHS/North president Lawrence Schalk was queried twice by Scofield regarding the Pawtucket matter before the article went to press. Schalk did not respond. After the commission was established Schalk, responded to yet another query saying that he would not comment since a commission had been set up to look into the matter. Other individuals conversant with the case (particularly from the AHS/North perspective) state that the article was factual as far as it went, but it failed to consider in its analysis some of the "cultural factors" in the management of AHS/North that would help to explain Schalk's behavior. □

Secret science

They met this April at Neal Wilson's bidding in Portland, Oregon — travel and lodging expenses paid for by your generously contributed dollars.

Eighteen men were invited; seventeen showed. Wilson called the meeting on his own authority, he said, without consulting PREXAD. (Has PREXAD been consulted since Robert Pierson left office?)

The group met for two-and-one-half days in the Portland Adventist Hospital board room, but the fact — not to mention the content — of this small conclave has gone unreported. (It is not to be presumed that because you paid for the gathering that you have any right to know about it.)

The only reference to the meeting in public print that *Currents* is aware of was a disparaging remark in a letter to the editor of the *Student Movement* (23 April 1986) from Andrews University College of Arts and Sciences religion professor Samuele Bacchiocchi, referring to "Adventist science teachers [who] requested a meeting with Elder N.C. Wilson, in Portland, Oregon, to explain to him why it has become impossible for them to believe in the creation story."

Bacchiocchi was mistaken. Not only was it Neal Wilson rather than "Adventist science teachers" who requested the meeting, but Loma Linda University professor of pathology and laboratory medicine, Brian Bull, was the only Adventist science teacher present who was not a member of the very conservative, five-member contingent invited by Wilson from what is still called the

Geoscience Institute. (Bull has no reputation on the subject of the Creation story.)

In addition to Bull and the five Geoscience Institute representatives, five of the remaining twelve were General Conference officers (including Wilson himself; the retired, past chairman of Geoscience, Francis Wernick; its new chairman, Lowell Bock; vice chairman, Calvin Rock; and Ralph Thompson).

The remaining eight invitees included three Old Testament scholars (William Shea, Gerhard Hasel, and the retired Richard Hammill); one retired church educator (Fred Harder); and two of three invited scientists not employed as Adventist teachers, who often labor under the designation "liberal" (Ed Hare and Richard Ritland). Ed Lugenbeal was kept away by the flu.

Currents spoke with four of Wilson's invitees. All four claimed not to know why Wilson called the meeting, but they hazarded some guesses:

- to bring the Geoscience Institute representatives into dialogue with Adventist scientists and biblical scholars who held perspectives different from theirs relating to the biblical accounts of Creation and Noah's flood.
- to expose Adventist leaders, such as the new chairman and vice chairman of the Geoscience Institute, to the kind of arguments the Institute faces within the Adventist thought community.
- to simply open up dialogue among existing and rather entrenched Adventist camps that ponder systematically the relationship of science to the Bible.

Following Bull's introductory paper analyzing the scientific method, considerable time was spent discussing the reliability of Scripture when it speaks of creation and of humanity's near extinction by drowning.

Another question pondered at length was whether sufficient and reliable scientific evidence has now accumulated to indicate persuasively that all forms of life did not appear on earth at once, in one short period of time (say six days).

The discussion became lively when some of the theologically trained participants challenged members of the Geoscience Institute for mixing up scientific arguments with theological ones.

The question has been raised whether what the Geoscience Institute does is, in fact, science. Ariel Roth, director of the Geoscience Institute, said he would be willing to see its name changed to Institute for the Study of Origins — an enterprise that many believe cannot, by definition, be scientific.

While Wilson chaired the meetings ably enough, he did not attempt to have

the group generate any sort of position paper or statement or communique. And it remains to be seen how he will use, if he does use, what he learned in Portland in April.

The pity is, of course, that there is a climate in the Adventist church such that this meeting should have to be conducted in secret — off the record. When one wag, having heard about the meeting, asked the important question whether secret science is a vice, *Currents* had no comment. □

Go west, young woman

Loma Linda University Church members smiled disbelievingly a few months ago when they read circulated copies of a position paper decrying the possibility that women might be ordained to the position of elder at the Pioneer Memorial Church in Berrien Springs, Michigan. The context of their smiles included the fact that the LLU Church already has approximately fifty women elders.

The statement's signatories were "concerned over the impact that the ordination of women as local elders by the Pioneer Memorial Church will have on the world church and on the issue of ordaining women as pastors. If the leading university church moves ahead with the ordination of woman elders, this action can easily be interpreted as reflective of the best theological judgment of the Adventist church — judgment which smaller churches can safely follow."

What the signatories were forwarding as their "best theological judgment" was the argument that I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9 (by asserting that a local elder or bishop be the husband of one wife) preclude the legitimacy of ordaining women as elders — even if they are the wife of one husband. "Ask yourself," the statement continues, "does Scripture need to make an explicit prohibition before we can accept its positive instruction?"

The original version of this "Statement of Concern" was drafted, Andrews University sources tell *Currents*, by a group at the home of Seminary church historian Mervyn Maxwell. In addition to Maxwell, the draft was signed by others such as Seminary dean Gerhard Hasel, Sabbath apologist Samuele Bacchiocchi, Andrews University White Estate branch office head William Fagal, ethicist Mirislav Kis, former White Estate branch director Hedwig Jemison, and former *Ministry* associate editor and present Seminary librarian Warren H. Johns.

The concerned drafters' intention was to circulate the document as a petition and to publish the results in the Andrews University *Student Movement* news-

paper. Pioneer Memorial Church pastor, Dwight Nelson, dissuaded them; but a slightly revised version (Kis and Hasel did not sign the revision), entitled "Important Reading Before Sabbath April 5," was mailed to Pioneer Memorial Church members and to the Andrews University family through intercampus mail a few days before the church congregation was to vote for or against the ordination of women elders.

The issue of ordaining women as elders at Pioneer Memorial Church was escalated by a 12 March 1986 *Student Movement* article written by Samuele Bacchiocchi, in which he set down seven reasons why he believed women should not be ordained as elders. His reasons, minus supporting argumentation, follow:

- (1) Adam's creation prior to Eve's;
- (2) man's headship in biblical representations of marriage and the church;
- (3) the all-male Old Testament priesthood;
- (4) male symbolism used in the Bible for the Godhead;
- (5) the pastor's symbolic role as representative of Christ;
- (6) no scriptural precepts or precedents for women elders;
- (7) pastoral ministry as a calling, not a profession.

Predictably Bacchiocchi was belabored on every point by letters to the editor. And his full page of fine-print responses to those letters demonstrated that Bacchiocchi labored, apparently unself-consciously, under the same cultural handicaps that crippled the co-workers of the Roman apostle he so frequently turned to for authority. A letter in the 1 May 1986 *Student Movement* by Andrews University Bookstore employee Margaret Davis attempted to illustrate for Bacchiocchi his prejudices by parodying parts of his letter.

Davis wrote "to my Italian male friends," because "some of my best friends are Italian men." Davis emphasized for Bacchiocchi "the key point that the Lord does not call Italian men to be ordained."

"Of course, you are fine men," Davis continued, "and there is a great deal of work you can do in the church." Davis then quotes Bacchiocchi: "In fact, I am even making a passionate plea . . . to open up new forms of ministries to professionally trained Italian men 'who are willing to serve as health educators, Bible instructors, and counselors, besides the traditional leadership roles they have played in the various departments of the church. I wholeheartedly believe . . . that the pastoral staff of PMC should include at least one, possibly two, professionally trained Italian men.'"

A couple of Bacchiocchi's peers (Ivan Blazen and Joseph Greig) dismantled his arguments restricting ordination of women — with Greig jokingly referring to "Bacchiocchi's Papal Bull." And

Bacchiocchi's article reminded Alice Davidson of a cartoon that "depicted the Pope proclaiming, 'Women can't be priests. We only accept the kind of people Jesus chose as disciples — bearded, Jewish fishermen.'"

On Sabbath morning 5 April 1986, the rhetoric stopped for a few minutes while the congregation of the Pioneer Memorial Church voted its pleasure regarding women elders. Pastor Nelson told the *Student Movement* (2 April 1986) that he encouraged "both PMC members and non-members to participate, [although] we probably will include some way of distinguishing between the two groups." (Naturally there is a large, transient, student population that worships at Pioneer Memorial but maintains its membership in home churches.) As it turned out, there was more than a distinction made between the two groups.

According to the *Student Movement*, the Pioneer Memorial Board established a 60 percent majority in favor of women's ordination as necessary to bring the issue to a church business session for action.

The Sabbath morning vote tallied 1,013 votes for women elders, with 655 against — an apparent victory for women eldership. But then the nonmember (or student) votes were eliminated, leaving the vote 579 in favor, and 453 against — a majority for women elders, but 4 percent shy of the required 60 percent majority.

Voting may decide what happens, but it may not decide what is right or just. Another, perhaps more informed, vote was taken when representatives from the religion departments of Loma Linda University, Pacific Union College, and Walla Walla College held their fifteenth annual meeting of the West Coast Religion Teachers Conference during the weekend of May 2-4, 1986. The entire session was devoted to a discussion of the ordination of women.

The conference concluded its meetings by approving the following statement in a forty to nothing vote, with one abstention:

"We believe God calls both men and women to serve in all aspects of the ministry. We believe the time has come for our church to recognize by ordination the calling of both men and women. We believe, while recognizing a measure of disagreement on this subject in the church, that our denomination should now encourage the ordination of women in North America and wherever else this step will enhance the mission of the church. We pledge to encourage women with a divine calling to prepare themselves for ministerial service."

It would appear that the West is the church's ecclesiastical frontier. And the message of the times seems to say: "Go west, young woman. Go west." □

"Neither buy nor sell"

After five years of legal maneuvering, the General Conference, the Review and Herald Publishing Association, and nine other Adventist corporations were brought to trial in the United States District Court for the Northern District of Illinois, Eastern Division, before Judge William T. Hart on charges of general conspiracy, violations of sections one and two of the Sherman Antitrust Act, and violations of Robinson Patman.

The plaintiff is Dr. Derrick (Dick) Proctor, a professor of psychology at Andrews University who on his own time, along with his father, operates an independent Adventist book and literature establishment designated Library and Educational Services.

During the recent four-week trial (June 23-July 21), a copious assortment of letters, documents, affidavits, depositions, and live witnesses established the fact that leaders of the various Adventist defendant institutions had acted at one time or another since 1979 to interfere with Proctor's ability to buy and sell Seventh-day Adventist books and literature (see *Adventist Currents* vol.1, no 2 for examples.). This interference involved letters to teachers, ministers, and colporteurs instructing them not to purchase from Proctor; as well as the refusal on the part of SDA publishing entities to sell to him, or to sell to him at the standard discounts they provided other multiple-order purchasers.

The reason for these actions was the displeasure the Adventist Book Centers and the Home Health Education Services took from being undersold by Proctor. Adventist schools and literature evangelists could purchase their books for less from his Library and Educational Services.

For instance, in 1981 and 1982 Proctor was selling a ten-volume set of Arthur S. Maxwell's *Bible Stories* for \$79.95; while Lake Union literature evangelists were selling the same set for \$269.95, and adding an \$18 shipping and handling charge. The Review and Herald Publishing Association was charging both church sellers and Proctor about \$50 for the set.

During the recent four weeks of trial, attorneys presented the Court with basically two arguments on behalf of the General Conference:

1) That because the importance of spreading SDA beliefs (equated with the "gospel commission") is part of SDA doctrine, and because the publishing work is a primary vehicle for that activity, church entities are not (under the

entanglement clause of the first amendment) subject to fair trade laws regarding price fixing or interference with trade or conspiracy to accomplish either.

2) That various Adventist organizations (unions, conferences, schools, ABCs, publishing houses, health care institutions, etc.) are simply the subsidiaries of one great General Conference corporation; and that this structural or organizational oneness precludes, by definition, the possibility of conspiracy or collusion — one cannot conspire with oneself.

Under point one, attorneys for the General Conference argued that Proctor's underselling was hurting the mission of the church; but they failed to explain how the literature evangelist who can purchase the *Bible Stories* set from Proctor for \$79.95 and sell them to families for \$135 (half the usual price), rather than \$269, would be hurting the mission of the church. Proctor's attorney, Matthew Chaconas, asked the court to consider the fact that out of 400-plus exhibits presented by General Conference counsel, not one showed how the mission of the church had been damaged.

In an attempt to exempt the General Conference from fair trade statutes, its attorneys argued that the literature evangelists were ministers. But Proctor countered that by reciting some of the differences:

A) Ministers are paid from tithe; literature evangelists are not.

B) Women cannot be ordained to the Adventist ministry, perform weddings, or baptize; women can be literature evangelists.

C) Adventist ministers must have some theological training, either at the undergraduate or graduate level; literature evangelists require neither.

The other major argument used by General Conference attorneys was that the various named defendants were legally one entity and that their actions could not be taken, therefore, as a conspiracy to do anything. Naturally this led to arguments before the judge about the nature of Seventh-day Adventist church structure.

Countering the notion that the General Conference (GC) and various Adventist entities are really legally one (or merely subsidiaries of the GC) is the fact that the unions, conferences, publishing houses, schools, hospitals, etc., are individually and legally incorporated in the various United States, with defined constituencies and boards of trustees that own and run them.

The "renegade" structural changes that have been made lately in several conferences and unions that have been opposed

unsuccessfully by the General Conference, as well as the General Conference's inability to discipline particular union presidents named as offenders in the Davenport scandal, also argues against the singularity of the General Conference and the organizations that it is now trying to claim in federal court are its subsidiaries.

A quote by General Conference chief auditor David Dennis also made a useful exhibit for Proctor's position. Writing of the "internal auditing program of the church," Dennis stated: "This program excludes the health care system which is virtually independent. Indeed, it uses the church name as a public relations approach without close administrative ties." A recent *Adventist Review* statement by Neal Wilson divorcing the General Conference from responsibility for the then \$1.7 billion Adventist Health System debt appears to corroborate Dennis' position.

In the effort to attribute to the General Conference monolithic power over all of Adventdom, Ellen White quotes were submitted into the record by the defense, quotes claiming the General Conference to be God's highest authority on earth. The prosecution countered these with Ellen White quotes of later date stating, "It has been some years since I have considered the General Conference as the voice of God" (Letter 77, 1898).

Witnesses for the General Conference included Robert Carter, Lake Union president; Lowell Bock, General Conference field secretary; Clyde Kinder, Potomac Conference ABC manager; and Neal Wilson.

Kinder, who had performed so poorly when giving his deposition that defense attorneys were shaking their heads and laughing, seemed much better prepared for his courtroom testimony. And when confronted by the prosecution with the contrasts between his deposition and his testimony in court, Kinder allowed that as he'd given matters more thought since his deposition his memory had improved.

Neal Wilson, on the stand, attempted to impress Judge Hart with the overwhelming authority of his position. His lengthy recital of a recent, three-week trip to the Soviet Union — where he claimed to have negotiated with various members of the politburo regarding the distribution of Adventist books — appeared to be the reason that the judge leaned back in his chair for a time with his eyes closed.

Proctor's former pastor at the Berrien Springs Village Church, Don Driver, gave a deposition stating that he had met with Wilson to see if an out-of-court solution to the impasse could be achieved and was told by Wilson that the church could continue the case until Proctor was

broken financially. Driver soon received a call to pastor a much smaller congregation.

The litigation certainly could be stretching Proctor's resources. Deposition transcripts alone have cost him \$30,000; and he and his single attorney decided not to purchase the daily trial transcripts (\$3.00 per page), while the General Conference's half dozen attorneys were able — with your money — to afford that luxury.

Earlier, in the discovery phase of the litigation, the General Conference had contracted a photocopying service to reproduce every scrap of paper (approximately 200,000 sheets) in Proctor's offices. This task took five people four weeks. It is understandable why the General Conference has been dunning the unions to help pay for the suit. The unions have passed this tax on down to their conferences. At least one conference in the North Pacific Union has refused to contribute to the litigation fund.

Perhaps the most troubling aspect of this litigation is that the General Conference leaders are trying once again — as in the Pacific Press cases — to persuade the court just how similar the Seventh-day Adventist church structure is to that of the Roman Catholic church. In their "Proposed Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law" (87 pages), submitted to the court at the conclusion of their closing arguments, the General Conference defendants submit (page 34) that "next to the Roman Catholic Church, the Adventist Church is the most centralized of all major Christian denominations in this country."

Of particular interest to *Currents* was the General Conference subpoena of George Colvin's doctoral dissertation — a narrative commentary of the Pacific Press cases. Colvin, a Ph.D. in the philosophy of government, testified as an expert witness for the prosecution.

A rumor that General Conference officers have commanded the *Adventist Review* not to print a story on the Proctor litigation will be interesting to follow. One *Review* staffer did request of Proctor permission to take his photograph, telling Proctor that the *Review* was planning a story on the case. Proctor, concerned that the story be objective, said he would sit for a picture whenever the *Review* got around to interviewing him.

It may be weeks or months before Judge Hart renders his decision. In the meantime, Proctor awaits that decision with guarded optimism; while General Conference sources disclose that a decision unfavorable to the General Conference will be appealed — if necessary — all the way to the Supreme Court.

Adventists believe that the time will

soon come when the enemies of God's people will see to it that they can neither buy nor sell, but *Currents* is certain that no one expected that persecution to come from God's highest authority on earth. □

Adventist Perspective aborted

A quarterly journal addressed to "Seventh-day Adventist professionals, businessmen, graduate students, and other thoughtful members," — to be entitled *Adventist Perspective* and published by Pacific Press — was aborted late in March this year by the officers of the General Conference.

Two of those officers, Neal Wilson and Lowell Bock, had encouraged the magazine's conception just seven months earlier, even intimating, according to Pacific Press vice president for editorial development Humberto Rasi, that General Conference financial support might be expected.

Rasi stated that the idea for a quarterly of this nature originated with the General Conference Committee on Secularism (1981-1985). The concerns behind the idea were reflected by the "need" statement in Pacific Press' formal proposal to the General Conference officers in March 1986. These included the facts of

- "considerable membership losses among second and third-generation Adventists, especially among those involved in university studies."

- the alienation of "a significant number of Adventist professionals and businessmen . . . from the local congregation" who "have withdrawn from active membership."

- "the desire to do something constructive for this influential sector of our membership."

By 16 January 1986 Rasi and his Pacific Press colleagues had developed a budget and had prepared a twelve-point survey (sent to 706 pastors, lay professionals, and conference presidents) for potential subscribers. The Press board recommended the plan, along with an editorial roster, to the General Conference.

Rasi, named by the Press board to the editorship of the prospective *Perspective*, acquired articles for the flagship issue; the Press advertising department sold several ad pages.

Completion of the market survey in March demonstrated that those sur-

veyed were quite enthusiastic and would subscribe, at \$14.95, for four issues. Of the 190 pastors, professionals, and conference presidents who responded to the survey, 79 percent of the pastors felt it should be published; 86 percent of the professionals encouraged publication; and 85 percent of the conference presidents wished to see it in print.

At an investment of \$16,000 total start-up costs, the first issue of *Adventist Perspective* was typeset and pasted up, ready to be printed. On March 25 and 26 Lowell Bock, representing the Pacific Press Board, and E.M. Styles, Bob Kyte, and Rasi representing management, made a formal presentation to the General Conference officers (editors of the *Adventist Review* and *Ministry* also invited).

The General Conference officers disapproved the projected publication, and *Currents* has their three primary reasons as articulated by the no-doubt disappointed Rasi:

- concern that the new journal might undermine the credibility and/or circulation of the *Adventist Review*.

- desire that Pacific Press would develop a different journal, aimed at non-Adventist secularized readers.

- fear that by targeting *Adventist Perspective* to Adventist professionals, businessmen, and university students, we might encourage the development of an elitist mindset in the church.

Two General Conference sources provide a different view of *Adventist Perspective's* abortion. They told *Currents* that Rasi targeted the wrong population — that the Secularism Committee recommended a journal that would reach the well-educated and professional non-Adventist population. Rasi, as secretary of the Secularism Committee, they argue, should have known that.

A second, less-important reason the General Conference spokesmen indicated for killing the magazine project was money. Pacific Press is already in financial difficulty; and a journal aimed at the highly educated Adventist, they believe, is unlikely to pay for itself.

Apparently the General Conference officers are satisfied to leave to *Spectrum* and *Adventist Currents* the task of meeting the needs of Adventist professionals, businessmen, and graduate students — as described by the General Conference Secularism Committee and the statement of need made in the Pacific Press proposal.

To paraphrase and invert Scripture: "To the secularized, non-Adventist first; then to the secularized Adventist."

Betrayal in Budapest



by Sidney Reiners

Within the last two years a long-standing struggle in the Hungarian Union of Seventh-day Adventists has become somewhat known in America. The conflict began in 1957 when, despite strong opposition from certain members of the Hungarian Union Committee, the Adventist church joined the Council of Free Churches (CFC). This is an association of small denominations originally organized to obtain for them the same legal status and benefits as the larger ones.

Under government supervision and manipulation, the CFC quickly became a vehicle for the promotion of ecumenical religio-political goals. It even operates a

seminary that trains the clergy of all denominations. The effectiveness of the Adventist tithe system (including tithes and offerings from outside Hungary) makes the Adventist church the largest single contributor to the ecumenical programs of the CFC, including its seminary.

The Council governs interchurch and government relations; training, licensing and assignment of ministers; church construction, budgets, disciplinary actions, and passports. (In 1975 the CFC prevented certain Adventists from attending the General Conference session in Vienna).

Palotay and the Communists

A dominant figure in the Council from its beginning was Sandor Palotay. Palotay was once an Adventist colporteur and Bible worker but was disfellowshipped

because of divorce and remarriage. Although he became associated with the Baptists, they always regarded him as an Adventist. He was president of the CFC until his sudden death in 1979.

Palotay was a prime mover in the invitation to Billy Graham to preach in Hungary in 1977. At that time Richard Wurmbrand's publication, *Voice of the Martyrs*, observed, "Those harassed by the Communists denounce a certain Palotai as one of the traitors who gave them into the hands of the police. . . ." The *Spotlight* newspaper of 3 July 1978, commented: "The agent who arranged both sites and audiences for the [Graham] crusade was Sandor Palotay, a communist

**Spotlight* and *Voice of the Martyrs* quotations are from William Grotheer's newsletter *Watchman, What of the Night?* (Box 789, Lamar, AR 72846).

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whose only allegiances are to money and state — in that order.”*

The key role of the Adventist church in the Council is highlighted by the fact that whoever is president of the Hungarian Union thereby becomes vice-president of the CFC. Consequently, when Joseph Szakacs (aka “beer Joe” because of his love for the “suds”) was chosen Hungarian Union president in 1971, he became Council vice-president under Palotay. Upon Palotay’s death, Szakacs was chosen CFC president. At the same time, Denes Zarks became the Hungarian Union president, and (automatically) Council vice-president.

As president of the Council of Free Churches, Szakacs also automatically became vice-president of the Ecumenical Council of Hungarian Churches, of which the CFC is a member. The Ecumenical Council of Hungarian Churches, in turn, is a constituent body of the World Council of Churches, just as the National Council of Churches is in America. Despite a denial in the *Adventist Review* of 22 November 1984, the Ecumenical Council of Hungarian Churches is officially listed as an “associate council” in the World Council of Churches book *Gathered for Life* (271).

The Council of Free Churches is also deeply involved with joint political action, particularly the ecumenical peace movement. According to Keston News Service, shortly after the forced dissolution of an independent peace organization called Dialog Peace Group, religious leaders formed the Interdenominational Peace Council. (The Adventist Hungarian Union is a member). According to the Hungarian Communist Party newspaper, the purpose of the Interdenominational Peace Council is “to organize the collective social and peace activities of the individual religious bodies” and “to coordinate its service for peace with the work of the National Peace Council.” The National Peace Council exists for the purpose of propagating the official government viewpoint. After its first session, the International Peace Council issued a statement condemning the U.S. for placing nuclear weapons in Western Europe, but it made no mention of Russian missiles in Eastern Europe. The president of the International Peace Council is Reformed Bishop Tibor Bartha, who is also president of the Ecumenical Council of Hungarian Churches; Hungarian Union Conference president Szakacs is vice-president.

From this it may be seen that the ecumenical and political ties of the official Adventist church in Hungary are deep and intricate. While Palotay was president, in fact, the CFC virtually engulfed the Seventh-day Adventist church. During the fruitless negotiations of January

1984 that resulted in the final separation of 1,339 Adventists from the official Adventist church, Elder Edwin Ludescher, president of the Euro-Africa Division, confided to the representatives of the “dissidents” (who became known as the Small Committee) that when he had come to Hungary in 1975 to hear the appeal of the disfellowshipped ones, he had experienced a real struggle with the Hungarian Union Committee and had not been able to get anywhere. Oscar Egervari, leader of the Small Committee, noted: “There was an important man there [Palotay] and because of him you could not do anything . . . Many of us still recall when you, Elder Ludescher, came to Hungary with Elder Pierson in May 1976. Even today I hold it humiliating that you kept going up and down the steps between the first and second floors like an elevator, because you did not dare to answer any of our questions until you had asked Sandor Palotay, who stayed on the second floor.”

