

September 13, 1993

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1. THE G C OFFICE IS BUZZING WITH ACTIVITY as the staff makes final preparations for the '93 Annual Council. A few weeks in early September is designated each year as a "travel moratorium" in order that staff members are available to consider major initiatives. A few of the items to be considered at this year's council include: ! Reporting the results and the recommendations born of the World Survey Commission which was established by the '91 Annual Council in which questionnaires have been completed in at least 45 randomly-selected congregations in each division. (I will report more on this later);

! Considering initiatives focused on moving organizations, currently dependent on appropriations, to become financially self-reliant, while urging at the same time organizations which are already self-supporting to achieve higher levels of mission-driven, collective sacrifice;

! Finalizing objectives and plans for the 1995 General Conference Session offering;

! Approving modifications to the Inter-division worker program designed to involve an increasing number in Global Mission activities;

! Struggling with a 1994 budget, so tight that most world divisions will receive no increased funding and some will face reductions; and

! Interviewing possible candidates for the position of assistant editor of the **ADVENTIST REVIEW** (replacing Eugene Durand who is retiring).

My personal schedule this past week was a bit heavier due to completing work on a companion book to the '93 Week of Prayer series—designed to be given to non-Seventh-day Adventists—as well as spending some time on another book dealing with our beliefs, in the light of the approaching 150th anniversary of The Great Disappointment.

2. PAPUA NEW GUINEA FORCES OCCUPIED THE SDA MISSION OFFICE and compound at Rumba on the island of Bougainville, according to Ray Coombe, SPD Communication director. All buildings, except for the church and office, were severely damaged since the site is now being used as a depot for government forces. Many mission workers who have been living in the mountains near Arawa for months have been forced to move deeper

into the jungle. PNG forces have also occupied two SDA villages and causing most villagers to leave. Last week three battles took place between the PNG forces and the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA)—all in areas where SDAs live. This conflict arose in May, 1990, when the BRA declared itself independent of Papua New Guinea.

3. 865 WERE BAPTIZED at the close of Elder James Zachary's (G.C. Ministerial Association) open-air evangelistic crusade in Kisumu, Kenya. The total for this associate in the GC Ministerial Association is expected to reach 1,000. Fifty laymen assisted with crusade activities.

4. JAMAICAN LAY PREACHER FITZ HENRY has concluded a seven-week crusade in Port-of-Spain, on the Caribbean island of Trinidad. Over 5,000 crowded under five large tents to hear this fiery preacher proclaim the everlasting gospel.

Brother Henry is a Christian businessman who volunteers his time regularly to conduct evangelistic campaigns. A hurricane was scheduled to strike Trinidad in the early hours of Sabbath, August 7, the sixth Sabbath of the crusade. Despite warnings, on Friday night crowds converged on the tent where they held a season of prayer asking God to divert the storm. God answered them and the hurricane passed between the twin islands of Trinidad and Tobago and the land was spared. That Sabbath 209 were baptized! At the close of the crusade 1,280 had been baptized; these are to be organized into three new congregations.

5. ARTURO SCHMIDT, OF NAD'S MUSLIM MINISTRIES, held an evangelistic series in Baku, capital of the Muslim republic of Azerbaijan. During the 3-month crusade the halls were crowded to listen to the gospel, health messages (based on both the Bible and Koran), and a Revelation Seminar. As a result 101 were baptized, two new congregations organized, and 450 continue attending Bible classes.

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