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INSTITUTIONAL LOYALTY VERSUS RACIAL FREEDOM: THE DILEMMA OF BLACK SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST LEADERSHIP

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# INSTITUTIONAL LOYALTY VERSUS RACIAL FREEDOM: THE DILEMMA OF BLACK SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST LEADERSHIP

By

Calvin B. Rock

Dissertation

Submitted to the Faculty of the

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# INTRODUCTION

Black Christians within majority white Christian denominations are proto-typical of what W. DuBois calls the black American's "two-ness of citizenship." These believers, a true minority of a minority, are continuously torn by the competing and often antithetical values of their double identity. As is the case in all minority situations, blacks in white churches, even when given equal opportunity, do not, by virtue of numbers, have equal power. In this struggle for equal power, hence justice, black leaders in white denominations have often adopted tactics such as kneel-ins, walk-ins, walk-outs, manifestos and press releases, in hopes of moving the larger body to more liberal social actions. While these measures are often successful, they are also productive of further tensions as they are viewed by the body politic as damaging to the church's image as a caring community. Thus, the historic dilemma of black Christian minorities remains--How can one be loyal to both race and church at the same time?

While studies of black religion in America occasionally comment on this problem, they do so, more often



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than not, in a cursory fashion.[1] The few authors who have made scholarly investigation of this phenomenon (e.g., L. Washington, Jr., and H. V. Richardson) give helpful insights into the plight of blacks in white churches, but do so with analyses and action schemata that limit themselves to the religio-historical vis-a-vis the historico-ethical approach embodied in this work.

The choice of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the United States of America, as a unit of investigation, is justified in several ways: a) it is a vibrant society whose many functional units (conferences, publishing houses, schools, hospitals, etc.) offer a wide scale of broad opportunities for interaction between the races; b) the church's sociological characteristics and contemporary political agenda make it similar to other black churches in predominantly white denominations in the United States of America; c) black Seventh-day Adventist leaders have, for decades, been very energetic and expressive with respect to their social and political roles

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[1]W. E. DuBois, The Souls of Black Folk; Carter G. Woodson, History of the Negro Church; E. Franklin Frazier, The Negro Church in America; C. Eric Lincoln, The Black Church Since Frazier and The Black Experience in America; Gayraud S. Wilmore, Black Religion and Black Radicalism; Albert Raboteau, Slave Religion; John Hope Franklin, From Slavery to Freedom; August Meier and Elliott Rudwick, Plantation to Ghetto; August Meier, The Negro Thought in America 1880-1915; Kenneth Clark, Dark Ghetto; H. R. Niebuhr, The Social Sources of Denominationalism; Benjamin E. Mays, Religion and Race.

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within the church and have a history and status which accurately reflect the broader society's struggle in this regard; d) the protest efforts of black Seventh-day Adventist leaders are well-documented with position papers, articles, etc., that are housed in the various institutional archives of the church; e) black Seventh-day Adventism is today the third largest black religious minority in the nation (130,000 at the end of 1980); f) the structural arrangements of the church accommodate an investigation which makes leadership characteristics particularly meaningful.

Are the principles of institutional loyalty and racial freedom mutually exclusive? Can blacks be contented and faithful members of a majority white denomination and true to their racial commitments and identity at the same time? The successes of the independence movements (housing 90 percent of black Christians) indicate that the latter is virtually impossible; or, to say the least, demonstrate clearly the preference of black Americans to worship under circumstances where these loyalty conflicts do not exist. Since, however, the black religious minority persists as a viable entity in the United States of America, and, in fact, is daily increasing in numbers if not in percentage, efforts such as this study, which pursue means of resolving the conflicts delineated, are necessary.

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The hypothesis which I propose is that while blacks in majority white churches have not the power to eradicate prejudice and injustice within the larger group, they can reduce significantly the tensions inherent in their duality. They can be at once racially formidable and denominationally loyal. The primary resource materials for the development of this hypothesis are the relevant works of Ellen G. White (1827-1915), church prophetess, and James Cone, chief apostle of black theology.

But, of course, it is not just black minority Christians who will profit from this study; members of the traditionally black denominations will also benefit. A careful appraisal and a workable resolution of the dilemma experienced by our subject group will provide important bridges of understanding and cooperation between those who occupy the independence denominations and the 10 percent of black Christians who remain in integrated fellowships. Furthermore, since all black Americans are a minority holding membership and allegiance within a nation, all of whose various institutions may be judged as largely hostile to their welfare, our study will provide parallels and insights instructive for the experience of the total black minority in the United States of America.

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# CHAPTER I

## PRIMARY CONTOURS OF CHURCH GROWTH AND SOCIAL PRACTICE, 1844-1980

Adventists regard their system as having a number of highly individualistic characteristics: 1) it is the true church, or, the only church whose doctrinal formulation includes the totality of God's will for humanity;[1] 2) it is the remnant church or the final segment of salvation history; 3) it is the legitimate heir of the message and mission of the new testament church (a role foretold in Biblical prophecy); 4) its function in society is reflected in such models as: a) the Israel of God, b) the reform ministry of Elijah; c) the work of John the Baptist.

Each of the latter models reflects important aspects of the church's self image. The Israelite model

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[1]There are three doctrines which Adventism stresses as having been overlooked by nominal Christianity but reclaimed through them; they are: a) the seventh-day Sabbath or the belief that God has never abrogated His command to earth's original inhabitants that they memorialize creation week by keeping the seventh day holy, b) the second-coming of Christ or the belief that Jesus will soon return to earth in fulfillment of His many gospel promises, c) the Spirit of Prophecy or the belief that Ellen G. White is the literal manifestation of the prophetic gift, and as such, fulfills one of the distinguishing characteristics of the true church as mentioned in Revelation 19:10.



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reinforces the idea of specialness and election; the Elijah model projects images of boldness in the face of apostasy, and the forerunner role of John the Baptist provides the dual directive: a) of preparing the world for the second coming of Christ, and b) the call to reform in matters of diet and dress.[2]

The model, however, which more than any other shapes the self image of Adventists is that of the three angels of Revelation 14:6-12. Adventists regard these angels, seen by the prophet as flying over the earth with the warning of the imminent return of Christ, as typifying the "three-fold" message which they preach.[3] Furthermore,

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[2]The austerity of the Baptist's wilderness life-style is instructive to Adventists regarding the relationship of dress and diet to one's spiritual welfare.

[3]"And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters. And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, if any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation, and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. Here

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they believe that by linking the second angel's announcement (Rev. 14:7), ". . . Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of His judgment is come . . . ," with the judgment scenes of Daniel (chapters 7 through 9), they can correctly calculate the year, "1844," as the time when God began His judgment in Heaven, and, simultaneously, established a "true church" people preaching judgment on earth: the true church, of course, being the Seventh-day Adventists themselves. Their angels motif perspectives regarding the significance of the year 1844 make the three not only the most determinative of models, it is the belief which more than any other provides for Adventists their strong certitude and self-assurance. As a result of such understandings, Adventism sees itself as a movement set apart, as the depository of God's true gospel, and as a people that are "in the world but not of the world." According to this view, Adventism is a cause miraculously conceived and divinely ordained to warn (and convince if possible), the unchurched, the unsaved, and even the saved, who are either ignorant, or are not yet full believers in, their distinctive understandings.

Adventism was born in what sociologists of religion hold to be an ideal social environment. The "Era of

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is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Revelation 14:6-12.

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Good Feeling," which began with the inauguration of James Monroe in 1818 and ended with the administration of Andrew Jackson (1829-1837), had provided Americans with a bold optimism about the country's future.[4] The chief causes of this optimism were: 1) the nationalism which popularized the view of the young nation as the "American Israel," 2) the spirit of activism based on a radical trust in personal initiative, 3) the belief in the perfectibility of the common person. The restlessness which characterized this era saw the pervasive loosening of established ideological relationships and the willingness of the citizenry to try fresh ideas in the form of new social utopian movements.[5] These new movements stressed a "this worldly" optimism which sharply contrasted with the "other worldly" forces of preceding centuries.

By the late 1830s, however, the mood was changing. The "Era of Good Feeling" had been dissipated by several unsettling events; among them were: 1) the surge of

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[4]The "Era of Good Feeling" is the label by which historians characterize this period of social and political optimism. Compton's Encyclopedia, 1967 ed., p. 456.

[5]Among the many socialist (utopian) groups which became popular at this time were the Rappites, the Society of Separatists of Zoar, the Bethelites, the Inspirationists, the Hope Dale Community, the Ephrata Community, Fourierism, and the Brook Farm Phalanx. Jerome L. Clark, 1844, 3 vols. (Nashville: Southern Publishing Assoc., 1968), 2:139-198.

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sectional animosities between the states, 2) the spate of charges and counter-charges among the churches, and 3) the devastating effects of the financial depression of 1837. Clearly, the hopeful expectations of Jacksonian politics had not been fulfilled and, as the country moved into the decade of the forties, Americans were generally pessimistic with regard to their economic, political, and social problems.[6]

It was this climate of disappointment and disillusionment that issued in a new and exciting phenomenon--the religious reform movement. Groups which were born or came into prominence at this time include the Mormons, the Disciples of Christ, the Christian Scients, and the Seventh-day Adventists. The guiding principle of this movement was clearly different from the popular, religious, and social enthusiasm that had flowered during earlier decades. The common appeal of this new wave of salvationist activity was reformation, perfect redemption and millennial expectation. The religious populace, despairing of earthly solutions to social problems, came now to attach their hopes to the promises of a "new heaven" and a "new

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[6]This overview of the societal mood at this time is by no means the complete picture. There were, in spite of this prevailing atmosphere, a number of forces at work which were quite sanguine regarding the nation's progress and future.

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earth" that are found in Holy Scripture.[7] The name "Adventist" was applied to those Christians inspired by this millennial expectation--a phenomenon which has since been labeled "The Great Advent Movement of 1840-1845."[8]

"Sabbath-keeping" Adventists first appeared as a dissident offshoot of the Adventist movement at the Adventist Conference held in Albany, New York, in 1845. However, it was not until 1848 that a significant sector of Adventism declared itself to be Sabbath keepers. The Sabbath-keeping branch of Adventism, at the outset, sought to form voluntary associations within existing churches. However, as they became more and more aggressive in declaring the spiritual bankruptcy of mainline Christianity, and as

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[7]"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." Revelation 21:1-4.

[8]"At one point perhaps as many as 50,000 of these Adventists scattered over New England and western New York as an integral part of the millennial ethos of the late 1830's and early 1840's, anticipating with the majority of Anglo-American Protestants that something would happen eschatologically around 1843, and seeing themselves, rightly, as an extension of or at least an epilogue of the Second Great Awakening." Jonathan M. Butler, "Adventism and the American Experience," in The Rise of Adventism, ed. S. Gaustad (New York: Harper and Row, 1974), p. 175.

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dissatisfaction and disillusionment with utopian promises intensified suspicion and hostility between ideological groups, these voluntary associations became more and more exclusive and sectarian. By 1860, the separation from existing churches had become complete. Adventists, pushed by the disapproval of mainstream Protestantism and pulled by their own "special truth" self-image, declared themselves to be independent from the churches which proclaimed Sunday as the holy day, and chose for themselves the name "Seventh-day Adventists."

The socio-historical factors so prominent in the birth of Seventh-day Adventism are not the only evidence of social determinism in their development. Also challenging their self-image as a prophetic occurrence (as being "in" but not "of" the world), are the realities of their socio-economic evolution. In this connection, the "sect-church" dichotomy provides an accurate interpretation of the changes which this group has undergone.[9] H. Richard Niebuhr describes the "sect-church" dichotomy in the following manner:

> In Protestant history the sect has ever been the child of an outcast minority, taking its rise in the religious revolts of the poor. . . . The sociological

---

[9]The "sect-church" dichotomy first came into sociological use in the work of Max Weber and his pupil, Ernst Troeltsch. Others who have made significant contributions to its development have been Liston Pope, H. Richard Niebuhr and Milton Yinger.

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> character of sectarianism, however, is almost always modified in the course of time. . . . As generation succeeds generation, the isolation of the community from the world becomes more difficult. Furthermore, wealth frequently increases when the sect approaches the churchly type of morals. As with the ethics, so with the administration of religion. An official clergy, theologically educated, takes the place of lay leadership; . . . . children are born into the group and infant baptism or dedication becomes once more a means of grace. So the sect becomes a church.[10]

The social characteristics of contemporary Seventh-day Adventism witness in many ways the truth of Niebuhr's conclusion, i.e., its ministry is highly educated, its membership is often affluent, and its organization highly diversified and institutionalized. However, there are a number of social characteristics of sectarianism which Adventism has not lost--its members are still largely inactive in political affairs, they are still somewhat aloof toward other religious groups, and, to a great extent, they are still self-contained with respect to education, health care, publishing, etc. (see Appendix 1).

The first published debate over the question of where Adventism is located on the sect-church continuum was initiated in the middle 1950s when Evangelicals Donald G. Barnhouse and W. R. Martin concluded a study of Seventh-day Adventist literature and doctrine with the announcement that this group should henceforth be regarded

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[10]H. Richard Niebuhr, The Social Sources of Denominationalism (New York: World Publishing Assoc., 1957), p. 19.

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as essentially orthodox and as a part of the mainstream of Protestant evangelical churches.[11] Time magazine, in an article titled "Peace with the Adventists," reported as follows:

> In 1956 the monthly magazine "Eternity," which has strong influence among fundamentalists in the U.S., told its readers, 'It is possible, we believe, to have fellowship with Seventh-day Adventists.' This reflects a definite switch from the previously held opinion that Adventists were an un-Christian group riddled with strange heresies and fringe fantasies that make them dangerous company for Christians. A staff-writer for "Eternity," had set out on a mission to expose Adventist anomalies, but ended up in extending the hand of peace instead. As a result of his research, fundamentalists have extended the hand of fellowship which has been accepted by the Seventh-day Adventists.[12]

The Barnhouse and Martin articles are regarded by Adventists as their formal introduction to recognized respectability in the family of Protestantism. But, of course, those articles by no means settled the question. In fact, rebuttal to the Barnhouse and Martin conclusions came quickly and decisively as one after another of the evangelical defenders of the faith rejected any suggestion that Seventh-day Adventists could be viewed as other

---

[11] Eternity Magazine, September 1956 to January 1957. The research of Barnhouse and Martin was conducted at the level of inter-church debate and revolved around the matter of orthodoxy. While their categories were not as precise as those of Niebuhr, Troeltsch, etc., they, nevertheless, bear meaningfully upon our discussion.

[12] Time, December 31, 1956, p. 48.

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than a sect.[13] In responding to the charges, Martin reiterated his position as follows:

> It is my true conviction that one cannot be a true Jehovah's Witness, Mormon, Christian Scientist, Unitarian, Spiritualist, and be a Christian in the Biblical sense of the term; but it is perfectly possible to be a Seventh-day Adventist and be a true follower of Jesus Christ despite certain heterodox concepts. . . .[14]

Donald Gray Barnhouse, E. Schuyler English, and a number of other modern religious leaders, joined Martin in his conclusions with respect to Adventism being a church. But, such well-known Christian leaders as Louis T. Talbott, M. R. DeHaan, John R. Rice, Anthony Hoekema, J. K. Van Ballen, Herbert Bird, and John R. Gerstner, have taken the position that Adventism is not a church.[15]

Gerstner capsulizes very well the continuing intrigue regarding this question with the following observation:

> The most interesting thing presently occurring in the world of churches and sects is the controversy concerning the classification of the Seventh-day

---

[13]A full defense of Walter R. Martin's position is given in his books, The Truth About Seventh-day Adventists (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1960), and in The Kingdom of the Cults (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1965), in the chapter titled "The Puzzle of Seventh-day Adventism."

[14]Martin, The Kingdon of the Cults, p. 359.

[15]Ibid.

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> Adventists. This group, since it came into being about a century ago, has usually been treated as a sect rather than a church by evangelicals. The Adventists, today, are contending vigorously that they are truly evangelical. They appear to want to be so regarded. But, on the other hand, many believe that the old classification as sect should not be changed . . . that they are as deserving of their sectarian classification as ever.[16]

The conclusions of Martin and Barnhouse, notwithstanding, the comparison of Adventism's dominant ethos with the overruling principle of the sect/church distinction shows that Seventh-day Adventism is not a "church" in the classic sense of the formulation. This becomes apparent when one remembers Milton Yinger's summary description of the "church"--a description which highlights its dependence upon sacrament and moderation in discipline--two characteristics not yet pronounced within Adventism. Yinger writes:

> The emphasis of the church is on sacrament and creed, whereas that of the sect is on 'right' behavior. . . . The moral demands are relaxed because salvation depends not only upon ethical achievement but upon the reception of the sacraments and acquiescence in the creeds. . . . Discipline tends to be moderate and the ban may be more readily used to exclude those who question the faith than those who fail to realize the ethical standards.[17]

The "denomination," identified by Niebuhr as a middle ground between sect and church, and by Yinger as

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[16]John H. Gerstner, The Theology of the Major Sects (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1960), pp. 9-10.

[17]J. Milton Yinger, The Scientific Study of Religion (New York: Harper and Row, 1974), p. 253.

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positioned between ecclesia and established sect, is a much more likely representation of Seventh-day Adventism. The denominational classification speaks more accurately to the situation of Adventists in that, 1) its membership comes mainly from the middle class, 2) its religious services emphasize an intellectual approach, 3) its ministry is the product of extensive formal education, 4) its rituals are formalized, 5) its worship structures are substantial, 6) its societal orientation is compromise rather than withdrawal (sect) or domination (church), and 7) while evangelism is still important to their scheme, increase in membership results more from births in their ranks than from adult voluntary conversions.[18]

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[18]The persuasive case is made by Adventist historian Jonathan Butler. "The Seventh-day Adventist shift from sect to denomination involved inevitable cultural and political accommodation. As New Englanders and western New Yorkers, Adventists had shared from the beginning in a Yankee ethic that would make them virtually indistinguishable from other middle-class Americans, very like the Mormons. While Jehovah's Witnesses, likewise indigenous to America, retained the disinherited status of the sect or cult, Seventh-day Adventists embraced social and economic upward mobility with religious zeal. The iconographic metamorphosis in Adventist literature from America as a beast to a buffalo to a lamb must be accounted for as much in these cultural terms as politically. Adventists finding themselves comfortably at home in American culture, tended to fall victim to the irony of hoping for a delayed end while preaching an imminent end." Jonathan M. Butler, "Adventism and the American Experience--Jonathan vs. Butler," in The Rise of Adventism, ed. S. Gaustad (New York: The McMillan Co., 1970), p. 259.

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The evidence which discourages the identification of Seventh-day Adventists as a denomination, however, is also quite formidable. In contrast with the denominational tendency, as identified by Yinger, Adventists are not liberal in their interpretation of scripture; they do not represent an accommodation of religion to a particular social class; they do not exercise relaxed moral standards. Furthermore, while tolerance of other religious groups is increasing, they are still more exclusive than inclusive in their associational patterns.[19]

My personal conclusion is that the most accurate identification for Seventh-day Adventism is none of the above, but rather, that of "established sect." Yinger describes this designation as a religious group that is somewhat more inclusive, less alienated, and more structured than the sect and, therefore, closer to the denomination.[20] He further observes that while other sects either disappear because the assimilative power of their cultural environment proves stronger than their resistance, or make the transition to denomination and beyond (ecclesia or established church), the "established sect"

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[19]Positive relationship to each of these tendencies is held by Yinger to be characteristic of the denomination. J. Milton Yinger, The Scientific Study of Religion (New York: Harper and Row, 1974), p. 175.

[20]Ibid., p. 266.

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manages to survive. As a sect, they continue to reject (at least de jure) many prominent normative patterns both secular and sacred. They remain "at war" (though with an ever lessening intensity) with the established religions and they maintain effective protection from the threat of severe compromise with secular society via such mechanisms as endogamous marriage and the private education of their youth. Members of the established sect go to school, work at jobs, and vote in local and national elections with those of other beliefs. However, they succeed in working out a synthesis of their sect norms and values of the world in which they function, and in doing so they defy Niebuhr's observation that "by its very nature the sectarian type of organization is valid for only one generation."[21] It is thus possible to conclude with Barnhouse and Martin that Seventh-day Adventists are essentially Christian (in the sense that all religious groups professing Christianity are Christian if they conform to the classical mission of the New Testament and the creeds and counsels of the organized Christian body).[22] However, their essential ethos is sectarian not churchly.

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[21]H. Richard Niebuhr, The Social Sources of Denominationalism (New York: World Publishing Assoc., 1957), pp. 19-20.

[22]Walter R. Martin, The Kingdom of the Cults (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1965), p. 359.

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The case for church classification may, in fact, be made from the perspective of the Adventists' social class and institutional configuration.[23] These factors notwithstanding, the concept of specialness which characterizes the Adventist self-image dictates for them a relational pattern which prevents absorption back into the mainstream of Protestantism.[24] While they have, as individual members, learned to adjust and adapt to the ways of contemporary culture, the "true church" beliefs which brought them out of existing denominations in the first place have not been weakened.[25] Adventist members have not changed their minds with regard to either the spiritual paucity of nominal Christianity, or to their own special place in the scheme of things.

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[23]Ownership of property and education of ministry and laity, two characteristics generally ascribed to church members, not sectarians, are now very common within Seventh-day Adventism.

[24]Adventists rank seventh on the Exclusivist-Ecumenical Gradient scale of twenty-seven American religious bodies compiled by Dean M. Kelley in his book Why Conservative Churches are Growing (New York: Harper and Row, 1972). See Appendix 2.

[25]As might be expected, black Seventh-day Adventists lag considerably behind their white counterparts in terms of social erudition. This lower position in class status (economic and educational) guarantees that their sectarian credentials will remain in many ways more pronounced than that of their white brothers and sisters. That is, they will continue to be more emotional and more dogmatic in their worship, and generally more conservative in their outlook and lifestyle.

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## Growth and Development of Black Adventist Membership

A crucial element of the Church's development has been its remarkable membership expansion. The following table demonstrates this fact:

TABLE 1

WORLD MEMBERSHIP GROWTH 1863-1980

| Year | Membership |
|---|---|
| 1863 | 3,005 |
| 1900 | 75,767 |
| 1909 | 100,931 |
| 1918 | 162,667 |
| 1944 | 557,768 |
| 1960 | 1,245,125 |
| 1970 | 2,051,864 |
| 1980 | 3,480,512 |

SOURCE: S.D.A. Annual Statistical Reports.

North American Adventists, who provide 78 percent of the church's income, have enjoyed an uninterrupted increase in growth, and at the end of 1980 claimed no less than 604,430 bona fide adherents.[26] The fact that black membership (traceable as far back as the Millerite Movement), is a highly visible and vibrant part of the church is of special significance for our study.[27] Note the

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[26]"General Conference Statistical Bulletin," 1980.

[27]The earliest names of Afro-Americans connected with Millerism are Charles Boles and John Lewis, both of whom assisted Miller in proclamation of the "Midnight Cry," North American Informant, March-August 1962, pp. 4-5.

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comparative growth profile of the percentage of black membership in the North American Division of the Adventist Church:

TABLE 2

NORTH AMERICAN BLACK S.D.A. MEMBERSHIP

| Year | North American Div. Members | Black Members | Percentage of Black Members[28] |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1900 | 36,000 | 150 | .003 |
| 1909 | 66,294 | 1,000 | 1.51 |
| 1918 | 95,877 | 3,500 | 3.65 |
| 1944 | 185,788 | 17,000 | 9.15 |
| 1960 | 332,364 | 70,000 | 21.06 |
| 1970 | 439,726 | 100,000 | 22.74 |
| 1980 | 604,430 | 130,000 | 21.51 |

SOURCE: S.D.A. Annual Statistical Reports.

The 130,000 black Adventists comprise over 21 percent of the church's membership and ranks third among those in racially mixed or "integrated" religious bodies. Black United Methodists, who total some 400,000, and black American Baptists of the American Baptist Convention, who number 225,000, are the only Protestant groups that are larger.[29]

[28]The decrease in percentage of black membership is due to unusual increase in Spanish and white membership (especially former) during this period (1980).

[29]The Protestant Episcopal and the United Presbyterian church, both of whose black constituencies number approximately 100,000, are other Protestant groups with significant percentages of black believers. There are approximately 800,000 black Roman Catholics in the United

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In the pre-Civil War days and, in fact, until separate black churches were organized in the early 1870s, black Seventh-day Adventists, being small in numbers, worshipped and traveled (though often second class) in the same facilities as their white counterparts. But, between the 1870s and 1880s, the evangelism of blacks in the South by various white missionaries caused their numbers to escalate and there soon developed the need and desire for racially separate congregations. As many as sixteen of these were established in the 1870s, fourteen in the 1880s, twelve in the 1890s, so that by 1900 there were no less than 42 black S.D.A. churches in the United States. Finally, in 1944, for most of the United States (the Pacific Coast being a notable exception) separate conferences (geographic locations) of congregational jurisdiction were organized to care for the rapidly developing membership (see Appendix 3).

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States. All totaled, there is an estimated 1.8 million blacks who hold membership in predominantly white religious bodies. This number is less than one percent of the 124 million total United States church membership. Most Negro Christians are concentrated in six predominantly Black denominations housing a combined membership of over 11.5 million. They are the National Baptist Convention, USA; the National Baptist Convention of America; the Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc.; the African Methodist Episcopal Church; the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church; the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church. Alex Poinsett, "Negroes and the Christian Church," in The Negro Handbook, compiled by the editors of Ebony (Chicago: Johnson Publishing Co., Inc., 1966), p. 307.

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## The Negro Department

One of the most significant events in the history of black Adventism was the creation, in 1909, of what was then named the Negro Department. This department was brought into being as an administrative entity commissioned to coordinate the work among black Seventh-day Adventists. Its creation was effected, in part, by the increasing demands of black Adventists and the concomitant rise of anxiety among their white counterparts. Original leadership in this department was provided by three Caucasian appointees who conducted its affairs until 1918. By that itme, it had become evident that the efforts of a centrally located committee of whites was inadequate to resolve the adjudicate issues involving blacks who were scattered throughout the country. Tensions were being produced by: 1) spiraling expectations among blacks that accompanied the growth of black membership, 2) participation by blacks in the financial organization of the church, 3) rapid educational progress. In 1918, demands for change were heeded; the committee of three was dismissed, and W. H. Green was appointed as the first black director of the Negro Department.

The Negro Department survived until 1978. During most of its history its function as a clearinghouse for the planning of black work gave it great credibility.

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Responding to the mood of the times, the name "Negro Department" was changed to "Colored Department" in the year 1942, and again, to "Regional Department" in 1944.[30] For most of its existence, leadership of the Regional Department was regarded as the most prestigious appointment available to a black Seventh-day Adventist. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that its directorship has included many of the most dynamic and successful pastors that the church has had.[31]

In addition to the role as "trouble shooter" for the organization, the department leader chaired "the Regional Advisory Committee" which met twice each year. In that capacity the department leader served as coordinator of black leadership and as their official representative to the church hierarchy.[32] Also providing great visibility for the leadership of the Regional Department was their

---

[30]Because the terms "colored" and "Negro" hinted of inferiority or forced separation, black leadership requested that this department (and later black conferences) be named "Regional." This label has persisted with more conservative black Adventists in spite of its incongruence as a geographic rather than a racial designation.

[31]The Negro Department leadership has included the following outstanding persons: W. H. Green, 1918-1928; G. E. Peters, 1929-1930, 1941-1953; F. L. Peterson, 1930-1941, 1951-1962; C. E. Moseley, Sr., 1953-1954; H. D. Singleton, 1962-1975; W. W. Fordham, 1975-1978.

[32]The Regional Advisory Committee was comprised of all black Local Conference presidents, heads of major institutions, and other key appointees and electees.

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editorship of the Informant, a quarterly news magazine that was mailed to the homes of black Seventh-day Adventists throughout the United States. This publication was the chief vehicle for contact and hence for the molding of opinion among black Seventh-day Adventists. Although the magazine was discontinued when the department was dissolved in October 1978, its many articles and editorials provide a rich source of historical information regarding the progress and development of black Seventh-day Adventism. As a result of their editorship of this popular publication, by their frequent presence at large church gatherings, and by their appearance at advisory committees and official business sessions of the black conferences, the directors of the Regional Department were afforded high visibility and respect. However, as their lack of power to legislate remedies for the enduring social and political dilemmas of black Adventism became more and more apparent, the department's relevance came under attack by black leaders and lay persons as well. Thus, even though the directors of this department had been black since 1918, they gradually came to be viewed by the more militant black leaders whom they served as ineffective, and even counterproductive to the cause of freedom.[33] One reason for this very awkward

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[33]No single event marks the surfacing of this attitude. However, the militant activities of the Laymen's Leadership Conference in the late fifties and early sixties

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situation was that the directors of this office had been appointed, throughout their history, by the (mainly) white leaders of the church, and not by the black churches and black leaders whose efforts they were asked to coordinate.[34] Black leaders came to realize that the office of black affairs was being directed by those politically indebted to the white hierarchy and not to their consittuents. Disenchantment with this situation reached its peak when both the director and his associate publicly opposed the Black Union request which the members of the Regional Advisory Committee had voted at their 1968 spring meeting. This request, vigorously orchestrated by black pastors during the 1970s, occasioned a growing division between the leaders and the directors. It was at the church's 1978 annual business council in Washington, D.C., that the Black Conference and institutional leaders, thoroughly disappointed with the directors' attitudes regarding Black Unions, engineered the proposal that terminated the Regional Department.

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caused many to conclude that the department leadership was not doing an effective job in interpreting matters of racial protest and social action to the church hierarchy.

[34]While the percentage of black leadership on the General Conference Committee (the appointing body) has increased significantly over the past two decades, by the year 1975 it was still no more than four percent.

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## Protest Movements

The earliest black leadership protest on record occurred October 2, 1889 at a meeting held at the Seventh-day Adventist campground in Nashville, Tennessee. At this convocation, C. M. Kinney, the first ordained black Seventh-day Adventist minister, functioned as spokesperson for his people's concern about the church's discriminatory practices. Kinney summarized his presentation by calling for an end to the second class status of blacks in white assemblies. A twelve-point proposal that lashed out against white prejudice and suggested separate meeting places for blacks was at that time presented (see Appendix 4). However, analysis of historical materials reveals that black leadership protest did not begin in a sustained manner until about the time of World War I. Since that time, protest has taken shape in three identifiable movements for justice. These movements I shall classify as: 1) the Struggle for Participation (1909-1929), b) the Push for Structural Accommodation (1929-1944), c) the Battle for Modifided Autonomy (1969-present).[35]

The first movement, "The Struggle for Participation," began with the dissatisfaction of blacks regarding

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[35]The 25-year period between 1944 and 1969 produced no new forms of organized protest. The satisfactions and challenges of building and operating regional conferences occupied leadership's attention.

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the 1909 appointment of three whites as leaders of the colored department. As mentioned above, blacks succeeded in correcting that imbalance in the year 1918. But the appointment of a black to head the department was not the primary thrust of black protest during this era. This first period had as its broader goals equal job opportunities, equal pay within the system, and adequate representation on committees and boards. Documents from this era make little reference to pluralistic accommodations; the emphasis is on integration. Black Seventh-day Adventists simply wanted complete acceptance within the church as a whole.

The frustrations of their endeavors finally led to the second of the three identifiable movements referred to above. This movement had as its objective a parallel organizational unit at the grass roots or local conference level. This request was introduced by formal resolutions presented by the black leadership at the church's Spring Councils of 1929 and 1930.[36] Such a structure, it was argued, would comprise a more realistic approach in the development of black churches, schools, etc. After fifteen years of vigorous discussion, that effort resulted

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[36]During the April 1944 discussion, which culminated in the organizing of colored conferences, G. E. Peters (then secretary of the Negro Department) referred to those earlier debates and pleaded against maintaining "a status quo" form of organization (see Appendix 5).

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in the organizing of eight black Local Conferences (see above, page 22).

It is interesting to note that while the widely heralded struggle for black conferences was proceeding at the central headquarters, the emphasis in the cities of America still focused on equal access in churches and institutions. This access involved congregational membership, admission to medical facilities and, most importantly, admission to Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions, many of which, through the 1960s, were generally reluctant to admit blacks.

Illustrative of the contours of the conflict are two landmark events of that period--the Barnett and Byard affairs. The former episode, one of the most intriguing protest events in the history of the Seventy-day Adventists, occurred during the early 1930s, and involved Claude Barnett (1889-1967), founder of the Associated Negro Press (1919-1964), the largest black press in the nation during most of its existence. Barnett, who editorialized consistently against discrimination in America, was apprised of problems within the Seventh-day Adventist Church via a series of letters detailing incidents of racism within the church. Interestingly, a number of these letters were written by black Adventist leaders who, fearing reprisals, refused to reveal their identity. Barnett was impressed

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and decided to publish a series of articles dealing with the racism within Adventism. One article that appeared in the Chicago Defender, January 1937, carried the following byline: "CHICAGO ADVENTISTS DEPLORE JIM CROW AT SDA COLLEGE--White Head of School Refuses to Comment on Situation, as does Chicago Clergyman, Pressed for Interview." In that article, Barnett quoted Arna Bontemps (then Seventh-day Adventist) as follows:

> In some quarters race relations seem to improve with time. In others they tend to grow worse. No effort has been spared to consolidate gains, however, and segregation and kindred evils, even in so small a group as Seventh-day Adventists, should not pass unnoticed. . . . I sympathize with the Negro students at Emmanuel.[37]

Shortly after the above article, Barnett wrote F. L. Peterson (black), then Secretary of the Negro Department of the General Conference, as follows:

> . . . Unfortunately, several reports have come to our office in recent months in respect to segregation that is practiced within S.D.A. circles. . . . for some time we have been receiving reports and letters concerning the discrimination against colored students by your medical school in California. Surprise was registered that your denomination should permit such a policy. . . . All race matters become larger than their denominations. Just as the California affair has come to the attention of civic leaders, the EMC episode has brought in unsolicited comments from outside this denomination on our recent releases. . . .
>
> Confidentially, I would like to tell you that reports have come to my office that the NAACP is about to take

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[37]The name "Emmanuel" refers to Emmanuel Missionary College, now Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI.

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> action in this case. You can readily see that if this matter is not corrected, it will have its effect on other parts of the state of Michigan and other northern states. When each action is taken, it will fall our duty to pass this on to our chain of newspapers. . . .[38]

The names of the blacks responsible for the leaks to Barnett were never made public, but Barnett's private files reveal a prominent minister, O. A. Troy, Sr. (1889-1962), among those who found the Associated Press to be a safe and effective way to challenge the church's conservative policies.

If Kinney's protest effort was the first, and the Barnett episode the most threatening, then, undoubtedly, the most consequential was the Byard incident in Washington, D.C., October 14, 1944. Mrs. Byard, a black Adventist of fair complexion, had been admitted in critical condition to Washington Sanitarium and Hospital (Seventh-day Adventist) but had been discharged when her racial identity was discovered. The white officials at Washington Sanitarium and Hospital secured space for her at Freedman's Hospital (black) but she died before Freedman's doctors could attend to her. On the Sabbath following her death, W. G. Turner (white), Vice President for the North American Division, visited the Ephesus SDA Church (largest black

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[38]The Claude Barnett Files, Chicago Historical Society Library, Chicago.

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congregation in the Washington area) and preached from 1 Peter 4:12: "Beloved think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you . . . ." Incensed by the temerity of Pastor Turner, local members caucused over the weekend, and with the aid of several notable ministers drafted an eight-page document addressed to the church leadership entitled, "Shall the Four Freedoms Function Among Seventh-day Adventists?" (see Appendix 6). The frankness of the language and the candid challenges hurled at the church leadership marked a new level of intensity with respect to black protest. In fact, a few weeks later the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, in a dramatic reversal, decided to reconsider the Black Conference request that had lain before them since 1929. The vote to establish black Conferences came a few weeks later and it remains the most significant accomplishment of the black protest leadership within the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Black Conferences were viewed as an adequate form of black accommodation for over two decades. However, just as membership growth in churches had surfaced tensions which demanded resolution in separate conferences, so the growth and success of the Conference units eventually produced a new set of tensions that suggested the

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formulation of union conferences.[39] This third movement had a dual focus: a) the consolidation of black conferences; b) increased political clout in denominational affairs. Black leaders named this proposed arrangement Regional or Black Unions.[40] The proposal was defeated through a series of votes between 1969 and 1978; but is

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[39]The overall church administrative organization has four levels of conference organizations: 1) the General Conference comprising the entire world field; 2) the Division conferences which administer the affairs of various continents; 3) Union conferences which make up major geographic sections of Divisions; 4) Local Conferences (the smallest of administrative units) which make up the Union structures. In the United States, these units supervise local church operations of various states. The Black Union proposition recommended that all eight black Local Conferences be extracted from the Unions where they now hold membership and arrange themselves into two Black Union Conferences. These Black Unions would relate to the North American Division as do all other Unions in the territory.

[40]The new emphasis by no means indicated that the problems of access addressed in the former periods had been solved. A classic example of how some churches were responding to integrationist efforts as late as 1969 is seen in the following letter to the writer dated December 31, 1969, from W. J. Henson, School Principal:

"I am writing in regards to your letter concerning the possibility of entering your children in our Cascade School second semester.

"The church met together and considered whether we should accept colored students this next semester. After discussion a vote was taken and it was decided not to accept any colored this next semester or the 1970-71 school year.

"I do believe we have made progress in spite of the vote. For the vote was very close. The first vote we took about a year ago was 4 to 1 against.

"I believe this problem will work itself out if all concerned will wait patiently upon the Lord.

"I am very happy for your results in your meeting. May the Lord continue to bless you and your family."

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still very much alive in the minds of the more militant black leaders. As will be described in Chapter III, it is obviously involved in present protest dynamics.

## Schisms

The protracted battle for justice by black Seventh-day Adventist leadership has not been without its casualties. There have been defections from the leadership ranks by several prominent ministers who found the church's reactionary policies intolerable. The most celebrated of these was J. K. Humphrey, a famed Harlem pastor and evangelist. In 1930, after being rebuffed in his several requests for finances for a community welfare project in Harlem, as well as for structural accommodations for blacks within the church. Humphrey led the majority of his large congregation to independent status and established what he called "The United Sabbath-day Adventist Conference." Humphrey, who came to the United States from Jamaica, British West Indies, in 1903, had by the late 1920s established himself as the foremost black Adventist pastor. His dynamic leadership had garnered followings in Harlem, Brooklyn, Jamaica (Long Island), New Rochelle, White Plains, and other sections of the New York area. In fact, Pastor Humphrey was responsible for starting no less than seven Seventh-day Adventist congregations in the

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New York area. Because of his extreme popularity, his leaving the church to begin his own independence movement had a traumatic effect on the work of the church, both in the New York state and throughout the nation. His charismatic preaching and personality led him to success with his rebel United Sabbath-day Adventist group in several eastern cities, as well as in Central America and the West Indies.[41] Fourteen years after his defection the New York Amsterdam News, in commenting upon Pastor Humphrey's reaction to the formation of separate black conferences, reported:

> According to Bishop Humphrey and his counsels, appeals and arguments to the General Conference for a separate conference to manage and strengthen the work among colored people were ignored and he felt himself in conscience bound to withdraw from the white group.

Humphrey, himself, is quoted as stating:

> This was in 1928 and 1929 that I urged the General Conference to do the only logical and proper thing, but our leaders then could not see what I was driving at. Today, that is in April, 1944, a conference was called in Chicago to do the same thing I advocated in 1928. If they are right now, I must have been right then.[42]

Another notable black leader who publicly renounced the church because of its racial policies was

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[41]M. G. Nunez, one of several ministers who seceded with Humphrey, articulated the rationale for defecting in a memorable article entitled "Why Should It Be Thought Unchristian?" (see Appendix 7).

[42]New York Amsterdam News, June 18, 1944.

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Lewis Sheafe. Sheafe, a chiropractor as well as a minister, while pastoring in Battle Creek, Michigan, in 1907, wrote the president of the General Conference the following letter pertaining to his plan for retaining funds usually sent to the General Conference. Sheafe addressed the highest officials of the Seventh-day Adventist Church as follows:

"Washington, D.C., Jan. 15, 1907

"Elder A. G. Daniells,
"Takoma Park, D.C.

"Dear Brother:

"The People's S.D.A. Church assembled Wednesday evening, January 9th 1907, to study conditions pertaining to its welfare, and to transact business.

"A very important matter which came before us for consideration was that pertaining to the rights and priviledges of the individual church of Christ.

"We learn from the scriptures that it is the right and privilege of the individual church to take part directly in all of missionary work, at home and abroad; to ordain persons for special work at home or abroad; to exercise self-government, under the guidance of its exalted head, the Lord Jesus Christ; to collect and expend its means, such as tithes and offerings, furnished by its members; being subject to no foreign tribunal or court of review. The only recognized head of this church above the pastor is the Lord Jesus Christ.

"This church by unanimous vote decided to at once enjoy these and other scriptural rights and privileges.

"We therefore respectfully notify you of our action.

"Done by order of the church.

"(Signed) Lewis C. Sheafe, Pastor
Elmira B. Green, Clerk"[43]

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[43]The Lewis C. Sheafe Letters, Oakwood College Archives, Eva B. Dykes Library, Oakwood College, Huntsville, AL.

