

# High Lights of the Departmental Reports

Continued from Bulletin No. 7

## Ministerial

By N. R. DOWER, *Secretary*

All Seventh-day Adventist ministers and Bible instructors are members of the Ministerial Association and form the primary group that the Ministerial secretary serves. The responsibilities of the Association include the spiritual growth, the professional training, and development of the minister, as well as the coordination of evangelism throughout the world. It deals with the minister as shepherd, soul winner, and as a trainer of church members in soul-saving capacities.

In its service to the ministers it provides meaningful help through the Tape-of-the-Month program; *The Ministry* magazine, a professional journal that includes sections for ministers' wives and health workers; Century 21 and other health-related aids in evangelism; the Academy of Adventist Ministers, a continuing education program; workshops; revivals; evangelistic campaigns; workers' meetings and institutes. It has been assigned a leading role in the call to repentance, revival, and reformation, which has especially challenged the church in the past several years.

During the five-year period, 1970-1974, the ministers of the church came within about 30,000 of baptizing a million souls. Approximately 1,400 new churches were organized. The largest year ever in soul winning was 1974, with about 230,000 baptized. In the achievement of these results numerous evangelistic campaigns have been held by ministers, laymen, and youth. Christian education has produced a good harvest in young people baptized through the work of consecrated teachers. Our Sabbath schools have served significantly as a holding agent for church members, because of the nature of Bible study and mission emphasis. And the Sabbath school has also become increasingly effective in its soul-winning role.

Total apostasies and missing members for the period present a staggering revelation and challenge to the ministry and membership of the church. With the final report of 1974 still not complete, we are chagrined by the fact that we will show a total loss in these two areas of about 300,000 precious souls. That means that in five years we have lost the equivalent of a whole world division, such as the Far East or Trans-Africa, or nearly all of South America. If all were dropped from our fellowship who are not even pretending to practice the truth our losses would doubtless be almost twice that number. This presents to both ministers and members a tremendous responsibility to seek for the straying and lost sheep within our homes, communities, and churches.

During the past five years the Ministerial Association staff has conducted many evangelistic campaigns, field schools of evangelism, institutes, and workshops in different parts of the world. It has joined with the Seminary in conducting Extension Schools for ministers in many countries and divisions, and it has had the responsibility of coordinating the soul-winning program of the church through various "mission" programs.

Beginning shortly is a pilot program in which we shall attempt to reach ministers of other denominations with this message through a two-year subscription to *The Ministry* magazine. This project known as P.R.E.A.C.H. (Project for Reaching Every Active Clergyman at Home) will initially involve about 25,000 ministers in the Columbia Union. It is hoped that it will be so well received that all ministers will soon be included, as we seek to follow the counsel that the messenger of

the Lord has given us—to work and pray for the shepherds who at present are taking care of so many of God's children still in other churches.

It is difficult to measure the spiritual condition of the church as a whole. The haunting question comes again and again to the minister's mind, "How many of my dear people are ready for the coming of the Lord?" If our spiritual growth does not far exceed our numerical growth we have accomplished very little of lasting value. We do, however, rejoice in the evidences that are being seen in many places among both young and old, that a revival of true godliness is beginning to manifest itself.

Let all of our ministers determine anew to feed the flock, to guard and protect it against its enemies, and actively to train and involve its full resources in its special mission of preparing a people for the coming of Jesus Christ.

## North American Regional

By H. D. SINGLETON, *Director*

This Department is concerned with the development of churches and institutions among the 25 million North Americans who have African ancestry.

There are churches in the eight local Regional conferences, the Pacific Union, the North Pacific Union, Canada, and Bermuda dedicated primarily to serving this group of Seventh-day Adventists. Of course, since church membership is open to all, there are thousands of blacks holding membership in other churches that are not mainly oriented to the race.

The challenge of the 25 million persons this Department considers its responsibility to warn of Christ's coming is constantly before the 500 churches and more than 400 ministers and Bible instructors, 300 literature evangelists, 350 church school teachers, as well as other denominational workers and laity.

The large city populations, many of which are heavily black, call for new and imaginative methods. In recent years, in several of the big cities new smaller companies of believers are being organized. These are fostered many times by members from the larger congregations. We believe this will result in putting a witness in many neighborhoods, and thus greatly accelerate the spread of the gospel.

In the biracial climate of the American past, it was natural that as the work among the Afro-Americans developed, institutions especially for them would come into being. Ellen White early saw these needs and called for the establishment of educational and medical work. Oakwood College in Huntsville, Alabama, and Riverside Hospital in Nashville, Tennessee, were among the first established.

### Message Magazine

*Message Magazine* is a journal published by the Southern Publishing Association beamed to the black population. With a subscription list of about 70,000, and often a circulation of 300,000 to 400,000 of a particular issue, the publication has meant much to our evangelistic thrust. Currently W. R. Robinson is the editor.

