

# From the G.C. President

January 31, 1994

Robert S Folkenberg

**1. ZAOFSKI AUDITORIUM COLLAPSES:** On Tuesday, Jan 25, at about 4:30pm local time, the Euro-Asia Division Seminary auditorium collapsed under a heavy snowfall. No one was injured. Designed and engineered by a reputable, commercial steel building company in the United States, the metal structure was shipped from the U.S. and erected under the supervision of a company representative. Cause of the collapse is unknown at this point. Since the building was designed for a 25-lb. load per square foot, it should have accommodated the three-foot snow load. A task force will go to Russia on February 7 to determine the cause of the building's failure.

**2. COUPLE LOSE HOME TO FIRE:** Volunteers Fredi and Ethan Jones arrived in Los Angeles 48 hours after the earthquake to assist relief efforts. While they distributed food and water the next day, the couple were told that their home in Napa (northern California) had been gutted by fire, apparently started as an accident while their home was being cared for by their 19-year old grandson. However, says Ethan emphatically, "This experience will not deter us from further service. We've been helping in homes destroyed by earthquakes, floods, and fire. Now it's our turn. Next time, we'll know how these people feel."

**3. THE SDA GLOBAL CENTRE FOR ISLAMIC STUDIES** has published two books vital for Muslim evangelism. *Your Muslim Neighbour and You* is a 48-page manual for pastors and laymen who have opportunity to witness to Muslims. The handbook is a natural follow-up to the Centre's first major publication, *The Three Angels and the Crescent*, which presents a variety of practical models for evangelism among specific groups.

Borge Schantz, the Centre's director, reports an enthusiastic reception for both books from workers in direct contact with Muslim populations. (For additional information write to the SDA Global Centre for Islamic Studies, Newbold College,

Binfield, Bracknell, Berkshire, England RG12 5AN.)

**4. FEBRUARY AT A GLANCE:** During the next three weeks I'll be traveling in North America for activities which include: a) speaking February 3 at the inauguration of La Sierra University's new president, Larry Geraty, b) attending board meetings of the Adventist Media Center, Loma Linda University and Medical Center, c) meeting with NAD conference presidents, d) attending a Global Mission weekend at the ARCO Arena in Sacramento on Sabbath, February 19, and, finally, e) attending Andrews University's board meeting at which time a new university president is scheduled to be elected, replacing Dr. Richard Leshner who has indicated his plans to retire at the close of the current school year.

**5. ADRA/MIDDLE EAST** is finalizing negotiations with Yemen for literacy and income-generation projects for women and community-based maternal and child-health programs.

**6. FOR THE FIRST TIME IN 40 YEARS** a foreigner was invited recently by the China Christian Churches Association and Three-Self leaders to speak on Sabbath in a registered church! In Nanjing to talk with Amity Publishing Company officials about printing The Desire of Ages this year, Richard Liu was also accorded the privilege of presenting the Sabbath message.

In a tourist section of northeast China, Chinese officials have given permission for Seventh-day Adventists to build a church--stipulating that it must be the largest in the area! Pleased with the opportunity, our believers are also challenged by the estimated cost of RMB 300,000 (US\$46,154).

**7. CLARIFICATION: THE UNIVERSITY CHURCH** which sustained heavy earthquake damage is in south-central Los Angeles, not Loma Linda. Southern California Conference now estimates

\$400,000 in damages--excluding University church, which was condemned, and the LA Central Korean Sabbath School building, yellow-tagged against meetings in some sections.

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