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Sheafe, who remained in the organized work for a number of years following his communication, was addressed not only by A. G. Daniels, the president of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, but by Ellen White, herself, who sent him a lengthy communication (February 10, 1907) pleading with him to reconsider his ways. Nevertheless, Sheafe persisted with his revolutionary plans and finally left the Seventh-day Adventist Church to join with the Seventh-day Baptists. His listing in Who's Who in Colored America, 1932, traces his movement in and out of the Seventh-day Adventist fellowship.[44]

While Humphrey's was the most celebrated case of the black leadership's disenchantment with the church's conservative racial policies, and while Sheafe's was one of the best documented, the most hostile of all defectors

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[44]Who's Who in Colored America, 1932, 3rd ed., p. 383. "SHEAFE, LEWIS CHARLES--Clergyman. b. Nov. 16, 1856, Baltimore, Md.; s. Joseph and Louise (Veaulette) Sheafe; m. Annie C. Howard, June 6, 1888; three children, Clara B.; Howard W.; Lewis C., Jr.; educ. Wayland Sem., Washington, D.C., 1923; Clergyman, 1881-present; Chiropractor, 1923-present; Pastor, Beulah Baptist Church, Alexandria, Va., 1888-90; Pastor, Pilgrim Baptist Church, St. Paul, Minn., 1890-94; Pastor, Mahoning Avenue Baptist Ch., Youngstown, O., 1896-97; Pastor, Jerusalem Baptist Church, Urbana, O., 1897-99; Seventh-day Adventist Ch. Battle Creek, Mich., and Mission Work, 25 years: Seventh-day Baptist Church, Wash, D.C., 7 years; Moderator, Wash. Union Assn., Seventh-day Baptist, Wash., D.C.; mem. Masons; Old Fellows; N.A.A.C.P.: Y.M.C.A. Pol. Republican: Relig. Seventh-day Baptist; Address, 1509 5th Street., N.W. Washington, D.C." (Italics mine.)

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was J. W. Mann, a popular minister of the early twentieth century, who, having left the Adventist church, established a body which he named "The Free Seventh-day Adventist Denomination."[45] On the occasion of his second biennial session of the general assembly of his group (January 15-23, 1921), conducted at the Bethel Church of Free Seventh-day Adventists in Savannah, Georgia, Mann excoriated his former brethren in the following manner:

> Because bigoted white leaders among Seventh-day Adventists have failed to consider the necessity of such vital changes, but have fixed a permanent bar against the Negro leadership in the organization, many of the most intelligent Negro ministers are separated from the denomination, some of whom have become entirely disgusted and have sought other positions, such as doctors of medicine and chiropractic. Others have resorted to real estate speculations, and still others in the farm, etc. It is also true, that many have given up the Christian hope, and are looking to the cold world, from which there can be no lasting peace of mind.[46]

At the conclusion of his paper, Mann gave twelve reasons why he found it necessary to begin his independence movement; the last three read as follows:

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[45]The fact that the emphasis of Mann's movement differed from the integrationist efforts which characterized the "struggle for participation," 1909-1929, is a clear reminder that in no case has the general thrusts been absolute for black leaders. Each movement, described on pp. 17-22, has had its exceptions in this regard; it was not that Mann did not try hard to achieve full participation--he did. It was his disappointment in not achieving full participation that drove him to cessation.

[46]John W. Mann, "Why Free Seventh-day Adventists?" January 1929, p. 2, Heritage Room, James White Library, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, MI.

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> Ten. We are free because the white leaders of the Seventh-day Adventist denomination discriminate against colored people. They do this abominable, most detestable discriminating in the organization, the church, the office, the school and sanitarium; notwithstanding the Negro membership must make great sacrifices to aid in building up these wonderful institutions now owned by the S.D.A. denomination.
>
> Eleven. We are free because the white leaders of the Seventh-day Adventist denomination bar even Negro Seventh-day Adventist patients from their sanitariums when the worldly institutions of the same kind, accept colored people of every walk of life.
>
> Twelve. We are free, because Negro Seventh-day Adventists are barred from holding any clerical position in the Seventh-day Adventist Publishing houses, tract societies and conference offices.[47]

It is remarkable that so few schisms occurred or that a separate denominational structure was never seriously advocated by a majority of black leaders. This may be attributed to several factors, among which are: a) an apocalyptic emphasis which minimizes hope or need for social change; b) a system of "belief transmission" or socialization through church schools and youth societies which incorporates succeeding generations and maximizes loyalties to the larger religious body; c) a combination of "plausibility structures," both theoretical and structural, which legitimate one's religious world in ways that provide binding intellectual and psychic security; d) the stellar efforts of a long line of eminent black preachers,

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[47]Ibid.

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such as G. E. Peters (1880-1949), F. L. Peterson (1888-1968), E. E. Cleveland (1915--), and C. E. Bradford (1925--), who, with pen and voice, have proclaimed a gospel filled with exhortations of fidelity to the church which they hold to be God's chosen people.

Typical of the language and philosophy of these and other eminent black leaders is the message of F. L. Peterson (then Vice President of the General Conference) to F. W. Hale (then a Professor at Central State University) regarding the latter's involvement in racial activities during the early sixties. Peterson felt that the younger, more militant Hale was wrong in exposing the church's racial practices to the press. He reprimanded his former student in a letter (January 1, 1961) which, in part, read:

> . . . To organize against the church because of any wrongs that may be seen in the church is neither a Godly or God-like act. To seek to nullify the work of the Seventh-day Adventist Church because of racial reasons will produce only chaos, and we have nothing to gain from chaos. The race to suffer the most damage will be that race that made the disorderly attack. We have a better way and a better plan. God would have us use it.
>
> Please, Dr. Hale, do not let it be chalked up against you that you would confederate against God's church because of racial prejudices. Make your appeal within the church.
>
> Remember that it does not make any difference who bores the hole in the ship, when the boat goes down everyone on board will get wet. Those who bless you now will curse you later. Do not do it.

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> There are some things that Baptists, Methodists, Congregationalists, etc., can do, but Seventh-day Adventists cannot.[48]

Hale's very courteous reply, lauding Pastor Peterson for his sacrificial ministry to the S.D.A. Church, but nevertheless reaffirming his intention to press vigorously for correction of racial ills within the denomination is reproduced in Appendix 8 of this work.

## Institutional Policy and Practice

### Comparison With Other Religious Groups

One of the best ways to understand the historic quality of Adventist race relations is to compare its policies and practices with those of other such religious organizations. Surprisingly, in light of our prior discussion, the church's theological posture in matters of race relations has always been one of full equality. Ellen White's position on this issue is unequivocal. Her statement in September 1907 was:

> The religion of the Bible recognizes no caste or color. It ignores rank, wealth, worldly honor. God estimates men as men. With him, character decides their worth. And we are to recognize the Spirit of Christ in whomever it is revealed. No one need be ashamed to speak with an honest black man in any place, or to shake him by the hand. He who is living in the atmosphere in

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[48]F. L. Peterson Letters and Papers, Oakwood College Archives, Eva B. Dykes Library, Oakwood College, Huntsville, AL.

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> which Christ lives, will be taught of God, and will learn to put His estimate on men.[49]

This concept of equality has been generally acknowledged by church leadership as a functional construct of the Christian "ideal." But since the days of reconstruction, black Adventists have experienced in the church the subordination of the principle of racial equality to that of expediency. A clear manifestation of this fact has been the timing and temper of various Adventist human relations statements.[50] It was not until October of 1961, long after most recognized religious bodies had issued significant policy statements regarding racial (social) justice, that Adventist leadership ventured to speak. The heart of their very guarded statement reads:

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[49]Ellen G. White, Testimones for the Church, 9 vols. (Mountainview, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Assoc., 1946), 7:223.

[50]The record of human rights declarations by various Protestant churches in America includes the following: the Evangelical United Brethren, November 16, 1946; the American Unitarian Association, June 22, 1947; the United Presbyterian, June 14, 1950; the American Baptist, June 25, 1953; the Southern Baptist, June 3, 1954; the Methodist, June 7, 1954; the Congregational Christian, June 30, 1954. The decisions of the above churches were followed by those of a number of other well-known denominations. Among them were the Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod, June 20, 1956; the American Unitarian Church, May 28, 1957; the Disciples of Christ, October 11, 1957. Source: "Denominational Statements with Reference to Racial Inclusive Fellowship," compiled by the Department of Racial and Cultural Relations, National Council of Churches of Christ (New York, 1955).

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In consideration of our denominational stand on human relations, and with a view to better communications and understanding, we recommend the following:

1. That we continue to encourage the employment of workers in our institutions without regard to race, color, or national origin, and on the basis of qualification and merit.
2. That we continue the service of regional workers in overseas fields, and that we explore the possibility of finding further overseas territories in which they can serve.
3. That when circumstances require, committees be set up within the union conferences to study the problem of human relations, and that workshops be conducted to give guidance and instruction in dealing with local racial problems.
4. That a representative standing committee in the General Conference be appointed on human relations.
5. That normal church channels be used in dealing with all racial and human relations problems.[51]

## Comparison With National Legislation

Another demonstration of the church's social conservatism is the manner in which its racial policies have been consistently juxtaposed with national legislation dealing with human rights. Laws upholding racial equality have always been accepted and applied with a great deal of caution. On the other hand, reactionary laws hostile to social progress have generally been welcomed and applied faithfully. In other words, the church has had difficulty endorsing liberal laws but has demonstrated ease of

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[51]Actions of the Autumn Council Pertaining to the North American Division, October 1961, pp. 6-7.

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compliance in times when the national mood has been that of racial backlash and negative legislation.

An exception to this pattern was the position of Ellen White during the period which lasted from the Emancipation Proclamation (1863) to the establixhment of "separate but equal" legislation in 1896. Among the many progressive legislative acts of this era were Amendments XII, XIV, and XV of the United States Constitution and Civil Rights Acts of 1866, 1870, 1871, and 1875. The attitude of Mrs. White regarding the association of the races, during this time, is given in the following remarks:

> Sin rests upon us as a church because we have not made greater effort for the salvation of souls among the colored people. It will always be a difficult matter to deal with the prejudices of the white people in the South and do missionary work for the colored race. But the way this matter has been treated by some is an offense to God. . . . You have no license from God to exclude the colored people from your places or worship. Treat them as Christ's property, which they are, just as much as yourselves. They should hold membership in the church with the white brethren. Every effort should be made to wipe out the terrible wrong which has been done them.[52]

The 1896 Supreme Court decision in Plessy v. Ferguson signaled the end of this period of liberal legislation. Between that event and the mid-1920s, the nation experienced a pervasiveness of Jim Crow laws that

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[52]E. G. White, The Southern Work (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Assoc., 1966), p. 15 (dictated March 21, 1891).

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institutionalized racial inequality.[53] Clearly, the hopeful mood of reconstruction had given way to the deep despair of apartheid-like segregation. As there was a change in the national mood, so was there an alteration in the prophetess' instruction. Her new position, obviously in deference to the social realities of the "separate but equal" doctrine, is gleaned from her remarks of March 21, 1908:

> In regard to white and colored people worshipping in the same building, this cannot be followed by a general custom with profit to either party--especially in the south. The best thing will be to provide the colored people who accept the truth, with places of worship of their own, in which they can carry on their services by themselves. This is particularly necessary in the south in order that work for the white people may be carried on without hindrances.
>
> Let the colored believers be provided with neat tasteful houses of worship. Let them be shown that this is done not to exclude them from worshipping with white people, because they are black, but in order that progress of the truth may be advanced. Let them understand that this plan is to be followed until the Lord shows us a better way.[54]

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[53] Plessy v. Ferguson, 163 U.S. 537, 16 S. Ct. 1138 (1896), reads as follows: "Laws permitting and even requiring their separation in places where they are liable to be brought into contact do not necessarily imply the inferiority of either race to the other and have been generally, if not universally, recognized as within the competency of the state legislators and the exercise of their powers."

[54] White, Testimonies for the Church, 9:206, 207.

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By the early 1940s, the country was evolving from the clutches of Plessy v. Ferguson and the rule of "separate but equal." Again, a number of liberal laws were enacted. These laws, which had much to do with the increase of black freedom in America, include the Voting Act (Grovey v. Townsend), 1944; the Interstate Commerce Act (Morgan v. Virginia), 1946; the Housing Act (Shelly v. Kroemer), 1947; the Labor Act (Railway v. Howard), 1952.

The church did not respond to this turn of events. A new era of racial interaction was dawning in America, but with few exceptions, Adventist hospitals, schools and churches, maintained the segregationist posture of the dying order.

The one hopeful event of the period was the private attempt of W. R. Branson, General Conference President, 1948-1954, to influence church leadership to take liberal action. In March of 1954, Branson wrote all of the Union and Local Conference presidents and business managers of S.D.A. institutions decrying segregation and admonishing immediate withdrawals of discriminating practices. Even though Branson's posture was not officially voted by the body, the news of his action brought great courage to the hearts of black leadership.

O. A. Troy, Regional Department secretary at that time, managed to obtain a copy of the letter and

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praised Branson highly for his courageous stand. His words were:

> The purpose of my letter to you, Elder Branson, is to let you know just how much what you have written means to us. For us, in a minority group, it represents a sort of unwritten 'emancipation proclamation.' Many of us have read the pronouncements of other denominations along these lines, but never has any denomination made a stronger and a more clear-cut statement of belief than the one made by you. God gave you wisdom and courage to draft this document. Of course, it will require decision and even patience to carry out the Christian ideals set forth in your epistle; but the principles are right, they are Christian, and God's people can be counted on to follow His leadings.[55]

With the victory ob Brown v. Board of Education in 1954, a new level of positive legislation had been reached. Many other acts followed, including the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Tax Revocation Act for Discriminatory Schools in 1970, and the School Busing Act of 1971. While the church did not remain silent during this period, its expressions continued to reveal a decidedly cautious approach. Its 1965 Rights Declaration stated in part:

> WHEREAS, it is our belief and conviction that all persons should be given full and equal opportunity within the church to develop the knowledge and skills needed in the building up of that church, and that all service and positions of leadership on all levels of the church activity should be open on the basis of qualifications without regard to race; therefore,
>
> WE RECOMMEND, that the following principles and practices be adopted and carried out in our churches and institutions:

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[55]O. A. Troy letter to C. Barnett, October 13, 1954, Library Archives, Chicago Historical Society, Chicago.

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1. Membership and office in all churches and on all levels must be available to anyone who qualifies without regard to race.
2. In our educational institutions there should be no racial bias in the employment of teachers or other personnel nor in the admission of students.
3. Hospitals and rest homes should make no racial distinction in admitting patients or in making their facilities available to physicians, interns, residents, nurses, and administrators who meet the professional standards of the institution.

It is further recommended that these recommendations be given serious consideration and that every effort be put forth to implement them as rapidly as is consistently possible.[56]

What must be reiterated with respect to the above is that the Seventh-day Adventist Church has, since Plessy v. Ferguson, remained in dutiful compliance with the government's segregation laws, but has been slow to identify with more liberal national legislation. There has been no attempt on the church's part to speak as a moral conscience to the society in general, and it was not until 1962 (eight full years after the laws of the land formally reversed "separate but equal") that headquarters published in the Review and Herald its intent to comply with that decree.

### In Response to Modified Autonomy

As noted earlier, the integrationist efforts of black Adventist leaders have, since the late 1960s, given

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[56]Actions of the Spring Council Pertaining to the North American Division, April 1965, pp. 1, 2.

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way to an emphasis on consolidation and modified autonomy. Ironically, however, as the majority of black leadership has come to value modified self-determination as the path to effective development, most white Adventist leaders have come to claim integration as the preferred model of racial interaction.[57] It is a cause of great frustration for black leadership that the church, for the most part, has historically found it necessary to oppose whatever model of interaction they happen to advocate.

However, while the social strategies of the white leadership have turned full circle, the nature of black freedom has remained unchanged. Formerly, under the social strategy of "separate but equal" (segregation) blacks suffered apartheid-like restrictions upon their "freedom of access." Now, in the name of integration (brotherhood) they suffer restrictions upon their "freedom of self-determination." The former restriction ignores their basic humanity; the latter rejects their ethnic reality; both deny their political power.

The church's formal reply to the self-determination model now held by the black leadership was eloquently

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[57]Evidence of the current integrationist emphasis is frequently seen in church periodicals (particularly the Review and Herald) where the use of such code words as "unity," "brotherhood," and "family" and the passionate exhortation to "press together" is now a frequent occurrence.

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presented by Neal C. Wilson (white), present world leader of the church. In a speech on October 12, 1978, regarding the issue of Black Unions, Wilson, regarded by blacks and whites alike as a liberal in social concerns, summarized the existing frustrations and tensions of black Adventists in accurate detail. He then offered a seven-point proposal for solving racial tensions. Pastor Wilson's earnest appeal stressed affirmative action and accountability on the part of white leaders in dealing with blacks.

However, what is strongly reflective of the church's perceptions, and what is very much the cause of black frustration, are Wilson's remarks concerning the goal of unity within the church. In his address, Wilson states:

> At times in a large family it is necessary that some members of the family forego or deny themselves certain desires in order that the whole family can stay together and that the ultimate good of the whole family can be realized and protected.[58]

The message was unmistakable. Here the speaker regarded the principle of "church unity" as prior to the notion of racial freedom; blacks were clearly being told that they would have to "deny themselves" for the good of the whole. His statement, a stark reminder of the

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[58]Neal C. Wilson, "Black Unions," October 12, 1978.

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suffering-servant role which blacks for so long have endured, was not taken kindly by blacks.

Equally disconcerting to blacks was another observation contained in Pastor Wilson's historic declaration:

> The Church most demonstrate that it is willing to go the 'whole distance' and to 'pay the price' of unity and partnership and 'by God's grace work for and come as close to the ideal as humanly possible.'[59]

Whate have caused deep concern for black leaders are: a) Pastor Wilson's assumption that racial integration is "the ideal," b) his belief that approximation to the given "ideal" is a practical possibility, c) his acceptance of the principle of "as close as possible" as a working philosophy with respect to the need for freedom of black Seventh-day Adventists. While the Wilson position received majority support in the debates of October 1978, his conclusions continue to be opposed by most black leaders, and herein is the dilemma. On the one hand, black Adventist leadership views their organization as not just another religious body, but as a special remnant people with a peculiar origin and destiny, a group whose very being is a direct fulfillment of identifiable prophecies in the books of Daniel and Revelation. They view the church, not in terms of its sociological dimensions, but in the light of its divine mission, as a people of

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[59]Ibid.

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prophecy, as a movement uniquely commissioned by God. Black Adventist leaders accept Ellen White's reminder that:

> Although there are evils existing in the church and will be until the end of the world, the church in these last days is to be the light of the world that is polluted and demoralized by sin. The church, enfeebled and defective, needing to be reproved, warned, and counseled, is the only object upon earth which Christ bestown His supreme regard.[60]

However, this black leadership is, at the same time, acutely aware of their second-class citizenship. The realities of psychological and political discrimination will not let them forget that they are a minority whose needs and desires suffer constant want of satisfaction. They cannot forget that their churches have fewer pastors, that their children have fewer schools, that the lack of finances hinders the vertical mobility of their young, that their physical presence in large numbers frightens white students and parishioners, and that their political destiny is controlled by the white majority of the church--a class whose social ways it does not like, whose social fellowship it cannot gain, but whose spiritual philosophy and mission it dare not deny. The tension that results is a protypical example of what William

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[60]Ellen G. White, Testimonies to Ministers (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Assoc., 1944), p. 49.

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DuBois has called the black American's "double life." Dr. DuBois observed:

> From the double life every American Negro must live, as a Negro and as an American, as swept on by the current of the nineteenth century while yet struggling in the eddies of the fifteenth century,--from this must arise a painful self-consciousness, an almost morbid sense of personality and a moral hesitancy which is fatal to self-confidence . . . .
>
> Such a double life, with double thoughts, double duties, and double social classes, must give rise to double words and double ideals, and tempt the mind to pretense or revolt, to hypocrisy or radicalism.
>
> . . . the Negro faces no enviable dilemma. Conscious of his impotence, and pessimistic; he often becomes bitter and vindictive; and his religion, instead of worship, is a complaint and a curse, a wail rather than a hope, a sneer rather than a faith.[61]

Of course, it is not enough to chronicle the history of black protest and to describe the position of "twoness" which black Adventists occupy. It is crucial to our task that we identify the forces primarily responsible for creating and maintaining that status. What are the theological presuppositions which undergird social conservatism in the Adventist church? What is the correlation between religious expression and racial negativism? How do the structural arrangements of this religious body function to inhibit the racial justice for its black minority? The chapter which follows considers these crucial questions.

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[61]W. E. Burgharde DuBois, The Souls of Black Folk (New York: Fawcett Publications, Inc., 1961), pp. 148-49.

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## CHAPTER II

## CONSTRAINTS UPON FREEDOM

The preceding overview of the institutional and associational configuration of Seventh-day Adventism makes it clear that its black membership has historically undergone a highly restrictive limitation upon their freedom. Our effort now is to discern the precise nature of the oppression to which black Adventists have been subjected. We shall pursue this task by an investigation of the theological, socio-religious, and socio-political agents prominently involved in shaping the social thought of Adventism.

### Theological Constraints

The theological constraints to be examined are: 1) apocalyptic eschatology; 2) sectarian ecclesiology; 3) a radically deterministic doctrine of God; and 4) the "free-will" image of man.[1]

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[1]Man, as a free actor, is essentially unfettered by social circumstances, free to choose and thus free to effect his own salvation. Charles Y. Glock and Rodney Stark, "Prejudice and the Churches," Religion in Sociological Perspective, ed. Charles Y. Glock (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1973), pp. 93ff.



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## Apocalyptic Eschatology

It is instructive to note that while contemporary Seventh-day Adventists do not preach and sing about the second coming of Christ with the fervor of their forefathers, they still teach that the event is imminent; their faith in the cataclysmic end of this world and the glorious dawn of the next is the "eschatalogical given" in the light of which all the church's social projects are engaged.

As might be expected, one of the chief architects of this doctrine was William Miller, whose unfulfilled expectations of 1843 and 1844 were dramatized as the "Great Disappointment."[2] Miller arrived at his calculations regarding the second Advent as a result of searching the Bible for new light and fresh reassurances in the wake of the crisis of frustration which gripped America during the restless thirties and forties.[3] While many were resolving their doubts through perfectionist strivings and by association with novel sectarian groups, Miller was offering the older and more complete solution by proclaiming the imminent (pre-millenial) return of Christ. His calm prediction in 1843 was:

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[2]"Great Disappointment" is the name given to the frustration of second-coming expectancy experienced by Miller and his followers, 1843-1844.

[3]For an overview of America's "crisis of frustration," see above, pp. 7-10.

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> This year, according to our faith, is the last year Satan will reign on our earth. Jesus will come and bruise his head. Let us then put forth our best energies in this cause; let every one of us come to Christ, in this last year of redemption; and if we succeed, what an army of regenerated souls may not we hail in the new heaven and the new earth! This year, a glorious year! The long-looked-for year of years, the best, it is come. I shall hope to meet you all, through faith in God, and in the blood of the Lamb.[4]

Of course, the other primary architect of Adventist eschatology was Ellen White, who was baptized by Miller in 1841 at the age of fifteen. That she structured her apocalypticism very much like that of her mentor is not surprising. Her wide literary corpus expands upon much that Miller proclaimed. After experiencing with Miller and his followers the bitter disappointments of 1843-1844, White explained those experiences as honest error regarding the second advent. Original Adventists thought the prophecies would culminate in the "second coming" itself--"the executive judgment." White helped them understand that those dates actually referred to the "investigative judgment" or a sentencing process that would precede execution and judgment at the second coming. White further explained the frustration of the disappointed flock as a God-given trial helpful in weeding out those who had joined the movement for the "loaves and fishes" or for the mere excitement of it all. Consequently, she wrote:

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[4]Clark, 1844, 1:16-17.

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> No one will say that Abraham was mistaken in believing that he was to slay his son; but God chose this very way to test his faith. Even so do we believe that God permitted the preaching of this last time for the same purpose respecting His children now, to test their faith. And we should have sinned nontheless, had we desired in our hearts to delay the Lord's coming, than Abraham would, had he withheld his son. God has brought us to Mount Moriah, and he will deliver us, or provide us a lamb.[5]

Through such means the prophetess provided not only psychic comfort for the beleaguered Millerites, but theological direction for their Adventist descendents as well. Speaking on this point, P. Geerard Damsteegt states:

> From the contemporary sources, one is forced to admit that the views of E. G. White had a profound influence on the new theological interpretations as well as the emerging missionary consciousness, making doubtful that without her influence the early Sabbatarian Adventists would have survived this period of turmoil.[6]

The social consequences of Adventist apocalypticism have been decidedly conservative for both the pioneers and their successors. Certainty that the world would end any day or hour made serious plans for social change unrealistic. Earthly projects are never a priority for apocalypticists. They live in the expectant posture of what Gilbert Murray regards as the sad philosophy of those who, knowing how short time is, ". . . do not undertake to build that which they cannot finish or to employ

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[5]P. Geerhard Damsteegt, Foundation of the Seventh-day Adventist Message and Mission (Grand Rapids: William B. Erdmans Publishing Co., 1977), pp. 104-105.

[6]Ibid., p. 164.

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those materials fit only for use in a structure that would require many generations or unlimited time for its completion."[7] Such individuals turn their attention away from the society's social needs to what they regard as "the work of the Gospel," and devote themselves diligently to the latter effort.

But the early Adventists were not all strangers to social reform. In fact, those who became Millerite leaders usually had been members in humanitarian associations at the time they initially heard or read Miller's lectures.[8] Upon becoming Millerites, however, they usually forfeited membership in those bodies. While the Millerite doctrine involved pronouncements against certain ills (e.g., slavery, capital punishment), their working philosophy usually reflected that of Joseph Bates, the eminent Millerite preacher and Sabbatarian who wrote:

> Some of my friends that were engaged in the temperance and abolition cause, came to know why I could not attent their stated meetings as formerly, and argued that my belief in the coming of the Saviour should make me more ardent in endeavoring to suppress those growing evils. My reply was that in embracing the doctrine of the second coming of the Saviour, I found enough to engage my whole time in getting ready for such an event, and aiding others to do the same, and

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[7]Quoted in H. Richard Niebuhr, The Responsible Self (New York: Harper and Row, 1963), p. 90.

[8]Jonathan M. Butler, "Adventism and the American Experience," The Rise of Adventism, ed. S. Gaustad (New York: Harper and Row, 1974), p. 176.

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> that all who embrace this doctrine would and must necessarily be advocates of temperance and the abolition of slavery; and those who oppose the doctrine of the Second Advent (in Millerism) would not be very effective laborers in moral reform. And further, I could not see my duty in leaving such a great work to labor single-handed as we had done, when so much could be accomplished in working at the fountainhead, and make us every way right as we should be for the coming of the Lord.[9]

That even contemporary Adventist apocalypticists have problems identifying social programs with what they understand to be the church's mission is witnessed by the words of Kenneth Wood, former editor of the Review and Herald, the official church weekly. Wood, who attended the Fifth Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Nairobi, Kenya, November 22 to December 10, 1975, reported his impression to world-wide Adventism as follows:

> I was in Nairobi as an accredited reporter. As a reporter I tried to be objective. As a Christian, I tried to be both sympathetic and fair. I tried to see the questions from the viewpoint of WCC leaders and participants. I reminded myself that various organizations involved in the National and World Council of Churches had been exceedingly generous with medicine and other supplies in times of national disasters and political upheavals. They have gone the 'second mile' in endeavoring to meet human needs.
>
> But I could not approve of much that happened in Nairobi. I felt sad to see strong churches and good people vote to commit their resources and energies to programs that Christ never assigned to His church. In my opinion, millions of people will die unevangelized and unsaved because the WCC and its member churches have been diverted from their true mission. Christ commissioned his followers to preach the Gospel

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[9]Ibid.

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> and to lift the crucified Christ, but too many are neglecting this path and are becoming involved in other pursuits (some worthwhile to be sure, but many of which should be undertaken by Christians individually or by secular organizations). We disagree with the direction of the World Council of Churches is going, not because we believe the members and leaders are bad people, but we believe that they are 'off the track.' However sincere they may be, they do no favor to the lost world by offering them the stones of political freedom, economic prosperity, or racial equality, when they hunger for bread--the Bread of Life.[10]

The Kingdom of God on Earth has never been a major plank in the Adventist doctrinal platform. For them the Kingdom is a radically super-worldly entity which stands in diametric opposition to the present world. There is in this view no possibility of an "inner worldly" aspect of the Kingdom of God in the mind of Jesus. Salvation is thoroughly spiritual and holds potential for relief from earthly oppression only by its hopes of a futuristic kingdom of glory. Its earthly dimension, at best, gives promise of eventual justice at the hands of an enlightened Christianity which will surely (if slowly) learn to love indiscriminately. Their position today holds little advantage over that of Charles M. Finney when he warned Theodore Dwight Weld (who had led his "Band of 70" in a campaigh to win souls both to the Lord and to "immediate emancipation") to be careful not to place primary stress on abolitionism. Finney contended that the whole slavery

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[10]Review and Herald, January 29, 1976.

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problem could be resolved within two years if only the public mind could be engrossed with the subject of salvation and make abolition an appendage just as he (Finney) had made temperance an appendange to his great Rochester revival (1830 to 1831).[11]

## Sectarian Ecclesiology

As the sense of apocalyptic time in Millerism muted any long-range social concerns, so their cynicism toward ecclesiastical and political institutions guaranteed their social isolation. Their appeal to other Christians to "come out of Babylon" (disassociate themselves from all religious error) was at first accompanied by warnings against manufacturing a separate church body.[12] George Storrs, an early Adventist leader who identified post-millenarianism, formalism, and materalism, as elements of a false church, expressed the common position of Adventist leadership during this time when he said:

> Take care that you do not seek to manufacture another church. No church can be organized by man's invention

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[11]Winthrop S. Hudson, "A Time of Ferment," The Rise of Adventism, ed. S. Gaustad (New York: Harper and Row, 1974), p. 168.

[12]Babylon, in Seventh-day Adventist theology, means "spiritual confusion" or "false doctrine" and symbolizes the spiritual bankruptcy of Protestantism as well as Catholicism.

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except but that it becomes Babylon the moment it becomes organized.[13]

It was, however, their very aggressive denunciation of "nominal Christianity" which helped to guarantee that Adventist "voluntary worship associations" would soon become viewed with hostility.[14] It was, further, the basis for their eventual separation from their former churches and their organizing as a formal body.[15]

Despite those events, what gave lasting contour to the church's sectarian ecclesiology was the oft-repeated counsel of Ellen White regarding the church's participation in social reform. She cautioned that care must be taken with respect to projects which would make "the work of the church" more difficult. Although she advocated civil disobedience rather than compliance to the fugitive

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[13]David T. Arthur, "Milleniumism," in The Rise of Adventism, ed. S. Gaustad (New York: Harper and Row, 1974), p. 6.

[14]"Faults criticized in Protestantism varied from clerical dominance to heresy and, especially to 'sectarianism,' an aspect which led some Millerites . . . to associate the Protestant churches with the term 'Babylon' [confusion]." Damsteegt, Foundations of the Seventh-day Adventist Message and Mission, p. 79.

[15]"As early as 1841 there was a report of a mob that attempted to break up a meeting of a lecturer who preached on the Midnight Cry. The next year several churches took official action against members who sympathized with or adhered to Miller's ideas, and many churches closed their doors against Millerite lectures." Ibid., p. 78.

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slave law, her consistent counsel to churches and individuals at the turn of the century was that caution or even withdrawal from controversy would be preferable to loss of credibility with whites whould would resent a liberal social position.[16] Typical of her statements in this regard are:

> We should not be turned aside to lines that encourage controversy or arouse antagonism with those not of our faith.[17]
>
> Let us do nothing that will unnecessarily arouse opposition, nothing that would hinder proclamation of the Gospel. Where demanded by custom or where greater efficiency is to be gained, let the white believers and the colored believers gather in separate places of worship.[18]
>
> So far as possible everything that would stir up the race prejudices of white people should be avoided. There is danger of closing the door so that our white laborers would not be able to work in some places in the South.[19]

What is evident above, and what has been evident throughout the history of the church, is that its sense of mission places a high value upon social credibility. Adventists have functioned cautiously, lest they add to the

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[16]"The law of our land requiring us to deliver a slave to his master, we are not to obey; and we must abide by the consequence of violating this law. The slave is not the property of any man." E. G. White, Testimonies for the Church, 1:201.

[17]Ibid., 6:394.

[18]Ibid., 9:208.

[19]Ibid., 9:214..

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stigma they have traditionally borne as a hostile Sabbatarian group, the additional weight of social militancy. Albert Barnes gives classic depiction to such mentality when he condemns slave-owning ministers for their "leave-it-alone" position:

> They regard that which is fixed and settled as so important that it is better that a wrong should be endured, rather than to peril the safety of the existing institutions by any change whatever. They have affixed to the union of the states such a value that it is fairly inferred from their opinion that it is better that any evil should be endured--that any number of millions of human beings be held in hopeless bondage than that the existence of the union should be periled.[20]

A third theological constraint prominently involved in Adventist social policy is the church's highly deterministic view of God's participation in history. Again, the understandings contributed by Ellen White clarify the matter. One of her statements which illumines this position reads:

> In the annals of human history the growth of nations, the rise and fall of empires, appear as dependent on the will and prowess of man. The shaping of events seems, to a great degree, to be determined by his power, ambition, or caprice. But in the Word of God the curtain is drawn aside, and we behold, behind, above, and through the play and counterplay of human interests, and power and passions, the agencies of the all-merciful One, silently patiently working out the counsels of His own will. . . .

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[20]Ralph L. Moellering, Christian Conscience and Negro Emancipation (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1965), p. 77.

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> As Ezekiel's wheel-like complications were under the guidance of the hands beneath the wings of the Cherubims, so the complicated play of human events is under Divine control. Amidst the strife and tumult, He that sitteth above the Cherubims guides the affairs of the Church.[21]

Perhaps the primary witness to Adventist confidence in the direct relationship of God to human history is their literal interpretation of King Nebuchadnezzar's dream, recorded in the second chapter of the Book of Daniel. In giving meaning to this event, Daniel stated, ". . . Blessed be the name of God forever and ever: for wisdom and might are his: and he changeth the time and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom to the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding . . . ." Then after bowing to the foreknowledge to God, Daniel proceeds to interpret the king's dream of the "man of many metals," as a panoramic foretelling of the flow of universal rule among nations from his day until the end of time. His words were:

> Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of Heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given unto thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold. And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh

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[21]E. G. White, Education (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1903), pp. 173, 178.

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> all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise. And whereas thou sawest the feet and toes, part of potter's clay, and part of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; but there shall be in it of the strength of the iron, forasmuch as thou sawest the iron mixed with miry clay. And as the toes of the feet were part of iron, and part clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay. And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountains without hands, and that it break in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure.[22]

Seventh-day Adventists associate specific world events with this prophetic outline and name: 1) Babylon as the "head of gold," 2) Media Persia as the "breast and arms of silver," or the kingdom which overthrew Babylon in 538 B.C., 3) Greece, which conquered Media Persia in 336 B.C., as the kingdom represented by the belly and thighs of brass, and 4) Rome which defeated Greece in 126 B.C. and ruled the world until 476 A.D., as the people depicted by the legs of iron. Adventists regard the dividing of Rome into ten feuding parts at the time of its fall, as the literal fulfillment of the mixture of

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[22]Daniel 2:37-45.

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iron with clay seen in the feet of the image. The inability of iron and clay to knead together is regarded as a promise that after Rome there would never be another universal kingdom: that instead there shall continue to be a universal society of contending nations that would exist in social disarray until the end of time. That eschatological event is foretold in the symbol of the giant stone, Jesus Christ, who smashes the image and inaugurates an eternal, just domain. This interpretation is a classic example of the fusion of apocalypticism and determinism in Adventist thought. It also demonstrates how it is possible for Adventists to see history as an inevitable consequence of prophecy and remain decidedly pessimistic concerning social change.

Another eloquent testimony of the working out of this principle is Ellen White's description of the Civil War Battle of Bull Run, also called the battle of Manassas, July 21, 1861. Mrs. White, who fell into vision at the assembly of the Roosevelt, New York, Conference, August 3, 1861, related to that group that she was shown a detailed account of how in this pivotal battle the northern troops were miraculously spared from certain annihilation. Understanding the successful escape (retreat) of Northern forces from the battle as an act of God intended not only

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to spare their lives but to preserve the cause of right. White writes:

> I had a view of the disastrous battle at Manassas, Va. It was a most exciting, distressing scene. The Southern army had everything in their favor, and were prepared for a dreadful contest . . . . The Northern men were rushing on, although their destruction was very great. Just then an angel descended, and waved his hand backward. Instantly there was confusion in the ranks . . . and a precipitate retreat commenced. This seemed wonderful to me then it was explained that . . . had the Northern army at this state of the battle pushed still further in their exhausted condition, the far greater struggle and destruction which awaited them would have caused triumph in the South. God would not permit this and sent an angel to intercede. This sudden falling back of the Northern army is a mystery to all. They know not that God was in the matter.[23]

When we combine this notion of a God who is radically involved in history to the expectation of a just kingdom beyond an imminent eschaton, it is easy to understand Adventist pessimism regarding one's capacity or need to meaningfully effect the flow of societal events.

Adventism, however, is not unique in this respect. Gary Marx, in a study of militancy among black ministers and laity, discovered that even among those opposed to discrimination, very few had ever involved themselves in social action. When pressed for reasons, most of the respondents stated that their reluctance to participate in militant activity was based upon their belief "that

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[23]Ellen G. White, Testimonies for the Church, 1:266-267.

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God would take care of things in His own time." Typical of the responses that Marx encountered from various blacks were: 1) "I don't go for demonstrations, I believe that God created all men equal and at His appointed time He will give every man his portion, no man can hinder it"; 2) "You can't hurry God. He has a certain time for this to take place. . . ."[24]

That reliance on Divine initiative inhibits social and political activism is further underscored in research by Marx which shows that the Moslem faith in a "deterministic Allah" effectively governs even militancy. Marx notes that while Moslems reject the Christiah "other worldly" concept, their militancy in America is nevertheless inhibited by hopes of an apocalyptic kingdom of righteousness. He sees supportive evidence in Essien-Udom's words, "The attainment of black power is relegated to the intervention of 'Almighty Allah' sometime in the future. . . . Not unlike other religionsts, the Moslem, too, may wait for all eternity for the coming of the Messiah, a predicted apocalypse in 1917 notwithstanding."[25] It is true, as Marx also discovered that education tends to

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[24]Gary P. Marx, "Religion: Opiate or Inspiration of Civil Rights Militancy Among Negroes?" in Religion in Social Perspective, ed. Charles Glock (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1973), p. 70.

[25]E. U. Essien-Udom, Black Nationalism (New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1962), pp. 313-314.

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modify one's radical determinism, or at least helps one to accommodate the notion of partnership with God. However, it is also true that the strength of the various other constraints which bear so heavily upon Adventist social mentality is such that an increase of education has not as yet significantly altered the church's historical approach to social injustice.

## The Free-Will Image of Man

The fourth theological constraint involved in the structuring of the Adventist social mentality is what Charles Glock and Rodney Stark term "the free-will image of man."[26] According to these authors, this image which differs from religion to religion, may also over a period of time differ in the same religion. In any event, it is for Adventists the chief causal factor in the development of a socially conservative outlook. Glock and Stark put it this way:

> The results of our empirical analysis lend themselves to the following interpretation: A free-will image of man lies at the root of Christian prejudice twoard Negroes and of negative attitudes toward the Civil Rights Movement. It also underlies the rejection of programs under-written by the church and the government to improve the situation of minorities. The simple fact seems to be that a great many church people,

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[26]Charles Y. Glock and Rodney Stark, "Prejudice and the Churches," in Religion in Sociological Perspective, ed. Charles Y. Glock (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1973), p. 95.

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> because they believe men are mainly in control of their individual destinies, think that Negroes are themselves largely to blame for their present miseries. It is not that these Christians condone the social forces that deprive black people, but rather that they do not recognize the existence of such forces in the world. They do recognize that Negroes are collectively disadvantaged, but the conclusion that logically follows from their theology is that this disadvantage must be the result of a racial shortcoming.[27]

The strength of the "free-will image of man" within Adventist theology is made apparent in two sources; first and foremost, as one might expect, in the literary corpus of Ellen G. White. The will occupies a prominent place in her moral schema. For her, the will is the governing power in human nature (the power of decision), and "everything depends upon the right action of the will."[28] Her belief that success in secular as well as spiritual matters is contingent upon resolute and consecrated exercise of the will is demonstrated in her telling commentary on Matt. 11:12.[29] Her statement is:

> The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. This violence takes in the whole heart. To be double-minded is to be unstable. Resolution, self-denial and consecrated effort are required for the work of preparation. The understanding

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[27]Ibid.

[28]E. G. White, Steps to Christ (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Assoc., 1956), p. 47.

[29]"And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force" (Matt. 11:12).