Elder Ludescher admitted: “Everything you said is true to the last word. For instance, when we were there with Elder Pierson in May 1976 we decided between ourselves that we did not want Palotay to be present at the discussions. I remember as if it were just yesterday that Gyula Makkos stopped talking when Palotay came in. ‘Without his permission nobody can lift his hands or feet in this building,’ Makkos said. ‘I am not going to continue my talk until he leaves the room.’

“I remember that Elder [Denes] Zarka [Hungarian Union president] came to me and asked, ‘Elder Ludescher, what shall

kacs is a graduate of what is derisively known as “Red University,” a course in Communist doctrine required of those who want to advance in the Party.

Elder Hegstad’s comments on the Hungarian Adventist leadership are corroborated by the testimony of Istvan Gereben, executive secretary of the Coordinating Committee of Hungarian Organizations in North America, before the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations June 12, 1984. Gereben’s comments, entitled “The Situation of the Church in Hungary,” follow:

“[T]he situation of the Seventh-day Adventists must be mentioned. Their leadership, hand-picked by the state authorities, carried out the measures designed to destroy the autonomy of the church. In their case as in the case of the Nazarenes the methods of intimidation were often more blatant than those applied against larger groups such as the Catholics. Nonetheless, these are all familiar to those who have studied totalitarian systems. They are always selected in such a way as to make documentation difficult if not impossible. Reminiscent of the intimidation known in the U.S. to those who are familiar with the ways of organized crime, these are always directed at the isolated individual who fears to appeal his case to international forums or to free public opinion . . . [T]he knowledge that a large portion of the Western press and many religious leaders are terribly naive about the extent of state control in the East is analogous to the fear of the victim of crime in the U.S. that the courts and the police are paid off by the leaders of organized crime.

The Adventist church [is] the largest single contributor to the ecumenical programs of the CFC.

we do?’ And I said, ‘Go and tell Palotay to keep himself to the agreement, to leave the place.’ It is a fact, however, that this was a time when we were helpless in Hungary. But today we feel that the situation is different.”

These comments are all the more interesting in view of the fact that in Minneapolis (March 25, 1978) I asked Roland Hegstad if he knew anything about Palotay. He said he had never heard of him; but he did know that the church in Hungary was helplessly manipulated by Communists. In August of 1982 I spoke with Elder Hegstad by telephone. We were discussing Adventism in Russia when he freely volunteered the information that the church in Hungary “has been infiltrated” by Communists.

Former Union president Joseph Sza-

“In the case of the Seventh-day Adventists, some of the state ‘appointed’ leaders were so dissolute and morally reprehensible that they eventually had to give up their positions.”

Indeed, internal corruption was another ingredient in the crisis. Allegations of adultery against then-Union President Janos Pechtol were a key factor in the 1965 disfellowshipping of about 300 members who were raising the issue. Yet in 1966 Pechtol was forced to retire when he divorced his wife and married the woman rumors had associated him with. This was the real beginning of the disintegration of the Hungarian Union.

In 1971 Hungarian Union secretary-treasurer Karoly Berzenczei was fired and disfellowshipped for embezzling just short of one million forints. Unfortunately,

demands for a reliable, verifiable accounting system have never been met.

The Iron Fist

In 1975 Elder Oscar Egervari, president of the Dunamelleki Conference, asked for a clarification of the denomination's relationship to the ecumenical movement. About the same time Susan Vanko, an Adventist professor at the ecumenical seminary, was told she could not write her own syllabus for a course on ethics but must rigidly follow a thoroughly ecumenical text on social ethics written

abstentions. I myself also am abstaining."

Meanwhile several upset members had left the church building. Elder Arvai said: "Several of the members left; we cannot repeat the voting procedure."

Susan Vanko's mother asked, "Is Susan disfellowshipped now or not?"

Elder Arvai replied, "Yes, she is disfellowshipped." But the members cried out, "No, she is not! We have not voted for it!"

The organ sounded, the meeting ended, and Susan Vanko was no longer "officially" a Seventh-day Adventist.

Whoever is president of the Hungarian Union thereby becomes vice president of the Council of Free Churches.

by a Lutheran. Several Adventist seminarians told her they felt that they no longer belonged there and were leaving. She asked them to stay and promised to take up the matter with seminary dean Jeno Szigeti, himself an Adventist.

As a result of these inquiries, Egervari and Vanko were called separately before the Union Committee and told that they were being transferred. They replied that they would accept transfer but still wanted an explanation of the church's relationship to the ecumenical movement. Both were suspended. (This was not the first of Egervari's problems with the Union Committee. Earlier the Committee had refused to back him in pressuring the government to allow Adventist children exemptions from attending school on Sabbath).

On the afternoon of March 20, 1976, three representatives of the Union Committee came to Vanko's home church, the Eszek Street Church in Budapest. Sister Vanko spoke for twenty minutes, explaining her stand. In reply the Union Committee representatives accused her of inciting a spirit of opposition to them. Their main charge was that she advocated withholding tithe from the Union Committee. (This is a matter for which members cannot be disfellowshipped. See *Church Manual*, p. 252, 1980 edition. Ellen White herself paid at least part of her tithe outside conference channels).

Elder Henrik Arvai of the Union Committee asked: "Brethren, who is for peace? Who will separate himself from such a subversive, destructive spirit?" About half of the forty members present raised their hands, while others chorused out, "It is not clear what we are voting for!"

Jose Zsuga, local elder, stood at the pulpit and pleaded: "I request that the voting proceed in the proper manner. Please allow for opposing votes and

Bizarre and illegal as this procedure was, it at least offered a caricature of due process. Hundreds of other Adventists who took issue with the Union Committee were simply discharged by letters directly from the Union Committee, by form letters from conference committees, or by church boards — all invalid processes, according to the *Church Manual*. In other cases, entire boards were dismissed and replaced by those subservient to the Union Committee. And, incredible as it sounds, in five cases entire church memberships were expelled, the churches disbanded, and the doors locked and sealed. Further gatherings on the property were prohibited. Such action was taken against the Szekely Bertalan Street Church, the very church which houses the Union office! (The congregation was later reorganized with members loyal to the Union Conference).

In addition to being disfellowshipped, some ex-members were forbidden to attend any Adventist church. Such was the case with about forty members of the Szekely Bertalan Street Church, including Oscar Egervari.

Four ministers who had lodged a written protest over the dismissal of Egervari were themselves disfellowshipped. In addition, the pensions of five retired ministers who had the courage to speak up were suspended. Leo Hartl, a retired seminary teacher, also had his pension — his sole source of income — terminated. He has been paralyzed for over ten years and his wife needs a full-time nurse to help care for him.

During this time political and ecumenical comments began to appear in the Sabbath school quarterlies. Commonly held Adventist doctrine was expunged; and, from January to August of 1975, the Union Committee refused to print the Ellen White comments.

As turmoil increased, various General Conference and division delegations went

to Hungary to try to resolve the problems. The 1976 visit of Robert Pierson, alluded to earlier, was unproductive. During Pierson's visit he spoke at the Szekely Bertalan Street Church. Union Committee guards, identified by arm bands, prevented about 150 disfellowshipped Adventists from even entering the church to hear the sermon.

In spite of all these events, Elder Pierson wrote to Union President Szakacs (16 June 1976) referring to the ex-members as "those who cause the problem." He went on to opine, "It is never right to rebel against the official leadership. . . ." That is a new ethic in Christianity, one never endorsed or practiced by Jesus, Martin Luther, Ellen White or innumerable other heroes of the faith.

Not content with driving these brothers and sisters from church, the Union Committee also lodged false charges against them with the police and initiated unsuccessful lawsuits against them. Readers acquainted with the books *Time of Trouble* and *The Persecuted* by Antal Nemeti, a Hungarian colporteur, will recall that in 1972 a group called the Priests of Peace pressured the police to arrest Nemeti for privately printing *Great Controversy*. At least two of the Priests of Peace were Adventist ministers, Karoly Fazekas and Union president Szakacs.

In 1977 General Conference representative Alf Lohne and Euro-Africa president Ludescher met with nine members of the Small Committee. With tears in his eyes, Elder Ludescher asked forgiveness for their earlier lack of understanding. They pronounced the disfellowshipings and dismissals of ministers invalid. They encouraged the alienated ones to support the dismissed ministers with their tithe and to continue to build the work of God. They asked that nothing be said about this.

In April of 1978, however, Elder Ludescher returned and took part in a Union election, in spite of the fact that 1,250 Adventists (out of a total membership of four to five thousand) had signed a petition asking that the election be postponed until the ecumenical question had been dealt with.

In January of 1982 Elder Ludescher returned, along with Elders Jean Zurcher and Peter Kunze, also of the Euro-Africa Division. They presented a draft agreement for reuniting the two groups. The Small Committee immediately accepted it, but the Union Committee demanded changes. These changes were accepted, but guarantees asked by the Small Committee were rejected. Elder Ludescher would not even allow the Small Committee to bring the altered document before their delegates in February. He told them to either sign it or then and there

no longer be part of the Adventist world organization, adding, "The General Conference will yet confirm this." They didn't sign.

Upon Ludescher's pronouncement the Union Committee immediately went to the authorities and insisted that they begin demolition of the church in Budapest being used by the disfellowshipped Adventists. Bulldozing actually began, but only enough to make it unusable. Since then the damage has been repaired and it is again being used, but a partition had to be built that interferes with the openness of the sanctuary.

The Union Committee also filed numerous complaints about a youth camp the disfellowshipped group was operating, charging that the drinking water was unsafe. Eventually the government did take the camp away but paid for it. A new camp has been established. As a result of other complaints, a nursing home had to pay numerous fines, also, but it still is in the possession of the disfellowshipped group.

Later in 1982 Elder Kunze and Elder Manfred Boettcher, president of the East German Union, attempted a reconciliation. Churches in East Germany are generally more resistant to government dictation than in Hungary and other Communist nations. The German Adventist leadership was very concerned that the church in Hungary not capitulate to the government because it could set a precedent for other countries. Elder Boettcher understood very well the stand of the disfellowshipped Adventists — so well, in fact, that the Hungarian church leadership thereafter kept him out of Hungary.

Kunze and Boettcher told the separated members they could return, not as prodigal sons (a favorite expression of the Union Committee) but as faithful Adventists. All who wanted to be part of the official church were told to ask for readmittance in writing. Many did and began attending Union Conference churches, along with converts they had won since 1975. However they were greeted not with the brotherly affection they had been promised but with sermons denouncing them as "idiots" and "diseased sheep." Not one of them was accepted into a Union Conference church.

Final Effort

Finally during January 19-29, 1984, Elders Neal Wilson, Ralph Thompson, Ludescher, Zurcher, and Kunze conducted the final round of negotiations referred to earlier. Elder Wilson observed that ecumenism seemed to be the principal problem, and he wanted to know the main objections. The Small Committee pointed to Policy 4-a of the Council of Free Churches, which states that member denominations "will not promote either

directly or indirectly the conversion of individual members from one member denomination to another — neither will they prevent it."

To zealous Adventists, this is an appalling contradiction of Revelation 18.

After lengthy discussion concerning the Council of Free Churches, Elder Zurcher said: "... for about an hour we have been talking about something on which all of us agree. There is no one in this room who does not share the same opinion with us. I wrote down my position on this question and it was published in the [Hungarian Adventist] *Minister's Informer*. . . . You have been quoting from it. I put it very clearly."

The Small Committee replied: "Yes, this is true; we agree. But even after this [article appeared], we have been condemned that our position is extreme."

"If your position is extreme," Elder Wilson interjected, "so is mine and that of the General Conference, for we agree with you, too; and we think of this issue the same way you do."

The next day was Sabbath. Elder Wilson spoke at the Szekeley Bertalan Street Church. He was very negative about the Small Committee. However, Sunday, January 22, a real spirit of communication developed. Elder Wilson then insisted that plans be made for the dismantling of the supposed "separate organization" before he left. The Small Committee representatives explained that there really was no separate organization, just an informal association of those who had been forcibly ejected.

Sister Csapo pointed out that when the disfellowshipped ones turned to Elder Egervari, he said: "If you think of splitting, then I will take my hat and leave you, for I cannot go along with that." She also stated that she has a tape recording of Sister Vanko saying: "If you will be put out through the door, then go back through the window."

Elder Gyula Molnar told of his expe-

Affairs, Imre Miklos, because years ago in the presence of my associates I poured out my heart to him when I said, 'What the Hungarian Union has done against you [the protesting Adventists] is simply beneath contempt.'"

The next meeting was Wednesday, January 25. Elder Wilson reported: "I . . . visited Imre Miklos, State Secretary, and we had a very pleasant talk in a very good atmosphere. I had a two-and-a-half-hour business luncheon with him and we dialogued about the Council of Free Churches."

Communists are aware that great things can be accomplished with a little of the Christian grace known as hospitality, such as a "delicious vegetarian lunch." Over it Miklos apparently managed to alter Wilson's thinking. They also understand the lust for power and recognition that underlies the most sanctified human nature. In addressing the 1984 Annual Council about the Hungarian situation, Wilson digressed long enough to enthuse over another experience in Hungary. Referring to the application of the disfellowshipped Adventists to be recognized by the government as a separate denomination by applying to the Cabinet of Hungary directly, Wilson reminisced: "... [T]hey're trying now to appeal to the Hungarian People's Republic — beautiful, beautiful parliament building in which we spent some time — sat in the chair of the Secretary of the Communist Party in Hungary" (Psalm 1:1).

Little things mean a lot.

Wilson's attitude was now very different from what it had been the preceding Friday and Sunday. He demanded that the Small Committee representatives sign the January 26, 1982, agreement that the Union Committee had altered and the Small Committee had rejected. His concern seemed to be unconditional capitulation to the Union Committee, with plans for the transfer of property.

In five cases entire church memberships were expelled, the churches disbanded, and the doors locked and sealed.

rience, and Elder Wilson said: "I am very touched in my heart . . . I ask forgiveness in the name of the General Conference and for the entire world organization. I am very much ashamed that in the ministerial staff — of which I am also a part — such things could occur."

Elder Ludescher added: "What has been done to you all is an awful horror. Such things should never have happened among God's people. . . . This is the very reason why I have an uneasy relationship with the State Secretary of Religious

But there was no guarantee to prevent a repetition of the past events, in which case the disfellowshipped ones again would be left without even a place to worship.

All this seemed even more baffling in view of what Wilson reported: "I asked him [Miklos] the question whether a denomination is allowed to withdraw from the Council of Free Churches, the Seventh-day Adventist Church for example. He said, 'Yes, naturally. Our position relating to that church will not change just because they leave the Council of Free

Churches. But a proper, good reason ought to be presented for leaving."

"Then," Wilson continued, "the State Secretary . . . brought up the example of the Nazarenes. He said that the Nazarenes are a small denomination in Hungary and their doctrines are against taking military vows and bearing arms. He said, 'We made it possible for the Nazarene young men to fill non-combatant posts. Yet they are not members in the Council of Free Churches, for it is not compulsory.'"

Turning to the Small Committee representatives, Wilson hyperbolized: "Brethren and sisters, such religious freedom I have not found anywhere; there is no example for this anywhere in the world that a small group like the Nazarenes would be permitted to fill noncombatant posts in the army." (Not even in America?) But he also added, "I would like to emphasize that this is not a doctrine of our church. We do not make this a doctrine; we cannot make it a doctrine not to bear arms. This is left up to the conscience of each young man what position he will take in given situations."

The Small Committee representatives stated that if it were simply a written goal to withdraw from the Council of Free Churches, they would reunite. Elder Ludescher said, "I have told you everything about the Council of Free Churches, all our opinions: that belonging to the Council of Free Churches is a stumbling block and it has to be removed at all costs." But he insisted the next Union session would be the first opportunity to remove that stumbling block.

Elder Wilson was less convinced: "I could not tell whether it would be good for the Hungarian church to step out from the Council of Free Churches. The way is open, but I think it has many advantages to belong to it."

At the end of the day's talks, Elder Wilson gave the Small Committee twenty-four hours to decide whether or not to sign the "Mutual Agreement" of January 1982 as revised by the Union Committee and now made even more objectionable by the addition of six points — a General Conference statement drafted and signed by Elders Wilson, Ludescher, and Zarka.

These six points placed blame for the situation squarely on the Small Committee, saying, with blithe disregard for the facts: " . . . [T]he Small Committee created for itself a situation which is irreconcilable with the world organization . . . by not being willing to recognize the Hungarian Union as the official body of the church in Hungary . . . [T]he Small Committee beyond all question violated the rule of the *Church Manual* which prohibits the formation of self-appointed, independent organizations."

The General Conference leader's determination to support the Union Committee as the only true and legitimate expression of the church organization is astounding, and not only on doctrinal and moral grounds. Organizationally it is equally absurd; for in 1981 it was revealed that upon joining the Council of Free Churches in 1957, the Union Committee had declared in its organizational policy that it was empowered "at highest level to direct the affairs of the denomination with absolute power." The statement did not even mention the Division or General Conference. This self-bestowed "absolute power" has been exercised to the extreme.

Thursday, January 26, the Small Committee met again with the Division and General Conference representatives.

The Union Committee . . . insisted that they begin demolition of the church in Budapest used by the disfellowshipped Adventists.

Elder Wilson demanded a simple yes or no from the Small Committee. Reluctantly, when their qualifying statements were not accepted or listened to, they had to say no. Then Elder Wilson declared: "I will tell to the delegates [at a meeting the next Sunday of both groups] clearly that we will not accept your organization any more; we are not going to have any discussion with you after this; and we will call on them to leave you, for the road on which you are leading them is not right."

At the next meeting, Sunday, January 29, Elder Wilson made it clear that it is better to not join church councils, but it is not a principle of our faith. " . . . There are a few places in the world where we are part of a council," he said. He emphasized that the government of Hungary had given the church complete freedom to leave the Council of Free Churches if they so desired, but this was not the time. "Since you are in," he said, "then you should be the best members in the council. Make it what it should be." He pointedly stated that the Union was not apostate.

The negotiations to restore unity ended in failure.

General Conference Silence

Following this catastrophe, the disfellowshipped Adventists tried to gain government recognition under the name Sabbath-keeping, Christ-expecting Christians. Although the government has been very tolerant so far, without legal status all activities can be suspended and property seized at any moment. The government has rejected the application because these people hold beliefs identical to the Seventh-day Adventists.

Elder Egervari wrote to Elder Wilson, asking him to write to the Hungarian government saying that he had no objection to this group forming their own organization. At Annual Council 1984 Wilson stated he would not be writing such a letter — this from the head of a church that prides itself on promoting religious freedom!

Significantly, this issue has never come to a vote by the General Conference. It has been handled by administrative fiat. When four concerned individuals visited with Bert Beach at the offices of the General Conference Department of Public Affairs in June 1985, he assured them that absolutely nothing would be done at the New Orleans session of the General Conference because everything is

all settled by committee before the delegates ever arrive. Beach proved to be right. In spite of extensive distribution of documents and appeals from the disfellowshipped Hungarians during the session, the issue was never raised on the Superdome floor. Just why the church goes through the expense and inconvenience of a world session when everything has been decided even before it meets is a mystery.

At the behest of Neal Wilson, however, the Hungarian Union was transferred from the beleaguered Euro-Africa Division to the Trans-European (formerly Northern Europe) Division, along with Yugoslavia, Greece and Israel — despite the vehement protests of the latter. (It is, on the face of it, an odd conglomeration.) At the same session, Ray Dabrowski, former editor of the Polish *Signs of the Times* and public relations director for the Polish Union, was appointed as the new division's communications director. Dabrowski should prove congruent with the Hungarian church; he has made a career of defending Communist policy.

Living on the Edge

God continues to grant the disfellowshipped Adventists favor in the eyes of the Hungarian authorities, and they are carrying on a normal church life with regular church services, evangelistic meetings, a youth camp, a nursing home, and a vegetarian restaurant in Budapest (the only one in Hungary). A university professor who has become very interested in the Adventist message is sharing what he is learning with 300 people in two cities. Three Unions behind the Iron Curtain are very sympathetic with the

disfellowshipped Adventists.

Nonetheless, without legal status the future of the unofficial Adventists remains uncertain. This is indicated by the ominous remarks of Imre Miklos at a plenary session of the Council of Free Churches September 23, 1983: "The work of the CFC and the activity of the member denominations are becoming a more vital part of our socialist life. . . .

"There are some here at home and beyond our borders who do not agree with the principles and activities we emphasize. They do not or would not understand what is involved. Here at home and in some church headquarters there are leaders who do not stand at the height of their calling. Their own church will discover some day that they do not do any good by their inefficiency or by their deviation from the standard practice of their church. We are handling these questions patiently but very decidedly. Who thinks that our patience is of weakness or hesitancy, or because we do not know what we ought to do, is mistaken. We are not in such a bad situation that we should be impatient or hasty."

Speaking at this same session of the Council of Free Churches, Szakacs pointedly noted. "It is a fact that nearly all member denominations have smaller or larger foreign connections with their European or world headquarters. These connections in the past years have deepened. Their usefulness is determined by the degree we can measure the good in them and are able to use them, or as we can pass on our experiences for them to use . . .

"In recent years we have been receiving more and more information about orga-

"I took part in some consultations where the president [of the CFC] and his associates received guests who came to Hungary for the first time. It is a distinct pleasure to see how the eyes of men open, how the views of those widen who come with good intentions by what they personally witness here. Our experience is the same when we go abroad and give witness. But it is twice as beneficial when they come to us and see personally and understand what we are talking about."

Then, reporting on a trip to East Germany, he said. "It was a great thrill when many thousand — among them many young people — made a profession of faith for the basic thesis of Luther, but especially for the serving of the cause of peace." Of course we must understand "peace" here as used in the Communist context to mean a time when everybody drops all resistance against world Communism (Ezekiel 13:8-16).

Thus we can see that the goal in Hungary now, as in other Marxist states that have found religion surprisingly resistant to eradication, is to use the Church. If Christianity can be sterilized and homogenized, it can be a very effective ingredient in the propaganda mix.

And once church leaders have prostituted themselves to the government and the twain become one flesh, clerics often outdo their secular mentors in the zealous prosecution of those who do not blend into the power structure. Like drug abusers, these power abusers have an evangelistic fervor all their own; they love to see others spiritually manacled, as they are.

This is illustrated in the remarks of Joseph Szakacs in 1979, as he reported

I remember from previous years in how many places we shared our experiences, and how gladly these were taken later by sincere, God-loving people. But there were also those who fought in support of their false disposition. Not [even] once did these fight for their personal advantages, to carry out their expectations, and for the 'better existence.' But those who obeyed the leading of the Spirit and progressed beyond the first steps were already inquiring as to how they could join most purposefully into a coordinating group like our Council of Free Churches, while keeping their profession of faith and liturgical practices."

Today 1,339 loyal Seventh-day Adventists are no longer members of the church. Their crime was asking for independence from the Council of Free Churches. They were illegally disfellowshipped and persecuted. The Hungarian Union Conference has followed the "rule or ruin" philosophy to the ultimate degree. What a spectacle to see the president of the Adventist church denouncing these faithful ones while embracing as the true Adventists people who violate the most elementary principles of Christianity, Adventist standards, and church policy.

One cannot help but wonder if the ultimate test for denominational backing is, Who holds the title to the real estate? Who has the government's blessing? This certainly seems consistent with Neal Wilson's crassly temporal goals for the church, to "grow numerically and financially, and in terms of world acceptance and influence. . . ." (*Adventist Review* 23 January 1986, p. 9) These are words that would sound less dissonant from the lips of a medieval pope than from a professed "servant of all."

We have seen betrayals like this before in Russia and in Germany in World Wars I and II. But this is the first time we have seen it happen in a nation of relative religious freedom where the excuse of persecution cannot be raised.

Individuals interested in lending moral support to the disfellowshipped Adventists may write to them. Do not mention anything political or make any critical remarks about the Hungarian government. Their mail may be read before they receive it. Simply tell them you accept them as true Seventh-day Adventists and encourage them in the Lord.

Here are some names and addresses:

Zsuzs Vanko 1121 Budapest, XII Remeete u. 16/a Hungary	Pal Kovacs 1191 Budapest, XIX Toldi u. u. 7/vi Hungary
Karoly Sonnleitner 1039 Budapest, III Zemlem Gy. u. 9. 1/4 Hungary	Oszkar Egervari 1121 Budapest, XII Csiga u. 3/c Hungary

"Brethren and sisters, such religious freedom I have not found anywhere . . . in the world." — Neal Wilson

nizations like the CFC being established in the different countries of Europe. Several of them are inquiring from us about our methods and structure."

(Two such inquirers were Bishop Ting, president of the government-approved Chinese Christian Council; and its chief secretary, Han. Ting gave Szakacs a report on the "life beyond denominations" in China.)

