

PIRATES OF PRIVILEGE

By Dr. Walter Rea / December 1984

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EDITOR'S NOTE

Walter Rea, the author of the block-buster anti-Ellen G. White book, *The White Lie* (1982-1983), found himself in an unusual situation where he could monitor the developing financial corruption of the Seventh-day Adventist Church's Davenport Scandal. Then, in an amazing set of circumstances, he found himself in possession of a copy of Dr. Donald Davenport's divorce decree. Dr. Davenport's estranged wife happened to attend the SDA Church. Dr. Rea was pastoring at the time, and, seeking his guidance in the matter, she showed him the decree. This legal document provided, among other things, a list of Dr. Davenport's many creditors, which included an astonishing number of Church entities, leaders, and other privileged Adventists, including more than one General Conference president and six union conference presidents. The Church and the Church's leaders who invested with Dr. Davenport lost something like 77 million dollars-- a huge sum of money in the late 1970's and early 1980's-- in this Ponzi scandal.

Pirates of Privilege, which reveals the nearly unbelievable details of this sordid chapter in the history of Adventism, was never published. The Seventh-day Adventist Church, when it fired Rea, took away his retirement benefits. Church leaders would like the world to believe the reason for his firing was his exposure of Ellen White's massive plagiarism, but we know now that it was as much for his exposure of SDA corruption as it was for his treatment of Ellen White. He was 60 years of age when his employment with the Church was terminated, and by then he had given many decades of service to the Church. Rea took the Church to court and won back his retirement benefits, but he was forced to agree not to publish *Pirates of Privilege* to secure that income. Thus, in a very real sense, every penny of retirement benefits Rea has received from the Church in the decades since represents "hush money" paid out to silence the story of Adventist corruption and its scandalous squandering of the Church's money. Most of the millions of dollars lost by Adventist leaders in the Davenport Scandal came to the Church in the form of tithe money sacrificially given to the Church by Adventist believers who were struggling to get from one paycheck to another. *Pirates of Privilege* shows Adventist leaders operating as if they do not believe there is a Heaven to win or a Hell to shun, much less than in the Church's own special teachings about the Sabbath, the Investigative Judgment, or the divine inspiration of Ellen White. Whether her writings were inspired by God or not, these leaders repeatedly disregarded her specific counsels in regard to both the handling of the tithe monies and of the Church's investment practices in general.

Pirates of Privilege has been available for many years on the World Wide Web in the form of a document that was produced by scanning a copy of the book's type-written manuscript with an OCR program. The program used for this purpose did not recognize many of the characters correctly, and most formatting of paragraphs and charts was lost in the process. I was surprised to learn that I could obtain a printed and spiral-bound copy of Dr. Rea's original type-written manuscript from Dr. Desmond Ford's Good News Unlimited ministry in Australia. By comparing the printed copy of the original manuscript with the OCR-scanned electronic copy, I was able to create a WORD file which is complete. This process, although laborious, took far less time than it would have taken to re-type the entire book.

The printed version of *Pirates of Privilege* is a facsimile of what represented a rough draft that would have gone through additional revisions before being submitted to a publisher. A final draft was obviously not prepared because the hope of publishing the book was immediately squelched by the court agreement. There were some typographical errors in this rough draft. In most cases I have chosen to correct such errors. Some mistakes may have crept into this restored version due to errors I may have made during the editing process. In a few cases I have provided notes to explain some of editing decisions I have made.

CHAPTER I

WHO RUNS THE STORE?

The Wall Street Journal called him "one of the kings of the nation's postal landlords. . . . Dr. Davenport, the Long Beach Post Office collector, claims neither rich yield nor tax benefits motivated him. It's the bidding that appeals to him, he says. 'I love to get in just barely under the next guy.'" ¹

That may have been so, but when his empire collapsed in 1982, millions were missing in the 69-70 million dollar fraud and neither Davenport nor his wife would tell the court where they had spent or sent their part of the millions. Also, the real landlord of those post offices turned out to be the Seventh-day Adventist Church with several hundred of its leaders and divines helping the Doctor launder his actions and money through the church's laundry.²

It is an incredible story, even for a people who had just been caught with its prophet lying about her gifts and her material.³ It ranks in size with the Catholic Church financial scandal and perhaps would have received greater attention if both stories had not broken in the news at about the same time. The Doctor and his partner, the church, fleeced banks, insurance companies, financial institutions, the Internal Revenue Service and the elderly poor of the church out of millions; yet no one involved in the crime was fined, no one went to jail and no one of significance was fired from his job, even though the theft of a loaf of bread or a stolen bike can and does bring a fine or prison sentence.

The Doctor still drives his Mercedes 380SL and the church still talks about holiness, while its divines implicated in the caper still retain their same positions, still maintain their innocence and still continue to exercise authority and control over the purse strings of its members.

The detailing of Davenport's activities is bizarre enough in itself, but compared to the undercover moves of the divines of the Adventist Church, they pale into insignificance. To understand them fully and to see the enormity of the deceit practiced and the fraud participated in by the church and its leaders and clergy, one must realize the claims of those clerics and their church.

First it must be noted that these leaders were responsible for keeping before the membership the shortness of earth's time and history. Every world event, great or small, was noted by them as a sign of the end. This could often take a monthly or yearly apocalyptic view. Yet these same leaders were investing their personal money as well as the church's in Post Office leases that could and often did run to twenty and even thirty years in length, with no possibility of cancellation. Did these men really believe what they preached to others that each day, week, month or year might bring the end of all things?

These leaders were foremost in preaching the poverty of Christ, at least for others. When the bankruptcy creditor list was released it was revealed that many of those men had invested for themselves or for their church, not thousands or tens of thousands, but even hundreds of thousands and millions. Where did these men of the vow of poverty for themselves and their church get this kind of money? Were they using church funds or their own personal use and then repaying it after they collected the interest on those funds? Were federal taxes paid on their personal amounts or did they wash their money, along with the church's so that no tax was paid? None of these questions have ever been answered publically.

The church and its leaders teach that its clergy should have no conflict of interest while in service to its people. Yet the evidence will and does show that most of the investors speculating with the church's money had personal amounts invested with that same man who was either a partner for the church or a vendor with it. Often the clerics would receive "finder's fees" for merely transferring the church's money from one account of the church to another of Davenport's, both of which they either controlled by their vote or actions; or, as evidence showed at the court hearing, they used joint accounts with the Doctor for these transactions.

For years the church has opposed speculation by its members. It has talked against investment in the stock market, while investing and losing millions in it. It has preached that all surplus funds, both personal and collective, should be used to "finish the work" of the church, not be put at risk for individual profit. Yet time and evidence has shown that Davenport and the way he had the divines did his business was one of the greatest risks that the church could have taken. Many of its leaders knew this, but, like players in musical chairs, believed they could get out before the collapse came, which some actually did.

There is no doubt that crimes were committed, serious crimes for which severe penalties could be assessed. Judge Finney, one of the members of a committee appointed to study the afterglow of the Davenport matter, stated that if some of the culprits in the Davenport scandal had appeared in his court they would and could have ended up with prison sentences.⁴ How then could such events come to pass in a church whose members believe that their leaders should and do represent Christ and whose characters they believe, when perfected in God's sight, will bring the end of all earthly time? Were these simple holy men, innocently led to their embarrassment by a cunning con man, as some would have the public believe, or were these leaders and divines part of a vast crime of great magnitude?

The detail of facts is not pleasant but as I stated in *The White Lie* these facts are presented here for all those that would rather believe a bitter truth about their church than a sweet lie. A crime was committed by all those leaders and individuals who were involved with, or knew of, the Davenport matter. To involve one's self in fraud, conflict of interest, manipulation or cover up is a crime. Even the failure to report a crime is a crime in many instances. The fact that the Davenport matter was and continues to be hid from public or private view shows clearly that those involved in or with knowledge of events recognized they were involved in a crime, else why should they hide the facts of their knowledge or involvement?

Finally, it is glaringly clear that the hypocrisy of the Davenport debacle equals the hypocrisy of the Ellen G. White lie. Adventists teach that they above all others fashion their lives and actions by the writings and counsels of their prophet, Ellen G. White, yet the Davenport fiasco went against all the counsel she ever gave whether that counsel was "inspired" or not. With respect to other areas of her advice, the world could plainly see that the leaders of her church only give lip service to her writings for themselves, while seeking to enforce it upon their membership. Discipline, the key and essence of the writings of Ellen White, was completely lacking for the leaders in the Davenport matter."

Some might be tempted to reason that enough has been written and explained about the church's involvement with Dr. Davenport and that the sooner the whole matter dies out the better for all concerned including the church and those leaders who would like to cover their trail. Those who reason thus overlook several things:

1. Nothing has really changed in Adventism except the cosmetics of the system. Most of those same men are in the same positions, doing the same things as they had done before.
2. There is no evidence that real change will come. The crimes committed by the clergy of the church were moral and spiritual crimes and as yet there have been no sincere confessions of those crimes. After all, in spiritual matters the church itself teaches that the leopard cannot change its spots or the Ethiopian his skin; no more can those who are accustomed to do evil change.⁵ All the facts show that those divines had been accustomed to doing evil for a very long time.
3. Some of the names that were made public and received minor embarrassment were only functionaries, while some of the big names and fish got away. It would have been better for all to be brought to the bar of justice in some court of law where the innocent could have been cleared and the guilty punished.
4. Many voices were raised for years against the practices of the church and its divines. These individuals should at least be recognized for the honest heroic part they played and how they suffered for their honesty.
5. Finally, people both inside and outside of Adventism should be given at least the opportunity to rethink their involvement emotionally, theologically, and financially in a system where those same men connected with Davenport still make the church's decisions in these other areas of involvement.

In an article entitled "Bad Business: The Davenport Fiasco," Tom Dybdahl, writing for *Spectrum*, does a fine job of reconstructing the backdrop that led to the Davenport connections and the Adventist church. He said:

Davenport himself was born in Bakersfield, California, in 1913. His father was an Adventist doctor who had been a pioneer missionary to China. Young Donald decided to follow in his dad's footsteps, and in 1940 he graduated with an M.D. degree from the College of Medical Evangelists in Loma Linda.

Early in his career as a general surgeon, Davenport developed a little sideline - building post offices. "I was tired of standing in line for packages," he told the Wall Street Journal in 1968, "so I asked the fellow why they didn't build a bigger building. He said, 'Why don't you?' and I said I couldn't, it was the government's. He said I could - so I did."⁶

It made a good story in the Journal but Donald was far more interested in building post offices than just for collecting stamps or saving time. It was very clear to those involved with the Doctor that his purpose was to make money first for himself, and, if any was left over, for others and the church. Secondly, he had set up his program to avoid taxes, and was suggesting shelters, and said so in a letter to his clients in 1968:

There are two expressions which come to my mind which have been used by big business people and the Internal Revenue Service and they are as follows:

1. Tax "avoidance" is perfectly legal.
2. Tax "evasion" is perfectly illegal.

. . . Several of you folk have quite a sizable account with me and the interest on this, coupled with your income, has put some of you in a very high tax bracket and this has taken away a lot of the benefits of this program and so I have been on the search for something which I think would help and I have been in touch with the Internal Revenue Service, Taxpayer's Office, Los Angeles, and I have come up with a plan which is perfectly legitimate, perfectly legal and will help some of you, . . .⁷

Several times in the letter he tells his investors what a wonderful fellow he is and why he is doing all this for them:

This is what I propose to do now. I will send a letter to each one of you. It may be just in the form of a card, advising you how much interest you could (he supplied the underline) receive, if you elected to have me send you a check. . . . ~ . you may say you do not want any of that money. Then, I will not send you a check. I will keep a record for you and that interest will accrue and will bear interest also so when you do decide to receive it, you will receive the interest you have deferred plus the interest which has accumulated on that money.⁸ (Ed. note: This footnote numbering is not in the original manuscript. It is my best guess at what the writer intended.)

. . . I would state sometime around the 1st of October, you will receive a letter from me telling you what you could have earned if you elected (again underline supplied by Davenport) to take your interest this year and then it is your obligation to tell me if you want all of the money, part of the money or none of the money.⁹

No wonder with the ability to write letters like that, one of the attorneys said after reading it that "that fellow Davenport comes across as a hell of a guy!"

But he wasn't fooling everybody. By the time 1978 rolled around he had improved his technique, but the game was the same, only more sophisticated eyes were reading his mail. He wrote Attorney Jerry Wiley at the USC Law Center the following:

Dear Dr. Wiley,

Dr. Raymond Moore of the Hewitt Research Foundation asked me to send you a copy of the letter which I sent out regarding the 16% special purpose account.

I think that you will find this letter self explanatory and if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. ¹⁰

In his letter he was soliciting funds, though he denied it, but he does lay down the policy whereby he again can make the people rich by "unusual opportunity" for one year and it paid very excellent returns. But Wiley was asking questions and in his return letter of January 6, 1978 he lays them out:

A. My first concern is whether it is legal for us to receive 16% per annum on a loan in California. . . .

B. . . . I would want to know who has access to the securities; what the securities are; and whether they have been pledged for any other collateral activities. . . .

C. . . . Additionally, I suppose a thorough fuduciary (sic) would ask for references of satisfied prior lenders to contact as well. ¹¹

Davenport's response was a classic. It said:

This letter is in response to your recent inquiry about loaning me some money for the 16% special purpose project. I wish to advise you that just this morning I have received all of the funds that I wish to have allocated to this project. So, I will not be in the market for any more funds. ¹²

The rest of the short letter was full of chattiness which said either nothing or everything to those who read it. Wiley was more concerned for the church than he was concerned legally. He was a church elder, member of the Loma Linda board, chairman of several church boards, and he knew from these experiences trouble lay ahead. The *Spectrum* Journal reported:

About the same time, Jerry Wiley, an Adventist attorney and currently an associate dean at the University of Southern California law school looked into the doctor's business affairs for three clients who were having difficulty recovering their money. He came up with a rather startling analysis: Davenport's empire was an elaborate scheme, which would work only as long as there was cash from new investors coming in to cover the payments to old investors. He shared his findings with Neal Wilson, then president of the North American Division. Wilson expressed considerable doubt that anything was wrong, but he promised to take up the matter with Kenneth Emmerson, the General Conference treasurer, and Cree Sandefur, Pacific Union Conference president. But again, nothing seemed to change. ¹³

Neal Wilson's hearing did not seem to improve after he was elevated to the office of General Conference President. Jerry Wiley wrote again to him on March 18, 1980 the following:

On another matter, you will recall that some years ago I came to you with the problem of Dr. Davenport. The people calling me, and others in Southern California, have led me to believe that that issue has now reached crisis proportions. Once again, I offer my services to the church in helping to solve this problem even at this late date. . . .While I will be in Dallas briefly during the General Conference session, I expect you will be entirely too busy to have time for quiet reflective talk on the Davenport matter, so I offer my services at some other time if you wish. ¹⁴

Still, without hearing from Wilson, another letter was sent in May of that year.

On another matter, the Tennessee Conference appears to be getting extraordinarily poor legal advice in terms of the responsibility of trust organizations and trustees for the investment of funds. This issue undoubtedly arises out of

the Davenport matter. If there is any way in which I can be of service on either of these items, please do not hesitate to call on me.¹⁵

Almost as if it were deliberate, the only thing that came from headquarters and Wilson was silence. Still Jerry tried one more time by calling, but the General Conference was non-attentive. Perhaps they still remembered the letter Wiley had sent to President Harold Calkins of the Southern California Conference in 1976, where he said as strong as he could:

As you may recall, both Robert M. Peterson, Esquire, and I have expressed detailed concerns about the legal structure, and management of the Southern California Conference's Trusts and Deferred Giving Programs as operated by the Association. . . Please note the next to the last paragraph in the left hand column concerning the investigation launched by the Oregon attorney-general's office. Unless the Association has changed its operating practices considerable, we are no less vulnerable today then we were 18 months ago.¹⁶

It is hard, now that events have taken their course, not to believe that Wilson did not want to take any action in the Davenport matter and did not until events, which were partly of his own making, overtook him.

It was not just Jerry Wiley who was trying to get Neal Wilson's attention in the Davenport matter. Men high up in his own office were knocking at his door without much success. Elder Kenneth Emmerson, treasurer of the General Conference, had been fighting a losing battle with Robert Pierson, former President of the General Conference, who, it turned out, was a friend and creditor of Davenport. In a footnote of Spectrum Vol. 12, it was reported:

As far back as September 1967, the General Conference treasury became concerned, leading Emmerson to ask Robert Osburn, as assistant treasurer, to investigate church investments with Davenport. During the years following, in numerous treasurers' councils, trust services advisory meetings, the treasury insisted that church organizations follow established guidelines. Unfortunately, although at least one union began withdrawing its investments, many others simply ignored the guidelines. Emmerson's letter of April 6, 1979 to W. J. Blacker, Loma Linda University vice president for financial affairs, reflects a decade of treasury's continuing concern with Davenport. Noting that he had recently heard that Davenport was approaching Loma Linda regarding an investment "scheme," Emmerson wrote: "To put it mildly, I was alarmed, concerned and almost angered over the thought that anyone at Loma Linda University would even entertain such an approach . . ." Interestingly, Loma Linda University President V. Norskov Olsen was a friend - and creditor - of Davenport.¹⁷

In a paper entitled "A Tale of Three Presidents, An Adventist Tragedy", by a Jack Eartherall, written in June of 1982, President V. Norskov Olsen is given a section where his friendly relationship with Dr. Davenport is given airing. It would seem from the facts that Olsen received special treatment as well as special interest while serving in the interest of both the Medical School and Dr. Davenport. According to the reports of the court prepared by the bankruptcy court, Davenport owes Olsen \$45, 000 in principal and a disputed amount of interest. What he seems to have gotten for that investment was shown in a letter from Davenport to Elder Burt Pooley, treasurer of the Montana Conference, in which he said:

I had several calls from Loma Linda University from the president and the comptroller wanting me to help them get a \$7,000,000 to \$10,000,000 line of credit because their payments on Medicare and medical (sic) are late and it is causing them all kinds of problems."¹⁸

Emmerson, the treasurer of the General Conference, had received a letter from me on February 16, 1979, just prior to his letter to Loma Linda and Elder Blacker. In it I said:

Yesterday one of my leading laymen came to me about the Don Davenport matter and the involvement of the church. It is now clear that it is becoming more and more known that there are serious problems in this area. I am sending you a copy of a letter that I sent to the

President of the General Conference about the matter. I had hope by calling the attention of the church to its delicate position that perhaps the men involved would draw back and encourage others to do likewise. This has not been the case. In fact just the opposite has been true and we seem, in some cases, to be encouraging disaster. While the list I presented was an old one, the new list is even more expansive and involved on a personal level, while the church's role has not been abated and the usages of funds in the matter continue to grow in some areas. The total amounts of both personal and denominational monies would, I believe, horrify the most liberal of our members, while the collateral risk escalates. I have wondered since writing, if the persons in the work that are on the list and have encouraged others to invest, as well as involving the Conference, are willing to guarantee the risk factor with the less sophisticated investors, who, through confidence in the brethren, have risked part if not all of their savings in this venture.

It would seem the place of the Church to monitor its own actions and its own personnel before other agencies are forced to do it for us. If at this time, with the problems we are having in religion and sects in California, the S.E.C., the I.R.S. and the State Attorney Generals Office should become involved, the implications could be enormous for the church.

Inasmuch as it all started here in California and in this Union, it might be well if you would contact Jerry Wiley, the attorney on the Loma Linda Board, a man that has been concerned for some time about this affair and has expressed to Church officials these concerns. It would seem that time is not our ally, and to do little or nothing could be disastrous.¹⁹

We may never know if my letter to Emmerson affected his thinking and his letter to Elder Blacker of Loma Linda, but we do know that the letter I wrote affected his thinking because he wrote to my president, Harold Calkins, on April 10 of that year and sent Jerry Wiley and me a copy. To Harold Calkins, he said:

I have read with a great deal of interest the correspondence between you and Walter T. Rea, and I have been constrained to write just a few lines to you inasmuch as he mentions me in the second paragraph of his letter to you under the date of April 3. I presume he is referring to the correspondence we had as it might concern Dr. Don Davenport.

I am entirely sympathetic with him and his position as concerns Dr. Davenport; and certainly, Harold, both you and I are concerned over the Loma Linda University development program as well as the Paradise Spa. Thankfully, it looks as though the Paradise Spa situation will be cleared up rather shortly, and I am sure all of us are going to have a praise service to the Lord once that has finally been taken care of. It is most unfortunate that some workers in the past have been so imprudent and lack concern that they would get an institution into the situation that the University found itself about the time that some of us were taking over our present responsibilities.²⁰

This part of the Emmerson letter holds a lot of fascination for me because of the reference to the Paradise Spa. Elder Blacker of that same Loma Linda and I had had a run-in about that business before the letter from Emmerson. On my vacation in Tennessee a year or two before, I had mentioned the Spa in a sermon in one of the churches. In the audience was a retired General Conference under-treasurer, and at the mention of the spa he had spoken out rather loudly "that's not true, brother," and I said that it was true and continued with the sermon. Upon returning to my home in California, Elder Blacker, then the President of the Pacific Union, sent for me and showed me a letter he had received from that retired treasurer. It said that he thought I was dangerous and should be stopped from saying things about the spa. I had taken several laymen with me and Elder Blacker proceeded to apologize for the spa. It was true, he admitted, that women, wine and song had been rumored to be connected with it, but that President Pierson had asked that the saloon be closed on Saturday, the Adventist Sabbath, which he somehow felt was a step forward. That spa had been giving the church a lot of trouble for some time-- some thought that it was tantamount to an Adventist brothel and that the reason the church did not give it away or shut it down was that it might put some of our girls out of work. Davenport even got into the act when he wrote:

I know very well about the millions of dollars that were spent for the Spa in Las Vegas and that too has been swept under the carpet as well as it could be by the Church's religious broom. I have been asked to help unload that deal out there and I have done the best I can and it is impossible, but nobody says anything about that.²¹

Blacker and I had clashed on other things. One was the information I received that he and some of his cronies from the Union had just happened to buy an orange grove which just happened to be next to the land that just happened to be given free to the State of California where the new Veterans Hospital stands in Loma Linda. It just happened that the group or committee that gave that land to the State that just happened to be next to Blacker's land included Elder Blacker. All of this was recorded in the San Bernardino Records Office. When I asked for an explanation, I was assured that it just happened that way and not much money was made in the conflict of interest deal. It was therefore no wonder to me that Blacker of Loma Linda did not or could not understand Emmerson's concern about the Davenport conflict of interest problem.

The rest of Emmerson's letter reveals how little attention the General Conference and Wilson was paying to him or how far gone the system was in matters of morality as Emmerson conceived of it or both:

Now concerning Dr. Davenport. Recently I had a meeting with the Southern Union brethren concerning this particular activity as well as with the North Pacific Union men; and most recently I had the opportunity of talking with the Officers of Loma Linda University on this matter. As of the present moment Loma Linda University is not involved with Dr. Don Davenport in any way. However, I had heard that they had made some overtures to the Doctor and were even, as I understood it, giving some consideration to becoming involved. I took the opportunity to write a very strong and straight letter to the Vice President for Financial Affairs, sending copies to the Board Chairman, the University President, and two or three of my colleagues. In the letter I stated that they should have nothing whatsoever to do with Dr. Davenport or any of his financial "schemes." I further pointed out to them that if this should occur, they should expect a very strong reaction from the General Conference and that it would, without a doubt, very seriously affect the financial backing of the General Conference to Loma Linda University. I pointed out that they should have no dealings whatsoever-- financial or otherwise-- with the Doctor; and although I did not explain why in the letter, I did have the opportunity to talk personally with these brethren and explain why.²²

Once again in the letter he said that he appreciated very much the position I had taken concerning Dr. Davenport, but at the end said, "It is the operating committees and boards that will have to take the actions needed to disassociate themselves from their relationships with Dr. Davenport and his program."²³ It was an interesting letter in the light of what was to continue and especially a later letter that Emmerson signed along with Wilson and Bradford. It was issued a few months after his letter about me, dated August 10, 1979 and was sent to Union Conference presidents and treasurers, General Conference department heads and chief financial officers of the North American Division. It started by saying:

Investigation and discovery procedures have been initiated by certain people to determine what relationship exists between the Seventh-day Adventist Church organization and Dr. Donald Davenport. Demands have been made that pressure be exerted upon leadership and organizations to withdraw immediately from any involvement that may be discovered. The General Conference is being asked to make full disclosure and issue a public statement as to what extent the Church is involved by way of investments in the Davenport post office and telephone company projects. AS WE HAVE CAREFULLY LOOKED AT THIS MATTER, WE DO NOT FEEL THIS IS PRUDENT OR NECESSARY AT THIS TIME. (Emphasis supplied) Up to this time we have not felt to get entangled in this controversy, . . . We do not wish to overreact even at this date . . .²⁴

The real question is why would Emmerson write to Calkins in the early part of the year stating that he was against Davenport involvement on any church level, that all should stay out of it or get out of it and then a few months later sign along with Wilson and Bradford a letter toning down this position. Was the first letter to Calkins and me only a C.Y.A. letter (as attorneys say "Cover Your Ass Letter") in case things went wrong in the future? Or was he

pressured, because of position, by others in the General Conference to go along with a softer approach, which was actually the approach taken later when the whole matter came to a head?

CHAPTER I FOOTNOTES

1. Noel Epstein, "Buying Post Offices is Profitable Ploy, Many Investors Find," *The Wall Street Journal* (February 15, 1968), Eastern Edition, p. 1.
2. Art Wong and James Nickles, "After the Fall: An Adventist's Bankrupt Empire," *The Sunday Sun*, San Bernardino, California, (4 articles May 30, 31, June 1, 2, 1982).
3. Richard N. Ostling, "The Church of Liberal Borrowings," *Time Magazine*, (August 2, 1982) p. 49; Kenneth A. Briggs, "7th-Day Adventists Face Change and Dissent," *New York Times*, (November 6, 1982) p. 1.
4. Adventist Forum, Pleasant Hills Church, Pleasant Hills, California, 1984.
5. Jeremiah 13:23.
6. Tom Dybdahl, "Bad Business: The Davenport Fiasco," *Spectrum*, Vol. 12, No. 1, (September, 1981) p. 51.
7. Donald J. Davenport to Dear Friends, September 19, 1968, p. 1.
8. Ibid., pp. 2-4.
9. Ibid., pp. 3-5.
10. Donald J. Davenport to Attorney Jerry Wiley, January 4, 1978.
11. Wiley to Davenport, January 6, 1978.
12. Davenport to Dr Raymond Moore, (cc to Jerry Wiley) January' 6, 1978.
13. Tom Dybdahl, "Bad Business: The Davenport Fiasco," *Spectrum*, Vol.12, No. 1, (September, 1981) p. 53.
14. Attorney Wiley to Neal Wilson, March 18, 1980.
15. Wiley To Wilson, May 16, 1980.
16. Wiley to Harold Calkins, October 12, 1976.
17. Tom Dybdahl, "Bad Business: The Davenport Fiasco," *Spectrum*, Vol. 12, no. 1, (September, 1981) p. 53.
18. Jack Eartherail, "A Tale of Three Presidents, An Adventist Tragedy," (June, 1982).
19. Walter Rea to Kenneth H. Emmerson, February 16, 1979, p. 1
20. Emmerson to Harold Calkins, April 10, 1979.
21. Davenport to Robert H. Pierson, April 18, 1977.
22. Emmerson to Harold Calkins, April 10, 1979, p. 1
23. Ibid., p. 2.

24. General Conference letter from Neal Wilson, C.E. Bradford, Kenneth H. Emmerson, M.E. Kemmerer to Union Conference Presidents and Treasurers, General Conference Institutions Heads and Chief Financial Officers, North American Division, August 10, 1979.