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> and the conscience may be united; but if the will is not set to work, we shall make a failure.[30]

The second source of illumination regarding the Adventist view of the "free-will" aspect of salvation is the S.D.A. Bible Commentary, which states in part:

> Sin deprived man of the capacity to exercise the free will: by His death on the cross, Christ restored that capacity. Every man is therefore responsible for his own destiny. The person who chooses to place his free will on the side of God's will and who wills to keep it there is invincible 'in Jesus Christ.'[31]

There can be no doubt but that Adventist theology includes a decidedly radical, highly functional "free-will" position. However, since the terms "radical determinism," and "extensive free will," indicate antithetical sources of initiative, the question of how these beliefs can function simultaneously for the believer cannot be ignored. What enables these divergent views to co-exist in one's cognitive experience is the tendency for the former principle (radical determinism) to function in the area of social and public concerns and for the latter (extensive free will) to function primarily in the area of religious salvation and individual success. Glock and Stark interpret this tendency as follows:

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[30]E. G. White, Youth Instructor, May 24, 1900.

[31]Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, 10 vols. (Washington, DC: Review & Herald Publishing Assoc., 1966), 10:423.

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> Both the belief that God possesses the power to intervene in human events and belief that man is largely in control of his own destiny are crucial to religion. In combination, they form the basis of religious commitment. The one warrants commitment by establishing the ultimacy of divine authority; the other makes reasonable the reward and punishment system through which that authority is exercised.[32]

Thus, the notion of a free-will capable of limitless achievement continues to be the chief ideological mainspring in the shaping of societal attitudes concerning individual accomplishment. It is and has ever been the primary source of America's notion of rugged individualism, and its justification for private wealth.

But, according to Glock and Stark, that is not the only way in which the free-will theory inhibits social liberalism. Their research shows that it does so by discouraging programs of social relief as well. They describe this as a "double tragedy" and conclude:

> To the extent that Christian theology and institutions support a radical view of individual freedom and accountability, their members can be expected to reject the very premise upon which the battle against prejudice and discrimination rests. For if the disadvantaged condition of minority groups is proof of their unworthiness, how can people be expected to support measures to help them? In the eyes of such Christian laymen, the doctrines of the church and its efforts on behalf of human rights often seem contradictory.[33]

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[32]Charles Glock and Rodney Stark, Religion and Society in Tension (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1965), p. 297.

[33]Ibid.

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This view of how various theological notions function to promote social conservatism is a needed reminder that religious group history (to a large degree) is theologically as well as socially determined. What gives the theological constraints such pervasive influence in social thought and policy is the very function of belief. As principles of one's world view (i.e., one's notion of God and the universe, etc.), theological beliefs not only interpret reality they also suggest values, hence standards, of right and wrong in matters of ethical relations. In light of this fact, one is not surprised that a people whose theology remains essentially unaltered by time, also possess a social mentality that is highly resistant to change.

## Socio-Religious Constraints

Accompanying the theological limitations on freedom are various socio-religious constraints. These correspond to social attitudes which are endemic to the experience of such groups as the Seventh-day Adventists. This section of our study seeks to illumine this reality by an identification of the major instances in which religious experience and social conservatism appear to be positively related.

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## Religious Expression

Recent research in this area reveals that there are four characteristics of religious expression which tend to reinforce social conservatism. They are devotionalism, doctrinalism, particularism, and communalism.[34] Glock and Stark attempted to measure the correlation between devotionalism and social conservatism by differentiating among respondents with regard to the measure of importance they attached to doing good to others "as a prerequisite for salvation." Through what they called an "ethical index," they found that individual commitment to Christian ethics is a powerful antidote to prejudice and, further, that Christians who attended church infrequently were more likely to be attached to the ethics of the New Testament than were more active members. Thus, they concluded that the dormant members of conservative churches and all members of liberal churches were likely to be more socially concerned and active than their opposites.[35]

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[34]Robert Wuthnow, "Religious Commitment and Conservatism: In Search of an Elusive Relationship," in Religion in Sociological Perspective, ed. Charles Y. Glock (Blemont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Co., Inc., 1973), pp. 117-128.

[35]Rodney Stark and Charles Y. Glock, American Piety: The Nature of Religious Commitment (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968); and Charles Y. Glock, Benjamin B. Ringer and Earl R. Babbie, To Comfort and to Challenge (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967).

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This inverse relationship between religious commitment and social liberalism is corroborated by Seymour Lipset and Earl Raab, who show that high devotionalism, along with a lack of formal education, is correlative to social conservatism. The findings of Lipset and Rabb are summarized in Table 3. What is important for our study is the fact that this investigation demonstrates that high religious commitment implies social conservatism. Rednecks and Right Radicals, both classified as socially conservative, show a higher religious intensity than their more socially liberal counterparts. Conversely, the Consistent Liberals and the Old Guard both show that low religious intensity is likely to accompany a higher degree of social liberalism.[36]

One of the studies in which doctrinalism surfaces as a key variable in Christian social conservatism is "Ministers as Moral Guides: The Sounds of Silence," conducted by Rodney Stark, Bruce D. Foster, Charles Glock, and Harold Quinley.[37] This study investigated Protestant

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[36]In Table 3, below, the authors classify "Rednecks" as socially conservative, economically liberal; "Right Radicals" as conservative both socially and economically; "Consistent Liberals" as liberal both socially and economically; and the "Old Guard" as socially liberal, economically conservative.

[37]Rodney Stark, et al., "Ministers as Moral Guides: The Sounds of Silence," in Religion in Sociological Perspective: Essays in the Empirical Study of Religion,

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TABLE 3

TYPOLOGY BY RELIGIOUS COMMITMENT AND EDUCATION

| Religious Commitment | 8th Grade | | High School | | College | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Percent | Number | Percent | Number | Percent | Number |
| | | | Rednecks | | | |
| High | 30[a] | (138) | 30 | (227) | 17 | (66) |
| Low | 14 | (14) | 8 | (37) | 3 | (37) |
| | | | Right Radicals | | | |
| High | 37 | (183) | 26 | (227) | 27 | (66) |
| Low | 7 | (14) | 5 | (37) | 0 | (37) |
| | | | Consistent Liberals | | | |
| High | 2 | (183) | 3 | (227) | 8 | (66) |
| Low | 14 | (14) | 10 | (37) | 42 | (37) |
| | | | Old Guard | | | |
| High (1) | 1 | (183) | 2 | (227) | 8 | (66) |
| Low | 14 | (14) | 16 | (37) | 24 | (37) |

[a]Percentage of those who have an eighth grade education or less, are Rednecks, and have a high religious commitment. Seymour Martin Lipset and Earl Raab, Politics of Unreason (New York: Harper and Row, 1970), p. 471.

ministers from nine major denominations in California. Table 4 (involving 1,580 questionnaires with a response rate of 63 percent) details their findings and reaffirms the influence of doctrinalism, "other worldliness," and the "miracle motif" upon political and social attitudes.

It is instructive to note with regard to item one, which addresses ministerial attitudes regarding the "miricle motif" (the belief that social ills can only be solved through the conversion of individual Christians), that: 1) 44 percent of the clergy agreed and 42 percent disagreed; 2) among the 44 percent who agreed, the doctrinal index shows a positive correlation between the measure of doctrinalism and the percentage of agreement; 3) similarly, among those who disagreed, the lower the doctrinal index, the greater the number who disagreed. The same pattern of agreement and disagreement with questions relevant to social attitudes and involvement is reflected in question two which tests both "other worldliness" and the "miracle motif," and in question three which assesses "other worldliness."

Lipset and Raab, who developed this doctrinal index as a means of examining Christian social conservatism, also found that the more doctrinally conservative the religious

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ed. Charles Y. Glock (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1973), p. 160.

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TABLE 4

DOCTRINALISM, OTHER WORLDLINESS, AND THE MIRACLE MOTIF

| | Doctrinal Index | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Low 0 (28) | 1 (134) | 2 (296) | 3 (467) | High 4 (568) | Total (1,493) |
| 1. "If enough men were brought to Christ, social ills would take care of themselves." | | | | | | |
| Percent agree | 7 | 17 | 35 | 41 | 77 | 44 |
| Percent disagree | 86 | 69 | 54 | 51 | 21 | 42 |
| 2. "It would be better if the church were to place less emphasis on individual sanctification and more on bringing human conditions into conformity with Christian teachings." | | | | | | |
| Percent agree | 93 | 80 | 73 | 51 | 19 | 47 |
| Percent disagree | 4 | 11 | 18 | 36 | 60 | 42 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3. "It is not as important to worry about life after death as about what one can do in this life." | | | | | | |
| Percent agree | 100 | 93 | 90 | 76 | 42 | 68 |
| Percent disagree | 0 | 6 | 7 | 19 | 47 | 26 |

SOURCE: Rodney Stark, et al., "Ministers as Moral Guides: The Sounds of Silence," Religion in Sociological Perspective: Essays in the Empirical Study of Religion, ed. Charles Y. Glock (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1973), p. 160.



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leader, the less prone he/she is to speak out against social evils. Their investigations demonstrated that 93 percent of the individuals who scored zero on the doctrinal index have taken a stand on a political (social) issue at some time or another, while only 42 percent of those who had a high doctrinal indes have ever done so. Sixty-six percent of the individuals who scored zero (the lowest possible doctrinal index response) had addressed social issues from the pulpit over the past year at least five or six times, while only 10 percent of those who scored four (the highest mark possible on the doctrinal index) had done so. Three-fourths of those who scored zero and two-thirds of those who scored one on the doctrinal index had preached at least one sermon on social reform, and three-fourths of those who scored high had not done so.

The other two characteristics--particularism (the tendency toward dogmatism) and communalism (the disposition to exclusivity in associational patterns) have not been as conclusively identified with social conservatism as have devotionalism and doctrinalism. However, evidence of their importance is forcefully attested by Robert Wurthnow in his study, "Religious Commitment and Conservatism: In Search of an Elusive Relationship." Wuthnow expresses a good deal of skepticism regarding the methods

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and conclusions of traditional studies on this topic. However, his own findings show that:

> Different dimensions of religion and convervatism are related in different ways; orthodoxy, in spite of being charged with legitimating the status quo, seems not to be a literal consequence for political and social views, at least outside the South and among adults. Only when orthodoxy is combined with "particularism" or radically "fundamentalistic" views does it show frequent correlations with conservative secular attitudes . . . communalism is the only dimension that seems unambiguously related to conservatism, especially social conservatism--confirming the expectation that sustained in-group association is related to intolerance.[38] (Italics mine.)

What must now be reiterated is that devotionalism, doctrinalism, particularism, and communalism are all prominent characteristics of Seventh-day Adventists. Their high degree of religious commitment (devotionalism) is evidenced by their church attendance and their unusually liberal financial giving patterns. The strength of their theological convictions (doctrinalism) is quite evident in the dogmatic emphasis common to their teachings. Their disposition to see their religion as the true church (particularism) is evidenced by their evangelical motif which lays heavy emphasis upon proselytizing. Their proclivity toward exclusivity in associational patterns (communalism) is highlighted by their belief that as the true church they are divinely mandated to "come out from among

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[38]Wuthnow, "Religious Commitment and Conservatism," p. 160.

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them" (nominal Christianity) and "be separate" (Rev. 18: 1-4). These characteristics guarantee that Adventism appeals to and is joined (in the main) by conservative, middle class Americans, such as those who have come into prominence recently as the "moral majority." Their religious conservatism is a barrier to social change including enlightened racial policy. Hence, their national political vote is overshelmingly conservative Republican (see Appendix 10), and they have a similar policy with respect to black freedom in the church as well.

## Minority Identity

Another socio-religious constraint counter-productive for black freedom is the attitude of blacks, themselves, with respect to freedom endeavors. As demonstrated above, black Seventh-day leadership has a long history of protest against injustice. Their membership in a religious society that withdraws theologically (and to a large extent socially) from the world, has not obviated certain forms of individual and collective resistance to the racism they have experienced. It should be noted, however, that the strength of their protest has been limited by the fact that black religious sectarians usually adopt the socially conservative attitudes of their religious counterparts--the majority membership.

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Since black members in white denominations share the theological beliefs of the majority, one would expect that the more liberal the theology the more militant the minority. According to Gary Marx in his article, "Religion: Opiate or Inspiration of Civil Rights Militancy Among Negroes?", this is precisely the case.[39] Marx's investigation led him to conclude that blacks belonging to more theologically conservative (sectarian) groups are least likely to be militant and that the degree of militancy increases proportionally with an increase in theological liberalism. These findings are summarized in Table 5.

The fact that Marx also found blacks in independence denominations less militant that those in liberal, integrated fellowships, no doubt reflects a lesser rate of racial incidents in the former groups. On the other hand, that he found independence members more active in "civil rights" activities than blacks in liberal white fellowships, suggests that integrated blacks do not adopt public causes as readily as their independence counterparts, and that the latter group experiences greater freedom and concern for the broader cause of justice.

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[39]Marx, "Religion: Opiate or Inspiration of Civil Rights Militancy Among Negroes," p. 62.

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TABLE 5

PROPORTION MILITANT BY DENOMINATION
(PERCENTAGE)

| Denomination | Militant | |
|---|---|---|
| Episcopalian | 46 | (24) |
| United Church of Christ | 42 | (12) |
| Presbyterian | 40 | (25) |
| Catholic | 40 | (109) |
| Methodist | 34 | (142) |
| Baptist | 32 | (658) |
| Sects and Cults | 20 | (106) |

SOURCE: Gary Marx, "Religion: Opiate or inspiration of Civil Rights Militancy Among Negroes?" in Religion in Sociological Perspectives: Essays in the Empirical Study of Religion, ed. Charles Glock (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1973), p. 66.

## Group Ethos

Yet another socio-religious reality which serves as a constraint upon black freedom is that which surfaces in the correlation of group ethos and social mentality. The high demand for commitment and the "true church" ethos of Adventism guarantee for it a decidedly stringent moral atmosphere. Not everyone responds positively to such a moral temper, but it is obvious that those who do so are susceptible to appeals of absolutism and obedience, rather than those grounded in relativism and diversity. Adherents to Adventism are likely to be persons who are disposed to

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"closed" rather than "open" systems of thought. That is, they seek finality of doctrine and are not open to either individualism or leniency with respect to alternate doctrinal interpretations and lifestyles. The history of the involvement of religious groups in social protest demonstrates that such individuals and collectives do not readily address human injustice. It is not that they ignore all social evils; they do not. Those societal ways that offend their sense of righteousness (i.e., pornography, gambling, abortion) have indeed been vigorously opposed by such groups. However, because their hopes for justice are grounded in an "other worldly" rather than in a "this worldly" fulfillment, social equity in this present society is seldom a priority or an expectation in their schema.

## Socio-Political Constraints

Having examined the primary theological and socio-religious factors which hinder black Adventist freedom, we shall now discuss a third set of constraints, viz., the socio-political. These constraints, in the form of ecclesiastical policy arrangements, present formidable tactical barriers to justice.[40]

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[40]Socio-political constraints are those legal and semi-legal arrangements which regulate church business and relationships.

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## The Matter of Authority

Glock and Stark state that primacy in congregational authority is inevitably provided by one of two groups--the "comfort seekers," those whose chief concern is inner peace and the ability to cope with their existential anxieties, or the "challengers," those who stress the church's need to exert moral leadership in society.[41] The comfort seekers, also known as the "traditional-institutional-type," comprise the bulk of the active membership. It is to their contribution of time and finance that church leaders must look for sustenance and success. Since efforts to change this group's social outlook often lead to the withdrawal of moral and material support, it is politically impractical, for pastors and/or church officials, to move contrary to their desires. That this is true in the formation of Adventist social policy is not easily demonstrated. Empirical evidence in such matters would require the kind of confessions that are not likely to be documented. Nevertheless, black Seventh-day Adventist leaders in their private caucuses often typify white liberal leadership as follows: 1) those who express liberal views privately but who dare not preach or teach these views before white audiences; and 2) those who speak and act boldly with regard to social oppression,

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[41]Stark and Glock, American Piety; and Glock, Ringer and Babbie, To Comfort and to Challenge.

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and whose careers, as a result, have been threatened or aborted. An outstanding exception to the latter is the current General Conference president, N. C. Wilson, who, during the sixties and early seventies, advanced the principle of integration which was strongly opposed by many whites. Widely known as a friend of blacks, Pastor Wilson has succeeded in portraying the image of a conservative in theological and economic matters, and of a liberal on social issues. Black leadership, which supported Wilson heavily in his 1978 election to world presidency, strongly suspects that while white leadership has been critical of his open identity with the casue of justice, their belief that he knows how to "handle blacks" was a determinative factor in his presidential election. Pastor Wilson's record of social liberalism, notwithstanding, the findings of Glock and Stark that most white Christians are "Traditional-institutional," and that most white leaders are not willing to challenge their authority (i.e., to counter their socially conservative wishes), is important to our consideration.

## Parliamentary Procedure

The parliamentary codes employed at church debates comprise a second socio-political constraint. Seventh-day Adventist leadership is not hesitant to admit, even in the most crucial forums, that it chooses not to be strictly

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bound by a particular set of parliamentary procedures (i.e., Robert's Rules of Order).

It is not hesitant to admit its belief that mutual respect and courtesy are sufficient to control discussions thus obviating the need for fastidious attention to parliamentary law. The result of this "soft view" of parliamentary rule in the church's assemblies is that the chairman retains extraordinary latitude and control. Blacks have discovered that a lack of specificity in parliamentary procedures renders their most carefully-laid strategies highly vulnerable. A common example of this parliamentary license is that the chairman of debate often serves as chief adversary of minority opinion as well. Blacks who debated the cause of Black Unions in October 1978, responded to the political process to which they were subjected with a position paper which stated in part:

> Acceptable parliamentary rules require that when the Chair feels he must declare himself, he should appoint a Chairman pro tem and does not resume the Chair until the matter is fully decided. However, the pattern of having a decided antagonist serve as chairman for discussion and study of this request is well established:
>
> a. The Chairman of the first commission for discussion, in 1969-1971, was openly opposed to Black Unions.
>
> b. The Chairman of the Regional Advisory, which was asked to carry the request to PREXAD 1976, was openly opposed.
>
> c. The Chairman of the Commission which PREXAD appointed to study the matter in 1976-1977, was openly and vocally opposed to this concept.

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d. The Chairman of PREXAD, who studied the Commission's report was openly opposed.

e. The General Conference, in discussion in the Spring Council of 1978, was chaired by one who was vocally opposed.

f. The Chairman of the recent Autumn Council was, again, vocally, openly, and energetically opposed.

It is thus established that at no point, along the way of discussion, has the matter had a fair and equitable airing.[42]

With regard to this same problem, black leadership expressed its dissatisfaction in a letter to Pastor Wilson. It states, in part:

> And this brings us back to where we began. Even though the ballot is secret, as long as our discussions and votes must be conducted in an arena, where the judge is also prosecuting attorney, parliamentarian and Chairman of the jury, justice cannot be had--impartiality is an impossibility. Actually, if it were possible, the matter should be reconsidered in an appropriate and fair arena. But since in the nature of our structure and tradition, this is impossible, we suspect that the issue will never be voted until the judge, himself, decides to recommend it. It is distressing to know that (even in 1978) not only has black leadership not the power or the option to chart its destiny along the legitimate philosophical and structural lines of Church administration, but it is denied a proper arena within which to debate its needs.[43]

As frustrating to minority endeavors as is this custom, it is probably not as pervasive a constraint as is

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[42]Letter to Wilson from black leaders, October 21, 1978. Black Union Articles, Oakwood College Archives, Eva B. Dykes Library, Oakwood College, Huntsville, AL.

[43]Ibid.

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yet another parliamentary device--that of structuring debate so that final comment is always reserved for the ranking officer present. The result, of course (especially in matters of race), is that the majority (white) delegates come to know very clearly exactly how the leader desires them to vote, and rarely, if ever, vot contrary to his wishes.

## Divine Approbation

A third socio-political constraint is the transference of Divine approbation upon significant persons, committees, and institutions of the church. An Ellen G. White quotation often used to engender defense for church leadership and authority is:

> But when the judgment of the General Conference, which is the highest authority which God has upon the earth is exercised, private independence and private judgment must not be maintained, but be surrendered.[44]

Again, speaking directly to an individual whose stated wishes clashed with those of the General Conference organization, Ellen White had the following to say:

> Your error was in persistently maintaining your private judgment of your duty against the voice of the highest authority the Lord has upon the earth. . . . You did not seem to have a true sense of the power that God has given to his true church in the voice of the General Conference.[45]

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[44]E. G. White, Testimonies for the Church, 3:492.

[45]Ibid.

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The manner in which these statements translate into functional acceptance and attitude is clearly revealed in the words of Robert H. Pierson, General Conference President from 1966 to 1978, in a worship address January 9, 1976. His statement was:

> When you and I joined the General Conference family something special happened to us. When we begin work in the General Conference office we become part of what inspiration describes as God's highest authority on earth. . . . All of us are something special in God's sight. Our relationship to our church, to the world field, to one another, and to the work entrusted to us is unique. We are part of "the highest authority that God has on earth." . . . These three buildings are not ordinary buildings. . . . These buildings constitute a consecrated place where God, through His appointed servants--you, me--directs His worldwide work. . . . As those of us here on the General Conference staff continue our unique service for Him, let us remember that we are daily, hourly, momentarily a part of a group of leaders that constitute the highest authority of God upon earth.[46]

With such divine approbation allocated to its primary decision-makers, it is easy to accept, and difficult to contradict, decisions which originate at higher levels of organization. Even when they do not understand or rationally agree, no committed Christian is likely to differ with "the voice of God." Even the militant leaders (black) who regard a decision as reflecting a voice that is other than God's, are reluctant to: 1) jeopardize their careers by alienating black laity--many of whom continue to reflect white Adventist attitudes regarding the methods

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[46]Robert H. Pierson, The Ministry, June 1976.

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and legitimacy of social change; 2) become party to strategies which will endanger their continued membership in the organized body.[47]

## Hierarchical Mobility

A fourth socio-political constraint is the psychology of hierarchical mobility for denominational (ministerial) employees in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. It is generally accepted that vertical mobility is achieved by ministers within the Adventist structure in one of several ways. First, mobility occurs when a pastor is sent to a church more prestigious than his last; second, when a pastor of a small or medium-sized church (and in most cases even a large church) becomes an administrator or official representative at any of the four levels of conference administration.[48] Among the more obvious benefits of such mobility are: 1) increased participation in the decision-making processes of the church; 2) increased financial income; and 3) travel opportunities (expense-paid trips to planning sessions, conferences, retreats, etc., that are often in desirable locations such as the

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[47]It is a decisive feature of the Adventist church that membership in its visible body is tantamount to that of membership in the church above; membership is a privilege, the loss of which equates to loss of eternal life.

[48]These levels are the General Conference, Division Converence, Union Conference and the Local Conference.

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West Indies, Honolulu, Europe, Canada, etc.). The result is that conference office appointments and special committee assignments are avidly pursued by the Seventh-day Adventist ministry. The fact that opportunities for mobility, both vertical and lateral, are much fewer for black leaders, not only intensifies their frustration but effectively limits their freedom.

## Numerical Superiority

A fifth socio-political constraint (and undoubtedly the most obvious and most effective of them all) is the matter of numbers. Black Seventh-day Adventist leadership has long since discerned that having equal opportunity is not the same as having equal power. Where numbers are concerned, voting patterns may usually be expected to fall along lines of color. There are, of course, some blacks who have been elected to significant office in competition with whites. Furthermore, there are some whites who have consistently supported the freedom concerns of black leadership. Generally, however, for Adventist blacks the disparity of numbers creates a formidable constraint to the pursuit of minority justice.

There are currently seventeen blacks in general (non-ethnic) Church leadership positions at the Union Conference level. Most of these individuals were selected

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only after the delegates assembled had been told by a higher echelon that the job involved should be held by a black. In such cases, all nominees were, of course, black. Even in these instances, however, the "numbers factor" is evident. This is so in that the decision as to which black is elected is usually dictated by the wishes of the majority, not those of the black delegates, who, being a voting minority, are easily out-maneuvered with respect to their choices for even those jobs designated "for blacks only." Since the white majority often views the choices of the black minority as being unsuited to function in a given area, their superior numbers are frequently used to place in the designated position a black whom they deem acceptable. The result is not only frustration on the part of the majority of the blacks voting, but often a very cool and dysfunctional relationship between them and the black who has been elected in this manner.

## Scriptural Antithesis

In opposition to the aforementioned dynamics, and at the root of the intensity of the dilemma, is the fact that the minority leader is continually prodded to freedom by the liberationist motifs of the Bible itself. The slave who saw in Israel's deliverance the promise of his own emancipation, and the civil rights leader whose freedom speeches were laden with scriptural imagery,

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demonstrates clearly that there are principles of freedom at work in the Word of God which stand in stark antithesis to the conservative propensities outlined above. Dorothy Soelle, in her book, Political Theology, gives incisive comment regarding this rich source of liberation when she writes:

> The gospel has to do with freedom for all, or more precisely--since the reality of oppression remains in the picture--its essence is the liberation of all . . . . It is concerned with the oppressed, the poor, those who are mourned. . . .
>
> Indeed, the gospel heightens social consciousness of suffering and dissatisfaction with what has already been achieved. . . . theology prods men to combat their apathy creating new anguish and inspiring new projects. It entices them to seek transformation.[49]

The history of black Adventist protest substantiates Soelle's claim and is a sober reminder of the likelihood of continued tension between the desires for freedom of the black Adventist leadership and the theological, socio-religious, and socio-political constraints that inhere in their denomination's beliefs and practices.

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[49]Dorothy Soelle, Political Theology (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974), pp. 67, 69.

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# CHAPTER III

## PRIMARY LEADERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS

The reaction of black Seventh-day Adventist leadership to their "two-ness" of citizenship has ranged from the extremes of bitter renunciation of denominational identity, on the one hand, to resigned acquiescence to injustice on the other. Study demonstrates, however, that neither extreme has typified black leadership's response to the church's racial shortcomings. Rather, their efforts, in the main, have been to correct the church's social policies. While it is true that the intentions of black leadership in this regard have been consistently similar, their working methodologies and theoretical presuppositions reveal an interesting variety.

In this chapter, we shall analyze the different social goals and styles of action of five contemporary leaders involved in the struggle for freedom of black Seventh-day Adventists. We shall engage this task by two distinct movements; first of all, by describing the dominant form of protest that is embraced by each of these leaders. The persons we will examine will be characterized



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in terms of protest strategies as follows: 1) W. S. Banfield (1925--), who has relied upon the influence of cross-cultural (integrated) study groups; 2) C. E. Bradford (1925--), whose consistent method has been the structuring and influencing of remedial legislation (reparations); 3) E. A. Canson, Sr. (1927--), whose career has been marked by his efforts in private negotiations; 4) E. E. Cleveland (1921--), whose primary endeavor has been a proper interpretation of the social principles of the Bible and the writings of Ellen White; and 5) F. W. Hale, Jr. (1927--), who is distinguished by his organization of political pressure groups within the Adventist lay membership.

Secondly, we shall organize the thought of these leaders with respect to their differences in preference regarding the form of racial interaction--integration or self-determination. This question was introduced as early as the middle 1940s, and has been an important aspect of the church's social thinking.[1] It was not until the Black Union controversy of 1968-80, however, that the issue was brought into clear focus. In this respect, we shall note that three of the leaders, Banfield, Canson, and Hale, are

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[1]The organization of black Local Conferences in 1944 necessitated serious consideration of this question. Many blacks who were integration-oriented did not accept black Conferences as a legitimate form of church organization. Many, who did accept them, argued for even further organization along this line.

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strongly allied with the principle of integration, and, hence, are opposed to the Black Union Proposal. The other two leaders, C. E. Bradford and E. E. Cleveland, favor self-determination, and, consequently, are firmly committed to the Black Union idea. We shall see, further, that while differences in protest strategy produce little or no tension among the leaders, they have been sharply divided on the issue of integration versus self-determination. The contours of the arguments and the strength of the convictions, which so severely strained their personal relations, will be fully explicated.

After describing the strategic and conceptual differences of these leaders, we shall then seek to demonstrate that, in spite of their disagreements, there are a number of ways in which they can and often do complement one another's endeavors. The chapter ends with an overview of black leadership's remarkable loyalty to institutional mission and identity.[2]

## Protest Strategists

### W. S. Banfield

Banfield's service portfolio includes the following assignments: 1) pastorates in North Carolina, Georgia, and

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[2]The interpretative schema for Chapter III is influenced by the incisive work of Peter J. Paris, Black Leaders in Conflict (New York: Pilgrim Press, 1978).

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Florida (1946-1962); 2) Presidency of the South Atlantic Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia (1962-1971); 3) the Associate Secretaryship of the Southern Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists (primarily white) (1971-75); 4) the Associate Secretaryship in the Regional Department of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists (1975-78); and 5) the Directorship of the Human Relations Department of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists (1978--).

Banfield first came to be viewed as a leader in racial affairs during his pastorate in Tampa, Florida (1956-1962). In 1956, he shocked his conservative members and stunned his incredulous colleagues around the country by accepting the presidency of the Tampa Branch NAACP, a position which he held for a two-year period. This occurred at a time when most black Adventists feared joining the NAACP, not to mention taking leadership responsibilities in it. Since that time, Banfield has been consistently vocal regarding black freedom and is regarded by blacks and whites alike as a forthright spokesperson for hunam dignity.[3]

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[3]Among Banfield's more widely read articles are: 1) "Some Observations on the Regional Union Proposal" (1977); 2) "Events Precipitating the Demise of the Regional Department" (September 12, 1979); 3) "The Great Black Union Controversy--Additional Cognitions" (February 3, 1978); 4) "Remarks of the Office of Human

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What distinguishes Banfield's protest effort is his consistent involvement in both official (church appointed) and unofficial (lay-voluntary) human relations forums and study groups. While most other leaders have sought redress via rigorous debate and various pressure tactics, Banfield's chief effort has been to foster freedom by engaging in dialogue and fellowship with integrated boards and committees. Typical of the purposes of these groups is that of the Human Relations Committee of the Southern Union, which Banfield served as secretary for a number of years. In its organizational preamble, the Southern Union HRC reflected its action philosophy as follows:

> WHEREAS, There are many forces in the world seeking to disrupt the unity of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and
>
> WHEREAS, There should be present in these last days in the church the spirit enunciated by Christ in His prayer for His disciples that we should all be one as He and the Father are one, and in harmony with His teaching that we should love our neighbor as ourselves and do unto others as we would have others do unto us,
>
> WE RECOMMEND, That stronger efforts toward unity and brotherhood be made in the conference of the Southern Union and in the churches.[4]

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Relations Advisory Board" (October 9, 1979); 5) "Suggestions for Improving Race Relations Within the Seventh-day Adventist Church" (1980).

[4]"Human Relations Committee Organizational Guidelines" (Decatur, GA: Southern Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, September 3, 1968), p. 1.

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The "efforts toward unity," intended by this group and by other groups with which Banfield had been identified, have usually highlighted the following: 1) attempts to improve black/white social relations, and 2) recommendations to the administrative bodies of the church of laws affecting non-discrimination and affirmative action.

One such group, the Concerned Christian Council, comprised of white and black laity and clergy who organized in the Atlanta area during the late sixties, listed Banfield as both charter member and co-chairman of its Education Committee. The Concerned Christian Council stated its purpose in somewhat more potent language than did the Southern Union Human Relations Committee. Their preamble reads in part:

> The purpose of the Concerned Christian Council is to promote understanding and foster Christian fellowship among all segments of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and to implement the human relations guidelines as spelled out in the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy and formally adopted by the Seventh-day Adventist General Conference, Union Conference, and Local Conference human relations committees.
>
> It is the council's desire to implement these purposes by those legitimate and Christian means afforded us through the denominational organization.[5]

The minutes of Banfield's Education Committee, May 19, 1969, are typical of his focus. Among other things, they call for:

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[5]Concerned Christian Council Organizational Guidelines, March 17, 1969.

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1. Workshops for teachers in newly integrated schools in Atlanta area
2. Awards for speaking or writing on integration issues
3. Live-ins
4. In-Service training for teachers in Negro history
5. Booths on integration issue to be erected at Teachers' Conventions
6. Travelling forum groups to visit various churches and answer questions
7. Letters of invitation and copies of CCC guidelines to be posted in each school in the Atlanta area.[6]

It was largely Banfield's participation in such cross-cultural group activities and human relations councils that earned him the leadership of the General Conference Office of Ethnic Relations.[7] His sincere faith in these processes as the proper path to social equity is seen in this following statement on cultural interaction written about the time of that appointment.

> One of the church's greatest assets resides in the diversity of the cultural and ethnic origin of its membership. People who historically and traditionally represent strong antipathies and hatreds, should be getting a taste of "this new thing," a new race, a new hope, a new nation, and thus participating in God's developmental process in the universe, <u>His unfinished task of creation</u>. . . .
>
> Social distance has a direct bearing on human relationships. Proximity, intimacy and communication are interrelated and have social consequences. In a given area, wide social distances and the absence of proximity and intimacy tend to make communication between

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[6]Concerned Christian Council Meeting Minutes, May 19, 1969.

[7]Later named the "Office of Human Relations."

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> races difficult, to perpetuate stereotype thinking and contribute to human misunderstanding. We gain a knowledge of people by entering into a relationship with them. . . .[8]

As an organizer and participant of inter-racial fellowship groups whose purposes have been to foster racial understanding and to promote non-discrimination legislation, Banfield is without peer among Black Adventist leaders.

## C. E. Bradford

Bradford also began his career as a church pastor. After sixteen years of service in the states of Louisiana, Texas, and New York, his work experience was altered by his introduction into administrative service. His thirty-two years of administrative work have included responsibilities as departmental secretary in four different black Conferences--the Southwest Region Conference, 1951-52; Central States Conference, 1952-57; the Northeastern Conference, 1957-1961; the Lake Region Conference, 1961-1970. From the presidency of the Lake Region Conference, Bradford was appointed Associate Secretary of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, a position he held from 1971-78. Currently, Bradford serves as Vice President of the General Conference of the North American Division, and, as such, is titular head of the entire Adventist

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[8]W. S. Banfield's article, "The Great Black Union Controversy: Additional Cogitations," February 23, 1978, pp. 5-6.

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organization in the United States and Canada. He is the first black to be so honored.

What distinguishes Bradford's protest career from that of Banfield and the other leaders is his long record of involvement in remedial legislation. His emphasis has not been so much that of human relations, or even desegregation, but that of strengthening black institutions and enhancing black economic status through laws and projects best described as reparational. While Banfield built his programs of better relationships and equal opportunity through groups especially created to investigate such matters, Bradford's efforts to gain material remediation in the form of reparations have been pursued primarily within traditional legislative and administrative bodies of the church.

Bradford has not acted with the hope of white acquiescence to black demands for full freedom. Unlike Banfield, he does not share King's dream of an America where someday justice will "ring from the prodigious hilltops of New Hampshire" to "every hill and molehill of Mississippi," and all will be "free at last!" For him there are no illusions. The system cannot be beaten; the establishment can at times be used for the good of the oppressed, but it cannot be overcome. In his view, the superiority of numbers and materials possessed by the larger group poses more of

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a challenge to political statesmanship than it does a challenge to confrontation. White authority is not so much to be boycotted, protested, or even neutralized, as it is to be manipulated. He is typical of that genre of minority "role players" who advance to meaningful positions in the structure by combining skills of negotiation with the working dictum: "Don't get mad, get smart."[9]

In his article titled "An Appeal to the leadership of the Seventh-day Adventist Church to Give Special Study to the Position of the Negro Seventh-day Adventists in American Society and in the Church," Bradford demonstrates his strong preference for the reparations motif as an instrument of justice, with the following appeal:

> Mrs. white called for a positive program to help the recently freed slaves to become good Christians and useful citizens . . . . During the 1890's and early 1900's she used the columns of the Review to make direct appeals to the church, both leadership and laity. The servant of the Lord did not equivocate:
>
> "Upon the white people of the United States the Lord has laid the burden of uplifting this race. But, as yet Seventh-day Adventists have done comparatively little to help them.
> ". . . The American Nation owes a debt of love to the race, and God has ordained that they should make

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[9]Among C. E. Bradford's significant literary contributions in support of the struggle for justice are: 1) "An Appeal to the Leadership of the Seventh-day Adventist Church to Give Special Study to the Position of the Negro Seventh-day Adventists in American Society and in the Church," June 1969; 2) "The Case of Black Unions" (not dated); 3) "Facing Reality," January 8, 1967; and 4) "Letter to R. R. Figuhr, General Conference of SDA," January 9, 1964.

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> restitution for the wrong they have done them in the past. Those who have taken no active part in enforcing slavery . . . are not relieved from the responsibility of making special efforts to remove, as far as possible, the sure result of their enslavement."

Having stated Ellen White's position on the matter, Bradford continues:

> The leadership of this denomination must recognize the gravity of the situation and not allow precedent or established policies to hamper positive remedial action. . . . To state it in a different way--compensatory and massive remedial measures are necessary to bring existing Negro institutions and facilities up to date and to prepare more Negro youth to serve the church.[10]

Bradford's approach has been responsible for a number of programs helpful to the black cause. Among the projects which he has successfully spearheaded are: 1) special funds for inner city called the Large City Evangelism Fund (1966); 2) percentage of tithe appropriation plan for Oakwood College (1967)[11]; 3) special tithe reversion monies for Conferences whose tithing per capita is $100 per member per year or less called the Small Conference Assistance Plan (1968); 4) special scholarships for black students in graduate schools called the Regional Scholarship Fund (1971).

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[10]C. E. Bradford, "An Appeal to the Leadership of the Seventh-day Adventist Church to Give Special Study to the position of the Negro Seventh-day Adventists in American Society and in the Church," June 1969, pp. 2, 6, 7, 8.

[11]By tying the black Conference support to Oakwood College to a percentage of tithe (initially 2.5 percent), the General Conference has insured a healthy source of funding to the college. The percentage (now 3 percent) yielded $908,520 in 1982.

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In addition to these ongoing programs which he has sponsored, Bradford has been vitally connected with a number of one-time gifts or appropriations to various black institutions which have, in effect, although not so named by the church, exhibited the character of reparations.[12] That he is now the ranking officer of the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists attests to the fact that he is able to crusade for black programs without alienating white Adventist leadership and laity--an achievement of no small significance.

Earl A. Canson, Sr.

Canson, who began his service career in 1948, has held pastorates throughout the State of California and has, since 1978, served as Director of Regional Affairs for the Pacific Union Conference. In this latter capacity, he has been very active in dissuading blacks in his area from supporting the organization of black Conferences. As a man whose disposition is more amelioratory than revolutionary, Canson has quietly managed to diffuse most black political unrest on the Pacific Coast, while, at the same time, championing the cause of integration. In contrast to Banfield,

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[12]Although Bradford (evidently for tactical reasons) has avoided the specific use of the term "reparations," his various remarks and methods show this to be the essential nature of his effort.

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who has sought to improve structural participation and social relations by involvement on various human relations committees, and contrary to Bradford's efforts of pursuing justice by advocating reparational legislation at the level of executive administration, Canson's style has been that of personal negotiation. Whereas the methods of both Banfield and Bradford assumed the need for drastic changes in church laws and policies, Canson's approach does not. His style assumes that it is not church policies but occasional human error which makes for problems, and that these can be avoided in an atmosphere of mutual trust and understanding. His skills as a soft-spoken diplomat or a "one-on-one" negotiator are appealing to white leadership, and provide him enough victories to placate the majority of the blacks in his area. Canson's article, "The Pacific Union Conference Regional Department--Facts and Figures," is typical of the conciliatory language by which he has been able to combine spiritual appeal with political thrust, and thus, hold together the tensions of social opposites. In concluding this paper in which he explains why blacks in the Pacific Coast area need not apologize for refusing to organize Black Conferences, Canson states, in language typically unoffensive:

> I would be the first to admit that opportunities to develop leadership are greater in the black conference for us blacks than it is here. But we are rising. My

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> plan is to prepare for greater service and the God of earth and heaven feed us and we will be satisfied. I maintain that if we decide to go to black conference, we will do it not because we have to, but because we want it. Our wants are not always best for us. God certainly knows what we need; I am willing to submit my opinion to His will, are you?[13]

Canson's philosophy of organization and his understanding of full justice are often contested, but his skills as mediator and negotiator are not; his low-key approach is unquestionably effective.[14]

## E. E. Cleveland

Cleveland's career, since finishing his studies at Oakwood Junior College in 1941, has been nothing short of mercurial. Working primarily as a public evangelist, Cleveland left the pastorate after five years of service in the states of North Carolina and Kentucky, to become a full-time evangelist in the Southeastern part of the United States. After thirteen years of highly successful ministry, Cleveland was, in 1954, appointed General Conference Associate Ministerial Secretary, a position with worldwide

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[13]Earl A. Canson, Sr.'s article, "The Pacific Union Conference Regional Department--Facts and Figures," 1975, p. 5.

[14]Canson's social philosophy is spelled out in two articles which generated national attention: "The Pacific Union Conference Regional Department--Facts and Figures," April 1975, and "How Much Should the Church be Divided?" June 1978. He has also maintained broad literary contact through his editorship of the "Regional News"--a quarterly newsletter regarding activities in the territory he serves.

