

THE AFRIKAANSE KONFERENSIE
(1968 - 1974)
AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE
FOR THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH
IN SOUTH AFRICA

by

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Abstract	vi
List of abbreviations	viii
Glossary of names and terms	ix
Biographical notes of prominent persons involved in the conflict	xi
Acknowledgements	xii
Personal declaration	xiii

INTRODUCTION

1. Crisis in the Seventh-day Adventist Church	1
2. Aims	3
3. Thesis Structure	3
4. Sources	6

CHAPTER ONE: THE EVOLVEMENT OF AFRIKANER CONSCIOUSNESS (1652-1914)

I.	THE INITIAL STIRRING OF A PEOPLE WITH A DISTINCTIVE IDENTITY	8
	A. Early aspirations for independence	8
	B. The advent of the Afrikaner	12
II.	AFRIKANER IDENTITY UNDER THREAT (1795-1877)	14
	A. Britain's policy of anglicization	14
	B. The Great Trek	17
	C. Calvinistic theology and Afrikaner nationalism	19
	D. The annexations of the Boer republics (1843-1877)	22
	E. The flowering of Afrikaans language and culture	23
III.	THE RESURGENCE OF THE AFRIKANER PEOPLE (1902-1914)	26
	A. The calamitous effects of the South African War	26
	B. Afrikaner revival	30
IV.	VERLIGTE/VERKRAMPTE CONFLICT	33
	A. Afrikaners in crisis	33
V.	SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION	34

CHAPTER TWO: A HISTORICAL SURVEY OF THE POSITION OF THE DUTCH AND AFRIKAANS BELIEVERS IN THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH IN SOUTH AFRICA (1887-1968)

I.	THE ORIGINS OF THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH IN SOUTH AFRICA	37
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A.	The first Seventh-day Adventist in South Africa	37
B.	The Dutch and the seventh-day Sabbath	37
II.	THE COMMENCEMENT OF DUTCH-ENGLISH ANTAGONISM IN THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH IN SOUTH AFRICA	38
A.	Beginning of dissatisfaction among Dutch-speaking believers	38
B.	The influence of the South African War (1899-1902)	42
C.	Desire develops for a separate organization	43
III.	SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA AND THE LANGUAGE QUESTION	49
A.	The establishment of Claremont Union College (1892)	49
	1. The College perceived as alien	50
	2. Views on government examinations	53
B.	The College relocated to Natal (1918)	53
C.	The College moves back to the Cape (1928)	58
IV.	SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST LITERATURE AND THE LANGUAGE QUESTION	69
A.	Early printing endeavours in South Africa	69
B.	Seventh-day Adventists face strong challenges	70
C.	Dutch Seventh-day Adventist literature	73
D.	English literature gains prominence	74
E.	A pattern emerges in the Church's literature work	76
V.	THE CHURCH'S MEDICAL ENDEAVOURS AMONG THE DUTCH PEOPLE OF SOUTH AFRICA	79
A.	Medical endeavours in Stellenbosch (1903)	79
VI.	THE CHURCH'S ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES	82
A.	The establishment of the South African Conference	82
B.	Optimism and enthusiasm outpaces discretion	83
C.	Organizational transformations (1903)	85
D.	Expansion into the Dutch-speaking areas	87
E.	The establishment of the Orange River Conference (1913)	88
F.	The Orange River Conference disbanded (1929)	88
G.	The Natal-Transvaal Conference and the Cape Conference amalgamate (1933)	90
H.	The formation of the Transvaal Conference and the Oranje-Natal Conference (1957)	91
I.	Expansion into the Orange Free State	92
J.	Afrikaans work develops in the Transvaal	92
K.	Antagonism still rife in the Church	92



VII.	THE AFRIKAANS LITERATURE YEARS	94
A.	The first Afrikaans Seventh-day Adventist literature	94
B.	The translation of Afrikaans literature gains momentum	95
C.	A backlog develops	97
D.	Paucity of original Afrikaans reading material	97
E.	Afrikaans ridiculed at the publishing house	100
VIII.	SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION	101

CHAPTER THREE: THE RISE OF THE AFRIKAANSE KONFERENSIE AND THE REACTION OF THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH (1968-1974)

I.	CONFRONTATION IN THE TRANSVAAL CONFERENCE	102
A.	The formation of the Afrikaanse Konferensie van Sewendedag Adventiste (1968)	102
B.	Further grievances of the Afrikaanse Konferensie	106
II.	SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST ECCLESIOLOGY	109
A.	The origins of the missionary mandate of the Seventh-day Adventist Church	109
B.	The organizational unity of the Church	111
III.	THE BACKDROP TO THE CONTROVERSY IN THE CHURCH	114
A.	The background years (1955-1968)	114
IV.	THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH REFUTES THE ALLEGATIONS OF THE AFRIKAANSE KONFERENSIE	117
A.	The reaction of the Church following the Special Session at Sedaven (1968)	117
V.	THE RIFT BETWEEN THE AFRIKAANSE KONFERENSIE AND THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH WIDENS	118
A.	A "letter and tract" conflict erupts	118
B.	The quarrel within the Church becomes public	123
C.	The Afrikaanse Konferensie justifies its motives and actions	124
D.	Afrikaanse Konferensie sympathizers censured	126
E.	Invitation to fast and pray rejected	127
F.	Fires of dissension kindled in the Church	131
1.	Na Vyf Maande	131
2.	Off-Shoot Movements	133
3.	Eenheid Onder die Volk van die Here	135
4.	Sal Daar Erkenning Wees	136



G.	Joint declaration by the Afrikaanse Konferensie and the Transvaal Conference	138
H.	The Church withholds its literature	145
I.	The Afrikaanse Konferensie threatened with legal action	146
J.	The personal influence of Church leaders in the crisis	148
VI.	THE ENDEAVOURS OF THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH TO TRY AND JUSTIFY ITS RESISTANCE TO THE AFRIKAANSE KONFERENSIE	150
A.	Negation of the charges of immorality made against the Transvaal Conference president	150
B.	Denial that Afrikaans had been disregarded	154
C.	The entreaty for a unilingual conference turned down	158
1.	Racial inequality in the Seventh-day Adventist Church	171
a.	The practice of separate education	171
b.	Racially based medical work.	173
c.	Racially divided organizational structures	174
d.	Racially divided places of worship	176
D.	Cultural differences between English and Afrikaans believers invalidated	177
VII.	SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION	181
CHAPTER FOUR:	THE DEVELOPMENT, DECLINE AND DEMISE OF THE AFRIKAANSE KONFERENSIE (1968-1974)	
I.	THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE AFRIKAANSE KONFERENSIE	183
A.	"Die stryd is aangeknoop"	183
B.	Registration of the new conference	188
C.	Enthusiastic support for the Afrikaanse Konferensie	191
D.	The evangelistic endeavours of the Afrikaanse Konferensie	194
E.	The Afrikaanse Konferensie's medical and welfare work	199
F.	The publication endeavours of the Afrikaanse Konferensie	209
G.	The aspirations of the Afrikaanse Konferensie to open up a theological seminary	211
H.	The establishment of the Afrikaanse Advent Vroue Vereniging (AAVV)	213



II.	THE DECLINE AND DEMISE OF THE AFRIKAANSE KONFERENSIE	213
A.	Optimism, though tempered, still prevails	213
B.	The Afrikaanse Konferensie confronted with serious monetary difficulties	215
1.	A critical decrease in financial support	217
2.	Excessive spending	220
3.	Misappropriation of funds	221
C.	Virulent personality clashes	225
D.	The impact of the ecclesiology of the Church	236
E.	Demise and aftermath of the Afrikaanse Konferensie	237
III.	SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION	240
CHAPTER FIVE: THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH AND THE CHALLENGE OF A MULTICULTURAL MINISTRY		
I.	THE ENDURING LANGUAGE DILEMMA	242
A.	Inadequacy to handle cultural issues	249
B.	An a-cultural view of the church	252
C.	Power of perception	253
D.	Reticence regarding overseas paradigms	256
II.	PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS FOR RESOLVING THE AFRIKAANS CULTURAL DILEMMA IN THE CHURCH	256
A.	The Seventh-day Adventist Church and the cultural challenge	256
B.	The circle of praxis	257
1.	Insertion	259
2.	Social analysis	266
3.	Theological reflection	272
4.	Pastoral response	277
a.	Rediscovering the importance of the local church	278
b.	The promotion of self-supporting organisations	281
c.	Training leaders in multicultural ministry	284
d.	Decentralization of administrative structures	285
III.	CONCLUSION	297
IV.	ANNEXURES	299
V.	BIBLIOGRAPHY	324
VI.	INDEX	345



ABSTRACT

In 1968 a group of Afrikaans believers protested that the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa had remained foreign to their experience. They maintained that American leaders had dominated the Church. They also asserted that their cultural, linguistic and literary needs had not been adequately catered to, and that the work of evangelization in the Afrikaans-speaking areas had been sadly neglected.

Some headway had been made by the Church in the years prior to 1968 with translations, firstly, into Dutch and later also into Afrikaans. Advancement had also been made by evangelists into the Afrikaans-speaking areas of the Transvaal and the Orange Free-State. The history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in this country, however, corroborates many of the grievances enumerated by the dissatisfied Afrikaans believers. The predominance of English in the administrative work of the Church and at its educational institutions had always been a thorny issue, resulting in continuous friction between the Church leaders and the Dutch and Afrikaans-speaking members. Problems had also arisen with regard to the use of Afrikaans at the publishing house of the Church. Positions of leadership in almost every department of the Church had been filled by non-South Africans. As a result, by the late 1960s, tensions in the Church had reached a boiling point.

At the end of 1968, at a special business session of the Transvaal Conference, the objections of the Afrikaans believers met with very strong resistance. No opportunity was granted to them to air their frustrations and grievances and, as a result, a number of delegates left this meeting in protest before it had been officially closed. This unilateral action resulted in the establishment of an organization called Die Afrikaanse Konferensie van Sewendedag Adventiste. This new conference was, however, considered to be schismatic and was never acknowledged by the established Church.

From the outset, the Afrikaanse Konferensie set out to cater to the needs of Afrikaans-speaking people in very forceful fashion. Many people felt that this new conference had a legitimate cause and its membership grew very rapidly. It initiated a welfare society, opened up several geriatric centres, its own printing press and a correspondence Bible school. It also held, throughout the ensuing years, numerous evangelistic campaigns. By the middle of 1973, however, the opposition and incessant pressure applied by the established Church and the severe problems that had emerged from within the ranks of the Afrikaanse Konferensie, swiftly contributed to its demise, with most of its members eventually rejoining the established Church.

At the time of the disintegration of the Afrikaanse Konferensie, the leaders of the Church resolved to strengthen the evangelistic work directed at Afrikaans-speaking people. They also determined to have more literature produced in Afrikaans, and to strongly promote the use of Afrikaans at the publishing house and at the Church's educational institutions. These resolutions, however, proved ineffectual, and in the years that followed, the work of the Church showed no improvement in its approach to the Afrikaans-speaking people.

Twenty-five years have passed since the demise of the Afrikaanse Konferensie and the Church finds itself, because of both, external and internal factors, in a position that could be considered decidedly worse than at the time of the formation of the Afrikaanse Konferensie in 1968. As from 1995, after a protest march by students on the campus of Helderberg College, instruction in Afrikaans was no longer provided at a tertiary level. The production of Afrikaans books and the translation of reading material into Afrikaans is almost non-existent. As a result, voices of dissent are once again being heard that the Afrikaans work is being neglected. This predicament in the Church can neither be ignored nor circumvented and the only way for the Church is to deal with the crisis in the utmost sincerity without allowing itself to succumb to it.

The source of the problem appears to lie primarily in Seventh-day Adventist ecclesiology where a gulf exists between its interpretation of unity, and its understanding of mission in a multicultural context. Authentic church unity cannot consist only of an outer dimension whereby unity and mission are cosmetically combined. It involves a deeper internal dimension, where the striving for unity becomes a witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ, while the mission of the church simultaneously embodies the obligations to cater to the cultural and linguistic needs of all of Christ's people. It is this essential synthesis that has yet to take place in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, where both these facets are to be fostered as complementary aspects of its total vocation. It is this fusion of unity and mission which will open the way for the Church to complete its mission, unhindered either by the polarizing and divisive effect of religious and cultural diversity, or by any misguided attempts to impose uniformity.

In their quest for positive resolutions for the challenges facing the Church, its leaders must ask what it means to be "church" in the social context in which it finds itself, what precisely is its mission in the pluralistic, multicultural situation in which it is located and how essential is the Church to God's mission in this country?

Judging from the nature of the dilemma that the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa still faces today, it appears that these are questions that have not been satisfactorily answered. After assessing both the past and present modes of the Church's operation it becomes essential for the Church leaders to do some critical rethinking about certain facets of its existing ecclesiology and its missionary strategies. It is just as important to systematically abandon the organizational structures that no longer fit the purpose and mission of the Church and to realign them with new paradigms that will effectively cater to the spiritual, cultural and linguistic needs of all the peoples of this country.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACS	Adventist Community Services
AD	African Division
ADO	African Division Outlook
AH	Advent Helpers
AK	Afrikaanse Konferensie
BL	Beherende Liggaam Afrikaanse Konferensie
CC	Cape Conference of Seventh-day Adventists
CCA	Cape Conference Archives
CCC	Cape Colony Conference
CCEX	Cape Conference Executive Committee
CNO	Christelike Nasionale Onderwys
CS	Claremont Sanitarium
CUC	Claremont Union College
DB	Dagbestuur Afrikaanse Konferensie
DCM	Department Church Ministries
EAD	Eastern African Division
EGW	Ellen G. White
EGWRC	Ellen G. White Research Centre (Helderberg College)
GC	General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists
GHC	Good Hope College
GRA	Genootskap van Regte Afrikaners
HBC	Helderberg College
HBCA	Helderberg College Archives
HBCL	Helderberg College Library
n.d.	No date (used with undated source material)
KNFSC	KwaZulu-Natal Free State Conference
NFSC	Natal-Free State Conference
NFSCA	Natal-Free State Conference Archives
NTC	Natal-Transvaal Conference
ONC	Oranje-Natal Conference
ORC	Orange River Conference
SAC	South African Conference
SAD	Southern African Division
SALCT	South African Library. Cape Town
SAO	South African Observer
SAPC	South African Publishing Company
SAU	South African Union
SAUC	South African Union Conference
SKC	Spion Kop College - (at times spelt Spioen Kop College)
SDA	Seventh-day Adventist
SPA	Sentinel Publishing Association - (name was later changed to Southern Publishing Association)
TAD	Trans-Africa Division
TC	Transvaal Conference of Seventh-day Adventists
TC Ex. Com.	Transvaal Conference Executive Committee
UDWL	University of Durban Westville Library
UNPMB	University of Natal Library, Pietermaritzburg
VOC	Vereenighde Oost-Indische Compagnie
VOP	Voice of Prophecy Bible School
ZAR	Zuid Afrikaansche Republiek

GLOSSARY OF NAMES AND TERMS

Although I have endeavoured in this study to limit the words, names, and expressions that are peculiar to the Seventh-day Adventist Church, there are a number of terms which need some clarification.

ADVENT. Anticipated second coming of Jesus Christ.

ADVENT REVIEW AND HERALD. Seventh-day Adventist Church periodical.

CONFERENCE BUSINESS SESSION. A local Seventh-day Adventist conference which usually meets in session every two years, with delegates from the various churches represented. Such a session elects officers and the conference executive committee, receives new churches, and hears reports on the work in the conference during the preceding term.

CAMPMEETING. Religious gathering of Seventh-day Adventist believers usually held over a number of days, generally in a rural or semirural setting, with provision for encampment on the grounds. A campmeeting is normally conducted by the local conference.

CHURCH MANUAL. An official handbook, issued by the General Conference, dealing with matters of local church organization, services, and operation, church officers, church membership, standards of conduct, and relationships of the church to conference officers, and workers.

CONFERENCE. Refers to the unit of church administration under the jurisdiction of a conference president in which a number of churches are associated together for administrative purposes.

DIVISION. The largest geographical and administrative unit of church organization below the General Conference, comprising of a number of union conference and headed by a Division president.

ELDER. A title used by Seventh-day Adventists to designate an ordained minister, although "Pastor" is more often used. However, "Pastor" is also applied to licensed ministers. In recent years "elder" has declined in popularity but continues as an alternative for "Pastor".

ELLEN G. WHITE (1827-1915). Considered to be the only person in the Seventh-day Adventist Church that has been endowed by God with the prophetic gift. Continual reference is made in this study to her counsel to the Church in South Africa at the turn of the century.

EFFORT. Technical term employed for a public evangelistic campaign.

GENERAL CONFERENCE. Highest level of Seventh-day Adventist Church administration, headed by a General Conference president. The headquarters of the worldwide Seventh-day Adventist Church is located in Washington D.C.

LITERATURE EVANGELIST. Salesperson usually employed by the Church to promote and sell Seventh-day Adventist literature.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE. In the Seventh-day Adventist Church, officers are elected every one or two years through an appointed nominating committee. This committee brings its report to the church, which then acts on the names presented.

REMNANT. A term employed in Seventh-day Adventist parlance to designate the church which will proclaim to the world, God's final message prior to Christ's second advent.

SABBATH. Seventh-day of the week (Saturday) honoured by the Seventh-day Adventist Church as a holy day of worship.

SANITARIUM. A term popularized by Seventh-day Adventists to describe a medical institution that provides for physical therapy and other treatments.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES. Seventh-day Adventist Church periodical published in various languages in many countries throughout the world under titles equivalent to this English title.

SPIRIT OF PROPHECY. An expression found in Revelation 19:10 and used by Seventh-day Adventists to mean that Jesus is witnessing to the Church through the medium of prophecy. Seventh-day Adventists accept Ellen G. White's writings as representing the work of the prophetic gift, but not as taking the place of the Bible or as constituting an addition to it.

TESTIMONIES FOR THE CHURCH. In Seventh-day Adventist parlance, a communication of counsel given by Ellen G. White, either orally or in writing, to an individual, to a congregation, or to Seventh-day Adventists in general. A collection of these counsels have been published under the title *Testimonies for the Church*.

THREE ANGELS' MESSAGE. Prophetic messages recorded in Revelation 14:6-11, and there represented as being proclaimed by three angels. In their context these three messages constitute God's final appeal to the world to accept salvation in Christ and to prepare for His imminent second advent.

TITHE. One tenth of a person's income claimed by God as an acknowledgment of His ownership of all things and as a means of training in faithful stewardship. The tithe has formed the base of all Seventh-day Adventist financial contribution.

UNION CONFERENCE. A unit of church organization formed by a group of several local conferences or missions and administered by a Union Conference president.

WORKERS. Technically speaking, this term refers to all persons employed and paid by the conference. It is mostly used, though, to designate the ministerial workers of the Church (i.e. the pastors, evangelists and Bible workers).

WORKERS MEETING. A retreat or workshop for the pastors, teachers, and administrators of the Church, usually held over a number of days.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES ON PROMINENT PERSONS
INVOLVED IN THE CONFLICT

Badenhorst, Willie - Served as Transvaal Conference president from 1970-1974.

Birkenstock, Josef - Worked as a pastor in the Transvaal Conference at the time of the controversy in the Church. Joined the Afrikaanse Konferensie and became its first president.

Birkenstock, Karl - employed as a pastor in the Transvaal Conference at the time of the breakaway. Joined the Afrikaanse Konferensie in 1968 and became prominent in most of the evangelistic efforts of this organization.

Campbell, Francis - Took over from RE Clifford as South African Union Conference president in 1970 and was very much at the forefront of deliberations with the Afrikaanse Konferensie until the conflict had terminated in the middle of 1974.

Clifford, Roy - Served as South African Union Conference president in the late 1960s. He was one of the first persons that the supporters of the Afrikaanse Konferensie approached in an attempt to gain official recognition for their organization.

Mills, Merle - Served as Trans-Africa Division president at the time of the conflict between the Church and the Afrikaanse Konferensie.

Pierson, Robert - General Conference president at the time of the Afrikaner conflict in South Africa. Made several trips to this country to mediate between the established Church and the Afrikaanse Konferensie.

Retief, Flippie. Employed as a pastor in the Transvaal Conference at the time of the conflict in the Church. Joined the Afrikaanse Konferensie and assisted Karl Birkenstock in evangelizing the Afrikaans-speaking areas of this country.

Van Eck, Pieter - Served as president of the Transvaal Conference from 1968 to 1970. He was intimately involved in the early deliberations between the established Church and the Afrikaanse Konferensie. He was transferred to the Cape Conference when he was replaced by WHJ Badenhorst as Transvaal Conference president.

Von Hörsten, Fritz - employed as a pastor and a teacher in the Transvaal Conference at the time of the breakaway. He was also an Afrikaans teacher at Helderberg College for a number of years in the early 1960s and the author of several religious books in Afrikaans. Along with his brother, Hendrik von Hörsten, he joined the Afrikaanse Konferensie in 1968. Fritz von Hörsten was one of the first ministers to unite once again with the established Church at the beginning of 1973.

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It was Bernard of Chartres who remarked: 'We are like dwarfs on the shoulders of giants, so that we can see more than they...not by virtue of any sharpness of sight on our part...,but because we are carried high and raised up by their giant size' (*Metalogicon*, Bk III, ch iv, Quoted in Deist, 1984:1).

This thesis is certainly no exception, as I was lifted up, supported, carried, and aided by so many people in so many wonderful and miraculous ways. In the light of this I would like, therefore, to express my deepest appreciation and gratitude:

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And then, to my heavenly Father I give all the honour and glory for giving me the courage, the insight, and the mental and physical strength that I needed to undertake and complete this monumental task.

This thesis is dedicated
to the memory of the late Professor Bongani Mazibuko
who started out as my promoter
but so suddenly and sadly passed away
at the beginning of June 1997

PERSONAL DECLARATION

I, Antonio Pantalone (ID. 590327 5142 008) (University of Durban Westville student number 9505283), solemnly declare that this thesis is entirely the product of my own initiative and research, and that the necessary acknowledgment has been given to all the sources that I made use of in this task.

Signed.....
Pantalone

Date.....
15 January 1999

INTRODUCTION

1. *Crisis in the Seventh-day Adventist Church*

The Seventh-day Adventist Church was formally organized early in the second half of the nineteenth century, in a predominantly English-speaking environment in the United States of America. From the commencement of its missionary work, the Church promulgated, in compliance with its interpretation of the three angels' messages found in the book of Revelation 14:6-10, its conviction that it had been destined by God to proclaim this final message of judgment to every nation, tribe, tongue and people, before the anticipated second advent of Jesus Christ. In 1874, eleven years after the Church's establishment, John Nevins Andrews, bound for Switzerland, sailed from the shores of America to become the first official Seventh-day Adventist missionary to Europe (*Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, 1990, p.728-729; Knight, 1995:87). By the turn of the century, a quarter of a century later, the Church was able to report the existence of converts to the Seventh-day Adventist faith in almost all of the well-known countries and islands of the world. It can thus be said that by this time the portion of the Church's missionary mandate, namely, to spread its message to all "nations", "tribes" and "peoples", was accomplished with a substantial measure of success.

The solitary remaining component of its missionary mandate concerning "tongues" or "languages" was, however, not, in many largely non-English speaking countries, to be realized with the same degree of success. Because the first missionaries, educators and Bible workers, especially in the early part of the Church's missionary endeavours, were predominantly all English-speaking Americans, most of their initial converts were people who could speak and understand English. It is also understandable how English, because of its predominance in evangelism, church administration and religious literature, came to be so strongly rooted in so many of the countries of the world, including South Africa where the first American Seventh-day Adventist missionaries arrived in July 1887.

Although the first major rift concerning language and culture in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa only erupted in the late 1960s, there is sufficient evidence of severe discontent that arose more than six decades before as a result of the Church's leadership allegedly failing to meet the linguistic and cultural needs of its Dutch-speaking members.

In December 1968, when a group of Afrikaans-speaking Seventh-day Adventist believers in the Transvaal Conference rose up in protest against the Church in South Africa, with the indictment that it had failed, throughout its existence in this country, to cater adequately to their cultural, linguistic and literary needs, they were confronted with the strongest possible opposition. As a result, these Afrikaans believers, separated themselves from the organized Church and formed themselves into an independent Afrikaans conference, which took on the name Die Afrikaanse Konferensie van Sewendedag Adventiste. This new conference was, however, considered to be schismatic and was never acknowledged by the established Seventh-day Adventist Church organization, both in South Africa and abroad, in spite of the continuous dialogue and bitter litigation which followed.

Tension in the Church really intensified when the Afrikaners objected that whereas they had been accused of destroying the unity of the church and were not granted the privilege of having their own Afrikaans language conference, black, coloured and Indian Seventh-day Adventist believers in South Africa had been drawn up into racially separated conferences. Although the Church leaders of the time strongly denied the allegations that there were racial reasons for these conferences being kept apart from the white conferences, there is no question that the effects of the governmental system in vogue in South Africa, in which apartheid was systematised and given biblical and theological support, rubbed off very strongly onto the thinking and subsequently the actions undertaken by many of the leaders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. As a result, for the major part of this century the Seventh-day Adventist Church, along with most of the other Christian denominations in South Africa, imbibed the dehumanizing apartheid philosophy of the government and created their own structures which mirrored the racially motivated political structures of this country thereby preventing the free association of all people in the Church. In this way the Seventh-day Adventist church in South Africa was split into two union conferences with racially separate administrative divisions for the black and white work of the church. The Church's welfare and medical work together with its evangelistic programmes were also run along racial lines while three separated colleges were also established for the training of students from the different race groups.

The Afrikaner schism which lasted for approximately five years, was without question one of the most traumatic and acrimonious occurrences in the history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa. Almost twenty-five years have passed since the demise of the Afrikaanse Konferensie and the Church is once again facing a dilemma of a similar nature, with a very strong likelihood that it could be faced with another major upheaval from some Afrikaans-speaking sections of the denomination, if workable resolutions are not soon found for these problems. In addition to the precarious language situation there are also still many misconceptions and unanswered questions in the Church today with regard to:

The precise reasons for the protest walk-out in December 1968 and why the Afrikaanse Konferensie was subsequently called into existence;

The grounds for the unyielding and virulent opposition of the established Transvaal Conference, whose membership and leadership, was ironically enough, predominantly Afrikaans.

The reasons that led to the decline and sudden demise of the Afrikaanse Konferensie in the early part of 1973.

The reasons why the black, coloured and Indian believers were for so many years separated into their own conferences while the Afrikaners were categorically denied the privilege of an autonomous structure on the grounds of language and culture.

2. *Aims*

Leading on from what has just been stated, this study acquires a fourfold aim, aspiring:

Firstly, to present an overview of the circumstances surrounding the rise of the Afrikaanse Konferensie and also, both in response to its allegations and the subsequent negations by the established Church, to report on an investigation with regard to the position of the Dutch and Afrikaner believers in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa from 1887 until 1968.

Secondly, as the title of this thesis suggests, it goes beyond a mere historical annotation and seeks to highlight the implications of what transpired between the Afrikaanse Konferensie and the established Seventh-day Adventist Church in the light of the present crisis that the Church is experiencing.

Thirdly, and most imperatively, this study goes a step further and seeks to provide avenues and workable solutions for the challenges facing the Church in the multicultural and multilinguistic milieu in which it finds itself.

Fourthly, whereas this study focuses primarily on the experience of Afrikaners in the Seventh-day Adventist Church it also examines this conflict and places it within the era of apartheid during which blacks in the Church were also separated into rigid racially constructed institutions. The most crucial challenge in Seventh-day Adventism in race relations in South Africa is posed by the contradiction between its rhetorical commitment to fellowship without racial barriers, on the one hand, and the racial inequities which are typical of most of its own life as a church, on the other. In the light of the Advent hope of the Church, in view of the message that the Seventh-day Adventist Church preaches, only two choices are possible: either the Church must act quickly and boldly to complete the process of total desegregation at all levels of the Church, or else confess its unreadiness to create an open community and give way to provisional temporary solutions. To do nothing denies humanity as well as the central message of the Church.

3. *Thesis structure*

When I began with the preliminary research on the Afrikaanse Konferensie at the beginning of 1997, I felt very much like a stone cleaner, less concerned with the research and the historical appraisal than with scrubbing off almost thirty years of dirt and discolouration from the facade of a silent and forbidding monument, uncertain whether the uncovered monument would prove to be worth the effort. Matters were made all the more difficult by the negative perceptions that existed among many people in the Church. Because of the bitterness and rancour that had arisen at the time of the controversy, and the fear that prevailed that it would open old wounds that had perhaps not yet properly healed, I could well understand why so many felt this way.

Notwithstanding these feelings and perceptions of unease that still existed, this project had been a personal goal that I had harboured for several years before 1997. After valuable guidance and assistance from numerous avenues, and after many months of contemplation, the following theoretical framework emerged.

Chapter One

In an endeavour to contextualize this study, and also to accentuate the conviction, that the conflict in the Seventh-day Adventist Church had its roots in a struggle that had taken place on a much wider scale, this chapter deals with Afrikanerdom's historical background. Without a measure of empathy and a knowledge of a people's history, results remain one-sided and superficial. This chapter focuses very specifically on the emergence and development of Afrikaner consciousness, the evolvement of a peculiar identity and language, and the ensuing struggles that the Afrikaner people experienced against foreign imperialism and the policies of anglicization of Charles Somerset and Alfred Milner. By underscoring the volatile and inauspicious situation that had arisen between Afrikaners and the British by the latter half of the nineteenth century, this first chapter highlights the powerful Afrikaner cultural and linguistic awakening that took place and simultaneously sets the stage for the arrival of the first Seventh-day Adventist missionaries to South Africa in July 1887.

Chapter Two

The protest by the Afrikaner believers in 1968, the subsequent formation of the Afrikaanse Konferensie, and the established Church's refutation of its proposed aims and objectives, provides an appropriate point of departure for an evaluative historical study, on the position, of both the Dutch Seventh-day Adventist believers at the turn of the century, and later also of the Afrikaners in the predominantly English-speaking, American orientated Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa from 1887 until 1968.

Chapter Three

The established Church's dissenting response to the formation of the Afrikaanse Konferensie, its refusal to recognize any of their objections or acknowledge this new conference as a part of the Church organization in South Africa, is the express focus of chapter three. The Church's response and the actions taken against the Afrikaanse Konferensie reveals a strong build up into two separate factions, many years before the protest walk-out in December 1968 and the establishment of the Afrikaanse Konferensie. This third chapter also stresses the numerous anomalies that existed in the Church at the time of the conflict: Firstly, it becomes very clear that, while there is no question that there were feelings of tremendous unhappiness and bitterness about the way that Afrikaners and their language had been handled in the Seventh-day Adventist Church that this was in fact *not* what initiated the protest and the walk-out in December 1968; Secondly, the established Church's refusal to acknowledge the Afrikaanse Konferensie was based partly upon the fact that this new organization had destroyed its unity, which it had so zealously guarded. The Church's response, however, revealed how racially and

culturally disunited the Seventh-day Adventist Church in this country really was. On every imaginable level the Seventh-day Adventist Church appeared to embody the Verwoerdian philosophy of 'separate development' with black, coloured, and Indian believers, working, worshipping and studying in racially separated institutions. The spirit of apartheid, of segregation, of discrimination and alienation knew no bounds in the Church. Paradoxically, when the leaders of the Church were confronted with the issue of why the Afrikaners were not granted their own conference, they denied that racism motivated the reasons for the existing separations; Thirdly, the Church's response to the crisis revealed the uncontextual and uncritical manner in which the Church's leaders often employed both the Bible and the writings of Ellen.G White in order to try and justify the actions they took against the Afrikaanse Konferensie; Fourthly, in spite of the Church's adamant assertions that Afrikaans had never been marginalized, that the needs of Afrikaners had always been taken into consideration, and the very rigid front that it erected against the charges made by the Afrikaanse Konferensie, the frantic actions undertaken by the Church after the walk-out to rectify the situation, only served to highlight the fact that there had, indeed, been very serious problems in the Church; And then fifthly, in spite of the numerous dialogues and deliberations that ensued between the Afrikaanse Konferensie and the established Church throughout the years of this conflict for the establishment of a unilingual Afrikaans conference, this was never allowed to become a reality, even though the Seventh-day Adventist Church had supported and endorsed unilingual conferences in its work in other parts of the world.

Chapter Four

The penultimate chapter of this study, reveals how the Afrikaanse Konferensie geared itself up to meet the needs of the Afrikaans-speaking communities and rapidly expanded in spite of the strong opposition and antagonism that was directed against it by the established Church. However, notwithstanding the powerful endeavours that the Afrikaanse Konferensie undertook to try and attain its objectives, its rapid membership and institutional growth, and its numerous endeavours to evangelise the Afrikaans-speaking people, it experienced a dramatic collapse in the early part of 1973, with most of its members eventually gravitating back into the ranks of the established Church.

Chapter Five

Since the demise of the Afrikaanse Konferensie in 1974 there has not been another group that has again protested in a similar fashion against the established Church in South Africa. A scrutiny of the present state of the Church though, reveals serious problems with ominous rumblings coming from its strongly Afrikaans-speaking segments because of the disappearance of Afrikaans at some of the Church's institutions, and the claims that Afrikaans is once again being marginalized and compromised at the expense of other language and cultural groups in the Church. It becomes apparent, once note is taken, not only of these internal factors, but also of the contentions that have recently surfaced on a national level where many Afrikaners are fighting for the survival of their culture and language, that every possibility exists, if matters are not soon rectified, that the Church could very easily find itself facing circumstances similar to those that occurred in the late 1960's.

After having analyzed the contentions that have arisen between the Afrikaans believers and the Church, the source of the problem appears to lie primarily in the Church's ecclesiology, where a gulf has emanated in the interrelationship that should exist between its interpretation of unity, and its mission in a multicultural context. If the Church is to become serious about gaining positive resolutions for these challenges, its leaders must inevitably begin to ask, what it means to be "church" in the social context in which the Church finds itself, and what precisely is its mission in the pluralistic, multicultural situation in which it is located. Judging from the nature of the dilemma that the Church in South Africa still faces today it appears that these are questions to which it has not yet provided satisfactory answers. After assessing both the past and present modes of operation of the Church in this country, it is as equally important for it to critically examine certain facets of its ecclesiology and the missionary strategies it employs in this country. Its outmoded organizational structures also needs to be radically reconstructed so that they can more readily and effectively cater for the various cultural, ethnic and linguistic needs of all peoples of this country. When faced with crucial issues of this nature, one of two courses can be adopted - either the "academic" or the "pastoral" route. By implication the former is a process by which the Church would examine and study the problems that it faces, in a detached, fairly abstract manner, dissecting its elements merely for the purpose of gaining a better comprehension of the situation. The latter avenue, however, examines the reality of the Church's circumstances from an involved, historically committed stance, discerning the situation for the express purpose of intended change. Considering the present predicament of the Church the only choice that it has, if it is going to become serious about overcoming these dilemmas, is to choose the pastoral route. Consequently, in order to provide an adequate foundation for the examination and implementation of this pastoral avenue, chapter five has utilized the "circle of praxis" which paves the way, through a four-fold process, to try and establish that fundamental link that needs to exist between the Church's interpretation of unity and its mission in the multicultural context. True church unity though, does not consist only of an outer dimension whereby unity and mission are cosmetically combined, but also involves a deeper internal dimension, where the striving for unity becomes an authentic witness to the gospel of Christ, while the mission of the Church simultaneously embodies the obligation to cater for the cultural and linguistic needs of all people. It is this essential integration of unity and mission that has yet to take place in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, where both mission and unity are to be fostered as complementary aspects of its total vocation and which would ultimately open the way for the Church to complete its mission to the world, unhindered either by the polarizing and divisive effect of religious and cultural diversity, or by any misguided attempts to impose uniformity.

4. Sources

I would like to believe that I chose precisely the right time to begin working on this project. Had I started ten years earlier, the emotional feelings, the memories, and the bitterness would have still been too close to the surface and the wounds that had opened, still too raw. Had I started ten years later, many of those who had been personally involved in the conflict might have passed off the scene.

When I commenced the research for this project, because no one had yet documented the history of the Afrikaanse Konferensie and knowing that the relevant information might have been already destroyed, I was understandably filled with anxiety as I was not really sure how much material I would find. The results, however, were to say the least, astounding. In January 1997 I was directed to a room in the basement of the old offices of the Transvaal Conference in Turffontein with a remark, "I hope you find what you are looking for". After some hours of searching, however, all the Transvaal Conference correspondence together with the Board Meeting minutes dealing with the Afrikaanse Konferensie, amounting to some 2000 pages, emerged intact. To this treasure trove was added: The minutes and correspondence of the Afrikaanse Konferensie, from the private papers and documents of the late DF du Plessis, which had been donated to the Ellen G White Research Centre in Somerset West; The minutes and the correspondence of the Trans-African Division: The minutes of the South African Union Conference; And the minutes of the Oranje-Natal Conference and the Cape Conference, all of which provided an in-depth insight into the deliberations between the established Church and the Afrikaanse Konferensie; Other papers which emerged, included, court orders, conference constitutions, typescripts of debates that had taken place and letters written from both an official and personal perspective during the conflict. All this valuable information was supplemented by numerous personal interviews that I undertook and the literary responses to my queries on the Afrikaanse Konferensie from persons around the country who had either been engaged in the conflict or who had known family or friends who had been involved.

Although, I made use of the histories of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa, written by LF Swanepoel, Ron Thompson, Paul Coetzer, Isak van Zyl and Virgil Robinson, this research endeavour, save for the first chapter, was almost completely dependent upon the primary source material that had become available. All the minutes of meetings, annual reports and correspondence of the Afrikaanse Konferensie were written in Afrikaans. Because it was thought very essential to include the primary sources wherever possible, the writing of this thesis required a considerable amount of translation into English. Wherever the original Afrikaans source has been included, the translation follows immediately after it. All the material accumulated in this research endeavour which is in my personal possession will be transferred to the Heritage Room at Helderberg College upon completion of this thesis.

My only regret in this study project has been the paucity of primary source material with regard to the Seventh-day Adventist Church's work amongst the black people of this country. This has led to what I consider to be the greatest drawback in this thesis, namely that the importance of the black work appears to have been bypassed. This was not intentional and to all those who enquire as to why I have not made greater reference to the history of black Seventh-day Adventists I sincerely apologise.

I make use of inclusive language throughout this study. Where sexist language does occur in quotations, I have left the language unchanged as the continual pointing out of this will become both boring and counterproductive.

CHAPTER ONE
THE EVOLVEMENT OF AFRIKANER CONSCIOUSNESS
1652-1914

I. THE INITIAL STIRRING OF A PEOPLE WITH A DISTINCTIVE IDENTITY

A. *Early aspirations for independence*

The approximately ninety, German and Dutch-speaking people who arrived with Jan van Riebeeck at the Cape of Good Hope in 1652 were all servants of the *Vereenighde Oost-Indische Compagnie* (Alton Templin, 1984:18; Elphick & Giliomee, 1989:67). From the commencement of this venture it is clear from almost every historical account that the VOC had no intentions to initiate a permanent settlement on the southern part of the African continent (Hinchliff, 1968:15; De Klerk, 1975:4; Swart, 1980:107; Elphick & Giliomee, 1989:530; Davenport, 1991:19). The Dutch authorities were solely concerned with the establishment of a refreshment station, "a cabbage patch at the tip of Africa" (De Kiewiet, 1972:4) where ships could obtain clean water, beef, fresh fruit and vegetables (Muller, 1973:17) and where sailors and passengers could find rest and recuperation if they were unable to continue their sea journey (Elphick & Giliomee, 1989:243; Denoon & Nyeko, 1992:15).

From the very beginning of this enterprise, life was very difficult for the settlers (Spilhaus, 1966:1; De Klerk, 1975:7-8; Elphick & Giliomee, 1989:10-11; Hofmeyr et al, 1994:235). By the middle of 1655, however, prospects were beginning, according to the entries in Van Riebeeck's daily journal, to look much more auspicious. At this time their crops appeared to be thriving and their livestock had also increased quite substantially. However, because some of the "gentle-folk" in their midst were finding it too embarrassing, and others either too lazy or unable to look after pigs and the like, it became necessary to employ *vrij burghers* (freemen) to till the land and raise livestock for the good of the VOC and its employees (Thom, 1952:379; Spilhaus, 1966:3; Alton Templin, 1984:18).

Two years later in April 1657, after a period of experimentation, during which the Company still failed to produce both the quality and the quantity of food needed by the passing fleets (Elphick & Giliomee, 1989:244), nine *vrij burghers*, who remained subjects, but no longer employees of the VOC, received their *vrijbrieven* (papers of freedom) from Rijkloff von Goens, Councillor Extraordinary of the Netherlands and were settled on their own farms in the Liesbeeck Valley (Spilhaus, 1966:2; De Klerk, 1975:8; Regehr, 1979:110). These settlers forming the first nucleus of a permanent white South African population (De Kiewiet, 1972:5; Davenport, 1991:19; Denoon & Nyeko, 1992:20; Elphick & Giliomee, 1989:66; Sparks, 1990:38). Even though a great deal of controversial debate has arisen among scholars over issues and dates such as these in the history of Afrikanerdom (see Chapter 5 pp.269-272), a number of early South African historians have considered 1657 to be a significant date and have ascribed it as the birth year of the Afrikaner nation (Leipoldt, 1938:166; Patterson, 1957:3; Van den Heever & De Pienaar, 1945:42; Van Jaarsveld, 1959:9).

The settlers of the North American colonies had been at liberty to seek the best available markets and had been given the option to sell their produce to the highest bidders. The *vrij burghers* at the Cape, however, found themselves at loggerheads with the economic concerns of the VOC who sought, by becoming the sole buyers of their produce at a fixed price, to monopolize the overseas trade (Spilhaus, 1966:8-12; Davenport, 1978:21; Denoon & Nyeko, 1992:20-21). Reporting on the condition of the settlement at the Cape at that time, Commissioner Verberg recorded: "The Dutch colonists at the Cape of Good Hope bear the name freemen, but they are so trammelled and confined that the absence of any freedom is but too manifest" (Streak, 1974:8). Freedom was, however, a state for which the colonists hankered more and more.

As a result, a year later in December 1658, a number of these freemen, whom Boyce identifies as the earliest white anti-colonialists in South Africa (Boyce, 1967:94), came to believe that they were being exploited and they presented a petition to the Company officials at the Cape (Leipoldt, 1938:175; Spilhaus, 1966:21; Kotzé, 1968:21; Alton Templin, 1984:19; Van der Merwe, 1995:2-3).

This petition had nineteen stipulations, dealing with their rights and with whom they believed they could trade, the poor quality of the animals that they were receiving from the Company, price regulations and the protection they were seeking from the marauding Khoikhoi tribes (Thom, 1954:390-400). According to Alton Templin, the tone of this document, most especially reflected in the eleventh stipulation which stated that "they were being oppressed instead of being helped", already reflected an embryonic group-consciousness and the first sparks of a fierce spirit of independence (Alton Templin, 1984:19). This notion is augmented in the words "de beschermers van ons land" in the fourteenth stipulation of the petition in which there was an unmistakable identification between these early colonists and the country which they already considered to be their new homeland (Thom, 1954:396).

Van Riebeeck's reply to the petitioners, although he acknowledged that they had some legitimate grievances, was terse and to the point (Spilhaus, 1966:21; Alton Templin, 1984:19). He stated that they had become *vrij burghers* on conditions stipulated by the VOC, that they were to submit to all the existing rules made by the local authorities, that they were to till the ground for the VOC as they had been instructed, or they would forfeit both their ground and their freedom (Thom, 1954:402; Spilhaus, 1966:22-23; Alton Templin, 1984:19).

This particular issue appears to have been resolved amicably, with the fourteen free burghers who had presented the petition agreeing to conform to the existing rules and regulations laid down by the VOC (Leipoldt, 1938:177; Spilhaus, 1966:22). The disharmonious relationship that had been generated between the free burghers and the Company would, however, greatly intensify in the years that were to follow (Regehr, 1979:112; Alton Templin, 1984:19; Elphick & Giliomee, 1989:289-290; Van der Merwe, 1995:3-5).

The VOC had never intended to extend the boundaries of the Cape Colony into the interior of Southern Africa (Davenport, 1978:18). In 1679, however, it reached a turning point in this commercial venture (Alton Templin, 1984:23) when it appointed Simon van der Stel as commander at the Cape (Boyce, 1967:96; Davenport, 1991:19; Elphick & Giliomee, 1989:73). Within less than a decade, under Van der Stel's zeal and competent administration, several new towns were established on the expanding frontier (Alton Templin, 1984:23). By 1688, the number of free burghers, settled on their own farms, with their own burgher councils, their own schools and churches and own militia had already grown from nine to over six-hundred (Boyce, 1967:96; De Kiewiet, 1972:6).

By this time, just more than thirty years after the initial landing by Van Riebeeck, it was already possible to establish a group identity between the Company's officials, the town dweller and the farmers. The latter soon becoming known as "boers" (a name applied originally to the planters) because of their attachment to the soil and the agricultural livelihood they practised (Kotzé, 1968:21; Meintjes, 1973:3).

Simultaneous, with the outward migration of the colonists and establishment of independent settlements, identification with the Netherlands was also rapidly weakening (Swart, 1980:107). As time went on, many of these burghers no longer considered themselves to be citizens of Europe, but of Africa (Van den Heever & De Pienaar, 1950:4). In the words of Van Jaarsveld, those who in the years to follow would become the progenitors of the Afrikaners had by this time already begun "to exhibit the ingrained traits of independence, dexterity, stubbornness, resoluteness against force, the love of freedom and the veld with its wide open spaces" (Van Jaarsveld, 1961:11).

Events taking place in Europe were, however, not destined to leave Southern Africa untouched. The revoking of the Edict of Nantes in 1685 by Louis XIV, resulted in the arrival of several hundred French Huguenots between 1688 and 1690 (Doyle, 1900:1; Fisher, 1969:14; Hinchliff, 1968:20; Van den Heever & De Pienaar, 1945:46). These settlers whom Fisher calls "the pilgrim fathers of the south" (Fisher, 1969:14) had come to South Africa to escape religious persecution. They, however, soon encountered adversities in other forms.

Because Simon van der Stel did not want to see a "Quebec at the Cape" (Patterson, 1957:51) the Huguenots were dispersed among the Dutch-speaking population groups throughout the regions of what is today the Western Cape, and were compelled to learn the Dutch language. They were also prevented by law to form their own religious congregations and schools (Boyce, 1967:97; Hinchliff, 1968:24).

As a result of these legislations and restrictions, within three generations the French language disappeared (Regehr, 1979:116; Alton Templin, 1984:23; Davenport, 1991:20) and this community which at that time was paradoxically larger than the Dutch population at the Cape, was absorbed into the existing population groups (Davenport, 1978:19; Muller, 1973:33; Patterson, 1957:4; Van den Heever & De Pienaar, 1950:64).

Besides the arrival of the French Huguenots, there was also an extensive influx of German-speaking people (Van Jaarsveld, 1961:10). As in the case of the Huguenots, although the assimilation was not so smooth because the Lutheran faith clashed with the Dutch Reformed faith, the Germans also eventually merged into the existing population groups at the Cape (Klaus Nürnberger in Prozesky, 1990:152)

Their absorption into these population groups and the disappearance of the French language, however, does not mean that the Huguenots who were adherents, like the Dutch, to the Reformed faith (Alton Templin, 1984:23) did not have any lasting influence on the existing social structures. On the contrary, Sheila Patterson makes it quite clear that two traits in particular, namely their stern Calvinistic fanaticism and their austere rejection of Europe and its modes of life, very soon became ingrained in the very nature of the emergent Afrikaner people (Patterson, 1957:4).

As this chapter strives to gain a better comprehension of the emerging Afrikaner identity, it is important to also reflect on the acrimonious, territorial, trade, and economic dispute that arose between the free burghers and the allegedly corrupt, autocratic Wilhelmus Adrianus van der Stel who took over as governor of the Cape from his father in 1699 (Van Jaarsveld, 1978:7; Alton Templin, 1984:24). Although Wilhelmus, was just as enterprising as his father (Muller, 1973:33; Elphick & Giliomee, 1989:303) it appears that he strongly resented, because of his own personal desire for profit, the competition from the free burghers in the fresh produce market and in the cattle trade with the Khoikhoi (Fisher, 1969:23; De Klerk, 1975:10-11; Elphick & Giliomee, 1989:305).

As a result of the complaints that he had abused his official position for the sake of private profit and the litigation that followed, the VOC summoned Van der Stel back to Holland (Muller, 1973:37; De Klerk, 1975:11; Davenport, 1978:24; Alton Templin, 1984:25). Davenport adds another perspective to the conflict with Van der Stel, when he states that the litigation could have been motivated by business rivalry by a wealthy burgher group who resented the farming success of Van der Stel rather than any desire to maintain a public principle (Davenport, 1991:26). Du Toit and Giliomee concur with this assessment and also maintain that these protests amounted to little more than a defence of group interest by a small number of wealthy burghers and were devoid of any articulated political ideology" (In Davenport, 1991:32-33).

The above-mentioned conflict between Van der Stel and the free burghers, whatever the reasons, does appear to have had some important consequences: It served, as an additional factor to knit together the common interests of the free burghers (Van Jaarsveld, 1961:10) which by that time included the French Huguenots and the German emigrants (Alton Templin, 1984:32). This clash is also indicative for in it exists, if the accusations against Van der Stel were justified, the first aggressive resistance by people in South Africa with a growing unified inclination, bold enough to stand up in solidarity to defend their civil liberties and economic interests against a corrupt and manipulative government.

In support of what has just been stated, other writers have asserted that the confrontation with Van der Stel brought to the fore, a people:

With a growing identity who yearned for greater autonomy, who sought after self-government, and who found it humiliating that overseas officials who were not as acquainted with the local situation as they were placed in positions of authority over them (Van den Heever & De Pienaar, 1950:8).

Note has already been taken of the expansion of the settlement into the interior of South Africa during the time of Simon van der Stel. However, in order to try and preserve its trade monopolies and to keep its administration cost-effective, the Company was still doing its best, even up to the mid-eighteenth century, to keep the boundaries of the settlement within reasonable limits (Alton Templin, 1984:25). This, however, became a restriction which the Company could never hope to control (Boyce, 1967:99; Fisher, 1969:24; De Klerk, 1975:16).

The progression from life in a small-farming community in the proximities of the Cape, to the rigorous life of trek-farmers in the dangerous and hostile interior of Southern Africa is indicative and confirms that many burghers had by the middle of the eighteenth century, finally cast off the customs of their Dutch, French and German forefathers and were living in a manner in keeping with the wide open spaces which they had grown to love and call *het vaderland*, (Boyce, 1967:118; Muller, 1973:50; De Kiewiet, 1972:12; Adam & Giliomee, 1979:96-97)).

B. The advent of the Afrikaner

As for the origins of the term "Afrikaner" there are references to be found, as early as the beginning of the 18th century to the "Africaan", "Africaander" and "Africaaner" (Kotzé, 1968:26). The process of becoming Africanized appears to have found its fullest reflection in the term "Afrikaners" by which the colonists at this time had already begun to refer to themselves (De Klerk, 1975:9). The first explicit evidence of its use to describe a person from European descent occurs in a document of 1707 (Van Jaarsveld, 1961:10; Regehr, 1979:116; Davenport, 1991:20). It records that when Hendrik Bibault was sentenced by Johannes Starrenberg the Landdrost of Stellenbosch, (Fisher, 1969:23; Patterson, 1957:23), to be flogged because he had rebelled against the authorities, he cried out:

'k ben een Africaander, al slaat den Land-drost mijn dood, of
al setten hij mijn in den tronk, ik sal nog wil niet stil
swijgen (Quoted in Raubenheimer, 1968:11).

Translation: I am an Afrikaner, even if the Landdrost flogged me to death, or shut me in prison, I will still not be silent (Adam & Giliomee, 1979:97; Swart, 1980:63; Van den Heever & De Pienaar, 1950:64; Van der Merwe, 1975:9).

In their ever continuing tussle for a self-reliant existence and in their desire to shrug off what they regarded to be the "corrupt and intolerable yoke" of the Company (Alton Templin, 1984:25) the burghers with a strongly emerging group-consciousness also fostered the development of a new language that was no longer pure Dutch and which would in the ensuing years become known as "Afrikaans" (Swart, 1980:63; Van der Merwe, 1975:9; De Klerk, 1975:14-15). Mention was made that Van Riebeeck's original crew consisted of both German and Dutch-speaking persons. Just over thirty years later when the Huguenots arrived, the French-speaking element was added to the existing population groups which by that time included the Khoikhoi, Malay, and Portuguese-speaking people (Elphick & Giliomee, 1989:121).

To delineate the precise etymology of Afrikaans is in itself an enormous undertaking and understandably falls outside the parameters of this study. Regarding the precedence that Dutch gained over these other languages, even though the Dutch speakers were in the minority at the Cape, it has been concluded that because the venture at the Cape was launched by a Dutch-speaking commercial company, that it must have dominated the social and cultural way of life and also determined the language to be spoken and written at the settlement (Patterson, 1957:43; Van den Heever & De Pienaar, 1950:64).

To try and establish precisely how and when the changes from Dutch to Afrikaans took place is seemingly so complex and difficult to ascertain, that even specialists in linguistics cannot seem to reach a clear consensus (Van den Heever & De Pienaar, 1947:12). HC Wyld does, however, furnish a springboard for further enlightenment when he states that:

Language cannot be regarded as something that is handed on in a fixed and determined form from one individual, and acquired in precisely the same form by another. It is changed, however inconsiderably, in the very process of transmission, reminted at the outset by the crucible of the new mind into which it passes. Thus we see that the elements of change in language lie in the transmission from one generation to another, and in the essential differences which exist between individuals (Cited in Van den Heever & De Pienaar 1947:13).

By this statement the author appears to be contending that the evolution and development of a language must be regarded as an outflow of the people's ethos in the social and geographical circumstances under which a nation is being developed. The language changes that occurred in South Africa, therefore, and its adaptation and evolution, must have then coincided with the outward migration from the settlement at the Cape where the Dutch language was still being spoken. Although he does not refer specifically to language development, Alton Templin also appears to be in agreement with what has just been mentioned, when he states that it was the external forces of life on the frontier that shaped the direction of cultural changes and solidified the lives of the Afrikaner people (Alton Templin, 1984:29).

By the turn of the eighteenth century, this process of adaptation and change had advanced to such an extent that a distinction could be made between "Kaaps-Hollands" and "Boeren-Hollands" (Van den Heever & De Pienaar, 1950:65). Describing the colonist of that time, the traveller and writer, De Jong remarked, "He is proud of the name 'Afrikaan' and citizen of the Cape he deems a title of honour" (Adam & Giliomee, 1979:98).

The changes and adaptation that took place in the language does not mean that all who had begun to speak Afrikaans had lost their love or respect for Dutch which was still regarded as *Hoog-Hollands* (High Dutch), while the not yet fully developed spoken language was still distinguished as *Plat-Hollands* (Inferior Dutch) (Van den Heever & De Pienaar, 1950:65). It must have also been unthinkable for many, mainly because the Bible was still only available in Dutch (Meintjes, 1973:5), to write in any other language (Patterson, 1957:45). Dutch was furthermore still the language used in the civil and judicial services and other official functions such as church services and public addresses. Notwithstanding the bond that many people still had with Dutch the mother tongue spoken in many homes early in the eighteenth century, and increasingly so, had become Afrikaans (Streak, 1974:31).

Even though there are strong debates between academics concerning the birth and development of the Afrikaner people, this chapter has thus far attempted to trace the rise to prominence of a peculiar people in South Africa with a viable group-consciousness, from the middle of the seventeenth century to the latter half of the eighteenth century, who were using Afrikaans, though not yet fully developed, as their medium of communication.

Patterson contends that under the administration of the VOC there had been no overt dissension between the language of officialdom and the emerging spoken language of the Afrikaners (Patterson, 1957:50). It would, however, not be very long after the arrival of the British at the Cape in 1795 before the Afrikaner people would be faced with a more resolute challenge and had to vigorously assert the claims of their new medium of communication, firstly against the English language and in later years against the Dutch language as well (Munger, 1979:19; Van den Berghe, 1965:26; Van den Heever & De Pienaar, 1945:58).

I. AFRIKANER IDENTITY UNDER THREAT (1795-1877)

A. Britain's policy of anglicization

In the concluding decades of the eighteenth century decisive occurrences taking place in Europe were to once again cast their ominous shadows over the isolated southern tip of Africa (Boyce, 1967:119; Muller, 1973:83). Bearing in mind that this chapter is focused on tracing the evolvement of Afrikaner consciousness, it does not expand in detail on the specifics of this particular period of South African history and will be limited solely to examining the ensuing struggles for hegemony that arose throughout the nineteenth century between the Afrikaner and the English.

In 1795 when Republican France invaded the Netherlands, a powerful British fleet was dispatched to the Cape before it could fall into the hands of the French navy (IK 1959:43; Muller, 1973:81; Denoon & Nyeko, 1992:24). The occupation of the Cape Colony by Great Britain, which would profoundly affect the people and the future history of this country (Muller, 1973:97; Munger, 1979:19), occurred over a period of twenty years and can be clearly delineated into three distinct phases (Davenport, 1978:29; Elphick & Giliomee, 1989:324).

The first occupation, done at the request of Prince William V who had fled to England after the Netherlands had been invaded, lasted from 1795 until 1803 (Patterson, 1957:31; Alton Templin, 1984:70). The year 1795 is also significant in that it signalled the eventual demise of ailing Dutch control at the Cape after 143 years (Cory, 1921:58; Alton Templin, 1984:70; Magubane, 1996:164) of what has been regarded as largely ineffectual rule (Scholtz, 1964:3; Muller, 1973:82;97; Nathan, 1937:4). This first eight-year period was largely one of conciliation, one in which Britain trod very diplomatically, clearly very anxious not to stir up any dissent or dissatisfaction between the inhabitants of Southern Africa (Scholtz, 1964:4; Hinchliff, 1968:5; Muller, 1973:85; Du Toit & Giliomee, 1983:12; Davenport, 1991:36). During this period, property was guaranteed, and endeavours were made to put a stop to corruption and trade monopolies (De Kiewiet, 1972:36; Du Toit & Giliomee, 1983:23). The Dutch Reformed faith was allowed to continue as the official religion of the settlement and the Roman-Dutch judicial system also remained unchanged (Hinchliff, 1968:23; Muller, 1973:85-86).

By the terms of the peace treaty of Amiens in 1803, which brought a brief respite in the Napoleonic wars, the Cape was ceded back to the Batavian Republic (Boyce, 1967:119; Alton Templin, 1984:70). Batavian jurisdiction was destined to be of fleeting duration for when hostilities flared up again in Europe in 1806, Britain occupied the Cape for a second time (De Kiewiet, 1972:34). This time, even though the Cape Colony would only formally become a British Colony in 1814 (Doyle, 1900:1; Boyce, 1967:120), there were definite intentions and indications of permanent possession (Scholtz, 1964:5; Davenport, 1991:37; Elphick & Giliomee, 1989:325).

Giliomee writes that by this time, although it had not yet fully emerged, that all the prerequisites for an awakening national consciousness namely a distinctive spoken language, a single religious faith, a common historical heritage and the consciousness of belonging to a separate ethnic group, were already all present in the existence and experience of the Afrikaner people (Giliomee, 1997:98).

Up to the time of the second occupation, British presence appears to have had little effect on the concept the vast majority of colonists at the Cape held of themselves (Elphick & Giliomee, 1989:325). In the years following 1806, however, tensions soon reached a boiling point (Ohlson, 1994:23). This occurred mainly due to what was perceived by the colonists to be a rigid, autocratic, intolerant British rule, and because of the increasing amount of British settlers promulgating an unfamiliar worldview, culture, language and religious faith (Nathan, 1937:3; Van den Heever & De Pienaar, 1945:59; Muller, 1973:98; Davenport, 1978:30; Zietsman, 1992:3).

Allister Sparks writes that, whereas the Dutch, French and German settlers had quite rapidly left Europe behind them, the English had brought Europe with all its ways and customs to Southern Africa (Sparks, 1990:46). As early as 1811, in a concerted attempt to rapidly bring the Cape Colony into line with British ways of thinking, John Cradock the Governor at the time, thought it expedient to introduce to South Africa, the same laws, the same principles and the same institutions as that of the parent state (Muller, 1973:100; Scholtz, 1964:6).

Notwithstanding the fact that those who considered Britain to be their parent state were still very much in the minority at the Cape and that Britain had taken possession of an almost entirely Dutch-speaking colony (De Kiewiet, 1972:38), with the Dutch population outnumbering the English 8 to 1 (Patterson, 1957:43), a process of anglicization was set in motion shortly after Cradock's resolution of 1811 (Davenport, 1991:38). In a letter written in December 1812, Cradock sent the following instructions to FE Tarr the rector of the Latin School in Cape Town:

Promote and establish the cultivation of the English language to the greatest extent among your pupils of the highest rank, as the foundation upon which they will in their future life best make their way (Scholtz, 1964:6-7).

One year later, in 1813, while the Cape was still under Cradock's governorship, a decree was issued making "a perfect knowledge of the English language indispensable" for admittance into the civil service (Scholtz, 1964:7). Legislation was also passed that all the official correspondence of the Colony would be done in English (Muller, 1973:104-105). It appears that the above-mentioned legislations were strictly adhered to, for in the space of only a single decade, the entire administrative system at the Cape had been comprehensively anglicized (Scholtz, 1964:7).

This strategy was to have serious repercussions, leading to the rapid anglicization of many of the Dutch citizens who lived at the Cape (Giliomee, 1997:98). In contrast, however, those living in the outlying areas, would not have been affected so drastically by the linguistic implementations at the Cape. What it did do in time, though, was that it increased the breach and resentment that had arisen between themselves and those living at the Cape, and continued to accentuate the traits that had become part and parcel of the migrant, seminomadic lifestyles they were leading (Sparks, 1990:43). This process of anglicization was to not only become another aspect of emerging Afrikaner consciousness but also led to the continued solidification of the Afrikaans language (Alton Templin, 1984:82).

It would, however, only be after Lord Charles Somerset's assumption of authority as governor of the Colony in 1814 and the permanent ceding of the Cape Colony to Britain, that the policy of anglicization in South Africa would reach a zenith (Streak, 1974:54; Van den Heever & De Pienaar, 1950:66; Zietsman, 1992:3).

Goulburn, the parliamentary Under-Secretary for the colonies, had stated in a speech in the House of Commons in 1816, that the introduction of English laws and principles had to be carried out in such a manner that the colonized people would take no exception (Muller, 1973:102). Notwithstanding this declaration, a little more than a decade later, as a result of both Cradock and Somerset's attempts to replace Dutch with English in just about every sphere of social and cultural life at Cape Colony (De Klerk, 1975:32; Harrison, 1987:48; Davenport, 1978:31), the very opposite had taken place in South Africa (Swart, 1980:197).

At this time, Afrikaans and Dutch people were replaced in position of central government by those who spoke English (Kotzé, 1969:31). Semi-representative government bodies such as the *Hof van Landdrost en Heemraden* and the *Raad der Gemeente*, institutions trusted and valued by the Dutch (Cory, 1921:339), were abolished and English-speaking magistrates and town trustees were established in their places (Van der Merwe, 1975:11). By 1827 not only had the face of Southern Africa totally changed but also much apprehension and resentment had arisen amongst many of the colonists (Muller, 1973:109). Frederick Courtney Selous the famous hunter and explorer summed up the situation when he wrote that many people of that time:

Hated the British government with a bitterness than can only be understood by those who know the cruel, mean and unmanly policy pursued by many of the Cape Colonial Governors towards the boers (Cited in Nathan, 1937:4-5).

The above linguistic restraints and implementations, however, did not lead to the demise of Dutch or Afrikaans and, along with numerous other grievances, was a contributing factor for the mass migration of thousands of frontier farmers beyond the boundaries of the Cape Colony into the unknown interior of Southern Africa (Meintjes, 1973:1; Ohlson, 1994:25).

B. *The Great Trek*

A perusal of South African historical literature reveals that many historians are still divided in their estimation of the Great Trek and the precise reasons why it took place (Muller, 1973:125-127; Smith, 1988:65; Leach, 1989:8-11; Williams, 1997:77). It has been generally understood, and taught for generations in South African schools, that the Great Trek was initiated when the political, social and religious vexations of the colonists had culminated to such an extent that they felt they had no other option but to sever their ties completely with the "intolerable" situation at the Cape Colony (Cory, 1921:256; Davenport, 1978:40; Alton Templin, 1984:99; Van den Heever & De Pienaar, 1945:60; De Klerk, 1975:27; Ohlson, 1994:25). In his book, *The Making of a Racist State*, Bernard Magubane states that the root causes for the Great Trek was a "combination of land hunger, dislike of British rule and anger at the abolition of slavery" (Magubane, 1996:165).

Although Piet Retief was not part of the initial group of trekkers who left the colony, the above-mentioned sentiment of exasperation is echoed in the first paragraph of his Manifesto which was published in the *Grahamstown Journal* in February 1837. Part of his complaint read as follows:

We despair of saving the colony from those evils which threaten it by the turbulent and dishonest conduct of vagrants, who are allowed to infest the country in every part; nor do we see any prospect of peace or happiness for our children in a country thus distracted by internal commotions (Nathan, 1937:17; Van den Heever & De Pienaar, 1945:60; De Klerk, 1975:23; Williams, 1997:77).

While a myriad of other causes has been suggested for the Great Trek besides the alleged animosity that had arisen between the British and the colonists (Munger, 1979:19; Denoon & Nyeko, 1992:63-66) it is necessary to also examine the powerful convictions that emerged of an own nationality or ethnicity and the effect that this had so that so many people left the Cape Colony. After Britain's acquisition of the Cape, there were many people who felt constrained to abandon their language, customs and heritage for English cultural forms and lifestyles. David Harrison states that many even aspired to Oxbridge accents and English manners (Harrison, 1987:48). As a result many indigenous families at the Cape did become anglicized, either because they were employed in the English speaking public service or as a result of their social dealings with the British section of the population (Muller, 1973:154; Scholtz, 1964:27). Describing this segment of the population Denoon & Nyeko record that:

Cape Town in the 1800's was a prosperous little town inhabited by well-to-do administrators and merchants in the meat trade... its citizens took pride in their sophistication and they were inclined to sneer at the trekboers and their servants who brought herds of cattle and sheep from the countryside, unfashionably dressed, stumbling over the niceties of the Dutch language and entirely ignorant of the English language...they preferred to see themselves as part of a modern and highly civilized metropolitan community (Denoon & Nyeko, 1992:56).

There were on the other hand, other who declined to emulate the above-mentioned pattern of life. As opposed to those who lived at the Cape, those who had adopted a pastoralist lifestyle led an existence that was by this time decidedly different to that of their western European ancestors. Because they herded their animals over great distances, most of them lived in roughly constructed houses, and did not emulate the fashionable style of clothing in evidence at the Cape. Educational skills were often also absent and because of the hostile environment they lived in, greater emphasis was placed upon military skills in order to protect their families and their possessions.

Until the arrival of the British, people in this country had devised their own laws and implemented them through locally elected leaders (Denoon & Nyeko, 1992:64). It would not take very long before the administration and the colonists began to cross swords because of the less than welcome political controls (Ohlson, 1994:25). Thus over a period of three years from about 1835 to 1838 as many as ten thousand colonists (Patterson, 1957:21) who harboured feelings of resentment against the English, moved away permanently beyond the confines of the colony into the unknown interior of the country to seek a another homeland and self-determination (Van den Heever & De Pienaar, 1945:61; Kotzé, 1968:75; Prozesky, 1990:152).

The Great Trek has been considered by many historians to be the starting point, not only of anti-British feelings (Van Jaarsveld, 1978:11-12) and the first massive revolt of Afrikanerdom (De Klerk, 1975:27) but also the start of nineteenth-century Afrikaner national consciousness (Van den Berghe, 1965:28) of which the continued solidifying of the Afrikaans language was a direct product (Alton Templin, 1984:82; Van den Berghe, 1965:101). Van Jaarsveld, fortifies what has just been stated when he adds that the term "volk" had its inception in the Great Trek (Van Jaarsveld, 1978:11) while Walker describes the Great Trek as "the central event in the history of European man in Southern Africa" (Quoted in Muller, 1973:124).

Even though many historians have repudiated the significance that has been attached to the Great Trek, it has undoubtedly held a paramount place in the hearts of many Afrikaners most especially since the middle half of this century (Davenport, 1978:40). Writing on the euphoria that arose in 1938 at the centenary celebrations of the Great Trek, David Harrison records:

At every Afrikaner shrine the pilgrims stopped to pay homage: at Slagters Nek, where the British publicly hanged five Afrikaners for treason; at the grave of Jopie Fourie, cut down by Smuts' firing squad; at the memorial of the seventy burghers murdered by Dingane; at the grave of Sarel Cilliers who had erected the beacon of the first covenant between God and the People...Pride in the Afrikaner past swelled in every chest as again and again at every sermon and speech the crowd sang the new Afrikaans anthem...it was indescribable, woman would come up to the axles of the wagons and smear the grease off with their kappies or their skirts, or with their handkerchiefs and put it on their faces. Others came and kissed the wheels, the steel bands of the wheels, until they were shining. They would fall on their knees and thank God for the Ossewatrek (Harrison, 1987:106-107).

As this chapter proceeds to the following section, namely, the influential role that the Bible and Calvinistic theology played in the continued consolidation of Afrikaner nationalism, sight must not be lost of the fact that the trekboers were direct descendants of the proud nation of Holland who still evaluated their history with deep theological assumptions (Sparks, 1990:24-26). Without some insight into the above motif, the total development of both the Afrikaner's culture and Afrikaner nationalism will not be adequately understood (Raubenheimer, 1968:37; Alton Templin, 1984:6).

C. Calvinistic theology and Afrikaner nationalism

In the secluded and often very hostile lifestyle that the voortrekkers led, such great distances from the settlement, it can be appreciated why they did not have many refinements. The synod of the DRC at the Cape Colony had officially opposed the trek (Alton Templin, 1984:101) branding it a "foolish idea" (Meiring in Sundermeier, 1975:57) and "a venture without Moses" (Patterson, 1957:182). No ministers had therefore been permitted to accompany the voortrekkers (Hinchliff, 1968:34; Alton Templin, 1984:101).

Klaus Nürnberger asserts, however, that it was their religious persuasions which developed their hardiness and prevented their degeneration (Klaus Nürenberger, in Prozesky, 1990:149). While it is true that many of the trekkers were not very well educated (Alton Templin, 1984:7,35) many of them could at least read and understand their Dutch family Bibles - which they carried with them and which usually formed the nucleus of boer family life (Regehr, 1979:114; Sparks, 1990:40; Prozesky, 1990:152-153).

The doctrine of predestination and the parallels that the colonists drew between themselves and the journey of the Israelites into the promised land will now be examined, both of which, not only influenced the God-fearing mind of the voortrekker but also continued to nurture the development of Afrikaner nationalism. Alton Templin says that some of the Afrikaner leaders even went as far as to label the restrictions of the British government as an "oppression of Pharaoh" (Alton Templin, 1984:87,99) and to perceive themselves to be in the mould of Moses and Joshua leading the children to the promised land (Alton Templin, 1984:9).

Notwithstanding the fact that some historians have questioned the assumption that the trekkers regarded themselves as a "chosen people" (Sparks, 1990:28; Smith, 1988:65), Elphick & Giliomee maintain that even if it was true that the voortrekkers had not drawn any biblical parallels to the liberation of the Israelites from Egypt that they still regarded themselves as "a chosen people, both as individuals and as families, with a special relationship to God" (Elphick & Giliomee, 1989:97). This subsequently led to the conviction, not only that they had been chosen by God for a special purpose but also that the birth of the Afrikaner nation was brought about not by the work of man, but as a creative act of God (Degenaar, n.d.:24).

Views such as these were not unique to the history of the people of this country (Van Jaarsveld, 1961:4). In the seventeenth century the Puritans in America led by John Winthrop (Handy, 1976:22) also believed that they had been divinely mandated by God to leave their homeland and build a "city upon the hill" which would serve as a model for the rest of the world (Quint & Candor, 1975:9; Wentz, 1990:71; Van Jaarsveld, 1964:4). In 1848 an American WA Scott wrote "God has a great design for this continent. As the Jews of Old - as the Apostles - as the Reformers - as our fathers of 1776 - so are we, as a race and as a nation, a peculiar people and called to a high and glorious destiny (In Van Jaarsveld, 1981:4).

Arising from the doctrine of predestination, the convictions developed that through God's divine election the Afrikaner nation had been called to exclusivity (Alton Templin, 1984:6-7; Van Jaarsveld, 1964:6). Max Weber contends that predestination leads to anxiety about one's salvation directing believers to seek outward signs of God's grace. For the people of Europe, he continues, opulent material possessions became the manifestation that God had indeed blessed them. In South Africa, however, the evidence of God's grace culminated in the master-servant relationship (In Van den Berghe, 1965:14-15).

Through this understanding the boers came to believe that blacks were subservient to the whites, that they had to be kept in their places and work for the whites, without any rights of their own, with no set wages, with no rights in the law courts and no right to own property. Blacks were regarded to beneath such dignity. Shiela Patterson succinctly states that the doctrine of the elect in South Africa made "a white skin the badge of Christianity and of civilization" (Patterson, 1957:177).

The colonists also felt oppressed by the British because they were being repeatedly frustrated in their attempts to use blacks as servile labour, and because the novel ideas of the missionaries so disturbed the existing relationship between whites and blacks (Boyce, 1967:135; De Kiewiet, 1972:54; Alton Templin, 1984:76-77). These feelings of distaste were confirmed by Anna Steenkamp, a close relative of Piet Retief, as one of the chief reasons for the Great Trek when she wrote: "Equalization of non-whites to Christians are in conflict with the laws of God" (Van Jaarsveld, 1964:7; Regehr, 1979:125; Sparks, 1990:105).

As De Kiewiet searches for reasons for the Great Trek, he maintains that the severest shock upon life in the first decades of the nineteenth century at the colony and more especially upon life in the rural areas was that of European philanthropic liberalism (De Kiewiet, 1972:43). Within a short space of time after the arrival of the English, all restrictions on the freedom of Khoikhoi and other people of colour was done away with and they were placed on a equal standing with whites before the law. What made this more disturbing for the colonists was that it entered through the influence of Christian missionaries. Alton Templin writes that some boers found the philosophy of the missionaries so offensive that some even suggested that the missionaries were be shot (Alton Templin, 1984:75).

Having at this point a somewhat deeper understanding of how the Bible the doctrine of predestination influenced the minds of so many people at the Cape, it is perhaps easier to perceive why the innovations of the British government concerning the *gelykstelling* (the liberation of people of other colour) and the work of the missionaries were regarded to be so distasteful and obnoxious and why it struck at the very core of the colonist's way of life (Creswicke, 1901:39). The significance of these convictions and the influence that they had upon the history of South Africa cannot be overemphasized.

This chapter has thus far taken note of people groups that had emerged in the seventeenth and early part of the eighteenth century who had articulated ideals of civil liberty and who had been desirous for political self-determination. As the voortrekkers encountered diseases, death, battles with the native tribes, and deprivations on their journeys into the interior (Alton Templin, 1984:103), the recurrent theme of "God's people on the road to freedom" must surely have given them meaning, endurance and sustenance and the belief that the hardships that they were experiencing was being done for the sake of liberty and autonomy (Van Jaarsveld, 1961:24-25).

D. *Annexations of the Boer Republics (1843-1877)*

By 1840, two years after the defeat of the Zulu army at the Battle of Blood River (De Kiewiet, 1972:60), Natalia, the first independent boer republic, had been established (Muller, 1973:142; Swart, 1980:55; Van Schoor, 1960:58). In June 1842, on the pretext that grievances had been received from the blacks and that they were appealing for help against the boers who were raiding their cattle, British military forces set foot for the first time on the soil of Natal (Swart, 1980:155). A short skirmish ensued, with the British, ironically under the command of an Afrikaner, Colonel Abraham Josias Cloete, defeating the boer forces (Van den Heever & De Pienaar, 1945:68; Van Schoor, 1960:65; Meintjes, 1973:188; Alton Templin, 1984:116). A year later, Natal was formally annexed and made part of the British empire (Thompson, 1960:1; Boyce, 1967:187-188; Regehr, 1979:128).

The above annexation resulted in yet another migration by people who felt they had been betrayed by fellow Afrikaners (Muller, 1973:146; Van den Heever & De Pienaar, 1945:68). This momentum into Transorangia and the Transvaal (Alton Templin, 1984:116) was another endeavour by the boers to move away from under the Union Jack and to gain the liberty that they were seeking (McCord, 1952:50). Cloete reputedly stated that some of the boers had actually threatened to walk barefooted over the Drakensberg to die in freedom, as death was dearer to them than the loss of liberty (Bird, 1888:468; Alton Templin, 1984:117).

The ensuing years were to prove, however, that liberty would once again elude the Afrikaner people. By 1836 a number of boers had settled in the vicinity of Winburg and Thaba Nchu, north of the Orange River. Many people in this group did not share in the grievances of the trekkers and maintained their loyalty to the British crown. Alton Templin writes that some of these people petitioned that they be placed under British authority so that they would be entitled to protection from the surrounding black tribes (Alton Templin, 1984:126).

A schism was, however, not long in coming and in 1842 a group under Jan Mocke who was ardently anti-British (Alton Templin, 1984:126) broke away from this "disloyal" group to proclaim a republic north of the Orange River (Muller, 1973:150). In August 1848, after the British had established a centre of authority at Bloemfontein in an endeavour to supposedly control the tensions that had arisen (Muller, 1973:149-150), the trekkers were defeated at the battle of Boomplaats and were forced to retreat (McCord, 1952:52; Swart, 1980:252; Alton Templin, 1984:130). In the very same year Transorangia was incorporated under Britain's jurisdiction (Van Jaarsveld, 1961:16; De Kiewiet, 1972:139).

By 1849 both the Cape and Natal were British colonies with British sovereignty also declared in the Orange River Territory (Boyce, 1967:186; Alton Templin, 1984:131). All that remained under Boer control south of the Limpopo River, was the territory known as *De Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek* (Van den Heever & De Pienaar, 1945:70).

Even though the Sand River Convention was signed in January 1852 affirming that land north of the Vaal River would be independent of British control (Thompson, 1960:2; Swart, 1980:26; Alton Templin, 1984:138) it did not provide a durable basis for harmony (Thompson, 1960:2) and would, within a few decades turn out to be an inconsequential scrap of paper (Van den Heever & De Pienaar, 1945:79). British intervention in the years that followed once again greatly disturbed the boers and past grievances became the order of the day. In August 1868 in reaction to these territorial interventions by Britain, the pro-Afrikaner Bloemfontein newspaper, *De Tijd*, recorded:

Will you give up your freedom, so dearly bought by your forefathers? Think about the freeing of the slaves in 1834...Think about Slagter's Nek. Think about the sheep stealing, the murder and the raids which the Kaffirs of the interior inflicted upon us...(Quoted in Alton Templin, 1984:155).

E. *The flowering of Afrikaans language and culture*

Reference must now be made to the role that Dutch and Afrikaans literature played in the evolvement of Afrikaner consciousness. In the early 1820s Fairburns' *South African Commercial Advertiser* was a bilingual newspaper even though English did predominate. During these years the paper had very often identified with the inclinations of both the Dutch and Afrikaner population and the grievances that they had experienced at the Cape. By the middle of the 1820s, however, because it had chosen to champion the cause of the Christian philanthropists, the paper lost the support of many colonists and in 1830 an opposition weekly paper, *De Zuid-Afrikaan*, was established (Van den Heever & De Pienaar, 1950:66).

De Zuid-Afrikaan was to continue unabated as the main purveyor of literary Dutch for the next four decades. It was, however, only in the 1870s under the dynamic leadership of Jan Hendrik (Onze Jan) Hofmeyr that it really began to focus its attention more specifically on the language issue (Swart, 1980:196; Van Schoor, 1960:154) with Hofmeyr arriving at the realization that national revival amongst the people of South Africa was only likely to succeed if it was going to be based upon their spoken language (Patterson, 1957:52; Zietsman, 1992:7). From the early 1870s *De Zuid-Afrikaan* began to awaken great public interest by making people attentive on issues such as the need to have a Bible in the spoken language of the people (Van den Heever & De Pienaar, 1950:69). In April 1873 an article written by CP Hoogenhout appeared, bemoaning the fact that even though the Bible had already been translated into 250 different languages no one had thought of having the Bible in Afrikaans. Hoogenhout continued by saying, that even though the Afrikaner did not yet have a Bible in their vernacular, God would never allow them to remain in this position forever (Scholtz, 1964:186). It can be ascertained at this point that a powerful link had already been forged between the Afrikaans language of the people and their religion, the one simply unable to exist without the other. In August 1874 Hoogenhout wrote: "Taal, nationaliteit en godsdienst is by elk volk ten naauwste verbond" (Zietsman, 1992:6).