CHAPTER II DAVENPORT AND THE DIVINES

It was very clear to me by the time of Emmerson's letter in 1979 to my President, Elder Harold Calkins, that neither he nor Wilson nor the General Conference committees would do anything effective to stop events in the Davenport matter. The reason was that I had discovered direct evidence of corruption in the church. It was on such a large scale that it was hard for me to comprehend it.

At the first of the year of 1976 I had been appointed pastor of the Long Beach church, although it would be more accurate to say I had been exiled by Elder Calkins to that position. My name had been put in nomination in the constituency of 1975 for three positions, President, Treasurer and Secretary of the Conference. The nominating [publicly to accept it. ¹ After talking with the Union President, Cree Sandefur, and his treasurer, Robert Cone, I came to the conclusion that they did not want me to accept the position and were not willing to give me their support. It wasn't until the following year and after the move to Long Beach that I learned the reason why.

After the nomination, and public refusal by me, of the position of treasurer of the Conference, Harold Calkins decided that I needed a move. As was his custom he tried to shift me from the center of political activity in the metropolitan area, but I kept refusing the calls he offered. Calkins, a very insecure leader, had managed to rid himself of most of the strong men in the conference he felt threatened by. He was trying to make sure I was the last to go. My name had appeared along with his in almost every election, and this he felt should be changed. Long Beach was open, a church that had once been a strong center but was on the decline and had been for many years. So I was exiled to the border of the conference where he felt I would have less influence in Conference affairs. What he did not anticipate was that Long Beach, the former home of Dr. Davenport and Elder Cree Sandefur, was to be the beginning of the end for me and also the opening of Pandora's Box of fraud, deceit cover-up, corruption and crime for the church.

I had only been pastor a few months when there came to my attention a copy of the divorce proceedings of one of Long Beach's most illustrious members, Donald Davenport. It was the property settlement between Donald Davenport and his former wife, a lady I had met, admired and worked with in youth work in the Conference. The agreement, dated May, 1972, was a petition for dissolution of their marriage in the Superior Court of the County of Los Angeles, case number D795614.²

What became clear to me after reading the evidence contained in the settlement was the way Dr. Davenport had understated his assets and liabilities, especially his liabilities. As a member of the Conference committee, I knew that Dr. Davenport had a great many dealings with the Conference, but the evidence of some of his many participations with the church was lacking in the divorce settlement. Yet in the agreement it was stated:

Each of us warrants to the other that neither of us owns any property of any kind, other than the property referred to in the preceding paragraph, and that listed in the schedules attached hereto and made a part of this agreement. If it later appears that either warrantor now owns any other property and that the warrantee has an interest in this other property, the warrantor agrees to transfer or pay to the warrantee, at the warrantee's election (i) an amount of the other property equal to the warrantee's interest therein, if it is reasonably susceptible of division; (ii) the full market value of the warrantee's interest on the effective day of this agreement; or (iii) the full market value of the warrantee's interest at the time the warrantee discovers the warrantor's ownership of the property. ³

After seeking expert legal counsel I informed Betty Davenport that I felt she and her children had additional benefits coming their way and that, if she wanted, legal counsel could be obtained that would help her redress the inequity. She felt she could not do this because her name was contained on some of Dr. Davenport's properties and he might create problems for her in the future in that direction if she re-filed for redress. However, the divorce record and settlement of the Davenports was not the important item that shocked me. It was the long list of names of people and conferences of the church that were involved with the Doctor that blew my mind. It showed a web of conspirators from one end of the country to the other who were consistently and systematically emptying the coffers of the church into their own pockets through the Davenport program. It showed men in groups of small committees in select places and positions who were not only voting the church's money out, but were sometimes in those same

committees voting themselves in financially by their connection with that church. This, any school boy or girl would know, was a conflict of interest, and thus a crime.

The list also made it clear why Cree Sandefur, the Union President, did not want me as a reformer in the business of the church. He was really in business with Dr. Davenport. In fact, the list was a virtual list of who's who in Adventism. But revealing enough, it did not include any blacks, Hispanics or downtrodden whites. It catered to the upper financial group of the church, the elite, the group that already enjoyed more of the privileges of the church than most. Here is the list.

Allborg, Don L.	11,110.83	Dittberner, Jess L.	6,798.25
Adams, Clinton E.	5,415.88	Dombrosky, Stanley	10,800.83
Adams, W. Melvin	23,515.55	Duffield, C. L.	113,631.39
Ash, Connie M.	634.18	Dunham, Phillip W.	10,981.67
Ashlock, Thomas M.	16,357.96	Eden, Nettie	15,527.59
Ayers, Leoard	7,028.56	Ellstrom, Gordon L.	13,892.99
Baker, Frank	6,189.88	Erickson, Melvin E.	16,833.16
Baldwin, Dalton D.	5,643.68	Fagal, Anna	26,828.67
Baldwin, Lela	13,418.25	Fagal, William A.	32,622.46
Baldwin, O. C.	33,569.98	Hackett, Arlind E.	4,255.54
Baldwin, Ruth	40,581.86	Hackett, Willis J.	11,775.40
Becker, V.W.	16,892.29	Hagele, Emil M.	31,990.94
Bennett, John G.	5,919.76	Hardy, Gerald R.	28,248.97
Berry, Vernon E.	32,655.63	Hardy, H. G.	18,480.00
Bethel Sanitarium	67,716.03	Harlin, Martha E.	7,617.87
Bigger, Forest W.	54,025.69	Hartzell, John M.	3,761.12
Berry, Vernon E.	32,655.63	Hardy, H. G.	18,480.00
Bethel Sanitarium	67,716.03	Harlin, Martha E.	7,617.87
Bigger, Forest W.	54,025.69	Hartzell, John M.	3,761.12
Brockett, Miller	34,532.09	Hartzell, Judith V.	2,965.02
Burke, W. J.	3,641.65	Heppenstall, Edward	104,951.90
Burkett, Elden E.	186,943.52	Hoffman, J. Reynolds	17,988.27
Carey, Wells C.	16,756.31	Huey, D. P.	4,993.90
Carle, Gordon H.	12,186.53	Iversen, J. O. and Mrs. P. M.	23,082.67
Caslow, Daniel	51,975.00	Jeske, W. S.	15,381.24
Caslow, Irene	4,375.71	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX	XXXXXXXXXX
Caslow, Louise	3,094.94	Johnson, Norman	47,106.51
Clements, William V.	7,114.80	Johnson, Lila V.	8,919.67
Comrie, Lillian M.	12,525.32	Jones, William E.	3,257.04
Cronk, Ramon R.	64,822.88	Karmy, Robert J.	17,325.00
Crooker, Luther W.	7,686.76	Karmy, S. D.	969,562.41
Cumbo, Everett E.	16,813.50	Krause, Marvin J.	22,189.84
Cummings, Desmond	75,664.04	Kuiken, Louise et al	178,696.00
Daniels, Gertrude	11,550.00	Ladd, W. M.	8,085.00
DeBooy, Paul M.	6,906.21	Lampson, C. P.	33,429.13
Lanham, Helen E.	2,223.89	Sandefur, Charles C.	\$24,255.00
Lauda, C. H.	30,554.57	Sauder, Harvey	5,884.41
Lew, John M.	23,830.00	Schleenbaker, S. E.	21,506.94
Libby, John E.	40,268.68	Schoepflin, W. L.	30,030.00
Lindgren, Clarence R.	112,529.15	Schwartz, Rhonda G.	11,550.00
Liscombe, George W.	8,958.75	Simonsen, J. A.	26,399.88
Lowe, Darlene	31,433.74	Smith, Grover C	56,796.21
Martin, Gudrum	9,284.81	Spangler, J. R.	18,817.49
Martin, Myrtle or So. May Jr. Acad.	2,310.00	Steck, Margaret E.	95,114.22
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX	XXXXXXXXXX	Stewart, Alvin J	3,637.13
Massengill, Otis	19,831.35	Streifling, Walter	29,371.75
Massengill, Robert	35,228.77	Suhrie, Frank	27,788.76
Massengil, Thomas	3,133.10	Thurmon, James E.	21,670.55
Miller, Amy Ann	12,272.72	Thurson, Rachael D.	11,550.00

Mogis, Ruby	10,930.00	Tribby, Albert et al	114,843.85
Mote, Frederick	14,897.19	Trimble, Vada	14,729.36
Murrill, W. L.	8,694.05	Turpel, W. P.	28,875.00
Nelson, John	33,273.31	Unruh, T. E.	17,733.11
Nettleburg, L. H.	12,317.41	Wagner, William J.	61,258.12
Neufeld, David A.	11,944.02	Walde, E. R.	11,072.08
Oakes, Lois B.	13,452.61	Walters, T. W.	26,205.86
Olsen, Dolores E.	14,584.19	Watts, Emmett	21,384.73
Olsen, V. Norskov	14,854.10	Webb, Ed H.	15,284.09
Parks, R. E.	7,737.35	Wheeler, R. A.	6,930.00
Pearson, Ralph W.	45,783.08	Whitaker, Anne	26,959.00
Pease, Norval E.	3,164.57	Whitaker, Susan & Deborah	21,506.94
Pierson, Robert H.	7,539.48	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX	XXXXXXXXX
Porter, J. T.	20,181.04	Whitaker and Smith	10,753.47
Porter, Thomas	4,083.83	Wottlin, Beatrice L	10,061.75
Preston, B. M.	7,785.17	Young, H. A.	16,032.56
Price, Jack L.	54,435.57	Rasmussen, Lowell	56,994.81
Purdey, Lorie	3,267.27	Frank, Albert J.	20,594.17
Purdey, Esther	2,980.03	Callicott, O. H.	90,000.00
Radke, Elford D	86,076.55	Cowles, S. D.	80,256.99
Reed, A. C.	3,121.42	Hansen, Eula	147,836.15
Reed, H. V.	23,100.00	Jankovsky, Mrs. F. O.	40,000.00
Reile, Ellsworth	10,456.19	Little Creek Sanitarium	25,000.00
Retzer, Darold J.	3,085.13	Lutz, Mary J	10,000.00
Retzer, Helmuth C.	6,103.57	Ross, Rosalie	10,000.00
Robertson, Mrs. James	15,474.69	Thompson, Gary	17,000.00
Robertson, John J	20,683.25	Tufte, Chester	25,000.00
Rue, George H.	23,100.00	Wood, Verna	35,000.00

<u>Name of Joint Venture</u>	<u>Assets</u>	<u>Encumbrances</u>
Davenport \ Donaldson	1,311,634.37	940,021.91
Davenport \ Eyer	555,054.85	421,395.97
Davenport \ Gibson	91,130.34	69,598.91
Davenport \ Harris	122,836.00	74,589.84
Davenport \ Harris \ Boucher	187,473.84	137,897.52
Dav./ Harris/Morehead (Mary Lou)	426,410.83	327,765.18
Davenport \ Ludders	35,896.16	NONE
Davenport/Ludders/Garver/Potts/Eyer	9,014.40	NONE
Davenport \ Moorhead (Jay)	122,200.00	88,897.55
Davenport \endash Potts	153,501.33	33,454.41
Davenport \endash Potts \ Eyer	956,999.96	690,809.45
Davenport/Potts/Potts/Eyer	44,460.25	NONE
Davenport \ Ramer	2,351,614.64	2,192,672.38
Davenport \ Sandefur	176.64	NONE
Dav./Sheppard (1 Hr. Martinizing)	16,492.14	3,309.51
Davenport \ Taylor	506,378.50	372,730.87
Davenport / Taylor	210,641.97	135,978.78

Bryant, Albert C and Anne S.	120,327.35
Bukhdud, Joseph & Jean Yvonne	42,520.71
Buss, William C. (MD)	500.00
Buss, William C. (MD)	6,914.33

Courdy Lighting Fixtures	59,225.37
Cummings, Desmond and Lois	11,214.31
Donaldson, Earl D.	37,507.29
Eyer, R. Wayne and Arlene	25,517.89
Freeman, Rhoda	2,618.03
Gershman, Harold & Julia	37,850.00
Gershman, Harold & Julia	137,500.00
Gershman, Harold & Julia	250,000.00
Goldsmith, Dr. Stephen R.	30,000.00
Gregory, Allison	1,018.37
Harris, Dr. John & Nina	32,836.00
Ikerd, Lloyd R. and Darlene G.	3,360.62
Johnson, David R. & Odette	101,690.01
Mehler, Mrs. Ruth	128,238.11
Meier, Rudy H.	11,915.57
Murchison, Donald	217,971.00
Nikas	353.27
Ryan, R. I. and Dorothy	6,098.46
Sheppard, Thomas and Gloria	23,853.81
Sheppard, Thomas and Gloria	22,641.76
Sparks, Clarence and Jane	473.75

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Of course the list changed. Some got in at the first and then were able to exit. Others were encouraged to come along with greater accounts of money and interestingly enough received greater rewards, always, it seemed at the expense of the church. When the list is compared with a later list of people and institutions it makes a better picture, but not necessarily a healthier one.

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Calhoun, GA 30701

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Takoma Park, MD 20012

Adventist Retirement Community
6015 Kratzville Road
Evansville, Indiana 47710

American City Bank
9601 Wilshire Blvd.
Beverly Hills, CA 90210

American United Life Ins
One W. 26th St.
Indianapolis, IND. 46206

Andrew Drain Service
2983 Bautista
Riverside, CA 92506

Bender L and Frances V. Archbold
6540 S.W. 28th Street
Miami, FL. 33155

Arrowhead
1000 West Temple
Los Angeles, CA 90074

Thomas M. and Betty C. Ashlock
2400 Mistletoe Place
Philadelphia, MD 20783

Associated Surgeons Medical Group,
8337 Telegraph Road, #315
Pico Rivera, CA 90660

Orvin Atkins, Trust Account A
8530 Wilshire Blvd., #500
Beverly Hills, CA 90211

Robert H. or Ota S. Babcock
719 Claret South
Calistoga, CA 94515

Boena Mar, SA c/o Mr. Phillip November
10520 Magnolia Blvd.
N. Hollywood, CA 91601

Franklin or Wylodine Baker
3014 N.E. 160th
Portland, OR 97230

Bank of America
PO O. Box 490
W. Covina, CA 91793

Bank of Palm Springs
789 E. Tahquitz-Mccallum Way
Palm Springs, CA 92263

Leon Beck
P. O. Box 2225
Palm Springs, CA 92263

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433 N. Camden Dr., #1099
Beverly Hills, CA 90210

Vernon E. and Lois Berry
567 Linda Falls Terrace
Angwin, CA 94508

Leo Bialis
2902 Alta Loma Drive
Palm Springs, CA 92262

Helen H. Black
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8711 N. Hill'n Dale
Spokane, WA 99218

C. E and/or Arline J. Bracebridge
160 Normandy Road
Columbia, SC 29210

Mrs. Mabel A. Brody
Rte. 1, Box 38B
Milton-Freewater, Or 97862

Budget Financial Corp.
Mr. Ickes

Robert H. or Ota S. Babcock
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Calistoga, CA 94515

Johnie Bailey
516 Bellehaven Ave., N.E.
Albuquerque, NM 87112

Dalton D. and Barbara Baldwin
11581 Richardson
Loma Linda, CA 92354

Bank of Beverly Hills
250 North Canon Drive
Beverly Hills, CA 90210

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711 High Street
Des Moines, Iowa 50307

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4139 Indian Lakes Circle
Stone Mountain, GA 30083

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4672 Ariba Dr.
Tarzana, CA 91356

Bethel Sanitarium
6015 Kratzville Road
Evansville, IN 47710

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12758 Lakeland Road
Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670

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415 Buena Vista Avenue
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35043 Persimmon Ave
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Elder E. Burkett, Trustee

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Concord, CA 94529

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Lincoln, Nebraska 68506

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Tigard, OR 97223

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Millie Miller, Asst. Mgr.

Coldwell Banker
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Torrance, CA 90502

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Phoenix, AZ 85001

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Berrien Springs, MI 49103

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Keene, TX 76059

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Charlotte, NC 28211

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14343 N.E. Siskiyou Ct.
Portland, Oregon 97230

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Los Angeles, CA 90048

Chicago Title Insurance COO
17671 Irvine, Blvd.
Tustin, CA 92680

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400 N. Roxbury Drive
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Tigard, OR 97223

Coast Federal S&L Assoc.
Box 44522
San Francisco, CA 94144

The Collegedale Credit Union
P. O. Box 296
Collegedale, TN 37315

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3900 W. El Segundo Blvd.
Hawthorne, CA 90250

Continental Assurance Co
Mort. Loan Dept
310 SO Michigan Ave

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626 Wilshire Blvd.
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Dewain Grattan
2220 Lynn Road
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Boise, ID 83707

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Indianapolis, IN 46206

Internrnational Union of Op. Engr., Local 302
Western and Clay Streets
Seattle, WA 98121

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Glendale, CA 91206

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Wells, Somerset, England BA51LZ

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Ralph M. Hendershot (son)
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Mercer Island, Washington 98040

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There are those in the Adventist church that will always feel that the next moves I took were both unwise and unnecessary, but they make much of the text in Matthew 18 under other circumstances when it does not involve them or their church. The words are these:

Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast sinned against thy brother. But if he will not hear thee; then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them tell it unto the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican. ⁶

I felt that I personally, as well as the whole church, had been wronged greatly in both deed and fact by the head elder of the church, whose name stood at the top of the list as a priest, because of his great conflict of interest in the Davenport matter. His influence was not on the side of right and he should be instructed as such. So I wrote on June 14, 1977 the following letter to him and to him alone:

The other day I came across a list of names with yours on it, so thought you might like to have a copy to remind you of the Clan and the big time. It is a list of ministers and leaders who have or had invested personal money with Dr Donald Davenport.

It certainly makes interesting reading. It also explains a lot of questions some have had about the workings of the church in the past and how and why some men get where they are. It surely lays to rest the promoted idea of a self-sacrificing, self-denying leadership in this movement. In any other field of human endeavor it also might raise special questions of conflict of interest, influence peddling, and even bribery, when the list is compared with another equally interesting list of all the Conferences and Associations that hold notes that amount to millions with the same man, often encouraged and helped by some of the same leaders and clergy.

We have often written about revival and how it is to be brought about by change, and that that change will come from reform. It is easy to see why we are and will have a difficult time in our circumstances in the church expecting or hoping for such a change to take place.

I have often wondered since seeing the list, what the lay members of the church would think of the message and the Clergy, if the list were published in the Review or some other paper. If, as one leader has said, it was just a good business deal on a personal level, then most of the laymen would be equally interested in making such a sure investment.

You may keep the list, if you wish. It seems to me to be a sad commentary on our times and our leadership in the Church. ⁷

At the same time I sent Elder Cree Sandefur, who at the time was Union President of the Pacific Union, where Davenport seemed to have gotten his start, a short note.

Dear Elder Sandefur,

There came to my attention some time ago a list of names which contained your name along with that of many of your friends. It makes very interesting reading. It also explains a lot of questions that have come to mind in the last few years concerning the church and the work. Some of these names have an interesting history in the field of money and finance. I thought that you might like to keep a copy to remind you of the club and the big time.⁸

I did not choose the words to either man lightly. The Davenport list showed that men in high office in the church helped to put others of their friends in high office. It was true, as Elder Rasmussen had told me in the Academy, that you ride to success on the shoulders of your superiors. It came to me clearer than ever before that it was not God running the church, as I had been told over and over again, but the Piersons and the Sandefurs that put men where they were so they could be helped to do what they wished. It was the Piersons and Sandefurs that got away, free

from the slander and shame. Sandefur was Pastor in Long Beach where Davenport was a member and got his start in the church with Cree's help. Sandefur went to Hawaii and Davenport was there. Sandefur went to the east and Davenport was never far away. Sandefur opened doors by his involvement thus encouraging others to enter those open doors. Yet when the house of cards came down, Cree was out with his money as well as out with his "fast" retirement. Davenport himself made it very clear in one of his letters how much help Cree had been to him:

Elder Sandefur took out his money three or three and one half years ago when he became President of the Pacific Union Conference and he and his wife Mildred told me together when I was on the Loma Linda Campus and they were out there that this was one of the hardest decisions that he had ever made because he had done very well with me financially, but since his Union Conference would probably be voting on some of my transactions that he felt best that he should take his money out and I said well that was up to him but that after he had retired if he wanted to he could put his money back in and he said he would most certainly do so.⁹

I wonder since seeing Davenport's letter if Cree did invest again with his friend and if so why he is not listed among those that were left holding the bag. After all, Davenport owed him a lot, at least enough to give him inside information as to when to get out. It was Cree Sandefur that helped to move all the investments that were in the local conferences, where the local laymen and preachers could see them and ask questions, to the Union where they could not see or complain. It was perhaps one of the best moves Cree made for Davenport while President of the Pacific Union, but it did leave the Union holding the bag for that \$1,528,094 of loans plus the accrued interest of \$120,449.

Editor's note: In the original typewritten manuscript, there is no footnote for the number 10.

The Davenport list had also shown that most if not all of the Unions in North America were involved with him in some way and that the committees of these institutions of the church, often with their presidents and officers, were personally members of Davenport's financial club. In its article Spectrum said:

Almost everyone interviewed for this article said that individual leaders received higher rates of return on their funds than did church organizations, and several stated that influential and powerful people in the church received better returns than ordinary mortals. And in his last, difficult days, Davenport had apparently paid off some favored creditors. His trustee, Irving Schulmeyer, reported in an application to the judge that "preferences have been made in substantial sums" by Davenport in the 90 days prior to his filing for bankruptcy.¹¹

President Pierson's letter back to me was typically ministerial. It said nothing and did not even say it well, but it did reveal a great deal about the man and his thinking:

It is understandable that you would be surprised to receive a list giving the personal amounts that various individuals have deposited with Dr. Donald Davenport there in California. In the first place, this is strictly confidential information and the fact that it has become somewhat public property is in itself shocking. (I have asked myself many times why he thought it was shocking if it was proper.) I may tell you, however, that this list was compiled August 31, 1971, and with deposits, withdrawals, etc., the list is no longer valid. (This was a straw man tactic; he knew there was a new and current list.) I appreciated very much that you sent the list to me personally instead of passing it along to others. (He did not know this but only hoped so.)

Brother Rea, I would prefer to sit down and talk with you rather than reply by letter, but since it is not likely that there will be opportunity for this, I wish to make a few observations that I hope will be helpful. (He was paid by the church to fly the world and could have come

if he had wished and as time has shown, it would have been better if he had not written as he did.)

I cannot speak for any of the other investors on the list, but I wish to speak for myself. As I go through the names there are a number that I, of course, know well, and I also know that they are generous supporters of the Lord's work, (Again a straw man. If most had received the high interest the list reveals, they should have been more generous in supporting the church that they were robbing to make it all possible.) and personally I would not wish to judge their giving by the amount they may have invested with Dr. Davenport. I know some of the persons on the list who have invested money for members of their families in their names.

In the first place, I want to say that as far as I have known, Dr. Davenport's operations for the past many years have always been open and above board, and in every way legitimate. (This is an incredible statement in the light of what his own General Conference Treasurer was saying and writing about.) He has helped many workers and members and some church organizations. To my knowledge no board or committee of which I am a member has any money invested with Dr. Davenport. (This is another incredible statement as the policy of the church matches the General Conference President virtually a member of any and every committee, especially the Unions that were involved.) There can be no conflict of interest here. In fact, I know of only one or two organizations which have money infested with him. (Yet the list I had sent him showed a dozen or more of which at least technically, he was a member.) If they have, according to my information, they have been receiving good interest on their investment and have never lost a penny. (This was also an untrue statement as Davenport was often behind in his interest payments to the churches and Conferences, which the bankruptcy records show.)

Is there something immoral about putting aside money for retirement or toward a home? According to my information, Ellen White owned several properties. (Pierson had always given lip service to the Adventist Prophet even if he did not follow her advice about honest dealing in finance.)

Some of us, Brother Rea, have spent a good share of our ministry in foreign fields. We were separated from our families for years. Our salaries were much less than in the homeland. We lived in mission or rental property. There was no opportunity to build up an equity such as workers here in the homeland are able to do. (What a litany of false reasons for his unethical and illegal actions!) Was it wrong for us to invest our savings where we would receive good interest until we needed it for retirement? I do not believe it is fair to criticize anyone for doing this.

I make no apologies for having a modest sum invested with Dr. Davenport. I do not have time to invest in stocks and bonds, etc., and spend time watching and worrying about the market. We placed our money where we felt impressed and have gone about our business without worrying about it.

As far as sacrificial giving is concerned, Brother Rea, I don't imagine that any of us gives nearly as much as we should when we consider what the Lord has given for us. But I can write in the *Review* with clear conscience urging our people to give sacrificially. Mrs. Pierson (sic) and I have given from 20 to 35% of our salaries for years in addition to thousands of dollars given to the world field program through my books from which I have foregone royalties that I might have claimed. I also drive a 1972 Chevrolet.

Brother Rea, (And here comes the sermon not the answer to my letter) I was both surprised and disappointed that a pastor in my church (note that he does not say ours or God's but his church) would jump to conclusions as you have (Before it was over most of Adventism as well as those of the world that knew about it jumped to the same conclusions) and write a

letter in a questionable spirit (The secretary must have had trouble with the word, *questionable*, for it is corrected and typed over and over several times. I have wondered if the word he used and erased was questioning.) without checking some facts with me before judging. But this I shall have to leave between you and the Lord.

May the Lord bless and guide you as you feed and lead the flock of God there in Long Beach. (which is exactly what I felt He was doing when I wrote Pierson the letter asking for an explanation).¹²

Pierson's letter sounded like some ancient pagan love song. He had been taken from the sheep fold of Adventism and exalted to the crown, yet he was poor-mouthing the very system he enjoyed. Some preachers whine a lot. They often rule like some ancient Mongolian Prince. They roam the world always at the people's expense. When they touch the ground from their flight they are wined, dined, and pampered by lesser functionaries, all who are hoping some promotion or crumb of favor will fall their way as a reward. From the beginning to the end the structure favors the executive, the administrator, the divine that has made it to the top. Even the retirement plan he spoke of gives him a leg up on his colleagues. One of the great lies of Adventism is that all men are treated equal in the work of the church. The special privileges of houses, gifts, interest free loans, trips and perks are a way of life with Adventist administrators. It is one of the reasons so many want to be one; and for Pierson to poor-mouth the very system he was defending by his action on the Davenport matter was laughable, if not terribly sad.

What was even sadder was the morality that he showed about the whole affair. Much of his reply did not admit anything or explain anything or apologize for any of his actions or those of his colleagues. He either was unable to understand how he and his friends looked to others or did not care. He didn't even leave the matter between "me and the Lord" as he said. I found out later through the bankruptcy court that even before the ink was dry on my letter to him he had sent it to Dr. Davenport and was playing both sides of the street. His letter to me was dated June 23, and Davenport's letter to him was dated June 28. He wrote to Davenport on the same day he sent me my letter:

Dear Elder Pierson,

I have your letter dated June 23, 1977 and the copy that you wrote to the individual that had written to you.

Without any effort on my part, I believe I have identified this individual as Elder Walter Rea and I did not set out to identify him but that same day there came into my office an Elder and I am going to use all the names that I have access to so you'll know what I'm talking about. This Elder's name was Elder David Neufeld and he told me, "What is this stuff that Walter Rea is peddling around?" and I said, "I don't know what he's peddling around, but I have an idea so would you tell me?" He said that he is telling everybody that you are in serious financial trouble and that specifically he has made three allegations:

- 1. That the Georgia Cumberland Conference has no money with you and I told him at the present time that Georgia Cumberland Conference has 52,600,000 with me.**
- 2. He stated that all the conferences are calling for their money back and this is in error. Occasionally one wants some of their money for some building project and I send it back to them.**
- 3. He stated that there was a member of the Long Beach Church that had asked for \$200,000 and I told him I couldn't pay it. I immediately called up this individual whose name is Widen Burkett and Widen said I did not ask for \$200,000 back and I didn't want it back and the party who is stating all this is Walter Rea who is Pastor of the Long Beach Church.**

The fourth allegation that Walter Rea made was that recently Elder C. Sandefur pulled out his money because he was worried about my investments and also that it was a conflict of interests.