Dr. Jozsef Nagy, Council of Free Churches chief advisor and dean of the Baptist Theological Seminary, commented: "In our foreign relations we have to make our views, our understanding and our biblical thinking clear in the intertwining of the gospel service and the labor for peace [for example, Communist propaganda]. . . .

on a trip to the Soviet Union during which he had faithfully promoted the gospel according to bureaucracy: "Among the small churches in the Soviet Union there has been frequent talk about registering the congregations. We also were asked by many whether according to our views it is necessary or even beneficial to be so organized or registered, as they call it. We always answer them Yes, we testify in behalf of this, and we can tell from experience how it worked to the advantage in many respects for the Adventists [and other denominations] . . . to be thus organized and then registered.

"But behind this question of whether to be registered lies most of the time something entirely different: a foreign spirit which is void of pure Christianity.

The Rocky Road to Salamanca

Over the past half century many Adventists have written letters to Arthur White inquiring about some particular aspect of his grandmother's life and work. On 9 August 1982 I joined that group by requesting from him documentation regarding his version of the widely published Salamanca vision story. It is one of many stories in which God is supposed to have revealed an event to Ellen White before it took place, so that through these precognitions she could spare the cause from various disasters.

When I first read the Salamanca vision story as told by Arthur White in his "Notes and Papers" (published as an appendix to T. Housel Jemison's *A Prophet Among You*), I noticed something unusual: This story of foreknowledge, unlike so many of the others, apparently could be documented (White cited a particular date in his grandmother's diary, four months preceding the event, that seemed capable of establishing her prescience).

At the time I wrote to Arthur White, I had no reputation with the White Estate as a gadfly — *Adventist Currents* was little more than a daydream. The diary entry cited by White as coinciding with the vision was 3 November 1890, and the event allegedly foreseen took place four months later on 8 March 1891. Further, he had written that "in the days that followed [3 November 1890] she recorded in her journal" what she was shown in Salamanca, New York, on that date. I asked White if he would send a photocopy of Mrs. White's handwritten diary (covering the dates from 3 November 1890 to 8 March 1891) to the Loma Linda University Library Heritage Room for deposit with the Ellen White source materials there.

I never heard from brother White, but soon discovered that the letter had triggered considerable activity at the White Estate. At the time of this unanswered request I was planning a trip to Washington, D.C., to attend the first national congress of the Association of Adventist Forums. Knowing that I would

be in Takoma Park, I booked my flight a day early, reserving a few hours to visit the White Estate offices and, I hoped, to examine the Salamanca vision portion of the Ellen White diary.

Not wanting to be presumptuous or to leave too much to chance, I phoned the White Estate offices a few days before my flight to make certain that there would not be a problem in being a patron of the Estate on the day that I planned to arrive. Was I naive!

Tim Poirer, then the most recent addition to the White Estate staff, took my call; and when I described for him my plans he said that the diary portion that interested me might not be there when I arrived. I expressed bafflement, and he explained that some of the men were examining the diary and might have taken it home. Intending a question, I said that surely they would remove from the building only a photocopy, not an original autograph. But he indicated reluctantly that I might be mistaken.

Despite Poirer's discouraging news, I took a chance and flew to Washington a day early and walked into the White Estate on Thursday, 2 September 1982. I was met by Ronald Graybill, then an assistant secretary, who immediately informed me that I would not be allowed to look at the diary. He explained that he had just completed a nineteen-page paper on the subject of the Salamanca vision problem, that the brethren were editing it, and that in a few weeks it would appear in the *Adventist Review*.

Graybill could not be moved by my reminding him that when audiences around the country ask him and Robert Olson whether there is anything that they would not be allowed to see at the White Estate, they unfailingly answer that church members can come in and read anything — even the "Z" file.

We discussed the Salamanca vision document problems. Graybill said that at first he had believed there were very serious problems; but that after close scrutiny it appeared to be an embarrassment primarily to Arthur White, because, Graybill explained, unlike Arthur, Ellen

White had never tried to use the vision to prove her foreknowledge.

At that point I had to disagree with Graybill and quoted to him from manuscript 59, 1905. There Mrs. White, after retelling the Salamanca vision story herself, concluded with the assertion that "on this occasion the excuse could not possibly be used, 'Somebody has told her.'"

Graybill responded saying, "Well, she doesn't say, 'if you don't believe me come look at my diary.'" But Graybill knew that she wouldn't really have wanted anyone to do that, because he had seen the diary.

Since this incident, a few individuals outside of the White Estate have examined the Salamanca vision portion of the Ellen White diary, but, to my knowledge, only in photocopy form. The individual who has made the most extensive scrutiny of the available materials is former Andrews University Seminary graduate student and one-time Good News Unlimited president Calvin W. Edwards, who now serves as director of publications at Walk Thru the Bible Ministries in Atlanta, Georgia.

Edwards' effort to acquire a thorough understanding of the Salamanca vision documentation problems took him back to Andrews University, to White Estate headquarters in Washington, D.C., and to the Loma Linda University Library Heritage Room. Publication of Edwards' findings became necessary when the *Adventist Review* did not publish Graybill's study of the problem. And publication became particularly urgent when the 15 May 1986 *Review* emerged with its cover story by Roland Hegstad about the Salamanca vision, "*Liberty Learns A Lesson*," indicating that Hegstad had not learned the lessons taught through the past decade of Ellen White scholarship.

Currents appreciation to Calvin Edwards for the time and astute effort involved in preparing the following analysis will become understandable as readers tackle his intricate and penetrating exegesis.—Ed.

THE SALAMANCA EXPERIENCE: Confirmation of Ellen White's Prophetic Powers?

by Calvin W. Edwards

Prophets do not need to have foreknowledge; but it certainly helps. Ellen White's writings are far from filled with predictive elements, and when they do occur — such as in the closing chapters of *The Great Controversy* — they are not so directly predictive as interpretations of biblical prophecies she views as yet unfulfilled. But occasionally she ventures a prediction, or claims to have knowledge of an event prior to its occurrence. These merit our special attention since, if accurate and verifiable, they constitute impressive evidence of unique prophetic powers that go beyond the talents, insights, and intuitions of other church members.

The Salamanca experience is just such a case.¹ Briefly, the story goes like this: while at Salamanca, New York, on Monday evening, November 3, 1890, Ellen White had an experience of physical and spiritual renewal which, she claimed, included a revelation from God. She could not relate the substance of the "vision" though, according to Arthur White (who cites A. T. Robinson), she tried to recount it on several occasions. Early on Sunday morning, March 8, 1891, she was awakened by an angel and instructed to write out the things revealed at Salamanca back in November 1890. She did this, and turned up at the early morning General Conference meeting to present her revelation, only to discover that what she had received four months earlier was a precise description of a meeting held during the night just past!

The story certainly is impressive and deserves our careful attention. It has provided significant apologetic value, first to Ellen White herself (*see Box 1*), and later to those concerned to preserve her stature and credibility in the church. Arthur White's recent biography of Ellen White emphasizes this point in connection with his retelling of the story: "The experience provided unimpeachable evidence to not a few who, during the past two years, had entertained serious questions concerning the reliability and integrity of the Spirit of Prophecy [Ellen White]. Coming as it did at the very opening of the conference session, it stabilized the work and put to rest those questioning elements that can be so devastating."²

But, if Ellen White apologists are to continue using this story to bolster the conviction that Ellen White possessed unique prophetic powers, several basic claims regarding this episode must be demonstrated — or at least they must be subject to a reasonable level of verification. These claims include the following:

1. Ellen White had a revelation from God on November 3, 1890, in Salamanca, New York.
2. This revelation depicted a meeting which had not yet occurred but which would take place on March 7, 1891.
3. The Lord, or an angelic visitor on His behalf, brought the information of the "vision" of November 3 to her mind early on the morning of March 8, 1891.

Since all witnesses to these events are deceased and we are therefore dependent upon written accounts, diaries, recollections, etc., a fourth claim is critical to the validity of the story:

4. The primary (and, one hopes, secondary) documents providing the facts of these incidents are trustworthy and reliable.

If any of these basic components in the story is untrue, or subject to a reasonable level of doubt, the usefulness of the story to verify Ellen White's prophetic powers is greatly diminished. Since these are fundamental to the story, they cannot be assumed. Other items in the story, such as her supposed attempts to recount the "vision" on at least five occasions,³ are not central and one may assume or not assume these to be true with little consequence. However, the heart of the story must be demonstrably true for the episode to be persuasive.

Of course, the frustrating thing about the Salamanca incident is that Ellen White did not in fact come forward with the story of the meeting *before* it occurred. She came forward after it occurred claiming she knew of it *before* it occurred. However, the apologetic value of the story is largely preserved if there is documentary evidence in her diary or some other manuscript that she knew of the meeting before its occurrence. The major portion of this article addresses the integrity of the documentation.

The March 8, 1891, Disclosure

We shall review the events of March 7 and 8, 1891, more closely, and then turn to the documents that provide historical support for various components of the story, scrutinizing particularly the event of November 3, 1890, which supposedly revealed to the prophetess the meeting of March 7, 1891.

On the first Sabbath evening of the General Conference session, March 7, 1891, an important closed-door meeting was held in the chapel at the office of the Review and Herald Publishing Association in Battle Creek, Michigan. For the thirty

The frustrating thing about the Salamanca incident is that Ellen White did not come forward with the story of the meeting *before* it occurred.

or forty persons in attendance the subject of discussion was the editorial policy of *The American Sentinel*, the denomination's religious liberty periodical. Dan T. Jones, president of the National Religious Liberty Association, chaired the meeting. A participant in the meeting later reflected:

He [Dan Jones] stated in a strong way that the Association could not continue to use the *American Sentinel* as the organ of the Association, unless it would modify its attitude toward some of what was termed the more objectionable features of our denominational views. Eld. A. T. Jones, editor of the *Sentinel* as strongly stated that as long as he had anything to do with the editorship of the paper, there would be no such change as suggested. The meeting assumed the form of very warm discussion between those who took opposite sides of the question.⁴

Albion F. Ballenger joined with Dan Jones, Captain Eldridge, and undoubtedly others, in stressing the need to downplay the unique doctrines of Adventism in the *Sentinel*.⁵ Probably the

largest area of debate was over whether the Sabbath should be referred to explicitly in the magazine.

Earlier that afternoon, after addressing a very large meeting of the General Conference, Ellen White had assured Elder O. A. Olsen, President of the General Conference, that she would not attend the 5:30 a.m. meeting for ministers on Sunday morning. However, on Sunday, March 8, just after Elder Olsen

had opened the meeting in the south vestry of the Battle Creek Tabernacle, Mrs. White, accompanied by her son Willie, entered the room. When asked whether she wished to address the assembled ministers she stated that she did.

She then proceeded to explain that she had been awakened during the night by an angelic visitor who instructed her to "write out the vision given her"⁶ at Salamanca, New York, some

Box 1

Ellen White's version

The setting for this manuscript was the trial of Albion Fox Ballenger. Ballenger had been sent to the 1905 General Conference session by the British Union because of his heretical view that Christ entered the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary following His resurrection and ascension. Ellen White did not attend his trial, but she wrote the following manuscript which presumably guided the church leaders in their decision.

Takoma Park, Maryland, Sabbath, May 20, 1905

I am not able to sleep past one o'clock. I was aroused to write out some things that have been impressed on my mind. Not long ago I met Elder Ballenger in the hall of the building in which we have rooms. As I spoke to him, it came vividly to my mind that this was the man whom I had seen in an assembly bringing before those present certain subjects, and placing upon passages in the Word of God a construction that could not be maintained as truth. He was gathering together a mass of scriptures such as would confuse minds because of his assertions and his misapplication of these scriptures, for the application was misleading and had not the bearing upon the subject at all which he claimed justified his position. Anyone can do this, and will follow his example to testify to a false position; but it was his own. I said to him, You are the one whom the Lord presented before me in Salamanca, as standing with a party who were urging that if the Sabbath truth were left out of the *Sentinel*, the circulation of that paper would be largely increased. You were the one that wept and confessed your mistakes, and we had the power of the Holy Spirit in that early morning meeting.

I had been very sick [at Salamanca] and yet had tried to speak to the people, and the Lord had strengthened me greatly, I had no knowledge of my words. The Lord spoke indeed through me. After I had given my last talk, my sufferings were so severe as to become almost unendurable.

A list of appointments had been sent out for me to fill on my way from Salamanca to Battle Creek. It seemed impossible for me to fill these appointments. I went to my room and bowed in prayer. I had not been able to utter a word of prayer before the room was lighted up with the glory of God and scenes passed before me. I saw an assembly in a room in Battle Creek, and one standing up held up the *Sentinel* and said, "The Sabbath question must be cut out of this paper; then the circulation will be largely increased and the truth will come before thousands."

One of authority came forward and said solemnly, "Bind up the testimony and seal the law among my disciples." Then came the reproof, decided, firm, and cutting: "The Sabbath truth is to be proclaimed. It is the truth for these last days." The words found in Exodus 31:12-18 were repeated with great solemnity.

I cannot now repeat all the things connected with the meeting, but I know that the steps which had been anticipated were not taken. The working of the Spirit of God was in that meeting.

That night was a most solemn one for me. There came to my mind the truth that we have been proclaiming since

the passing of the time in 1844, when the message came to us regarding the mistake we were making in keeping the first day of the week. We had Bible evidence and the testimony of the Spirit of the Lord that we were keeping a day that bore no sanctity, and that in so doing we were transgressing the law of God. This message we have borne ever since; and I solemnly asked, Are our people now to cut out the Sabbath message from the *Sentinel* and heed the advice and counsel of worldly men, keeping the *Sentinel* from carrying this most important truth to the world?

I could not sleep much that night. The next morning we started for Washington. I was taken very ill, and it was thought best for Sara and me to return to Battle Creek and not attend the meetings that were laid out for me on my journey.

When I arrived at Battle Creek, I learned that our leading brethren had asked the Lord in prayer to send me direct to Battle Creek. Meetings were being held in the various rooms of the Tabernacle. One morning I was awakened before daylight. It was as if a voice spoke to me, Attend the morning meeting. I arose and dressed, and walked across the road to the meeting. As I went into the room, the brethren were in prayer. I united my prayer with those of the rest, praying with great earnestness. The Spirit of the Lord was in the meeting and my soul was deeply stirred. After the season of prayer, I arose to speak and bore a decided testimony with the Spirit and power of God, relating my experience in Salamanca and telling them what the Lord had revealed to me in the vision of the night.

After I had borne a decided testimony, Brother Ballenger arose, all broken-hearted and weeping, and said, "I receive this testimony as from the Lord. I was in the meeting last night, and I was on the wrong side."

What was my surprise to learn that the light I had in Salamanca was given me some time before this meeting was held. The Lord had prepared the way for me to return to Battle Creek and bear my message in the early morning meeting, directly after the evening meeting. I had been shown that steps would be taken to have the *Sentinel* no longer speak boldly upon the question of the true Sabbath of the Lord. The circumstances were such that on this occasion the excuse could not possibly be used, "Somebody has told her." No one had an opportunity to see me or speak with me between the evening meeting and the morning meeting that I attended.*

I bore the message that the Lord gave me, and some made confession with broken hearts and contrite spirits. — Ms. 59, 1905, pp. 1-4.

*Ellen White's position is very clear. She believed that God supernaturally led in this experience because the details of the secret midnight meeting were revealed to her before it took place, and because she was able to relate that information publicly before anyone had opportunity to tell her about it. She made no point of the time when she recorded these details in her diary.

Editorial note by Robert W. Olson, from "The Salamanca Vision and the 1890 Diary," compiled by Robert W. Olson, Ellen G. White Estate, Washington, D.C., 1983.

four months earlier. She then read from a manuscript she had brought to the meeting stating that at Salamanca she had been shown a harsh, unchristian meeting where the *Sentinel* was being discussed. She explained that she had seen one man hold up the paper and point out certain articles which were unsuitable, in his thinking, because the magazine was going to members of Congress, lawyers, and persons in high positions.

Her discourse lasted almost an hour. When she sat down there was stunned silence. Albion F. Ballenger was one of the first to rise to his feet. He stated something to the effect that "Sister White has described a meeting that some of [us] attended, as accurately as could anyone who was present . . . I was the one who held up a copy of the *Sentinel*, and pointed out the articles that should be left out. The meeting was held in the Review office chapel last evening."⁷ As he did this he took a copy of the most recent *Sentinel* from his pocket, unfolded it, held it up, and pointed to an article in the middle of the front page. He affirmed that that particular article on the Sabbath had been pointed out by him the previous evening as being unsuitable for some readers because it would prejudice them.⁸ He declared: "I am sorry to say that I was on the wrong side; but I take this opportunity to place myself on the right side."⁹ Others followed with similar confessions.

The decision of the night before, that the National Religious Liberty Association would terminate its use of the *Sentinel* unless its editorial policy changed, was reversed later that morning. The testimony of Ellen White propelled the church forward with its distinctive doctrines prominently featured in its religious liberty paper.¹⁰

It reads like a true success story of God's miraculous intervention to prevent a wrong course of action, intervention through His chosen messenger who courageously bears an unpopular testimony and an unlikely story — yet who is graciously received, believed, and obeyed for the betterment of the church and to the glory of God.

White's Pre-Disclosure References

Let us now examine the primary documents in which Ellen White refers to the Salamanca experience, to ascertain the validity of the fundamental facts of the story.

Robert Olson, Secretary of the Ellen G. White Estate, Washington, DC, has done a masterful job of compiling sixteen possible references in Ellen White's own writings (see Tables 1, 2, and 3). His work is thorough and mostly very objective. He also provides extensive transcripts of adjacent diary entries, plus photocopies of the handwritten originals of many of the pertinent documents (a true rarity for the White Estate!). These

Again, there is no indication of propositional revelation occurring at Salamanca, and certainly no hint of the content of any such revelation.

are reviewed here in chronological sequence; and for the reader's convenience, footnotes provide original references and the location in Olson's compilation (available from the White Estate).

1. Ellen White kept a daily diary in which she recorded the events of the day, comments on her health, attendance at meetings, the state of her accommodations, etc., and some occasional reflections and spiritual lessons she had gleaned in the course of the day. The entry for November 3, 1890, mentions nothing of a vision or revelation from the Lord. However, the November 4, 1890, entry makes an oblique reference to an event the previous evening. The entry probably was made en route from Salamanca to Sands (Stanley), Virginia, and reads: "We

[Ellen White, Willie White, and Sara McEnterfer, Ellen's secretary and traveling companion] were at last seated in the cars and were thankful to be moving. Oh, praise the Lord, I longed to be where I could write out the things that were opened to me the past night. It was the Lord."¹¹ The entry comes to an abrupt end and is followed by another headed by "Sands, Virginea [sic]."

2. On Sabbath, November 8, 1890, Ellen White addressed an 8:30 a.m. meeting at Sands, Virginia. Her diary entry for that day makes a very brief reference to the Salamanca experience: "I sought to revive their [those attending the morning meeting] faith by relating my experience in Salamanca. Hearts seemed to be touched."¹² No details of the nature of the "experience" are recorded; it may refer to her "vision," or possibly only to the renewal of strength she realized in the midst of sickness at Salamanca.¹³

3. Around November 14, 1890, Ellen White wrote a letter to Albert Harris from Brooklyn, New York, briefly describing her travel thus far. For the first time she provides a little insight into the nature of what actually happened on the evening of November 3, 1890. "Here [Salamanca] I spoke three times to the people, my head still afflicted. When almost discouraged thinking I must give up my future appointments, when as I knelt to pray, suddenly the glory of the Lord shone around about me. The whole room seemed to be filled with the presence of God. I was happy, so happy, I did not sleep scarcely any of that night because of gladness of heart and peace and comfort from the Lord which passeth knowledge. I said nothing more about returning home [to Battle Creek], but went to the depot in a snow storm [to continue on to Sands, Virginia]."¹⁴ Again, there is no indication of propositional revelation occurring at Salamanca, and certainly no hint of the content of any such revelation.

4. The fourth reference listed by Olson as a "possible" one makes no reference to Salamanca whatsoever. It is the diary entry for November 25, 1890, from Brooklyn, New York, and is introduced with: "During the night I have been in communion with God."¹⁵ She goes on to complain of the politics, vanity, and selfishness of leaders in the councils at Battle Creek and to warn of the perils that will follow if these men are not sanctified. She does claim that "the past, present, and future, were plainly revealed to me";¹⁶ but her insights seem to be gleaned in the night of November 24-25, not November 3 at Salamanca. Olson gives no explanation for why he lists this as a potential reference to Salamanca (see Item 12).

5. The next "possible" reference also does not mention Salamanca. The portion that closely parallels Ellen White's later description of what she claimed to see at Salamanca reads as follows:

The people of the world will try to induce us to soften our message, to suppress one of its more distinctive features. They say: "Why do you in your teaching make the seventh-day Sabbath so prominent? This seems to be always thrust before us; we should harmonize with you if you would not say so much on this point; keep the seventh-day Sabbath out of the *Sentinel*, and we will give it our influence and support." And there has been a disposition on the part of some of our workers to adopt this policy.

I am bidden to warn you that deceptive sentiments are entertained, a false modesty and caution, a disposition to withhold the profession of our faith. In the night season, matters have been presented before me that have greatly troubled my mind. I have seemed to be in meetings for counsel where these subjects were discussed, and written documents were presented, advocating concession. Brethren, shall we permit the world to shape the message that God has given us to bear to them? So then as well might the patient prescribe the remedies that are to be used for his cure.

Shall we, for the sake of policy, betray a sacred trust? If the world is in error and delusion, breaking the law of God, is it not our duty to show them their sin and danger? We must proclaim the third angel's message.¹⁷

This passage cannot be viewed as evidence that a divine revelation was provided at Salamanca to Ellen White to give her knowledge of a meeting that had not yet occurred.

Olson's inclusion of this document in his list of "possible" references to Salamanca is based on its similarity to her *later* references to Salamanca.¹⁸ There is no intrinsic, internal evidence to link it to Salamanca at all. This is what has come to be known as Manuscript 16, 1890, written from Lynn, Massachusetts, and is dated to approximately December 4, 1890. This writer is not aware of how this date is established. The question arises: If this manuscript was written on or around December 4, 1890, how might this knowledge of a desire to downplay the Sabbath in the *Sentinel* have come to Ellen White? Her claim is that matters were presented to her in the night season. Of course this may well be true, but it is not verifiable. Nor does she explain who presented the matters to her. There was ample possibility for communication between Battle Creek and the itinerant prophetess. Willie had left for Battle Creek on November 12 and had rejoined his mother by November 24. He had been recalled urgently by Elder Olsen, the General Conference president.¹⁹ Also, Brother Chadwick from Battle Creek, was with Ellen White on her journey until November 24.²⁰ And Ellen White wrote and received many letters during her travels. A variety of church leaders were lobbying with both Ellen White and her son by letter and in person. It is perfectly reasonable to suppose that the presentation she received in the night seasons was not unrelated to material she was receiving directly from Battle Creek by human sources. This is especially true because the *Sentinel* editors, the Religious Liberty Association, and the *Sentinel's* publishers at the Pacific Press, had been quarreling over the matter for some time.

6. On January 9, 1891, Ellen White wrote a manuscript after returning to Battle Creek, reflecting on her nearly three months of travels and preaching. She recalls the successes and the fact that she spoke fifty-five times, and then comments:

On one occasion I was much perplexed to know and to understand my duty. I had painful gatherings in my ear that with severe colds made it hard for me. At Salamanca, New York, I was severely afflicted and thought I must return home. I went to my chamber and bowed before God, and before I had even asked, the Lord heard, and revealed Himself; the room seemed to be full of the light and presence of God. I was lifted out of all my

discouragements, and was made free and happy. I could not sleep but I praised God with heart and voice. This blessing was just what I needed. Courage and faith and hope were again in lively exercise, and I went on my way rejoicing.²¹

There is no recollection of propositional revelation, or insights relating to a meeting, the *Sentinel*, editorial policy, etc. In this description as with Item 3 above, the experience seems one of physical and spiritual healing.

This concludes our survey of the references to the Salamanca experiences, which were probably written before the March 8, 1891, presentation by Ellen White to the Sunday morning General Conference ministers' meeting. Table 1 summarizes our findings.

What stands out is that there is no clear evidence that up until her March 8, 1891, presentation, Ellen White ever associated her Salamanca experience with the revelation of information about a March 7, 1891, meeting, the *Sentinel*, editorial policy, or de-emphasizing Adventist distinctives. In fact it is not by any means clear that God revealed anything to her at Salamanca. If he did in fact do so, she certainly never hinted, to this point, at what was revealed.

White's References of Indeterminable Date

The next four references to Salamanca are impossible to date precisely. They are typically dated prior to her March 8, 1891, presentation. If the dating could be proven, it would help establish the case for her prophetic powers.