De Zuid-Afrikaan also pleaded for the advancement of education and the need for books to be written in the language that the people spoke and understood. From 1874 onwards the paper became more and more forthright in this direction. In May, the editor of *De Zuid Afrikaan*, Oom Locomotief (CP Hoogenhout), stated:

Wanneer zal er toch een einde komen aan het schandelijk tijdverkwisten, om onze kinderen uitsluitend Engelsche Geschiedenis, Engelsche Aardrijkskunde en andere Engelsche bogt te leeren? (Scholtz, 1964:192).

Translation: When will a stop be put to the outrageous waste of time, to teach our children only English History, English Geography and other English nonsense?

The great disparity that was also becoming evident by this time between Dutch and Afrikaans must also be highlighted. In this regard, Hoogenhout wrote:

Wanneer sal die mense dan tog wil begryp, dat Hollans en Engels hier in Afrika as vreemde tale mot behandel wort (Scholtz, 1964:188).

Translation: When will the people realize that Dutch and English in Africa must be treated as foreign languages.

Impetus was added for the recognition of Afrikaans in mid 1874 when a series of articles under the title *De Afrikaansche Taal* was written by Reverend Stephanus Jacobus du Toit of Paarl, recognized by some historians as the first Afrikaans nationalist (Kok, 1974:37; Swart, 1980:293). For Du Toit the concept "Afrikaner" clearly had an exclusive connotation (Leach, 1989:29). It was upon this foundation that he attempted to build a structure of exclusivity whereby Afrikaners had to follow their own political course and preserve their distinctive culture and identity (Wilson & Thompson, 1971:302). According to Du Toit "true Afrikaners" were those who were not ashamed of being known as such, who sympathized with the Afrikaner cause and who stood for their people and their fatherland (Giliomee, 1997:101). Du Toit even suggested that God had placed Afrikaners in Africa and had given them the Afrikaans language (Alton Templin, 1984:201).

This exclusive kind of language was contested by Hofmeyr who believed that an Afrikaner was anyone who helped to promote the common interests of South Africans and lived as members of one family (Giliomee, 1997:101). In August of the following year, also largely under the direction of Du Toit and seven other founder members, the Genootskap van Regte Afrikaners (Society of True Afrikaners) was inaugurated (Van den Heever & De Pienaar, 1950:60; De Klerk, 1975:71). Its aim was, in the words of Du Toit "to stand up for our language, for our nation and our land" (Swart, 1980:25;237; Van den Heever & De Pienaar, 1950:72; Harrison, 1987:50). Only a few months later, on 15 January 1876, *Die Patriot*, the first Afrikaans newspaper which became the official mouthpiece of the GRA was published (Regehr, 1979:142; Harrison, 1987:50) with a stirring appeal appearing on the front page:

Een Afrikaanse Koerant! Wie het dit ooit gedroom! Ja, Afrikaanders! een koerant in ons ei'e taal! Dit het baie moeite gekos om so ver te kom; dit kan ek julle verseker (*Die Afrikaanse Patriot*, 1876:1; Swart, 1980:25; Van Jaarsveld, 1971:195).

Translation: An Afrikaans newspaper! Who could have ever dreamt of it! Afrikaners! a newspaper in our own language! I can assure you that it has been a struggle to get to it thus far.

The paper, encountered forceful opposition from both English and Dutch-speaking people (Swart, 1980:25). The latter still regarded the language of Holland as the language of the people, while they degraded Afrikaans as a 'brabbeltaal' or the communication medium of the Khoikhoi (Marks & Trapido, 1987:98). Notwithstanding the resistance that it encountered, by 1880 *Die Patriot* had become the most widely read newspaper in South Africa, contributing a great deal to the awakening of Afrikaner nationalism and making Afrikaners aware of the dignity of their history and beauty of their language (*Die Afrikaanse Patriot*, 1876:2,9-13).

In the annexation of the ZAR in 1877 and in the bitterness and anger that followed, the newspaper was also to find a ready audience in the minds of Afrikaners pointing them ahead to the day when both British and Dutch influences would disappear completely from South Africa (Van den Heever & De Pienaar, 1950:74).

In 1877 Du Toit also published the first history in Afrikaans entitled, *Die Geskiedenis van ons Land in die Taal van ons Volk* (The History of our Country in the Language of our People) (Wilson & Thompson, 1971:301; Sparks, 1990:117). In the foreword Du Toit made his intentions for writing the book very clear when he wrote that he was aiming to acquaint the Afrikaner people with the "trials and sufferings of their fathers in the land where foreigners were seeking to tread them under foot" (Quoted in Smith, 1988:60).

Through the writings of Du Toit, Afrikaner historiography reached a zenith, and historical events such as Slagters Nek for example, where five farmers in the Drosdy of Graaff-Reinet had been hanged for treason in 1816 (Alton Templin, 1984:78-79; Smith, 1988:60) became a national tragedy and a symbol of British treachery and inhumanity towards the Afrikaner people (Creswicke, 1901:39). No longer were these men regarded as rebels, but martyrs and Afrikaner heroes, who had died while striving to gain liberty from the yoke of their oppressors (Sparks, 1990:117). Thirty years later in his book, *The Great Boer War*, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle echoed similar sentiments about Slagters Nek when he wrote "a brave race can forget the victims of the field of battle but never those died on the scaffold" (Doyle, 1900:7). In similar fashion, the Great Trek, which Du Toit equated with the exodus of God's people from Egypt, also began to gain renewed significance (Alton Templin, 1984:204-205) with the strong admonition that persons who were not moved by this event, were unworthy of being called Afrikaners (Smith, 1988:61). Through his work Du Toit not only showed that the Afrikaans language was capable of becoming a literary as well as an oral medium of communication but also provided the nucleus of an enduring Afrikaner nationalist mythology.

Over the ensuing years a profusion of Afrikaans nationalist literature appeared, much of it employing the theme of Afrikaner grievances, and the struggles they had endured at the hands of ruthless British rulers. This powerfully emotional and polemical literature had an enormous impact on the minds of Afrikaners and took the cause of Afrikanerdom within a relatively short space of time to unparalleled heights (Sparks, 1990:118). Three years later, in 1880, Die Afrikaner Bond was initiated with branches established in the Transvaal, the Cape and the Orange Free State (Creswicke, 1901:40-41). The Bond, as had the newly established Afrikaans newspaper, attacked the spread of British influence at the expense of the Afrikaner's traditional way of living and adopted the neo-Calvinism of Abraham Kuyper as a defence against the culture of 'liquor, lucre and redcoats' the symbols of British conquest and dominance (Davenport, 1991:93).

In 1881 military conflict erupted between the Afrikaner republics and the British empire, following the annexation of the Transvaal goldfields (Thompson, 1960:2; Alton Templin, 1984:174; Le May, 1965:1). Both the victory gained over the British forces at Majuba and the subsequent restoration of Afrikaner sovereignty continued to stimulate Afrikaner consciousness (Wilson & Thompson, 1971, 366) and solidify the belief that God had called the Afrikaner nation to fulfil a divine role in this country (Sparks, 1990:115). In its interpretation of the outcome of the war, *Die Patriot*, wrote that it was God's divine intervention that had made the English soldiers powerless and had given the boers victory (Alton Templin, 1984:178). When some suggested that it was good shooting that gave the boers victory at Majuba, General Joubert responded: "No, it was not the good shooting of the boers that procured for us the victory, but the Lord's help. the Lord has done it" (Quoted in Alton Templin, 1984:180). The independence that the Afrikaner republics had gained, however, was destined to be ephemeral. On 11 October 1899, in another attempt to preserve their sovereignty in South Africa, the Afrikaner republics were again compelled to declare war on Britain and the South African War began (Wilson & Thompson, 1971:324; Kruger, 1975:17; Sibbald, 1993:29; Hofmeyr et al, 1994:259).

III. THE RESURGENCE OF THE AFRIKANER PEOPLE (1902-1914)

A. *The calamitous effects of the South African War*

Even though the South African War (1899-1902) only lasted for some thirty two months (Walker, 1975:488) it had catastrophic consequences for the people living in South Africa (Van Jaarsveld, 1971:192; Bunting, 1986:13-14). Against the might of the British army, the boers could pit no formal apparatus or adequate manpower (Muller, 1973:291) and after a few early victories they were routed and defeated (Kruger, 1975:17). By the end of the war, the country had been overrun by vast troop manoeuvres. The goldmines had been shut down (Walker, 1975:508). The British army's scorched-earth policy had left over 30,000 farmsteads burned down and the land utterly devastated (Thompson, 1960:12; Davenport, 1978:140; O'Brien, 1979:197). Besides the cost of the dead and wounded soldiers, over one hundred thousand women and children (Muller, 1973:315) had been driven from their homes into overcrowded disease-infested concentration camps (Martin, 1957:14; Boyce, 1967:502; Swart, 1980:366; Bunting, 1986:13) where over twenty-six thousand of them perished (Bunting,

1986:13) twenty-two thousand of these under the age of 16 (Davenport, 1991:196; Harrison, 1987:35-40; Van den Heever & De Pienaar, 1945:102-103). John Chettle states that even though much has been written about this war, many people still fail to measure its true impact. Chettle calls the war, in which about 20% of the total Afrikaner population of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State died, most of them women and children, the "Afrikaners' Holocaust" (Cited in Munger, 1979:150).

The British insisted that the disaster of the camps were due to factors beyond their control. They maintained that their intention had been humane and that they had tried to provide for those who had been rendered destitute and homeless by the war (Martin, 1957:3-9;13;21). For many people though, even many years after the war, what had transpired at the camps was not considered accidental, but was viewed as another anti-Afrikaans conspiracy, a calculated and deliberate attempt to annihilate the Afrikaner people. James Ramsay MacDonald a future Prime Minister of Great Britain correctly predicted that "the camps would create such fierce bitterness, that even when the memory of the war had faded away, that the nightmare of the camps would still remain" (Patterson, 1957:35; Bunting, 1986:13). Thousands of boer breadwinners had been deported to St. Helena, Bermuda, Ceylon and to other distant prisoners of war camps (Van Jaarsveld & Scholtz, 1966:135; Wilson & Thompson, 1971:328; Bunting, 1986:13), many of them never returning to the land of their birth (Sachs, 1952:20; Harrison, 1987:46).

Cessation of hostilities in May 1902 and the policies implemented for reconstruction were also destined to bring no immediate relief (Harrison, 1987:46-47). Following in the wake of the war came an appalling drought (Fisher, 1969:200; Duvenage, 1978:53; O'Brien, 1979:206; Davenport, 1991:205) and a crippling depression which multiplied the influx of *bywoners* to the largely "English" towns to a flood (Stultz, 1974:13; Van Jaarsveld, 1978:14). Many untrained and landless Afrikaners had no other option but to find their place on the lower rungs of industry, of the civil service, and the mines (Van Jaarsveld, 1971:209), so very often in rivalry with black workers (Hanf et al, 1981:86; Stultz, 1974:16; Van Jaarsveld, 1978:15).

As a result, within a relatively short space of time, from a reasonably self-providing agrarian community, thousands of Afrikaners had sunk to the status of a displaced and impoverished population group (Van der Merwe, 1975:19). Shiela Patterson writes that the Afrikaner nation had by this time been "reduced to beggary" (Patterson, 1957:37). Reflecting on the effects that the war had had on the Afrikaner people, General Jan Smuts, recorded: "The Boer War was other than most wars, it was a vast tragedy in the life of a people" (Quoted in Patterson, 1957:31).

In *The White Tribe of Africa*, David Harrison records that one in every three Afrikaner homes that had been visited by the Carnegie 'Poor White Commission' in the initial years of the twentieth century, were unsuitable for civilized living. The commission also noted a very high mortality rate among children because of the unsanitary conditions and surroundings. When Afrikaner school children were asked to write down what they ate for breakfast, midday meal and supper, most of them simply wrote, "pap" (mealie meal porridge) (Harrison, 1987:72-73). Briton and boer were thus, respectively, by the end of the South

African War not only conqueror and conquered but also rich man and poor man (Kruger, 1975:20; Van Jaarsveld, 1975:308). The outcome of the war had not only sealed the political and military defeat of the independent boer republics but also their economic defeat (Van Jaarsveld, 1975:309; Hanf, et al, 1981:86). Some of the humiliation and indignity experienced by the Afrikaners at this time has been recorded by EB Rose in his book *The Truth About the Transvaal*:

Particularly the British portion of the Uitlanders or foreigners assumed an attitude of contemptuous superiority towards the government and people of the country which was as unjustifiable as it was arrogant and intolerable. The most revered institutions of the Boers were attacked and reviled; their sentiments and prejudices were ruthlessly trampled upon; charges on wrong doing, as often false and undeserved as not, were levelled against the most highly esteemed officials and leaders; and, in short, it appeared as though a very devil of exasperation had taken possession of the Uitlanders (Quoted in McCord, 1952:110).

Emotional outbursts of hatred and grief were to be expected following the British victory in the war (Harrison, 1987:47). The employment of black levies by the British army had already fanned the flames of anger and hatred of the boers (McCord, 1952:280,311-312; Martin, 1957:102-103; Boyce, 1967:502; Patterson, 1957:37; Van den Berghe, 1965:33; Van den Heever & De Pienaar, 1945:102; Wilkins & Strydom, 1978:37). Emotions were, however, intensified to a fever pitch by Lord Alfred Milner, High Commissioner for South Africa (Boyce, 1967:492), who appeared determined by his post-war policy of anglicization, to "wipe out the last traces of Africanderism" (Van Jaarsveld, 1978:27; Van der Walt, et al, n.d.:439). Milner, who never hesitated to call himself "an imperialist out and out" (Thompson, 1960:5; Le May, 1965:8; Muller, 1973:320; O'Brien, 1979:396), had in fact already formulated his intentions in a memorandum he had written in December 1900 to Major Hanbury Williams. With regard to his vision for the future use of languages in South Africa, Milner wrote:

Next to the composition of the population, the thing that matters most is education. In the agricultural parts of the Cape Colony, this needs to be completely overhauled. In the new colonies the case will be easier to deal with, provided we make English the language of all higher education. Dutch should only be used to teach English and English to teach everything else (Quoted in Van der Walt, et al, n.d.:441).

In the same memorandum he stated that the British population was to be increased to such an extent that there would be a permanent British majority in South Africa (Davenport, 1978:150). He also maintained that Afrikaners were to be exposed to the full force of modern western cultural influences, transmitted in the English language (Thompson, 1960:7).

While many Afrikaners finally came to the position where they were prepared to make peace with the English, for others, accommodation with Milnerism in any form was totally out of the question (Bunting, 1986:15). Many could not overlook the memories of the surrendered republics, the devastation brought about by the war and the horrors of the concentration camps. For many of these Afrikaners, Milnerism had become the epitome of British oppression and sowed seeds for a nationalism more bitterly anti-British than anything that had existed before the war (Thompson, 1960:16). Milner denied that his purpose was to plough the Afrikaner under. He did, however, write that he wished "to ensure the dominance of the British element, politically and culturally" (Davenport, 1991:206). Thompson records that after the war, as a result of Milner's great zeal in furthering his educational projects, Afrikaans had become a despised language. Children were only allowed to speak it three hours a week at school. In fact, this policy was taken so far that even Dutch had to be taught in English (Thompson, 1960:15; Davenport, 1991:206). Children who did not comply with the above school regulations were compelled to display a placard proclaiming, "I am a donkey, I spoke Dutch" (Fisher, 1969:199; Wilkins & Strydom, 1978:38; Bunting, 1986:14; Harrison, 1987:54-55).

At this time the newly born language, Afrikaans, had as yet no official standing. National symbols - flag and anthem - were British. In no way was the republican tradition reflected. The public service was essentially British. The representative of the crown in South Africa was a Governor-General, as British and as powerful as any colonial governor since Caledon. Even the Supreme Court, with its own Appellate Division was not the final arbiter in the administration of justice. The Privy Council in London still had the final word. The English also had an almost complete monopoly of the industrial skills. Technical training was almost exclusively English. The big financial institutions, such as the banks and insurance companies came from Britain. All teaching in the government schools had to be in English with the exception of three hours a week for instruction in Dutch. The cities, populated since the second quarter of the nineteenth century with British immigrants, primarily from the urban middle classes, were seats of Anglo-Saxon culture (De Klerk, 1975:96). In this situation of detriment it must have appeared in the eyes of many that the Afrikaner people, along with their language and culture and all that for which they had striven over the past number of decades, were under the sword of Damocles, facing total eradication (Thompson, 1960:17). Van den Heever noted that at the war's end the Afrikaner had become a foreigner in his own country of birth (In Bunting, 1986:15).

The impact that this had on the collective Afrikaner mind is almost impossible to exaggerate. It was not merely a case of poverty and hardship. Afrikaners had been through much difficulties and hardship before this. It was, however, the first time in their history that so many of these proud, freedom-loving people had been reduced to living as *bywoners* (squatters) in a state of destitution, servitude and squalor (O'Brien, 1979:206-207). At this time, in a personal letter to Emily Hobhouse, Jan Smuts expressed his despair when he wrote: "South Africa is on a downward grade in every sense and at present I see no ray of light in the future" (Quoted in Thompson, 1960:17).

B. *Afrikaner Revival*

Out of the ashes of the war, the bitter humiliation, and the policies of Alfred Milner, however, a rapid revival appeared in the form of a powerful theological, cultural and linguistic response (Muller, 1973:325; Giliomee, 1997:103; Sparks, 1990:126). Much of the credit for this went to the Dutch Reformed Church as it discovered a way to identify itself with the suffering of Afrikaners without it being untrue to its theology (Thompson, 1960:17-18; Klaus Nürnberger in Prozesky, 1990:153). It was this Church, as it promoted the national cause of the Afrikaner (Meiring in Sundermeier, 1975:58) that was to become the volkskerk and the stabilizing influence for the people (Sparks, 1990:155). David Bosch states that in the "Afrikaner's darkest hour", the Dutch Reformed Church and the people became virtually indistinguishable (In Saayman & Kritzinger, 1996:24). Many *predikante* had not only provided spiritual assistance for the boere commandos during the war (Swart, 1980:90) and volunteered their services as chaplains to the camps in Ceylon, the Bermudas and St Helena (Meiring in Sundermeier, 1975:58) but also withstood Milner's policy of anglicization after armistice had been declared (Thompson, 1960:18). One such minister, Reverend HS Bosman, stated:

Ons Kerk is onder, maar niet dood...ons volk is onder maar niet dood, (Swart, 1980:89; Thompson, 1960:18-19).

Translation: Our church has been subjugated but is not dead, our nation has been defeated but is not dead.

The respected Reverend John Daniel Kestell had the following to say with regard to the state of Afrikaners and their language:

God heeft het Afrikaansche volk in den grooten strijd gevormd. Het is niet uitgedelgd; Zijn taal is niet vernietigd. De macht den vijand heeft het wel overweldigd, heeft het als een machtige golf overstroomd, maar de Afrikaner zin en geest bestaan nog. eeft zwaard kan den wil doen buigen - en geweld kan den geest onderdrukken. Het Afrikaansche volk blijft een onuitdelgbaar element in het Britsche rijk (Quoted in Van Jaarsveld & Scholtz, 1966:142).

Translation: God has formed the Afrikaner nation in the great struggle. The nation has not been annihilated; His language has not been destroyed. The power of the enemy has conquered, it has been swamped with a mighty wave, but in spirit the Afrikaner still remains. No sword can bend the willpower - no violence can suppress the spirit. The Afrikaner people remain an ineradicable element in the British empire.

The Dutch Reformed Church also took the important step in the organization of about 200 Christian National schools (Patterson, 1957:55; Thompson, 1960:19; Kruger, 1975:20) in opposition to Milner's public schools where English was the sole medium of education (Van den Heever & De Pienaar, 1945:106; Muller, 1973:324; O'Brien, 1979:219; Harrison, 1987:53). Although the CNO movement was seriously hampered by lack of funds and staff, the children in these schools

were taught to avoid "foreign ways" (Thompson, 1960:53) and Afrikaner nationalism in all its forms was strongly promoted thereby gaining the moral support of many Afrikaners (Thompson, 1960:19).

Many boer military leaders also continued to fight for the cause of Afrikanerdom long after the weapons of war had been laid down. General CF Beyers, a man who had become a hero for his military exploits during the South African War, wrote in *De Volkstem*:

Dit is asof die Here ons patriotisme nou dat ons uitgeroei is, beproef om te sien hoe sterk ons nasionaliteit is. Weet dit: As God u as Afrikaners in die wereld gebring het, verwag Hy ook dat u as Afrikaner sal sterf (Quoted in Swart, 1980:89).

Translation: It is as if our patriotism, now that we have been defeated, is being tested to see how strong our nationalism really is. Know this: If God created us as Afrikaners, He also expects us to die as Afrikaners.

In his memoirs of the South African War, General Christiaan De Wet wrote:

The future is dark indeed, but we will not give up courage, and hope, and trust in God. No one shall ever convince me that this unparalleled sacrifice which the Afrikaner nation has laid upon the altar of freedom will be in vain. It has been a war of freedom - not only freedom of the Boers, but for the freedom of all the nations of South Africa (Quoted in Le May, 1965:152).

Poets like Eugene Marais, Totius, Louis Leipold, and Jan FE Celliers were, during these difficult and perplexing times for the Afrikaner nation, extremely effectual in restoring dignity, depth and cultural identity to the Afrikaans language (Thompson, 1960:20; Kruger, 1975:20; Duvenage, 1978:56; Swart, 1980:62). It appears that the intense determination of the Afrikaners that their language and cultural traditions should be afforded respected places, provided dramatic confirmation that Milner's policy of enforced assimilation was possibly the least effective way of trying to achieve his intended aims (Davenport, 1991:206). David Harrison records that Kowie Marais, former judge and later Progressive Federal Party spokesman on Education once stated: "Had it not been for Milner and his extreme measures, we Afrikaners would probably all quite happily have been speaking English by now. By his opposition to our language, he helped create it" (Harrison, 1987:53). Far from destroying Afrikaner nationalism, Milner and Chamberlain were probably the greatest recruiting agents it ever had (Wilson & Thompson, 1971:333).

There appears to be unanimous consensus among historians that it was at this time, shortly after the war, that the Tweede Taalbeweging began (Boyce, 1967:509; Van Jaarsveld, 1971:85; Muller, 1973:325; Davenport, 1991:212). By the year 1905, journalists in various centres throughout the four colonies, had begun to use Afrikaans in their newspapers. These advancements were used by Gustav Preller to underscore the gap which separated the spoken and written language of Dutch Afrikaners. The latter, Preller stated, was a type of High

Dutch while the former was Afrikaans. The columns of Preller's paper *De Volkstem* often carried articles which gave Afrikaans a degree of respectability and dignity (Marks & Trapido, 1987:104-105).

On the political front it was destined to be military generals such as Louis Botha, Jan Smuts, Barry Hertzog, and Abraham Fischer, that led the Afrikaner nation to recovery (Van der Walt, et al, n.d.:450). A change of government in Britain led not only to the recall of Alfred Milner early in 1905 (O'Brien, 1979:222; Muller, 1973:324; Van Jaarsveld, 1971:212) but also initiated a policy of greater forbearance between the empire and South Africa (Sparks, 1990:130). Shortly after Milner's departure, Louis Botha formally inaugurated a new political party called *Het Volk* (The People) in the Transvaal. It was formally constituted in January 1905 (Davenport, 1991:212). Several months later in the same year another political party, called the *Orangia Unie* was inaugurated by Fischer, Hertzog and Christiaan De Wet in the Orange River Colony (Kruger, 1975:21; Davenport, 1978:155). The formation of these parties represented the beginning of a return by Afrikanerdom to a purposeful role in public affairs (Davenport, 1991:212).

However, Louis Botha and his close associate Jan Smuts chose to adopt a course of closer cooperation with the British empire (Kruger, 1975:21; Giliomee, 1997:105). Botha made it no secret that he had no wish that *Het Volk* should only represent Afrikaner interests or that participation with the English should be precluded (Muller, 1973:327; Harrison, 1987:58). Even General JBM Hertzog the most national minded Boer leader of that time seemed ready to respond to the prevailing optimism. He stated that his wish was "To form a party which would embrace all the white people in South Africa" (Stultz, 1974:11).

This feeling of unity, however, between Botha and Hertzog was not destined to last and soon permanent political divisions appeared in South African politics (De Klerk, 1975:98). Even though the existing political parties combined to form the South African Party in 1910, the policies of conciliation championed by Botha and Smuts had never been part of the principles of the *Orangia Unie* Party (Thompson, 1960:34). Neither did Hertzog, in spite of his optimism and support for the Union of South Africa, ever lose his conviction that all South Africans composed of Afrikaner and British could co-operate with each other on a basis of equality and respect with each nation maintaining its own distinctive identity (Thompson, 1960:35-36; Van Jaarsveld, 1975:278).

There is undoubtedly much more to be learned in the policies adopted by Botha and Smuts, both believing that conciliation was necessary to bury the hatchet and mend the rifts that had developed between South Africa and Great Britain (Thompson, 1960:31). Shortly after 1910, however, South African politics developed into a tussle between two opposing political philosophies for the support of the Afrikaans electorate (Stultz, 1974:3). By 1912 Hertzog had come to believe that most English-speaking people were wedded to the imperial ideal and that the strength of British influences in South Africa, Botha's policy of forgive and forget (Van Schoor, 1960:168) would compromise Afrikaner independence (Giliomee, 1997:105; Swart, 1980:104).

Because Hertzog believed that Botha's policy could only lead to the destruction of the Afrikaner people, he was regarded by the English press as an extreme Afrikaner nationalist (Thompson, 1960:36) and became very unpopular with the English section of the population. . As a result Louis Botha tried to keep Hertzog out of his cabinet by offering him a post as an appeal judge which Hertzog refused. Eventually Botha felt compelled to drop Hertzog from his cabinet, but as if nothing had occurred, Hertzog stayed on in the party (Bunting, 1986:19). Matters eventually came to a head in December 1912. At this time Hertzog made his resounding "dunghill speech" at a mass meeting in Pretoria which understandably provoked a storm and infuriated the English population. In this speech he stated that he would live on a dunghill with his own people rather than live in the palaces of Britain (Swart, 1980:373; Wilkins & Strydom 1981:40).

Many Afrikaners had once again, as had happened in the nineteenth century, not only come to feel strongly about their language and their culture but also felt alien in the policies of the South African Party which was suspected of being dominated by "influences rooted in the British way of living" (Stultz, 1974:15). A split soon become inevitable (Bunting, 1986:19) and by 1914 Hertzog had broken away from the South African Party to form the National Party (Hanf, et al, 1981:95; Marks & Trapido, 1987:107; Swart, 1980:104; Van Schoor, 1960:172; Wilkins & Strydom 1981:40). Included in its programme of principles was the following statement:

The National Party emphasises the necessity of English and Dutch speaking people forming one nation...but that unity need not be more than a social and spiritual unity, with full preservation of our respective national riches consisting of our language, history, religion, customs and morals (Sachs, 1952:23).

Thus while in its formal organization and activities the National Party resembled the other political parties of that time, it came to be closely allied with other "national minded" bodies such as the Dutch Reformed Church and other Afrikaans cultural organizations (Stultz, 1974:15). These alliances would give the National Party invaluable support that none of its political opponents could match for many years to come. After the founding of the National Party in 1914, Louis Botha's government came under continual censure for having failed, for the sake of conciliation with the English, to press for equality of rights for the Afrikaner people. Through Botha's one-stream policy it was alleged that the tender plant of Afrikaans would be overwhelmed by the all-powerful English world culture. Many people firmly believed that only by keeping the cultural lives of the Afrikaner and the English in two separate streams, could the Afrikaner's identity be maintained and developed.

IV. VERKRAMPTE/VERLIGTE CONFLICT

A. *Afrikaners in crisis*

In the mid 1960's, just a little more than fifty years after the founding of Hertzog's National Party, Afrikaners were once plunged into a crisis (Van Jaarsveld, 1975:455). To speak of the above-mentioned decade as a time of crisis for the Afrikaners appears to be a contradiction for it began with the

accomplishment of republic status in May 1961, with self-determination eventually becoming the crowning event for Afrikanerdom (Kotzé, 1968:72-93; Van Jaarsveld, 1975:275). And then to make the above allegation even more enigmatic, at the 1966 General Election, Hendrik Verwoerd's National Party, which won 126 out of the 166 seats in parliament (Van Jaarsveld, 1975:453; O'Meara, 1996:150), achieved an unprecedented victory in South African election history (*SA Observer*, vol.xi, no.8, April 1966, p.3; *SA Observer*, vol.xv, no.5, April 1970, p.1, UDWL).

Even though the first stirring of the impending crisis were already present in the early 1960's, it was only after the assassination of Verwoerd in September 1966 that the *Verligte-Verkrampste Stryd* as it became known, came to the fore (Van Jaarsveld, 1975:454; Du Pisani, 1988:1). This conflict can never be equated with the calamitous South African War. It was, however, to be a time of great acrimony and bitterness for many Afrikaners. As the name given to this crisis suggests it was a time when Afrikanerdom, as a result of the severe political division within the National Party, broke into two, with ultra-conservative Afrikaner nationalists at loggerheads with what they considered to be a liberal and treacherous Afrikaner contingent bent on destroying everything that they considered to be "sacred" and important for the continued distinctiveness and well-being of the Afrikaner nation (Van Jaarsveld, 1975:455). The above dissension became extremely antagonistic resulting in the breakaway movement of the followers of Albert Hertzog from BJ Vorster's National Party in 1969 to form the *Herstigste Nasionale Party* (HNP) (Du Pisani, 1988:142).

The 1960's would simultaneously become a time during which the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa, appearing to mirror the struggles that were taking place between the conservative and liberal Afrikaners in the political realm, would also be plunged into crisis and experience a severe schism within the ranks of its Afrikaans-speaking members.

V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This chapter has outlined the evolvement of Afrikaner consciousness along with the aspirations that progressively emerged for the development of an distinct Afrikaans cultural identity. It has also underscored the strained and inauspicious situation that existed between the Afrikaners and the British in the final decades of the nineteenth century when the first Seventh-day Adventist missionaries arrived in South Africa.

Its intention, however, goes beyond a mere historical notation of the development of Afrikaner identity as it seeks to pave the way for another important dimension, one that has so often been lost sight of, namely, that people are never converted in a vacuum. What this means is that people are irrefutably influenced by their *sitz em lieben* - i.e. the political, economic, social, linguistic, cultural and religious environment in which they have grown up, in which they have been schooled, and in which they are living (Van Wyk, 1991:114-115).

Even converts to the Seventh-day Adventist faith, are not exempted from such influences. If this latter statement is true, it means, that when Afrikaners joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church, most especially during the first few decades of this century, many of them brought into this Church their deep rooted heritage, their infatuation and love for their own language and literature, their feelings of attachment and loyalty to the land of their progenitors, their sense of pride in the history and evolvement of the Afrikaner people, and a culture and lifestyle that was uniquely Afrikaans. A glimmer of such notions becomes evident in a composition entitled Die Adventboodskap op die Pad van Suid-Afrika written by the late Dr. Hofni Joubert, in which he drew parallels between the voortrekkers and the heralds of the Seventh-day Adventist message in South Africa:

In daardie dae was daar 'n pad. Die pad is vandag op baie plekke toegegroeï. Daar staan massiewe geboue op; Ysterspore en betonbrûe kruis oor hom; spoelwaters het diep in sy hart gesny en hom van sy kosbare teelaarde beroof. Maar sy naam bly onveranderd. Dis die pad van Suid-Afrika. Dis die pad wat van die kusland tot by die Samesie gerol het. In sy spore het die beskawing bakens geplant. Die bakens moet 'n stempel van godsdiens dra.

Ons is simbole van die verlede. Ons het die Pad van Suid-Afrika betree. Die lang skof is agter die rug. 'n Kort entjie pad lê nog voor. Nou wil ons weet wie verder op daardie pad gaan voortloop. Die vaandel van geregtigheid en waarheid moet aanhou wapper. Die lig van die Adventboodskap moet die nasate van die voortrekkers omstraal. Die geklank van die ewige evangelieboodskap moet gehoor word in elke dorp en op elke plaas. Ek vra die jeug van vandag - toekomstige draers van die Adventboodskap - wie is daar wat hierdie woord verder sal dra? (Joubert, n.d., p.1, In author's possession).

Translation: In those days there was a road. Today the road is overgrown in many places. On it stand massive buildings; Railway lines and bridges cross over it; flood water have cut deep into it and robbed it of its fertile riches. Its name, however, has not changed. It is the road of South Africa. It is the road that stretches from the coast to the Zambezi. Civilization planted beacons in its tracks. These beacons must have godly characteristics.

We are symbols of our yesterdays. We are travelling on the road of South Africa. The longest part of the journey is behind us. Only a short journey remains. Now we desire to know who is going to continue the journey. The banner of righteousness and truth must be upheld. The light of the Advent message must illuminate the descendants of the voortrekkers. The sound of the eternal gospel message must resonate in every town and on every farm. I ask the youth of today - future bearers of the Advent message - who is there that will continue to carry this word?

Alongside these historical, cultural and linguistic influences which strongly affected the thinking of many Afrikaners in the Church, there must of also been feelings of consternation and resentment about the manner in which Afrikaners and their language had been denigrated by the British in the years gone by. Many people belonging to this generation still remembered the South African War, the ruined farms and a way of life that had been disrupted and destroyed (Van Jaarsveld, 1975:257). Many of them were sons and daughters of those who had fought against the British in the war (Patterson, 1957:36). These fears and anxieties cannot simply be written off as idiosyncratic and must be evaluated against the backdrop of settler history dating all the way back to the middle of the seventeenth-century. For the Afrikaner, issues such as language, culture, national identity and self-determination were never mere abstractions, but had almost always boiled down to a matter of survival (Munger, 1979:157,161,165; Zietsman, 1992:1).

The apprehensions of these Afrikaners, however, together with their love and affinity for their history, language and literature, would be viewed as inconsequential by the English-American orientated Seventh-day Adventist Church leaders and would be regarded as unimportant in the Church's response to the grievances enumerated by the Afrikaanse Konferensie.

CHAPTER TWO
A HISTORICAL SURVEY OF THE POSITION OF
THE DUTCH AND AFRIKAANS BELIEVERS IN THE
SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH IN SOUTH AFRICA (1887-1968)

I. THE ORIGINS OF THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH IN SOUTH AFRICA

A. *The first Seventh-day Adventist in Southern Africa*

The latter half of the nineteenth century found the Seventh-day Adventist Church on the threshold of reaching out in ever increasing worldwide missionary endeavours. It was also a period during which the history of South Africa and its people would be irrevocably transformed (Blake, 1977:25; Cammack, 1990:1; Hinchliff, 1968:75; Van Jaarsveld, 1975:159-160). For thousands of years, with its enormous wealth many feet below the earth's surface concealed from the sight of humans, South Africa had slumbered largely undisturbed.

With the discovery of diamonds, the "old" face of South Africa speedily vanished. To the diamond diggings at Kimberley were drawn some 30 000 prospectors miners of all nationalities, gender, age and religious beliefs, working frantically and feverishly, hardly appearing to pause for food, drink or rest (Williams, 1902:127-128,203-205; Sparks, 1990:120-122). As a result, by 1871, the town of Kimberley had become the largest white settlement outside of Cape Town (Smith, 1996:21).

Amongst the many thousands of optimistic miners who hastened to the diamond fields of Kimberley was an American by the name of William Hunt (Andross, 1926:254; Swanepoel, 1972:1; Van Zyl, 1990:80) a man with a deep preoccupation in Bible prophecy who had been converted to Seventh-day Adventism in 1869 on the gold fields of Nevada (Breedt, n.d.:1; Swanepoel, 1972:1). In the early 1870s his decision to relocate elsewhere in the world to seek his fortune led him to the South African diamond fields. The details of Hunt's arrival and his activities in South Africa have regrettably remained very obscure (Breedt, n.d.:1). What is known, is that he had brought a copious quantity of Seventh-day Adventist literature with him to South Africa, and appeared to have been sharing his faith with his acquaintances in Kimberley (Schwarz, 1979:224). More than fifteen years went by before an intriguing combination of events took place and permitted the Seventh-day Adventist Church to take permanent root in South Africa (Andross, 1926:253-254; Breedt, n.d.:3).

B. *The Dutch and the seventh-day Sabbath*

By the mid 1880s, unknown to William Hunt, two Dutch residents of Kimberley, Pieter Wessels and George van Druten together with their families, had begun to observe the seventh-day Sabbath (Schwarz, 1979:224; Swanepoel, 1972; Van Zyl, 1990:78-80). Neither of them, however, had any idea that there was a Sabbath keeping church in America (Robinson, n.d.:4-5; Swanepoel, 1972:6).

This all rapidly changed when Van Druten met William Hunt. Both Van Druten and Pieter Wessels, who was also introduced to Hunt, were jubilant when they learnt of the existence of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in America from Hunt (*Trans-Africa Division Outlook*, 15 December 1970, p.2-4, HBCL; Schwarz, 1979:224). These Dutch seventh-day Sabbath keepers in South Africa had needed no prompting and had begun to share their newly found religious convictions with their families and friends. The religious literature which they had obtained from William Hunt, however, was in English and many Dutch and Afrikaans-speaking people were finding it very difficult to read and understand (Swanepoel, 1972:6). As a result, just a few months after their meeting with William Hunt, Wessels and Van Druten sent a letter together with amount of fifty Pounds to the General Conference in America requesting that a minister of religion be sent to South Africa to instruct the Dutch people in the teachings of the Seventh-day Adventist Church (Andross, 1926:254).

This letter which arrived in America towards the end of 1886 elicited a joyous response from the General Conference (Breedt, n.d.:7; Schwarz, 1979:224) and resulted in plans rapidly being put together to send some missionary workers to South Africa (Swanepoel, 1972:10). In just a little over eight months, on 28 July 1887, the missionary group chosen to come to South Africa consisting of two ministers, two literature evangelists, a Bible instructor together with members of their families, arrived in Cape Town (Robinson, n.d.:62; Spalding, 1962:6).

II. THE COMMENCEMENT OF DUTCH-ENGLISH ANTAGONISM IN THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH IN SOUTH AFRICA

A. *Beginning of dissatisfaction among Dutch-speaking believers*

This rapid deployment of the first missionaries to South Africa was, however, to carry in its wake a factor which would adversely affect the Church's more propitious development (Pantalone, 1996:151). When Wessels and Van Druten had written to the General Conference in 1886, they were no doubt expecting a Dutch-speaking minister to come to South Africa. This was confirmed by Wessels himself in a monogram which he wrote many years later. Part of his document read as follows:

Shortly after this experience, Brother Van Druten and I went to Brother Hunt and asked him to write to our people in America, asking that they send us a Dutch minister (Personal experiences of PJD Wessels, 17 November 1924, DFN 506, EGWRC).

It has been argued in this thesis that by the late 1880s the Afrikaner's outlook on life and religious inclinations differed considerably from that of the English-speaking people. However, instead of sending Dutch-speaking ministers, the Seventh-day Adventist Church in America sent English-speaking missionaries into a country that was already polarized and racked with severe social, linguistic and political perplexities (McCord, 1952:170-173).

The negative attitude by which English-speaking American missionaries were regarded by the Afrikaner-Dutch community was already in evidence before the arrival of the Seventh-day Adventist missionaries. In the early 1880s an American preacher by the name of Hazelberg had caused quite a stir by his preaching on faith healing and distribution of literature (Van Zyl, 1990:77). SJ du Toit the nationalistic editor of Die Patriot who would also strongly oppose the spread of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, recorded Hazelberg's departure from South Africa with the following contemptuous statement:

De Heer Hazenberg is terug naar Amerika, het bakermat van dweeperijen, van waar hij kwam (Swanepoel, 1972:78-79).

Translation: Mr Hazenberg has returned to America the cradle of fanaticism where he came from.

When the entreaty had been received to send missionaries to South Africa, the General Conference had no option but to dispatch English-speaking ministers because there were apparently no Dutch-speaking ministers to send to South Africa at that time (Swanepoel, 1972:10). In the light of the presumable paucity of Dutch-speaking ministers a deep farsightedness becomes evident in the missionary mandate that the first American missionaries received from Ellen White before they embarked for South Africa. A part of this mandate stated that they were to use South Africans as soon as possible in the functioning of the Church. Part of this instruction reads as follows.

No one man's ideas, one man's plans, are to have a controlling power in carrying forward this work. One is not to stand apart from the others and make his plans and ideas the criterion for all the workers. There is to be with individual members sent forth together, a board for counsel together.

One is not to stand apart from others and argue his own ways and plans, for he may have an education in a certain direction and possess certain traits of character which will be detrimental to the interests of the work if allowed to become a controlling power (In White, *Testimonies for Southern Africa*, 1977:8).

This admonition is admittedly not worded in modern missiological terminology. In it, however, if one reads carefully between the lines, are the first exhortations that the American missionaries in South Africa were not to appropriate all the decision making and take all responsibilities upon themselves but were to allow local people to participate in all avenues of missionary work as well. A scrutiny of the Church's earliest records, however, discloses that admonishment such as these and others that followed were overlooked and never implemented, (Van Zyl, 1990:72).

The Church's failure to move rapidly enough in the deployment of persons to minister effectively to the Afrikaans and Dutch communities becomes evident very early in the history of the Church. At the Third General Meeting of Seventh-day Adventists held in Cape Town in December 1890, the apprehension of the Dutch Seventh-day Adventist believers were raised when they strongly appealed, firstly, for a worker to be sent to South Africa to administer to the needs of the Dutch people and, secondly, for literature in a vernacular that they could understand (Swanepoel, 1972:23).

Besides the official church correspondence and documentation of that time, it is the many personal letters, written during the first twenty years of the Church's existence in this country that best reveals the hopes, the feelings of frustration, and the moods of the Dutch believers living at that time. In one of the earliest letters written to America, Phillip Wessels a brother of Pieter Wessels, expressed his views on the state of affairs in the Church the following words, "The work has started on a very bad footing here" (Letter from Phillip Wessels to WC White, 25 October 1892, DFN 506, Letter 0001, EGWRC).

His insight into the problems existing with the Dutch believers and how the Church leaders could have dealt with them becomes evident further on in the same letter:

As you are well aware of the fact there do exist national prejudice and national peculiarities, and the only correct way of dealing with them is to meet them on their own ground as much as possible, with advance and ripe plans and ideas. I think more should be done in the Bible work. We have as you know only one Bible worker. We ought to have a Holland class or teacher to engage in that language. as [sic] you know here are thousands of the Dutch speaking population in fact the greater majority of the European population is of that element...There is no work done here in the Dutch to my know, ege [sic] (Letter from Phillip Wessels to WC White, 25 October 1892, DFN 506, Letter 0001, EGWRC).

After elaborating on the forceful opposition that the Church was experiencing from ministers of other religious denominations and the prejudice that had arisen against the Seventh-day Adventist Church, he stipulated:

I think the time is [sic] come that we can now have our own conference (Letter from Phillip Wessels to WC White, 25 October 1892, DFN 506, Letter 0001, EGWRC).

Several months later Phillip Wessels wrote to Ellen White, once again expressing his frustration that nothing was being done for the Dutch-speaking believers. Part of his letter read as follows:

And I can see myself that a great deal needs to be done especially among our Holland nationality... There is our Holland field. It is so to say a vacant field...Our English bretheren [sic] seem hardly to realize our needs (Letter from Phillip Wessels to Ellen G. White, 14 January 1893, Document File Number 506, Letter 0002, EGWRC)

In the same letter, Phillip Wessels stated his convictions regarding the utilisation of the financial resources of the South African believers, an issue which was destined to be repeated over and over again:

It is not clear to me that I should do such a thing to spend my money in other countries when there is a great need of it in our own land (Letter from Phillip Wessels to Ellen G. White, 14 January 1893, Document File Number 506, Letter 0002, EGWRC).

With regard to the concerns existing at that time of reaching the Dutch-speaking people with the gospel and in reaction to the attitude of contempt and disregard that was being shown to persons of Dutch origin, some letters did not hesitate to use the most forceful language possible. In July 1893 Phillip Wessels wrote to Ellen White. Part of his letter read as follows:

We are not so primary and crude in our ideas as some may think we are. My nationality had long long years to battle against barbarism and disadvantages, but now prosperity has give our country a share and now my people are lifting up the brow for civilization and advancement. Then strangers come in our churches, and they do not see things as we perhaps may see them, and they go away with bad impressions. I cannot see why matters ought to be left so And our dutch work be so hindered. We have to meet the people where they are. We cannot always carry out strict American notions. And it will be more and more realized that Other people have also ideas of their own which are as dear as such ideas may be to americans...should be more such talents in such positions representing foreign interists. So that the work can be international in fact and not in word only. [Letter has been reproduced unabridged] (Letter from Phillip Wessels to Ellen G. White, 10 July 1893, Document File Number 506, Letter 0005, EGWRC).

Four years later, the situation with the Dutch believers had evidently still not ameliorated. This is in evidence from a part of the following letter:

...but what about the Dutch work is the question. Hardly anything is done for them. (Letter from Pieter Wessels to Ellen G. White, 26 April 1897, Document File Number 506, Letter 0013, EGWRC).

These feelings of discontent that had arisen between the Dutch-speaking believers and the Church leadership in South Africa had apparently become so bitter that the rumblings eventually reached America, compelling the General Conference to take some action in the matter (Swanepoel, 1972:89). In an attempt to get to the root of the dilemma, the General Conference sent Professor WW Prescott, its Educational Secretary, to South Africa to give them added insight into the prevailing situation (Breedt, n.d.:17; Swanepoel, 1972:35-36). In his report, Prescott subsequently noted that amongst other factors that were causing problems in South African Church were:

The conflicts that existed between the indigenous development of the church in South Africa and the doctrinal and organizational concepts that had been imported from America (Swanepoel, 1972:89).

In Prescott's opinion the Church in South Africa needed careful instruction and exceptionally stable leadership, in order to allow it to develop along orthodox lines (Swanepoel, 1972:89). At the end of 1897, shortly after Prescott's visit to South Africa, presumably in an attempt to alleviate the tension that had arisen, Asa.T.Robinson the South African Conference president who had incurred the wrath of many of the Dutch-speaking church members (Letter from Pieter Wessels to Ellen G. White, 13 March 1897, DFN 506, Letter 0010, EGWRC) was moved to Australia and replaced with WS Hyatt (Union College Board Minutes, 13 September 1897, p.5, HBCA).

This was clearly not an auspicious time for an English-speaking American to take office as the new South African Conference president. Not only was the Church on the threshold of a severe financial crisis, but polarization had also already taken place in South Africa as a result of the Uitlander issue (Van Jaarsveld, 1975:308) the abortive Jameson Raid that followed, and the impending conflict between Britain and the Boer Republics (McCord, 1952:170-173).

B. The influence of the South African War (1899-1902)

Even though there is not a great deal of reference made to the South African War in the Church's records, it unquestionably disrupted its operations (SAC Minutes, Report of the Ninth Session, 27 September 1901, p.1, HBCA; SAC Minutes, Tenth Annual Session, 17 January 1903, pp.53-54, HBCA). Only three months after the war had begun, Hyatt wrote to America expressing his fears that the armed conflict in South Africa would stir up nationalistic feelings between the English and the Dutch-speaking believers in the Church (Breedt, n.d.:13). Judging from the mood of this letter it appears to indicate that some degree of confrontation had already taken place between the English and Dutch-speaking members in the Church. Referring directly to the South African War and the effect that it was having on the Church, Hyatt wrote:

Of course, they (Seventh-day Adventist Church members) feel this war keenly, as they have relatives in the service, fighting mostly on the side of the Boers [brackets added] (Letter from WS Hyatt to Ellen G. White, 27 December 1899, HBCA).

The involvement of so many South Africans in the war and the political and social dilemmas that surrounded them, made it unavoidable for the Seventh-day Adventist Church not to have with its own share of controversies (Breedt, n.d.:14). By the time the war began in October 1899, the Church with still a very small membership had not firmly established itself in South Africa. Furthermore, because of its American character and because all the positions of leadership were held by English-speaking people, it is not difficult to understand why the Church, its leaders and its modes of operation, immediately became suspect to the Dutch-Afrikaans population (Breedt, n.d.:14; Swanepoel, 1972:78-79).

In the letter to Ellen White in December 1899, Hyatt wrote that because of the tremendous financial strains that had come upon the Church, as a result of the war, it had been necessary for the South African Conference to cut back on their staff and ask certain employees to work on a self-supporting basis (Breedt, n.d.:14). Because of the strained racial feelings that existed in the Church at that time between the Dutch and the English some of the believers felt that the Dutch person that had been retrenched had been discriminated against. Hyatt wrote as follows:

They tell me straight that it is all because he is Dutch. If he were an American he would be employed and get good wages and nothing that I say helps the matter any (Letter from WS Hyatt to Ellen G. White, 14 December 1899, HBCA).

The impressions among the Dutch believers was that Hyatt was against Dutch people (Breedt, n.d.:15). Occurrences such as these often became very heated and were the cause of much bitterness and antagonism between the Dutch members of the Church and the English-speaking American leaders (Breedt, n.d.:15).

C. Desire develops for a separate organization

As emotions between English and Afrikaans-speaking believers became more and more strained (Coetzer, 1985:164), talk eventually arose about holding separate services for the two different language group in the Church (Swanepoel, 1972:93). It is again from the letter that Hyatt wrote to Ellen White at the end of 1899 that these feelings become evident:

There is another matter that is causing me much perplexity. I feel very anxious about it. It is the feeling between the Dutch and English brethren. I expect that you have known something about the feeling of the Dutch brethren with reference to the work here.

At the beginning of the war the Dutch brethren and sisters decided to hold two prayer services each week to pray that the Lord would close up this war in some way. They have been very zealous in this and have expressed several times to me that the English brethren are very bitter towards them. With the exception of one of two instances

I have not heard any of the English brethren express themselves harshly towards the Dutch. This feeling has grown until we have reached a crisis. Some of the brethren feel that there should be a separation in the work; but they are not all united on this point. Last evening I met with the leading Dutch brethren and sisters and after some consultation a committee was appointed to draft a plan which will express the desires of the Dutch brethren. Now, Sister White, it seems to me that we are in a very critical time. The question of supremacy in South Africa between these classes in the church is very much strained.

When I came to Africa the English and the Dutch were having their services but once a month. This change I opposed because I felt that it would bring trouble later. Now the Dutch people are asking that they might hold services every Sabbath morning. Now we come again to the relation between these two classes in the Conference. I believe this should be settled once and for all. All are agreed in asking you to give us counsel on this question. Our plan is briefly this: We have postponed indefinitely our Conference which was to be held December 22-31. Now we hope to have our Dutch brethren unite on what they desire for the future, and this will be sent to you by representatives as aforesaid (Letter from WS Hyatt to Ellen G. White, 14 December 1899, HBCA).

Ellen White's response to Hyatt's consternation came in the form of a strong rebuke. In this letter she reprimanded the American leaders for the damage that they had caused in the Church in South Africa because of the half hearted manner in which they had worked. Part of her censure read as follows:

I will say to my brethren in South Africa, there has not been that wisdom and keen foresight used in dealing with the Wessels family that there should have been. It is a sad fact that not all the men who have come from America as workers have been a help and blessing to South Africa...This has cost South Africa much. How much might have been accomplished in South Africa if the men sent to that field had been devoted Christians...Some of the workers sent from America to Africa have been hindrances and not helps (Letter from Ellen White to W.S. Hyatt, Letter number H-183-1899, EGWRC).

When Ellen White wrote to SN Haskell an American missionary who had spent some time in South Africa in the mid 1890s her words of censure against some of the Americans who had worked in South Africa were even stronger:

In the past I have not ventured to refer to these objectionable things, lest I should do harm. But the General Conference has done great injury to the cause by sending to Africa persons who were wholly unfitted for the work there. Had the work in South Africa been properly carried forward, what a change would have been seen there and in the regions beyond. Did our brethren in America think that if a man happened to have talent in small things he was sure to be fitted for the work in South Africa? The unprepared workers who were either encouraged to go to South Africa, or who encouraged themselves to go, have left such an impression, that in regard to many of the workers the people would rather they had never left America. These things have been a millstone to drag down the work in Africa, to confuse instead of making clear. Talent and money has been largely diverted from South Africa, a field which should have had both these things. This money should not have been transported to America to enrich a field which had abundant facilities.

Let those in America who suppose the voice of the General Conference is the voice of God, become one with God before they utter their opinions. I wish to say that a very poor example has been set the Wessells family by the workers sent to Africa from America. Some of the workers had never learned the lesson of wearing Christ's yoke and bearing His burden. Had the workers in Africa remembered this, they would have done a great work by their God-fearing, unselfish attitude. The work would have gone forward among the Dutch and the other languages. Publications containing the truth would have been circulated everywhere. Ministers and rulers would have been converted to the truth. The war now going on would not have been (Letter from Ellen White to SN Haskell, Letter number H-187-1899, EGWRC).

In spite of the severe reprimand from Ellen White, the strife and discontent in the Church over the issue of English and Dutch did not stop. It eventually boiled over later in 1901 when a number of Dutch-Afrikaans speaking members considered that the time had finally arrived to establish a church that would cater exclusively for their own linguistic and cultural needs (Swanepoel, 1972:93). The leader behind this movement appears to have been the influential Professor Hubertus Elffers (Breedt, n.d.:19).

Elffers who had come to South Africa from Holland in 1878 (Swanepoel, 1972:130; Thompson, 1977:23) had been converted to Seventh-day Adventism in 1892 (*De Kerkbode*, 2 September 1931, pp.442-444, SALCT). By 1901 Elffers was the Dutch teacher at Claremont Union College, the official translator of the

Seventh-day Adventist Church, the vice-president of the South African Conference (Coetzer, 1985:164; Van Zyl, 1990:122) and a member of the Zuid-Afrikaanse Taalbond (*Dictionary of S.A. Biography*, vol.1, 1968, pp.275-276, SALCT),

In a letter written to the South African Conference Committee, Elffers stated his case in the following manner:

The three speeches delivered respectively by Elder Hyatt, Bro.Ingle and Elder Edmed in our meeting of Sunday last, in response to my request for counsel in regard to my future work in the Cause, have had that effect on me for which I cannot doubt they were intended. I may perhaps remind you that the chief points in them were the following:

1. That since the time when I accepted the truth, the introduction of the language question had divided the churches.
2. That on account of my conviction that the gospel should go to every individual in his mother tongue, I am looked upon as a disseminator of strife, and have been kept from visiting other parts of the field lest these too should become polluted by the spirit that is in me.
3. That as long as I hold to the plan for gospel labour laid down in Acts 2:7-11, the work of God will never prosper in Africa and I shall be the means of crippling its course.
4. That the use of the Dutch language is a curse to South Africa, as it has proved political, and ought not to be countenanced in our work. I would remind you that these speeches were delivered without any provocation, and that on no former occasion had I been made aware of your cherishing against me feelings of this nature. Having, however, now been declared an accursed thing by three of your number, three more allowing every word of these scathing remarks to pass unchallenged, no other course remains open to me as a Christian and a gentleman, than to withdraw from any and every part of the work, which I hereby do (Cape Conference Minutes, 3 August 1901, pp.39-41, HBCA).

The Church's reply to Elffers which refuted all the above accusations, was worded as follows:

We have to take exception to the various charges you have made, and must say that the language you have quoted in your letter is not the same as that used at the Committee meeting to which you refer...We would respectfully remind you that the subject

discussed on the Conference Committee referred to in your letter was that of separating the Dutch work from the English work in this field. You had suggested that the Dutch should have their own meeting-houses, with their own services, ordinances, and Sabbath-Schools, and it was this division of the church that we as a Committee could not endorse. We express our unanimous desire and prayer that the Lord may enlighten your mind to see the error that you have committed in acting as you have done in regard to this matter (South African Conference Minutes, 6 August 1901, HBCA).

The "Elffers incident" was destined to become very emotional and to cause severe repercussions in the Church. The Wessels family, by far the wealthiest South African Seventh-day Adventists in South Africa at that time, responded in the following manner to the chastisement of Professor Elffers:

For the last eight years accusation of the same sort as those referred to above have been made both privately and publicly against the Dutch workers in the cause. Many of the Dutch members of the denomination feel that unless something is done very soon to remedy this state of affairs, not only will there be a serious division in the church, but its loyal members will have to take matters into their own hands and control not only their own funds but their own church.

I hold you responsible for the action already taken by Professor Elffers and other Dutch workers, and for any future results of this your unwise and unchristian attitude towards them. Dutch workers have not received proper support and encouragement and have so been allowed to fall away or take up other vocations.

Dutch members of the denomination have so keenly felt the necessity for more aggressive [sic] work among the Dutch people that some of them have withheld [sic] their tithes and others have given them with the stipulation that the money should be used for the support of [sic] Dutch ministers and workers. To their great disappointment, however, this has not been done as yet; and now matters are brought to an issue by the false accusation of the Conference Committee as assembled in council [sic] against one of the most earnest members of the S.D.A. church in South Africa. This brother has been the mouth piece of several of the Dutch workers in the Conference, and at that meeting referred to above, he only spoke for others and was thus ignominiously insulted. A meeting will be convened in due time by some of the members of the S.D.A. church to consider what action is to be taken in the future (Letter from AE Wessels to Conference Committee of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, 4 August 1901, EGWRC).

Several months before the above-mentioned crisis, Elffers had already received a letter from America with the admonishment that he was to abandon his views on holding separate services for the Dutch-speaking people. Part of this letter read as follows:

Something has been said in the letter written by brethren Hyatt and Hankins about the desire on the part of some of our South African brethren to have the conference work divided into two sections, or two conferences, in which the Dutch will work for the Dutch and English for the English. I am convinced that this is not the Lord's plan. I was with my mother for two years in Switzerland, Germany, France and Scandinavia, and heard many propositions from our brethren regarding the separation of the work of the several nationalities. The counsel sent us from the Lord was always contrary to such as separation. This counsel urged the brethren of the different nationalities to join together in the most perfect union. Brethren who could speak both the German and French language were advised not to concentrate their efforts upon people of their own nation, but to labor for souls wherever they could find the most ready to listen to the truth. They were also advised not to labor for division according to nationality and language in the conferences, but to forget all national questions, and to labor together to carry the message to all the people (Letter from W.C. White to Professor Hubertus Elffers, 14 December 1899, HBCA).

In spite of the urging of the South African Conference that he repent of his so-called errors, and the advice that he had received from America that the proposed separation between Dutch and English work in the Seventh-day Adventist Church should not take place, Elffers chose to resign from the ministry of the Church in mid 1901 (Coetzer, 1985:164; Swanepoel, 1972:94).

The late Pastor PA Venter (snr) who knew Elffers personally, adds another dimension to the saga. In his memoirs Pastor Venter states that Elffers had told him that there had been a great deal of opposition from the Church's leaders against his printing of *De Wachter*, the Dutch counterpart of the Church's monthly magazine. The Church leaders at the time apparently believed that they alone should have a right to print the Church's newspapers. It was at this time that Elffers stopped printing the Dutch paper. Pastor Venter also records Elffers' recollections of the jealousy that he had experienced from certain persons in positions of leadership in the Church (Memoirs of Pastor P.A. Venter (snr), n.d., pp.32-35, Document in the author's possession).

Not much has been recorded of Elffers' life following his resignation from the conference. There are indications that he and some of his Dutch followers met and worshipped at the Rustica church which was his own personal chapel (Coetzer, 1985:164; Swanepoel, 1972:130-133; Thompson, 1977:23-24). Elffers

did return into the employment of the Church for a number of years and became the president of the Orange River Conference in 1913 (Memoirs of Pastor PA Venter (snr), n.d., p.33. In author's possession). He, however, broke again with the Seventh-day Adventist Church in 1926 (Swanepoel, 1972:133; Thompson, 1977:23) and died some years later in virtual obscurity (Die Burger, Friday 31 July 1931; De Kock, 1968:275-276).

Swanepoel records that, even though the Church was at this time able to retain its organizational unity in spite of the severity of the nationalistic antagonism that had arisen, that this conflict was to "leave wounds on the body of the church that proved almost impossible to heal" (Swanepoel, 1972:94).

III. SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN SOUTH AFRICA AND THE LANGUAGE QUESTION

A. *The establishment of Claremont Union College (1892)*

Besides the renewed request for a Dutch gospel minister to be sent to South Africa and the plea for Dutch literature to be made available in South Africa, the third general meeting of Seventh-day Adventists in South Africa held in December 1890 also dealt with another concern, namely, the need that had arisen for a Seventh-day Adventist educational institution to be built in this country (Pantalone, 1996:54; Swanepoel, 1972:23-24). As a result, with Asa.T. Robinson the South African Conference president doing a great deal to promote the concept of a Seventh-day Adventist educational institution in South Africa, 23 acres of land was purchased in 1892, in Kenilworth, a suburb of Cape Town, for the express purpose of building an educational centre where South African workers could be trained (*Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, 1976:577; Swanepoel, 1972:44,168).

The erection of the three-storey dormitory building and the school building began shortly afterwards and were both completed by the beginning of 1893 at a cost of 7300 Pounds (CUC Second Annual Calendar 1894. HBCA). In January 1893 the *Cape Times* carried the first advertisement of the school inviting prospective students to write to the principal for particulars regarding the subjects and classes offered (Robinson, n.d.:73).

From its inception, the College, which also operated a primary and a secondary school on the same premises, offered a first class, four-year collegiate degree, giving students the option of taking courses in Greek, Latin, calculus, trigonometry, geometry, astronomy, logic, chemistry, physics, advanced algebra and moral sciences (*Union College Calendar*, 1894, pp.14-15, HBCA).

The educational curriculum of the College also stressed the holistic development of their students. An early calendar outlined its objectives as follows:

The design of our institution is to give its pupils the advantage of thorough education in all those subjects usually taught in a college of the first class. At the same time it will seek to impart instruction in those principles that aid the development of true character, thus fitting the student for the higher responsibilities of life. It will also give instruction concerning the laws of health and bring into active use all the powers of the body, thus giving to the pupils, physical training and culture. In a word, the object of the institution is to educate every part of the human body so that the students may become the possessors of true refinement, culture and Christian character (*Union College Calendar*, 1894, p.6, HBCA).

1. *The College perceived as alien*

Notwithstanding the College's elevated objectives, severe problems were destined to hinder its development almost right from its date of commencement (Van Zyl, 1990:109). Included among these problems was its alien character. Although "Claremont", a suburb of Cape Town, had initially been part of the name of the College, its yearbooks, graduation booklets and advertisements, reveal that in later years "Claremont" was for some unexplained reason deleted from its name (*Union College Calendar* 1913; Graduation exercise folders 1909, 1910, 1911, 1912, HBCA) and the College took on precisely the same name as a sister Seventh-day Adventist college situated in Nebraska in the United States of America (Interview with PA Venter, 29 June 1997). Besides the extraneous name that it had adopted, its strongly English-American character was further emphasized by the importation not only of an American, English-speaking principal and teaching staff (*Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, 1996:71; Swanepoel, 1972:171) but also an American based educational curriculum (Van Eck, 1948:34-35).

As a result the College found itself, like the English-speaking missionaries who had come to South Africa in 1887, at odds with the strongly Afrikaans-Dutch spirit both inside and outside the Church (Robinson, n.d.:74). Dr. Paul Coetzer, who has written quite extensively on Seventh-day Adventist education in South Africa, states categorically that "the language question at the Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions very often, chiefly because of its strongly English-American orientation, mirrored the struggles and the dilemmas that were taking place in the other departments of the denomination" (Coetzer, 1985:168).

The dissatisfaction and unhappiness of the Dutch and Afrikaner people with the College's operations becomes evident once again from some of the personal correspondence of that time. Although accurate assessments cannot be made from a single letter, or from letters from one particular family, they do nevertheless, does give some insight into how the school was being perceived and the spirit that was prevailing at that time. In mid 1897 Pieter Wessels wrote the following concerning the College:

We have six children and all want school and they are growing large and take much to bring up...our school here is not up to mutch [sic]. I am afraid it is not the head but rather the tail (Letter from PJD Wessels to Ellen White, 26 April 1897, Letter number 0013, Document file number 506, HBCA).

In his memoirs, the late Pastor PA Venter (snr) spoke in the following manner about his years at Union College:

My skool jare is deur die oorlog verlore en 1909 besluit ek om na die ou Union Kollege te gaan en bietjie Engels te leer. Ek het my vee diere verkoop en in die begin van 1910 was ek in die ou Union Kollege. Die studies het swaar gegaan. Dit was alles Engels en ek moes maar my toevlug na die woorde boek neem [underling added] (Memoirs PA Venter (snr), n.d., p.20, In author's possession)

Translation: My school years were disrupted by the war and in 1909 I decided to go to old Union College to learn a little English. I sold my livestock and in 1910 began at old Union College. The studies were very demanding. Everything was in English and I had to depend very much upon the dictionary.

Besides the English orientated education, the non-South African principals and educators who served at the College (Swanepoel, 1972:174-176) reference must also be made to manner in which the College was advertised. Even though not all the College's yearbooks appear to have survived, those that are still available, namely, the 1894, 1913, and 1917 issues were compiled entirely in English. An examination of the contents of these yearbooks confirms the College's unSouth African character. The 1894 Union College Calendar divided the four different years of the collegiate course in a jargon that was uncompromisingly American. First year was designated as "Freshman Year" the second year as "Sophomore Year" while third and fourth years were termed "Junior Year" and "Senior Year" respectively. The same College calendar promoted its library and reading material in the following manner:

Steps have been taken towards furnishing the College with a good library. Some money has been appropriated by the College Board for this purpose and a number of book have been donated by friends of the College...In connection with the library, will be a reading room, supplied with standard papers and journals of both English and American print (CUC Second Annual Calendar, 1894, HBCA).

Even its mode of attracting public students to the College appears to have been done exclusively in English. At the turn of the century the *South African Sentinel* (the Seventh-day Adventist Church magazine) advertised the College in the following manner;

Parents and guardians are you looking for a school where your Boy or Girl can get a practical education? Try Union College. The school offers the best instruction in the most practical subjects. Students of any age and any denomination taken (*South African Sentinel*, January 1900, p.14, HBCL).

Although Hubertus Elffers was admittedly part of the teaching staff and was employed to teach a few hours of Dutch per week at the College before he resigned in 1901 (Swanepoel, 1972:171), it is clear that the efforts to move in this direction was never promoted with great vigour and, therefore, remained negligible. In fact, it becomes quite evident that those who wished to see the teaching of Dutch take root at Union College often had to fight tooth and nail for it to become a reality. In mid 1897 the following was recorded in the College Board minutes:

He [the Dutch teacher] also asked for the decision of the board as to grade 4 taking Dutch lessons. The Dutch teacher was anxious to teach this grade. The teacher of the grade in question objected on the grounds of scholars having their time filled up during the sessions in other studies [square brackets added] (Union College Board Minutes, 12 July 1897, p.3, HBCA).

In spite of the objections raised against the teaching of Dutch, on the motion of Professor Elffers, the resolve was taken at the same meeting that the grade 4 class would be taught Dutch (Union College Board Minutes, 12 July 1897, p.3, HBCA).

This research was unfortunately unable to ascertain with certainty what effects the post-South African War educational policies of Alfred Milner had on Union College. Having, however, at this stage a fairly accurate understanding of the English linguistic inclinations of the College, it can be stated with a certain degree of certitude, that Milner's policies of anglicization would have caused no major disruptions to its existing curriculum or in the language medium the College employed to instruct its students. An indication in this regard can perhaps be gleaned from the College's records which confirm that in the post-war years Dutch was only taught for a few hours a week - as Milner's educational policy had prescribed (Union College Board Minutes, 19 January 1899, HBCA). The desire that English should predominate at the College also came from some of the students. In an undated manuscript, a Union College student penned these words:

The one book which the best writers say contains the finest English is the Bible. Has it not proved itself...we even read that Shakespeare studied the Bible...a year or two will show whether the Bible as a text book in Union College will produce better English work... (Manuscript from a Union College student, n.d., Document File Number HR 10, HBCA).

2. Views on government examinations

Feelings of discontent against the College appear to have also arisen because students were being dissuaded from writing the South African matriculation examinations (Van Zyl, 1990:109). Many of the students themselves were in favour of writing these examinations. The parents of these students also wanted their children to write these exams (Swanepoel, 1972:169). The College Board, however, thought differently and wished to see greater emphasis placed on practical skills rather than on academic endeavours thus preparing the students for work in the mission fields (Thompson, 1977:155). Virgil Robinson records that as a result of such views, the College lost the confidence and support from both the meagre Seventh-day Adventist community and the South African public. He noted furthermore that in only the second year of the College's existence that it experienced a drastic drop in the first-year student enrolment (Robinson, n.d., 74).

Based on these findings, it becomes evident that many consequential decisions were being taken at the College by persons who were either not acquainted with the cultural, social and linguistic needs of the people of this country, or who inflexibly refused to understand and recognize the demands of the local South African people.

B. The College relocated to Natal (1918)

As early as 1907, concerns were been expressed by College administrators and Church leaders alike that Union College should be relocated. At a Union College Board meeting the following remark made by WS Hyatt was recorded: "There seemed to be a strong feeling in the mind of some of the brethren that the college work should be removed to the country" (Union College Board Minutes, 17 April 1907, p.185, HBCA).

The chief reason given for the intended move was that the rapid urban encroachment that had taken place around the College grounds was having a deleterious effect upon the College and its students (*SKC Annual Calendar*, 1925, p.61, HBCA; Van Eck, 1948:38). As a result, desires were soon being expressed that the Claremont property be sold and that the College moved to another location, preferably to some place in the country where students could engage in agricultural work and where the College could become self-supporting by growing some of its own food (Memorandum to the African Division, November 1924, Document File Number HR 54, HBCA).

After repeated warnings from some people not to relocate the College at a place that was too isolated (Union College Board Minutes, 17 April 1907, HBCA) the College was eventually moved away from the Cape in 1918 to a farm situated on the slopes of Spioen Kop, the scene of one of the most renowned battles of the South African War (Van Eck, 1948:39; Thompson, 1977:135-136).

The move to Spioen Kop necessitated a break of an entire academic year while the College was being built. There were also two successive name changes, to The South African Training School which began its operations in 1919 and then to Spion Kop College in 1921 (SKC Annual Calendar, 1925, p.61, HBCA).

While the years spent at Spioenkop were not devoid of struggles by Afrikaans-speaking students, they were also years during which important adaptations would take place. Every single principal that served at the College and also most of the teaching staff came from overseas. Its educational principles, philosophy and objectives were often couched in precisely the same terminology as that of Union College (SKC Annual Calendar, 1925, pp.77-80,86, HBCA). However, Van Eck states that the new College, especially during the mid 1920s, was to develop and adopt a character very different to that of its predecessor (Van Eck, 1948:41).

Much of Spion Kop College's records have unfortunately gone astray. As a result the history of the first three years of the College, while it was still known as The South African Training School, remains obscure. However, from the material that is still available it becomes evident that from 1922 onward, even though prescribed English literature still tended to predominate, that the teaching of both Afrikaans and Dutch began to gain a greater degree of attention (SKC Annual Calendar, 1925, pp.86-90, HBCA). In 1925 the College calendar made the following epigrammatic statement:

Kennis van Afrikaans is nodig vir al ons werkers in die veld. Daarom bied ons 'n sterker kursus in Afrikaans. Die student wat hierdie kursus met volharding volg, sal 'n suksesvolle werker in die saak van die Heer word (SKC Annual Calendar, 1925, pp.86-90, HBCA).

Translation: A knowledge of Afrikaans is a requirement for all our workers in the field. That is precisely why we present a strong course in Afrikaans. The student that perseveres with this course, will become an effective worker in the cause of the Lord.

In addition to the above, the College also promoted the holding of Afrikaans seminar periods in the following manner:

Hierdie klas kom om die veertien dae vir 'n uur bymekaar om te gesels oor onderwerpe van algemene aard. Alles wat hierdie klas doen, die lees van die Bybel, toesprake, sing of bid sal gedoen word deur die medium van Afrikaans. Bywoon van die klas word vereis van elke student in die kursus, wat Afrikaans in die Standerds geneem het (Spion Kop College Annual Calendar, 1925, pp.90-91, HBCA).

Translation: This class which meets every fortnight for an hour comes together to discuss topics of general interest. Everything that is done in this class, the reading of the Bible, speeches, singing or praying will be done in the Afrikaans language medium. Attendance is obligatory for every student that has taken Afrikaans in the standards.

The views in regard to language appear to have changed so radically that proficiency in Afrikaans even became a requirement in order to graduate. Part of the guideline for graduation in 1925 read as follows:

Studente, wat uit die Unie van S.A. kom, word verplig om Afrikaans te neem in elke jaar van die voorbereidende kursus (Spion Kop College Annual Calendar, 1925, p.105, HBCA).

Translation: Students that come from the Union of South Africa are required to take Afrikaans in every year of the preparatory course

High school students at Spion Kop College who desired to study Afrikaans were also given this opportunity. In 1924 the following was recorded:

Students who are preparing for Dutch work who elect Afrikaans in Standards 8 and 9 be allowed to drop the English literature of Standard 10 and devote extra time to Afrikaans (Spion Kop College Board Minutes, 6 July 1924, HBCA).

The teaching of Afrikaans at Spion Kop College was destined to continue up to 1927, the year before the College was to move back to the Cape. At an executive committee meeting the following decisions were taken in regard to Afrikaans:

The matter of the language to be offered at the college was given study. In view of the field needs it was felt that the Afrikaans work in the college should be so arranged as to become a required subject for all prospective workers in the Afrikaans language. It was therefore VOTED that all students whose home language is Afrikaans be required to take Afrikaans in both years of the College Course. It was also VOTED that Afrikaans become an elective for all other students (SKC Executive Committee Minutes, 27 August 1927, HBCA).

Two days later at another meeting the question was raised whether credit should be given to students wishing to study at overseas Seventh-day Adventist educational institutions. It appears that at this time students who were leaving Spion Kop College were not being given credit for Afrikaans subjects. It was subsequently voted by the Spion Kop College Board to request the Educational Secretary of the African Division to ascertain the standing of

Afrikaans in the American Union and to request for appropriate credit hours for this subject. (SKC Minutes, 29 August 1927, HBCA).

These years also saw, because of the greater emphasis that was being placed upon teaching of Dutch and Afrikaans, the employment of more South African teachers at Spion Kop College. In August 1923 it was voted that an additional teacher be sought to assist Mr. Boekhout who was already teaching Dutch and Afrikaans (SKC Minutes, 12 August 1923, HBCA). It was also at about this time that Pastor PA Venter (snr) was called to Spion Kop College where he taught Afrikaans for more than five years (Memoirs of PA Venter (snr), n.d., p.4, In author's possession).

While the above paragraphs outline the transitions that took place which allowed room for the study of Afrikaans the changes never transpired without a measure of resistance. In an anonymous and undated letter, a staff member from Spion Kop College recalled an incident of antagonism and opposition against the offering of Afrikaans at the College. He relates the following recollections of what took place:

Op 'n dag in personeelvergadering, het hierdie Amerikaanse prinsipaal tydens 'n bespreking met sy vuis op die tafel geslaan en gesê: We must stamp out this Afrikaans question...I'll stamp out Afrikaans out of this school like I stamped French out of our Canadian schools (Spion Kop se Dae, n.d., Document File Number HR 54, HBCA).

Translation: One day at a staff meeting, during a discussion this American principal slammed the table with his fist stating: We must stamp out this Afrikaans question...I'll stamp out Afrikaans out of this school like I stamped French out of our Canadian schools.

If such vehement opposition existed against the placement of Afrikaans at the College, more than likely not only from one person, what ushered in the above mentioned changes? The answers to the above question are multifaceted and must be sought in circumstances which took place both inside and outside the Church. On the political level, the mid 1920s was an era of great transformation. As a result of Jan Smuts' policy of conciliation with the British empire and his harsh handling of the coal miners' strike in 1922, he had lost an enormous amount of support from the Afrikaner electorate (Van den Berghe, 1965:102). Hertzog, on the other hand, who had pioneered the establishment of the National Party (Hanf, et al, 1981:95; Swart, 1980:104; Wilkins & Strydom, 1978:40) and had strongly voiced his "Afrikaner first" policy had drawn so much support that it had led to the defeat of Smuts at the election polls in 1924 (Hanf, et.al., 1981:95) and Hertzog became prime minister of South Africa. One year later, in 1925, Afrikaans was, alongside English, recognized as an official language of the Union of South Africa (Patterson, 1957:56).

There is once again no evidence of any pressure being applied to the College to change its existing language policies. Neither are there any references in its records alluding to modifications that needed to be implemented at the College. Be that as it may, there is no question, chiefly because they occurred almost precisely at the same time, that the change of government and the establishment of Afrikaans as an official language must have invariably influenced the Church leaders in regard to the status of Afrikaans.

The early 1920s were also years during which the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa experienced some major changes. Continued efforts by the leadership in America to provide more effective lines of management and thereby give better direction for church activities led them, in 1913, to establish divisional organizations. Schwarz succinctly explained the organizational changes that took place at this time in the following way:

The implementation or creation of added organizational structures grouped the existing union conferences and missions in a given geographical area into a Division under the jurisdiction of the General Conference (Schwarz, 1979:374).

The organizational changes set in motion by the Church in America eventually resulted in the formation of the African Division in 1920 (Thompson, 1977:1; Van Zyl, 1990:100). Vested with the same authority, initiative and decision-making powers as the other world divisions (Thompson, 1977:1) the newly formed African Division became the overall body of organization to direct and coordinate the entire church work in the territory of South Africa and numerous other Southern African countries. The African Division's first president was William Henry Branson (1887-1961). At thirty-three years of age he was still relatively young for such a high position of leadership (Thompson, 1977:160). What he lacked in years though, he made up in aggressive drive and dynamic leadership (*Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, 1976:179). It appears from recollections of early church leaders and others who are still able to remember conversations and events of the time, that it was under Branson's adept leadership that the Seventh-day Adventist Church in this country finally began to "Africanize" (Interview with Carel Neuhoff, 9 June 1997).

Pastor Josef Birkenstock has recollections of how his father, JJ Birkenstock a Seventh-day Adventist evangelist travelled the country with WH Branson conducting evangelistic campaigns. Branson's chief concern was how they could most effectively reach the people of this country with the gospel (Interview with Pastor Josef Birkenstock, 15 June 1997). It appears, according to Pastor Birkenstock, that it did not take Branson very long to realize that without the use of Afrikaans that the Church would never accomplish the task it had set out to do (Interview with Pastor Josef Birkenstock, 15 June 1997). Branson's convictions gave the green light to persons such as John Raubenheimer, JJ Birkenstock, PA Venter, J van der Merwe and others to strongly evangelize the Afrikaans-speaking public living in the rural areas of South Africa (Thompson, 1977: pp.16-20).

There is, in conclusion, beside the political changes in the country and the foresight of WH Branson, another important factor that must be taken into consideration when viewing the path of Afrikaans at Spion Kop College, namely, the feelings of dissatisfaction that arose from a number of students that the College was far too English (Memoirs PA Venter (snr), n.d., p.26, In author's possession). These feelings of discontent, which can be paralleled to some of the frustrations that became evident at the turn of the century, appear to have materialized out of the desire of some theological students, which included John Raubenheimer and Jan van der Merwe, both who would in time become accomplished evangelists, who wished to study the Bible in Afrikaans (Interview with Pastor PA Venter, 29 June 1997). Even though the above incident cannot with certainty be connected to the fist-banging incident of the College principal, Pastor Venter confirmed that the principal did become very angry with the students and very categorically turned down their request.

Even though there is no evidence that these feelings of discontent produced any results. Coupled, however, with the changes that had taken place in the political sphere, the recognition of Afrikaans as an official language and Branson's Afrikaans orientated evangelism, it must nevertheless be recognized as an additional factor in the evolvement of Afrikaans at Spion Kop College.

C. The College moves back to the Cape (1928)

After a number of years spent at the Spioenkop location the prudence of those who had warned that Union College was not be relocated in an area that was too isolated was abruptly revealed (Thompson, 1977:135). In a lengthy memorandum addressed to WH Branson, the African Division president, the Spion Kop College Board expressed its concerns about the deteriorating situation at Spion Kop College. Part of their memorandum read as follows:

...since that time the college board and management have been carefully working to carry out the plans adopted at the Educational Convention and to loyally abide by the decision to leave the college at Spion Kop. But the dissatisfaction on the part of the constituency has increased and the general feeling continues to grow that a mistake was made in the location of the college...We give below some the disadvantages and handicaps in connection with operating the college at Spion Kop...

