

1. CONVOCATION IN PARIS: After a 2.5-hour dialogue Friday evening with pastors, church elders, and other conference, union, and division leaders. Sabbath (June 11) it was a joy to worship with more than 3,000 of our 5,000 members in the North France Conference.

While remaining faithful to conscience, many members face difficulties due to the recent law establishing a six-day school week requiring children to attend school on Sabbath. Pray that this element of religious freedom will be reestablished in France.

2. SOLUSI CELEBRATION & CONFERENCE: Following an all night flight from Paris, I arrived Sunday morning (6/12) at historic Solusi College, 50 Km (32 miles) from Bulawayo, Zimbabwe, just in time to speak at the graduation of 78 college and graduate students. The day was special for many reasons. **1)** The graduating class included the very first students (14) to receive their MA in Pastoral Ministry from Andrews University on the Solusi College, **2)** They were celebrating the 100th birthday of Solusi. It was in 1894 that the Sparrow and Anderson families founded Solusi Mission on the 8,000-acre land grant provided by Cecil Rhodes, then Prime Minister of the British colony. **3)** Though still unofficial, the congregation received the news that preliminary approval had been granted for Solusi to receive university status.

About 50 Bible teachers from most of the colleges in Africa gathered, Monday morning, at Solusi to consider methods of conveying biblical truths within the African culture, and I had the opportunity to dialogue with them for a few hours. One of the papers projected that in 20 years, at the present rate of growth, there will be more than 21 million Seventh-day Adventists on the African continent. Zimbabwe alone is expected to have 3.4 million members. To maintain the current pastor/member ratio in Zimbabwe (about one pastor for 20 congregations) they will need 2,000 pastors, which means graduating 100 per year, instead of the current 10-15! Due to the prohibitive cost of meeting this need the group considered training of local elders and other optional means of delivering pastoral/evangelistic ministry.

3. TUESDAY'S VISIT TO ZAMBIA was brief (10 hrs), pleasant, yet productive, for it included a meeting with about three thousand believers (extraordinary attendance for a work day) as well as a meeting with Frederick J T Chiluba, president of Zambia.

The church in Zambia is vibrant! They have already reached their Global Mission quinquennial goal of 102,500. In other words, 102,000+ of their 208,000 members have been baptized since the last GC Session! Thus they have set a new goal of 250,000

our believers worship in 1,030 churches and over members by June 1995. In addition to two hospitals, 2,000 companies and these are organized into six local missions. I must confess to one startling impression! All

but one of the union and local mission officers was in his or her 30s! The oldest one (the exception) is in his 40s. And, yes, I did say his or her, for two secretary/treasurers of local missions are women. They have set one other goal, and that is to be financially self-reliant by 1997!

4. GABON, (my next stop last Wed. & Thurs.) in equatorial West Africa, is home to 1.5 million people among whom our work began 30 years ago. Progress was slow and difficult. Three years ago we had only 25 members. Then Elder L Newton, president of the Central Africa Union, called Elder Max Pierre, a pastor of Haitian descent then in New York, to serve as evangelist/president of the Gabon Mission. He found people hungry for the message. Today we have 1,000 members, and many more attending church!

I flew to Franceville, a city of 400,000 in the interior, where two months ago there were no Seventh-day Adventists. Elder Pierre just concluded an evangelistic series there and baptized 183 people. They are already fully organized as a church, with a uniformed pathfinder club of 50 and a choir!

The Franceville meetings were televised to central Gabon. What Pastor Pierre didn't know was that in Akiene (100 Km--60 miles away) Pastor Jose Gaspar, a local pastor (27 churches/2,000 members) was watching the series and encouraging his members to do so. He came under conviction and visited with Elder Pierre. While I was there he made his decision to become a Seventh-day Adventist and read me a letter that sounded like a Macedonian call in which he reported that 200 others had already made the same decision. He, and his "mission president" who had also accepted our message, invited us to preach to their members. Then, on returning to Libreville, I met with Gabon's Prime Minister, Oye Mba Kasimir, appealing for assistance in resolving the problem caused by the 6-day school week.

While in Gabon, church leaders laid plans to hold evangelistic meetings and establish congregations (with chapels) in the 10 largest cities in the country and 10 villages (all unentered) in the next year! This will be possible only if funds become available. The cost of *each* initiative is US\$10,000.

I will report on my visit to Cameroon next week.

5. ELDER CHARLES GRIFFIN, Associate Director of the GC Department of Church Ministries for Stewardship, accepted an appointment to serve as president of the Greater New York Conference.