### Pine Forge Academy

Pine Forge Academy is the only other boarding school besides Oakwood College, and it is supported jointly by the Allegheny East and West conferences.

It is situated on a 575-acre tract of land a few miles from Pottstown, Pennsylvania, in an ideal rural setting for such an institution.

### Breath of Life

The newest project to influence the millions of black people toward God is known as the Breath of Life TV program. This

program has offices in the new Seventh-day Adventist Radio, Television, and Film Center, which presently houses the Faith for Today and It Is Written television programs.

The first phase of the project will produce 13 evangelistic programs to be presented over several stations. The speaker on this program is C. D. Brooks, and the director is Walter Arties.

#### Inner-City Services

One of the high lights of this quinquennium concerns the inner-city services of the General Conference, which are under the direction of W. W. Fordham, the associate secretary of the Regional Department.

In 1970 the General Conference gave specific help to the less fortunate and neglected people in our cities in North America. Consequently, a concentrated effort was launched in behalf of the thousands of underprivileged blacks, whites, and destitute Spanish-speaking Americans.

During the past five years more than 2 million dollars has been appropriated toward this ministry of loving concern, resulting in the operation of the variety of services that are relevant to the needs of the communities, such as STOP and health screening.

*The STOP program*, the Society for Training People in Trouble. The ever-increasing crime rate, particularly among youth, makes us aware of the need to reach as many as possible before they become hardened criminals. Designed to help solve the ever-increasing problem of crime, the STOP program is aimed at helping youth on probation. The probation plan calls for work with the individual before he is locked up. Hopefully, because he has received help to shape his environment, he will not have to go to prison, where his environment will shape him. Members of the church are invited to work with the probation court as volunteer probation officers. As a result of this program, many young people have been saved from a life of crime and are now members of the church.

*Health-screening programs.* As a result of an appropriation of approximately \$200,000 during this quinquennium, scores of health-screening vans are now crisscrossing America, providing screening for hypertension, glaucoma, diabetes, and sickle-cell anemia. In addition, complete dental services are now offered to the poor in many deprived areas. Thousands throughout North America have expressed deep appreciation



Not all General Conference business is carried on in the official business sessions. Three delegates from GC headquarters confer at lunchtime: Ernest H. J. Steed and C. D. Watson, seated, both of the Temperance Department, and Caris H. Lauda, standing. Elder Watson has just been elected president of the Afro-Mideast Division.

for these services, and many are now church members as a result of this first contact through the screening ministry.

Throughout North America we are happy to report that the church's image has been changed drastically for the better as a result of the many services that are now being channeled through the inner-city services of the General Conference.

#### Conclusion

In 1918, about the time my parents were baptized, every twenty-fifth Seventh-day Adventist in North America was black.

In 1975 one member in every five in North America is black. God has prospered His work. Growth from about 20 black SDA's in 1890 to 100,000 in this division is marvelous to behold.

In 1891 we possessed one small building. Today property devoted to this work is worth \$40 million. But the need is great. We cannot relax. We must do greater exploits. Twenty-five million black people beckon, "Come over and help us." Under God they shall be helped.

## Public Affairs and Religious Liberty

By MARVIN E. LOEWEN, *Director*

Seventh-day Adventists, because of their understanding of prophecy, have a special interest in religious liberty. For 87 years this Religious Liberty Department has existed and has endeavored to teach and uphold the principles of freedom. This legacy has come to us from staunch defenders of truth, who through the years have met the continual attempts of Satan to restrict the freedoms of men. It is our privilege and responsibility to accept this gift as a sacred trust and to continue to oppose every effort made to ensnare and enslave the consciences of men. It is still true that "eternal vigilance is the price of liberty."

In the five years since the last General Conference session, threats to religious liberty have multiplied beyond all expectation. Perhaps the greatest increase has been in the field of labor-union problems. This is true in several countries, but especially in the United States. Trade-union problems have demanded a great deal of the time of W. M. Adams, who is responsible for the North American Division religious liberty interests. As individuals have taken a conscientious stand against union membership, many have sought relief through government agencies or through the courts. The church has stood by the side of such members to safeguard their rights of conscience.

Frequently legislation has been proposed in State legislatures or in the national Congress that has afforded opportunities to present to legislative leaders the principles of individual liberty, the rights of individual conscience. Many labor leaders have agreed to the requests of individual members and permitted them to earn a livelihood without becoming a union member.

Congress passed legislation allowing unionization of hospitals in 1974. Because of representations made by us, a conscience clause was inserted, permitting hospital workers opposed to joining a union, because of religious conviction, to refrain from joining.

In Puerto Rico intervention by this department secured a change in the bylaws, exempting Seventh-day Adventist nurses from union membership.

In the Australasian Division a satisfactory arrangement has been worked out with the Government and the labor union to protect the interests of those conscientiously opposed to union membership.

The financial and political power of unions increases year by year. Many professional organizations, such as teachers