...Ladysmith is 20 miles away and is only a village, so we are too far away to let our lights shine or make our influence felt...With the exception of a narrow strip of land along the river bottom, the soil of the farm is exceedingly shallow and unsuitable for general farming...

...The inconvenience of not being accessible to medical and dental aid is accentuated in times of severe crisis...It is practically impossible to operate school industries profitably

in this isolated location, so far away from any market and handicapped by the heavy expense of transportation...(Memorial by the Spion Kop College Board to the African Division, 24 November 1924, Document File Number HR 54, HBCA).

In 1927, just over a decade after the move to Natal, Spion Kop College was moved to the Cape (Thompson, 1977:137). It was, however, not moved back to the busy suburbs of Cape Town but to "Bakkers Kloof" a 400 acre, apple and almond orchard situated about 5 kilometres from the village of Somerset West (*Helderberg College Annual Calendar, 1928, p.6; The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald, 6 June 1926, p.23; Thompson, 1977:137; Van Eck, 1948:42*). Building plans had already been initiated at the new location as early as 1926 (*African Division Outlook, 15 June 1927, p.10; HBC Annual Calendar, 1928, p.6 HBCA*) and by March 1928 the new College which had took on the name Helderberg College was ready to take in its first group of students (Van Zyl, 1990:110).

Unlike the break and the many changes that had occurred when Union College had been relocated to Spioen Kop in 1917, a scrutiny of Helderberg College's annals reveal that the educational curriculum and many of the trends and industries initiated and developed at Spion Kop College were simply augmented and built upon when the College was relocated to Somerset West (Van Eck, 1948:40; Pantalone, 1996:114).

Likewise, with regard to bilingualism, with WH Branson still holding the reins of leadership at the African Division, Helderberg College appears to have from its commencement simply continued where Spion Kop College had left off. This is in evidence in the very first Helderberg College yearbook which was also not only brought out in a fully bilingual form but was, save for the name changes of the College, etc., in many portions an almost carbon copy of the 1925 calendar of Spion Kop College. (*Helderberg College Annual Calendar, 1928, pp.30-51; Spion Kop College Calendar, 1925, pp.94-104, HBCA*).

The remaining part of this section will focus specifically on the question of staff and the use of English and Afrikaans at Helderberg College. Even though the first few decades of Helderberg College still saw, as in the case of its predecessors, the presence of teachers and principals from abroad, Helderberg College appears to have been able, almost from the outset, to achieve a remarkably good balance between the complement of South African and overseas teachers. This is in evidence in the staff allocation for the College from the early 1930s. In 1934 the staff allocation read as follows:

GE Shankel	- Principal (non-South African)
JV Wilson	- Business manager (South African)
AV Edwards	- Bible teacher (non-South African)
WF Tarr	- French, English teacher (South African)
Helen Hyatt	- Normal Department teacher (non-South African)
CC Marais	- Preceptor and Afrikaans teacher (South African)
PJ van Eck	- Afrikaans teacher (South African)

LW Finn - Matron (non-South African)
Y de Gournville - Primary school teacher (?)
Mrs Garne - Sewing and dressmaking (South African) (HBC Minutes, 18 June 1934, p.1, HBCA).

Although the staff complements over the ensuing years at Helderberg College have not all been enumerated, it becomes evident from the College's records that the trend to employ both local educators and teachers from overseas was to continue right up the 1950s and early 1960s when the balance eventually started tilting in the favour of a stronger South African contingent (HBC Board Minutes, 1936-1969, HBCA).

Just as consequential as the staff components at the College during the above-mentioned years, were the many resolutions taken with regard to the utilisation of Afrikaans. In November 1944 the Helderberg College Board took a resolution on bilingualism that had no precedent in the history of Seventh-day Adventist tertiary education in South Africa. It was worded as follows:

To approve the following recommendations of the College Staff on bi-lingualism it was VOTED:

1. That the Staff give full moral support to the policy towards greater bi-lingualism and that
 - a. Teachers be encouraged to study and use Afrikaans whenever possible in the classroom and in their general association.
 - b. A public statement be made by the Principal covering the greater bi-lingualism in the classroom.
 - c. More opportunities be made for English speaking students to use Afrikaans in public talks and for Afrikaans speaking students to use English in the same way (Meeting of the Helderberg College Board, 20 November 1944, HBCA).

Resolutions such as these did, however, not always materialize. Reflecting on the state of Afrikaans at Helderberg College, many past students admitted that even though there were no open feelings of discontent that they could remember, that English most definitely overshadowed Afrikaans (Interviews with Pastor PH Coetzee, 9 June 1997; Mr Andre Joubert, 26 January 1997; Dr Joubert, 28 June 1997; Dr IJ van Zyl, 6 July 1997).

Another Afrikaans-speaking alumnus of the College had the following to say about her experiences at Helderberg College in the late 1950s:

My husband and I were leaders of the Baanbrekerklub at Helderberg in 1958. We wanted to show a movie about the history of Paul Kruger, but the authorities simply would not allow it because in one scene the Union Jack is taken down and the Vierkleur hoisted and that, in their opinion would hurt the feelings of some.

One evening we had the students play (or dance) volkspele and boy did they enjoy it. So much enjoyment certainly had to spell sin, but we reasoned, the American marches we always had and enjoyed, had then to be sin too! In the end it proved that having fun the American way is okay, but doing the same thing the Afrikaans way is definitely out (Letter from Eunice Gey van Pittius, 6 April 1997, In author's possession).

An eye witness to the above state of affairs at College who expressly asked to remain anonymous related that:

Many Afrikaans people felt that there was a kind of deliberate imperialism at Helderberg which was aiming at driving the Afrikaans language to extinction, something that the British had tried to do with Afrikaans earlier on (Memorandum from past student, n.d., In author's possession).

The predominance of English, in the classroom in this specific case, was confirmed by a commission that had carried out an inspection at the College. One line from its report stated: "Instruction is given in both English and Afrikaans, with English definitely preponderating". (HBC Inspection Report, 31 October - 1 November 1962, HBCA).

As had happened at the turn of the century at Union College and at Spion Kop College, as a result of the perceptions of some Afrikaans-speaking members, that their language was being downgraded and neglected at the College and that the American leaders were wilfully against Afrikaners, another language controversy erupted in the early 1960s.

This crisis appears to have finally come to the surface in 1959 when Fritz von Hörsten was invited to join the education department at Helderberg College to teach Afrikaans. In a letter that he wrote almost three decades later, Von Hörsten related what transpired at that time:

Ek was aangestel op die komitee vir tweetaligheid te Helderberg, en op die eerste vergadering van die komitee het 'n personeellied (hy was uit die huis uit Afrikaans maar het verkies om Engels te word) die volgende emfatiese verklaring

gemaak: Helderberg College will remain an English institution forever. Hierop het ek dadelik die rektor gevra of hy met die stelling saamgaan, en hy het bevestigend daarop geantwoord. Ek was totaal uit die veld geslaan, want, ek het gedink, hoe kan Helderberg hoop om vooruit te gaan as hy die taal van die grootste gros kerklede in Suid-Afrika so opsetlik en doelbewus negeer. Daardie Sondagmiddag het ek met die uiterste teleurstelling en hartseer my bedanking uitgeskryf as personellid van Helderberg College (Letter from F von Hörsten to Dr. D. Birkenstock, 29 Januarie 1987, In author's possession).

Translation: I was appointed on the committee for bilingualism at Helderberg, and at the first meeting of the committee a staff member (he was from an Afrikaans home but had chosen to become anglicized) made the following emphatic statement: Helderberg will remain an English institution forever. Thereupon I immediately asked the rector whether he went along with the statement. He answered in the affirmative. I was totally devastated, because I thought, how can Helderberg ever hope to thrive if it so deliberately negated the communication medium of the largest portion of the denomination's membership. That same Sunday afternoon, bitterly disappointed and heartsore, I wrote out my resignation as a Helderberg College staff member.

Assertions such as the one that Helderberg would always remain an English institution, spread like wildfire, infuriating many Afrikaans-speaking members of the Church. Even though it had not been voiced publicly, many Afrikaans-speaking members had long felt that American culture was being established at Helderberg College at the expense of the Afrikaner culture and that the College had become a foreign and strange element in the mind of the Afrikaner.

They maintained furthermore that because Afrikaner sentiment was being undermined, that it would jeopardize the progress and advance of the gospel amongst Afrikaans-speaking people. Many felt that Afrikaners who were being trained at Helderberg often became so "Americanized" that they were no longer adequately equipped to preach the gospel and reach the Afrikaner mind (Memorandum from past Helderberg College student, n.d., In author's possession).

In response to the rumblings of dissatisfaction that were becoming more and more audible from many of the Afrikaans-speaking members of the Church and the impending language crisis at the College, a special commission was appointed by the Helderberg College Board to assess the situation. As opposed to the angry reply that was given by the school principal at Spion Kop College and his refusal to allow to the study of Afrikaans almost forty years before, the commission's report, issued under the title 'The need for an increased use of Afrikaans in the College' acknowledged that Helderberg had largely failed to meet the cultural and linguistic needs of its Afrikaans students. The

commission endeavoured to move beyond the apparent failures of the College and made recommendations to try and achieve the required balance between the use of both English and Afrikaans. Some extracts from the commission's report read as follows:

The afternoon was devoted to a general discussion of the problem with its historical background, present manifestation and the philosophical basis on which our approach to language instruction and use at Helderberg College rested. It was felt on one side that Afrikaans-speaking workers were entering the Field without adequate preparation to use their language effectively...This was due to the emphasis on English at Helderberg which led to a psychological reaction of inadequacy, frustration and discouragement and the anglicization of Afrikaans workers to the detriment of their efficiency and acceptability among their own people.

It was maintained that the atmosphere at Helderberg was not sympathetic to full status and attainment in Afrikaans and that the overwhelming weight of English use was in a sense coercive to the Afrikaans student. On the other hand it was recognized that even though Helderberg was historically and traditionally an English-medium school where the great majority both of staff and students had always been English-speaking, that in recent years considerable progress had been made in the direction of bilingualism though there was still much room for improvement (Report of Commission appointed to study the need for an increased use of Afrikaans in the College, n.d., HBCA).

In its summary the commission added the following statements:

Helderberg College is established in a bilingual country, so that full recognition should be accorded in its programme to both the official languages of the country. Students of S.A. origin should, therefore, be proficient in both languages...

There is scope for increased use of Afrikaans both as a medium for classroom instruction as well as in general cultural life of the college...

A more favourable climate towards Afrikaans could be created by staff and students and through official encouragement by the College Board. It is recommended that the status of English and Afrikaans in the institution be equal in all respects and that a sincere effort be made to introduce class-room instruction throughout the school in both language media (Report of Commission appointed to study the need for an increased use of Afrikaans in the College, n.d., HBCA).

Undoubtedly due to the recommendations made by the commission that Afrikaans was to receive greater recognition, Von Hörsten did not resign and remained on as an Afrikaans teacher for a number of years afterwards.

In the ensuing years, however, the College did not succeed, in spite of the above mentioned recommendations, in achieving a greater bilingual balance (Coetzer, 1985:168). In an endeavour to once again discover some causes for the failure of the College in the post-1960 years to move in the direction of a full bilingualism several possibilities materialize:

Firstly, it must be borne in mind that even though Helderberg College was situated within the borders of the Republic of South Africa that it was a Division educational institution. This meant that the College had many English, Portuguese, French and American students. Most of these could neither speak, write or even understand Afrikaans and it was understandably very difficult for Helderberg's administration to place Afrikaans on an equal footing with English.

Secondly, an additional factor for the poor advancement of Afrikaans at Helderberg was the contempt that was often shown not only by many students but also by many overseas leaders and teachers at Helderberg for Afrikaners and their language. While this is not suggesting that all leaders and students were opposed to Afrikaners it is important that incidences such as the following be mentioned. Some years prior to 1960, an Afrikaans cultural club was initiated called Die Baanbrekerklub. At a time given simply as "some time after the achievement of Republic status" a past student relates how the principal of the College angrily berated the president of the above mentioned club and threatened to have the club closed down. This memorandum, referring specifically to the negative attitudes of many persons at Helderberg for Afrikaans also recorded:

Telkemale as die studente, veral seuns van werkers, baie van wie unie presidente of hoofde van departemente in die werk was, tydens die kapelperiode hoor die spreker praat in Afrikaans, dan het hulle met die grootste veragting gehandel. Hulle sou hoorbaar sug, en is nooit daaroor berispe nie, met groot gebaar 'n boek uithaal, en so opsigtelik moontlik daarin lees (Spion Kop se Dae, n.d., Document File Number HR 54, HBCA).

Translation: Many times the students, especially the sons of workers, many who were union presidents or heads of department in the work, would behave in the impolite manner when a chapel speaker addressed the students in Afrikaans. They would audibly sigh, and take out books in the most obvious manner and intentionally read, but they were never disciplined.

The same student recalls another specific occasion where a conversation was overheard between some students who were obviously talking about another Afrikaans-speaking student. One of these students stated: "You know he is not a bad guy, its such a pity he speaks a Bushman language (Afrikaans language)" (Spion Kop se Dae, n.d., Document File Number HR 54, HBCA). It appears that attitudes like those just mentioned were not only confined to older students and adults. This same student relates in conclusion, how even a little girl in standard two (apparently the daughter of the American accountant at the College) stated with much scorn in her voice "I dont like efirkens" [sic] (Spion Kop se Dae. n.d., p.1, Document File Number HR 54, HBCA). Even though such remarks and attitudes may appear to be petty and deemed as insignificant, there is no question that they were hurtful and had a cumulative effect on many Afrikaners at Helderberg College.

Thirdly, a factor one that would cause terrible bitterness in the ensuing years, were the walls of division that had arisen between many Afrikaners in the Church. As had so often happened both on the social and political level, many Afrikaners in the Church had chosen, for reasons that were to some all too obvious, to identify themselves almost entirely with the English and American cultures, some even using only English as their mode of communication. Many of these Americanized Afrikaners who had gravitated to positions of leadership at the College, obviously thought very differently to the conservative Afrikaner element in the Church with regard to the use and preservation of the Afrikaans language and culture.

In the eyes of many Afrikaans-speaking people, these leaders, because of their failure to identify with the needs of Afrikaners while having close and wilful affiliation with the their American counterparts, were responsible for halting the more propitious progress of Afrikaans at Helderberg College. With the state of affairs as it was at the College it is understandable why so many Afrikaners in the Church were averse to sending their children to study there. This unquestionably contributing to the extremely slow growth of Afrikaans-speaking students at the College over this period of time.

And then in conclusion, as in the 1920s during the years of Spion Kop College, it becomes necessary, before an accurate analysis of the language question at Helderberg College can be made, to also try to understand the political climate in the 1960s. These years were the crowning years of Afrikanerdom. Hendrik Verwoerd had led South Africa out of the commonwealth in 1960 and followed it up in the very next year with the attainment of republic status. This meant a separation from the British empire and the achievement of sovereign independence for Afrikaners (Van Jaarsveld, 1975:275)

In spite of this appearance of unity and harmony in the years following the attainment of republic status there were deep undercurrents of discontent within the ranks of Afrikanerdom (Hanf, et al, 1981:98). As early as 1964, ideological shifts were already becoming evident within the ranks of the National Party.

On 12 July 1964 in a speech delivered to more than 3000 people assembled at Spioenkop, the State President, CR Swart, declared:

We descendants of Boer and Briton are Boer and Briton no more. We are one people with one nationhood, one flag and one loyalty. We honour the graves that are behind us, but our eyes must be held on the cradles of the future - fixed on a dream which we can never allow to be darkened (*South African Observer*, Vol.x, No.1, August 1964, p.5, UDWL).

In an address delivered at Vryburg on 10 August 1964, HF Verwoerd, stated:

It is the duty of the government to see that all are given a chance and it is the policy of the government to ensure that all will be given the opportunity to rise to the highest position (*South African Observer*, Vol.x, No.2, September 1964, p.14, UDWL).

Two months later, on 5 November in an address to the guests at the annual dinner of the Johannesburg Afrikaanse Sakekamer, BJ Vorster, who was at that time the Minister of Justice in the National Party, asserted:

Today three years after becoming a Republic, there is a greater unity between English and Afrikaans speaking people than even before in the history of South Africa (*South African Observer* Vol.x, No.5, December 1964, p.7, UDWL).

In his new year's speech at the beginning of 1965, Verwoerd's strident call had similarly become one for greater white unity. He stated that it was to be a clear objective for South Africa to sweep aside all ideas of separate nationalism for the English and Afrikaans language groups (*South African Observer* Vol.x, No.6, January 1965, p.3, UDWL).

To the orthodox minded element within the party the Afrikaans cultural leaders and many members of the DRC, the above speeches and subsequent shifts within the party were cause for great consternation. Speaking on behalf of the right-wing element in the party at a Day of the Covenant speech in December 1964, Hertzog warned that history was being repeated. Whereas their forefathers before them, he stated, had been able to trek to a new homeland, the only option for the present generation of Afrikaners was to stand firm (*South African Observer*, vol.x, No.6, January 1965, p.6, UDWL). Addressing the leaders of the Afrikaanse Taal and Kultuur Vereeniging, Dr Koot Vorster actuary of the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk also warned that in the face on unfolding events the Afrikaner's culture was "fast sliding down the slipway of destruction" (*South African Observer*, vol.x, No.6, January 1965, p.8, UDWL). Likewise the greatest apprehension for many cultural leaders of that time was that the future of Afrikaans would be in jeopardy if the protection of Afrikaner culture ceased to remain a priority of Nationalist policy.

Great changes had, however, also taken place by the 1960s in South Africa on the socio-economic level. Afrikaners had become increasingly more urbanized, with the Afrikaans business class, realizing what private enterprise could do for them, had also become much larger and more self-assured than in the earlier decades (Kenney, 1991:183). Many Afrikaner industrialists and financiers of the time were of the opinion that the only way for the Afrikaner to become equal in the sphere of commerce, industry and mining was to seek shares with those who had monopolized South African financial and industrial enterprises. Such persuasions had resulted in the merging of Oppenheimer's General Mining & Finance Corporation and Federale Mynbou. As with the deviations that had taken place on the political level the above amalgamation which had taken place in 1964 elicited bitter and emotional responses from certain segments of the Afrikaner population. These Afrikaans industrialists were severely censured by the right-wing paper, the *South African Observer*. Its castigation read as follows:

See how they are even ready to kiss the hand that offers the poisoned bait...when they should be fighting resolutely for the preservation and development of our own capitalism...This new danger threatens not only Afrikanerdom - it threatens all South Africa with its diverse racial and linguistic groups...The merging of Oppenheimer and Afrikaner interests is not a manifestation of co-operation between English and Afrikaans business leaders. It is the internationalisation of Afrikaner capital in the mining industry, the immediate result which will be to advance the progressive aims of Oppenheimer among which are the destruction of the racial and national integrity of the White people of South Africa (*South African Observer*, Vol.x, No.3, October 1964, pp.1-7, UDWL).

Even though the above paragraphs have indicated some of the mounting right-wing grievances during the premiership of Verwoerd, it appears that they were never openly articulated in the form of criticism towards the NP leadership or in the form of ideological demands. However, within weeks of BJ Vorster's election as prime minister to replace Dr. Verwoerd after he had been assassinated in September 1966 (*South African Observer*, vol.xii, no.1. October 1966. UDWL) a major conflict erupted in the National Party (Stultz, 1974:180).

Less than one month after Vorster's election, Professor Wimpie de Klerk of the Department of Philosophy at Potchefstroom University and editor of *Die Transvaler*, addressed a youth congress convened by the SA Bureau of Racial Affairs. In his speech he identified two types of Afrikaners, the *verkrampes* (the narrow minded) describing the arch-conservative wing of Afrikaner nationalism who were opposed to any change in general and to any deviations in the existing pattern of race relations, and the *verligtes* (the enlightened) which characterized the so-called liberals in the government whom he also judged to be too hasty in their advocacy for change (Serfontein, 1979:99).

Although there appeared to be nothing profound about this speech, its timing and the taxonomy which it developed set in motion a process of polarization which climaxed three years later in the first major rupture within Afrikaner nationalist ranks (Van Jaarsveld, 1975:455)

Because of Vorster's earlier association with the Ossewa-Brandwag during World War II and the vigour of his campaigns against the PAC and the ANC in the early 1960s, his election as Verwoerd's successor was widely viewed as a major victory for the verkrampte wing of the government (South African Observer, Volume.xv. No.1, December 1969 p.2, UDWL). By the end of his first year in office though, there was little doubt that Vorster had placed himself firmly in the verligte camp (Stultz, 1974:181).

The impact that the verligte-verkrampte struggle was having on society was recorded as follows by the *South African Observer*:

Wherever one moves these days, one is bound to hear whispers: What is happening in our country? What is the whole verkrampte-verligte controversy about, and where is it heading? Everyone is talking about it - men and women, English and Afrikaans speaking, influential business people, the man in the street (*South African Observer*, Volume.xiii, No.2, November 1967, p.3, UDWL).

As the conflict intensified, a breakaway in the National Party became inevitable. When Dr Albert Hertzog refused to resign from parliament he was dismissed from the cabinet in August 1968 (Wilkins & Strydom, 1978:184). From this point on, the Afrikaans newspapers, most of which supported the prime minister and advocated a revisionist line, pressed for the immediate expulsion of the dissident leaders. Matters finally came to a head at the congress of the Transvaal National Party held in Pretoria in September 1969 when a motion of confidence in the party leadership was passed and the delegates were asked to attest their support of party policy with respect to:

- (1) English-Afrikaans cooperation;
- (2) Diplomatic relations with black states;
- (3) Immigration; and
- (4) The government's policy with respect to visiting sports teams which might include blacks (Leach, 1990:136; Serfontein, 1979:99).

The dissidents, led by Dr Albert Hertzog, balked on the matter of visiting sports teams and subsequently either resigned from the party or were expelled. Soon afterwards, they gave public notice that they intended to establish a new political party (Stultz, 1974:184). In a meeting held at the end of October 1969 Hertzog and his followers established the Herstigte (reconstituted) Nasionale Party (Hanf, et al, 1981:98; Wilkins & Strydom, 1978:7). In both its spirit and its promise the new political party desired to be likened to the

purified National Party which had been formed in 1934 under the leadership of Dr. DF Malan. Without greatly deviating from the NP policy on race relations, the new party stood for complete Afrikaner hegemony in South Africa, the relegation of English to a second language status, the abolition of the monarchical parliamentary system and its replacement by the presidential-cabinet system.

Based on these findings, it can be stated with quite a strong degree of certainty, that as many Afrikaans believers in Seventh-day Adventist Church were confronted with the ebb and flow of the widely publicized political conflict in the country, that it would have also strongly shaped their thinking in regard to the position of the Afrikaner in the Church, their relationship with English-speaking Church leaders, and of course their views on the language controversy that had erupted at Helderberg College.

IV. SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST LITERATURE AND THE LANGUAGE QUESTION

A. *Early Printing endeavours in South Africa*

From the outset of its missionary endeavours in South Africa the Church geared itself up to implementing a very solidly based programme of religious literature production and distribution. This is evident in the inclusion of two literature evangelists, George Burleigh and RS Anthony, in the first missionary group that arrived in South Africa in 1887 and the copious supply of literature that they had brought with them (Robinson, n.d.:62; Van Zyl, 1990:113); Quite soon after their arrival the Church leadership in South Africa not only requested that the General Conference in America send someone to this country to train other literature evangelists but also purchased a printing press for the Church (Van Zyl, 1990:113-114).

Within three months of the arrival of the literature evangelists, Robinson records that they had already travelled extensively throughout the country and had sold quite a large amount of the religious books, tracts and newspapers they had brought with them (Robinson, n.d.:62). In 1889, just two years later, The International Tract and Missionary Society, was formed to conduct the sale of religious literature in South Africa.

Notwithstanding the Church's strong desire to assertively distribute its religious literature in South Africa, a scrutiny of this period reveals that the emphasis and financial support for its literature endeavours remained, for a myriad of reasons, quite negligible when compared to the urgency and priority received by the other lines of the Church's work (Pantalone, 1996:125). Both the Claremont Sanitarium (the Church's medical hospital in Cape Town) and Union College had begun their operations in new and elaborate buildings costing thousands of Pounds, with no want of furniture and equipment (Pantalone, 1996:77-78). In comparison, the tract society began its work in the basement of the Roeland Street church in Cape Town, after which it was relocated to a small cottage near the entrance of the College's buildings

(Robinson, n.d.:64). In similar fashion, the printing press which also launched its operations from the same church basement as the tract society (*Trans-Africa Division Outlook*, 15 January 1983, HBCL) was granted three small rooms in 1896 at Union College where it would remain for almost 20 years (Robinson, n.d.:64; Swanepoel, 1972:184; Thompson, 1977:135; Van Zyl, 1990:114).

Because of the Seventh-day Adventist Church's distinctive theological convictions, most of its literature had to initially be printed at printing presses overseas (Van Zyl, 1990:113). This understandably made the procurement of books, Bible studies, tracts and evangelistic material very slow.

As a result, therefore, of the lack of facilities, the paucity of substantial financial support, and the absence of trained translators and apologists to translate material from English into Dutch and Afrikaans, the Church's endeavours to effectively distribute its literature was severely hindered and was destined to remain mediocre for many years (Robinson, n.d.:65; Swanepoel, 1972:184). The failure of the Church to have an effective support system for its literature work and an adequate and continual supply of high quality literature, for the Dutch and Afrikaans-speaking people was to soon place it at an extremely serious disadvantage (Pantalone, 1996:126).

B. Seventh-day Adventists face strong challenges

Even though the request for Dutch printed material had been made some years earlier, the dearth of Dutch and Afrikaans religious material only really became evident in the challenges which confronted the first missionaries and their converts to the Seventh-day Adventist faith. It was Seventh-day Adventist interpretation of biblical doctrines in the predominantly Dutch Reformed Church communities that made matters so very difficult (Pantalone, 1996:157). One of these beliefs was the Church's conviction that the seventh day of the week (Saturday) was the day to be observed as the Sabbath day. The Seventh-day Adventist Church also faced difficulties because its teachings opposed the doctrine of predestination, the practice of infant baptism and the immortality of the soul, all of these very ardent beliefs in the predominantly Calvinistic communities in which the Seventh-day Adventist Church was working.

Sight must never be lost of the fact that it was also the Church's English-American character that incited so much prejudice against it. Among the many resolute opponents that the Church faced, almost right at the onset of its existence in South Africa, was the ardent and fiery Afrikaner nationalist and editor of *Die Patriot*, Reverend SJ du Toit.

In 1892 the Seventh-day Adventist Church work in the Paarl district was dealt a decisive blow in a debate that took place between Reverend SJ Du Toit and GD Scholtz, a Dutch-speaking convert to the Seventh-day Adventist faith. The background to the debate is most intriguing. After his conversion, in his great enthusiasm to share his new found faith, Scholtz had gained an audience

with Paul Kruger, at that time the President of the Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek. In his book *Memoirs and Reminiscences* Sir Gilbert Kotzé who held the position of Chief Justice of the High Court in the Transvaal, describes Kruger's response to Scholtz:

Mr Kruger was rather given to applying Biblical illustrations to mundane affairs and often displayed great ingenuity in the practice of this habit, for he was thoroughly at home with his Bible. On one of my weekly visits to him he handed me a pamphlet, which he had written and published for the purpose of converting the teaching of a certain Mr. Scholtz or Schultz, who lived in the western border of the Transvaal and preached a doctrine that the true Sabbath was on Saturday, the last day of the week and not on Sunday.

On presenting me with this pamphlet he asked me to read it carefully and give him my opinion at our next meeting. When we met again we discussed the matter in which the president was so much interested. I told him that so far as I could venture to express an opinion, there could be no doubt or controversy on this question. It was plain that while the Jewish Sabbath was fixed and observed on the Saturday or the last day of the week, the Christian Sabbath had, ever since the establishment of the Christian Church, been fixed and held on Sunday. This seemed to satisfy Mr. Kruger, and our conversation then took a more secular turn (Kotzé, n.d.:126-127).

The pamphlet to which Kotzé was referring to was a letter written by Kruger in High Dutch, entitled, *Open Brief van S.J.P. Kruger aan G.D.J. Scholtz Naar aanleiding van eenen vraag over den Sabbathdag*, and which in all probability set the scene for the debate between Reverend Du Toit and Scholtz. This debate which was scheduled to take place in the town of Paarl was far from a haphazard venture. Swanepoel records that:

Everything was carefully planned: rules, mutually agreed upon by both parties, were published and adhered to; each of the opponents had a moderator, whom they had named who could decide on matters of conflict which arose during the debate; the basis for the debate was to be the Word of God, accepted by both parties as the unfailing authority; the debate would be carefully reported, and this report, after being corrected by both parties would be published (Swanepoel, 1972:80).

Reverend Du Toit had by this time, in his capacity as the editor of *Die Patriot*, received numerous letters requesting more information on the Seventh-day Adventist Church. The impending debate had also generated a considerable amount of interest in the town of Paarl itself. Matters did not proceed very favourably for Scholtz or for the prestige of the Seventh-day Adventist Church

during the five-evening debate from 29 August to 2 September 1892. From the start of the debate it became very obvious to everyone present that Scholtz could never measure up to Du Toit's high academic standards and logically presented arguments. Time and time again he failed to present satisfactory answers to the key questions that Du Toit asked. Swanepoel records Scholtz's perceptions on the proceedings of the debate. Already on the very first night of the debate, Scholtz addressed the audience with the following words:

Ik kan niet tot u spreken zooals de vorige spreker, want ik heb geen geleerdheid, maar wat ik weet heeft God de Heer door Zijnen Heiligen Geest mij geleerd.

Translation: I cannot speak as well as the previous speaker for I am not well educated, but what I do know, is what has been taught to me by the Holy Spirit.

When challenged on the matter of why he was not responding to some of the questions that Du Toit raised, Scholtz replied:

Ik heb geene vragen beantwoord, omdat ik niet gaarne de gedagte des vergadering wilde rond leiden. Ik ben gekomen om van het licht mij van den Heere gegeven is ook aan anderen mede te deelen, maar niet om twistvragen te behandelen waarin geen heil te vinden is (Swanepoel, 1972:81-82).

Translation: I did not answer any questions because I did not wish to lead the thoughts of the meeting into confusion. I came to share the light that the Lord has given me, not to handle polemic questions from which no good can arise.

The already dented reputation of the Seventh-day Adventist Church was dealt a further blow after the debate itself when Scholtz failed to present his final summary for publication. As a result of the Church not being able to defend its doctrines and beliefs effectively at the above mentioned debate, and its subsequent failure to produce any printed material, Paarl and many of the surrounding rural districts were virtually shut for many years afterwards to any evangelistic work of the Seventh-day Adventist Church (Swanepoel, 1972:82). It was however, not only the debate that weakened the name of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa. Over this same period of time, numerous books and articles were published in Dutch and Afrikaans warning the people against what they termed the "deceptive" and "misleading" teachings of the Seventh-day Adventist Church (Swanepoel, 1972:82-84). The debate, the deleterious articles and books which came at a time when the Seventh-day Adventist Church had neither an effective printing shop in operation, nor persons who were competent enough to be able to respond to the challenges in the Dutch or Afrikaans language, unquestionably made deep inroads into its effectiveness to reach the Dutch-Afrikaans people of South Africa in final decades of the nineteenth century (Pantalone, 1996:160).

C. Dutch Seventh-day Adventist literature

Although a certain amount of Dutch religious literature was being produced in America and in South Africa by the early 1890s (Robinson, n.d.:70; Swanepoel, 1972:185; Van Zyl, 1990:113), it was really only with Hubertus Elffers' conversion to the Seventh-day Adventist faith that the work of translation, and more effective production of Dutch material, started to take place in the Church. Professor Elffers was not only a brilliant educator, scholar and author of books, but was also proficient in several languages including English, German and French, enabling him to do professional translating work for the South African government (*De Kerkbode*, 2 September 1931, p.443, SALCT; *Historia*, December 1966 'Die Kultuurhistoriese Bydrae van Hubertus Elffers', p.241, SALCT).

It appears that it was directly through Elffers' translation work that he came into contact with the Seventh-day Adventist Church (*Historia*, December 1966, 'Die Kultuurhistoriese Bydrae van Hubertus Elffers', pp.241-242, SALCT). Not long afterwards, because of the need that had arisen for a teacher to take Dutch classes at Union College, he was asked by the president of the South African Conference if he would be willing to occupy this position (Swanepoel, 1972:132). With regard to his conversion to Adventism, Elffers himself states that after an association lasting some 18 months he and his whole family finally joined the Church (Elffers, 1929:xii-xiii).

Besides his many other occupations, Elffers and his family also ran a private printing shop in Cape Town called the Rustica Press (*De Kerkbode*, 2 September 1931, p.444; Thompson, 1977:23). It was largely through this avenue that the Seventh-day Adventist Church was able for the next few years (1894-1901) to make a positive advancement in the production of literature for Dutch and Afrikaans-speaking people in South Africa. Swanepoel records that "by the latter half of 1896, the church had 14 of its books available in Dutch, totalling 3,300 pages" (Swanepoel, 1972:84). By 1895 the Church's English newspapers, namely, *The South African Sentinel* and the *Gospel Echo* and the Dutch monthly edition, *De Wachter* were all available in South Africa (Swanepoel, 1972:185). It has not been possible to ascertain with certainty whether the English newspapers were also being produced and printed in South Africa or whether they were still being imported from overseas. As regards the Dutch edition, Pastor Phillip Venter, whose late father was a personal acquaintance of professor Elffers, related that he was almost certain that *De Wachter* was being translated and printed at the Rustica Press (Interview with Pastor PA Venter, 29 June 1997).

These Church papers printed with the express purpose to promote its books, to acquaint the South African public with the beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, its services and the various activities that it was conducting (SAC Minutes, 3 October 1901, p.31, HBCA) were destined to undergo periods of oscillating fortunes (Swanepoel, 1972:186). Five years later, by the turn of the century, in his annual conference progress report, Hyatt reported that "Good work was being done with the papers" (SAC Minutes, 27 September 1901, p.1, HBCA). In addition to the production of these newspapers the Church had also sent large amounts of literature, which included books and tracts both in English and Dutch, to the various hospitals and boer prisoner-of-war camps at Ceylon, St. Helena, India and the Bermudas (SAC Minutes, 27 September 1901, pp.1-2, HBCA; Swanepoel, 1972:187).

D. English literature gains prominence

By the middle of 1901, however, with the resignation of Elffers and the subsequent loss of the services of the Rustica Press, the Dutch literature work of the Church experienced an extended period of "drought". In place of *De Wachter* which was no longer being published, the Church chose to import *Zion's Wachter*, a Dutch monthly magazine published at a printing press in Europe. The Church's endeavours to try and place the Dutch and Afrikaans literature work on a better footing appeared, however, to be largely unassertive, and the remainder of the first decade of the twentieth century once again saw the balance tilt strongly in favour of English literature production and distribution.

In an attempt to gain a better comprehension of why English literature gained prominence over the Dutch literature in the Church at the time, it is important that several factors be taken into consideration: There was, firstly, as has been already mentioned, the loss of Professor Elffers' services. Throughout the ensuing years the Church's records reveal its continual but unsuccessful efforts to try and obtain the services of a proficient Dutch translator to take the place of Elffers.

There was, secondly, the geographical location of the Church's major institutions. Besides the headquarters of the Church which was located in Cape Town, the same city and its suburbs was also home to no less than three SDA churches, the Claremont Sanitarium, the Carnavon Bathhouse, Union College, the Plumstead Orphanage and also its printing press (Pantalone, 1996:92). This meant, even though the Church's work had already spread to other parts of South Africa, that the nucleus of its work was still being done in a city that had for almost two hundred years been under the anglicizing influence of Great Britain. Thus even many Dutch and Afrikaans people brought up in a city where the civil service, administration, legal and educational systems were predominantly English, probably bought and read English literature and English newspapers instead of Dutch or Afrikaans reading material.

Several historians have in fact gone to some lengths to show how reticent many of the anglicized Dutch-Afrikaans people in Cape were to come to the military assistance of the republics in the South African War. Whereas by the end of the nineteenth century anti-British feeling were rampant in the Transvaal, many Afrikaners at the Cape did not share their republicanism in any clearly articulated way (Moodie in Sundermeier, 1975:41). These factors perhaps best explain why the sale and circulation of English reading material was continually greater than the Dutch (Swanepoel, 1972:186) and also why large stocks of unsold Dutch books and tracts had to often be reduced in price or given away as free literature (CC Conference Minutes, 17 January 1907, p.136, HBCA).

Sight can also not be lost of the fact that this period of time (1901-1910) was analogous to the strongly American-English character of Union College. While it is certainly true that efforts were being made at the time to produce Dutch literature, it is highly unlikely that the American English-speaking leadership in the Church, who so strongly determined the English educational trend at Union College, would differ considerably in their opinions concerning the predominance of English in the Church's literature. What has just been stated is confirmed in a resolution taken by the Church's leadership shortly after Elffers' resignation and the discontinuation of *De Wachter*. In the latter part of 1901 the Church took the following resolution to increase the circulation of the English papers:

The recommendations regarding the Sentinel and paper work were freely discussed and aroused much interest. The Sentinel was held up in a new light, and hopes were expressed that our people may take a more lively interest in it than heretofore, and that all may unite in the effort to raise its standard and make it a paper [sic] will give a 'certain sound' to the message for this time (SAC Minutes, 3 October 1901, pp.32-33, HBCA).

At the same meeting, the desire was also expressed that the Sentinel should become the recognized missionary paper for all of South Africa. Added support for the preference that was being shown to the English language comes from the numerous English academic papers that were presented at the conference covering a broad range of topics from education, preaching, medical work, Bible studies and city missionary work, as opposed to the absence of any such papers presented in Dutch or Afrikaans (CC Conference Minutes, 16-21 January 1906, HBCA). Even as late as 1908 the Church's records reveal that the trend that had evolved for English literature to overshadow the Dutch literature was still firmly in place. This is in evidence from the following remark:

Whereas the Sentinel are among our most effective agencies in giving light to the people - Renewed effort must be made to give these papers wider circulation (CC Conference Committee Minutes, 18 January 1908, p.186, HBCA).

E. A pattern emerges in the Church's literature work

The specific aim of this chapter has been to provide a historical survey leading up to the rise of the Afrikaanse Konferensie. It therefore does not dwell in great detail on the history of the Church's literature work (For further information see Pantalone, 1996:123-127). The remaining part of this section, will only highlight specific patterns that emerged in the Church's literature work in the first decade of the twentieth century. Note has already been taken of the many appeals that had been made for Dutch literature in South Africa. It was, however, only in the years following Elffers' resignation that the delayed production of Dutch reading material and the Church's reaction to these entreaties really becomes evident.

At the end of the year 1900 an action was taken by the Conference to translate a book into Dutch entitled, *The Desire of Ages*. At the same meeting the International Tract Society pledged 25 Pounds towards meeting the cost of the translation of this book (CC Conference Minutes, 9 December 1900, p.18, HBCA). However, ten months later, this translation had evidently not yet been carried out, for the request to translate this book was repeated (CC Conference Minutes, 12 October 1901, p.72, HBCA). Research into the Church's records could not establish whether the translation of this book into Dutch was ever carried out.

Early in 1901, a decision was also taken by the Conference Committee to produce 5000 copies of Dutch tracts translated from *The Bible Readings* (CC Committee Minutes, 10 March 1901, p.26, HBCA). There is once again no evidence that this task was ever carried out. The failure of the Church leadership in this regard though, while probably not the result of deliberate malice, does somehow indicate firstly, a lack of urgency for the production of Dutch and Afrikaans papers, and, secondly, that the Church's English literature work had continued to secure the optimism and favour of the leadership (Swanepoel, 1972:186). Some months later in regard to the English paper work the following was recorded:

It is the unanimous opinion of the committee that our papers were being well handled and the last issues of the *Sentinel* and the *Journal of Health* were the best we have ever had (CC Conference Minutes, 23 July 1901, p.35, HBCA).

Indeed, in what is about to follow, there appears to be little doubt that a laissez-faire attitude was generally adopted by the major portion of the Conference leadership of that time towards the Dutch and Afrikaans literature work. This allegation gains support from the following records: In April 1902 the Conference's records reveal that a donation of 200 copies of the *Sentinel* was made in an endeavour to bolster the work of the Church in Kimberley. A sum of 10 Pounds was also invested towards furthering the production of the *Journal of Health*, which was also to be used in Kimberley (CC Conference

Minutes, 14 April 1902, p.90, HBCA). Even though a pressing need became evident in the above-mentioned minutes that the Church should make literature available in the Dutch language there is yet again no mention made of Dutch or Afrikaans reading material that perhaps also needed to be sent to Kimberley which was home to so many Dutch and Afrikaans-speaking people.

Further scrutiny of the Church's records reveals that the Dutch and Afrikaans literature work would be, time and time again, relegated into a secondary position, as efforts by the leadership continued to be largely focused upon giving the English literature work greater publicity and wider circulation. At a subsequent meeting, only a day after the decision was taken to send literature to Kimberley, the desire was once again expressed that greater efforts should be made to increase the distribution of the *Journal of Health* to 1500 copies each month (CC Conference Minutes, 5 April 1902, HBCA). This optimism concerning the Church's English newspaper work however, appears highly incongruous with the remarks made by WS Hyatt in May of the same year. Part of what he stated was recorded as follows:

...the chairman stated that the Sanitarium was about to give up and drop the publication of the *Journal of Health* when the College picked it up and has continued printing it. But as they had been printing it at a loss, the College Board had by vote intimated their intention to drop its publication...The question was then raised. What shall we do with the *Journal of Health*? (CC Conference Minutes, 8 May 1902, pp.104-105, HBCA).

Six months later, the decision of how the Conference were going to deal with the *Journal of Health* had clearly still not been resolved. At a committee meeting held in November 1902, the suggest was made that perhaps the magazine should perhaps be discontinued and substituted with the *Good Health* magazine published in London. After continuing deliberation the committee appeared to reach some consensus that it would not be conducive to suspend the magazine. As regards the *Sentinel*, some members spoke, in spite of losses that this magazine was facing, in favour of retaining the magazine because it was "better than it used to be" (CC Minutes, 27 November 1902, p.127, HBCA).

By the middle of the decade, however, it appears that the printing of the *Journal of Health* had been terminated and that the *Sentinel*, in spite of concerted efforts to boost its circulation, was running at a severe loss (CC Minutes, 28 January 1906, p.271, HBCA). Notwithstanding these losses and the continual failure of the *Sentinel* to have made a favourable impact on the South African public, it appears that the Conference's leadership never lost confidence in the paper. In October 1907 the Conference unanimously undertook the responsibility to continue with the magazine's publication and to lift its numbers up to 3000 (CC Minutes, 20 October 1907, p.320, HBCA). In fact Swanepoel records that during some years the *Sentinel* and certain other English magazines had production figures of as high as 30 000 (Swanepoel, 1972:187).

As opposed to the continual favour shown for English literature and the persistent calls by the Church's leadership to increase their circulation, the Dutch work, so vacillatingly dealt with, pales into insignificance. In what is about to follow is another example of the conference's failure to act upon convictions that had arisen that the production of literature in the Dutch language was imperative for the furtherance of the Church's work. At the beginning of 1906 the following was noted:

All agreed to the value of our literature in forwarding the Work and called attention to the need that exists in Health publications in the Dutch Language (CC Minutes, 15 January 1906, p.110, HBCA).

Four days later, acting upon the above opinion, the following resolution was passed:

Whereas there is an urgent need of Health Literature in the Dutch Language and whereas our Dutch Brethren are calling for some of the instruction contained in the Spirit of Prophecy in their own language therefore we recommend: That suitable Health literature be translated and also such portions of *Early Writings* as may be deemed necessary (CC Minutes, 19 January 1906, p.117, HBCA).

At a subsequent meeting almost precisely a year later, not only was a repetition of the above request for Dutch literature noted, but also a word for word reiteration of the above-mentioned resolution that the Church would undertake to produce the required material in the Dutch language (CC Minutes, 10 January 1907, p.132, HBCA). At the beginning of 1908, again a year later, the following plea was noted, as in the previous two years:

Whereas there is a great need for inexpensive Dutch literature on the Prophecy's and on the subject of tithing, Spirit of Prophecy, Health Reform and Temperance it is recommended that this conference should supply such literature as soon as possible (CC Minutes, 20 January 1908, p.161, HBCA).

The failure by the Church's leaders to act upon these resolutions and produce the necessary Dutch and Afrikaans literature perhaps best epitomizes what took place in the literature work in the years that followed. Book committees were often designated to make selections of matter for publication in Dutch (CC Minutes, 11 January 1907, p.135, HBCA) and recommendations made that specific material be translated and printed into Dutch (CC Minutes, 18 January 1907, p.138, HBCA). Notwithstanding these aspirations to further the Dutch publications, the Church's Dutch literature work, primarily because of the lack of fervent promotion and publication, never reached a point where it ever could be equated with the English literature or become an effective agent in its work in this country (Swanepoel, 1972:188).

V. THE CHURCH'S MEDICAL ENDEAVOURS AMONG
THE DUTCH PEOPLE OF SOUTH AFRICA

A. *Medical endeavours in Stellenbosch (1903)*

By the turn of the century an amount of interest was being shown by the Dutch community in Stellenbosch as a result of the Church's work that had been initiated there (CC Minutes, 15 July 1902, p.120, HBCA). The person responsible for initiating the Church's work in this area was a DN Groenewald who had used his medical knowledge to gain entrance into and win confidence with the community. This mode of operation begun in March 1899 was bolstered by the spread of Dutch literature. The progress of the Church's work in Stellenbosch was confirmed eighteen months later in September 1901. The report read as follows:

Reference was made to the Stellenbosch property as the Committee had been asked to open Bath [hydrotherapy] and Medical Missionary work there. Brother Groenewald has begun a good work in that place, visiting, giving treatments and doing general missionary work (SAC Minutes, 27 September 1901, p.3, HBCA).

The very next day, a more detailed report was made. Part of this report read as follows

DN Groenewald reported on the work he has recently begun in Stellenbosch. The city is almost exclusively Dutch, but there are some of all classes and he is gaining an influence among all of them. He began working there the 17th of last March, with the medical missionary work as an opening wedge. Number of treatments given 137. Subscriptions were taken for the Health Journal which has had a good influence. Sister Groenewald has also given 89 treatments. The number of pages [sic] tracts sold, 14,760 (SAC, Committee Minutes, 28 September 1901, p.11, HBCA).

During the ensuing three years, the records reveal that Groenewald continued to do sterling work in Stellenbosch, thereby consolidating the Church's medical and evangelistic endeavours among the Dutch-speaking people. In February 1901 the work had ostensibly progressed to such a point that the Conference Committee considered it expedient to begin hydrotherapy treatments in Stellenbosch as well (CC Minutes, 24 February 1901, p.24, HBCA). In March of the following year, after Groenewald had indicated to the Conference Committee that "he was in need of several things for the work in Stellenbosch" (CC Conference Minutes, 6 March 1902, HBCA) he was granted an audience at the first Cape Conference Committee meeting in April 1902. His recommendations to the Committee were noted in the following manner:

Brother Groenewald then gave a report of the work and its prospects at Stellenbosch. He was very much in favour, and urged the necessity of, having another nurse, as there seemed to be a great demand for obstetrical work. He recommended the committee to employ Miss Jessie Tarr. Moved by Brother Lindsay, seconded by Brother Ingle that Miss Jessie Tarr be invited to go to Stellenbosch providing Sister Webster recommends the choice (CC Conference Minutes, 5 April 1902, p.89, HBCA).

At the next committee meeting, the president of the conference WS Hyatt who was in the chair stated:

The property at Stellenbosch is forming another nucleus [sic] for medical missionary work (CC Conference Minutes, 14 April 1902, p.93, HBCA).

Notwithstanding the progress that had been made in this area, the growing public demand for medical work and the receptivity of the public to the Church's Dutch literature, the conference took the decision to sell the property in Stellenbosch. This property had been donated to the Church by Professor Hubertus Elffers specifically so that work could progress among the Dutch-speaking people (CC Minutes, 17 February 1903, p.156, HBCA).

This chapter has not expanded in great detail in regard to the history of the Church's medical work in this country. However, in order to be able to fully comprehend what eventually led the conference to sell the property in Stellenbosch, it is important to mention that in 1901 the Church lost its ownership over the Claremont Sanitarium (The Church's medical hospital) which it had built and initiated in Cape Town five years before (for full details see Pantalone, 1996:87-90). In spite of the tremendous loss that the Church experienced with the forfeiture of the Claremont Sanitarium not much time passed by before the desire arose again to start another medical centre. At a committee meeting held in April 1902, Hyatt made the following statement in regard to the impact that the first sanitarium had made and the response of the public to its demise. He stated: "Some of the old patrons of the [Claremont] Sanitarium are anxious for us to resume work". In response to Hyatt's remarks the committee requested him to present the situation to the overseas conference and make an appeal for a doctor to come to South Africa (CC Minutes, 14 April 1902, p.93, HBCA).

The above-mentioned aspiration to begin another hospital in South Africa led, to the opening of the Plumstead Sanitarium, and to the eventual termination of the Church's work in Stellenbosch (Swanepoel, 1972:99). Although the reasons for selling the property to Victoria College (the forerunner of Stellenbosch University) were never really explicitly stated, the opinion was expressed that it would perhaps be in the best interest of the Church to:

Dispose of the work or treatment rooms at Stellenbosch and find every energy to make a success of one medical missionary enterprise (CC Minutes, 28 January 1903, p.142, HBCA).

There were those on the committee who were opposed to the sale of the Stellenbosch property. Some were of the opinion that the Church was under moral obligation to continue the work in Stellenbosch as it was the "only enterprise established especially for work among the Dutch people" (CC Minutes, 28 January 1903, p.144, HBCA). However, in spite of the sentiments and views that were expressed against the sale, the property in Stellenbosch was eventually sold in February 1903 (CC Minutes, 26 February 1903, p.159, HBCA).

Although the sale of the Stellenbosch property cannot be linked to any wilful intention by the Church's leaders to hinder the work among the Dutch people, it was a grave miscalculation and a great loss to the Church's work among the Dutch people of the time. Never again would the medical endeavours by the Church, as they had been carried out amongst the Dutch-Afrikaans speaking people in Stellenbosch, ever be repeated with such intensity.

The reasons for selling the Stellenbosch property was just as baffling when note is taken of the fact that the Plumstead Sanitarium was begun in a building owned by the Church which had been used as an orphanage for a number of years before (Pantalone, 1996:94). What the sale did mean, besides the loss of the Dutch work in Stellenbosch, was that another medical practice was opened in South Africa based on medical practices and principles initiated in America and staffed with an American doctor (Pantalone, 1996:95).

The medical work as Plumstead sanitarium was, however, also destined to be relatively shortlived and not many years went by before it was closed down and the property sold (*The Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, 6 June 1926, pp.23-24, HBCL). Among the many reasons that have been given for the closure of the above medical institution was the frequent change of physicians at the institution and the introduction of uncommon medical practices into a conservative South African Dutch community (Swanepoel, 1972:165). As in the case of Union College, however, the Plumstead Sanitarium appears to have also paid a very heavy price for its very unsouth African character.

Groenewald was instructed by the Church leaders to remain in Stellenbosch and try to continue working on a smaller scale, giving treatments from house to house (CC Conference Minutes, 17 February 1903, p.157, HBCA). However, without an established base from which to work, it appears that any hope of keeping the interest alive in Stellenbosch was unsuccessful. Groenewald himself eventually gravitated to Swellendam and then to Oudtshoorn to work among the Dutch people living there (CC Conference Minutes, 20 January 1905, p.242, HBCA). The last time that Groenewald's name appears in the Church's records, is in a report of his trying to initiate medical work in Bloemfontein (CC Conference Minutes, 8 November 1910, p.378, HBCA).

Seven decades later, at the formation of the Afrikaanse Konferensie, the failure of the Church to move ahead effectively in the medical work among Afrikaans-speaking people in South Africa would be forcefully reiterated. In a document disseminated by Pastor Josef Birkenstock at the Special Session in December 1968 this protest was worded as follows:

Daar is een besondere aspek in hierdie saak waaroor ons baie diep oortuig is, nl. dat ons werk in Suid- Afrika smartlik geminag is. In byna al die Afrika-lande het ons gevestigde mediese werk, maar hier het ons GEEN MEDIESE INRIGTING nie, ten spyte van die gunstige geleenthede wat reeds lank hier bestaan (Die ware geskilpunt op hierdie sitting, n.d., p.7, HBCA).

Translation: There is one specific aspect in this regard that we are deeply convinced about, namely, that the work of the Church has been grievously disparaged. While medical work has been established in just about every country in Africa, there is in spite of all the favourable opportunities NO MEDICAL INSTITUTION established here.

VI. THE CHURCH'S ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURES

A. *The establishment of the South African Conference*

The educational, medical and publishing endeavours of the Church can never be analyzed in isolation from its organizational structures. An investigation which focuses explicitly on these structures was, however, considered necessary in the light of the allegations that would materialize from the Afrikaanse Konferensie in 1968, that the Church administrative organization had failed to fulfil the linguistic and cultural needs of the Dutch and Afrikaans people of this country.

It is crucial, both in the light of what is about to follow in the remainder of this chapter and also to be able to provide a base for a more effective understanding of the Church's organizational structures, to focus again on the commencement of the Seventh-day Adventist Church's missionary work in South Africa. Mention has already been made of the disappointment that the Dutch believers experienced when they learnt that the first Seventh-day Adventist missionaries to South Africa were not Dutch-speaking. Concrete plans were nevertheless set in place for the advancement of the evangelistic work of the African Mission, as the Church in South Africa was known at that time (Swanepoel, 1972:12). At a meeting held soon after the missionaries has disembarked, a resolution was taken that the Church's work would initially concentrate on two locations, namely Cape Town and Kimberley. It, however, did not take long before the message of the Church had also spread to the Eastern Cape. By 1892 three Seventh-day Adventist congregations had been initiated in these three areas (*African Division Outlook*, 12 September 1929, p.2, HBCL).

The membership of the Church in South Africa, however, chiefly because of the numerous and onerous challenges that it faced from the other established churches, was at this time still very small. Robinson records that after almost five years of missionary endeavours, the membership had only grown to 140 (Robinson, n.d.:29). Notwithstanding the small membership and the financial exigencies, plans initiated in America elevated the status of the African Mission in 1892 to that of a financially self-supporting organization called the South African Conference of Seventh-day Adventists with Asa.T.Robinson, an American, elected as its first president (Robinson, n.d.:110; Swanepoel, 1972:26-27).

B. Optimism and enthusiasm outpaces discretion

When the first party of American missionaries disembarked in Cape Town in July 1887, they had in their possession a carefully worded letter from Ellen White advising them on how the missionary work in South Africa ought to be planned and best be put into practice (Van Zyl, 1990:97). Prominent in this letter was the frequently repeated counsel to the missionaries that they had to lay very careful plans and that they were to maintain a very high standard in all their missionary endeavours (White, 1977:7-13). A scrutiny of the annals of the Church reveals that the latter half of this counsel appears to have been taken very serious indeed (Pantalone,1996:77). Union College started in 1893, and the Claremont Sanitarium begun three years later, are both examples of the exceptionally high quality of work put out by the Church at that time. RS Anthony, the medical superintendent of the Sanitarium, wrote as follows concerning the institution two years after it had opened:

Our institution is known far and wide, and we have won the hearts of the people (Letter from RS Anthony, Claremont Medical and Surgical Sanitarium, 8 March 1899, Document File Number 3000-c, HBCA).

Dr. GG Eyre who was at that time the editor of the prestigious and well known *South African Medical Journal*, reported how impressed he had been both by the dedication of the staff at the Sanitarium and the work that was being performed there, even though he had been initially very sceptical (In Swanepoel, 1972:160). Likewise, even though it was not designed on such an elaborate scale as the Sanitarium, Claremont Union College had no reason to remain in the limelight of the Sanitarium. It has already been noted that the College, which began its operations in a brand new building, also operated both a primary and secondary school on the same property and offered prospective students on a tertiary level, a curriculum of study of an exceptionally high standard.

Further investigation reveals that the years after 1892, were characterized by an atmosphere of intense optimism. In almost every sphere of the Church's work, an almost limitless zeal appears to have manifested itself to place the endeavours of the Church on the very best footing possible. Even the General

Conference president, OA Olsen, who visited South Africa in the early 1890s, was caught up in the prevailing euphoria and optimism and encouraged the Church to firmly establish itself and swiftly expand its missionary horizons into the rest of Africa (Robinson, n.d.:40-41; Swanepoel, 1972:68). Nevertheless, while everything on the surface appeared to be moving very advantageously for the Church, there were some with keen and discerning foresight who sensed that the rapid organizational and institutional developments were not as auspicious as what they really appeared to be. SN Haskell, who had spent some time in South Africa, wrote in the early 1890's expressing his concern that the extensive institutional growth and missionary expansion was moving at a far too rapid pace. In 1894 he wrote:

The numbers [i.e. of church members] have not advanced in proportion to the institutions built (Letter from SN Haskell to WC White, 12 October 1894, Document File Number 3000-c, HBCA).

From the above admonishment it can be deduced that Haskell's concern must have gone deeper than just the Church over-extending itself institutionally in proportion to the very small membership. There can be little doubt that he also comprehended that the South African Conference with its small membership, its financial resources not yet properly established and its work force already stretched to the limit, would never in the possible advent of adverse economic conditions be able to support such elaborate and costly institutions. It is intriguing to note that the letter given to the missionaries before they arrived in South Africa in 1887 reveals not only the counsel that they were to plan properly, but also that the work in South Africa would perhaps have to be initiated at a careful pace (White, 1977:9). The annals of the Church reveal that instead of moving at a more sedate pace and applying the brakes to the briskly moving development, the final decade of the nineteenth century became the "boom" years of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa, years during which the Church experienced its most rapid missionary growth and institutional development.

Within less than a decade after Haskell had expressed his concerns, a combination of factors, some of them admittedly not within the control of the Church, had radically eclipsed its mercurial development. By 1901 the Church had lost the ownership of the Claremont Sanitarium which had been erected at such a tremendous cost and Union College found itself floundering in serious debt and facing possible closure (CUC Board Minutes, 18 July 1899, p.57, HBCA). Furthermore, the literature evangelists, who were at that time the most effective distributors of the Church's reading material had also been taken off the Church's payroll, with the South African Conference unable, just as Haskell had predicted, to do anything to alleviate the situation (For fuller detail see Pantalone, 1996).

C. Organizational transformations (1903)

By the turn of the century it had become apparent that radical changes were needed in the organizational structure of the worldwide Seventh-day Adventist Church. As a result, the General Conference session, held in April 1901 in the United States of America, put a number of major organizational changes into operation. The transformation in organizational structure that would most strongly affect the Church in South Africa was the decentralization of decision making and responsibility through the establishment of union conferences. Under this reorganization the various world fields was divided into organized union conferences, the local conferences would be under the jurisdiction of the respective unions, while the unions themselves would be directly responsible to the General Conference in America (Schwarz, 1979:279).

Even though the Church in South Africa was clearly in no position to undertake these organizational changes, the Church leadership in South Africa chose to restructure its existing organization and emulate the paradigm as it had been set out by the General Conference. In the process, the South African Conference which had been in operation for almost ten years and had administered all the Church's work in Southern Africa was elevated to the status of South African Union Conference in January 1903 (*African Division Outlook*, 12 September 1929, p.2, HBCL; Van Zyl, 1990:99). The reorganization of the Church in South Africa also included the creation of two new conferences, namely the Cape Colony Conference and the Natal-Transvaal Conference (WH Anderson, n.d., 'History of the Work in the Southern African Division', HBCA) Both the newly created conferences operated under the jurisdiction of the South African Union Conference, with the territory of the Orange Free State divided between them (Swanepoel, 1972:115-116).

A comparison of the South Africa Church's organizational development and growth with that of the Church in America serves to emphasize, firstly, that it was not an opportune time for it to augment its organizational structures and, secondly, that its small membership neither needed nor warranted such an extensive organizational structure.

At the inauguration of the Michigan Conference in 1862, the first Seventh-day Adventist conference established in America, it began with no less than seventeen organized churches under its jurisdiction and a total membership of over 1000 people (*Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, 1976:880-881). In contrast, when the South African Conference was begun in 1892, it consisted of only three small churches with a total membership of only 128 people. By 1901 when the recommendations materialized for unions to be formed, the number of conferences in North America had increased to 57, the membership had grown to 78,188 and its evangelistic workforce stood at over 1600 (Schwarz, 1979:267). In comparison, when the South African Union Conference was formed in 1902 not only was it financially destitute, but also had only two conferences under its jurisdiction, a membership still under 600, and a working force numbering only 35 (Van Zyl, 1990:99; Swanepoel, 1972:121).

It may be contended that the Church in South Africa perhaps had no choice but to follow the organizational guidelines as they had been determined by the General Conference. A closer scrutiny of the stipulations made by the General Conference reveals, however, that the above-mentioned organizational changes could be implemented where the church membership, staff and workers made it advisable (*Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, 1976:1051). If this stipulation has been correctly interpreted, the envisaged reorganization were recommendations or guidelines, rather than mandatory orders from the General Conference. These stipulations also appears to intimate that the decision whether to set the recommended changes in motion or not, depended very much upon the prevailing conditions and situations in the various countries in which the Church was located.

In the light, of the loss of the Sanitarium, the severe financial difficulties and its very small membership, the decision taken by the Church's leaders to expand its organizational structures in the above fashion is very difficult to comprehend. There seems to be little doubt that the implementation of such an a "top heavy" organizational structures, in relation to the total membership of the Church, must be regarded as a contributory factor in the Church's continuing financial dilemmas in the years that followed (A Historical and Pragmatic Look at the Organization of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa, n.d., Dr IJ van Zyl, EGWRC). Five years later in February 1908, at a Cape Colony Conference Committee meeting, the financial position of the conference was disclosed in the following statement:

Elder Hankins expressed his willingness to be returned to the home field [i.e. America] in order to relieve the present embarrassing [sic] financial condition of the conference (CC Minutes, 9 February 1908, p.341, HBCA).

Several months later, the financial problems had apparently become so acute that the conference workers were anxious that they would receive no remuneration. In order to allay their concerns the following resolution was taken:

In view of the shortage of funds in the treasury it was moved by Bro. Ingle, that we assure the workers on the conference pay roll that each one will get his pro. rata share of the funds in the treasury each month (CC Minutes, 6 July 1908, p.346, HBCA).

In January of the following year, the financial position of the conference had still not improved and even more drastic steps had to be taken to alleviate the situation. At a combined Union and Cape Conference Committee held in Kenilworth in Cape Town the following actions were recorded:

In view of the financial condition of the conference it was agreed that we could not continue cash payments to the canvassers (literature evangelists) as salaries and the

following motion was carried: That on account of the financial condition of the conference, we discontinue salaries to the canvassers, but that we recommend all canvassers who can do so, to continue the work on a selfsupporting [sic] basis (SAUC and CC Minutes, 4 January 1909, p.357, HBCA).

Notwithstanding the serious financial exigencies that the Church was experiencing, there are no indications in its records of any intention by the Church's leaders of that time to dismantle or simplify the administrative organizations in order to try and reduce its severe monetary shortages. It was however, as had happened nine years before, the literature evangelists who were left out in the cold. It would subsequently take the Church leadership in South Africa almost thirty years before they realized and finally conceded just how grossly unbalanced the administration of the Church really was (*African Division Outlook*, 24 January 1929, p.4, HBCA).

D. Expansion into the Dutch-speaking areas

In spite of all the financial difficulties the Church was facing, the dearth of Dutch literature, the predominance of English-speaking leaders, the loss of the medical work in Stellenbosch and an anglicized educational institution, by the middle of the first decade of the twentieth century, the work among the Dutch and Afrikaans-speaking people had begun to take root (Swanepoel, 1972:100). The records show that by 1907 the Church's work had spread to the towns of Bonnievale, Calitzdorp, Swellendam, Riversdale and Oudtshoorn. Interestingly enough it was once again DN Groenewald who spearheaded the Church's evangelistic work among the Dutch-speaking of the country (CC Minutes, 14 January 1906, pp.103-104, HBCA).

Much good had also come from the spreading of Dutch literature to the boer prisoner-of-war camps, resulting in some of them becoming converted to the teachings of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. It was, however, primarily the literature evangelists who were instrumental in reaching the Dutch and Afrikaans-speaking people in the rural areas with the gospel message. The names that were to become prominent at this time as effective literature distributors among the Dutch and Afrikaans-speaking people, were BP de Beer, his brother JN de Beer who had sold much of their literature in the areas between Stellenbosch and Beaufort West, and a brother Van Eeden who worked mainly in the Orange River Colony (CC Minutes, 14 January 1906, p.102, HBCA).

At the beginning of 1906 the work among the Dutch had moved ahead with such success that the following remark was noted, "Elder Hyatt verbally expressed his gratitude that the conference had during the past two years moved out in the work for the Dutch people with such good results". (CC Minutes, 12 January 1906, p.99, HBCA). Some of the Dutch-Afrikaans towns entered into by the Church over the following few years, included Bethlehem, Mooihoek, Harrismith, Lindley, Kroonstad, De Aar, Ficksburg and Bloemfontein.

E. The establishment of the Orange River Conference (1913)

By 1912 the work among the Dutch and Afrikaans-speaking people in the districts of the Orange River Colony, had ostensibly progressed to a stage where the Church's administration considered it expedient to create a separate organization for administering its work in this area. The work in one area of the Orange Free State had grown to such an extent that a school had to be opened (Swanepoel, 1972:105).

As a result, early in 1912, an amendment was made to the existing conference's constitution so that the Cape Colony Conference would be known as the Cape and Free State Conference instead (CC Conference, 20 February 1912, p.219, HBCA). At the beginning of 1913 the first concrete recommendations to separate the two conference were made, with WS Hyatt stating that the work in the Free State had progressed so well that the time had arrived to suggest to the South African Union Conference, that the Cape Colony Conference be divided into two separate areas of administration. (CC Conference Minutes, 7 January 1913, pp.225-226, HBCA). Two days later the following resolution was noted:

To recommend to the South African Union Conference to take into consideration the advisability of a division of the Cape and Free State Conference (CC Minutes, 9 January 1913, p.228, HBCA).

The Orange River Conference (ORC) was subsequently formed later in that year with Professor Hubertus Elffers elected as its first president (*African Division Outlook*, 12 September 1929, p.2, HBCL).

F. The Orange River Conference disbanded (1929)

A thorough investigation into the history of the Orange River Conference could not be carried out because of the disappearance of all its documentation. The demise of this conference and the reasons why it supposedly had to be closed down, was, however, recorded in the *African Division Outlook* - the African Division's monthly publication. In January 1929, WH Branson the African Division president gave the following reasons for the disbanding of the ORC:

An important change has just been made in the administration of the work in the territory heretofore known as the Orange River Conference. For some years it has been felt that the conference was quite small and expensive to operate as a separate field, and at a recent meeting of the Union Conference Committee and delegates from the Orange Free Conference it was decided to disband this conference, advising the churches in the province of the Orange Free State to unite with the Natal-Transvaal Conference and those in the Cape Province to unite with the Cape Conference. If these churches are thus joined to these two conferences, there will be only two European conferences in the South African Union hereafter, instead of three, thus the

expense of maintaining one conference office will be eliminated and more funds will be available for field workers. We believe this move is in the right direction and that it is sure to bring added prosperity to the work in South Africa (*African Division Outlook*, 29 January 1929, p.4, HBCL).

JF Wright, the South African Union president at that time, outlined the conference reorganization as follows:

For some time there has been quite a strong feeling growing up in South Africa, that in our European department we were top heavy as regards conference administration. It has seemed that we were not warranted in carrying three local conferences with such a small membership. All the conferences during recent years have had a struggle financially. Of course to disband a conference is a matter of no small concern, therefore, such an action was delayed as long as possible. But finally the crisis was reached. To continue on such a course, meant to go backward, rather than forward. So after very thoughtful consideration it was voted to favour disbanding the Orange River Conference (*African Division Outlook*, 24 January 1929, p.4, HBCL).

Some historians of the Church have however, in spite of the all reasons given, raised numerous questions with regard to the disbanding of the Orange River Conference. Ron Thompson wrote as follows:

The dissolution manoeuvre brought tangible results in disposing of what the leaders called a 'top heavy administration' within the Orange River Conference. It eliminated the expense of maintaining a conference office and meant the saving of over 1500 Pounds annually in administration. This amount, the leaders believed, could be devoted to evangelistic work, in order to increase the membership in South Africa. By contrast with the dissolution of the Orange River Conference, the institution of the Rhodesia-Bechuanaland Conference in 1929 [which was also administered by the South African Union Conference] appeared anomalous and paradoxical.

The membership in the year before the formation of the conference was only seventy three, and apart from the newly erected church in Bulawayo with its congregation, there were no other church buildings or organized church organizations. There had not been much membership growth in Southern Rhodesia before its organization as a conference. Only about eighteen were baptized in 1928 and the total membership in that year was not much more than the fifty six members it had in 1920. At the time of the dissolution, the Orange River Conference tithe income averaged about 2400 Pounds annually from about three hundred and

fifty members (For further details see Thompson, A History of the Growth and Development of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in southern Africa 1920-1960, pp.62-68).

While the dissolution of the Orange River Conference may appear not to have any particular bearing on this study, it does become relevant when cognisance is taken of the fact that the Orange River Conference was never reinstated as a autonomous organization (Thompson, 1977:65). Ironically, in the years following the disbanding of the Orange River Conference, after some of the Church's most prominent evangelists such as AW Staples, JJ Birkenstock and PA Venter (snr) had held evangelistic meetings in this area, many churches in the Orange Free State experienced a period of strong membership increase. However, if there may have been any intentions to reinstate the conference, there is no question that this desire would have been thwarted by the advent of the Great Depression and the disastrous financial crisis that followed in its wake.

G. The Natal-Transvaal Conference and the Cape Conference amalgamate (1933)

By the early 1930's with the entire world still reeling in the throes of the Great Depression, the General Conference was compelled to reduce its financial appropriations to the Church in South Africa by more than 40%. As a result in 1933 the decision was taken to amalgamate the Natal-Transvaal Conference and the Cape Conference into one organization which was once again given the name the South African Conference (*Southern African Division Outlook*, 15 May 1933, pp.6-7, HBCL).

This organizational structure would remain unchanged until January 1936. On 15 January 1936, at the second session of the South African Conference, the commission appointed to investigate the possible division of the South African Conference rendered their report in the following way:

Elder A.F. Tarr, President of the Union Conference, on the request of the chairman presented the report of the Sub Commission on the division of the Conference into two conferences. He pointed out that the commission was influenced, not only by an apparent feeling in the field but by the attitude of the General Conference in Washington, that we should divide into smaller units as soon as possible (SAC Minutes, First meeting of the Second Session, 15 January 1936, p.4, HBCL).

Two days later at the reinstatement of the Natal-Transvaal Conference and the Cape Conference and the division of territorial boundaries, the Orange Free State was subdivided between the two conferences, with no mention made whatsoever of once again giving it any form of autonomy. The territorial boundaries were designated in the following fashion:

THE CAPE CONFERENCE TERRITORY

The territory of this Conference shall consist of the Cape Province except for the territory north of Kuruman and Taungs; and that portion of the Orange Free State south of and including Boshof, Brandfort, and Ladybrand;

THE NATAL-TRANSVAAL CONFERENCE TERRITORY

The territory of this Conference shall consist of the Provinces of Transvaal and Natal and that portion of the Orange Free State north of the towns of Boshof, Brandfort and Ladybrand; (Minutes of the Fourth Meeting of the Combined Cape and Natal-Transvaal Conferences in Session, 17 January 1936, p.12, HBCL).

These territorial boundaries as set out in the mid 1930s would remain unchanged until 1957.

H. The formation of the Transvaal Conference and the Oranje-Natal Conference (1957)

By the mid 1950s plans were drafted to divide the Natal-Transvaal Conference mainly due to the increase in Seventh-day Adventist Church membership (Southern African Division Outlook, 15 October 1957, p.3, HBCL). By the end of 1957, all the churches and institutions in the Transvaal were brought under the jurisdiction of the newly created Transvaal Conference which made its headquarters in Johannesburg, while all the churches in Natal, the Orange Free State and East Griqualand were incorporated in the Oranje-Natal Conference with its headquarters situated in Pietermaritzburg (*Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, 1976:1366; South African Union Lantern, 1 October 1957, p.2, HBCL).

At this time the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa, besides the black, coloured and Indian divisions of its work, consisted of three white conferences, namely the Cape, Oranje-Natal, and Transvaal conferences all of them working under the jurisdiction of the South African Union Conference.

There do not appear to be clear cut answers as to why the Church chose not to restore autonomous conference status to the Orange Free State. This course of action, however, when note is taken of the fact that the membership in the Orange Free State in later years grew to be very strong indeed, must be regarded as yet another enigma in the history of the development of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa.

I. Expansion into the Orange Free State

Notwithstanding the decision not to reinstate the Orange River Conference, several points need to be noted. Firstly, there is no evidence from a scrutiny of the Church's records that the work in the Orange Free State amongst the Afrikaans-speaking people was ever depreciated or disregarded. On the contrary, the work of evangelisation in this area appears to have continued as it had done before. This is evident in the correspondence of both the Natal-Transvaal Conference and the Oranje-Natal Conference. In 1936 a report from the Natal-Transvaal Conference indicated that no less than 20 towns or cities in the Orange Free State were being targeted with the gospel (NTC Executive Minutes, 19 January 1936, pp.1-5, HBCL). By the mid 1950s, fourteen years later, the records indicate that the work of evangelisation was continuing very strongly in the Free State with several new churches established (NTC Minutes, 24 December 1944, p.5; NTC Executive Minutes Committee, 1 July 1953, p.1, HBCL).

J. Afrikaans work develops in the Transvaal

The work in Transvaal over the same period of time, indicates an analogous pattern with towns and cities such as Volksrust, Bethal, Carolina, Barberton, Ermelo, Brits, Krugersdorp, Balfour, Germiston, Groblersdal, Lindley, Heidelberg, Welkom, Petrus Steyn and Vereeniging to mention just a few, receiving concerted attention from the Church's evangelistic teams (NTC Conference Executive Committee Minutes, 1 July 1953, pp.1-2, HBCL). In the early 1960s the Transvaal Conference minutes reflected that Afrikaans evangelists such as Karl Birkenstock were greatly encouraged to conduct evangelistic efforts in the predominantly Afrikaans cities and towns of the Transvaal and to work "in accordance to their own wishes and experience" (TC Minutes, 10 May 1962, p.84; 29 July 1962, p.113, HBCL).

K. Antagonism still rife in the Church

The Church's progress amongst the Afrikaans-speaking people in South Africa belies the aversion by which Afrikaners were still being regarded by some of the Church leaders. Whereas it has been indicated that the Church's records reveal no wilful intentions by its leadership to hinder the spread of Afrikaans, memoirs, personal letters and interviews with people who lived at that time portray a very different picture of what really took.

In an interview, a retired church member who, expressly wished to remain anonymous because of the fear of repercussions, recalled some very scathing remarks made by an American church leader in the 1920s when a number of Afrikaners had joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church. At their baptism the American told the evangelist who had conducted the evangelistic effort: "I don't know why you are wasting your time bringing riff-raff such as this into the church" (Interview conducted on the South Coast of Durban, June 1997).

Attitudes of belligerence towards Afrikaners, such as the one mentioned above, has also been confirmed from various other sources. In a letter to a personal friend, the late Pastor PA Venter (snr) wrote:

Deur die jare van my bediening het ek met baie sulke foute ontmoet. Ek was b.v. ontslaan uit die werk na ek dertien jaar in die bediening was, dit omdat ek guns gesoek het vir Afrikaans in die werk. Sonder [sic] selaris [sic] of enige hulp was ek net so gelos...Ek was verbied om in Afrikaans te preek of selfs 'n gebed te doen (Letter from PA Venter to Danie du Plessis, 7 May 1971, Letter in author's possession).

Translation: Throughout the years of my ministry I came across many such blunders. I was for example dismissed out of the ministry after thirteen years of service because I sought to gain favour for Afrikaans in the ministerial work. I was thus left without remuneration or assistance...I was forbidden to preach or even pray in Afrikaans.

In his memoirs, Pastor Venter elaborates on what took place during the evangelistic work of Church and what eventually led to his dismissal. In 1907 he recalls how evangelists, Pastor Williams and Pastor Shone, who were both English-speaking, came to the town of Lindley in the Orange Free State which was totally Afrikaans at that time. Because these evangelists could not speak Afrikaans and because the people of Lindley could not understand English, not a single person joined the Church (Memoirs of Pastor PA Venter (snr), n.d., p.18, Document in author's possession).

Several years later in 1927, Pastor Venter was invited by the Church leadership to assist Pastor Mcnay and Pastor Hiten with an evangelistic effort in the town of Aliwal North. Here again the plan was, as 20 years before, that this evangelistic endeavour would be held in English even though this town was predominantly Afrikaans. The results were once again extremely poor.

By the year 1932, in spite of the meagre results that these evangelistic endeavours were showing, some Church leaders still refused to allow Afrikaans to be used in evangelistic efforts. During 1932, Pastor Venter was assigned to assist the evangelist John Raubenheimer with an effort in Standerton, which was again almost "one hundred percent" Afrikaans. However, in spite of their request to hold the meeting in Afrikaans, the president of the South African Conference remained adamant that it should be held in English. On the first day of the meeting, the tent that they had erected in the town was packed to capacity with people from Standerton and the surrounding areas. The people that attended the meeting appeared to be greatly astonished, not so much by the message that had been preached, but more by the fact that two Afrikaans-speaking ministers were communicating in English to Afrikaans-speaking people.

The very next morning Pastor Venter wrote to the conference telling them about the predicament that they found themselves in and enquired whether they could not use Afrikaans as a medium of communication in the predominantly Afrikaans towns in which they worked. The conference wasted little time to respond, and certainly did not mince any words. Pastor Venter was called before the Conference Committee, strongly berated for being so "politically minded" and told never to make such suggestions again. The effort at Standerton was completed, in English (Memoirs of Pastor PA Venter (snr), n.d., p.39).

Pastor Venter's dismissal occurred in the early 1920s when in his capacity as a teacher at Spion Kop College he requested whether a Bible class could be held in Afrikaans (Memoirs of Pastor PA Venter (snr), n.d., p.62, Document in author's possession). Strangely enough, a scrutiny of the Spion Kop College records, reveal no such occurrence ever having taken place (Spion Kop College Minutes, 1922-1927, HBCA).

Notwithstanding the allegations made against the Church leaders that they were averse to allow evangelists to preach in Afrikaans, it is important, in order to retain a balanced perspective on the issue of Seventh-day Adventist evangelism in Afrikaans areas, to highlight the fact that a greater sense of accommodation in the modes of evangelistic outreach does become evident in the records of the years that followed. After a change of presidency in the South African Conference later in the 1930s and Pastor Venter's continued appeal that he was being hampered because he could not preach in Afrikaans, he was eventually allowed to work in the Afrikaans areas such as Potchefstroom, Fochville, Potgietersrus, Paul Pietersburg, Naboomspruit, Parys and Louis Trichardt and preach in his own language. Afrikaans churches were subsequently established in many of these areas (Memoirs of Pastor PA Venter (snr), n.d., pp.40-48, In author's possession).

VII. THE AFRIKAANS LITERATURE YEARS

A. *The first Afrikaans Seventh-day Adventist literature*

This chapter has already dealt with the problems that arose in the Church with regard to the predominance of English literature in the early years of this century and will now focus on the position of Afrikaans literature in the Church between the years 1925 and 1968. The year 1925 was chosen as a point of departure because it was in this year that Afrikaans became one of the official languages of the Union of South Africa, and also because it was in this year that the first Seventh-day Adventist educational yearbook was brought out in a bilingual form.

The mid 1920s saw the appearance of the first Afrikaans articles in the *African Division Outlook*, even though the English contributions in this monthly magazine still predominated (*African Division Outlook*, 15 March 1926, p.3; 15 May 1926, p.3; 15 June 1926, p.6, HBCL). Towards the end of 1926, the *African Division Outlook* carried the news that an Afrikaans hymnal had been compiled from translations made from *Christ in Song*, the English Seventh-day

Adventist Church hymnal at that time (*African Division Outlook*, 15 September 1926, p.6, HBCL). Ensuing correspondence, however, appears to once again bring the time of the Afrikaans hymnal's translation and production into question. Early in 1936 at a meeting of the Natal-Free State Conference, the following resolution was taken:

VOTED: That the officers of the Conference be authorized to compile a selection of about 200 translated hymns in Afrikaans taken from the *Christ in Song* and submit this compilation to the Sentinel Publishing Board for immediate approval and publication (NTC Minutes, 3 May 1936, HBCL).

