

From the G.C. President

January 17, 1994

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1. TRIP CANCELLED: It was with deep regret that after receiving some explicit information and advice, and after consultation with the Africa Indian Ocean leadership, our plans to visit Zaire, Rwanda and Madagascar were cancelled. Civil unrest continues to plague Zaire. With the economy in shambles, inflation rates are astronomical. In the last week or so the government removed six zeros from the currency. Some military units, who have not been paid for months, have been stopping vehicles on the streets and highways to rob and pillage, and recently the French ambassador was killed. Included in the itinerary was a gathering next Sabbath in Kigali, Rwanda, to celebrate AID's baptism of the one millionth member. This week Elder JJ Nortey, AID president, reported they have now reached 1,004,667 members!

2. MEMBERS OF THE RUSSIAN MAFIA have recently come to our seminary in Zaokski on two occasions demanding monthly payments for "protection" and threatening reprisals should these payments not be forthcoming. Staff and students are spending hours together in prayer, for while leadership has counseled with and sought assistance from government officials it is evident the only real source of protection, in these extremely unstable times through which Russia is passing, is from the Lord Himself. Please remember this institution in your prayers.

3. AUSTRALIAN BUSHFIRES, raging around Sydney and throughout the State of New South Wales, have not affected any church-owned properties. However, flames from one fire came within meters of the Hoxton Park Church. Other fires reached within five kilometers of the South Pacific Division Wahroonga headquarters and the nearby Sydney Adventist Hospital was placed on emergency alert.

4. TWO HUNDRED NINETEEN WERE BAPTIZED in December at the close of a crusade conducted in Pantitlán, Mexico, by Mrs. Adly Campos, administrative assistant for the G C Ministerial

Association. One thousand six hundred studied the Family Life Seminar Bible course in preparation for the crusade, many of whom are still preparing for baptism.

5. PAKISTAN: The challenge in Pakistan, where less than three percent of the 120 million population are Christians, and where only one in every 16,040 is an Adventist, is immense. Sixty-seven of the five hundred nineteen baptized during 1993 were a result of youth evangelism. Four new church buildings, housing new congregations established in previously unentered areas, were recently dedicated in Pakistan. Four more new churches will be dedicated in the next few weeks as part of a Global Mission program to organize fifteen new churches by the summer of 1995.

6. PASTOR TURKER OLCER MADE HISTORY when he conducted the first ever evangelistic series for Moslems in Razgrad, Bulgaria. In this area of northeast Bulgaria our 10 members are almost unnoticed amid the 20,000 majority Turkish population. In one night, with the aid of a taxi driver, pastor Olcer hung 300 posters advertising the meetings while the members distributed 8000 brochures.

The mayor's opposition, initially evident during an interview, became fully apparent on opening night when Elder Olcer, the members, eighty visitors, journalists and the police arrived at the rented hall and found locked doors. After much discussion the visitors demanded the doors be opened and eventually they were unlocked. This "performance" was repeated during the next four nights before the meetings continued without interruption. During the meetings one thousand Bibles, five hundred copies of *The Way to Jesus* and fifteen hundred brochures, all in Turkish, were distributed in the community. Seven visitors enrolled in a Bible study course and after one week twenty three people stopped smoking. At the conclusion of the evangelistic series ten Turks and eleven Bulgarians made their decision to be baptized and join the Adventist church.