Elder Sandefur took out his money three or three and one half years ago when he became President of the Pacific Union Conference and he and his wife Mildred told me together when I was on the Loma Linda campus and they were out there that this was one of the hardest decisions that he had ever made because he had done very well with me financially, but since his Union Conference would probably be voting on some of my transactions that he felt best that he should take his money out and I said well that was up to him but that after he had retired if he wanted to he could put his money back in and he said he would most certainly do so.

Elder Pierson, those are four blatant lies and I'm not going to call the Lord's annointed (sic) a liar, but I think I can call truth, truth and falsehood, falsehood. I documented all four of these instances. I documented Walter Rea, Pastor of the Long Beach Church for saying that. I debated whether I should call Elder Rea and I thought by calling him if he's going to tell lies now he would perpetuate his lying program and I'm just going to leave it alone.

Now, to be more specific: I told everybody that vested with me that I would treat their money just like a bank that I would not discuss with or disclose to other people what they had or anything about it. If they wanted to disclose it, that was their personal business and I have never violated that confidence.

I started this investment program about 17 or 18 years ago and nobody has lost a cent of interest or a cent of principal during that time and nobody ever will unless some catastrophe happens that I do not foresee.

For your own information, my financial picture and program has never been better than it is right now and I have no reason to believe that it won't continue to be better.

I'm very disappointed that Elder Walter Rea should take it upon himself to try to do whatever he's doing.

I hear, indirectly, and I'm not in a position to document it, that he is not pleased with the way the Church runs their finances and he is going to help straighten it out any way he can. My former wife, Elizabeth Davenport, worships at the Long Beach Church where he is a Pastor and it is very easy to believe and to think that he got this list of investors from her or through her office.

In the dissolution of marriage settlement I listed my assets and my liabilities and I had to list all of the people that had invested with me, but I made it very clear to my former wife's attorney, William Cree, that this was a confidential matter - that I wanted him to know that I owed - that I would take all the responsibility for the bills and obligations, but that it would serve no useful purpose and it would violate a trust if this became public. Apparently, either my former wife or this attorney saw fit to make it a matter of public record and Elder Walter Rea does not have the best interest of the Church at heart, but perhaps only his own selfish interests to take the matter still further.

As an interesting note, which you may well know, every time there is a vacancy in the President's office of the Southern California Conference, he gets a little group behind him and makes some trouble and runs for the office. I've known him many, many years and this is his program.

Again, Elder Pierson, I'm sorry for this item happening, but for somebody to have to dig into something six years back to make their point is really quite ridiculous.

I thought that you handled his letter in a masterful way and it is not beyond the realm of possibility that within the next year or two everybody within that investor's group will have

been paid off because I'm getting into larger and larger buildings and I'm paying off investors as I do that.

I find it quite interesting that he made four allegations in front of Elder Dave Neufeld. I disproved every one of them.

I would like to ask you a question which I don't think you have the answer for, but I think I'm entitled to ask - and that is, "When does a minister of the Seventh-day Adventist Church get a license to lie?"

Please accept my apologies for this unfortunate situation and do whatever you can to protect the good interests of the Church because that's what we all should do. ¹³

Poor Don, still doing his best to come across as "a hell of a guy." The letter not only shows up the deceit in Davenport's makeup but Pierson's as well. It also helps to show how the system had gone wrong with stooges and lies and intimidation. One of those stooges that got away was David Neufeld. He was a left over General Conference man that was put to work in the Pacific Union by Cree Sandefur at half price. He was long overdue for retirement but made up for it by singing the praises of Davenport to all that questioned him. He had his own money invested and encouraged other to do so. He was one of the boys that got out with profit, and long after the debacle he still stood four-square for his friends in the mess and said he felt no guilt for what he did as a double agent for Davenport.

Another name mentioned was also an agent for Davenport. He was my head elder, Widen Burkett. We had discussed Dr. Davenport together; and I had assured him that as a committee member of the Conference he was in a slippery position when it came to the voting of funds from the conference to Davenport when he himself was singing his praises as an investor. Another item had come up between us that perhaps chaffed him a bit. It so happened on his retirement as a public school teacher that he received a call to go into the ministry in Nevada. The President of that Conference, Elder Striefling, was a Davenport investor, Burkett was a Davenport investor, and Cree Sandefur, who would have to approve the appointment in the Union, was a Davenport supporter. With so many young men coming out of school without calls into the work I felt that it was wrong for Burkett to receive that call the way it was coming and looking and told him so, and asked him how it would seem if all the circumstances should become known. The call did not materialize but I received the impression Widen was not happy with me for my lack of support for his friend, Davenport. With his \$185,000, plus interest, I could understand why.

Two other names should be mentioned as those that got away without much embarrassment or shame. One was John Robertson, a former Long Beach Pastor and friend of Dr. Davenport. While pastoring in Glendale, he was unable to convince his board at the Vallejo Drive Church that they should invest with him in Davenport. It caused some problems and some of the elders who talked with me felt strongly that John was putting on too much pressure considering his connections. John later worked in Southeastern California and I guess felt no moral problem with encouraging others to follow Davenport. He later wrote a high sounding moral book called THE WHITE TRUTH seeking to refute my book, THE WHITE LIE, even before I had published it. Another former pastor of Long Beach and friend of Davenport and retiree who was re-hired by Sandefur was Elder Duffield. He had taken trips overseas with the Doctor and had encouraged others to invest with him. In a letter to me he said:

Many of my friends keep inquiring of me about his financial picture. I would like to be able to speak with some degree of certainty about his soundness. I have gotten all my money from him. Confidentially I had \$100,000 with him. I must say that he doled me out a bundle of interest over the years. For this I'm deeply grateful. However, I am happy to have my money (principle). The reports I get from various sources, including his first wife, are very dim. ¹⁴

So it wasn't just me that was hearing and speaking the things we were hearing. It was getting late for Davenport and he was thrashing around more and more. What did and does come across over and over again is that one could talk to lawyers, doctors, truck drivers, school children, atheists or infidels, and most if not all could tell you that what was going on was wrong, evil and wicked. But neither then nor since has Pierson, Sandefur, Neufeld, Robertson, Burkett, Duffield, Union Presidents or the church as a whole expressed or admitted the gravity of its sins of involvement. Little or no embarrassment has been shown, much less shame. And perhaps even more amazing, the

church as a whole still preaches against those terrible Catholics, those dirty Protestants, and the evil world, not seeming to notice that by their lack of concern over their own amoral or immoral conduct or the condoning of it, they have forfeited any right to condemn or preach reform to others.

Evidently Pierson had not given Davenport enough assurance that he would either stop me or fire me for he wrote again a few weeks later:

Dear Elder Pierson,

I have your letter dated July 19, 1977 and I do not wish to take your valuable time with reading a lot of correspondence.

I will abide by your wishes and let the matter drop unless Elder Walter Rea decides to keep stirring it up. If he decides to do this, I have no alternative but to take care of him in the best way that I see fit.

I would like to close my remarks in this letter with some thoughts that I think are very important.

I consider my word of honor absolute and when these different ministers over the period of seventeen years invested sums with me, they asked me, almost without exception, not to mention the amounts they had with me because they felt it would serve no useful purpose and besides it was their own business.

I have kept that trust all these years and I refuse to even give the General Conference a balance sheet because even though Elder Emmerson and Elder Osborne indicated, via the grapevine, that they wished to have it-- this could reveal the names of the different people and I felt that I would not violate a trust.

The second reason that I am interested in shutting up Elder Walter Rea is that I am aware of a group of laymen that wish to cause embarrassment to the Seventh Day Adventist Church by getting every single bit of financial information that they can and distort and twist and use it to their best advantage to embarrass the Church and I, for one, would like to do everything in my power to protect the Church. I always have and I always will.

I have told you before that I have not lost a single cent of interest or principal for the Church these many years in which I handled millions of dollars for them. I have pride in that relationship. I thank God that I have been successful in difficult times to always provide the Church with a gain and not a loss.

It disturbs me very much that somebody on the Church payroll such as Walter Rea would become involved in a situation where it could become very embarrassing to the Church.

With these facts, I now rest my case I hope that you are effective enough in having Elder Walter Rea realize the folly of his ways and, because he got this list by some devious means, and dug into a domestic situation that has been settled for over five years only to furnish ammunition for the discontents and malcontents in the Church that he should be advised that this will not help him, but in the long run will hurt his cause.

Elder Pierson, please remember that I am 100% behind the organized Church. There may be people in the Church, such as Elder Walter Rea, that do not do things as I feel they should be done, but that is their problem, not mine.

I promise you that I will not pursue this matter further unless Elder Walter Rea and his ilk (sic) do not take your advice and keep the list confidential. If they don't then I am absolved from my promise to you and I will take the matter in my own hands.

If I understand the Bible correctly, it says that if you have something against your brother, you go to him first. If that doesn't settle it, you take a witness and go to him. If that doesn't settle it, you take the whole Church and go to him and if that doesn't settle it, then you take it to court or some other higher authority.

Elder Pierson, Walter Rea has not done any of those things and I just feel very protective of the Church. I think sometimes some of us laymen must take a strong arm position to defend the Church and to shut UD all of this maliciousness that is going around.

Well, you have heard my story. I have made a promise and I will keep my promise, but my promise has one "out" in it. If Walter Rea is not smart enough to keep his mouth shut, then I am going to move in on him. ¹⁵

Someone has suggested to me since seeing the letter that they sound more like the Mafia than Christians, and I agreed. To believe that the head of a church would be in business with such a man and yet not come to me and talk of what was transpiring is hard to understand. Another interesting thought is that if Pierson was sharing his correspondence from me with Davenport he must have been sharing it with another, Neal Wilson. Why not? It had been done before.

In the early 1960's I was contacted by the then President of the General Conference, R. R. Figuhr. The church had been having a lot of troubles with their head divines in the south, and because I had worked there, been on committees and knew the men, he wondered in his letter if I would be willing to write what I felt were some of the problems. My letter would be confidential of course, he assured me, and I would be doing a good service for the church. I wrote him my convictions, naming names, stating places and specifics, how the leaders were, in my opinion, corrupt, greedy men, how they bought and sold property through our hospitals to protect themselves and to save money through the institutions and then would profit by their methods, how they sold cars to the workers and extracted a personal fee for doing so. I was liberal with my information and the names of men who were participating. ¹⁶

Sometime later I met Elder Neal Wilson at the General Conference session, and he informed me that he had read the letter I had been told was confidential by R. R. Figuhr. I knew from my knowledge of the system I was in trouble. Sure enough, sometime later, one of my friends called and told me that my name had been black listed in the south for all time and I could and would not ever get a call to anything, "not even dog catcher." Knowing how the system operates I was not surprised. I have often been accused of seeking higher office. Knowing some of the men in those offices, I have never known if I should take the rumor as praise or insult. If by the time of the Davenport situation I carried any thought of advancement in the church, it surely would have been an empty basket that carried those thoughts; and I have often said that I may be dumb but I was not entirely stupid.

It was clear to me after Pierson's letter, even without having access until later to the Davenport correspondence that the church and its leaders would do nothing to stop their rush to greed and destruction. If anything was to be done, something or someone other than those involved for personal gain would have to do it. It was clear from my background of years in the service of the church that no reform would come even though I had written Pierson. No change would be made and no clean up would take place. Had I known what I know now, that most of the votes and voices that counted were arrayed against me. I doubt that it would have effected my action. I knew without that information that my time was short and that what I did, I would have to do quickly, or even more millions would be funneled into the pockets of Davenport and his helpers. It has never been clear to me whether Davenport corrupted the clergy, or the other way around, but for me it had to stop.

After much soul searching and a great deal of counsel from those I respected and trusted, I decided on several steps. One of those steps was to release the list I had found to John Adam in Tennessee and to Sydney Allen in Riverside, California. These men had been fighting as laymen at least as long as I had and were doing their best to alert the church of what was going on. I knew that they had access to sources of publication that I did not have and that they had the courage to take the project as far as necessary, though none of us knew how far that would be. It didn't take long for us to find out.

The pressure was building, and Davenport could not ignore it much longer. On April 19, 1979, Davenport sued John Adam and his employer, A. G. Edwards & Sons, Inc., charging that Adam had interfered with his business and defamed his character. He asked for \$1 million actual damages and \$3 million punitive damages. He followed that up on May 15 with a similar suit against Sydney Allen for \$2,550,000.¹⁷

The lawsuit laid it out better than we had dared believe it would, for it said;

Dr. Davenport borrows funds from various individuals and large institutions including, among others various Divisions and Conferences of the Seventh-day Adventist Church of the United States (Church). That the Church, and various individual members of the Church, for investment purposes, have loaned substantial sums of money to Davenport which loans are reflected by promissory notes, many of which are demand in nature, secured by first mortgages or trust deeds in favor of the lenders, totaling many millions of dollars in secured deeds. . . .and in conjunction with his borrowing activities, has formed close personal relationships with numerous leaders of the Church and other individuals in the Church. Based upon the quality of the secured debt offered the Church, and upon the relationship of friendship and trust between financial representative of the ChurchThat although Plaintiff has attempted to counteract the conduct of Defendant Adam, Plaintiff fears and truly believes that unless injunctive relief is provided after a hearing of this cause, Plaintiff will be destroyed by the Defendants and that the Plaintiff will suffer irreparable harm since the Defendants' actions will result in a total loss of the trust and confidence of individuals and conferences of the Church, thereby destroying a source of lending which cannot be replaced through other conventional lending sources and requiring Plaintiff to liquidate vast holdings in order to pay off sums of principal and interest which normally and customary would not yet come due (Emphasis supplied)¹⁸

What Dr. Davenport had done in the lawsuit was to reveal all the information necessary to follow his activity from beginning to end and find that the loose ends had always ended in the church with his friends he had cultivated. He also made it clear that without the friendships he would and could not continue his operation. So in essence he was saying that his empire depended on the payoffs he was giving to Adventist preachers in order to milk the church and other institutions to keep going. The suit did one other thing. It produced his own blueprint on how to bring him down and stop his operation. If one could stop him from bleeding the church and its members, he was through.

With that information the rest was fairly easy. The Government agencies would and could do what the church had failed to do: clean up the act and thus destroy it. I approached the Attorney General's office of the State of California with what information John and others had provided, including fraud, breaking of usury laws, breaking of S.E.C. regulations, and bending of other laws. The I.R.S. office appointed a special agent, Sandra M. Armstrong, to investigate the matter, gave me her card and told me to keep in touch. Those who were aware of these moves guessed correctly that it was only a matter of time before the end could come, and we encouraged all the investors we were able to contact to leave the sinking vessel as soon as they could. I personally talked with many, including such leaders as Elder Heppenstall, Dave Neufeld, Duffield, Burkett and others, including some personal friends of mine as well as Davenports, such as Dr. Wayne Eyer and others. Some did not heed the warning and hence their names appeared on the creditors list when the end came. Those that did get out have ever been grateful.

It was a difficult decision to come to. It was hard to take action that we all knew would embarrass the church. Yet we all knew also that the church was going to be embarrassed anyway and it was harder to stand aside and watch Davenport and the preachers continue to bleed the church and its little people, for it was they that suffered the most. Nothing will erase the conviction that many millions more would have been lost if we had not taken drastic action to stop what was clearly a "scheme," as Emerson said, to use the church's money to enrich a few at the expense of the many. None of the people that took our advice and got their money out have had anything but praise for what we did for them, and even some of the ones that turned against us after the bankruptcy said they wished they had followed our advice.

1. 1975 Constituency Meeting record, Southern California Conference, Pacific Union Conference.
2. Petition for dissolution of marriage in Superior Court, County of Los Angeles, Case No. D795614, Property Settlement Agreement. May 1972
3. Ibid., p. 93.
4. Ibid., List of creditors under Property Settlement
5. United States Bankruptcy Court, Central District of California, Filed March 2, 1982. (2nd ammended mailing list)
6. Matthew 18: 15-17.
7. Walter Rea to Robert Pierson, June 14, 1977.
8. Walter Rea to Cree Sandefur, June 3, 1977.
9. Donald Davenport to Robert Pierson, June 28, 1977.
10. L. L. Butler, "Update on Davenport Loans", back page of Adventist Review, subtitle, "Summary of Davenport Loans, June 30, 1981".
11. Tom Dybdahl, "Bad Business: The Davenport Fiasco," Spectrum 12, No. 1, (September, 1981) p. 58.
12. Robert Pierson to Walter Rea, June 23, 1977.
13. Donald Davenport to Robert Pierson, June 28, 1977.
14. C. L. Duffield to Walter Rea, February 9, 1978.

15. Donald Davenport TO Robert Pierson, July 25, 1977.

16. Walla Walla Tapes (2) Lecture by Walter Rea, November, 1981.

17. Tom Dybdahl, "Bad Business: The Davenport Fiasco," *Spectrum* 12, No. 1, (September, 1981) p. 53.

18. Donald J. Davenport vs. John Adam and A. G. Edwards & Sons, Inc., No. 79-229107. United States District Court for the Western District of Tennessee, Western Division.

CHAPTER III WHY THE DAM BROKE

It didn't seem reasonable that anymore could be done with the church to change the course of events that would lead it to shame and reproach but sometimes one can appeal to something other than reason. With that in mind I wrote two more letters in 1979 hoping for some positive action.

Dear Brethren,

I am sending you a copy of the filed law suit that Don Davenport instigated against a fellow church member. It makes clear what up to now has only been allegation:

- 1. That Dr. Davenport is involved in a financial way with the Church to the tune of millions of dollars.**
- 2. That much of these deals have been secured by personal promissory notes.**
- 3. That his "personal" and intimate friendships with various leaders, executives and Conference workers, have made his arrangements possible. That without their cooperation and assistance, he could not have obtained the money he has.**
- 4. That no other lending institution would back him under the same condition.**

In view of these public statements, it would seem that now is the time for the leadership of this Church to make public its involvement through the names of its leaders and the executives on the list of investors. Certain questions have to be answered:

- A. Inasmuch as all of us are only custodians of the people's funds, were there any conflict of interests?**
- B. What were the rates of interests, the finders fees, or the pay off to the individual worker for their involvement?**
- C. Was the interest ever higher to the individual than the interest paid to the denomination through the association? And if so, why?**
- D. Did the varying rates to the individuals have anything to do with their positions or the amount that was borrowed from the Church?**
- E. How much encouragement was given to others to invest by those workers who were already investing?**
- F. Was the list and opportunities ever opened to the total membership? If not, what contacts were made and by whom, to make up the list?**

Finally, inasmuch as the officers of the General Conference were cautioned several years ago concerning the implication of such transactions, where has the moral leadership been all this time? While it is true, Brother Emmerson has recently disavowed the church's involvement in the Davenport matter, as recently as three weeks ago, Davenport was granted an extensive line of credit through one of our local Seventh-day Adventist hospitals. Other workers have been personally investing recently under assumed names, while holding committee membership in the Conference. Another scandal similar to this

concerning the Riverside Mall and the workers and officials of the Southeastern California Conference, is about to break.

With all the high sounding platitudes emanating from Washington, when do you think we will get the necessary moral leadership to finish the Work? It would seem the least we could do is to fire those who obviously are involved in a conflict of interest. ¹

As I look back now and reread what I had written, it seems so foolish for me to believe that something moral and spiritual would come of what I had done. The church just did not feel that she needed changing or cleaning. Law and justice are the articles of faith that Adventism peddles and mercy, grace, repentance, forgiveness and restitution are unknown experiences in corporate Adventism. Finally, morality by their definition, not grace and conversion by the Holy Spirit, is the stock and trade of the church, and that still small voice that would have kept those men from the insanity of greed could not be heard and was not recognized if it was. Those same men of special privilege even went so far as to change the rules and policies that workers had operated under for decades, but the changes were made to the advantage of those leaders and the disadvantage of the worker. It was this that prompted my final letter of appeal and I sent it in a strident note:

**S. D. Bietz, Treasurer
Pacific Union Conference**

Dear Friend,

This week we have been having meetings in our Conference concerning the changes to be made in the workers sustentation plan. It has been suggested by some that you would appreciate some of our input; therefore this letter.

For 34 years my wife and I have stood side by side in service for this Church. We have done this as a team on two assumptions-- One, that we had dedicated our lives to God's Church and service hoping that He would come, partly through our efforts, while we were alive. Two, that if He did not come, the brethren and the Church would honor their commitments to us if we lived and retired. It now seems that we were wrong on at least one of these assumptions. The commitments of this denomination, which they have made in the past years to its workers are well known, inasmuch as they have been published each year in the General Conference Workers Policy. It now appears that the Church is repudiating those policies under which we have all served, and in which we had faith and to which we gave our commitment.

I would like to ask several questions concerning the changes that are suggested:

1. Why should a wife who carries with her husband the responsibility of the church, as well as a financial commitment to the home, be treated with less deference than a wife who may not make any contribution to the church as well as not making any financial contribution to the home?

2. Who is going to assemble all these past service records for the wives and verify their accuracy?

3. Why deny a worker medical benefits if he conscientiously signed off from Social Security in the belief that the Conference Medical policy would supply his needs? The Conference may say they encouraged Social Security on the part of the worker, but the very fact that they refuse to contribute their share in the case of a minister, shows that they do not support it at all.

4. What are you going to do with workers who, when they face the new rule change in 1981, meet the years of service requirement but by an accident of birth, do not meet the age

requirement? Will you deny him what you have promised in the past, because he is not old enough? How many more years must he wait for his due?

Finally, the strength of a man's assets or the benefits of his abilities to accumulate cannot be either the moral or legal basis of his entitlement to sustentation. He has either earned it regardless of his finances, or he hasn't. To use the premise that some will have more money when they retire than when they were working is fallacious. If that argument is true and I am wrong, let me make a final statement.

I am sending you a copy of the list of men connected with the Church as well as some of their friends, whose position of privilege have given them enormous advantage to profit over their fellows, many of whom do not and have not had that advantage. Now, some of those same men will be sitting on committees denying privileges and benefits that they themselves already have and may not therefore need, even though they have gained these advantages by other means than that of working for a salary in the Church. How will the have-nots who are being denied, feel when this fact is made public?

I would encourage you to read this letter to your group in Washington. In fact, I would be delighted to have it published in the *Adventist Review*.²

As in the case of all my attempts to engender dialogue with the church leaders, there was no response. The church does not believe in real true dialogue as I have pointed out in my national article, "Who Profits from the Prophet."³ What it must have is monologue if there is talk at all. It prefers edicts with strict compliance. And that is exactly what happened in the case of the sustentation or retirement plan. It was changed to suit the leaders and the group in power and it fell heaviest on the poor and needy workers of the field. It was however, perhaps the strongest letter I had sent and in that sense caused some talk and thinking about my "retirement" or "firing".

There is no question but that the letter generated considerable comment among "the brethren" and I began to hear rumors that I was to be fired. This was at least a year and a half before the article appeared in *The Los Angeles Times* concerning my work on the writings of Ellen G. White, the Adventist Prophet. Because of those rumors I wrote the following letter to Neal Wilson in May of 1980. It was during the trial of our Conference President, Harold Calkins and the Burbank group concerning past disagreements:

Dear Neal,

This past week I was subpoenaed for a deposition concerning the court trial involving Elder Calkins and the slander suit brought against him by the group that were disfellowshipped from Burbank some years ago. {While participating, I could not help but think that the whole affair could have been avoided if better understanding and judgment had been used by all.}

It also seemed to relate to my own situation, especially since my attorney friend, Jerry Wiley, reported his recent conversation with you, hence this letter. Please take this writing as a sincere effort to set forth the facts as I see them, and not in anyway as a criticism, a threat or a demand.

The current rumor that I would or will be fired leaves me astonished, inasmuch as my experience on church conference committees, has taught me that a minister has to commit some great crime to receive such final treatment. We have often allowed men of questionable moral or ethical conduct to survive.

Because of the severity of such action, certainly no one can doubt that in my case, I would leave no avenue unexplored, no method legal or moral untried before I would allow such action to take place, especially since I have violated no church policy, have challenged no church doctrine or belief, and have applied myself with all diligence to my calling these many years.

Surely, no one that has ever had any personal dealing with Dr. Davenport and represented the church on committees that loaned him money (and there are such on some of your committees) could sit in judgment on my actions and not have their motives suspect by a court of law or the church. Nor could any administrator, representing political power, vote to override the committee you yourself selected, when they voted 18 to nothing that my research was valid and that I should be given a vote of thanks for that work, without subjecting themselves to the criticism of cover up.

It would seem to me that the real issues are not the two mentioned above, but whether the membership who pay the bill have a right to know. As we both know, the courts have long ago decided that even in the case of a church, they indeed do have that right.

If there are those in responsible positions that feel that I have become a liability, then let them suggest a plan whereby I can retire with honor and security at whatever time they think advisable. At 57, I still have 8 years to go before age 65. Nothing less than this could be acceptable to me, inasmuch as there are no charges I can be condemned morally or legally for.

I am enclosing two copies of affirmation, both of which I am sure you have seen, only to remind others that any pressure applied to either you or me is ill-advised.

Once again I appreciate your problems and can understand somewhat of the situation you work under, but rest assured that I and Mrs. Rea do not and never have, taken our ministry or work in the church lightly, but still believe that the way to deal with problems is to recognize them, confess them and then deal with them honestly and objectively. ⁴

There really was nothing in Wilson's reply that gave me any assurance that he was interested in me as a person. Rather he gave the usual party line and sought to cover all the bases at once. He said:

You really should address questions with respect to your work and ministry to the Southern California Conference and/or the Pacific Union Conference. The General Conference does not get into the management and administrative relationships between a conference and its ministers. As you know, we do not make administrative decisions for conferences or union, but at times we are called upon to express an opinion or give counsel and advice. ⁵

You have to know Wilson and Adventist double-talk to appreciate this paragraph. Wilson had helped to engineer many a deal, and had fired men and blocked their promotions, yet he always worked through his hit men so that he could take the high ground. He even goes on to contradict himself when he says,

I have repeatedly indicated that you had much to offer this church, and I was very hopeful that you would be responsive to counsel from individuals as well as from church leadership, including the General Conference. ⁶

Never, since we were students together in college, has Wilson talked to me about much of anything, much less my personal desires and wishes for the church. Even in the E. G. White controversy he had to be dragged, kicking and screaming to the conference table and never once did he discuss Davenport with any of us that were hammering loudly and clearly at his door; His defense was always policy as he interpreted it.