At the end of the same month, the deliberations concerning the translation and production of the Afrikaans hymnal was being discussed at Division level. It was recorded that:

In view of the immediate need of an Afrikaans Hymnal in the South African Union it was voted that we counsel the SAUC to arrange either through one of their evangelists or through their office, as a temporary measure to reprint the Afrikaans hymnal used by Brother Birkenstock (Southern African Division Minutes, 31 May 1936, pp.1133-1134, Microfiche at the EGWRC).

It appears that about ten years passed before these hymn books were eventually produced. This delay was probably bound up in the financial perplexities that had overtaken the Church during the Great Depression and that it could only become a reality in 1936 when funding did become available. The records indicate that a considerable amount of capital was invested in the project in the mid 1930s (NTC Minutes, 17 October 1937, p.102, HBCL).

B. The translation of Afrikaans literature gains momentum

As the demand grew, the Church's leadership reciprocated by undertaking to make translated Afrikaans material a reality. Contributions over the ensuing years towards the translation of Afrikaans material came in the form of financial subsidies and grants (NTC Minutes, 19 January 1936, p.1, HBCL). Other assistance came in the formation of sub-committees to oversee the translation and production of material into Afrikaans (NTC Minutes, 10 January 1943, p.7, HBCL). Church records reveal that the Church was even prepared to release gospel ministers and evangelists from their ministerial duties for a period of time to participate in these endeavours. (NTC Minutes, 15 December 1940, p.253, HBCL).

In this manner a wide variety of Afrikaans reading material was made available for the Afrikaans-speaking members. What follows are some of the projects undertaken and some of the books that were eventually translated into Afrikaans:

In 1936 the *Home Physician* was made available in Afrikaans (Natal-Transvaal Conference Minutes, 3 May 1936, no page numbering, HBCL).

In the early part of 1937 a great urgency was identified for Afrikaans materials to be made available from the *Testimonies for the Church* (Natal-Transvaal Conference Executive, 29 March 1937, p.78, HBCL).

In 1939 a request was made that favourable consideration be given to production of *Great Controversy* in Afrikaans (Natal-Transvaal Conference Minutes, 23 April 1939, p.201, HBCL).

Later that year another request was made through the Union for the translation of the *Children's Bedtime Stories* and *Home, Health, Happiness and Beauty* into Afrikaans (Natal-Transvaal Conference, 7 June 1939, p.207, HBCL).

In 1941 a Morning Watch (daily devotional) was made available in Afrikaans (Natal-Transvaal Conference Committee, 30 March 1941, p.266, HBCL).

Two years later *Steps to Christ* was produced in Afrikaans in a pocket-book format (Natal-Transvaal Conference Minutes, 23 January 1943, p.1, HBCL).

In 1943, Primary Sabbath School quarterlies were made available in Afrikaans (Natal-Transvaal Conference Minutes, 8 January 1943, p.1, HBCL), while in 1944 Afrikaans-speaking adults also benefitted by the translation of material into Afrikaans. (Natal-Transvaal Conference, 17 June 1944, p.2, HBCL).

In 1948 a request was entertained to separate the bilingual (English and Afrikaans) *Signs-Tekens* magazine (Natal-Transvaal Conference, 16 January 1948, pp.1-4, HBCL).

In the mid 1950s the first plans were undertaken to produce an Afrikaans Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal, with the South African Union Conference undertaking to raise the funds to defray the expenses (Natal-Transvaal Conference, 28 January 1954, p.68, HBCL).

One year later an Afrikaans pamphlet on the Reformers appeared (Natal-Transvaal Conference Executive, 3 January 1955, p.18, HBCL).

Later that same year Afrikaans song books were produced that were to be used in evangelistic endeavours (Natal-Transvaal Conference, 20 November 1955, p.194, HBCL)

At the end of 1955, for the first time in almost 70 years, Afrikaans was used in the Church's administrative records in South Africa, (Natal-Transvaal Conference, 20 December 1955, p.20, HBCL).

In 1963 it was proposed that two more books, *God Speaks to Modern Man* and *The Impending Conflict*, be translated into Afrikaans (Sentinel Minutes, 3 July 1963, p.6, EGWRC).

In the following year a resolution was taken to translate Clifford Anderson's medical book into Afrikaans with a view of publication (Sentinel Minutes, 17 August 1964, p.35, HBCA). It was eventually decided to produce 7500 copies of this book in Afrikaans (Sentinel Minutes, 16 November 1965, p.1, HBCA).

C. *A backlog develops*

Notwithstanding the aspirations and the considerations to translate and produce material in Afrikaans, the records of the Sentinel Publishing Association of the early 1960s indicate that it had run behind schedule with this endeavour. In March 1962 the Sentinel recorded the pressure build up in the following manner:

Whereas the Sentinel at the present time has over ten books which are to be translated into Afrikaans: Voted that we employ staff on a temporary basis" (Sentinel Publishing Association Minutes, 13 March 1962, p.38, Microfiche at the EGWRC).

By the end of the decade the situation at the Sentinel with regard to the translation of material into Afrikaans had not been alleviated. This is evident from the publishing house's records. In September 1969 the pressure build up was minuted as follows:

Discussion took place regarding the large amount of Afrikaans work still pending. Plans were laid to distribute the work in such a way as to relieve the pressure (Sentinel Publishing Association Minutes, 18 September 1969, p.23, EGWRC).

D. *The paucity of original Afrikaans reading material*

The records of the Church also gave evidence of a lack of original Afrikaans reading material to be printed by its publishing house. Reading material translated from English into Afrikaans was regarded as highly unsatisfactory by many Afrikaners and would become a bone of contention in the late 1960's.

In an undated manuscript, written by Edwin de Kock who was a teacher at Helderberg College, he commented on what was taking place at the Sentinel with the following words:

Daar is voortdurend moeilikheid van Afrikaners met die Sentinel. Ek verwys na twee dinge. Het u gelet op die uiters swak Sabbatskoolboekies wat daar gedruk word? Waarom weier ons Sabbatskoolsekretarisse nie om dit aan te neem om te versprei nie? Daar word betoog dat daar geskikte vertalers nie gevind kan word nie. Indien wel, is dit nie miskien omdat jongmanne weet dat daar vir hulle geen vooruitsigte op bevordering is nie? Die hoofredakteur is mos altyd Engels, asof ons Afrikaners nie groter skrywers in hierdie land opgelewer het as die ander groep nie. En waarom altyd vertalings? Dit is tweedehandse lektuur (Memorandum by Edwin de Kock, n.d., p.9, HBCA).

Translation: The Afrikaners have continual problems with the Sentinel. I refer to two points: Have you taken note of the extremely poor quality of the Sabbath School books that are printed there? Why do our Sabbath School Secretaries not refuse to accept them for circulation? It is often stated that competent translators cannot be found. If this is true, is it not perhaps because young men know that there are no prospects for promotion? The chief editor is always English-speaking, almost as if Afrikaners have not provided more eminent writers than any other group. And then why all the translations? This is second-hand literature.

There was also, besides the lack of original Afrikaans reading material coming off the Church's printing press, great unhappiness among many Afrikaans-speaking members because of the Sentinel Publishing Association's apparent reluctance to publish material that had been written by Afrikaans Seventh-day Adventist authors. As early as 1962 it was decided that a committee be appointed to read Hendrik von Hörsten's stories for children in Afrikaans in order to review their content and suitability (Sentinel Publishing Association Minutes, 20 August 1962, p.44, EGWRC). Some months later it was resolved at the Sentinel that Von Hörsten's stories be purchased with intentions to publish them (Sentinel Publishing Association Minutes, 21 February 1963, p.2, EGWRC).

In 1964 Hendrik's brother, Fritz von Hörsten, also submitted an Afrikaans manuscript entitled *Agter die Blou Gordyn* which was accepted for publication (Action 76/17/64). Discussions were held with Von Hörsten on the matter of royalties and the purchase of his book (Sentinel Publishing Association Minutes, 27 July 1964, p.31, HBCA). Strangely enough, the records of the South African Union Conference reveal that by 1969 both manuscripts had still not been published. In May 1969 the minutes read as follows:

Voted: That on behalf of the South African Union Conference the Sentinel Publishing Association be requested to hold the manuscripts and books prepared by the von Horsten [sic] brothers until a decision is made at the yearend [sic] meeting (SAUC Mid-Year Meetings, 19 May 1969, p.735, Microfiche at the EGWRC).

A year before, in 1968, the president of Transvaal Conference, PP van Eck, had written to the Union president, RE Clifford concerning, the high quality of Fritz von Hörsten's book and the dire need that had arisen to have these book published. Part of Van Eck's letter read as follows:

As far as the book *Agter die Blou Gordyn* is concerned...I understand that the author has a letter from the late Pastor GS Stevenson that is book is one of the best he has read, as applied to the South African scene. Personally, I am convinced that we urgently need this book as a people, and our literature evangelists need this book to present to the public (TC president's correspondence, PP van Eck to RE Clifford, 3 July 1968, HBCA).

Some months earlier the South African Union Conference had also tried to have the publication and printing of von Hörsten's books expedited:

VOTED to request the Sentinel to consider very early production of AGTER DIE BLOU GORDYN as a matter of urgency and that the production of OOM HENDRIK SLAAPTIDYD STORIES be printed apace (SAUC Minutes, 2 February 1968, p.267, Microfiche at the EGWRC).

Donald K. Short, the American manager at the Sentinel Publishing Association obviously thought differently in regard to the value of Von Hörsten's book and could hardly disguise the contempt in the words that he used in reply to the South African Union Conference president. In July 1968 he wrote:

Elder van Eck also mentions Brother von Hörsten's book, *Agter die Blou Gordyn*. It is intimated that some Conference might get a bee in its bonnet and take matters into its own hands, and find a publisher to produce this book so that it can be distributed to the public. I am sure this approach is made with all good intentions, but it should be clearly understood that this simply cannot happen...

Although the book is very interesting, those who have read it are clear in stating that it does not contain anything which is distinct and definitely Seventh-day Adventist. From this angle, therefore, the field should cease and desist from its agitation on this matter (Letter from D.K. Short to R.E. Clifford, 5 July 1968, p.2, HBCA).

Short's negative attitude and his overt opposition to the book spoke volumes and undoubtedly constituted one of the greatest hindrances to the publication of Von Hörsten's books. Fritz von Hörsten himself was under no illusion why his books were never printed. In a document entitled *Die Gebeure van 1969*, he recorded that the book was never published simply because it was arbitrarily decided by the Church's leaders that it was written by an Afrikaans author and that it would never be appreciated by English-speaking people (*Die Gebeure van 1969*, p.5, HBCA). *Agter die Blou Gordyn* was in fact never printed by the Sentinel Publishing Association. In 1971 under the directions of the Afrikaanse Konferensie it was eventually produced by Hillex Printers, a private company in Johannesburg (Von Hörsten, 1971).

E. Afrikaans ridiculed at the publishing house

What perturbed many Afrikaners at the time was also the manner in which their language was being ridiculed at the publishing house. In a letter in which the writer chose to remain anonymous the following paragraphs were recorded:

Een broeder het onder ander twee keer, en die twee kere was sowat 'n jaar uitmekaar, deur die perskamer geloop waar stapels gedrukte leesstof gewag het om gebind te word. Die stapels was toegemaak teen stof, en die taal van elke stapel is op 'n stuk papier geskryf wat voor afgehang het. By hierdie twee geleenthede het daar agter Afrikaans, in groot letters, en tussen hakies, gestaan: Bushman Language.

Die man wat toe voorman daar was, is nou die werksbestuurder. Hy het aan die einde van die werksjaar 1957, 1958 se kalenders aan die werkers uitgehandig nadat hulle hul gebruiklike afskeidspartytjie gehad het, met hierdie woorde: Who wants a calender in Afrikaans, or who wants it in a language? (Spion Kop se Dae. n.d., p.4. HBCA).

Translation: On two separate occasions, about a year apart, a brother made his way through the pressroom, where piles of printed materials were stacked waiting to be bound. All the accumulated material had been sealed against the dust and the language in which the material had been printed had been written on a piece of paper which was hanging in front each pile. On these two occasions, after the word Afrikaans, there stood in big letters and in brackets: Bushman Language.

This man who was then foreman is now the works manager. At the end of 1957, when he was handing out calendars at the customary end-of-the-year farewell function, he did so with the following words: Who wants a calender in Afrikaans, or who wants it in a language?

By the late 1960s the Church was faced with a great shortage of authentic Afrikaans reading material and an enormous backlog of books that still had to be translated into Afrikaans. Strong perceptions had also developed that there was an attitude of scorn emanating from the publishing house for Afrikaners and their language and that the publishing manager dragging his heels when it came to the publication of certain Afrikaans books (Letter from Pastor HF Steenberg, 2 May 1997, In author's possession).

VIII. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Judging from the findings of this chapter, there can be little doubt that the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa had remained since its inception in 1887 an American-English orientated organization with English overshadowing Afrikaans in just about every aspect of its work.

The Church had, furthermore been unavoidably influenced by events taking place within its organization and also by the prevailing political climate of South Africa. As a result, by the late 1960's the Church found itself in a very volatile situation. At this time there were many in the Church who had recollections of the South African War (1899-1902), the British concentration camps, and the sufferings brought upon the Afrikaner nation by the British.

There were also many Afrikaans-speaking believers who had bitter memories of the struggles they had experienced at the Church's predominantly English educational institutions. This situation was compounded by the shortage of authentic Afrikaans literature, the profusion of foreign leaders in high positions of administration in the Church, and the perceptions that there was a deliberate attempt by certain church leaders to drive Afrikaans to extinction at Helderberg College.

CHAPTER THREE
THE RISE OF THE AFRIKAANSE KONFERENSIE
AND THE REACTION OF THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH
(1968-1974)

I. CONFRONTATION IN THE TRANSVAAL CONFERENCE

A. *The formation of the Afrikaanse Konferensie
van Sewendedag Adventiste (1968)*

On 8 December 1968, 425 delegates of the Seventh-day Adventist Church met at Sedaven High School in Heidelberg for a Special Business Session of the Transvaal Conference (TC Minutes, 8 December 1968, p.112, HBCA). This session culminated with a number of delegates abandoning the meeting before it had been officially brought to a close. In order to be able to fully understand the events that transpired at this session, it is necessary to examine some occurrences which had taken place during the preceding months.

On 21-22 January 1968 the Transvaal Conference had met to elect the officers who would serve in positions of leadership for the following two years (TC Minutes, Sixth Business Session, 21-22 January 1968, p.14, HBCA). This session appears to have gone by without any real disputes, with the new leaders chosen being endorsed by the South African Union Conference Committee (SAUC Minutes, 6 May 1968, p.305, HBCA). Soon afterwards, however, reports began to spread that the election of certain leaders had been planned before the session. These allegations were confirmed by the Transvaal Conference Executive Committee. Their report read as follows:

Irrefutable evidence has been received that a group of workers and laymen organized at the Sixth Business Session to have predetermined persons elected (TC Minutes, 6 November 1968, p.109, HBCA).

Tensions within the conference's leadership, which by this time were already tightly stretched, escalated even further when serious accusations were made against the moral life of the president of the Transvaal Conference, Pastor Pieter van Eck (Van Zyl, 1990:73). In the light of these rumours and the pre-planning that had taken place, the Transvaal Conference Executive, firstly, maintained that the accusations of immorality were unsubstantiated and pledged their loyalty to and confidence in their president (TC Minutes, 4 March 1968, pp.43-44. HBCA) and, secondly, also voted to call another Business Session on 8 December 1968 to re-elect the conference's officers in order to "set aside the irregular election of the Sixth Business Session of the Conference" (TC Minutes, 6 November 1968, p.109, HBCA).

In the resolution to call together another session it was emphasized that the meeting was being convened for one purpose only, namely to re-elect the conference's officers (TC Minutes, Special Business Session 8 December 1968, p.122, HBCA). A decision was subsequently also taken by the Transvaal Conference Executive that any person, irrespective of whether a Church leader or lay member, who was found guilty of pre-election campaigning before the session in December would be severely disciplined (TC Minutes, 6 November 1968, p.110, HBCA). In an endeavour to try and defuse the situation of detriment that had become apparent throughout the year amongst the conference's leadership, a workers meeting was convened a month before the planned session in December (TC President's Correspondence, PP van Eck to M Mills, 13 November 1968, HBCA).

The session on 8 December did not proceed the way the conference would have wanted. On the day of the meeting, a nine-page tract of protest under the title, Die ware geskilpunt op hierdie sitting (The actual point of dispute at this session), drawn up by Pastor Josef Birkenstock was disseminated amongst all the delegates at the session (TC Minutes, 8 December 1968, p.127, HBCA). This document turned out to be a severe castigation of the Church and its leadership for a myriad of alleged malpractices that were taking place. This action was in direct opposition to the conference's express intention for convening the session. Although the document emphatically claimed that neither nationalism nor animosity between English and Afrikaans-speaking believers in the Church was at the root of the dispute, it unmistakably brought some deep-rooted grievances of the Afrikaner believers in the Church potently to the fore. In a forcefully worded protest against what the document regarded to be the excessive control that the overseas authorities had over the Church in South Africa, the rhetoric of the document bore parallels to the language of the Dutch colonists in their dispute with WA van der Stel in South Africa at the beginning of the eighteenth century (See Chapter One, pp.11-12). The 1968 protest was worded as follows:

Geen volk hou daarvan om deur uitlanders gehiet en gebied te word nie. Hulle hou nog minder daarvan as hierdie besoekers die volk nie ken en verstaan en nooit eers 'n poging aan wend om hul taal aan te leer nie (Die ware geskilpunt op hierdie sessie, p.6, Desember 1968, HBCA).

Translation: No nation wishes to be arbitrarily dictated to by foreigners. They appreciate it even less if these visitors are not familiar with the people and have never made any attempt to learn their language.

It went on to refer to the attitude of superiority that many of the Church leaders from overseas had reputedly assumed over the Afrikaners:

Dit is onverklaarbaar maar baie waar dat ons buitelandse leiers te dikwels 'n bevooroordeelde houding teenoor ons werk en teenoor ons mense in Suid-Afrika ingeneem het. Baie, baie min het waarlik getrag om ons unieke situasie hier te verstaan en simpatiek daarteenoor te staan. As gevolg van hul kleinerende houding het baie van die swakhoofdige werkers hul rug op hul eie volk en kultuur gekeer. Hierdie werkers het begin voel dat indien hulle in die werk vooruitgang wil maak, hulle die maniere (en selfs die spraak en aksent) van hul oorsese leiers moet na-aap. In die verlede was dit nog altyd die gevoel dat 'n Afrikaanse werker nêrens sal kom as hy nie eers probeer om 'n Engelsman te word nie. Jy het die verkeerde naam het 'n algemene gesegde onder ons hier geword. Die direkte gevolg daarvan is nie net bespotlik nie, maar ook tragies (Die ware geskilpunt op hierdie sitting, pp.6-7, HBCA).

Translation: While it may appear inconceivable, it is nevertheless true that our overseas leaders have all too often adopted a prejudiced attitude towards our people in South Africa. Very few really attempted to understand our unique situation and identify with us. As a result of their disdainful attitude many of our own weak-minded leaders have turned their backs on their own people and culture. These workers feel that if they are to make progress they must reproduce the mannerisms, the speech and accent of those from overseas. In the past there was always the belief that an Afrikaans worker would never go places unless he first tried to become anglicized. 'You have the wrong name', has become a common saying amongst us. The direct result thereof has not only become piteous but has also attained tragic proportions.

The minutes of the Special Session recorded that throughout the day a number of delegates unsuccessfully attempted to raise "irrelevant points of view which could not be entertained because they were not related to the purpose for which the special session had been called" (TC Minutes, 8 December 1968, p.127, EGWRC). Because no tape-recordings or transcripts could be traced of the discussions at the session it is impossible to determine the precise course that they took. Fortunately, however, even though almost thirty years have passed there are still many people alive today who were delegates to the session and who can recall some of the debates and the events that transpired. Among the grievances announced by those that protested against the Church were the following:

Helderberg College was depreciated because Afrikaans had been blatantly disregarded and because Afrikaans-speaking gospel ministers had been instructed in a language and culture foreign to them;

The foreign Church leaders working in South Africa were also berated because they had failed to identify with the sentiments and culture of Afrikaners;

The protestors bemoaned the fact that the Afrikaners' language and culture had simply been overlooked;

The administration of the Church also came under attack because the cultural needs of the Afrikaner had never been allowed to prosper and come to the forefront because of the predominantly English character;

Because the Church was being administered and controlled from the United States of America, the local congregations had very little say in the affairs of the conference and in the determination of their own lot;

And then in conclusion, because the tithes and other financial contributions were being sent to higher overseas organizations, that the churches in South Africa were being faced with a shortage of money and were thus unable to effectively proclaim the gospel (Letter from Pastor HF Steenberg, 2 May 1997, In author's possession).

Many voiced the opinion that the solutions to these problems in the Church lay in the democratization of the existing organizational structures and in the shifting of power and authority downwards to congregational levels.

The spark, however, which ignited the already explosive atmosphere at the session was the re-election of Pieter van Eck as president of the Transvaal Conference. When the nominating committee presented its report to the seated delegates, a motion was passed from the floor to refer it back to the committee. This was done, no doubt, because of the accusations of immorality that had been made against Van Eck some months before (Letter from Pastor Eric Armer, 11 April 1997; Letter from Pastor Josef Birkenstock, 9 March 1997, Letters in author's possession). The motion to refer it back to the committee for further discussion was overwhelmingly defeated and the report of the nominating committee was accepted by the majority of delegates at the session.

While it has been difficult to ascertain precisely what transpired thereafter, it appears that at some point in the meeting the chairman lost control of the proceedings and pandemonium ensued (Letter from ML Mills, 10 April 1997, in author's possession). After several persons had their voices purposefully muted out by loud boing, singing and derogatory remarks when they attempted to address the chair (Letter from Frieder von Hörsten, 25 February 1997, In author's possession), a visibly frustrated delegation numbering about thirty people under the leadership of several ministers of the Transvaal Conference left the meeting in protest (TC Minutes, 8 December 1968, p.127).

The group that had walked out, congregated together some distance away from the main auditorium and had in a short while grown to almost fifty people. At this meeting a resolution was taken to protest against what had transpired at the session and to establish a new conference with the provisional name of Die Suid-Afrikaanse Konferensie (SAK Notule, 8 Desember 1968, pp.1-2, HBCA). Other resolutions taken on this day stated that: The decision of starting the new conference had been taken because many felt they could no longer condone the partiality that was being exercised in the Transvaal Conference and the manner in which blatant sinful practices were being covered up; It was their continued desire to adhere to the fundamental doctrines of the Seventh-day Adventist Church; The new Suid-Afrikaanse Konferensie needed to be recognised as an integral part of the established South African Union Conference organizational structure (SAK Notule, 8 Desember 1968, pp.1-2, HBCA).

From these resolutions, even though the above-mentioned group had walked out in protest and had taken the first tentative steps to establish another conference, it appears that they did not, at this stage, consider themselves to be schismatic in their relationship with either the Transvaal Conference or the South African Union Conference.

B. Further grievances of the Afrikaanse Konferensie

The response of the established Church to the grievances and deportment of these Afrikaans believers did not take very long to materialize. Before the session had ended on the 8 December the decision had already been taken to appoint a commission to: "Investigate the activities of this group and take necessary steps to discipline the individuals concerned" (TC Minutes, 8 December 1968, p.127). Two days later on 10 December, the Transvaal Conference Executive Committee suspended all five ministers who had been involved in the walk-out at the session and in the forming of the new conference (TC Minutes, 10 December 1968, p.130). The five ministers that were disciplined were JA Birkenstock, KG Birkenstock, PJ Retief, FW von Hörsten, and ANP van den Bergh. The relatives of these ministers, even though some of them had nothing to do with the walk-out, were also placed under suspicion (Letter from Pastor Martin Retief, 20 June 1997, In author's possession).

On 15 December 1968, those who had walked out of the session and a large group of their supporters who had by this time grown to over two hundred, met again at Brentwood Park in Johannesburg. At this meeting the newly established Suid-Afrikaanse Konferensie already began, no doubt because the first signs had already materialized that it would not in fact be acknowledged by the established Church, to take on a greater degree of permanence. A Dagbestuur was elected with Pastor Josef Birkenstock chosen as its first chairman. In spite of rather strong indications that such a request would not be favourably received, a resolution was also taken to draft an official memorandum to the Transvaal Conference, requesting that the new conference, which at this meeting took on the name Die Afrikaanse Konferensie van Sewendedag-Adventiste, be officially recognized (AK Notule, 15 Desember 1968, p.1, HBCA).

In its first circular, the Afrikaanse Konferensie's objectives were clearly stated:

Die AFRIKAANSE KONFERENSIE skaar sigself langs die ander susterkonferensies MET NET EEN DOEL, en dit is om GODS WERK IN HIERDIE LAND TE VOLTOOI (AK Omsendbrief, Nr.1, 15 Desember 1968, HBCA).

Translation: The AFRIKAANSE KONFERENSIE with Afrikaans as its chief medium of communication joins itself to her sister conference WITH JUST ONE OBJECTIVE before it, namely, TO COMPLETE GOD'S WORK IN THIS COUNTRY.

Soon afterwards the Afrikaanse Konferensie followed its memorandum with an Open Letter which had an Afrikaans title, and surprisingly enough an English content, directed at the leaders of the Transvaal Conference. Part of the memorandum read as follows:

We still ask why is it that we were not allowed to speak at the session? Why did our lay people become victims of this clever strategy? The history of our organization has not been a happy one in this country. The "Dutch" have been continually regarded as inferior and not capable of handling their own affairs. The Afrikaners (and their nation to whom our message must also be preached) have had to be content with crumbs falling from the master's table. In our traditionally honest way we tried to avert the tragedy of a neglected work in our country. But our leaders have always pretended that this tragedy does not exist. We have sent you a memorandum in which we asked for the right of working among our own people in our own way. We have had no reply from you. How long shall this be allowed to continue? We want to be part of the world-wide work. We want to bring the three angel message to our people while mercy still lingers ('n Ope-Brief Aan Alle Leiers en Ampsdraers wat by die Sake Sitting van 8 Desember was, n.d., p.2-3).

The response of the Transvaal Conference Executive to the establishment of the Afrikaanse Konferensie, its memorandum, the open letter and its intended objectives, was printed and circulated without any delay amongst all the members of the Transvaal Conference. In this circular it was made very explicit that the Afrikaanse Konferensie was unconstitutional and would therefore not be recognized as part of the established Church body. It also stipulated that if any member of the Transvaal Conference was found to be supportive of the above organization they would be disciplined. This leaflet contended that there was in actual fact, notwithstanding all the accusations that the Church had neglected to work effectively amongst the Afrikaans-speaking people, no need for an Afrikaans Conference in South Africa (TC Circular, 18 December 1968, p.2. HBCA).

In an ensuing memorandum the Transvaal Conference circular maintained that because it was a bilingual conference it had always served and was still catering effectively to both language groups in the Transvaal Conference This document also stated that the incongruity between the two cultural groups as maintained by those in the Afrikaanse Konferensie was in fact:

An artificial and abstract idea, existing only in the minds of a very small minority (TC Executive Committee's Response to Afrikaanse Konferensie Memorandum, n.d., pp.3-4, HBCA).

Another document of the Afrikaanse Konferensie containing more Afrikaner grievances was entitled Die opdrag van 1899 en die minagting daarvan (The command of 1899 and the disregard thereof). This document consisted of an accusation against what was considered to be the unconsecrated manner in which the Seventh-day Adventist American missionaries had worked in South Africa at the turn of the century. These persons had apparently ignored specific guidelines and counsel that had been sent to them, thereby causing irreversible damage to the furtherance of the Seventh-day Adventist Church's work in South Africa (Die Opdrag van 1899 en die Minagting Daarvan, n.d., pp.1-5, HBCA). The document listed the blunders of the American missionaries as follows: Some of the American missionaries who had come to South Africa had been undedicated, proud and self-centred; Those who had come as missionaries had been incompetent for the work that had been set before them; Great harm had been caused as a result of the way the missionary work of the Church had been done in South Africa; The financial means of the South African Seventh-day Adventist believers had been misused by foreign missionaries for improper and selfish purposes; The missionaries sent to South Africa had been people without any missionary vision.

After elaborating upon the ways in which this "disregard" had played its role, the document concluded with the following statement:

'n mens sal dan tog wil weet of hierdie raadgewinge en vermanings ter harte geneem is of nie. Het daar 'n drastiese verandering ingetree in die werk wat so skeef en verkeerd aangevoer is? Wat was die ondervinding van ons evangeliste, leraars, onderwysers en voltydse werkers in ons land nā hierdie doelgerigte en duidelike vermanings en waarskuwings wat die Here deur sy diensmaagd aan die leiers van die Adventbeweging in Suid-Afrika gerig het? Het daar 'n verootmoediging ingetree of het die wanpraktyke en tragiese toedrag van sake onversteurd voortgewoeker? Die antwoord op hierdie vrae kom met ontsetting, hartseer en ontnugtering (Die Opdrag van 1899 en die Minagting Daarvan, p.5, HBCA).

Translation: A person will want to know whether these counsels and warnings were ever heeded to. Have any drastic changes materialized in a programme that was initiated in such a indiscriminate manner? What were the experiences of our evangelists, gospel ministers, teachers and full-time workers in our country after these explicitly clear warnings had been given by God through His servant to the leaders of the Advent movement in South Africa? Has any acknowledgement in fact materialized or have the malpractices and tragic state of affairs continued unabated? Answers to the above questions effects feelings of apprehension, sadness and a distressing realization of what is really happening.

By expressing their grievances in this forthright manner and then linking them with the failings of the missionaries and the Church leaders at the turn of the century, the Afrikaanse Konferensie had not only called for urgent reforms to take place but had also brought the entire modus-operandi of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in this country seriously into question.

II. SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST ECCLESIOLOGY

The bulk of this chapter deals specifically with the reaction of the established Seventh-day Adventist Church to the emergence of the Afrikaanse Konferensie. Before an appraisal can be made, however, of the exchanges that took place between these two organizations, and before any deductions can be drawn, for the reasons why the organized Church responded to the Afrikaanse Konferensie in the way that it did, it is essential to have some understanding of certain facets of Seventh-day Adventist ecclesiology. The first section of this chapter will, therefore, deal with the clarification of its missionary mandate, an interpretation and understanding of its organizational unity, and its understanding of how schismatic or theologically divisive groups in the Church should be regarded and dealt with.

A. *The origins of the missionary mandate of the Seventh-day Adventist Church*

The term "church" (*ekkleśia*) has been generally understood as "those called out to meet as a body" (Beach & Beach, 1985:14; Nichols, 1986:85). This was a common Greek term employed for any "called" or "gathered" assembly of people, and was accordingly used many times in the New Testament to designate Christians meeting together for worship (see 1 Cor. 11:18; 14:3). In addition to this understanding the SDA Church also acknowledges Jesus Christ as the founder and the head of the Christian church, along with the view that the Church is the brotherhood of all believers (*Seventh-day Adventist Church Fundamental Beliefs*, n.d.:146-160). These understandings dealing with the nature of the church are similar to the interpretations and teachings proposed by many other Christian denominations.

This consensus is, however, disturbed in the perceptions that the SDA Church has concerning the missionary mandate entrusted unto it. In essence, the Church believes that "it has been called into being by God in an age of universal spiritual apostasy to emphasize neglected truths, to repair theological breaches and to lead out in the gathering of the remnant people and the majority of whom are still scattered in every land" (White, 1943:188-189). This conviction can be clearly deduced from another quotation taken from the writings of Ellen White:

In a special sense Seventh-day Adventists have been set in the world as watchmen and light bearers. To them has been entrusted the last warning for a perishing world. On them is shining wonderful light from the word of God. They have been given a work of the most solemn import - the proclamation of the first, second, and third angel's messages...the most solemn truths ever entrusted to mortals have been given [sic] us to proclaim to the world. The proclamation of these truths is to be our work (White, 1948:19).

In addition to this assertion, Ellen White also made the bold claim that the work of spiritual reform begun during the Protestant Reformation in the sixteenth century would be brought to completion by the Seventh-day Adventist Church (White, 1911:148). This decisive role that the SDA Church was to supposedly perform in crucial spiritual events was also perpetuated in the writings of many other Adventist authors. In the mid 1920s Carlyle B. Haynes, a public evangelist and a prolific author, also expressed the notion that the light of the gospel given in the Reformation was handed down via the Reformers to the Adventist Church (Haynes, 1926:67-82). Some years later, Leroy Edwin Froom also declared that the Adventist Church had received its divine commission from God to bring the work of the Reformation to its consummation (Froom, Quoted in Paxton, 1978:20-21). Beach & Beach wrote that they believed that the Seventh-day Adventist Church was the visible organization through which God was sending and proclaiming His last messages before the second advent of Jesus (Beach & Beach, 1985:29).

These claims by the Adventist Church have been rejected by theologians of other Christian denominations (See Paxton, 1978). An overview of the commencement of the SDA Church will, however, reveal how it arrived at the such assertions. The key events leading to the establishment of the SDA Church were initiated when William Miller (1782-1849), a former captain in the American army, experienced a dramatic conversion and began to study the Bible (Nichol, 1945:17; *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, 1996:73). It was particularly the eighth and ninth chapter of the book of Daniel that captivated his attention and brought him to a conviction that Christ's promised second advent would take place sometime between 1843 and 1844 (Martin, 1960:28; Hoekema, 1965:92; Land, 1986:5).

From the year 1831 until 1844, Miller and other preachers who had joined him, embarked on extensive preaching tours throughout the United States of America intent on sharing their convictions of the imminent advent of Christ (Land, 1986:1-5). By 22 October 1844, on the day that they were expecting Christ to arrive, there were an estimated 100,000 people hopefully waiting for this event to take place (Froom, 1954:855). This day, however, which was to become known as the "day of great disappointment" passed as any other without Christ's expected appearance (Schwarz, 1979:50-51). Most of the Millerites (Miller's followers) scattered.

Others, however, continued to study the Bible, believing that even though Christ had not come as they had expected, that 1844 was still a significant date on the Bible's prophetic calendar. As these believers continued with their investigation into what had occurred in 1844, they arrived at the conclusion that the book of Daniel was not referring to Christ's second advent, but to the commencement of Christ's priestly ministry in the "Most Holy Place" in the heavenly sanctuary (Schwarz, 1979:62-63; Froom, 1971:80). Out of this conviction the belief developed that the final judgement had begun in heaven, and that God had chosen them to warn the inhabitants of the earth about Christ's impending advent.

Even though it would still take another 20 years before the Church was formally organized, these spiritual convictions and responsibilities, developed and consolidated by the Church's pioneers in the mid-nineteenth century, would remain part of the foundation blocks of the Church's theology of mission. Over one hundred years later, in 1995, its missionary mandate was still being expressed as follows:

The remnant and its mission

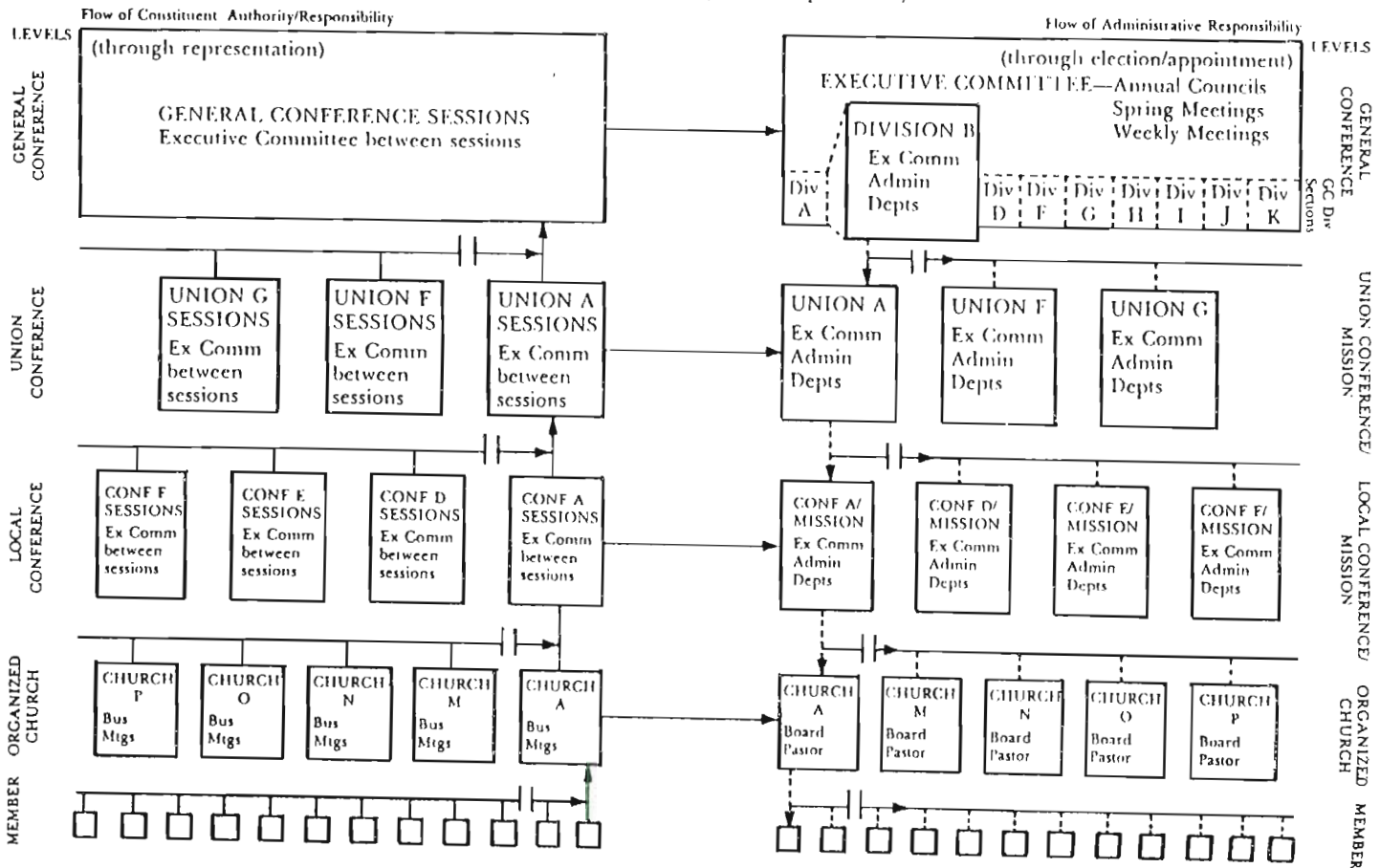
The universal church is composed of all who truly believe in Christ, but in the last days, a time of widespread apostasy, a remnant has been called out to keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. This remnant announces the arrival of the judgment hour, proclaims salvation through Christ and heralds the approach of His second advent. This proclamation is symbolized by the three angels of Revelation 14 (*Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual*, 1995, p.11).

B. *The organizational unity of the church*

Having taken cognizance of both the development of the missionary mandate of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and the conviction that had developed that God had elected this Church as a prophetic movement for a very explicit task, it will become somewhat easier to understand why its leaders considered the organizational unity of the Church to be so important, and why schismatic movements that threatened to destroy this unity would be so forcefully opposed.

As the Seventh-day Adventist Church developed it soon became apparent that a system for directing the affairs of the Church in an orderly fashion would be necessary (Fromm, 1971:139). Even though there was opposition to the creation of a formal organization (Gaustad, 1974:179; Beach & Beach, 1985:30), in 1860 the name "Seventh-day Adventist" was accepted as being most expressive of their faith and position (Damsteegt, 1977:255). In 1861, the first Seventh-day Adventist Conference was inaugurated in Michigan (Schwarz, 1979:96), while the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists was called into existence in May 1863 as the highest administrative organization of the Church (Van Zyl, 1990:21). By the turn of the century, however, it had become apparent that radical changes were needed in the existing structures of Church administration. Accordingly, in 1901 a process of decentralization was implemented whereby the world-field was divided into organized union conferences. Under this new structure, the local conferences came under the control of the unions, while the unions themselves were directly under the jurisdiction of the General Conference (Schwarz, 1979:277). In 1913 continued endeavours to provide more effective structures for the world-wide Church led to the grouping of the existing union conference in given geographical areas into divisional organizations. These organizational structures which are still in place today are reflected in the following diagram:

**SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH RELATIONSHIP OF CONFERENCE/MISSION ORGANIZATIONS
and Flow of Authority and Responsibility**



For notes regarding diagram see annexure 7, p.323 (Beach & Beach, 1985:135)

Besides the constituent levels that had progressively unfolded in the Seventh-day Adventist Church organizational structure, there was also the question of church polity. Out of the four recognized forms of church government, namely the episcopal, papal, congregational, and representative systems, the Seventh-day Adventist Church embraced the representative form of church polity with both presbyterian and congregational element (Beach & Beach, 1985:32). The authority of this system is derived from the elected representatives of the various churches who govern through the five recognized organizational structures of the Church, namely: the local church, the local conference - the union - the division, and the General Conference. Although there is limited lay representation in the governing bodies beyond the local church level, every local church member does have a casting vote and the church itself does have distinct prerogatives of its own (*Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual*. 1995. p.24) (For a detailed description of Seventh-day Adventist Church structure and governance refer to the annexure 2, p.304).

As the writings of the Church are examined they give the distinct impression that no clear divisions or distinctions are made between its theology and its organizational structures. The belief exists that the Seventh-day Adventist Church organization was founded on divine principles and placed on a par with its inspired doctrines. These thoughts were clearly reflected at the height of the conflict in the Church in the 1960s when Pastor JJB Combrinck wrote:

Die stelsel van organisasie wat ons Adventpioniers uit Gods woord op die patroon van die kerk in die dae van die apostels gekry het, en die model van Israel wat hulle in die woestynomswerwinge gehad het, is vir ons net so 'n kosbare leerstuk as al ons waarhede wat ons van God ontvang het (Apologetika, n.d., p.4, HBCA).

Translation: The organizational structure that our Adventist pioneers received, based upon the Word of God and the church at the time of the apostles, and the model that the church of Israel had during the wilderness wanderings, is to us a doctrine just as precious as all our truths that we received from God.

Similar convictions also appeared in the writings of other Church apologists. Pastor GM Niemandt also maintained that the organization of the SDA Church had received divine sanction under the inspired leading of the Holy Spirit (Grondpilaar van eensgesindheid in die SDA kerk, n.d., p.2).

With the views that there was divine purpose in its organization, and the conviction that its structures had been implemented so that order and unity could be preserved, came the belief that because the SDA Church was God's elected agent, that all authority and power had been bestowed by Christ upon the Church and its leaders to guide the Church and deal with any difficulties that might confront it (*Seventh-day Adventist Fundamental Beliefs*, n.d.:144).

Although Ellen White admonished the Church that it was not to place all its trust and dependence upon human leaders (*Gospel Workers*, 1948, p.200) she also asserted that those who despised the authority of the Church and its leaders, were despising the authority of Christ Himself (White, *Gospel Workers*, 1948:503). Such a conviction would understandably place the Church in an almost unassailable position in its opposition to individuals or groups who were considered schismatic, either because they had deviated from the accepted missionary practice or doctrines of the Church, or because they threatened to disturb the unity or the established organizational structure of the Church (*Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual*, 1995, p.164).

III. THE BACKDROP TO THE CONTROVERSY IN THE CHURCH

A. *The background years (1955-1968)*

Besides the augmented understanding of these tenets of the ecclesiology of the Church it is also necessary to scrutinize a series of events that took place within the Cape Conference and the Transvaal Conference in the decade prior to the walk-out at Heidelberg in December 1968. It appears that by the mid 1950s a measure of agitation had erupted in the Cape Conference between some ministers and JB Cooks the Cape Conference president (Letter from Pastor PA Venter to A Pantalone, 11 March 1997). An ex-Cape Conference worker recalled how this group of ministers, which included KG Birkenstock, BVD Kriel, JW Newman, and PP van Eck, most of who were to also become involved in the controversy in the Transvaal Conference in 1968, had banded together in their determination to oust Pastor Cooks from his position as president (Interview with an ex-Cape Conference minister, 11 March 1997). Their quarrel with Pastor Cooks appears to have been linked with a desire that surfaced at this time for the establishment of a conference for Afrikaans-speaking people at the Cape (Antwoord op Omsendbrief van Leraar EC Webster, 26 June 1969, p.1, Document in author's possession). GS Stevenson, the SAUC president at the time was, however, alerted to what was taking place in the Cape Conference and quickly defused the situation by dispatching a number of these so called "instigators" to the Transvaal Conference and the Oranje-Natal Conference (Interview with an ex-Cape Conference minister, March 1997).

Although no direct links could be established with the situation just described, at the beginning of 1958, all the ministers of the Cape Conference were requested to endorse and sign a worker's code of ethics which read as follows:

- I. My Relationship to the Organization.
 1. I will regard as confidential the discussions of the committees and boards which are not intended for publication.

2. I will be loyal to committee decisions, avoiding ill-considered criticism.
3. I will not engage in private enterprise or speculative business while in full time employment.

II. My Relationship to Fellow-Workers.

1. I will not by word, look or innuendo cast unfavourable reflection on predecessors or successors.
2. I will not let professional jealousy becloud my sanctified judgment, remembering the principle of 'In honour preferring one another'.
3. I will give due credit for the ideas and work of others and humbly do all I can to co-operate with them in making their work a success (Cape Conference Minutes, 9 January 1958, p.40, EGWRC).

By the mid 1960s Pastor JW Newman had been appointed president of the Transvaal Conference, and almost the entire group of ministers that had agitated against Pastor Cooks in the 1950s had also gravitated to this conference (TC Minutes, 3 June 1965, p.131, HBCA). When the Transvaal Conference held its fifth business session in January 1966 to elect its new officers for the ensuing biennial period, JW Newman was reelected as the president of the conference (TC Minutes, Fifth Business Session, 16-17 January 1966, p.15, HBCA). However, before his two-year term had drawn to a close, Newman submitted an urgent request that he be relieved of his duties. The minutes of the Transvaal Conference record that Newman had requested to be relieved because he was emigrating to the United States and that his children had to be placed in schools before the new school year commenced in September 1967 (TC Minutes, 7 June 1967, no page numbering, EGWRS). In a personal letter to GS Stevenson, however, Newman disclosed that he had fallen out of favour with a core group of ministers in the Transvaal who had wished to vote him out at the following session in January 1968. Newman stated that he would, however, deny them that pleasure by resigning and leave the country instead (Interview with Pastor PA Venter, 29 June 1997).

Pastor Geoff Garne, who was called from the Oranje-Natal Conference to replace Pastor Newman as president of the Transvaal Conference was to remain in that office for only a few months. At the Transvaal Conference business session held four months later in January 1968, Pastor Garne was succeeded as president of the Transvaal Conference by PP van Eck (TC Minutes, Sixth Business Session, 21-22 January 1968, HBCA).

Before the session commenced, however, a covert plan had been made to influence the nominating committee to elect predetermined persons as the new conference officers (Letter from HF Steenberg, 2 May 1997, In author's possession). From the convictions of numerous persons, they all agreed this pre-session planning had been masterminded by Pastor Karl Birkenstock (Interview with Pastors Engelbrecht and Rautenbach, 8 January 1997). By January 1968 Birkenstock had worked things in such a way that he had made quite sure that PP van Eck, who had been one of the group who had agitated against JB Cooks, would be elected as the new president (Interview with Pastor Josef Birkenstock, 15 June 1997).

This pre-session planning was confirmed at the session itself. On the day of the session, just before the special committee was ready to report the names of those that been chosen to serve on the nominating committee, Pastor Jan van der Merwe handed the chairman of this committee a sealed envelope that he had obtained from someone several weeks before the session. According to Pastor Van der Merwe the envelope contained a list of names that a caucus of ministers had apparently decided should serve on the Nominating Committee. Upon inspection it was discovered that the names on this list corresponded almost precisely with the list of names chosen by the Special Committee (Letter from Pastor HF Steenberg, 2 May 1997; Interview with PA Venter, 29 June 1997).

What transpired over the following few days ultimately culminated in the walk-out at the Special Session in December 1968. PP van Eck had hardly had a chance to settle in his new position as Transvaal Conference president when he was accosted by the group that had been instrumental in his "election". Upon their disclosure to Van Eck however, that he had become president because they had placed him into that position, he retaliated by stating that it was not they but the Transvaal constituency that had elected him.

Van Eck also made it very clear to this group that "he was not willing to dance to their pipes" (Interview with PP van Eck, 7 June 1997) and would only act in the best interest of the Transvaal Conference (Letter from Pastor PA Venter, 11 March 1997, In author's possession). It was from this time onward, as rifts began to appear among the Church leadership and accusations and rumours against certain people began to circulate, that tension in the Transvaal Conference began to mount.

The person most strongly vilified was PP van Eck who was accused by some of his former colleagues, after he had so suddenly turned against them, of leading a sexually immoral life. Even though the Transvaal Conference very firmly declared that they had found no substance to these accusations (TC Minutes 4 March 1968 pp.43-44, HBCA), only two months after he had been elected as president, the strain which had come upon was already evident in his correspondence. In a letter to Pastor Mills he wrote:

I have been in the Transvaal for only a few weeks, and already have seen and felt some of the problems and stresses that will be my portion (Letter from PP van Eck to ML Mills, 14 March 1968, EGWRC).

These occurrences that took place within the Church in the decade prior to the walk-out in December 1968 are very significant in that, they not only give added insight into the complexity of the situation and corroborate the existence of identifiable blocs that had formed in the Transvaal Conference prior to the Special Session in December, but has also revealed the significant role that specific individuals would play in the unfolding controversy in the Church.

IV. THE CHURCH REFUTES THE ALLEGATIONS OF THE AFRIKAANSE KONFERENSIE

A. *The reaction of the organized Church following the special session at Sedaven (1968)*

Notwithstanding the indictments of the discontented Afrikaans-speaking believers in the Transvaal Conference, the organized Church resisted any form of consideration for the grievances that had been expressed. Even before the Special Session on 8 December had been concluded it was agreed that a sub-committee should be called together by the South African Union Conference, to take the necessary steps "to discipline those individuals responsible for creating the ill-feeling and dissension at the session" (TC Minutes, Special Business Session, 8 December 1968, p.127, HBCA).

At a meeting-place some distance from the Carl van Heerden Memorial Chapel where the Special Session was being held, those that had walked out in protest took the decision to establish another conference, and to submit a request that this newly established conference become an integral part of the South African Union Conference (TC Minutes, 19 December 1968, p.1, HBCA). Pastor RE Clifford, the Union Conference president, who had been invited to address the group who had protested was, however, not in the position to give an affirmative answer to their request for recognition and advised them to draw up a memorandum in which they could present their proposal to the Executive Committee of the Transvaal Conference (AK Notule, 8 Desember 1968, p.2, HBCA).

The president's recommendation to their request was interpreted by the Afrikaans believers as an affirmative indication that their conference would soon become part of the established Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa. The chain of events that transpired over the following few days was, however, to prove that this would not happen. Two days later, on 10 December, at a meeting of the Transvaal Conference Executive, Pastor Josef Birkenstock one of those who had walked out in protest and who had also been responsible for compiling the document, *Die ware geskilpunt op hierdie sitting*, was called to appear before the committee, to state his plans for the future in view of his attitude and actions at the special session of the Transvaal Conference.

For a number of hours, the committee which included the TAD president, Merle Mills, and the SAUC president, RE Clifford, answered Birkenstock's questions and endeavoured to convince Josef Birkenstock that his suppositions as contained in the document handed out at the Special Session were "not applicable to the Transvaal Conference and thus inconsequential" (TC Minutes, 10 December 1968, p.129, EGWRC; TC Correspondence, 19 December 1968, p.1, HBCA).

When Birkenstock was asked to declare his loyalty to the Transvaal Conference and to state whether he accepted the nominating committee's report read on 8 December at the Special Session, he expressed that he could not to do so and chose to resign.

Over the following two days a number of other ministers of the Transvaal Conference who had either joined the protestors or had shown an affinity with them, were also summoned to appear before the Transvaal Conference and confronted with questions similar to those put to Josef Birkenstock. By Wednesday afternoon, four other ministers namely Karl Birkenstock, Fritz von Hörsten, Philippus Retief and ANP van den Bergh, along with Josef Birkenstock had either been suspended or had chosen to resign (TC Minutes, 11 December 1968, pp.134-135, HBCA).

Three days after the walk-out at Sedaven an action was also taken by the Transvaal Executive Committee to appoint a sub-committee to draw up a letter to repudiate the allegations in the document distributed by Josef Birkenstock at the Special Business Session (TC Minutes, 11 December 1968, pp.131, HBCA).

V. THE RIFT BETWEEN THE AFRIKAANSE KONFERENSIE AND THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH WIDENS

A. A "letter and tract" conflict erupts

The ever-widening rift that developed between the organized Church and the separated Afrikaans believers becomes evident in the profusion of tracts, letters and circulars that materialized over the ensuing months as both these groups attempted to elucidate their own particular perspectives on the crisis in the Church.

On 15 December 1968, at the meeting held at Brentwood Park where the Afrikaanse Konferensie was formally inaugurated, an action was taken to draft a memorandum to the Transvaal Conference requesting that the new conference be officially recognized (Notule van die Eerste Vergadering van die Beherende Liggaam van die Afrikaanse Konferensie, 15 Desember 1968, p.1, HBCA).

This memorandum insisted that immediate consideration should be given to the formation of an Afrikaans Conference. The reasons for their request was given as follows: Firstly, because they believed that the jurisdiction of the Transvaal Conference extended over a geographical area that was far too vast;

Secondly, because English and Afrikaans were both official languages; Thirdly, because of the existence of the Afrikaans and English cultural groups in the Church and the continual complications that had arisen as a result of the unavoidable disparities that existed between these two groups; And fourthly, because they believed that the platteland could only be ministered effectively by Afrikaans-speaking people.

The memorandum concluded by stating quite categorically that there had been no desire by the believers of the Afrikaanse Konferensie to break away from the established Church and that their wish was to remain part of the South Africa Union Conference and Trans-Africa Division (Memorandum vir 'n Afrikaanse Konferensie van Sewendedag-Adventiste onder die Uniekonferensie van Suid-Afrika, n.d., Document in author's possession).

The first omsendbrief (circular) of the Afrikaanse Konferensie which was also formulated at Brentwood Park included the following paragraphs:

Ons kondig met genoeë aan dat hierdie KONFERENSIE in die lewe geroep is by die onlangse SAKESIESSIE BY SEDAVEN op 8 Desember, 1968. Dit is 'n mylpaal in die geskiedenis van die Adventbeweging in hierdie land. Dit is besluit dat Afrikaans die voertaal van hierdie Konferensie sal wees.

Die AFRIKAANSE KONFERENSIE skaar sigself langs die ander susterkonferensies MET NET EEN DOEL, en dit is om GODS WERK IN HIERDIE LAND TE VOLTOOI (Omsendbrief Nr.1, Die Afrikaanse Konferensie van die Sewendedag-Adventiste Kerk, 15 Desember 1968, HBCA).

Translation: We joyfully announce that this CONFERENCE was called into existence at the recent BUSINESS SESSION AT SEDAVEN on December 8, 1968. It is a milestone in the history of the Advent movement in this country. It has been decided that the medium of communication of this conference will be Afrikaans.

The AFRIKAANSE KONFERENSIE aligns itself alongside the other sister conferences WITH ONLY ONE OBJECTIVE, namely to COMPLETE THE LORD'S WORK IN THIS COUNTRY.

On 17 December 1968, two days after the formation of the Afrikaanse Konferensie, the South African Union Conference declared its disapproval and non-recognition of the new organization, subsequently deploring what it called "the divisive action of the group in the formation of another organization within the territory of the South African Union Conference" (SAUC Executive Committee, 17 December 1968, p.437, EGWRC).

The very next day the Transvaal Conference reciprocated by issuing its own statement which was circulated without delay to all its church members. Part of their circular read as follows:

It has come to our notice that a meeting was held at Brentwood Park on Sunday, 15 December 1968. We must point out that this meeting, although held within the territory of the Transvaal Conference, was held without the knowledge or approval of the Transvaal Conference, the South African Union Conference, or the Trans-Africa Division. Within the framework of the denomination, the Transvaal Conference is the only official representation of the Seventh-day Adventist church in the province of the Transvaal. The only recognized procedure for the establishment of a new organization is for it to make representations through the official representative organizations.

In view of these facts this new organization is acting illegally by referring to itself as a Seventh-day Adventist Conference. The report that the Union President has intimated that if the new conference can obtain sufficient support, it will receive recognition is not factual. Accordingly, any member who support or joins this opposition movement makes himself subject the [sic] church discipline and will be cutting himself off from the church body. We must also advise that any person supporting the break-away organization forfeits his privilege to serve in any capacity in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Transvaal Conference, and that they may under no circumstances whatsoever make use of our church pulpits (TC Minutes, 18 December 1968, HBCA).

In the response of the Transvaal Conference to the Afrikaanse Konferensie's memorandum it not only pronounced the organization of the new conference as "a deception of the highest order" but also proceeded in a step by step repudiation of every argument contained therein: It, firstly, denied that any need existed to partition the Transvaal Conference on a geographical basis; It, secondly, denied the need for a division of the Transvaal Conference on a membership basis; It, thirdly, maintained that because the Church was serving both language groups "equally efficiently" that there was no need for an Afrikaans Conference; Fourthly, differences between cultural groups were considered to be an abstract idea existing only in the minds of a small misguided minority; And, fifthly, the document also asserted that because there were also many English-speaking people living on the platteland that it could be served more effectively by a bilingual conference. In conclusion, the assertion in the memorandum that the Afrikaanse Konferensie did not wish to break away from the Church was, chiefly because a separate organization had already been formed, also comprehensively rejected (TC Executive Committee's Response to the Memorandum submitted by the Self-Styled Afrikaanse Konferensei [sic], n.d., pp.3-5. HBCA).

Although the terms "splinter group" and "dissident group" appeared for the first time in the correspondence of the established Church, they were not the only derogatory terms that would be used to designate the Afrikaanse Konferensie. On 19 December 1968, in a five-page letter which the Transvaal Conference directed to all those that had attended the Special Session, it once again severely criticized the document that had been circulated by Josef Birkenstock, maintaining that the accusations contained in the document, which revealed hard feelings, irregularities and grievances against the Church organization, were in fact vague and did not pertain to the Transvaal Conference. It also repudiated the numerous accusations contained in Birkenstock's document maintaining that they were based on inaccurate reports. It also argued that the document not only undermined the confidence and loyalty of God's people, but also that it was a serious offense for a minister of the Gospel to break the unity of the Church. And finally it asserted that the document did not present a true reflection of the way in the Seventh-day Adventist Church had operated (TC Correspondence, 19 December 1968, p.2, HBCA).

In spite of all the efforts of the Transvaal Conference to renounce the allegations that had been made by the Afrikaanse Konferensie, and its insistence that the break-away group only enjoyed the support of a small minority of the Afrikaans-speaking people, the second omsendbrief of the Afrikaanse Konferensie indicated that membership had already grown to over 250 people. This figure must be viewed as quite substantial in the light that the Transvaal Conference had, at that time, only about 3000 church members on their books (Omsendbrief Nr.2, Afrikaanse Konferensie van Sewendedag-Adventiste, 24 Desember 1968, p.1, HBCA).

The very rigid lines that the organized Church had undertaken in its dealings with the Afrikaanse Konferensie is also evident in the correspondence at Division level. In a letter directed to the Transvaal Conference at the end of December 1968, Merle Mills, the Trans-Africa Division president suggested that a strong course of action be taken when dealing with those in the Afrikaanse Konferensie. In a letter to Eric Korff the secretary treasurer of the Transvaal Conference, Pastor Mills wrote:

What are the latest developments in the Transvaal as it relates to these disaffected ministers? I am confident that had these ministers followed a straight course and been peacemakers rather than troublemakers, the laity would not have been aroused. For that reason it is my firm conviction that they must be dealt with summarily and firmly...It may even be necessary in some cases to disband a church or two...I do not think we can be too lenient with the troublemakers among our ministry [underlining added] (ML Mills to Eric Korff, 30 December 1968, p.2, TAD Correspondence, HBCA).

Any traces of leniency or the slightest hint of sympathy shown, even among the highest echelons of the Church leadership, for the Afrikaanse Konferensie and its intended goals were very forcefully censured. In mid January 1969 the Union president, RE Clifford, had corresponded with the Beherende Liggaam (Controlling Body) of the Afrikaanse Konferensie and referred to this arm of the organization as an "official" body. The Transvaal Conference wasted little time in sending him a reply and making him understand that he was "out of line" (TC Minutes, 14 January 1969, p.147, HBCA). Three days later Eric Korff, the secretary-treasurer of the Transvaal Conference, directed a strongly-worded letter to Clifford chiding him for the actions that he had undertaken. His admonishment read as follows:

According to the decision and statement of the Executive Committee of the South African Union Conference of December 17, 1968 and December 19, 1968, respectively, this group was styled irregular. Therefore, we feel that your use of the word "official" is inconsistent with the abovementioned [sic] decision and statement. From the introduction of your letter one can also conclude that you recognise the group, as a result of the words "Sekretaris, Beherende Liggaam".

We also conclude from paragraph two of your letter that if you did not have other appointments, you would have attended their "official" meeting! As a Committee we feel that this letter of yours undermines the authority of both the South African Union Conference Executive Committee and the Transvaal Conference Executive Committee, and impedes their work, on account of that one can infer from your letter that you recognise them and that further negotiations are possible.

It must be taken into account that the credentials of the leaders of the splinter organization have been withdrawn, and as a result of their actions they are unworthy of acting as leaders of a new conference within the framework of the denomination. This Committee therefore requests that any further contact with this group only take place in consultation with the officers of the Transvaal Conference, especially since the S.A.U.C. Commission recommended that you do not communicate with this group (Eric Korff to RE Clifford, TC Correspondence, 17 January 1969, pp.1-2, HBCA).

The lengths to which the organized Church was willing to go to counter the Afrikaanse Konferensie appeared to have no bounds. At the end of January 1969, in an endeavour to block the application of the Afrikaanse Konferensie to register as a legal organization, the Transvaal Conference president, Pieter van Eck, appealed to the Union president that he should and seek assistance in this regard from the Prime Minister of South Africa. Part of his letter was worded as follows:

Elder, I want to suggest that you, together with the Southern Union President, arrange for an interview for Elder Mills with our Prime Minister as soon as possible. I believe this should be treated with great urgency. We have information that these men are arranging to go to Cape Town in the near future in order to interview the Minister of the Interior in order to register as a church body (PP van Eck to RE Clifford, TC President's Correspondence, 28 January 1969, pp.1-2, HBCA).

B. The quarrel within the Church becomes public

By March 1969 the situation between the established Church and the Afrikaanse Konferensie had deteriorated to such an extent that an account of the conflict appeared in the Afrikaans public newspaper, *Dagbreek en Landstem*. The article read as follows:

KERK GESLUIT OOR AFRIKAANS-SKOORSOEKERY

As jy 'n Afrikaner oor sy Afrikanerskap kwaad maak, dan soek jy skoor. En jy sal moeilikheid kry - maak nie saak in watter organisasie en vereniging Boer se kind sit nie. Nou het die Afrikaner stryd - van alle plekke - onder die Sewendedag-Adventiste uitgebreek. Daar heers 'n kwaai stryd in dié kerk. Die Afrikaanse seksie het in opstand teen die beheer uit Amerika gekom en geëis dat dit beeindig word. 'n Groep Afrikaanse leraars het hul eie Afrikaanse Konferensie gestig, en is summier uit die beweging geskors. Op Krugersdorp het dit só erg gegaan, dat die kerk met 'n slot en ketting toegesluit gestaan het. Die gebou behoort aan die Amerikaanse Konferensie (*Dagbreek en Landstem*, 2 Maart, 1969, HBCA).

CHURCH LOCKED IN AFRIKANER QUARREL

Translation: If you make an Afrikaner angry about his Afrikanerhood, then you are really looking for trouble. And trouble you will get - no matter in what organization or society this Afrikaner is found. An Afrikaner conflict has now broken out - of all places - in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. A terrible struggle has erupted in this church. The Afrikaans contingent have revolted against American dominance and have demanded that it come to an end. A group of Afrikaans pastors have initiated their own Afrikaans Conference and have been summarily suspended. In Krugersdorp the contention became so serious that the church had to be locked with a chain. The building belongs to the American Conference.

Although no one claimed responsibility for sending the article to the newspaper, the organized Church's reaction to the article was that it had been purposefully slanted in order to gain the maximum amount of publicity and rebuffed it as "a bit of gossip-writing" which would soon be forgotten. Neither did the Church's leaders think it imperative, in order to prevent the situation from escalating into a series of sensational newspaper reports, to reply to the report (SAUC President's Correspondence, 5 March 1969, HBCA).

C. The Afrikaanse Konferensie justifies its motives and actions

By the middle of March 1969, in direct response to the disapproval shown by the organized Church to its supplications, the Afrikaanse Konferensie thought it expedient to prepare a lengthy apology entitled *Vrae en antwoorde oor die Afrikaanse Konferensie* (Notule van die Sesde Dagbestuur-Vergadering van die Afrikaanse Konferensie, 16 Maart 1969, p.3, HBCA). This document, constructed in the form of questions and answers, decried the actions of the Church at the Special Session which had robbed them of their Christian democratic rights. It also once again denied the allegations that there had been a break-away from the Church and asserted that their members had remained loyal Seventh-day Adventists (*Vrae en Antwoorde oor die Afrikaanse Konferensie*, n.d., pp.1-4, HBCA).

When called to answer to the allegations that the Afrikaanse Konferensie was nothing more than a political movement, the document focused attention on the fact that the organized Church itself was, because of the lines of separation that existed within the Church between the black, coloured, and Indian work, also politically divided (*Vrae en Antwoorde oor die Afrikaanse Konferensie*, n.d., p.4, HBCA).

Besides rejecting the allegations of the Transvaal Conference that all those who had joined the Afrikaanse Konferensie were "weaklings and non-tithe paying members of the church", the document elaborated on the great difficulties that Afrikaans-speaking people had experienced in the Church. This part of the document read as follows"

Laat ons die antwoord so stel: Wat die Afrikaanssprekendes nog verkry het, is met groot stryd en tranes verkry. By Helderberg Kollege het leiers nog 'n paar jaar gelede gesê Afrikaans sal daar oor hulle dooie liggeme erken word as 'n taal. Sedaven Hoërskool het verlede jaar in matriek een leerling gehad wat Afrikaans hoër geloop het. Die Sentinel is Engels - Ons hele beweging word as nie-Afrikaans bestempel (*Vrae en antwoorde oor die Afrikaanse Konferensie*, n.d., p.5, HBCA).

Translation: Let us phrase our answer in the following manner: Everything that the Afrikaans-speaking people have managed to obtain has only come about with much tears and terrible struggles. Just a number of years ago at Helderberg College, the

leaders adamantly forbade Afrikaans to be recognized as a language. Last year Sedaven High School had only one Matric student taking Afrikaans on higher grade. The Sentinel is English - Our whole organization has in fact been characterized as non-Afrikaans.

Among the many changes that the Afrikaanse Konferensie envisaged in the Church, was that people of varying language, culture, customs and traditions should not be compelled to join together. This, according to the document, was not authentic unity. The only solution which would bring about peace, happiness and progress, they believed, lay in allowing the diverse groups existing in the Church to be separate. In the final paragraphs of the document it wanted to know why the members of the Afrikaanse Konferensie were being reviled, persecuted, barred from their churches, and condemned, in the light of the fact that they had not shifted in doctrine, that they had not wanted to break-away and that there had always been a desire to work together to complete the Lord's work in South Africa (Vrae en Antwoorde oor die Afrikaanse Konferensie, n.d., p.7, HBCA).

The concluding part of the document was structured in the form of a plea to the organized Church to allow a spirit of dialogue and understanding to emerge, and that recompense be made for the partiality that had taken place in the history of the Church ((Vrae en Antwoorde oor die Afrikaanse Konferensie, n.d., p.8, HBCA). This research could not ascertain whether the organized Church ever responded to this document of the Afrikaanse Konferensie.

At the beginning of April 1969 the Afrikaanse Konferensie appealed to the South African Union Conference that a meeting should take place between the two organizations. This entreaty was worded in the following way:

'n Groot aantal van ons Sewendedag-Adventiste lidmate voel bedroef oor die huidige verwydering wat tussen ons as lede van die laaste kerk van God ingetree het. Ons begeerte is dat daar so spoedig moontlik samesprekings gehou word net die doel voor oë om die verskille onder ons uit die weg te ruim (Versoek gerig aan die Suid-Afrikaanse Unie-Konferensie, 5 April 1969, HBCA).

Translation: A large contingent of our Seventh-day Adventist members have been saddened by the alienation that has taken place between associates in God's remnant church. Our desire is that dialogue will take place as soon as possible to annul the disparities that exist between ourselves.

Such a meeting did take place on 7 April 1969 at the Victoria Hotel in Johannesburg, between spokesmen from the Afrikaanse Konferensie and the leaders of the established Church (TC President's Correspondence, 5 August 1969, p.1, HBCA).

From the side of the Afrikaanse Konferensie optimism prevailed once again that the problems that had existed between themselves and the Transvaal Conference would be finally resolved. At a meeting of the Beherende Liggaam several days after the above-mentioned meeting at the Victoria Hotel the following was noted:

U sal geïntereeserd wees om te weet dat twee van ons leiers nl. leraar F von Hörsten en broer DF du Plessis kort na kampvergadering in aanraking gekom het met die leiers van die Transvaalse Konferensie, die Unie en Divisie. Ons was baie aangemoedig deur die uitslag van hierdie samesprekings, en ons voel dat dit die weg gebaan het tot 'n ooreenkoms in die toekoms...(Aan alle lede van die Beherende Liggaam, Afrikaanse Konferensie, 15 April, 1969).

Translation: You will be interested to know that shortly after campmeeting, two of our leaders, namely, Pastor F von Hörsten and brother DF du Plessis made contact with the leaders of the Transvaal Conference, the Union and the Division. We were greatly encouraged by the outcome of these meetings, and we feel that the way has been opened up for an agreement sometime in the future.

D. Afrikaanse Konferensie sympathizers censured

The hopes of the Afrikaanse Konferensie were not to be realized. Only a few days after the meeting at the Victoria Hotel, as this cat and mouse game continued, a resolution was taken by the Transvaal Conference that the time had arrived to take action against those who were sympathetic to the Afrikaanse Konferensie. A decision was consequently taken to write to all the members of the splinter group advising them that "they would be placed under censure if they did not break with the group and repudiate their rebellion" (TC Minutes, 27 April 1969, pp.220-221, HBCA).

Shortly thereafter, lengthy lists of persons from all the churches in the Transvaal who were in any way affiliated with the Afrikaanse Konferensie were rapidly compiled and many members were censured (TC Minutes, 6 May 1969, HBCA). Among the churches in the Transvaal Conference that placed "dissident" members under censure included the Alberton, Carolina, Springs, Brakpan, Nigel, Heidelberg, Elsburg, Rustenburg, Nelspruit, Barberton, Witbank, Warmbaths, and Pretoria congregations (TC president's correspondence, May 1969, HBCA).

The reaction of the Afrikaanse Konferensie to the censuring of its members and the continued reluctance of the established Church to accommodate them within the organization, resulted in a lengthy document being produced by Fritz von Hörsten entitled Die gebeure van 1969. This document, directed at the presidents of the South African Union Conference, the Trans-Africa Division and the General Conference, was the most comprehensive and most forceful appeal made by the Afrikaanse Konferensie up to that time. The document

reiterated the fact that the Afrikaanse Konferensie was not to be regarded as another church and that its members still wished to be a part of the work in South Africa. It also alluded to the fact that the work of the Church for Afrikaans-speaking people had been deliberately thwarted in the past and that there were not enough Afrikaans-speaking evangelists being trained at Helderberg to promulgate the message effectively amongst Afrikaners. Neither did the document recoil from withholding what it considered to be the main reason for the situation of detriment existing in the Church, stating that the leadership in this country had become a political football with the American, English-speaking leaders perpetually regarding the Afrikaans-speaking people as inferior or incompetent. The intolerable situation for the Afrikaner believers within the Church and the lack of Afrikaans at Helderberg College and at the Sentinel Publishing Association was also strongly accentuated (Die gebeure van 1969, 12 May 1969, p.1-3, HBCA).

The incident that Von Hörsten's document found most deplorable was the deliberate undoing of a campaign of the Afrikaanse Konferensie in Randfontein. The allegation was made that FC Pelser, a minister in the Transvaal Conference had made contact with a minister of the Dutch Reformed Church in Randfontein alerting him against the campaign to be held there thus making sure that any chances of them gaining a good audience was effectively destroyed (Die gebeure van 1969, 12 May 1969, p.11, HBCA).

E. An invitation to fast and pray rejected

The next salvoes fired in the continuing struggle in the Church, came when the secretary of the Afrikaanse Konferensie, PJ Retief, wrote to the Transvaal Conference enquiring whether they would like to join in a day of fasting and prayer on 24 May 1969 in the hope that the conflict in the Church would come to an end (Omsendbrief nr.8, Afrikaanse Konferensie, 1 Mei 1969, p.2, HBCA). The response of Transvaal Conference to this request by the Afrikaanse Konferensie, replete with ill-worded comments and biblical quotes taken out of context, denounced the Afrikaanse Konferensie for widening the gulf between the two organizations. Part of their response was worded as follows:

We are gladdened that you realise that a need exists to fast and to pray. We want to share a few statements from the Spirit of Prophecy in this connection with you.

According to the *Great Controversy*, p.601, a need for this [fasting] exists. We need to humble ourselves before the Lord, with fasting and prayer, and to meditate much upon His word, especially upon the scenes of the judgment.

In the *Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 4, pp.1150-1151) we read that God is waiting on us to humble ourselves and to repent. The outward signs of fasting and prayer, without a broken and contrite spirit, are of no value in God's sight.

You rightly mention that the Conference set December 7, 1968, the day before the special session, aside as a day of fasting and prayer. Unfortunately a small group of workers and laymembers apparently attached no importance to this judging from their actions at and since the session.

From this you will notice that God also requires us to be obedient. We must in all respects point out, Brother Retief, that your group has not been obedient:

- (a) You did not accept the highest authority of the church on earth, viz a session, or its pronouncements.
- (b) You did not accept - after a day of fasting and prayer - that these pronouncements were approved by heaven, and thereby also scorned Romans 8:28.
- (c) You did not obey the pronouncement and appeals of the Executive Committees of the Transvaal Conference or the South African Union Conference.
- (d) You did not accept the recommendations of the presidents of the Trans-Africa Division or the General Conference.

By this you have given evidence that you do not accept that those committees or persons have been appointed by God. On the contrary, you have proceeded to widen the gulf that you caused during the session by continuing with your rebellion, and by taking steps to bring into existence an organization that is not recognized by God's church, viz, the Transvaal Conference, the Trans-Africa Division, and the General Conference. Taking into account the abovementioned [sic] we wish to recommend the following to you:

1. That you set aside May 24, 1969, as a day of fasting and prayer, and that you accept and apply all the aforementioned principles in all sincerity.
2. We will request all our loyal members to fast and pray a week earlier, that is on May 17, 1969. As there can be no question or discussion to come to agreement while you continue with your unrecognized organization (as advised by the presidents of the Division and the General Conference), we will ask God to help you, and to give you the grace to forsake your rebellion, and to return to the

acknowledged constitutional church organization of God (Letter from Eric Korff to PJ Retief, 5 May 1969, HBCA).

In addition to the reply given to Retief, the Transvaal Conference also publicized its disapproval to all its members. A part of its circular read as follows:

Ons het verlede week 'n brief van Broer PJ Retief, namens die groep wat onlangs van die kerk weggebreek het, ontvang. In die brief rig hy 'n versoek tot die Transvaalse Konferensie dat 'n bid - en vasdag uitgeroep moet word om sodoende die weg te baan vir samesprekings om tot 'n vergelyk te kom. Hulle voorstel is dat beide ons Konferensie en die splinterbeweging, 24 Mei 1969 'n bid en vasdag moet maak. Dit moet baie duidelik gestel word dat daar onder geen omstandighede samesprekinge om erkenning kan plaasvind nie. Die groep het van die kerk weggebreek, bewys gelewer dat hulle nie kan berus by besluite, uitsprake, en oproepe van God se grondwetlike aangestelde en erkende kerk en leiers nie, en het sake in hul eie hande geneem om nog 'n kerkorganisasie in die lewe geroep. Hierdie verontagsaming van die erkende genootskaplike beleid en prosedures kan onder geen omstandighede toegelaat word nie (TC Correspondence, 6 May 1969, HBCA).

Translation: Last week we received a letter from Brother PJ Retief, written on behalf of the group that broke away from the church. In his letter he directed a request to the Transvaal Conference that a day of fasting and prayer be proclaimed to prepare the way for discussions and try to and reach a compromise. They suggest that both our conference and the splinter group, fast and pray on 24 May 1969. It must be made very clear that under no circumstances, can deliberations for acknowledgment take place. The group has broken away from the church, demonstrated that they will not comply with decisions, announcements and appeals made by God's constitutionally appointed, recognized church and leaders, and have taken matters into their own hands to initiate another church organization. This defiance of recognized denominational policy and procedures cannot be permitted under any circumstances.

In contrast to the animosity and aversion shown by the established Church at this time, the correspondence of the Afrikaanse Konferensie discloses a spirit and an attitude that was decidedly different to that of the Transvaal Conference. In a circular to its members the Afrikaanse Konferensie expressed its reaction to the pejorative reply of the Church to Retief in the following manner:

VAS EN BIDDAG VAN 24 MEI: Soos u heelwaarskynlik gehoor het, het die Transvaalse Konferensie ongelukkig geweier om met ons te werk in hierdie opsig. Hulle vertel ons dat hulle alreeds op 17 Mei so 'n vas en biddag gereël het. Ons voel die groot saak wat ons aan die Here hierdie komende Sabbat moet opdra is om te bid dat die Gees van die Here vaardig sal wees in die harte van ons broeders en susters in die ander Konferensie, sodat hulle gewillig sal wees om in te sien dat ons alleenlik staan vir 'n saak van reg en geregtigheid. Ook moet ons veral bid vir die leiers van die Transvaalse Konferensie en die Here vra dat Hy hulle harte sal versag sodat hulle waarlik die Gees van Christus sal openbaar. Ongelukkig is dit nou baie duidelik soos u verder lees dat daar 'n baie sterk vervolgingsgees onder hulle bestaan.

Laat ons dan ook bid dat die Here ons sal bewaar van enige [sic] snydende opmerkings en ook dat Hy enige gevoel van bitterheid uit ons harte sal wegneem. Ons sterkste wapen is waarheid en reg, en om steeds die lieflike Gees van Christus in sagmoedigheid en liefde te betoon (Omsendbrief nr.9, Afrikaanse Konferensie, 21 Mei 1969, p.1, HBCA).

Translation: DAY OF FASTING AND PRAYER 24 MAY: As you have probably heard, the Transvaal conference has unfortunately refused to join us in this endeavour. They tell us that they have already planned to fast and pray on the 17th of May. We feel that this coming Sabbath we must bear up to God in prayer that the Spirit of God will be active in the hearts of our brothers and sisters of the other Conference, so that they will be willing to see that we stand solely for truth and justice. Let us pray especially for the leaders of the Transvaal Conference and ask God to soften their hearts so that they will truly manifest the Spirit of Jesus. Unfortunately it has become very clear as you read further that a very strong spirit of persecution exists in their midst.

Let us also pray that the Lord will keep us from making any cutting remarks and that He will take away any feelings of bitterness out of our hearts. Our most powerful weapon is truth and justice, and to manifest in a benevolent and loving way the beautiful Spirit of Christ.

The same document also continued to express the hope, in spite of the inexorable attitude manifested by the Transvaal Conference, that meaningful dialogue would still take place so that existing difference could be ironed out and some sort of resolution be achieved (Omsendbrief nr.9, Afrikaanse Konferensie, 21 Mei 1969, p.2, HBCA).

F. Fires of dissension kindled in the Church

Tensions in the Transvaal Conference increased as a number of persons, in their private capacity, decided to speak and make decisions on behalf of the organizations involved and to defend their respective viewpoints. All too often these tracts, letters and memorandums ended in vindictive, scurrilous and revengeful attacks not only on the respective organizations but also on the personal lives of individuals involved in the controversy. Four documents in this category are now discussed.

1. Na Vyf Maande

By the middle of May 1969, a 14-page document written in the form of an open letter entitled *Na Vyf Maande (After Five Months)* made its appearance. The author initially acknowledged that Afrikaans had not found an abiding place in the Church and that Afrikaners had not always been dealt with the necessary respect. However, the above-mentioned document, after doing a retrospective analysis of all that had taken place in the five months since the protest at the Special Session in December 1968, rigorously berated the insinuations, allegations and strategies of the Afrikaanse Konferensie.

