

1. GC/NAD TITHE DISTRIBUTION

MODIFIED: A chapter of Church history came to a close during Spring Meeting. Since the earliest days of the Church the General Conference and the North American Division functioned as a single entity. During the past several years the North American Division has gradually developed its own identity, first in staffing, then budgeting, and, most recently, in cash management. In all overseas divisions, a special percentage of tithe, defined by each division policy, is sent from the lower organizations to the division, and this tithe percentage is kept by the division for its own use. The overseas divisions pay to the General Conference 1% of all tithe given by its members. However, in the North American Division 21% of all tithe returned by our members for the world-program of the Church has been sent directly to the General Conference, bypassing the division which did not function as a separate entity. The General Conference then returned substantial amounts of money as appropriations to NAD entities.

At Spring Meeting each year the General Conference Committee approved initial guidelines for the next year's budget, allocating resources into four basic funding blocks: **a.** NAD operating expenses and entitlements programs such as educational assistance, evangelism funds, and small-conference assistance; **b.** appropriations for GC institutions operating in North America (Andrews University, Loma Linda University, Oakwood College, Christian Record Services*, and the Pacific Press and Review and Herald Publishing Associations**); **c.** GC headquarters operations; **d.** appropriations to world divisions.

Beginning in 1994 this process will change. The 21% of the tithe from North American members will flow through the conferences and unions to the North American Division where 9.4 points of the 21% will be held. This represents a slight increase over the amount currently returned by the General Conference to North America. In harmony with a 1990 Annual Council action, this will increase from 9.4 to 9.65 points in 1995. These funds will be used by the NAD to underwrite the items listed under (a) above. Note, that as a result of these changes, in 1995, 45.7% of the NAD tithe increase will remain

in the North American Division (9.65 is 45.7% of 21).

It is interesting to note that in 1993, 76% of the funds returned to North America are distributed to the conferences in these entitlement programs.

It will be the task of the General Conference to cover the explosive demands of items b, c, and d listed above with 11.35% (11.6% in 1994) of the tithe and mission offerings and Ingathering (the latter two of which are showing declining trends) as well as the increasing Global Mission offerings. (*CRS receives a grant from Ingathering funds. **Pacific Press and Review and Herald do not receive any operating appropriations.)

2. ADRA/TED SERVES SARAJEVO:

Ray Dabrowski, Trans-European Division Communication director, reported that a convoy of 31 trucks with over 300 tons of humanitarian aid for the besieged city of Sarajevo was dispatched from Belgrade by ADRA/TED March 17. After four days of uncertainty due to the sudden eruption of fighting around Sarajevo, the convoy reached the city.

This was the largest of four convoys coordinated by ADRA/Yugoslavia. Besides food, clothing, and medicines, ADRA trucks carried more than 22,000 parcels addressed to individual inhabitants in the city. Parcels collected by ADRA in Belgrade and several regional centers were delivered to their respective destinations. Thus far more than 600 tons of aid have been dispatched from Belgrade.

Radomir Nikolic, director of ADRA-Sarajevo, reports that the arrival of ADRA transports are announced on local radio. People then know they should come to our Adventist church which was repaired after the roof was damaged by a bomb. Now the church is full of activity, distributing an average of 800 parcels each day. ADRA staff work in warehouses day and night in -20 degree Centigrade conditions with no electricity, cook with wood fuel, and frequently suffer frostbite. They are under constant danger of being shot at. Nikolic can describe several near-death situations from which he and other ADRA personnel escaped miraculously. His VW mini-bus has 32 bullet holes.

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