

From the G.C. President

March 28, 1994

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1. Cohutta Update: In addition to a myriad of smaller group meetings, two meetings dominated last week's activities in Cohutta Springs.

* **Stewardship Council--GC** and world division officers joined stewardship directors for the first day of a four-day stewardship council to consider ways of enhancing stewardship education, identifying areas needing attention and evaluating effectiveness.

* **Commission on World Church Organization (COWCO)** Two of the major issues discussed during this, the final meeting of this Commission included:

! **Documentation:** COWCO spent a major block of time reviewing the proposed modifications to the GC fundamental documents (constitution, bylaws, and policies) that would be necessary if the previously agreed changes are approved.

! **GC Delegation--**During its previous meetings COWCO had agreed to recommend to the GC Session a new approach to composing future (2,000 and beyond--if necessary) GC Session delegations. This formula included a cap of 2,650, which is the number of delegates estimated to attend the 1995 GC Session. Upon receiving the a report from world divisions that the cap be reduced to 2,000 or less, COWCO agreed to recommend to the 1994 Annual Council that the proposal submitted to the '95 Session (**a**) be based on a cap of 2,650 (as communicated to the world divisions), but that (**b**) the GC Session delegates be presented the alternative of reducing the cap to 2,000 while maintaining the same ratios between delegate categories. Additionally, the delegates will be provided an estimate of the total dollars that might have been saved by the church had the '95 session delegation been limited to 2,000.

All of the COWCO recommendations (along with other possible GC Session items) must be approved by the 1994 Annual Council, which is responsible for approving the GC Session agenda.

Our plans are to distribute a video presentation (with printed support documentation) of the major issues to be on the GC Session agenda to delegates before the 1995 Session.

2. NEW MEDICAL SCHOOL IN ARGENTINA: When River Plate Adventist University in Argentina opened its medical school on March 7, 1994, it became the third such program offered by church institutions, the others being Loma Linda University and Montemorelos University. The new medical school, operating without supplemental financial support from the General Conference or the South American Division, will function with the support of neighboring River Plate Adventist Hospital.

More than 4,000 attended opening ceremonies, including Dr. Carlos Menem, President of the Republic of Argentina. Making reference to the program's dual emphasis on curative and preventive medicine, the president stated, "It is good to heal, but much better to prevent." He closed his remarks by reminding the audience of the model Physician, the One "who made the lame walk, the dumb speak, and the blind to see."

3. ADRA ENTERS YEMEN: On February 16 the Middle East ADRA director, Jim Neergaard, signed an agreement that will enable us to place an ADRA director in Yemen.

4. GLOBAL MISSION IN MOLDOVA: Six months ago there was not one Seventh-day Adventist in Kriulyani, Moldova. Then Pastor Iliya Balan, who was pastoring a church of 260 members with a new church building, agreed to move to this unentered town and leave his congregation to be pastored by trained lay leaders. As a result, today there is a group of 22 meeting in one room of the pastor's house and four have been baptized.

What an example of *collective sacrifice*! The congregation he left behind was willing to provide their own pastoral care so that others might know Christ and Pastor Balan was willing to move from the comforts of an established church. A portion of the direct evangelistic expense of this initiative was funded by committed members of the world church through Global Mission. I believe there are many ways we as a church can look for and practice the spirit of collective sacrifice in which we make sharing the gospel with others more important than our own needs.