

# From the G.C. President

October 23, 1995

Robert S. Folkenberg

**O PROGRESS AMONG MUSLIMS:** In 1989, the General Conference named the Soviet Union, China, India, and the Middle East as direct action areas of high priority for the new Global Mission initiative and the results are evident. So far during 1995, the West Russian Union has seen one new church open each week. These new churches represent centers of hope, hope that was not present just a few months ago. Our immediate goal is to establish new churches in 70 moderately-sized cities that still have no Adventists. To think that this could be done in 70 weeks!

Though our churches have been vandalized in Muslim Armenia, our faithful workers continue to labor with encouraging results. Twenty-one people were recently baptized in Gumry, another nine were baptized in Sisyanak, and a second church will be opened in Yerevan. Our church in Tbilisi, Georgia, has a special problem. They recently baptized 25 new members, but because the church was already packed many of the members now have to stand outside and listen by the windows. At the conclusion of an evangelistic meeting in Abkhazia 67 people were baptized. The church in Gandja, Azerbaijan, is made up of former Muslims and Jews who meet each Sabbath as Seventh-day Adventists, now happy in Christ.

Much of what is being done in the Euro-Asia Division is being done with great sacrifice. New members are excited about their new hope in Christ and the truths of the Bible. Please continue to pray for God's cause in this part of the world field where the work goes forward amid danger, financial difficulties, and personal sacrifice.

**O IT IS WRITTEN UPDATE:** I just received word from Pastor Mark Finley that, beginning November 4, Asia television will begin to broadcast *It Is Written* on prime time Saturday evenings to the 75 million households in India and 38 other countries in the Middle East and Asia. The first four programs have already been sent.

Negotiations are under way for *It Is Written* to produce, under government supervision, a series of programs on smoking and health that will be broadcast on 3,400 stations to the 900 million people of the Peoples Republic of China.

**O VIETNAM'S 65 MILLION PEOPLE** are a high priority for Global Mission. The church has had a continued presence in the southern part of the country since the end of the Vietnam war, and ADRA continues to work in the northern part of Vietnam. In 1994, AWR, began a daily ½ hour broadcast in Vietnamese. Today, there are 22 home Bible study groups meeting in central Vietnam and more than twenty people await baptism in another city.

AWR's Global Mission initiative created considerable interest in the area around Hanoi primarily from other Protestant churches where more than 600 have shown considerable interest in the Adventist Church. We have had no Adventists in the northern part of the country since 1954.

**O FROM BRAZIL TO ANGOLA:** Six Brazilian nurses have volunteered their services for the last six months with ADRA in Angola. So far they have set up five health posts throughout the country where they treat people and share health principles. That their work has been accepted is evidenced by the Angolan government's invitation for them to broadcast their basic health concepts over the radio for the general population to hear. Please pray for these young nurses and this Global Mission endeavor.

**O GLOBAL MISSION--SOLOMON ISLANDS:** The Kwaio People on the Solomon Islands have been resistant to Adventists for years. In fact, a few years ago they even killed one of our missionaries. Recently an event happened that changed this dramatically. One day, while the local villagers were observing workers who were felling trees to make a landing strip for Atoifi Adventist Hospital, a small child ran into the path of a falling tree. Hospital chaplain Baxton, cried out loudly, "Lord, save him!" The tree stopped its crashing descent midair long enough for the chaplain to run over and pull the child to safety. Then the tree continued its fall crushing everything in its path. The Kwaio tribe was so moved by this display of God's power that they have chosen to renounce heathenism. Leaders of the South Pacific Division presented a Bible to the Kwaio chief, although he cannot read it. "When the Bible was presented to me," the chief later said, "I felt all my devils leaving me." Please remember the Kwaio tribe in your prayers.

**O "THE TWO BAPTISMAL CANDIDATES** were at the water's edge when suddenly an awful, blistering wind came up, whipping in off the desert." Christian Record Service's John Spoto recalls the day during the National Camp for the blind last summer at Hobble Creek in Springville, Utah. "It began to drizzle, and the water got really choppy. David, the blind man behind me, said, 'Spoto, what's happening?' Nobody knew what to do, so I looked up to God and said, 'In the name of Jesus, peace be still!' And just like that, in 30 seconds, there came a calmness. Not even a breeze. The water calmed down, and we went on with the baptism."

God is working powerfully through Christian Record Services, our church's ministry to the blind and the deaf. Its effectiveness evidenced by the 15 blind campers have been baptized at Hobble Creek alone during the last three years.

**O ON A PERSONAL NOTE:** After about two months of intensive pressure with scarcely a free moment, I'm taking my camping gear and heading for the peace and solitude of the mountains for four eagerly-anticipated days of "recovery!" After returning, and spending a weekend attending the west coast convention of Adventist attorneys, I leave to attend the year-end meetings of the Africa-Indian Ocean Division and then visit our believers in Zaire and Rwanda.