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evangelistic responsibilities. During his term of duty, he held campaigns in over sixty countries and preached on every continent. Since 1976, Cleveland has served as Director of Church Missions and classroom instructor at Oakwood College.

Known for decades as a fierce defender of church policy, Cleveland, during the forties and fifties, was identified as an apologist for the church hierarchy. However, by the time of the vote on the Black Union issue in 1978, Cleveland's reputation as a social conservative and eminent defender of the establishment had turned full circle. At the present time, he is looked upon as the non-appointed but undisputed leader of the militant wing of black Seventh-day Adventist leadership. No one can be certain, but many regard the action of the General Conference in 1966, which placed a younger, less experienced white as head of the General Conference Ministerial Department, as the critical factor in his emergence as a racial activist. What solidifies his image as a militant spokesperson is both the volume, and the often strident tone, of his statements. His views are clearly portrayed in the ten books he has written, all of which, either directly or indirectly, deal with scriptural principles of brotherhood. These views are sharply focused in his articles on black

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unions.[15] His ongoing editorials in the Regional Voice (a monthly news magazine begun by black leaders in the wake of the 1978 Black Union defeat) are classic examples of both his style and social thought. The level of Cleveland's protest has intensified with time, but his basic method of seeking to change social attitudes through the use of his pen has not changed. Both as a defender of the faith, prior to 1966, and as a social activist since that time, Cleveland's form of protest has been journalistic rather than administrative.

Unlike Banfield, Bradford and Canson, Cleveland has never served as titular head or representative of a voting constituency. However, the lack of an administrative platform has, in no way, stymied his effectiveness. While the others, whom we have mentioned, have been primarily concerned with challenges inherent in the church's

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[15]E. E. Cleveland's major articles on the subject of race relations include the following: 1) "Brief on Regional Conferences" (April 11, 1968); 2) "Regional Unions" (January 1970); 3) "White Paper on Black People" (April 4, 1976); 4) "Comment on the Paper 'Black Unions, Options and Consequences,' by Betty Sterling" (July 1977); 5) "To the Kingdom" (July 1978); 6) "A Report to the People" (January 1, 1979). As author of "Opinion," a regular editorial in the Regional Voice, Cleveland's leadership role has been perpetuated. Articles he has written for that publication include the following titles: "Brotherhood and the Black Community" (April 1981); "Reaganomics and the Church" (May 1981); "A Declaration of Principle" (June 1981): "Together We Stand" (August 1981); "The Dilemma of the Middle-Class" (September 1981); "Self-Help" (November 1981); and "Upside Down" (December 1981).

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structure, or with rectifying particular incidents of injustice, Cleveland's effort has been to clarify what he calls the church's "misunderstanding and abuse" of the social principles of the Bible, and the writings of Ellen White. He is, by far, the most prolific writer and social commentator in the history of black Seventh-day Adventism.

Cleveland's attitude regarding those statements in the writings of Ellen White which might help to maintain or increase tension, is poignantly revealed in a characteristic letter to Ron Graybill, a member of the Ellen White Estate.[16]

> I don't want to be surprised by the enemies of the faith with quotations that I have not seen nor heard that could prove damaging to the reputation of the prophet or embarrassing to me as a believer. Also, so many of our white believers have misunderstood the intent and content of so many of her published racial observations that such a book (Ellen White on Race Relations) would prove enlightening and helpful to them. It is therefore a work long overdue. I hope that when you have completed this work, it will carry the official stamp of approval of the E. G. White Publications Committee. This would give it some denominational responsibility and backing. The church owes us this; black people in our communion have suffered too long at the hands of administrators and members

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[16]The Ellen White Estate is a group of thirteen individuals appointed by the General Conference whose job it is to monitor all official releases and interpretations of Ellen White's vast literary corpus. The Estate houses hundreds of books and thousands of articles, letters, and official documents pertaining to her life and philosophy (see Appendix 11).

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who have misread, misunderstood, and misapplied the writings of our prophet feeling that she has sanctioned their prejudice.[17]

Particular statements by Ellen White which have caught Cleveland's attention, are the following:

1. In heaven there will be no color line for all will be as white as Christ himself.[18]

2. Since the flood, there has been amalgamation of man and beast, as may be seen in the almost endless varieties of species of animals, and in certain races of men.[19]

3. We are to avoid entering into contention over the problem of the color line. If this question is much agitated, difficulties will arise that will consume much precious time to adjust.[20]

4. Colored people should not urge that they be placed on equality with white people. The relation of the two races has been a matter hard to deal with and I fear that it will ever remain a most perplexing problem. So far as possible everything that would stir up the race prejudice of white people should be avoided.[21]

Cleveland's demand that such statements be explained to the black and white membership of the Seventh-day Adventist Church or printed only in context with other

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[17]Cleveland's letter to Ron Graybill, March 27, 1979.

[18]Talk given by Ellen White in Vicksburg, Mississippi, March 16, 1901.

[19]Ellen G. White, Spiritual Gifts (Washington, DC: Review & Herald Publishing Assoc., 1945), Book 3, p. 75.

[20]Ellen G. White, Testimonies to the Church, 9:213.

[21]Ibid., p. 214.

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statements that give the proper balance of Ellen White's social and racial attitudes, resulted, in 1959, in the publishing of the book, The Southern Work. The Southern Work, more than any single volume of Ellen White's writings, clarifies her racial views and has been of great solace to blacks who, as Cleveland explains, have long suffered from abuse and misuse of White's counsel on issues of race. His decades of poignant exegesis regarding these controversial statements lend an exciting quality to his literary corpus, and have earned him, in many quarters, the title of "troubler in Israel."

Typical of the manner with which he has handled many of White's perplexing statements, is his following reply to a friend who wrote to him questioning the meaning of the above statement regarding the color of Christ. Cleveland responds to the inquirer as follows:

> I have received the statement from the pen of Mrs. White concerning the color of Jesus. If you will study it closely you will notice it does not say how white Jesus is. Let me quote the phrase: 'In heaven there will be no color line for all will be as white as Christ himself.'
>
> But I raise the question, How white is Christ himself? Neither the Scriptures nor Mrs. White have dared to say. Now the nearest thing that is descriptive on the subject is from Revelation 1:14-15. It speaks of '. . . His feet like unto fine brass as if they were burned in a furnace . . . .' Now, . . . feet like that looked like they have been burned cannot be white. But an objector may say 'John was a prophet and this was simply metaphoric language.' To this I would reply that Ellen White was a prophet and

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> therefore her language was also metaphoric. In the flesh, Christ was a Jew and there is no evidence that the Semite was white.[22]

Operating during the 1950s and 1960s with a security guaranteed by his success as the church's most prolific and popular soulwinner, Cleveland wrote extensively on the subject of Ellen White and racial policy. During the later sixties and early seventies, the frequency of his letters and inquiries on this subject accelerated, and as their tone became more forceful, Cleveland's activist endeavors drew an increasing amount of fire from his brethren. Although Cleveland's racial protests during this period resulted in a rapid deterioration of relations at church headquarters, his journalistic protest did not slacken. This siutation (black leaders believe), as much as anything else, led Robert Pierson, then President of the General Conference, to make personal appeals to the writer that he find a job for Pastor Cleveland at Oakwood College. This occurred in 1975. Cleveland, by this time fully aware of the increasing unacceptability of his presence at headquarters, cooperated with the plan and joined the faculty at Oakwood. Removed from the immediate dangers of punitive sanctions so likely at headquarters, Cleveland, while at Oakwood College, has increased both the volume

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[22]The E. E. Cleveland Letters and Papers, Oakwood College Archives, Eva B. Dykes Library, Oakwood College, Huntsville, AL.

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and stridency of his letters and articles. Cleveland's effort to improve the lot of his people by clarifying the social and racial principles of the Bible and the writings of Ellen White gives him a style of protest that is far-reaching and proves, again, that "the pen is mightier than the sword."

F. W. Hale, Jr.

One of the better known black educators in the United States, Hale's career has included teaching experience at Oakwood College and Wilberforce University, the Presidency of Oakwood College (1966-1971), and his current position as Vice Provost for Minority Affairs at his alma mater, Ohio State University.

What has earned Hale a leadership role in black Adventism's struggle for equality is his more than two decades of articulate expression regarding church racial issues.[23] That which distinguished his style from that of other leaders is his dependence upon pressure groups and tactics as a means of influencing racial policy. This propensity has been demonstrated in two ways. The first is

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[23]Hale's more memorable addresses on the subject of race relations within the Church are: "Human Values and Denominational Policy, An Open Letter to the General Conference and All Seventh-day Adventists" (July 26, 1962); "The Task Ahead" (June 19, 1956); and "Commitment Versus Capitulation, or Where Do We Go From Here?" (January 13, 1970).

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his organization of laity into formal bodies of political activity--something none of the other leaders has ever done. In fact, Hale's initial move into the protest arena came in 1962, when he helped to develop the very activist (and at that time radical) Laymen's Leadership Conference. In an open letter to black Adventism dated July 4, 1961, the Laymen's Leadership Conference stated its case in part as follows:

> For decades we as Negroes have adjusted. We have adjusted to segregated churches. We have adjusted to regional conferences. We have adjusted to the philosophy of "white teachers only" in our institutions of higher learning. We have adjusted to the philosophy of "menial tasks only" for the few Negroes who have served in such units as the Review and Herald Publishing Association and the Voice of Prophecy.
>
> We have adjusted to the pattern of our periodicals which make it a practice of producing photographs of blacks in their raw, native costume as an indication of the progress which we are making in our worldwide missions appeal . . . . We have adjusted and adjusted; now it is time to readjust! We must readjust our thinking to the reality that failure to speak in the past has done little to promote our general welfare. Communication is a two-way street. Too long has the information been funneling down; now it is time for some information to start bubbling up . . . .[24]

The Conference, which was headquartered in the Ohio area, made its presence felt throughout the sixties at various church elections and numerous social debates. During these years it overshadowed all other groups (including

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[24]Open Letter to black Adventism by the officers and members of the National Board of the Laymen's Leadership Conference, July 4, 1961 (see Appendix 12).

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the black pastorate) in the matter of racial protest. As the black pastoral ministry became more active in this regard during the sixties, and as Hale, himself, during his 1966 to 1971 presidency at Oakwood College, became more closely identified with mainline church responsibilities, the power and influence of the Laymen's Leadership Conference began to noticeably wane. Nevertheless, Hale's reputation as an activist persisted, and was dramatically reinforced by his several articles and speeches during the Black Union conferences of 1968 and 1969. In 1980, Hale co-chaired a national gathering of blacks (primarily lay persons) whose purpose for assembly was a review and reply to what they regarded as the un-Christian response of black clergy to the defeat of the Black Union proposal--an effort which Hale had vigorously opposed. In terms of personality and method, this endeavor appeared to be the resurrection of the old Laymen's Leadership Conference and, in fact, the organization now lists Hale as one of its four co-directors and is named "The Committee of Concerned Laymen."[25]

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[25]While the first four leaders whom we have discussed have avoided the organizing of politically activist groups among the church laity, Hale's protest efforts have depended on that very effort. The ministerial leaders, unlike Hale, have functioned with the assumptions that 1) laymen should be shielded as much as possible from the church's racial shortcomings so as not to discourage their loyalty; 2) the organizing of laymen for protest against

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Additional evidence of Hale's preference for overt pressure tactics is his willingness to "go public" with the debate. His curb-side conference with the press in San Francisco in June 1962 at the World Conference of Seventh-day Adventists is again the only such action ever taken by a major black Seventh-day Adventist leader. The fact that he now serves as personal confidant to Jesse Jackson of Operation PUSH, and is a member of that Board, heightens his profile as a maverick among black S.D.A. protest personalities and as one whose scale of activities and influence so far beyond the conventional boundaries of social protest. He does nothing to reduce the apprehension raised by this image when he writes:

> Where do we go from here? If our hearts are right, we must plan an effective strategy for racial desegregation in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Effective strategy on each level of the church considered will require a variety of strategic actions which are interactive and mutually supportive. Included should be such strategies as: 1) emphasizing the changing of attitudes; and 2) emphasizing direct changes of social patterns and institutions through active intervention.
>
> There is no valid ethical ground for categorical insistence upon restricting strategy to techniques of "persuasion" and "education" in the removal of racial barriers in the church, notwithstanding, the common assertion to the contrary. The very existence of such barriers is not ethical, and the racial composition

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white leadership may, in fact, lead to their organizing themselves against black leadership; 3) as leaders of the people, it was their (black clergy's) responsibility to "straighten out" matters.

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> of the membership and basis for participation in the church is not properly a matter requiring the consent of persons in the church.[26]

## Theoretical Presuppositions

Quite apart from their differences of style or the primary strategies employed by these leaders in their protest activities, are their views concerning the proper form of racial interaction to be gained from protest. They all agree that injustice must be resisted. What they do not agree upon, however, is the form of social interaction to be achieved--integration or self-determination. Their lack of unanimity as to which of these social forms better serves the cause of freedom has resulted in severe conflict within the ranks of black leadership. This conflict and disagreement is a hindrance to their attainment of freedom.[27]

It is the issue of Black Unions which focuses the thinking of black leadership toward the question of the form of social interaction to be achieved. This debate

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[26]Hale's paper "Commitment Versus Capitulation, or Where Do We Go From Here," January 13, 1970, pp. 30-31.

[27]Self-determinationists make a clear distinction between primary integration--the integration that proceeds on the level of personal, social relationships, and secondary integration--the integration of non-personalized activities and relationships. Among the latter are public services (housing, jobs, transportation, etc.). Among the former are clubs, private associations, church membership, marriage, etc.

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(described above as the Battle for Modified Autonomy, 1960-1978) elicited more articles, inspired more speeches, and stimulated more genuine research and comment within the church ranks than any socio-political issue in the history of Adventism.[28]

The Black Union debate was formally initiated at the time of the Regional Advisory Meeting, April 7-10, 1969, in Miami, Florida, but its roots must be seen as beginning with the formation of colored Conferences in 1944. The growth of black Adventism following the formation of these administrative units, discussed above, produced a constellation of psychological, material, and administrative needs which black leaders gradually came to realize could not be satisfied in predominantly white Union organizations. Among the problems in the traditional Union organization pattern which black leadership saw as unsolvable were: 1) vertical mobility or opportunity for promotion within the system; 2) horizontal mobility or the need and privilege of transfer and fellowship with workers in other black Conferences; 3) relevant direction for black Conference administration; 4) joint programming and planning; 5) accurate representation of black Conferences at higher administrative levels (the Division and General Conference); 6) a natural presence

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[28]See Chapter I, pp. 32-34.

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on the Union Presidents' Council--the most prestigious administrative committee in the North American Division of Seventh-day Adventists. These and other factors were argued by black leaders before the church at two historic conferences convened within a year of the April 1969 resolution. These discussions were held at headquarters (Washington, DC) on January 13 and April 16, 1970. A formal vote was taken at the April 16, 1970, meeting and the Black Union proposal was defeated by a count of 28 to 41. What did come out of that meeting, however, was the promise by the white Adventists to pursue vigorously an alternative document titled "The Sixteen Points" (see Appendix 13). The majority voting agreed that these points espousing integration as an alternative to modified autonomy (Black Unions) would comprise the direction for the future.

Another result of the vote of April 16, 1970, was a deepening polarization among blacks themselves. Those who were in favor of Black Unions and those who were against (mainly individuals in General Conference positions or in positions in the traditional Union structure) were by now caucusing in separate stragegy sessions. The battle lines were being drawn, not only of blacks against whites in the system's hierarchy, but of blacks against one another over the issue of whether to name the promised

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land of justice integration or self-determination. The clearest analysis of how black leaders divided on the issue at this time was provided in an open letter to the church leadership by C. E. Bradford, at that time president of the Lake Region Conference. His letter states in part:

> If my analysis is correct and I believe it is, the representatives from the field voted decisively in favor of the unions. The General Conference, Union and institutional delegates voted overwhelmingly against black unions.
>
> I am made to conclude therefore that the men who serve the people, who are closer to the rank and file were outvoted by men who were removed from the field. It is regrettable that a voice of the delegates from the field was drowned out by the non-field segment.[29]

The full text of the Bradford letter is given as Appendix 14.

The visionary propositions of the sixteen points did not satisfy the self-determinationists among the black leadership, and for one obvious reason, they did not believe that the white leadership was capable of delivering on the majority of these propositions. It was with this in mind that in 1975, after five years of disenchantment with the sixteen points, the self-determinationists renewed their appeals to the General Conference for study of the establishment of Black Unions. The request was

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[29]The C. E. Bradford Letters and Papers, Oakwood College Archives, Eva B. Dykes Library, Oakwood College, Huntsville, AL.

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granted and a blue-ribbon discusson commission convened at Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan, August 26, 1976, to once again hear the matter.

The August 1976 meeting resulted in the decision to ask PREXAD (President's Executive Group on Administration) to consider the renewed request. On January 25, 1977, W. S. Banfield, having been appointed Chairperson of a fact-finding commission established by PREXAD, directed letters throughout the nation outlining an elaborate plan for this second full review.[30] Between that month (January 1977) and the Autumn Council (October 1977) several committees met and researched the issues with a quality of care not seen in the original discussions (1968-1970). This time a number of eminent scholars, white and black, were asked to participate. Although the discussion was learned and sophisticated, the results were the same as before! On October 13, 1977, at the Autumn Council Session, Elder Neal Wilson, Then Vice President of North America, speaking for PREXAD, read to the church leadership in attendance a historic position paper. It read in part:

> After the most careful deliberation it is the confirmed belief of PREXAD that it would not be judicious nor wise to organize regional 'black unions.' The following are some of the reasons that have led

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[30]W. S. Banfield was at this time Associate Director of the Office of Regional Affairs.

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> to the decision: 1) A major consideration in the thinking of PREXAD is the concern to keep our people as close together as possible spiritually and organizationally. . . . 3) PREXAD feels that we must reject any philosophy which says that only black people can make decisions for black people, or white people for shites, or for that matter any ethnic or language group only for itself. . . . 4) The goal of unity of the body of Christ with the parts operating in sympathetic relationship does not seem to suggest going in the direction of black unions. . . . 6) Any further organizational separation than now exists would be misrepresented both inside and outside the Seventh-day Adventist Church. . . . 7) If North America consciously moved in the direction of further fragmentation, thus reducing interchange between all ethnic and cultural groups, it could set the wrong example and have an adverse influence on our sister divisions around the world.[31]

The position of PREXAD was rejected by the eight black Conference presidents who presented Pastor Wilson with a statement of their dissidence and firm resolve to pursue the matter (see Appendix 15). How would the black leadership go about this? That question was discussed at a private and highly sensitive gathering on December 12, 1979, at the Hilton Hotel, Chicago O'Hare Airport. In attendance were the eight black Local Conference presidents, the Director of Church Missions of Oakwood College, and the President of that institution. This group, which later came to be known as the "Committee of Ten," decided to publish a booklet enumerating the virtues of their

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[31]Wilson's speech on October 13, 1977, re: Advisability of Black Unions, Washington, DC, pp. 5-8.

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cause.[32] This booklet was widely distributed and did much to solidify their roles as the Steering Committee of the Black Union forces.

The distribution of the booklet throughout most of the country stirred the General Conference leaders to action and the matter of Black Unions was unexpectedly placed on the Spring Council Agenda of April 11-14, 1978. This time PREXAD, moved by the very real threat of deepening division produced by the newly displayed determination and activism of black leaders, broadened the forum to include the entire General Conference Committee, a group numbering approximately four hundred church leaders, many of whom had not previously been exposed to the debate. The vast majority was white.

At the conclusion of two and one-half days of discussing PREXAD's October 13, 1977, negative recommendation, a vote to delay further action until the Autumn Council (October 1978) was introduced and passed.[33] In

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[32]The title of the 16-page booklet is Together for a Finished Work. Articles in the book commonly referred to as the Blue Book (edited by R. C. Brown, Sr., Secretary of the Lake Region Conference) are: 1) "The Proposition," by E. E. Cleveland; 2) "Spriitual Benefits," by C. D. Joseph; 3) "Facts About Black Unions," by C. B. Rock; 4) "Some Amazing Facts," by C. E. Dudley.

[33]It is revealing to note that most of the black leadership who were opposed to the Union concept in the 1969 and 1970 debates (some have even written papers of opposition) were speaking favorably this time around.

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September 1978, articles by two blacks on the subject of Black Unions, titled "Black Unions, Yes and No," appeared in the church paper (Review and Herald).[34] Then, on October 12, 1978, in the Takoma Park Seventh-day Adventist Church across the street from world headquarters, yet another vote was taken and again the Black Union idea was soundly defeated.

What makes these debates so significant for black Adventism is not only that they resulted in a formal declaration of racial policy, but that they focused very dramatically on the sharp dichotomy of leadership with respect to concepts of proper racial interaction. Those supporting the self-determinationist principles that underlies the concept of Black Unions (Cleveland and Bradford) made it clear that while they maintained a vital concern for their fundamental rights, their immediate goal was to obtain power and authority, not rights and fellowship. On the other hand, the integrationists (Banfield, Canson, Hale), by endorsing the sixteen points as the Magna Charta for race relations, made it clear that theirs was the more traditional quest for access and brotherhood which guided the civil rights movement from the beginning.

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[34]"The Positive Position," written by C. B. Rock; "The Negative Position," written by A. A. Anderson, a black layman of Washington, DC (see Appendix 16).

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## The Integrationists

The three supporters of the integrationist position show general agreement on a number of conclusions undergirding that position. Among other things, they believe that: 1) self-determinationism is tantamount to separatism or nationalism and should be understood as a form of reverse segregation; 2) non-Adventist society (both religious and secular) would view Black Unions as a sign of the inability of the races to live in harmony in the Seventh-day Adventist Church; and 3) integration is inherent in the principles of unity and oneness mandated by the Bible and in the counsels of Ellen G. White.

In advancing the first of the points above, Banfield makes the choice an "either/or" situation when he states:

> Black leaders, in and out of the church, have had to consider paramount the search for the answer to the question 'How does a black person gain social and economic parity in a racially prejudiced society?' Historically, they have addressed themselves to the question from two different distinctions. They advocated either nationalism or integration.[35]

Hale addressed the second assumption above in his paper, "Commitment Versus Capitulation," as follows:

> Consequently, the philosophy of separatism is gaining within our church as it has in secular circles. When

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[35]Banfield's article, "Events Precipitating the Demise of the Regional Department of September 12, 1979," p. 2.

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> we must admit to ourselves that we do not have the spiritual guts to come to grips with the problems that make mockery of our faith--then we may be admitting that our faith is a mockery.[36]

Banfield reinforces Hale's concern that the organization of Black Unions would be a negative statement regarding Adventist race relations:

> The decision to favor true integration of our current unions will enable the church to provide a less ambiguous, a more articulate and meaningful Christian witness to the world.
>
> The church is struggling to be the headlight and set the pace in race relations for the communications media, the business, educational, sports and entertainment world, not the tail-light bringing up the rear. Secular society considers this to be one of Christianity's most obvious failures. In this matter, the "true" or "remnant" church is hoping not to be weighed in the balances and found wanting. This is our great opportunity. Let us boldly move ahead.[37]

All three establish allegiance to the third proposition above with repeated statements that depict integration as the "ideal" relational pattern in light of the instructions of the Bible and the writings of Ellen G. White. None does it more plaintively than Canson when he reflects:

> I am of the opinion that the text which states 'Gather yourselves together, yea, gather together, O nation not desired; Before the decree goes forth . . .'

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[36]Hale's paper, "Commitment Versus Capitulation," January 13, 1970, p. 22.

[37]Banfield's "Observations on the Regional Union Proposal," August 3, 1977, pp. 1-2.

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> (Zephaniah 2:1,2) is referring to the Seventh-day Adventist Church . . . .[38]

Or later when he comments:

> Mrs. E. G. White makes the following statement: 'We are to practice the principles of heaven here below. In heaven there is one grand meeting place.' (Vol. 9, p. 197) I am not saying that we should forget that there are different races and that we melt into one society, but I am saying . . . 'Let us be careful less we further complicate the situation which will make it difficult for us to work in unison with out white brethren.'[39]

It is interesting to note that while the integrationist forces all make the same general case, they do so from a variety of theoretical perspectives.[40] Canson's dominant appeal is social. He is committed to what he terms "cultural blending"--the need for races to share elements of culture. Canson attacks what he calls the "narrow thinking of cultural pluralism" and explains his fears that self-determinationism will prevent desired

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[38]Canson's paper, "How Much Should the Church be Divided," June 1978,pp. 8-9.

[39]Ibid.

[40]As is evident, the arguments of both the integrationists and the self-determinationists proceed, for the most part, with a non-critical appropriation of a variety of supportive materials. With the exception of Hale, these men are not to be thought of as disciplined scholars treating their subjects with the refined tools of formal preparation. Rather, they should be viewed as sensitive, experienced, and articulate Christian leaders swept up by the issues of the most exciting socio-religious debate of their generation; or for that matter, of the entire life of the church.

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acculturation (integration) between the races in the following language:

> Didn't Sister White say that '. . . God calls for a harmonious blending of a variety of talent?' In those churches where whites and blacks meet together . . . a great opportunity exists for the harmonious blending of a variety of talents and every member can participate in the blending process.
>
> In those areas where blacks and whites are members of different churches, much of the blending is lost; but there is a unifying influence of the union conference . . . . There is a blending of talents of the union committee and a harmonious working together of an integrated staff in the union office. . . .
>
> Should our regional conferences be organized into black unions the only official blending of talents of the whites and the blacks would be on the General Conference Committee which meets twice a year; at the General Conference Session, every five years; and in various advisory meetings. . . . We would not only be living in a pluralistic society, we will be part of a pluralistic church.[41]

Banfield, on the other hand, emphasizes the spiritual aspects of the decision. His repeated emphasis is that love demands racial togetherness in structural as well as social relations. He is convinced that blacks must love even if it is "one-sided love," and that all methods should embody the principle of love, both as a means of reflecting true Christian values and as a weapon for softening the consciences of those guilty of oppression. He states that:

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[41]Canson's paper, "How Much Should the Church be Divided," June 1978, pp. 10-11.

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> . . . It is the nature of love to be sacrificial and one-sided if it is to be genuine. This is love's strength and the distinctly Christian dimension of love contained in the meaning of the word agape.[42]

And again, in his comments to the Advisory Board of the Office of Human Relations on October 9, 1979, he stated:

> In order for this vision to become a reality, we must help to develop in and among God's people a spirit that will enable them to transcend their ethnic, cultural, and physiological differences, likes and dislikes, and to willingly become obedient to unenforceable obligations which are beyond the reach of the politics of the church or the laws of society . . . . Such obligations are met by an inner higher law written in our hearts which produces love. Human problems cannot be solved without the spirit of love and brotherhood. Love is still our most potent weapon for personal and social transformation.[43]

Complementing the social emphisis of Canson's argument, and the spiritual emphasis of Banfield, is the ethical emphasis of Hale. Hale's articles and speeches show consistent concern for the moral issues surfaced by the debate; these include: 1) giving up a course (integration) for which so many (particularly M. L. King, Jr.) have fought and died; 2) settling for less than the gospel "ideal" (integration); 3) yielding to a "philosophy of separatism" (black unions) which is self-serving and reactionary rather than amelioratory and unifying. That the

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[42]Banfield's letter to C. B. Rock, July 26, 1978, p. 3.

[43]Remarks to the Office of Human Relations Advisory Board by W. S. Banfield, Tuesday, October 9, 1979, pp. 2-3.

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ethical question looms large in Hale's argument is no surprise; as early as June 1966, he had summarized the moral nature of the church's responsibility as follows:

> It is better to make it not by letting things ride, but by having some idea of where things ought to go and doing whatever is possible to let them go in that direction. . . . A critical gap still exists between the nature of our witness and the caliber of our actions. The opportunity for leadership that rests upon laymen and clergy alike, holds out the bouyant hope that we shall overcome some day.
>
> The challenge is to discover ways of bridging the gap between the present realities and the church's ethical commitment.[44]

Another example of how the moral issue is reflected in Hale's argument is seen in his statements regarding the tactics employed in the struggle of blacks with one another. While advocating the strongest of pressure tactics against the white establishment, Hale wishes for blacks to be cautious in their warfare against each other:

> The caution that must be observed, however, is in the area of strategies and tactics for our cause is not secular, but spiritual. There is a fine line in many instances, we would agree, but Christians have never endorsed the philosophy that the end justifies the means.[45]

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[44]Hale's speech, "The Task Ahead," June 19, 1966, p. 2.

[45]Hale's document, "Commitment Versus Capitulation," January 13, 1970, p. 24.

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## The Self-Determinationists

Bradford and Cleveland support their self-determinationist position with a number of common beliefs. Among these are: 1) that cultural pluralism is a functional reality for race relations in the United States; 2) that the contemporary situation of America demands a strategy that has power, not rights, as its primary focus; and 3) that this position can be justified theologically--that is, by the counsels of the Bible and the writings of Ellen White. Speaking on the issue of cultural pluralism, Cleveland states:

> . . . My visits to South America and many other parts of the world convinced me that indigenous leaders manning their union conference organizations does not lessen the fervor with which they love their white brethren nor their faithfulness in the prosecution of the work. Rather, it forms what Mrs. White calls a 'unity of diversity' which has strengthened the work in all these areas.[46]

In similar language, he later writes:

> . . . I should point out that the Spanish-speaking people had already requested of the General Conference that they consider organizing conferences simply because white America has not and will not assimilate them. Now these Spanish-speaking people are European and Caucasoid in origin; if the white man doesn't assimilate or integrate them, and they are having a hard time what future do you hold out for the black man who is even farther from their ethnic strain? This is why we know that the only solution to our present problem is a larger degree of self-government.

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[46]Cleveland's paper, "Regional Unions," January 1970.

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> . . . Oh, and this goes for the Chinese and Japanese and all others.[47]

Bradford deals with the power issue mentioned above in the following language:

> Black men in predominantly white unions can only be symbols of power. Black people today are not interested in the llusions of power, but in the realities.
>
> There is a new mood in the black community. Perceptive leaders recognize their task as working within the community to develop the latent powers and the resources of the people.
>
> The old Civil Rights approach is passe, i.e., dramatization of injustice by marches, demonstrations, etc., a confrontation with a "power structure," the bargaining session and finally detente. Black people have come to realize the failure of this approach to bring about meaningful change to the total community.
>
> . . . the church must take into account this new mood, this accentuation of blackness, this ethnocentricity. Control under the guise of integration is unacceptable.[48]

Both Bradford and Cleveland make strong arguments against the idea that integration is an ideal of scriptural origin. Cleveland is eloquent in his protest against the integrationists' attempt to portray it as such:

> Let us not be lulled to sleep by slogans and phrases that mean one thing to us but quite another to our white brethren. Whether the words 'unity' 'togetherness' or 'oneness' come from the lips or black or

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[47]Cleveland's paper, "Comment on the Paper 'Black Unions: Options and Consequences' by Betty Stirling, July 1977, p. 4.

[48]Cleveland's commentary, "Together We Stand," Regional Voice, 3, no. 8 (August 1981):5.

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> white, we must press for a definition of terms and discover the bottom line.
>
> . . . There is no substitute for limited autonomy in the organizations of men. In the new heaven where 'the kingdom will not be left to other people,' we will experience the utopia where 'a man is a man for all that.' Men are capable of limited justice for all men are limited; but when the administrator is all powerful, all wise and everywhere present, justice may indeed run down like water and righteousness like a mighty stream.[49]

Looking beyond the three shared assumptions that undergird the self-determinationist stance of Bradford and Cleveland, one notes that each (as in the case of the integrationists) has his own special emphasis. For Bradford, the dominant reason for seeking self-determination is attainment of practical benefits--i.e., the increase of mobility, the relevance of planning, and the consolidation of talent and resources. His is the pragmatic approach of one who understands clearly the functional problems at stake. He explains himself clearly:

> It was because the climate in the predominantly white church made it impossible for the black man to exercise his gifts in freedom that black churches were organized. It was because the black minister was restricted on the conference level that the black conferences were organized. The same holds true on the union level. . . . The ultimate in separation is not separation of structures but of persons. The segregated church is not a creation of the regional conference; all things on the local church level remain as they were before 1945 (organization of regional conferences), no more, no less segregated.

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[49]Ibid.

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> The creation of one or more black unions simply brings together existing conferences so that each may learn from the other so that the work may be unified and the structures more responsive to patent needs.[50]

Cleveland, on the other hand, appeals primarily to the principles of racial pride (dignity) and group solidarity for the acceptance of self-determination. His concerns, in this respect, were never more clearly expressed than when he wrote:

> As we face the future, black people must understand that we will need each other as never before. We will be forced to help each other and thus ourselves. We will have to trust each other; trouble will force us to. Self hatred is a legacy of slavery we must renounce to survive. . . . As someone put it, 'we must hang together or separately.'[51]

## Dissidence and Conflict

As is the case in most instances where leaders sustain serious divergence of social goals, and where formal victory and defeat have occurred in public debate, the Black Union controversy has resulted in a serious rupture of personal and professional relations within black Adventist leadership. The self-determinationists list several actions of the integrationists which they view as contributing very directly to the breach of relations. One of the actions resented by the self-determinationists

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[50]"The Case for Black Unions," by C. E. Bradford (not dated), pp. 3-4.

[51]Cleveland's commentary, "Self-Help," Regional Voice, 3, no. 11 (November 1981):6.

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was the vocal opposition to the Union proposal by blacks in jobs on the Union and General Conference levels. Since the Union proposal embraced reorganization at the Local Conference level, its proponents viewed as "meddling" the opposition of those blacks no longer directly involved in the administration of black Local Conferences and churches. The black Local Conference presidents, in particular, resented the fact that blacks on the Union and General Conference levelspublically contradicted their considered opinions as to what was best at the Local Conference level of organization.

Another action which produced tensions was the opposition of individuals on the West Coast where black Conferences do not exist, and where, in the opinion of Black Unionists, the question of Black Unions is moot. Black Union proponents viewed the efforts of these individuals as interfering in affairs which they could not fully appreciate, and, therefore, should not have opposed.

Another way the integrationists piqued the self-determinationists was throught their use of deprecating rhetoric in the analysis of both the motives and methods of Black Union proponents. The latter group saw themselves demeaned by such statements as:

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A. Black revolution is not a game, nor are its goals served by assorted actors and hustlers playing revolution.[52]

B. This is a most important point because the actors and game-players would discredit contributions of everyone other than themselves . . . . It is imperative that the black community know the difference between the committed and the comedians.[53]

C. . . . He (God) will work a revolution (not of rehtoric) but of righteousness (right doing) among us designed to enhance the achievement of progressive Christian fellowship rather than a distorted racial isolationism born of a deluded wish to skirt scriptural injunctions for the sake of unity, harmony, self determination, . . . or whatever reason.[54]

D. This open letter is to alert you to the fact that it appears that a deliberate vendetta is being launched against the Message Magazine and its editor (Lewis B. Reynolds) by the "so-called" leadership of OUR Regional Conference because Elder Reynolds "took a stand" against black unions at the Annual Autumn Council of 1978.[55]

E. Unfortunately, a good many of our 'would be' regional statesmen are decidedly shaky on their chart, compass, and steering apparatus.[56] (Italics mine.)

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[52]Hale's paper, "Commitment Versus Capitulation," January 13, 1970, p. 25.

[53]Ibid., pp. 26-27.

[54]Ibid., p. 32.

[55]An Open Letter to the S.D.A. Regional Constituency by Helen Beckett, Samuel Coleman, Burrell Scott, Frank Hale, Jr., August 20, 1979.

[56]An open Letter to the Black Constituency entitled, "Up Front: Where Are We Headed," the Committee of Concerned Laymen, September 12, 1979.

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Other activities of the integrationists which irritated Black Union advocates include: 1) the use of the Informant (National Newsletter) by the integrationist directors of the office of Regional Affairs--Elder W. W. Fordham (director) and W. A. Banfield (associate)--as a forum to discourage lay sympathies with the Black Union movement; 2) the refusal of Elders Fordham and Banfield (chairpersons of the regional advisory) not only to "carry the ball" but to remain silent or at least neutral when they could not conscientiously support the actions of the group they chaired[57]; 3) the commiseration of blacks with whites on an issue in which the white power structure was already in possession of great advantage.[58]

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[57]It is true that neither Fordham nor Banfield was in leadership of the Regional Advisory at the time of the original resolution in April 1969, but they inherited a mandate that they did not support. Fordham originally promoted Black Unions and wrote a paper on the subject, titled "A Critique on Regional Unions," July 1, 1979. He later changed his position and became an ardent opposer. To Banfield's credit is the fact that his position against Black Unions was formulated when he was president of a black Local Conference (South Atlantic). His stance has not varied.

[58]In addition to the numbers advantage, Black Unionists thought it unfair: 1) that in crucial debates the chairperson should have the dual role of spokesman for the opposition and facilitator of discussions; 2) that church administration "used" the Review and Herald by preceding critical votes with articles stressing "unity," which by inference labeled the Black Union idea as un-Christlike and divisive; 3) that there should be a lack of firm parliamentary rules during debates (see Chapter II, pp. 88-91); and 4) that individuals

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Integrationists, on the other hand, also had reasons to feel mistreated by their self-determinationist friends. One of the causes of resentment on the part of the integrationist group was their exclusion from Black Union strategy sessions. As the debates matured between 1968 and 1978, the Black Conference presidents more and more assumed the role of spokespersons for the Union thrust. Blacks in integrated Unions and in General Conference positions were hurt by being left out of this inner circle of planning. Being omitted from many of the real poser decisions of the white structure in which they were serving was painful enough, but being left out of the black caucuses where for so many years they had presence and power was even more painful.

Another self-determinationist effort which piqued the integrationists was the tendency of the former to deliver their proposal to the laity in language which suggested that the integrationists were guilty of "selling out." The "field niggers" (Black Union advocates) versus "house niggers" (integrationists) analogy was unmistakable.

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(white and black) obviously negative to the proposal, were being appointed to leadership positions on the various study committees. Self-determinationists viewed these devices as crass-political exploitation and felt sabotaged (betrayed) by their black brothers who joined forces with the architects of these arrangements.

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Perhaps the most serious or lasting fissures were produced by resentment with what appeared to be a number of vindictive measures employed by the Black Union advocates. Among such actions were: 1) the dismantling of the Office of Regional Affairs; 2) the discontinuation of the greatly beloved Informant magazine; 3) aggressive insistence on a change of the manager-editor of the Message magazine,[59] 4) refusal (after the October 12, 1978 vote) to attend any meetings chaired by Banfield or Fordham; 5) refusal to attend any of the traditional Human Relations Councils at the Union or General Conference level; 6) refusal to invite blacks of Union and General Conference staffs who publicly opposed them to the Local Conference functions they might normally attend; and 7) the organizing of national and regional caucuses (called departmental councils) without the participation or authorization of either the Union or General Conference.

That all of the above activities affected social relationships is not surprising; that those relationships remain cool, if not ruptured, several years after the fact, is unfortunate. That they are likely to change or to be

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[59]L. B. Reynolds, Message magazine editor during most of the debate, had read a paper against Black Unions at the October 1978 meeting and was from that time forward openly opposed by all eight Conference presidents who were not only members of his Board of Editors, but chiefly responsible for the magazine's circulation goals.

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restored to former levels of interaction without a harmonizing of theoretical views is highly unlikely.

## Potential for Cooperation

While the differences in social understandings and styles of action which we have noted provide black leadership with considerable ground for conflict, they also hold possibilities for interdependence and mutual support. Most of the integrationists do wish to retain black Conferences (a glowing demonstration of the self-determination principle); and most self-determinationists encourage: 1) "reverse integration"--the influx of whites into black Conferences and institutions; and 2) "structural integration," the integration of secondary relationships--that would mean the participation of blacks on all levels of church organization.

The most obvious evidence of interdependent relations is the way in which less aggressive strategists benefit from the efforts of more militant leaders. It is often the case that social freedom is facilitated when the attempts of heightened militancy are juxtaposed with more moderate approaches. As the petitions of Martin Luther King, Jr., were made more palatable to America when compared to the strident protestations of Stokely Carmichael and Rap Brown; as the work of the NAACP was made more credible when contrasted to such groups as

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CORE and the Black Panthers; so too, the rhetoric and actions of the more radical church leaders make tolerable the requests of less aggressive blacks. The results produced by Hale and the Laymen's Leadership Conference during the early and middle sixties illustrate the point.

The LCC leadership, at this time, had as one of its objectives the election of a black General Conference Vice President. This demand was aired by Hale and the LCC leaders to the San Francisco press at the General Conference Session of June 1962 (much to the dismay of church leadership). The strategy worked. Later in that session, F. L. Peterson was elected General Vice President of the world church. It is ironic, but significant, that the more moderate Peterson (whose letter denouncing Hale's aggressive tactics is included in our study (see Chapter I, pp. 40-41) was, in fact, the political beneficiary of the very militancy which he decried. The election of the first black Vice President for North America (C. E. Bradford, 1978--) also underlines this point. Few blacks, or whites, for that matter, believe that this appointment, which came in the wake of the Black Union defeat, would have been possible in less stressful times.

