

From the G.C. President

March 21, 1994

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1. THE G. C. STRATEGIC PLANNING AND BUDGET COMMITTEE met in Cohutta Springs last Thursday and Friday to review G. C. operations and financial projections. ! **'93 NAD Tithe increased 1.8%** over 1992, while the Consumer Price index increased at a rate of 3.4%. This was sobering, given that the initial '95 operating budget is based on projected tithe increase. ! **'93 Headquarters operation** was US\$1 million below the operating cap established in 1990. However, with the cost of living rising faster than income, evaluation of services offered by G. C. headquarters will be undertaken. ! **Sabbath School Mission offerings** from divisions outside North America decreased slightly compared with those of 1992, while within North America mission offerings decreased nearly US\$1 million. ! **Project giving** in North America processed through the General Conference increased by US\$5 million, which was over 60% compared with 1992.

We thank God for those who directly support vital mission projects around the world. However, there will be serious consequences to our world mission program, and the 900+ missionaries who serve every world division, unless the trends in tithes and regular Sabbath School mission offerings improve during 1994. I appeal to every pastor and elder to make this a matter of personal attention.

2. CAMBODIA was the focus of last Sabbath's Global Mission Celebration at Southern College. With few baptized Seventh-day Adventist believers two years ago and an extraordinary receptivity to the Gospel message, Cambodia is one of our greatest evangelistic opportunities. Today we have one church building for 37 congregations with about 250 members but 1,500 attending services! R. D. Riches, Southeast Asia Union president, reported that the cost of a one-year stipend to train and support a lay Bible worker to raise up a congregation, plus the cost of land and a simple chapel to seat 200, is US\$9,000 each. The 5,000+ attending the Global Mission gathering contributed over US\$565,000--enough to establish and house almost 63 new congregations! When the properties have been purchased and permits secured, Maranatha Volunteers International will assist with chapel construction.

3. AWRNEWS: ! Cyprus--The radio studio in Nicosia is preparing 22 hours of programming weekly in Arabic. ! **Slovakia**--The 14 hours of daily broadcasts from Slovakia blanket most of the Middle East and North Africa. ! **Guam**--AWR President Walter Scragg

announced that a contract has been signed with Continental Electronics for a 100 kw, solid state transmitter, augmenting the two Thompson 100kw transmitters that have been used by the station for the past eight years. AWR-Asia Manager Gordon Retzer says the schedule calls for the new transmitter to be installed by mid-July, 1994. This transmitter was made possible by proceeds from a bequest of a North American church member.

4. AFRICAN CHURCH-ROOF CRISIS: G. C. leaders knew a "church-roof" crisis was developing in Africa but did not understand its full magnitude until a recent meeting with leaders of the three divisions operating on that continent. We found there are currently 2,467 congregations worshipping without a roof over their heads! These are in addition to the 350 groups in the portion of Angola under Unita control which cannot be assisted until peace has come to that war-torn country.

The effect of this crisis is evident in Rwanda where 80% of our 298,000 believers (238,000) worship under the sky every Sabbath. The government, in order to encourage the building of chapels, has told us that we may hold evangelistic crusades only in church buildings!

Our believers are well able to provide the land and build their chapel, but they cannot secure the US\$2,000 in hard currency necessary to secure roofing material. I pray that individual members or congregations will consider sponsoring one or more of these roofs and communicate with G. C. treasury's office of church development.

5. 52 SCHOLARSHIPS have been granted by the G. C. Office of Women's Ministries (41 of these are full scholarships) to women in seven divisions and one attached union. These scholarships were funded from royalties of the sale of the first devotional book prepared by Women's Ministries.

6. CORRECTION: In the February 28 edition of this news sheet I reported that we have received more than 50 original compositions to be considered for the G. C. Session Theme song. Richard Stenbakken, chairman of the Session music committee, corrected that number to 250!

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