The document, akin to many of those of the Transvaal Conference, made use of a profusion of uncomplimentary terms when referring to the Afrikaanse Konferensie. It also stated that the author himself was convinced that the newly established organization had been initiated by Satan (*Na Vyf Maande - 'n Ope Brief deur JA Japp aan elke mede-Afrikaner in die Sewendedag-Adventiste Kerk in Suid-Afrika, 15 Mei 1969, p.11, HBCA*). This document also alleged that the reason for the schism in the Church had its roots in unbelief. The author of this document stated his convictions as follows:

Die werklike oorsaak van hierdie skeuring het betreklik min te make met ler. P.P. van Eck, of die Amerikaanse "imperialiste". Die grondoorsaak van die skeuring is ongeloof. Ongeloof in die leiers van Gods Kerk, ongeloof in die deur God gerigte grondwet van die Kerk. Ongeloof in die leiding en krag van God in Sy Kerk op aarde (*Na Vyf Maande - 'n Ope Brief deur JA Japp aan elke mede-Afrikaner in die Sewendedag-Adventiste Kerk in Suid-Afrika, 15 Mei 1969, p.8, HBCA*).

Translation: The real reason for this schism has really very little to do with Pastor P.P. van Eck, or American "imperialists". The underlying reason for this schism is unbelief. Unbelief in the leaders of God's Church, unbelief in the Divinely established constitution of the Church. Unbelief in the leading and in the power of God in His church on earth.

The response to Na Vyf Maande, by the Afrikaanse Konferensie, consisting largely of an apology for the actions that they had undertaken, immediately latched onto the notion that the author, Johan Japp, a pastor in the Oranje-Natal Conference, had been driven by a personal vendetta to write in such a hateful way. It recorded:

Hierdie merkwaardige dokument het onlangs onder ons aandag gekom. Dit word baie gou duidelik dat hierdie ope brief deur broer JA Japp geskrywe, meestal sy gevoelens eerder as sy verstandige oordeel weerspieël...Ons kon gewens het dat broeder Japp sou gewag het totdat hy beter ingelig omtrent hierdie hele saak was, en ook sy gevoelens eers afgekoel het. Ons merk dus op dat hy in sy geskrif dikwels gebruik maak van onchristelike metodes om sy aanval teen die Afrikaanse Konferensie te loods...Ons kan nie glo dat hulle met hom deel in sy uitlatings van haat en nyd nie (Antwoord op Na Vyf Maande, 2 Junie 1969, p.1. HBCA).

Translation: This remarkable document has recently come to our attention. It becomes clear very quickly that this open letter by brother JA Japp mirrors his own feelings rather than his reasonable judgment...We could only have wished that brother Japp had waited until he was better informed in regard to the whole affair, and that his personal feelings had first cooled down. We take note that he repeatedly makes use of unchristian methods to launch his attacks upon the Afrikaanse Konferensie...We cannot believe that they share in his expressions of hate and envy.

Pastor Japp's allegations that the Afrikaanse Konferensie had come about without any form of deliberation was repudiated. The assertion that the Afrikaanse Konferensie had been driven by unbelief was also discredited, with the document maintaining that it was not unbelief that had motivated the Afrikaners to pursue such a course of action, but the love that they had for the cause of God in this country. In the concluding paragraphs the document opens up an issue that will be dealt with at length in the final chapter of this thesis, namely, the unwillingness of the Church leaders to allow a unilingual language conference to take root in South Africa, while such conferences had in fact been permitted in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in other parts of the world (Antwoord op Na Vyf Maande, 2 Junie 1969, p.1-11, HBCA).

By the end of 1969, five other documents evidently not sanctioned by the Church, had been compiled against the Afrikaanse Konferensie. They were: Die Nuwe Skeidsmuur; Verhandeling oor Rebellie; Sal Daar Erkenning Wees; Off-Shoot Movements; and Eenheid onder die volk van die Here. This research was, however, only able to trace three of the above-mentioned documents, namely, Sal Daar Erkenning Wees, by GM Niemandt, Off-Shoot Movements by JD Coetzee and

Eenheid onder die volk van die Here by FC Pelser. Ironically, all the authors of these documents that were so strongly opposed to the existence of the Afrikaanse Konferensie were all Afrikaans-speaking pastors in the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

2. *Off-Shoot Movements*

This document consisted exclusively of an accumulation of quotes from the writings of Ellen White and contained no analysis of the situation as it was in the Church at the time of the Afrikaanse Konferensie (*Off-Shoot Movements*, n.d., In author's possession). This document, does, however, serve as an exposé of the attitudes and perceptions that prevailed in the minds of the Church leaders at the time. It also raises the issue of the uncontextual manner in which the writings of the Church were used in an attempt to counter the influence of the Afrikaanse Konferensie. Pastor Coetzee's reasons for including the quotes that he had chosen, namely, to accentuate the authority and position of the organized Church in the conflict, and to enumerate the characteristics normally attributed to schismatic or heretical groups, can quite easily be discerned. Regarding the commission and the authority vested in the Church, Pastor Coetzee selected the following quotes:

The church in these last days is to be the light of the world that is polluted and demoralized by sin. The church is the only object upon earth upon which Christ bestows His supreme regard (*Testimonies to Ministers*, p.46, In *Off-Shoot Movements*, p.1).

God has a distinct people, a church on earth, second to none, but superior to all in their facilities to teach the truth, to vindicate the law of God (*Testimony Treasures* volume 2, p.361, In *Off-Shoot Movements*, p.1).

God has a church upon the earth who are His chosen people, who keep his commandments. He is leading, not stray offshoots, not one here and one there, but a people (*Testimony Treasures* volume 2, p.362, In *Off-Shoot Movements*, p.2).

God has made His church on the earth a channel of light, and through it He communicates His purpose and will...God has invested His church with special authority and power which no one can be justified in disregarding and despising; for he who does this despises the voice of God (*Acts of the Apostles*, pp.163-164, In *Off-Shoot Movements*, p.8).

When referring to heretical and schismatic groups in the Church and the manner in which they normally operated, Pastor Coetzee listed the following quotes:

Satan has wrought with deceiving power, bringing in a multiplicity of errors that obscure the truth. Error cannot stand alone and would soon become extinct if it did not fasten itself like a parasite upon the tree of truth. Error draws its life from the truth of God. The traditions of men, like floating germs, attach themselves to the truth of God, and men regard them as a part of truth. Through false doctrines, Satan gains a foothold and captives [sic] the mind of men, causing them to hold theories that have no foundation in truth (*Evangelism*, p.589, In *Off-Shoot Movements*, p.2).

The worst enemies we have are those who are trying to destroy the influence of the watchmen upon the walls of Zion. Satan works through agents. He is making an earnest effort here (*Testimonies for the Church* volume 5, p.294, In *Off-Shoot Movements*, p.3).

Things will be constantly arising to cause disunion, to draw away from the truth. This questioning, criticising, denouncing, passing judgment on others is not an evidence of the grace of Christ (*Selected Messages* book two, p.79, In *Off-Shoot Movements*, p.3).

The enemy is at work, to divide to scatter. Now as ever before he will make determined efforts to scatter our forces (*Selected Messages* book two, p.87, In *Off-Shoot Movements*, p.4).

We are not to receive the words of those who come with a message that contradicts the special points of our faith. They gather together a mass of Scripture, and pile it as proof around their asserted theories (*Selected Messages* book one, p.161, In *Off-Shoot Movements*, p.7).

Besides Pastor Coetzee's enumeration of the above-mentioned quotes, in which he endeavoured to elevate the position of the "true church of God" above those whom he believed were being controlled by Satan, his uncontextual use of the writings of Ellen White must also be questioned. Every single quote that he employed in *Off-Shoot Movements* were written either in the last half of the nineteenth century or in the first decade of this century when she was confronting specific problems pertaining to the Church in those years. One example was Ellen White's counsel taken from *Selected Messages* book two which was written in 1893 after Anna Phillips a young woman residing in Battle Creek was led to believe that her impressions and dreams were the intimations of the Spirit of God. According to Ellen White the work of Anna Phillips "did not bear the signature of Heaven" (White, 1958, *Selected Messages* book two, p.86, HBCL). It was precisely for this reason that Ellen White gave these counsel and warnings to the Church.

Bearing this one example in mind, it is obvious that these quotes would have had no direct bearing or relevance to the situation that had arisen in the Church in South Africa. This "quotation grabbing" or uncritical manner of evaluating and condemnation brought upon the Afrikaner crisis also becomes evident in the writings of Pastor FC Pelser and Pastor GM Niemandt. Their documents are now evaluated.

3. *Eenheid onder die volk van die Here*

The second document, *Eenheid onder die volk van die Here*, written in a style very similar to that of *Off-Shoot Movements*, does provide a short analysis to which a measure of consideration must be given. In Pastor Pelser's appraisal of the situation he attempted to warn the members of the established Church against what he termed "the rebellious nature of the Afrikaanse Konferensie".

Pelser also asserted that the unity of the Church had been destroyed by the actions of the break-away group. In his document Pelser not only used quotes from the writings of Ellen White as had Pastor Coetzee, but also made numerous references to Bible passages in his attempt to discredit the Afrikaanse Konferensie. The biblical passage most frequently referred to by Pelser was the rebellion in the wilderness against Moses and Aaron's leadership by Korah, Abiram and Dathan. Using this biblical passage as a departure point, Pelser proceeded to draw parallels between the situation during the time of Moses to the "rebellion" of the Afrikaanse Konferensie against the established Church. He also intimated that the actions of the rebellion in South Africa was tantamount to committing sin against the Holy Spirit. According to his conviction, this "rebellion" was of the kind that could never be forgiven (*Eenheid onder die volk van die Here*, Mei 1969, pp. 6-7, HBCA).

In addition to the above-mentioned assertions by Pelser, he also alluded to the political situation in South Africa at that time. Both the introductory and second chapter of this thesis has already made reference to the Verligte-Verkrampste conflict which had resulted in Dr. Albert Hertzog breaking away from the National Party to form the Herstigte Nasionale Party. The split in the NP had already taken place by May 1969, with Hertzog relieved of his post in Parliament (Wilkins & Strydom 1981:184). Pelser maintained in his document, however, that Hertzog had, for the sake of unity within the National Party, repudiated the radicals and refused to establish a splinter group with purified nationalistic principles. Even though Pelser's information about Hertzog was in direct contradiction to what had actually taken place, it appears that he deceptively used this reconciliation that was supposed to have taken place between political parties in South Africa as an illustration of the type of unity and the attitudes that should have prevailed at that time in the Seventh-day Adventist Church (*Eenheid onder die volk van die Here*, Mei 1969, p.8, HBCA).

Pelser's document engendered a very forceful response from the Afrikaanse Konferensie, which maintained that it was the Transvaal Conference which had by its continual refusal to negotiate, and the detrimental influence of foreign leaders in South Africa that had in fact broken the unity of the Church. The document also maintained that unity could never be forced upon people, especially when the proposed unity was perceived as foreign. It also asserted that the time had finally dawned for the Church in South Africa to become self-governing (Antwoord op F Pelser se Eenheid onder die volk van die Here, 18 Junie 1969, p.1, HBCA).

After a fairly lengthy analysis of the context in which the insurrection of Korah and Dathan against Moses and Aaron had taken place, not only did the document deem Pelser's accusations that the Afrikaanse Konferensie had rebelled against God as ludicrous, but also turned the tables on the Transvaal Conference by comparing their unsympathetic, narrow-minded attitude, to that of Moses, who even in the face of the rebellion against him had remained understanding, tolerant and impartial (Antwoord op F Pelser se Eenheid onder die volk van die Here, 18 Junie 1969, p.2-4, HBCA).

4. *Sal daar erkenning wees*

The third document, *Sal daar erkenning wees* went even further than *Na Vyf Maande* in its endeavour to depreciate the existence of the Afrikaanse Konferensie. Pastor GM Niemandt, the author of this document wasted little time in divulging the reasons why he had compiled his document. In the introduction he wrote the following:

Ek wil 'n waarskuwing rig aan elke kind van die Here dat ons hier met 'n baie subtiele dwaling te doen het. In hierdie brief, is dit my opset om die propaganda van hierdie groep te ontbloot soos ek dit sien. Hierdie mense is besig om gevaarlike onrus in ons kerk te strooi, en sou ons dit toelaat, of ontvang, kan dit ons hele lewe besoedel daardeur. Dit is my opset om die volgende vrae te beantwoord aan die belangsetllende [sic] leser:

1. Is die groep wat weggebreek het, nog getroue Sewendedag-Adventiste?
2. Waarom weier die kerk om die hand van broederskap uit te strek na hierdie groep?
3. Is daar erkenning in sig?
4. Wat is hulle sielkundige benadering waarmee hulle ons vertrou probeer wen? (*Sal Daar Erkenning Wees*, n.d., p.1, HBCA).

Translation: I would like to direct a warning to every child of God that we are dealing with a very subtle heresy. By means of this letter it is my aim to expose the propaganda of this group, the way I see it. These people are engaged in spreading

dangerous discord in our church, and should we allow it, or receive it, it may completely contaminate our lives. It is my intention to answer the following questions:

1. Are those that broke away still loyal Seventh-day Adventists?
2. Why does the church refuse to extend out the hand of brotherhood to this group?
3. Is there acknowledgment in sight?
4. What is their psychological approach by which they are trying to win our confidence?

According to Pastor Niemandt, the unchristian propaganda that was being spread by the Afrikaanse Konferensie was not only a subtle psychological and a very dangerous endeavour to sow seeds of unhappiness and spread untruths in the Church but also an attempt to try and justify the schism that had taken place at the Special Session in December 1968. This document also maintained that the deceptive endeavours to set Afrikaans-speaking people against the English had been constructed by the use of very shrewdly chosen words such as "wanpraktyke" (malpractice); "buitelandse oorheersing" (overseas domination); and "onreg" (injustice). Neither was there, according to Pastor Niemandt, any concrete evidence that Afrikaans had ever been suppressed, discredited, or belittled in the Church (Sal daar erkenning wees, n.d., p.1, HBCA). To support this Pastor Niemandt stated that the Transvaal Conference had not only always worked for the benefit and good of all races, but that the ideal of the conference had always been to foster the work amongst Afrikaners in this country and to promote freedom of speech, and a spirit of unity and brotherly love (Sal daar erkenning wees, n.d., pp.2-3, HBCA).

The author then added that by the break-away of the Afrikaanse Konferensie, the Church had been purged of the bad elements that had existed within the organization, and that the Special Session had in fact been called for the specific purpose of casting out this inharmonious group from the Church. Notwithstanding the persistence of the Afrikaanse Konferensie that they wished to remain part of the Church, the author upheld that this would never happen, not only because they had radically changed doctrinally, but also because their behaviour was in actual fact a total rejection of God (Sal daar erkenning wees, n.d., p.4, HBCA). The document proceeded thereafter in great detail, in its attempt to disclaim just about every possible reason imaginable for the existence of the Afrikaanse Konferensie, with the author finally coming to the following conclusion:

Daar is dus geen sprake van erkenning, of selfs 'n kommissie van ondersoek nie. Daar is ook nie sprake dat die Unie dit oorweeg om aparte konferensies vir taalgroepe te organiseer nie. In soverre dit hierdie groep betref kan daar nie erkenning wees nie (Sal daar erkenning wees, Mei 1969, p.9, HBCA).

Translation: There is therefore no chance of acknowledgement or even a commission of enquiry. There is also no possibility that the Union will ever consider the creation of separate language conference. With regard to this group there can simply never be recognition.

By the middle of 1969, the Church's leaders, no doubt comprehending that tension and animosity were mounting because of such writings that did not carry the authorization of the Church, finally took a hand in the matter and requested that privately written material in defence of the Church should first receive approval of the conference committees (Oranje-Natal Conference minutes, 23 June 1969, p.191, NFSCA). From this time onwards it seems that privately written material markedly decreased.

*G. Joint declaration by the Afrikaanse Konferensie
and the Transvaal Conference*

In spite of all that had been written and the acerbic assertions that meetings would never take place between the two groups, a meeting did become a reality when delegates from the Afrikaanse Konferensie were invited to meet with the leaders of the established Church in August 1969 at the headquarters of the Transvaal Conference, to "deliberate on the problems that had arisen in the church since December 1968" (TC President's Correspondence, 5 August 1969, p.1, HBCA).

At this meeting a consensus was reached that all attacks and animosity between the two groups would immediately cease. This agreement was confirmed in a joint declaration which was signed by representatives from the Afrikaanse Konferensie and the Transvaal Conference. This declaration was worded as follows:

GESAMENTLIKE VERKLARING

Op 17 Augustus 1969 het 'n verteenwoordigende afvaardiging bestaande uit vyf lede van die interim-organisasie (bekend as die Afrikaanse Konferensie van Sewendedag-Adventiste) met die Uitvoerende Komitee van die Transvaalse Konferensie van Sewendedag-Adventiste asmede Leraars Clifford en Webster van die Unie en Leraar Lind van die Divisie, in Johannesburg by Adventpark bymekaargekom en vir ongeveer sewe uur openhartig en broederlik beraadslaag oor die probleme wat tussen die twee groepe ontstaan het.

Klagtes en besware is geopper deur die vyf afgevaardigdes en daar is aangedring op die noodsaaklikheid van 'n gekose komitee om op hierdie klagtes en vraagtekens in te gaan, maar geen besluit is hieromtrent geneem nie. Die kwessie van erkenning van die andersdenkende groep deur die Transvaalse Konferensie was nie

ter sprake nie. Die onderhandelaars het as broeders van die dieselfde kerk getrag om die positiewe te beklemtoon, en uiteindelik het die besprekings op 'n wedersydse ooreenkoms uitloop wat neerkom op 'n wapenstilstand en die bevordering van 'n broederlike gees en Christelike verstandhouding, met 'n algehele onthouding van beswadderingsaanvalle. Aan die einde van die besprekings was daar 'n eenparige oortuiging deur al die verteenwoordigers, komitee lede asook Unie en Divisie leiers teenwoordig, en is dit ook so in die algemeen aanvaar dat verdere samesprekings spoedig moet volg om bestaande geskille uit die weg te ruim en om die wenslikheid van 'n Afrikaanse Konferensie te bespreek deur verteenwoordigdes van beide groepe (Transvaal Conference Correspondence, 'Gesamentlike Verklaring', 27 Augustus 1969, HBCA).

Translation: JOINT DECLARATION

On the 17th August 1969, a representative group of 5 members of the interim organization (known as the Afrikaanse Konferensie van Sewendedag-Adventiste), met with the Transvaal Conference Executive Committee together with Pastors Clifford and Webster of the South African Union Conference and Pastor Lind of the Trans Africa Division, at Advent Park. The discussion, lasting approximately seven hours was conducted in a frank and brotherly spirit regarding the difference which have arisen.

Complaints and accusations were stated by the five representatives and urged that a select committee be appointed to investigate these grievances, but no decision was reached on this point. The question of recognition in respect of the splinter group by the Transvaal Conference was not a feature of the discussions at all. The representatives of both groups of the same faith endeavoured to emphasise a positive approach resulting in the discussions reaching a mutual stage of understanding that future relationships be continued in a spirit of brotherly love and with an accepted undertaking that all defamatory accusations cease. At the end of the discussion there was an unanimous conviction on the part of the representatives, committee members, as well as the Union and Division leaders present, and generally accepted, that further dialogue should continue, to determine whether in effect an Afrikaans Conference is desirable and a satisfactory settlement of any grievances.

With the declaration it was agreed that a select committee would be appointed to investigate the grievances that had arisen. A consensus was also reached between the two groups that an endeavour would be made to be more positive in their future discussions and that a spirit of love and tolerance would prevail. There was also unanimous conviction on the part of those who attended

the meeting that further dialogue should continue to determine whether in effect an Afrikaans Conference was a viable proposition. The next circular of the Afrikaanse Konferensie, issued three days after the meeting at Advent Park, joyfully carried the following announcement to its members:

**SAMESPREKINGS HET BEGIN!
VREDE IS VERKLAAR EN ONS GLO DIE PROBLEME
SAL UITEINDELIK OPGELOS WORD**

Baie van u het die uitnodiging van die Transvaalse Konferensie ontvang om verlede Sondag, die 17de voor hulle te verskyn om u standpunt te stel. Ons is bly u het genoeg vertroue in ons broeders gehad dat u dit aan hulle oorgelaat het om namens u almal daar te vergader. Die Transvaalse Konferensie het toe ingestem om 5 van ons broeders daar te woord te staan. Na 'n baie lang bespreking is daar ooreengekom om 'n gesamentlike verklaring van hulle en ons uit te reik...Ons het nou 'n verstandhouding tussen ons Konferensies dat ons nie verder mekaar sal aanval of in die wiele ry nie (Omsendbrief nr.12, Afrikaanse Konferensie, 20 Augustus 1969, p.1, HBCA).

**Translation: DISCUSSION HAVE BEGUN!
PEACE HAS BEEN DECLARED AND THE PROBLEMS
WILL EVENTUALLY BE SOLVED**

Many of you received invitations from the Transvaal Conference, to appear before them on the 17th of August to present your points of view. We are glad that you had enough trust to allow us to appear at that meeting as your representatives. The Transvaal Conference agreed to let five of our brothers present their case. After very long deliberations, a consensus was reached to issue a joint declaration...We have now reached an understanding between our Conferences that we are neither going to attack, nor sabotage one another.

Notwithstanding the cooperation that had been asserted there appeared to be no authentic intentions by the Church to declare peace or to reach any form of consensus with the leaders of the Afrikaanse Konferensie. On 19 August only two days after the declaration had been signed, PP van Eck, had in direct contradiction to what had been decided, excommunicated a person from the Church because of his affiliation with the Afrikaanse Konferensie.

Fritz von Hörsten who had been one of the signatories on the Joint Declaration, wasted no time to respond to Van Eck's actions. In his correspondence to Van Eck he wrote:

In die gesamentlike verklaring deur ons uitgereik, word daar uitdruklik gekonstateer dat ons:

- 1) 'n Wapenstilstand uitgeroep het;
- 2) verdere samesprekings spoedig moet hê om o.a. ons probleme, asook die wenslikheid van 'n Afrikaanse konferensie te bespreek.

Wat doen u toe nadat ons tot die ooreenkoms gekom het en die wapenstilstand verklaar is met die oog op uiteindelijke versoening en vrede tussen ons? Op 19 Augustus werk u agter die skerms met u manne en begin die vyandigste en giftigste aanval denkbaar teen ons loods. U laat 'n leier van die groep met wie 'n wapenstilstand gesluit het en wat self met u kom onderhandel en die gesamentlike verklaring onderteken het, summier ekskommunikeer (Fritz von Hörsten to the President and Executive Committee of the Transvaal Conference, 5 September 1969, HBCA).

Translation: In the joint declaration that we issued, it was expressly pronounced that we:

- 1) Called a truce;
- 2) Would shortly thereafter have further discussions, amongst other things, to discuss our problems and the desirability of having an Afrikaans Conference.

What did you do after we had come to an agreement to declare a truce, with the hope of reconciliation ultimately taking place between us? On 19 August, you and your team worked behind the scenes to launch one of the most hostile and venomous attacks against us. You allowed a leader of the group with whom you concluded the cease-fire to be abruptly and unconditionally excommunicated.

By the middle of September tensions reached a boiling-point once again when the established Church published an official statement in the *Lantern* (the official magazine of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa at that time) wherein it outlined its relationship to the Afrikaanse Konferensie. In the *Lantern*, in which declarations appeared from the General Conference, the Trans-Africa Division, the South African Union Conference, and the Transvaal Conference, it was made very clear that the Afrikaanse Konferensie was still considered to be an unauthorised organization. Its actions were regarded as sinful and subversive against the Church and against God, and that the position of the established Church against them had not changed since the session in December 1968. It also unequivocally stated that the Afrikaanse Konferensie would never become a recognized organization within the framework

of the established Church in South Africa. These declarations also repeatedly appealed to those who had joined the Afrikaanse Konferensie to "repent", to abandon their intended course of action and to work within the framework of the working policy of the Church (*Lantern*. Volume XIX, 15 September 1969, pp.1-12, HBCA). Part of the South African Union Conference's statement in the *Lantern* was worded as follows:

Our members should not allow themselves to be persuaded that such an independent organization will receive recognition by the church. To do so would break down and make null and void the church order that has been built up through the years under the blessing of God and the guidance of the Spirit of Prophecy (*Lantern*, Volume XIX, 15 September 1969, p.5, HBCL).

This issue of the *Lantern* had in fact been prepared some months before the meeting at Advent Park. This is borne out by the following: In April of that year, in an endeavour to formulate its approach to the Afrikaanse Konferensie, the Transvaal Conference had already taken the following action:

WHEREAS the time had come to take action against the leaders and those members who are sympathetic to the splinter movement, VOTED to request the SAUC to have a special issue of the South African *Lantern* published as soon as possible to include statements by the presidents of the SAUC, TAD, and GC concerning the splinter movement, especially with the denomination's view of the splinter movement, and what steps the splinter movement should take to rectify matters (TC Minutes, 27 April 1969, pp.220-221, HBCA).

The Afrikaanse Konferensie reciprocated almost immediately with an eleven-page open brief (open letter) directed at the presidents of the Trans-Africa Division, the South African Union Conference and the Transvaal Conference. The letter began by bemoaning the fact that the observations in the *Lantern* had been made from an unacceptable departure point and that the arguments contained therein had patently evaded the real issues at stake. After the letter had confirmed the belief of the Afrikaanse Konferensie in the unity of the Church, it also stated that the Afrikaanse Konferensie would have never been formed if the Church leaders had initiated a thorough investigation into the accusations of immorality that had been made against the president of the Transvaal Conference, instead of branding certain persons as "extremistic Afrikaners" (Open brief aan leraars Mills, Clifford en Van Eck - Na Aanleiding van die Spesiale *Lantern* van 15 September 1969, 6 November, 1969, p.1-4, HBCA).

It was not, according to the open letter, the Afrikaanse Konferensie but the established Church which had by its unwholesome and unchristian actions of not allowing them to voice their protests at the Special Session, that had acted unconstitutionally. The letter also asked whether the sovereignty of Christ could still be seen in the Church, in the light of the prevalence of bitter

accusations, intimidations, a recalcitrant reluctance to deliberate, and the abrupt excommunication of persons that was taking place, (Ope brief aan leraars Mills, Clifford en Van Eck - Na Aanleiding van die Spesiale Lantern van 15 September 1969, 6 November, 1969, p.6, HBCA).

Regarding the imperative that those who had joined the Afrikaanse Konferensie should repent, the letter enquired whether the time had perhaps also arrived for the established Church which had for so many years adopted a position of domination, which had so grossly discriminated against Afrikaners, and which had neglected to work effectively in this direction, to also adopt an attitude of sorrowfulness and repentance (Ope brief aan leraars Mills, Clifford en Van Eck - Na Aanleiding van die Spesiale Lantern van 15 September 1969, 6 November, 1969, p.9, HBCA).

In the concluding paragraphs, emanating from it believed was the Church's contradictory actions after what had been declared in the joint declaration, and the subsequent rescinding of the decision that had been taken for the possible establishment of a separate Afrikaans Conference, the letter castigated the Church for what it considered to be a blatant violation of the agreement between the two groups and because they believed that their discussions had in actual fact been nothing more than a delusion and mockery, something that they never expected to take place in a Christian church (Ope Brief aan leraars Mills, Clifford en Van Eck - Na Aanleiding van die Spesiale Lantern van 15 September 1969, 6 November, 1969, pp.10-11, HBCA). In its final appeal to the Church leaders the letter recorded the following:

ONS VERSOEK

Ten slotte wil ons ernstig met u pleit:

1. As u, die leiers, die werk van Jesus op aarde wil doen, word tog gevul met Sy Gees en Sy gesindheid.
2. Erken u wanoptrede op 8 Desember 1968 en u skuld aan wat verder gebeur het.
3. Stel ondersoek in na die ernstige klagtes wat daar ingebring is en wat die eenheid van die kerk verbreek.
4. Wees absoluut eerlik aangaande die werk onder die Afrikaans-sprekendes en gee aan hulle hul regmatige aandeel (Ope Brief aan leraars Mills, Clifford en Van Eck - Na Aanleiding van die Spesiale Lantern van 15 September 1969, 6 November, 1969, p.11, HBCA).

Translation: OUR REQUEST

In conclusion we wish to seriously plead with you:

1. That you as leaders, if you wish to carry out the work of Jesus on earth, be filled with His spirit and His disposition.
2. To acknowledge your mistakes on December 8, 1968 and to acknowledge your blame for what took place afterwards.
3. Implement investigation into the serious accusations that were submitted which is destroying the unity of the church.
4. Be absolutely honest concerning the work among the Afrikaans-speaking people and give them the share that is due to them.

The ope brief was followed by a circular to all the members of the Afrikaanse Konferensie in which it branded the Church's document as pathetic and also underscored the vacillating nature of the Church's leaders (Omsendbrief nr. 15, Afrikaanse Konferensie, 16 Oktober 1969, pp.1-2, HBCA).

The Church leaders to whom the ope brief had been directed did not allow themselves to be intimidated, and replied with a scathing point for point repudiation of all that had been stated in this document of the Afrikaanse Konferensie. The final part of their response was worded as follows:

Ten slotte wil ons waarsku dat die huidige redes wat u aanvoer vir die bestaan van die Afrikaanse Konferensie van Sewendedag-Adventiste dit gereduseer het tot 'n politico-religieuse organisasie. Terwyl die versoek om die aanneemlikheid en noodsaaklikheid van 'n Afrikaanse konferensie [sic] te ondersoek, ons geensins afskrik nie, skrik die ander redes van wantroue in die leiding van die Kerk sy sedelike reinheid ons wel af. As ons 'n aparte konferensie moet stig op grond van hierdie twee redes en ons noem dit maar net 'n Afrikaanse konferensie dan sou ons daarin geslaag het om 'n nuwe kerkorganisasie te stig wat sê dat Afrikaners nie so sondig as Engelse is nie - en so 'n organisasie is niks minder as 'n politieke organisasie onder die dekmantel van godsdienst nie (Response by the Transvaal Conference to the ope brief of the Afrikaanse Konferensie, n.d., p.8, HBCA).

Translation: In conclusion we would like to warn you that the reasons given for the existence of the Afrikaanse Konferensie van Sewendedag-Adventiste reduces it into a politico-religious

organization. While the request to examine the urgency and the possibility of the establishment of an Afrikaanse Konferensie does not alarm us, the lack of confidence shown in the leaders of the church and its moral purity certainly does. If such a separate organization had to be established for these two reasons and we had to call it an Afrikaans Conference, we would then have succeeded to establish a new church organization in which we would be saying that Afrikaners are not as sinful as the English - and that such an organization is nothing more than a political organization under the cloak of religion.

H. The Church withholds its literature

Besides the censuring and excommunications that had taken place, the barring of Afrikaanse Konferensie's supporters from the campmeetings of the Church (TC Minutes, 2 February 1969, p.166, EGWRC) and the Church's refusal to respond to the requests made by the Afrikaanse Konferensie, the established Church also voted to stop all supplies of Bible study material and religious books to anyone who had chosen to affiliate themselves with the Afrikaans breakaway group. Accordingly, in the latter half of 1969 the following recommendation was made by the Transvaal Conference executive committee:

VOTED to recommend to the SAUC that they request the Bible and Book Centre not to supply the splinter group with Church and Sabbath School supplies (TC Minutes, 19 October 1969, p.276, HBCA).

Towards the end of 1969, in addition to the embargo on the above-mentioned literature, an order was also sent to the Sentinel Publishing Association to stop magazines or any of the other Church's publications from reaching the sympathizers of the Afrikaanse Konferensie (TC President's Correspondence, 11 November 1969, p.2, HBCA).

Any person who was found guilty of contravening the order of the Church, not to supply literature and Bible study material to "dissident" members were very severely reprimanded (SAUC President's Correspondence, 15 April 1971, HBCA). These endeavours to cut off the supply of books and Bible study material to the Afrikaanse Konferensie can be considered to be quite absurd when note is taken that during this time the established Church, obviously quite desperate for Afrikaans translators, was still making regular use of the services of Danie du Plessis who had left the Church and had become one of the leaders in the Afrikaanse Konferensie (SAUC President's Correspondence, Letter from F Campbell to DF du Plessis, 15 April 1971; Letter from JD Coetzee to DF du Plessis, 25 June 1971; Letter from JD Coetzee to DF du Plessis, 1 March 1973, HBCA).

The withholding of the above-mentioned literary material appears to have been used by the Church over the next four years as a type of bargaining tool. All too often when negotiations did take place between the established Church and the Afrikaanse Konferensie, and it looked as if the latter would conform and move towards once again becoming part of the established Church, the decision would be taken to allow the Afrikaanse Konferensie to buy books and receive its literary supplies (SAUC Minutes, 28 January 1971; 17 March 1971; 12 September 1971; 17 December 1972; TC Minutes, 5 February 1973, HBCA).

This approach adopted by the established Church necessitated the Afrikaanse Konferensie to seek other avenues so that they could fulfil their literature requirements. They included the writing of their own Bible studies, the publication of their own Afrikaans books and magazines, and the establishment of Skans-Publikasies which became the official printing press of the Afrikaanse Konferensie. The Afrikaanse Konferensie also received printed material from family and friends who lived overseas who were sympathetic to the Afrikaanse Konferensie. Because the Seventh-day Adventist Church worldwide studied the same Bible quarterlies it became relatively easy to obtain these materials in this manner (Letter from an unidentified writer to DF du Plessis, 16 May 1972, Letter in author's possession). The literature and publication endeavours of the Afrikaanse Konferensie will be expanded upon in the following chapter.

I. The Afrikaanse Konferensie threatened with legal action

Shortly after the decision had been taken to establish the Afrikaanse Konferensie (Akte van oprigting van die Afrikaanse Konferensie van Sewendedag-Adventiste, 14 Maart 1969, HBCA) the established Church sought to oppose the use of the name "Seventh-day Adventist" by the Afrikaanse Konferensie in a court of law. Upon enquiry, however, the Church was informed by their lawyers that there were in fact no legal steps in South African law at that time by which organizations could prevent the use of its name by any other group, on the grounds of possible confusion which could arise as a result thereof (Legal opinion from Van Wyk De Vries, Malan & Steyn to the Transvaal Conference, 19 March 1969, p.1-2, HBCA).

In response to this opinion by their lawyers the Church enquired whether there was any possibility that they could prevent the Afrikaanse Konferensie from using its name if they registered it under the protection of the Names, Uniforms and Badges Act, (Letter from Eric Korff to JG Smit, 6 May 1969, HBCA). When this avenue also failed, the Church clearly still not satisfied, continued to seek other ways to prevent its name from being used in the title of the Afrikaanse Konferensie. At the beginning of May 1969, the Secretary Treasurer of the Transvaal Conference Eric Korff wrote as follows to the Union president:

I still find it, rightly or wrongly so, very difficult to understand that nothing can be done to preclude the splinter group from using the denomination's name, as explained by the advocate. I discussed the matter very casually with Mr EL Burger yesterday and he seems to feel that "intent to deceive" would be sufficient grounds to obtain a court order (Letter from Eric Korff to RE Clifford, 7 May 1969, HBCA).

Two days later the Church directed another letter to the lawyers setting out all the reasons why they believed the Afrikaanse Konferensie should not be permitted to use the name "Seventh-day Adventist". Attention is focused at this time upon one of the reasons contained in the letter. It was worded as follows:

Daar word voorgegee dat 'n kerkgenootskap bekend as Die Afrikaanse Konferensie van Sewendedag-Adventiste bestaan. Daar is net een Sewendedag-Adventistekerk in die Republiek van Suid-Afrika, en dié erken nie hierdie maatskappy of die groep wat dit in die lewe geroep het nie. 'n Kerkgenootskap wat nie deur ons genootskap erken, beheer of gerig word nie, gee voor om die Ewige Evangelie van Jesus Christus soos vertolk in die Sewendedag-Adventiste leer te bevorder. Ons kan nie toelaat dat 'n groep waaroor ons geen beheer uitoefen aan die wêreld voorgee dat dit ons leerstellinge verkondig nie (Letter from the Transvaal Conference to Van Wyk de Vries, Malan & Steyn, 9 May 1969, HBCA).

Translation: The existence of a church organization known as Die Afrikaanse Konferensie has been assumed. There is only one Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Republic of South Africa, which neither acknowledges this company or the group that has called it into existence. A church organization that is not recognized, controlled or guided by our organization is supposedly spreading the eternal gospel as interpreted in the Seventh-day Adventist doctrine. We simply cannot allow the world to assume that such a group, over which we have no control, is preaching our doctrines.

This kind of thinking and reasoning by the Church leaders not only stresses the authoritative and exclusive position that the established Church had adopted in the conflict with the Afrikaanse Konferensie, but also appears to harbour the belief that only an organization that had the sanction of the Seventh-day Adventist Church had the right to preach the Gospel.

This research could not trace any additional documentation with regard to the polemic that had developed over the use of the Church's name. It does become evident though, that there was no way that this could be prevented, in spite of the established Church's insistence and all the efforts that they undertook. The Afrikaanse Konferensie was eventually registered as a legal organization in the middle of April 1969, and retained the words "Seventh-day Adventist" as part of their title (Akte van oprigting van die Afrikaanse Konferensie van Sewendedag-Adventiste, 14 Maart 1969, HBCA).

J. The personal influence of Church leaders in the crisis

The biased and vindictive nature of the struggle between the established Church and the Afrikaanse Konferensie became evident before the Special Session 1968. In PP van Eck's correspondence to the TAD president, a month before the walk-out, he had already spoken of a "mopping up operation" that would have to be carried out against the "rebels" in the Transvaal Conference (Letter from PP van Eck to ML Mills, 13 November 1968, pp.1-2, HBCA). The Trans-Africa Division president though, no doubt perceiving the very personal involvement of Van Eck, exhorted him with the following words:

I know you have been passing through trying times because of the rebellion...Since you are emotionally involved because of the scurrilous attacks made against your character you will have to lean heavily upon the Lord for grace so that your personal feelings will not overrule your judgment (Letter from ML Mills to PP van Eck, 13 March 1969, pp.1-2, HBCA).

The admonition to caution in the above regard appears to have fallen on deaf ears, for just a month later an unforgiving spirit still appears to have pervaded Van Eck's correspondence. In a letter to the Union president Van Eck wrote:

I believe they have reached the place where they believe the lie. When one hears this, then I have serious question whether it would do any good to give these unscrupolous [sic] men a hearing or to even visit with them in an effort to bring them back (Letter from PP van Eck to RE Clifford, 16 April 1969, HBCA).

Several months later, in his continuing endeavour to bring the Afrikaanse Konferensie to its knees, Van Eck's attention turned inwardly when he started applying pressure on the ministers who had remained loyal to the Church, but who, according to him were not able to deal adequately and forcefully enough with the "dissidents". In a letter to RE Clifford the SAUC president at that time, he expressed himself in the following way:

Pastor Keulder is our district Pastor in the South Eastern Transvaal...This district has been the easiest hunting grounds for the dissidents...It seems, rather than face the dissidents with courage and spending much time with those who are being misled, our Pastor runs away. Elder Clifford, don't you think a call [transfer] could be arranged for him, say to the SWA field...It seems he lacks the courage to face opposition, especially the dissidents and difficult church members [square brackets added] (TC President's Correspondence, Letter from PP van Eck to RE Clifford, 7 August 1969, HBCA).

The personal involvement of Van Eck and the direction in which he had been trying to steer events was strongly berated. Fritz von Hörsten had already written to Van Eck and the Executive Committee of the Transvaal Conference in July 1969. A remark from his letter read as follows:

Broeder van Eck, dit is nie speletjies waarmee ons ons besig hou...Weeg die persoonlike oorwegings by u nie swaarder as die voorspoed en eenheid van die kerk nie? Dit skyn of u eerder verder wil verbreek as heelmaak (Fritz von Hörsten to PP van Eck and the Transvaal Conference Executive Committee, 2 Julie 1969, p.4, HBCA).

Translation: Brother van Eck, these are not games that we are involved in...Do your personal considerations not outweigh the prosperity and unity of the church? It appears that you wish to break even further rather than bring about restitution.

Two months later, Von Hörsten directed another letter to the Transvaal Conference Executive, once again criticizing Van Eck's partial involvement. A part of his letter read as follows:

U, leraar van Eck is die voorsitter van die komitee...Dink u ons is blind om te sien hoe u in u persoonlike hoedanigheid alle besprekings van die staanspoor af wil doodsmoor nie (Letter from Fritz von Hörsten to the President and the Executive Committee of the Transvaal Conference, 5 September 1969, HBCA).

Translation: Pastor van Eck you are the chairman of the committee...Do you think we are blind to the fact that you in your personal capacity are smothering all dialogue before it even begins.

Upon hearing what had transpired at the session in December 1968 the Trans-Africa Division president, even though he cautioned Van Eck not to allow his personal sentiments to becloud his judgment, angrily slammed his fists on a table with a vow that he would personally "show the Afrikaners in the Transvaal who was boss" (Interview with Dr IJ van Zyl, December 1996).

By the end of 1969, one year after the walk-out at the Special Session, even though there were still some who continued to believe that the Afrikaanse Konferensie could still become part of the established organization in South Africa, this hope had greatly diminished. The remainder of this chapter will now undertake an analysis of the reasons why the established Church so adamantly opposed the incorporation of a separate Afrikaans Conference into its existing organizational structures.

VI. THE ENDEAVOURS OF THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH TO TRY AND JUSTIFY ITS RESISTANCE TO THE AFRIKAANSE KONFERENSIE

A. *Negation of the charges of immorality made against the Transvaal Conference president*

It did not take the Church long to respond to the accusations that had been made against Van Eck's personal life. In March 1969, two months into Van Eck's term as president, the Transvaal Conference minuted the following resolution:

WHEREAS, since the business session certain undermining rumours have been circulating about the President, and

WHEREAS the Nominating Committee was aware of these rumours and found no substance in them and

WHEREAS the Executive Committee has complete confidence in the President,

VOTED, to request the President of the SAUC to send a circular to all the workers in the Conference advising them of the confidence of the Executive Committee (TC Minutes, 4 March 1968, pp.43-44, HBCA).

In May 1968 the SAUC endorsed their confidence in Van Eck by confirming his election as president of the Transvaal Conference (South African Union Conference Minutes, 6 May 1968, p.305, EGWRC). Van Eck's innocence was also asserted in the document *Na Vyf Maande*. In defence of Van Eck, the author of this document, Pastor Johan Japp, maintained that the accusations of immorality had been colluded by Van Eck's accusers merely because he would not conform to their devious designs (*Na Vyf Maande - 'n ope brief deur JA Japp aan elke mede-Afrikaner in die Sewendedag-Adventiste Kerk in Suid-Afrika*, 15 Mei 1969, pp.4-5, HBCA).

Notwithstanding the belief in Van Eck's innocence and the undertaken defence on his behalf, it becomes quite clear that by December, when the time had arrived for the Special Business Session, that the accusations against him were still as prevalent as ever. It has already been determined that one of the main reasons for the walk-out at the Special Session in December was the re-election of Van Eck as Transvaal Conference president. The rationale behind

this act of remonstrance was also made clear at the meeting of the Afrikaans dissatisfied believers that took place shortly after the walk-out. The resolution taken at this meeting read as follows:

BESLUIT, om 'n aparte konferensie te stig omdat ons onmoontlik kan saamstem met die onregverdige en eie magtige manier waarop sake in die Transvaalse Konferensie vandag geskied het en met die wyse waarop sonde verdoesel is (Notule van vergadering van Die Suid-Afrikaanse Konferensie, 8 Desember 1968, p.1, HBCA).

Translation: VOTED, to establish a separate conference because we cannot overlook the unjust and high-handed practices by which matters were conducted in the Transvaal Conference today and the manner in which sin has been condoned.

Although there is no reference to a name in the above-mentioned paragraph, it nevertheless leaves little room for guessing as to whose supposedly sinful practices this remark was alluding to.

Ten days after the Special Business Session, in another attempt to dispel the accusations that had been directed at the president, the Transvaal Conference reiterated their position:

After the nominating committee had presented its report and was accepted by the session, there were certain men who asked for it to be referred back. These men had on various occasions during the year fully discussed the unsubstantiated charges against the President.

As late as October 22 1968, at a meeting of all conference workers and the Executive Committee, they unanimously pledged their loyal support to the President and placed in him their unqualified confidence after a full investigation of the malicious gossip concerning him had been made.

At the session, the President of the Conference told the delegates that this question had already been officially discussed on three different occasions. He asked the delegates whether they desired it to be discussed again, and they almost unanimously voted against it. For this reason, further discussion on this particular subject was unnecessary (Transvaal Conference Correspondence, 18 December 1968, p.4, HBCA).

Those that had made the allegations of immorality against Van Eck had not been placated by the responses of the Church and maintained that the right persons had not been used to conduct an adequate inquiry into what they considered to be "a very serious case" (Antwoord op Na Vyf Maande, 2 Junie 1969, p.2, HBCA).

For a year afterwards, until the conclusion of Van Eck's term as president, the accusations of sexual immorality made against him appear to have been buried. However, at the beginning of 1970 when Van Eck was succeeded as Transvaal Conference president by WHJ Badenhorst, these rumours unexpectedly emerged once again. This time, however, it was not done by those who had protested against his nomination a year before, but strangely enough, by the leaders and committees who only a number of months before had so earnestly defended him. Shortly after Van Eck's successor had taken office as president, the following was noted in the Transvaal Conference's minutes:

WHEREAS there are strong indications of an increasing concern both among the workers and laity with regard to certain unanswered questions relating to PP van Eck:

- VOTED 1. To refer the whole question of PP van Eck's future service in the organization to the SAUC and TAD with request that urgent plans be worked out so that he can be moved as soon as possible to some other area or phase of the work outside of the conference and
2. That an impartial commission of enquiry be set up on Union level with powers to co-op at least two members of the TC Committee, excluding the officers, to investigate the cloud of accusations which have been levelled against PP van Eck so that, in the interests of the Church in South Africa, this 'cloud' be removed (TC Minutes, 15 February 1970, p.68, EGWRC).

At this time, ML Mills, the Trans-Africa Division president also made the following remarks to the General Conference president with regard to Van Eck's position:

I am sorry to tell you that brother van Eck was not re-elected as president of the Transvaal Conference...The Nominating Committee almost to a man felt that while brother van Eck has made a great contribution to the conference and had loyally defended the faith during the past two years there was still a question in the minds of many about his character. A cloud still hangs over him with respect to rumours of past indiscretions which seemed too many to clear up or defend...

Aside from what the dissident movement had perpetrated against Elder van Eck which has denigrated his character, the brethren were of the opinion that there were just too many stories in circulation which could not be overlooked...Both Elder Lind and I attended this conference session and I must say that the more we listened to the discussions on the Nominating Committee, the

more we found it difficult, and even impossible, to defend Elder van Eck (Trans-Africa Division President's Correspondence, Letter from ML Mills to RH Pierson, 21 January 1970, On Microfiche EGWRC).

The apparent vacillations by the Church leaders with regard to Van Eck's personal life and the accusations that had been directed against him must constitute some of the most baffling correspondence by the Church's leadership in the saga between the established Church and the Afrikaanse Konferensie. It has been noted how, for two years, the Church leaders had staunchly defended Van Eck by refuting all the allegations that had been made against him and how they had confirmed their belief in his innocence. At the end of his term as president, however, the need to defend the allegations that had been made against him, appears to have no longer been necessary and he was simply moved to another conference.

If the accusations of immorality made against Van Eck were true, as it admittedly appears to be judging from the letters of the Trans-Africa Division president, it must then be conceded that there existed a measure of justification for the walk-out at Heidelberg in December 1968 and the subsequent establishment of the Afrikaanse Konferensie.

The implications of what has just been stated are enormous. It has been impossible in this study to prove that the Church's leaders knew about Van Eck's moral indiscretions early in 1968. If, however, they were aware of them, and blatantly covered them up and defended Van Eck, simply because of the role that he could have played in defending the faith against the Afrikaanse Konferensie, there is little doubt that they must carry a large portion of the blame and guilt for what transpired at the Special Session in December 1968, the establishment of the Afrikaanse Konferensie and the ensuing conflicts that followed. What has just been stated was in fact confirmed by the Afrikaanse Konferensie. In September 1969 in its response to the declarations by the Church, the *Lantern* it noted the following:

Die Afrikaanse Konferensie sou nooit ontstaan het, indien ooglopende inkonsekwente optrede in hierdie geval nie na vore getree het nie. Daar is 'n sware aantygning voor en op 8 Desember gemaak en u is bewus daarvan. Is daar ondersoek ingestel? NEE! By herhaling NEE NOG NOOIT! (Antwoord op die *Lantern*, Na Aanleiding van die Spesiale *Lantern* van 15 September 1969, p.4, HBCA).

Translation: The Afrikaanse Konferensie would have never come into existence, if obvious inconsistent actions had, as in this case, not come to the fore. A strong indictment was made before and on the 8th of December of which you are aware. Were any investigations carried out? NO! And by repetition, NO NEVER!

B. Denial that Afrikaans had been disregarded

Besides the negation of the charges directed against Van Eck, an additional mainstay in the established Church's armoury against the Afrikaanse Konferensie was the strong and adamant assertion that there was no substance in the accusations that Afrikaans had been slighted, scorned or overlooked and that Afrikaans-speaking people had been discriminated against in the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

As with the other accusations, the Church once again never hesitated to make its stance clear in regard to the issue of the Afrikaner and the position of Afrikaans in the Church. In this regard the established Church not only asserted that there were no grounds for these accusations by the Afrikaanse Konferensie, but also that many Afrikaans-speaking people in the Transvaal Conference had in fact taken strong exception to these charges because they felt that the Afrikaanse Konferensie did not represent them (TC Executive Committee's response to the memorandum submitted by the self-styled Afrikaanse Konferensie [sic] van Sewendedag-Adventiste, n.d., p.3, HBCA).

Assertions such as these, in defence of the Church, was also made in other writings. In the document *Sal daar erkenning wees*, its author, Pastor GM Niemandt, claimed that the setting up of English against Afrikaans by the Afrikaanse Konferensie was a sinful and deceptive psychological mode of operation. He elaborated by stating that there had never been any deliberate suppression of the Afrikaners or their language in the Church. A part of this document read as follows:

Daar mag wel foute gewees het in die verlede, maar ek het nog nooit 'n konkrete geval opgemerk van doelbewuste onderdrukking van Afrikaans, of moedswillige verontagsaming nie. Dit was nooit die BELEID van ons kerk dat Afrikaans die minste moet wees nie (*Sal daar erkenning wees*, n.d., p.1, HBCA).

Translation: There may have been shortcomings in the past, but I have personally never noticed a single case of deliberate suppression or intentional disregard of Afrikaans. It was never the POLICY of our church that Afrikaans should ever be the least.

Pastor Niemandt, also maintained that the apparent concern shown by the Afrikaanse Konferensie for the advancement of the Lord's work in South Africa was only a front to cover other selfish and insidious motives (*Sal daar erkenning wees*, n.d., pp.1-2, HBCA).

Notwithstanding the continued insistence by the Afrikaanse Konferensie that the Afrikaans-speaking areas of South Africa had been woefully neglected and while their intended aim was to spread the gospel in these areas, the established Church also remained adamant that the allegations of the

Afrikaanse Konferensie were not "a true reflection of the way the Seventh-day Adventist Church had operated and that there was therefore no necessity for the formation of a new conference" (Transvaal Conference Correspondence, 18-19 December 1968, p.2, HBCA)

By their use of these indictments, the Afrikaanse Konferensie had, according to the established Church, also relegated itself to a "politically-orientated religious organisation" which was working in opposition to the established church in South Africa (Letter from the Transvaal Conference to Flippie Retief and JA Birkenstock, n.d., p.8, HBCA).

The rejection of the allegations by the Afrikaanse Konferensie that Afrikaans had been discredited in the Church, does however take on enigmatic proportions when cognizance is taken of statements made by an appointed committee to study the situation of Afrikaans in the Church. A sub-committee appointed to investigate the feasibility of the establishment of a separate language conference made mention in their report that there was a "recognised need in the church to provide more adequately for the literature requirements of the Afrikaans-speaking members" (Report of the sub-committee on separate language conferences, 27 November 1969, p.2, HBCA). In its report, just two months later, the South African Union Conference stated:

We are fully aware of the background and reasons which caused concern among our members with regard to the work of the Lord in South Africa, especially among the Afrikaans-speaking members. The next step will be to confer with our constituency regarding certain positive suggestions which the SA Union Committee will submit, and which, in our opinion, will provide a solution to the problem (South African Union Conference Minutes, 11 January 1971, p.147, EGWRC).

Just over a month later, another commission was appointed with a mandate to study and report on the Afrikaans language programme in the Union. The following resolution was minuted:

Voted to appoint a commission of the following members to study the possibility of consolidation in the three European conferences of the SAU with a view to exercising some economy in administrative expense and in particular to giving special attention to the needs of the Afrikaans language programme in the Union (South African Union Conference Committee, 24 February 1971, p.174, HBCA).

This chapter has already made it quite explicit that little or no regard was initially given to the grievances of those that had protested. The above-mentioned statements, therefore, the apparent change of attitude, and the prospect for the establishment of unilingual conferences, which materialized more than two years after the walk-out at the Special Session, and after the

church had so adamantly refuted the allegations that Afrikaans had been neglected in the church, are very difficult to comprehend.

In an endeavour to understand what was happening in the Church at this time, several questions became inevitable: Firstly, if the leaders were in fact aware that such concerns existed among the Afrikaans-speaking members in the Church, why did they wait for two years before they acknowledged them? Secondly, why had they taken so long to appoint a commission to make investigations and seek positive solutions in this regard? And thirdly, if such problems and grievances were evident in the church, why were they so adamantly refuted in the first place?

The second chapter of this study has made it quite clear that serious dilemmas had arisen in the church with the Dutch believers at the turn of the century and then later with Afrikaans believers as well. The actions that the Church undertook after the walk-out at the Special Session, although the leaders never gave ear to the grievances of the Afrikaanse Konferensie, also serve to corroborate the fact that problems did indeed exist in the Church at that time.

Even before the walk-out and the formation of the Afrikaanse Konferensie, the Church leaders had already begun to express concern about the state of Afrikaans in the various church departments. In September 1968, the following was minuted by both the SAUC and the Transvaal Conference because of problems that had apparently arisen with Afrikaans students at Helderberg College. From the following statement it appears, firstly, that the church leaders recognized that teaching in English tended to predominate and, secondly, that a dire need had become evident for Afrikaans-speaking students to be trained and instructed in their own language. The resolution read as follows:

WHEREAS Afrikaans speaking graduates from Helderberg College are not able to speak their language as well as they ought to, VOTED, to recommend to the Helderberg College School Board through the SAUC that College be as bilingual as possible and that students be permitted to deliver at least 90% of their speeches in the speech class in their own language.

At the same meeting, the recommendation was also made that the College increase its theological personnel by adding an Afrikaans-speaking lecturer to its staff complement (TC Minutes, 8 September 1968, pp.101-102; South African Union Conference Minutes, 11 September 1968, On Microfiche EGWRC; Interview with Dr IJ van Zyl, 6 July 1997, Somerset West).

Besides the resolutions that the above-mentioned improvements be made at Helderberg College, the established Church also concluded, after the walk-out at the special session in December 1968, to launch an extensive translation, production and promotion programme of Afrikaans literary material. Whereas very little emphasis had been placed on a programme of such a nature in the

years before the formation of the Afrikaanse Konferensie, the ensuing years saw a great leap forward by the Sentinel Publishing Association in an endeavour to make Afrikaans literature available to members of the Church. On 18 December 1968, only ten days after the walk-out, urgent recommendations were made to the Sentinel Publishing Association to translate and produce no less than nine books in Afrikaans. In addition to the desired production of these books, the church leaders also recommended to the printing press that both, the quality and the supply of Afrikaans literature had to improve in the area of magazines, journals, children's books and religious tracts.

On 19 December 1968 a further recommendation was made that the Trans-African Division Outlook also be produced in Afrikaans. Until then the magazine, which had been produced for the first time in 1920, had been predominantly English (South African Union Minutes, 19 December 1968, p.471, HBCA). Over the following few months the endeavours to make literary material available to the Afrikaans-speaking people in the Church abounded as never before. During this time it also appears that meetings both at Conference and at Union level were dedicated almost entirely to making plans for the production of Afrikaans material (SAUC Minutes, 21 February 1969, pp.532-534; SAUC Minutes, 6 December 1970, pp.70-71, On Microfiche, EGWRC).

Special funds were also earmarked over the following months for the specific purpose of producing books in Afrikaans (SAUC Minutes, 7 September 1970, p.825, HBCA). By August 1969 a subcommittee had been called into existence to update the glossary of the Church's terminology into Afrikaans (South African Union Conference Minutes, 21 August 1969, p.587, HBCA). By 1974, four years later, this programme of Afrikaans book production had become so massive that the SPA was working full-steam so that it could provide the books and materials that the church members required (South African Union Conference Midyear Minutes, 8 May 1974, pp.1255-1256, HBCA).

How can the above-mentioned "blitz", however, by the Church leaders to produce material in Afrikaans and the numerous other actions undertaken at this time to try to meet the needs of the Afrikaans-speaking believers be equated with the strong assertions that had been made that the literature needs of its Afrikaans-speaking members had always been satisfactorily met and that no problems had ever existed with Afrikaans in the Church? After having already taken cognisance of the state of Afrikaans in the Church, the answer to this question must have its roots in the realization by the Church leaders, once they had been confronted with the accusations by the Afrikaanse Konferensie, that there were indeed serious problems with Afrikaans in various areas of the Church. It becomes quite clear, though, that the Church leaders frantically and hastily endeavoured to rectify these problems, instead of acknowledging that the grievances that had been enumerated by the Afrikaanse Konferensie had indeed been true.

C. The entreaty for a unilingual conference turned down

Concurrent with the issuing of the statement that the Church leaders had become attentive to the problems and concerns that its Afrikaans-speaking members were experiencing, they also undertook to investigate the feasibility of the implementation of separate unilingual conferences in South Africa. As a result, at the beginning of 1971, the South African Union Conference Committee resolved:

To look forward to studying in depth the possibility of re-organizing the three European conferences with a view of creating two unilingual parallel conferences, and that if it was found that re-organization on this basis bears merit and it is the wish of the constituency, a special session of the South African Union Conference be called to give attention to this re-organization (South African Union Conference Minutes, 11 January 1971, p.146, HBCA).

At a subsequent meeting the Union Conference surprisingly rescinded the above-mentioned decision and minuted that it was considered "inadvisable to organize unilingual conferences" (South African Union Conference Minutes, 24 February 1971, p.174, HBCA). It has been noted earlier in this chapter, that although the earnest desire of the Afrikaanse Konferensie had been to focus its labours among Afrikaans-speaking people, the established Church's response indicated that the establishment of a unilingual Afrikaans Conference was considered unnecessary and uneconomical. By the end of 1969, in the sub-committee's report on separate language conferences, the established Church had in fact already emphatically formulated its position in this regard. Their report was worded as follows:

In the Adventist church we recognise the primary function of language as a medium of worship and witness and any local conference should be administered in the language or languages understood by the people. In South Africa we believe that a bilingual conference administration covering a given geographical area, serving both languages groups adequately and fairly is more economical than unilingual conferences which would necessarily overlap in territory and increase administrative costs. For these and other reasons a bilingual administration is considered advantageous. Furthermore, bilingual conferences, under present circumstances, encourages the breaking down walls of partition between different nationalities and the development of tolerance (Report of the Sub-Committee on Separate Language Conferences, 27 November 1969, pp. 1-2, HBCA).

The reasons given by the Church for not seeing its way clear to allow an Afrikaans conference, however logical the reasons may seem to have been, remained a source of unending perplexity for those who had joined the Afrikaanse Konferensie. Many of these people were under the firm conviction that a dire need had arisen for the Seventh-day Adventist Church to spread the gospel amongst Afrikaans-speaking people and could not understand why they were being prevented from doing so, and why they were being regarded as "political extremists" and "fanatics" (8 Desember en daarna, 2 April 1969, p.4, HBCA; Antwoord op die Lantern: 'n Ope brief aan Mills, Clifford en Van Eck, n.d., p.4, HBCA). A letter written at this time by Pastor PJ Retief reiterated that the people who had joined the Afrikaanse Konferensie were loyal Seventh-day Adventists, abiding to the teachings of the Church and wishing to spread the gospel among Afrikaans-speaking people. In this letter the writer asked:

Noem u mense wat rotsvas by die bakens van Adventisme staan 'n splintergroep? (Letter from PJ Retief to PP van Eck, 14 Mei 1969, p.4, HBCA).

Translation: Can you call people who so solidly abide by the landmarks of Adventism, a splinter group?

Although this chapter has already examined some of the underlying reasons given by the established Church for its opposition to the implementation of separate language conferences, it appears that one of its foremost concerns was that the creation of such an organization would destroy the unity and the existing structure of the Church in South Africa. The significance and importance by which the Church regarded its organizational unity is clearly evident in the following statement made by the Transvaal Conference:

ORGANIZATIONAL UNITY. Much is being made of the denomination's insistence that there must be organizational unity. It is being said that doctrinal unity is all what matters. The official Seventh-day Adventist view has always been that our organizational unity has contributed to our doctrinal unity. In fact we believe that our organisational unity is as divinely inspired as our doctrines. The members of this organization are therefore under sacred obligation to be subject thereunto [sic], loyally to support it, and to share in its maintenance (Transvaal Conference Correspondence, 17 March 1969, p.2, HBCA).

Several months later the sub-committee that had been given the mandate to study the feasibility of implementing separate language conferences reiterated its stance with regard to Church unity and gave a number of reasons why it was not advisable to implement unilingual conferences in South Africa. A portion of their report read as follows:

The Sub-Committee wishes to make the following propositions relative to the Separate Language Conferences in South Africa:

1. The Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy makes unity in worship and in organization, in heart and in action basic to the existence of the church and to the fulfilment of the divine mission entrusted to it.
2. Within the world church divisions, unions, conferences, fields, institutions or separate language congregations are organized, but this is for geographical, linguistic or other reasons, and should in no wise break the unity of God's household.
3. Where differences between basic races are pronounced, the contingencies of the work may sometimes make separate organizations entities desirable, this without prejudice to church unity.
4. South Africa is moving towards closer unity between the two European language groups. South Africans are not divided into Afrikaans and English blocs on the municipal, provincial and national levels of administration. The administration could well show similar concepts of administrative unity as well (Report of the Sub-Committee on Separate Language Conferences, 27 November 1969, p.1, HBCA).

In his document Sal daar erkenning wees, Pastor GM Niemandt, not only strongly defended the Church's standpoint on unity and its existing organizational structures, but also berated the Afrikaanse Konferensie for bringing in a system whereby it had destroyed the unity of the Church. He wrote as follows:

Die Sewendedag-Adventiste kerk volg een organisatoriese stelsel dwarseer [sic] die wêreld. Ons lokale konferensies staan onder die administrasie van 'n president bygestaan deur sy uitvoerende komitee. Die president is op sy beurt weer 'n lid van ons Unie komitees. Deur die jare het hierdie stelsel goed gewerk. Die president word aangestel op tweejaarlikse termyn waarna ons weer kies. Maar nou het hierdie groep voerendag gekom met 'n splinternuwe plan. Hulle kies geen president nie, maar 'n voorsitter, en 'n dagbestuur, plus 'n beheerende liggaam. Die dagbestuur is 'n klein komitee, die beheerende liggaam 70 lede. Hoe hulle verkies word, is nie vir my heeltemal duidelik nie. Skynbaar het die hele groep vergader, en toe die dagbestuur aangestel. Die ware stelsel waarop die saak werk, is nog nie aan ons verduidelik nie. Een ding staan egter vas: Dit sal moeite

verg om so 'n botsende orgaan in te maak pas by ons stel van Unie sakesittings, en Unie komitee vergaderings. Die hele ding bots met ons idee van eenvormigheid. Op die gebied van organisasie is die eenheidsbande tussen ons en hulle dus deurgeknip. Nou staan daar twee botsende organisasies saam in Suid-Afrika. Hulle sê aan ons: Leen ons julle naam, maar ons kan nie ons naam leen aan 'n organisasie wat nie eie aan ons is nie. Hoe kan ons? (Sal daar erkenning wees, n.d., Deel II, pp.1-2, HBCA).

Translation: The Seventh-day Adventist Church worldwide follows one organizational pattern. Our local conferences are administered by a president and his executive committee. The president himself is also a member of our Union Committees. This system has worked well in the years gone by. The president is appointed for a two year period after which we vote again. This group has now come to the fore with a brand-new plan. They do not choose a president but a chairman, a maintaining committee and a controlling body. The maintaining committee is small, the controlling body has 70 members. How they are elected is not very clear to me. Apparently the entire group met and appointed the maintaining committee. The basis upon which the entire system works has not been explained to us as yet. There is one thing however that is very clear: It will take much effort to make such an opposing organization part of Union business meetings, and Union committee meetings. The whole affair clashes with our idea of uniformity. Therefore on the sphere of organization the bonds of unity between them and us have been severed. There are now two organizations in South Africa which clash with each other. They tell us: Lend us your name, but we cannot lend our name to an organization that is not part of us. How can we?

Many persons though, who had joined the Afrikaanse Konferensie, interpreted church unity in a very different light. Soon after the walk-out some maintained that it was precisely because the established Church had had such shaky principles regarding unity that the separation had taken place. In a document entitled Die beginsels van ware eenheid (The principles of authentic unity) those who believed that the Church had not adequately interpreted the true principles of unity asserted that:

Unity could never be studied or understood in isolation; Biblical principles could under no circumstances be compromised for the sake of unity;

Unity should be a spontaneous response to biblical principles and that organizational unity would be achieved only after unity in the faith and unity in doctrine had been reached;

Unity could never begin with the visible church, but with truth. The established church was, according to their understanding, in the same danger as at the time of the Jews who saw organizational unity as their map and transport to salvation;

The springboard for true unity should always be regeneration and faith in the truth;

The church should never, for the sake of showing the world that it was united, try to misconceive and be fraudulent;

Unity should never be determined by the number of people that belonged to the Church (Die beginsels van ware eenheid, 11 February 1969, pp.1-4, HBCA).

It becomes evident that many of those who had joined the Afrikaanse Konferensie could not agree to an idealistic view of unity. In addition, many of those who joined the Afrikaanse Konferensie remained adamant that they had never intended to destroy the unity of the Church. In Die beginsels van ware eenheid they endeavoured to make this very clear. A paragraph from this document reads as follows:

Nou vra ons: Waar het ons as die Afrikaanse Konferensie 'n haarbreedte van die leerstellings van Adventisme afgewyk? 'n Eerlike antwoord sal wees: Nee, julle het nie. Maar dan wil ons weet: waar het ons nou die eenheid verbreek? Daarom tree 'n duidelike simpton ongelukkig nou hier na vore, 'n simpton wat op 'n diepgaande kwaal by ons as genootskap dui nl. dat eenheid 'n ge-isoleerde strewe geword het; ten koste van beginsels, ten koste van wat eerbaar is en soms ten koste van die waarheid self (Die Beginsels van ware eenheid, 11 Februarie 1969, pp.1-4, HBCA).

Translation: Now we ask: Where have we as the Afrikaanse Konferensie even deviated a hair's breadth from the doctrines of Adventism? An honest answer will be: No, they have not. Then we wish to know: where have we broken the unity? A distinctive symptom unfortunately materializes at this point, a symptom that points to deep-rooted malady in our community, namely that unity has become an isolated endeavour; at the cost of principles, at the cost of what is honourable and even at times at the cost of truth itself.

The deliberations concerning the establishment of separate language conferences did not end at this time, but continued to feature for the following four years in the Church's correspondence. In October 1970, at its 26th Business Session, the South African Union Conference formulated its most comprehensive statement on the position of the Church with regard to

unilingual and bilingual conferences in the South African Church. After quoting extensively both from the writings of Ellen White and the Bible, which the compilers of the statement employed to fortify their convictions about the indivisibility of the Church, they enumerated seven lengthy principles which they believed, accentuated the clear advantages that a bilingual conference had over a unilingual conference in South Africa. According to the findings of this document a unilingual conference was not geographically warranted in South Africa. The document also stated that a bilingual conference was more economical and that a unilingual conference would break down rather than build up unity in the Church (The complete resolution that the Southern African Union Conference took at this time against the implementation of unilingual conferences is contained in annexure 1, p.299).

The statement by the South African Union Conference once again brings a number of issues to the fore which need to be analyzed. The first of these is the manner in which the Church employed the Church's literature to try and justify its convictions that bilingual conferences were advantageous over unilingual conferences. The book most frequently quoted from at this time was *Testimonies for the Church* vol.9 written by Ellen White. From this volume the compilers of the SAUC statement drew quite extensively, not only to accentuate the unity and indivisibleness of the Church, but also to stress the need which existed for all the various nationalities in the Church to blend together in the work entrusted to them.

The manner in which the Church leaders employed the writings of Ellen White at this time was contested by many of those who had joined the Afrikaanse Konferensie. When Pastor Josef Birkenstock had presented his document *Die ware geskilpunt op hierdie sessie* at the Special Session in December 1968, he had also quoted from the writings of Ellen White. In the quotes that Birkenstock used, Ellen White had forcefully admonished the American missionaries and Church leaders in South Africa at the turn of the century for the loose and haphazard modes of management and for serious detriment that had resulted. The response of the Church leaders to Birkenstock's employment of Ellen White's writings was that those admonishments given by Ellen White only pertained to the circumstances prevailing in South Africa at that time. A week after the walk-out, the Transvaal Conference worded its conviction in this regard as follows:

The letters of Sr EG White regarding South Africa were written in 1899 and were given specifically for the problems of that time. While we fully accept the admonition given by her, we are not to take it out of its context or time-setting (Transvaal Conference Correspondence, 18 December 1968, p.4, HBCA).

However, when the established Church made use of Ellen White's counsels much of it written for specific issues in other parts of the world at the turn of the last century, it appears that the consideration of the context and time-frame was no longer deemed as important. In the document *Sal daar erkenning*

wees, the author, Pastor GM Niemandt also made numerous references to *Testimonies for the Church*, vol.9 and maintained that the counsel and principles found in these pages were to be applied directly to the situation in South Africa (Sal daar erkenning wees, n.d., p.14, HBCA).

These hermeneutical irregularities did not go by unheeded and were strongly criticized. In an undated manuscript entitled Memorandum, the author, Edwin de Kock, a teacher at Helderberg College, pointed out how far the Church had deviated in its understanding in this regard. He wrote as follows:

'n Moontlike struikelblok in die pad van afsonderlike konferensies weens taalonderskeid is 'n misverstand oor veral bl. 195-198 van *Testimonies for the Church*, vol.9. Ek glo dat dit, indien ons dit reg begryp, nie werklik 'n beletsel is nie (Memorandum. n.d., p.1, HBCA).

Translation: A possible stumbling block in the establishment of separate language conferences is the misunderstanding of especially pp. 195-198 of the *Testimonies for the Church*, vol.9. I believe, if we understand it correctly, that it will not really be an forbiddance.

In Memorandum, De Kock argued at length pointing out how the quotes in *Testimonies for the Church* which had been used so extensively by the Church leaders pertained specifically to a situation that had arisen in the Church in North America. He stated that parallels could therefore not be drawn from that context and made to be binding upon the situation that had arisen in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa (Memorandum, n.d., p.1, HBCA). Besides the context which was clearly North American, De Kock's document also highlighted the fact that because this part of the world had been chiefly a unilingual country at the time, parallels which were more pertaining to the South African context were to be found in Europe instead, which was also home to a multiplicity of language groups.

Although this thesis is dealing explicitly with the Afrikaner situation in the Church in South Africa it is important to trace the reasoning behind De Kock's thinking and to see why he maintained that the Church should examine the European paradigms instead of the North American ones. De Kock pointed out that the counsel contained in *Testimonies for the Church* volume 9 had been written in 1905, twenty five years after the Danish, Norwegian, Swedish and German language conferences had been established (Memorandum, n.d., p.1, HBCA). The time-frame for the establishment of these European conferences was according to him of extreme importance for nowhere was there any admonition to abandon or discredit the creation or development of these language conferences. He stated this conviction in the paragraph which follows:

As die Gees van Profesie die totstandkoming van afsonderlike konferensies in enige van hierdie lande wou oordeel, sou suster White voor 1880, vyf en twintig jaar vroeër iets daaroor geskryf het, want toe is die Deense Konferensie al georganiseer. Uit

voorgaande is dit reeds duidelik dat die getuienis van 9T 195-198 (*Testimonies for the Church* vol.9) nie oor Europa kommentaar gelewer het nie, maar 'n situasie in the Verenigde State van Amerika (Memorandum, n.d., p.1, HBCA).

Translation: If the Spirit of Prophecy reproved the creation of separate language conferences in any of these countries, sister White would have written concerning this situation twenty five years earlier for by this time the Danish Conference had already been established. From this it becomes quite clear that the witness of 9T 195-198 was not a commentary on what had taken place in Europe, but on the situation in the United States of America.

De Kock also described how, after the worldwide reorganization of the Church in 1901, the Swiss Church which only had a small membership, was divided into two separate language conferences, namely a German and a French-speaking one. He reasoned as follows:

A reorganization of the work in Europe took place in 1901. Switzerland was divided by language into two sections: one became the German Swiss Conference, under the newly formed German Union Conference...the other became the French Swiss Conference" (Memorandum, n.d., p.3, HBCA) (A detailed description of the commencement and development of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Switzerland will be carried out in the final chapter of this thesis).

In the light of these divisions that had taken place on the basis of language differences in Switzerland, De Kock asked:

Die grondslag was en is suiwer taalkundig sowel as kultureel. Is ons Afrikaners op minder geregtig as ons Duitse, Sweedse en Switserse broeders? (Memorandum., n.d., p.4, HBCA).

Translation: The foundation was and is purely linguistic and cultural. Are we as Afrikaners entitled to any less than our German, Swedish and Swiss brothers?

The remaining part of De Kock's document consisted of what is probably one of the most comprehensive arguments of that time in favour of a separation of church conferences on a language basis. De Kock made references in his document to emotionally stirring incidents such the concentration camp deaths of the Afrikaans women and children during the South African War (1899-1902), and the condescension, scorn and prejudice levelled by the British against Afrikaners in the past. His main concern, however, appeared to be grounded upon what he considered to be the careless and indifferent attitudes by which the Seventh-day Adventist Church leaders had approached the problems that had

arisen between the English and Afrikaans believers. His document decried the fact that the Church had adamantly refused to acknowledge that it had committed any wrongs against the Afrikaans-speaking church members, and that it had simultaneously failed to set any meaningful and lasting changes in motion. According to De Kock the only lasting solution to the perennial problems that existed in the Church, lay in allowing the Afrikaners to have their own conference, to allow Afrikaners to work amongst their own people, and to allow them to have their own schools and training centres (Memorandum, n.d., p.2-9, HBCA). It has not been possible in this study to trace any response by the Church to this paper by Edwin de Kock. De Kock's ideals were, however, never realized and the institution of unilingual conferences never became a reality in South Africa.

An added issue that the statement of the SAUC on bilingual and unilingual conferences raises is the justifications that the Church had tried to make for the separation that existed between the white and black race groups in its organizational structures. De Kock was not the only one who commented on the internal race relations existing in the Church at that time. He was, however, the most forthright and began his argument on the issue of race relationships in the Church with the following questions:

Daar is al vir 'n geruime tyd aparte unies vir die Bantoewerk. Mag hulle hierdie voorreg geniet en die Afrikaners nie? Op grond van watter gesag, behalwe die van praktiese oorwegings? Word kleurlinge en Indiërs apart behandel, as verskillende nasionale entiteite? Ja. Mens kan vra: Waarom? (Memorandum, n.d., p.4, HBCA).

Translation: There has been separate unions for the Bantu work for quite a while. Can they enjoy this privilege and not the Afrikaners? Are coloureds and Indians treated separately as diverse national entities? Yes. One is prone to ask: Why?

In an endeavour to stress his point De Kock quoted a part of the Declaration of Human Relations of the Church Seventh-day Adventist Church which read:

That in the formation of educational, medical, publishing and other institutional policies, we commit ourselves to specific tasks and goals in an attempt to foster racially inclusive practices (Declaration of Human Relations, General Conference Bulletin, Nr. 5, 17 June 1970; Quoted in Memorandum, n.d., p.4. HBCA).

In essence, De Kock was wanting to know why the Seventh-day Adventist Church, which was guarding its unity so jealously that it would not allow the Afrikaners to have their own conference, had created separate conferences for Seventh-day Adventist believers from other racial and cultural groups in this country.

This issue was also not overlooked by the Afrikaanse Konferensie. In the document 8 Desember en Daarna which appeared in the early half of 1969 the following question was asked:

Ons en die Bantoe-gelowiges, Kleurling-gelowiges en die Indiërgelowiges is almal een in die Here, maar het ons dieselfde gemeentes en Konferensies? (8 Desember en daarna, 2 April 1969, p.2, HBCA).

Translation: We and the Bantu, Coloured and Indian believers are one in Christ, however do we have the same congregations and conferences?

One month later in May 1969 the Afrikaanse Konferensie once again wrote:

Om terug te keer na ons eie land, waarom het ons verskillende organisasies vir die verskeie Bantoe-taalgroepe? Is hierdie dinge dan nie ook almal skeidsmure nie? Waarom is dit dan net wanneer die Afrikaners so 'n beter indeling begeer dat dit nou skielik 'n verskriklike sonde en euwel word dat dit die eenheid van die kerk gaan skeur? (Antwoord op die nuwe skeidsmuur, 22 Mei 1969, p.1, HBCA).

Translation: To refer once again to our own country, why do we have separate organizations for the various Bantu language groups? Are these things also not all dividing walls? Why is it only when the Afrikaners desire a better classification that it suddenly becomes so terribly sinful and evil that it threatens to destroy the unity of the church?

Even though a response to De Kock's paper could not be traced, the challenge to answer these specific question cited by the Afrikaanse Konferensie was taken up by GM Niemandt in his document Sal daar erkenning wees. In response to the tract 8 Desember en daarna which had also raised up the issue of the existence of separate organizations for the Indian, coloured and black believers against the reticence of the Seventh-day Adventist Church to allow for an Afrikaans Conference, Part of Niemandt's document read as follows:

Die kerk het suiwer in opdrag van die Here, soos die lig van die Getuienisse dit openbaar, gehandel toe daar aparte organisasies vir blank en nie-blank gestig is. Die belangstellende leser kan dit self opspoor in 9T. bl.204-210. In kort sal ek slegs 'n samevatting gee van wat u in die betrokke hoofstukke kan lees:

- (i) In die lande met gemengde bevolkings bestaan daar 'n heftige vooroordeel tussen blank en nieblank. Daardie vooroordeel kan ons werk benadeel.

- (ii) Gestel ons vrylik meng met die Bantoes, dan sou ons kerk 'n stigmatiese naam verkry onder die blankes.
- (iii) Hierdie toestand sal verhinder dat ons lig voor die blankes kry, as hulle weier om 'n gemengde kerk te aanvaar.

In kort is dit die Getuienisse se redes waarom ons die blankes moet afsonder van die nieblankes. Die Getuienisse se raad het betrekking op toestande in Amerika, en dieselfde beginsel pas in Suid-Afrika ook, waar die rassegevoel tussen blank en nieblank (buite ons kerk) seker erger is as in Amerika. Hier verbied die wet ons selfs, en apartheid is 'n voldonge feit. Om hierdie redes het die broeders dit gerade geag om blank en nieblank te skei (Sal daar erkenning wees, n.d., p.13, HBCA).

Translation: When separate organizations were established for whites and blacks the church acted purely by the command of God, as revealed through the light of His Witness. The interested reader can read it for himself in 9T. pp.204-210. In essence, I will only give a summary of what you will find in the specified chapters.

- (i) In countries with mixed populations there exists a great amount of prejudice between whites and blacks. This intolerance can greatly impair our work.
- (ii) Suppose that we had to mix freely with the blacks, the Church's name would then be stigmatized among the whites.
- (iii) This situation would prevent the light from reaching the whites, if they refuse to concede to a mixed church.

Succinctly then, these are the reasons given by the Witness why the whites must be separated from the blacks. The advise of the Witness is relevant for the situation in America and the same principles are also applicable to South Africa, where racial feelings between whites and blacks (outside the church) are certainly worse than in America. In this country even the law forbids it and apartheid is an established fact. For these reasons the brothers thought it appropriate to separate the whites and the blacks.