7. This item is located in Diary 16, 1890, on page 289. It follows the entry for November 3, 1890, but precedes the November 4 entry (see Item 1). However, the language and context indicate that it does not belong with either of these entries but is a later insertion back into this section of her diary. It reads:

Weary in body and in much discomfort and pain, I went to my chamber, my sleeping room. I had painful feelings and thought I would be compelled to return to Battle Creek. The season of the year was unfavorable, the weather changeable, and the [rail] cars uncomfortably heated. This prepared us to contract colds, and it seemed presumptuous to attempt to journey from state to state.

I knelt by my chair to pray, feeling disheartened in reference to my journeying. Many appointments were before me. I had not uttered a word when the whole room seemed filled with a soft, silvery light, and my pain and disappointment and discouragement were removed. I was filled with comfort and hope and the peace of Christ.

TABLE 1

Probably written before March 8, 1891

Item No.	Date	Source	Reference to Salamanca
1.	Nov. 4, 1890	Diary 16, p. 290	Things were opened to her.
2.	Nov. 8, 1890	Diary 16, p. 294	She told the experience to an audience in Sands, Virginia.
3.	Circa, Nov. 14, 1890	Letter 72a, 1890	Encouragement, peace, and comfort brought as the glory of the Lord filled her room.
4.	Nov. 25, 1890	Diary 16, pp. 336-338	None.
5.	Circa, Nov. 4, 1890	MS 16, 1890	None.
6.	Jan. 8, 1891	MS 2, 1891	She was lifted from her discouragement and made free, happy, and hopeful as the Lord filled her room with his presence.

"My peace will I give unto you." I knew it was upon me. The presence of Jesus was in the room. Genesis 28:12-15. I could better understand the meaning of these words: "And Jacob . . . said, Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! This is none other but [sic] the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." And he was in a desolate wilderness.

Indeed heaven seemed very near to me, and my heart was filled with joy and gladness. I had no inclination to sleep. I wanted to feast upon the heavenly manna, that bread of life that if we eat thereof we shall live forever. What a night that was to my soul! Every breath was prayer mingled with praise to God.²²

There is a sudden jump in thought from the November 3 entry which described the predicament of Sister Bowen whose husband burned every religious book or paper in her possession,²³ to this description of the refreshing Salamanca experience.²⁴ And there is an equally sudden jump at the end of this page to the entry for November 4.²⁵ Olson rightly points out that the statement, "The season of the year was unfavorable," points back to a substantially earlier period.²⁶ If the season at the time of writing was significantly better than early November, it may well have been written some time after March 8, 1891. But this is only conjecture. The entire passage is written in the past tense and nothing in it suggests the events described had just occurred. She says, "I had no inclination to sleep," a phrase which would have been written in the present tense if this description were an immediate response written late in the evening of November 3 as the diary itself suggests. Likewise, her reflection, "What a night that was to my soul!" could hardly have been written on either November 3 or 4. In a refreshing moment of candor and insight for the White Estate, Olson admits that, "from internal evidence it appears that the lines quoted here were probably written some weeks or even months later [than the Salamanca experience]."²⁷

The bottom of this diary page has a note saying, "Look at the last part of the book headed Salamanca important matter." Pages 450-517 present a long account of what has been believed to be the Salamanca experience, though the passage does not carry the title "Salamanca" (see Items 9 and 10 below). It would be helpful if it could be determined whether this note, which is in her hand, was written at the same time as the rest of this passage following the November 3 diary entry. For if it were, it would date this passage at a date equal to or later than that of pages 450-517. An analysis of the original ink might throw light on this inquiry.

This undatable reference is similar to Items 3 and 6 above, and contains no mention of a meeting, the *Sentinel*, editorial policy, or de-emphasizing Adventist distinctives.

8. There is yet another passage written on the lower portion of diary entries for other days. This one occurs below entries for November 20, 21, and 22, 1890, and spans six pages (Ellen White often allowed two pages for each day's entry). Clearly it was not written on these dates because in the passage she refers to "the facilities here in Battle Creek";²⁸ and she was in Brooklyn, New York, from November 13-25. She did not return to Battle Creek until December 30, 1890; so undoubtedly the entry beneath these days (if made at one time) was made after that date. There is no way to identify or suggest a definitive date for this passage. Olson notes these facts but Arthur White, with less attention to the text of the passage, simply suggests it was written at Brooklyn, New York, in the days immediately following her visit to Salamanca.²⁹

Despite the fact that the entry is introduced with the words, "Nov 21 During the night season,"³⁰ its date of authorship must be later. Olson, who has access to the original diary, advises us that there is a change in ink color following this phrase and suggests that after penning these words she left the rest of the page blank to be filled in at a later time. This she apparently did after her return to Battle Creek on December 30, 1890. Olson also correctly points out that there appear to be descriptions of two divine nocturnal teaching sessions, not one — so possibly each of these occurred at a different time.

The writing on these six pages falls into six portions, which we can represent as follows:

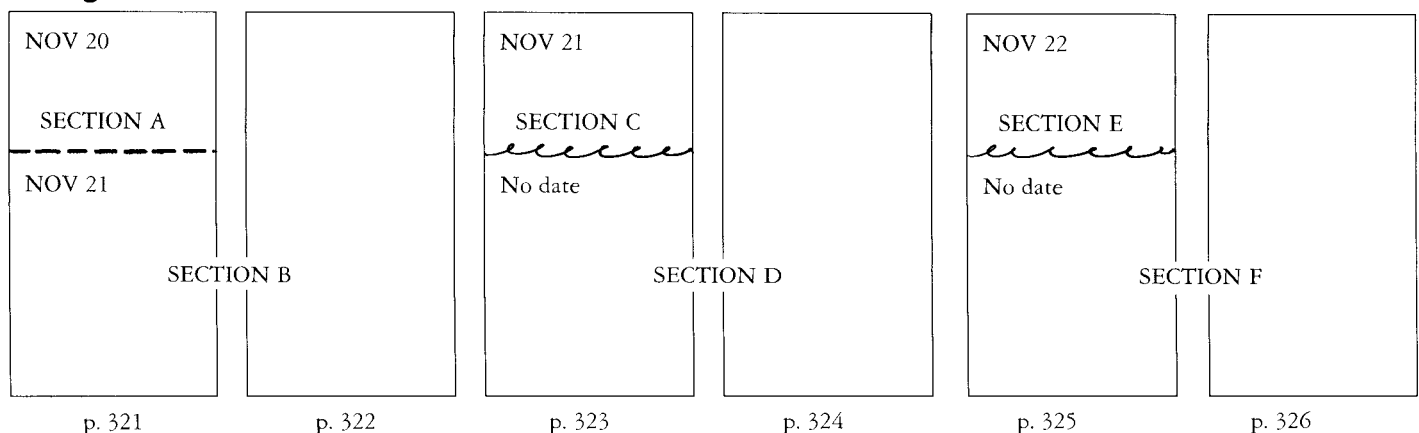
Section A "Brooklyn, N. York City, N.Y., Nov. 20, Thursday. I spoke in the evening at five o'clock and the Lord gave me great freedom before the people. I felt my weakness and I am pleading with God for him to restore me and I believe that he will do it. I am reaching out for stronger faith" (p. 321 of diary).³¹

Section B Beginning, "Nov. 21, during the night seasons I have had special exercises of the Spirit of the Lord . . ." (p. 321). This section is an admonition to Ellen White herself by her "Guide" who instructs her to bear the messages that God gives to her despite the reluctance of those who receive them to accept her testimonies. Despite the adverse circumstances, she is to do her part and leave the rest to God.

Section C "November 21, Friday 1890. I think not [sic] best to attend morning meetings. I am urged by the Spirit of the Lord to write important matters in reference to the work of God for this time and the necessity of the churches reaching a higher standard" (p. 323).

Section D Beginning, "God will have the pure Gospel preached to his people. Selfishness will appear in many ways . . ." (p. 323). This section describes the lack of dependence upon God in the management of the publishing house at Battle Creek. Prayer and self-sacrifice are missing as excessive expenditures are made. There is danger lest the lack of piety and the worldly

Diagram 1



policies that have been adopted lead the institution into secularity.

Section E "November 22, Sabbath, 1890. This morning I have been pleading most earnestly with the Lord for his presence, for the enlightenment which he alone can give me. I wrestled for some time in prayer and I have placed myself decidedly on the Lords [sic] side to believe every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. I will not take myself out of his hands. Infirmities press me at times and my faith is tested severely. Oh that I may never lose sight of Jesus my hope and consolation" (p. 325).

Section F Beginning, "These things have gone just as far as they should without protesting in plain words against them . . ." (p. 325). The writer goes on to explain that during the night she perceived herself to be present in several councils where she heard influential men saying that the American

Olson advises us that there is a change in ink color following this phrase and suggests that after penning these words she left the rest of the page blank to be filled in at a later time.

Sentinel could gain greatly in popularity and influence if it were to refrain from mentioning the Sabbath and omit the words "Seventh-day Adventist" from its pages. Her guide warns against such a practice.

Four facts confirm that passages B, D and F were written at a different time from the diary entries they append: the change in ink; a scrawled line beneath sections C and E, thus separating them from what follows; the observable difference in calligraphy, the regular diary entries being larger and freer in style; and the thought sequence essentially flows through sections B, D and F (though F may be separate) and is disjoint from sections A, C and E which constitute routine, mundane diary entries.

Why Ellen White created the impression that this material was written on November 21, 1890, is not known. Even if she put the date in on November 21 and then returned later to fill out the details, she had the opportunity to correct the date. It appears that she desired to create the impression that this material originated at that time.

The portion that supposedly relates to the Salamanca experience is Section F, clearly written after November 22, 1890, and reads as follows:

In the night season I was present in several councils, and there I heard words repeated by influential men to the effect that if the *American Sentinel* would drop the words "Seventh-day Adventist" from its columns, and would say nothing about the Sabbath, the great men of the world would patronize it. It would become popular and do a larger work. This looked very pleasing. These men could not see why we could not affiliate with unbelievers and non-professors to make the *American Sentinel* a great success. I saw their countenances brighten, and they began to work on a policy to make the *Sentinel* a popular success.

This policy is the first step in a succession of wrong steps. The principles which have been advocated in the *American Sentinel* are the very sum and substance of the advocacy of the Sabbath, and when men begin to talk of changing these principles, they are doing a work which it does not belong to them to do. Like Uzzah, they are attempting to steady the ark which belongs to God and is under His special supervision. Said my guide to those in these councils, "Who of the men among you have felt the burden of the cause from the first, and have accepted

responsibilities under trying circumstances? Who has carried the burden of the work during the years of its existence? Who has practiced self-denial and self-sacrifice? The Lord made a place for His staunch servants, whose voices have been heard in warning. He carried forward His work before any of you put your hands to it, and He can and will find a place for the truth you would suppress. In the *American Sentinel* has been published the truth for this time. Take heed what you do. 'Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it'"³²

Apart from the inability to date this pericope, and the wrong date penned by Ellen White, there is another problem in identifying this as a reference to the Salamanca experience — there is no reference to Salamanca, explicit or implied. The only way this can be related to Salamanca (like Item 5 above) is by comparing it to Ellen White's later claims that at Salamanca she was shown a divine perspective on the editorial policy of the *American Sentinel*. There is no internal evidence to suggest that this passage records information communicated by God or a heavenly adviser at Salamanca.

One may be inclined to suggest that if Ellen White did not receive this information back on November 21, 1890, in New York, or some other time, she did at least gain this insight from the Lord, somewhere, sometime. Possibly, but we are left with the dilemma that she claimed to have received it at Salamanca. Also, the matters on which she wrote may well have been the subject of ongoing communications to her by a variety of persons who took strong stands on the *Sentinel's* editorial policy. The nature of this text does not permit us to view it as evidence that Ellen White had a revelation from God on November 3, 1890, in Salamanca, New York; or that this revelation depicted a meeting which had not yet occurred but would take place on March 7, 1891.

9. Another problematic passage is that found in Diary 16, pp. 450-452. This is possibly the one referred to at the bottom of page 289 in the material inserted under the November 3, 1890, entry. There a note scribbled in the margin that reads, "Look at the last part of the book headed Salamanca important matter"³³ (see Item 7). The entry for December 31, 1890, occupies pages 447-449. So this passage was evidently written on or after December 31, 1890. The relevant section reads:

I had a very marked experience which I hope never to forget. Through the night season I was in communion with God. I was taken out of and away from myself, and was in different states and assemblies, bearing a decided testimony of reproof and warning.

I was in Battle Creek, and in a council assembled there were ministers and responsible men from the Review Office. There were sentiments advanced and with no very gentle spirit urged to be adopted, which filled me with surprise and apprehension and distress. Years before I had been called to pass over similar ground, and the Lord had revealed to me many things of importance and given me warnings to be given to His people decidedly. I was commanded to hold the same before them perseveringly and not to fail or be discouraged in this work, for the men who ought to live so close to Jesus Christ that they could discern His voice, receive His counsel, and keep His way, would become exalted and would walk in the sparks of their own kindling. They were not spiritual, could not discern the devices of Satan, and were ignorant of his workings in a large degree. They would adopt plans which appeared wise, but Satan was the instigator of these measures. If these men had the molding of the work, God would be dishonored. . . .

Again and again since 1845 the dangers of the people of God have been laid open before me, showing what

would be the perils of the people of God in the last remnant of time. These perils have been shown me down to the present time, and on the night of November 3 there was spread out before me some things I could not comprehend. At the same time assurance was given me that the Lord would not allow His people to be enveloped in the fog of worldly skepticism and infidelity, for Christ would lead all who would follow His voice and be obedient to His commands up from the fog of worldly malaria to the summit above the fog of questioning unbelief, where they might breathe the atmosphere of security and might triumph, standing on the solid Rock, a foundation sure and steadfast.³⁴

While this passage does refer to the Salamanca experience ("on the night of November 3"), it does not refer to the more specific matters that have historically been attributed to the revelation of that evening — the editorial policy of the *American Sentinel*, the de-emphasizing of Adventist distinctives, and the whole course of a particular meeting on March 7, 1891. None of this is mentioned; her theme is that she was encouraged to carry on her work of conviction and providing direction, despite the unpopularity of her views. Though she was in the minority, she was right and God would vindicate her and her viewpoint.

As Robert Olson says, "We do not know when this account was written."³⁵ He suggests it was written in early 1891 but gives no reason for this selection except that it was after December 31, 1890, since it follows the entry for that day. The references to the General Conference Session in March, later in the diary, tend to confirm a date in the first three months of 1891 (see Item 10).

One of the puzzling aspects of this passage is that it is preceded by the words, "A letter written from Salamanca, Nov. 3, 1890."³⁶ It seems that an attempt is made to make a passage written after December 31, 1890, appear to have been written on a specific and strategic date at least two months earlier. Olson lets Ellen White off the hook gently by suggesting, "The words 'A letter written from' appear to have been added at a later date when it may actually have slipped Ellen White's mind as to exactly where she was when she penned these lines. The Nov. 3 date doubtless refers to the subject under discussion, not the date of writing."³⁷

Her diary entry for November 4, 1890, suggests she was not able to write out anything of the Salamanca experience. By this time she had left Salamanca and she still awaited the opportunity to write what she had seen the previous night. If this is true, the passage on pages 450-452 could not have been written on November 3 at Salamanca. And it is virtually inconceivable that having undergone this frustration about not being able to write her thoughts out, that she would later accidentally state that she did write them out at that time. It is difficult to conceive of this as a "slip of the mind."

One final point of interest on this pericope. Ellen White claimed to have had a view of "men from the Review Office." The *American Sentinel* was published by the Pacific Press, not the Review and Herald.

10. More information regarding the Salamanca experience follows in the long section from pages 450 to 517 of her 1890 Diary (Diary 16). It is possibly this entire undated section that is referred to in the note at the foot of page 289 (see Item 7 above). One relevant portion commences on page 457:

At Salamanca November 3, 1890, while bowed in earnest prayer, I seemed to be lost to everything around me, and I was bearing a message to an assembly which seemed to be the General Conference. I was moved by the Spirit of God to say many things, to make most earnest appeals, for the truth was urged upon me that great danger lay before those at the heart of the work.

I had been, and still was, bowed down with distress of body and of mind. It seemed to me that I must bear a message to our people at Battle Creek. The words were to be in earnest. "Speak the words that I shall give thee, to prevent their doing things which would separate God from the publishing house [the Review and Herald] and sacrifice pure and holy principles which must be maintained."³⁸

At least this is how Olson presents it. A glance at the handwritten manuscript suggests a different text — as in fact it frequently does. It clearly reads, "Salamanca [sic] Nov. 3, 1890 (copied) While bowed in . . ."³⁹ The copy starts with "While . . ." with the place and date functioning as a heading to the copy that follows. Again we have an attempt to date the passage back to Salamanca on November 3, 1890 —

It seems that an attempt is made to make a passage written after December 31, 1890, appear to have been written on a specific and strategic day at least two months earlier.

notwithstanding Ellen White's earlier statement that she could not write it out on November 4.

The other relevant reference in this sixty-eight page passage to what is considered to be the Salamanca experience is on pages 506-507:

I was present in one of your councils. One arose, and in a very earnest, decided manner, held up a paper. I could read the heading plainly — *American Sentinel*. There were criticisms made upon the articles published therein. It was declared that this must be cut out, and that must be changed. Strong words were uttered and a strong unChristlike spirit prevailed. My guide gave me words to speak to the ones who were present who were not slow to make their accusations.

In substance I will state the reproof given: That there was a spirit of strife in the midst of the council. The Lord had not presided in their councils and their minds and hearts were not under the controlling influence of the Spirit of God. Let the adversaries of our faith be the ones to instigate and develop the plans which are being formed. While not all the plans are objectionable, principles are being brought in which will dishonor God. . . .⁴⁰

This portion comes some fifty pages after the last reference to Salamanca, but is generally held to be an authentic recollection of what was perceived at Salamanca and related on March 8, 1891, — an insight into the March 7, 1891 meeting some four months prior to its occurrence. Olson suggests that the words after page 510 of the diary "may have been written early Sunday morning, March 8, 1891,"⁴¹ and seems to imply that previous portions such as the one above from page 507 would have been written earlier as a genuine anticipation of the meeting which had not yet occurred. Back on page 500 the author refers to the year 1891, which is not surprising since the 1890 daily diary entries finished with December 31 on page 449. On page 510 she refers to "this body assembled in this house in General Conference," almost certainly referring to the General Conference Session which commenced on March 5, 1891, and lasted three weeks. So the best we can date this piece is between December 31, 1890, and March 26, 1891. Whether it was written before or after the March 7 meeting, or Ellen White's account on March 8, cannot be determined.

We have just reviewed the four references to the Salamanca experience which cannot be dated with any certainty. Table 2 summarizes our findings.

There are two facts that stand out from this survey. One, all of these diary entries which in truth cannot be dated with any precision, appear under dates that would normally be considered the date of authorship. It is most disconcerting, and certainly baffling for the student of this subject, to encounter this repeated attempt to misdate writings on the Salamanca experience and the March 7, 1891, meeting. It may be unkind to project motives here, but it would be equally unwise to overlook the consistency with which this phenomenon occurs.

Two, the references to Salamanca (or the evening of November 3) never refer to the *American Sentinel*, the Sabbath, editorial policy, or the matters that appear to have been the key matters discussed at the famed meeting in the Review building on the evening of March 7, 1891. Items 9 and 10a link Salamanca and administrative problems at the Review and Herald in Battle Creek but do not refer to the *Sentinel*, which was published by the Pacific Press in New York. Curiously, it seems that the White Estate selects out references to the *Sentinel* and a meeting where its editorial policy was discussed, and claim these as deriving from the Salamanca experience (Items 8 and 10b). Ellen White, however, doesn't quite seem to do this (at least to this point, but see Item 11) though Item 10b does appear in a connected sequence to a reference to Salamanca some fifty pages earlier (Item 10a). This act on the part of the modern White Estate seems to be in the same tradition as the acts of Ellen White herself, who misdated four passages to consistently indicate her access to information at a date earlier than the actual time of writing.

For those who are dedicated to the integrity of Ellen White

and her heritage, these facts are alarming and disappointing.

White's Post Disclosure References

Olson lists another six references to the Salamanca experience, all dated after the March 7 and 8, 1891, meetings. Since these are less critical to our purpose of ascertaining the usefulness of this story in verifying Ellen White's prophetic powers, we shall treat them briefly.

11. In her diary entry for March 11, 1891, Ellen White narrates what happened on the morning of March 8, 1891. This after-the-fact account is the first in which she links Salamanca and the conflict over the *Sentinel*. The passage reads:

I awakened in the morning with the decided impression that I should go into the ministers' meeting, and bear the message which the Lord had given me at Salamanca, New York, in our three months' tour. I went into the meeting and bore the testimony given of God in the demonstration of the Spirit and power of God. I told them the Lord had opened before me many things.

In the night season my Guide said, "Follow Me." I was taken to a council of men, where a zeal and an earnestness were manifest, but not according to knowledge. One held up the *Sentinel*, and then made remarks entirely contrary to the principles of our faith. The particulars of this are given in my diary of 1890. The message given made a deep impression on all those present.

Brother Ballenger, deeply affected, arose and said, "I was in that council meeting which was held last night until a late hour, and Sister White has described it accurately. The very words she says she heard spoken were spoken last night. I was on the wrong side of the question,

TABLE 2

Cannot be dated with any certainty

Item No.	Date/ Location	Source	Reference to Salamanca
7.	Between diary entries for Nov. 3 & 4, 1890; but written considerably later.	Diary 16, p. 289	Description of discomfort and discouragement, which, after the room was filled with a soft, silvery light, was transformed to feelings of comfort, hope, and gladness, and a sensation of the presence of Jesus and heaven.
8.	Below diary entries for Nov. 20, 21 & 22, 1890; but probably written after Dec. 30, 1890.	Diary 16, pp. 321-326.	No reference to Salamanca, but a description of her recollection of "several councils" she attended "in the night season" — influential men claimed that the <i>American Sentinel</i> would be better received without the words "Seventh-day Adventist" — and her commentary and that of her "guide" on the danger of such a course.
9.	Commences on page after conclusion of December 31, 1890 entry; written Dec. 31, 1890, or later.	Diary 16, pp. 450-452.	Relates a "marked experience" where she saw herself bringing reproof and warning to various assemblies; a meeting in Battle Creek with leaders from the Review Office caused her much distress; she was encouraged to oppose their course which was inspired by Satan; on the night of November 3, 1890 (i.e. at Salamanca), she saw things she could not comprehend, but she was reassured that God would continue to lead his people.
10a.	In section following Dec. 31, 1890, entry; written between Dec. 31 and March 26, 1891.	Diary 16, p. 457.*	A description of her distress on November 3, 1890, followed by her perception of herself addressing the General Conference with earnest appeals; she was instructed to speak words that would be provided to prevent actions which would separate God from the Review and Herald publishing house.
b.	Ditto.	Diary 16, pp. 506-507.*	No reference to Salamanca, but a description of her observations and reproof as she "attended" (presumably "in vision") a council where the <i>American Sentinel</i> was criticized.

*These two references could have been treated separately, but I have chosen to retain Olson's numeration system while dividing Item 10 into parts a. and b., since they seem to this writer to be distinct.

and now take my position on the right side." His testimony was well wet down with tears and humble confession.

I was greatly astonished. I thought that this meeting had been held at the time it was presented to me.

My soul is exceeding troubled. The publishing institutions are receiving a mold that is not after the similitude of God.⁴²

As has been belabored above, though Ellen White dated four items in 1890, and though she here refers to her "diary of 1890," nevertheless the "particulars" of which she writes here were outlined in 1891 (Item 10). Unfortunately, this passage also provides the appearance of foreknowledge when there is no evidence to support it.

12. The next reference occurs in a letter to Dr. W. P. Burke at the St. Helena Health Retreat, and is thought to be dated in October 1891. It reads:

While at Salamanca, New York, in November, 1890, I had a very remarkable experience. I had been greatly afflicted and discouraged in consequence of physical suffering. The pain in my head and ears was almost unbearable, yet I filled my appointments. The last time I spoke, because of gatherings in my head I told my son I must return home at once, although important meetings were before me in Brooklyn, New York, and Washington, DC. I could scarcely hear my own voice and was so weak I staggered as I walked. I went to my chamber and knelt to pray when the whole room was lighted up with the presence of Jesus. I was lifted above all discouragement and was made all light in the Lord and praised Him aloud. This night many things were opened before me in regard to our institutions. The condition of conferences and churches was shown me and I immediately wrote out many things in my diary.⁴³

Here the panorama of concern is broader than previously. No longer is the problem the situation at the Review in Battle Creek, but the condition of "institutions . . . conferences and churches."