Such patterns of interdependence operate in a number of other strategic combinations. For example, the

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reparations effort of Bradford, combined with the human rights quest of Banfield, assures that remediation aims at true justice, not simply welfare. Similarly, Bradford's efforts toward reparations, Cleveland's pursuit of black solidarity, and Banfield's hopes for corrective legislation, all need Canson's negotiation skills for effective dialogue. The complementary quality of these arrangements can be seen in the fact that Canson's negotiation prowess without meaningful organizational adjustments (Bradford), is empty rhetoric; that Cleveland's racial dignity theory without some form of interpersonal relationships (Banfield), is iconoclastic; that Hale's ethical relations without political solidarity (Bradford and Cleveland) is an invitation to exploitation; and that Banfield's human rights approach, without the material benefits of reparations (Bradford), will provide blacks with only "half a loaf." Of course, given the long history of the struggle, all of the above efforts must be pursued with the spirit of self-sacrificing love (Banfield) if institutional loyalty is to be maintained.

## Potential for Social Change

Perhaps the best way to assess the comparative merits of integration and self-determinationism is to weigh the verifiable results of the employment of their constituent arguments. For example, that which makes

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cultural blending highly suspect as an option for solving the church's dilemma is its obvious failure over the years to appreciably effect cultural assimilation. In the Pacific Union where this strategy is being followed, not only are whites still noticeably in charge of church affairs, but blacks have had to request and be given "regional directors" for the purpose of guaranteeing voice and understanding in church affairs. The brute truth is that four decades of functioning with the integrationist theory has provided Pacific Union blacks very little "blending" either political or social.

The social strategy which most clearly demonstrates white reluctance (both in and out of the church) for blending is the phenomenon of "white flight." The national trend of demographic shifts is indisputable evidence of this unwillingness.[60] In a report by Time magazine, November 10, 1975, James S. Coleman, a noted sociologist who had been in favor of the bussing emphasis of the sixties, is quoted as reversing his earlier posture. Time reported that in a follow-up conversation with the judiciary in the fall of 1975, Coleman observed that compulsory bussing had

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[60]The persistence of white flight as a determinative factor in race relations is documented in a number of studies; among them, the Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorder (New York: Banton Books, 1968), and Richard M. Burkey, Ethics and Racial Groups (n.p.: Cummings Publishing Association, 1978).

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driven so many white urban families to the suburbs, that in terms of numbers the city public schools are more segregated then than ever. The New York Times (January 10, 1981) substantiates the persistence of this phenomenon in an article titled "Census Finds Blacks Gaining Majorities in Big Cities." The article reads in part:

> Final 1980 census figures show that an enormous migration of whites from the nation's largest cities has left black or Hispanic Americans as the majority or a substantial minority in most cities.
>
> This information is based on final census figures from 26 of the nation's 30 largest cities representing all regions.
>
> All 26 cities are surrounded by predominantly white suburban rings usually of larger population than the cities themselves.[61]

The Birmingham Post-Herald (Tuesday, January 25, 1983) provides an even later view:

> . . . the author of a school segregation study released yesterday by the Joint Center for Political Studies said that despite gains in black enrollment, city schools with declining white enrollment are turning into 'minority institutions.'
>
> . . . The report examined trends in the largest urban school districts and 44 metropolitan areas including suburbs. It showed that two-thirds of the students in the 10 largest school districts in 1980 were minorities, and that the ratio is rising rapidly.
>
> . . . While white flight has contributed to a form of reverse segregation in school systems in some southern cities, the report shows that the major problems are in large industrial cities in mostly northern states.

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[61] New York Times, January 10, 1981.

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> New York, Michigan, New Jersey and Illinois head the list in segregation of blacks.[62]

As with most socio-political arrangements seen in the larger society, the white-flight phenomenon has, likewise, characterized the social relations of Seventh-day Adventists. Nowhere is this more evident than on the Pacific Coast, where the integrationist hopes of black leaders are continually nullified by this trend. The "take over" by blacks of a number of schools and churches in this area, which once had few blacks, if any, is a stark reminder of how unwilling most whites are to socially integrate. By means of "White flight" on the one hand, and the absorption of a small number of acceptable blacks on the other, the diseased body of racism effectively resists the challenge of those who approach its bastions with a soft hope of cultural blending.

Of more serious challenge to injustice is the ethical appeal described above. As with all appeals which are grounded in recognizable moral principles, this approach has the distinct advantage of relevance and consistency. However, those who depend heavily upon ethical appeals are clearly hampered by the fact that they (as proponents of cultural-blending) must rely upon the supposed goodness

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[62]Gayle McCracken, Reporter, "Black School Enrollment Up; Segregation Still a Problem," Birmingham Post-Herald, January 25, 1983.

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of human nature for social change. In isolation from other more pragmatic strategies, appeals to conscience rarely bring about political freedom; they are more prescriptive rhetoric than concrete reality.[63]

The style of action which aspires to "agape" love contributes to the black quest for freedom an element valuable to all minorities engaged in perpetual disadvantage--a reason to triumph while suffering. In this case, that reason (love for the oppressor) is appropriately grounded in the Christian ethic. Those who have been disadvantaged for decades, and even centuries, cannot survive without either victory or long-suffering. As the history of the native American demonstrates, in matters of long-standing social injustice, hope does not necessarily spring eternal, or if it does, is not necessarily rewarded. But what makes the self-sacrifice motif less of a challenge to injustice than some others is that it reinforces dramatically the "suffering servant" concept which permits the pleasure of a majority to outweigh the desires and needs of the minority. It allows the perceived good of the many to outweigh the rights and requirements of the few. That this motif provides the minority with a rationale to "fight on" in spite of inequities, is noble; that

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[63]Hale's successful efforts in the struggle for structural integration combine ethical appeals with direct confrontation (see above, pp. 117-121, 133-134, 145).

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it forces the minority to employ methods deemed by the majority as passive, or as signs of weakness, is dysfunctional; that it insulates the oppressed against hatred and bitterness is redemptive; that it is often mistaken by the oppressor as evidence of satisfaction with the status quo is both inevitable and unfortunate. As a supportive element to the action strategies above, the principle of self-sacrificing love does aid the cause of freedom; as an independent or dominant disposition, its value is limited.

What makes self-determinationism the most attractive theory of racial interaction is its appeal to the principles of pragmatism and group pride.[64] Thos pragmatists who seek accommodations in the structure as a means of answering the economic and political needs of black Seventh-day Adventists do not wish to wait for the leavening process of moral principles, or the evolutionary process of human growth, to bring about change. They move concretely within the present structure to provide whatever is needed for immediate relief. What should be reiterated, however, is that while self-determinationism accommodates reparations, it understands the reparational principle, itself, to be an inadequate substitute for

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[64]Pragmatism as it is reflected in the institutional requirements addressed by Bradford, and group pride as seen in the emphasis on racial dignity by Cleveland.

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freedom. Reparations are, under the circumstances, necessary, and in large enough doses, serve well the principle of restorative justice; however, they are seldom materially sufficient, and their effect is usually blunted by the political necessity for the body to provide similar concessions to other claimants as well. Even if this were not so, freedom can scarcely be said to be served in systems where the disadvantaged are taxed equally with the advantaged and must then depend upon the latter's sympathies for returns that do not begin to compensate for the disparity which separates their incomes. Reparations are important for the survival of the disadvantaged but survival, even that offered by the hands of the repentant, is not freedom. On the other hand, to be able to determine one's own destiny, to preserve one's ethnicity, and to relate within the larger society so as to maintain the peculiar cultural arrangement of the minority, is to enjoy freedom of the highest order.

The importance of group pride, the other foundation principle of self-determinationism, to the perspectives of social justice lies in: 1) its being a stimulus to personal initiative; 2) its providing motivation toward a group solidarity (hence political power); 3) its encouragement of realistic goals and objectives; and 4) its valuing of one's own heritage and culture.

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It is with this principle of group pride in mind that Cleveland denounces the demeaning character of "one-way" integration (blacks acculturating into white societies), and exposes the assumption of racial inferiority implied by that posture.[65] The principle of racial dignity is especially critical of appeals which emphasize cultural blending and agape love, in that such appeals rely upon the justice-granting capacity of human nature. That nature, aptly described by Reinhold Niebuhr as collectively immoral, has, in American social history, proven to be consistently manipulated in the favor of whites. Self-determinationists are impatient with the leaven-like processes upon which these principles (cultural blending and agape love) depend, and distrust the moral sensitivities of the majority whose ethical sense they court. Self-determinationists face the issues of racial interaction without illusions of sudden change. They refuse gradualism and do not wish to depend upon charity. They see legislative negotiations as useful tactics for survival, but decry the role of the "eternal petitioner." They see assimilation (blending) as a legitimate individual choice, but hold little faith in attempts at massive acculturation. They admire the agape claims of

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[65]Cleveland's paper, "Regional Unions," January 1970, p. 5.

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self-sacrificial love, but regard three hundred years sufficient "cross time" for any minority. Self-determinationism builds its own nationhood; retains its own funds; respects its own culture. It rejects the notion that non-whites are, or can be, a part of America's "melting pot," and values the "salad bowl" motif instead. Self-determinationists accept the testimony of the centuries regarding black/white relations and waste no time or energy on social projects which attempt to defy the ancient logic that "birds of a feather flock together." And yet, self-determinationism is comfortable with cross-cultural fertilization. It eschews all vestiges of racial discrimination and welcomes the stranger within its gates with the title "brother." It sees the "fatherhood of God" and the "brotherhood of man" as essential principles of race relations and demands that it be allowed to sit at the table of humanity with all its cultural differences--as a power among powers. Self-determinationism adopts pluralism as its associational model and regards ethnicity as a legitimate form of cultural expression. It recognizes that being outnumbered, it will often be outvoted, but knows that its desires for freedom are better served as an outvoted ethnic entity than as an accommodated, unorganized minority. It pulls together the separated

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parts of black society into duly represented political units that give accurate expression to their needs.

The history of black Conferences demonstrates the primary structural benefits of the principle of self-determination to be the following: 1) it decreases the loss and attrition of highly capable blacks by encouraging thier participation in and for the black community; 2) it increases the relevancy of planning in and for the black community by placing community direction in the hands of indigenous leaders; 3) it provides concentrated political power through group governance; 4) it reduces black frustration by promoting realistic objectives; 5) it provides authentic results in that its efforts are made, as Bonhoeffer would say, "in correspondence with reality"--and not abstraction.[66]

## Loyalty Attitudes

A final observation regarding the primary characteristics of black Seventh-day Adventist leadership is that all wish to be understood as pursuing freedom while maintaining absolute loyalty to the church. Cleveland, whose theory of racial pride, and whose forceful language, make him the most frequent target for charges of dissidence, establishes this point as strongly as any when the writes:

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[66]Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Ethics (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1955), p. 227.

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> In spite of what the Review and Herald, or any other document may tell you, your black leaders are NOT trying to split the church or to bring it disunity, or to leade you away from fellowship with white brethren.
>
> . . . For years all the union conferences in America were staffed by white brethren,--nobody accused them of pulling away from the black brethren, why now should we be labeled as pulling away when we want what they have had for years . . . . We are loyal Seventh-day Adventists now and will be loyal Seventh-day Adventists forever.[67]

Banfield speaks similarly when he writes:

> Despite the imperfections of the Church, this is no time to cast away our confidence, we must love it in the same manner as Jesus loves it. Even though it stands in need of reproof, warning, and counseling, we need divine intervention supported by consecrated leadership and lay support to straighten it out.[68]

Hale, in writing to F. L. Peterson, May 3, 1961, is adamant in his declaration of loyalty:

> Elder Peterson, you are aware that I have been an Adventist since a child and plan to be, God helping me, until I die. I have accepted the doctrines and teachings of the Seventh-day Adventist Church much as I accepted the Constitution of the United States. I do not debate either.
>
> . . . The Laymen's movement is not an anti-church movement; it is anti-segregation and anti-discrimination.[69]

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[67]E. E. Cleveland, "We Are Not Pulling Away" (not dated), p. 2.

[68]W. S. Banfield, "Events Precipitating the Demise of the Regional Department," September 12, 1979, p. 2.

[69]The F. W. Hale Letters and Papers, Oakwood College Archives, Eva B. Dykes Library, Oakwood College, Huntsville, AL.

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Canson, Bradford, and the other contemporary thought leaders of Black Adventism would agree.[70]

It is clear that black leadership today, as historically, elects to function from a loyalty bias rather than from the matrix of an either/or decision. Loyalty and justice do not, in their thinking, present themselves as mutually exclusive phenomena. To be loyal to the church is to be solicitous for its welfare--to be solici- for its welfare is to work toward rectifying its ills. It is not simply personal pain and disadvantage which the oppressed minority experiences; it is also patriotic hurt--the embarrassment and dishonor which the loyalist experiences in view of the obvious weaknesses of one's valued membership group. The efforts of those who seek to overthrow the forces of oppression within the body must be seen, therefore, not only as attempts to better their social position, but as the ministry of those who, consumed by zeal for what they sincerely believe to be

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[70]Other contemporary black leaders whose views have been especially meaningful for church protest directions include: 1) Robert Carter, President of the Lake Union Conference; 2) C. E. Dudley, President of the South Central Conference; 3) George Earl, President of Northeastern Conference; 4) C. D. Joseph, President of Lake Region Conference; 5) J. Paul Monk, Editor of Message magazine; 6) Major C. White, Secretary of the Pacific Union Conference; 7) Robert L. Woodfork, Associate Secretary of the General Conference.

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"God's House," energetically strive to alter its character and image.

Of course, unswerving loyalty in the face of political and economic oppression is not unique to black Seventh-day Adventists; their fidelity is typical of that of black members in other majority white denominations, and, for that matter, of black Americans in general. Thus, in a very real sense, black Seventh-day Adventist leadership, divergent in action style, divided in social theory, polarized by protest objectives, and burdened by inner tensions, may be seen as a lively microcosm of America's most pressing dilemma. If this is so regarding their status and protest characteristics, perhaps it can also be true with respect to the resolution of their situation. It is to this view that we now turn our attention.

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# CHAPTER IV

## BLACK THEOLOGY--AN AID TO EFFECTIVE PROTEST

It is fair to conclude that the tensions experienced by black Adventist leadership in the United States are primarily the result of three factors: 1) the constant reminders of the church's inability to harmonize social practice with positive human relations' proclamations; 2) a clash of desires and aspirations for freedom with the ethnical necessity to use protest measures that are only marginally effective; and 3) the polarization of leadership with respect to the goals of racial interaction (integration versus self-determination). There is little hope that black leadership can resolve the first of the conditions above. Just policies are available for a minority only when, as a result of political expediency or an occasional fusion of objectives, sufficient numbers of the majority "will" them their due. In light of the variables identified in Chapter II of this study, this possibility is not likely to occur in any significant measure for black Seventh-day Adventists. Furthermore, even if just policies were more the rule, it is doubtful



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that black freedom would measurably increase. As the history of voluntary associations attests, theoretical proclamation does not guarantee genuine application.

While black leadership is greatly restricted with respect to the harmonizing of theoretical proclamation and social practice (item one above), it can do much to resolve the inconsistencies and tensions inherent in items two and three. I shall propose, in other words, that black leadership can, in fact, harmonize legitimate desires and aspirations for freedom with effective protest measures (item two) and that self-determination is a form of racial interaction with which all can be comfortable (item three).

The task will begin with the identification of black theology as a necessary conceptual framework for black Christian protest, and will conclude with the proposing of restoration as a unifying principle for traditional Adventist theology and black Christian minority protest.[1]

## The Rationale for Black Theology

The social attitudes and practices of Seventh-day Adventists, like those of all Christians, are determined

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[1]It should be noted that our understanding of black theology is largely dependent on the thought of James Cone.

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by their hermeneutical style or tradition, the study of which Jurgen Moltmann calls "political hermeneutics."[2] In his discussion of the "Ways Toward the Psychological and Political Liberation of Man," Moltmann lays the foundation for hermeneutical inquiry:

> As human life is complex and is lived at the same time in a number of spheres and dimensions, a number of hermeneutical processes are necessary. There is no one hermeneutical key and no one hermeneutical key experience. The process of translation involves various fields of experience. . . .[3]

Moltmann's definition of "political hermeneutics" is important. He states that:

> The political hermeneutics of faith is not a reduction of the theology of the cross to a political etiology, but an interpretation of it in political discipleship. Political hermeneutics sets out to recognize the social and economic influences on theological institutions and language in order to bring their liberating content into the political dimension and make them relevant towards really freeing men from their misery in certain vicious circles.[4]

As history demonstrates, without such a hermeneutic an oppressed religious minority is continually victimized by a number of psychologically crippling conditions. Chief among these are: 1) the acceptance of the

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[2]Political hermeneutics has been explicated by such writers as Gustavo Gutierrez, Rosemary Ruether, Dorothy Soelle, Johannes Metz, Ernest Bloch, Reuben Alves, Letty M. Russell, Martin L. King, Jr., James Cone and Albert Cleage.

[3]Jurgen Moltmann, The Crucified God (New York: Harper & Row, 1974), p. 292.

[4]Ibid., p. 318.

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status quo as the will of God for His suffering servants; 2) experiencing guilt feelings as a result of criticizing the church; 3) involvement in "crisis" activity rather than sustained efforts guided by principle; 4) viewing injustice as a reflection upon the character of the church and/or God and maintaining a dysfunctional relationship to one or both; and 5) the use of only those protest measures which are approved by the offending majority--the oppressors.

Since the theological contours of Adventism have been provided by white and not black theologians, it is not surprising that Adventism's political perspective has little relevance for the minorities within its membership. Hermeneutics, by definition, develop at the confluence of revelation and experience. They are the interpretive framework through which a people understand the meaning of God's Word in their situation. That situation for blacks and whites (both in the Adventist church and in society in general) is radically different. The social experience of the two groups, described in the Kerner Report, indicates separate sociological frames of reference, and, hence, different hermeneutical points of departure.[5] Black Seventh-day Adventists have basically two

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[5]"Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders" (New York: Bantam Books, 1968).

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options; they can accept a foreign word (God's word to white theologians) as His word to them, or they can find (hear) the Word as it relates to them specifically. Such a Word is what black theology is all about. Black Seventh-day Adventists must come to understand that there is no such thing as "plain theology" or a theology which comes to one unconditioned by the hearer's social and political perspective. There is what Moltmann has called a "theology of the cross," but that is not "plain theology"--that is biblical theology, which, like a prism or a finely-cut gem, revolves under the varied lights of time and culture, reflecting for each generation and people an appropriate, authentic hue.[6] Black theology understands this phenomenon and boldly asserts that "what we blacks have been fed is white theology"--a theology hopelessly accommodated to the oppressor's social perspective or point of view. Hence, it is altogether legitimate, necessary, and natural, that the racially oppressed theologize in categories relevant for their situation. Accordingly, black theology must reevaluate critical categories of thought often ignored by white theologians. The result of black theology is: 1) a dramatic reinterpretation of the

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[6]A chief impediment to the development of "plain theology" (a theology devoid of social bias) is human arrogance. Niebuhr reminds us that the "will to power" is the primary ingredient of group ethnocentrism.

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epistemological elements of freedom; and 2) a radically different emphasis upon key elements of faith.

## Elements of Freedom

Under the scrutinizing eye of black theology, many of the assumptions of mainline theology regarding freedom are dramatically rearranged. The constituent concepts most important in this regard are community, obedience, and power.[7]

In the hands of white theologians, the term "community" has always been adaptable to their political advantage. As interpreted by racists, community is an exclusivistic concept intending a communality of kind. Scriptures dealing with "oneness," which might be seen as encouraging interracial fellowship, are, for them, clearly qualified by other biblical references which make community a restricted affair. For example, to the reference of God's having "made of one blood all nations" is added the qualification that God has also "determined the times before" and "appointed the bounds of their habitation."[8] It was such appropriation of scriptures that permitted the slave owners to sing:

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[7]These concepts, so often the basis of social (political) attitude and decision in the church, receive considerable attention both in the writings of Ellen White and in the works of contemporary Adventist leaders.

[8]Acts 17:26.

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Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above

and

We are not divided
All one body we
One in hope and doctrine
One in charity

each Sunday morning, and then return home to their chattel without tinge of conscience. It was this same exegetical bent which allowed Seventh-day Adventists, for most of the twentieth century, to turn Ellen White's advice that the whites work for whites and the blacks work for the blacks ". . . until the Lord shows us a better way," from an accommodation to the realities of the political situation which then existed (1901), into an abiding justification of the principle of "separate but equal"--a principle which is by definition contrary to the meaningful community of differing ethnics.

The ultra-liberal's view of community, however, is just as damaging to black freedom.[9] While the racist is trapped by the cognitive and cultural limitations of the past, and is impervious to the relative aspects of Christian praxis, it would seem that liberals are afflicted by

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[9]By ultra-liberal we delineate those individuals (white and black) who hold to the "melting pot" theory and whose social endeavors are, therefore, inimical to the principles of ethnicity and pluralism.

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a contrary error--that of closing their eyes to present realities. The racist superimposes yesteryear's cultural mind-set upon today's intellectual climate and proclaims "we should do no more." The ultra-liberal, on the contrary, unfolds bold blueprints for a world of homogenized community in which no differences exist, and proclaims "we must do no less." Both positions are damaging to genuine community; the former, because it denies opportunity, and the latter, because it denies reality; the former, because it supports inequality of access, the latter, because it leads to costly waste of human energies and resources; and finally, the former, because it makes community a restrictive association of similar beings, while the latter makes community a cruel hoax, the abstract design of stubborn visionaries.

Another epistemological foundation of freedom that has been reinterpreted by black theology is the concept of obedience. Biblical references such as "Servants be obedient to those who are your earthly masters, with fear and trembling" (Ephesians 6:5) have often been, in the hands of the advantaged class (the masters), an effective device in deadening Christian conscience and mitigating minority protest. The exhortation to obedience to established authorities (both civil and religious), without clear definition of the limitations of

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established authority upon personal privilege, is endemic to white Christianity. This is not surprising. The ruling class has little or no reason to raise the question of "how much to take" or "when to rebel." One can cite the American Revolutionary War, or even George Wallace's University of Alabama stand in 1954, as examples of the capacity of the American Anglo-Saxon citizen to rebel when repressed. What must be remembered, however, is that the viewpoint of the repressed, in the last few centuries, has not been available to the ruling white majority. The result is that first century obedience injunctions flow from the lips and pens of an advantaged class unenlightened by lower class concerns. For such a ruling class, allegiance to God is equated with quiet acceptance of the church's social practices--whatever they may be. James Cone is insightful when he states:

> Ungodly in their very relationship to black people, they want to tell us what God's love means. There is only one explanation for this attitude. They are white and can think only like white people, even in reference to God. How else do we explain that the white theologian's view of God's love invariably coincides with or compliments the structure by making blacks complacent and obedient. . . .[10]

Black theology believes that God is at work in the church and that when an enlightened leadership or laity vote into being a social or doctrinal policy, it has the

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[10]James H. Cone, A Black Theology of Liberation (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1970), p. 135.

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stamp of Christ who said ". . . whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Matthew 16:19). However, black theology also affirms that much of the church's leadership has been neither intellectually informed nor spiritually enlightened, and that the decisions which they make, especially in the social (political) realm, must not be believed or accepted.

The other primary concern of black theology in dealing with the question of obedience has to do with the legitimacy of protest. The question of whether it is right to contest the social practices of the body of Christ is important for black theology's understanding of its proper relationship to authority. Moellering makes the case against those who justify contemporary minority passivity by comparisons to the lack of protest activity of the early Christians, by asking:

> Entrenched as the system was, what could a minority of Christians do to abolish the deplorable relationship of master and slave? There would have been little hope of eliminating the nefarious institution of slavery by a head-on revolution. Given the existing situation, it would have been suicidal to instigate an insurrection. Whenever that method had been tried it had resulted in making the lot of slaves even more intolerable.[11]

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[11]Ralph L. Moellering, Christian Conscience and Negro Emancipation (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1965), p. 150.

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Perhaps the clearest reply to white theology's hermeneutical error of making first century social praxis a guide for twentieth century patterns of obedience is Cone's statement:

> We cannot see Jesus' behaviour in the First Century as a literal guide for our actions in the Twentieth Century . . . .
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> Scripture . . . is not a guide which makes our decisions for us. On the contrary, it is a theological source because of its power to 'renew for us the disclosure of the holy which was the content of primordial revelation.' . . . The meaning of scripture is not to be found in the words of scripture as such, but only in its power to point beyond itself to the reality of God's revelation; and in America that means black liberation.[12]

The third and last of the epistemological elements of freedom, which we have chosen to discuss in the light of black theology, is the concept of power. Cone cuts to the heart of the historic inadequacy of white theology's interpretation of power when he writes:

> It seems that whites forget about the necessary interrelatedness of love, justice, and power when they encounter black people. Love becomes emotional and sentimental. This sentimental condescending love accounts for their desire to 'help' by relieving the physical pains of the suffering blacks so they can satisfy their own religious piety and keep the poor powerless . . . . the main difficulty which most whites have with Black Power and its relationship to the Christian gospel stems from their own inability to translate traditional theological language into the life situations of black people.[13]

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[12]Cone, A Black Theology of Liberation, pp. 68-69.

[13]James Cone, Black Theology and Black Power (New York: The Seabury Press, 1969), pp. 54-55.

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Again, that such a hermeneutical tendency typifies white theology is understandable. Those whose situation is advantaged have little reason or capacity to question the morality of their definitions and usages of power. It is different for the oppressed; or at least for the "enlightened oppressed."[14] The latter group realizes that freedom is never a gift, but is earned and achieved through struggle; that unjust powers must be confronted if they are to be changed; that holders of power relinquish privilege only when the force of protesting power plies it from their grasp. In short, they know that power is a positive tool of Christian ethics and that compulsion is a legitimate and necessary constituent of effective power.[15]

The theological justification of political compulsion is not, however, an invitation for petitioning minorities to employ what Paul Tillich calls "loveless power." Injustice must be seen not only as the use of superior power in the restraint of destruction of inferior

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[14]By "enlightened oppressed," I am referring to those whose perceptions allow them to see beyond and through the sham of powerless love that is held up by white theology.

[15]Such an understanding and use of power is necessary for the attainment of both of classical philosophy's categories of freedom: negative freedom--the freedom from restraints which deny equality; and positive freedom--the capacity to take advantage of available opportunities.

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powers, but also as the revengful acts of inferior powers. Majorities and minorities must both remember that the proper use of power results in justice; it is the abuse and misuse of power which leads to injustice.

At any rate, since every human encounter, whether friendly or hostile, involves a conscious or unconscious struggle for power, its use is unavoidable. Therefore, in the final analysis, the protesting disadvantaged have only two options: 1) to batter the walls of injustice with the heavy artillery of boycotts, ballots, and other compulsory activities, or 2) to employ those forms of protest from which all compulsion or force has been abstracted (i.e., speeches, letters, appealing for brotherhood and love) and trust in the justice-granting capacities of human nature. White theology, in general, is perfectly comfortable with the latter alternative. The former alternative, on the contrary, is implied by black theology. For Cone, this includes necessary violence. His meaning is clear:

> If whites do not get off the backs of blacks, they must expect that blacks will literally throw them off by whatever means are at their disposal. This is the meaning of Black Power.[16]

Again, Cone states this view unequivocably:

> . . . the black revolution is nothing but a will to spread the decision among black people to seize their freedom any way they can. . . . Therefore, if black

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[16]Cone, Black Theology and Black Power, p. 22.

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> people are to have freedom we must take it, with guns if need be.[17]

Of course, black theology is not unanimous in its attitude regarding physical force. Major C. Jones expresses an alternative view:

> To feel the need to respond to violence by becoming violent seems to make one a slave to the person or persons who call forth the act of violence as a means of self-defense. . . .
>
> Jesus was a good example . . . . Was this not the reason He admonished Peter to put up his sword, for all those who live by the sword die by the sword? Few would suggest that Jesus was less than a person of strength.[18]

Although not oblivious to the problems inherent in violence, Cone sees blacks as having little choice. His position is:

> The Christian does not decide between violence and nonviolence, good and evil. He decides between the less and the greater evil. . . . If he decides to take the 'non-violent' way, then he is saying that revolutionary violence is more detrimental to man in the long run than systemic violence. But if the system is evil, then revolutionary violence is both justified and necessary.[19]

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[17]Cone, A Black Theology of Liberation, pp. 177-178.

[18]Major C. Jones, Christian Ethics for Black Theology (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1974), p. 137.

[19]Cone, Black Theology and Black Power, p. 143.

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As for the use of Christ as an example of the non-violent person, Cone again disagrees.[20] He reasons as follows:

> . . . The critical question for Christians is not whether Jesus committed violence or whether violence is theoretically consistent with love and reconciliation. We repeat; the question is not what Jesus did, as if His behavior in first-century Palestine were the infallible ethical guide for our actions today. We must ask not what He did, but what He is doing--and what He did becomes important only insofar as it points to His activity today.[21]

While Cone does not make violence a prominent tenet of his system, his leaving the door open for its tactical use is somewhat problematic for black theology. The destruction of property and the shedding of blood are morally repugnant to most blacks who have been nurtured in New Testament understandings (whether or not those understandings are accurate is beside the point). Even the attempt to humanize violence or to limit it to a

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[20]On a prior consideration, Cone does not concede that Jesus was "non-violent." Noting the skepticism of Rudolph Bultmann and other Form Critics (white) regarding the historical details of the gospels, Cone asks: "Why is it that they do not express the same skepticism when dealing with Jesus' politics as they do with everything else? How can they be so sure that Jesus was not violent? Why is it that they say that Jesus preached the kingdom, an all-encompassing reality, but suggest that it had nothing to do with politics? How can they say that the God of Jesus was the Yahweh of the Old Testament but shy away from His political involvement on behalf of the oppressed?" James H. Cone, God of the Oppressed (New York: The Seabury Press, 1975), p. 223.

[21]Ibid., p. 222.

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method of last resort does not give it ready acceptance with most blacks.

On the other hand, since few Christians (black or white) will categorically pledge themselves to non-violence in the face of ultimate threats to existence, Jones is most helpful when he offers an "ethic of distress" in place of a theological justification of violence. Reasoning in the manner of Bonhoeffer, who had labeled his strikes against Hitler as necessitas (acting beyond the law), Jones writes;

> Indeed the time often comes when the Christian feels that he cannot remain neutral. This is the moment when it would be more honest and moral for the Christian to adopt an ethic of distress admitting to himself and to his God that his future actions beyond this point are not Christian or ethical. In adopting an ethic of distress, the Christian seeks no ethical justification for what he feels he must do within the context of the moment, because he knows that there can be no such justification for what he is about. Such a stance would, it seems, prevent all impossible attempts to construct a blanket theological justification for so much that is wrong with revolution, war, the killing of other human beings.[22]

Whatever the nature or use of power, it is the belief of black theology that the only hope for acquiring adequate strength to pursue the task of freedom is that of self-empowerment. "The black man must achieve a 'counter-power' to offset the current power of the collective white society. He must, of necessity, empower

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[22]Jones, Christian Ethics for Black Theology, p. 176.

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himself; this power will never be given to him."[23] Black theology understands this self-empowerment to be a form of self-affirmation which manifests itself socially and politically as self-determination--the participation of blacks in society as a solidified force, not as scattered individuals blindly adopting and mimicking the interests of the advantaged class. According to black theology, the sin of the oppressed is not that they sought integration so assiduously and for so long. That is understandable given the psychological and sociological contours of their historic condition in America. Their sin is, rather, that now, in the face of integration's colossal failure, they still, in significant numbers, continue to kneel at the altar of its smouldering ashes.[24] Richard Burkey illumines well the cruel hoax of integration and reinforces the case for self-determination when he writes:

> There never has been a melting pot. Individuals have managed to disappear into the majority if they have the 'correct' phenotype, but with very few exceptions, virtually all of the ethnic groups that ever existed in this country remain today. The idea of 'one nation, one people,' has been a hypocritical ploy used by the majority either to eliminate competition and intolerable diversity or to raise the hopes of a

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[23]Ibid., p. 27.

[24]Integration here is interpreted as a social, not structural homogenization.

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> group while simultaneously denying that group any genuine participation in American life.
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> . . . Integration proposals mask Anglo dominance, whether intentionally or not.[25]

## Elements of Faith

Even more fundamental to our project than the elucidation of the freedom characteristic listed above, is black theology's distinctive emphasis upon various elements of faith. One of the primary ways in which black theology accomplishes this involves the very nature of the inquiry which guides its theological concerns. The critical question for black theology is not one of dogma or ethics, but of God's involvement and care. Individuals who suffer under oppressive social conditions ask first not about God's essence or His eminence, but about His relationship to their situation. When black Christians pray for "daily bread" and "deliverance from evil" they are praying for rent money and avoidance of landlords, as much as anything else, and when in church they rise to "Sing the Mighty Power of God," they are singing more about God's personal intervention in their own situation than they are about his cosmic omnipotence. Typically, theirs is a radical dependence upon God for the necessary

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[25]Richard M. Burkey, Ethnic and Racial Groups, the Dynamics of Dominance (Menlo Park, CA: Cumings Publishing Co., 1978), pp. 427, 432.

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ingredients of life. James Cone was never more cogent than when he wrote:

> Blacks did not ask whether God existed or whether divine existence can be rationally demonstrated. Divine existence was taken for granted because God was the point of departure for their faith. The divine question which they addressed was whether or not God was with them in their struggle for liberation. Neither did blacks ask about the general status of their personal existence or that of the physical world; the brute presence of white people did not allow that sort of philosophical skepticism to enter their consciousness. Therefore, the classical philosophical debate about the priority of concepts versus things which motivated Kant and his predecessors' reflective endeavors did not interest black people. What was 'real' was the presence of oppression and the historical need to strive against it.[26]

The tendency of mainline theology to focus on metaphysics and to regard the problem of evil philosophically is not shared by black theology. Its exponents are not spectators of oppression, they and their people are its victims. They are not impersonal readers imagining a God who can feed the hungry and clothe the poor, they are the disadvantaged, the disenfranchised and the disinherited for whom the knowledge of God's love and care is a foremost principle of the God-man relationship.

But it is not simply <u>care</u> which black theology establishes as essential to their covenant with God; the issue of <u>identification</u> is equally important. Black theology believes that both the Old Testament and the New

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[26]Cone, <u>God of the Oppressed</u>, pp. 54-55.

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Testament make clear God's penchant for personal involvement with the oppressed. This is witnessed in the Old Testament by His election of the "persecuted Israelites" as His "holy people." Throughout the history of Israel, God is chiefly known via His political activity on behalf of an often weak and outnumbered people. But His Lordship was manifested not only with Israel against other nations and gods, but in His reminder to "the chosen" that awful judgments would befall those who are guilty of injustice and oppression.[27] Black theology holds that Yahweh's identification with the weak and poor throughout Israel's history is not only a condemnation of overt oppression, it is a warning against political neutrality as well.[28]

A similar view can be gleaned from the New Testament. Black theology holds the "good news of the gospel" to be as much a spur to political freedom (release from social oppression) as it is a promise of spiritual freedom (release from animosities toward God). Cone again places the matter in clear perspective when he writes:

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[27]". . . You who defraud the poor and are hard on the needy . . . As I am God . . . your day is coming, when you will be dropped out with prongs, the last of you with fish-hooks; out you go, through breaches in the walls, each of you headlong, chased to mount Hermon--by order of the Eternal." Amos 41:1-4 (Moffatt).

[28]Cone, God of the Oppressed, p. 70.

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> Because most biblical scholars are descendants of the advantaged class, it is to be expected that they would minimize Jesus' gospel of liberation for the poor by interpreting poverty as a spiritual condition unrelated to social and political phenomena. But a careful reading of the New Testament shows that the poor of whom Jesus spoke were not primarily (if at all) those who are spiritually poor as suggested in Matthew 5:3. Rather, as the Lucan tradition shows, these people are 'those who are really poor, . . . those who are really hungry, who really weep and are persecuted.' The poor are the oppressed and the afflicted, those who cannot defend themselves against the powerful.[29]

Thus, Cone concludes:

> People who want to know who God is and what he is doing must know who black people are and what they are doing. This does not mean lending a helping hand to the poor and unfortunate blacks of the society. It does not mean joining the war on poverty! Such acts are sin offerings that represent a white way of assuring themselves that they are basically a "good" people. Knowing God means being on the side of the oppressed, becoming one with them and participating in the goal of liberation. We must become black with God![30]

Another element of faith emphasized in black theology is that of corporate guilt or responsibility. Two of the most difficult terms for white Christians to appropriate, but which are highly important for black theology, are "institutional racism" and "group culpability." In the words of the Kerner Commission:

> What white Americans have never fully understood--but what the Negro can never forget is that white society is deeply involved in the ghetto. White institutions

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[29]Ibid., pp. 78-79.

[30]Cone, A Black Theology of Liberation, p. 124.

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> created it, white institutions maintain it, and white society condones it.[31]

The pietistic approach to religion that is characteristic of white Americans shields them from the thought of corporate and residual culpability. But, Herbert Gollwitzer confesses for all white theologians and their followers when he writes:

> The 'head start' we white Christians daily enjoy is due to the sins of the past and is an irreversible historical development. The sins of our fathers are still our advantage today. . . . Humankind today is still very much shaped by white racism. 'Imperialism' is not a demiurgic catch word, but a reality, and this imperialism is white.[32]

Martin Luther King, Jr., expounding on this issue, describes the case as follows:

> The classic example of organized and institutionalized racism is the union of South Africa. International policy and practice are the incarnation of the doctrine of white supremacy in the midst of a population which is overwhelmingly black. But the tragedy of South Africa is not simply its own policy; it is the fact that the racist government of South Africa is virtually made possible by the economic policies which profess to be the moral bastions of our western world.[33]

It is not that black theology ignores private or individual guilt and responsibility; rather, it adds to that

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[31]"Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders," p. 2.

[32]Herman Gollwitzer, "Why Black Theology," in Black Theology, ed. Gauraud S. Wilmore and James H. Cone (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1979), p. 156.

[33]Martin Luther King, Jr., Where Do We Go From Here? (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968), p. 173.

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traditional dimension of white theology the culpability of the masses, and demands that the oppressors and beneficiaries of oppression make restitution for past and present indignities.

Yet another crucial element in the perspective of black theology is its insistence upon concreteness. As Cone states:

> The world is not a metaphysical entity nor an ontological problem as some philosophers and theologians would have us believe; it is very concrete. It is punching clocks, taking orders, fighting rats and being kicked around by policemen. It is where the oppressed live. Jews encountered it in concentration camps, Indians on reservations, and blacks on slave ships, in cotton fields, and in 'dark' ghettos. The world is white people, the degrading rules they make for the 'under-privileged,' and their guilt-dispelling recourse to political and theological slogans about the welfare of the society 'as a whole.' In short, the world is where the brutal reality of inhumanity makes its ungodly appearance, making persons into animals.[34]

For Cone and for all the apostles of black theology, hermeneutical integrity is primarily defined by the congruence of revelation with concreteness. Thus, as Paul Lehmann has stated: "The congruence of this socio-logical reality with the biblical experience of God makes the adjective 'black' in Cone's theology a

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[34]Cone, A Black Theology of Liberation, pp. 233-234.

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socio-theological designation, not an exclusive chromatic one."[35]

Also critical to black theology's faith agenda is its regard for proleptic as opposed to apocalyptic eschatology. Proleptic eschatology, described variously as "ethics for the present" or "doing the future now," leads its adherents to value socio-political goals (proximate ends) without abandoning belief or hope in a better world. Apocalyptic eschatology is not denied, but its importance is balanced by proleptic considerations. Thus, for black theology, the Kingdom of God reveals itself through actions that prefigure its coming. The eschatological kingdom of glory is proleptically revealed in the present kingdom of grace, thereby correcting the traditional mainstream American thinking. Cone puts it this way:

> If contemplation about the future distorts the present reality of injustice and reconciles the oppressed to unjust treatment committed against them, then it is unchristian and thus has nothing whatsoever to do with him who came to liberate us. It is this that renders white talk about heaven and life after death fruitless for black people. . . . Unless the future can become present, thereby forcing us to make changes in this world, what significance could eschatology have for black people who believe that their self-determination must become a reality now. White missionaries have

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[35]Paul H. Lehmann, "Black Theology and Christian Theology," in Black Theology: A Documentary History, 1966-1979, ed. Gayraud S. Wilmore and James H. Cone (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1979), p. 156.

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> always encouraged blacks to forget about present injustice and look forward to heavenly justice. But black theology says no, insisting that we either put new meaning into Christian hope by relating it to our liberation or drop it altogether.[36]

## Black Theology and Ellen White

While it is obvious that the principles of black theology, identified above, speak relevantly to the justice aspirations of black Seventh-day Adventists, it is not given that they, or any such religious minority, can be comfortable with concepts apparently so foreign to their established theological tradition. It is surely a fact that the theological way of Adventism described in Chapter II, and the emphasis of black theology described above, are compatible in some respects and incompatible in others. Adventism, by all measure, rightly belongs to that corpus which black theology identifies as "white theology" and from which it takes considerable exception in both style and substance. However, while that cleavage is formidable, it is not irrevocable. What makes relevant conversation between the two possible is the fact that much of black theology's emphasis is mirrored in Adventism's chief authority figure--Ellen G. White--whose emphasis in many instances has not coincided with the church's prevailing thought. What must be remembered

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[36]Cone, A Black Theology of Liberation, p. 241.