It is also a part of the policy of the church that those of us who are ministers of the gospel and employed by this church will not appeal to any court of law for redress. This is especially true in areas of church polity, doctrine, and spiritual activity. We have by accepting ordination and appointment as a minister in this church limited our personal freedom. ⁷

This statement is laughable in the light of several things. First, the amount of money that has been spent for legal fees by Wilson and the Church in the Davenport matter, as well as the E. G. White Prophet matter is a well kept

secret but said to be astronomical. Second, all the officers of the church have been insured by the organization and would be protected in case they were ever sued while in office, Third, that "ain't the way the General Conference Risk Management Service saw it when they wrote in 1982:

There is considerable evidence from the Davenport scenario at the present time to indicate that, in spite of the approximate \$23,000,000 potential investment loss, the church still cannot discipline itself and is headed full throttle down the road toward disastrous litigation between conferences, between conferences and church officers, and between conferences and the church-owned insurance company. The legal wheels have now been in motion almost six months and we are very close to a "point of no return!"⁸

The speculation is that millions have been spent in the last few years for any and every law suit that the church either needed for its own sake or to protect its money or image in the face of mounting threats. The letter from Risk Management concluded with a plea and warning, and an admonition:

The Davenport fiasco has, we hope, taught us that the church desperately needs to put its house in order. . . . Also this feedback indicated that greediness for the all-mighty dollar is the source of our trouble with Davenport investments. Also, greediness towards the insurance company for recovery of uninsured losses, without due respect to business ethics and the moral concept of contractual provisions in the insurance policies, is responsible for turning the church toward the entanglement of litigation which may end in disaster.⁹

I have often wondered since reading the letter what happened to its author, Charles Frederick, and what kind of flak he received from Wilson for it. Wilson left no doubt in his letter to me that compliance with church leaders and their dictums was the only solution he would accept from any worker:

Our concern arises when you launch a relentless crusade and feel impelled to take it to the church, publicly and privately, through meetings and by circulating materials. So most people, the course that you had embarked on was one that was divisive, that unsettled the faith of people, that seemed to openly challenge the church, and that raised doubts, and led only to confusion and weakness. If you have heard that you would be fired it is unfounded rumor, . . .¹⁰

It seemed to me that this is where Wilson tipped his hand. There had been no meetings for the public that the Conference was not aware of and had not participated in. Wilson himself had called the private meeting in Glendale that year and was only stung because tapes were released telling what was going on. I had circulated no material that both the committee he had chosen and the White Estate had not seen and in some cases encouraged me to send. I had not even written my book *The White Lie* yet and indeed there is no reason that it ever had to be written if the church had handled the matter as Christians in friendly and intelligent dialogue. I had not openly or privately challenged the church in anything concerning doctrine, or its faith, but had openly and often challenged its business practices as he knew, and Davenport was hanging like a Damocles sword over both of our heads. Yet he refused to discuss the matter with those of us that could have helped. Time was to supply his reason.

None of us could hold back the tide that was flowing against the church and Dr. Davenport. The law suits against John Adam and Sydney Allen were dropped when both men got to Federal Court; and Davenport would have been forced, if he continued the suit, to open his records in both cases, an act he simply could not do and survive. Already, Adam had discovered that several of the properties for which the conference claimed first mortgages happened not to be owned by the Doctor.¹¹ On July 22, 1981, he filed for bankruptcy under Chapter 11 of the Federal Bankruptcy laws.

The headlines in *The Los Angeles Times* of July 25, 1981 said, "Massive Church Fund Loss Feared."¹² The *Sacramento Bee* of August 29, under a byline of "Credit Squeeze" said, "Adventists Face a Troubled Future."¹³ The news media across the nation had much to say and write about the Adventist scandal. One of the strongest was Davenport's own home town paper, *The Long Beach Telegram* of August 2. Among other things they said:

Church critics claimed he estimated \$46 million collapse amounted to an old-fashioned Ponzi pyramid scheme with respected Seventh-day Adventist ministers for salesmen and elderly Adventist the unwitting victims. In exchange for their participation, ministers were treated to free trips to posh condos in Palm Springs and Hawaii and favorable interest rates on their personal investments with Davenport, . . .¹⁴

One of the best jobs of reporting most of the facts in the Davenport case was done by *The Sunday Sun*, San Bernardino, California. In a series of four articles they covered some of the workings of the church with Davenport using charts and graphs. Some of their conclusions were:

- * Adventist laymen and spiritual leaders for years invested millions with Davenport in the form of loans repaid at interest rates two to three times the prevailing rate.
- * Adventist organizations also loaned Davenport millions, and for years were regularly repaid. But property records show Davenport seemed to repay loans with funds from other loans.
- * Many of Davenport's transactions with Adventist entities and church officials seemed to violate the church's own investment and conflict-of-interest guidelines.
- * Some Adventist investments officers made personal deals with Davenport at substantially higher interest rates - up to 80 percent - than their church entities received.
- * Some church loans to Davenport were unsecured, and other loans were secured by third and fourth trust deeds and trust deeds for property valued at considerable less than the loan. . . .
- * At a time when Davenport was deeply in debt - failing to repay many loans - he and his second wife, Patricia, made personal bank withdrawals of \$1. 8 million. . . .
- * The *Sun* found that for at least the past two decades, millions from Adventist trust funds were invested with Davenport in the form of loans. In addition, church officials have reported that five church entities, which they didn't identify, loaned approximately \$800,000 to Davenport from tithe funds intended for the church ministry. . . .
- * The *Sun* found 13 key church officials - conference presidents, trust directors, treasurers and others - who had personal business dealings with Davenport while their church entities were making loans to the developer.¹⁵

What the *Sun* also reported confirmed my suspicions that the church would have lost millions more if they had not been stopped. They spelled out in detail why that would have been so:

In a January 1981 letter, Davenport stated: "The church is too dumb to take recognition of the fact that I have channeled between \$10 million and \$20 million into their coffers with never a cent lost . . ."

Six months later, Davenport was near bankruptcy and turning to the Adventist church for a bailout.

On the morning of June 23, a Davenport office memorandum shows he spoke to Wayne Massengill of Keene, Texas, and Portland, Ore., who was then a Southwest trust director for the church, a personal investor with Davenport, and a former church trust director in the Northwest.

Davenport asked Massengill for help in raising \$5 million from the church to keep other denominational funds invested with him from being lost or greatly decreased in pay-off value. Minutes later, Davenport spoke with James Hopps of Boring, Ore., legal counsel for the church's Northwest Conference, according to another memo.

Hopps, a year earlier, had renewed a \$82,000 loan to Davenport repayable at 80% interest. In March 1981, Davenport - seeking admission into the exclusive Hillcrest Country Club in Los Angeles - had written to Hopps for a letter of recommendation that would describe Davenport's 35 years of church work. In June 1981 Davenport explained he would be forced to file for bankruptcy

unless various church conferences loaned him the \$5 million. He offered to sign over his properties to the church.

Hopps said he'd put together a plan, Davenport's memo of the call shows. Three weeks later, Davenport still was piecing together a bail-out plan.

On July 17 he wrote Ellaworth S. Reile of Lincoln, Neb., president of the Mid-American Union Conference. Reile had \$15,000 in loans to Davenport and had been his partner in three business ventures. Davenport told Reile he would take a General Conference or a union conference representative into his office to assure repayment of the loan he needed to stave off the banks and bankruptcy proceedings. Hinting at the repercussions for the church if he went bankrupt, Davenport wrote of the bailout: "This would totally stop what I think would be a tremendous run on the church, as well as (stop a) cutting off of trust funds and, worst of all, even tithing, which none of us wants to see."

Apparently the church rejected the bailout package. ¹⁶

Perhaps the church officials that I had contacted did not know at the time that they received my letters that time was short as far as Davenport was concerned, but certainly Davenport knew it, and when his letters to Pierson and others are read in the light of that knowledge he does not seem "such a hell of a guy." In fact, the reading of his assets from the court- records makes astonishing reading for a man and wife that must have known they were about to become poor. The list is long and intriguing in view of the fact that the examiner said he could not locate any of the jewelry listed.

Books and records in the custody of the Trustee indicate substantial pieces of jewelry were owned by Donald J. and Patricia A. Davenport at July 21, 1981. However, an inventory of such jewelry and a valuation of the several pieces have not been made inasmuch as the location of the jewelry is unknown.

This schedule includes information listed from records available from an insurance brokerage firm, Sutro Insurance Agency, which underwrote the property coverage for the subject jewelry.

1	18KT. YELLOW GOLD NECKLACE	2,450.00
2	18 KT. YELLOW GOLD RING, WET WITH ONE LARGE OXBLOOD CORAL PEAR-SHAPED AND 19 BAGUETTE DIAMONDS	3,000.00
3	14 KT. YELLOW GOLD CLASP AND 6 STRAND CORAL TORSADE NECKLACE	800.00
4	18 KT. YELLOW GOLD CROSS, MADE OF HAND-CARVED CRYSTAL WITH 18 KT. YELLOW GOLD TOP, AND CENTER SET WITH CABOCHON EMERALD	1,850.00
5	14 KT. YELLOW GOLD CHAIN FROM WHICH ABOVE CROSS IS SUSPENDED	675.00
6	NECKLACE WITH PENDANT, 18 KT. GOLD AND CRYSTAL	750.00
7	NECKLACE 18 KT. YELLOW GOLD, DIAMONDS ESTIMATED WEIGHT 2.5 CTS. RUBIES ESTIMATED WEIGHT 0.25 CTS., DOUBLE LION	1,500.00
8	NECKLACE, 18 KT. YELLOW GOLD AND PAVE DIAMOND INITIAL "D" NECKLACE SET WITH 27 ROUND DIAMONDS WEIGHING APPROXIMATELY .36 CTS.	680.00
9	NECKLACE, 14 KT. YELLOW GOLD AND DIAMOND WEIGHING 1.0 CTS. ON ROPE TWIST CHAIN	360.00
10	EARCLIPS, YELLOW GOLD LIONS HEAD ON LOOP	475.00
11	RING, 18 KT. YELLOW GOLD DOUBLE LION'S HEADS WITH GREEN ENAMEL AND ROSE DIAMONDS	450.00
12	14 KT. YELLOW GOLD OVAL BARK FINISH LINKS BRACELET WATCH	900.00
13	PENDANT, MALACHITE HEART	60.00

14	NECKLACE, 18 KT. YELLOW GOLD RONDELLES WITH MALACHITE AND OXBLOOD CORAL BEADS MEASURING APPROX. 10 MM.	2,500.00
15	NECKLACE, MALACHITE BEADS WITH YELLOW GOLD CLASP	750.00
16	CUFFLINKS, 18 KT. YELLOW GOLD AND MALACHITE SQUARES MEASURING APPROX. 13 15 MM.	250.00
17	CUFFLINKS, 18 KT. YELLOW GOLD AND DIAMOND MELON SHAPE, CONTAINING 54 ROUND DIAMONDS WEIGHING 2.45 CTS.	2,200.00
18	14 CT. YELLOW GOLD RUBY EARCLIPS, SET WITH 88 SMALL FACETED RUBIES	475.00
19	18KT YELLOW GOLD BRACELET, SET WITH 14 SMALL OVAL TURQUOISE STONE, 14 SMALL FACETED BLUE SAPPHIRES	1,200.00
20	18 KT. GOLD PENDANT WITH THE DATE OF FEB 9, PENDANT IS RECTANGULAR SHAPE, 3/4 X 1"	140.00
21	18 KT. YELLOW GOLD DIAMOND BROOCH CONTAINING 4 FULL CUT DIAMONDS WEIGHING APPROX .24 CTS.	500.00
22	18 KT. YELLOW GOLD DIAMOND AND CORAL RING, HAND-MADE SET WITH 10 FULL CUT DIAMONDS WEIGHING .06 CT. EACH, AND ONE FANCY SHAPE CORAL SET AROUND RING	1,000.00
23	LADIES 18 KT. YELLOW GOLD RING, FLORENTINE FINISH, CONTAINING ONE LARGE TURQUOISE 12 X 20 MM.	1,000.00
24	PAIR 18 KT. YELLOW GOLD, LARGE MARGUISE SHAPRED EAR CLIPS WITH GREEN ENAMEL AND SET WITH ONE OVAL CORAL, EACH 8 X 14 MM	850.00
25	BRACELET 3/4" WIDE, DOUBLE ROW, CONTAINING 36 CULTURED PEARLS, 6 MM. EACH AND 3 SMALL JADE AND 3 SMALL DIAMONDS .05 EACH, SET IN GOLD SECTIONS BETWEEN PEARS WITH GOLD ROPE STANDS ON EACH SIDE	850.00
26	18 MM. ROUND DOUGHNUT SHAPE JADE PENDANT SET IN YELLOW GOLD	225.00
27	14 KT. YELLOW GOLD FANCY DOME STYLE RING CONTAINING JADE AND DIAMONDS, WITH 4 SMALL CABOCHON JADES, 4 SMALL DIAMONDS WEIGHING APPROX. .12 CT. 10 BRILLIANT CUT DIAMONDS WEIGHING APPROX. 1.20 CTS. AND 1 BRILLIANT CUT DIAMOND WEIGHING APPROX. .60 CT.	1,650.00
28	14 KT. YELLOW GOLD LINK BRACELET	600.00
29	SINGLE STRANG, 92 CULTURED PEARLS, KNOTTED, 7-1-1/2 MM.	800.00
30	14 KT YELLOW GOLD THREE ROW ROPE BRACELET	400.00
31	14 KT YELLOW GOLD FAN PIN	275.00
32	14 KT. YELLOW GOLD AND JADE 5 SECTION BRACELET	375.00
33	ONE BRILLIANT CUT DIAMOND TIE TAC, 2.50 COLOR GRADING SLIGHTLY IMPERFECT, BRILLIANT AND WELL PROPORTIONED, APPROX. WEIGHT 0.55 CT.	550.00
34	PAIR OF 14 KT. YELLOW GOLD SAPPHIRE TUBULAR BAR CUFFLINES SET WITH A 44 CALIBRE SAPPHIRE	1,000.00
35	PAIR 18 KT YELLOW GOLD CUFFLINES, OVAL DOME STYLE MESH DESIGN, MADE IN ITALY	400.00
36	18 KT. YELLOW GOLD MAN'S VACHERON CONSTANTIN AUTOMATIC BRACELET WATCH, WITH 18 JEWEL VACHERON MOVEMENT	4,000.00
37	18 KT. YELLOW GOLD AND CORAL EARCLIPS WITH 12 ROUND CORAL PLACQUES	800.00
38	14 KT. YELLOW GOLD ROPE NECKLACE	1,000.00

39	14 KT. YELLOW GOLD AND MALACHITE NECKLACE WITH 10 RECT-ANGULAR TUBE SECTIONS	1,200.00
40	18 KT. YELLOW GOLD, PLATINUM AND PAVE DIAMOND RING, WITH 32 BRILLIANT CUT DIAMONDS WEIGHING APPROX. 1.00 CT.	1,400.00
41	96 CULTURED PEARLS MEASURING 7-7.8 MM., 9 FANCY GREEN ONYX AND ONE CABOCHON GREEN ONYX	10,000.00
42	18 KT. YELLOW GOLD, DIAMOND, CITRINE AND EMERALD RING CONTAINING: 1 CARVED CITRINE, 1 CABOCHON EMERALD WEIGHING 0.63 CTS. AND 18 ROUND DIAMONDS WEIGHING 1.42 CTS.	4,500.00
43	GOLD AND DIAMOND NECKLACE, SET WITH 60 DIAMONDS WEIGHING 6.55 CTS.	6,500.00
44	MULTI-STRAND SEED PEARL NECKLACE WITH TWO GOLD PANTHER HEADS CLASP	5,900.00
45	18 KT. YELLOW GOLD DIAMOND SOUTH SEA PEARL EARCLIPS, WITH A DIAMOND TOTAL WEIGHT OF 3.32 CT.	9,850.00
46	18 KT. YELLOW GOLD AND DIAMOND BRACELET, SET WITH 288 FULL CUT ROUND DIAMONDS, WEIGHING 20.00 CTS.	21,000.00
47	PAIR 18 KT. YELLOW GOLD SHINY, CURVE BANGLES BRACELET WHICH FIT WITH ABOVE MENTIONED BRACELET @1,160.00 EACH	2,320.00
48	18 KT. YELLOW GOLD AND DIAMOND NECKLACE SET WITH 242 ROUND DIAMONDS WEIGHING 13.50 CTS.	16,500.00
49	18 KT. YELLOW GOLD AND DIAMOND EAR CLIPS, SET WITH 78 FULL CUT ROUND DIAMONDS WEIGHING 13.38 CTS.	13,600.00
50	GOLD AND DIAMOND TIE TAC	2,000.00
51	DIAMOND RING	185,000.00
52	DIAMOND NECKLACE	34,000.00
53	DIAMOND AND SAPPHIRE EARCLIPS	13,000.00
54	ONE LADIES RING, 18 KT. YELLOW GOLD, DIAMOND, CITRINE AND EMERALD CONTAINING: 1 CARVED CITRINE, 1 CABOCHON EMERALD WEIGHING 0.63 CTS., 18 ROUND DIAMONDS WEIGHING 1.42 CTS.	6,000.00
55	ONE LADIES RING, 22 KT. YELLOW GOLD CROSS OVER DESIGN	600.00
56	ONE LADIES RING, YELLOW GOLD WIRE MOTIF AND DIAMONDS, CONTAINING: 2 ROUND DIAMONDS ESTIMATED WEIGHT 0.40 CTS.	1,200.00
57	ONE LADIES RING, YELLOW GOLD, CORAL AND DIAMOND, CONTAINING: PEARSHAPE CABOCHON OXBLOOD CORAL MEASURING 30 X 10.6 X 11.8 MM., 19 BAGUETTE DIAMONDS ESTIMATED WEIGHT 1.90 CTS	7,000.00
58	ONE LADIES RING 18 KT. YELLOW GOLD TWIN RING WITH TWO CARVED INTAGLIOS	1,050.00
59	ONE LADIES RING, 18 KT. YELLOW GOLD AND 6 ROW DIAMOND CONTAINING: 156 ROUND DIAMONDS ESTIMATED WEIGHT 7.35 CTS.	13,000.00
60	ONE LADIES RING, WHITE GOLD, TOURMALINE AND DIAMOND, CONTAINING: 1 EMERALD CUT TOURMALINE (BROKEN) MEASURING 23.7 X 18.3 X 9.44 MM., MARQUISE DIAMONDS ESTIMATED WEIGHT 0.40 CTS., 4 ROUND DIAMONDS ESTIMATED WEIGHT 0.30 CTS	7,000.00
61	ONE LADIES RING, 14 KT. YELLOW GOLD FLORENTINED WEDDING BAND	350.00

62	ONE LADIES RING, 18 KT. YELLOW GOLD, CORAL AND DIAMONDS, CONTAINING: 10 ROUND DIAMONDS ESTIMATED WEIGHT 0.60 CTS.	1,850.00
63	ONE LADIES RING, 22 KT. YELLOW GOLD, CABOCHON AMETHYST, ROUTILE QUARTZ AND DIAMOND, CONTAINING: 7 ROUND DIAMONDS, ESTIMATED WEIGHT 0.35 CTS.	1,600.00
64	ONE PAIR LADIES EARCLIPS, Q8 KT. YELLOW GOLD AND DIAMOND HOOPS	2,650.00
65	ONE PAIR LADIES EARCLIPS, 18 KT. YELLOW GOLD AND CORAL	2,300.00
66	ONE PAIR LADIES EARCLIPS, 18 KT. YELLOW GOLD, DIAMOND, AND CABOCHON SAPPHIRE, CONTAINING: 14 SAPPHIRE BEADS WEIGHING 21.00 CTS., 278 ROUND DIAMONDS WEIGHING 9.25 CTS.	15,500.00
67	ONE PAIR LADIES EARCLIPS, 18 KT. YELLOW GOLD, DIAMOND AND SPOTTED WHITE STONE, CONTAINING: 14 ROUND DIAMONDS ESTIMATED WEIGHT 0.70 CTS.	2,200.00
68	ONE PAIR LADIES EARCLIPS, 18 KT. YELLOW GOLD, PLATINUM AND DIAMOND, CONTAINING: 114 ROUND DIAMONDS WEIGHING 4.13 CTS.	8,000.00
69	ONE PAIR LADIES EARCLIPS, 18 KT. YELLOW GOLD TWIST MOTIF	1,500.00
70	ONE PAIR LADIES EARCLIPS, 18 KT. YELLOW GOLD, CORAL AND GREEN ENAMEL	1,500.00
71	CLIPS, (ONE PAIR) PLATINUM, DIAMOND, CALIBRE RUBY AND CRTSTAL (CRYSTAL DAMAGED SOMEWHAT AND 2 CALIBRE RUBY MISSING), CONTAINING: 8 SQUARE DIAMONDS ESTIMATED WEIGHT 0.75 CTS., 78 ROUND SINGLE CUT DIAMONDS ESTIMATED WEIGHT 1.60 CTS., 14 BAGUETTE DIAMONDS ESTIMATED WEIGHT 0.70 CTS., 22 CALIBRE RUBIES ESTIMATED WEIGHT 1.35 CTS., 4 SMALL CABOCHON RUBIES	4,500.00
72	PIN, PLATINUM, DIAMOND AND JADE BAR, CONTAINING: 78 ROUND SINGLE CUT DIAMONDS ESTIMATED WEIGHT 2.00 CTS. JADE BAR MEASURING 15 X 6 MM.	3,500.00
73	ONE BRACELET, YELLOW GOLD AND PAVE DIAMOND HINGED BANGLE, CONTAINING: 288 ROUND DIAMONDS ESTIMATED WEIGHT 20.00 CTS.	37,500.00
74	BRACELETS, (ONE PAIR) YELLOW GOLD HIGH POLISHED HINGED BANGLE TO BE WORN WITH THE ABOVE BRACELET (EACH VALUE AT \$1,800.)	3,600.00
75	ONE NECKLACE, 18 KT. YELLOW GOLD AND WHITE GOLD, PERIDOT AND DIAMOND IN A ROPE TWISH DESIGN CONTAINING: 1 EMERALD CUT PERIDOT MEASURING 29 X 18.8 X 12.6 MM., 40 ROUND DIAMONDS ESTIMATED WEIGHT 1.20 CTS.	17,000.00
76	ONE NECKLACE, 18 KT. YELLOW GOLD LINK WITH OCTAGONAL PENDANT PLAQUE IN YELLOW GOLD, DIAMOND BLUE AND YELLOW SAPPHIRES CONTAINING: 4 OVAL BLUE SAPPHIRES ESTIMATED WEIGHT 4.00 CTS., 4 OVAL YELLOW SAPPHIRE ESTIMATED WEIGHT 4.00 CTS., 60 ROUND DIAMONDS ESTIMATED WEIGHT 1.80 CTS.	11,500.00
77	ONE NECKLACE, 18 KT. YELLOW GOLD, DIAMOND, EMERALD AND RUBY DOUBLE LION, CONTAINING: DIAMONDS ESTIMATED WEIGHT 0.15 CTS., 1 CABOCHON EMERALD ESTIMATED WEIGHT 2.50 CTS., RUBIES ESTIMATED WEIGHT 0.25 CTS.	4,500.00

78	ONE NECKLACE, YELLOW GOLD LINK WITH AQUAMARINE SET UP-SIDE DOWN AND DIAMONDS, CONTAINING: 1 EMERALD CUT AQUAMARINE MEASURING 27.5 X 23 X 14.5 MM., 30 ROUND DIAMONDS ESTIMATED WEIGHT 2.50 CTS.	8,700.00
79	ONE NECKLACE, 18 KT. YELLOW GOLD LINK WITH OLD COIN IN DIAMOND BEZEL, CONTAINING: 26 ROUND DIAMONDS ESTIMATED WEIGHT 3.25 CTS.	10,000.00
81	ONE NECKLACE, 18 KT. YELLOW GOLD LINK WITH DIAMOND AND CARVED INTAGLIO PLACK, CONTAINING: 40 ROUND DIAMONDS ESTIMATED WEIGHT 1.65 CTS.	6,500.00
82	ONE NECKLACE, YELLOW GOLD LARGE LINK	8,000.00
83	ONE NECKLACE, 14 KT. YELLOW GOLD 24" WITH DETACHABLE BRACELET SECTION	2,200.00
84	ONE PENDANT, 18 KT. YELLOW GOLD CABOCHON PEAR SHAPE GREEN STONE AND CRYSTAL CROSS	1,500.00
85	ONE NECKLACE AND PENDANT, 18 KT. YELLOW GOLD AND JADE PENDANT WITH YELLOW GOLD CHAIN	1,500.00
86	ONE NECKLACE, 32 STRANDS OF BIWA FRESH WATER CULTURED PEARLS 26-1/4" LONG WITH 18 KT. YELLOW GOLD, BLACK ONYX AND DIAMOND CLASP CONTAINING: 14 ROUND DIAMONDS ESTIMATED WEIGHT 0.25 CTS.	2,500.00
87	ONE NECKLACE, SINGLE STRAND CULTURED PEARL WITH YELLOW GOLD AND DIAMOND CLASP CONTAINING: ROUND DIAMONDS WEIGHING 3.86 CTS. AND SEVENTY-ONE CULTURED PEARLS MEASURING FROM 8 TO 9.5 MM.	8,000.00
SCHEDULE OF FURS		
1	ONE BLACKGLAMA MINK VEST	800.00
2	ONE BLACKGLAMA NATURAL MINK FULL LENGTH COAT, FOX TRIM	3,200.00
3	ONE KNITTED WOOL AND BLOND MINK FULL LENGTH COAT BY CARDIN	3,000.00
4	ONE LYNX JACKET BY DIOR	1,000.00
5	ONE WHITE FOX STOLE	1,000.00
6	RUSSIAN LYNX COAT	10,000.00
7	ONE NATURAL CANADIAN LYNX STROLLER	6,000.00

Comments:

location of the aforementioned furs is unknown. ¹⁷

Why the list is so intriguing is that the church the Doctor represented on so many committees and bank accounts has been fighting a rear guard action for over a hundred years over its members even wearing a small plain wedding band. It was obvious that the Doctor and his wife, Patty, did not put much stock in the statement from their church prophet that "Not one penny should be spent for a circlet of gold to testify that we are married." ¹⁸

While the list of the assets of the Adventist Divines were not listed in the court records, they were not doing so bad either. John Adam had done a very good job of sleuthing and had come up with several items concerning the leaders.

1. That at least six of the Union Presidents had some connection financially with Dr. Davenport.

2. That always they received more interest than the church they represented.
3. That at times, that interest ran from 50 to 80% depending upon the deal involved.
4. That several of the presidents were actually business partners with Davenport and enjoyed some tax benefits.
5. That Davenport was able to put some of his own men in positions in the Conference where the wills and trusts could be more easily accessible to him.
6. That the wheeling and dealing did not stop with some of the leaders with the Davenport matter but spread to the medical field.¹⁹

That is was illegal and immoral to do what they were doing, both parties knew, for Davenport had written to Jack Price, one of his favorites:

I would not noise around about this 80% return because some of the peanut brains that are in the denomination and know nothing about finance will hasten to spread it to the four corners of the earth that I in desperate trouble and I now have to pay 80% for my money. This could not be further from the truth.²⁰

When the Architectural Digest of November, 1981, came out showing one of the many Davenport projects and said among other things:

To transform the newly constructed condominium into an age-weathered setting redolent with history demanded considerable imagination and skill, and Mrs. Davenport was especially fortunate in finding gifted craftsmen who could help implement her ideas.²¹

It was very clear that Donald and Patty, as well as the Adventist Divines were having a great deal of fun with the church's money, even if the poor and needy that give it through the church were not.

CHAPTER III FOOTNOTES

1. Walter Rea to General Conference Officers, 1979.
2. Walter Rea to S. D. Bietz, February, 1979.
3. Walter Rea, "Who Profits from the Prophet," Free Inquiry, Vol. 4, no. 4 (Fall, 1984).
4. Walter Rea to Neal Wilson, May 29, 1980.
5. Neal Wilson to Walter Rea, July 2, 1980, p. 1.
6. Ibid., p. 2.

7. Ibid., p. 2.

8. Charles O. Frederick, President, Gencon Risk Management Service for the protection of Denominational Assets, to Presidents and Treasurers, Conferences and Institutions, North American Division, p. 1.

9. Ibid., p. 5.

10. Neal Wilson to Walter Rea, July 2, 1980, pp. 3,4.

11. Tom Dybdahl, "Bad Business: The Davenport Fiasco," *Spectrum*, Vol. 12, No. 1, (September, 1981) p. 54.

12. Doris A. Byron and John Dart, "Massive Church Fund Loss Feared," *Los Angeles Times*, July 25, 1981.

13. Marjorie Hyer, *The Washington Post*, "Credit Squeeze, Adventist Face a Troubled Future," *The Sacramento Bee*, August 29, 1981.