The validity and coherency of Niemandt's arguments, and his endeavours to try and justify the segregation between white and black Seventh-day Adventists, becomes very ambiguous when note is taken of the following statements that he

made earlier on in the same document. In this declaration Niemandt argued for the brotherhood of all races and the discarding of any racial discrimination in the Church. He worded his statements as follows:

Dit is vandag geestelikheid wat tel, en die mate van 'n man word gemeet in die volheid vandie [sic] Heilige Gees wat hy het. 'n Man word nie gemeet in die oë van die Here volgens sy taal en kultuur nie. Ons mag dus nie KERKE STIG WAS [SIC] BASIES TAAL EN RAS GE-ORIENTEERD IS NIE. Ons moet kerke stig wat georiënteerd is tot sielredding. Kom ons werp daardie element van rassetwis uit ons harte uit en dien die Here met bekeerde harte (Sal daar erkenning wees, n.d., p.12, HBCA).

Die vyfde pilaar waarop die kerk van Jesus in eenheid gebou is, is die BROEDERSKAP VAN ALLE RASSE IN CHRISTUS...Sodra 'n man dus die waarheid aanvaar, en wedergebore word, verloor hy sy eie volksidentiteit (Sal daar erkenning wees, Part II, p.2, HBCA).

Translation: Today it is spirituality that counts, and the measure of a man is gauged in the fullness of the Holy Spirit in his life. God does not evaluate a man according to his language and culture. We may therefore not ESTABLISH CHURCHES WHICH ARE RACE AND CULTURE ORIENTATED. We must organize churches that are orientated to soul-winning. Let us cast this element of racial discrepancy out of our hearts and serve God with transformed hearts.

The fifth pillar whereupon the church of Jesus is built in unity, is the BROTHERHOOD OF ALL RACES IN CHRIST...As soon as a man accepts the truth and is born again, he loses his own cultural identity.

In similar fashion, when a number of statements contained in the document of the South African Union Conference dealing with the unilingual and bilingual conferences are scrutinized, one is prone to arrive at the conclusion that a discrepancy existed between what the Church believed, and what it put into practice with regard to the interpretation of church unity, justice, equality and brotherhood, and their declaration that the Church was averse to the existence of racial discrimination. In its interpretation of church unity and the race relations that should exist in the Church, the document of the SAUC enumerated the following texts from the writings of Ellen White and the Bible:

1. 1 Cor. 1:10 ...that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; and that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

2. Col. 3:10-14. As different nationalities, Christians are to live together in tolerance, forbearing one another in love.
3. Gal. 3:27,28. National or class difference between Christians should not be evident as among the heathen.
4. Eph. 2:13,14. Because of the blood of Christ reconciliation has come between groups once estranged.
5. 1 Cor. 12:1-31. The unity of the church is in its purposefulness and co-operation in spite of diversity. Verse 25: There should be no schism in the body; but members should have the same care one for another.
6. 9T pp.195-198. It is not the Lord's plan for his people to separate themselves into separate companies because of differences in nationality and language.
7. 9T pp.179-183. Wherever possible let us break down the walls of partition between nationalities. No matter what nationality a Christian is, he will bear the stamp of Christ.
8. The Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy makes unity in worship and in organization, in heart and in action basic to the existence of the church and to the fulfilment of the divine mission entrusted to it (South African Union Conference Minutes, Eighth Meeting of 26th Session, 5 October 1970, pp.18-24, On Microfiche, EGWRC).

Both Niemandt's document and that of the SAUC, highlight the incongruous manner in which many of the Church leaders approached the conflict with the Afrikaanse Konferensie. Many quotations that the Church had used from the writings of Ellen White had been written in the final decade of the nineteenth century when she was dealing with the problems that had arisen with the colour-Line in the Southern States of America (White, 1937:199-226; Graybill, 1970:8-9). In their mode of argumentation and their forceful endeavours to justify their opposition to the existence of the Afrikaanse Konferensie, the leaders of the Church also tried to justify the separation between the black and white believers in the Church. By doing so, however, they only succeeded in accentuating the divisions and separations that existed between the various race groups in the Church, and disclosed just how culturally and racially prejudiced the Seventh-day Adventist Church had been in this country. Earlier in his document, Pastor Niemandt, for example, had contended that the Church leaders in South Africa had thought it appropriate to separate the blacks and whites, because of the laws of apartheid that existed in the country at that time (Sal daar erkenning wees, n.d., p.13, HBCA).

These statements made by the SAUC and Pastor Niemandt also brings the Seventh-day Adventist Church's convictions about its relationship with the government into question, and raises a question mark with regard to the prophetic nature and missiological mandate of the Church. Although the Seventh-day Adventist Church had always declared its loyalty to the political leaders of the country, it had, at the same time, also accentuated the notion that the Church was to "steer clear of political involvement and social strife" (*Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual*, n.d., p.146).

In reality, though, the Church weakly and timidly succumbed to a political ideology which enforced discriminatory practices against people of this country. The Church leaders had, according to Pastor Niemandt, also allowed their thinking and actions to be patterned by unbiblical philosophies, resulting in the erection of racial barriers between the different ethnic and race groups in the Church. This made the Church, in spite of the insistence that they considered themselves to be a-political, both political and guilty of implementing racial practices against the black, coloured and Indian people.

It becomes important, in order to give substance to what has just been stated, to examine the relationship that had existed between race groups in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa.

1. *Racial inequality in the Seventh-day Adventist Church*

a. *The practice of separate education*

The trend to separate the different ethnic groups along racial lines becomes evident in the educational institutions of the Church quite soon after the turn of this century. When Claremont Union College opened its doors in 1893, coloureds and blacks were also enrolled as students (Robinson, n.d.:76; *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, 1996:686). The presence of these students at the College, however, was to invoke a very negative response from some members of the white SDA constituency, who threatened to remove their children from the College if these students were not immediately withdrawn (Robinson, n.d.:76). These feelings of aversion were clearly evident in some of the correspondence of that time. In the same month that the College was opened Pieter Wessels wrote to Ellen White. In his letter he stated:

Further more I do not want my children to associate with the lower classes or coloured people. I will labor for them and teach my children to do so. But I do not want my children to mix with them for such is detrimental to their moral well fare Nor do I want my children to think there is no difference in so ciety that they should finally associate and marry into colored blood [The letter has been reproduced uncorrected] (Letter from PJD Wessels to Ellen White, 14 January 1893, Document file number 506, HBCA).

Robinson, makes a note that, in spite of this kind pressure applied by certain members of the Church, its leaders initially stood firm and for a number of years black and coloured students remained at the College. These endeavours to keep the College open to all races was, however, not successful and the graduation records show that during its 25 year existence, not a single black, coloured or Indian student ever graduated from Union College.

By 1913, the Church records reveal that a great need had arisen to have trained teachers and ministers for the growing coloured Seventh-day Adventist constituency. It seems as if by this time, coloured students were no longer admitted at Union College for a special committee was constituted by the Church to find a suitable location for a training school for prospective coloured students (Swanepoel, 1972:182).

Twenty years were to pass, however, before a single-roomed church school was opened in 1929 on the same premises as the Salt River church in Cape Town (*Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, 1976:523). Ron Thompson regards this move by the Church as a "bold step forward" (Thompson, 1977:143). Considering that this coloured school was opened during a time when the Church was experiencing serious financial difficulties as a result of the Great Depression, such a move could be interpreted to be a brave endeavour. However, after making a comparison with what was taking place at Helderberg College, which had opened up in Somerset West only a year before the coloured school, the validity of Thompson's statement must be seriously questioned.

When the educational institution had been transferred from Spioen Kop to the Cape, fastidious endeavours were made to secure the best possible location for the College. Thousands of Pounds were spent to secure the 400 acre site and to build suitable classrooms, dormitories, dining rooms and administration buildings (*African Division Outlook 'Our New Training College and Sanitarium'*, 1 January 1926, HBCL). The coloured school, however, as has already been noted, started in one single room in Salt River. In 1930, this school was transferred to Athlone, a suburb of Cape Town, where it took on the name Good-Hope College (*Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, 1976:523-524). Conditions at the school remained backward for many years, when compared to the facilities and the great expenditure undertaken at Helderberg College. An old shabby farmhouse on the new property at Athlone was used for classrooms, female sleeping quarters and for a kitchen, while the male student dormitory consisted of a weather-beaten, leaky old tent (Thompson, 1977:144).

The Church's stance of maintaining its educational institutions racially separated, was to persist until the mid 1970s when the first coloureds were permitted to enrol as students at Helderberg College. Even at this time the process towards full integration was very slow and painful. While the teaching facilities had been opened to these students, they were still not permitted to enrol as boarding-school students, or even permitted to use the same dining room facilities as the white college students.

The black Seventh-day Adventist educational institution had been opened twenty years before that of the coloured school. Its facilities were, however, also crude and primitive, and its development very slow indeed. In 1909 this school was opened 25 miles from Grahamstown and given the name Maranatha Mission (Swanepoel, 1972:125). The school remained at this location until 1916 when it was relocated to Butterworth in the Transkei and its name changed to Bethel Training School (Thompson, 1977:110). Conditions at Bethel were also extremely poor and the student enrolment remained very small (Thompson, 1977:148). This was closed down in mid 1920s and relocated to Natal for about ten years. This venture was unsuccessful and the school had to be moved back to Butterworth in 1936. From this time onward, Bethel remained the training school for black teachers, pastors and administrators (*Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, 1976:152).

Although black students were also permitted to enrol as students at Helderberg College at about the same time as the coloured students, the number of black students registered initially remained very small. In 1991 when the theological faculty at Bethel closed down, all the theology students were transferred to Helderberg College. From this time black students began to enrol in greater numbers at Helderberg.

b. Racially based medical work.

The medical institutions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, erected in this country at the turn of the century, were also a prerogative for the white population. Besides some photographs which show a solitary black face or two, who were in all probability employees at the hospitals, there is no evidence that these medical institutions ever made their services available to black people. The only writing discovered in this research, which had a direct bearing on blacks and the Church's medical work, was a letter written by Dr Geo Thomason the first medical superintendent at Plumstead Sanitarium. In one paragraph of this letter, the doctor made the following statement:

We are anxious that as soon as possible, the benefit of these principles shall be extended to other classes in this country. The sphere of vision must be enlarged to see the need of suffering humanity of whatever colour or station. Our plans in this respect have not been crystallized into definite shape, but in trying to peep into the future we have seemed to see a little building in one corner of our grounds devoted to the care and treatment of the coloured people (*South African Missionary*, vol.III, July 1905, p.2, HBCL).

Doctor Thomason's statement not only reveals the racial lines that were being drawn by the Church between peoples of different colour, but also highlights the contempt with which coloureds were being regarded at that time. How else can one understand the doctor's aspiration to enlarge the existing vision of the Church's medical work with the enigmatic statement, that the work for the

coloured people would be done "in a small building in one corner of the hospital's grounds?" It could not be ascertained in this study whether any medical work was ever initiated for black or coloureds at the Plumstead Sanitarium.

The only hospital that was built for the treatment of blacks was Nokuphila Hospital which was opened in the October 1936 in Sophiatown (*Southern African Division Outlook*, 1 November 1936, p.12, HBCL; Thompson, 1977:184). In spite of it being in close proximity of Coronation and Baragwanath hospitals, Nokuphila, a sixty bed hospital, experienced a good measure of success with patronage from both the Indian and black people. As the hospital became better known it also received substantial financial grants from the department of Native Affairs. In 1959, however, when Sophiatown was demolished by the government and the entire black population relocated to Soweto, Nokuphila Hospital was forced to close down (Van Zyl, 1990:105).

After the closure of Nokuphila, plans were initiated by the Church to start another hospital for the treatment of blacks at another suitable location. Nothing, however, came of these plans and the closure of Nokuphila signalled the demise of any medical work by the Seventh-day Adventist Church amongst the black people of this country (Thompson, 1977:223).

c. Racially divided organizational structures

As with the educational and medical work of the Church, the organizational structures were also divided along racial lines. Prior to 1920, the missionary work, for the blacks inside the borders of South Africa and also for those north of its borders, had been directed by the South African Union Conference. At the inauguration of the African Division in 1920 the SAUC relinquished its responsibilities outside the borders of South Africa to the newly created Zambezi Union Mission (Branson, 1925:1-2). At this time a second organization was created called the Southern Union Mission which would take supervision for the missionary work amongst the blacks within the borders of South Africa. All the work in the southern part of Africa carried out by the Southern Union Mission, the Zambezi Union Mission and the South African Union Conference was coordinated by the African Division (Thompson, 1977:31).

The constitution of the African Division gives deeper insight into the kind of associations that existed at the time between the white and black members of the Church. It reveals that because the white work in South Africa was self-supporting, that the SAUC was granted a constitution based on self-government. However, the "kaffir work", as it was known at that time, was not self-supporting and the SUM was not regarded as a self-governing association. As a result of this rationalization, even though a number of organizational modifications were implemented in the structures of the black work throughout the ensuing years, a clear dividing line was drawn up between the white work and the black work which would remain in the Church's organizational structures for the next seventy years (Pantalone, 1996:143-146).

In December 1991, at a historic meeting which took place at Helderberg College, the SAUC and the Southern Union, the latter being the organization that administered the black Seventh-day Adventist work in South Africa at that time, were once again merged into one organization called the Southern African Union Conference (*Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, 1996:633). Besides the formal ending of a racially structured administrative organization, what made this meeting particularly significant is that Pastor Douglas Chalale was elected as Union president, becoming the first black man to head the work of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa (*Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, 1996:634).

Ironically, while the merger in 1991 at Union level had been accomplished with the minimum of difficulty, the process of integrating the black and white conferences has still, after more than seven years, not been fully achieved and only one of the three white conferences in South Africa, namely the Oranje-Natal Conference has followed the pattern of the Union to formally end racially divided church work. In November 1994, at a business session of the Oranje-Natal Conference and the Natal Field, 300 delegates voted to merge and form a new, fully integrated conference. This new conference, called The KwaZulu Natal-Free State Conference, with a fully representative staff administers the work for all the ethnic groups in Kwazulu-Natal and the Free State (*Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, 1996:634). Up to the time of this study the other two white conferences, namely the Cape Conference and the Transvaal Conference, have still not, even after repeated deliberations, reached the resolution to merge with the black conferences. The Church's work in these areas are still being separately administered.

Strangely enough there are still people in the Seventh-day Adventist Church who maintain that the separation in organizational structures were never based on discriminatory practices. At the end of 1997, however, the union leadership of the Church confessed and admitted for the first time that racism had indeed played a major role in keeping blacks and whites separate in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. In its submission to The Truth and Reconciliation Committee the following was stated:

Because the governmental system in vogue in South Africa in which an ideology was systematised and given Biblical and theological support, effects of the system rubbed off on to the thinking of our church leadership. The church imbibed wittingly and unwittingly the political philosophy in vogue and created structures which mirrored the political structures.

In this way the church was divided into two Union Conferences with separate administrations, one to cater for the Blacks and the other for Indians, Coloured and Whites. Separate colleges were confirmed for theological and teacher training and separate Welfare structures. Indeed the two structures did not communicate with each other except for the certain essentials

such as in formulating certain broad church policy (SAUC response to The Truth and Reconciliation Committee, 2 December 1997, p.87, NFSCA)

d. *Racially divided places of worship*

With racial separatism affecting the organizational structures and the educational and medical work of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in this country, its influence could hardly avoid being felt also in places of worship. The racial rift that existed between Seventh-day Adventist believers in South Africa, is poignantly described in William 'Bloke' Modisane's book, *Blame me on History*. As one of the team members of black writers in the 1950s who created the *Drum* magazine, Modisane was given an assignment on the colour-bar question in the Christian church. The article was to be titled 'Brothers in Christ?' Modisane accepted the challenge and with a photographer ready to record the action, he 'infiltrated' a number of Christian denominations in Johannesburg. The first church he visited was a Dutch Reformed Church in Troyeville. Before the service had begun, he was forcefully evicted, a pattern that was to be repeated in most of the fifteen white churches he had entered. One of the churches on Modisane's list was the English Seventh-day Adventist Church. Although Modisane recorded that he had gained a little courage when he noted that it was an English-speaking church, the reception that he received was far from cordial. He recorded his experiences as follows:

On Saturday morning in my newly pressed suit, we went to the Seventh-day Adventist Church which was not very difficult to steal myself into through a side entrance...I threw out my antenna to feel out the slightest hostility to my presence, but it was like trying to feel for something in a vacuum. There was no contact. Then I felt the warm breath on the back of my ear, the voice whispered: 'This is a white church, there's a Seventh-day Adventist Church for natives in Sophiatown'. 'Yes I know', I said brushing his objections aside, 'but I want to worship here'. I leaned forward out of reach of his whispering voice which was breathing warm into my ear, and peered into my Bible. After a few more attempts which were ignored, he rose from his seat and walked over to the main entrance to return with one of the elders who was a member of the welcoming committee; there were no polite insinuations in his voice. I was not wanted. 'I'm asking you to leave. I was determined that if I was not wanted it was their responsibility to have me thrown out, I was not prepared to co-operate with the benefit of my expulsion; but their determination was very discreet, almost like helping a blind man across the street - you hold his hand firmly and steer him across the street.

In the editorial conference of the next week, it was decided that one reporter could only attend two services, and that joined by another reporter, the story would receive a wider coverage. Can Themba was invited to join me in this assignment...His first church of call was a revisit to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Brash and bubbling with bravado, Can whistled his way to the main entrance into the hands of a hostile, enormous Christian who with two others hallooed for help and manhandled the black intruder into a waiting car; as they were forcing him into it, his head knocked against the top of the car causing a flow of blood. He was taken to Marshall Square police station and charged with trespassing and allowed out on bail (Modisane, 1986:195-200).

The two incidents just described cannot speak for every white Seventh-day Adventist congregation in South Africa. They do nevertheless give some insight into the aversion by which black people were being regarded, and the resentment that existed on any intrusion by blacks, even if they happened to also be Seventh-day Adventist believers, into white places of worship.

On the eve of the General Conference session in New Orleans in 1985, Niel Wilson, the president of the world-wide Seventh-day Adventist Church released a statement on how the Church regarded racism. Part of his declaration was worded as follows:

The Seventh-day Adventist Church deplores all forms of racism, including the political policy of apartheid with its enforced segregation and legalized discrimination (*Advent Review*, 14 November 1985, p.2, HBCL).

Notwithstanding the fact that this statement was issued from the highest controlling body of the Church, the leaders in South Africa remained inactive in combating racism in this country. Neither is there any record where a Seventh-day Adventist minister or administrator ever took a public stand against the discriminatory policies and practices of the South African government. Towards the end of 1997, when the Seventh-day Adventist Church was addressed by The Truth and Reconciliation Committee (TRC) to state what its position had been during the apartheid era, even though the Church's leaders did admit some of its failures during the apartheid years, it shifted blame for the racial divisions that had existed in the Church upon the policies of the previous South African government (See annexure 3, p.309).

*D. Cultural differences between English
and Afrikaans believers invalidated*

There still remains the need to examine a final component in the opposition of the Church to the Afrikaanse Konferensie, namely, its reluctance to recognize Afrikaners in the Church as a people coming from a diverse cultural

group, and its conception that once Afrikaners became members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, that Afrikaner nationalism was to no longer play any role in their lives.

South African historian and at a time probably one of the most prolific writers on Afrikaner history, FA van Jaarsveld, wrote the following concerning nationalism:

Modern nationalism originated with the French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars. European scholars who have studied the nationalism of modern nations, agree that the national awakening of a people by and large was the result of pressure, danger or attacks from without on its identity (Van Jaarsveld, 1964:4-5).

It became imperative to include the first chapter as a prologue to this study to show just how pivotal Afrikaner nationalism had become in the lives of the Afrikaner people, how it had permeated into the educational, political and religious realms, how it had welded the Afrikaner nation together in time of severe crisis and war, and how it had prevented them from being assimilated into a foreign culture that had threatened to overwhelm them.

"Culture" on the other hand has been very aptly described by Van den Heever and De Pienaar in *Die Kultuurgeskiedenis van die Afrikaner* not only as a group response to specific circumstances and conditions in which such people find themselves, but also the simultaneous emergence of a very distinctive set of spiritual and material values (Van den Heever & De Pienaar, 1950:35-36). Afrikaner culture and Afrikaner nationalism which had become an integral part of Afrikaner life and which of course also included their language, unquestionably set the Afrikaner nation aside as a unique cultural group in South Africa. However, in the response and correspondence of the established Church to the Afrikaanse Konferensie, the Afrikaner's culture and Afrikaner nationalism were deemed as being of no consequence. In its response to the memorandum submitted by the Afrikaanse Konferensie requesting the formation of a separate language conference, the Transvaal Conference took their negation of Afrikaner culture to the very extreme when they stated that:

Differences between cultural groups are only an artificial and abstract idea existing in the minds of a very small misguided minority (TC Executive Committee's Response to Memorandum Submitted by the Self-Styled Afrikaanse Konferensei [sic], n.d., p.4, HBCA).

As vociferous as ever, GM Niemandt also joined the debate in his document *Sal daar erkenning wees*. Because a part from his views on culture has already been dealt with in this chapter, the emphasis will now be focused on his thoughts on Afrikaner nationalism. In his document he stated:

Ons het nie hier te doen bloot met 'n aansoek om gelyke regte nie. Ons het die vraag of ons volksnasionanisme gaan aanvaar as deel van ons geloof. Volksnasionanisme is altyd gevaarlik wanneer dit binne 'n kerk voorkom. Die kan die ware gevoel van broederskap tussen nasies uitdoof. Ek wil u maan my broeders dat ons nie mag toegee aan die druk van volksnasionanisme nie. Ons magnie [sic] ons land verkoop in die hande van iets wat godsdiens kan vernietig nie (Sal daar erkenning wees, Deel Een, n.d., p.11, HBCA).

Hand aan hand met die prinsiep van die broederskap van alle nasies, is die prinsiep dat ons volksprioriteit en nasionale gevoelens moet demp ter wille van eensgesindheid onder ons gelede. My taal en my kultuur mag nie 'n motief wees om die eenheid van die kerk te skend nie. Wanneer nasionale gevoelens, en volksgevoel ons harte oorheers, kan dit veroorsaak dat daar die volgende dinge in 'n kerk tevoorskyn kom:

1. Die drang om kultuur te laat geld.
2. Weiering om te meng met ander taalgroepe.
3. Neersiening en diskriminasie teen andertaliges.
4. Weiering om andertalige leiers te aanvaar.
5. Beklemtoning van taal en kultuur bo bekering (Sal daar erkenning wees, Deel II, n.d., pp.3-5).

Translation: We are not dealing here with only a request for equal rights. We are dealing with the question whether we are going to accept nationalism as part of our faith. Nationalism is always dangerous when it makes it's appearance in the church. It can extinguish the true feeling of brotherhood between nations. I would like to admonish you brothers, that we do not yield to the pressure of nationalism. We cannot sell our country into the hands of something that is can destroy religion.

Together with the principle of the brotherhood of all nations, is the principle that we silence national preeminence and nationalist feelings for the sake of unanimity in our ranks. My language and culture must never become a motive to mar the unity of the church. When nationalistic feelings, and patriotism gain prominence in our hearts, they can allow for the emergence of the following things in a church:

1. The insistence to make culture count.
2. Refusal to join together with other language groups.
3. Contempt and discrimination against people of other language groups.
4. Reluctance to accept leaders from other language groups.

5. Accentuation of language and culture over conversion.

Edwin de Kock also pulled no punches on the issue of culture and nationalism. In response and in direct opposition to the thoughts expressed by the Transvaal Conference and GM Niemandt, De Kock very candidly asserted that nationalism and culture could never be ignored, minimized or separated from the lives of the Afrikaans members of the Church. He believed this to be so, firstly, because of his conviction that the message entrusted unto the Church, namely, the three angels' message of Revelation 14 was a message that had to be preached to distinctive nations and culturally diverse people, and secondly, because he believed that the Afrikaner nation had been divinely ordained by God and that they formed an integral part of this group. He believed that if the latter was overlooked and the message to the Afrikaner people was depreciated in any way, it would be in direct contradiction to the divinely ordained missionary mandate of the Church (Memorandum, n.d., p.5-6, HBCA).

In the light of the aversion displayed towards Afrikaner nationalism, De Kock enquired whether American and English-speaking church members could really be regarded as "anti-nationalists". In fact, the attitude of the Trans-African Division president, ML Mills, who evidently told De Kock that "he was an American and proud of it", the profusion of patriotic British, Canadian and American hymns in the *Seventh-day Adventist Church Hymnal* and the cultural aggression being committed against Afrikaners was sufficient evidence for him of just how nationalistic and culturally arrogant many people were in the Church. According to De Kock, the Americans, who had American flags draped besides their pulpits and flying at their churches, and who sang patriotic songs of loyalty to their country every day at their schools, were even greater nationalists than the Afrikaner people. De Kock then wanted to know why Afrikaners were always being branded as extremists and radicals by their English and American counterparts when they showed any signs of patriotism and loyalty to their country and their flag. (Memorandum, n.d., p.6, HBCA).

What can never be lost sight of in the controversy between the Afrikaanse Konferensie and the established Church over the issue of culture and nationalism, is that a large number of Afrikaans-speaking Seventh-day Adventists converts had come from Dutch Reformed Church backgrounds steeped in Afrikaner nationalism (Letter from Pastor HF Steenberg, 2 May 1997, In author's possession). Moreover many Afrikaners in the Seventh-day Adventist Church had attended government schools where they had been taught the history and the rise of Afrikanerdom, learnt patriotic South African songs and motivated to love their heritage and to be loyal to their country. Many had Dutch and Afrikaner ancestry that went back several hundred years. Others had family that had served as combatants in the South African War. Others had lost their families and friends in the British concentration camps (Interview with Doctor Andre Ebersohn, 16 June 1997).

Could the Church leaders really expect these deeply ingrained feelings to simply vanish when they joined the Seventh-day Adventist Church? On the other hand, was it at all necessary for Afrikaners to abandon these feelings when they became Seventh-day Adventists? Did Englishmen, Frenchmen, Italians, Americans or Germans leave behind or empty themselves of all their cultural values when they joined the Church? And then finally, in the light of what it had done to build up and bind the Afrikaner nation together in the past, was Afrikaner nationalism and an attachment to a unique culture as pernicious as had been made out by Niemandt's document?

According to De Kock, there had never been any aspirations by the Afrikaners in the Church to gain prominence over any other cultural group. All that they were requesting was that the uniqueness of the Afrikaner culture be taken into consideration. This included liberty to conduct programmes for Afrikaans-speaking people in a way that they were accustomed to, to worship in a manner in which they best understood and in the language they felt comfortable with (Memorandum, n.d., pp.5-8, HBCA). Shortly after the Special Business Session in December 1968 the Afrikaanse Konferensie made the following emphatic statement with regard to language and culture:

Elke taal en kultuurgroep het sy eie tradisies en gewoontes, en sulke groepe moet nie saamgedwing word nie. Dis nie ware eenheid nie. In die verlede het die groepe mekaar probeer uitoorlê en alleenlik 'n regverdigte oplossing (soos in ons afsonderlike Engelse en Afrikaanse gemeentes) kan vrede, geluk en vooruitgang bring (Vrae en Antwoorde oor die Afrikaanse Konferensie, Omsendbrief 7, n.d., p.6, HBCA).

Translation: Every language and culture group has its own traditions and customs, and such groups must never be compelled to join together. This is not true unity. In the past, these group tried to outmanoeuvre each other and only an equitable solution (as in our separated English and Afrikaans congregations) can bring peace, happiness and prosperity.

VII. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The greatest irony in this controversy in the Church was that it erupted chiefly into a schism between Afrikaners - with Afrikaans-speaking church leaders and pastors offering the most forceful opposition to the aspirations that had arisen for the creation of an Afrikaans conference.

In the minds of many of those who had joined the Afrikaanse Konferensie, those Afrikaners that so adamantly opposed them and sided with the established Church were regarded as "hanskakies" (English puppets) or "Hensoppers" (surrenderers) for their betrayal of the cause of Afrikanerdom. These names were of course vestiges from the South African War (1899-1902).

The Afrikaners on the other hand, who contested the establishment of the Afrikaanse Konferensie, called those who wanted such an establishment "verkrampes" (narrow-minded eccentrics). These opposing views, along with those specified in this chapter, resulted in an acrimonious and controversial deadlock in the Seventh-day Adventist Church that would drag on for almost five years, with neither side prepared to give up any ground.

CHAPTER FOUR
THE DEVELOPMENT, DECLINE, AND DEMISE
OF THE AFRIKAANSE KONFERENSIE
(1968-1974)

I. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE AFRIKAANSE KONFERENSIE

A. *"Die stryd is aangeknoop" (The struggle has commenced)*

Neither the assertions by the established Church, that no need existed for an additional organization in the Transvaal; that the creation of the Afrikaanse Konferensie was in defiance of church government and amounted to a sinful rebellion, nor the threats of disciplinary action and censure that would be meted out against those who offered any support to the Afrikaanse Konferensie (TC Executive Committee's response to the Memorandum by the Afrikaanse Konferensie, n.d., p.1, HBCA; TC Correspondence, 18 December 1968, p.1, HBCA) appears to have placed an effective restraint upon the optimism and jubilation that came in the wake of the newly established conference. This mood was unmistakably evident in an omsendbrief given out a few days after the meeting at Brentwood Park, where the Afrikaanse Konferensie was formally inaugurated:

Die Stryd is Aangeknoop!

Van verskillende dele van Transvaal en elders ontvang ons al hoe meer versekering van steun en voorbidding. Ons is bly dat al hoe meer lede by ons nuwe Afrikaanse Konferensie aansluit soos hulle bekend word met die gebeure by die onlangse Sakesitting en soos hulle geleentheid kry om die beginsels van reg en regverdigheid te onderskryf (AK Omsendbrief nr.2, 24 Desember 1968, p.1, HBCA).

Translation: The Conflict has Commenced!

From various areas of the Transvaal and elsewhere we are receiving more and more assurances of support and prayers of intercession. We are glad to see that many more members are joining our new Afrikaanse Konferensie as they become aware of what took place at the recent Business Session and as they are given the opportunity to endorse the principles of justice and fairness.

The same omsendbrief also announced that the number of those who had actively joined the Afrikaanse Konferensie had risen to over 250 (AK Omsendbrief, nr.2, 24 Desember 1968, p.1, HBCA). Three weeks later, in January 1969, the first omsendbrief was followed by another which once again accentuated the fervour that prevailed at the time of the establishment of the Afrikaanse Konferensie. It read as follows:

Op die Transvaalse platteland sowel as op die Rand, in Noord Natal en ook die Vrystaat, gaan die boodskap uit na Gods volk om op te staan in hierdie krisis-uur, en heelhartiglik vir reg en geregtigheid in die Here se werk op te tree. Dit is moeilik om voor te bly met die vele oproepe wat tot ons kom van belangstellende lede en hele gesinne, ja selfs gemeentes wat hulself by die Afrikaanse Konferensie van Gods nakomelingsvolk wil skaar om die evangelieopdrag na ons nasie te help uitdra.

U sal bly wees om te weet dat die lidmaatskap nog steeds aangroei, en nou reeds meer as verdubbel het sedert ons laaste saamtrek op Brentwoodpark. Ons is seker dat tydens kampvergadering aan die begin van April ons moet reken op goed oor 'n duisend siele. Hierdie vinnige groei is 'n aanduiding daarvan dat meer tot die oortuiging raak van die dringende behoefte aan hervorming onder Gods oorblyfselvolk (AK Omsendbrief, nr.4, 17 Januarie 1969, p.2, HBCA).

Translation: In both the rural areas of the Transvaal and on the Rand, in Northern Natal and also the Free-State the message is going out to God's people to arise in this crisis hour and resolutely come forward for justice and fairness in God's work. It is difficult to keep up with the many calls that have come to us from interested members and entire families, yes, even congregations that want to enlist with the Afrikaanse Konferensie of God's descendant people to help carry the evangelistic commission to our nation.

You will be glad to know that our membership is still growing and has more than doubled since our last rally at Brentwood Park. We are sure that during campmeeting at the beginning of April we must anticipate well over a thousand people. This rapid growth is an indication that more are coming to the realization of the urgent need for a reformation that needs to take place among God's remnant people.

Notwithstanding the fact that a new conference had been established in isolation from the established Church, those that had been instrumental in its creation still strongly asserted that they were loyal Seventh-day Adventists and that they were not to be regarded as a breakaway group or a separate organization. Their seventh omsendbrief stated:

Daar was geen wegskeuring of afstigting nie. Ons was, en is, en bly getroue Sewendedag-Adventiste...Ons wil nie. Glad en geheel nie. Ons is en bly 'n deel van Gods volk met dieselfde leer en doelstellings. In ons werk is daar divisies, unies, konferensies en velde. Hulle opponeer mekaar nie, maar werk saam. As daar nou so 'n groot groep gelowiges is wat voel dat dinge verkeerd

geloop het deur die jare en die werk nie onder ons mense gedoen is soos dit moes wees nie, waarom dan hulle wil dooddruk, hulle vervolg, hulle kerke toesluit, hulle bespot as die skuim wat geskei is of godslasterlik die drek van die gereinigde liggaam van die Here? (AK Omsendbrief, nr.7, n.d., p.7, HBCA).

Translation: There was no breakaway or apostasy. We were and remain loyal Seventh-day Adventists...We do not wish it to be so. Not at all. We are and remain part of the people of God with the same doctrines and aims. In our work there are divisions, unions, conferences and fields. They do not oppose each other but work together. If such a large group of believers exist who feel that things have proceeded on the wrong track in the years gone by and that the work amongst our people has not been done the way that it should, why stifle them, persecute them, lock their churches, and mock them as separated scum or blasphemous dirt from the purified body of God?

In a letter written by Fritz von Hörsten on behalf of the Afrikaanse Konferensie to the Transvaal Conference Executive Committee at the beginning of May 1969, he strongly reiterated the loyalty of the Afrikaanse Konferensie to the established Church and its fundamental beliefs. A part of his letter read as follows:

Ek skryf aan u namens 'n spesiale afvaardiging van die groep Sewendedag-Adventiste wat tydelik afgeskei van julle is, maar wat nog deel uitmaak van Gods oorblyfselkerk. Aangesien daar baie misverstand bestaan aangaande die protes van hierdie groep wil ons baie duidelik aan u stel dat:

1. Ons teen geen leerstellings protesteer nie;
2. Ons nie teen die kerk protesteer nie;
3. Ons nie teen die kerkorganisasie protesteer nie.

Die protes is gemik alleenlik teen sekere sake wat swaar op die harte van ons as gelowiges druk en ook op die harte van vele van ons medegelowiges in die Transvaalse Konferensie (Letter from FW von Hörsten to the President and TC Executive Committee, 12 Mei 1969, p.7, HBCA).

Translation: I write to you on behalf of a special deputation from the Seventh-day Adventist group that have temporarily separated themselves from you, but who are still part of God's remnant church. Because there exists a great deal of misunderstanding in regard to the protest of this group, we wish to make it quite clear that:

1. We are not protesting against any doctrines;
2. We are not protesting against the church;
3. We are not protesting against church organization.

The protest has been directed primarily against certain matters that lay very heavy on the hearts of many of us as believers and also on the hearts of many other believers in the Transvaal Conference.

In a letter written four months after the walk-out the Afrikaanse Konferensie contended that because they had been forcefully driven out of the established organizational structure, that they had been given no other alternative under the existing circumstances but to consolidate themselves into a new conference. Their insistence in this regard was worded as follows:

Daar is 'n Afrikaanse Konferensie georganiseer, ja met 'n voorsitter en 'n tesourier, omdat die behoefte aan 'n samesnoering van die proteste van ons mense meer as noodsaaklik was, anders is dit sonder meer net soos blare deur die wind uitmekaargedryf (8 Desember en daarna, 2 April 1969, p.2, HBCA).

Translation: Because of the more than urgent need that arose to consolidate the protest of our people, an Afrikaans Conference has been organized, with a chairman and a treasurer, if this had not been done we would have simply been scattered like leaves in the wind.

The same letter also alluded to the fact that the new organization was provisional and that it could be dissolved at any time should the circumstances change in the Transvaal Conference (8 Desember en daarna, 2 April 1969, p.4, HBCA).

In its rejoinder, the established Church categorically denied that anyone had been driven out, repudiated the notion that the Afrikaanse Konferensie was an interim organization, and maintained that the breakaway had been preplanned months before the Special Session in December. Their response was worded as follows:

Om te sê dat die onreëlmatighede by die sakesitting u tot so 'n stap gedwing het is om te vergeet dat julle al vir mense voor die sakesitting gesê het dat indien julle nie julle sin kry nie, julle sou uitstap en 'n nuwe organisasie stig. Was dit dan nou werklik ons onkonstitusionele optrede wat julle so geskok het dat julle 'n nuwe organisasie moes stig, of was alles reeds voor die tyd beplan?

Verder vra ons hoekom julle 'n afgerolde manifes oor die "ware knelpunte" op die sakesitting uitgegee het as julle nie voor die sitting al die manifes geskrywe en laat afrol het nie (Letter from the TC Executive to JA Birkenstock and PJ Retief, n.d., p.7, HBCA).

Translation: To state that the inconsistencies at the business session drove you to take such a step, is to forget that you already told people before the business session that, should you not get your way that you would walk out and create a new organization. Was it then really our unconstitutional actions that so shocked you, that you had to create a new organization, or was it planned before the time?

We ask furthermore why you gave out a document dealing with the "ware knelpunte" at the business session, if the document had not been written and copied before the session?

These opposing viewpoints served to further entrench the tension and alienation that had developed between the Afrikaanse Konferensie and the established Church in the months following the walk-out in December 1968.

In response to an open letter drawn up by EC Webster, the president of the Orange-Natal Conference at that time, who had expressed his astonishment that a new conference could be established at such short notice, the apologists of the Afrikaanse Konferensie stated very emphatically that there had been neither a predetermined nor a rushed plan to establish the new conference. It stated its views as follows:

Graag wil ons verduidelik dat dit glad nie ons begeerte of vooropgestelde plan was om hierdie Konferensie te stig nie. Al wat ons kan sien is dat die leidende hand van die Here ons daartoe gedryf het. Met die spesiale sakesitting van 8 Desember 1968 toe kerkbeleid nie net geïgnoreer maar op 'n gruwelike wyse geskend is, het die Engelse en Amerikaanse leiers hul wil op ons Afrikaanse mense deurgestoomroller. Ons het nog gevra vir onderhandelings dat ons so 'n Afrikaanse Konferensie mag begin. Tog is ons leraars gedwing om te bedank nog voordat die Unie-Konferensie tyd geneem het om behoorlik aandag aan die hele aangeleentheid te skenk. Voor ons Afrikaanse broeders kans gegee is om te verduidelik, is hierdie nuwe Konferensie as uit die bouse bestempel (Antwoord op omsendbrief van Leraar Webster, 26 Junie 1969, p.1, HBCA).

Translation: We would really like to explain that it was not our desire or a prearranged plan to establish this conference. All that we saw was that it was the hand of God that led us in that direction. With the Special Business session held on 8 December

1968 when not only church policy was ignored, but also violated in the most terrible way, the English and American leaders steamrollered their will upon us as Afrikaans people.

We still requested for negotiations to take place so that an Afrikaans conference might be initiated. We as pastors though, were compelled to resign, before the Union Conference even took time to give proper attention to the whole matter. Before our Afrikaans brothers were given a chance to explain themselves, this new conference was condemned as something evil.

A week later, at the beginning of July, Fritz von Hörsten expressed his dismay that the established Church did not believe that they were only organized on a provisional basis. He stated:

Dis 'n interim-organisasie wat binne 'n kort tydperk ontbind kan word. Waarom glo u ons nie as ons dit sê nie? (Letter from Fritz von Hörsten to the President and Executive Committee of the Transvaal Conference, 2 Julie 1969, p.3, HBCA).

Translation: This is an interim organization that can be dissolved within a short period of time. Why do you not believe us when we say this?

In spite of the persistence of the Afrikaanse Konferensie that it had been organized as interim association, the established Church, never believed this (Typescript of meeting between a delegation from the Afrikaanse Konferensie and the established Church, n.d., no page numbering, HBCA).

B. Registration of the new conference

In spite of the insistence by the Afrikaanse Konferensie that it should be regarded as an interim organization, its application submitted to the South African authorities to be registered as a legal association, gainsaid its assertion. In an omsendbrief sent out to the members of the Afrikaanse Konferensie early in February 1969, the leaders of this organization also made no mention that it was only a provisional organization. Its intention to register the Afrikaanse Konferensie read as follows:

U sal bly wees om te weet dat die registrasie van ons nuwe Konferensie goed vorder, en binne die volgende paar weke behoort dit afgehandel te wees (AK Omsendbrief, nr.6, 20 Februarie 1969, p.2, HBCA).

Translation: You will be glad to know that the registration of our new conference is proceeding well and in the following few weeks it should be settled.

There were also no indications of a provisional nature, when it was formally registered early in May 1969. On the contrary, the correspondence appears to have suggested, if note is taken that it involved the possible registration of property and the opening of bank accounts, that the new conference was indeed aiming at permanency. This is evident in the sixth omsendbrief of the Afrikaanse Konferensie which carried the following announcement:

REGISTRASIE VAN ONS KONFERENSIE AFGEHANDEL

U sal saam met ons bly wees om te weet dat die registrasie van ons Konferensie nou afgehandel is. Hierdie sal egter heelwat onkoste beteken en daarom vra ons almal om mildelik by te dra vir die spesiale dankoffer hierdie komende Sabbat, die 3de Mei. Van nou af sal dit moontlik wees om eiendomme te registreer en bankrekenings oop te maak in die naam van die Afrikaanse Konferensie van Sewendedag-Adventiste (AK Omsendbrief, nr.8, 1 Mei 1969, p.2, HBCA).

Translation: REGISTRATION OF OUR CONFERENCE COMPLETED

You will glad to know along with us, that the registration of our Conference has now been completed. This however means quite a lot of additional expenses and we therefore ask everyone to contribute generously to the special thank-offering this coming Sabbath, the 3 May. From now on, it will be possible to register property and open banking accounts in the name of the Afrikaanse Konferensie van Sewendedag-Adventiste.

What no doubt also gave the Afrikaanse Konferensie an appearance of permanence was the hiring of office premises in Kempton Park from which to direct its operations, the appeals to the various congregations who formed part of the Afrikaanse Konferensie to canvass for church building funds and the opening of a bank account in the name of the Afrikaanse Konferensie, avid recruitment campaigns to gain both new members and additional ministers for the Afrikaanse Konferensie, the decision taken to build a spacious meeting-hall at Bapsfontein, and lastly, the drawing up of a separate constitution (AK Notule, tweede vergadering van die Beherende Liggaam, 12 Januarie 1969, p.5, HBCA).

What does appear to be paradoxical and adds complexity to the situation at that time, was that in August 1969, when the Joint Declaration appeared, the leaders of the Church signed the document in which they described the Afrikaanse Konferensie as an interim organization. Whether this description is tantamount to recognition is not a settled thing. A portion of the joint declaration read as follows:

GESAMENTLIKE VERKLARING

Op 17 Augustus 1969 het 'n verteenwoordigende afvaardiging bestaande uit vyf lede van die interim-organisasie (bekend as die Afrikaanse Konferensie van Sewendedag-Adventiste) met die Uitvoerende Komitee van die Transvaalse Konferensie van Sewendedag asmede Leraars Clifford en Webster van die Unie en Leraar Lind van die Divisie, in Johannesburg by Adventpark bymekaagekom...[underlining added] (Gesamentlike Verklaring, In omsendbrief nr.13, 4 September 1969, p.4, HBCA).

Translation: JOINT DECLARATION

On 17 August 1969, a representative group consisting of five members of the interim organization (known as the Afrikaanse Konferensie of Seventh-day Adventist) with the Executive Committee of the Transvaal Conference of Seventh-day Adventists together with Pastors Clifford and Webster of the South African Union Conference and Pastor Lind of the Trans Africa Division, at Advent Park...[underlining added].

As a result of the acrimony that had arisen between the established Church and Afrikaanse Konferensie the gulf continued to widen, and that the latter organization finally developed into a separate and autonomous ecclesial structure. The following reasons for this development can be adduced:

- (a) The established Church's dissenting response to the requests of the Afrikaanse Konferensie and its unyielding refusal to commit itself to meaningful dialogue.
- (b) The continual threats and the implementation of censure and disfellowship.
- (c) The unwillingness of the Church to accept the tithe returns from the Afrikaanse Konferensie,
- (d) The assertions by the Church that those who had joined the Afrikaanse Konferensie were to be regarded as the weaklings, the riff-raff and non-tithe givers of the Church, and,
- (e) The declaration by certain Church leaders before the Special Business Session in December 1968 that a process of elimination would have to be carried out in order to have certain persons forcefully removed from the Transvaal Conference (Letter from PP van Eck to M Mills, 13 November 1968, HBCA).

Soon after the walk-out in 1968, no doubt because of the antagonism that had developed and the barriers which had been erected between the established Church and the Afrikaanse Konferensie, many who had joined the newly established organization foresaw that the two organizations would never be part of one united church structure and that the Afrikaanse Konferensie would have to go it alone. This perception is evident in an omsendbrief sent out

only two months after the walk-out at the Special Session. It stated:

In ons verrigtinge van die Afrikaanse Konferensie wil ons graag twis en tweedrag vermy, en in baie gevalle het ons 'n plan voorgestel wat deur verskeie gemeentes aanvaar is, sodat die gemeente nog steeds saam kan aanbid en by mekaar bly. Dit is jammer, maar blykbaar is die ou konferensie nie daarvoor te vinde nie, en aanbid lidmate van die Afrikaanse Konferensie nou apart (AK omsendbrief, nr.6, 20 Februarie 1969, p.1, HBCA).

Translation: In our functions of the Afrikaanse Konferensie we wish to avoid quarrel and discord, and in many cases we derived a plan, which was accepted by various congregations, whereby the congregations could still worship and remain together. Lamentably, it appears that the old conference did not endorse this, and now the members of the Afrikaanse Konferensie are worshipping on their own.

C. Enthusiastic support for the Afrikaanse Konferensie

Notwithstanding the tremendous resistance that the Afrikaanse Konferensie faced, the weeks and months following the walk-out at the Special Session in December 1968, saw a substantial rise in its membership. On 22 December 1968 a meeting of the Krugersdorp Seventh-day Adventist Church, almost the entire congregation voted to join the Afrikaanse Konferensie in spite of the presence of a strong delegation from the Transvaal Conference. The success achieved at Krugersdorp was interpreted as a sign that many such occurrences would eventually take place. In their second omsendbrief the Afrikaanse Konferensie wrote:

Ten spyte van dreigemente en bangmaakstories het die gemeente op heldhaftige wyse voet by stuk gehou, en die stemming vir aansluiting by ons nuutgestigte Afrikaanse Konferensie het uitgeloop op die pragtige oorwinning van 25 teenoor 7...Van besoeke wat afgelê is in ander dele van die Transvaal, kan ons alreeds getuig dat die slag van Krugersdorp net die begin is van 'n reeks oorwinnings vir die volk en die saak van God (AK Omsendbrief, nr.2, 24 Desember 1968, p.1, HBCA).

Translation: In spite of the threats and accounts of intimidation, the congregation remained adamant and the voting whether to join the newly established Afrikaanse Konferensie eventually resulted in a splendid victory of 25 against 7...From visits paid to other areas of the Transvaal, we can testify that the conflict of Krugersdorp is only the beginning of a series of victories for the people and the cause of God.

By the second week of January 1969 various groups in Brakpan, Springs, Nigel, Heidelberg, Petit, Benoni, Alberton, Kempton Park, Primrose and Elsburg were gearing themselves up to form congregations that would be affiliated to the Afrikaanse Konferensie (AK Notule, tweede vergadering Beherende Liggaam, 12 Januarie 1969, p.4, HBCA). By March 1969 the Afrikaanse Konferensie could report that it had established congregations in Vryburg, Lichtenburg, Rustenburg and Warmbaths with others in Carolina, Ermelo, Piet Retief, Vryheid and Glencoe preparing to join as well. Their sixth omsendbrief also recorded that an active interest had been generated in the Orange Free State, Natal, the Cape Province and even as far away as South West Africa (AK Omsendbrief, nr.6, 20 Februarie 1969, p.1, HBCA). By April 1969, the number of organized congregations of the Afrikaanse Konferensie had risen to 15 with 7 gospel ministers in its employment (AK Omsendbrief, nr.8, 15 April 1969, p.2, HBCA). By June 1969 another congregation had also been initiated in Nelspruit (AK Omsendbrief, nr.10, 11 Junie 1969, p.1, HBCA).

**Locations of Afrikaanse Konferensie
congregations in South Africa**



By August 1969 prospects prevailed that its membership would grow to over 1000 with 12 pastors serving the Afrikaanse Konferensie (AK omsendbrief, nr.11, 2 Julie 1969, p.2, HBCA).

There were, in addition to the membership and organizational growth of the Afrikaanse Konferensie, a large number of supporters who attended its combined rallies. At the first rally held at the Boksburg city hall at the beginning of February 1969, it was reported that over 700 people had been in attendance. A month later in March 1969, the Afrikaanse Konferensie again reported the largest gathering of Seventh-day Adventists believers in the town of Carolina (AK Omsendbrief, nr.2, 18 Maart 1969, p.1, HBCA). At the beginning of April 1969, at the first camp meeting held at Bapsfontein, it was reported that 1000 people had attended, with an offering collection taken up of over R10,000 (AK omsendbrief, nr.8, 15 April 1969, HBCA).

Notwithstanding these reports of membership growth and the approval that the Afrikaanse Konferensie was enjoying, the Transvaal Conference purposefully tried to downplay the effects of what was taking place. In March 1969, in a circular to the members of the Transvaal Conference, the leaders of the established Church wrote:

We know that you will be interested to know what has been happening in our Conference since a small group of workers and members dissociated itself from God's church...

DISSIDENT CONGREGATION. The splinter group is making it known that whole congregations have joined it. This is not factual. In only one church have the majority of the members indicated their intention of joining the splinter movement, and we shall still have a membership upward of thirty in that church. In one platteland church it would appear that the majority of the members may join the other group, but there is not certainty about the matter at this stage.

In all the other churches who are supposed to be supporting this group, isolated members or groups of members have given it support leaving the majority of our members faithful. This is another attempt at trying to make the effects of the dissension greater than what it is. The Conference officers, members of the Executive Committee and other workers have met with a number of platteland churches. While we were very sad indeed to see some of God's children succumbing to deception, we were cheered that so many remained faithful, and that God's Spirit was at work so that many who had supported the other group realized their mistake and had the courage to admit it (TC Circular, 17 March 1969, p.3, HBCA).

However, several months later, in spite of all the assertions of the established Church that the Afrikaanse Konferensie consisted only of a small minority, a note of apprehension and uneasiness becomes evident in some of their correspondence. In a letter written to WHJ Badenhorst, Pastor ME Lind, the President of the Trans-Africa Division wrote:

I have today received an interesting letter from Elder Pierson in which he states that Josef Birkenstock sent him a letter in which he stated that their campmeeting offering was R 15,000. I should be deeply grateful if you could find out just how many were in attendance so that we can have a clear picture of the situation. Josef goes on to inform Elder Pierson that they now have about 1,000 members! (TAD Correspondence, Letter from ME Lind to WHJ Badenhorst, 27 April 1970, p.1, HBCA).

In response to the above-mentioned letter Badenhorst replied:

It is very difficult to ascertain how many people attended the campmeeting of the dissident group. There are so many rumours going round that one cannot really arrive at any figure. This morning I contacted one of our church members who I heard, attended one of the meetings on Sunday, because his son is a member of that group, but he informs me that he would not like to make a guess, but that even on the Sunday afternoon, there were quite a number of people present. We can only hope that the Lord will sort this matter out for us, because it seems to me that they are determined to carry on as a separate organization. Brother Birkenstock mentioned to Pastor Stevenson the other day, that the time has come for us to accept the fact that there is an Afrikaans Conference (Letter from WHJ Badenhorst to ME Lind, 5 May 1970, p.1, HBCA).

Over the ensuing months, the positive growth of the Afrikaanse Konferensie continued. This took place not only because of many members who were leaving the Transvaal Conference to join the Afrikaanse Konferensie and the subsequent erection of separate Afrikaans-speaking congregations in various parts of South Africa, but also because of concentrated evangelistic endeavours undertaken by the Afrikaanse Konferensie.

D. Evangelistic endeavours of the Afrikaanse Konferensie

From the outset, because of the aspirations envisaged to labour in the Afrikaans-speaking areas of South Africa, "evangelisation" became the watchword of the Afrikaanse Konferensie. At its first meeting, a week after the walk-out, a decision was taken to initiate a fund which would be used to launch evangelistic endeavours (AK Notule, Eerste Algemene Vergadering, 15 Desember 1968, p.4, HBCA).

The first of these evangelistic outreaches though, no doubt because of the amount of planning and preoccupation that went into stabilizing and registering the new organization in the months following the walk-out, only took place in September 1969 in the Transvaal towns of Heidelberg and Randfontein. The fourteenth omsendbrief of the Afrikaanse Konferensie described the public response to their first outreach in the following manner:

EERSTE POGINGS VAN ONS AFRIKAANSE KONFERENSIE BEGIN!
GROOT OPKOMSTE BY OPENINGSDIENSTE!

Dis vir ons baie aangenaam vanmôre om aan u die gebeure aan die begin van ons pogings hierdie afgelope naweek mee te deel. Ons kan met die Psalmis net uitroep, Waarlik, die Here het groot dinge vir ons gedoen! Al twee ons evangeliste het as eerste onderwerp die argeologiese tema gebruik 'Verborgte Skatte uit Verlate Grafte' en beklemtoon dat die Midde-Oosterse opgrawings oorvloedige bewys lewer van die waarheid van die Bybel. Op Heidelberg het ler. Flippie Retief 'n gehoor van altesame 600 getrek by die 2 sittings in die stadsaal gehou. Dit is duidelik dat 'n gunstige reaksie onder die algemene publiek ontstaan het...Op Randfontein die Sondagmiddag en aand het ler. Karl Birkenstock ook aan twee sittings sy gebruikelike mooi en indrukwende lesing voorgedra. Sowel mense het gekom dat hulle nie almal by die eerste lesing kon inkom nie. Altesame was daar 'n opkoms van om en by 1,300, en ons is bly om te sê dat die kollekte die beste was wat ler. Karl Birkenstock nog ooit in sy hele loopbaan as evangelis ondervind het. Die vooruitsigte vir die volgende lesings lyk baie goed (AK Omsendbrief, nr.14, 16 September 1969, p.1, HBCA).

Translation: FIRST EFFORTS OF OUR AFRIKAANSE KONFERENSIE START!
LARGE ATTENDANCES AT OPENING SERVICES!

It is with great pleasure that we can announce to you today, the events at the beginning of our efforts that took place this past weekend. We can only exalt with the Psalmist and say, Truly the Lord has done great things for us. For their opening topics, both our evangelists used the archaeological theme 'Verborgte Skatte uit Verlate Grafte' (Hidden Treasures from Desolate Graves) and accentuated that the Middle-Eastern excavations deliver ample proof for the veracity of the Bible. In Heidelberg, at the two sittings held in the town-hall, pastor Flippie Retief drew an audience of about 600. It is clear that there was a positive response from the general public...At Randfontein on the Sunday afternoon and evening, pastor Karl Birkenstock also gave his practical and impressive lecture at the two sittings. So many people came that they could not all get in at the first sitting. There were about 1,300 people and

we are happy to say that the collection was the best that pastor Karl Birkenstock has ever experienced in his entire career as an evangelist. The prospects for the coming lectures appear to be very good.

Notwithstanding the positive public response and the optimistic prospects envisaged for the evangelistic lectures in Randfontein, opposition came from an unexpected quarter, a Seventh-day Adventist minister. These actions not only led to the undoing of the campaign in Randfontein for the Afrikaanse Konferensie (Letter from Frieder von Hörsten, 25 February 1997, In author's possession), but also ended up in a very heated and antagonistic court case between Pastor Karl Birkenstock and Pastor Frederick Pelser a Seventh-day Adventist minister working in the Transvaal Conference. A number of weeks after the campaign had started in Randfontein, the following report appeared in an omsendbrief of the Afrikaanse Konferensie:

Ongelukkig moet ons meld dat ons evangeliste heftige teenstand ontvang het, nie alleen uit die gewone oorde nie, maar selfs van Adventiste-leraars in die ander Konferensie. Veral op Randfontein het party van hierdie manne hulle bes probeer om Ler. Karl Birkenstock se dienste in die wiele te ry. Ook moet ons meld dat Ler. F Pelser op 9 Oktober 'n misleidende en ontwykende verduideliking probeer gee het aangaande sy ondergrawing van ons poging te Randfontein (AK Omsendbrief, nr.15, 16 Oktober 1969, p.1, HBCA).

Translation: We have to unfortunately disclose that our evangelists have met with ardent resistance, not only from the usual areas, but also from Adventist pastors in the other Conference. Particularly in Randfontein, a number of these men tried their best to bring pastor Karl Birkenstock's services to grief. We have to also mention that on 9 October, pastor F Pelser tried to give a misleading and evasive explanation in regard to his undermining of our effort in Randfontein.

There are no indications in the established Church's correspondence that it intentionally set out to sabotage the Afrikaanse Konferensie's evangelistic endeavours in Randfontein. It was in all probability the work of specific individuals who acted without sanction from the established Church. This incident, however, once again highlights the deep-rooted animosity, resentment and intolerance that had developed in minds of certain persons in the Transvaal Conference against the Afrikaanse Konferensie.

This incident that had developed between Pelser and Birkenstock eventually deteriorated to such an extent that a court case was made against Pelser for defamation of character. According to a letter from Birkenstock's attorneys which was addressed to the Transvaal Conference, their client's name had been maligned because of the allegations that had been circulated in Randfontein.

The attorneys also requested that a public apology was to be published in the Randfontein newspaper and the Seventh-day Adventist Church's magazine (Letter from JR du Plessis to the Transvaal Conference, 27 October 1969, pp.1-2, HBCA).

The Transvaal Conference, however, acting on legal advice from their attorneys, denied the allegations that Karl Birkenstock's name had been slandered and asserted that an apology was, therefore, not necessary (Letter from PP van Eck to RE Clifford, 30 October 1969, p.1, HBCA). The Transvaal Conference's attorneys, in turn, directed a strongly worded letter to Birkenstock's lawyer insisting that both Pelser and the Transvaal Conference repudiated the accusations made against them and were prepared to contest the case in a court of law. Part of their letter read as follows:

Wat die beweerde laster te Randfontein betref, ontken ons kliënt asook Leraar Pelser ten ene male dat daar enige lasterlike bewerings ten opsigte van u kliënt aan enige persoon gepubliseer is en enige aksie wat u daaromtrent aanhangig wil maak, sal natuurlik teengestaan word (Letter from Mr Smit to Mr du Plessis, 31 Oktober 1969, p.1, HBCA).

Translation: With regard to the alleged calumny in Randfontein, our client and Pastor Pelser jointly repudiate the accusations that any slanderous remarks were promulgated to any persons against your client and any legal action that you consider in this regard will naturally be contested.

In a letter addressed to the South African Union Conference and Transvaal Conference presidents, Pastor Pelser recounted that the troubles between himself and Karl Birkenstock had begun a number of months before the campaign in Randfontein, when Pastor Birkenstock had wanted to initiate a congregation of the Afrikaanse Konferensie in Durban. According to Pastor Pelser, he had become dismayed that good people were being made to leave the Church because of the misrepresentations being made by the Afrikaanse Konferensie. He had, therefore, written a long letter in May 1969 to a brother and sister Ferreira in Durban, not only outlining his perspective on the situation, but also warning them very adamantly against breakaway movements such as the Afrikaanse Konferensie.

It was because of some reference in this same letter to an incident that had taken place almost 20 years before, when Karl Birkenstock had allegedly misappropriated some church money, that Pelser was being taken to court for defamation of character. Pelser stated his version of the quarrel between himself and Karl Birkenstock in the following manner:

Two weeks ago K. Birkenstock approached me and said that I had slandered him and demanded a printed apology in the Lantern. I told him if I had misstated his case I would make amends to the

people to whom I had written my letter. After investigation, I wrote a letter and duplicated it. You will find a copy of it at the back of this letter. I arranged for a meeting with Birkenstock and handed him the letter and said this stated the case accurately and was as far as I was able to go. He was extremely dissatisfied with this letter and on this occasion, the second within a week, he made it clear that he was taking me to court for defamation of character (Letter from FC Pelser to Elders R.Clifford and PP van Eck, 9 June 1969, pp.1-4, HBCA).

For some unknown reason Pastor Karl Birkenstock eventually withdrew the court case against Pastor Pelser. It also does not appear that the established Church ever published any apologies in this regard.

In spite of the setback experienced in Randfontein, those in the Afrikaanse Konferensie never appeared to lose their focus on the importance of continuing to evangelize the Afrikaans-speaking areas of South Africa.

Although this chapter does not refer to, or elaborate upon every single evangelistic endeavour of the Afrikaanse Konferensie, it is important, in order to be able to picture the extent of their work, to make mention of some of the towns in which these efforts took place. They included the Transvaal towns of Warmbaths, Rustenburg, Pretoria, Kempton Park, Benoni, Springs, Carolina, and Heidelberg. While the influence of the Afrikaanse Konferensie in Natal and in the Cape Province was not really as strong as it would have liked, it also did make some inroads in Durban, Rossburgh, Glencoe, Dundee and Vryheid and in some of the suburbs of the Eastern and Western Cape. At the end of 1970 in its Jaarverslag (Annual Report) the Afrikaanse Konferensie reported its progress in the following manner:

Na 2 kort jare is dit paslik om terug te kyk en 'n opname te doen van wat verrig is in die nuwe Konferensie. Deur die genade en leiding van die Here is dit moontlik om nou besonderhede te verstrek aangaande die vooruitgang van die Here se werk onder ons Adventiste-volk. Die lidmaatskap het gegroei van net 'n handjievol tot nou bykans 1,000 gedoopte lidmate (Jaarverslag van die Afrikaanse Konferensie van Sewendedag-Adventiste, 1970, p.1, HBCA).

Translation: After two short years it is expedient to look back and to present a survey of what has been accomplished in the new Conference. By the grace and leading of the Lord it is possible to furnish details concerning the progress of God's work amongst our Adventist people. The membership has grown from just a handful to almost 1,000 baptised members.

At the same time it reported the acquisition of a huge portable aerotorium (portable evangelistic tent) which could seat 500 people, which was to be used for evangelistic endeavours (Jaarverslag van die Afrikaanse Konferensie van Sewendedag-Adventiste, 1970, p.6, HBCA).

The Afrikaanse Konferensie considered public outreach so crucial that at times they even held evangelistic efforts concurrently in three different places (AK omsendbrief, nr 10, 11 Junie 1969, p.2, HBCA). During some of these evangelistic endeavours the public demand became so great that campaigns had to be re-run in the same town or city. One such place was Pretoria where within the space of a single year, Karl Birkenstock held three separate evangelistic campaigns (Oproep insake evangelisasie-fondse, 10 Augustus 1972, p.2, HBCA). As a result, over the ensuing four years, the Afrikaanse Konferensie reached out to many parts of South Africa.

While efforts of the Afrikaanse Konferensie were being met with a good measure of success, it appears that it could never avoid confrontation with the established Church. Beside the troubles that they experienced with their efforts in the Transvaal Conference, they also met similar opposition and resistance from the Cape and Orange-Natal Conferences. In the Cape Conference, Pastor Francis Campbell the president at that time, strictly forbade them to work in the area under the jurisdiction of his conference (AK omsendbrief, nr.12, 20 Augustus 1969, p.2, HBCA). Nevertheless, throughout the years that followed, regular baptismal services were held for those who had joined the Afrikaanse Konferensie (AK omsendbrief, nr 5/71, 21 Junie 1971, HBCA). The expansion of this conference and its congregations bears testimony to the persistence it showed in its evangelistic campaigns. In the Cape Province, for example, where the president of this conference had expressly forbidden them to work, a congregation of over 60 people was established after an evangelistic campaign in this area (AK omsendbrief, nr 6/72, 26 Julie 1972, p.1, HBCA).

E. The Afrikaanse Konferensie's medical and welfare work

Besides the high priority that evangelisation enjoyed in the Afrikaanse Konferensie, there existed also a great sense of urgency to initiate medical work as an integral part of its programme. An overview of the Church's medical work in South Africa in the years prior to 1968 will allow for a deeper comprehension of why the Afrikaanse Konferensie placed so much emphasis on the medical.

When the first American Seventh-day Adventist missionaries arrived in South Africa in the middle of 1887, they brought with them a missionary mandate written by Ellen White, which accentuated the need for the Church to engage in medical missionary work. It stated, amongst other things, that medical missionary work in South Africa had to feature very highly on their list of priorities (Van Zyl, 1990:98).

In accordance with this directive, a substantial piece of land, consisting of 125 acres, was bought in 1892 for \$17,000 in one of the prime suburbs of Cape Town (*Advent Review and Sabbath Herald*, 20 April 1897, EGWRC, p.253). A hospital was subsequently built and opened at the beginning of 1897, under the name The Claremont Medical and Surgical Sanitarium (*Good Health*, 'The Sanitarium Idea' December 1899, p.758, EGWRC). Although it initially enjoyed a period of remarkable success, the Church lost control of this hospital as early as 1901, through some very unfortunate circumstances (De Villiers, *South African Medical Journal*, June 1983, EGWRC).

A second hospital called the Plumstead Sanitarium was opened in another suburb of Cape Town in 1904. This also was a relatively short-lived venture and in 1927 it was sold and taken over by a private organization (Pantalone, 1996:94-96).

There were, in the years that followed, sporadic attempts, to initiate medical work in other parts of South Africa. Some time after the turn of the century a small hospital was opened in Pietermaritzburg and another in East London. While the records of what transpired at these two institutions are unfortunately very vague, they also had no lasting success and were also eventually closed down (For details of Seventh-day Adventist medical work in South Africa see Pantalone, 1996: pp.94-98). Even though there were people who continually tried to alert the Church leaders to engage once again in medical work, it totally faded from the operations of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa. When Josef Birkenstock presented his document *Die ware geskildpunt op hierdie sitting* at the Special Session in December 1968, it is not surprising that among his list of grievances, he also enumerated the failure of the Church in South Africa to engage effectively in this important branch of work. He penned his concerns as follows:

Daar is een besondere aspek in hierdie saak waaroor ons baie diep oortuig is, nl. dat ons werk in Suid-Afrika smartlik geminag is. In byna al die Afrika-lande het ons 'n gevestigde mediese werk, maar hier het ons **GEEN MEDIESE INRIGTING** nie, ten spyte van die gunstige geleenthede wat reeds lank hier bestaan...

Jarelank het die Divisie 'n ongevoelige (en soms byna 'n antagonistiese) houding aan die dag gelê teenoor die idee dat hier ook mediese werk begin moet word. Die hoëre broeders sê dat hulle nou ten gunste daarvan is, maar ons voel dan ook dat hulle die inisiatief moet neem deur ook nou met 'n hospitaal hier te begin. Hulle kan ten minste die Suid-Afrikaanse Unie aanmoedig om darem met die werk te begin, al moet dit aanvanklik op 'n klein skaal geskied. Maar soos dit nou is, het daar gedurende die afgelope 40 jaar niks gebeur nie.

Intussen is die Unie en Division doodtevrede om groot somme geld van die Suid-Afrikaanse publiek te ontvang wat vrylik aan die Oesinsamelingveldtog gee. Terselfdertyd het ons letterlik niks om hierdie gewers aan te bied vir die miljoene Rand wat hulle gedurende die afgelope 50 jaar vir mediese werk gegee het nie (Die ware geskilpunt op hierdie sitting, n.d., p.7, HBCA).

Translation: There is one particular aspect on this issue about which we are deeply convinced, namely that our work in South Africa has been grievously slighted. We have established medical work in almost all the African countries, but here we have **NO MEDICAL INSTITUTION**, in spite of all the advantageous opportunities that have for so long been here...

For years the Division has adopted an indifferent (and at times a very belligerent) attitude towards the idea that a medical work must also be started here. The brothers in high positions say that they are now in favour of this, but we feel that they must also take the initiative that a hospital must be opened here. They can at least persuade the South African Union to begin the work, even though it may begin initially on a small scale. But as it is now, for the last 40 years nothing has happened.

In the meantime the union and the division are content to receive large amounts of money from the South African public who give willingly to the Harvest Ingathering Appeal. At the same time we have almost nothing to offer these contributors for the millions of Rands given over the last 50 years for medical work.

As a result of its intense desire for the medical work to take root in South Africa, the Afrikaanse Konferensie immediately turned its focus on initiating a programme for welfare and medical work. At the first meeting of the Afrikaanse Konferensie held at Brentwood Park a decision was taken by the newly elected controlling body to seek registration of an organization that would undertake these responsibilities (AK Notule, eerste vergadering Beherende Liggaam, 15 Desember 1968, p.1, HBCA). At a subsequent meeting of the Afrikaanse Konferensie held in January 1969 a resolution was taken to apply for registration of a welfare organization with the government authorities (AK Notule, eerste Dagbestuur, 2 Januarie 1969, p.1, HBCA).

The established Church's reaction to this endeavour by the Afrikaanse Konferensie was as equally swift. At the end of January 1969, in a letter to the Union president, in which there are clear indications that this proposed venture by the Afrikaanse konferensie was considered to be a threat to the work of the Transvaal Conference, PP van Eck wrote:

Elder, I want to suggest that you together with the Southern Union President, arrange for an interview for Elder Mills with our Prime Minister as soon as possible. I believe this should be treated with great urgency. We have information that these men are arranging to go to Cape Town in the near future in order to interview the Minister of Interior in order to register as a church body. I would also suggest that Pastor Runkel visit the authorities regarding our welfare work (Letter from PP van Eck to RE Clifford, 28 January 1969, p.1, HBCA).

This opposition to this proposed branch of work of the Afrikaanse Konferensie was only the beginning as for the next four years the Church contested the existence of its welfare organization in almost every way possible. In April 1970 the Church directed a letter to the National Department of Welfare in an attempt to stop the registration of Adventhelpers, the name under which the welfare work of the Afrikaanse Konferensie functioned. Its objections were worded as follows:

Dit het onder ons aandag gekom dat daar 'n groep mense, by name die Adventhelpers onder die beskerming van die sogenaamde Afrikaanse Konferensie van Sewendedag-Adventiste, besig is om fondse van die publiek vir welsyndoeleindes in te samel. Aangesien daar geen geregistreeerde welsynorganisasie by name Adventhelpers bestaan nie, en aangesien die naam Sewendedag Adventiste gebruik word, is daar geweldig baie verwarring by die publiek en wil ons sekere feite onder die aandag van u Raad bring. Die sogenaamde Afrikaanse Konferensie van Sewendedag-Adventiste is NIE deel en word nie erken deur die bestaande en geregistreeerde Sewendedag-Adventiste kerk nie. Aangesien dit enige groep of organisasie vrystaan om tot u Raad aansoek te doen vir erkenning en u aansoek op meriete oorweeg, wens ons namens ons kerkgenootskap 'n ernstige beroep op u Raad te doen om:

1. toe te sien dat daar nie verwarring by die publiek sal kom as gevolg van die bedrywighede van hierdie groep nie;
2. op te tree teen die onwettige insameling van fondse deur hierdie groep;
3. beslag te lê op fondse wat reeds onwettiglik deur hulle ingesamel is op valse voorwendsels;
4. bestaande geregistreeerde welsynorganisasies te beskerm teen moontlike uitbuiting van hierdie aard soos beskryf in hierdie skrywe; en

5. te verhoed dat daar oorvleueling van doelstellings tussen die werksaamhede van hierdie groep en die Oesinsamelings oproep is.

Ons vertrou dat u Raad die bogenoemde feite sal oorweeg in verband met die bedrywighede van die groep, Adventhelpers, en sal optree in ooreenstemming met die voorsiening van die Welsynwet (Letter from the Harvest Ingathering Appeal to the Department of Welfare, 15 April 1970, pp.1-5, HBCA).

Translation: It has come to our attention that a group of people, known as the Adventhelpers operating under the auspices of the so-called Afrikaanse Konferensie of Seventh-day Adventists, are soliciting funds from the public for welfare work. Seeing that there is no registered welfare organization that exists that goes by the name Adventhelpers, and seeing that the name Seventh-day Adventist is being used, there exists terrible confusion with the public and we wish to bring specific facts to the attention of your Board. The so-called Afrikaanse Konferensie of Seventh-day Adventists is NOT part and is not recognized by the existing and registered Seventh-day Adventist Church. Understanding that any group or organization may exercise the freedom to apply to your Board for recognition and that you base every application on merit, we wish on behalf of our church community, to make an earnest appeal to your Board to:

1. see that no confusion exists with the public as a result of the activities of this group;
2. act against the unlawful gathering of funds by this group;
3. confiscate the funds that has already been illegally collected by them under false pretences;
4. protect existing registered welfare organizations against any possible exploitation of this nature as has been just been described in this document; and
5. prevent that overlap of objectives takes place between the functions of this group and the Harvest Ingathering Appeal.

We trust that your Board will consider the above-mentioned facts in connection with the operations of the group, Adventhelpers, and will act in accordance with the recommendations of the Welfare Act.

In its annual report at the end of 1970 The Afrikaanse Konferensie outlined its perspective on the resistance it had encountered with its welfare work. Part of this report was worded as follows:

Nadat ons toestemming van die regering ontvang het in Januarie 1970, het ons in Maartmaand met kollekteerwerk begin onder die naam Adventhelpers. Dit was asof 'n bom gebars het. Daar is nou van enige denkbare metode gebruik, ook hoe swarter hoe beter, om ons welsynwerk te probeer bestry en vernietig.

Ons moet onthou dat ons in daardie stadium beide mondelings en skriftelik die Transvaalse Konferensie verseker het van ons begeerte om in vrede met mekaar saam te lewe en ook aangebied dat ons in enige klagte of beswaar teen ons, sou probeer om die saak reg te stel. Ten spyte hiervan het hulle sonder enige waarskuwing 'n klagstaat van 5 bladsye teen ons opgestel, onderteken deur die Nasionale en Streekwelsynsekretarisse van die Oesinsamelings Oproep en direk na die polisie in Kemptonpark gegaan om ons van bedrog ens. aan te kla.

Hulle ontken dit nou, maar dis duidelik dat hulle doel was om ons in die tronk te kry, en dis seker hulle sou hulleself daarvoor verheug het om party van ons predikante agter die tralies te laat sit (Jaarverslag van die Afrikaanse Konferensie van Sewendedag-Adventiste 1970, p.2, HBCA).

Translation: After we had obtained permission from the government in January 1970, we began soliciting funds under the name Adventhelpers. It was as if a bomb had exploded. At this moment every conceivable method is being used, the more sinister the better, to try and contest and destroy our welfare work.

We must remember that at that stage we gave both an oral and a written assurance to the Transvaal Conference that our desire was to live in peace with each other and also offered that if there were any charges or accusations against us, that we would try to set matters right. Notwithstanding this, without any warning they drew up an indictment consisting of 5 pages against us, signed by the National and Regional welfare secretaries of the Harvest Ingathering appeal after which they went directly to the police in Kempton Park where we were accused of fraud etc.

They deny it now, but it is clear that it was their aim to put us in jail and it would have undoubtedly given them much pleasure to see some of our ministers behind bars.

Because of the charges made against the Afrikaanse Konferensie's welfare work, the collection of funds under the name Adventhelpers had to cease for a number of months. Notwithstanding these impositions against the Afrikaanse Konferensie by the established Church and even the apprehension and arrest of one of the Afrikaanse Konferensie's money collectors by the South African Police, they did not allow their efforts to be derailed (TC Correspondence, Letter from FG Steyn to F Campbell, 23 August 1971, p.1, HBCA).

Even though, the collection of funds for welfare under the name Adventhelpers had temporarily been stopped, the soliciting of funds had continued under a different name. In March 1970 in a letter directed to those in the Afrikaanse Konferensie who were involved in the solicitation of funds, the following warning was circulated:

Graag wil ons net 'n ernstige woord van waarskuwing aan u rig wat u asseblief seker moet wees om na al ons mense oor te dra. Dit is dat ons tog seker moet wees om onder geen omstandighede die woord "oes" of "oesinsameling" moet gebruik nie. Hierdie is benamings wat aan die ander Konferensies behoort, en ons sal in groot moeilikheid beland as ons hierdie woorde sou gebruik.

Ons kan wel sê dat dit ons "Jaarlikse oproep van die Sewendedag-Adventiste" is. Onder onself sal ons van hierdie veldtog praat as die "kollektewerk" wat ons doen" (Letter from JA Birkenstock to the ministers, elders and lay activity leaders of the Afrikaanse Konferensie, 17 Maart 1970, HBCA).

Translation: We would like to direct a serious word of warning to you, that you should carry over to all our people. It is that we must be sure, not to use the word "oes" (harvest) or "oesinsameling" (harvest ingathering) under any circumstances. These are designations that belong to the other Conferences, and we shall land ourselves in great trouble should we use these words.

We can say that it is our "Jaarlikse oproep van die Sewendedag-Adventiste" (Yearly appeal of the Seventh-day Adventists). Amongst ourselves we shall speak of this campaign as the "kollektewerk" (collection work) that we are doing.

In spite of all the opposition they had encountered, two months later, in May 1970, an omsendbrief carried the news that the Afrikaanse Konferensie's welfare collectors had already collected over R12,000 and were well on their way to achieving the intended objective they had set for themselves. The omsendbrief continued:

Dis aanmoedigend om te sien hoe mooi ons kollekte-veldtog aankom, en ons vertrou dat wanneer almal hand bygesit het, ons kan verwag om binnekort ons doelstelling van R40,000 te bereik (AK omsendbrief, nr.20, 21 Mei 1970, p.1, HBCA).

Translation: It is good to see how well our collection campaign is progressing and we trust that when everyone has put their shoulder to the wheel that we can expect to reach our goal of R40,000.

It was only in August 1970, when Adventhelpers was finally registered, that funds could be collected under this name without any further interference from the established Church. Shortly after Adventhelpers had been registered this news was circulated to all the members of the Afrikaanse Konferensie. This good news was worded as follows:

Hoe dankbaar is ons nie om die goeie nuus met u te deel nie! Na weke en maande van angsvolle spanning en afwagting, en na ons toewyding aan die Here op die vas en biddag van Sabbat, 1 Augustus, het die goeie nuus ons uitendelik bereik dat die Kommissie vir Welsynorganisasies op 3 Augustus besluit het om die Adventhelpers te registreer...Dit beteken nou dat ons ongehinderd met ons welsyn en kollekte werk kan voortgaan (AK Omsendbrief, nr.23, 26 Augustus 1970, p.1, HBCA).

Translation: How thankful we are that we can share the good news with you! After weeks and months of nervous anxiety and expectation, and after our consecration to God on the day of fasting and prayer on Sabbath, August 1, the news finally reached us that the Commission for Welfare Organizations decided on August 3, to register Advent Helpers...This means that we can continue unhindered with our welfare and collection of funds.

As a result, by August 1970, when Adventhelpers was eventually officially recognized by the Department of Welfare and it had received its own welfare number, its their programme of fund solicitation had already been in full swing for four months, with most of the churches of the Afrikaanse Konferensie participating in this programme (Verslag van ons fondse-insameling, 27 April 1970, pp.1-3, HBCA).

Over the next two years, the collection of funds for welfare work by the Afrikaanse Konferensie went from strength to strength. In March 1971 the amount collected by members, ministers and congregations of the Afrikaanse Konferensie was once again greeted with hearty enthusiasm (AK Omsendbrief, nr. 2/71, 22 Maart 1971, HBCA). Two months later, in May 1971, the Afrikaanse Konferensie reported that it had already doubled the amount of welfare funds collected throughout the whole of the previous year (AK Omsendbrief, nr.4/71, 22 Mei 1971, p.1, HBCA).

Besides the collecting of funds for welfare, a decision was also taken at the end of 1969 to purchase Lindlahr College, a disused school near Pretoria, in which the Afrikaanse Konferensie was hoping to begin a medical institution (AK Notule, negende vergadering van die Beherende Liggaam, 14 Desember 1969, p.3, HBCA). A year later, Lindlahr College had still not been purchased and a decision was subsequently taken to purchase some vacant land instead, also in the vicinity of Pretoria, upon which they were hoping to build a medical hospital (AK Notule, veertiende vergadering van die Beherende Liggaam, 9 Augustus 1970, p.6, HBCA). In addition to the intended purchase of this land, attention was also focused upon the need to open rehabilitation centres to take care of alcoholics and drug abusers (AH notule, Eerste vergadering van die Bestuursraad, 6 April 1970, HBCA; AK Notule van die Beheerende Liggaam, 3 Mei 1970, HBCA).

It appears, however, that none of these ideals were ever realized for no further references could be traced in the Afrikaanse Konferensie's correspondence with regard to building a medical centre, a hospital or rehabilitation centres for alcoholics and drug abusers.