Her statement that she "immediately" wrote out many things is perplexing in light of her November 4 entry expressing frustration for not being able to write out what she perceived the previous night. The question naturally arises, If she wrote these things out immediately in her diary, where in her diary are they to be found? Clearly there *is no* "immediate" record. Olson suggests that the November 25, 1890, diary entry (pp. 335-342) may qualify⁴⁴ (see Item 4). This seems reasonable except, the passage begins with, "During the night I have been in communion with God,"⁴⁵ suggesting that what follows were divine revelations of that evening, not back in Salamanca some three weeks earlier. The November 25 diary entry has another strange idiosyncrasy. It is a diary entry made in Brooklyn, New York, and yet she can write "many come here" and "in this place," referring to Battle Creek! This kind of thing leaves the reader bewildered. Was she also subject to transportation during her nocturnal illumination sessions? Maybe this passage under November 25 was written after December 31, 1890, when she was back in Battle Creek, just as the entries below November 20-22 were written at later times (see Item 8 above). The mystery remains — where did she "immediately" write the "many things" seen at Salamanca?

13. In 1892 a fourteen-page pamphlet, "Danger in Adopting Worldly Policy in the Work of God," was published. It drew primarily upon the material in Diary 16, pp. 450-517 (see Items 9 and 10 above). It is now largely reproduced in *Life Sketches*, pp. 319-330, and *Testimonies to Ministers*, pp. 460-471. A glance at the pamphlet indicates significant editing, which is hardly surprising considering the draft nature of the diary entries — they were surely not written as publication-ready copy!

14. More than two years after the Salamanca experience, it was still vivid in Ellen White's mind. While in Melbourne, Australia, on January 9, 1893, a similar event occurred. When describing it to Captain C. Eldridge in Battle Creek she likened it to her November 3, 1890, experience:

During the night I . . . passed through an experience similar to that which I had at Salamanca, New York, two years ago. When I awoke from my first short sleep, light seemed to be all around me, the room seemed to be full of heavenly angels. The Spirit of God was upon me, and my heart was full to overflowing. Oh, what love was burning in my heart!⁴⁶

It is most disconcerting, and certainly baffling . . . to encounter this repeated attempt to misdate writings on the Salamanca experience and the March 7, 1891, meeting.

15. Again from Australia, on May 16, 1898, she recalls the Salamanca experience when relating her concern for the condition of the whole Michigan Conference. Leaders have "trusted in man and made flesh their arm" but must "turn to the Lord with all the heart."

The present existing state of things was made to pass before me while I was at Salamanca, and I then gave testimony before those assembled in the tabernacle. I did not speak my own words, but the words of the Lord. The power of God was upon me. Cautions, warnings, and reproof have been given to the men in responsible positions.⁴⁷

Here the scope of the Salamanca experience is the whole Michigan Conference. At other times it has been various states and assemblies, councils, the church at Battle Creek, the General Conference, the Review office, churches, institutions, and responsible brethren. What is not clear is what was *not* included in the Salamanca vision. Possibly the common thread is that of dependence upon human wisdom rather than divine. This appears as a fairly consistent motif when she refers to the warnings she perceived at Salamanca.

This may be an appropriate juncture to mention a point observable in the previous items but illustrated graphically in the last two (14 and 15). Sometimes her references to Salamanca are to the sense of joy and peace she experienced when discouraged. Others are to a revelation regarding the condition of the church or its institutions. With this there is sometimes admonition for her to proceed with her heaven-granted assignment of reproof. These two vastly different perspectives on Salamanca seem to this writer to be incompatible, though, in the visionary world of the prophet, perhaps all things are possible.

16. The final post-incident reference is Ellen White's most extensive. This is the second time she links the Salamanca experience and the matter of the *Sentinel* (see also Item 11); and in this case, now fourteen years after the incident, she connects them explicitly and repeatedly. Her dual purposes were to bring conviction to Albion F. Ballenger who was on trial for his heretical views of Christ's entry into the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary, and to validate her prophetic authority.

After retelling the Salamanca vision story and its effect on her astonished General Conference listeners on the morning of March 8, 1891, she stressed: "The circumstances were such that on this occasion the excuse could not possibly be used, 'Somebody has told her.' No one had an opportunity to see

me or speak with me between the evening meeting [March 7, 1891] and the morning meeting that I attended [March 8]."⁴⁸ Olson, obviously a little sensitive about the misdated diary entries, correctly states:

Ellen White's position is very clear. She believed that God supernaturally led in this experience because the details of the secret midnight meeting were revealed to her before it took place, and because she was able to relate that information publicly before anyone had opportunity to tell her about it. She made no point of the time when she recorded these details in her diary."⁴⁹

On this later point Olson has admitted that at least some details of the meeting could not be recalled until right around the time the meeting actually convened, and that she possibly wrote some of her ensuing commentary *after* it occurred, early on the morning of March 8, 1891.⁵⁰

The entire relevant portion of this manuscript is cited earlier in Box 1 and need not be repeated here.

Our findings in these final six primary references by Ellen White to her Salamanca experience, written after the event she claimed to have seen in advance, are summarized below.

The Salamanca Scorecard

These sixteen references exhaust our primary sources for information about the November 3, 1890, and March 8, 1891,

events. So the question must now be asked: Is there evidence here to conclude that this story constitutes a verification of Ellen White's prophetic powers? Earlier we suggested four essential claims that should be confirmed for this episode to have such apologetic value. We now examine these.

1. *Ellen White had a revelation from God on November 3, 1890, in Salamanca, New York.* There is no reason to question the fact that Ellen White indeed had an extraordinary experience on the evening of November 3, 1890, in Salamanca, New York. After that date she clearly refers to it on twelve occasions.⁵¹ However there *is* reason to question whether this involved a revelation from God.

The first eight items do not relate anything that God revealed to her at Salamanca. In fact only the first one suggests that anything was revealed at all. It is not until *after* March 8, 1891, that we have a definitively dated statement revealing the supposed content of the revelation at Salamanca. The fact that she can often refer to the Salamanca experience, and not mention any revelation, makes one doubt whether any substantial revelation did in fact occur. And further, when we do hear of revelation, it is *after* the incident that was supposedly revealed previously, thus providing a clear motive and method for such a claim to be made. The references with uncertain dates of composition (Items 9 and 10a) hardly help because they too may have been written on or after March 8, 1891.

Regretfully, what we do not have is a clear, early statement: "I received a revelation from God at Salamanca. And this is

TABLE 3

Written after the event (March 8, 1891)

Item No.	Date	Source	Reference to Salamanca
11.	Mar. 11, 1891	Diary 17, pp. 111-112.	Description of the events on the morning of March 8, 1891, including the impression that she was to relate what she had received at Salamanca the previous year; claims that what she saw at Salamanca was a meeting where the <i>Sentinel</i> was discussed; narrates the successful impact of her presentation, and her astonishment.
12.	October, 1891	Letter 48, 1891.	Description of her physical ailments while at Salamanca, and the encouragement from the presence of Jesus in the evening experience; claims to have had revelations concerning institutions, conferences, and churches, and to have written these immediately.
13.	1892	"Danger in Adopting Worldly Policy in the Work of God," a 14-page pamphlet.	A published, edited version of the material in Diary 16, pp. 450-517. See Items 9 & 10 above.
14.	Jan. 9, 1893	Letter 20a, 1893.	She likens a present experience to what happened at Salamanca — surrounded in light, a seeming presence of angels, the Spirit's presence, and a full heart. No suggestion of revelation.
15.	May 16, 1898	Letter 41, 1898.	A brief mention of both her experience at Salamanca and her discourse to the General Conference on March 8, 1891. Emphasizes that God provided the words of reproof she spoke.
16.	May 20, 1905	MS 59, 1905	In the context of narrating a discussion with Albion F. Ballenger, she describes a conversation with him as well as the Salamanca story. She claims to have seen Ballenger in vision at Salamanca opposing references to the Sabbath in the <i>Sentinel</i> . Describes her physical condition and regained strength at Salamanca, and the revelation she received regarding the <i>Sentinel</i> and historical Adventist doctrine. Then she tells the story of being awakened prior to the General Conference morning meeting, attending and telling her Salamanca experience, her surprise that the meeting had occurred the previous night, and the confession and reversal of policy that followed.

what he told me" Instead, we have many statements about a healing, renewing experience; and several months later, the idea of revelation is added. Further, there is no clear, precise pattern to the statements of what was revealed.

So we are left with the question unsettled as to whether she did or did not hear a word from God on November 3, 1890.

2. *This revelation depicted a meeting which had not yet occurred but would take place on March 7, 1891.* No references that with any confidence can be dated prior to March 7, 1891, make mention of the meeting. Thus, there is no verification of the claim that she knew of the meeting prior to its occurrence. Once again, there are statements connecting the Salamanca experience and the March 7 and 8, 1891, meetings; but they are either of an unknown date or dated after the meetings in question. Consequently there may be a claim to foreknowledge but *no evidence exists* to support the claim.

3. *The Lord, or an angelic visitor on his behalf, brought the information of the "vision" of November 3, 1890, to her mind early in the morning of March 8, 1891.* This is her claim at the March 8 meeting as reported by herself (Items 11 and 16) and by a number of individuals who heard her relate the experience. Clearly, this cannot be verified. We can hardly presume to know precisely what happened in Ellen White's bedroom on a given morning. However, we can hear her claim and test its likelihood. This we shall do.

4. *The primary (and, one hopes, secondary) documents providing the facts of these incidents are trustworthy and reliable.* Sadly, on this point we seem to be faced with a series of serious problems. Frankly, the degree of internal consistency is not at all impressive. The following is a sampling of the problems of conflicting evidence confronting the meticulous student of this topic.

- a. What was she doing when the experience at Salamanca occurred? She was bowed in prayer (Items 3, 6, 7, 10, and 16), or awaking from sleep (Item 14).
- b. What meeting did she see? The March 7, 1891, meeting from which she was absent (Items 9, 10b, 11, and 16), or the March 8, 1891, meeting where she addressed the General Conference (Item 10a).
- c. Did she write out the revelation immediately? Yes she did (Item 12), or perhaps she wished to but could not (Item 1).
- d. What actually constituted the Salamanca experience? A renewed physical strength and courage to continue her preaching itinerary despite difficulties (Items 3, 6, 7, and 14), or a revelation from God concerning the state of the church or a particular meeting (Items 9, 10a, 11, and 16).
- e. What was the scope of the revelation? Different states and assemblies (Item 9); a meeting in Battle Creek at the Review office (Item 9); the General Conference (Item 10), the publishing house (Item 10); the Michigan Conference (Item 10); or institutions, conferences, and churches (Item 12).

In some instances the options are not mutually exclusive. However, these types of fundamental variations as the story is narrated have a seriously detrimental impact upon its credibility.

Perhaps more serious is the apparent wrecklessness with the dating of some of the key documents. It is disturbing that no less than four of the sixteen documents Olson presents are in fact undated. Even more serious is the fact that all of these bear apparent dates which suggest authorship earlier than the actual date of composition. Ellen White's habit of going back and writing additional information under previous diary entries is most peculiar. In a regular book manuscript this would be anticipated, but hardly in a day-by-day diary—and especially when

the subject matter inserted at a later date corresponds to what is claimed to be a prior revelation right around the date under which the entry is made. The appearance of evil is then strong. The evidently false dating of these is a serious business that should become the basis for a more extensive study of White Estate manuscripts to ascertain the extent of this practice. In light of these facts, the trustworthiness and reliability of the primary documents would have to be questioned by the objective analyst.

Clearly then, we do *not* have adequate evidence here to treat this anecdote as a verification of Ellen White's prophetic powers. We have a clarion claim to such, but insufficient evidence available to the historical researcher to make the claim anywhere near credible. Those who view it as proof positive of foreknowledge and divine insight are arbitrarily positioning their faith in a manner designed to arrive at a predetermined, desirable outcome. In doing so they overlook or underrate certain key facts within the historical records. Of course, for some it is

Ellen White's habit of going back and writing additional information under previous diary entries is most peculiar.

much simpler: "Mrs. White said it proved her true, so I believe it does." The frightening consequences of such mindless submission are not difficult to imagine.

How Did She Know?

But of course, one crucial question remains. Since Ellen White did in fact address the General Conference on the morning of March 8, 1891, how *did* she know of the meeting the previous evening which she evidently described so accurately just hours after it concluded? The only statements we have from Ellen White on this subject insist that she "saw" it months earlier at Salamanca. "I awakened in the morning with a decided impression that I should go into the ministers' meeting, and bear the message which the Lord had given me at Salamanca, New York, in our three months' tour. I went into the meeting and bore the testimony given of God in the demonstration of the Spirit and power of God. I told them the Lord had opened before me many things."⁵² If knowledge via a divine revelation cannot be proven, is there evidence for another source of information that enabled this remarkable feat? This brings us to sources originating with witnesses to her March 8, 1891, presentation and their accounts of the meeting on the evening of March 7, 1891, and the events early in the morning of March 8, 1891.⁵³

The Conclusion of the Evening Meeting, and Ellen White's Arising

Accounts of when the Saturday evening meeting in the Review office concluded, March 7, 1891, differ significantly. A. T. Robinson puts it "after midnight";⁵⁴ in his other manuscript he suggests it was about 1:00 a.m.;⁵⁵ O. A. Johnson et al.⁵⁶ and *Life Sketches*⁵⁷ put it after 1:00 a.m. But O. A. Olsen,⁵⁸ Edna Kilbourne Steele,⁵⁹ and Arthur White⁶⁰ — none of whom were present — all place the terminus around 3:00 a.m. It is impossible to be dogmatic about this matter; but if one is to give priority to the witness of those who were present, Robinson's 1:00 a.m. conclusion would be the most probable.

Accounts also vary somewhat regarding when Ellen White was awakened. Her diary for March 8, 1891, gives no time for her awakening.⁶¹ Robinson says she was awakened after midnight and writing since 1:00 a.m. — the same time he gives for the conclusion of the meeting in the Review office.⁶² Johnson,⁶³

F. F. Wilcox,⁶⁴ Arthur White,⁶⁵ and Olsen⁶⁶ all put her rising around 3:00 a.m. Olsen's manuscript originally gave the rising time as 4:00 a.m., but later manuscripts have been editorially altered to read 3:00 a.m. Steele does not give an exact time but says Ellen White had been writing for some time prior to 5:00 a.m.⁶⁷

Not only do the times for Ellen White's awakening vary, but there is also a discrepancy in the account of the manner in which she awoke. She claimed that the Lord awoke her in the night and instructed her to bear a testimony to the ministers at the Tabernacle on Sunday morning. But at about 5:00 a.m. she told her secretary, Sara McEnterfer, that she was not planning to attend the meeting that morning.⁶⁸ Arthur White implies that Ellen White made this statement the previous day; this contradicts all the documentary evidence.⁶⁹

O. A. Olsen's testimony has been altered at this point. His original statement went as follows: "... at 4 o'clock she was awakened, someone taking hold of her arm waking her up; and she then arose immediately, got ready, and gathered up her matter, and came to the meeting." The carbon-copy manuscript of this on file in the Ellen G. White Research Center at Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan, has original red pencil alterations on it. It is the altered version that has usually been duplicated and distributed by the White Estate. The editorially altered version reads: "... at 3 o'clock she had been awakened, had arisen immediately, and after gathered [*sic*] up what she had written, had come to the meeting."⁷⁰ The time is changed and the portion about being taken by the arm and awakened has been omitted.

Accounts of what Ellen White did between her arising and arrival at the early morning meeting also differ. According to L. A. Hoopes her mind was exercised about her Salamanca experience, and she was bidden to write what she saw in that vision. This she proceeded to do.⁷¹ Wilcox declares that an angel "told her to write out the instruction given her in Salamanca several months previously;" she did this and read from the manuscript at the meeting.⁷² Likewise, Johnson⁷³ states that she wrote out what was shown her at Salamanca, as does Robinson.⁷⁴

But the accounts of Steele, Olsen, and Arthur White vary significantly. Steele, who was staying in the room beside Ellen White and ate breakfast with her immediately after the morning meeting, states: "After she [Ellen White] had told Sara [McEnterfer] to go back to bed [just before 5:00 a.m.⁷⁵], she was suddenly and strongly impressed to dress quickly and to take that manuscript she had written so many months before, and to go to that early ministers' meeting."⁷⁶ Steele also agrees that Ellen White had been up before this time writing.⁷⁷ So,

"No one had an opportunity to see me or speak with me between the evening meeting and the morning meeting that I attended." — Ellen G. White

according to Steele, Ellen White, after she arose, wrote, but not on the topic of the Salamanca vision, and then around 5:30 a.m. gathered up a manuscript written months earlier and took it to the meeting with her.

Olsen's statement is open to interpretation: she "gathered up what she had written."⁷⁸ It is not clear from this whether he believed her to have done the writing that morning or at an earlier time. Arthur White's view is that "she dressed, went to her bureau, took from it the journal in which she had made the record of what had been shown to her at Salamanca. As the scene came clearly to her mind, she wrote more to go with it."⁷⁹

All maintain that she did write something. All except Steele

maintain that what she wrote drew upon the Salamanca vision. Arthur White has the added touch that her writing was by way of addition to earlier writing she had done on the topic. Ellen White's diary for March 8, 1891 (written after her presentation to the brethren), makes no reference to her writing in the morning.

Some of the above accounts may appear to imply that the Salamanca vision had not been written out until the morning of March 8, 1891. Three testify that this is not the case. Olsen says that the Salamanca vision was "then and there written," and at Battle Creek she was simply impressed to relate it.⁸⁰ Arthur White declares: "In the days that followed [the Salamanca experience] she recorded in her journal that which she was not allowed to tell the men in Salamanca."⁸¹ What White goes on to cite from ("the handwritten record in our vault") is from pages 325-326 of her 1890 diary (Item 8, Section F) — the portion whose dates and occasion of authorship are indeterminate. If he has special knowledge relating this writing to the Salamanca experience, he should make public the reasoning behind his conclusion. Steele wrote regarding Salamanca: "While fresh in her mind she had written what had been presented to her in a little black, clothbound book which was a dummy for 'B. D. & S.' (It was a dummy for Edson White's Cook Book which he published under the title, 'Breakfast, Dinner and Supper.')"⁸²

Steele wrote to Arthur White, August 11, 1946, disagreeing with Wilcox on exactly this point. She said: "In Elder Wilcox's article in the Bulletin he states that she aroused at 3 A.M. that same night and wrote out what she had seen. But as I remember it was already written some six [actually, four] months before while at Salamanca, N.Y., as I remember also it was written in an old B.D. & S. dummy . . . She had written it all out in such complete detail so many months before."⁸³ Steele believed that Ellen White wrote in the early hours of the morning, but not on the topic of the Salamanca vision.

Though Arthur White gives no rationale for his position that Ellen White wrote out the Salamanca vision soon after it was received and then added to it in the early hours of the morning on March 8, this would tend to reconcile the varying testimonies. If the portion about the *Sentinel* below the November 22 diary entry is the original portion written concerning her revelation at Salamanca (and there is no evidence to support this, see Item 8), then the question remains, what and where is the portion written in the small hours of the morning of March 8? Could the portion about the *Sentinel* from the back of her handwritten journal for 1890 (around pages 506-507, see Item 10) be what was added? Robert Olson suggests that it was the portion about the General Conference (page 510); he evidently prefers to leave the portion about the *Sentinel* dated earlier rather than having it written after the meeting it is supposed to predict.⁸⁴

Arthur White's positions on this story seem quite ambiguous. According to him, Ellen White could not relate the vision on the morning of November 4, 1890, when she tried twice to relate it to Robinson and Willie White.⁸⁵ Nor could she tell it as she tried on three occasions on Saturday afternoon, March 7, 1891.⁸⁶ But he asserts that she had in fact written it out, at which time she obviously could recall it and at least relate it in writing, and where she could review it as she pleased.⁸⁷ His position seems to be that she could recall the "vision" but not relate it to others.⁸⁸

Mother and Son Visit

Another problem presents itself regarding what happened in the early hours of March 8 up in Ellen White's bedroom. Edna Kilbourne Steele was a secretary to both Ellen and Willie White. She lived in Ellen White's Battle Creek home, sharing a room next to Ellen's with Sara McEnterfer. In her two accounts of what occurred, Steele points out that Sara rose before 5:00 a.m. to see whether Ellen White wanted to attend the early meeting (notwithstanding Arthur White's implied view that Sara

checked with Ellen White regarding her morning attendance prior to going to bed the previous evening⁸⁹). Sara was assured that Ellen did not intend to attend the Tabernacle that morning. Evidently Ellen White was up, not yet dressed for the meeting, and was either writing or showed signs that she had been writing. Sara's return to the room and a warm bed made a vivid impression

on Steele's mind. She said: "I have never known what flowed from her [Ellen White's] pen during the earlier hours of that morning; but I do know it was not the text of the Salamanca vision. If, earlier in the night, Sister White had been instructed to write out the Salamanca story, and to read it to the ministers in their early morning meeting, she would not have told Sara



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Equal and exact justice to all men, of whatever state or persuasion, religious or political.—Thomas Jefferson.

NUMBER 11.

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resolutions had there been any one to show the injustice of it to the working people, who have to toil daily from early morning until late in the evening. The closing of the World's Fair on Sundays would virtually deprive them of deriving the least benefit from it, and we would rather see that Fair closed all the rest of the week, and open on Sunday, than to see it open every day excepting Sunday.

The laboring men are far from being a unit in favor of Sunday closing.

"What Does the Bible Teach about the Sabbath?"

ists for holding to the fourth commandment as it reads, he says:—

We only are consistent who accept both groups of like evidence, and believe that the seventh day was observed before the Hebrew nation, and that the Lord's day inherited its birthright at the resurrection.

Now the day which has always been observed by the Hebrew nation is "our Saturday." And the seventh day, which was observed before the Hebrew nation, was the identical day which was observed by the Hebrew nation. Also the seventh day which was observed before the Hebrew nation was the original Sabbath. There-

Liberty's Preamble

The Salamanca vision story, with all its miraculous elements and implications, was retold by an apparently unwitting Roland Hegstad as the *Adventist Review* cover story of 15 May 1986, "Liberty Learns A Lesson."

Some clue as to how this kind of insupportable story gets by the *Review* editors at this late date may be gleaned from a statement made to *Currents* in a recent letter from *Review* assistant editor Eugene Durand. We were corresponding about another significant error in Adventist doctrinal history published in an earlier *Review* article by Arthur White (see "Reviewing the *Review*", *Adventist Currents* vol.1, no.5); and Durand suggested that the matter should be taken up with the *Review's* "expert" on Ellen White, Paul Gordon.

Hegstad recounts Ellen White's Salamanca vision story to support his contention that the fortunes of the *American Sentinel*, our first religious liberty magazine, waxed and waned depending on how faithfully its editors followed an apparent imperative of the vision — that Adventist doctrinal distinctives be featured prominently in the *Sentinel's* pages.

Melodramatically, Hegstad writes of the *Sentinel's* "tragic demise" in 1904, fourteen years after the vision, saying that "once again seeking 'a wider sphere of influence,' the *Sentinel* lost its way, its vitality, its circulation, and at last, its life."

But Hegstad's contention that the *Sentinel's* commercial success was dependant on how faithfully it featured Adventist

religious teachings is not supported by either the *SDA Encyclopedia* or the dissertation of Adventist church historian Gilbert Valentine.

The *Encyclopedia* tersely states that *Sentinel* "publication was suspended in 1904" due to "the heavy expense of production and the small circulation."

Valentine, in his doctoral dissertation on the life of W.W. Prescott, page 451, elaborates:

"Religious liberty issues in the Adventist church during the first three or four years of the twentieth century had been temporarily obscured by the internal conflict of the church with Kellogg and the move of church headquarters to Washington. So low a priority did the matter receive, in fact, that the religious liberty journal *Sentinel* was discontinued in 1904 because its circulation was declining and it was running at a loss. According to Prescott, who wrote to W.C. White and his mother for counsel about it, one reason for the declining circulation was that religious liberty was a dead issue at the time."

Hegstad closes his *Review* testimonial by stating that "the Salamanca vision has now become part of the preamble to the editorial policy [of *Liberty* magazine]."

Currents challenges Hegstad to represent accurately the Salamanca vision in the magazine whose editorial policies it is "part of the preamble to."—Ed.

a few minutes before five o'clock that she was not going to the meeting, and for her [Sara] to go back to bed."⁹⁰ Clearly, Ellen White did not want Sara in her room at that time.

This conflicts head-on with the bulk of the testimonies as to what Ellen White actually said at the meeting, namely that the Lord had bidden her to rise and relate the experience at Salamanca concerning the *Sentinel* at the ministers' meeting.

When the story is retold in her diary fourteen years later (May 20, 1905), Ellen White concludes with a curious defense of the veracity of her account: "The circumstances were such that on this occasion the excuse could not possibly be used, 'Someone has told her.' No one had an opportunity to see me or speak with me between the evening meeting and the morning meeting that I attended."⁹¹ Contradicting this, the account in *Life Sketches* states:

Sunday morning, about 5:20 [a.m.] Brethren A. T. Robinson, W. C. White, and Ellery Robinson were passing Mrs. White's residence on their way to the early meeting. They saw a light in her room and her son ran up to inquire about her health.