14. Doreen Carvajal, "Seventh-day Adventist's Empire Collapses," *Long Beach Telegram*, August 2, 1981.

15. Art Wong and James Nickles, "After the Fall: An Adventist's Bankrupt Empire," *The Sunday Sun*, San Bernardino, California, May 30, 1982.

16. Art Wong and James Nickles, "What will Church find in Bankruptcy' 5 Wake," *The Sun*, San Bernardino, California, June 2, 1982.

17. United States Bankruptcy Court, Central District of California, Chapter II Case No. LA 81-09060-BR, SCHEDULE 33, Schedule of Jewelry -List Number 1 and 2, pp 1-8; Schedule of Furs.

18. Ellen G. White, *Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers*, (Mountain View: PPPA, 1923), p. 181.

19. SDA PRESS RELEASE, Published by The Adventist Layman Council, Collegedale, Tennessee. Vol. 1, no. 8,9; Vol. II, no. 1; Plus others on file with no Vol. or Numbers listed.

20. Donald Davenport to Jack Price, August 22, 1980. (Copied from SDA Press Release, Vol. 1, no. 9).

21. Gerrold A. Turnbull, "Classical Resonance, The Framework of History in a Contemporary Setting," Architectural Digest, November 1981, pp. 142-149.

CHAPTER IV

WHO PROFITS FROM THE PROPHET?

It has been clear to those who wanted to know that Adventism has and continues to have serious flaws in structure and procedure. It is a closed shop as far as the layman and membership is concerned. It is strictly a party of the clergy, the super salesmen of the psychic, as I have pointed out in *The White Lie*:¹ It is a system formed by those salesmen, run by those salesmen and operated and controlled by and for those salesmen. The layman has little or nothing to say or do with its operation. In the eyes of the clergy they have one function and that is to supply the money to run the system.

In 1969, while still a pastor in the church, I had written to Elder Blaker, Pacific Union President, stating some of these concerns and asking for at least a look into some ideas that would make a more open church. I felt then, as I do now, that the church was choking for lack of openness and participation from the bottom up. The letter was one of special pleading:

Thank you for the letter and your kindness in listening. You have a great talent there. The thoughts we talked about are not all mine but have come over the years from observation and discussion with many in the ministry. Here are some of them put to pen.

One has only to look at the transcript of a graduate of Theology and he is impressed with deficiency, not in the accumulation of hours but the barrenness of objective courses and thinking. For decades the minister has stood at the peak in academic training to his congregation. This is no longer true. It is also a false assumption that a training in Theology as constituted in our program, prepares a minister for the practical, objective problems that present themselves in his everyday life. While he is dealing with lawyers, administrators, doctors and laymen whose training and work is mechanics, electronics, mathematics, and similar objective occupations, he is completely deficient in these areas.

This deficiency becomes more glaring in the minister's operation of church boards, committee meetings, school programs and wherever he is brought into conflict by his subjectivity or value thinking and the objective, pragmatic problem of life, both in the church and among the people. Such conflicts and frustrations have engendered discouragement and may contribute to the declining interest in the position of pastor or parish ministry. Many a minister would leave his profession if it were not for the fact that his system has robbed him of any effective way of making a living if he does go. He thus stays in the system being equally unhappy and inefficient, praying most fervently that the Lord will come soon and deliver him from the dilemma.

There are several practical suggestions that might be helpful in meeting the problem as far as academic perusals are concerned. One would be to encourage in the ministerial program more objective courses, stressing practical vocational and problem-solving courses in the area of practical life problems. It is safe to say that in the course of a 40 year ministry that one will encounter an infinitesimal number of theologians who wish to discourse with you on determinism, or one may search in vain for a Greek to practice his minor on, while the problems in sociology, juvenile delinquency, logic, mathematics, business administration, are ever present. Who's ever stressed in Adventism to the Adventist ministry that finances occupy a large portion of a minister's time and energy? Yet where are the courses in bookkeeping, auditing, and like subjects? These should be a must.

A second and more dramatic solution and, I believe, far more relevant and practical, would be to require all ministerial students, upon graduation, to have a B.A. or B.S. in some vocation of his choice, exclusive of teaching. It is parenthetical to say that in my opinion, too many disappointed preachers have ended up as incompetent teachers. With this practical step a man having once tried the ministry and finding it repugnant, or for various reasons wishing to switch, would not end up licking stamps in the Bible House or driving

the Conference moving van during the summer. He could take his place with confidence in the community of men without a stigma or a sense of guilt or a sense of frustration because of his past.

Many a man has been held to the work merely by the overwhelming fact that he was not qualified through the system of his denomination to do anything else outside of it. Under a new outlook, with a qualified degree in a field of his choice he would not only be qualified but certified to take his place in industry or commerce. Having given him an opportunity to obtain an option, thus giving him security and pride of position, dedication to the ministry would be much more real and enduring. The denomination could then embrace two or three years of seminary training to round out what they feel must be final ministerial necessities.

Another formidable hurdle in the matter of security and meaning comes when the intern hits the field. He is given to understand that he must now ignore his 26 or 28 years of competitive studies in which he must strive for grades to obtain position as well as status and recognize, he is informed, that in the organization there is no position and thus no advancement. He must submit himself to whatever program the Conference specifies, whether he is qualified or not. He must resign himself to serve under a minister who may not be qualified, participate in evangelistic meetings that are often ill-conceived and poorly executed and yet hope that through this maze of inconsistencies he can gain enough favor with the brethren to finally be ordained, thus putting God's stamp of approval on him for life.

It is recognized by those in the field that very little thought has been given to the intern's program of training in the area of pastoral ministry. The glaring injustice leaves him at the mercy of one man, a Conference president, who may or may not be trained in the handling of personnel, who may or may not have been a successful pastor, who may or may not understand the problems of the parish priest. If this is not enough he is often assigned to the pernicious whims of a likewise unqualified pastor with little or no experience except in accumulation of years often in frustration and failure itself. One thing the denomination seems to have overlooked in this area is that survival does not mean success.

Would it not be much wiser to have a man in charge of personnel in the Conference whose sole responsibility would be the pulpit and the pew? He would answer to no one except the Conference Committee, but would be available at all times for the problems in the church and the ministry. He would have no executive functions but to deal with personnel problems. If such a position would threaten the local Conference President, then I would suggest a committee made up of eight to ten pastors, with perhaps a teacher or layman if the idea was to be extended to their fields. A minister or an intern would be allowed without fear of reprisal to state his problems to such a group in candor.

Such a board could not only mediate problems, but perhaps in the ideal, could head them off. Such a man or board could recommend placement rather than the haphazard subjective method that is used at the present time. It is possible that such a method could be pooled throughout North America to give a much more objective approach to the filling of vacancies. Whatever is done must be done quickly to insure young men that they are wanted and necessary and to help break down the conviction that they must be 45 years of age or even older before the denomination can express confidence in their ability.

Finally, Jack, this would tie in with my thoughts on our laity and our young men being informed as to open Committee Meetings. If these Committee Meetings were held once a quarter in the various districts and allowance was made for all who wished to attend, it would go a long way toward consolidating laity and organization. Young interns as well as young ordained men should be allowed visiting privileges on Conference Committees. Perhaps if three or four young men could sit on a committee for six months without voting rights they would be more knowledgeable and, I believe more appreciative of the problems of a Conference and administration, likewise the laity. Any method. whereby position or

authority can be delegated on the basis of ability and fairness rather than the petty privilege of position would do a tremendous amount to bring in rapport and thus, spirituality between administration and the field.

There are other methods that one could use to make the ministry feel relevant and necessary, such as the structuring of workers meetings for their interest, the use of their experience and knowledge on committees both in the office and in the field, the recognition of their support in a tangible way from the Association in the matter of wills and legacies, plus a practical approach to their own personal problems rather than expecting subjection through the arbitrary voice of authority.

I guess I had better stop before you get the impression I am liberal as well as an idealist. What I guess I am saying is that we ought to practice in our own ranks the Christianity we preach to others.

It is always FUN to be and HAVE a part of the work, Jack. Tell your administrators to stop taking that fun away from us as pastors and ministers. ²

As with most of my letters, ideas, suggestions and pleadings, the letter and ideas that they represented were ignored in favor of arbitrary control and arrogant supervision. In fact, it was this same approach that caused the other problem that I was involved in, the matter of Ellen G. White and her role in the church. It was with the hope we might have some openness and dialogue that most of us that were doing work in this area continued. But that was a forlorn naive hope that simply could not be if one understands Adventism.

In order to understand the whole of the Davenport problem it is necessary to understand some of the problems of the Ellen G. White controversy. In both areas, the same men control, make decisions, ignore counsel, and sack dissenters. In both cases, if laymen had played any significant part, if the facts had not been kept from them, the results would have been much different. In my case the two problems merged because of my special knowledge in both areas and my desire and efforts to inform the church as a whole in order to effect change. How foolish I was to believe that anyone or anything could change the leaders of Adventism to any position that might threaten their control or position of power.

When Walter Martin wrote *The Kingdom of the Cults* in the 1960s, his definition of a cult was very gentle. He said:

By the term "cult" I mean nothing derogatory to any group so classified. A cult, as I define it, is any religious group which differs significantly in some one or more respects as to belief and practice, from those religious groups which are regarded as the normative expressions of religion in our total culture. I may add to this that a cult might also be defined as a group of people gathered about a specific person or person's interpretation of the Bible. ³

Martin goes on to list three major cults - Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, and Christian Scientists - but leaves out Seventh-day Adventists entirely. In fact, he defends his choice of exclusion by adding to the Appendix a section entitled, "The Puzzle of Seventh-day Adventism." ⁴ In his second chapter, "Scaling the Language Barrier," Martin refers directly and specifically to Seventh-day Adventists, but does not seem to perceive it:

It is therefore possible for the modern theologians to use the terminology of the Bible and historic theology, but in an entirely different sense from that intended by the writers of Scripture . . . one must face the fact that the originators and promulgators of cult theology have done exactly the same thing to the semantic structure of Christian Theology as did the modern theologians. So it is possible . . . to utilize the terminology of Bible Christianity with absolute freedom, having already redesigned these terms in a theological framework of his own making and to his own liking, but almost always at direct variance with the historically accepted meanings of the terms. The student of cultism, then, must be prepared to scale the language barrier of terminology. First, he must recognize that it does exist, and second, he must acknowledge the very real fact that unless terms are defined when one is either speaking or reading cult theology, the semantic jungle which the cults have created will

envelop , making difficult, if not impossible, a proper contrast between the teachings of the cults and those of orthodox Christianity. ⁵

Had Martin's definition been more precise and his observations more astute, surely he would have included Seventh-day Adventists. He seems to sense this error of judgment years later in an interview in the July 1983 *Adventist Currents*, when he reviews his past contacts with the Adventist and concludes that either he was misled by some of the spokesmen of the church or they really did not have the authority to represent the true picture of the church. ⁶

It is understandable that Martin should fall into the error of misreading the facts about Adventists. Many others have done the same. It is because the inquisitor is often led to deal with the promises of Seventh-day Adventists and not their practices. Martin knew some Adventist ministers as friends; they were not fanatics. He was fooled by the fantasies he was told; he was never shown the facts. The language of the cult as used by Adventists colored his vision; very seldom, if ever, are the practitioners, such as the ministers of the flock, or laymen, allowed to speak for the church. Rather the seminarian, the theologian, the institutional employee, or the retired monastic mind is the spokesman for what is called "Adventist Truth." Because of this forced practice, the true picture of Adventism is seldom seen or known by the non-Adventist. This was the problem for Walter Martin, and he seems to sense it when he says years later that he was lied to by some in the church and double-crossed by most concerning his agreements with the church about the distribution of his book *The Truth about Seventh-day Adventists*.

This exchange was printed in *Adventist Currents*:

CURRENTS: Was there a prior agreement as to what would happen to your book when it came out?

MARTIN: Oh, yes. We would distribute the book and promote it through Christian bookstores, through Eternity Magazine, and anyplace else we could.

CURRENTS: Even though you had been doing that for a few years?

MARTIN: I have faithfully done that. And they were to take my book and get it into all the Adventist bookstores and publishing houses so that the Adventist could see the work I had done. They reneged on that. The General Conference reneged on that, and Anderson was very upset.

CURRENTS: Do you know who to define as General Conference in that case?

MARTIN: I don't, and wouldn't make an accusation. But they did not keep their word. As a result, only QUESTIONS ON DOCTRINE came out in Seventh day Adventist bookstores. THE TRUTH ABOUT SEVENTH-ADVENTISM did not.

In addition to that, they wrote a book to answer my book without giving my book a hearing. That was wrong . . . What they did was censure the Adventist people. ⁷

In contrast, Anthony Hoekema had no difficulties whatsoever in recognizing Adventism for what it was and said so in *The Four Major Cults*, published in 1963, where he lists Adventism as one of the four. He had no trouble doing so because his Chapter 6, "The Distinctive Traits of the Cult," is neither gentle or evasive, but clear, to the point, and inclusive. His operational definitions are such that anyone can use them to evaluate whatever cult non-cult he wishes. He lists these traits as follows:

- 1. An Extra-Scriptural Source of Authority.**
- 2. The Denial of Justification by Grace Alone.**
- 3. The Devaluation of Christ.**
- 4. The Group as the Exclusive Community of the Saved.**
- 5. The Group's Central Role in Eschatology.** ⁸

He then goes on to apply these five traits to the Seventh-day Adventists. Their extra-scriptural authority is Ellen White, their prophet. Their justification before God is accomplished by works. Christ is interpreted by Ellen White

through her writings. No scholar is allowed to advance any idea of importance that does not agree with any statement she has ever made. The Adventists have always taught that they are the exclusive community of the saved and that he or she must be an Adventist to enter the kingdom if he or she has ever had the opportunity to hear the church's message. Finally, the book *The Great Controversy*, again written by Ellen White, makes Adventism the central figure in closing events.⁹

Adventists have in the past and at the present denied all five traits or categories, but as always it is the language barrier, or the use the cults make of theological terminology that throws the unaware off. While denying that any of the traits exist in their church, the keepers of the Adventist press, the thought-molders of the ministry, and the public relation experts go right on selling a religion that exhibits all five of them to the membership through the church press and programs.

Like most conservative organizations, there is little freedom of expression or choice for Adventists concerning attitudes or actions that conflict with church thought or tradition. Because of the belief that it is wrong to marry outside the church, there is little influx of ideas from other individuals or groups or other forms of expression of belief. No one teaches in Adventist colleges, academies or grade schools except denominationally trained workers and believers. Even the administration of the colleges handpicks its teachers. Thus free expression and the exchange of opinions are effectively controlled by the system. If the label "church" was stripped from the organization, it could be seen as a tightly controlled political organization using the people's money to control those same people. The recent studies of the political structure of the church would seem to confirm this view.¹⁰

These observations have been confirmed over the years, but recent events can be cited for evidence that all is not well within the structure. In the early seventies a great deal of information came to the fore concerning the writings of Ellen White, the church's prophet. This information was conveyed to readers of *Spectrum*, an Adventist journal for scholars in 1980 by Donald McAdams, president of the Texas-based Southwestern Adventist College:

In 1970, 55 years after the death of Ellen G. White, Adventist scholars began for the first time to examine critically her writings and to share their conclusions with the community of Adventist intellectuals. The scholarship started with a cluster of articles in the autumn 1970 number of *Spectrum*. Other articles, a book and several unpublished manuscripts followed. Ten years later, we can see that the 1970s introduced a new era in the study of Ellen White.¹¹

Ronald Numbers, a professor in the church's School of Medicine at Loma Linda, California, kicked off the smoldering controversy over Ellen's reliability and authority with his book *Prophetess of Health* in 1976.¹² It caused great consternation among Adventist leaders and was discussed widely by Adventist scholars, and even received some national attention. The church wrote a defense against it and distributed it to its membership. It was not that the material was so new that got Numbers into trouble and later fired. It was not that he proved that others before White had written what she said she had been told by God in visions. It was not even that he had discovered that large parts of her "visions" on health had been lifted from others, often word for word. What did isolate Numbers from the system was the attitude he expressed in his Preface:

In so doing, I have parted company with those Adventist scholars who insist on the following presuppositions: (1) that the Holy Spirit has guided the Advent movement since the early 1840s, (2) "that Ellen Harmon White was chosen by God as his messenger and her work embodied that of a prophet," (3) "that as a sincere, dedicated Christian and a prophet, Ellen White could not and did not falsify," and (4) that the testimony of Mrs. White's fellow-believers "may be accepted as true and correct to the best of the memory of the individuals who reported." It seems to me that such statements, particularly the last two, are more properly conclusions than presuppositions.¹³

That did it! Those thoughts and ideals might be acceptable rules of thought for scholarly research, but Numbers should have known that knowingly or unknowingly he was violating the cardinal rule of Adventist scholarship, which was that one must have a presupposition, a born or cultivated bias, to deal with any of the facts and ideas concerning denominational history. Those presuppositions and biases must be made to color the Adventist scene.

There was another shocker in Ronald Numbers' book besides the lack of presuppositions-- his casting doubt on Ellen White's integrity as well as her credibility. The church is involved in health in a big way, with Ellen White, directed by God, of course, getting the credit. In one of her strongest health "visions" she received the instructions from heaven to abstain from flesh foods of all kinds. So strong was she on this issue that one of the badges of Adventists is vegetarianism. She is quoted in her testimonies as saying:

I have been instructed that flesh food has a tendency to animalize the nature, to rob men and women of that love and sympathy which they should feel for everyone, and to give the lower passions control over the higher powers of being We are not to make the use of flesh food a test of fellowship, but we should consider the influence that professed believers who use flesh foods have over others. . . . Shall we not bear a decided testimony against the indulgence of perverted appetite? Will any who are ministers of the gospel, proclaiming the most solemn truth ever given to mortals, set an example in returning to the fleshpots of Egypt? Will those who are supported by the tithe from God's storehouse permit themselves by self-indulgence to poison the life-giving current flowing through their veins? Will they disregard the light and warnings that God has given them? ¹⁴

Yet in spite of the fact that Adventists put vegetarianism on such a high moral and spiritual plain because of Ellen White and her writings, Numbers charges that White ate meat much of her life, a charge the White Estate has acknowledged. Numbers refers to Willie, Ellen White's son, when he says:

When the inevitable rumors began circulating that the prophetess had not always lived up to her own standards, Ellen White protested that she had indeed been "a faithful health reformer," as the members of her family could testify. But even her favorite son Willie related a different story. Years after his mother's death he told of the many setbacks in her struggle to overcome meat, of the difficulties in finding competent vegetarian cooks, and of lunch baskets filled with turkey, chicken, and tinned tongue. Yet despite these lapses, both he and his mother seem to have regarded themselves as true vegetarians-- in principle if not in practice. ¹⁵

Such a double standard led many of the readers of Number's book to wonder why, if as White claimed, God gave her instruction in these matters, didn't she follow His advice, or did she know all along that God had said nothing of the kind?

Another disruption followed on the heels of Ronald Numbers' book that not only questioned the integrity of Ellen White and her ideas but the reliability of her theology. Many of those familiar to Adventist history, such as A. F. Ballenger, W. W. Prescott, L.R. Conradi, and W. W. Fletcher, had in times past raised questions concerning the main pillars of Adventist doctrine, such as the twenty-three hundred days, the heavenly sanctuary, and the pre-Advent judgment. Now it was Desmond Ford's turn. Ford, chairman of the Theology Department of Avondale College in Australia, was exchange professor at Pacific Union College in Angwin, California when he accepted an invitation to speak to the local forum chapter on October 27, 1979. At that meeting he brought to his listeners' attention the inconsistencies of the church's position. Martin and Donald Barnhouse had determined and stated years before that they considered the Adventist judgment just another example of the face-saving double-talk employed by the church, considering that the Millerite movement of 1844 had failed with its date setting to produce the Second Coming of Christ. What the Adventists had invented was the theology that when Christ did not come-- and, as they believed, the door of probation was closed for the world-- that they had misunderstood the whole concept. So now they felt that God had hidden the real truth to test the believers as to their sincerity and that now the judgment was really going on in the heavenly sanctuary above, where no one could see it, thus not being able to prove that the idea was right or wrong. The outcome of the Ford review was never in doubt. He, like Numbers before him, did not bring his suppositions to the committee at Glacier View, where the meeting of his peers took place. They demanded his resignation with a strong statement in defense of Ellen White and the church's position:

(a) HILLS: Are we to tell our people that we have been wrong? Doesn't Sister White use this argument?

(b) STRAND: The crucial issue is how Ellen White used these texts (Numbers 14:34 and Ezekiel 4:6).

(c) WILSON: You never listen to your brethren. If you believe in Ellen White, and the brethren tell you what they think you had better practice what you preach. If you are not willing to accept the counsel of your brethren

(d) WILSON: It is not the role of the Review to give contrary views equal time, or to promote "new light" before that light has been studied by responsible groups. . . . The bottom line, of course, is the role of Ellen White in doctrinal matters. ¹⁶

It was clear from the meeting that there was to be no honest inquiry into Adventist belief or practice. It was clear that Ford, for all his degrees, including two Ph.D's, was out and that the scholars who had taken part in his review were only allowed to be there to provide support for the decision concerning him that had been made long before the event. It also was a remarkable display of cultic double-talk when the church told the world that Ellen White was a lesser light and Bible was the church's first authority.

Raymond F. Cottrell, formerly associate editor of the *Adventist Review*, the Adventist in-house organ, protested:

One person after another has been raising those (questions) for 75 years. As a church, we have dealt decisively with the people who did so, one by one, but we have done little or nothing yet by way of providing the church with viable answers to the questions they asked. We have treated the questioners as if they were trouble-makers, and the questions as if they did not exist, except in someone's perverted imagination. It would be difficult to defend this long-standing default on our part as a responsible, Christian way of relating to what we all recognize as a major theological problem. ¹⁷

Once again the Adventist church was brought to the door of truth and inquiry by one or more of its scholars, but church leaders chose to keep that door shut. Once again they were confronted with honest men seeking honest answers, but chose to take the popular, dishonest course. As always, the super salesmen of the system were willing to use the language of the cult to deceive the unaware and ignorant. But this time the price was much higher. The learned, the talented, and the moneyed people of the church began to raise questions and to withhold their services and funds. Questions surfaced not only about the integrity of Ellen White but her reliability in doctrinal matters. After all, in over one hundred and forty years, not one major or minor denomination had accepted the Adventist theory of investigative judgment, and many thought that over half of their own theologians did not accept it either.

Two of the biggest explosions for the church were set off in the 1980s by Ronald Graybill and this writer. The latter episode focused worldwide attention on the misuse and abuse of the materials handled by the church. The Graybill affair reviewed for all who wished to see the control exercised by the White Estate - the keepers of the keys in all matters of the Adventist prophet, Ellen White - over the facts and fables handed out since the church's founding.

Ronald Graybill had been a research assistant for thirteen years and was designated an associate secretary of the Ellen G. White Estate. On April 1983, Graybill went before the committee at John Hopkins University for his doctrinal dissertation, "The Power of Prophecy: Ellen G. White and the Women Religious Founders of the Nineteenth Century." He was successful in that defense but it was to be the last of his victories. He had placed a five year embargo on his manuscript, but without his consent a copy of his work was obtained and circulated throughout the church world-wide.

The results were predictable and immediate. The back page of the November 1983 *Adventist Review* announced to its readers:

The dissertation and its impact on Elder Graybill's ability to function as a spokesman for the Ellen White Estate were discussed at a meeting of Ellen G. White Estate board of trustees on November 3. The board voted to place Graybill on administrative leave, to suggest that he prepare a written response to questions raised concerning the dissertation, and to invite him to meet with the board at its next session (December 5), when the matter is to be discussed further. ¹⁸

Fast on the heels of the article came another in *Christianity Today*, "Another Scholar Is in Jeopardy over Ellen White." ¹⁹ In the article they theorize:

Douglas Hackleman, editor of the magazine *Adventist Currents*, which holds the nontraditional view of White, calls the issue of Graybill's procedural violations a "red herring." "The real problem," Hackleman says, "is that for most Adventists, the dissertation will have the effect of demythologizing Ellen White." Hackleman asserts that a decision by the foundation not to retain Graybill would testify to its tendencies to hide the facts about White.²⁰

The process of "demythologizing Ellen White" had gotten into high gear in the preceding years, but Graybill's work brought out several points and new material to support these facts: (1) skepticism about Ellen White's prophetic gifts, (2) doubts about her character and integrity, and (3) that Ellen White might have produced visions as they were needed to maintain her authority. The dissertation also suggests that she was somewhat of a witch doctor, calling the wrath of God on all those who refused her instructions or exhortations.

But Graybill's real problem was not, as others before him had said, his lack of presupposition and his candor. It was that as a privileged member of the White Estate, he had used material that had not been released for public scrutiny. Much of what he used had been classified by the White Estate as secret, or sensitive, or embarrassing to persons still living, or, as in the case of national defense, top secret. He had violated the basic rule of the White Estate, and that was to go public with material that Arthur White, the grandson of Ellen White and the real keeper of the keys since his grandmother's death, had forbidden to be seen.

Neal Wilson, General Conference President of the Seventh-day Adventists, tried to make the situation sound spiritual when he reported to the church:

On the other hand, the record shows, according to Dr. Olson of the White Estate, that Graybill has been a productive worker and has written articles, prepared shelf documents, and traveled extensively in behalf of the White Estate, giving lectures that have helped to answer some of the questions being raised in recent years. Graybill affirms his confidence in the belief that Ellen G. White was divinely inspired. That she had the prophetic gift is believable because her teachings are Biblical.²¹

Even the intellectuals in the church tried to save Graybill with praise and special pleadings.

1. Ron constantly reminded us that the messenger and the message could not be separated from her time and circumstances and still be correctly understood. His careful research into the "life and times" of a particular statement brought confidence to the Adventist historical fraternity and to scores of thoughtful laypeople.

2. Ron Graybill gave the Ellen G. White Estate a credibility that it never had before because he was able to approach her writings in a very open way. He made it possible for us to gain a greater appreciation of Ellen White as a person, a mother, a writer, as well as a messenger. With Ron Graybill gone, the White Estate has lost most of its credibility.

3. I am very sorry to see Ron Graybill go. He has been consistently trusted by the academic community to give the straight story.

4. Ron Graybill was one person we could turn to who was faithful to the evidence and at the same time redemptive. At workers' meetings in my conference, he was candid, non-defensive, open with the facts, and at the same time enhanced Ellen White's role.²²

What is easy to over-look is that Graybill first took the material without permission, an act he had criticized in others. Then he put a five-year hold on the manuscript, showing that he either did not want the church to know what he knew or was determined that they shouldn't know. Finally, when he was cornered by circumstances he created himself, he ran for cover to keep his position. Surely these are not the actions of an honorable hero. It would seem that Graybill became less than honest in order to save a dishonest position.

My phone started ringing at 6 A.M. Thursday, October 23, 1980, and, although to a lesser extent, it has not stopped ringing since. The cause of all this activity was an article by John Dart, religion editor of the *Los Angeles Times*. John had interviewed me several days before concerning the work of Ellen White. After taking pictures and looking

over the research, Dart went back to his office. Before publication he called and asked if I considered White a plagiarist, to which I replied that the research would indicate that she was. And that was the way the article came out that Thursday, with banner headlines saying "Plagiarism Found in Prophet Books."²³

The article was supposed to have been carried on page 17 of the religion section, but instead was on pages 1, 3, and 21. It was later syndicated in more than one thousand newspapers and reported on radio and television around the world. It was not the first time the charge had been made, but the first time the charge and the evidence had been popularized or sensationalized. Dart had been informed that I was the authority at the time on the "copy work" in Ellen White's writings, but it seemed that even he was surprised at the coverage his story was given.