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is that Ellen White was the chief theological authority in the transition from decimated Millerism to stabilized Adventism, and while she was the dominant influence in both the doctrinal and administrative development of the group, she has also served as its most outspoken critic. Her ministry was not only formative but corrective. A critical study of Adventism reveals that in many theological and social issues the functioning (real) Adventist ethic has not accurately reflected the ideal which the prophetess advocated. Thus, a negative ctitique of Adventism, by black theology, is not necessarily a negative critique of Ellen White; rather, it is often a cogent commentary of how modern Israel (to use one of Adventism's favorite self-descriptions) has repeated the tendency of ancient Israel to ignore or misappropriate the prophet's instruction.

A pointed example of White's differing from the general church in <u>theological</u> emphasis is her position with regard to the doctrine of justification by faith. White defines this important reformation theme as follows:

> What is justification by faith? It is the work of God in laying the glory of man in the dust, and doing for man that which is not in his power to do for himself. When men see their own nothingness, they are prepared to be clothed with the righteousness of Christ.[37]

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[37]Ellen G. White, <u>Review and Herald</u>, April 4, 1895.

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> By faith he (the sinner who has so grievously wronged and offended God) can bring to God the merits of Christ, and the Lord places the obedience of His Son to the sinner's account. Christ's righteousness is accepted in place of man's failure.[38]

This theme (justification by faith) did not, however, during her lifetime, became the dominant doctrinal note which the prophetess prescribed. Yet, to the end of her ministry, White firmly held to Luther's position that justification is a matter of being declared righteous (acceptable) on the grounds of a goodness which is outside the individual, not being made righteous because of imparted (inward) grace.[39]

That Mrs. White decried her people's tendency to lean toward salvation by works and away from the sola fide position of classic Protestantism is revealed in her following forthright remarks:

> There is not one in one hundred who understands for himself the Bible truth on this subject (justification by faith) that is so necessary to our present and eternal welfare.[40]

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[38]Ellen G. White, Review and Herald, November 4, 1890.

[39]Her position was then and is today, to a large degree, muted in the real Adventist world because of a traditional fear of antinomianism.

[40]Ellen G. White, Review and Herald, September 3, 1889.

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> Our churches are dying for the want of teaching on the subject of righteousness by faith in Christ, and on kindred truths.[41]
>
> As a people we have preached the law until we are as dry as the hills of Gilboa, that had neither dew nor rain. We must preach Christ in the law, and there will be sap and nourishment in the preaching that will be as food to the famishing flock of God. We must not trust in our own merits at all, but in the merits of Jesus of Nazareth.[42]

As intimated above, White's scoldings were given not because believers rejected _in toto_ the notion of justification, but rather that this emphasis was subordinated to sanctification and an overriding concern for perfectionism.

White's differences with the body politic in this and other theological regards are not more dramatic than her differences with the church's normative stance in certain _social_ issues. In spite of her conservative ecclesiology and her radical view of God's divine initiative in proximate affairs (see Chapter II), Ellen White possesses socio-theological insights which mark her as radically different from much of Acventism's sociality, past and present. It is this fact which makes meaningful dialogue with various tenents of black

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[41]Ellen G. White, _Gospel Workers_ (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Assoc., 1948), p. 301.

[42]Ellen G. White, _Review and Herald_, March 11, 1890.

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theology a hopeful quest. One is impressed, in this regard, by the fact that all four of the "elements of faith" mentioned above as special to black theology's thrust find functional acceptance in White's writings.

A prime example of the compatability between these aspects of black theology and White's system is seen in her development of the notion of God's regard for the oppressed. In speaking of God's care and concern for the down-trodden blacks of the South, she states:

> It has become fashionable to look down upon the poor, and upon the colored race in particular. But Jesus the Master, was poor, and he sympathizes with the poor, the discarded, the oppressed, and declares that every insult shown to them is as if shown to himself. I am more and more surprised as I see those who claim to be children of God possessing so little of the sympathy, tenderness, and love which activated Christ. Would that every church, North and South, were imbued with the spirit of our Lord's teaching.[43]
>
> . . . But every act of injustice, every fraudulent purpose, every pang of anguish, is written down in the books of heaven as done against Christ Jesus, who has purchased man at an infinite price. The manner in which men treat their fellowmen is registered as done unto Christ . . . .[44]

While these references are surely convincing, White's clearest delineation of Christ's identification with the suffering and oppressed is her arresting

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[43]Ellen G. White, The Southern Work (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Assoc., 1966), pp. 10-11.

[44]Ibid., p. 61.

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commentary on Matthew 25:41-46.[45] In memorable language she writes:

> Jesus here identifies himself with his suffering people. It was I who was hungry and thirsty. It was I who was a stranger. It was I who was naked. It was I who was sick. It was I who was in prison. When you were enjoying food from your bountifully spread tables, I was famishing in the hovel or street not far from you. When you closed your doors against me, while your well-furnished rooms were unoccupied, I had not where to lay my head. Your wardrobes were filled with an abundant supply of changeable suits of apparel, upon which means had been needlessly squandered, which you might have given to the needy. I was destitute of comfortable apparel. When you were enjoying health, I was sick. Misfortune cast me into prison and bound me with fetters, bowing down my spirit, depriving me of freedom and hope, while you roamed free. What a oneness Jesus here expresses as existing between himself and his suffering disciples! He makes their case His own. He identifies Himself as being in person the very Sufferer. Mark, selfish Christian: every neglect of the needy, poor, the orphan, the fatherless, is a neglect of Jesus in their person.[46]

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[45]"Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee as hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."

[46]Ellen G. White, Welfare Ministry (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Assoc., 1952), p. 40.

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White's favorite depiction of God's special concern for the oppressed blacks of America was her comparison of their plight with that of the Israelite slaves in Egypt. In one such analogy she boldly declares:

> The Lord did not wait until His people went forth and stood in triumph upon the shores of the Red Sea before He called Israel His son, but while they were under oppression, degraded, downtrodden, suffering all that the power and the invention of the Egyptians could impose to make their lives bitter and to destroy them, . . . God undertakes their cause and declares to Pharaoh, 'Israel is my Son even my first born.'
>
> God cares no less for the souls of the African race . . . than he cared for Israel.[47]

It is fair to say that some whites of the Adventist community shared Ellen White's sentiments in this regard. It was, in fact, a result of their concern and mission endeavors that many black schools and churches were begun in the South during the decades between slavery and the beginning of the twentieth century.[48] However, it is also a fact (as indexed in the comparison of Adventist

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[47]Ellen G. White, The Southern Work, p. 14.

[48]The premier example of this concern was the establishment by the church of Oakwood College in 1896. Named at that time "Oakwood Industrial School," this was the fortieth such institution begun by religious institutions in America for blacks in an era when such institutions, in Niebuhr's terms, "sprang up like mushrooms after a summer rain." The school opened its doors November 16, 1896, with four buildings, property valued at $10,157.57, four teachers and sixteen students (eight men and eight women), one of the latter being the author's maternal grandmother. S.D.A. Bible Commentary, rev. ed. (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Assoc., 1976), 10: 1018.

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social policy with national legislation (see Chapter I, pp. 43-48) that as a group the Adventist church has never fully mirrored her antipathy for injustice and oppression.

The notion of corporate guilt and responsibility is another of White's theories that is subsumed in the thrust of black theology. In language as strong as that of modern apologists of reparations, she declares:

> Who is it that held these people in servitude? Who kept them in ignorance, and pursued a course to debase and brutalize them, forcing them to disregard the law of marriage, breaking up the family relation, tearing wife from husband, and husband from wife? If the race is degraded, if they are repulsive in habits and manners, who made them so? Is there not much due to them from the white people? After so great a wrong has been done them, should not an earnest effort be made to lift them up.[49]

> The neglect of the colored race by the American nation is charged against them. Those who claim to be Christians have a work to do in teaching them to read and follow various trades and to engage in different business enterprises. Many among this race have noble traits of character and keen perception of mind. If they had an opportunity to develop, they would stand upon an equality with whites.[50]

Then, speaking in specific terms regarding the level of concern exercised by her people (the Seventh-day Adventist church), she writes:

> Much might have been accomplished by the people of America if adequate efforts in behalf of the freedmen had been put forth by the government and by the Christian churches immediately after the emancipation of the slaves. But the government, after a little

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[49]Ellen G. White, The Southern Work, pp. 14-15.

[50]Ibid., p. 44.

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> effort, left the Negro to struggle, unaided, with his burden of difficulties. Some of the strong Christian churches began a good work, but sadly failed to reach more than a comparatively few; and the Seventh-day Adventist church has failed to act its part.[51]

The other two elements of faith so fundamental to black theology mentioned above are not as readily apparent in White's writings as the categories just reviewed. Nevertheless, scrutiny reveals that they too (i.e., concreteness and proleptic vis-a-vis apocalyptic eschatology) are fundamental to her thought. White's concern for concreteness is demonstrated in two ways. First of all, she refused to identify with mainline American Christianity's penchant for engaging abstract themes to the exclusion of attention to the historical situation of the human agent. In spite of the fact that she witnessed Christianity's radical swing to transcendent concerns in the wake of its reaction to the social gospel, she maintained a keen sense of sociological awareness. Her steady involvement in the "real" world of human endeavor gives her a posture in matters of theological conception that is much closer to that of James Cone than Karl Barth. Among the real world issues of her time with which White grappled were: 1) slavery, 2) the civil war, 3) the reconstruction, 4) woman suffrage, 5) prohibition, 6) child labor

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[51]Ellen G. White, Testimonies to the Church, 9:205.

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practices, 7) the Darwinian evolutionism, and 8) the urbanization of America and its concomitant evils of esclating tensions between capital and labor, abuses by the rich, human misery in crowded, unsanitary ghettos, and the disintegration of traditional family mores. Not only was she occupied with these concrete realities, she insisted upon addressing these issues in ways that were realistic for her time and situation. It is this latter penchant which has been, at once, black Adventism's chief steepest hurdle to acceptance of her writings and white Adventism's chief stumbling block to enlightened social policy.

The former problem stems from the fact that her realism caused her, at the turn of the century, to revert from her positive posture toward integrated fellowship to a radically negative (conservative) position. In earlier times she had admonished concerning the association of the races:

> Let the worker give them an example by associating with them and by revealing the virtues of Christ Jesus. They need to be brought into contact with cultivated minds, to come into association with those whose hearts are softened and subdued by the Holy Spirit. They are imitative, and will catch up pure sentiments, and be influenced by elevated aspirations. A new taste will thus be created, and elevated desires will spring up for things that are of good report, pure, honest, and lovely. But if the colored people are left in their present condition, and do not have presented before them a higher standard of Christianity than they now have, their ideas will

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become more and more confused, and their religious worship more and more demoralized.[52]

However, seeing the reactionary mood of the nation during the decade of the 1890s, White reversed her position dramatically. Noting that Plesy versus Ferguson--Separate but Equal Decision of 1896, the widespread acceptance of such literary works as Thomas Carol's The Negro a Beast, and the increased number of lynchings and stonings of blacks in the South (as many as 367 in 1892 alone), she wrote:

> The whites who have oppressed the colored people still have the same spirit. They did not lose it, although they were conquered at war. They are determined to make it appear that blacks were better off in slavery than since they were set free. Any provocation from the blacks is met with the greatest cruelty. The field is one that needs to be worked with the greatest discretion. Any mingling of the white people with the colored people, as sleeping in their houses or showing them friendship as would be shown by the whites to those of their own color, is exasperating to the white people of the south.[53]
>
> So far as possible, everything that would stir up the race prejudice of the white people should be avoided.[54]
>
> At the least provocation the position of prejudice is ready to show its true character . . . . Outbreaks

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[52]Ellen G. White, The Southern Work, pp. 33-34. See above, Chapter I, pp. 41-44, for other references of this nature.

[53]Ibid., p. 83.

[54]Ellen G. White; Testimonies for the Church, 9:214.

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> will come at any moment, and all unexpectedly, and there will be destruction of property and even of life itself.[55]

The obstacle for blacks mentioned above is the need to see these statements as justifiable realism, not accommodation or capitulation to social pressures; and to remember that Ellen White was consistent in advocating "doing good" in the ways that did not destroy or vitiate the possibilities of greater future good.[56] The challenge for whites, in this regard, is the need to remember that this counsel comprises a temporary posture and not permanent policy, and that she qualified her instruction regarding racial separation by sanctioning this strategy ". . . until the Lord shows us a better way" (see Chapter I, p. 45). That the overthrow of America's segregationist laws

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[55]Ellen G. White, The Southern Work, p.86.

[56]Even in so fundamental an activity as promulgation of the Sabbath truth, White advised caution and reserved tactics where prejudice against that doctrine would erect insurmountable barriers to success. This was a general principle of White's evangelistic thrust. Applied specifically to the work among the blacks, it is stated as: "Nothing can be done at first in making the Sabbath question prominent, and if the colored pecple are in any way educated to work on Sunday, there will be unsparing, merciless oppression brought upon them. . . . those who are bitter against the law of God, trampling it under their feet, are all the more earnest to make human laws a power. Their religious prejudice and bigotry would lead them to do any act of violence, verily thinking they were doing God's service. . . . A blind zeal under false religious theories is the most violent and merciless." Ellen G. White, The Southern Work, p. 74.

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and the liberalizing of the country's social atmosphere are ample evidence of the possibilities of a "better way" should be abundantly apparent. Paradoxically, a common challenge for both whites and blacks, in the Adventist church, is not to regard Ellen White's category of a "better way" as a mandate for massive racial integration; that too would be an unrealistic approach to America's foremost social reality. It is rather a challenge to mutuality, cordiality, and the genuine concern of Christians who, while maintaining their individuality, foster a spiritual unity in spite of cultural or ethnic diversity.

The second way in which White's regard for the concrete or historical situation is demonstrated is via her presentation of Christ as God's personal breakthrough into the everyday situation of humanity.[57] The point of departure for this notion in White's system is her incarnation theory. For her the incarnation is the foremost tenet of the gospel. She writes:

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[57]"Heaven and earth are no wider apart today than when shepherds listened to the angels' song. Humanity is still as much the object of heaven's solicitude as when common men of common occupations met angels at noonday, and talked with the heavenly messengers in the vineyards and the fields. To us in the common walks of life, heaven may be very near." Ellen G. White, The Desire of Ages (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Assoc., 1898), p. 48.

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> When we want a deep problem of study, let us fix our minds on the most marvelous thing that ever took place in earth or heaven--the incarnation of the Son of God.[58]

> Christ did not make-believe take human nature; he did verily take it. He did in reality possess human nature . . . . He was the Son of God; He was seed of David according to human descent. He is declared to be a Man, even the Man Christ Jesus.[59]

Then, standing squarely in the tradition of Chalcedon, she wrote:

> He clothed His divinity with humanity . . . wonderous combination of God and man! . . . A divine-human Saviour, He came to stand at the head of the fallen race, to share in their experience from childhood to manhood. Christ had not exchanged His divinity for humanity; but He had clothed His divinity in humanity.[60]

For White the breakthrough of transcendence into humanity accomplished two primary purposes. First, it provided humanity a living, tangible view of God's character of love, and secondly, it provided God a live acquaintance with human woes in the trenches of their daily experience. For her, then, as with Bonhoeffer, salvation was accomplished not on the periphery, but in the middle or the midst of human reality. Her language is:

> God commanded Moses for Israel, 'Let them make Me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them (Ex. 25;8), and He abode in the sanctuary, in the midst of His

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[58]Ellen G. White, Testimonies for the Church, 7:904.

[59]S.D.A. Bible Commentary, 5:1130.

[60]Ibid., pp. 1126-1128.

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> people. Through all their weary wandering in the desert, the symbol of His presence was with them. So Christ set up His tabernacle in the midst of our human encampment. He pitched His tent by the side of the tents of men, that He might dwell among us.[61]
>
> It was Satan's purpose to bring about an eternal separation between God and man; but in Christ we become more closely united to God than if we had never fallen. In taking our nature, the Saviour has bound Himself to humanity by a tie that is never to be broken.[62]
>
> Christ is the ladder that Jacob saw, the base resting upon the earth, and the topmost round reaching to the gate of heaven, to the very threshold of glory. If that ladder had failed by a single step of reaching the earth, we should have been lost. But Christ reaches us where we are.[63]

For White, who sees Christ "tabernacled" in our encampment, He is no less an immediate Lord than for Cone who sees Him crucified ". . . not on an altar between two candles, but on a cross between two thieves."[64]

The final element of black theology's special emphasis mentioned above, "the triumph of proleptic vis-a-vis apocalyptic eschatology," is also at work in the system of Ellen White. Her concern that activity in the "here and now" be illumined by the principles of the realm beyond the eschaton is clear. Some of her more choice statements in this regard are:

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[61]Ellen G. White, The Desire of Ages, p. 23.

[62]Ibid., p. 25.

[63]Ibid., p. 311.

[64]Cone, Black Theology and Black Power, p. 66.

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> Heaven is to begin on this earth. When the Lord's people are filled with meekness and tenderness, they will realize that His banner over them is love, and His fruit will be sweet to their taste. They will make a heaven below in which to prepare for heaven above.[65]
>
> . . . Those who are accepted at last as members of the heavenly court, will be men and women who here on earth sought to carry out the Lord's will in every particular, who sought to put the impress of heaven upon their earthly labors.[66]
>
> We must now, by diligent, self-sacrificing effort, endeavor to walk in the love of Christ, in the unity of the spirit, through sanctification of the truth. No half-way work will suffice to fulfill the representation given in prayer of Christ. We are to practice the principles of heaven here below.[67]

While these references make it clear that Ellen White did, in fact, heartily embrace the concept of "doing the future now," her concern in this regard surfaces most clearly in her theory of the contrasting, but complimentary kingdoms of Grace and Glory. In writing concerning the apocalyptic events of Matthew 24:31, 32, White remarks:

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[65]Ellen G. White, Testimonies for the Church, 7:131.

[66]Ellen G. White, Counsels to Parents and Teachers (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Assoc., 1913), p. 58.

[67]Ellen G. White, Testimonies for the Church, 9:197.

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> The throne of glory represents the kingdom of glory . . . . This kingdom is yet future. It is not to be set up until the second advent of Christ.[68]

In the same reference, however, White contrasts the eschatological kingdom of glory with the present kingdom of grace. Her remarks in elucidating upon Hebrews 4:15, 16, are pointed.[69] She states:

> The kingdom of grace is here brought to view by Paul in the epistle to the Hebrews. After pointing to Christ the compassionate intercessor who is 'touched with the feeling of our infirmity,' the apostle says: 'let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may find mercy, and find grace.' . . .[70]

> The throne of grace represents the kingdom of grace; for the existence of a throne implies the existence of a kingdom. In many of His parables, Christ uses the expression 'the kingdom of heaven' to designate the work of grace upon the hearts of men.[71]

The doctrine of the two kingdoms occupies an important part of White's theology. It is perhaps her most comprehensive view of the Christian's dual citizenship. By this typology she not only structures a vivid picture of the interrelatedness of the eschatological with the

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[68]E. G. White, The Great Controversy (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Assoc., 1888), p. 347.

[69]"For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

[70]E . G. White, The Great Controversy, p. 347.

[71]Ibid., p. 344.

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historical, but demonstrates in lucid terminology the basis of moral obligation and the nature of its judgments. White does this in part in her treatment of the kingdom parable of Luke 12. Here she makes it clear that Christ's followers are kingdom agents whose function in the realm of grace is vital to the success of His cause. Her view is:

> Our Saviour represents himself as a man taking his journey in a far country, who left his house in charge of chosen servants giving to every man his work. Every Christian has something to do in the service of his master. We are not to seek our own ease or convenience, but rather to make the up-building of of Christ's kingdom our first consideration.[72]

What constitutes the up-building of the kingdom? One of her more arresting answers is:

> When He sent forth the twelve, He said, 'As ye so preach, saying, the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils, freely ye have received, freely give.' Matt. 10:7, 8. They were not to settle the temporal affairs of the people. Their work was to persuade men to be reconciled to God. In this work lay their power to bless humanity. The only remedy for the sins and sorrows of men is Christ. The gospel of grace alone can cure the evils that cures society. The injustice of the rich toward the poor, the hatred of the poor toward the rich alike have their root in selfishness, and this can be eradicated only through submission to Christ.[73]

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[72]Ellen G. White, Testimonies for the Church, 5:182.

[73]E. G. White, Christ's Object Lessons (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Assoc., 1900), p. 254.

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This commentary (a part of White's elucidation upon the parable of the rich fool of Luke 12) leaves her open to the charge of reliance upon the "miracle motif" referenced in Chapter II. That, of course, has been identified as a principle often negative or dysfunctional to the struggle for social freedom. However, while it cannot be denied that White viewed the entrance of scripture into the heart and a subsequent conversion experience as the ultimate answer to the woes of human society, her concept of the kingdom citizenship is balanced by other remarks that forever refute any view of her ethics as unsuited for practical agency. Thus, she was able to state:

> Human agencies are the hands of heavenly instrumentalities; for heavenly angels employ human hands in practical ministry.
>
> . . . The knowledge and activity of the heavenly workers, united with the knowledge and power that are imparted to human agencies, bring relief to the oppressed and distressed.[74]

Perhaps the most penetrating notion emanating from White's doctrine of the kingdoms is her category of stewardship. This concept, as much as any other, undergirds and typifies her approach to moral agency and is one of her distinctive contributions to ethical theory. Through the symbol of stewardship, White is able to demonstrate

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[74]Ellen G. White, Testimonies for the Church, 6:456, 457. (Emphasis mine.)

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principles of obligation that relate divine commission to human responsibility without becoming either humanistic or other-worldly. The practical balance to agency which this understanding provides is surfaced in the following:

> All the good things we have are on loan from our Saviour. He has made us stewards. . . . The interest and propriety of Christ's kingdom should be paramount to every other consideration.[75]

> We are but stewards, and on the discharge of our obligation to God and man depend both the welfare of our fellow beings and our own destiny for this life and for the life to come.[76]

But then, White was also very specific in applying the principle of stewardship to service to blacks in particular. Her description of the pitable state of the majority of blacks in her day was typically candid but unoffensive. One of her more forthright statements is:

> Those who are indifferent to the wants of the needy will be counted unfaithful stewards, and will be registered as enemies of God and man. . . . Instead of closing our eyes and senses to the wants of those who have nothing, instead of adding more and more facilities to those that are already abundant, let us seek to see what we can do to relieve the distresses of the poor, bruised souls of the colored people.[77]

About the same time that Ellen White was utilizing the stewardship concept in behalf of the "coloreds"

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[75]Ibid., 3:397.

[76]E. G. White, Education (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Assoc., 1903), p. 139.

[77]E. G. White, The Southern Work, p. 38.

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of her day, the Atlanta Constitution, May 17, 1907, editorialized on the same subject:

> We do not grudge one cent of the millions of dollars that have been poured into the evangelization of Asia and Africa. But if the Presbyterian Church, and it is only an example of the other churches, views the call of the Master with such keen conscientiousness as it applies to the Buddhists of China and the fetish worshipers of Africa, what account shall they give of their spiritual stewardship to the millions of half-Christian, half-savage, half-man, half-child Negroes in America, whose lack of true religious training is building up for the nation a problem of tragic potentialities? The heathen over seas? Yes! Let us strain every nerve in their conversion. What about the half-heathen nearer home?[78]

When one compares this language with White's comments above, it is obvious that while she was not singular in applying the stewardship concept to relief for blacks, her approach demonstrates not only moral sympathy but keen journalistic sensitivity as well.

Perhaps the most substantive difference between the philosophy of Ellen White and that of black theology is that while White identifies closely with the causes of the oppressed, she is not militant with respect to social change. Unlike black theology, White has no category of direct intervention in the affairs of political structures. Her warning is:

> The govenment under which Jesus lived was corrupt and oppressive; on every hand were crying abuses,--extortion, intolerance, and grinding cruelty. Yet the

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[78]Editorial in Atlanta Constitution, May 17, 1907.

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> Saviour attempted no civil reforms. He attacked no national abuses, nor condemned the national enemies. He did not interfere with the authority or administration of those in power. He who was our example kept aloof from earthly governments. Not because He was indifferent to the woes of men, but because the remedy did not lie in merely human and external measures. To be efficient, the cure must reach men individually, and must regenerate the heart.[79]

While the above is typical of her counsel in such matters, it cannot be forgotten that Ellen White provided a number of suggestions for government reform or betterment. One was her encouragement to vote for worthy candidates and legislation.[80] Another was her approval of active membership in legislative bodies at the state and national levels.[81] Yet another was her advice that unjust laws not be obeyed, the consequences notwithstanding. Her public defiance of the Fugitive Slave Law illustrates this point.[82]

Further demonstration of her willingness to defy the laws of the land in matters of conscience is her

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[79]E. G. White, The Desire of Ages, p. 509.

[80]E. G. White, Temperance, p. 253.

[81]E. G. White, Messages to Young People (Nashville: Southern Publishing Assoc., 1930), p. 36.

[82]See above, Chapter II, pp. 62-63. White's civil disobedience stance was, for her time, highly controversial and suggests for her system an element of radicalism not always apparent to the casual observer. On the other hand, one should not be surprised that the female leader of a male-dominated church in a male-oriented society would be capable of extreme independence of thought and action.

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statement regarding the relationship of government to divine injunction. After extolling the German princes of the Diet of Spires (1529) for their position that "in matters of conscience the majority has no power," White writes:

> This principle we in our day are firmly to maintain. The banner of truth and religious liberty held aloft by the founders of the gospel church and by God's witnesses during the centuries that have passed since then, has, in this last conflict, been committed to our hands. . . . We are to recognize human government as an ordinance of divine appointment, and teach obedience to it as a sacred duty, within its legitimate sphere. But when its claims conflict with the claims of God, we must obey God rather than men. God's word must be recognized as above all human legislation.[83]

While all of the above makes it possible to classify White more in the tradition of the left wing of the Reformation than with the establishment theologians, she should not be thought of as a political theologian. Given time, her principle of regard for the oppressed might have issued in more militant strategies. However, the tenor of her faith and the realities of her times limited her, for the most part, to welfare efforts vis-a-vis political action.[84]

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[83]E. G. White, The Acts of the Apostles (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Assoc., 1911), p. 69.

[84]That, too, should not be surprising, for the black church, itself, was not yet drawing the kind of social action implications which black theology now provides.

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White's initiation of programs of education, health, and family betterment has greatly assisted in the development of self-determination and individual sufficiency of black Seventh-day Adventists. But her welfare motif should not be thought of as mutually exclusive to political hermeneutics or as an alternative to social activism. It should, rather, be regarded as a dynamic principle or emerging event upon which an enlightened leadership might build even more effective ways of service to humanity.

Through the foregoing discussion, it may be demonstrated that in principle as well as practice, black theology has meaningful kinship with the ethics of Ellen White. To say that they are in majority agreement in matters of substance and style would not be true, but to say they contain a number of tenets mutually supportive is to make a distinction which is not only true but vital for black Adventist leadership's willingness to accept the good which it (black theology) offers. The discovery by black Adventist leadership that black theology is substantively compatible with their peculiar mission could very well initiate, for them, new and creative reflection. Such an endeavor grounded in the broader understanding of White's writings, illumined by socio-religious principles of black theology and true to the needs of black

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experience, would be an invaluable step toward their psychological and political freedom.

What would be the guiding principle for such a formulation? To begin with, while both of the lodestars of contemporary black theology (liberation and reconciliation) hold attractive potential, neither for reasons that will follow, is independently acceptable for such an enterprise.

## Guiding Principles for an Adventist Political Hermeneutic

### Liberation

As the sin of white theology is the perpetuation of political (social) oppression by its appropriation of revelation in ways that exclude the black experience, the danger for black theology is that, guided by the spirit of black power, it will make black political (social) feeedom the end of all theological endeavor.[85] This particularistic tendency is observed in Cone's appropriation of liberation as the organizing principle of black theology. One of his clearest statements in this regard is:

> Black theology takes the risk of faith and thus makes an unqualified identification of God's revelation with the liberation of black people. There can be no other

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[85]Another black theologian whose formulations have stimulated controversy, even among black Christians, is Albert Cleage, whose Black Messiah teachings are generally regarded as the extreme formulation of the militant position.

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> medium of encountering the contemporary revelatory event of God in this society.[86]

It is because Cone sees liberation as not only consistent with the gospel, but as the gospel itself, that one has difficulty seeing in his method anything other than a concern for black political freedom.[87] By overlooking that aspect of liberation that has to do with personal victory over temptation, or with individual spiritual growth, Cone leaves the impression ". . . that if the day ever came when blacks were totally liberated from the oppressive deeds of whites, the kingdom of God would be at hand."[88]

Cecil Cone, in criticizing this use of liberation as the overriding principle of black theology, correctly observes:

> The tension in Cone's Black Theology, therefore, is located in its identification with the Black Power movement. While the motif of this movement may be part of an appropriate analysis of black religion at certain points, it cannot serve as the point of departure. Because Cone used Black Power as the point of departure for his theological analysis of black religion, he was unable to grasp its essence. He

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[86]James H. Cone, A Black Theology of Liberation, p. 66.

[87]Ibid., p. 17.

[88]"The Basic Theological Position of the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc., Pt. 1," in Black Theology, ed. Gayraud S. Wilmore and James H. Cone (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1979), p. 260.

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> wrongly perceived black religion to be primarily political activity as found in Stokely Carmichael and Rap Brown.[89]

Insofar as Cone makes liberation an essential consequence of activities of freedom, he gives blacks a helpful guide for their struggle. But insofar as he makes black liberation the central motif of revelation and praxis, he provides the enemies of black theology with justifiable reason to accuse him of imbalance. Nevertheless, when one recalls how social experience influences theological thought, it is understandable that political freedom emerges as as dominant theme in the theology of the oppressed. Furthermore, while a theology which gives radical emphasis to political freedom is clearly vulnerable to questions regarding ultimate salvation, this same theology is unquestionably salvific in terms of the immediate concerns of the oppressed.

## Reconciliation

Rivaling the liberation motif of James Cone as black theology's guiding principle is the reconciliation theme of Deotis Roberts. Roberts leaves no doubt regarding his reliance upon this theme when he states:

> Christians are called to be agents of reconciliation. We have been able to love and forgive. . . . The

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[89]Cecil Cone, The Identity Crisis in Black Theology (Nashville: Westminster Press, 1971, p. 101.

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> assertion that all are 'one in Christ Jesus' must henceforth mean that all slave-master, servant-boss, inferior-superior frames of reference between blacks and whites have been abolished.[90]
>
> To many blacks, reconciliation will come as harsh judgment. [However] the black theologian's role is that of prophet. . . . His message will often be unwelcome by blacks as well as whites. But insofar as he speaks the Christian message in the area of race, he will need to speak of reconciliation and liberation.[91]

Roberts does not reject liberation as a major premise of black theology, but views it as a movement that is preliminary to reconciliation. What he fears most is alienation from whites, and what he hopes for is not just peaceful coexistence (a state which Cone sees as highly unlikely), but healing and meaningful communication. For Roberts, Christ is at once Liberator and Reconciler. Consequently, he articulates for black theology a universalism that denies even the quasi-independence or separatism implied by Cone and the Black Power advocates.

One notes, with interest, the manner in which Cone and Roberts chide each other regarding their respective points of view. Roberts charges Cone with narrowness of thought and accuses him of overlooking reconciliation

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[90]Deotis Roberts, Liberation and Reconciliation, A Black Theology (Nashville: Westminster Press, 1971), p. 72.

[91]Ibid., pp. 21-22.

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altogether in an effort to extol economic and political freedom (liberation). Cone, on the other hand, charges that by making reconciliations a central theme in black theology, Roberts distorts its Christian meaning and "opens the door not only for white people to be oppressors and Christians at the same time, but also for them to participate in black liberation and to set the terms of our reconciliation with them." Cone summarizes his views on the matter:

> Thus, it is absurd to talk about a reconciliation to people who are determined to separate from us for the purpose of oppression . . . all talk about reconciliation with white oppressors, with mutual dialogue about its meaning, has no place in black power or black theology.[92]

Thus, Cone, who is excessive in his making liberation tantamount to salvation, is perceptive in recognizing that the concrete situation of blacks does not allow for a primary emphasis on intercommunication with whites. Reconciliation (as liberation) is a compatible constituent of freedom. However, considering the social distance between whites and blacks, it must be regarded more as an abstract condition or a state of heart than an active social reality.

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[92]James H. Cone, God of the Oppressed, p. 241.

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## Restoration

My own view is that the weaknesses of liberation and reconciliation as guiding principles for the enterprises of black theology suggest the need for a third or companion element.[93]

The principle which avoids the shortcomings of both liberation and reconciliation, while providing for black theology positive virtues of its own, is that of restoration. The primary New Testament words for this term are: 1) "palingenesia," meaning regeneration of making all things new (Matthew 19:28); and 2) "apokatastasis," meaning a) restitution (Acts 3:21) and b) reclamation (Acts 1:6).[94]

The notion of restoration as the essence of God's plan of salvation is described imaginatively in the writings of Ellen White (see Appendix 17). Among her more comprehensive statements are:

> The dominion that once was Adam's, passed to the usurper. But the Son of God proposed to come to this earth to pay the penalty of sin, and thus not only redeem man, but recover the dominion forfeited. It is this restoration that Micah prophesied when he

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[93]Liberation suffers from particularism in its social focus, and hence a restriction of social goals. Reconciliation suffers from universalism of social outreach, and hence a lack of realism.

[94]The latter word, "apokatastasis," also finds expression in a number of Christ's healing experiences (e.g., Matthew 17:11 and Mark 9:12).

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> said, 'O Tower of the flock, the stronghold of the daughter of Zion, unto Thee shall it come, even the first dominion.' The apostle Paul has referred to it as 'the redemption of the purchased possession.' And the psalmist had in mind the same final restoration of man's original inheritance when he declared, 'The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein forever.'[95]

Again, in another of her works, she states:

> In the beginning, God created man in his own likeness. He endowed him with noble qualities; his mind was well-balanced and all the powers of his being were harmonious, but the fall and its effects have perverted these gifts. Sin has marred and well-nigh obliterated the image of God in man. It was to restore this that the plan of salvation was devised, and a life of probation granted to man. To bring him back to the perfection in which he was first created is the great object of life,--the object that underlies every other.[96]

As a conceptual framework for black theology, restoration gives ultimate meaning to one's understanding of the character and will of God as well as the nature and destiny of the human being. That vision, in turn, requires that the believer's actions (projects) be consistent with God's purposes. Those projects, viewed as the agent's efforts to cooperate with God in the regeneration or rebuilding of humanity, involve social as well as spiritual concerns. Thus, for the notion of restoration, the socio-political realm is as legitimate a sphere for

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[95]Ellen G. White, Prophets and Kings (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Assoc., 1917), p. 682.

[96]Ellen G. White, Patriarchs and Prophets (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Assoc., 1913), p. 595.

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activity as is the religious. In fact, while restoration perceives the difference between political activity and spiritual worship, it regards the former as much a sacrament as the latter. For its devotees, Ellen White's belief that "the very essence of the gospel is restoration . . ." is as much a challenge to human action as it is a pronouncement to heavenly concern. White's choicest expressions in this regard are:

> Our religious faith must not be only theoretical, but practical. Pure and undefiled religion will not allow us to trample upon the rights of the least of God's creatures. . . ."[97]

> The Lord Jesus demands our acknowledgment of the rights of every man. Men's social rights, and their rights as Christians, are to be taken into consideration. All are to be treated with refinement and delicacy, as the sons and daughters of God.[98]

> God has not singled out a few men for His favor, and left others uncared for. He will not lift up one, and cast down and oppress another. All who are truly converted will manifest the same spirit. They will treat their fellow-men as they would treat Christ. No one will ignore the rights of another.[99]

Such a working dictum of the principle of restoration holds great promise for the humanitarian projects of Christian stewardship. It focuses relevantly upon the concrete situation of the human condition and challenges

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[97]Ellen G. White, Testimonies for the Church, 3:528.

[98]Ellen G. White, Gospel Workers, p. 123.

[99]Ellen G. White, Testimonies for the Church, 7:209.

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all who would dare to action which is both comforting and redemptive. Furthermore, restoration thus conceived pursues its political (social) ends without being destructive to another's essential being. It avoids the imbalance of Cone's "whatever means at their disposal," by establishing the dictum of "every means consistent with human growth and development." It gladly effects reconciliation (meaningful inter-communication) whenever it is possible, but it also views liberation as a social imperative. However, it regards both of these activities as way-stations beyond which it must carry the enterprise of the rebuilding of humanity.

To be liberated, in a social sense, is to live under circumstances where equality, access, and opportunity are a reality, but it is not given that those who are thus free will freely pursue the ends which liberation provides. Restoration, on the other hand, implies not only access, etc., but the dynamics for growth as well. Reconciliation is closer to restoration than liberation, but suffers the likelihood of interpretations which render social tranquility, not human transformation, as its goal. The strength of restoration's concern for wholeness is reflected in the following view of Major C. Jones:

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> Looking at what man ought to be under God, looking at man realistically as he so often has become through sin, Reinhold Niebuhr was right in asserting that 'Christianity measures the status of man more highly and his virtue more severely than any other alternative view."
>
> Such a theological view of man is but an affirmation of man's capacity and striving for wholeness and for harmony with nature, with his fellows, and with God. Indeed, these biblical and theological concepts imply further that the struggle for such wholeness and harmony is an integral part of the divine creative process.[100]

My own summary of the way in which liberation, reconciliation and restoration compare as guides for moral agency is provided in Table 6.

Succinctly stated, that which recommends restoration as a superior principle is its consistency as both a theological source and a social project. As source, it is unquestionably faithful to the overriding theme of scripture; e.g., God's designs for bringing a lost creation back to its original state; and as project it provides the agent with a task which is at once true to God's ultimate purposes for humankind and relevant to humanity's proximate (social) needs.

Since restoration is accomplished wherever liberation and reconciliation are functional, it may be said that restoration is already implicit in black theology

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[100]Jones, Christian Ethics for Black Theology, p. 31.

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TABLE 6

GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR MORAL AGENCY

| | Liberation | Reconciliation | Restoration |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Level of dialogue | agent with social systems | agent with fellow agents | agent with God |
| 2. Point of departure | black community | universal community | primordial community |
| 3. Proximate concern | social freedom | inter-communication | human growth and development |
| 4. Ultimate concern | human dignity | human relations | human salvation |
| 5. Ultimate effect (final cause) | social justice | social tranquility | human transformation |

and that our discussion is at least the beginning of an attempt to make that relationship more obvious. Similarly, since restoration, rightly conceived, accommodates both liberation and reconciliation, these principles may be viewed as historically implicit in Adventist thought. However, the concerns for justice among black Adventists demand more than an implied expression of these notions. Minority freedom requires their explicit knowledge and enactment. It is here that black theology makes its unique contribution toward solving the dilemma of black Adventist leadership. It provides for them a relevant hermeneutic, a theology which speaks meaningfully to their position of twoness; and it does so through principles which are consistent with their historic scriptural perspective. Thus, black theology allows black Adventists to be psychologically black and philosophically Adventist, at the same time. It accommodates their need to genuinely believe and effectively protest, and to be comfortable doing both. It permits them to be different while being loyal; to be realistic about their social situation while remaining true to their doctrinal persuasion.

As we have observed, a political hermeneutic can develop only at the intersection of social experience and revelation. However, because black Adventists really believed (and generally still believe) that "the coming King

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is at the door," they have not been inclined to long-term efforts of critical Biblical scholarship--the kind that equips one for organized interpretation of revelation. Consequently, black Adventists have no historical tradition for the quality of theological reflection that is productive of an identifiable hermeneutic.[101] The problem at this level is circular: black social experience evinces an other-worldly emphasis; an other-worldly emphasis tends to mute interest in long-term scholastic endeavors; an absence of long-range scholastic endeavors obviates hermeneutical development; the lack of an authentic hermeneutic (one that is true to social reality) forces acceptance of the advantaged's word--a word unsuited for the requirements of self-determination hence true freedom.[102]

Thus, an important part of the solution to the dilemma of black Adventist leadership is the conscious development of its own scholarship. Although black leaders cannot all be scholars (in the technical sense of the word), they can "grow their own." They can

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[101]It is still fashionable for some black leaders to disdainfully refer to the Adventist Seminary at Andrews University (Berrien Springs, MI) as the "Adventist Cemetery."

[102]Political hermeneutics reflects the new situation of God in the inhumane situations of men, in order to break down the hierarchical relationships, which deprive them of self-determination, and to help to develop their humanity. J. Moltmann, The Crucified God (New York: Harper and Row, 1974), p. 133.

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select, support, and encourage young men and women who, while believing authentically, will learn broadly and become productive interpreters of revelation. Meanwhile, guided by the principle of restoration, leadership would do well to adopt the outlook which black theology has already established, and hope in time to add to that corpus meaningful contributions from their own rich doctrinal background. They should do so not because they envision the Adventist church becoming an ideal social society, but because they know it is important that freedom be pursued even in a society likely to remain imperfect. To such Christian revolutionaries the words of H. Richard Niebuhr, in describing the redemptive effort of "homo faber," would seem most encouraging:

> Salvation comes with the restoration of the vision of God to man, and the reflected image of God in him. It is less the establishment of innocence from transgression than the granting to the self of ability to move again toward perfection, toward the actualization of the power by which it is enabled to see God and to live in his likeness. Salvation is the restoration of the goal that had been lost and so also the healing of the diseased powers.[103]

Such an outlook on the part of a group so long peripheral with regard to the freedom endeavors of the general black population would speak dramatically not only

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[103]H. Richard Niebuhr, The Responsible Self (New York: Harper and Row, 1963), p. 133.

