

From the G.C. President

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O UPDATE—DIALOGUE WITH 3ABN: For several months the General Conference has engaged in dialogue with “Three Angel’s Broadcasting Network” (3ABN) seeking to define a basis by which there can be increased cooperation between 3ABN and the church’s constituent-based organizations. Given the global magnitude and urgency of our mission, the need to avoid nonessential and expensive duplication, and the need for unity—the precursor to the latter rain—it is essential we find how to best interface independent ministries and the church constituencies which they serve.

The evening of March 20, after many preliminary meetings, I participated in a consultation with the officers and most of the members of the 3ABN Board of Directors. Though this was not an official board meeting, those present did reach a consensus on many of the basic factors in a working relationship. Among those factors was the General Conference’s desire that any agreement should state clearly that the General Conference has not assumed any corporate control over 3ABN.

I pray fervently that such an historic agreement will soon become a reality and that the result will be a rich harvest of souls which will hasten our Lord’s return.

O PUC’S UNIQUE HOMECOMING: I have the privilege to speak on Sabbath, April 19, for Pacific Union College’s unique “satellite homecoming”—the first transmitted by satellite to alumni and friends all over North America. The program will be available on Galaxy 9, Channel 1, starting at 11:00 a.m., Pacific time.

O QUALITY ADVENTIST EDUCATION: I heard a story recently that emphasized the quality of the education our young people receive at our Adventist colleges. This young woman, majoring in corporate communication, applied for an internship with one of the major public relations firms in Washington, D.C. The PR executive told her that 600 students had applied for internships—and that they would hire only 6! She competed with students from Georgetown, University of Maryland and other outstanding universities. Several weeks later, after reviewing her resume and portfolio and after interviewing her, they offered her one of the six internships!

O NEW COUNTRY INITIATIVE: The Adventist Dispensary of Dzahadjau, the first Adventist institution in the Muslim Republic of Comoros in the Indian Ocean, was officially inaugurated on March 24 by the governor and a representative of the World Health Organization followed by the Adventist Dispensary of Dembeni and the Adventist Dispensary of Mohoro inaugurated on March 25 and 26. These medical projects, planned by

ADRA and started with the support of Global Mission, are attended by two Adventist physicians from Madagascar: Dr. Andrianantenaina and Dr. Rasoanantenaina, assisted by local personnel. They have already seen well over 300 patients, some from distant villages. Please pray for this new initiative.

Off the Back Burner

Segment #60: Ellen White’s practical counsel and common sense were never more evident than in the 1890s when she helped develop the work in Australia. In a letter to Marian Davis, Ellen White wrote out her practical instruction, based on the counsel of her Guide: “I have planned what can be raised in different places. I have said, ‘Here can be a crop of alfalfa; there can be strawberries; here can be sweet corn and common corn; and this ground will raise good potatoes, while that will raise good fruit of all kinds’” (Bio, vol. 4, p.154).

Little scientific farming had been done at that time in Australia. Ellen White knew that if Avondale used proper soil management, not only would the college benefit but poverty in that area would be greatly reduced. In a letter to her son, Edson, she described the development of orchards at the school and on her own two acres: “The cultivation of our land requires the exercise of all the brainpower and tact we possess. The lands around us testify to the indolence of men. ... We hope to see intelligent farmers, who will be rewarded for their earnest labor. ... If we accomplish this, we shall have done good missionary work” (Ibid., p. 224).

Practical counsel was often needed in the treatment of the sick. Early in 1897, Professor Herbert Lacey, Avondale’s principal, was stricken with typhoid fever. He lost 20 pounds in one week. Hearing that the medical team had applied ice to Professor Lacey, Ellen White dashed off a telegram to the medical workers: “Use no ice, but hot applications.” Why did she do this, and do it so quickly? She saw too many dying of typhoid but she also knew that hydrotherapy should be used wisely. Ellen White later wrote of this crisis: “I was not going to be so delicate in regard to the physician as to permit Herbert Lacey’s life to be put out. ... To go just as the book of Dr. Kellogg shall direct without considering the subject is simply wild” (Ibid., p. 224).