The church had been made aware of the charges in a special meeting in Glendale, California, in that same year. There, after seeing some of the evidence, the committee of eighteen scholars from across the United States had decided by vote that the evidence was alarming - that is, that it was new and significant and should receive additional study - and that the people of the church should be told.²⁴ It was also agreed that scholars should work with me to find out the extent of the copying and that the committee should meet from time to time to compare facts.

The committee acted, however, without the consent or blessing of the high administration and its council, called "PREXAD." Less than two months later it gave its report to the study committee in a letter, which said in part:

That the administration, under the guidance of the White Estate, organize an in depth study of the writings of the Spirit of Prophecy to attempt to discover not only the similarities between the writings of Ellen G. White and other authors, but to also discover the dissimilarities between these writers. . . . We recommend that this program be initiated first by a comprehensive study of the book, Desire of Ages. It may be that this study will be sufficient to establish patterns and methods, which are applicable to others of her works and that a further intensive search of other books may be unnecessary. 7. That intensive study over a period of years has largely served its purpose, and that now the General Conference will ask other individuals to carry on this work to the degree deemed necessary by the leadership of the church. . . . It will at the same time enable the church to more fully educate the membership to understand. . . .²⁵

In essence, the PREXAD committee nullified the reasons the committee of scholars had been called in the first place and took away the right of the people paying the bills to know. This was a common practice and had been done in past cases of this nature and was used later to keep the membership in ignorance concerning the financial scandal of the Davenport Post Office deals and the kickbacks and payoffs to some of the leading clergy.²⁶ It really did not surprise those of us who knew some of the members of that group especially its leading adviser and the president of the General Conference, Neal Wilson, for he had written to me, a letter already referred to, saying:

It is also a part of the policy of the church that those of us who are ministers of the gospel and employed by this church will not appeal to any court of law for redress. This is especially true in areas of church polity, doctrine, and spiritual activity. We have by accepting ordination and appointment as a minister in this church limited our personal freedom. . . . Our concern over your activities does not arise because you have done studies or research, or that you feel that something should be done and our people should be better informed, or that you may hold' some difference personal ideas and convictions. Our concern arises when you launch a relentless crusade and feel impelled to take it to the church, publicly and privately, through meetings, and circulating materials. . . . If you have heard that you would be fired it is unfounded rumor. . . '²⁷

But the rumor was true. One of the members of the president's committee, Elder Bradford, had visited me in Los Angeles months before and had stated that every time he walked down the hall of the General Conference someone came out of a door muttering my name, both in relation to the Davenport affair and the Ellen G. White cover-up. So, I was fired in November 1980, and the church hired as many lawyers as it could afford to protect the names and positions of those who supported the church's pronouncements, whether they were right or wrong. For me it was over, after thirty-six years of ducking and weaving whenever I told a truth that the church did not want revealed. Once again, truth was on the scaffold and wrong was on the throne in Adventism. A few months later my

book *The White Lie* was published and received additional attention from the public press. Said the *New York Times*:

"Walter' Rea has inflamed the issues confronting the cult with incontrovertible evidence he provides in *The White Lie*.²⁸

Also *Time Magazine* stated:

"The White Lie is a bombshell which has shocked the church." The book was also a hot item in the church, but not in the same manner.²⁹

All over the world, members were discouraged from reading it, and the Adventist Book Stores refused to order it. In Australia, where we lectured in behalf of the local lay groups, the people were told:

The leadership of the church at all levels wishes the membership to know that they do not believe loyal church members would be helped in any way by (Rea's) visit to this Division. They deplore and disassociate themselves from the activities of any group which promotes Walter Rea and his attacks on the church.³⁰

At the same time, and often on the same page, the church would advertise a book entitled *Omega*, written by Lewis Walton:

Coming Soon to Your Friendly Adventist Book Centre The author of this new book suggests that we look at some of the things happening currently within the church in light of those early events. This is the type of book that will be read and re-read many times as we examine ourselves and our current stance compared with history.³¹

The main thrust of the Walton book seemed to be that anyone with any "outside" educational learning or an IQ over 85 seemed to be a threat to the church, which leaves one wondering where that puts "Walton and church leadership. My studies and *The White Lie* laid open for all to see several new problems concerning the Adventist Church. With the Adventists always using the argument that a prophet and its people should be tested and judged by their fruits, why had the Adventists and Mrs. White failed the tests so badly? The Davenport affair should have clearly showed that a portion of the leadership and clergy were dishonest, if not corrupted by bribes and kickbacks. Ellen White had often lied about her visions and the source of her materials or, even worse, could not tell the difference between truth and fiction in her value structure. She had even written to the flock at the very time of her enormous plagiarizing that:

Many who are seeking a preparation for the Lord's work think it essential to accumulate large volumes of historical and theological writings. Many suppose that the study of these works will be a great advantage to them in learning how to reach the people. This is an error. As I see shelves piled with these books, some of them rarely looked into, I think, Why spend money for that which is not bread?³²

And, to a great degree, theology, as studied and taught, is but a record of human speculation, serving only to "darken counsel by words without knowledge."³³

Yet, over 1,200 volumes were found in her library, and the works of those "speculations" were copied by her in the name of God and vision. If respect for human dignity, human rights, difference of opinion, and open discussion of issues is a mark of a viable healthy society, then Adventism has failed the test. Finally, credibility both for Ellen White and her people has been tarnished, perhaps for all time. Even the admission in 1984 that perhaps 50 percent or more of what was written in *Great Controversy*, the keystone in the Adventist arch of theology, was copied from others³⁴ was only a half-truth. They referred to only the historical sections copied. If the material that was not historical but theological and devotional was added to her copy program, the rate would be more like 80 to 90 percent. In the fall issue of *Free Inquiry*, Vern Bullough, Dean of Natural Science at the State University College of New York at Buffalo, gives his ideas about some of the principles of humanist tradition:

A. Traditional dogmatic or authoritarian religions that place revelation, God, ritual, or creed above human needs and experience are not for us.

B. Moral values derive from human experience.

C. Reason and intelligence are the most effective instruments that humans possess.

D. . . . we reject all religious, ideological, or moral codes that denigrate the individual, suppress freedom, dull the intellect, and dehumanize the personality.

E. We emphasize that sexuality is part of being human. . . .

F. Individuals must experience a full range of liberties if we are to enhance freedom and human dignity.

G. We are opposed to barriers erected on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, age, or other types of minority status. ³⁵

In no way could Adventists or Adventism qualify as being concerned with the individual soul or spirit. Any idea, principle, creed, or faith that cannot stand the test of inquiry or discussion should not be said to represent any truth, small or large. How could it? Authoritarian control is not faith or reason; it is simply tyranny over the human mind and spirit.

So who profits from the Adventist prophet? Surely not the world at large, which after more than 140 years of evangelism, propaganda, and promotion has accepted nothing that she wrote or said. Not the other religions of the world, which still have their own profits to care for, their own programs to push. Who profits? The administrators, the fanatics, and the system. The administrators who, without regard for love or human values, drive the people before them like flocks to a sheep dip. The fanatics, who refuse to allow any truth or interpretation of truth to prevail over their own conscience, full of fears and foibles. The system, whose pronouncements remain moral, while its thinking remains amoral and its actions immoral.

No matter what is written or recorded about Ellen White as the Adventist prophet, no matter how many rhetorical games are played with her "inspiration," very few members follow her instruction in much of anything. Her counsel is used as a whipping post for fanatics to tie their fellow members to, the easier to torture them with their judgments. Such a practice also allows administrators to piously posture while they largely ignore her instruction in regard to their own lives. The Davenport debacle, ³⁶ with other examples of mismanagement, shows clearly that Ellen White no longer controls the Adventist membership. The administrators do. But those same administrators, by abuse of their trust and in order to obtain liberty for themselves and license for their friends, have lynched the very woman they profess to adore. Adventism must now either rescue itself from the fanatical course its leadership has steered it toward or forever lose its viability in the community of human beings. Time will tell if resuscitation will come too late.

CHAPTER IV FOOTNOTES

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28. Kenneth A. Briggs, "7th-Day Adventists Face Change and Dissent," *New York Times*, (November 6, 1982) p. 1.

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IV

DECEIT, THE ADVENTISTS FIRST LINE OF DEFENSE

It was obvious from the beginning, to anyone who had the facts, that both the Davenport investigation and my trial for telling *The Los Angeles Times* that Mrs. White had copied her works, were a farce and fraud, staged for public consumption only. No justice was intended, no punishment was meant to be fair, and no recognition of facts made any changes or were meant to be seriously considered.

The same system sent some of the same men to both events. By their dual roll these divines, often consumed by human greed and driven by the lust for power, became the pirates of privilege by protecting themselves and their system. What they really did was effectively destroy not only confidence in man but even tarnished God Himself. After all, it is well written in stone over the Los Angeles County Courts building, "he who violates his oath profanes the dignity of faith itself."

The January 23 edition of *The Sunday Sun* had reported what was suppose to have been President Neal Wilson's finest hour. They listed several things he had said and promised:

1. Wilson reported a recent visit with special FBI agents investigating Davenport's bankrupt investment empire
2. Wilson said the FBI probe - at the apparent behest of the Securities and Exchange Commission, the Internal Revenue Service and other federal agencies - seems focused on charges of misrepresentation and violations of usury laws.
3. Of the church's own probe, Wilson reported that about 50 top church officers will be publicly disciplined, perhaps within six weeks. And some officers whose actions were so "reprehensible," will be fired and their ministerial credentials withdrawn.
4. He pledged to "clean up this matter to the best of my ability."
5. On Tuesday, Wilson had issued a statement announcing that about 95 officials would be disciplined. ¹

It was a star performance but was really not to be taken very seriously. That same "reformer" Wilson had been quoted in *The Religious News Service* of October:

Mr. Wilson said the church does not now plan to fire or reprimand anyone involved in the financial scandal, but will in the future "do more than simply remonstrate" against officials who mismanage funds. ²

And that is exactly how it turned out in the end. None of the drastic promises came to pass as punishment for the guilty.

It was even more clear what was going to be the end of the matter when Wilson's article appeared in *The Adventist Review*, the church's official paper:

I have asked the 25 officers of the General Conference to authorize a special group to be known as The President's Review Commission. This commission consists of 15 members, eight of whom shall be lay business and professional persons. . . . It is understood that definitive action will be the express prerogative of the General Conference officers. It is also understood that the General Conference officers may adopt or revise recommendations and forward such to executive committees, boards, or constituencies. ³

This was cynicism at its worst. Those officers of the General Conference that were to have the final say were some of the ones that were partners and investors in the Davenport scandal. Why would anyone expect them to vote themselves punishment or expect them to put themselves out of office, as Wilson had threatened to do? But it all sounded so grand and proper when Wilson ended his holy crusade by quoting from John Harris, which had come by way of Ellen White, the church's prophet: "Enfeebled and defective as it may appear, the church is the one object

upon which God bestows in a special sense His supreme regard." ⁴ Harris didn't have the Adventist church in mind when he wrote that statement but Wilson and Ellen White did.

About the only ones that were satisfied at the actions of Wilson and the church were those that were covered up by their non-action. Perhaps the attorney said it best when he wrote:

I thought the editors of the *Review* provided a subtle editorial on your report of the handling of the Davenport matter by their placing Eric B. Hare's story, "The Elephant That Cried," immediately following your report. Many of us are crying tears every bit as large as those cried by the elephants, for your chart on page 8 tells us how confused we have become. Once again we have confused the admonition about refraining from judging. That admonition speaks to our inability to judge the fitness of someone for the kingdom because we do not know to what extent Christ's character has been substituted for that of the one in question. We do have the responsibility, however, for judging fitness for continued leadership, and that responsibility seems to have been abandoned.

Perhaps it is that our church is not hierarchical at all, but merely a collection of feudal barons who combine to keep a weak king in office.

We are appalled and saddened to discover that personal profiteering, self-aggrandizement, and major conflicts of interest causing the loss of millions of dollars of tithe funds result in no significant changes. Power does corrupt doesn't it? ⁵

On October 29, 1982 after the names of the committee had been made public, felt impressed that one more letter would not hurt my case and might help the church toward a sane approach to justice and integrity. So I wrote to the members of the investigation committee the following:

Dear Committee Member,

It has been well publicized that you are one of the chosen committee persons to review the Davenport matter. The hope of the church, as expressed by Elder Wilson, is that your special expertise will insure an honest, fair and exhaustive examination of the records. Thus your final report will wisely protect the innocent and hopefully suggest some punishment for the guilty, while suggesting guidelines, checks and balances to prevent a recurrence or similar debacle.

It is because of these objectives that I write you. I would wish that I could appear before the committee to lay before you relevant material that I am sure is not contained in the deposition. However, knowing the church's effort to minimize my testimony in the Davenport affair, I would strongly urge you to have Attorney Jerry Wiley, Associate Dean and Professor of Law, University of Southern California, appear before your committee.

As one of the enclosed letters will show, he has consistently been ignored by Elder Wilson and others when he sought to be helpful in these matters. He does not speak for me, nor necessarily represent my point of view, but can bring a new dimension to your inquiry that I am sure the church records and attorneys do not stress. I believe that his appearance would be valuable and add much to the hope that your presentation to the church will be a fair and unbiased review. ⁶

But it was all for naught. To this day not one of the members of the committee has expressed any private or public interest in such a contact or any of my suggestions. There is a great deal of posturing in Adventism but very little progression toward honest action. John Adam surely had a point and some insights when he recorded:

I can understand Brother Wilson's situation. He would like the union presidents to return him to office in 1985. ⁷

Why not? Those same union men involved in the Davenport matter had put Wilson in the position he held to begin with. If there was to be any mass firing, Wilson would have to go with the others if they were to go. So no union man was fired and some were even exalted.

The events surrounding my firing were even more bizarre than the Davenport investigation and overlapped that scandal all the way. No reasonable, knowledgeable person can believe that the matter of E. G. White and her copy work was the main cause of my dismissal after 36 years in the ministry of the church. It was only a convenient "holy cause" to cover up a much more malignant motive and design.

After the January, 1980 meeting in Glendale, the Presidents Advisory Committee had mandated that if any more work was to be done on Ellen G. White and her plagiarizing, it should be done by others. That "others" was Fred Veltman of Pacific Union College, who to this day, four years later, has produced nothing for the public to view. It is doubtful in view of the past record of the church if Fred's full study and comments will ever be public knowledge. I was ordered to disassociate myself completely from the research for the present and the future members. Though I was dissatisfied with this ultimatum, I wrote the Committee:

Enclosed you will find some more material that we have been gathering concerning the subject of Mrs. E. G. White. This will be the last material that I will be sending, inasmuch as PREXAD has concluded that someone else in the church would be better able to deal with the subject and, as they stated, I would be better able to return to the full time ministry.

Actually the study did not take all that much time. There are many members in various places of America that have used their time and expertise to help with the project. These interested ones will carry on the research and bring it to a published form. Last year, we had 25 baptisms here in Long Beach and held a five day plan, a cooking class, and a six week effort, in addition to raising about seventy thousand dollars for two new additions to the local church school. Our President, Harold Calkins, tells me that not many Anglo pastors did any more and the only complaint he had was that the religious liberty offering was down. We hope we can raise it up this year.

I would have preferred to continue to meet with the committee that Elder Wilson selected as they gave fair value to the research and the feeling of mutual trust was present. Also, we could have worked on some of the problems that we did not have the time or commission to deal with that I am sure will linger on. But the Church has spoken; so we will try to comply. Any questions should now be directed to PREXAD or Jim Cox, who I understand has been selected to do additional work.

One or two thoughts remain to be considered. A. Methodology: It was not the purpose of the first presentation to have things in a scholarly way, but to concern all of the members with an overview. I feel that was done. B. Attitude or Positive Approach: It is still my belief that the church does not as yet have a consistent view of Mrs. White and her authority, inspiration or position. It would seem this is yet to come and when it does come we can then deal with it. C. Tapes: Some have questioned their release. At the beginning of the meeting, I thought that we had a gentleman's agreement that we all would let the finding of the committee be given to the Church by either Elder Wilson or PREXAD. Inasmuch as this was not done and many of the members, as well as those not members of the committee, went forward and gave printed, taped and written views, some of them most distorted of what happened, it did not seem fair or sane for me to be the only one that was muted, thus the release. Tapes are made to keep men honest.

It has been my pleasure to serve the Church in this capacity and to have been privileged to work with each of you. I believe with all my faith, that God has been with me in the study and

that doors are opened that will never again be closed. Thanks again for your help in this effort and your friendship. ⁸

The letter was written in all sincerity and does establish, I believe, several points:

- A. That I was trying to work with and through the church.
- B. That I was not defying or fighting the structure as some later claimed.
- C. That I still wanted to be a part of the structure and work within it.
- D. That my work as a pastor had not suffered, as some were asserting. This character assassination became more pronounced as my work became better known.
- E. It was felt necessary at the time to lay out what my work in the church had been in order to combat those that were misguidedly criticizing it.

At the same time I was receiving such slurs, the treasurer of the conference had written me:

Suffice it to say, I wholeheartedly urge that you not write a derogatory book on "company time" so to speak. Better yet, you lay down that sword. If you want a more challenging job these next three or four years to better capitalize on some of your training heretofore not used, let's see if we can find it. I personally feel that with all of your talents and energies, whether you realize it or not, you have found yourself very unchallenged in the Long Beach Area and no doubt this has inadvertently contributed to the work of dubious value in which you engaged. I suppose I should qualify the word "dubious" . . . essential to my happiness and salvation - - dubious--very dubious. ⁹

While I was impressed with Walden's concern at the time, I did not understand the "dubious" remark inasmuch as Wilson had felt it important enough to form a committee to hear it and relevant enough to have a Ph.D. give it further years of study. I know now that "dubious" means any study the church does not want or approve of.

The only other item of importance that happened before my November termination was the letter from the General Conference and Elder Wilson. (See Chapter 3, footnote #10 and Chapter 4, footnote #27. It was an ominous letter, if one knows anything about Wilson. If one rereads it and takes the opposite view to each item he mentions including my not being fired, the picture becomes very clear and also reveals the true Wilson. With that gut feeling that all was not well and the end was near, even before *The Los Angeles Times* article, I wrote a reply on July 26, 1980, four months before my termination:

Your letter of July 2 was appreciated and read several times. It is to our disadvantage that we cannot sit down and discuss some of the points that you raised. As you are the busy one perhaps I can bring several questions that you left in my mind to your attention.

I learned some things from the letter and will not take your time in the future as to the matters that involve any local issues. It has been my plan to keep my local conference informed as to the events that take place and had hoped that through them the rest of the Union or others involved would be notified.

Several of the questions that came to mind from your letter concerned either misunderstanding or misinterpretation of events or policies. First I know of no action by any local conference committee concerning me or my actions that I have refused to abide by or listen to. If any such actions have been taken or written out they have never been sent to me.

A further question came in your statements concerning lawyers and law. It was interesting that in the same mail in which your letter arrived. One also came from John Adam in which he sent a copy of a statement he made to his attorney. Enclosed is a copy. If Des

(Cummings) ever has to repeat that conversation under oath it will open some interesting chapters in the business dealing of the church and its leaders. It also seems to run contrary to some of your ideas about how a worker can or should defend his rights.

Finally, it would seem that the committee that sat with me for the two days in January was only advisory, inasmuch as much of what they voted was not carried through. For example, they felt, if you will listen to the tape, that my work was of such a nature that I could be of help to the church and I should be given help to put the material in written form so that it could be read and studied and discussed. Now the word comes that I should not only write nothing but say nothing, if you received the letter from President Harold Calkins. It would seem that whatever they concluded about the tapes would have no more weight or validity than some of the other actions that were not followed.

Thanks again for your time. I am sure that any other necessary communication can come through the local conference, as you suggested.¹⁰

Far more important and significant than the letter from Wilson were the events of September 1979. They didn't seem all that important at the time, but perhaps more than any other week, those events were to shape Adventist history of the future and leave their impressions for all time.

We had scheduled a meeting in September 1979 in the Long Beach Church to make public for the first time facts and new materials that proved that Ellen White copied most of her works. In fact information would indicate that she didn't do much of it herself, but others did it in her name often without her knowledge. A panel of ministers with advanced degrees had been selected to answer questions from the audience that might be raised by the research and presentation. The president of the Conference, Harold Calkins, was also invited to give the closing remarks so long as he operated within the time allotted to him. Several attempts were made officially to stop the meeting, and even Bradford, vice president of the General Conference, flew out to add pressure to a "cease-and-desist" order. A meeting was called in the President's office in Glendale in which I was summoned, and at my insistence Jerry Wiley, my attorney friend, and the one who was to chair the coming Long Beach meeting, was also asked to attend. It was only after several hours of bickering and shadow-boxing and a statement by Wiley that the meeting was allowed to end with the conditions that the following Sabbath the show would go on in the Long Beach Church. Jerry promised that as chairman he would certainly not let the meeting get out of hand and that with both Robert Olson of the White Estate and Harold Calkins representing the Conference present, surely they could handle any questions or problems that would arise; Jerry's final observation was that *The Los Angeles Times* might wonder out loud why an Adventist minister was not allowed to talk about Ellen White in an Adventist church on the Adventist Sabbath if the meeting was canceled.

But the events that astonished both the attorney and me were those movements by the church just two days before that meeting in the President's office. Harold Calkins had suggested that I meet with him and Bradford at Loma Linda, the Adventist Medical School. He stated that Bradford was interested in my research and wanted to know more about it. I invited both men to meet at my home, feeling that inasmuch as most of the material that I had been working with was there, they both could better grasp the scope and importance of the project by what they saw. Harold assured me that time and circumstances just would not allow Bradford to make the trip to my place and anyway Bradford had flown all the way from Washington D.C. just to talk and get better acquainted. So the time was set for the next day at Loma Linda.

Late that night I received a long distance call from a friend with connections to the church's headquarters in Washington D.C. They told me that some people knew I was going to be at Loma Linda in the morning and that plans were afoot at the scheduled meeting to fire me without a trial and without chance of appeal; that the local, union, and General Conference would be represented as one at the meeting. To say the least, after what Elder Calkins had stated to me about the meeting, I was astonished and in my ignorance and naively told my caller it just couldn't be so.

After arriving the next day at the medical center, I felt that the better part of wisdom would be to check on the rumor. It was true, some of my friends told me; they knew I was coming, they knew that a meeting was being held and that I was to be sacked without counsel or concern for facts and evidence. To make sure of the facts I had just learned I walked across the campus to the building indicated and asked if Elder Calkins was somewhere to be found. I was told that indeed he was upstairs in a meeting with others and they were waiting for me to come. With my mind

racing and numb with the deceit being practiced on me, I told the receptionist that I would not be attending that meeting and to tell Harold Calkins he had lied to me. I whirled around and went to my car and left for Los Angeles where my first call was to the Attorney to inform him of the events. At that moment he became my attorney-at-law and from then to the present all contacts from the church on official matters were and have been channeled through him. The next day before the Glendale meeting in Harold's office, I asked Bradford to raise his right hand and swear that the rumor was not true and he had not been sent on a "strike" mission. Bradford, ever the loyal liar for the establishment, said piously that he did not involve himself in local political matters. Harold, who later was confronted with the overwhelming evidence, like Pilate before him, washed his hands of the matter by stating that yes, he had known of the meeting, but hadn't known its nature.

It is very clear in looking back, that if I had attended that meeting framed in lies and deceit, that I would have been sacked and become only one of the dozens of nameless martyrs that has littered the path of Adventism. If those martyrs ever exhumed a body that the church wanted left in the silence of the graves of the past, the people of the church and the world were not told that those crimes were committed in the name of God and the inspiration of Ellen White.

It is also very clear that those same men and leaders of the church would commit any crime, tell any lie and destroy any person that would attempt to communicate any information that was not acceptable to them, and that they would censor what information the public or church would receive. As Wilson had said in his letter, he did not care what I believed, found or suspected as long as I did not communicate it to others. It was equally clear that the judge and jury had already been out on me and had decided I was guilty and should be hung, as piously and religiously as possible. With the picture clear as to the future, it was easy to set things in motion to do what I knew I must do and which no one had yet been able to do: sensationalize and popularize what scholars and theologians had known for years but had been kept from saying.

When the Dart article was printed in me *Los Angeles Times*¹¹ there was nothing said in it that had not been said before in the privacy of Adventist circles. It was not an attack on the church or even an indictment of its past history. The real problem was that the church itself had always censored its members in their reading. As I had written in *The White Lie*, "The success and genius of any religious movement is to tell the members what they want to hear and make sure they don't hear what you don't want them to hear."¹² What the scholars knew in Adventism and were forced to keep silent about was altogether different than what the *Adventist Review* always force fed its readers. Even after four years of intensive research and dozens of pronouncements from scholars and the church's own papers, The *Review* could say:

Ellen White's use of sources was wider than many had realized, both in the range of her writings and the amount of "borrowing." At the same time it has become clear that her books are far more than compilations, that material from other sources is in most cases a minor part of her work and often is adapted in her use of it. The comparison to Bible writers' use of sources has been made convincingly.¹³

Yet nothing had been convincingly studied, dialogued, researched or established except what the church was willing to have its members know. Censorship had been a part of Adventism from its beginning and had been argued as necessary and proper in the Glendale meeting of January 1980.¹⁴

The make-up of the committee that sacked me was interesting. Bradford was there from the General Conference and represented that same Wilson that had just a few months before written that I would not be fired. And it was the same Bradford who had written about the Davenport setup that:

We have no knowledge here at the General Conference of any shady dealings by Georgia-Cumberland with Dr. Davenport. The General Conference does have well defined policies with reference to investments, and the General Conference has consistently encouraged our institutions and conferences to adhere to these guidelines. In addition, we have insisted that all conferences and institutions require their employees to sign conflict of interest statements.

I have no way of knowing what Elder Cummings personally received on his investments. There was no move to defrock him, and the invitation to join the Sunbelt Hospital Association is in the capacity of spiritual adviser and director of chaplains.¹⁵

That same Bradford, who only a few months before had said that every time he came down the hall of the General Conference someone came out of a door muttering my name; Bradford, who used the "awesome power of the General Conference" to help cover up for his friends and colleagues in the system. There was the Union Conference President, Blehm, whose connections and profits with Davenport were well documented and were later sent to me by some members of the bankruptcy proceeding. There was Harold Calkins, my own president, who had done everything possible to rid the conference of me and any others that had found fault with his handling of monies in the conference and who had helped Davenport establish a line of credit through the Glendale Adventist Hospital. He denied that such a line of credit had been issued until confronted with the evidence and then said that it had been canceled. I asked him how a line of credit could be canceled weeks after it had been issued and after Davenport had used it all over the country. His answer did not give much assurance and perhaps gives some reason for some the financial problems that hospital is having at the present time. That same Harold who was quoted months before by Robert Olson as saying:

Administrators of Southern California are disturbed by Rea; Calkins could carry the Conference Committee with him if the decision was made to let Rea go. He is being retained in hopes of saving him. For he does have much useful talent.¹⁶

Harold, who was later rewarded by Wilson, was sent to England to save the British Empire as the Adventist Union President. Fortunately for Britain he failed and was retired back in the states. Also there, my head elder from Long Beach, Widen Burkett with his vote; Burkett, who was one of Davenports best friends, and had \$185,000 invested with him and reported to him each statement that he heard me make concerning his empire. Much of the rest of the Committee was made up of men that were in one way or another beholden to either Calkins or Blehm for their jobs or positions in the work of the Church. I was allowed no counsel and it was clear that only one decision would be made. They were not interested in why the article had appeared or what it said that was helpful or positive. Their attitude from the beginning, with the help of Bradford from the head of the system, was to "give me a fair hearing and hang me" as soon as possible, and they did. Can any reasonable person doubt that Davenport was also present in that room by his influence and control? After all, hadn't he written and seriously asked that I be dismissed for criticizing him and his actions and the actions of all the dishonest super salesmen of the clergy that were his accomplices? There is much more evidence than just speculation that the above was true. The church cut me off with only the policy of severance pay, took away my medical insurance knowing my wife was a diabetic and was uninsurable, and forced us to move from the Los Angeles area if we were to receive the standard moving fees allotted to any worker with our years of experience. We had hoped to reach some kind of settlement for the years of service and had worked in the system long enough that such consideration be given us automatically. The negotiations were going toward this point of view when the church's attorney wrote to us after the publication of *The White Lie* and the attention it received in the world press:

This will confirm our telephone conversation on the morning of August 2, 1982 in which I advised you that the Southern California Conference does not feel that it can make a settlement with Walter Rea at least at this time.