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to similar religious minorities, but to all loyalists in pursuit of justice.

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# APPENDICES

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APPENDIX 1

FACTS ABOUT SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

1. Membership

| | |
|---|---|
| Baptized adult church members (June 30, 1981) | 3,563,879 |
| Organzied churches | 21,155 |
| Sabbath school members | 3,480,518 |
| Sabbath schools | 41,906 |
| Ordained ministers (active) | 9,423 |
| Full-time salaried workers | 92,212 |

2. Educational Program

| | |
|---|---|
| Total denominational schools | 4,731 |
| Current value: educational institutions (1979) | $561,017,741 |
| Total enrollment | 476,703 |
| Schools above elementary level | 882 |
| Academies (high schools in North America) | 87 |
| Colleges in North America | 10 |
| Universities | 2 |
| International correspondence school | 1 |

3. Mission Work

| | |
|---|---|
| Nations in which church had organized work (total world nations defined by United Nations--218) | 190 |
| Languages in which church works | 582 |
| Publishing houses | 50 |
| Languages in which church publishes | 182 |
| New missionaries sent outside Home Division last year | 356 |
| World Mission funds received | $40,603,272 |



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4. Broadcast Outreach

| | |
|---|---|
| Stations airing Adventist programs weekly | 3,328 |
| Bible correspondence schools | 130 |

5. Good-Neighbor Program

| | |
|---|---|
| Persons helped | 11,310,297 |
| Number of articles of clothing given | 18,741,246 |
| Hours of work contributed by laymen | 16,597,267 |
| Cash and value of goods given to needy | $20,696,083 |

6. Contributions

| | |
|---|---|
| Total church offerings in world | $630,634,939 |
| Tithe (one-tenth of personal income) | $392,394,117 |
| Total offerings in North America | $425,437,661 |

7. Health-Care Ministry

| | |
|---|---|
| Hospitals and sanitariums | 153 |
| Dispensaries and clinics | 266 |
| Nursing homes and retirement centers | 75 |
| Physicians (residents, interns), dentists | 2,179 |
| Investment in health-care facilities (1979) | $898,860,777 |
| Patients treated | 6,668,544 |

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Note: Latest available figures (1980) are for the world unless otherwise indicated.

Source: A Quick Look at Seventh-day Adventists, Department of Communication, General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 6840 Eastern Avenue. N.W., Washington, DC 20012.

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## APPENDIX 2

### THE EXCLUSIVIST-ECUMENICAL GRADIENT[1]

(Black Muslims*)
Jehovah's Witnesses
Evangelicals and Pentecostals
(Orthodox Jews*)
Churches of Christ
Latter-day Saints (Mormons)
Seventh-day Adventists
Church of God
Church of Christ, Scientist
Southern Baptist Convention
Lutheral Church--Missouri Synod
American Lutheran Church
Roman Catholic Church
(Conservative Jews*)
Russian Orthodox
Greek Orthodox
Lutheran Church in America
Southern Presbyterian Church
Reformed Church in America
Episcopal Church
American Baptist Convention
United Presbyterian Church
United Methodist Church
United Church of Christ
(Reform Jews*)
Ethical Culture Society
Unitarian-Universalists

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[1]Dean M. Kelley, Why Conservative Churches are Growing: A Study in Sociology of Religion (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 19720, p. 89 (*indicates non-dominational).



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APPENDIX 3

ORGANIZATION OF BLACK LOCAL CONFERENCES

| Name | Date of Organization | State | Headquarters |
|---|---|---|---|
| Lake Region | 10/44 | IL<br>WI<br>MI<br>IN<br>MN | Chicago, IL |
| Allegheny[a] | 12/44 | DE<br>NJ<br>PA<br>OH<br>VA<br>WV<br>MD<br>DC | Pine Forge, PA |
| Northeastern | 10/44 | VT<br>ME<br>NH<br>NY<br>CT<br>MA<br>RI | New York, NY |
| South Atlantic[b] | 12/44 | FL<br>GA<br>NC<br>SC | Atlanta, GA |
| South Central | 12/45 | MS<br>TN<br>AS<br>KY | Nashville, TN |



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Table--Continued

| Name | Date of Organization | State | Headquarters |
|---|---|---|---|
| Southwest | '50 | TX<br>LA<br>NM<br>OK<br>AR | Dallas, TX |
| Central States | '52 | NB<br>MO<br>KS<br>IA<br>WY<br>CO | Kansas City, MO |

[a]Allegheny Conference divided into East and West in 1958. East maintains its headquarters in Pine Forge, Pennsylvania, and serves the District of Columbia, Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, and parts of Pennsylvania and west Virginia. West maintains administrative offices in Columbus, Ohio, and serves portions of Pennsylvania and West Virginia, as well as all of Ohio and Virginia. Source: Allegheny East and Allegheny West Conference Directories (1978).

[b]South Atlantic divided into Southeastern and South Atlantic in 1981. Southeastern comprises the southern part of Georgia and all of Florida with the exception of the northwest portion. South Atlantic now comprises the northwest portion of Florida, all but the southern part of Georgia, and the totality of North Carolina and South Carolina.

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## APPENDIX 4

## C. M. KINNEY'S STATEMENT

Nashville, TN, S.D.A. Campground
October 2, 1889

Elder R. M. Kilgore: Now, Bro. Kinney, we are ready for your statement.

C. M. Kinney: It is probable that my ideas may be a little different from what has been expressed by some. But they are mere suggestions, and I would be extremely glad if there were no necessity to carry them out.

In the first place, a separation of the colored people from the white people is a great sacrifice upon our part; we lose the blessing of learning the truth--I have reference especially to general meetings. The colored people as a class are in need--

Elder K. What kind of separation do you refer to?

C.M.K. I refer to the separation in the general meeting; that is, for them to have a different camp-meeting. It would be a great sacrifice upon the part of my people to miss the information that these general meetings would give them; and another thing, it seems to me that a separation in the general meetings would have a tendency to destroy the unity of the Third Angel's message. Now, then, this question to me is one of great embarrassment and humiliation, and not only to me, but to my people also.

There are four thoughts that suggest themselves to mind that should be considered in the solution of this question: the first is that the course that shall be taken shall be pleasing to God; second, that a position will be taken that will not compromise the denomination; third, that the position that is to be taken will be to the best interest of the cause; fourth, that a position will be taken that will commend itself to the good judgment of



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the colored people, that they may not be driven from the truth by our position on this question. Now, these are questions that seem to me should be considered in the solution of this matter, I am glad to state first that the Third Angel's message has the power in it to eliminate or remove this race prejudice upon the part of those who get hold of the truth.

Elder K. That is clearly demonstrated, at least to a great extent, as I learned on the camp-ground here.

C.M.K. Second, that the Third Angel's message is to go to all nations of people; that it cannot take hold of them if there is some obstacle in the way, and that the truth of the Third Angel's message will enable us to remove that obstacle. The colored-line question is an obstacle; in other words, the very presence of the colored people in church relations and in our general meetings is an obstacle, is a barrier that hinders the progress of the Third Angel's message from reaching many of the white people.

Now, I wish to present twelve propositions, which, to my mind, would be a complete or perfect solution to the difficulty:

(1) A frank understanding between the two races on all questions affecting each.

This would avoid much trouble that would otherwise occur.

(2) That colored laborers shall have no special desire to labor among white people, except an occasional invitation where to accept would cause no trouble.

(3) That the colored brethren do not interfere with the outside interest among the white people; the minister in charge of such work to be judge of such interference.

(4) Where the two races cannot meet together without limitation in the church, it is better to separate.

(5) That missions be established among them, thus raising up separate churches. White laborers giving their time exclusively to this work.

I realize the difficulty of white laborers attempting to labor for both classes in the South, for if they labor for the colored people they will lose their influence among the white people, but in laboring among the colored people exclusively that difficulty is obviated.

(6) that in view of the outside feeling on the race question, and the hindrance it makes in accomplishing the work desired among the whites, the attendance of

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the colored brethren at the general meetings should not be encouraged, yet not positively forbidden. If they do attend let there be a private, mutual understanding as to the position they should assume on every phase of the meeting.

I would say in this connection that in my judgment a separate meeting for the colored people to be held in connection with the general meetings, or a clear-cut distinction, by having them occupy the back seats, etc., would not meet with as much favor from my people as a total separation. I am willing, however, to abide by whatever the General Conference may recommend in the matter, and advise my people to do the same.

(7) In those churches where there are two or more let them remain until an effort can be made to raise up a church among them; then have them to unite with it.

(8) Until there is enough to form a conference of colored people, let the colored churches, companies or individuals pay their tithes and other contributions to the regular state officers, and be considered a part of the state conference.

(9) That the General Conference do what it can in educating worthy colored laborers to engage in various branches of the work among them, when such can be found.

(10) That Christian feeling between the two races be zealously inculcated everywhere, so that the cause of separation may not be because of the existence of prejudice within, but because of those on the outside whom you hope to reach.

(11) That when colored conferences are formed they bear the same relation to the General Conference that white conferences do.

(12) That these principles be applied only where this prejudice exists to the injury of the cause.

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## APPENDIX 5

### G. E. PETERS' STATEMENT ON ORGANIZATION OF NEGRO CONFERENCES[1]

I am not in favor of maintaining a status quo form of organization. I haven't got wisdom enough to decide while on the floor the kind of organization that we should have. Any one person's ability is not sufficient to decide this matter. I have studied my people. I wrote the General Conference and mentioned that we should come with something definite in mind so that we could avoid confusion. I did this because I know my people from infancy. We ought to decide on a policy that spells progress and give it to our friends. This is a serious matter. I don't believe that this is a time for office seeking. The salvation of the 13,000,000 colored souls in the United States is at stake.

In 1930 I listened to more speeches against the progress of the colored people than we have had today. Fortunately the speakers today are sincere. We have confidence in them. In 1930 several of the men who fought against the advanced step of the colored work are not in the work today. Those same men were not bringing in souls. They were doing a very small work. They were not in touch with the Negro to a great extent. They thought if they would say something to the white folk, they would then be sure of a job for life. Everyone is present today, of those who stood for progress in 1930.

I am not a radical. I am not an agitator. Nothing is accomplished without God. Pardon my personal reference, but I have through the help of God brought in about 3,000 souls. In one meeting I baptized 145 without stopping. At the close of the meeting 250 souls were won

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[1]Organization of Negro Conferences, Book I, Spring Council, April 8, 1944, Oakwood College Library, Huntsville, AL.



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to Christ. God has given me the ability to lead. I suppose that I have erected more churches than any of the brethren, but yet I am standing for progress TODAY.

I maintain that it stands out very clearly, if we continue to maintain the status quo form of organization, that we need something for the colored people in the Southwestern. This is shown very definitely. It is also quite evident that something new is needed where my good friend, Clarks, is located. For example, in the Southern New England Conference there are only 349 colored Adventists, this shows that something is needed to propell the work to our colored people.

Who am I to say that we should have colored conferences? Whatever it is that takes to bring classes of Negroes into this message, that is the thing that I am after. We must have greater evangelism. It is not a matter to insure one's bread and butter as the years go by. We should have some organization that will give us a future. It is not a matter of simply pleasing public sentiment. That does not ring with God's people.

God gave Elder Blunden a vision for his publishing department. LOOK how under this plan our colored men have advanced. This shows that colored people can lead. Today is a high day for our men in the publishing department. We can also look at Oakwood and see what God has done with colored leadership. We are proud of Oakwood.

I remembered how the colored people cried when they were taken out of the white church here in Chicago. Now the colored church is the largest we have in Lake Union. It shows how God can bless under your own leadership.

We should decide whether we should have a colored conference. It ought to be very carefully considered. I don't believe that we should try it in the whole field at the same time. I believe our people have leadership. We aren't ashamed of our progress. I don't believe that we should continue under the present plan of the status quo.

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## APPENDIX 6

## SHALL THE FOUR FREEDOMS FUNCTION AMONG SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS?

Those who slight a brother because of his color are slighting Jesus.
Southern Work, p. 9.

I. Result of neglect of the colored people--the curse of sin on the church. Southern Work, p. 12.

II. Estimate of the colored people as being

A. Brethren. Southern Work, p. 4.

B. Men capable of attaining eternal life as the white man. Ibid., p. 27.

C. Travelers to the same heaven to sit down at the same table as the whites. Ibid., p. 10.

D. Worshippers of the same God as the whites. Ibid., p. 6.

III. Capabilities of the colored people: talent, T 9:202; ability, 9:202; quick perception and bright minds, T 7:229; reasoning power. Southern Work, p. 27.

IV. Duty of the white Adventists

A. To repair as far as in their power past injury done to the colored people, 7:230.

B. To show "exact and impartial" justice to the Negro race.

C. To increase the force of colored workers, T 9:207.

D. To throw their influence against the customs and practices of the world. Southern Work.



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V. Solution: the love of Jesus a "dissipater of hereditary and cultivated prejudices. Ibid., p. 14.

## THE OBSERVATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WORLD-WIDE WORK AMONG COLORED SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS

THESIS: The present policy of the white Adventists in responsible positions will not stand the acid test of the Judgment.

I. The policy in the educational and medical work is discriminatory and un-Christ-like.

A. Colored people are not admitted generally to our institutions as patients, students, and nurses.

1. The Washington Sanitarium refuses to admit colored people: The Byard case, Gaither case, the Clark case.

2. Colored girls are denied admittance to the Washington Sanitarium School of Nursing and some other schools open to the whites. As a result, they are forced to travel long distances to such schools as will accept them or undergo inconveniences at the risk of their souls at non-Adventist schools.

B. No academies like the Shenandoah Academy are available in the East for our colored youth.

C. Academies that might accept colored students are not easily accessible.

D. There is no standard satisfactory creditable academy for our colored youth.

E. A notorious example of injustice was the policy of Emmanuel Missionary College.

1. Colored students were assigned to the rear seat during worship at chapel.

2. Colored students were subjected to an unwarranted and humiliating form of segregation

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in having to wait for their meals until there might be a "quota" of colored students to fill a table.

F. The "quota" policy of our institutions of higher learning with its limitations of equal opportunities for our colored youth to obtain a Christian education is indefensible.

G. There is inadequate supervision of our educational work by those who should be interested.

H. In contrast to the policy of the Adventists, many non-Adventist institutions admit colored applicants.

1. A S.D.A. colored girl is pursuing nursing at Bellevue in New York City with no discrimination.

2. Catholic University accepts colored students.

I. There are no Negroes so far as we know on staffs of Adventist institutions. In contrast:

1. City College of New York City employs a full-time Negro psychologist who is a director of the Evening School.

2. Hunter College of New York City employs a full-time Negro professor.

3. The University of Chicago employs at least five full-time Negro professors as well as visiting professors.

4. Harvard, Boston, Northwestern, New York, De Paul and Toledo employ Negro instructors.

J. There is a policy of evasion and futile appeasement relative to our work.

1. It is said, for example, that it is against public policy to have Negro and white patients in the Washington Sanitarium.

2. It is said that colored patients would be objectionable to white patients, especially those from the Southern States.

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3. Non-Adventist institutions in Maryland use no such subterfuges.

   a. John Hopkins Hospital in Maryland accepts Negro patients.

   b. Sandy Spring Hospital in Maryland accepts Negro patients.

II. The policy in the administrative sphere is discriminatory and un-Christlike.

A. Negroes do not have adequate representation on committees at all levels--local, union, and general conferences.

1. The Potomac Conference Legal Association (as well as the Union and General Associations) has no representation for the 16,000 colored constituents of Seventh-day Adventists.

2. Deeds of churches and other properties are held by the Conference Legal Associations--deeds to institutions occupied by colored Adventists; yet no colored Adventist is a member of these associations.

3. Appropriations made by many committees are proportionally inadequate to the needs of the colored work.

4. There is not even one General Conference office filled by a colored person.

5. Even the General Conference stationery (there may be another type) "unwittingly shows discrimination in the caption about the Colored Department and its Secretary is shunted down to the bottom of the letterhead and to the left. "Left" and "bottom" often have sinister connotations.

6. The fact that there is a colored constituency should entitle it to at least one general conference administrative officer and colored supervisory officers with proper office personnel, equipment, and power.

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7. The financial contributions of the colored constituency warrants the carrying out of the statement under "6" above.

8. The present disinterestedness on the part of the General Conference Committee as a unit calls for the presence of a General Conference officer who can sympathize with the plight of 16,000 colored Adventists.

B. Funds are allocated so that monies from the colored constituency finance institutions where we derive no direct financial and economic benefits; in other words, our money is not used enough for our advancement.

1. There is an over-emphasis and dramatization of "deficits" in the colored work.

2. The reports of those continual deficits in the colored work are too vague and lacking in detailed information for unqualified acceptance on the part of the colored laity.

C. We have no representative connected with the disbursement of funds from the colored constituency.

D. The office of the Secretary of the Colored Department does not carry with it enough administrative authority, jurisdiction, and equipment. In the eyes of the laity, it seems to be in matters pertaining to the impartial progress of the colored group powerless to function adequately.

E. There is no definite, detailed report of Negro funds and their disbursement.

1. The colored people know nothing of the business organization, loss, profits, and expenses connected with the Message Magazine.

2. There are no colored editor, circulation manager, and business manager of the only Adventist periodical devoted exclusively to the interest of the 13,000,000 colored people in the United States.

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F, The personnel in the administration of the colored work is not proportionate to the needs, demands, and interest of such work. For example, the colored work at large consists of evangelizing, teaching, and selling books.

III. The policy in the field of employment is unfair, partial and un-Christlike.

A. Negroes are not employed as stenographers in all divisions of work (local, union, and general), printers, linotype setters, shipping clerks, camp directors, secretaries over such departments as Missionary Volunteer Department, Army, etc., editors and members of editorial staffs.

B. Negroes are not encouraged to find employment in the "work."

IV. The policy in spiritual matters is too one-sided and narrow.

A. Conference officials (general, union, and local) neglect to lay plans for the improvement of the colored Adventists as a group.

B. Conference officials do not initiate, encourage, and foster dignified programs for the up-life of the colored constituency.

C. Conference officials visiting colored churches on the Sabbath preach sermons fostering conference objectives, e.g., Harvest Ingathering, Sabbath School, Big Week, etc.

D. Conference officials foster only institutes which have to do with bringing in money to the general treasury.

1. Colporteurs enrich the treasury. (We admit they help to save souls).

2. Lay workers' institutes emphasize the bringing in of souls, but these souls will bring in more tithes, more Harvest Ingathering funds, etc.

E. No dignified programs are offered, suggested, encouraged, emphasized for the improvement of

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our only sanitarium and college, or for the building of new academies, sanitariums, or colleges.

F. There are according to our knowledge no recreational camps for our many boys and girls.

G. Whites and coloreds do not worship together, although:

1. The Bahais worship together.

2. The Friends have a common meeting place.

H. Since white and colored eat without friction daily in the cafeterias of the Library of Congress, Union Station, National Art Gallery, Interior Department, and other government buildings, it is illegal to segregate the Secretary of the Colored Department for his meals.

V. These unfair practices embarrass the colored laity, form a definite obstacle to the spread of the message among colored people in the highways and byways, and also if we may paraphrase 2 Samuel 12:14 give occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme.

Recommendations:

Educational and Medical

1. That Seventh-day Adventist sanitariums, hospitals, and educational institutions discontinue the un-Christian policy of discrimination towards colored people.

2. That the "quota" policy of our institutions of higher learning be discontinued.

3. That a standard satisfactory academy be opened for our colored youth.

4. That qualified colored people be given opportunity to serve on faculties of our institutions of learning.

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Administrative and Supervisory

1. That colored people be given adequate representation on committees, at all levels--local, union, and general.

2. That adequate appropriations be made to meet the demands and needs of the colored people.

3. That at least one General Conference Office be filled by a colored person.

4. That funds from the colored constituency be allocated so that the colored people may derive direct financial and economic benefit.

5. That colored people be appointed to supervise various phases of the work.

6. That conference officials encourage our ministers and workers to be frank in declaring the needs of their own people. Otherwise, those who should be like Elijah, Esther, and Moses will become craven cowards.

7. That the office of the Secretary of the Colored Department be given administrative authority, jurisdiction, and equipment.

8. That the colored people be given detailed reports of the colored funds and their disbursement.

9. That there be appointed a colored editor of the Message Magazine, with associate editors of either group, and a business manager so the colored people can be informed of the profits or losses of this magazine.

Occupational

1. That the number of colored people employed by the conferences be determined by some fixed ratio in all types of positions.

2. That colored secretaries be appointed to foster the educational, social, and welfare work in all departments.

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3. That colored people be appointed as editors and on editorial staffs of Adventist periodicals.

Spiritual

1. That there be no intimidations of our colored clergymen and workers supported by the conferences when they attempt to better the conditions of their brethren.

2. That the conference officials encourage our ministers and workers to be frank in declaring the needs of their own people. Otherwise, those who should be like Elijah, Esther, and Moses will be mere sycophants and craven cowards.

3. That conference officials be elected who through their knowledge of and interest in colored people can foster programs in their behalf.

4. That campaigns for colored work be given the prominence and dignity that are given to all other phases of the work.

5. That new and adequate academies and educational institutions of higher learning be erected for the Christian education of colored youth.

Copyright April, 1944

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## APPENDIX 7

### "WHY SHOULD IT BE THOUGHT A THING UNCHRISTIAN"[1]

In the departments of a nation forming its economic, political, educational, inventive and religious background, when that which is called "new" is launched, --something which differs from the old method,--men everywhere rise up against it. But like the locomotive, the Bell Telephone, the Republican form of Government, the airship, the teaching that the world is round, the acceptance of the automobile, the Seventh-day Sabbath, and other ideas, it forces these same men to see light, reason, logic, and food sense in the "new idea," as they call it, and after a few severe tests are given according to their ability to text, they soon fall in line and loudly proclaim that the new thing which has come (to benefit humanity) is all right. So after the big fight against, there comes the acceptance of, the new idea.

The same thing seems to be true regarding the white brother in the Adventist Church and the new idea--The United Sabbath Day Adventist Conference. Of course, it means that Negro believers will be given the common benefit accruing from a conference. It means the non-stultification of Negroes in the faith of the Advent message found in Rev. 14:6-12, John 14:1-3, Ex. 20:8-11, Isa. 56 and Isa. 58. The message does not say that Negroes religiously must not have any part in operating the gospel message in conference life among their own race. The gospel message of Christ limits no race and has no creed save the Bible.

Because our white brothers have never seen a Negro president among Adventists, and a full force of Negroes

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[1]Article written by Elder M. G. Nunez in August 1931 when the Black Leaders sought to have a stronger base from which to work in carrying the message of Jesus Christ to the millions of Blacks who live in the United States and around the world.



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in office in conference affairs administered by these honest dark-skinned men, because the idea has prevailed (not given by Christ) that Negroes should not be placed in office, the cry is that all in connection with the United Sabbath Day Adventist Conference are lost; and have given up the message and left the landmark, are not "in the truth," and so on ad infinitum. This is simply ridiculous. This is the same spirit that shows itself when new ideas are handed out, which differ from the general run of things in a nation. A certain honest class of colored believers not knowing, of course, joined these white brothers, because Negroes must not be put to lead out. They must not occupy positions of trust. Administrative positions in the affairs of conference life do not belong to Negroes. All of which is contrary to sound judgment, contrary to the spirit of Jesus.

One sad feature is that these colored folk who voice the sentiment of the white brother believe a Negro minister is lost, and members are lost if they own their church property, preach in a conference directed by Negroes and if Negro members worship in churches connected with the United Sabbath Day Adventist Conference. This religio-phobia is so pernicious and acts so fiercely on tissue in church life, that some Negroes do not want to be decent and speak to other Negroes who are in a conference with Negro officials and a Negro preacher, and members who are still in a "white conference" think it wicked to worship and to preach in a church that is in a conference directed by Negro officials. I wonder if Jesus would get mad with folk because in the common nature of things two congregations have come about, one Negro and the other White; or stop being Christian-hearted toward Negroes because they have a conference of their own. Why should not a group of colored churches which is hailed with joy by our white Adventist believers presuppose a conference directed by Negro officials?

The question is asked, "Why did you not begin years ago a conference such as you now have?" The answer is simple: the time was not yet full. But today the fulness of time for such a conference is seen, hence the United Sabbath Day Adventist Conference is functioning in all its departments.

The troubles, the unpleasantness, the ejection of Negroes by white Adventist presidents, and all that inside volcanic condition incident to the impact of Negro ambition and White prejudice have nothing to do with the Necessity of a United Sabbath Day Adventist Conference

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directed by Negroes. Conditions demanded such a conference, whether there was continuous tranquillity or constant warring.

The brothers and sisters north and south, homeland and foreign should cease the unwise cry, "The time is not ripe, we are not ready for such a master move." Let me ask, "When is the time going to be ripe?" If 1913 to 1931 does not bring a ripened time; if the briny tears of men and women among the Advent Negro believers who have had to groan in public and private, does not show ripened time; if the loss of hundreds of boys and girls of our Negro preachers and members in the Advent ranks; if the premature death of Negro Adventist preachers suffering under the oppression does not bespeak that the time has come; and if justifiable concern for the future as well as interest in our present condition does not spell the arrival of the time, when will it ever come.

As the United Sabbath Day Adventist Conference moves on in its functionings directed by Negro officials, as churches come in, as the gospel spreads itself among the races of the earth, as believers are raised up, Whites and Negroes who now fight Negroes because of blindness caused by distorted vision, will all see the sensible stand taken by the United Sabbath Day Adventist Conference. For except our righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, we shall in no wise enter the kingdom of heaven.

Some say, "You are in a split"; others say, "You are divided." Why should a United Sabbath day Adventist Conference with Negro officials be considered a split or a division? It is no more a split or division than Negro churches in White conferences. When the so-called Negro department was organized among Seventh-day Adventists in 1913, why was it not called a split? Why was it not called a division? Was it because that at the head there stood a white brother as division president? Let us be men and put away these childish reasonings [?]. We must not preach any other than a gospel which unites, a gospel which will tear down the strongholds of Satan. Thank God, there is power in the gospel, if we will accept it and use it. We feel kindly disposed toward those who have consciously or unconsciously kept us back, depriving us from benefits and spiritual privileges along some lines.

In speaking of these things, I would not have our readers to understand that there is any race issue involved. Some small-calibred persons rush to the

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conclusion that we are stirring up race issues. Would you say Acts 6:1-7 is a race question? If it was, when it was settled, the word of God increased and large numbers joined the church. Verse 7. When Paul said, "I am a Hebrew of the Hebrews" and proclaimed his racial standing, was he stirring up a race issue? Then no more are we stirring up a race issue when we hold that in keeping with the conditions the United Sabbath Day Adventist Conference is right in showing why the dark Advent believers, men and women, boys and girls, should be treated just the same as the white saints and do as they are doing. It is Christian decency, it is self-respect, it is a question of sweeping away the wickedness that is existing among the Advent saints as they proclaim the message, "The Lord is soon coming."

Yes, and we do believe that the end of all things mundane is at hand; for this reason gospel power in the lives of Advent believers should, under the influence of the Holy Ghost, correct any existing wickedness, so as to have a people without spot or wrinkle stand before the judge of all the earth. Yes, Jesus our Saviour is coming again. John 14:1-3. Eighteen million Negroes in America and many other races are to be warned. The world is to be warned. Will we allow unrighteousness to hinder the work of God in the earth? May God help that this will not be so.

Like the lightning bug let us move about taking our light with us. Let us be men, Christian, honest, bold, fearless, loyal, standing up for that which is right. Let us lift up the Christ whose blood alone cleanses guilt. And in the gathering day those of all nations, kindreds, tongues and peoples, who have accepted the Christ and followed Him in a life of regeneration renouncing the world, the flesh, and the devilish arts of Satin, will shine in the kingdom of God and His Christ. To this end we earnestly pray that all Conference life will function.

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## APPENDIX 8

## F. W. HALE'S LETTER TO F. L. PETERSON

May 3, 1961

Elder F. L. Peterson
General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists
6840 Eastern Avenue, N.W.
Takoma Park, Washington 12, D.C.

Dear Elder Peterson:

You must know the surge of overwhelming emotions which gripped the strings of my heart as I read the letter from the gentleman, who, just ten years before, had started me on my career as a teacher in higher education. Elder Peterson, I will always have the highest regard for your qualities as a man, for the source of inspiration which you have personally been to me, and for your counsel through the years. And your sincere concern for the church of God and also my personal welfare at this moment only deepens my admiration and respect for you as an individual.

However, I must not equivocate on the matter at hand.

That I am considered the principal in a "confederacy against the church of God" is a matter of astonishment and chagrin.

It is no exception that the eye of one who introduces reforms is met with angry flashes, but his heart may well beat lighter when he is promoting a just cause.

It is well to know that there is a "better way and a better plan;" yet great streams are not easily turned from channels, worn deep in the course of ages. Likewise the difficulties which must be overcome to remedy the racial problems which are among us can not be taken lightly as they are by no means slight.



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Elder Peterson, you are aware that I have been an Adventist since a child, and I plan to be, God helping me, until I die. I have accepted the doctrines and teachings of the Adventist Church much as I accept the Constitution of the United States. I do not debate either. Although the Constitution has been explicit in its emphasis upon the rights of the individual, it has just been recently that all men have begun to benefit by its proclamation. So too, does the doctrine of the church embrace truths which would make pit possible for blacks and whites to live and work harmoniously together if we all adopted a serious attitude toward our teachings.

It is for this reason that I cannot accept the statement that the current laymen's movement is a "confederacy against God's church." The laymen's movement is not an anti-church movement; it is anti-segregation and anti-discrimination. Would you not agree that the anti-segregation and discrimination movement among us will cease, when our leaders will assume a positive position instead of a negative one towards the movement?

Are all Seventh-Day Adventists members to be forever bound to hear but one side, and that side being the side of the oppressors? Elder, it is a most unfortunate thing when those who sit in the seats of justice are bound in deciding racial issues, to listen to the most conservative viewpoints. And when I project such a statement, it is not a matter of indicting the church organization. But I speak of many of its most eloquent leaders who have shamelessly given the sanction of the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy to endorse the whole treacherous system. These leaders make the principles which we practice in the area of race relations a cold, heartless thing. It is not ". . . easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits and without partiality. . . ."

Now to your point of our bringing the church into disrepute. Nothing could be farther from our imagination. In a sense you are saying, "Spare the denomination, spare her leaders." Elder Peterson, the very nature of the statement suggests an impasse which none of us can afford to admit. Spare them from what? The implication suggests that any laymen's movement designed to improve race relations will be met on the threshold by the church and its leaders to do battle against it. I have never entertained the thought of such a struggle. We want to give a wholehearted support to the newly established Race Relations Committee of the General Conference.

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We want to serve as one channel for assisting the General Conference in pinpointing certain areas of sensitivity among us. We want to assume that our leaders will appreciate and solicit a "grass roots" reaction from those who make helpful and constructive suggestions in the area of race relations. If there are leaders who would suppress such actions by challenging the efforts of those who would snatch truth from the dust, how our brethren could conceive of such men as being stalwart representatives of Jesus Christ is a mystery which I leave all of us to penetrate.

But your major concern is method, and I have attempted to answer that by assuring you that we accept the establishment of the Race Relations Committee as a forward step. And we should like to weld the laymen into an organization that will serve as an effective adjunct to the work which many of our ministers have already begun.

And permit me to make myself clear on my reaction to the Seventh-Day Adventist ministry. In my Chicago speech I alluded to the fact that many Seventh-Day Adventist workers have been to reticent in their reactions to the condition of Negroes in our denomination for fear they might have jeopardized their personal positions and ambitions. This cannot be denied. Yet I recognize there are numerous exceptions, and I thank God that there are. I understand that Elders G. E. Peters, J. H. Wagner, W. W. Fordham, and W. S. Lee, among others, have been particularly dutiful in attempting to elevate and improve the conditions of the regional constituents.

Friend, you give me no other choice but to take exception to the word "hero," and I accept your caution in the right spirit. I must confess, however, that if I were pursuing this program for personal gain or prestige, I'm afraid that the potential liabilities would outweigh the assets. I am aware that this action (1) Will cause some to consider me as a "heretic rebel and a flaunt"; (2) Will cause others in key positions "to pull the shade" on my career as far as my future service to the denomination is concerned; and (3) Will cause still others to even cahllenge my motives and sincerity of purpose.

So I have no doubt about what personal damage could result; however, I can no longer "hid my light under a bushel" in these matters. I recall the words of Sister White in The Southern Work: "I know that that which I now speak will bring me into conflict."

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I maintain that there is no circle in the church that could sustain segregation and discrimination for one moment, if it were not sustained in the circle of leadership.

If the General Conference, the Union Conferences, the local Conferences, the publishing houses, the evangelists, the ministers, the missionaries, and the educational and medical institutions would all combine their powers to erase the smudge of racial segregation and discrimination among us, the whole system would crack and crumble overnight.

Such a challenge is for us the living! I have no other plans but to accept the challenge.

We think of you and Sister Peterson so often; we will never be able to repay you for your many kindnesses. Special greetings to Sister Peterson.

Very sincerely yours,

F. W. Hale

FWH/mc

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APPENDIX 9

THE FIRST BATTLE OF MANASSAS

July 21, 1861

and as

Shown in Vision to Ellen G. White

Eyewitness Account of W. W. Blackford:

"It was now about four o'clock and the battle raged with unabated fury. The lines of blue were unbroken and their fire was vigorous as ever while they surged against the solid walls of gray, standing immovable in their front. It was on that ridge earlier in the day Jackson won the name of Stonewall.

"But now the most extraordinary spectacle I have ever witnessed took place. I had been gazing at the numerous well-formed lines as they moved forward to the attack, some fifteen or twenty thousand strong in full view, and for some reason had turned my head in another direction for a moment, when someone exclaimed, pointing to the battle field, 'Look! Look!' I looked, and what a change had taken place in an instant. Where those well-dressed, well-defined lines, with clear spaces between, had been steadily pressing forward, the whole field was a confused swarm of men, like bees, running away as fast as their legs could carry them, with all order and organization abandoned. In a moment more the whole valley was filled with them as far as the eye could reach. They plunged through Bull Run wherever they came to it regardless of fords or bridges, and there many were drowned. Muskets, cartridge boxes, belts, knapsacks, haversacks and blankets were thrown away in their mad race, that nothing might impede their flight. In the reckless haste the artillery drove over every one who did not get out of their way. Ambulance and wagon drivers cut the traces and dashed off on the mules. In crossing Cub Run a shell exploded in a



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team and blocked the way and twenty-eight pieces of artillery fell into our hands.

"By stepping or jumping from one thing to another of what had been thrown away in the stampede, I could have gone long distances without ever letting my foot touch the ground, and this over a belt forty or fifty yards wide on each side of the road. Numbers of gay members of Congress had come out from Washington to witness the battle from the adjacent hills, provided with baskets of champ and lunches. So there was a regular chariot race when the rout began, with the chariots well in the lead, as was most graphically described by the prisoners I captured and by citizens afterwards. We found, occasionally, along the road, parasols and dainty shawls lost in their flight by the frail, fair ones who had seats in most of the carriages of this excursion. Some of their troops, north of Bull Run, did not participate in the panic, and some did not throw away their arms but the greater part must have done so, from the quantities we found.

"Stuart was uncertain whether this was a general or a partial rout, at the moment, and told me to go as fast as I could to either General Johnston or General Beauregard, report what had happened and ask if he must pursue. He, like everyone else at that period of the war, did not feel the confidence in himself that we did a little later. I gave Comet the rein and struck a bee line to where he said I would probably find the Generals, taking fences, ditches, and worse than all some fearful gullies as they came.

"I found General Beauregard, who of course knew what had happened before I got there, for by that time all musketry firing had ceased, though the batteries were still pounding away at long range at the disappearing fugitives."--W. W. Blackford, War Years with Jeb Stuart (New York: Scribner and Sons, 1946), pp. 32-35. (W. W. Blackford was Lieutenant Colonel, C.S.A.)

View Given to Ellen G. White:

"God is punishing this nation for the high crime of slavery. He has the destiny of the nation in His hands. He will punish the South for the sin of slavery and the North for so long suffering its overreaching and overbearing influence.

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"At the Conference at Roosevelt, New York, August 3, 1861, when the brethren and sisters were assembled on the day set apart for humiliation, fasting, and prayer, the Spirit of the Lord rested upon us, and I was taken off into vision and shown the sin of slavery, which has so long been a curse to this nation. . . .

"The North and the South were presented before me. The North have been deceived in regard to the South. They are better prepared for war than has been represented. Most of their men are well skilled in the use of arms, some of them from experience in battle, others from habitual sporting. They have the advantage of the North in this respect, but have not, as a general thing, the valor and the power of endurance that Northern men have.

"I have a view of the disastrous battle of Manassas, Virginia. It was a most exciting, distressing scene. The Southern army had everything in their favor and were prepared for a dreadful contest. The Northern army was moving on with triumph, not doubting but that they would be victorious. Many were reckless and marched forward boastingly, as though victory were already theirs. As they neared the battlefield, many were almost fainting through weariness and want of refreshment. They did not expect so fierce an encounter. They rushed into battle and fought bravely, desperately. The dead and dying were on every side. Both the North and the South suffered severely. The Southern men felt the battle, and in a little while would have been driven back still further. The Northern men were rushing on, although their destruction was very great. just then an angel descended and waved his hand backward. Instantly there was confusion in the ranks. It appeared to the Northern men that their troops were retreating, when it was not so in reality, and a precipitate retreat commenced. This seemed wonderful to me.

"Then it was explained that God had this nation in His own hand, and would not suffer victories to be gained faster than He ordained, and would permit no more losses to the Northern men that in His wisdom He saw fit, to punish them for their sins. And had the Northern army at this time pushed the battle still further in their fainting, exhausted condition, the far greater struggle and destruction which awaited them would have caused great triumph in the South. God would not permit this, and sent an angel to interfere. The sudden falling back

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of the Northern troops is a mystery to all. They know not that God's hand was in the matter." Testimonies, 1:264, 266-267. Ellen G. White Publications, General Conference of S.D.A., Washington, D.C.

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## APPENDIX 10

## SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST POLITICAL MENTALITY

Blacks who work at the Church headquarters in Washington, D.C. were interested to note that whereas the election of liberal Democrat Jimmy Carter produced quiet resignation, if not gloom, among whites in the offices there, election of politically conservative Ronald Reagan resulted in high expressions of joy and occasioned a special holiday of celebration, something the election of a Democrat president has yet to inspire.

Perhaps the most trustworthy evidence of a formal nature with respect to Adventist political mentality is, however, that presented by the various Seventh-day Adventist college polls measuring Presidential candidacy preference. An example of this is the poll taken at Walla Walla College in Washington State at the time of the 1976 presidential campaign. In a report printed in the "Collegian" (school newspaper), dated November 21, 1976, the following information was provided:



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Political poll conducted

WALLA WALLA STUDENTS PREFER FORD

Walla Walla College students apparently favor the re-election of President Gerald Ford by a wide margin. According to a poll conducted last week by News Writing students, respondents favored Ford by almost an 8 to 1 margin.

Presidential Preference: (all respondents)

| | |
|---|---|
| Gerald Ford | 76% |
| Jimmy Carter | 7% |
| Eugene McCarthy | 5% |
| Lester Maddox | 0% |
| None of the Above | 12% |

Even though most respondents labeled themselves moderately liberal, many took decidedly conservative positions on some campaign issues. Most felt that the federal government should not spend more money to guarantee jobs for all Americans capable of working, nor did they feel that the federal government should enforce court-ordered bussing to achieve racial equality. Students split fairly even on the issue of whether the federal government should cut spending on military weapons.[1]

About the same time, November 4, 1976, the Lancastrian, student newspaper of Atlantic Union College, South Lancaster, Massachusetts, another Adventist school of higher education, detailed a similar survey. Their caption, "Ford Wins at AUC," was expanded upon by a student officer, Jimmy Davis, in his accompanying editorial. In part, Davis said:

---

[1]At the time of this article Walla Walla College had a student body of approximately 1,600 students of which approximately 4 percent were black.

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In Tuesday's mock presidential election, President Ford easily defeated the nation's choice, Jimmy Carter, and all other candidates in an election held by AUC's History Club. Ford's victory, with 64 per cent of the student and faculty votes, came as no surprise to anyone familiar with this campus.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Ford | (Rep.) | 175 | 63.6% |
| Carter | (Dem.) | 82 | 22.6% |
| McCarthy | (Ind.) | 24 | 8.7% |
| Anderson | (Amer.) | 3 | 1.1% |
| Camejo | (Soc.) | 2 | .7% |
| LaRouche | (Lab.) | 1 | .4% |
| Write-ins | (8) | 1 | 2.1% |

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## APPENDIX 11

## THE PUBLISHED WORKS OF MRS. E. G. WHITE

In listing all the E. G. White works, there are included some volumes in which there is more or less duplication of subject matter. For instance, in noting the :Testimonies for the Church," Volume I was published in 1885, but the content is a republication of "Testimonies" Numbers 1-14, which were first issued between 1855 and 1868.