He found her busily engaged in writing. She then told him that an angel of God had awakened her about three o'clock, and had bidden her go to the ministers' meeting and relate some things shown her at Salamanca. She said that she arose quickly, and had been writing for about two hours.⁹²

Robinson's testimony also states that Willie visited his mother,⁹³ as does one of Steele's.⁹⁴

Arthur White also admits that Willie visited his mother prior to the meeting, but his version has her "dressed and putting on her bonnet" as he entered the room.⁹⁵ In saying this he makes it appear that the time mother and son spent together must have been short. No other accounts contain this feature.

Willie White stayed with his mother and accompanied her to the meeting. "After the meeting was opened Elder W. C. White came in, accompanied by his mother, who had quite a lot of manuscript on her arm."⁹⁶

Ellen White's arrival at the meeting with her son was sometime after its commencement. According to Olsen it was after a period of singing and during the season of prayer.⁹⁷ Others say: after the meeting began;⁹⁸ during the prayer season;⁹⁹ or after 5:30.¹⁰⁰ Hoopes puts her arrival as late as "about 6:00 a.m."¹⁰¹

A conservative estimate would put the amount of time that Willie White spent with his mother at about fifteen minutes (assuming that Arthur's affirmation of her fitting her bonnet does not necessitate us concluding she went directly to the meeting within minutes) and a more generous allocation could grant them close to half an hour together. The question naturally arises: Could Willie White have informed his mother of the events in the Review Office just hours earlier? The answer is a clear, Yes. According to A. T. Robinson, who was staying in the home of Willie White, White was in attendance at the late night meeting the previous evening.¹⁰² Robinson and White were walking to the Tabernacle together when Willie left Robinson to go upstairs and see his mother.¹⁰³ Thus, there is no question that Willie White could well have supplied information about the previous night's meeting to his mother.

So here, as with the primary sources, we do not have a clear-cut, consistent, verifiable story. Unfortunately, we are left with a confusing array of variations which do not leave any strong support for Ellen White's claim that the Lord awakened her and told her to narrate information He had provided earlier.¹⁰⁴ What does emerge from a careful study of these secondary documents is a clear source for how Ellen White may have known of the March 7, 1891, meeting. She was visited by her son who was present at the meeting that concluded just hours earlier in the Review office. Her claim that no one could say

"Someone had told her" is bluntly contradicted by no less an authority than *Life Sketches*, not to mention her own grandson and *de facto* protector, Arthur White. Which family member should we trust on this point?

A Brief Historical Reconstruction

To conclude, I shall propose yet another hypothesis as to what really happened. It should be pointed out that the secondary accounts upon which I have been drawing are really hypotheses of what actually occurred, based, not upon verifiable facts, but upon the reports of persons, and convictions held by the reporters. I too wish to engage in this process, and surely this is the stuff of which much of history is made. It also needs to be pointed out that some seem to approach the interpretation of events such as the Salamanca experience with a presupposition that the more supernatural the account is, or the more pious it appears, the more likely it is to be true. Though a firm believer in the supernatural, this does not seem to this writer to be a sound way of doing history. In the following brief scenario I have simply committed myself to the facts. They seem to suggest a story something like this:

On the night of November 3, in Salamanca, New York, Ellen White had an experience where she sensed a renewal of strength and courage. Possibly she also had some general insights regarding the church, particularly what was happening in Battle Creek. This may be what she wrote about and mailed away on subsequent days (her diary records several such mailings). Her views on this occasion did not include insights into the meeting which convened four months later on March 7, 1891.

In following weeks, resulting from information coming to her from persons she met, including Brother Chadwick who had recently come from the Review, she wrote on a number of occasions concerning the publishing work at Battle Creek. Her concerns were particularly with respect to what she termed "worldly policy" which was determining the management style of the Review. The passage under the November 21 diary entry (Item 8, Section D) is an example of this writing, as is the passage under the November 25 entry (Item 4). The date of Item 8, Section D is indeterminable though it is written in the diary below the entry for November 21, 1890. Possibly persons such as C. H. Jones, manager of the Pacific Press where the *Sentinel* was published, and his associate, D. T. Jones (both of whom attended the March 7, 1891, meeting), had been briefing Ellen White both by mail and in person at the General Conference and preceding meetings. It is unlikely that she was not already quite familiar with the debate.

Could Willie White have informed his mother of the events in the Review office just hours earlier?

On March 8, 1891, she awoke around 3:00 a.m. and rose to work on a manuscript which became the basis for her talk later that morning. This was possibly closely related to her talk on the Sabbath afternoon preceding. Several individuals pointed out the similarity between her talk then and the beginning of her talk on Sunday morning. Before she left for the early meeting, Willie White visited her with information from the meeting in the Review office. He described to her some of its memorable details, including the way Ballenger stood to his feet and pointed out what he wished omitted from the *Sentinel*—undoubtedly a dramatic scene. This correlated with the information she had obtained over the preceding months from various lobbyists.

In addition to the visit from Willie White, another who was returning from the meeting after its conclusion could have called

upon Ellen White. If in fact this meeting did go until 3:00 a.m., it is possible that persons returning home saw Ellen White's light on and took the opportunity to inform her of the character of the meeting. Willie White may have been the *third* nocturnal visitor. Perhaps Robinson visited her at the conclusion of the meeting, for he stated that she had been at work since the same hour the meeting concluded. Or did Olsen take her by the arm and awaken her? Sara visited around 5:00 a.m., and finally Willie a little before 5:30 a.m.

Upon acquiring information about the meeting, she related it in her mind to the "visions" she had received concerning the publishing work and to her sermon the previous day which had focused on standing up for the distinctives of the Adventist

Her claim that no one could say "Someone has told her" is bluntly contradicted by no less an authority than *Life Sketches*.

message. She now incorporated all three ideas (which certainly were capable of relation) into a message that formed the basis for her presentation at the early morning ministers' meeting.

She may also have gone back to her 1890 diary, which Arthur White assures us was present in her bureau, and written in some details about the previous night's meeting. They were not put with the Salamanca entry for November 3 or 4, 1890, but under the entry for November 22, 1891 (Item 8, Section F). Arthur White reminds us that in the early hours of the morning she did in fact add material to what she had written earlier. He has not stated what the added material was; it may have been the information about the *Sentinel* entered under the November 22 diary entry, and probably at least parts of the lengthy section at the back of the 1890 diary, pages 457-517, particularly pages 506-507 about the *Sentinel*.

Ellen White told Sara just before 5:00 a.m. that she did not intend to go to the meeting, for at that time she did not intend to go. She felt the Lord had urged things upon her mind and she had been writing those things out. She may have known about the Review office meeting that finished just a few hours earlier from one such as Robinson, but it was when Willie brought his information that she decided that she must immediately attend the meeting in the Tabernacle. There she presented an amalgamation of the previous day's speech, her ongoing concern for the state of affairs at the Review, her insights into the editorial policy of the *Sentinel*, and specifics of the previous night's meeting, claiming to have received all such information four months earlier at Salamanca.

The decision of the National Religious Liberty Association to drop its use of the *Sentinel* was reversed. Thus her intent was accomplished. Whether the will of the Lord was thereby performed is not, and cannot, be known.

Ellen White's Credibility

Some will be concerned with the implication that Ellen White lied — something of which any of us would find difficult to accuse a religious leader. However, this is not a dilemma that this writer has concocted. The problem faced us once *Life Sketches* was published in 1915 with its admission that Willie White did in fact visit his mother prior to the March 8, 1891, meeting — contradicting her claim in 1905 that no one could possibly suggest she had been informed.

The fact is that the historical reports do not align, and one must choose whom one believes to be inaccurate. The preceding

account, documenting her inaccuracies, contradictions, later insertions, undated manuscripts, and her variety of recollections of what actually occurred at Salamanca, hardly establishes compelling cause to commit ourselves to Ellen White's own view. The scenario I have suggested above is more closely aligned with the preponderance of historical facts, and indeed is more moderate and credible than her own story.

How then is it that a "prophetess" should distort the truth in this way? The answer is simply that she was human and subject to sin as all of us are. Also, at the time of writing the incriminating "no one could have told her" statement, she was 76 years of age, in poor health, and her memory may have been failing. Perhaps most importantly, she had a vested interest in winning the day on March 8, 1891. From her perspective, a fatal error had been made the previous evening, a drastic decision not to use the *Sentinel* because of its editorial stance. She needed to reverse the decision. She felt it was God's will to correct the erroneous position just adopted. Indeed, her will was but an expression of God's will. An opportunity presented itself. There was a "vision" that had occurred on November 3, 1890, in Salamanca — a "vision" whose content had not been delineated clearly or exhaustively. What she had said of it was general in nature and *was* related to the publishing work. (The fact that it related to the publishing work in Battle Creek, while the *Sentinel* was published in New York, seemed to be overlooked!) So now she took the vision and inserted a definite message from God into it to serve the purpose at hand. The Salamanca experience became, in her mind, a foresight into the March 7, 1890, meeting — just what she needed for the occasion! This surely would have the power necessary to reverse the decision forged amid much emotion the previous night. And as we know, it worked. It seems that even a prophetess is not beyond a little pragmatic opportunism to aid in carrying out what she believes to be God's work.

Some may argue that an even more generous approach may also be permitted. That in the zeal to do that which she believed was right for the church (which, almost certainly was equated by her to God's will for the church), she innocently and unwittingly conflated various pieces of information. By the time she addressed the ministers on Sunday morning, March 8, 1891, she may actually have come to believe she had "seen" the March 7, 1891, meeting on November 3, 1890. This conjecture, that she innocently realigned information, has the implication that one never knows just when to trust her word in a literal and exact sense, and when to take only its intent, viewing the accompanying historical data with a degree of tentativeness. Most people want more certainty from their prophet than this permits.

Historians, not apologists, will no doubt continue to struggle with what model best accounts for the Ellen White phenomena. Certainly it is a complex matter that deserves earnest attention in the Adventist church. Various positions have been advanced so far: the White Estate has the "prophet" model; Walter Rea has responded with his "supersalesman of the psychic" view expressed forthrightly in *The White Lie*; Robert Brinsmead, now silent on the issue, has proposed an "erring, sinning prophet" view; Desmond Ford has suggested a prophet whose usefulness has been tarnished by the White Estate's eagerness to establish the supernatural source of her writings; while Molleurus Couperus proposed she is best accounted for when seen as a victim of temporal lobe epilepsy.

It seems to this writer that, as helpful as these suggestions are, in general, these positions tend to focus on a *part* (be it a large part) of the Ellen White data. As studies continue to emerge, perhaps a consensus that incorporates the full spectrum of data will emerge. The question then remains, Will the church adopt a position which represents, as fully as possible, the wide range of data regarding Ellen White?

For my part, here I have simply sought to present an illustration of the type of careful study that should be repeated until a full picture of the "prophetess" may be gained.

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It is much too much to claim that a meticulous study of the Salamanca experience *invalidates* Ellen White's claim to possessing prophetic powers. On the other hand, it is equally reckless to use such an incident as a verification of her predictive abilities, or as an assumption that God in fact provided the insights she narrates. This simply cannot be demonstrated. Those who want to believe such may do so. But they may not believe with integrity that such a belief has a basis in fact. Its basis resides in the realm of faith and in the prior assumption that Ellen White's word is to be trusted despite any facts to the contrary. Such faith may be comforting to some, but it is not rational to most. □

ENDNOTES

1. The following account is based on a number of documents testifying to the incident. Because the accounts are very largely repetitive, and the story is quite well known (at least with Ellen White apologists), I have not footnoted every detail. The primary source documents are available in transcribed or facsimile form in Robert Olson's compilation, "The Salamanca Vision and the 1890 Diary," Washington, D. C.: Ellen G. White Estate, September 12, 1983.

The story itself is told in varying degrees of detail, and with variations of fact, in the following sources: Arthur L. White, "The Vision Which Could Not Be Told," n.d.; Arthur L. White, "Story of the Salamanca Vision," n.d.; Edna Kilbourne Steele, "Statement Concerning the Salamanca Vision," n.d.; O. A. Olsen, "The Salamanca Vision," August 19, 1914 (in Olson, pp. 76-78); A. T. Robinson, "The Salamanca Vision," n.d.; O. A. Johnson, et. al., "A Remarkable Vision," May 19, 1922 (in Olson, pp. 85-86); E. E. Gardner to W. C. White, December 3, 1915 (in Olson, pp. 79-80); and an untitled article by H. W. Cottrell dated October 12, 1920 in "The Salamanca Vision," a compilation of statements about the episode (in Olson, p. 81). These are all typewritten manuscripts in Document File 107-b at the Ellen G. White Research Center, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan.

Further recollections of the event are found in typewritten manuscript form in Document File 107-b at the Ellen G. White Estate, Washington, D. C.: L. A. Hoopes, "The Salamanca Vision," April 25, 1915; [A. T. Robinson], "Personal Experiences [sic] Connection With the Work of Sister White," n.d. (in Olson, pp. 72-75); Edna Kilbourne Steele to Arthur L. White, August 11, 1946 (in Olson, pp. 82-84).

Published statements about this experience include: F. M. Wilcox, "The Testimony of Jesus," *Review and Herald: General Conference Report*, No. 3, June 9, 1946, pp. 61-64; A. T. Robinson, "Some Personal Experiences," *The Adventist Review and Sabbath Herald*, January 15, 1914, p. 54; Ellen G. White, et. al., *Life Sketches of Ellen G. White*, Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1915, pp. 309-318; T. H. Jemison, *A Prophet Among You*, Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1955, pp. 471-480, an appendix by Arthur L. White; Arthur L. White, *The Lonely Years*, Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1984, pp. 468-469, 478-483; Roland R. Hegstad, "Liberty Learns a Lesson," *Adventist Review*, May 15, 1986, pp. 8-10.

2. White, *Lonely Years*, pp. 482-483.

3. Arthur White emphasizes this point, based on the testimony of A. T. Robinson, for the purpose of stressing

God's providential timing in recalling the vision *after* the meeting, for if she had stated her revelation before the Saturday night meeting, "it would have been said that it was not true, for no such meeting had taken place" (in Jemison, p. 479). He does not seem to consider the added impact that such a statement of her revelation would ultimately have had, even if it were not believed immediately!

4. [Robinson], p. 2.
5. Ibid., and Olsen, p. 2.
6. [Robinson], p. 3, and Wilcox, p. 63.
7. [Robinson], p. 3.
8. Steele, "Statement," p. 2.
9. White, "Vision Which Could Not Be Told," p. 6.
10. This story has recently been recounted to again affirm the need to make Adventist distinctives prominent, in Hegstad, "Liberty,".
11. Diary 16, 1890, p. 290, in Olson, p. 20; for facsimile see p. 95; also see Manuscript 44, 1890, p. 6. In this quotation, as most others, the transcription is not exact. Minor editorial and spelling changes are evident when the transcription is compared with the handwritten originals. Overall there is an astounding variety in transcriptions of Ellen White's manuscripts. Any published version usually varies not only from the original, but also from other transcriptions and printed versions.
12. Diary 16, p. 294, in Olson, p. 23; see also Manuscript 45, 1890, pp. 3-4.
13. See Olson's footnote, p. 23.
14. Letter 72a, 1890, in Olson, p. 27.
15. Diary 16, p. 336, in Olson, p. 31; see also Manuscript 6, 1890, p. 2.
16. Diary 16, p. 338, in Olson, p. 32; see also Manuscript 6, 1890, p. 3.
17. Manuscript 16, pp. 17-18, in Olson, p. 37; see also *Counsels*, pp. 94-95.
18. "Her counsels here are similar to her later descriptions of the Salamanca vision, and may be based on what she was shown in that vision," Olson, p. 37.
19. Diary 16, p. 313, in Olson, p. 25; see also Manuscript 46, 1890, pp. 2-3.
20. Diary 16, p. 334, in Olson, p. 31; see also Manuscript 29a, 1890, p. 10.
21. Manuscript 2, 1891, p. 1, in Olson, p. 57.
22. Diary 16, p. 289, in Olson, pp. 57-58; see also Manuscript 44, 1890, pp. 5-6.
23. Diary 16, pp. 288-289, in Olson, p. 20; see also Manuscript 44, 1890, p. 5.
24. Diary 16, p. 289, in Olson, pp. 57-58; see also Manuscript 44, 1890, pp. 5-6.
25. Diary 16, p. 290, in Olson, p. 20; see also Manuscript 44, 1890, p. 6.
26. Olson, footnote, p. 57.
27. Ibid.
28. Diary 16, p. 323, in Olson, p. 59; see also Manuscript 29, 1890, pp. 3-6.
29. White, *Lonely Years*, p. 469. The diary entries for November 20-24, 1890, have been transcribed from the original handwriting and titled Manuscript 29, 1890. This document, or parts of it, appears in a confusingly wide array of forms and stages of redactional development. This writer is aware of the following: the original handwritten manuscript with numerous interlineations added to it in Ellen White's handwriting; a typed transcription of the handwritten manuscript with the interlineations (now typed in), containing numerous further editorial alterations; this typed manuscript has further interlineations also in the hand of Ellen White,

but there is also a version without the additional interlineations; a document apparently prepared at the White Estate entitled, "E. G. White MS 29, 1890, Showing Editorial Work Done," comparing the handwritten diary and the typed manuscript, but only over the space of a few sentences on pages 5 and 6; "Manuscript Matter Used by A. L. White in Salamanca Vision Story Drawn from Interlined Copy of MS," a document which transcribes a portion of pages 5 and 6 of Manuscript 29, 1890, including the interlineations; "Salamanca Diary," a one page transcription of a portion of the Ellen White handwritten diary entered after the November 22, 1890, entry (but separated by a scrawled line), this transcription includes the interlineations from the original diary entry; the traditional MS 29, 1890 on file for general research in typed form at Ellen White Research Centers; and of course Olson's citation of a portion of these diary entries on pages 58-60 of his compilation. Most of these documents are available in Document File 107-b at the Ellen G. White Estate.

Another entire study could be made of the development and editing of the primary sources for the Salamanca experience after they were first penned by Ellen White. For purposes of simplicity and to aid the reader in validating this study, this writer has generally assumed Olson's transcriptions to be reliable and valid. Any exceptions from this are noted either in the text or footnotes.

30. Diary 16, p. 321, in Olson, p. 58; see also Manuscript 29, 1890, p. 1.
31. See Olson, pp. 30, 58-60 for a transcription of these passages; also pp. 98-103 for facsimiles of the six diary pages in question. The transcriptions used here are my own.
32. Diary 16, pp. 325-326, in Olson, pp. 59-60; see also Manuscript 29, 1890, pp. 5-6.
33. Diary 16, p. 289, in Olson, footnote, p. 57.
34. Diary 16, pp. 450-452, in Olson, pp. 60-61; see also Manuscript 44, 1890, pp. 6-8. Curiously, this passage, clearly belonging in 1891, is placed in a manuscript by the White Estate and dated 1890! Such are the hazards awaiting a novice researcher in the White Estate.
35. Olson, footnote, p. 60.
36. Ibid.
37. Ibid.
38. Diary 16, p. 457, in Olson, pp. 61-62; see also Manuscript 40, 1890, pp. 1-2.
39. Diary 16, p. 457, facsimile in Olson, p. 110; parentheses mine.
40. Diary 16, pp. 506-507, in Olson, p. 63; see also Manuscript 40, 1890, pp. 23-30.
41. Olson, footnote, p. 63.
42. Diary 17, 1891, pp. 111-112, in Olson, pp. 64-65; see also Manuscript 42, 1891, p. 5.
43. Letter 48, 1891, pp. 1-2, in Olson, p. 65.
44. Olson, footnote, p. 65.
45. Diary 16, p. 336, in Olson, p. 31; see also Manuscript 6, 1890, p. 2.
46. Letter 20a, 1893, in Olson, p. 67; see also *This Day With God*, p. 17.
47. Letter 41, 1898, pp. 1-2, in Olson, p. 67.
48. Manuscript 59, 1905, p. 4 in Olson, p. 70.
49. Olson, footnote, p. 70.
50. Olson, footnotes, pp. 63, 64.
51. Of the 16 items listed, Items 4, 5, and 8 do not refer to Salamanca; and Item 13 is a reprint of Items 9 and 10.
52. Diary 17, p. 111, in Olson, p. 64; see also Manuscript 42, 1891, p. 5.

53. For a list of these sources see footnote 1.
54. Robinson, "Salamanca Vision," p. 2.
55. [Robinson], p. 2, in Olson, p. 74.
56. Johnson et. al., p. 1, in Olson, p. 85.
57. White et. al., *Sketches*, p. 314.
58. Olsen, p. 3, in Olson, p. 77; Olsen is here quoting Captain Eldridge who was present at both meetings.
59. Steele, "Statement," p. 2.
60. White, "Vision Which Could Not Be Told," pp. 4, 6; and White, "Story," p. 3.
61. See Manuscript 42, 1891, p. 5.
62. Robinson, "Personal Experiences," p. 3, in Olson, p. 74.
63. Johnson et. al., p. 1, in Olson, p. 74.
64. Wilcox, p. 63.
65. White, "Vision Which Could Not Be Told," pp. 3, 4; and White, "Story," p. 3.
66. Olsen, p. 1, in Olson, p. 76. Robert Olson's transcription states she arose at 4 o'clock, which aligns with the original manuscript. However, this has usually been altered to say three o'clock. See below.
67. Steele, "Statement," pp. 1, 2.
68. Ibid, p. 2.
69. White, *Lonely Years*, pp. 478-479.
70. Olsen, p. 1, see Olson, p. 76.
71. Hoopes, p. 3.
72. Wilcox, p. 63.
73. Johnson et. al., p. 1, in Olson, p. 85.
74. [Robinson], p. 3, in Olson p. 74.
75. Steele, "Statement," p. 1.
76. Steele to White, p. 1, in Olson, p. 83.
77. Steele, "Statement," p. 2.
78. Olsen, p. 1, see Olson, p. 76, for the edited version of this statement.
79. White, "Vision Which Could Not Be Told," p. 4.
80. Olsen, p. 3, in Olson, pp. 77-78.
81. White, "Story," p. 1.
82. Steele, "Statement," p. 1.
83. Steele to White, p. 2, in Olson, p. 84.
84. Olson, footnote, p. 63.
85. White, "The Vision Which Could Not Be Told," p. 2.
86. Ibid., p. 3.
87. Ibid., p. 2.
88. "Ellen White was not allowed to tell the vision," *ibid.*, p. 6. How could Arthur White determine whether she simply could not recall it, or whether she was prevented from relating it? See also, White, "Story," p. 1; and White in Jemison, *Prophet*, pp. 476-480, especially p. 476.
89. White, *Lonely Years*, pp. 478-479.
90. Steele, "Statement," p. 2.
91. Manuscript 59, 1905, p. 3, in Olson, p. 70, emphasis mine.
92. White et. al., *Sketches*, p. 315.
93. [Robinson], p. 2, in Olson, p. 74.
94. Steele, "Statement," p. 1.
95. White, "Story," p. 4.
96. [Robinson], p. 3, in Olson, p. 74; see also Steele, "Statement," p. 1.
97. Olsen, p. 1, in Olson, p. 76.
98. Robinson, "Salamanca Vision," p. 2.
99. Steele, "Statement," p. 1.
100. Cottrell, p. 1, in Olson, p. 81.
101. Hoopes, p. 2.
102. Robinson, "Personal Experiences," p. 54.
103. [Robinson], in Olson, pp. 73-74.
104. Olson lists yet other contradictions and inaccuracies, mostly minor in nature, but concludes: "In general, however, the [eyewitness] accounts are remarkably similar, and reflect an overall trustworthiness," Olson, p. 71.

Social Conscience at the General Conference

by George Colvin

One of the least noticed aspects of the 1985 General Conference session was the way it inched the Adventist Church closer to engagement with issues long thought to be "political" — Adventist parlance for an irredeemably secular topic with which the Church should not be concerned. Several events, however, showed that the disengagement from society that this tradition has produced may be eroding. They also raised some disturbing concerns about Adventism's new directions in this area.

The most obvious signs of change were four statements issued by General Conference president Neal C. Wilson on June 27. Although Wilson consulted with the 16 vice-presidents of the General Conference, he did not obtain any assistance on these statements from anyone educated in specific areas related to the topics of the statements: peace, racism, the family, and drugs. His method seems calculated to preserving the statements as his personal reflections rather than official policy. His great administrative and personal authority, however, makes that difference less than it appears; and the news release from the Session about the statements attributed them not to Wilson alone but to "world church leaders." In addition, the failure to obtain wider input certainly diminished the quality of the documents. Wilson's method contrasts, for example, with the approach of the Catholic bishops of the United States, who sought wide comment from Catholics and non-Catholics before issuing their recent pastoral letters on nuclear weapons and economics. That the bishops' statements were severely flawed does not reflect on the method.