During the course of the following two years the Afrikaanse Konferensie opened three homes for the aged instead. At the beginning of May 1970 the following was reported:

Die planne is reeds ver gevorder, en hopelik sal ons eerste tehuis vir verswakke bejaardes aan die einde van Mei oopmaak in Cottesloe in Johannesburg. Hier is 'n paar uitstekende woonstelgeboue wat baie goed vir hierdie doel aangewend kan word. Br. van Wyk is nou besig om pasiënte te kry sowel as om die personeel vir hierdie inrigting te werf. Hierdie is maar die eerste van 2 of 3 sulke inrigtings wat vanjaar nog geopen sal word (Verslag van ons fondse-insameling, 27 April 1970, p.2, HBCA).

Translation: Well advanced plans are already in place, and our first institution for the aged will hopefully be opened at Cottesloe in Johannesburg. There are a few excellent buildings here that will be well suited for this purpose. Br. van Wyk is at presently at work trying to gain both patients and personnel for this institution. This is but the first of 2 or 3 such institutions that will be opened later this year.

The institution at Cottesloe which was named Stille-Waters and opened four months later in September 1970. The omsendbrief for October 1970 announced its opening as follows:

Verlede Vrydagmiddag, die 25ste September, is Stille-Waters tehuis by Cottesloe amptelik geopen. Ons was bly om Mnr. Pieterse die stadsraadslid vir Johannesburg daar teenwoordig te

hê wat vir ons 'n baie aanmoedigende toespraak gelewer het. Alles by die tehuis lyk baie mooi en dis reeds vol met ongeveer 60 pasiënte (AK omsendbrief, nr. 24, 1 Oktober 1970, p.1, HBCA).

Translation: Last Friday, 25 September, the Stille-Waters old-age home at Cottesloe was officially opened. We were glad to have amongst others Mr Pieterse the town councillor for Johannesburg present who gave us a very encouraging talk. Everything at the home looks very beautiful and it is already filled with about 60 patients.

The same circular that announced the opening of the institution at Cottesloe also bore the news that there were advanced plans to open a second geriatric centre near the town of Belfast (AK omsendbrief, nr.24, 1 Oktober 1970, p.1, HBCA). This centre which was named Lentedal was opened in March 1971 where both the mayor and the town clerk of Dullstroom were invited to attend the opening ceremonies (AK Omsendbrief, nr.20, 22 Maart 1971, p.1, HBCA).

Denne-Oord, the third home for the care of the frail-aged was opened on a property that the Afrikaanse Konferensie had purchased from the mines in the town of Springs. Extensive renovations had to be carried out on the existing buildings (AK omsendbrief, nr.20. 21 Mei 1970. HBCA). The doors of Denne-Oord were opened for service to the general public in September 1971 (AK Omsendbrief, nr 6/71, 16 Augustus 1971, p.3, HBCA). Besides the three geriatric institutions just mentioned, there were prospects of opening others in the Western and Northern Transvaal, Pretoria, Northern Natal, Durban and in Port Elizabeth (AK Omsendbrief, 6/72, 26 Junie 1972, HBCA). These homes were, however, for reasons that this research could not trace, never initiated.

The focus of the Afrikaanse Konferensie's welfare work was not limited to taking care of the needs of the senior citizens. It also paid close attention to the need of destitute children and ran numerous programmes and camps for them in the ensuing years (AK omsendbrief, nr.7/71, 24 September 1971, p.3, HBCA).

In addition to the care of the aged and destitute, the Afrikaanse Konferensie also mobilized itself to be of assistance in times of disaster. Although it could not be ascertained with any degree of certainty what disaster occurred in the Western Cape towards the latter part of 1969, the Afrikaanse Konferensie established a substantial fund to assist those in need (AK Notule, Beherende Liggaam, 12 Oktober 1969, p.4, HBCA).

In the latter half of 1971 when the Eastern Cape experienced serious floods in the Gamtoos and Sondag River Valley, the Afrikaanse Konferensie again responded by assisting the victims of the disaster with money, blankets and food (Omsendbrief aan alle lede van die Afrikaanse Konferensie van Sewendedag-Adventiste, 24 September 1971, HBCA).

The Afrikaanse Konferensie also joined the Matigheidsbond van Suid Afrika (Temperance Society of South Africa), where Fritz von Hörsten, who became their representative in this society, took an active role in combating the detrimental influences of drugs and alcohol. A certain percentage of the welfare funds the Afrikaanse Konferensie collected were earmarked for this society (AK Notule, Beherende Liggaam, 3 Mei 1970, p.3, HBCA).

F. The publication endeavours of the Afrikaanse Konferensie

In the second chapter of this study it has already been noted that one of the grievances of the Afrikaanse Konferensie was that its publication house had not made adequate reading material available in Afrikaans.

In a document written by the Afrikaanse Konferensie early in 1969, the publishing house of the Church was strongly criticized because of its foreign character and because it had failed to meet the needs of the Afrikaans-speaking believers in the Church. This accusation was worded as follows:

Die Sentinel is nie Afrikaans nie! Ons registreerde kerk in Suid-Afrika heet The Seventh-day Adventist Community of Africa. Geen wonder dat ons as 'n vreemde kerk beskou word wat oorgewaaai het hierheen nie. Ons is nog nie deel van ons land nie (8 Desember en daarna, 2 April 1969, p.2, HBCA).

Translation: The Sentinel is not Afrikaans! Our registered church in South Africa goes under the name The Seventh-day Adventist Community of Africa. Is it any wonder that we are still regarded as a foreign church that blew over to this country. We are still not part of our own country.

Accordingly, along with the desire that evangelisation and medical work be urgently carried out amongst the Afrikaans-speaking people, the need also arose to make Afrikaans reading material readily accessible to those people.

The previous chapter has also shown how, after the walk-out in December 1968 at the Special Session, the established Church had stopped all literature supplies to those who had joined or who had given support to the Afrikaanse Konferensie. The established Church tried very hard, through various means, to enforce these measures. It, however, proved to be a hopeless task, with the Church clearly unable to control the strict embargo they had placed upon their literature. Although the established Church continually denied it, there were many people in the Transvaal Conference who, even though they had not joined the Afrikaanse Konferensie, were very sympathetic to its cause. Even though strict prohibitions had been made on the sale of Bible study material and reading books to the so-called "dissidents", this material was still finding its way through family, friends and sympathizers, from even as far off as America to those who had joined the Afrikaanse Konferensie. This becomes evident in a letter to DF du Plessis from a friend at Andrews University in

Michigan who was regularly sending him copies of the Bible study lessons common to Seventh-day Adventist congregations throughout the whole world (Letter from Andre to DF du Plessis, 16 May 1972, HBCA).

It is ironical that even some leaders in the established Church, very often those who were ostensibly the strongest opponents of the Afrikaanse Konferensie, were the ones who made spiritual literature and Bible study material available to some of the persons who had joined the Afrikaanse Konferensie (Letter from AO Coetzee, 7 July 1997, In author's possession).

Notwithstanding the fact that a supply of literature and Bible study material prepared by the established Church was still finding its way to the members of the Afrikaanse Konferensie, a need arose to translate and write its own material in Afrikaans, to begin its own publishing house and to employ persons to sell reading material to the general public.

Even though there was a lengthy delay before the registration of Skans-Publikasies, the publishing department of the Afrikaanse Konferensie, in the latter part of 1970 (AK Omsendbrief, nr.24, 1 Oktober 1970, p.2, HBCA), the Afrikaanse Konferensie once again did not let the grass grow under its feet and the work of making Afrikaans reading material available began almost immediately.

Besides all the circulars and newsletters which had been made available to the Afrikaans members, the most immediate need was to make Bible lessons available in Afrikaans. The preparation and printing of these lessons was done throughout all the years of the Afrikaanse Konferensie's existence (AK omsendbrief, Aan alle predikante, ouderlinge, sabbatskool-superintendente en die tesouriers van die gemeentes, 4 Junie 1971, HBCA). In addition to the publication of the Bible lessons in Afrikaans, a number of reading books, magazines, children's bedtime stories and other inspirational material, much of it written by Fritz von Hörsten and his brother Hendrik von Hörsten, were also published by the Afrikaanse Konferensie during the years 1969 to 1973.

Although the established Church in South Africa had literature salespersons right from the beginning of this century, C Human, the publishing secretary of the Afrikaanse Konferensie noted that books published by Skans-Publikasies were being more readily purchased than other Seventh-day Adventist books. He suggested that one of the chief reasons for this easier turnover was perhaps the fact that they were being produced by Afrikaans writers. He reported as follows:

Ons het alreeds opgemerk dat dit baie makliker gaan met die verkoop van ons boeke wat deur Skans-Publikasies uitgegee word as die vorige Adventiste boeke. Een van die groot redes vir hierdie maklike afset is seker omdat hulle van die pen van Afrikaanse skrywers gekom het (AK omsendbrief, nr.8/71, 9 November 1971, p.2, HBCA).

Translation: We have already take note that the books published by Skans-Publikasies are selling much easier than the previous Adventist books. One of the chief reasons for this easier turnover is surely because they were have come from the pen of Afrikaans writers.

In an endeavour to also reach out to members of the Afrikaans-speaking public, the Afrikaanse Konferensie also initiated a Bybel Korrespondensie Skool (Bible Correspondence School) which was based in Bloemfontein. The Bible study courses, written and compiled by Fritz von Hörsten, could be done with this institution through correspondence (AK Notule, vierde Beherende Liggaam, 5 September 1971, p.3, HBCA; AK Notule, vyfde vergadering van die Beherende Liggaam, 21 November 1971, p.2, HBCA)

G. The aspirations of the Afrikaanse Konferensie to open up a theological seminary

One of the proposed undertakings of the Afrikaanse Konferensie which never materialized was the opening of a seminary, where aspiring gospel ministers for this organization could pursue their theological studies in Afrikaans. Because prospective ministers who had given their allegiance and support to the Afrikaanse Konferensie had been barred from studying theology at Helderberg College (Antwoord op die Lantern, 'n Ope brief aan Lrs. Mills, Clifford en Van Eck, 15 September 1969, p.13, HBCA; Helderberg College Board Meeting Minutes, 1971/684, p.147, HBCA), a decision was taken to investigate the possibility of starting a theological school. As a result, in October 1969, Pastor GJE Coetzee and Mr J Steenkamp were requested to meet with the Controlling Body of the Afrikaanse Konferensie by the middle of November, so that plans could be laid for the establishment of an Afrikaans seminary. (AK Notule, twaalfde Dagbestuur, 13 Oktober 1969, HBCA).

This aspiration, along with the urgent need that had arisen in the constituency for the creation of such an institution appears to have been widely spread across the country. In his Memorandum, Edwin de Kock, although he never ever joined the Afrikaanse Konferensie, argued very strongly in favour of the establishment of an Afrikaans educational institution. He wrote as follows:

Daar is verrassend baie Afrikaanse leerkragte op Helderberg, hoewel sommige weens 'n Engelse opvoeding hulle eie taal min in die klaskamer gebruik. 'n Groter moeilikheid is dat die baie eentalige Engelse leerlinge hulle byna verplig om Afrikaans te laat links lê. Dit was veral die huidige prinsipaal wat hom vir tweetalig personeel beywer het.

Die Divisie en SAUK het egter reeds besluit om 'n Engelse prinsipaal op Helderberg-Kollege aan te stel. Helderberg se baie Engelssprekende jongmense verseker, saam met die buitelandse

werkers, 'n Engelse taalklimaat wat sterk op die teologiestudent inwerk. So word hulle taal, die instrument van hulle bediening afgeskeep ten voordele van 'n vreemde taal. Ook word hulle onwillekeurig gekondisioneer om so 'n toedrag van sake as normaal te beskou.

GEVOLGTREKKING

Dit is duidelik dat die kinders van Afrikanermeerderheid amper glad nie hierdie hoërskool en kollege ondersteun nie...

DRINGENT BENODIG

'n Afrikaansmediumhoërskool en kweekskool (Memorandum deur Edwin de Kock, n.d., p.10-11, HBCA).

Translation: There is a surprisingly strong Afrikaans academic contingent at Helderberg. Afrikaans is used very sparingly in the classroom because of the predominantly English orientated education. A greater problem is that the many unilingual English student also force them to push Afrikaans to one side. It was the present principal that worked very hard to introduce bilingual staff.

The Division and SAUC, however, had already decided that an English principal would be appointed at Helderberg College. Helderberg's many English-speaking young people, together with the overseas workers have made sure, that the English language strongly influenced the ambience of the theology department. In this fashion, their language, the medium of their ministry, is neglected at the expense of a foreign language. The student are also involuntarily conditioned, to regard this situation as normal.

CONCLUSION

It is clear that the high school and the college does not receive the support of the children of our Afrikaner majority...

URGENTLY NEEDED

An Afrikaans medium high school and seminary.

In spite of the resolutions that were taken and the aspirations that existed in this regard, in similar fashion to the plans of the intended medical institutions which had failed to materialize, The Afrikaanse Konferensie never arrived at the place where the establishment of an Afrikaans theological seminary and Afrikaans medium school ever became a reality.

H. *The establishment of the Afrikaanse Advent
Vroue Vereniging (AAVV).*

It is intriguing to note that in the latter part of 1971, a need also arose within the Afrikaanse Konferensie to cater for the women in this organization. A women's movement was consequently initiated which came to be known as the Afrikaanse Advent Vroue Vereniging (AAVV). In September of that year its inauguration was announced with these words:

Tydens die laaste Beherende Liggaam-vergadering het 'n groepie susters op Bapsfontein bymekaargekom om 'n Vrouevereniging vir die Afrikaanse Konferensie te stig. Sr. I Birkenstock het leiding geneem in hierdie groot saak en ons wil aan haar baie dankie sê daarvoor, want daar is lankal reeds 'n behoefte gevoel aan 'n Vrouevereniging in die Afrikaanse Konferensie (Omsendbrief aan alle susters van die Afrikaanse Konferensie, 21 September 1971, p.1, HBCA).

Translation: During the last Controlling Body meeting, a group of sisters came together at Bapsfontein to establish a Women's Society for the Afrikaanse Konferensie. Sr. I Birkenstock took the lead in this great endeavour and we wish to thank her for this, for there has long been a need felt for a Women's society in the Afrikaanse Konferensie.

Unfortunately, besides the election of its office bearers and the involvement of the AAVV in relief work during the floods in the Eastern Cape (AK Omsendbrief, nr.7/71, 24 September 1971, p.1, HBCA), documents of the Afrikaanse Konferensie does not reveal much more in connection with the accomplishments or further expansion of this organization. Notwithstanding the absence of any further material regarding this branch of the Afrikaanse Konferensie, sight must never be lost of the importance and foresight that accompanied this undertaking.

II. THE DECLINE AND DEMISE OF THE AFRIKAANSE KONFERENSIE

A. *Optimism, though tempered, still prevails*

The Afrikaanse Konferensie communiqué to its members at the end 1972, which also marked the fourth anniversary of the walk-out at the Special Session and the inauguration of the Afrikaanse Konferensie, brimmed with optimism, and the prospects for a successful new year was once again strongly emphasized, as in previous years. It read as follows:

VOORUITSIGTE VIR 1973

Die afgelope vier jaar van die bestaan van hierdie konferensie is gekenmerk deur uitbreiding en groei. Uitgewerswerk is

aangepak, welsynwerk is grootskaals onderneem, evangelisasie het lewenskragtig gefunksioneer. Dit is prysenswaardig en ons wil sien dat daar ruimer uitbreiding geskied, maar daar is ook 'n tyd om te konsolideer. Dit is ons vaste oortuiging dat tenminste die eerste helfte van 1973 aangewend moet word om die prestasies van die verlede te verstewig. In die plekke waar evangelisasieveldtogte geloods is, moet die belang wat ontstaan het, opgevolg word (AK Omsendbrief, nr. 8/72, 30 Desember 1972, p.1, HBCA).

Translation: PROSPECTS FOR 1973

The preceding four years of the existence of this conference has been characterized by expansion and growth. Publication work has been undertaken, welfare work has been done in a big way, evangelism has functioned like a vital life force. This is praiseworthy and we wish to see that wider expansion take place, but there must also be time to consolidate. It is our firm conviction that at least the first half of 1973 be utilised to bolster the achievements of the past. In the places where evangelistic campaigns were held, the interests that were generated must be followed up.

This message of optimism and confidence in the strength and future prosperity of the Afrikaanse Konferensie obscured some very serious predicaments and inconsistencies that had materialized within its ranks which would ultimately lead to the very dramatic collapse of this organization in the early part of 1973. Whereas the storm which struck the Afrikaanse Konferensie only really broke out in the final months of 1972 and the early part of 1973, it becomes quite clear from its correspondence that there had been an unmistakable tension building up in the months prior to the disintegration of the organization. An omsendbrief written in the middle of 1972 to the members of the Afrikaanse Konferensie, contains the first allusion to the fact that the situation within the organization was not altogether stable and secure. It was worded as follows:

In ons konferensie ook ten spyte van probleme waarmee ons te kampe het, is ons tog bly dat Gods leidende hand altyd sigbaar is [underlining added] (AK Omsendbrief aan alle lidmate 6/72, 26 Julie 1972, p.1, HBCA).

Translation: In our conference, in spite of problems that we are faced with, we are glad that God's leading Hand is always evident.

These problems would become, in the months that followed, serious obstacles in the way of the Afrikaanse Konferensie and would eventually lead to its demise.

B. The Afrikaanse Konferensie confronted with serious monetary difficulties

In a letter written in August in 1972 by Karl Birkenstock and PJ Retief, in which they earnestly plead with the members of the Afrikaanse Konferensie for donations to bolster the evangelisation funds, there are indications that a serious financial crisis was at hand. A part of their letter read as follows:

Of ons met hierdie planne kan voortgaan hang hoofsaaklik van u reaksie af. Ons het u gebede en u fondse nodig. Ons weet u sal gehoor gee aan hierdie spesiale en persoonlike oproep...Help ons dus, asseblief. Ons is gewillig om die werk te doen - maar dan het ons u milde ondersteuning broodnodig (Oproep insake evangelisasie fondse, 10 Augustus 1972, p.1, HBCA).

Translation: Whether we can continue with these plans depends primarily upon your reaction. We need your prayers and your funds. We know that you will give heed to this special and personal appeal...Help us therefore, please. We are willing to do the work - but we need your generous support very badly indeed.

Further correspondence of the Afrikaanse Konferensie reveals that it was not only the evangelistic department of this organization which was finding itself in dire straits. As early as the second half of 1971 it appeared that the financial predicament of the Afrikaanse Konferensie had become so critical that several accounts had not been paid and had gone seriously into arrears. At the end of August, Adventhelpers received the following letter from the attorneys of The Carpet Clinic for an account which it had not paid. Part of their letter read as follows:

We refer to our letter of the 12th July 1972, in which we requested payment of the due instalment of R500,00 in respect of the above matter. We would have you note that a further instalment of R500,00 has now become due and the arrears now owing amount to R1000,00. Our clients are anxious to recover this debt and would have us proceed in this matter if you fail to make an effort to liquidate these arrears (Letter from Mendelow, Zimerman & Ian Miller (Attorneys), 30 August 1972, p.1, HBCA).

The Afrikaanse Konferensie's telephone line was also cut in the latter half of 1971 because the account had not been paid (Letter from the Post Office to the Seventh-day Adventist Church, 22 October 1971, p.1, HBCA). At the beginning of December 1972, the chairman of the Afrikaanse Konferensie was also obliged to announce that the Konferensie was being forced to give notice to its secretaries because it could no longer pay their salaries (Letter from JA Birkenstock to DF du Plessis, 2 Desember 1972, p.1, HBCA).

Even Skans-Publikasies, the publishing house of the Afrikaanse Konferensie, appears to have experienced financial difficulties. At the beginning of 1972 it had to take a R3000.00 loan from the bank in order to pay its account which was in arrears (AK Notule, eerste Dagbestuur, 16 Januarie 1972, HBCA)

The financial restraints also necessitated a cut in the remuneration packages for the ministers (AK Notule, tiende Dagbestuur, 17 September 1972, HBCA). As a result, the ministers of the Afrikaanse Konferensie were also finding it very difficult to make ends meet. At the end of December 1972, JH Kritzinger, a pastor in this conference, wrote a letter which leaves a stark testimony to the great difficulties that they were experiencing as a result of their salary reductions. He wrote:

Nogiets wat ek baie dringend onder u aandag wil bring is die drastiese besnoeiing van predikante se salarise. Dit is iets wat taamlik kommer wek en ek voel dat die saak aan u gestel moet word in die lig soos ek dit sien. Met hierdie besnoeiing vind ek dit moeilik om my gemeente te bearbei soos dit behoort te wees. Ek is verplig om in te kort op my myle en dit is alles behalwe 'n gesonde toestand vir die gemeente. Veral in 'n tyd soos hierdie, wanneer die lewenskoste elke dag opgaan, dink ek is dit noodsaaklik dat hierdie saak heroogweeg word. Ek wil geen druk uitoefen in hierdie verband nie, maar voel tog om die regte kleur van die saak aan u te stel. Ek is bekend met die finansiële krisis, maar ons moet keer vir 'n groter krisis (Letter from JH Kritzinger to JA Birkenstock, 22 Desember 1972, HBCA).

Translation: Something else that I urgently wish to bring to your attention is the drastic reduction of pastor's salaries. This is something that causes quite a bit of concern and I feel that the situation must be presented to you in the light in which I see it. With this reduction, I find it very difficult to minister to my congregation as it should be done. I have been necessitated to cut down on my mileage which is obviously not a very healthy situation for the parish. Especially in times such as these when the cost of living is escalating every day, I think it is imperative that this case be reconsidered. I do not wish to apply any pressure in this regard, but I do feel that I have to make the position clear to you. I am aware of the financial crisis, but we have to avoid a crisis of even greater dimension.

By December 1972, under these very trying circumstances, DF du Plessis, the newly chosen chairman of the Afrikaanse Konferensie, was compelled to make the following plea to the members of his constituency:

In die afgelope aantal maande het ons met besorgdheid en kommer moes waarneem hoedat die bydraes van die gemeentes afgeneem het...Broeders en susters, daar moet iets skort. Is daar waarlik diegene onder ons wat die bydraes wat hulle voorheen vir die bevordering van die Here se saak beskikbaar gestel het, nou vir hulle eie voordeel gebruik? So erg het hierdie situasie geword dat ons sekere noodwendige toelaes van ons werkers moes inkort...Broeders en susters ons pleit met u, wees getrou in u geldelike verpligtings teenoor die saak van die Here en dit sal u geestelik verryk. Op die lang duur sal dit tot u eie skade wees indien u die hand en die hart toehou vir die Here se werk (AK omsendbrief, nr 8/72, 30 Desember 1972, p.2, HBCA).

Translation: During the past number of months we have had to observe with anxiety and concern how the offerings of the congregations have declined...Brothers and sisters there must be something wrong. Are there really those among us that will use the contributions they once made available for the extension of God's cause, for their own use? The situation has become so bad that we have had to decrease certain essential allowances for our workers...Brothers and sisters we plead with you, be faithful in your financial obligations to God's cause and you will be spiritually enriched. In the end, if you should keep both your hand and your heart closed for God's work, it will lead to your own ruin.

These financial exigencies in the Afrikaanse Konferensie, apparently on a very sound footing just a number of months before (AK Omsendbrief, nr 1/71, 8 Februarie 1971, p.1, HBCA) can be attributed to the drastic reduction of Afrikaanse Konferensie members, excessive spending, misappropriation of funds and personality clashes within its own ranks.

1. *Critical decrease in financial support*

By the latter part of 1971 members of the Afrikaanse Konferensie had begun to rejoin the established Church in greater and greater numbers (Interviews with JA Birkenstock, Dr Andre Ebersohn, Koos van den Heever). The reasons for this, although multifaceted, are not difficult to ascertain.

It has already been noted that many who had left the established Church in 1968 to join the Afrikaanse Konferensie did not believe that they had broken the unity of the Church and still considered themselves to be loyal Seventh-day Adventists. Many of them also believed that it would not take too long, before their conference was incorporated into the existing organizational structure of the established Church.

The leaders of the Afrikaanse Konferensie themselves were perhaps most responsible for these hopeful prospects that developed in the minds of the believers who had joined this conference. Right from the start, the correspondence of the Afrikaanse Konferensie had given them the impression that recognition and incorporation into the established Church was a foregone conclusion. Five months after the walk-out at the Special Session, in spite of the barriers that been erected between the two organizations and the inflexible statements of the established Church that the Afrikaanse Konferensie would never be acknowledged, the eighth omsendbrief carried the following message to its members:

Samesprekings: U sal bly wees om te weet dat voorlopige samesprekings met ons kerkleiers van die Unie en Divisie reeds plaasgevind het. Die vooruitsigte vir 'n skikking lyk baie goed en hoewel dit moontlik nie gou sal kan gebeur nie, is ons tog baie hoopvol dat hierdie moeilikhede opgelos sal word. Ons is bly om te weet dat ons Unie-President, Leraar Clifford, ons nog steeds beskou as binne die familie van Adventiste in Suid Afrika (AK omsendbrief, nr 8, 15 April 1969, p.2, HBCA).

Translation: Discussions: You will be pleased to know that preliminary discussions have been taken place with our church leaders from the Union and Division. The prospects for a possible consensus appear to be very good and although it probably will not happen quickly, we are still hopeful that these difficulties can be resolved. We are happy to know that our Union President, pastor Clifford, still acknowledges us as being part of the Adventist family in South Africa.

In June 1969 at a meeting of the Controlling Body, Josef Birkenstock appealed to everyone present to disseminate the good news of the Afrikaanse Konferensie's formation throughout the country (AK Notule van die Sesde Vergadering van die Beherende Liggaam, 8 Junie 1969, p.1, HBCA).

Two months later in August 1969 Birkenstock's appeal was followed up with yet another optimistic message:

SAMESPREKINGS HET BEGIN!
VREDE IS VERKLAAR EN ONS GLO DIE PROBLEME
SAL UITEINDELIK OPGELOS WORD

Hierdie is natuurlik net die begin van baie sulke samesprekings wat nog sal moet volg, want ons weet dis die begeerte van Gods kinders om in vrede met almal saam te leef en veral met ons medegelowiges. Ons glo dat die Here verder sal seën en lei sodat al die probleme behoorlik opgelos kan word (AK Omsendbrief, nr. 12, 20 Augustus 1969, p.1, HBCA).

Translation: DISCUSSIONS HAVE BEGUN
PEACE HAS BEEN DECLARED AND WE BELIEVE THAT THE PROBLEMS
WILL EVENTUALLY BE RESOLVED

This is of course only the beginning of many such exchanges which will still have to follow, for we know that it is the longing of God's children to live in peace with everyone, especially with fellow believers. We believe that the Lord will further bless and lead so that all the problems can be solved.

It is, of course, almost impossible to ascertain whether the leaders of the Afrikaanse Konferensie genuinely believed that recognition and incorporation into the established Church would take place. There is no doubt, though, that the above-mentioned correspondence raised the expectations and enthusiasm of many Afrikaans-speaking persons that at long last the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa was going to give consideration to their needs and initiate an Afrikaans-orientated structure within its existing organizational structure. By the end of 1971, when this recognition had still not materialized, and with prospects of this happening growing ever dimmer and dimmer, many members of the Afrikaanse Konferensie appear to have become disillusioned and had chosen to return and reclaim their former membership with the established Church. PP Van Eck, the Transvaal Conference President at the time of the walk-out in December 1968 had in fact predicted early in 1969 that this would take place. In a letter to the Union president he wrote:

Many of the dissident members will return to the organized church as soon as they know that this splinter group cannot be recognized (Letter from PP van Eck to RE Clifford, 9 June 1969, p.1, HBCA).

By 1971 the attendance at the previous two Afrikaanse Konferensie campmeetings held in the Transvaal had been good. The correspondence of the following year, however, reveals that the fervour and the numbers of those wishing to attend the campmeeting in 1971 had markedly declined. In March the second omsendbrief for 1971 carried the news that very few applications had been received for tents and mattresses to be used at its forthcoming campmeeting (AK Omsendbrief, nr.2/71, 22 Maart 1971, p.2, HBCA).

Understandably then, as the membership of the Afrikaanse Konferensie was reduced by those returning to the established Church at a more rapid rate than those who were being converted through its evangelistic endeavours, the financial life-blood of this conference was slowly draining out. By the middle of 1972 the Afrikaanse Konferensie was also facing similar difficulties with both their membership and financial resources in Durban. In August Josef Birkenstock wrote to Pastor ANP van den Bergh expressing his concern that the tithe income for July had only amounted to R150.00 and that the work in that area could continue not under such circumstances (Letter from JA Birkenstock to ANP v.d. Bergh, 14 Augustus 1972, p.1, HBCA).

2. *Excessive spending*

The reduction in the membership of the Afrikaanse Konferensie can not completely account for the financial difficulties that came upon this organization. An additional reason for these monetary difficulties can be found in the great amount of financial spending undertaken by the various departments of the Afrikaanse Konferensie.

Besides the enormous financial outlay undertaken with the evangelistic outreaches in various parts of the country, the publication work and the three old-age homes erected by the Afrikaanse Konferensie, all of which have already been discussed in this chapter, the correspondence reveals that there were also other projects undertaken that required vast sums of money.

The first of these projects, and probably the one that initially required the greatest outlay of funds, was the building of a meeting hall at Bapsfontein. The decision to erect such a hall was taken as early as April 1969 (AK Omsendbrief, nr.8, 15 April 1969, p.1, HBCA; AK Omsendbrief, nr.10, 11 June 1969, p.1, HBCA). Additional correspondence reveals that the building of this hall, which was very quickly brought to completion, depended largely upon both the material outlay and the physical skills of the members of the Afrikaanse Konferensie (AK omsendbrief, nr.12, 20 Augustus 1969, p.2, HBCA). Although there are unfortunately no figures given in the available correspondence concerning the amount of money spent on this project, there can little be doubt that it must have been quite a tidy sum. Besides the building of the hall, the renovations and numerous improvements on this building throughout the ensuing years, there was also the equipping of the premises with items such as stoves, fridges, deep-freezes and the procurement of more than 400 chairs.

In addition to the hall at Bapsfontein, the Afrikaanse Konferensie also simultaneously undertook to buy an aerotorium (a portable evangelistic tent), costing in the region of R5500,00, to assist in the evangelistic work (AK Notule dertiende vergadering van die Beherende Liggaam, 21 Junie 1970, p.3, HBCA). This aerotorium, which was understandably quite large, needed to be transported and so a diesel truck and a trailer had to be acquired for this purpose (AK Notule dertiende Dagbestuur vergadering, 16 Desember 1971, p.1, HBCA).

Although this chapter has already dealt with the erection of the old-age homes, mention has not been made of their high maintenance costs, the renovations that needed to be undertaken and the remuneration of the staff members working at these institutions. At Denne-Oord, for example, the home for the aged in the town of Springs, there was an outstanding amount of close to R40,000 when the established Church took it over from the Afrikaanse Konferensie in 1973. While these amounts spent at that time on building renovations may admittedly appear to be paltry in today's terms, it must be borne in mind that thirty years ago it was a substantial amount of money.

It is understandable how, during the initial years of the Afrikaanse Konferensie, while it had a large membership who were making liberal contributions to the organization, it could move forward and expand so rapidly. It is just as easy to see why the opposite happened when the membership suddenly began to decline and the flow of funds began to dissipate, and why the Afrikaanse Konferensie could no longer operate as effectively as it had done in the initial years of its existence.

Notwithstanding the indications of impending financial detriment in the Afrikaanse Konferensie there appeared to be hardly any attempts to curb the expenditure of this conference in the light of its declining membership until it was too late. In December 1972, at its second annual business session, an appeal was made by some of the delegates that proficient businessmen from within the organization should be appointed to investigate the troubles that the Afrikaanse Konferensie were experiencing and to implement measures to counteract the financial deterioration (Notule van die tweede twee-jaarlikse sakesitting van die Afrikaanse Konferensie, 3 Desember 1972, p.2, HBCA). At this stage, however, it appeared that there was nothing anyone or any committee could do to remedy the detrimental financial situation of the Afrikaanse Konferensie.

3. *Misappropriation of funds*

A third reason, and the one that probably sank any likelihood of possible financial recovery in the Afrikaanse Konferensie was the revelation that huge sums of money had been misappropriated by some of the leaders within the organization of the Afrikaanse Konferensie. While it has been difficult to determine with absolute certainty where responsibility lay for the misappropriation of funds, it is of more significance to note how these accusations not only brought the old-age homes to ruin but finally rent the Afrikaanse Konferensie into two.

All the indications of such fraudulent activities taking place within the Afrikaanse Konferensie appears to have been on the cards already several months before the financial crisis came into the open. At the beginning of May 1972, when DF du Plessis, in his capacity as treasurer of the Afrikaanse Konferensie, found that he was not being presented with the financial documents from certain departments in the Conference he wrote to the Controlling Body and explained the position as follows:

Broeders, vanaf die ontstaan van die Afrikaanse Konferensie van Sewendedag-Adventiste het ek my volle gewig by die saak ingewerp en nooit myself en middele gespaar om dit te help bevorder nie...Daar kom egter 'n tyd van ontnugtering en dit is juis hierdie feit wat my brief genoodsaak...Die twee kere dat ek finansiële state opgestel het, was dit onder moeilike omstandighede wat werklik nie nodig was nie as daar net meer konsiderasie en samewerking was.

Ons het by die derde boekjaar gekom en daar is nou ses stelle rekenings om af te handel. Vir die gewone rekenmeester is dit nie 'n groot saak nie, mits al die gegewens beskikbaar is...Wat my egter ontstel is dat wanneer ek samewerking gesoek het van verantwoordelike persone om my die nodige bewysstukke en inligting te verskaf, dit baie skamel was...Hier is ons in die derde maand na die einde van die boekjaar en dit word vir my ONMOONTLIK gemaak om 'n enkele balansstaat uit te kry. Die rede? Daar word eenvoudig nie ag gegee op my versoeke vir sekere gegewens nie. Die betrokke persone is altyd te besig om samewerking te verstrek...Ek vra dus dat ek onmiddellik onthef word van enige verdere werk wat te doen het met die rekenings, finansies en administrasie van die konferensie (Letter from DF du Plessis to the Chairman of the Controlling body of the Afrikaanse Konferensie, 4 Mei 1972, pp.1-2, HBCA).

Translation: Brothers, from the onset of the Afrikaanse Konferensie van Sewendedag-Adventiste I threw my full weight into the cause and never spared myself or my means to help its advancement...However, there comes a time of disenchantment and it is precisely this reason that has necessitated my letter...On both previous occasions when I compiled the financial statement, it was done under difficult circumstances that were really not necessary if there had been more consideration and cooperation.

We have now reached the third financial year and there are six sets of accounts that have to be done. For the ordinary accountant this is not a great undertaking, if all the particulars are obtainable...What really disturbs me, though, is that when I needed the assistance from the responsible persons to give me the documentary evidence and the necessary information, it was very scant indeed. We are already in the third month after the end of the financial year and it has been made IMPOSSIBLE for me to draw up a single balance-sheet. The reason? My requests for the necessary particulars are simply disregarded. The persons concerned are always too busy to give their participation...I ask, therefore, that I immediately be released from any further work that had to do with accounts, finances and administration of the conference.

It appears that matters eventually came to a head during 1972 when the auditors scrutinized the financial records of the Afrikaanse Konferensie. It has not been possible to trace the auditor's report. The following letter, however, written by Karl Birkenstock and JL Jordaan appears to intimate that financial irregularities had been detected within Adventhelpers. In a letter to the chairman of Adventhelpers they wrote as follows:

Uit u gedrag tot dusvêr is dit duidelik dat nóg die Voorsitter van die Beherende Raad van Adventhelpers Mnr. JA Birkenstock nóg die Sekretaris Mnr. WA van Wyk van plan is om enigsins behulpsaam te wees met die beantwoording van die punte wat deur die Ouditeurs ge-opper is nie.

Indien hierdie saak aan die Prokureur-Generaal oorhandig word of indien die beweerde onreëlmatighede onder die aandag van die Nasionale Welsynraad gebring word, kan dit tot ondersoek van die sake van die Adventhelpers en die Konferensie lei...wat die hele bestaan van die Konferensie in gevaar kan bring (Letter from KG Birkenstock and LJ Jordaan to the Chairman of Adventhelpers, 1 November 1972, pp.1-2, HBCA).

Translation: From your actions thus far it becomes clear that neither the Chairman of the Controlling Body of Adventhelpers Mr. JA Birkenstock nor the secretary Mr. WA van Wyk is planning to be of any assistance in replying to points that were raised by the auditors. Should this case be handed over to the Auditor-General or should the alleged irregularities be brought to the attention of the National Welfare Board, it could result in an investigation into the workings of Adventhelpers and the Conference...which could bring the whole existence of the Conference into jeopardy.

Many of those who were intimately involved in the running of Adventhelpers repudiated the allegations and passed a unanimous vote of confidence in its leadership (Notule van 'n algemene Jaarvergadering van die Adventhelpers, 18 Februarie 1973, p.1, HBCA).

The tension, however, that had been building up within the Afrikaanse Konferensie was not alleviated. At the beginning of 1973 the situation took a turn for the worse when irregularities of a similar nature also became evident in other departments of the Afrikaanse Konferensie. In February 1973, after experiencing serious problems with bank accounts, Mrs MM van den Bergh, the president of the AAVV, directed the following letter to the chairman of the Afrikaanse Konferensie, containing very serious and direct allegations:

Ek het al twee maal vir Suster Rita van Wyk gevra waar ons bankrekening geplaas is. Hoe die finansiële toestand van ons beweging is, maar kon geen bevredigende antwoord kry nie. Ek versoek die Raad om asseblief verdere stappe te neem om ons beweging se geld te beveilig. Verder wil ek die Raad versoek om Leraar K. van Wyk se salaris terug te hou totdat die saak opgelos is, aangesien sy vrou die Tesourier is en sy die geld gereëld ontvang het (Letter from MM van den Bergh to the Chairman and Directors of the Afrikaanse Konferensie, 23 Januarie 1973, HBCA).

Translation: I have asked Sister Rita van Wyk twice where our bank account is kept. What the financial position of our organization is, but received no satisfactory answer. I request the Board to please take further steps to safeguard the money of our organization. Furthermore, I request the Board to withhold pastor K. van Wyk's salary until such time that this case has been solved, seeing that his wife is the Treasurer and that she regularly received the money.

The leaders of the Afrikaanse Konferensie tried very hard to keep these allegations from reaching its members. It was, however, almost impossible to prevent them from filtering down to the lower echelons of the organization, and it was not long before accusations against specific individuals were also being made by the ordinary members of the Afrikaanse Konferensie. In January 1973 the following letter, accusing various persons of fraud, was received by the leadership of the Afrikaanse Konferensie. Part of the letter read as follows:

Die Afrikaanse Konferensie het 'n baie groot probleem en die name wat hier volg moet verslag gee wat van tweederdes van die Welsynswerk se geld geword het en een derde van die Kerk se geld. Verantwoording vir die Welsyngeld: Mnr. WA van Wyk. Leraar K van Wyk. Suster Rita van Wyk. Leraar JA Birkenstock. Leraar FW von Hörsten (Letter from Mrs. ML Botha to the chairman of the Afrikaanse Konferensie, 23 January 1973, HBCA).

Translation: The Afrikaanse Konferensie has a serious problem and the names which follow, must give an account of what happened to two-thirds of the Welfare work's money and one-third of the church's money. Answerable for the Welfare money: Mr WA van Wyk. Pastor K van Wyk. Sister van Wyk. Pastor JA Birkenstock. Pastor FW von Hörsten.

These accusations were categorically denied by those who served in leadership positions in Adventhelpers. In a letter written in March 1973 Pastor Fritz von Hörsten repudiated the indictments that had been fabricated against Adventhelpers. His letter also disclosed that a power struggle had materialized between certain persons in the organization for control of the old-age homes. He wrote as follows:

'n Mens verbaas jou oor hoeveel kunsmatige krissise geskep is oor Adventhelpers. Daar is gejaag hot en haar om 'n krisissatmosfeer op te wek - en eienaardig, daar is die deure van die drie tehuise nog oop en die persone wat nog nooit 'n sent ingesamel en nooit vir een oumens gaan bid of nooit vir een oumens 'n bord kos gegee het, maar wat die grootste lawaai opgeskop het om die tehuise in die hande te kry... (AK omsendbrief van Fritz von Hörsten, 22 Maart 1973, p.7, HBCA).

Translation: One can only stand amazed at how much fabricated crises have been created over Adventhelpers. There has been a fast and furious chase to provoke an atmosphere of crisis - and ironically, there are the doors of the three old-age homes still open and the persons that have never collected a cent and never prayed for an aged person or never even given a plate of food to an aged person, now making the loudest noise to try and take control of the homes...

This situation eventually deteriorated to such an extent that it resulted in a high level court case between the Afrikaanse Konferensie and Adventhelpers over control of the old-age homes (In die Hooggeregshof van Suid Afrika, Saak nr. M.0588/73, HBCA). The bitter litigation that ensued between the Controlling Body of the Afrikaanse Konferensie and Adventhelpers, led to a serious loss of revenue. Within a number of months all three old-age homes were lost to the Afrikaanse Konferensie. The Stille-Waters and Dullstroom homes were eventually closed down, while Denne-Oord was taken over by the established Church (AK Omsendbrief, nr.7/73, 22 Oktober 1973, HBCA).

C. Virulent personality clashes

In addition to the loss of membership and the financial crisis which was dragging the Afrikaanse Konferensie to its knees, a terrible rupture developed among the leaders of this organization. While tension had been building up because of the deteriorating financial condition the root cause of this antagonism appears to have been the serious personal differences and disagreements that arose between Karl Birkenstock and Fritz von Hörsten. Even though Fritz von Hörsten had broken away from the established Church in 1968 he had always maintained that the Afrikaanse Konferensie had not deviated in any way from the doctrines of the Seventh-day Adventist Church (Vrae en antwoorde oor die Afrikaanse Konferensie, n.d., pp.3-4, HBCA).

For the first few years, even though the established Church had asserted that the Afrikaanse Konferensie was not to be regarded as part of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, there are no indications in its correspondence to suggest that it had deviated from the theology of the Seventh-day Adventist Church or the accepted practices of the Church. Towards the middle of 1972, however, there appeared a definite leaning, amongst certain leaders of the Afrikaanse Konferensie, towards a Calvinistic theological interpretation and a desire to alter its existing ecclesiology.

The representative form of church government which the Seventh-day Adventist Church had used had also been taken over, with some minor changes, by those who had formed the Afrikaanse Konferensie. This form of government appears to have been accepted by the majority of people in the Afrikaanse Konferensie and seemed to have worked well for almost four years.

By the latter part of 1972, however, aspirations had emerged amongst certain individuals in the higher echelon of the Afrikaanse Konferensie to replace the representative form of church government with a synodical type of church government. At the Second Business Session of the Afrikaanse Konferensie held at the beginning of December 1972, a committee was appointed to investigate the feasibility of implementing a synodical form of church government (AK Notule, tweede sakesitting, 3 Desember 1972, p.3, HBCA). Due to time constraints at this session, however, the proposed implementation of a synodical system, was not dealt with and carried over to a second session to be held in the middle of January 1973 (AK omsendbrief, kennisgewing van sakesitting, 18 Desember 1972, p.1, HBCA).

At the January session however, the committee appointed to investigate and report back on the matter of church government could only present an interim report and, therefore, no final decision was taken (AK Notule van die tweede twee-jaarlikse sakesitting van die Afrikaanse Konferensie, 21 Januarie 1973, p.1, HBCA).

From this time onwards the sequences of events taking place in the Afrikaanse Konferensie become quite complex and very difficult to comprehend. During the session in January, Pastor Josef Birkenstock, who was at this time a delegate to the session but no longer the chairman of the Afrikaanse Konferensie, left the meeting hall in protest before proceedings had been brought to completion apparently because no consensus had been reached over the matter of church government.

This becomes evident in his actions following his walk-out at this session. Quite soon afterwards Birkenstock formulated a circular which did not carry the approval of the Afrikaanse Konferensie's leadership. In this circular he informed the members of the Afrikaanse Konferensie that four congregations had already accepted the presbyterian synodical form of church government after the recommendations of the business session held in December 1972. Part of this circular read as follows:

U sal bly wees om te hoor dat vier van ons vooraangaande gemeentes hier in [sic] Transvaal die eerste was om die stap te neem om die sinodale-presbiteriale stelsel van kerkgesag te aanvaar. Soos aanbeveel op die sakesitting van 3 Desember 1972, het hierdie vier gemeentes die voortou geneem in hierdie voorwaartse stap om die werk van die Here beter te kan uitvoer.

Translation: You will be pleased to hear that four of our prominent congregations here in the Transvaal became the first to take the step to accept the synodical-presbyterial system of church control. As recommended at the business session of 3 December 1972, these four churches took the lead in this progressive step so that God's work can be more effectively carried out.

In addition to the above-mentioned declaration, Birkenstock also added a profusion of confusing facts concerning the financial position of the Afrikaanse Konferensie and the dismissal of some the workers from this organization. He wrote:

Ons is bly om u mee te deel dat ons leraars nog steeds aangaan saam met hulle gemeentes om die werk van die Here te doen, en veral nou is ons besig met positiewe planne om die werk van die Here in 1973 uit te brei...U sal bly wees om te weet dat ons Welsynwerk goed aangaan...Die finansiële posiesie [sic] van ons tehuise was nog nooit beter as op die huidige tydstip nie (Omsendbrief from JA Birkenstock to members of the Afrikaanse Konferensie, 9 Februarie 1973, p.1, HBCA).

Translation: We are happy to share the news with you that our pastors, together with their congregations, are continuing to do God's work, and especially now we are busy with positive plans to expand the Lord's work in 1973...You will be glad to know that our Welfare work is progressing well...The financial position of our old-age homes has never been as sound as it is at present.

It is difficult to understand why Birkenstock chose to make these statements. Firstly, this omsendbrief did not carry the consent of the Controlling Body of the Afrikaanse Konferensie. Secondly, in spite of this assertions that four churches had accepted the synodical form of church government, no decisions had been taken either at the December or January business session to implement such a form of church government. Thirdly, contrary to Birkenstock's statements which alluded to the favourable financial situation of the Afrikaanse Konferensie and the old-age homes, it has already been noted that by this time this organization was on the verge of bankruptcy with all three old-age homes on the verge of closure. The only deductions that can be made from Birkenstock's actions was that, he either wanted to intentionally mislead the members of the Afrikaanse Konferensie by spreading untruths, or that some churches had really accepted the synodical form of church government because their pastors, Birkenstock included, were in favour of this system even though it had not been endorsed by the Controlling body. The latter reason is probably the one closer to the truth.

Birkenstock's actions and his misleading letter were subsequently heavily berated by the Controlling Body of the Afrikaanse Konferensie. In response to his allegations that the Afrikaanse Konferensie had accepted the synodical system, they forcefully repudiated his declarations and responded with their own circular. Part of it stated:

Ons wil die volgende punte baie duidelik aan u stel: Daar word in die omsendbrief verklaar dat die sakesitting van 3 Desember 1972 die presbiteriaans-sinodale stelsel van kerklike gesag

aanvaar het. U kan maar u afgevaardiges na hierdie sakesitting vra en hulle sal so iets ontken. Dit is slegs deur C Serfontein voorgestel en 'n kommissie is aangestel om op die wenslikheid van so 'n stelsel in te gaan.

Tydens die voortgesette sakesitting van 21 Januarie 1973 was daardie kommissie nog nie gereed om 'n volledige verslag of aanbeveling na die afgevaardiges te bring nie. C Serfontein het 'n persoonlike en mondelikse verslag gelewer en daar is besluit dat die kommissie verder sou werk en hulle bevindings aan die Beherende Liggaam sou voorlê. Daar was geen aanvaarding of besluit in verband met hierdie aangeleentheid nie. Ons is jammer dat die stelsel nou voorgelou word en 'n blakende onwaarheid as sy fondament het.

Verder is dit 'n stelsel wat nog nooit deur die Sewendedag-Adventiste Kerk êrens toegepas is nie. Ons beskou die stap van die werkers wat hulle afgeskei het van die Afrikaanse Konferensie, as 'n afwyking van die erkende kerkorganisasie van Sewendedag-Adventiste en as sulks moet ons dit in 'n baie ernstige lig beskou (AK omsendbrief, 1/73, Aan al die gelowiges van die Afrikaanse Konferensie van Sewendedag Adventiste, 20 Februarie 1973, p.2, HBCA).

Translation: We wish to stress the following points to you: It has been alleged in the circular that the business session of 3 December 1972 accepted the presbyterian-synodical system of church control. You may ask your delegates who attended this session and they will deny any such thing. It was only recommended by C Serfontein and a commission was appointed to make an investigation into this kind of system.

During the subsequent business session on the 21 January 1973, that commission was not yet ready to submit a full report or recommendation to the delegates and it was resolved that the commission would continue its work and bring its findings to the Controlling Body. There was no acceptance or decision in this regard. We are sorry that the system now being promoted using a blatant untruth as its foundation. This is furthermore a system that has never been utilized by the Seventh-day Adventist Church. We regard this step by the workers who separated themselves from the Afrikaanse Konferensie as an aberration from recognized Seventh-day Adventist Church organization and we must, therefore, view this in a very serious light.

Pastor Fritz von Hörsten was also a delegate to the session in January. He, however, intentionally chose not to attend and was, like Birkenstock, very strongly castigated, dismissed as an office-bearer in the Afrikaanse Konferensie, and eventually disfellowshipped from the organization.

In March 1973 Von Hörsten responded to his censure with a comprehensive omsendbrief of his own wherein he clearly enumerated the reasons for his actions and his departure from the Afrikaanse Konferensie. An analysis of Von Hörsten's omsendbrief is important as it reveals the deep rooted animosity which tore the leadership of the Afrikaanse Konferensie into two and which ultimately brought about the demise of this organization. Part of Von Hörsten's omsendbrief read as follows:

Dit is onnodig vir my om aan u te sê dat groot dramatiese dinge aan die gebeur is...U het teen hierdie tyd gehoor of gelees dat predikante wat vier jaar lank die Afrikaanse Konferensie gedien het na die beste van hulle vermoë nou skielik ontluik het as bedrieërs en aartskelms wat van die aardbodem gevee moet word...Ek wil u sê wat my die pad laat loop waarop ek loop.

Vier jaar gelede het ons teen onreg geprotesteer in die vorm van 'n eie Afrikaanse Konferensie wat soos ek dit uit die staanspoor gestel het 'n tydelike organisasie sou wees, sover dit my aangaan...Toe ons dus moes registreer, was dit sover dit my betref en almal het dit goed verstaan - net in die hoedanigheid van 'n tydelike organisasie...

Ongeveer 'n jaar of twee gelede het hierdie teologiese kwessie 'n kraak in die Afrikaanse Konferensie laat ontstaan toe Leraar Karl Birkenstock die more in sy elfuurdiens op Bapsfontien 'n onregstreekse, maar subtiele aanval op die Kerk van God gedoen het en dit vir my baie duidelik was dat hy 'n koers inslaan weg van die gebaande weg af, die wildernis in...

Deur al die jare van die Afrikaanse Konferensie het Fritz von Hörsten sonder 'n skadu van afwyking by die volle waarheid van Gods Woord gestaan in verband met hierdie lewensbelangrike leerstelling van die eenheid van Gods Kerk.

Verder beteken dit in eenvoudige taal dat Leraar Karel Birkenstock teologies dwaal op hierdie belangrike punt en dat sy teologie dus vals en uiters gevaarlik is vir sy eie sieleheil en vir die sieleheil van almal wat hom volg op die dwaalpad weg van die waarheid, weg van die Kerk van God af...

Selfs die sinodale-presbiteriale stelsel was nooit 'n werklikheid nie - ons het daarvan gepraat as die stelsel om ons gemeentes tydelik te beskerm, maar dit was allermens ons

bedoeling dat dit 'n blywende instelling sou word. Daarvoor is ons teologies bekwaam om te weet dat dit nie erkende kerkbeleid is nie (Omsendbrief van F von Hörsten, 22 Maart 1973, pp.1-9, HBCA).

Translation: It is unnecessary for me to tell you that there are great and dramatic things happening...You have by this time heard or read that ministers that served this conference to the best of their abilities for four years have now been suddenly transformed into crooks and arch-deceivers that must be swept from the face of the earth...I would like to recount what made me choose the journey that I have undertaken.

Four years ago we protested against injustice in the form of our own Afrikaanse Konferensie which would be, as I stated from the beginning only a provisional organization, as far as I understood it...When we had to apply for registration, it was, according to my knowledge and everyone well understood it, in the capacity of a provisional organization...

About a year or two ago this theological concern led to a rift in the Afrikaanse Konferensie when one morning during the eleven-o'clock service at Bapsfontein, Pastor Karl Birkenstock launched an indirect but subtle attack on the church of God, and it then became very clear to me that he had chosen an avenue off the tested pathway into the wilderness...

Throughout all the years of the Afrikaanse Konferensie, Fritz von Hörsten has stood without a shadow of deviation by the full truth of God's Word in regard with this indispensable doctrine concerning the unity of God's Church

It means furthermore, in simple language, that pastor Karel Birkenstock deviates theologically on this vital point and his theology is thus false and exceptionally dangerous for his own soul salvation and for the soul salvation of everyone that follows him on the route of departure away from the truth, away from the Church of God...

Even the presbyterian-synodical system was never a reality - we spoke about it as a system to temporarily protect our congregations, but it was never our intention that it would become a permanent institution. We are in this respect theologically competent to know that this is not recognized church policy.

The remaining part of Von Hörsten's letter very graphically portrays the anger, the bitterness, the animosity, the schism that had materialised in the leadership hierarchy, and the culminating events in the early part of 1973 which eventually led to the collapse of the Afrikaanse Konferensie. He outlined these traumatic events and its outcome as follows:

Die volgende afgrond op ons pad was die kwessie van die direkteure (u moet beseft die Afrikaanse Konferensie is nie 'n kerk nie maar 'n firma). Vier direkteure skop die ander uit, omdat hulle kastyg een vergadering nie bygewoon het nie, en die wet van maatskappye lui dat direkteure geskors kan word wanneer hulle driemaal na mekaar, sonder om geldige redes vir hulle afwesigheid te verstrek, direksievergaderings nie bywoon nie. Hier skop die paar direkteure die ander uit by die eerste vergadering wat gehou word. Die vulkaan het hier begin spuug. Ag watter tragedie. In die naam van Christus het hierdie onsmaklikhede begin, en wat verder sou gebeur, het menigeen al seker sy kop in skaamte laat vashou terwyl hy uitroep: Here, is dit waartoe ons gedaal het?

Die saak van die direkteure het op die verlengde sakesitting sy klimaks bereik. Die hele Sondagmore is gewy aan die grondwet omdat daar hardnekkig gepoog is om alle direkteure outomaties sitting te laat hê op die Beherende Liggaam, en dit was oop en bloot net 'n stryd om mag in die hande te kry.

Toe daar tot stemming oorgegaan is, is die poging om die grondwet te verander verpletterend verslaan. ('n Tweederde meerderheid is nodig om die grondwet te verander). Dit het beteken dat geen direkteure outomaties sitting het op die Beherende Liggaam nie. Maar een direkteur het opgestaan en gesê hy sal daar wees en niemand sal hom keer nie - hy sal hom nie deur 'n wet van die Konferensie laat bind nie! Sien u? Die begin van chaos. En daardie selfde middag toe die Beherende Liggaam byeengeroep word, neem hy sy plek in as lid. En die notule van daardie vergadering verkondig ewe blatant: Direkteure die en die en die.

Onreg? Wetteloosheid? Die dinge waarteen ons geïntestesteer het, was mak in vergelyking met wat nou plaasvind in ons Konferensie. Die middag het die voorsitter gesê daar word gedreig met 'n skeuring. En toe Pretoria dreig om sy sin te kry en nie net dreig nie, was dit die einde van die Konferensie wat my en die ander werkers betref. Ons het genoeg van onreg in die naam van godsdiens gehad, genoeg gehad van die leuen in die naam van waarheid; genoeg gehad van bullebakkerie onder die dekmantel van ywer vir die Here.

Van daardie sitting af is geopenbaar wat nog altyd in ons harte verborge was. Nog nooit is soveel beswadding geslinger teen twee mense soos teen broer en suster Van Wyk van Adventhelpers nie. Hulle wat alles opgeoffer het vir hierdie werk, hulle uit wie se beursies tienduisende gestroom het vir die ouetehuis en vir evangelisasiewerk, hulle is beswadder dat die hel daarvoor gebloos het. Tjeks by tienduisende het glo verdwyn. Op 'n swartbord is die Beherende Liggaamlede onderwys gegee in die bedrog wat gepleeg is. En daarvandaan is die boodskap met renperde die veld ingestuur. Ek moet eerlik sê ek weet nie of daar vergifnis is vir sulke moedswillige leuens deur mense wat hulle beroem op die waarheid nie... (Omsendbrief van FW von Hörsten, 22 Maart 1973, p.5, HBCA).

Translation: The next obstacle on the road on which we found ourselves was the issue of the directors (you must realize that the Afrikaanse Konferensie is not a church but a company). Four directors expel another one, simply because he did not attend one meeting, while the company act stipulates that directors can only be suspended when they fail to attend three consecutive directors' meetings without valid reasons for their absence. So here the group of directors expel another at the first meeting which is held. It was here that the volcano began to erupt. Oh, what a tragedy. This unpleasantness began in the name of Christ, and what happened thereafter must have made many hold their heads in shame while they exclaimed: Lord, is it to this that we have descended?

The issue of the directors reached its climax at the extended business meeting. The whole of Sunday morning was spent on the constitution because of a stubborn bid that was made to allow all directors to gain a place automatically on the Controlling Body, this being a flagrant attempt to gain power.

By voting, the attempt to have the constitution modified was defeated overwhelmingly. (A two-thirds majority is needed to amend the constitution). This meant that no director could automatically take his seat in the Controlling Body! One director stood up though and stated that he would be present there and that no one would stop him - he would not allow himself to be bound to a regulation of the Conference. Do you see? The beginning of chaos. The same afternoon when the Controlling Body was called together, he was present. And the minutes of that meeting record very blatantly: Directors so and so and so.

Injustice? Lawlessness? The things we protested against were docile when compared to what is happening now in our Conference. That afternoon the chairman stated that there was a threat of a schism. And when Pretoria threatened to try and get his way and not only threatened, that was, according to me and other workers, the end of the Conference. We had enough of injustice carried out in the name of religion, enough of the lies in the name of truth; enough of the bullying carried out under the cloak of fervour for the Lord.

From that session onwards was revealed what always lay hidden in our hearts. Never before was so much besmirching slung against two persons like brother and sister Van Wyk of Adventhelpers. They who offered up so much for this work, they from whose purses flowed thousands for our old-age homes and evangelistic work, they were slandered in such a fashion that even hell would have blushed. Cheques to the value of tens of thousands ostensibly vanished. The Controlling Body demonstrated on a blackboard the embezzlement that was supposed to have taken place. Swiftly thereafter the message was rushed as if by racehorses into the field. I must honestly state, that I doubt whether there is any forgiveness for persons who glory in the truth and yet tell such deliberate lies.

Pastor Von Hörsten, along with a small delegation of five persons, had in fact by this time already approached the leadership of the established Church in an attempt to bring about the possible end to the separation between the two organizations. There were also clear intentions that they wished to reclaim their former membership. Upon their request, a meeting was set up which was held in Johannesburg on 12 to 13 February 1973. At this meeting, Pastor Von Hörsten presented a paper dealing with the unity of the Church, while the Union president Francis Campbell also presented a paper on the desirability of separate language conferences in the South African Union Conference. Von Hörsten's paper was in accordance with recognized Seventh-day Adventist ecclesiology and accepted by all the delegates present at this meeting (South African Union Conference President's Correspondence, n.d., pp.1-2, HBCA).

A letter from ML Mills, the TAD president, to Pastor Campbell discloses how the leadership of the Church viewed the attempted return to the established Church by Von Hörsten and the other "dissident brethren". He wrote:

I was very happy with the way you handled the ad hoc committee in the Transvaal Conference office this past week, at which time we had a two-day discussion with various leaders of the dissident movement. I was also pleased to get a further report from you by telephone concerning what discussions took place on both the union and conference committees in response to what was discussed with our dissident brethren.

I believe we are not amiss in opening the way for Brother von Horsten [sic] to return as a member of the church and to subsequently be employed in view of his admission that his past activities have not contributed to the unity and solidarity [sic] of the church.

Well, before leaving on my long safari I just wanted to share these few thoughts with you. I do have a burden to suggest that in considering the re-employment of any of these men of the dissident movement, we must be most cautious lest we be misunderstood. But in the case of Brother von Horsten [sic] I feel reasonably certain because the man has approached us in a spirit of concern and contrition and this in itself give indications of sincerity (Letter from ML Mills to F. Campbell, 19 February 1973, p.1, HBCA).

From the ensuing correspondence of the Afrikaanse Konferensie it becomes clear that these actions by Von Hörsten were carried out without the necessary consensus from the organization that he was supposedly representing. In an open letter to both pastor Von Hörsten and pastor Josef Birkenstock who was also disfellowshipped from the Afrikaanse Konferensie, the Controlling Body never pulled any punches in saying precisely how it regarded the actions of these two pastors over the previous two months. Part of its letter read as follows:

Julle optrede die afgelope tyd en in besonder julle verwarrende omsendbriewe noodsaak hierdie ope brief. As eertydse makkers sou ons liewers hierdie onaangename dinge wou verswyg en net die gordyn daaroor laat sak het. Dis mos verby. Julle het geloop...

Maar waarom nou al hierdie uiters onaangename polemieks? Al die gal, bitterheid, nydigheid, frustrasie en verwarring wat uit jou pen vloeit Fritz, sal die Afrikaanse Konferensie nie aftakel nie. Dit openbaar net jou eie verwarring...Julle manne sal verskoon as ons reguit praat. Fritz jy wil almal sê wat jou die pad laat loop waarop jy loop - ons weet dit reeds. Dis omdat jy net jy is. Dit het alles gebeur as gevolg van jou 'teologie' - 'n verkleurmannelike teologie. Die Afrikaanse Konferensie was in Desember 1968 'n gerieflike platform vanwaar jy al jou bitterheid en wraaklust, jou 'teologie' kon openbaar... (Ope brief aan FW von Hörsten en JA Birkenstock, 12 April 1973, pp. 1-5, HBCA)

Translation: Your actions during this time and especially your baffling circulars necessitates this open letter. As former associates we would have rather wished to be silent about these unpleasant things and bring the curtain down over them. It is past. You left...

But why all the extremely unpleasant polemics? All the gall, bitterness, envy, frustration and confusion flowing out of your pen Fritz, will never bring the Afrikaanse Konferensie down. It only reveals your own confusion...You gentlemen will pardon us if we talk straight. Fritz, you want to tell everyone what caused you to go on the road on which you find yourself - we already know that. It is because you are you. It all came about as a result of your 'theology' - a chameleon-like theology. The Afrikaanse Konferensie was a convenient platform in December 1968 from which you could make all your bitterness and revenge, and your 'theology' public...

The castigations meted out against Von Hörsten by the Controlling Body was, however, not unanimous and resulted in further division and disagreement in the leadership of the Afrikaanse Konferensie. Notwithstanding the numerous pleas that were made from within the organization that reconciliation needed to take place (Notule van die 10de Beherende Liggaam vergadering van die Afrikaanse Konferensie, 29 Oktober 1972, p.3. HBCA; Notule van die 11de Beherende Liggaam van die Afrikaanse Konferensie, 26 November 1972, p.2, HBCA) these conflicts went from bad to worse.

In an incident in the Transvaal town of Warmbaths the tension between Karl Birkenstock and J Cronje, both pastors of the Afrikaanse Konferensie became so explosive that it ended up in a fist fight for which the latter was suspended from the organization (Notule van die eerste vergadering van die derde Beherende Liggaam van die Afrikaanse Konferensie, 21 Januarie 1973, p.2, HBCA).

On 20 March 1973, a meeting was held between a delegation from the established Church which also included the Trans-Africa Division President ML Mills and the General Conference President RH Pierson, and several spokesmen from the Afrikaanse Konferensie. At this meeting the question was raised once again whether the established Church would consider the creation of an Afrikaans-language department within its existing structure. The response to this was again just as emphatic as it had been over the past five years with the delegation of the established Church responding that they "saw no light to proceed with this request" (Omsendbrief nr.3/73, 4 April 1973, p.2, HBCA). This meeting was aborted when a deadlock ensued between the two groups over Fritz von Hörsten's presence at the meeting. The Afrikaanse Konferensie's delegation thought it unconstitutional for him to attend the meeting and requested that he leave the meeting. The delegates from the established Church balked at their request that he should leave resulting in the meeting reaching a deadlock (South African Union Conference Circular, 26 March 1973, HBCA). A year later the differences that had arisen between Fritz von Hörsten and some of the ministers of the Afrikaanse Konferensie had still not been resolved (Letter from JD Coetzee to MD du Plessis, 26 March 1974, HBCA).

D. The impact of the ecclesiology of the Church

Besides all the above-mentioned reasons given for the disintegration of the Afrikaanse Konferensie, there remains one final factor to be considered in the demise of this conference, namely, the psychological impact that the rejection by the established Church had upon the members and leadership of the Afrikaanse Konferensie. The reasons for this rejection was rooted in the ecclesiology of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. To understanding why this so strongly affected the Afrikaanse Konferensie it is necessary to reveal another dimension of the Seventh-day Adventist Church's missionary mandate. In the first chapter of the book of Revelation, Christ is pictured standing in the midst of seven lampstands (Rev.1:13). According to the historicist mode of prophetic interpretation, which the Seventh-day Adventist Church has adopted, it believes that these seven lampstands represent seven literal epochs stretching from the time of Jesus' earthly ministry to the time of His second advent. These seven lampstands are then paralleled to the messages given to the seven churches. The messages given to these churches are recorded in the second and third chapter of the book of Revelation. While the message to the Laodicean church embraces the professed Christian church in general, Seventh-day Adventists believe that this message applies to the Seventh-day Adventist Church in particular. In this scheme of prophetic understanding, the message to the seventh and final church brings to view the closing scenes of probation. It reveals a period of judgment and the final stage of Christian history just before the second advent of Christ (Smith, 1949:391). Seventh-day Adventists also believe that their Church has been given the responsibility to sound the final warning in this concluding period of the history of this world and that this task will not be given to any other church (From, 1971:629-631). With this kind of thinking entrenched in the minds of Seventh-day Adventists one can perhaps understand why so many, even though they were in full sympathy with the cause of the Afrikaanse Konferensie, hesitated to detach themselves from the Seventh-day Adventist Church and pledge their loyalty to an organization not affiliated or acknowledged by this Church.

The Church's leaders, as has been noted in the previous chapter, took full advantage of these interpretations and pressed this point home very emphatically throughout the years of conflict between itself and the Afrikaanse Konferensie. While it was, according to their doctrinal belief, the obligation of the Church leaders to safeguard the unity of the established Church, this endeavour undoubtedly overshadowed the pertinent issues that had developed in the Church and which should have been dealt with. The major part of the established Church's correspondence, however, during the conflict reveals an austere, and inflexible nature, focusing on the destructive nature of the "dissident organization" and the need to defend the unity and doctrines of the "True Church of God". Whereas the correspondence of the established Church was replete with threats of censure and disfellowship if anyone was found to be in support of the Afrikaanse Konferensie, seldom were there positive views on how the Church could deal with those dilemmas and bring about reconciliation.

This seemingly unsympathetic approach by which the established Church immediately went onto the offensive, demolishing and renouncing everything that the Afrikaanse Konferensie stood for, was in fact mentioned in some of the very first circulars of the Afrikaanse Konferensie after the walk-out at the Special Session in December 1968 (AK Omsendbrief, nr.7, n.d., p.1, HBCA).

All too often resolutions were taken at the upper leadership levels of the Church to keep the members of the constituency informed of the discussions, dialogues and decisions adopted in regard to the "dissident" group (South African Union Conference Minutes, 27 January 1971, HBCA). The declarations of the Church, however, dealt chiefly with the termination of support, the suspension of former workers, the withdrawal of credentials, the revoking of ministerial licences, denouncements of the mutinous activities of the breakaway group, admonitions that the activities of the Afrikaanse Konferensie were threatening the unity of the Church, and that the breakaway organization was bringing disgrace to God's cause.

Coupled with all the other reasons given for the decline of the Afrikaanse Konferensie, there was no way that, in this situation of conflict, disruption, negativity, fear and the doubt that had been instilled in many people by the established Church, that the Afrikaanse Konferensie could ever, in spite of the signs of growth in the early years of its existence, overcome the enormous barriers before it and reach a stage where it could really become a fully autonomous proactive organization.

Notwithstanding the problems and the unresolved issues that existed between the Afrikaanse Konferensie and the established Church, during the latter part of 1972, the trickle of persons moving back to the latter organization increased in intensity. In the case of some ministers such as J Cronje and FW von Hörsten, they brought almost their entire congregations, namely the Warmbaths and Randfontein churches respectively, over with them into membership of the organized Church.

Even though there were the "bittereinders" (die-hards) who resisted as long as possible, gallantly trying to hold together the shattered vestiges of what was once a powerful Afrikaanse Konferensie, the circumstances they found themselves in, namely the very rapidly shrinking membership, the irreversible financial position, and paucity of able leadership, made it virtually impossible for them to carry on. Although there was no formal resolution ever taken to disband the Afrikaanse Konferensie, by the middle of 1973, it was a totally spent force.

E. *The demise and the aftermath of the Afrikaanse Konferensie*

After the collapse of the Afrikaanse Konferensie and the return of the majority of its members into the established Church's organizations, Pastors, ANP Van den Bergh, PJ Retief, IJC Boshoff, FW Von Hörsten, J Kritzinger and JA Birkenstock also all eventually returned to the established Church and were

once again employed by the established Church. Karl Birkenstock, however, along with a small group of followers never returned to the Seventh-day Adventist Church (Letter from DF du Plessis to F Campbell, 30 April 1974, p.1, HBCA). This latter group altered the name of the Afrikaanse Konferensie to Die Suid Afrikaanse Hervorming and continued as a totally autonomous religious group (Interview with Dr Andre Ebersohn, 16 June 1997).

Even after the majority of people had decided to rejoin the Church, the established Church leaders were apparently still not satisfied that they had done enough to denigrate the Afrikaanse Konferensie and looked for a scapegoat upon which to heap all the blame for the events of the previous five years. In the end it appears that Pastor Josef Birkenstock bore the brunt of their arrows of retribution. The Church leaders demanded that he sign a declaration of guilt which they planned to publish in the Church paper (South African Union Conference President's Correspondence, Letter from F Campbell to WHJ Badenhorst, 3 May 1973. HBCA; Letter from WHJ Badenhorst to F Campbell, 5 November 1973, p.1, HBCA). Even though Birkenstock evidently did sign this declaration, it appears that it was never published in the Church paper.

In a letter addressed to JD Coetzee the Lay Activities Secretary of the Transvaal Conference at that time, DF du Plessis summed up his view of the five years of controversy between the Afrikaanse Konferensie and the established Church and its aftermath in the following manner:

Vir my is dit onnodig om te herhaal hoe pateties die oorgrote meerderheid as gevolg van die krisis in ons geledere opgetree het. Daar is bitter weinig betrokkenes wat nie dinge gesê en geskryf het waaroor hulle nie vandag spyt is nie of nog oor spyt sal kry nie. As ek ooit die onmenslikheid van mense en die onchristelikheid van christene ervaar het, dan was dit in die afgelope vyf jaar of meer. As ons hierdie betreklike geringe krisis so hanteer sidder ek vir die toekoms wanneer onsettende groter krisisse van ander oorde ons sal bedreig...

Dit is my heilige oortuiging dat alles nog nie gedoen is om hierdie saak reg te maak nie. Ek kry die indruk dat niemand juis omgee nie...Die skeuring wat verlede jaar in die Afrikaanse groep plaasgevind het, kan skaars as 'n prestasie vir een of die ander kant gereken word. Dit was 'n produk van 'n reeks eiesinnige flaters...

Kom ons vergeet maar ons Bybelkennis en ryk voorrade uit die Gees van Profesie om te bewys dat die Afrikaanse groep uit die bose is. Dit is 'n elk geval 'n afkeurswaardige taktiek wat die Fariseërs teen Jesus gebruik het. Die omsendbriewe wat in die verlede uitgestuur is, herinner my aan die materiaal wat ons gebruik het in die dae toe ek nog in die politieke joernalistiek was. Hoe harder jy die opposisie slaan, hoe heftiger raak hy

teen jou gekant. Kan ons nie in liefde, soos dit die kerk van God betaam, 'n brief aan elke persoon rig en hom of haar vra om weer saam te aanbid en werk nie? U weet dit is nog nooit gedoen nie. Ek weet nie of dit doelbewus of uit onkunde geskied het nie maar die mense is nog altyd laat voel dat hulle uit en uit heidene is wat moet terugkom na die kerk toe. Daar is 'n stigma op hulle geplaas en dit is nie deur liefde gemotiveer nie...(Letter from DF du Plessis to JD Coetzee, 6 Februarie 1974, pp.1-2, HBCA).

Translation: It is unnecessary for me to repeat how pathetic the larger majority behaved as a result of the crisis which erupted in our midst. There are very few who said or wrote things which they do not regret today or will still regret in the future. If I have ever experienced the callousness of people and the unchristianlike spirit of Christians, it was then in the past five years or more. If this seemingly minor crisis was handled in this manner, I shudder for the future when crises of much great magnitude will threaten us from other directions...

It is my honest conviction that not everything was done to set things right in this situation. I get the impression that nobody really cares...The schism that occurred last year in the ranks of the Afrikaans group, can hardly be seen as a achievement for any of the groups involved. It was a product of a series of wilful blunders...

Let us forget about our Bible knowledge and our abundant information from the Spirit of Prophecy to try and show that the Afrikaans group was a product of evil. It is in any case a reproachful tactic that the Pharisees used against Jesus. The circulars that were sent out in the past, remind me of the information that we used in the days when I was still involved in political journalism. The harder you smash the opposition, the more intense his retaliation becomes against you. Can we not in love, as behoves the church of God, direct a letter to every person and ask him or her to once again worship or work together. You know that this has not yet been done. I do not know if this has been done intentionally or in ignorance but the people have also been given the impression that they are heathens through and through who must return to the church. There has been a stigma placed upon them that has not been motivated by love...

Even though the Afrikaanse Konferensie had ceased to exist and the majority of its members had returned to the organized Seventh-day Adventist Church (Omsendbrief van FW von Hörsten, 22 Maart 1973, p.8, HBCA) it becomes clear from Du Plessis' letter that the pertinent issues that had been raised by the

Afrikaanse Konferensie had not been solved. Many persons had rejoined the established Church, because of the dire circumstances which had brought about the demise of the Afrikaanse Konferensie rather than the Church having come up with equitable and positive solutions for the language issue in the Church. Soon after the break-up of the Afrikaanse Konferensie, in a letter to the Union President DF du Plessis expressed his dismay at the way events had been steered by the Church's leaders. A paragraph of his letter was worded as follows:

Die klimaks van my teleurstelling oor die wyse waarop die samesprekings sedert 20 Desember 1972 gevoer is, het op 20 Maart gekom. Ek gaan nie daaroor uitwei nie. U weet beter wat u siening omtrent die saak is en die omstandighede wat u gedwing het om op te tree soos wat u wel opgetree het (Letter from DF du Plessis to F Campbell, 30 April 1973, HBCA).

Translation: The culmination of my disappointment concerning the way the discussions have been steered since 20 December 1972, came on the 20th of March. I am not going to elaborate. You know better, what your views are concerning the matter and the circumstances that compelled you to react in the way that you did.

What probably disconcerted Du Plessis and no doubt many others as well was the superficiality of the negotiations and the self-righteous attitude of the established Church. Whereas it had, for almost five years, determinedly repudiated the arguments and balked at almost every proposal of the Afrikaanse Konferensie, once it became clear that this organization no longer posed any real threat, the doors of "reconciliation" and re-entry into the "true church" suddenly opened and the provisions to improve the lot of the Afrikaans-speaking believers in the Church suddenly materialized.

III. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

From the outset, the Afrikaanse Konferensie had set out to cater to the needs of Afrikaans-speaking people in very forceful fashion. Many people felt that this new conference had a legitimate cause and its membership grew very rapidly. It initiated a welfare society, opened up several geriatric centres, its own printing press and a correspondence Bible school. It also held, throughout the ensuing years, numerous evangelistic campaigns. By the beginning of 1973, however, the opposition and incessant pressure applied by the established Church and the severe problems that had emerged from within the ranks of the Afrikaanse Konferensie, swiftly contributed to its demise, with most of its members eventually rejoining the established Church.

The intended proposals by the Church leaders to foster the advancement of Afrikaans in the Seventh-day Adventist Church after the collapse of the Afrikaanse Konferensie were directed primarily in four directions, namely, in

the field of evangelisation, publications, welfare work and the training of Afrikaans-speaking ministers at Helderberg College (Circular from the South African Union Conference to all members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, n.d., p.2, HBCA).

Notwithstanding these moves taken by the Church leadership to improve the state of Afrikaans it became clear as time passed, that they proved to be feeble and ineffectual and it was not long before these proposals were put on the back burner with English still predominating in almost every aspect of the Church's work.

The unresolved issues in the Church with regard to the language and culture of the Afrikaner, though, were not destined to remain buried forever. Neither did the demise of the Afrikaanse Konferensie mean that the aspirations of many Afrikaans-speaking people to have an organization that would reach out with the Gospel specifically to the Afrikaners had vanished. It would, however, ultimately be the prevailing political climate in the early 1990s, the removal of the racial barriers that had existed in the Church, the subsequent admission of blacks into Seventh-day Adventist places of worship and into the educational and administrative institutions that provided the impetus for Afrikaners to once again voice their dissatisfaction that their language and culture was being marginalized.

CHAPTER FIVE
THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH
AND THE CHALLENGE
OF A MULTICULTURAL MINISTRY

I. THE ENDURING LANGUAGE DILEMMA

Twenty-five years have passed since the demise of the Afrikaanse Konferensie and the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa once again finds itself in a precarious position with regard to Afrikaans. Presently the circumstances surrounding the Afrikaner's language and culture in the Seventh-day Adventist Church could be considered decidedly worse than it was in the late 1960s. In the wake of the release of Nelson Mandela and the far-reaching changes that took place on the political scene in South Africa in the early 1990s (Ottaway, 1993:1), also came modifications and revisions of existing organizational and ecclesial structures in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Accordingly, discriminatory practices against black, coloured and Indian believers and the discernible racial barriers that had existed in the Church for so many years, began to rapidly break down. As a result many Seventh-day Adventist churches and institutions began to reveal more and more people of different races worshipping and working together.

This is where the dilemma of the Afrikaans language and culture once again became pronounced. Afrikaans had been the only medium of worship in many Afrikaans-speaking churches. With the influx of people, however, who could not understand Afrikaans, who often associated Afrikaans with the former oppressors of this country and who did not want to hear or speak the language, (Giliomee, 1997:12), a precarious situation once again presented itself. As the influx of black, coloured and Indian believers into former white churches grew, pressure was applied, albeit indirectly in most cases, on many congregations to modify their language policy from an Afrikaans to an English medium. While many Seventh-day Adventist churches have accepted the language transformations and have accommodated the non Afrikaans-speaking members, other churches in various parts of South Africa have reacted very strongly against this (Letter from Pastor Gerhard Visser, 19 February 1997, In author's possession). In some churches this has become a source of grave uncertainty, unhappiness and frustration (Letter from Wernie de Lange to the president of the Natal-Free State Conference, n.d., p.1, NFSCA). This issue is discussed in more detail later.

At the beginning of 1995 a mass demonstration by students took place on the campus of Helderberg College in Somerset West. They emphatically demanded, amongst many other objections, that Afrikaans was to no longer be used as a medium for teaching at a tertiary level. An extract from their memorandum carried the following message:

Hail Helderberg! This has long been our song and motto, a place where dreams were meant to become a reality. Sadly our hopes were dashed by an attitude of noncommitment towards addressing long standing, legitimate grievances of the disadvantaged student population of Helderberg College...We hereby submit a memorandum which is a declaration of our grievances whereby we demand our right as students...

Language:

We demand that Helderberg become an English medium institution. This would mean that no lecturers should be allowed to address students in Afrikaans and all tests and examination papers should be written in English only. A response to this item must be obtained by 1 p.m. Monday afternoon, and the results should be seen in the forthcoming examinations (Memorandum from the Helderberg College Student Core Group to the Helderberg College Board, 25 January 1995, HBCA). (See annexure 6, p.322).