The officers of the Conference were appalled to learn from the *Time Magazine* article in the August 2, 1982 issue that Mr. Rea is planning a second edition of his book in which he plans to charge that Mrs. White's last books were fabricated by others while she was senile. Such statements only convince the Church that it was correct when it terminated Mr. Rea's employment.

Since settlement negotiations are no longer in progress, you are free to do whatever you believe to be appropriate with respect to the hearings which we have previously discussed.¹⁷

That letter was a shocker and showed just how much the church and its word really means, for just a few days before that same church attorney had written to us the following:

You will find enclosed a draft of the proposed settlement agreement between the Southern California Conference and Mr. Rea. Please review it and telephone me regarding any comments that you may have.

You will recall that there was also a discussion of a letter being written regarding Elder Rea's church standing. I enclose a copy of a letter dated May 10, 1982 signed by Elder Paytee sent to Elder Robert Cowan on this subject. The letter was drafted and sent without my prior knowledge. I would like your comments as to whether this letter is acceptable to you and Elder Rea.

I will look forward to hearing from you in the hopes that this matter can be soon completed.¹⁸

The letter that the attorney referred to was one that we had requested concerning our standing in the church. Although we had denied no doctrine, had received no discipline in our line of duty, and were still practicing members, and even though the policy of the church was that we should receive church membership wherever we were to go, the churches in our new area would not transfer our membership. One side light in the process was, that though we had been ordained for over thirty five years and were never "defrocked" from that position, we were addressed now as Mr. Rea instead of "Elder" as is the custom in Adventism. Lorenzo Paytee, Secretary of the Southern California Conference, had made it clear in his letter that we were not under some ban:

My office has been requested to clarify the action of the Executive Committee regarding Walter Rea.

The proceedings involving Walter Rea and the Executive Committee, which resulted in the Committee voting to terminate Walter Rea's employment and to withdraw his ministerial credentials, did not address the issue of his church membership, merely his employment.

As you are aware of, a church member's standing is a matter for the local church to handle. As far as the conference is concerned, a church member is in good and regular standing until the church where he is a member properly decides otherwise. The Long Beach SDA church, of which Walter Rea is a member, is the proper body to pass judgment on his standing as a church member. Our Executive Committee passed judgment only on the issue of his fitness to be employed by the denomination.

Therefore, without any judgment from the Long Beach church to the contrary, this office can state that Walter Rea is a church member in good and regular standing.¹⁹

Another interesting concept surfaced concerning the church's thinking about women. My wife was never mentioned or considered separately from my situation. Her feelings were never considered, her doctrinal views were never sought and her desires concerning her future in the church didn't ever seem to matter to those considering my problem.

It was because of this lack of good faith on the part of the church and its officers that I decided that only one action was possible to gain relief from what I considered an unjust situation. I had asked for a rehearing of my case before the Union Committee, which was my right by policy, and was denied. I had asked for retirement benefits which was my due by policy and had been refused. I had broken no conference or church rules or laws and had been dismissed for what I considered fraudulent and misleading charges. Because of these facts I wrote Elder Walter Blehm, the Union President the following:

I am enclosing some material that I believe you should read. It will set the tone for the rest of this letter.

I have always tried to be open and honest with the men that I served with, while in the work of the church. From the material enclosed concerning you and Dr. Davenport, I would draw

the conclusions that you had not been as open and honest in your dealings. Of the men who sat in judgment on my work and fired me for my "negative influence," at least four of you either knew of, or were personally involved in the Davenport matter, which certainly created a conflict of interest as far as my involvement was concerned.

In spite of that involvement, however, I still negotiated and signed a compromise agreement with the church through the Southern California Conference. That agreement was in essence, though not called that, my sustentation which, as you know the policy says, I was entitled to at 60 years of age and 35 years of service. As you also know, that agreement worked out in good faith with your attorney was overturned and canceled.

Therefore, you have left me no choice but to take you, some members of the General Conference and other parties concerned into Federal Court for redress. I am sure that when the press, the church, the public and the courts hear of the involvement of at least five presidents, including such men as Pierson, Willis Hackett, Cree Sandefur and yourself, they will realize that with the confession in the June '82 *Ministry Magazine*, my discovery on Mrs. White played a very minor role in my dismissal. However, the attorneys will inform you of the particulars. By the way, I would be interested in the statements from Ellen G. White that you were using to direct your personal activities when you involved yourself with Dr. Davenport while serving as an officer of the church.²⁰

I also sent him the additional information.

SEE THE FOLLOWING 23 PAGES - EXHIBITS A THRU W:

Editor's note: The original manuscript features photocopies of the original documents, including receipts and correspondence. To retain a text document with a smaller file size, I have chosen to provide either a summary of the receipt or a re-typing of the correspondence:

EXHIBIT "A" – DAVENPORT TO BLEHM – MAY 15, 1978

May 15, 1978

W. D. Blehm
5294 Peacock Lane

Riverside, CA

Dear Elder Blehm:

I have a letter dated May 12, 1978 and I was very happy and willing to cash you out of the current income loan account.

This account is structured so the cash-out dates are on April 10, August 10 and December 10. However, I never stick to that if the party needs their money and I wish to advise you that I will get together the funds and get them to you shortly.

For your information, this account is handled in a very special way and the investments are made in vehicles that are structured so that the payout dates for the interest IS CONVENIENTLY MADE ON April 10 when most people need their money for income tax or August 10 when they need their money for vacations and December 10 when they need their money for Christmas presents, tithes, offerings, year end expenses, etc.

It has been my pleasure having you in our loan account and we will get these funds to you very shortly.

Kindest personal regards.

Cordially yours,

Donald J. Davenport, M.D.

DJD:pk

EXHIBIT "B" – LEGER SHEET

Editor's note: The information in Exhibit B is from a ledger sheet apparently from Dr. Davenport's office indicating deposits from the Oregon Conference and the interest paid. The original manuscript is a photocopy of that ledger sheet, and some of the information is cut off at the top and right side. The pennies of the dollar amounts of interest paid are not visible:

5394 Peacock Lane, Riverside, CA 91500

DATE	NOTE MADE	CODE	AMOUNT	REF NUM	INTEREST	PRINCIPAL	BALANCE
5/13/1975	YES	212dr	8,000	CR7			8,000.00
9/23/1975	YES	99da	2,000	CR15			10,000.00

Allow interest to accrue.

<u>INTEREST EARNED - Y/E</u>	Amount	Paid	Balance
12/31/1975	844.11	15%	844.10
12/31/1976	2,067.19	16%	2,911.30

Recommended by Elder Massengill

President of Southwester Calif. Conf.
(includes Garden Grove Church)

EXHIBIT "C"

W. D. and/or Shirley L. Blehm
4-Peacock Lane, Riverside, CA 92505

DATE	(DESCRIPTION)	REF	DR.	CR.	BAL
2/16/1978	Franale 203 (<i>Illegible</i>)	\$26.81			\$20,000.00
4/16/1978		\$32.06	\$300.00		\$20,000.00
6/23/1978	In full \$20,365.00	\$39.04	\$365.00	\$20,000.00	\$0.00
			\$665.00		

EXHIBIT "D"

\$-2,000.00

September 23, 1975

On December 31, 1977-----, without grace we promise to pay to the order of W. D. Blehm and/or Shirley T. Blehm at 829 N.E. 168th. Pl., Portland, Oregon 97230 ---Two thousand and no/100 Dollars, For Value received, with interest from date at the rate of 10 per cent annum until paid. Principal and interest payable in Lawful Money of the United States at ten per cent interest per annum on December 31st., beginning December 31, 1975 and continuing until December 31, 1977; at which time the entire balance of principal and interest then remaining unpaid shall be due and payable, and in case suit is instituted to collect this note or any portion thereof, we promise to pay such additional sum as the Court may adjudge reasonable as Attorney's fees in said suit.

Donald J. Davenport

Patrician A. Davenport

Witness: Sylvia Ramer

EXHIBIT "E"

\$---5,000.00---

May 30, 1976

---On December 31, 1977-----without grace we promise to pay to the order of S. D. Blehm and/or Shirley T. Blehm at 5294 Peacock Lane, Riverside, California 92505 For Value received, with interest from date at the rate of ten per cent per annum until paid. Principal and interest payable in Lawful Money of the United States at ten per cent interest per annum on December 31st., beginning December 31, 1976 and continuing until December 31, 1977: at which time the entire balance of principal and interest then remaining unpaid shall be due and payable, and in case suit is instituted to collect this note or any portion thereof, we promise to pay such additional sum as the Court may adjudge reasonable as Attorney's fees in said suit.

Donald J. Davenport

Patricia A. Davenport

Sylvia Ramer

Witness

EXHIBIT "F"

-----8,000.00-----

May 13, 1975

-----On December 31, 1977-----, without grace we promise to pay to the order of W. D. Blehm and/or Shirley L. Blehm, on order at 829 N. E. 168th Pl., Portland, Oregon 97230, -----Eight thousand and no/100-----Dollars, For Value received, with interest from date at the rate of ten per cent per annum until paid. Principal and interest payable in Lawful Money of the United States at ten per cent interest per annum on December 31st., beginning December 31, 1975 and continuing UNTIL December 31, 1977: at which time the entire balance of principal and interest then remaining unpaid shall be due and payable, and in case suit is instituted to collect this note or any portion thereof, we promise to pay such additional sum as the Court may adjudge reasonable as Attorney's fees in said suit.

Donald L. Davenport

Patricia A. Davenport

Sylvia Ramer

Witness

90-2669
1222

Donald J. Davenport, M.D.
Office Account
P.O. Box 7037 213-427-7458
Long Beach, Calif. 90807

Long Beach Office
American City Bank
5199 E. Pacific Coast Highway
Long Beach, California 90804

Pay-----Nine hundred forty-five and 06/100-----Dollars \$945.06

Pay to the order of:

W. D. Blehm or Shirley L. Blehm

NOT NEGOTIABLE

1222-2669: 592014580

Donald J. Davenport, M.D.
Long Beach, Calif.

DATE	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT	DISTRIBUTIONS
			Acct. No./Amount
	Principal and interest, 12/31/77	20,598.00	
	Interest thru 2/10/78	<u>347.06</u>	
		20,945.06	Dr.203
		20,000.00	Cr.213
	Transfer to 9% account as of 2/10/78		\$945.06

Employee: Please return 3 paid notes.

EXHIBIT "H" – LETTER FROM PACIFIC UNION CONF. TO DR. DAVENPORT – JULY 22, 1977

July 22, 1977

81

2686 Townsgate Road
Westlake Village, California 91361

Donald J. Davenport, M.D.
P.O. Box 7037
Long Beach, California 90807

Dear Don:

In harmony with my discussion with you, the Investment Committee voted this morning to utilize the joint Union Bank saving account only in conjunction with a loan approved by us with funds in the savings account to be drawn upon as construction progresses.

Sorry the Committee didn't see their way clear to open the joint savings accounts on any other basis.

Meanwhile, would you like us to hold the bank signature cards here in the event that our percentage policy for first trust deed loans will allow us to fund another of your projects?

We've appreciated doing business with you through the years, Don, and look forward to working with you in the future.

Drop in to see us whenever you have occasion to be in our area. There are some nice places in the vicinity for lunch!

Sincerely,

Ernest L. Herr
Funds Manager

ELH:glb

EXHIBIT "I" AND EXHIBIT "J"

July 25, 1977

Ernest L. Herr

Funds Manager
Pacific Union Association of SDA
2686 Townsgate Village, CA 91361

Dear Ernie:

It was nice receiving your letter dated July 22, 1977.

After I talked to you last week, I did go down to the Union Bank and set up four saving accounts as we had previous done and I put in \$10.00 in each one which was the minimum that I could start these accounts up with.

You recall that I had a very specific purpose for this. Namely, that I was to become a partner in this \$47,000,000 condominium project in Century City. That required that I either put up \$1,000,000 of cash or \$1,000,000 of Letters of Credit.

Ernie, you know I am not one to wait for the last minute so I went to the Union Bank even before you put any funds in to ask them for a \$1,000,000 Letter of Credit and they were processing it, but I also went to the George Elkins Company that I know very well and I talked to George Elkins himself. He told me that I should go to the Lloyds Bank in Westwood and he would make an introduction for me.

I did go into Lloyds Bank and Mr. Elkins was there and he introduced me to the top executives there and they agreed to make the Letter of Credit immediately. I then had the possibilities of two Letters of Credit and I was not under any urgency to create these joint bank saving accounts which would have been of some, Though minimal material advantage for me to get the Letter or Credit.

I received a telephone call from Mr. Larry Eisele, Regional Vice President of Union Bank last week to come down and see him. At the time he told me that they had approved my letter of Credit, irrespective of anything else that I had to do.

Ernie, I would suggest, for the time being, that you hold the bank's signature cards. However, I would not encourage you at this time to send in any money into these joint bank savings accounts.

I know that I move quite rapidly, but that is one of the reasons for my success and when I called you, I was hoping that you could put in \$1,000,000 of savings or some portion thereof on which you would make a 9% return and it would give me some "clout" in my dealings with Union Bank. However, apparently, that was unnecessary because the Union Bank approved my Letter of Credit without me doing anything which I feel is good.

Ernie, this does not mean that you should not send in any money at a later date. But, apparently, from your committee's policy it appears that you would have to have some more investments with me and, at the present time, the telephone investments are very few and far between.

I used to bid one or two a month. I am now bidding one every two or three months.

I would just as soon that you hold the bank's signature cards and, in the event that your percentage policy for first trust deed loans changes, then we can resume our conversation. But at the present time, there would be no motivation on my part to pay you a guaranteed 9% return on a saving account. I would receive only 5% when there would be a differential cost of 4% that would have no material advantage to me.

I am sure that you know as well or better than your committee that investments and finances are a very dynamic program and that I have found out that I have to make my decision to move rapidly within two or three hours, otherwise my opportunities are lost.

I am bidding a large telephone building in Michigan today and I will probably know within a week whether I get it or not. I am not presenting it to you because it will be in the neighborhood of \$3,000,000 and I know that that would not fit in with your percentage requirements.

I already have a life insurance company commitment loan in the amount of 8-3/8th for 25 years if I can get it and that is lower than I have ever offered any church group a return for many, many years.

Please keep in touch with me, Ernie, and I will do the same with you.

Kindest personal regards.

Cordially yours,

Donald J. Davenport, M.D.

DJD:pk

EXHIBIT "K" AND EXHIBIT "L"

DONALD J. DAVENPORT, M.D.
General Contractor

Real Estate Investments

**9501 Wilshire Blvd.
Suite 812
Beverly Hills, CALIF 90210**

**3711 Long Beach Blvd.
Suite 804
Long Beach, CALIF 90807**

March 8, 1979

Dr. J. W. Cassell, Jr., President
PACIFIC UNION COLLEGE
Angwin, California 94508

Dear Jack:

Your letter of March 2, 1979 did not require an answer, but it was nice meeting all of you. I was happy to be able to think of a plan which could be a great source of income for you.

I verified with two banks, after I spoke with you, so that if one bank does not come through for any reason, we have a back-up. In days of tight money, people can make promises-- especially banks-- and then take a long time to fund.

I cannot emphasize too strongly that there is no policy for what I am helping you accomplish. Any committee action would construe it as me being desperate and trying to raise money. This is 100% wrong. I do want to raise money to help the college, I do want to raise money for student loans. This plan will do that.

There is no law that I know of on the Church books that says you cannot put money in a savings account. Your only obligation is to put this money in a savings account in a bank that I direct you to. I will have them give me the withdrawal slip stating that it will require my signature and any two of your signatures to get the money out. This is exactly the way we did it with the Pacific Union Conference Association's money which Mr. Ernest Herr had.

The reason Mr. Herr suggested that we have two signatures from the Conference was that in case he was out of town the President or the Treasurer or another official could withdraw the money. Once you put the money in the saving account and I send you the withdrawal slip (which will be the same day), you will have 100% control of the money. I cannot touch it. Whenever you want the money out, you just have to send the withdrawal slip and the money will be sent immediately.

I am always looking for creative ways to help the Church. This program helped Pacific Union Conference Association, a.k.a. The PUC Fund; they had as much as \$3,000,000 in it. At the present time the North Pacific Union has a small account under this program and the Montana Conference has two trusts in a like manner. So, the program is not irregular-- just beneficial.

**Dr. J. W. Cassell, Jr.
PACIFIC UNION COLLEGE
March 8, 1979
Page Two**

I would appreciate if you would not discuss this too widely. Since I handle money for 22 different Church entities, they would all want me to do something like this for them. I have neither the money nor the inclination nor the deals to take care of 22 organizations. I can do it for four organizations, however.

I hope that when you make your visit to the Pacific Union Conference Board meetings, you will be kind enough to give me a day's notice and come by my office and we can bring everything up to date.

85

Kindest personal regards.

Cordially yours,

Donald J. Davenport, MD

DJD/nh

EXHIBITS "M" AND "N"

**DONALD J. DAVENPORT M.D.
GENERAL CONTRACTOR
REAL ESTATE INVESTMENTS**

9501 WILSHIRE BLVD.

3711 LONG BEACH BLVD.

SUITE 812
BEVERLY HILLS, CALIF 90210
213-275-5142

SUITE 804
LONG BEACH, CALIF 90807
213-427-7458

March 15, 1979

J. W. Cassell, Jr., PHD; President
PACIFIC UNION COLLEGE
Angwin, California 94508

Dear Dr. Cassell:

I was happy to meet with you and the four gentlemen that came down with you. I felt the meeting was informative and worthwhile.

In the meantime I have contacted the First Los Angeles Bank and the United California Bank to ascertain that I would get "mileage" out of the deposits, which I would bring in to their attention and in to their bank. Although I knew all the time that it would work that way, I verified it.

I am willing to reduce to writing, in this letter, that for every \$100,000 that you put in a joint savings account in a bank that we mutually agree upon, I will pay the difference between the passbook rate and ten percent. This way you will always get not less than ten percent.

If you put \$200,000 in, and leave it for two years, I will make a \$50,000 contribution to a building or a fund of your choice. If you put the same amount in for one year, I will make a \$25,000 contribution. I will also do my utmost to try and generate some scholarships, which we discussed in detail, and which would be most easily accomplished if we went to the American City Bank. However, for the time being, until this "Bert Lance Law" is fully understood, I would prefer to direct the saving accounts to the United California Bank and to the First Los Angeles Bank.

Even though my chances of getting a scholarship in the amount of \$20,000 will probably not be as great as with the American City Bank, it only means that I will work twice as hard to try and get \$20,000. I may be successful, and I may not be. I might also (and you cannot hold me to this, but you may think about this) contribute to the scholarships myself, in case I am not able to generate the funds from the banks. We all understand that the scholarship is a bonus, or a fringe benefit, but the other matter above mentioned is a definite commitment on my part.

I feel very good about this arrangement. It will give the Church utmost security, utmost liquidity, utmost control and yet allow me to benefit by the funds. This in turn will help me in my tithe and offerings and contributions. Obviously, I am going to contribute to the areas which help

J. W. CASSELL, JR.
MARCH 15, 1979
PAGE TWO

me the most.

Please bring any of your friends or Board members down to see me at any time, and we can have a "little snack" at La Scala restaurant. Kindest personal regards.

Cordially yours,
Donald J. Davenport, MD

DJD/nh

EXHIBIT “O”

EDITOR'S NOTE: In the original photocopy of the manuscript, this exhibit is a difficult to read replication of two parts of a check from Pacific Union College to Dr. Davenport for \$200,000-- first the voucher indicating what the payment is for followed by the instrument itself, apparently photocopied before the check was separated from its voucher.

4-12-79

88

Ck. #88240
01-00-000-0-01-0163-00
200,000.00
For Investment.

Pacific Union College
Angwin, California 94508
Bank of America
Angwin, CA 94508

Donald J. Davenport, M.D.
Date: 4-12-79
88240
**200,000.000
068240-1210-0035-07989-00020

EXHIBITS "P" AND "Q"

PACIFIC UNION COLLEGE
Angwin, California 94508 / Telephone (707) 965-6211

April 12, 1979

Office of the President

Donald J. Davenport, M.D.
P.O. Box 7037
Long Beach, CA 90807

Dear Don:

As we had discussed on the phone, I presented your proposal to the Executive Committee of our Board of Trustees this morning. The board voted unanimously to proceed, as we discussed, which I will endeavor to outline briefly as follows:

It is our understanding that the account is to be a joint savings account with United California Bank under your name and Pacific Union College Association. Two signatures will be required for withdrawals. One signature would be yours and the second would be one of the officers of Pacific Union College.

It is understood that possession of the savings passbook would be with the College and that you would sign one or more withdrawal slips so that, as a practical matter, the school could withdraw the funds at any time.

It is our understanding that the funds deposited in the joint account shall remain the funds of Pacific Union College and that this transaction shall not be considered to be a loan. This is an accommodation for the reasons we have discussed together whereby we are depositing funds in the United California Bank in the joint account and retaining control of the funds by way of the savings passbook and the executed deposit slips.

We understand that this clarification is necessary so that there will be no question as to the ownership of the funds in the unlikely event of your demise or some other type of situation wherein the ownership of the funds might be questioned.

It is our intent at this time to leave the funds on deposit for two years or more; however, it is understood in the event it becomes necessary in our opinion that the funds may be withdrawn at any time with the courtesy of notice to you.

In consideration of our depositing the funds in the joint account as you have directed, you have kindly agreed to pay the difference

Donald J. Davenport, M.D.
Page – 2

of interest rate so that the net return to the College is 10% per annum for the funds deposited.

Terminology suggested by our attorney is that you agree on behalf of yourself, heirs, assigns, or beneficiaries not to make any demand on the funds directly or indirectly.

I believe, Don, this puts in writing the agreement that you, Bob, Tom Hopmann, and I came to during our phone conversation approximately a week ago.

I again want to tell you how much we appreciate your interest in Pacific Union College and for playing such an active and important role in Christian education.
Best wishes to you and Mrs. Davenport.

Sincerely yours,

J.W. Cassell

J. W. Cassell, Jr.
President

JWC/eh

This letter confirms my agreement.

Donald J. Davenport

Donald J. Davenport

EXHIBITS "R" AND "S"

**DONALD J. DAVENPORT, M.D.
GENERAL CONTRACTOR
REAL ESTATE INVESTMENTS**

9501 Wilshire Blvd.
Suite 812
Beverly Hills, CALIF 90210
213-275-5142

3711 Long Beach Blvd.
Suite 904
Long Beach, CALIF 90807
213-427-7458

March 15, 1979

J. W. Cassell, Jr., President
PACIFIC UNION COLLEGE
Angwin, California 94508

Dear Jack:

I trust that the way Tom Hopmann and I handled the initial deposit of \$200,000 was satisfactory to you. I felt we did it exactly the way we had represented it and I always want to do things correctly.

I am writing this letter to you to put into your file to augment what we are talking about. As you know we must keep it at "arm's length distance" from the bank program. This is so that it can not be construed that the bank is hiring me to make bank deposits.

You have deposited, on April 13, 1979, two hundred thousand dollars in a joint account of Donald J. Davenport, M.D. And Pacific Union College. Twelve months from this date, or on-or-before April 13, 1980, I will send you two checks. One check will be in the amount of \$20,000, which represents a return of 10% on \$200,000.00 for a period of one year. I will also send you a contribution of \$25,000.00, which represents a contribution of 12.5% on two hundred thousand dollars. This makes a grand total of \$45,000.00 and makes a net return to you of 22.5% per annum.

I am also trying to work out some ideas for a scholarship program, but I do not know exactly how that will work inasmuch as the \$200,000 was put in the United California Bank rather than the American City Bank. I told you I would work hard on that for you and I will.

The mechanics of this are as follows:

Every interest bearing time I will pull out the interest from United California Bank, which is quarterly, and I will put that in my operating capital. It will be between 5% and 5-1/4%. I am not certain at this time but I do know that it will not be over 5-1/4%.

This is totally unrelated to the checks that you will receive on April 13, 1980.

It is quite conceivable, although I do not wish to be held to it, that as I approach the year-end of 1979, I might find it beneficial for tax reasons to

Dr. J. W. Cassell, Jr.
April 18, 1979
Page Two

make my contributions at that time. If that is the case after consultation with my accountant, I will mail you two checks totaling \$45,000.00 on-or-before December 31, 1979. If there is no tax advantage to me, then I will mail them on-or-before April 13, 1980.

These funds are not collateralized or cross-guaranteed or loaned to me. They are funds which you have deposited in the United California Bank as part of a joint venture. The funds are owned by you in their entirety at all times.

You will be interested in knowing that the manager of the United California Bank, Mr. Paul Roth, has advised me already that my loan interest rates will start coming down. This is quite beneficial to me.

I believe this will be the last correspondence I need to write relative to the mechanisms of this transaction. I would appreciate your putting this in your file so you will have ready access to it. I am setting it up on my date file that on-or-before April 13, 1980 I will send the two checks totaling \$45,000.00 and they will be labeled as contributions.

I am also sending a copy of this letter to my Long Beach office where my Office Manager, Sylvia Ramer, works with my accountant on all of my transactions.

Kindest personal regards.

Cordially yours,

Don

Donald J. Davenport, M.D.

DJD/nh

cc: Sylvia Ramer

EXHIBIT "T"

PACIFIC UNION COLLEGE
Angwin, California 94508 / Telephone (707) 965-6304

Office of College Relations and Development

May 19, 1981

Donald J. Davenport, M.D.
9501 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 812
Beverly Hills, CA 90210

Dear Don:

We have been checking our records regarding the interest on the funds we have deposited with Imperial Bank.

It has been 14 months since your last gift to us making up the difference from passbook savings paid by the bank and 25%.

As you recall, your gift pledge of \$25,000 qualified Pacific Union College for the BECA challenge Fund of \$79,000 this year. I know that this was not to be an additional amount, rather the interest difference. The alumni have met that challenge with contributions to the annual fund in the amount of \$145,000 with 16% or 1,200 alumni participating.

We now have to prove to the BECA board that your part of the gift has been received, then they will pay us their part. So once again we are getting double mileage out of your thoughtfulness.

I think Bob Strickland has already written to you indicating that the college will need to withdraw the \$200,000 from Imperial Bank June 30.

Don, I can't tell you how badly this makes me feel. I want to add to those funds, not take them away. In fact, I have been working with our Committee of 100 trying to come up with something but, as yet, I don't have it worked out.

Anyway, I wanted to let you know that we appreciated so much what you have done for PUC and what you are now doing.