Another anomaly about the statements was the uncertainty of their intended audience. Certainly they were directed primarily to Adventists, but some of them seemed to envision a wider target group. For example, the statement on peace discussed the obligations of "Christians"

and "the authentic Christian church," not just Adventists and the Adventist Church; and the statement on drugs urged "everyone" to live healthfully. Yet all of the statements relied on quotations by Ellen G. White and the Adventist "Fundamental Beliefs," neither of which has any authority outside Adventism. Such sources may properly guide the thought of Adventist leaders in developing their views on social issues, and they may be used by those leaders to communicate to Adventists; but explicit reference to Adventist authorities will not strengthen the impact of social statements on non-Adventists. To be effective in such activities, Adventist leaders will have to exercise their ability to think without relying on internal authorities. This is the method commonly used in scholarly work — which reinforces the need for wider consultation before issuing social position.

Drugs

Of the four statements, the shortest and least controversial was the one on drugs. It condemned the "worldwide drug epidemic" and its ravages and called on "everyone" to "follow a lifestyle that avoids tobacco products, alcoholic beverages, and the misuse of drugs." This statement was praiseworthy in taking

is much biblical precedent for it. Finally, Adventists are not opposed to the appropriate use of drugs (as witness the practices of Adventist hospitals), whereas (as the statement hints) the Adventist Church is opposed to any use of alcoholic beverages. Whatever the situations regarding drug abuse, smoking, and drinking, they are not the same situations and cannot properly be combined.

Family

The statement on home and family correctly emphasized the close connection between society's "health and prosperity" and that of the family, and recognized the "assault" on "the traditional Christian concept of marriage between one man and one woman." It also rightly called for family members to strengthen their family ties, including the "spiritual dimension." In reaffirming the continuing validity of the traditional position and the centrality of the family to social (and, it might have declared, political) life, the statement was well judged.

Unfortunately, it needed to be very much amplified to adequately address the major issues involved. It is no longer enough to declare such positions as if they were self-evident; their validity must be proven. The extent of the rot was outlined by Richard John Neuhaus in his recent

Wilson issued this statement in part to ward off an effort to vote such a position as the official stand of the Session.

notice of the drug plague — which extends to Adventists, as shown by the substantial response to a call to renounce drugs, issued by Jesse Jackson at the 1985 Pathfinder Camporee. But it conflated three different concerns. Use of tobacco and alcohol is legal virtually everywhere, whereas drugs "misuse" is properly illegal. Also, drug abuse and any use of tobacco are inherently unhealthful, whereas it appears that the temperate use of alcohol may not be harmful; and there

work, *The Naked Public Square*. He recalled his service on the recent White House Conference on Families, which studied the kinds of problems mentioned in the statement. The Conference began with a controversy over its name. Originally called "the White House Conference on the Family," its title was changed at the behest of activist homosexual organizations and some feminists, who insisted that its name reflect the "alternative lifestyles" that they claimed

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to be widespread. During the Conference, a physician testified that American family law should be overhauled entirely to accommodate, as Neuhaus put it, "the putative revolution in the way Americans live."

The point is not that American standards have changed so greatly (which Neuhaus doubted) but that those standards are indeed besieged. Apart from the theoretically-based attack, it seems likely that in practice black American Adventists have been affected by the widespread disintegration of black families in the United States that has recently received much attention. In light of this situation, the statement on the family can be most useful as a starting point for more extensive development of Church positions. These positions should take research into account, but they should not be dictated by their empirical data. Instead, they should be primarily informed by rational argumentation to principles informed by the data and by biblical positions — recognizing always that an appeal to the Bible has limited ability to clinch an argument outside conservative Christian circles. This development might have to take into consideration such diverse topics as the nature of human sexuality, the proper relationship between parents and children, and the effects of economic and political systems on families. And it should properly involve considerations drawn from secular ethicists, especially Aristotle and his later interpreters, as well as specifically Christian sources.

Racism

The statements on racism and peace were the longest of the four (though still quite short) and went further into "political" areas than the others. The racism statement condemned "the sin of racism" (defined as a belief or practice that *certain racial groups are inferior* and therefore justly "the object of domination, discrimination, and segregation). This

One wonders how Wilson could consistently declare that Adventists are not obliged to disobey apartheid laws . . .

sin, it declared, was "one of the odious evils of our day," "really a heresy and in essence a form of idolatry." In this category it specifically included "the political policy of apartheid with its enforced segregation and legalized discrimination."

Reports at the Session suggested that Wilson issued this statement in part to ward off an effort to vote such a position as the official stand of the Session. As it was, Donald Morgan, an Adventist



Politicians meet: Neal Wilson and Louisiana governor Edwin Edwards

from Jamaica who for ten years was an Adventist minister and is now a sociology professor, condemned Wilson's statement as still too vague. Morgan also noted that while Wilson condemned apartheid, the Church maintained a substantially segregated union conference in South Africa — a practice General Conference communication director Robert Nixon blamed on the societal situation. Nixon also indicated that the General Conference refused to meddle in the internal affairs of unions. This assertion was interesting in light of the constant emphasis at the Session on the General Conference's authority throughout the Church and the powerful effort in 1984 by Wilson and North American Division president Charles Bradford to prevent certain changes in the North Pacific Union Conference constitution. [On this effort, see Terrie Dopp Aamodt, "Laity Transform North Pacific Constitution."

(that is, black South Africans) could not "take steps toward unity without immediately being in trouble." Although he "was not sure" that Adventists should "become disobedient and defy law when it does not require disobedience to God," he declared in a statement largely missing from the official minutes:

"We have sometimes been reluctant. Some things are prohibited by law. Other things are in the area between what is forbidden and what is permitted. Sometimes we stop too easily and do not press the flexibility of law. We have suggested reaching across the gulf and pressing into the area of no man's land until we reach a dead wall. This is where good judgment and holy zeal tell us how to press the matter. We must not take a status quo attitude. We must keep pressing until authorities demand we stop. Too often we are unwilling to take risks and press the matter."

Wilson placed the primary responsibility for this pressure on "those who have privileges," whom he specifically identified as "the white population." At the same time he was unwilling to let black Africans entirely off the hook, referring glancingly to "tribal situations within countries" that also cause people to "look on others as inferior." These remarks drew widespread applause.

The racism statement properly recognized the heinousness of racism and its historically devastating effects, from slavery in the United States to genocide against Jews in Germany to apartheid in South Africa. It also correctly affirmed Christianity's duty to break down such barriers and create "a worldwide community of faith." As a tactical move, it placed Church leadership firmly in opposition

Spectrum 15 (December 1984), pp. 8-9.)—Ed.]

Wilson went somewhat further in comments made in response to a charge by Charles Makombe, an African delegate, (June 28) that the Church's segregated unions violated the emphasis on unity in the Role and Function Commission report. Blaming the situation on forces that the Church did not control, Wilson noted that "those who are denied by law certain privileges and opportunities"

to a system of minority rule that is obviously decaying; and it averted the passage of a stronger and more binding position that might have been difficult to implement. If the statement is read together with Wilson's later remarks, his position did not stop with pious platitudes; he urged prudent and well-judged action.

Although he did not dwell on it, and although the erasure of that remark from the official record will obviously reduce its impact, Wilson also raised the problem

suffer for disobeying apartheid laws.

The statement could have been stronger, in addition, if Wilson had incorporated thinking from natural reason and natural law as well as revelation. The United States Declaration of Independence would be an obvious source of such arguments. The Declaration asserted that certain "truths" were "self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the

Adventists need not imitate the errors of the World Council of Churches and the American Catholic bishops.

of African tribalism. Reports suggest that Adventism has been a force for the breaking down of tribal barriers as well as racial ones, and in that way it has performed a public service. But the same theoretical basis that justifies opposition to apartheid will support opposition to tribalism, which is endemic in Africa and has caused millions of deaths since African colonies gained independence in the early 1960's. Many, perhaps most, African governments are based largely on tribalism. As British historian Paul Johnson pointed out in *Commentary*: "There is no such thing as a genuinely multiracial society in the whole of Africa. There is no African country where tribal or racial origins, skin color or religious affiliation are not of prime importance in securing elementary rights." Future Church statements on African social issues will not deserve to be considered courageous if they refuse to address this point as explicitly as they do apartheid.

Moreover, the statement and the remarks contained a slight disjunction. If apartheid was merely one more form of racism (as Wilson claimed), and if all forms of racism are heretical and idolatrous (as he also stated), and if heresy and idolatry are contrary to the law of God (as seems evident), then laws requiring the Adventist Church to participate in apartheid are simply opposed to God's law — as much so as laws requiring it, say, to disregard the Sabbath. And if that is the case, one wonders how Wilson could consistently declare that Adventists are not obliged to disobey apartheid laws, since his reasoning suggests that obeying those laws makes them heretics and idolaters. That the Church did not make the laws would surely be morally irrelevant. The early Christians did not make the laws requiring them to treat the Roman emperor as a god, but they refused to obey them nevertheless — and suffered more for doing so than South Africans would

pursuit of happiness." It also claimed that governments existed to secure these rights and derived their "just powers from the consent of the governed."

Now this document was not specifically American; it was a declaration of universally applicable truths. It maintained that all human beings had a right, as a result of their human nature, to have a share in choosing their rulers, and that the "just powers" of those rulers were limited. It also put forward, for the first time in history, a statement of universal truths as the foundation for a particular nation; and in doing so it laid the groundwork for much later political change outside the United States.

In later years political philosopher John Stuart Mill informally amended this position. Mill recognized that there are societies in which the people, however entitled to self-government by right, are not yet fitted to exercise that right. Giving such people immediate self-government would produce chaos, not constitutional republican democracy. Accordingly, Mill argued that such people could properly be governed without their consent for a time, provided that those who ruled them had the intention of preparing them for self-government and provided that the means they used were really adapted to that purpose.

What was most obviously missing from the statement on apartheid was the political context. Johnson enumerated six ways in which South Africa is similar to other African countries and four in which it is different. The six similarities were: rapid population increase, which is producing wars, famines, and other societal disorders; lack of racial, cultural, and linguistic unity; population pressure on the land, which is driving people to the towns faster than the towns can absorb them and causing massive urban problems, including high crime rates and poor housing; use of social engineering and repression; widespread racialism and

tribalism; and expression of the dominant discriminatory practices (developed by politicized intellectuals) in law codes and official philosophies. South Africa differs in being far richer than most other countries, in having a modern economy (largely based on its mining industry), in having had a rising real income for blacks over the last quarter century, and in being in many respects (such as access to the courts, multiparty government, and constitutionalism) a free country — or at least a country notably more free than most other African nations.

None of these considerations justifies apartheid, nor do they argue that the statement on racism was ill-advised. But they strongly suggest that an Adventist position on African affairs characterized solely by opposition to apartheid is going to be both hypocritical and cowardly. Because the actual situation would not justify such a single-issue position, it could easily be seen as an act of appeasement to the increasingly influential bloc of black African Adventists.

A fuller statement, taking into account the Declaration and Mill's position, might conclude that apartheid is an evil but that it is a necessary one until the murderous tribalism in South Africa is removed. It could then recognize majority rule in South Africa as one of many goals to be achieved, with the protection of minority rights and constitutional government to be included among these goals. It could then judge the South African government by its intentions toward black South Africans and (if these intentions were good) the means it was using to achieve those ends. As it is, condemnation of apartheid is too simple and easy, even if highly justified.

Peace

The statement on peace termed wars "a diversionary tactic" by Satan to "interfere with the gospel task." It condemned heavy spending on war materials, declaring: "The arms race, with its colossal waste of human funds and resources, is one of the most obvious obscenities of our day." In a noteworthy departure from previous views, the statement indicated that "hope in the Second Coming must not live in a social vacuum," although it immediately reaffirmed that only the Second Advent could bring in "the coming kingdom of peace"; human action alone was insufficient. It closed by putting Adventists firmly on the side of peacemaking.

An unfortunate aspect of this statement was the choice of the term "obscenity" to describe "the arms race." It has recently become the vogue to apply this term to anything distasteful, but this is not a desirable change. The previous use of "obscene" in a sex-related context preserved this word for a useful purpose;

broadening it so greatly is likely to make it essentially one more synonym for "bad." In this statement, "abomination" could easily have been used.

Perhaps the most obvious aspect of this statement's substance was its incompleteness in most areas and hesitancy in others. It did not analyze the "arms race" (the very existence of which has lately been controverted by scholar of politics Charles H. Fairbanks, Jr., in the premier issue of a new foreign-policy quarterly, *The National Interest*). Instead, it merely attacked military spending, as if this were a self-winding activity without political basis. It suggested that social action by Adventists and even by the Adventist Church was not illegitimate, but it went no further; and though its idiosyncratic view of the function of warfare as a satanic distraction from evangelism was certainly not self-evident, it did not develop this position.

The statement on peace clearly revealed the need for much more extensive thinking on the topics it covered before any further such statement is issued. In particular, Adventist leaders will have to take politics seriously on its own terms if they are going to be either comprehensible or effective in this area. In his study, Fairbanks examined the military buildups between Germany and Britain before World War I; in Europe generally before World War II, and between the United States and the Soviet Union between 1955 and 1980. He discovered a much more complicated pattern of armament than the term "arms race" suggests, with its connotation that arming "can be understood as a competitive or reactive process between states," that response to buildup on one side was inevitably matched by the other, that the "race" must have a terminal point in war, and that arming was "an apolitical activity" separated from the rest of human life — an absurd and dangerous game that has "a logic of its own

Fairbanks argued, were "the motives, traditions, and limits contained in the broader political context on one's own side," not the link to an opposing nation; and the international link was not strongly determined by political events (such as the German annexation of Austria or the Cuban missile crisis in 1962).

Fairbanks' views indicated what many leading scholars in foreign policy are now arguing: that the basic international problem is one of politics, not arms — and especially the clash of political-economic systems between Communism and representative democracy linked with a modified capitalist economic system. This view sees weapons not as things in themselves but as political instruments — which, to give them credit, the rulers of the Soviet Union have always thought them to be. This view is certainly not predominant in ecclesiastical circles, but the Adventist Church need not imitate the errors of the World Council of Churches and the American Catholic bishops.

If this view is adopted, however, it becomes impossible to place Adventists on the side of the "peacemakers" merely by denouncing war and declaring that Adventists want "worldwide peace." Concerning several opposing generals and Czar Nicholas II of Russia, Communist leader Vladimir Lenin observed during World War I, "Absolutely everybody is in favor of peace in general, including Kitchener, Joffre, Hindenburg, and Nicholas the Bloody, for every one of them wishes to end the war." This statement remains true. No one favors war as such; all rulers profess a desire for peace. The difference lies in the methods by which they wish to gain peace, the ways they define peace, and the conditions they wish to exist once "peace" (however defined) is obtained.

Calls for "peace," without anything more, are inevitably vacuous; everyone

and the same type of gun in the hand of a policeman trying to stop the robbery. The bank robber's gun serves illegitimate purposes; the policeman's gun serves legitimate ones. Similarly, we might conclude (for example) that German rearmament before World War II was evil because it was the instrument of totalitarian and genocidal policies; whereas the British weapons buildup was good because it was done in a good cause — the preservation of human rights, constitutionalism in government, freedom of religion, and the other components of historic Western civilization. And if we went this far, we might also look very differently at increases in military power by the United States and by the Soviet Union. We might, for example, come to agree with the view of Alexander Solzhenitsyn, who concluded that Communism was irredeemably hostile to "mankind as a whole," that "it cannot survive as an ideology without using terror," and that therefore "to coexist with Communism on the same planet is impossible. Either it will spread, cancer-like, to destroy mankind, or else mankind will have to rid itself of Communism (and even then face lengthy treatment for secondary tumors)."

The most important error in Wilson's statement on peace was the way it avoided this central political concern. The history of Western "peace" movements that have focused on weapons rather than political principle strongly indicates that this position leads to equating all those who have weapons, regardless of their moral qualities in other respects. The recent "peace" movements in the United States and Europe have had a constant tendency in this direction. Classical pacifism could recognize the moral differences among armed nations, even while it deplored the arms themselves. The current variety, however, fixes its gaze so intently on the weapons (especially, though not exclusively, the nuclear variety) that other concerns often fade from view. Wilson's statement on peace did not go so far, but its analytical framework inclined it in this direction.

Unfortunately, there were indications at the Session that General Conference leadership is not ready to think seriously about the present world situation in political terms. Although Communism, on Solzhenitsyn's analysis, is the central political problem of our time, it was mentioned from the rostrum only once, and then not by an Adventist. One of the guests invited to greet the Session was Dr. Joseph Lowery, president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. In his comments, Lowery denounced Communism for debasing human beings into slaves of the State and robbing them of humanity by its philosophical materialism. He called for those present to

Church communications personnel recognized Kulakov's statement on religious freedom in the Soviet Union to be . . . a bald-faced lie.

independent of political choice and will."

The historic situation, Fairbanks found, was very different. Arms increases by one nation sometimes were not matched by others; the content of the arms increases was determined more by national military doctrine and bureaucratic politics than by imitation of an adversary; and the size of arms increases was more strongly related to financial limits, political practicability, and other such concerns than by the size of enemy forces. The strongest determinants of arms increases,

will give them a rousing cheer and go on to serious business. Fairbanks' conclusion that political concerns dominate weapons, rather than the other way around, points toward a better approach. This method classifies weapons not as evils in themselves but as sometimes good and sometimes evil, depending on the ends the weapons are intended to advance.

This is an exercise we constantly perform inside nations. Most Americans, for example, would perceive very differently a gun in the hand of a bank robber

make democracy so attractive it would overwhelm Communism.

Wilson immediately responded. He began by remarking that Lowery had spoken as "a true American" — which suggested Lowery had spoken parochially (as a citizen of a single country), whereas Wilson was speaking from worldwide concerns. Wilson then declared that Adventists saw the solution to "the world's concerns" as coming not from democracy (which was no solution to the world's ills) but from the Second Coming of Christ.

As with the statement on peace, Wilson's answer to Lowery ignored the political question. In Wilson's statement, the political question was suppressed by the emphasis on arms; in the answer, it was buried under theology. The answer missed the obvious point that human rights, including freedom of religion, flourish almost exclusively in democratic countries. Even beyond this, it suggested that although Communism was a human invention it somehow could no longer be countered by human action; only divine intervention would suffice. But Wilson clearly did not believe this was the case with apartheid, which he urged white South African Adventists to combat — a pointless counsel if apartheid could only be removed by direct divine action. Why, one wondered, should Adventists struggle against apartheid but adopt a resigned fatalism toward Communism?

The difference in attitudes in the two cases cannot reflect a real difference in the two systems; no informed person would contend that apartheid has done more damage to the world or to the Adventist Church than Communism has. Rather, it seems to arise from the general agreement of South African Adventists about apartheid's wickedness as contrasted with the inability or unwillingness of Adventist leaders in Communist countries to take an anti-Communist stand. The result is that Adventists in Communist countries serve both as hostages and as administrative barriers against any expression of anti-Communism by Western Adventist leaders. An example of this situation was provided by a statement, quoted in the New Orleans *Times-Picayune*, by Elder M. P. Kulakov, leader of the 31,000 official or registered Adventists in the Soviet Union. After drawing attention to the "crimes" and "robbery" in United States cities, he declared: "Some people here in the West, I see, have a misunderstanding about religion in the USSR. Some people think people [there] are not free to practice religion openly. It's not so."

Conversation with Church communications personnel showed that they recognized Kulakov's statement on religious freedom in the Soviet Union to be what it was — a bald-faced lie. But

none of them felt moved to make a point of this fact, recognizing that Kulakov was merely doing what was necessary to maintain his standing with Soviet authorities. It was thus left to the officially despised Christians in Crisis group to make a public point of Kulakov's deceptiveness; and when they did so in a way that seemed offensive, they were promptly arrested. Christians in Crisis also put on informative programs on the situation of Adventists in Communist countries in Eastern Europe, which contrasted with the determined ignoring of this sad state of affairs by official Adventist leadership. [See Sidney Reiners' "Betrayal in Budapest"...] Indeed, Wilson's own terminol-

"Iron Curtain" parallel those he displayed on the Communist side, it seems likely he will be a barrier rather than an aid to serious Adventist consideration of the Communist threat.

Other points of terminology at the Session were also interesting. Although the political opinions of African Adventists are not well known, delegates from Africa fell easily into the habit of referring to their area as part of "the Third World." This practice was so common that Wilson chided them for it, saying that such terminology was derived from political positions and was foreign to Adventism. What is equally important is the lineage of the term, which grew from the efforts

She opposed involvement in political questions by Adventist Church workers, even urging Adventist teachers not to study such matters.

ogy went beyond ignoring to accommodation, as when he referred to a recent trip he had taken to "one of the Socialist countries of Europe." The context suggested that this unnamed country was not "socialist" but "Communist" or "totalitarian"; and Wilson should not have acquiesced in the effort of such regimes to misidentify themselves as "socialist" (a term with a different meaning altogether).

Another troubling indication in this same direction was the elevation of Raymond Dabrowski, previously editor of the Polish *Signs of the Times*, to the position of communications director of the Trans-European (formerly Northern European) Division. Dabrowski has compiled a considerable and not particularly praiseworthy record as an apologist for the actions of Communist governments. In the September/October 1978 issue of *Liberty*, he deplored *Liberty's* reporting of arrests for smuggling Bibles into Soviet-dominated countries. He declared that "Western propaganda" was promoting "anti-Eastern European" ideas "under the beautiful banner of religious liberty" by laying emphasis on such items. Suspicions have been raised that the Polish Adventist delegation was instrumental in banishing "Candle in the Wind," a documentary film on religious liberty in the Soviet Union, from the second World Congress on Religious Liberty. And in the April 1982 issue of *Spectrum* (vol. 12, no. 3), Dabrowski relayed statements by N. A. Zukaluk, one of Kulakov's colleagues in administering the official Adventist Church in the Soviet Union, maligning Vladimir Shelkov, the leader of the True and Free Seventh-day Adventists who had recently died in a Soviet concentration camp. If Dabrowski's attitudes on the Western side of the

of the early leaders in those countries to disassociate their nations from the struggle between constitutional democracy and Communism. If this situation indicates that African Adventists in fact believe that there is no difference between these systems or that the struggle between them is irrelevant to the future of their countries, the Adventist Church is going to have a much harder time developing sensible statements on social matters.

Events at the General Conference Session were not the only recent straws in the wind that indicate the direction of official Adventist political involvement. Although the topic seems to be peripherally related at best to its central concerns, the Church's religious-freedom publication *Liberty* has recently printed numerous articles on warfare; and the inclination of those articles has generally been toward pacifism. About two years ago, a highly placed General Conference official privately commented that the Church should consider the desirability of pacifism as a replacement for its traditional noncombatant position. And Jesse Jackson (whose foreign policy views seem to stem primarily from neutralism and anti-Semitism) was the most prominent politician present at the 1985 Camporee and gave a speech with a considerable (and predictable) political content.

It seems likely that the positional and terminological errors in Wilson's four statements and other events at the 1985 Session were not evil or malicious. Rather, they can be blamed, at least in part, on two attitudes — one very common in the Western world in general and one specific to Adventist leaders. The more widespread sentiment was caustically described by Sovietologist Richard

Pipes in his recent book, *Survival Is Not Enough*.

"Hardly anyone lacking in professional competence dares to intrude on the discussion of NATO's [the North Atlantic Treaty Organization] conventional forces and their strategy; this is a matter gladly left to the experts. But nuclear weapons have become everyone's business; indeed, any citizen who would claim incompetence on such issues as the MX [missile] or START [the Strategic Arms Reduction Talks] would risk being accused of social irresponsibility. Some circles in the United States committed to unilateral nuclear disarmament are not averse to involving in the debate even children, apparently in the belief that the more important a subject is the less one needs to know about it. People who would not dream of advising a chef on preparing hollandaise sauce dispense advice freely when the topic is the immensely complicated one of nuclear weapons and strategy (p. 228)."

What Pipes was denouncing was not popular involvement in decisionmaking but rather attempts to make policy without sufficient information, especially on highly complicated problems. This advice is sound, and it bears on the specifically Adventist part of the problem.

This specifically Adventist attitude cannot be conclusively proven; it is more a tendency than a clearly evident trend or position. But in reading and listening to the pronouncements of Church leaders and in seeing the processes by which they generate proposals (including especially the four Session statements), one fears some of them believe that the spiritual gift of administration somehow includes or subsumes all the other gifts of the Spirit of which Paul wrote (I Corinthians 12). One often observes comments such as those in Wilson's keynote address at the Session, that dismissed summarily the views of those who "have never had the responsibility of trying to maintain the focus on our mission, our message, and our organization." The problem with this attitude, of course, is that the gift of administration is a particular gift, just as ecclesiastical administrators tend to be a particular type of person with a particular form of education and experience. Their position gives them the authority and responsibility to set policy for their church and to speak in its name; but this makes it all the more necessary that before they do these things they take counsel with those blessed with other relevant gifts. This process will be slower and the results will seem more official; but a faulty position or policy is not improved by being hasty, informal, or tentative.