Titles appearing in asterisk are out of print. [*Initial edition out of print, but available in other form. +Recently reprinted with facsimile pages.]

| Date | Title | Pages |
|---|---|---|
| 1851 | *A Sketch of the Christian Experience and Views of Ellen G. White | 64 |
| 1854 | *Supplement to the Christian Experience and Views of Ellen G. White | 48 |
| 1855 | *Testimony for the Church, No. 1 | 16 |
| 1856 | *Testimony for the Church, No. 2 | 16 |
| 1856 | *Testimony for the Church, No. 3 | 16 |
| 1857 | *Testimony for the Church, No. 4 | 48 |
| 1858 | +Spiritual Gifts, Vol. 1 | 219 |
| 1859 | *Testimony for the Church, No. 5 | 32 |
| 1860 | +Spiritual Gifts, Vol. 2 | 295 |
| 1862 | *Testimony for the Church, No. 6 | 64 |
| 1862 | *Testimony for the Church, No. 7 | 64 |



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| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1862 | *Testimony for the Church, No. 8 | 64 |
| 1863 | *Testimony for the Church, No. 9 | 48 |
| 1864 | *Testimony for the Church, No. 10 | 80 |
| 1864 | Appeal to the Youth (95 pages, 40 of which were written by Ellen G. White) | 40 |
| 1864 | Appeal to Mothers | 64 |
| 1864 | +Spiritual Gifts, Vol. 3 (Facts of Faith) | 304 |
| 1864 | +Spiritual Gifts, Vol. 4 (Facts of Faith) | 156 |
| 1865 | How to Live (a series of six pamphlets together, containing in all 296 pages, 86 of which were written by Ellen G. White) | 86 |
| 1867 | *Testimony for the Church, No. 11 | 53 |
| 1867 | *Testimony for the Church, No. 12 | 96 |
| 1867 | *Testimony for the Church, No. 13 | 172 |
| 1868 | *Testimony for the Church, No. 14 | 102 |
| 1868 | *Testimony for the Church, No. 15 | 96 |
| 1868 | *Testimony for the Church, No. 16 | 104 |
| 1869 | *Testimony for the Church, No. 17 | 204 |
| 1870 | *Testimony for the Church, No. 18 | 208 |
| 1870 | Spirit of Prophecy, Vol. 1 | 414 |
| 1870 | *Testimony for the Church, No. 19 | 96 |
| 1871 | *Testimony for the Church, No. 20 | 200 |
| 1872 | *Testimony for the Church, No. 21 | 200 |
| 1872 | *Testimony for the Church, No. 22 | 192 |
| 1873 | *Testimony for the Church, No. 23 | 116 |

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| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1875 | *Testimony for the Church, No. 24 | 192 |
| 1875 | *Testimony for the Church, No. 25 | 192 |
| 1876 | *Testimony for the Church, No. 26 | 208 |
| 1876 | *Testimony for the Church, No. 27 | 190 |
| 1877 | Spirit of Prophecy, Vol. 2 | 396 |
| 1878 | Spirit of Prophecy, Vol. 3 | 442 |
| 1879 | *Testimony for the Church, No. 28 | 192 |
| 1880 | *Testimony for the Church, No. 29 | 192 |
| 1880 | Life Sketches of James White and Ellen G. White (450 pages, of which 221 were written by Ellen G. White) | 221 |
| 1881 | *Testimony for the Church, No. 30 | 192 |
| 1882 | *Testimony for the Church, No. 31 | 244 |
| 1882 | Early Writings (reprint of "A Sketch of the Christian Experience and Views of Ellen G. White," 1851; "A Supplement to Christian Experience and Views," 1854; and "Spiritual Gifts," Vol. 1, 1858) | 284 |
| 1883 | Sketches From the Life of Paul | 334 |
| 1884 | Spirit of Prophecy, Vol. 4 | 492 |
| 1885 | Testimonies for the Church, Vols. I-IV (current editions, reprint of Testimonies, nos. 1-30) | 2,655 |
| 1885 | *Testimony for the Church, No. 32 | 238 |
| 1886 | *Historical Sketches of S.D.A. Foreign Missions (294 pages, 120 of which were written by Ellen G. White) | 120 |
| 1888 | The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan (enlargement of "Spirit of Prophecy, Vol. 4) | 678 |

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| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1889 | *Testimony for the Church, No. 33 | 288 |
| 1889 | Testimony for the Church, Vol. V (Reprint of Nos. 31-33) | 745 |
| 1890 | Patriarchs and Prophets | 755 |
| 1890 | Christian Temperance (The second part of this book is entitled "Bible Hygiene," and was compiled from the writings of James White. The entire book contains 268 pages.) | 162 |
| 1892 | Steps to Christ | 153 |
| 1892 | Gospel Workers (first edition) | 471 |
| 1894 | Christian Education | 248 |
| 1896 | Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing | 205 |
| 1896 | Christ Our Saviour | 183 |
| 1898 | The Desire of Ages | 835 |
| 1900 | Christ's Object Lessons | 421 |
| 1900 | Testimonies on Sabbath School Work | 122 |
| 1900 | Testimony for the Church, Vol. VI (No. 34) | 482 |
| 1902 | Testimony for the Church, Vol. VII (No. 35) | 298 |
| 1902 | Manual for Canvassers | 70 |
| 1903 | Education | 309 |
| 1904 | Testimony for the Church, Vol. VIII (No. 36) | 335 |
| 1905 | Ministry of Healing | 516 |
| 1909 | Testimony for the Church, Vol. IX (No. 37) | 288 |
| 1911 | Acts of the Apostles | 602 |

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| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1913 | Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students Regarding Christian Education | 556 |
| 1915 | Gospel Workers (new and revised edition) | 520 |
| 1915 | Life Sketches of Ellen G. White (480 pages, 254 pages written by Ellen G. White) | 254 |
| 1916 | Prophets and Kings | 733 |
| 1920 | Colporteur Evangelist | 103 |
| 1922 | Christian Experience and Teachings of Ellen G. White | 233 |
| 1923 | Fundamentals of Christian Education | 540 |
| 1923 | Counsels of Health | 634 |
| 1923 | Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers | 520 |
| 1925 | Christian Service | 275 |
| 1930 | Messages to Young People | 466 |
| 1932 | Medical Ministry | 335 |
| 1933 | Life and Teachings of Ellen G. White | 129 |
| 1937 | Sanctified Life (reprint of "Bible Sanctification") | 69 |
| 1938 | Counsels on Diet and Foods | 498 |
| 1938 | Counsels on Sabbath School Work (a rearranged, enlarged edition of "Testimonies on Sabbath School Work") | 186 |
| 1940 | Counsels on Stewardship | 350 |
| 1946 | Evangelism | 707 |
| 1946 | Counsels to Writers and Editors | 181 |

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| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1947 | Story of Redemption | 438 |
| 1949 | Temperance | 300 |
| 1949 | Testimony Treasures, Vols. 1-3 | 1,623 |
| 1950 | The Remnant Church | 72 |
| 1952 | Welfare Ministry | 349 |
| 1952 | Adventist Home | 583 |
| 1953 | Colporteur Ministry | 156 |
| 1954 | Child Guidance | 550 |
| 1955 | Sons and Daughters of God | 383 |
| 1958 | Selected Messages, Vols. 1-3 | 1,478 |
| 1964 | Life at Its Best | 314 |
| 1964 | Spirit of Prophecy Counsels Relating to Church-State Relationships | 196 |
| 1966 | Guidelines to Mental Health | 491 |
| 1969 | Christ in His Sanctuary | 128 |
| 1970 | Conflict and Courage | 381 |
| 1971 | Happiness Homemade | 188 |
| 1982 | The Upward Look | 383 |

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APPENDIX 12

LAYMEN'S LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

Box 232, Oberlin, Ohio

July 4, 1961

Dear Fellow Believer:

Now is the time for us to declare the WHOLE TRUTH.

On February 26, 1961, an organization was formed to unite all Seventh-Day Adventist laymen into a common bond to combat racial segregation and bias among Seventh-Day Adventists.

We hate to admit that the evidence supports the fact that Negro Seventh-Day Adventists serve a subordinate role in the life and program of the denomination. Too long we have equivocated--too long we have excused.

For decades we as Negroes have adjusted. We have adjusted to segregated churches. We have adjusted to regional conferences. We have adjusted to quota systems in our colleges and professional schools. We have adjusted to the philosophy of "White Teachers Only" in our institutions of higher learning. We have adjusted to the philosophy of "menial tasks only" for the few Negroes who have served in such units as the Review and Herald Publishing Association and the Voice of Prophecy.

We have adjusted to the pattern of our periodicals which make it a practice of producing photographs of blacks in their raw, native costumes as an indication of the progress which we are making in our world-wide missions appeal.

We have adjusted and adjusted. Now is the time to readjust! We must readjust our thinking to the



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reality that failure to speak in the past has done little to promote our general welfare. Communication is a two-way street. Too long has the information been funneling down; now is the time for some information to start bubbling up.

We are appealing to groups all over the country. Our success will depend upon two things; God's blessings and our personal preparation.

We anticipate that every effort will be made to block, to scuttle this program. Yet we must not fail nor be discouraged. "Let us march on 'til victory is won!"

Yours for LLC,

The Officers and Members

of the National Board,

Laymen's Leadership Conference

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## APPENDIX 13

### REGIONAL CONFERENCES AND HUMAN RELATIONS

1) Seventh-day Adventist churches open their doors to any would-be worshipper or prospective member regardless of race or color and welcome such with brotherly love and concern. Where it is felt that this principle is violated it is the duty of the next higher organization to investigate and recommend effective measures to correct.

2) The following additions to the baptismal vow and Church Manual are being recommended to the General Conference session:

> "6) All who enter the kingdom of heaven must have experienced conversion, or the new birth, through which man receives a new heart and becomes a new creature. Thus, regardless of ethnic or social background, he becomes a member of 'the whole family in Heaven and earth.'" (Matt. 18:3; John 3:3; 2 Cor. 5:17; Eze. 36:26, 27; Heb. 8:10-12; 1 Peter 1:23, 2:2; Eph. 3:15; Acts 17-26.)
>
> "13) Do you believe that the Seventh-day Adventist church is the remnant church of prophecy into which people of every nation, race and language are invited and accepted, and do you desire membership in its fellowship?"

At an appropriate time during this session a forthright statement should be made by the leadership of the Church dealing with and giving support to the position of the Church on race relations.

3) Conference selecting qualified spiritual leaders as pastors shall not be limited by race or color. Should some black pastors be appointed to white churches and some white pastors to black churches, a very desirable example of church fellowship and understanding would result; therefore, programs to this end should be undertaken with the support and guidance of unions.



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4) In order to make our public ministry more effective and to help members and potential members realize the importance of this brotherhood, conference administrators are urged to make clear to pastors and evangelists that it is their duty to teach these principles as a part of the gospel and our special message for the world. We further recommend that prospective members be so instructed either in the baptismal class or in personal Bible studies.

5) Special emphasis should be given to human relations workshops to implement resolutions which unless carried out, are useless. These workshops should include all workers--field, educational and institutional, and leading laymen from both black and white conferences and churches. It is recommended that union and/or conference-wide human relations workshops be conducted in every union in North America before the 1971 Autumn Council.

6) Where normal entrance requirements are met, all Seventh-day Adventist schools from the elementary to the university level shall admit Seventh-day Adventist youth to the school of their choice without regard to race or color. Where a church supported school fails to follow the counsel of the Church as stated on this point, it is the duty of the next higher organization to investigate and recommend corrective measures.

7) A bi-racial commission of not more than 7 members shall be appointed in the North American Division to deal with complaints of discrimination or exclusion and other problems that arise in the area of race relations that may be appealed to it for help. This commission in cooperation and in counsel with the union converences and/or the institution shall have authority to act immediately, making a thorough investigation and seeking solutions to these problems.

8) On the union conference level positive steps should be taken to open doors in the area of administrative and departmental leadership for those who have demonstrated their ability and qualifications to serve all segments of the Church. In unions where there are Regional conferences or where there is an organized Regional Department, the administrative officer level should include black leadership.

9) Black personnel shall be selected to serve in our publishing houses, hospitals, academies, colleges, universities and other denominational institutions on the

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staff and/or administrative levels. Where it seems advisable institutions should institute training programs for the development of black personnel in technical and administrative skills.

10) There is a missionary magazine dedicated to the black community in North America. The circulation of this journal is primarily the responsibility of the Regional churches. The Autumn Council of 1967 voted to help finance a black circulation manager for Message Magazine. We reaffirm that recommendation on the basis of the 1967 agreement on union participation and ask that this be implemented in the immediate future.

11) At the time of the annual North American Union Conference Presidents' meetings one or more black administrators on the union level will be invited to participate as well as representation from the Regional Department of the General Conference.

12) In order to provide opportunity for the presidents of Regional Conferences (including the secretary of the Regional Department of the Pacific Union) to consult together regarding problems distinctive to their work, Autumn Councils will schedule two meetings of this group each year, under North American Division leadership, in conjunction with other regularly called meetings. When additional meetings are required such would be arranged by the North American Division administration.

13) The next edition of the Ministers' Manual should include as a part of the ministerial candidates examination before ordination questions regarding the candidate's attitude toward human relations.

14) We recommend that the General Conference lay plans to provide literature that would be useful in operating human relations workshops, setting forth standards, guidelines and procedures in this area.

15) We recommend that the General Conference officers develop some plan whereby reports of progress in human relations may be publicized throughout the constituency in North America on local as well as general levels.

16) We recommend the adoption in principle of the following plan of financial relationships involving Regional work.

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## The General Plan

It is suggested that in addition to funds provided by existing policies and union appropriations for Regional work, a new fund be set up by the General Conference which would be reverted to the unions, who in turn would allocate amounts to the Regional work to be used only for capital improvements and denominational scholarships. The amounts reverted to the unions would be in proportion to tithe income received by the General Conference for each union. The fund would be known as "Regional Captial Reversion Fund." This plan is to be reviewed at the end of three years. The General Conference portion of these funds will remain with the General Conference to be distributed by NADCA upon recommendation by the union conference presidents at the time of their annual meeting.

This found would be made up from sources of non-tithe income calculated on the following basis:

1) From the unions--20% of the union share of tithe received from Regional conferences or Regional churches.

2) From the General Conference--6% of the General Conference share of tithe received from the Regional conference or Regional churches.

Bases on 1969 figures this would result in a fund total as follows:

| Union | Union Share of Tithe | 20% | % of Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Atlantic | $210,781.11 | $ 42,156.22 | 24.54 |
| Central | 31,478.04 | 6,295.61 | 3.67 |
| Columbia | 187,666.00 | 37,533.22 | 21.85 |
| Lake | 103,023.90 | 20,604.78 | 12.00 |
| North Pacific | 7,001.24 | 1,400,25 | .82 |
| Northern | 2,427.25 | 485.45 | .28 |
| Pacific | 124,676.44 | 24,935.29 | 14.52 |
| Southern | 151,768.45 | 30,353.69 | 17.67 |
| Southwestern | 39,957.91 | 7,991.58 | 4.67 |
| | $858,780.42 | $171,756.09 | 100.00 |
| General Conference share of fund | 108,206.27 | | |
| | $279,962.36 | | |

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## Implementation

This plan could be effective as from January 1, 1971. (If approved by the Autumn Council of 1970).

Unions would remit amounts to the General Conference monthly along with their regular report.

The General Conference would also credit its share to the fund monthly.

Then beginning with the close of April, 1971, the amounts would be reverted to the unions following the close of each quarter. This would keep the reversions to the unions quite current and result in four regular remittances each year. The unions could then be flexible in relation to the Regional conferences and local churches according to the allocations or needs as they arise. Distribution of the General Conference share through the unions to the designated projects would be done on an annual basis to begin after the total for the first year had been credited to the fund.

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Note: NADCA is the North American Division Committee on Administration.

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APPENDIX 14

C. E. BRADFORD'S LETTER TO PASTORS,
ELDERS, LAY ADVISORY MEMBERS
RE REGIONAL UNIONS,
APRIL 19, 1970

Lake Region Conference of Seventh-Day Adventists
8517 South State Street, Chicago, Illinois 60619

April 19, 1970

Pastors
Church Elders
Lay Advisory Committee Members

Dear Brethren and Sisters:

You have known that for some time the matter of regional unions has been under discussion. The discussion got under way at the quadrennial advisory meeting of the General Conference Regional Department held in Miami, Florida, April 7-10, 1969. The delegates to this meeting sent a resolution to the General Conference requesting that study be given to the idea of this administrative accommodation.

In response to the Miami request the North American Division Committee set up a commission composed of ministers and laymen from every conference, as well as, a number of General Conference, union and institutional representatives. The ratio of the committee is 47 from the field and 42 from the General Conference, unions and institutions. The purpose of this commission was to hear both sides of the question and send on a recommendation to the General Conference committee.

The first meeting of the commission was called for January 13, 1970 at the General Conference office. The group spent some 15 hours together. A motion was made that the General Conference immediately take steps to



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organize two new unions. An amendment to the motion was made requesting that alternatives be studied. The entire motion was laid on the table.

Meanwhile, the General Conference officers prepared a document to present to the commission setting forth the alternative to black unions. This alternative proposal is enclosed in this letter. It was thoroughly discussed at the recent meeting of the commission, (April 16) also at the General Conference office. A motion was made to proceed to form regional unions, at the same time accepting the spirit of the document. This motion was made at 9:45 a.m. Debate went on until 9:00 p.m., at which time the motion was defeated 41 to 28.

I have prepared an analysis of the vote based on private interrogation of as many delegates as possible:

| | |
|---|---|
| Total number of delegates voting | 69 |
| Total number voting "Yes" (to form unions) | 28 |
| Total number voting "No" | 41 |
| Number of field men voting (local conference workers, laymen) | 36 |
| Number of non-field men voting (GC, union, institution) | 33 |
| Possible number of field men voting "Yes" | 23 or 64% |
| Possible number of field men voting "No" | 13 or 36% |
| Possible number of non-field men voting "Yes" | 5 or 15% |
| Possible number of non-field men voting "No" | 28 or 85% |

Ten large city pastors voted. Eight (8) voted "yes", two (2) voted "no".

| | |
|---|---|
| Approximate membership of pastors voting "Yes" | 8,500 |
| Approximate membership of pastors voting "No" | 1,500 |

If my analysis is correct, and I believe it is, the representatives from the field voted decisively in favor of black unions. The General Conference, union and institutional delegates voted overwhelmingly abainst black unions.

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I am led to conclude therefore that the men who serve the people, who are closer to the rank and file, were outvoted by men who are twice removed from the field. It is regrettable that the voice of the delegates from the field was drowned out by the non-field segment.

The brethren agreed to try the proposals set forth as an alternative to black unions for a year and then reconvene the commission. At that time the determination will be made as to which approach is best for the work among the black people of North America.

I solicit your prayers on behalf of the commission.

Sincerely yours,

C. E. Bradford
President

CEB:eb

Enclosure

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## APPENDIX 15

### BLACK PRESIDENTS' LETTER TO R. H. PIERSON AND MEMBERS OF PREXAD, AUTUMN COUNCIL, WASHINGTON, DC, OCTOBER 1977

October 19, 1977

Elder R. H. Pierson and
Members of PREXAD

Dear Brethren:

We cannot conscientiously support the decision on 'Regional Unions' that was read to us at the time of the PREXAD meeting held on Thursday, October 13, 1977.

We share the common burden of the leaders of the church to work for 'a finished work now' and to hasten our Lord's soon return; therefore, we feel that the "Regional Union" concept is still the only organizational structure that can best meet the needs of advancing the Black work in the United States of America.

Very sincerely yours,

H. L. Cleveland, President
ALLEGHENY WEST CONFERENCE

G. R. Earle, President
NORTHEASTERN CONFERENCE

C. E. Dudley, President
SOUTH CENTRAL CONFERENCE

S. D. Myers, President
CENTRAL STATES CONFERENCE

L. R. Palmer, President
ALLEGHENY EAST CONFERENCE

W. C. Jones, President
SOUTHWEST REGION CONFERENCE

C. D. Joseph President
LAKE REGION CONFERENCE

R. L. Woodfork, President
SOUTH ATLANTIC CONVERENCE

cc: N. C. Wilson

C. E. Bradford

W. W. Fordham



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## APPENDIX 16

## SHOULD THE CHURCH ORGANIZE BLACK UNIONS IN NORTH AMERICA?

### A Brief Introduction

For a number of years some members and leaders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America have proposed that the local regional conferences of North America be organized into two union conferences with predominantly black leadership. In a number of meetings held in various parts of North America the advantages and disadvantages of this proposal have been discussed. At the 1978 Spring Meeting of the General Conference Committee, held in Washington, D.C., nearly a full day was devoted to hearing presentations by advocates of the proposal. At that meeting it was recommended that a commission be set up to give further study to the idea and that the subject be placed on the agenda of the 1978 Annual Council.

Most people who have studied the matter recognize that sound arguments can be presented both for and against the formation of black unions. Most also feel that if any real principle is involved, it is organizational, not doctrinal. Ultimately, a decision will be made by delegates to the Annual Council. At that time, as in the past when other complex issues have been discussed and resolved, the church will unite behind the decision and move ahead harmoniously.

The editors of the REVIEW, believing that church members throughout the world would like to examine the arguments both for and against black unions, asked two well-qualified black members--one a denominational worker, the other a layman--to make statements setting forth the main reasons why some support the proposal and others oppose it. Obviously because space is limited, the presentations are not exhaustive.



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YES

I believe we should get on with the business of conducting the Lord's work with what informed and experienced black leadership honestly regards the best alternative available.

By C. B. ROCK, D.Min.
President, Oakwood College

The request for black unions now being considered by the church is that the eight regional conferences scattered throughout six of the existing ten unions of the North American Division withdraw from their present structure and form two new unions of four conferences each. These black (regional) local conferences, which were created in 1944 with a total membership of 17,000 and annual tithe of $500,000, now have a membership of almost 100,000, and in 1977 produced for the church $18 million in tithes.

Why do advocates of this arrangement see it as critical to the welfare of black work? It is simply that regional work and workers are unable within existing structures to function in a normal and healthy manner. To put it succinctly, they are, because of differences in life style, "culturally" separated from their white brethren and, because of barriers of union organizational lines, "structurally" separated from one another.

What we are requesting, therefore, is a common umbrella under which to discuss and plan for our common needs. Each of the black conference presidents advocates this accommodation and each regional conference committee has approved this plan and has so informed the General Conference. Basically, what we are saying is that were the time and finances now utilized in travel and attendance at meetings (where we spend long hours, days, and sometimes even weeks in counsel with our white counterparts) spent in dialog with one another, the black work would benefit enormously.

A major aspect of the dilemma is that while isolated from one another, black conferences have no worker or programmatic exchange with white conferences within their unions. Thus, while the several white local conference presidents in the unions are gathered in meaningful conversation, often assisting one another in

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worker and/or program exchange, the black administrator is for all practical purposes unaffected and uninvolved. This situation prevents efficiency in many decisive areas, a chief example of which is mobility both "lateral" (worker exchange between conferences) and "vertical" (the normal flow of local leadership into union work).

Never has a black local conference president been voted union president. Rarely has any black occupied any union job without considerable agitation on the part of blacks and a quotalike decision. This is significant not only because of what it says about the quality of democracy in the elective processes of the church but also because, in the absence of a true division structure in the United States, the union presidents' council (comprising the ten union conference presidents) has become the sounding board and boiler-room council for the vice-president for the North American Division. Since this division supplies approximately 78 percent of world finance and consequently has persuasive influence upon church policy, this group must be regarded as highly significant.

However, the irony of the situation is that even if one or more blacks were elected president of existing unions, the functional problems related to the inability of black conferences to interact with one another would still exist. Electing a black president of a present union would not solve the deep and frustrating problems that stem from the dual isolation mentioned above.

Other aspects of the problem are: 1. Never in the 34 years of their existence has a black leader officially chaired a regional conference session. Result? Well-meaning but alien (white) leadership has often been unable to understand, decipher, and manage the names and issues peculiar to regional work. 2. Since the most powerful voice available to the people for appeal and representation at General Conference councils is the union president, blacks, in a fashion reminiscent of the "Indian agent" system of colonial days, have always been administratively spoken for by men whose backgrounds do not provide them an understanding of the dominant black experience. 3. Because they are locked in by percentages and procedures influenced and voted with white income and needs in mind, black administration is unable to modify and adapt General Conference policy as may best suit its distinctive situations.

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Consideration of the foregoing functional needs is greatly illumined by an understanding of one fundamental, bedrock fact of American life--cultural pluralism. Of the three discernible patterns of racial interaction offered by American history--Anglo-conformity, the "melting pot," and cultural pluralism--only the last has been truly operative in the United States. The others have never been more than high-sounding theories.

What of course is most puzzling to many whites (and problematic to some blacks) is that the thrust of the 1960's and before was for full or equal participation under the name of integration. What many blacks naively had in mind was cultural homogeneity. The dominant culture formed the valued culture and was the pasture on the "other side" that we had been forbidden to enter or that if entered was tentatively enjoyed. But the disillusionment that has occurred from involvement in that experience, the dramatic resurgence of black price, the unsolvable logistics of mixing masses of widely divergent cultures, all in the context of the recent revival of ethnicity in the United States, makes it abundantly clear that what America and the church are at best capable of is desegregation, not assimilation (integration). Our local church structures across the country recognize this fact; our local conference structures recognize this fact; the present union structure ignores this reality--hence the problem.

Can the church turn the tide (if not without, at least within its own society) and so structure its internal relationships that we can have cultural singularism or at least a cultural kinship so similar that our conferences (and by inference our members, churches, and pastors) can function through the union level without the kind of material and human waste mentioned earlier? We who advocate black unions think that the task is (a) impossible, considering the sheer logistics of massive acculturation, and (b) unnecessary, considering Griessman's definition of cultural pluralism as "a complete and honest respect for culture variation."[1]

While it is clear that, individually, blacks and whites may wish and must be allowed access or fellowship in all places and at all levels of church operations, we

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[1]Eugene B. Griessman, Minorities (Hinsdale, Ill.: Dryden Press, 1975), p. 222.

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question whether the Holy Spirit has made cultural homogeneity a gospel priority or if it is correct to say that acculturation or massive integration should be a goal or ideal of the church. The New Testament example of church organization plainly demonstrates the model of widely differing cultures that maintained their ethnicity or group identity and sent officials to Jerusalem to represent their individual parts of the church structure.

What is remarkable is not that Jews and Gentiles in the book of Acts experienced massive integration (acculturation) at the level of primary relationships; what is remarkable is that in the early church widely differing cultures were uniformly affected by the gospel, and that Jews and Gentiles could, without guilt feelings, be separate and autonomous culturally and to a great extent (up to the final level of the Jerusalem Council) autonomous structurally while yet maintaining consensus and unity in doctrine and brotherhood. Perhaps there is more ethical meaning than we have noticed in the fact that even on the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit was establishing the foundation, each heard the gospel in his "own tongue." It is manifestly possible to be spiritually one but culturally twain.

And what about the lack of fellowship among the churches? Is there really any to lose? What about world opinion? What would society think? Eighty-five percent of blacks who are Christian attend all-black churches. They would surely understand the need for a common base in a vastly white political structure. The 15 percent who attend predominantly white churches (e.g., United Methodists) are experiencing similar problems and also will understand. For non-Christian blacks and for whites, Christian and otherwise, our answer is dual: (a) the logic of this position makes it reasonable whether or not they understand; (b) Adventists are not known to refuse to do what is right because of what others think.

Those who feel that pluralism in the Seventh-day Adventist Church is evil must be reminded that it is already here and that it was recommended by the Lord's messenger. Those who are tempted to look upon the idea as "segregation in reverse" must understand that even as are the black conferences, the black unions would be open to all races, and that this makes integration a two-way street. Those who think that the formation of black unions would precipitate a cry by minorities in America and around the world for indigenous leadership should

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remember that it is part of the genius of the gospel that it can prepare a people for self-leadership and that it is not successful until it is able to relinquish direction to national or ethnic talent.

Those who remember that Ellen White counsels against organizing conferences along language and nationality lines[2] should also recall that she was dealing with the diversities of culture within the white race and clearly made exception for the black work;[3] and those who think that black-union advocates are divisive dissidents should see in the blessings of God upon their work evidence that the quality of their divine connections is at least commensurate to that of the whole. Our point is that because of America's (and the church's) sociological realities, black unions have a need to exist, and because of America's (and the church's) political realities, black unions have a right to exist.

Black unions would, in principle, be nothing new. They would merely be a better form of accommodation than we are now experiencing. We are accommodated at union elections when, after considerable negotiation, we wring out an agreement providing "X" number of positions for blacks only. We are accommodated at General Conference sessions when all black North American Division delegates meet independent of their individual unions to choose delegates to the nominating committee, thus operating for a few revealing moments as a quasi-black union. We are accommodated at meetings of our union presidents when various black brethren are invited to make certain that the black view is heard. These and other measures have been employed in good faith. We appreciate them, but they don't solve the problem. Blacks are still unhappy because much of this structuring is obviously contrived and therefore psychologically demeaning. Whites are unhappy because they are being pressured into creating positions they view as financially wasteful.

Millions of blacks must yet hear the gospel, and black leadership must be freed to move unhindered to the task. If we need programs of cross-cultural fertilization (and we do), if the races can benefit from cultural exchange (and they can), then let us busy ourselves with the job of structuring arbitrary situations in which the

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[2]Ellen G. White, Testimonies, vol. 9, p. 195.

[3]Ibid., pp. 206-210.

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races can do so at the level of primary (intimate), not secondary (tangential), relationships. Student exchange between Oakwood and our colleges that have a small number of blacks; required internship stints by black and white teachers, preachers, or secretaries in churches or institutions of the opposite race; family fellowships where Adventist couples or families spend weekends in homes of other racial groups--these and other programs (involving all minorities of significant number) would help produce the only fruit God ever required: appreciation, understanding, and love for one another. However, let us not, in an attempt to solve a pervasive sociological dilemma (and it is as old as the Tower of Babel), restrain black conferences in the clutches of benign bondage presumptuously awaiting miracles God never promised.

My point is that black unions are not morally retrogressive. They are not attempts of power-hungry people to separate from the mainstream. Rather they attempt to bring order to a separation already existing. They are in this sense a dignified and responsible way of addressing serious logistical needs. They admit to cultural pluralism within and without the church. They say that understanding this and structuring the work of a people culturally separated from their white brethren and structurally separated (isolated) from one another is more reasonable and practical than trying to overcome all the resistance afforded by pervasive reality.

If we can as responsible agents accept the fact that pluralism is not inimical to love and that the bearers of genuine religion need neither dominate nor assimilate the receivers, we can then view black unions in the relaxed objectivity of Griessman's definition (and the New Testament example) and get on with the business of conducting the Lord's work with what informed and experienced black leadership honestly regards the best alternative available.

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NO

I oppose the creation of black unions in the Seventh-day Adventist Church because I think it is too simple a solution for very complex problems.

By ALAN A. ANDERSON, JR., M.A.
Industrial Psychologist

The move to organize the black unions in North America obtained new impetus when blacks failed in three separate elections to win a union presidency in the North American Division of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Black regional conference leadership expressed strong desire to form two regional union conferences. Black laity have several other priorities and many unanswered questions.

1. Can the world organization of Seventh-day Adventists take the risk of further ethnic fragmentation by continuing to support the precedent set in 1944 when regional (black) local conferences were established?

Significant organizational changes for the black constituency were made when black representatives were added to the Oakwood College board in the fall of 1931, when the board elected James L. Moran the first black president of Oakwood College in 1932, and when H. E. Ford became business manager of the newly established Riverside Hospital. All three of these early moves set the stage for the major organizational change--regional conferences.

Eighty-two years ago the "separate but equal" concept was applied by the United States Supreme Court in the case of Plessy v. Ferguson, establishing segregated passenger cars on railroads for black and white travelers.[1] But in another landmark decision (the case of Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas), the court, headed by the late Earl Warren, struck down the former ruling by deciding that "separate" can never be "equal" in a practical sense.

[1]United States Reports: October Term, 1895. Plessy v. Ferguson, No. 211, argued April 13, 1896, decided May 18, 1896; U.S. 537 (1896).

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In the prevailing opinion, speaking of segregating children, Chief Justice Warren said, "To separate them from others of similar age and qualifications solely because of their race generates a feeling of inferiority as to their status in the community that may affect their hearts and minds in a way unlikely ever to be undone."[2] In return, separation causes white children to develop an unrealistic self-image, which causes difficulty when later they are required to cope with blacks as socio-economic equals or superiors.

The United States Supreme Court invalidated the "separate but equal" doctrine after 58 years of experience. Thirty-four years after establishing regional conferences in the North American Division. the Seventh-day Adventist world leadership has urged that the British Union avoid the creation of a black conference.[3] It seems that separatism is against the policy of the SDA Church, as well as against the law of the land in America.

2. Is cultural pluralism the best answer?

Cultural pluralism has been urged as a requirement for balance in human relations for our multiethnic society. But is the situation of American blacks really comparable to that of other ethnic groups in America? The separation of blacks from their cultural roots in Africa and subsequent exposure of slave blacks to European culture has left blacks in the United States of America with only one universally identifiable African characteristic--blackness. Even this characteristic has been modified by extensive miscegenation with the dominant white race. Therefore, the psychology of black Americans, as is true of no other ethnic minority, is essentially a psychology of relationships with the reference group--white people. The master-slave dichotomy created the relationship. Emancipation and 115 years of freedom have changed that relationship economically, but psychologically strong ties remain.

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[2]United States Reports: October Term, 1953. Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka. Opinion of the Court. 347 U.S. 483 (1954).

[3]W. R. L. Scragg, "London Churches Opt for Integration," ADVENTIST REVIEW, June 1, 1978.

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Attempts by blacks to establish identity with African roots tend to cause them to disavow Christianity as the "white man's religion." But genuine Christianity is the only possible solution to the race question--the new birth in Jesus Christ and a common new culture, similar to the resolution of the conflict between Jew and Gentile as described in Ephesians 2:11-22. Unless blacks are rooted and grounded in Bible-based Christianity, the Black Muslim religion, which fosters race hatred in the name of Allah, is the almost inevitable alternative. In the Advent Movement, cultural pluralism is the condition that Christianity was designed to correct, not accommodate (see Rev. 14:6, 7; Eph. 2:19-22). Therefore, cultural pluralism should be subordinated to cultural singularism in Jesus Christ.

3. Does the proposal for black unions conform to the criterion that freedom and equality mean acceptance of equal responsibility?

The unique psychological relationship between black and white has been aptly labeled "an American dilemma." The puzzling mixture of love and hate is the fruit of the interdependency relationship established during the slavery era.

That feeling of continuing interdependency is manifested in the thinking of black leaders who are advocating black unions. An example of this kind of rationale is reflected by a spokesman for black unions who presented a question and answer as follows:

"Question:

"How will the organization of black unions affect the operation of Oakwood College?

"Answer:

"Oakwood College should be administered by the (two) unions. However, in the light of the large income disparity between whites and blacks in America, the General Conference should be asked to continue to recognize a special responsibility to Oakwood and to appropriate directly to the school, or for the school through the combined black unions, a percentage of capital and operation funds no less than that which it is providing during the school year in which black unions are affected."

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Although the definition of the funding is unclear, the dependency relationship would be a distinct financial improvement for the black constituency in the regional conferences, which are now sharing in the contributions of their present unions to the General Conference. If the above proposal for Oakwood College is adopted, the only black constituents who would be contributing to the Oakwood College appropriation would be those blacks in unions that do not have regional conferences and blacks in white local conferences.

Equal financial support status is achievable only where self-respect exists. Do black leaders believe that the black latity will be satisfied to diminish their self-respect by accepting covert handouts from the white constituency? I believe that black church members are willing to bear their fair share of supporting the Lord's work.

4. What would be the likely impact of SDA black unions on evangelizing a black population that, according to Whitney Young,[4] is splitting into an upper segment that is making socioeconomic progress and a lower segment that is becoming distressingly more deprived?

Can we expect many in the upper segment to leave their integrated jobs and communities to fellowship in a more culturally limited worship experience? Can we expect them to witness to Christian unity and love and bring their friends to hear separatism preached in black SDA pulpits?

The roots of racism remain in our society. Wherever large, concentrated segments of blacks live in close proximity to whites, the problems appear to be worse. But our program should accommodate the full range of the black life styles and value systems rather than cater only to the culture of the lower socioeconomic segment.

5. Does the black leadership assume that black unions are necessary for advancement because of racism in the choice of union executives?

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[4]"Racism Doesn't Explain Everything," Washington Star, February 22, 1977.

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The increasing cost of elementary, secondary, and college education is a great threat to SDA members' Christian school commitments and traditions. Many low-income SDA blacks and whites are reluctantly sending their children to public schools because increasing church school tuition rates are "pricing them out of the market." The apathy of many second-, third-, and fourth-generation SDA youth toward SDA church commitment is disturbing to the SDA laity. Marriage and other family-relations problems, including separation and divorce, are increasing. The laity is looking for comfort in the church--not more controversy and conflict.

The church-wide program needs clear definition of problems and workable solutions. Such definitions and solutions are in short supply. How can black leadership expect to be recognized as qualified to lead the church-wide program unless it demonstrates sensitivity, concern, interest, and capacity to articulate impartially the needs of all Seventh-day Adventists? Is the need for black self-determination greater than the need for Seventh-day Adventist unity?

I believe that self-determination for black SDA members can better be achieved by increasing one-on-one interaction with both black and white SDA members. The nation has settled the issue and is working toward eliminating the effects of separatism. Black unions are a step backward.

If the gospel is the product that preachers sell by preaching, why do black preachers not believe that it works on the hearts of white leaders? If they do not believe it, why are they preaching it? I believe that Christ is in the hearts of thousands of black and white Seventh-day Adventists in the North American Division. I believe that God's people are ready to show the world that there is power in the blood of Jesus Christ to change human hearts to the extent that many more will fellowship together, along with the many hundred in several churches. Does the black clergy believe that prayer changes things? Black laity believes!

Black and white ministerial leadership should listen to black and white students in a 600-student SDA academy who elected a black young man as student-government president for the year 1978-1979. The youth said, "We don't have a problem; it's our parents and teachers who have the problem!"

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While the controversy over the black-union issue has been becoming more intense, a black man, Womack Rucker, Jr., started work as a junior management official at the SDA Kettering Medical Center in Ohio. Later, after graduate studies, he served as a hospital administration intern at Johns Hopkins University Hospital. After that final training session, he was appointed assistant administrator of Washington Adventist Hospital. The mobility process was conducted in an atmosphere of negotiation, good will, and trust.

This same atmosphere could be created division-wide if black and white leaders want it badly enough.

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## APPENDIX 17

### SELECTED E. G. WHITE REFERENCES REGARDING RESTORATION

Other salient references from the pen of Ellen G. White are: 1) "To restore in man the image of his maker, to bring him back to the perfection in which he was created, to promote the development of body, mind, and soul that the divine purpose in his creation might be realized--this was to be the work of redemption. This is the object of education, the great object of life." Ellen G. White, Education (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1903), pp. 15-16.

2) So evil, unrestrained, grew stronger while the appreciation and desire for good diminished. Men lost the image of God and received the impress of the demonical power by which they were controlled. The whole world was becoming a sink of corruption.

"There was but one hope for the human race--that into this mass of discordant and corrupting elements might be cast a new leaven; that there might be brought to mankind the power of a new life; that the knowledge of God might be restored to the world.

"Christ came to restore this knowledge. . . . He came to manifest the nature of His law, to reveal in His own character the beauty of holiness." Ellen G. White, Education (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1903), p. 76.

3) "The great heart of infinite love is drawn toward the sinner with boundless compassion. 'We have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.' Yes, only believe that God is your helper; he wants to restore His moral image in man." Ellen G. White, Testimonies for the Church (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1882), 5:635.

4) "The education to be secured by searching the Scriptures is an experimental knowledge of the plan of salvation. Such an education will restore the image of God in the soul. It will strengthen and fortify the mind



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against temptation, and fit the learner to become a co-worker with Christ in His mission of mercy to the world." Ellen G. White, Christ Object Lesson (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1914), p. 43.

5) "Our Lord Jesus Christ came to this world as the unwearied servant of man's necessity. . . . The burden of disease and wretchedness and sin He came to remove. It was His mission to bring men to complete restoration; He came to give them health and peace and perfection of character.

". . . From him flowed a stream of healing power, and in body and mind and soul men were made whole." Ellen G. White, Gospel Workers (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1915), p. 41.

6) "The central theme of the Bible, the theme about which every other in the whole book clusters, is the redemption plan, the restoration in the human soul of the image of God. From the first intimation of hope in the sentence pronounced in Eden to that last glorious promise of the Revelation, 'They shall see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads' (Revelation.22;4), The burden of every book and every passage of the Bible is the unfolding of this wondrous theme,--man's uplifting,--the power of God, 'which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ' [I Corinthians 15:57]." Ellen G. White, Education (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1903), pp. 125-126.

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