I will be looking forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Don Coles

Don J. Coles, Ed.D.
Vice President for
College Development

DJC:j

EXHIBIT "U"

**DONALD J. DAVENPORT, M.D.
GENERAL CONTRACTOR
REAL ESTATE INVESTMENTS**

9501 Wilshire Blvd.
Suite 812
Beverly Hills, CALIF 90210
213-275-5142

3711 Long Beach Blvd.
Suite 904
Long Beach, CALIF 90807
213-427-7458

May 22, 1981

Dr. Don J. Coles
Vice President for College Development
Pacific Union College
Angwin, Ca 94508

Dear Don:

I have your letter dated May 19, 1981, and was happy to communicate with you but sorry that you could not avail yourself of what I considered an unusual opportunity. Sometimes, life is that way and we must take it that way.

I am a great believer in channeling money back into the church but especially into the areas which have helped me make the money. That is one reason that I approached you folks.

I have been awarded these three new post offices to build, ranging in price from \$90,000 to \$387,000 and I already have them sold to be delivered upon completion. They will make a nice profit for me. I am also bidding five new telephone buildings, totaling in excess of six million dollars and ten more post offices. So you can see that I am very, very busy and looking for cash in every way.

My cash comes to me when the buildings are built and sold.

Don, please keep in touch with me and any time you are in the Los Angeles area please give me advance notice and we will have lunch together.

Kindest personal regards.

Cordially yours,

Don

Donald J. Davenport, M.D.
DJD/pjr
cc: Ms. Sylvia Ramer, Long Beach Office Manager

EXHIBIT "V" AND "W"

PACIFIC UNION COLLEGE
Angwin, California 94508 / Telephone (707) 965-6304

Office of College Relations and Development

July 6, 1981

Donald J. Davenport, M.D.
General Contractor
9601 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 812
Beverly Hills, CA 90210

Dear Don:

I just talked to your secretary and will be trying to call back again, but in the meantime, I will write a letter.

I did appreciate your letter of May 22 in response to mine. I wrote to you regarding the interest on funds we had deposited with the Imperial Bank. But since you did not mention a payment to PUC on the interest difference, I thought that I should contact you again.

We will be receiving the passbook rate from Imperial which is certainly a lot less than what we could have received with certificates; but your offer to us exceeded even the certificate rate so we were happy to deposit the money in order to be an advantage to you as well as to us.

From our standpoint, it was a perfect arrangement. Now we need to know when we can expect a check from you which is a donation and totally tax deductible. It is very important to us to receive this money as soon as possible since our BECA Fund Challenge was based on this gift and we did meet that challenge which qualifies us for funds from BECA, provided, of course, that you, the major pledger to qualify us fulfills your pledge.

I thought this, too, was a neat arrangement since you would be making this gift anyway because of our deposit with the Imperial Bank. Of course, the other reason we are interested in receiving the check is that we would have received a lot more interest income had we had deposited our money in certificates or treasury notes. I think you can see our concern, and since you did not mention it in your letter, I want to follow up. I do not mean to be bugging you about it, but it is very important to us here.

I don't know if you have heard yet, but I am transferring to Glendale Adventist Medical Center the middle of August. It is hard to leave Pacific

Donald J. Davenport, M.D.
Beverly Hills, CA 90210

July 6, 1981
Page 2

Re: Tax Deductible Donation

Union College, since I have been here for 22 years and really believe in the school and all of its projects, but I have an unusual opportunity at Glendale Adventist Medical Center in working with Don Prior and feel that now is the time to transfer.

Don has assured me that I will still be working with you at Glendale; this will be part of my responsibilities and I am looking forward to that.

With the best of everything to you, I remain

Sincerely,

Don Coles

Don J. Coles, Ed.D.
Vice President for
Development

DJC:j

*End Of Exhibits.
See next page for continued reading.*

The letter was effective. It must be remembered that the Davenport matter and the church had not yet fully hit the national news or the church members, and these men were all scrambling to posture and put as much distance between themselves and the scandal they had helped to create but were still hoping would be somehow contained. After months and months of negotiation, delay and frustration and many letters and meeting of contradiction, less than three weeks later the following letter of settlement came from my attorney, James Wagner:

Enclosed is the Settlement Agreement and check. Also enclosed is a copy of a letter from Bob Paterson which helps explain the Church's understanding of the agreement.

The best course of action for you is to expressly avoid comment on your termination and and negative comments about you from Church leaders prior to November 2, 1982.

A major for instance would be even acknowledging that Blehm was in on the termination and was a Davenport investor. That implies a connection and violates the spirit of the agreement.

Now don't get paranoid either. Although a breach of the agreement would make you liable for breach of contract, it must be an express violation. I was careful to have the Church prepare the document because on a close call any ambiguity will be construed against the party preparing the document.

Meanwhile they are aware we believe you are free to comment on EGW and Davenport.

Now that your super salesman thesis is out there and now that we have operationally acknowledge that you were terminated for the ecclesiastic reason of their belief you were a negative influence on an important Church doctrine, I recommend you be particularly scrupulous to be issue oriented.

Am I glad this chapter is over. ²¹

The attorney's referral to the negative comments about me from the church leaders was a real stumbling block to my signing any settlement. Church history, any church history, will show that when facts cannot be refuted, the institution will turn to smears and lies about its perceived opponent. The things that we began to hear about our life and work in the church got so bad that in Australia in 1981 I felt compelled to write to Robert Olson at the White Estate and the General Conference the following letter:

As you know I am following you throughout Australia at the Adventist forums. It is not possible to express the shock I have experienced at some of the statements you have left on record concerning my personality and past work in the church. You have not only revealed the thinness of your Christianity, but you have and are demeaning your position with the church. You have every right to disagree with my findings but you do not have the privilege of maligning my character.

Therefore, as of the date of this letter, if it should come to my attention in any form that you have continued this practice, I will instruct the attorney to file against you and the White Estate and the Seventh-day Adventist Church for malicious mischief and defamation of character. You should be given the opportunity to prove in a court of law the evil untruths you claim you know about me and my past.

It has been interesting to discover that the Adventist Church has always turned to smear and lies toward those that they cannot control or silence. This you yourself have done with both Ford and myself. It is also interesting to hear you began to do this with Elders Cottrell and now the beginning of Fred Veltman. Have you no shame?

There should be no mistake concerning the limits that have been reached concerning my patience. If you do not wish to be exposed to the world press and the church you profess to love and seek to protect, as one that is irresponsible, then for your own sake and theirs, please try to exercise some self restraint with your mouth. ²²

It has always been my contention that I was a friend and member of the church. In the Davenport and Ellen G. White matter, both problems could be helped and not hindered by an honest and frank airing of the facts, and a determined, sincere plan to change the record of that past for a more forward and truthful one in the future. After all, the church members had been taught to forgive and if we as leaders were honest about our mistakes or mismanagement of the details of the past, we could only be forgiven and trusted in the future if we acknowledge

such failures and took steps to correct and insure abuse would not occur in that future. If I had been or was wrong in both cases, then a court of law should have decided that, and I should and could have been exposed as the scoundrel that I would have been. It could have been and still would be a simple matter to settle both issues in favor of honesty and justice. If the church had or would take me to federal court, then all the records of the depositions of the Davenport matter could, through the Freedom of Information Act, be forced from their files and the church members then could see whether the punishment was made to fit the crime. If the evidence showed that some of the church's critics, such as myself, were wrong then we would also be exposed for what they said we were.

The same method could be used to settle the Ellen G. White matter. If the committee that met with me in Glendale had been allowed by PREXAD to continue its work with me and we had followed reasonable safeguards and time tables for the release of material, the church could have known what most of the scholars had known, and were to soon learn, in spite of the ban placed on the information by the church. But such was not to be, for the church has always believed in censorship and cover-up as detailed in the fall edition of the *Free Inquiry*. Their first line of defense seems to be deceit. But then what could the public expect from minds that are haunted by the belief that they will be hated by all their relatives that don't share their persecution complex and their Saturday Sabbath; that they will be tortured by all the Catholics; martyred by all the protestants; abandoned by all the governments; and finally because of all this attention, be exalted to some lofty heaven far away where they will be next to God by themselves sharing bliss with 144,000 others.²⁴

One last observation from a long sad chapter. When the settlement check had been received I wrote and asked that for tax reasons, so that the whole amount would not be eaten up by attorney fees and taxes, I be allowed the ministerial considerations I had enjoyed for almost forty years; that is, tax exempt status on parsonage allowance, medical expenses, travel, education, etc. Even though I had received assurance from the I.R.S. that these were privileges still available to me, not until I went back to the church through the attorney was the matter settled in a memorandum from the law office in February, 1983.

On January 24, 1983 I called Relious Walden at the Southern California Conference of Seventh-day Adventists and told him that on the basis of my research and the opinion of one of our tax professors there was no reason why the Southern California Conference should issue a 1099 to Walter Rea. I further pointed out to him that for the conference to issue a 1099 in light of the settlement was inconsistent with the position they had maintained throughout the settlement negotiations, namely that the settlement was not for compensation owed, but rather for other reasons. Thus, I explained, if they issued a 1099 they were not conceding that they owed Walter Rea the compensation that they denied all along that they owed him.

The conclusion of the conversation was that the conference would not be issuing Walter Rea a 1099.

Later in the week I reaffirmed this position with President Ralph Watts and he said that he and Relious Walden had discussed this and he was in full accord with my recommendation.

All of which leaves one wondering, with the Davenport matter still not to the press and public as yet, and the Ellen White material coming out from other researchers and confirming all my findings, if I was so wrong in both matters, why did they fire me in the first place?

CHAPER V FOOTNOTES

1. Art Wong, "Adventist chief lays out Davenport's case," *The Sunday Sun*, San Bernardino, California, (January 23, 1983).

2. Melinda Gipson, "Tumult in Adventist ranks doesn't worry the church, says is leader in interview," Religious News Services, (October 20, 1981), p. 5.

3. Neal Wilson, "A Report to the Church," *Adventist Review*, August 29, 1982.
 4. *Ibid.*, p. 23.
 5. Attorney Jerry Wiley to Neal C. Wilson, April 7, 1983.
 6. Walter Rea to President's Review Commission, October 29, 1982.
 7. *Currents* Interview: John Adam, *Adventist Currents*, Volume 1, No. 4, p. 22.
 8. Walter Rea to Glendale Committee Members, May 25, 1980.
 9. R. L. Walden to Walter Rea, September 19, 1980.
 10. Walter Rea to Neal C. Wilson, July 28, 1980.
 11. John Dart, "Plagiarism Found in Prophet's Books," *Los Angeles Times*, (October 23, 1980, p. 1.
 12. Walter Rea, *The White Lie*, (Turlock, CA, M&R Publications, 1982).
 13. Editor's Viewpoint, "Ellen White in Perspective," *Adventist Review*, August 16, 1984), p. 3.
 14. Glendale Committee, "Ellen G. White and Her Sources," tapes, (January 28-29, 1980).
 15. C. E. Bradford to Louise and Otto Newmann, November 20, 1980.
 16. Dr. Robert Olson, "E.G. White Writings," Lecture, Andrews University, Dr. Roy Graham Class, (Classnotes, February 26, 1980), p. 2.
 17. Attorney R. M. Peterson to Attorney James Wagner, August 3, 1982.
 18. Peterson to Wagner, July 15, 1982.
 19. Lorenzo W. Paytee to Robert Cowan, May 10, 1982.
 20. Walter Rea to Walter Blehm, October 7, 1982.
 21. James Wagner to Walter Rea, November 2, 1982.
 22. Walter Rea to Robert Olson, October, 1981.
 23. *Free Inquiry*, "Censorship in the Seventh-day Adventist Church," 2 articles: Douglas Hackleman, "Ellen White's Habit," and Walter Rea, "'Who Prophets From the Prophet,'" (Fall, 1984) Vol. 4, no. 4, pp. 16-29.
 24. Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy* (Mountain View: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1888), "God's People Delivered," pp. 635-652. (See also last few chapters of *Early Writings*.
1. Memorandum, Jerry Wiley to Walter Rea, File, February 4, 1983.

CHAPTER VI

THE PRICE OF REFORM

It is a strange and fascinating study that in the 150 years since the concocting of Adventist ideas not one serious attempt has been made to analyze, criticize or destroy the concepts promoted by the organization by scholars outside the church. No Catholic, whom the Adventists have hated from the beginning, has ever spent the time or

effort to meet some of the distortions on its history that Adventism has promoted. No serious protestant historian or theologian has felt it necessary to spend the time correcting the misstatements of the protestant past that Adventist evangelists promote in their attacks on the protestant world. No acknowledge or noted historian or geologist has attempted to set right all the assumptions that have now been proven false, that were stressed by Ellen White or the church she founded.

The long list of critics from beginning to the present day are the names of men who worked and held high office, some very high, in the church's structure. As these men became knowledgeable and informed, both in the background of Ellen White and the church's structure, they either left the church and faded from view or expended some or much effort in trying to inform the membership of what they had become aware of and were not allowed to talk about. For this effort they were criticized without mercy, condemned without just cause, and smeared without concern for their reputation or person. Up until 1975 when the government made it mandatory, even the retirement was used as a weapon against church reformers. Each and every year, the *General Conference Working Policy Book*, which is denied to the clergy, as well as the membership, contained the statement:

No worker can regard the fund as an arbitrary provision from which aid can be claimed as a matter of personal right, regardless of the conditions upon which the fund is provided by voluntary action of the organizations contributing to it. The employment of an individual by the Seventh-day Adventist denomination does not therefore in any way guarantee sustentation assistance to such person, since allowances from the fund are made by voluntary action of the General Conference and its subsidiary organizations. ¹

Thus this fund was often doled out or denied by the leaders of the church if one did or did not behave according to their acceptable standards. I can still remember the first time that I realized that the church could control a worker up to the grave by denying him a surviving wage if he would not be controlled in his attitudes, lifestyle or utterances.

In spite of the efforts of the church to starve them into submission or to stain their reputation into compliance, there is no serious evidence that all or any of the reformers of the past were evil men. There is no record that they were in trouble with the outside world for morals, ethical, or financial misconduct. No F.B.I. was questioning their involvement, no I.R.S. was checking their records, no S.E.C. was concerned with their compliance, and no indictment was threatened because of their mismanagement of church funds. Yet, regardless of this, the church is more willing to accept and trust a leadership that has been tainted by scandal, caught with their hands in the till, investigated by all of the above mentioned organizations and even censored by the church itself, than give any credence to the information that has come through the last hundred years from reformers within its own ranks.

These thinkers, scholars, ministers and doctors of the past had good minds. They must have known the price that would have to be paid for their inquiries and studies. They were not unaware of the record of the past within the church and the prices that many had paid for their efforts and attempts to bring a truer picture of Ellen G. White to the membership. Those who had worked within the system saw some of the corruption in high places and saw how it was overlooked and even condoned. Why they would they take the certain path to self destruction and isolation? Knowing that in their later life, with nothing but denominational experience and education to fall back on, they would not be marketable in any other reasonable position outside the church, why would they advance their demise? Not all the answers will even be given, but to believe that these were all evil men with hatred toward the church they served, or were all power hungry for position and power, or were out to destroy the system they had given their life of service to, is much too easy an answer even for the simple minded.

There are some answers, though, and they should be looked at. One of those answers was stated so well by the *Spectrum* of 1984:

The difference was not intellectual capacity. It is not necessary to administer I.Q. tests to observe that both sides had their quota of brilliant and pedestrian minds. The difference was not scientific training. Many progressives felt that once their conservative brethren (scientist, administrators or educators) saw the data they would take the only course open to reasonable men and reevaluate their traditional positions. This assumption was naïve. Nor was the difference loyalty to the church. While the historical record shows that it is harder for progressives to retain their loyalty to the church (often because of the obstacles

placed in their path by conservatives), it is important to recognize that many progressives were profoundly loyal to the church. ²

While the article is talking about a different subject it is not unrelated to the topic of Ellen and her record and authority. There certainly is no proof that Numbers, Graybill, Ford or Rea were not loyal to the church unless loyalty is defined as not being controlled by some of those in it. What rules did they violate, what procedures did they transgress?

It could be true that some of the methods used by the reformers of the past could be improved upon. But then so could the methods of the church structure itself. History is not too kind in its record of the actions of the men who always postured as the "saints within the structure," as opposed to the "sinners" outside the system, especially when those sinners had often been abused, misused and excommunicated by some of those "saints." Methods are something to dialogue and confer about. Methods come by experience and trial and error; only thus can they be improved or changed by honorable men. Often methods are only reactions from other poor methods and not a consistent mode of operation at all.

There are other reasons that change comes with such torture in Adventism. Often the leadership of the church depends upon old, used, tired, uneducated men who have risen to success on the shoulders of their superiors, not through intelligent efforts of their own. Therefore such men are dependent on the system and those shoulders of their superiors, for without the support of those superiors they would be nothing in either place or position. Many do not read, do not study, do not think, but only react to any threat from either the right or the left. Their last desire is movement in any direction; thus they oppose any thought or actions that would "rock the boat." They have a good thing going for them and they know it and do not want it exposed or threatened.

Another more malignant problem in the Adventist system is Ellen white, herself. Believing as she did and teaching as she did, that she was either all of God's or none, there is no choice. Therefore everything she did, wrote or touched, even her shopping list, is often considered holy and inviolate or "inspired." Anyone that attempts to cross this morass is sure to be shot down. To try to extricate the church's dilemma by playing semantical games with the word "inspiration" is not only unsatisfying but purely dishonest. The inconsistency of this position will continue to haunt Adventism forever unless they reach higher ground. The proof of that statement is found in the works of Ellen herself. She encouraged, advanced and promoted the idea of reform herself in all she wrote. Listen to her words and works:

In refusing the warning of the first angel they rejected the means which Heaven had provided for their restoration. They spurned the gracious messenger that would have corrected the evils which separated them from God (*Great Controversy*, p. 380)

The Redeemer of the world never spurned true repentance, however great the guilt, but He hurled burning denunciations against Pharisees and hypocrites. There is more hope for the open sinner than for this class As a people professing to be reformers, treasuring the most solemn, purifying truths of God's word we must elevate the standard far higher than it is at the present time. Sin and sinners in the church must be promptly dealt with, that others may not be contaminated. (*Testimonies*, Vol. 4, p. 185)

There are many false prophets in these days, to whom sin does not appear specially repulsive. They complain that the peace of the people is unnecessarily disturbed by the reproofs and warning of God's messengers. As for them, they lull the souls of sinners into a fatal ease by their smooth and deceitful teachings Those who seek to cloak sin and make it appear less aggravating to the mind of the offender are doing the work of the false prophets and may expect the retributive wrath of God to follow such a course God has no sympathy with the evildoer. He gives no one liberty to gloss over the sins of His people, nor to cry, "Peace, peace," when He has declared that there shall be no peace for the wicked. Those who stir up rebellion against the servants whom God sends to deliver His messages are rebelling against the word of the Lord. (*Testimonies*, Vol. 4, p. 185)

Indignation often kindles in the heart of the sinner against the agent whom God chooses to deliver His reproofs God's chosen servants should meet with courage and patience

whatever trials and suffering befall them through reproach, neglect, or misrepresentations because they faithfully discharge the duty that God has given them to do. They should remember that the prophets of old and the Savior of the world also endured abuse and persecution for the world's sake Those who by unwise sympathy encourage men in rebellion when their self-love is smarting beneath merited reproof are not the friends of God, the great Reprover. God will send reproof and warning to His people as long as they continue upon earth. (*Testimonies*, Vol. 4, p. 180)

Deal faithfully with wrong-doing. Warn every soul that it is in Danger. Leave none to deceive themselves. Call sin by its right name. Declare what God has said in regard to lying, Sabbath-breaking, stealing, idolatry, and every other evil. "They which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." If they persist in sin, the judgment you have declared from God's word is pronounced upon them in heaven. (*Gospel Workers*, p. 502)

The Lord reproves and corrects the people who profess to keep His law. He points out their sins and lays open their iniquity because He wishes to separate all sin and wickedness from them, that they may perfect holiness in His fear. (*Testimonies*, Vol. 5, p. 662)

Reproofs always hurt human nature. Many are the souls that have been destroyed by the unwise sympathy of their brethren; for, because the brethren sympathized with them, they thought they must indeed have been abused, and that the reprover was all wrong and had a bad spirit. The only hope for sinners in Zion is to fully see and confess their wrongs and put them away. Those who step in to destroy the edge of sharp reproof that God sends, saying that the reprover was partly wrong and can devise to make the reproofs of none effect will accomplish his design. Some will lay blame upon the one whom God has sent with a message of warning, saying, He is too severe, and in so doing they become responsible for the soul of the sinner whom God desired to save. . . (*Testimonies*, Vol. 3, p. 329)

God's ministers must lift up the voice like a trumpet, and show the people their transgressions. The smooth sermons so often preached make no lasting impression. Men are not cut to the heart, because the plain, sharp truths of the word of God are not spoken to them. . . When will be heard once more in the church the voice of faithful rebuke, "Thou art the man"? If these words were not so rare, we should see more of the power of God. The Lord's messengers should not complain of their efforts being fruitless until they repent of their love of approbation, their desire to please men, which leads them to suppress the truth, and to cry, Peace, when God has not spoken peace. (*Gospel Workers*, pp. 149,150)

He (God) shows us that when His people are found in sin they should at once take decided measures to put that sin from them, that His frown may not rest upon them all. But if the sins of the people are passed over by those in responsible positions, His frown will be upon them, and the people of God, as a body, will be held responsible for those sins . . . If wrongs are apparent among His people and if the servants of God pass on indifferent to them, they virtually sustain and justify the sinners, and are alike guilty and will just as surely receive the displeasure of God; for they will be made responsible for the sins of the guilty. (*Testimonies*, Vol. 3, pp. 265,266)

This is quite a heady mandate for any reformer, so I rest my case. The problem is that the Adventists have never felt that those statements applied to them but were directed at others, the club, their club, their church, that was above even their own prophet. The state has allowed the church, any church, to pollute, pervert and circumvent all the laws passed to help keep men honest. They are literally above most, if not all human laws. There is no commandment I know of in the ten that a person cannot violate and survive in Adventism. But I had violated the eleventh commandment of the church which has always proven to be greater than the other ten. It was "Thou shalt not put forth thy hand upon the Lord's anointed," in this case the Adventist structure and clergy. No one has ever violated that commandment and survived in Adventism, and neither could I. You just can't squeal on the system

and expect their blessing even if you are proven right in your information. One could go on recording Ellen's words in this fashion indefinitely.

If those are "inspired" words from God, how can I be condemned for what I did? If they are "inspired" why has the church so obviously rejected them as pertaining to themselves when they come from their prophet? If they are "inspired" who stands condemned: the ones that used them to try to bring about reform or the leaders that still continue their shadowy practices and tell their white lies? If they are "inspired" why has the church settled back as if nothing happened at all and the clock stopped in 1844? Yet Wilson in the October *Review* could still quote Ellen in *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 69—"When the character of Christ shall be perfectly reproduced in His people, then He will come to claim them as His own." If this statement is "inspired," then the coming of the Adventist Christ in indeed a long, long way off, if the characters of the Davenport investors are to be considered.

Rather, it is much easier to believe that in the light of all the new evidence not all she said was "inspired" or relevant to the world or the church. Indeed, I now recognize where some of the statements quoted from her in this chapter had their origin, and it was not from God but copied from others. They may still be good useful statements with meaning, but having been washed through others they give some insight as to why they lack the force from God to convert the mind or the heart of the Adventist leadership. If the power we possess which we have always claimed truly comes from the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit had been allowed to work in some of those lives instead of second hand statements copied from others, in the name of Ellen G. White, perhaps Davenport and the divines would never have happened and *The White Lie* would never have been written. But the events of the *Pirates of Privilege* tell us clearly that where there is no vision from God, the people do indeed perish.

What are some of the lessons to be learned from this sad experience?

A. In order to be truly free morally, in order to have a correct living relationship with God, man must have free access to truth. That truth or those facts must be untampered with, free from suppression, deletions, corrections, or interpretation and manipulation from others. To the extent that any information is wrong, garbled or twisted by others, to that extent decisions based on that false information will end up hurting and harming those who make those decisions.

B. Beware of any supersalesman, any divine or system that tries to sell you any idea in religion that is "unique" or "the truth" for all time. Remember that "truth" in religion has been around for millenniums and there are many tests that can be administered to find out what is "truth." No one has ever had a monopoly on it.

C. It is very difficult, if not impossible for people with a sectarian mind in religion to understand that others who do not agree with them can also be right. After all they may both agree with "truth" but interpret it differently. There is no evidence offered in Scripture that divisions in interpretation of truth are sinful or harmful unless our actions make it so.

D. Trust is not a right, or a divine commission. God has earned our trust or He hasn't, likewise, leaders of any organization, religious or not. If the leadership is not trustworthy they don't deserve our trust. It is not a divine right. It is perhaps in this area that the leadership of Adventism has its greatest problem. Those leaders believe, some sincerely, that God has given them their position and therefore the people should give them their trust no matter what they do or what their actions say. Nothing could be further from the truth of the matter.

Editor's note. *In the original manuscript there are two subsections labeled "D." I have continued this arrangement for the sake of reference against the original manuscript.---- KW*

D. Love and Law are not mandated or separated in Christianity. They walk side by side. God's law is love and if the Adventist Church that preaches law so much really believed what they preached, they would be known in their community as a people of love. It would show in what they did to each other. How can a community believe that Adventism is a message of God's love when they often watch what harm the members do to each other? If we hate and destroy each other over interpretations, how can we be expected to love those not of our faith who find it hard to understand our beliefs chiseled in the stone of dogmatism not the fleshly tables of the heart of love?

E. If there is no final judgment, no final place of arbitration, then I have indeed been one of Adventism's greatest fools, not because I was proven to be false, to the contrary, but because the system can destroy its critics and

reward its faithful. But believing as I do that there is a heavenly tribunal, I could not do other than I did and that was to call sin by its right name.

F. There is a thin line between human greed and prudence. Most of the personalities that represented the church were in the high bracket of church work. They received more than most others do of the perks of their profession. Even their retirement was stacked in their favor, yet they often plead, as Pierson did, that they were only being prudent. What they really were being was greedy.

G. Once it is clear to a person that no one in Adventism sits on the committee that decides where we end up in the hereafter, it is much easier to adjust to the real world around you and begin to get back to the fundamentals of Christianity which are love, peace and goodwill toward all men. IT IS TRUE THAT ADVENTISM HAS TAUGHT US ALL THE LAW. WHAT A HUMAN TRAGEDY THAT BY THEIR ACTIONS THEY DID NOT TEACH US TO LOVE THAT LAW.

THE RACE OF LIFE

When you sit all alone at the end of a day
And the shadows that fall are all gray
And you know that the trials that you face all ahead
Are the ones that will not go away.

And you count up your loss and you tally your gain.
And you weigh in the balance of life
And you trust to the scale as it tips to your end
That the peace will out weigh all the strife.

For you know there was good, and you sense there was bad.
In a mix that was conditioned by time.
But you pray as you sit with your memories alone.

For the deeds that you do with their motives tacked on
Are reviewed by an impatient hoard
For often the things that you thought were well done
Were the acts that were largely ignored.

So the wise and the sound, as they travel through life
Would beware what the people would seek
And will travel their path with a vision in mind
That will lead them at last to the peak.

When you stand all alone at the setting of sun
And the reckoning of time is all through
May the Savior of men who reviews your whole life
Be the one that to Him you've been true.

For the vote of the crowd has no meaning or form
In the race that we run among men
But the goal that we seek and the prize we obtain
Is the crown we may win in the end.

Not the shout of the crowd or the curses of men
Are the forces that finish the race
But the test of a life when its lifetime is through
Is to seek and obtain His rich grace.

For you know there was good and you sense there was bad
In a mix that was conditioned by time.
But you pray as you sit with your memories alone
That the good will not end up all crime.

Walter Rea

CHAPTER VI FOOTNOTES

1. General Conference Working Policy, Revised October, 1966, p. 306.
2. Edward Lugenbeal, "The Conservative Restoration at Geoscience," *Spectrum*, Vol. 15, No. 2, p. 24.