Apart from their problems of substance, the events at and outside the Session and the statements on racism and

peace indicate the problematic position or non position of Adventism regarding political issues. To the extent that it takes its cue from Ellen G. White, Adventism will be very hesitant to become involved with such concerns at all. Ellen White was apolitical almost to the point of being antipolitical. She opposed involvement in political questions by Adventist Church workers, even urging Adventist teachers not to study such matters and Adventist members to avoid proclaiming their political views "by pen or voice" (2 *Selected Messages* 336-337). The traditional Adventist abhorrence to political

Moreover, the situation of the Adventist Church has altered. The Church itself recently was granted nongovernmental observer (NGO) status at the United Nations Economic and Security Council (ECOSOC) — an event to which Wilson pointed with pride in his keynote address at the Session. And the Church is becoming a social force of some power, especially in certain countries and areas. Taken together with the involvement of Adventists in government on their own hook, these developments signal the need for a rethinking of Adventist social and political policy.

"People who would not dream of advising a chef . . . dispense advice freely when the topic is . . . nuclear weapons and strategy." — Richard Pipes

matters reflects this attitude.

Unfortunately, a stance that is useful for a small, largely American, and institutionally weak church is not necessarily relevant to the needs of a much larger, worldwide, and institutionalized one. Some Adventists are prominent political figures in their countries; but they can gain little help from their religion in the execution of their responsibilities. Also, it is becoming painfully evident to Church leaders that politics will not let the Church alone merely because it takes a vow to leave politics alone.

At the same time that the Adventist Church is beginning to need intelligent thought on political concerns, it finds itself hard-pressed to provide it. As Tom Dybdahl pointed out some years ago in *Spectrum*, the Adventist Church has for a long time been involved in politics; it has merely concentrated on a sectarian set of issues on which it has taken idiosyncratic positions. These issues are largely drawn from the view of Ellen White, including her support for religious liberty and for legislation in health-related areas. But time has to a great extent overtaken these concerns. Although religious liberty problems in the world are if anything greater now than in her time, their nature has changed. They are now posed not by the efforts of the state to advance the goals of some predominant church but by the state's desire to increase its power for its own purposes. In particular, the Roman Catholic Church has indeed become a "paper tiger" — unable even in Italy to prevent abortion on demand from becoming law or to prevent the showing of blasphemous movies. Even Leo Pfeffer, the old warhorse of strict church-state separationism in the United States, declared recently that almost all of the separationist agenda has been attained.

It is obvious, for example, that the historic concentration of Adventist political interest on the United States must change. The alarmist efforts of *Liberty* and its *Confidential Newsletter* and the Pacific Union Conference's even more shrill and less credible *Undercurrent* about the perils to religion in the United States are disproportionate and stem from an obsolete mindset. Although there are still threats to religion in America, they pale by comparison to the dangers in the vast majority of countries. This fact, the growing official and individual Adventist involvement in international affairs, and the increasing proportion of Adventists who live in countries outside the United States all argue for a substantial change in focus.

Even in the United States, more thought must be given to the dangers of an extreme separation of religion and politics (as distinguished from church and state). These dangers are being brought out by many thoughtful analysts who do not wish to undermine church-state separationism but who are worried about the consequences for religion and public affairs alike of a secularist and amoral American society. These dangers may face many churches in the same way, and their existence may argue for less suspicion by Adventists toward other churches and more willingness to cooperate in a common struggle.

In developing its new lines of thought, Adventism will find its traditional view helpful but incomplete and even in places misleading. Times and political issues change; and an organization that cannot adapt its political agenda to meet those changes will be irrelevant at best and actively (if unintentionally) harmful at worst.

Unfortunately, the Church may also receive limited help from its few polit-

ically sensitized intellectuals. Discussions with such Adventists in the United States and attendance at Association of Adventist Forums meetings in which they have been involved indicates that many of them are much less well informed than they believe and are too closely wedded to a substantially left-wing position (especially in international concerns) whose deficiencies are becoming daily more obvious. It is notable that *The Nation*, the leading leftist publication in the United States, remarked in 1985 that the only leftism in the United States was the ecclesiastical left. The Adventist Church will not improve its positions or be helpful in the world situation by following the views of the World Council of Churches, the Mennonites, or the Friends Service Committee.

Why, one wondered, should Adventists struggle against apartheid but adopt a resigned fatalism toward Communism?

The questionable helpfulness of many Adventist intellectuals is not a unique problem. The recent record of intellectuals in politics and related concerns has been a very mixed one. Many African countries were founded on governmental prescriptions by politicized intellectuals educated in Great Britain or France, and very few of these systems have produced anything but one-party government and economic decline. Closer to home, when *Commentary* (now the leading journal of neoconservative thought in the United States) was founded in 1945, its first symposium featured the leading intellectuals of that time, including Karl Polanyi, John Dewey, and Reinhold Niebuhr. As political scientist James Q. Wilson ruefully recalled in the journal's recent fortieth anniversary issue: "Almost to a man, they doubted that America would succeed economically unless there were wholesale changes in its political and economic system." And "almost every contribution to the symposium, even when it was nominally addressing economic matters, was really about American culture. None found much to admire in it." As Wilson almost needlessly pointed out, the contributors badly underestimated American culture and the American economy. In choosing educated people to help them in the task of rethinking, Adventist administrators need to be aware of this record and avoid those who support positions that have demonstrably failed in practice and theory.

This does not mean that rethinking is impossible or unnecessary. Indeed, there is a danger that Adventist political involvement will increase but will still be characterized by somewhat disconnect-

ed positions taken without regard to any overall guiding principles and situational analysis. The statements on peace and apartheid reflect this tendency, which would allow the Church's political agenda to be dictated by the agenda of its society and the prevalent views of the times. While Adventism must be able to address the "hot topics" of the times, it must develop the ability to do so based on a well-considered, well-founded, and consistent set of principles founded on the Bible, on rational thought, on empirical research, and on political analysis. Ellen White may be helpful, but primarily within the Adventist Church; she cannot be used to justify public positions directed to non-Adventists, even as Catholics cannot expect Adventists to accord authority to papal pronouncements.

This reconsideration should go to bedrock. It should deal in depth with such questions as the nature and function of the state, human nature as it affects political concerns, the source and nature of human rights, the relationship between economic and political systems, the origin and nature of dominant modern political philosophies and their relationship to Christianity, and the nature and magnitude of modern threats to Christianity and Western civilization in general and Adventism in particular.

Despite the existence of policies and pronouncements on some areas related to these topics, Adventism has never developed the kind of thoughtful foundation in such areas that is absolutely necessary to ensure consistent, intelligent, and informed positions in social, economic, and political concerns. Before it is led (as it inevitably will be) much further into such matters, Adventism needs to do its homework. If it does not, its actions and statements will be incoherent, irrelevant, and frivolously modish at best; at worst, they will be dangerous or actively harmful to the Church, its members, and the general society. Even less than in earlier ages, the world is unforgiving of the ignorant.

There are many sources who could assist in developing such a full-scale political philosophy and political theology. It will be necessary, however, for Adventists to quarry from mines they have seldom used. Most of those who can provide material for this edifice are certain Catholics, moderate (but still to traditional Adventists "apostate") Protestants, evangelicals, neoconservative Jews of the *Commentary* magazine

variety, and even secular thinkers (such as Mortimer Adler or scholar of political philosophy Leo Strauss and those of his school) whose views are not antagonistic to religion. Adventists may also have to learn that the answers to modern questions may be more easily found in the thirteenth century A.D. with Thomas Aquinas or the fourth century B.C. with Aristotle than in the nineteenth or twentieth centuries.

This rethinking would be troublesome, although it might not cost much in money. But it would yield the solid benefits of connecting Adventism with the best thought of its time and reconnecting it with the best of historic Christian and classical thought. It should also produce intelligent guidelines for Adventist political involvement in a way that no superficial approach can do. If done well, this approach could place Adventism high in the ranks of organizations contributing to the improvement of modern society; and the contributions Adventism could make in this way are far more important and much cheaper than those it can make by providing facilities for high-technology medicine, now the only field in which Adventist institutions have a worldwide reputation. This situation is anomalous for a religion, which should be most prominent in matters of the spirit, not technology.

Any rethinking will be stultified if it is limited to those topics that Adventism can easily deal with because opinions inside and outside the Church about them are almost unanimous — as is the case with apartheid. And it will be ineffectual if it does not deal with the problem of Marxism-Leninism. Although this philosophy is almost totally disbelieved where it is in power, it is still influential in thought outside those areas. Adventism needs to deal with it not only for the sake of Adventists in Communist areas but for the sake of those outside them.

Adventism may not have the will, the personnel, or the interest to execute such an ambitious project; or it may be so immovably mired in its historic (and decreasingly relevant) positions that it cannot do so without sacrificing its coherence. The necessity for this kind of rethinking, however, is becoming increasingly evident; and Adventist leaders have a duty to avoid dodging the issues or addressing only easy concerns (and those in a piecemeal way). Elder Wilson's statements made at least a beginning by recognizing, if only implicitly and reluctantly, that Adventism may need to relate itself more creatively to political concerns. The actions needed to make this relationship profitable are clear, as are the benefits from doing so. What now is in question is ability and will; and a sufficient application of the latter often produces the former. □

Evangelicals on the Canterbury Trail

by Alice Elizabeth Gregg

When Geoffrey Chaucer mounted his "compane of nyne and twenty of sondry folk" on assorted horses to canter off to Canterbury on 16 April 1387, he had no idea that Robert E. Webber and six of his evangelical Episcopalian friends would take a not-too-dissimilar pilgrimage via twentieth-century typewriters and word processors some 600 years later in *Evangelicals on the Canterbury Trail* (Waco, Texas, Word Books, 1985).

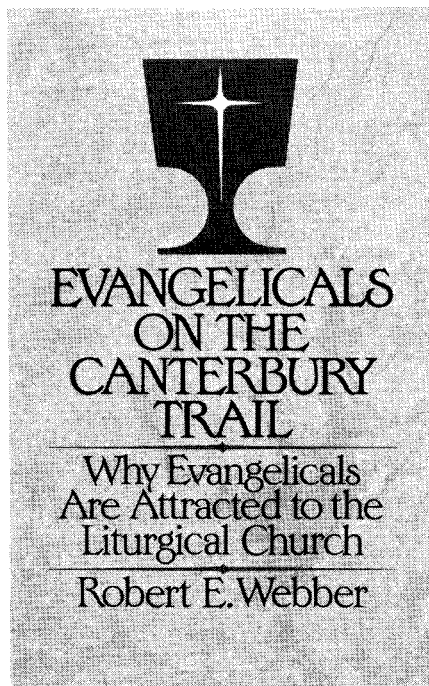
Chaucer's motley group — including a knight, squire, yeoman, nun, prioress, monk, friar, merchant, scholar, and a wife of Bath, to mention a few — came from different shires in England to visit the shrine of St. Thomas a Becket, who had helped them when they were sick. His martyrdom, a fact of history, began with his murder on 29 December 1170 by henchmen of King Henry II as he walked that evening from the cloisters into the northwest transept of the cathedral. His crime was that he had not, as an official in the Catholic church, bent his knee to Henry's civil power.

The most colorful of Chaucer's lot, the wife of Bath, had been married five times and considered herself well experienced in the ways of menfolk. She rode sidesaddle, completely aware that the wind playing with her foot-mantle and exposing her scarlet "hosen" was producing a successfully lusty sideshow — stockings being considered extremely private articles of underclothing in those times. She had already taken pilgrimages to far-away places — Jerusalem, Rome, and Santiago de Compostela in Spain — and was an easy rider on her ambler, laughing with the best of them at the bawdy and the ridiculous.

The framework in which Chaucer chose to narrate his Canterbury Tales was to introduce the pilgrims in a prologue, then have each one tell two stories on the way to the cathedral and two on the return journey. Of the planned 120 stories, only 24 exist — some unfinished.

By comparison, Webber's company of seven all-Americans is a small, elite, highly educated, and eloquent group of evangelicals-gone-Episcopalian. Each gives his own account of his attraction to the liturgical tradition of the Episcopal church. Isabel Anders writes for religious

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magazines. James Johnson is an author and editor.

David Neff is associate editor for *Christianity Today*. He is a graduate of Loma Linda University and received a Master of Divinity degree from Andrews University. LaVonne Pease Neff (she doesn't use her maiden name in the book) is a freelance editor and writer of numerous articles. She also is a graduate of Loma Linda University and received a Master of Arts degree in religion from Andrews University.

John Skillen is an English professor at Gordon College in Massachusetts; and

She rode sidesaddle, completely aware that . . . her scarlet "hosen" was producing a successfully lusty sideshow.

Robert Webber, the chief architect of the book, is a writer and professor of theology at Wheaton College in Illinois.

What, you are asking at this point, are two, nice, young Seventh-day Adventists doing in such an "almost-Catholic," "apostate Protestant" crowd? Why would each of them get an advanced degree from the Seventh-day Adventist seminary at Andrews University and then leave what

the denomination calls "the truth" to join an "incense-loving," "prayer-book-holding," liturgical church? Their particular story is told in the last account of the book.

Webber is helpful in exploring such questions as these in his prologue, explaining the six aspects of the Episcopal church that were so appealing to him. "Anglicanism," he writes, "preserves in its worship and sacraments the sense of mystery that rationalistic Christianity of either the liberal or evangelical sort seems to deny." His "longing for an experience of worship that went beyond either emotionalism or intellectualism" was satisfied in the Anglican church — the three needs of mystery, worship, and sacrament being closely related.

At times he "felt like an ecclesiastical orphan looking for spiritual parents and a spiritual identity." He found his "spiritual identity with God's people throughout history by embracing the church universal and a holistic perspective on spirituality. These three needs — historic identity, an ecclesiastical home, and a holistic spirituality — are also closely related."

Anyone having taken his own tourist trip to Canterbury might understand somewhat the experience beyond intellect and feeling that Webber suggests — the sense of worship and mystery. Tiptoeing around the spot where Becket's blood still lies glistening, in imagination, on the marble floor of the room called Martyrdom; or moving through the light and space under the high arches and seeing the vision of stone columns like a "heaven tree" from foundation to vault; or standing beneath the dazzling Bossanyi

windows in the southwest transept, one is virtually "grabbed by God" until compelled to rush for comparative calm out into the traffic roaring beyond the walls of the cathedral.

Not all people have such transcendent experiences in cathedrals. One can always be brought back to reality by the person who says loudly and clearly that if he ever sees another cathedral, he will throw up.

In the same vein, not all people have or need the same religious experience.

Webber, as an evangelical as well as an Episcopalian, describes evangelicals as being "characterized by a sense of simple gospel trust — trust, not in themselves, not in their works, not in their spirituality, not in their good works, but in Christ and Christ alone for salvation."

He believes that "evangelicals are characterized by a deep concern to be orthodox. Although most lay evangelicals do not have a deep grasp of theology, they have a solid commitment to what the church has always believed. Evangelicals have a strong sense of biblical authority; they firmly believe that God became incarnate in the womb of the virgin Mary; they regard Jesus as full God and full man; they look upon his death as a victory over sin and the power of evil and a once-for-all sacrifice for sin; they believe in a physical bodily resurrection from the dead, the ascension, and the reality of the coming again of Christ to judge the living and the dead." These characteristics add up, he says, to "personal faith and a deep commitment to orthodoxy," and result in "evangelicals being good worshippers."

David Neff came to realize that his Episcopal friends understood the church in a different way from his Adventist friends. To his Adventist friends, "the church was a community of people built around a common doctrinal commitment. The essence of being Adventist did not lie half so much in worshiping God on Saturday morning as it did in *believing* that Saturday morning was the right time for worship." To his Episcopal friends, "the church was a community built around a common worship commitment." At that

"struggling to harmonize the truth he understood with the traditions of the elders." When Ford was defrocked, David (first name used to distinguish him from his wife, LaVonne) took it as a message for himself and started looking for other work.

David had been taught "that the General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church was God's highest authority on earth, and that individuals should submit their understandings of Scripture to its judgment. (That kind of conciliar authority was awfully Catholic for a group that claimed to be the only pure Protestants.) Of course, the Adventists stood apart from the rest of Christ's church because they would not submit their idiosyncratic interpretations of Scripture and theology to the judgment of the larger church." His confirmation was a "choice in favor of the whole church rather than just a splinter of it. And [his] confirmation was a prayer in action and word for the unity of the church of Jesus Christ."

LaVonne Neff was no ordinary pastor's wife. Educated and talented, she has made a career of her own — writing, editing, and teaching. Her background and writing are so similar to that of Joan Craven ("The Wall of Adventism," *Christianity Today*, 19 October 1984) that there are those who say that if you scratched Joan, LaVonne would bleed.

In "The Wall of Adventism," Craven writes that "Adventists who claim to be evangelical point to the church's official doctrinal positions as stated in the *Church Manual*. The 'Fundamental Beliefs' include: the statement that Scripture is inspired, all-sufficient, and unerring; a thoroughly orthodox presentation of the

doctrines may wonder if Adventists are even Christian."

In the *Canterbury Trail*, LaVonne writes that she began to question Adventist beliefs "when, in the early '70s, a perfectionistic group of church leaders began teaching that the saved person is eventually enabled to live without sinning." That, she felt, bore no resemblance to her own experience. She then began questioning Adventist interpretation of the Bible and eventually found that "being a religion teacher, writer, and pastor's wife in a church whose soteriology, eschatology, and historical interpretation were all unacceptable to [her] quickly became a severe problem."

The closest LaVonne and her counterpart, Craven, get to the wife of Bathe and her nocturnal pursuits is a statement in "The Wall of Adventism" made by an academy girl to Craven's husband. This girl stated that she felt just as guilty when she ate a hot dog as when she went to bed with her boyfriend. The wife of Bathe, on the other hand, might have had a good laugh at anyone eating a dog — hot or cold!

Webber's experience in a fundamentalist church has a familiar ring to Seventh-day Adventists who are searching for answers to their questions. "To ask genuine questions," he writes, "to test the options, to be open to other traditions was seen as a sign of doubt."

The purpose of his book, he writes, "has been to explain why evangelicals are attracted to the liturgical tradition, especially the Episcopal church. But the issue is much broader than that. Evangelicals are returning to main-line denominations — to Methodist, Presbyterian, Lutheran, United Church of Christ, and Catholic churches. This book has been about that migration, and six reasons have been given for the trek into these churches: mystery, worship, sacraments, historical identity, ecumenical affirmation, and holistic spirituality. But evangelicals who come into these churches bring with them their evangelical roots, a heritage that has positive distinctions, experiences that can contribute to the spiritual life of the Episcopal community." He sees the confluence between the evangelical and liturgical tradition as a sign of spiritual health, a sign of renewal in our times.

When the Christian denominations can focus first on Christ and His ministry before their organizational propositions, then their members will be able to say that they are Christians who — because of their background, personality, and needs — worship in the Episcopal, or whatever, tradition. □

That kind of conciliar authority was awfully Catholic for a group that claimed to be the only pure Protestants.

moment of his enlightenment, he realized that his own commitment as an Adventist pastor had been to lead a worshipping community. The Seventh-day Adventist church understood itself primarily as a believing community. He knew that he "could never fulfill [his] role as a worship leader with Adventism as long as [he] held beliefs that conflicted with parts of its total package."

Also, he was particularly tortured by his conflict of commitments when he heard about the heresy trial of Desmond Ford, a ministerial colleague and a former Anglican turned Adventist, who was

trinity and each of the members; and an evangelical view of the new birth, the Second Coming, and justification by the blood of Christ."

Craven points out that "full half of the 'Fundamental Beliefs' concern such teachings as the unchangeable seventh-day Sabbath, Christ's function in the heavenly sanctuary since 1844, and the prophetic ministry of Ellen G. White." She believes that "evangelicals who look primarily at SDA statements about Scripture, the Trinity, and salvation tend to think of Adventists as fellow evangelicals, while those who focus on peculiar

(concluded from page 3)

between handwritten and typescript documents, he said, "Well, you knew the White Estate wouldn't like it." But he had no comment on the problem of equating what the Estate doesn't like with what is unethical.

Another White Estate representative, Roger Coon, asserted with far too much confidence that Ellen White, having seen in vision the meeting between Mary Magdalene and Jesus just after His resurrection, and having "probably heard the dialogue in contemporary English vocabulary, [she] was therefore in a position to know when the rendering of the KJV was archaic (and, therefore, misleading); . . ." (The King James Version of John 20:17 has Christ saying, "Touch me not, for I have not yet ascended to My Father," leaving the impression, as Coon points out, that Christ would have been defiled in some sense had Mary touched Him before His ascension.)

Without saying Ellen White was mistaken, I suggested to Coon and the class that an accurate translation of the Greek is even more winsome: "Don't go on holding me." Coon's reaction was, "Well, they're not mutually exclusive."

While the point was not argued further in class, a quick reading of the relevant paragraph in *Desire of Ages* (p. 790) still gives the clear impression that Mary was not to touch Jesus, and that she did not do so. It would simply be better if Coon did not try to claim vision-based exegesis for Ellen White.

One of several off-the-topic lectures was Coon's presentation on demons —

Coon was then asked whether the White Estate had any documentation that would indicate that there was any kind of deliverance session for the Smith home or for Harriet.

Coon replied that he had only been at the White Estate for five years and was unfamiliar with the letter. Robert Olson, however, has been there for a decade now; and he spoke up from the audience to pronounce that there was no deliverance session for Smith's home or wife, leaving us to wonder whatever happened to those demons, and to hope that they did not influence too much what Smith published for so many years in the *Review*.

In another very apologetic lecture by Coon on Ellen White's personal eating habits, he viewed as part of "Satan's objectives and methodology" the suggestion that she might have been a health-reform hypocrite, and claimed that the charge "is still as unfounded and unproven as it was during the lifetime of the prophet."

The White Estate's own documentation indicates that Ellen White had a rather up-and-down experience with meat eating from the time of her health reform vision in June of 1863 until at least 1894 (see Ron Graybill monograph, "The Development of Adventist Thinking on Clean and Unclean Meats," 1981). And it was pointed out to Coon during his presentation that it wasn't Ellen White's personal stumbling on health reform that troubled anyone; rather it was what she had to say about others who suffered the same weakness. The following two examples were read to the class:

"Those who digress occasionally to gratify the taste in eating a fattened turkey

General Conference president, with the blessing of Ellen White.

Coon's response to all of this was to allow Olson to bail him out again. Olson, from the audience, dismissed the entire problem of hypocrisy by stating that Ellen White was simply giving us the ideal, what we should all strive to reach. One either said, "Aw, come on, Bob"; or, as it happened, one said nothing.

The White Estate representatives continue to picture Ellen Harmon as having managed only three grades of education, even though two recent doctoral dissertations on Ellen White — one of them written from the White Estate (Ron Graybill's) — provide evidence that she was, by her own account, "a good enough reader to be called 'downstairs to the primary room' to read lessons for the 'little' children, Ellen clearly had moved beyond the primary grades herself."

Olson, Gordon, and Coon all minimize Mrs. White's uncredited use of sources — but quickly add that it would not matter if 100 percent of her writings are derivative. Still, Paul Gordon seemed to delight in saying that Fred Veltman had not found one instance of verbatim dependency in his fifteen-chapter *Desire of Ages* source search. Veltman says different; but, of course, it doesn't matter.

It does matter, however, that the White Estate representatives refuse to tackle the tough questions evolving from Ellen White studies. It does matter that the White Estate remains almost impervious to would-be tacklers because it refuses to come onto the field, much less to play by the recognized rules of free and open inquiry that have graced Western civilization.

It does matter that there was silence when I asked the White Estate representatives whether they ever pondered the ethical problem of a few men deciding what an entire people (now pushing five million) will and will not know about their spiritual roots.

The White Estate representatives said that I should be patient because soon *everything* in the vault would be available. And they intimated to me, as they have to others, that it is merely a matter of waiting for Arthur White to die.

But time is running out for all of us — not just for Arthur White. And the White Estate Board of Trustees, to recover its integrity as a board, must act of its own volition — while it still has a choice — to open the vault, before the gun goes off signalling the end of the fourth quarter, the end of all missed tackles, and the end of all things. □

A lifelong carnivore, A. G. Daniells, was installed as General Conference president with the blessing of Ellen White.

a discussion of the apparent growth of "spiritual warfare and deliverance ministry" among Adventists. He used biblical precedent to argue against the current tendency in deliverance sessions to prolonged dialogue with demons, to having them identify themselves, and to casting them out sequentially.

As Coon's lecture closed, I referred him to Letter 3, 1869, and quoted from memory Ellen White's words to Uriah Smith: "I saw no less than four evil angels occupying your home;" and, a little later in the letter, "Harriet [Smith's wife] is much of the time controlled by Satan."

or other flesh meats, pervert their appetites . . . and the lack of stability in regard to the principles of health reform is a true index of their character and their spiritual strength" (2T, p. 487).

"No man should be set apart as a teacher of the people while his own teaching or example contradicts the testimony God has given His servants to bear in regard to diet . . . His disregard of health reform unfits him to stand as the Lord's messenger . . ." (6T, p. 378). Inexplicably, within a few months of the writing of that testimony, a lifelong carnivore, A.G. Daniells, was installed as