Notwithstanding the pleas that materialized from some sectors of the Church not to permit a unilingual situation to take root at the College, the leaders of the Church undertook, because of what they termed "The polyglot composition of the student body at Helderberg College", to modify the language policy of the College (Board discussion of language chosen as instruction medium at Helderberg College, 22 May 1995, HBCA). Although the Helderberg College Board stipulated that other languages would be accommodated (Helderberg College Minutes, Mid-Year Meeting, 4 June 1995, p.29, HBCA) the changes at Helderberg College has been the cause of much unhappiness for many Afrikaans-speaking people in the Church (Letter from AM du Plessis, 28 February 1997, In author's possession). Dr. Bernhard Ficker a member of the Cape Conference Executive Committee addressed his concerns regarding the student protest and the language changes at Helderberg College as follows:

Ek skrywe om my diepe besorgdheid uit te spreek oor die huidige gebeurtenisse ten opsigte van die effektiewe eliminerings van Afrikaans by Helderberg Kollege, grootliks as gevolg van die betogende teologie studente wat hulself die "Core Group" noem...Die taalbeleid van die Kaapse Technikon maak volledige voorsiening vir die behoeftes van die Afrikaanssprekende student en die Afrikaanse gemeenskap. Helderberg Kollege se taalbeleid daarenteen is direk 'n ontkenning van die plek van Afrikaans op die kampus en die regte van die Afrikaanssprekende student. Die gevolg is dat die Afrikaanse student deur hierdie Core Group geviktimizeer en ge-intimideer word as hy/sy dit durf waag om 'n vraag in Afrikaans te vra (Brief aan die voorsitter Kaapse Konferensie Uitvoerende Komitee, 28 Julie 1995, pp.1-3, CCA).

Translation: I write to express my deep concerns about the present occurrences with regard to the effective elimination of Afrikaans at Helderberg College, chiefly as a result of the protest actions of the theology students who call themselves the "Core Group"...The language policy of the Cape Technicon makes full provision for the needs of the Afrikaans-speaking student and the Afrikaans community. The language policy of Helderberg College, however, directly denies a place for Afrikaans on the campus and the rights of the Afrikaans-speaking student. As a result the Afrikaans student is victimized and intimidated by the Core Group should he/she dare ask a question in Afrikaans.

An Afrikaans-speaking graduate from Helderberg College related that he refused to read *The Helderberg Student* (College paper) and that he had changed his intentions to support the College financially in the future because of the language changes that had taken place (Letter from Pastor HF Steenberg, 2 May 1997, p.28, In author's possession). Another member of the Church also reacted strongly to the modification of the language policy which he considered to be "a travesty of justice". He also felt that the language prohibitions was unconstitutional and therefore contestable in a court of law (Fax from Hano Bekker, 'Remarks regarding current language dilemma at Helderberg College', n.d., p.1, HBCA).

The language dilemma that materialized at Helderberg College in 1995 was envisaged almost ten years before, by Pastor Fritz von Hörsten who had joined the Afrikaanse Konferensie in 1968. In a letter to Dr. David Birkenstock, the rector of Helderberg College, Von Hörsten expressed his deep concerns about the way events at the College had been steered and how Afrikaans had once again being marginalized. A part of his letter expressed his apprehensions as follows:

Dit is vir my duidelik dat die pad waarop u voortgaan met betrekking tot die opleiding van werkers vir die groot veld van Suid Afrika, by sy einde gekom het. Ek en baie ander van my geloofsgenote sien hoe u u in 'n cul de sac vasgeloop het sonder dat u dit werklik besef...In my verduideliking sal ek u vra om 'n bietjie geduld met my te hê. Ons gaan in die geskiedenis van Helderberg ongeveer 25 jaar terug...Ek was aangestel op die komitee vir tweetaligheid te Helderberg, en op die eerste vergadering van die komitee het 'n personeellid die volgende emfatiese verklaring gemaak "Helderberg College will remain an English institution forever"...Ek probeer kortgaan. Daardie bestaande komitee vir tweetaligheid te Helderberg Kollege het nooit weer gesit nie...Vandag staan ons ongeveer 25 jaar later. En wat ek nou wil sê, moet asseblief nie vertolk word as besorgheid oor 'n taal nie...Nee my en my broeders se besorgheid is oor die WERK VAN DIE HERE wat in ons land klaargemaak moet word. Daarom dan hierdie dringende skrywe vandag aan u.

Kom ons doen saam 'n ontleding en evaluasie van die huidige stand van sake op Helderberg Kollege, na 25 jaar van tweetaaligheid...HELDERBERG IS FEITLIK TERUG WAAR HY 25 JAAR GELEDE WAS. En al oplossing wat ek vandag vir die probleem sien, is dat daardie besluite van vroeëre jare herroep en Helderberg weer VOLKOME ENGELSE INSTITUSIE verklaar word (Letter from FW von Hörsten to Dr Birkenstock and Staff of Helderberg College, 29 Januarie 1987, pp.1-2, Letter in author's possession).

Translation: It has become clear to me that the road upon which you are journeying with regard to the training of workers from the great field of South Africa has come to its end. I and many other of my fellow believers see how you have wandered into a dead-end without realizing it...In my explanation I ask that you be patient with me. We go back in the history of Helderberg about 25 years ago...I was appointed on a committee for bilingualism at Helderberg, and at the first meeting of the committee, a staff member made the following emphatic statement: 'Helderberg College will remain an English institution forever'...I will try to be brief. That standing committee for bilingualism at Helderberg College never met again...Today we find ourselves about 25 years later. What I am about to say must please not merely be interpreted as a concern about a language... No, my brothers and I are concerned about the WORK OF THE LORD that must be completed in our country. Therefore the reason for this urgent letter to you.

Let us together analyze and evaluate the present state of affairs at Helderberg after 25 years of bilingualism... HELDERBERG IS ALMOST PRECISELY WHERE IT WAS 25 YEARS AGO. And the only solution that I today see for the problem is that the decisions that were taken in the early years be revoked and Helderberg once again be declared AN ENTIRELY ENGLISH INSTITUTION.

The answer which arrived some two months later from Birkenstock, was in many ways reminiscent of the disparaging and intimidating correspondence that had emerged some twenty years before in the conflict between the established Church and the Afrikaanse Konferensie. Part of his letter read as follows:

Wanneer 'n mens so 'n brief vol oordrewe en opruiende stellings ontvang, dan is daar twee gevare. Eerstens om die brief te ernstig op te neem en te veel daarin te lees, of om die brief af te maak as iets wat van 'n stommerik afkomstig is wat in 'n droomwereld leef, ver verwyder van die werklikheid...In my studies in administrasie is daar altyd aan ons gesê dat wanneer 'n mens so 'n soort brief ontvang, dan moet 'n mens let op die outeur, die segsman en poog om te bepaal wat sy eintlike motiewe

is, en wat hierdie persoon self bereik in die saak wat hy so kragtig ondersteun. Ek het wel so 'n analise gedoen maar ek gaan nie daaroor uitwei nie want dit raak u noodwendig as persoon.

Die groot droom - hoe duidelik onthou ek nog die vooruitsigte, hoe u vir die Afrikaanssprekendes sou werk en vir hulle in die bresse sou tree - maar daarvan het nie veel gekom nie. Die frustrasie van die verydelde drome en ideale word nou op ander geprojekteer en hulle word die sondebokke vir die huidige toestand van die "werk van die Here". Miskien het die beelde van doodloopstrate (u samesyn met die Afrikaanse Konferensie) en grafte (aftrede) ander toepassingsmoontlikhede as net op ons...Nadat ek u brief sorgvuldig deurgelees het, moes ek myself afvra of hierdie jongste poging van u nie 'n laaste wanhopige poging is om êrens grootheid en roem te verwerf nie, om die verlore glorie terug te win deur ander af te takel. Is dit weer 'n bedekte Afrikaanse Konferensie aksie, dreigement of net 'n droom? (Letter from D Birkenstock to FW von Hörsten. 13 Maart 1987, pp.1-6, Letter in author's possession).

Translation: When one receives such a letter replete with exaggerations and inciting statements, two dangers emerge. Firstly, to take the letter too seriously and to read too much in it, or to disregard the letter as something coming from a stupid fool living in a dream world, far removed from reality...In my administrative studies we were told that when one receives such a letter, that one should always take note of the author, the spokesperson and try to determine what his real motive was and what that person desired to achieve in the matter that he so strongly promoted. I did carry out such an analysis but hesitate to elaborate because it affects you as a person.

The great dream - how clearly I remember the prospects, how you would work for the Afrikaans-speaking people and would step into the breach for them - but very little came of it. The frustration of shattered dreams and ideals are now being projected on others and they become the scapegoats for the present state of the "work of the Lord". Perhaps the images of dead-end streets (your association with the Afrikaanse Konferensie) and graves (retirement) could apply to others apart from us...After I had read carefully through your letter, I needed to ask myself whether this latest endeavour of yours is perhaps not a last despairing attempt to gain eminence and fame, to gain lost glory by depreciating others. Is it perhaps a covert Afrikaanse Konferensie action, or threat, or just a dream?

In spite of the Birkenstock's insistence that there were no grounds for Von Hörsten's allegations, Helderberg College did in actual fact, as the latter had predicted, become unilingual, with deep concerns coming from the constituency that the College was not catering adequately for the training of Afrikaans Seventh-day Adventist workers. At the present time not only have explicit sentiments arisen among Afrikaans believers of the Church to initiate an Afrikaans College elsewhere to train and cater for the tuition of Afrikaans-speaking Seventh-day Adventist students (Letter from Josef Birkenstock, 9 March 1997; Letter from EA van Eck, 18 March 1997, Letters in author's possession) but there are also indications that have emerged that perhaps the creation of an Afrikaans conference will be the only avenue that will help to solve the problems that have arisen in the Church (Letter from Bernhard Ficker to Dave Allen, 15 June 1995, CCA).

The present situation of Afrikaans publications in the Church is also causing concern. A number of years ago the Sentinel Publishing Association was compelled, under great financial duress, to cut down drastically on its staff employment and curtail much of its operations (Pantalone, 1996:130). As a result of this, many of the Church's books, journals and magazines are being printed overseas, once again tilting the balance of available literature in favour of English. There is at present, as far as could be ascertained, only one part-time Afrikaans translator employed by the Church, with complaints emerging once again from certain sectors that the quality of the translations of the Bible lessons from English into Afrikaans are not of a very high standard.

On an organizational level, the situation in the Church is even more enigmatic. Following the example of the South African Union Conference and the Southern Union, which became an amalgamated union in 1991, the Oranje-Natal Conference also merged with the Natal field to form one multiracial conference in 1994 (ONC Special Business Session minutes, 13 November 1994, p.112, NFSCA). The two remaining white conferences, namely, the Transvaal Conference and the Cape Conference have, however, resisted all attempts thus far to bring about an amalgamation with their black and coloured counterparts (Message from the RS Folkenberg to Matthews Bediako, CompuServe.COM, Monday 21 October 1996, HBCA). While the situations in these two conferences are extremely complex and the reasons why they do not wish to amalgamate, multifaceted, inherent in this dilemma is once again the unmistakable fear of the minority Afrikaans group of being swamped not only by the strong English-speaking segment but also by the proportionately larger black group of believers in the Church (Letter from Bernhard Ficker to Pastor Dave Allen, 15 June 1995, CCA). These concerns and apprehensions of many Afrikaans-speaking people in the Church who will do everything in their power to preserve their language and culture which they perceive to be under a threat of being eradicated, has understandably also intensified the dilemma that is presently facing the Church.

As the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa stands on the brink of the 21st century there is no question that it is being faced with questions and

challenges of immense magnitude. In view of the problems that have arisen in the past with the Afrikaanse Konferensie and the enduring cultural and linguistic dilemma that is still facing the Church today, how is the Church to minister effectively in the multicultural context in which it finds itself? The answer to this question is not only important so that the Church can avoid any repetitions of what transpired between itself and the Afrikaanse Konferensie in the past, but also so that the primacy of Scripture can be re-established and that the Church will truly fulfil its the missionary obligation to reach to every nation, tribe, language and people with the everlasting gospel that it claims to be preaching.

Because this study has up to this point dealt specifically with an Afrikaner dilemma that materialized within the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and because this is undoubtably one of the more challenging and crucial concerns facing the Church at present, the reflections and arguments developed will ultimately focus on how the issues relating to the Afrikaans-speaking community in the Church can be resolved. The broader impact of this study, can, however, not be avoided. It has implications, **firstly** for the existing organizational structures of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa, enquiring whether they are effectively meeting the divergent needs of the present pluralistic society. It asks whether these structures are giving church members the scope to become active participants in the process of nation-building in South Africa, and whether they are empowering Seventh-day Adventist churches in South Africa to become more effective communicators of the Christian message in a multicultural and multilinguistic context.

The **second** crucial issue that is raised by this study, is the process of contextualization, indigenization and inculturation of the Seventh-day Adventist Church's form of worship, its liturgy, its evangelistic endeavours, the content of the messages that it preaches and the kind of literature it produces. Even though the Seventh-day Adventist Church came to South Africa from America over 110 years ago, serious concerns are once again being expressed about its foreign character and that the Church is still in its modes of operation, Bible readings and administrative structures merely reproductions of those in America.

The **third** and final issue that this study brings to the fore is the vision of the Church for the future. How should the Church of the future be and what significant contributions should the Seventh-day Adventist Church make for the people of this country? This vision will obviously not only have to take into account the many challenges that the Church faces, but it has to take steps further both in the directions of short-term and long-term operations, while making decisive changes in course whenever necessary. Part and parcel of this vision is also that of the language medium of the Church. The issue whether the administrative, ministerial and educational work of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa should continue to be conducted primarily in English or whether languages of the other ethnic groups in this country should be used, cannot be evaded or unilaterally determined.

After considerable deliberation on the conflict between the Afrikaanse Konferensie and the established Church, and the multicultural dilemmas prevalent in the Church in South Africa, it appears that the reasons for the development or evolvment into this state of affairs are predominantly fourfold: firstly, the inadequacy of the Church leaders to be able to deal effectively with cultural issues; secondly, an a-cultural view that prevails in the Church; thirdly, the power of perception with regard to Afrikaners and their language; and fourthly, a reticence that exists in the Church in South Africa to emulate overseas paradigms. These four issues will now be discussed.

A. *Inadequacy to handle cultural issues*

The responses, reactions and attitudes regarding the exigencies in the Church, were and are still revealing a serious lack of specialisation and discernment of how to best deal with such situations. At the height of the controversy between the Church and the Afrikaanse Konferensie, the correspondence of that time reveals that it was largely misunderstandings and misinterpretations by the Church's leaders that had permitted the situation in the Church to deteriorate to such an extent of detriment (Memorandum by Edwin de Kock 'Proposed solution for a grave problem in the Church', n.d., p.1, HBCA).

All too often when the Church leaders are confronted with the term "culture" whether it be "African", "Afrikaner" or any other culture for that matter, there is still a very strong disposition among many deliberators to assume that it refers simply to those more obvious expressions, symbols, forms of life, or behaviour characterising a particular national or ethnic identity. Culture is also identified as the social heritage of particular groups and nations which binds them together and gives them their identity. Culture is also understood to be a social construction, normally developed over a long period of time, involving an inheritance of shared values, languages, customs, beliefs and worldviews. While these opinions of culture all undoubtedly have their place, they overlook some of the most important contemporary challenges and complexities which discussion on these issues should address and which are also covered by this term. While these perceptions may characterize some meanings of the word, the concept is much more fundamental and has an intricacy which reaches much deeper than many persons would care to admit.

There is sufficient evidence to show that in societies where power is unequally distributed, and where the controlling group has a distinct culture, that cultural patterns can very easily become hegemonic. This means that other cultures are either suppressed or turned into "ethnological curiosities", often leading to the development of counter cultures of power and protest. Gustavo Gutierrez makes the point that unless the intrinsic worth of a cultural group to whom the gospel message is being related is fully acknowledged, "evangelization" can very easily be viewed as a guise to subjugate them (In Neely, 1995:8).

The failure of the Church to adequately comprehend the deepest issues on culture, and in this particular case the Afrikaner culture, has of late once again not only become a tremendous barrier to the spreading of the Seventh-day Adventist message to the Afrikaans-speaking community of this country but has also been the reason for renewed conflict. When considering the issue of culture in particular, it is worthwhile to take note of what transpired in the Newcastle Seventh-day Adventist Church in 1995. For many years before, although this church was predominantly Afrikaans, it had been accommodating English as well as Afrikaans-speaking believers. At the beginning of 1995 Zulu-speaking church members began to attend the Newcastle church in increasing numbers (Letter from Wernie de Lange to the president of the Natal-Free State Conference, n.d., p.2, NFSCA). At a Church Board meeting a resolution was taken, apparently out of fear that the Afrikaans church would be taken over by the Zulu believers, to open an English-medium church at another location in Newcastle where the Zulus could worship. At the next Church Business Meeting, however, where the Church Board's resolution was discussed, the plan to start this new English medium church for the Zulu believers was rescinded.

In the light of the revocation, a group of Afrikaans-speaking believers worshipping in this church requested, seeing that an English-speaking church was no longer going to be opened, whether they could start a separate Afrikaans-speaking church instead. The latter motion was immediately turned down at the Church Business Meeting. Two reasons were given: firstly, the Church Board felt that racism played a role in the desire to begin a separate Afrikaans-speaking church, and secondly, because the Church Board felt that the church in Newcastle was providing adequately for the needs of Afrikaners.

Almost immediately after the above-mentioned request to start an Afrikaans-speaking church was turned down, a group of these Afrikaners then decided to organize themselves into a separate church group where they met every weekend for worship some distance from Newcastle on a farm in Normandien. What followed, sadly evolved, as at the time of the Afrikaanse Konferensie, into vociferous and heated debates between the "Normandien group" and the existing "Newcastle group", followed by attempts to take disciplinary steps against those who had unofficially left the church to worship as a separate group (The Normandien Issue, A report by Pastor Danie Potgieter on the conflict in the Newcastle Church, 20 November 1996, p.1, Document in author's possession). Mr Wernie de Lange who was among those who joined the Normandien group disclosed some of the antagonism and intimidation projected against them. Part of his letter read as follows:

Op dieselfde vergadering was dit uiteindelik deur die voorsitter aangebied dat die afstigting van 'n Afrikaanse groep om die ongelukkigheid onder lidmate en om alle mense swart en wit die geleentheid te bied in Newcastle om self te besluit by watter gemeente hulle die gemaklikste voel, aan die president voor te lê. Ek is later deur die voorsitter ingelig dat dit onder geen

omstandighede deur die president goedgekeur word nie en dat daar minstens dertig mense moet wees voordat dit oorweeg sou word. Die feit is dat daar ernstige intimidasie van lidmate was deur die voorsitter en lidmate wat die afstigting teenstaan op grond van dat daar geen behoefte bestaan nie en dat dit 'n suiwer rassistiese motief sal veroorsaak, dat lede van daardie groep nie erken sal word deur homself en die Konferensie as SDA's nie, en dat hy weier om hulle te bedien as leraar en as 'n splintergroep beskou (Letter from Wernie de Lange to the president of the Natal-Free State Conference, n.d., p.5, NFSCA).

Translation: At the same meeting it was actually suggested by the chairman that the separation of an Afrikaans group be laid before the president, because of the unhappiness that had arisen among the church members and also in order to give all persons, black and white in Newcastle an opportunity to choose at which congregation they felt comfortable. I was later informed by the chairman that it would under no circumstances be approved by the president and that there had to be at least thirty people before it would be considered. There was in fact serious intimidation of the members by the chairman and those who oppose the separation on the grounds that no need exists in this regard and that it would introduce a purely racial motive which would result in the members of that group not being acknowledged as Seventh-day Adventists by himself and the Conference, and that he refuses to minister to them and would regard them as a splinter group.

In a letter written to the Executive Committee of the Natal-Free State Conference by a church member who had joined the Normandien Group, an objection was made against the charges of racism and the disciplinary action taken against this group by the Newcastle Church. Part of the appeal was worded as follows:

Ure se samesprekings met die komitee het dit baie duidelik uitgeklaar dat ons nie rassisties is omdat ons 'n behoefte het om binne ons eie taal en kultuurverband ons godsdiens te beoefen nie. Ek erken dat die behoefte vergroot het nadat 'n derde kultuur in ons gemeente betrokke begin raak het. Verstaan my asseblief baie mooi, ek het dit ook baie duidelik op 'n gemeente vergadering gestel in die teenwoordigheid van die geagte President dat ek nie my kultuur verhef bo enige ander kultuur nie, en dat ek ook nie sê dat slegs my kultuur reg is. Ek vra slegs vir 'n atmosfeer van aanbidding waarmee ek gemaklik is en waarmee ek al die jare groot geword het. Dit is egter afgemaak as rassisties op die betrokke vergadering (Letter from Mrs S. Pheiffer to the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Natal Free State Conference, 18 Oktober 1996, p.1, NFSCA).

Translation: Hours of dialogue at committee level made it quite clear that we are not racists because we have a need to practice our religion in our own language and in our cultural context. I admit that this need has augmented since a third cultural group became involved in our congregation. Please understand me very well, and I have also made it clear at a congregational meeting in the presence of the honourable President, that I do not elevate my culture above any other culture and I do not say that only my culture is right. I only ask for an atmosphere of worship that I am comfortable with and one in which I have grown up. However at the specific meeting this was brushed aside as being racist.

Although the issue at the Newcastle church was, far more complex and prolonged, it can be seen from what has just been stated, that there was once again a failure or a reticence to understand, to listen and to take into consideration the deeper cultural and linguistic needs of the Afrikaner church members. Unlike the situation in America and elsewhere in the world whereby Church leaders are ostensibly encouraging means whereby minority groups can be accommodated on the basis of language and culture, the church leadership in South Africa enigmatically view the request for adequate provision for the needs of the Afrikaans-speaking members as a tool or a means of perpetuating apartheid and as rebellion against the authority of the Church. The importance of the discussions concerning the topic of culture cannot be overemphasized. Messengers of the gospel cannot merely have a knowledge of the message they may be wanting to convey, but also need an increased awareness of the total environment of their listeners before they will be able to communicate effectively. The communicators need to learn before they can tell, and listen to their hearers before they can speak.

B. An a-cultural view of the church.

As the Church faces these tremendous challenges, because of the long habits instilled into Western thought patterns, there is also an inclination for the Church leaders to think in terms of "dualities". In this dualistic thought mode, issues under question are often distinctly atomized, differentiated from what they are not, with differentiations usually turning into sharp distinctions and distinctions often developing into opposition and confrontations. Taking cognisance of what has occurred in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa in the past and the problems that it faces at present, it appears that what has just been stated constitutes the very core of the dilemma. The Afrikaner culture along with Afrikaner nationalism has been perceived by the Church as something fixed and outside of the Gospel. Coupled with this has been the fear that in the process of accepting or recognizing Afrikaners as a people coming from of a separate cultural group that the identity of the Church and its unity would be lost.

The inclination for many people in the Church to think in this a-cultural fashion still prevails today, with the conviction that Christian identity will be tainted if it is integrated with cultural and nationalistic issues. In the minds of many Seventh-day Adventists there is an understanding that when people join the Church that they should lay aside their culture and that their culture, whether Afrikaans, English, Zulu or Xhosa should no longer play any part in their lives.

C. The power of perception

To many people the word "Afrikaner" conjures up the worst thoughts of racism, violence, race prejudice and herrenvolkism. In similar fashion the term "Boer" has also become synonymous with the most outrageous forms of political meanness. The Afrikaner nation has often been regarded as an anachronism, a people emanating from an antiquated era with worn out theological ideas, a people with a laager mentality that no longer fit in with the contemporary society in which we are living. Many people still call Afrikaners "hairy-backs" or "rock spiders" (Van Wyk, 1991:77). De Klerk describes the stereotyping of Afrikaners in the following manner:

The negative stereotype of the Afrikaner, created early in his history and built up over the past three decades, is the image of the malevolent Boer. British travellers during the earliest British reign, missionaries before and during the Great Trek, and the British press during the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902) built up a caricature of the Afrikaners as a self-contained group, essentially primitive, obdurate, heavily conservative and slow to think and act. They were described as a closed community, a second-rate and backward Dutch tribe in Africa who, in their isolation, rationalized their prestige by feelings of superiority over blacks because they were God's chosen people. In later years this stereotype was formulated in more civilized and hypocritical terms. It still implies, however, that the Afrikaners as a group maintain themselves by, and benefit from, a pitiless system of apartheid suppression and that, more or less, all Afrikaners perceive reality blinkered by this ideology (De Klerk, 1984:6).

Whereas some of these perceptions probably do characterize a certain segment of very conservative Afrikaners in South Africa, these kinds of generalizations badly misses an understanding of the Afrikaner people and has also been a tremendous barrier to the furtherance, development and growth of the church work amongst Afrikaans-speaking people in this country. At the height of the controversy between the Church and the Afrikaanse Konferensie in the early 1970s, the Church Board of the Orange Grove Church in Johannesburg not only expressed its views on the situation but also simultaneously disparaged the Afrikaanse Konferensie with the following remarks:

Why should we be concerned about avoiding friction? If our handling of the matter from the beginning had been firm and not the weak and vacillating compromise that it has been, there would be no problem today. Friction has been generated by the renegade faction who are prepared for any course of action, however reprehensible, to win their ends. It would be dangerous to underestimate the feelings of the euphemistically labelled 'English Churches'. We do not feel that any change in organization is necessary or advisable and do not feel that the Union or Division really has a mandate for this change. We wish to stand together in finishing the work of God and not play with the politics of a lunatic fringe minority. We are not intrinsically interested in nationality, feeling rather that it is more important to be first a Seventh-day Adventist. May we beg of you to stand firm. Maintain that which was committed to you in dependence on God! Remember that although we are unequivocally opposed, as a Church Board, to compromise with these heretics or racially biased schisms, we pray that you may be given the grace to be worthy of the hour to which God has called you (Memorandum from the Orange Grove Church Board to the president of the Transvaal Conference, 18 February 1971, p.1, HBCA).

Even though almost three decades have since elapsed, the pejorative attitudes adopted towards Afrikaners in the Seventh-day Adventist Church has not really altered. In the early 1990's the Cape Conference, the Good Hope Conference and the Southern Conference, the white conference, the coloured conference, and the black conference respectively, were all involved, together with a Merger Task Force, in an exacting process of trying to merge these three separate and autonomous conferences into a single organisation. In October 1996, during the Cape Conference Session held at Hartenbos, the decision to amalgamate with the black and coloured conferences was outvoted by the delegates. Even though this study cannot enter into all the details of the attempts to bring about the merger and the debacle which followed, what must be stated is that the primary reason given by those opposed to the amalgamation, was the financial implications of such a move. All three of those conferences were at this time experiencing severe financial problems and concerns were expressed that it was not an auspicious time for major organisational changes to take place. As a result of the financial exigencies that it was facing, the Cape Conference had already taken the decision to reduce its personnel and not to increase the salaries of its workers (Letter from Dr. Bernhard Ficker to the president of the Cape Conference, 25 January 1997, pp.1-2, CCA; Memo to Cape Conference session delegates, n.d., pp.1-12, CCA; Verslag van Hendrik Barnard Tesourier van die Kaapse Konferensie, Julie 1995, CCA).

Although the term "Afrikaner" was not used directly in the backlash that followed the decision of the Cape Conference not to merge with the other conferences, a number of spokesmen stated that the decision of the Cape

Conference was solely an attempt to preserve apartheid and the compromises suggested thereafter simply a shrewd way to retaining discriminatory practices against people of colour (Letter from Bernhard Ficker to Pastor Bradfield, 19 March 1995, p.1, CCA).

The strongest words of condemnation, in the light of the failure of the Cape Conference to merge with the other conferences, came from Robert Folkenberg the General Conference president of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. In a message to his deputy, Pastor Matthews Bediako, who attended the 1996 session at Hartenbos, Folkenberg clearly spelled out that the clinging to racial separation prohibited the merger. Part of his message read as follows:

What tragic news you have given me. It's heartbreaking to see ever-present signs of the evil one at work. I had so hoped that the constituents of the three conferences in the Cape area would vote to merge. It seems to me that, with you and Don Robinson present, the union should seek legal counsel to find out if there are steps that can be taken to advise the government of the union's disappointment with this decision and explain our church ecclesiology [sic]. There could be merit to this given what I understand is (or will be) the unconstitutionality of an organization that insists on being divided along racial lines. Should any sanctions be forthcoming from the government they should fall only on the entity that insisted on being racially separate. (Compu.Serve COM, Monday 21 October 1996, 01:06:33, From RS Folkenberg, Subject: Re: Report of Today's session).

The above-mentioned views expressed by Folkenberg and a subsequent visit that he undertook to South Africa several months later at the beginning of 1997, during which he once again strongly expressed his conviction that the amalgamation process of the remaining conferences should proceed without delay, have greatly incensed certain persons and communities in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, especially in the strongly Afrikaans orientated Transvaal Conference. In a letter addressed to Pastor Garth Bainbridge, the President of the Cape Conference at that time, Dr. Bernhard Ficker expressed his objections against Folkenberg's actions in the following way:

Pastor Folkenberg states that "should any sanctions be forthcoming from the government they should only fall on the entity that insisted in being racially separate". Is he not possibly being racist by instigating such actions whereby only one specific conference is to be targeted? I am not aware of any conference insisting on being racially separate. At one stage the Cape Conference voted by a more than 90% margin to merge. There is thus no way it can stand accused of insisting on being racially separate. The church leadership is now falling into the same trap as many racists by accusing everything they don't like as being racist...

He writes that the government must be consulted in order to "explain our church ecclesiology". Could Pastor Folkenberg kindly explain to the CC Executive exactly what ecclesiology he wants explained to the government? Possibly the most serious matter is his accusation relating to the "signs of the evil one". The implications is that all those church members who voted against the merger are furthering the interests of "the evil one", i.e. the devil (Letter from Bernhard Ficker to Garth Bainbridge, 25 January 1997, p.1, CCA).

D. Reticence regarding overseas paradigms

One of the most paradoxical features in the conflict between the established Church and the Afrikaanse Konferensie was the overt opposition given to various modes of operation envisaged in South Africa which appear to have been implemented with a good measure of success in Seventh-day Adventist conferences elsewhere in the world.

This is not an imaginative or novel discovery and was quite emphatically brought to the fore by persons such as Edwin de Kock during many of the debates between the established Church and the Afrikaanse Konferensie. De Kock recorded that because of the strong presence of both German-speaking and French-speaking Seventh-day Adventists in Switzerland, not only had separate language conferences been created but also separate publishing houses and training centres for German and French workers had been built to accommodate the diverse cultural and linguistic needs that existed in that country. These views centring around the organisational structures adopted by the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Switzerland has been authenticated in Seventh-day Adventist literature (*Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, volume 10, 1976, pp.1446-1449, HBCL).

If separate language conferences attending to the specific needs of the distinct cultural groups has been allowed to flourish in the Seventh-day Adventist Church work in Switzerland, and perhaps also in other parts of the world, the question is, why then was it so adamantly opposed by the Church leaders in the 1960s when the Afrikaans-speaking people requested that such an arrangement also be considered in South Africa? This issue will be discussed at length later in this chapter.

**II. PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS FOR RESOLVING THE
AFRIKAANS CULTURAL DILEMMA IN THE CHURCH**

A. The Seventh-day Adventist Church and the cultural challenge

After having taken note of what has transpired in the Church in the past and also taking cognisance of the challenges that it is presently facing, there is no question that a task of immense magnitude awaits its leaders. At the same time though the conviction also prevails that it will be the responses

of the ordinary church members, together with those of the Church leaders, to these crucial issues that will determine whether they will be stumbling blocks or become stepping stones.

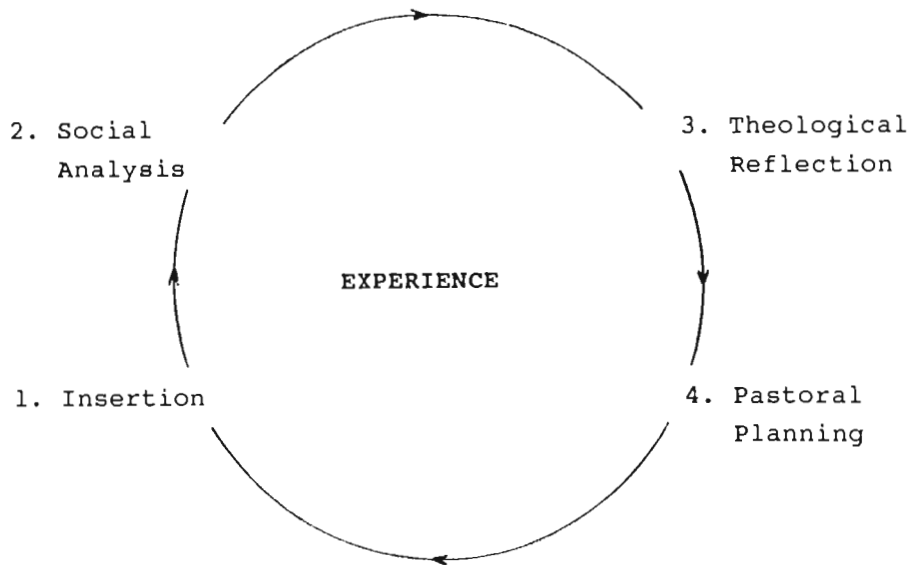
Emanating from the challenges facing the Church, two kinds of responses can probably be anticipated. These challenges could elicit a theoretical response. This response engenders an attitude or stance whereby the circumstances in which the Church finds itself are viewed in a dispassionate, detached and abstract manner. The results and findings gleaned from a study of this nature will, with such an attitude, be "stored away" with the greatest care not to cause any disruptions to the present situation that the Church finds itself in.

A pastoral response in strong contrast to the theoretical response entails a committed and pragmatic endeavour aimed at dealing with the issues in question. This view very seriously takes into account the Church's *raison d'être* and explores the reality of the circumstances existing in the Church from an engaging, historically committed stance, discerning the present situation for the express purpose of trying to work toward the much needed solutions for the dilemmas it is experiencing. Crucial questions emanating from a response of this nature ask: How are the necessary changes going to be best brought about? What transformations need to take place within the higher levels of the Church's organisation and at local church level, so that those changes can be practically implemented? In my capacity as a Gospel minister in the Seventh-day Adventist Church and as person exercising academic freedom, the following plan is submitted which would hopefully contribute to supplying some answers to the exigencies that exist in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa at present.

B. *The Circle of Praxis*

A hermeneutical framework called the "circle of praxis" of which the above-mentioned pastoral response forms an integral part should first be examined. The concept of praxis, the ongoing relationship between critical reflection and action, was developed in Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and was later related to what has become known as the hermeneutical circle. This method was later explored in great detail by Jean Luis Segundo (Segundo, 1977:7-13). The circle of praxis has also been referred to as the pastoral circle. In order for the Church to successfully overcome its dilemmas it is obviously going to have to go beyond the mere examination of a theoretical framework and will have to enter into a situation of deliberation, planning and dedicated hard work from many people before the answers for its many challenges are found. Although this hermeneutical framework is usually encountered within the context of liberation theology, the four movements existing within this circle of praxis could also be both very enlightening, informative and pragmatic for a study of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the multicultural context in which it finds itself at present. In diagrammatic form, this pastoral circle is usually outlined as follows:

THE PASTORAL CIRCLE



Before beginning to analyze and explain each constituent element in the circle of praxis, emphasis must be made on how crucial it will be for the above undertaking to be initiated at ground level. The organisational structure of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa has of late not only been criticised for being administratively top-heavy but also because far too many decisions taken for the direction in which the local churches themselves should operate appear to be coming from the higher levels of the Church's organizational structure (Van Zyl, 1990:101; 'A Historic and Pragmatic Look at the Organization of the Seventh-day Adventist church in South Africa', IJ Van Zyl, n.d., p.44-48, EGWRC). Peter Drucker states that the most common and most serious symptom of malorganization is multiplication of the number of management levels. Every additional level, he continues, makes more difficult the attainment of common direction and mutual understanding. Every additional level distorts objectives and misdirects attention. Every link in the chain sets up additional stresses and creates one more source of inertia, friction and slack. A basic rule of organization, he concludes, is to build the *least possible* number of management levels and forge the shortest possible chain of command (Drucker, 1974:546).

The implementation of programmes at grass-roots level is one of the primary reasons for the phenomenal growth of the churches in Latin America (Brennan, 1990:30-32). While bishops and priests act as catalysts for the growth of the liberation movement, its dynamism is provided by the people themselves as they meet in local communities which are known as *comunidades de base* (ecclesial base communities). In the space of ten years, as these people from all walks of life met together to pray and to study the Bible in the light of their own social reality, their numbers grew to over one hundred thousand (Sigmund, 1990:177). What is also very important, is that these ecclesial base communities not only provided the very necessary pastoral care, but through these established groups, the people began more and more to perceive themselves as the people of God, dynamically active in the work of the church.

1. Insertion

The initial movement in the circle of praxis is insertion. This first step is imperative for any church taking its missionary endeavours seriously. This step accentuates the process whereby the church locates the geography of its pastoral responses in the lived experiences of the individuals, peoples and communities it hopes to reach with the gospel message.

Only in this manner as the Christian community "inserts" or "implants" itself among the people to whom it wishes to witness, can it really survey, authentically appreciate and embrace the existing social, cultural and linguistic practices. Furthermore, only as the church undertakes this step, can it take deeper cognisance of what the people are feeling, what experiences they are undergoing and how they are responding to the various cross-currents in a particular society.

There are many Christian churches in South Africa, the Seventh-day Adventist Church included, that have allowed themselves to fall into the rut of "long distance ministry" - a practice akin to that of the ruling church during the Middle Ages, which for a long time was characterized by a spiritual life removed from the so called "worldly" or "secular" concerns of society.

The second and third chapter of this study has already accentuated the fact that the Seventh-day Adventist Church not only failed to properly understand or address the deeper needs of the Afrikaner's language, history and culture, but that it also continuously tried to drive a wedge between them and their *sitz em leben* - the environment into which many of them were born, and one which undergirded their worldviews, the one in which they had been educated, and the one to which they were accustomed and comfortable to worship in.

In the first chapter of this thesis a conscientious attempt was made to stress the birth and deep-rooted development of Afrikaner consciousness, the growth of their language, the reality of Afrikaner Christian nationalism and importantly, also the direct involvement and support of an Afrikaner church. Can these inherent peculiarities then, which are more than often at the very core of an Afrikaner's being and family life, simply cease to exist or no longer be of importance when an individual becomes a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, or any other church for that matter? It was pointed out that some Church leaders believe and maintain that this should happen and that culture and the so-called "fixation" with a language should be dismissed from one's experience when a person becomes a Christian.

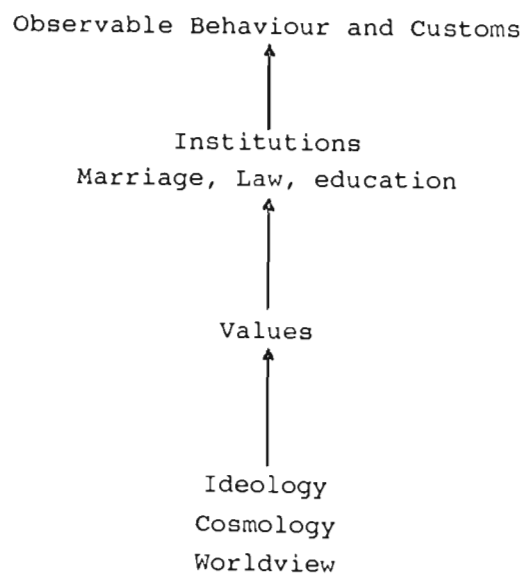
The history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church both in regard to the experiences of, the Dutch believers at the turn of the century and then that of the Afrikaners in the 1960s, showed that people could not simply become cultureless or pretend that their identity, history, language and distinctive worldviews no longer had any influence upon their lives or their thinking when they joined the Church.

At the base of this extremely complex situation in the Church is that culture has been viewed solely as those observable or outward forms of behavioral patterns, namely the way that people dress, the food they eat, the way they worship, the language they speak, their art, technological skills, and the customs and traditions they revere. Charles Kraft states that many people still think of the term "culture" as referring primarily to artistic or philosophical expertise or even to good manners and other accoutrements of the "upper" social classes (Kraft, 1981:45)

During the last number of years many scholars have gone to great lengths to show how extremely limited this kind of thinking has been, maintaining that in those observable patterns of life, lie the factors, the values, the ideologies and the worldviews that drive or compel people to react, respond, or operate in ways that are different to that of peoples from other cultural groups (Dakin, 1994:17-23; Neely, 1995:4). Carson & Woodbridge (1993:2) describe culture as an objectification, and expression of the "spirit" of a particular people who inhabit a particular time and place, while Carl Henry delineates culture as "an undergirding of life and reality that preserves its reality" (Quoted in Carson & Woodbridge, 1993:2).

According to Donald Bloesch (1968:177) culture is the divinely appointed means for men and women to realize their humanity. Kraft argues that the ability to produce, bear and transmit culture possibly provides the sharpest distinction between humans and animals (Kraft, 1981:47). Hesselgrave & Rommen (1989:53) have demonstrated culture diagrammatically in a 'layers of culture' paradigm with the observable facets at the top and the worldview not only as the foundation, but also as the factor that makes everything above it a reality:

LAYERS OF CULTURE



Hesselgrave (1978:68) teaches that culture is a plan, according to which society adapts to its physical, social and ideological environment. Shorter (1988:5) states that culture is essentially a transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a pattern capable of development and change, belonging to the concept of humanness itself. He continues by saying that if religion is a human activity or a human phenomenon it must affect and be affected by culture.

Dakin (1994:18) maintains that culture involves the whole of human creation and is expressed through norms of behaviour which are linked to an underlying system of values and beliefs. Neely (1995:4) asserts that culture is a unique plan for living a purposeful, harmonious and successful life. Luzbetak (1988:156) states that culture is not only a map or a blueprint for living but also a code for action, survival and success in life that is always in the process of formation and adjustment. In *Kultuurgeskiedenis van die Afrikaner*, it is stated that there is a powerful spiritual link between culture and a particular locale to which an individual or community is exposed and explains culture as a "totale verskynsel" (comprehensive phenomenon) encompassing all human labour and activity (Van den Heever & De Pienaar, 1950:34-35). Wolfhart Pannenberg says that culture is closely related to language, which is itself one of the elements of culture. As in language, he states, man creates an artificial world in culture in order to make the diversity of nature's manifestations controllable (Pannenberg, 1974:21-22).

In *Sanctorum Communio*, in which Dietrich Bonhoeffer undertook an exhaustive investigation into the social structure of the "fellowship of the saints" he states, even though he never actually employed the term "culture", that Christian doctrines can never be adequately understood unless they are directly related to the social dimension or the communities in which they emerge (In Godsey, 1958:26). Leslie Newbigin corroborates these thoughts of Bonhoeffer when he states:

Human beings only exist as members of communities which share a common language, customs, ways of ordering economic and social life, ways of understanding and coping with their world...If the gospel is to be understood, if it is to be received as something which communicates truth about the real human situation, if it is as we say "to make sense" it has to be communicated in the language of those to whom it is addressed and has to be clothed in symbols which are meaningful to them (Newbigin, 1989:141).

What makes this entire process of language and culture in the Seventh-day Adventist Church intricate and the solutions even harder to achieve, are the separations and the division of opinion that exist with regard to culture between Afrikaners themselves (Letter from AM du Plessis, 28 February 1997, In author's possession). When referring to Afrikaners in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, it cannot simply be assumed that they are a homogeneous group with analogous objectives and needs. At present, as in the political

sphere of the mid 1960s and in the years of the Afrikaanse Konferensie, it is Afrikaners themselves that are often locked in conflict with each other over the issues of language, culture and Afrikaner nationalism. In the thinking of the one group, the Seventh-day Adventist Church in this country, its structures, administration, institutions and modes of evangelism are considered to be alien, and far removed from the authentic experience as Afrikaners. The adherents of this group continually remonstrate that key issues such as their language, culture and distinctive needs have been taken for granted, and perpetually press for reforms and strive to have an Adventist faith and form of worship established with an Afrikaner inclination.

For the other group of Afrikaners, which strangely enough, not only always appears to be in the majority, but which also very often produces persons that occupy positions of leadership in the Church, the issues under question such as cultural plurality, nationalism and an attachment to a language are often considered as peripheral and subsequently regarded as of no consequence in the life of the Christian. In much of their thinking, being an "Adventist" takes precedence and any hint or a suggestion of cultural diversity in the Church is slighted and opposed in the strongest way possible.

After taking note of these profound dilemmas in the Church, the process of insertion needs, therefore, to also be an educative step, with the Church and its leaders having to possess a far deeper cognisance and appreciation of the development of all the varying aspects a particular cultural group such as language, history, culture and worldview. In this case, in order for the Church to be able to successfully overcome its present dilemmas with its Afrikaans-speaking members, a thorough transformation needs to take place in the thinking of people at all levels. No longer can the Church ignore the fact that cultural and religious pluralism is a social reality in South Africa (Lubbe in Prozesky, 1990:209) and that evangelization in this context, in order to be more effective, is going to require a far more sensitive and tolerant approach. Fritz Guy states that the time has arrived for the Seventh-day Adventist Church to see its role not as being a holy elite, but as helping, healing members of communities. The emphasis, Guy continues, needs to be shifted away from separation to participation, from fear of contamination to a desire to be helpful, from withdrawal to involvement (Fritz Guy, *Spectrum*, v.25(4), p.25, June 1996).

Neither can the Church ignore the fact that Christianity began as a cross-cultural process and transmission across cultures has always been an integral part of the Christian faith (Dakin, 1994:22,41,46,58). The basic hypothesis here, is that effective Christian witness is only likely to take deeper root once the playing field between the various cultural groups has been levelled and once a mutual exchange of ideas has taken place between equals - which all church members are. Paul Tillich states that communication is a matter of participation and where there is no participation there is no communication (Tillich, 1959:204).

Afrikaners therefore, together with all the various cultural groups in the Church, must be acknowledged as a distinct cultural group with their own history, their own language and own diverse needs and aspirations. Bearing this in mind, it needs to be understood, therefore, that the Afrikaner's worldview, the manner in which they see themselves in relation to the world and the way that they relate the world to themselves, is very different from that of a Zulu, or an American. Likewise the manner in which Afrikaners worship and the value that they place upon their traditions, Afrikaans poetry and music, for example, cannot be appreciated or fully understood in the same manner by someone with a different worldview.

It is also imperative that the Church leaders taken cognisance of the seriousness by which many Afrikaner regard their language. While this characteristic is by no means unique only to Afrikaans-speaking people, the Afrikaner's language, which is so closely tied to the development of their history, is not only perceived to be the binding factor of Afrikanerdom, but is also regarded as that factor that sets them apart as a distinct cultural group. This is why it is so absolutely necessary for Afrikaans-speaking people in the Church to be able obtain literature in Afrikaans, for them to listen to sermons in Afrikaans and to read books and papers in their own language. Furthermore, they consider it essential that Afrikaans students be given the privilege to be taught in the language of their choice.

Speaking specifically on the issue of language and culture, Dakin maintains that although the truth as spoken by Jesus never changes, it is necessary to present the gospel in such a manner that any language barrier is transcended and that the hearers receive the truth in an accessible and acceptable linguistic form (Dakin, 1994:25). Günther Renck (1990:2) not only maintains that language is the most important tool in conveying the gospel message but also states that crossing cultural barriers also means crossing language borders. Hesselgrave (1989:161) maintains that the context of any communicative event is determined by the use of a specific language within the matrix of the culture with which it is associated. He continues by stating that language is the means of expressing and disseminating the content of a specific culture and functions as the primary vehicle of the reflective processes which generate the pool of shared knowledge that defines a given culture.

In this process of insertion it is equally as important for the Church, as it aspires to seek solutions for the cultural dilemmas that exist in this country, to take cognizance of what has transpired in other countries of the world where the Seventh-day Adventist Church has been confronted with cultural and linguistic diversity. While there are a number of examples that can be referred to, the most appropriate one, primarily because it was specifically cited during the Afrikaanse Konferensie years, is the Church's experiences with the German, French and Italian people in Switzerland. While one needs to take the different circumstances that existed between South Africa and Europe into consideration, and to understand that no single mode of operation will

work in all countries of the world, it is most intriguing to take note of how differently the mission work of the Seventh-day Adventist Church was planned and put into practice in these two countries.

John Nevins Andrews, the first SDA missionary sent to work in Europe (Jordan Devereaux, 1988:86), left America 13 years before the first SDA missionaries came to South Africa in 1887. However, several years before Andrews arrived in Europe, James Erzberger a young Swiss student who had made contact with some Seventh-day Adventists, had been invited to America to become better acquainted with the beliefs of the Church. In July 1870, after more than a year of intensive study in America, he returned to Switzerland as an ordained SDA minister. Erzberger was to labour for almost four years among his own people in Switzerland with considerable success, before he was finally joined by Andrews in 1874 (Knight, 1995:64-65; *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, 1996:728).

The method in which Andrews set about doing his work is most enlightening. When he arrived in Switzerland he immediately realized the importance of learning the vernacular of the Swiss people and producing literature in their own language (Schwarz, 1979:145). As a result, only a year later, in 1875, a Tract and Missionary Society was established for the purpose of strongly promoting the circulation of SDA literature in the language of the people of Switzerland. In 1876, a printing house, *Librairie Polyglotte* was established in Basel and an evangelistic journal in the French language, *Les Signes des Temps*, was printed and circulated throughout France, Italy and Switzerland (*Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, 1996:729-731). By the time that Andrews died in 1883, the languages in the which the Church was printing its literature also included Romanian, Italian and German (*Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, 1976:1447-1449). Besides learning the Swiss vernaculars, Andrews also made extensive use of the services of the Swiss believers, who were well acquainted with the local dialects and cultures, on much of his evangelistic endeavours throughout Switzerland, Italy and Germany (Schwarz, 1979:145-147; *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, 1976:509). While Andrews' untimely death at a relatively early age was a terrible blow for the Church its message had by then been firmly inculturated and a solid foundation had been laid for continuing the work in Switzerland and other parts of Europe.

Even though the work among the French-speaking people of Switzerland had initially appeared to predominate, in 1886, under the forceful leadership of Elder LR Conradi and Pastor Erzberger, the work was initiated in a very strong way among the German-speaking people as well. A year later in 1887, the first German converts were baptized and a German church was established in Zürich (*Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, 1996:512). As in the case of the French-speaking people who had received literature in their own language, Erzberger did a great amount of translating into German and a periodical, *Herold der Wahrheit* (Herald of Truth) and a number of other books were also printed specifically for the German-speaking segment of the population (*Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, 1996:730).

For the next fourteen years the French and German work of the SDA Church in Switzerland was administered by the Swiss Conference established in Basel in 1883. In 1901 mainly because of the French and German languages, the Church's work in Switzerland was divided into two sections. One became the German Swiss Conference and the other the French Swiss Conference. Although some territorial adjustments were implemented in the late 1920s and 1980s, these two conferences still exist. Both these conferences fall under the jurisdiction of the Euro-Africa Division with the French Swiss Conference attending to the various needs of the French and Italian people of Switzerland while the German Swiss Conference cares for the German and Romanish-speaking people (*Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, 1996:730).

Besides the 58 established SDA churches in Switzerland, there is also a 100 bed Sanitarium on the shores of Lake Geneva, a prosperous health food factory which exports food to over 21 countries outside Switzerland, two retirement homes, the one situated at *Oron-la-Ville* operated by the French Swiss Conference and the other located at Bernese Oberland operated by the German Swiss Conference. Both French and German literature is provided by denominational printing houses situated outside the borders of Switzerland, in Paris and Hamburg respectively. These printing establishments provide for all the literature needs of the various language groups in Switzerland. *Maison D'Édition "Les Signes des Temps"* the publishing house in Paris provides literature, tracts and books mainly in French, while *Advent Verlag*, the Hamburg publishing house, not only prints literature in German but also in 21 other languages (*Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, 1976:8). In similar fashion, the higher educational needs of the diverse language groups of Switzerland are also adequately taken care of by the *Séminaire Adventiste Du Salève* (French Adventist Seminary) and *Friedensau* and *Seminar Marienhöhe* (German SDA educational institutions) (*Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, 1976:483;1312;1314).

After having taken cognisance of the degree of success by which the SDA Church has functioned in Switzerland, how it has inculturated its message, and how it has for the past 100 years allowed for the existence of the various institutions to take care of the different linguistic, cultural, social and educational needs of the Swiss people, there appears to be no real grounds for the reluctance that has been shown in the Church in South Africa to allow the Afrikaner believers to have their own separate language conference, to establish institutions that will fulfil the educational needs of the Afrikaner, and to establish a printing house that will supply literature in Afrikaans. There is no reason, if such a need exists, why a paradigm based on the Swiss organizational structure cannot be emulated in South Africa whereby the work of the Church is subdivided into districts that will specifically cater for the various ethnic, cultural and linguistic groups of this country.

It is clear that before these changes could ever take place, or such plans set in motion, that a paradigm shift has to take place whereby the Church embraces a cross-cultural perspective in the place of a "cultureless" one. Furthermore,

in this process of insertion, the Church must not only count on the discretion and contributions made by theologians, but should also begin to rely upon the tools, the expertise and the findings provided by linguist specialists and the authorities in the field of the behavioral sciences, such as sociologists and anthropologists and also be willing to listen attentively to and learn from the Church members as well.

2. *Social Analysis*

Insertion, is only the initial step in this entire process and it is very necessary that the Church understand all four movements in the "circle of praxis" in the fullness of their interrelatedness. From the diagram on p.258 note has been taken that the second movement in the circle of praxis is that of social analysis. Holland & Henriot (1988:14) succinctly describe social analysis as "the endeavour to try and obtain a more complete or a more realistic picture of a specific social situation". Social analysis could also be explained as the realistic evaluation of the context, or the disclosure of the concrete life situation of a people or a community to whom the gospel message is being directed. Judging both from the kind of responses presented by the Seventh-day Adventist Church during its conflict with the Afrikaanse Konferensie, and also by the continued reluctance of the Church to become involved in an integrated, holistic or contextualized social ministry (Pantalone, 1996:184) the movement of social analysis is probably going to constitute one of its greatest challenges.

Right at the outset of such an inquiry it is important to bear in mind, that the process of social analysis or contextualization is not meant to provide a blueprint for action, but should rather unfold the context within which a programme for social change can be delineated. Because of the diverse and conflicting persuasions found amongst the Afrikaners and also because of the extremely complex structure of current South African society, the process of contextualization can become extremely intricate. What may perhaps be an accurate assessment of the prevailing context for Afrikaners living in a specific city or town in Gauteng for example, may be neither reliable, accurate or acceptable to another Afrikaner group living in a city in KwaZulu-Natal, or for that matter, for a town in the Cape. These complications, cannot be avoided, but the commonality is that all people, church members included, are radically social (Lane, 1984:2) meaning that they are inextricably linked to a social network of human relationships and always exist in affiliation to a community. What this really indicates, is that individuals, along with the various communities in which they live, are profoundly and unavoidably influenced, albeit in different ways, not only by their history, and their distinct cultural backgrounds, but also by the prevailing social, economic and political influences of the environment in which they are located.

The step of social analysis does admittedly appear at this stage to be only adding to the perplexities prevalent in the Church, and making the resolutions to appear to be even more remote. One of its chief tasks though, is to

engender a spirit or an attitude of critical reflection upon the prevailing social realities and to generate a process of dynamic dialogue between all involved.

Focusing once again upon the inflexible attitudes and actions that prevailed in the Church in the late 1960s, there is no question that there was a tremendous breakdown, both in the intolerant way the Church assessed the reasons for the conflict, and the extremely one-sided manner in which the discussions took place between the Afrikaanse Konferensie and the established Church. One is not for one moment suggesting that the Afrikaanse Konferensie was beyond reproach in all its decisions and actions. The possibilities cannot be ignored though that, if the Church leaders had perhaps responded to the dilemmas in a less dogmatic, uncompromising and contentious manner, if there had been a better understanding of Afrikaner history and the derivation of the Afrikaans language, if some of the Afrikaner's grievances had perhaps been acknowledged and assessed with a more open-minded and progressive perspective, and if the prevailing political climate of the mid-1960s had been taken into consideration, that the situation might not have deteriorated into such a lingering and bitter conflict.

In similar fashion, with the current political situation as it is in South Africa, together with the massive influx of blacks into South African universities, schools, churches and places of employment which were, in the not so distant past, almost exclusively reserved for whites, many Afrikaners find themselves in a tense situation as they perceive their identity and their language once again to be under threat. In the early part of 1997 a recommendation was tendered at the University of South Africa that a "baseline English policy" be implemented and that teaching in Afrikaans be abolished altogether (*Rapport*, 27 April 1997).

In addition to this, many Afrikaners have also become incensed by the writing of revisionist historians who have for the past number of years tried to invalidate what they regard to be "myths" in the rise and development of the Afrikaner nation. Thinking along these lines David Yudelman makes the following assertive statement:

The Afrikaner has been credited with a far larger role in the evolution of contemporary South Africa than he deserves. This is partly the fault of Afrikaner nationalist mythology, which has portrayed him as the divinely ordained protector of the values of Western Christian civilization and, like the American frontiersman, the hero of an epic story of pioneering survival (In Ken Smith, 1988:173).

In this process, the significance once placed upon dates associated with historical events such as the Great Trek, the Slagters Nek rebellion, and the Battle of Blood River, all of which have been given heroic and sacred significance by many Afrikaners (Creswicke, 1901:39; De Klerk, 1975:22;

Harrison, 1987:103; Bergh, 1988:100), have been strongly debated and have been subjected to intensive scrutiny from revisionists who contend that all of these occurrences were perhaps not as indicative as has been suggested by historians in the past. In a paper entitled 'Myths surrounding Blood River and the Vow' Professor Ben Liebenberg, argues that the significance of the battle of Blood River was blown up out of all proportion by earlier Afrikaner historians. He also dismisses the myth that Blood River symbolized the victory of Christendom over paganism (In Leach, 1989:10-11).

It soon becomes apparent from the profusion of literature which has emerged on the history of Afrikanerdom that there are varying schools of thought. On the one hand there are the academics, journalists and teachers who are, in their endeavours to create a more usable history, rewriting South African history "from below" (Beinhart & Saul, 1995:vii). As has already been pointed out, much of this recent rewriting has strongly challenged the settled or conventional views of Afrikaner history, and has argued, amongst other things, that Afrikaner nationalism and the drive toward Afrikaner nationhood only really became a reality with the Afrikaner political and cultural revival in the mid 1870's (Smith, 1988:59). Some have interpreted the rise of Afrikaner nationalism chiefly as an expression of class interest (Beinhart & Saul 1995:189), whereas other scholars and historians maintain that Afrikaner nationalism was an 'invention' that took place at some time between 1902 and 1924 and can be directly attributed, or have its roots in the social relations precipitated by industrialization or the spread of capitalism (Marks & Trapido, 1987:95). FA van Jaarsveld, a prolific writer of Afrikaner history over the last four decades has also pleaded in his *Omstrede Suid-Afrikaanse Verlede*, for renewal, maintaining that many historians have failed to do justice to an authentic history of Southern Africa (In Smith, 1988:166).

These liberal scholastic endeavours aimed at reinterpreting South Africa history along with the current undertakings to demythologize the rise of the Afrikaner nation has provoked a potent backlash from orthodox minded Afrikaners who interpret these strategies as an inherent part of a psychological warfare, aimed once again at rubbing the noses of the Afrikaner people into the dirt and depriving them of their nation, their identity and their freedom (Breytenbach, 1995:5-6). In his paper on *Afrikaner Volksbestaan* Professor Van der Wateren states that these aspirations to castigate the Afrikaner have not only transformed them into the "muishonde" (skunks) of the world but has actually placed Afrikaners into the same matrix as Nazis and Fascists (In Coetze, 1994:2). In reaction to these incessant attacks directed at the heart of Afrikaner history and the enormous changes that had taken place in the South African political arena, an Afrikaner Volkskongress was convened in Pretoria in November 1994 during which Professor AD du Pont opened the meeting with the following statement:

Die jaar 1994 was en is 'n krisisjaar vir die Boere-Afrikaner en aan die einde van hierdie jaar staan ons in baie opsigte met leë hande en vertwyfelde harte. Ons is vernederd, ons is verward,

want ons moes met slap hande toesien hoe ons stoflike en geestelike erfgoed van ons weggeneem is. Geweldig baie van wat ons en die geslagte voor ons opgebou het, is tot niet. Nou staan ons ook nog voor die werklikheid dat ons as volk, in die naam van versoening, hervorming, vrede en derglike, moet verdwyn as 'n eiesoortige volk. Oral word ons nou onder druk geplaas om te hensop en te verdwyn - so asof ons volk, sy geskiedenis en bestaan 'n vergissing was (In Breytenbach, 1995:5,15).

Translation: 1994 has been and is a crisis year for the Boere-Afrikaner and by the final part of this year we find ourselves in many respects empty and distressed. We have been humiliated, we are confused, as we have seen our material and spiritual heritage taken away from us. Much of what we and our forefathers before us have built up has been ruined. We are now also faced with the reality that we as a people must disappear, in the name of reconciliation, reorganisation, peace and equality. We are being placed under pressure in every possible manner to surrender and to vanish - just as if our people, our history and our existence was a mistake.

Hermann Giliomee deliberates at length on the political, economic and social transitions that have taken place in South Africa since the late 1980s, and the far-reaching transformations that have taken place within sectors of Afrikanerdom that were once averse to change and opposed to any form of power-sharing (Giliomee, 1997:5-14). There are, however, many who repudiate these liberal views. Many of these people refuse to compromise the history, religious faith, culture and language of the Afrikaner people (Van der Wateren, 1996:1), and persist in tracing the rise of the Afrikaner people as an unbroken process which began sometime in the middle of the 17th century (Coetze, 1994:12;15;16-18;21). There are also those who believe that God was instrumental in placing the Afrikaner nation in this country for a very specific purpose (Van Der Wateren, 1996:1; Coetze, 1994:11), and who still interpret Afrikaner history predominantly as a bitter struggle for self-preservation in the face of oppressive and hostile forces (David Bosch in Saayman & Kritzinger 1996:24). In *The Rise of the South African Reich*, Brian Bunting fuelled such thinking when he wrote:

For the Boers, the war [South African War 1899-1902] was the climax to a 'century of wrong', a century of British expansion, oppression and meddling which had finally goaded them beyond the limits of endurance. There rose up before them as they fought the memory of the past, of the colony which had been annexed, of the slaves which had been freed, of the Slagter's Nek rebellion and its martyrs, of the battle of Majuba, of the thousand and one defeats and humiliations to which they had been subjected ever since the British presence established itself in South Africa. For a while they had been able to escape from British

rule into the security of their own republics, but these too were threatened with destruction. Everything for which they had lived and struggled was endangered - their freedom, their language, their possessions, their racial supremacy, their very existence as an independent people with their God-given right to manage their affairs and their chattels as they pleased. The people of the two republics felt that the cup of their bitterness was too full to be borne. They threw themselves into the struggle feeling themselves ready to die rather than submit [square brackets added] (Bunting, 1986:11-12).

The audio and visual media in South Africa have likewise, because of the extended coverage recently afforded to the languages of other ethnic groups, also had to reduce the extensive coverage that Afrikaans programmes received in the past. Hennie Human writes that in 1991 Afrikaans programmes had about 50% of the total coverage time of TV1. By 1995 coverage time of Afrikaans on TV1 had been reduced to 15% while CCV and NNTV had almost no Afrikaans at all (Human, *Tydskrif vir Geesteswetenskappe*, 1995 2:2, p.234-240). *Rapport* gave some insight into plans that have subsequently materialized for the protection of Afrikaans language and cultural rights:

AFRIKAANSE GROEPE STAAN SAAM

Beskerming van gemeenskappe se regte moet in wetgewing vervat word. Verrassende vordering word deur 'n groot aantal Afrikaanse organisasies gemaak oor 'n voorgenome wet vir die beskerming van godsdiens, kultuur en taalregte. Na 'n byeenkoms verlede Saterdag in Pretoria heers daar groot optimisme dat 'n groot oorwig van Afrikaanse politieke partye en kultuurorganisasies hul gewig sal saamgooi om vroeg in Junie 'n enkele voorstel vanuit die Afrikaanse gemeenskap hieroor aan die regering te doen (*Rapport*, 27 April 1997).

Translation: AFRIKAANS GROUPS STAND TOGETHER

Protection of rights of communities by law. Surprising progress is being made by a large number of Afrikaans organizations concerning proposed legislation for the protection of religious, cultural and language rights. After a meeting last Saturday in Pretoria, optimism prevailed that the larger portion of Afrikaans political parties and cultural organizations would band together so that they could submit a single resolution from the Afrikaans community early in June to the government.

Certain demands with intentions to improve instruction in Afrikaans at schools have also arisen. Dr. CP van Aardt writes that these demands include: The use of Afrikaans as a communication medium; That written Afrikaans must be clear and understandable; That the Afrikaans that is taught must be functional; That

listening skills of students must be improved; And that Afrikaans must be established as a bearer of culture (Van Aardt, Karring, Lente 1995, p.2-4, 'Die Stand van Afrikaans', UNPMB).

Barbara Bosch from the Departement Afrikaans en Nederlands at Rhodes University investigated the contribution of Afrikaans in attempting to create a South African unity within a linguistic diverse community. She writes that although linguistic diversity will be a characteristic of the social make up of this country for several generations to come, that Afrikaans can greatly contribute to creating a linguistic balance in this multilingual environment (Bosch, *Tydskrif vir Geesteswetenskappe*, 1996 36(4), 'Afrikaans en die Afrikaanse Taalkunde: 'n gebalanseerde perspektief').

As in the years gone by, incidents such as those just mentioned have greatly influenced the views of Afrikaners within the Church. This is evident in some of the Church's recent correspondence. In August 1997 JH van Heerden, an Afrikaans-speaking church member from Bainsvlei, also addressed his concerns in regard to the state of Afrikaans in the Seventh-day Adventist Church as follows:

Ek is 'n Afrikaans sprekende Afrikaner wat trots is op my herkoms en my moedertaal is vir my 'n kosbare juweel. Ek het in die waarheid ingekom as Afrikaans sprekende en het geen probleem daarmee dat my kerk 'n kerk is van vele tale nie...Dit wil egter vir my voorkom asof, in lyn met die regering se neiging om my moedertaal te onderdruk daar 'n insypeling van gevalle engele in ons midde is, en al wat dit sal meebring is 'n gevaar van verrotting van binne af in ons kerk. Ek versoek u dus dat hierdie aangeleentheid onder ons kerkbestuur se aandag gebring moet word omdat die rooi ligte volgens my mening reeds duidelik begin flikker (Letter from JH van Heerden to the Bloemfontein Sentraal Church Board, 9 Augustus 1997, NFSCA).

Translation: I am an Afrikaans speaking Afrikaner, proud of my origin and regard my home language as a precious jewel. I came into the truth as an Afrikaans speaker and have no problem with a multilingual church...It does appear though, that in line with the government's determination to suppress my home language, that an infiltration of evil angels has occurred in our midst, which can only bring the danger of internal rot in our church. I petition you, therefore, to bring these events to the attention of our church's administrators, because to my mind the danger signals have already begun to flash.

In August 1997 the Bloemfontein Sentraal congregation addressed the Natal-Free State Conference with a number of concerns relating to Afrikaans in the Church. In response to Van Heerden's concerns, the Church Board requested that the following items be discussed regarding the newsletter of the Church:

- a) That Afrikaans should not be neglected and a good balance be achieved.
- b) That if someone submitted an article that it be published in the language used.
- c) That the president's message be presented in both English and Afrikaans.

The Church Board also requested that the conference give feedback to the Union with regard to the printing of Spirit of Prophecy books in Afrikaans (Letter from the Bloemfontein Sentraal Church Board to Natal-Free State Conference, 25 Augustus 1997, NFSCA). The Bloemfontein Sentraal Church Board explicitly requested that the items they had enumerated were to be discussed at the church business session of the Natal-Free State Conference in November 1997. For some reason not a single item on their letter was discussed at the session. Even though these concerns may admittedly initially appear to be pithy and isolated, and could very easily be written off as inconsequential, they need to be evaluated in conjunction with other Afrikaner grievances that have recently surfaced because of the elimination in practice of Afrikaans at Helderberg College and a growing absence of Afrikaans literature - a situation that is reminiscent to the period before the walk-out in Heidelberg in December 1968.

In the light of what has just been stated, and with the situation of the Afrikaner strained both outside and inside the Church, it becomes clear that the Church's involvement in a social ministry can no longer remain peripheral, optional or episodic. Kritzinger (1988:394) maintains that the real test of a religious community cannot only be judged by the number of converts it can attract but in the quality of its social involvement to all the people of the community in which it is located. Pittinger (1971:78) adds to this by saying that a community that is not affected in any significant way by the world and its influences, is a dead or dying community, concerned only with its own affairs, and, like all entities which are not open, is moving towards its own demise.

3. *Theological Reflection*

Notwithstanding the imperativeness of examining the movements of insertion and social analysis, the ultimate goal of the church should always rise above the endeavours to establish culturally acceptable churches, and to meet its obligations in enacting a socio-critical ministry. Both of these can so easily merely become means to an end and the church should reflect primarily on what is God's missionary mandate for the church. In other words, what God ultimately expects from the church in the social and historical reality in which it finds itself.

No theologian, even armed with the Word of God, can claim an indisputable point of view on Bible matters. Neither is any church immune to a conflict of interpretations of Scriptural texts. Only as the church takes the third step and tries to re-establish the primacy of Scripture, and engages both in

biblical and cultural hermeneutics, will it be able to move away from a pedantic existence that has been dominated by a spiritual and missiological mediocrity. Then it will rediscover and bring into operation the living spiritual resources of the church, and finally arrive at the place where the church stands up for the dignity of all people regardless of their race or cultural background. Only then will all its institutions be able to effectively serve all the diverse peoples of this country.

Both in the Old and New Testament, God's purpose for his people clearly involved a proclamation and a realization of a total salvation, one which covered the whole spectrum of human needs, and one which also involved the proper restoration, not only of man's relationship to God, but also between sexes, generations, races and even between humankind and nature. This is what might be essentially called, living spirituality, where the church no longer moves along an intolerant pathway of exclusivity. This is where spirituality and church unity is no longer interpreted as an introverted cultivation of one's own precious soul, but reaches a point where its goal encompasses love for both, close and distant neighbours - a love that take the form of a real struggle for justice and freedom for all people on all social levels. Living spirituality also means that the church must be willing to take the risk of what Karl Rahner calls, "a vocation of 'open church'" (Rahner, 1974:93). The latter is not merely alluding to the fact, Rahner states, that the church's institutions and places of worship must allow unrestricted access to all persons, but refers more specifically to a radical transformation that needs to take place in the narrow, restrictive, sectarian mentality of many churches today. A situation of this kind may arise in a church when the far greater majority of such a church withdraws itself either intentionally or in practice from public life or society, only to see around itself, a world given up to evil (Rahner, 1974:93-95).

It was never the Seventh-day Adventist Church's intentions to place itself in this position. However, because of the manner in which it has interpreted its theology, its calling and its missionary mandate, an exclusiveness has taken root in the minds of many of its members. Because it has designated itself as the only "true, remnant church of God", a rift has subsequently developed between itself and "Babylon", with all those who do not belong to the former group regarded as intruders or enemies. This kind of fortress mentality became all too evident in the Church's conflict with the Afrikaanse Konferensie. This was revealed in its hypersensitivity to the criticism that had arisen within its own ranks, to the censure that was directed against its leaders and also in its call for solidarity in order to stand up to the adversaries of the Church.

Building upon Karl Rahner's sociological categories of "open" and "closed" churches, Gerald Arbuckle has listed the following major differences between them:

OPEN CHURCH

Integrative/challenging/
enabling

Encourage feedback to
respond to new needs
in the light of the group's
mission

Encourage integration of
planning and implementation

Decisions for actions are
hypotheses, open to review
by all groups in the light
of experience

Encourage atmosphere that
is goal/mission orientated;
challenging, informal

Manage through supportive
use of authority, i.e.
encourage experimentation,
learning from errors,
tolerance of ambiguity

Encourage communication
at all levels

CLOSED CHURCH

Assumption of omniscience-
omnipotence

Control the feedback process to
guarantee authority

Discourage interaction between
planning and implementation

Decision for action are final
unless plans and changes are made
by top officials

Foster an atmosphere that is
status-quo orientated

Manage through fear, thus
discouraging experimentation
and enabling

Communication is one-way:
downward (Arbuckle, 1993:27).

The concept of "open church" does, of course, not mean that the church cannot challenge or confront those who deny its fundamental beliefs and dismiss its teachings as irrelevant. The church must out of necessity always speak an unambiguous language to repel heresy that may rise in its midst. This final statement must, however, be qualified. When boundaries of this nature are set it must unequivocally always be a question of doctrines, or it must be expressly stated what is involved. In other words, the theological qualifications of such declarations must be explicitly clarified. There is also a second point. When with authority the church fulfils its task in speaking out against heresy, the proclamations are very often vague and ineffective in practice. The decisions taken by the church should therefore never appeal to the formal teaching authority of the church or its extra-biblical writings, but should be made to the power of the living spirit of faith, always striving to substantiate the particular dogma from the Word of God, the innermost centre of Christian faith. Unless it is substantiated from this conviction, the very defence of the dogma itself becomes an argument against the teaching authority of the church in general.

This of course brings to the fore the issue of critical biblical hermeneutics which should form the foundations for a living biblical religion. The church should ever strive to be a hermeneutical community, constituted by the Word of God and enlivened by the Spirit. The Spirit thus becomes the enabling power that ministers the Word and renders it effective, not only by interpretation and explanation (orthodoxy) but also by application (orthopraxis) not only by hearing but also by doing. In an endeavour therefore, to understand more broadly and deeply the analyzed social and cultural experiences in the light of living faith, the Word of God must be brought to bear critically and concretely upon each situation, raising new questions, suggesting new insights, and continually opening up avenues for new responses and approaches.

In the light of this, the Seventh-day Adventist Church should seriously reflect once again upon the various biblical texts upon which it has built its theology of mission. One such text is the three angels' messages found in the fourteenth chapter of the book of Revelation. In this text the emphasis of the Seventh-day Adventist Church has perhaps been more upon content rather than context, and upon the attributes and distinctive qualities of the messenger, or the carrier of the eternal gospel (the church) and its "prepackaged" message rather than on how the "nations, tribes, tongues and people" can most effectively be reached with this crucial message (*Seventh-day Adventist Believe*, n.d., 152-169).

On the issue of cultural, ethnical and linguistic diversity, this text is one of enormous significance. The late David Bosch very poignantly characterized a missionary or bearer of the gospel, as a servant crossing geographical, cultural, political and linguistic frontiers (In Mazibuko, 1990:7). By implication this understanding appears to be singling out the fact, without depreciating the role of the messenger, that each nation, tongue, tribe and people must be reached with the gospel through the cultural medium, language, and thought patterns that they best understand and are most familiar with. This is supported in Scripture by incidents such as the one that took place on the day of Pentecost, with each disciple, after they had been filled with the Holy Spirit, addressing the Parthians, Medes, Elamites and a host of other nationalities in their own language and dialect (Acts 2:1-11). Without denying or violating the cultural trappings in which it was couched, the truth of God's revealed plan of salvation was presented to and understood by representatives of an amazingly diverse group of cultures (Hesselgrave, 1989:172). A number of years later when Paul preached his Mars' Hill message to the people of Athens he responded with a contextualized message. Beginning with the listeners' frame of reference (polytheism), he urged them to turn away from empty and useless idols to the living God who had already been revealed to them in nature. Paul was saying that although general revelation gives true knowledge of God, it is not the gospel message. The final step in the apostle's argument was that God sent His Son for their salvation (Acts 17:16-31).

The most powerful example that could be cited, however, is the incarnation of Christ (Padilla, 1985:83). The gospel of John records that the Word [Christ] became flesh and tabernacled with humankind (John 1:14). Bosch states that Jesus ministered, lived, and thought almost exclusively within the framework of first-century Jewish religious life and faith (Bosch, 1991:20). He dressed as they did. He attended their functions. He worshipped in the places where they worshipped. He spoke their language. He was part and parcel of the culture of the time. Most importantly He rooted His messages and parables in the idiomatic expressions, metaphors and illustrations that they were familiar with. Imitating the story of Jesus therefore, must ultimately lead not only to a style of life characterized by humility, love and service but also to a practice that moves away from a "wait and see" existence to a position that focuses upon all the cultural and linguistic trends of a particular society.

Besides reflecting on the issue of language and culture in the Bible, it is also imperative to examine what the Word of God says about unity. Seventh-day Adventists have tended towards a concept of unity in terms of like-mindedness, and a very specific like-mindedness at that, viz. holding to the same biblical teachings. Adventists like to think of themselves as a world church held together by a set of doctrines or fundamental beliefs upon which there is perfect unity. There is a sense in which such a concept of unity is very attractive, giving a comforting sense of security and belonging in an increasingly problem-ridden, divided and alienated world.

What precisely is the biblical concept of unity though? One of the primary texts employed by the Church leaders during the controversy with the Afrikaanse Konferensie to explain and support their interpretation and concept of unity was taken from John 17:20-21. In this text, Jesus prayed expressly for the kind of unity that must exist amongst His followers. He prayed that His followers might become one, as He and His Father are one. Several thoughts emanate from this text. The emphasis of Jesus in this text was very clearly not upon organizational unity, but rather upon the spiritual oneness of Christians resulting from their agreement on the basic truths of the Bible and their fusion with Christ.

We thus brought to an understanding that the Seventh-day Adventist interpretation of unity brought about by holding the same teaching is not entirely incorrect. This text also underlines the fact that the gospel cannot be authoritatively proclaimed by a disunited church. This text, however, does not for one moment rule out diversity. Neither does it imply that people are to deny their origins, their language and their culture. It seems to be underscoring, rather than negating the obligation for believers from diverse backgrounds to become united. Duane Elmer (1993:26) elaborates on this text by stating that the oneness among Jesus' followers is given expression after the unity that is found within the Trinity, which is in itself marked by diversity, a distinction of functions and roles, and yet characterized by perfect unity. Saayman corroborates what Elmer says and states that the unity of the church is a given fact founded on and giving symbolic expression to the

unity found within the Trinity (Saayman, 1984:15). The disciples of Jesus were, therefore, to mirror this diversity and distinct functions and also at the same time experience the unity under the banner of the Trinity.

In reality there is a great amount of diversity in the Christian church. Diversity though, is not all bad. Because the church is big enough to allow differences of opinion, neither do people have to spend time and energy pursuing others and trying to push them into established moulds. Cottrell states that true unity cannot coexist with imposed uniformity. The two, he continues, are no more compatible than matter and anti-matter. Sooner or later the imposition of this kind of uniformity in religious and culturally motivated matters is certain to fracture the unity of the church and destroy the effectiveness of its mission to the world (In *Adventist Today*, v.5(1), p.15, Jan/Feb 1997).

When the Bible speaks about the redeemed at the end of time, when sin has been eradicated and the earth made new, it seems once again to be emphasizing the diversity of the nations that enter the new Jerusalem, with each of these nations "bringing into this city their own glory" (Revelation 21:24). This verse appears to suggest that the Chinese people, along with those from Greece, Papua New Guinea, Indonesia and all the redeemed people of God throughout the ages, will all bear and keep their own distinctive cultural and ethnic identity.

As the spotlight is once again focused upon the missionary mandate of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the diversified multicultural society in South Africa, its obligation should be to follow the examples as set out in Scripture and endeavour to contextualize and indigenize every aspect of its ministry in the social, cultural and linguistic patterns of the people it wants to reach with its messages. Neither must the growing pluralism and cultural diversity in the South Africa be viewed as a threat. Its obligations to all the diverse people of this country should also include the Afrikaans-speaking people in the Church. Should the Church continually fail in this obligation or continue to refuse to grant the Afrikaans believers in the Church, along with all the other linguistic and cultural groups, their fullest rights to worship, and express themselves in the language of their choice, the Church can no longer claim that it is fulfilling its missionary obligation to be reaching all the people of this country.

4. *Pastoral Response*

The implications of all three facets dealt within the circle of praxis are far-reaching. Even these steps would, however, remain abstract and futile if the Church did not take the final step by implementing a pragmatic programme of pastoral action by which the various cultural and linguistic groups could be effectively reached with the gospel.

a. *Rediscovering the importance of the local church*

Considering the problems and dilemmas that the Seventh-day Adventist Church has experienced in this country and the immense challenges that it is still facing, it appears that the only safe way to go into the future, is to give local churches the freedom and creativity to set community based programmes in motion that will most effectively meet the diverse cultural, linguistic and social needs of the communities in which they are located. In Acts 20:20 it is recorded that the early Christians met "publicly and from house to house", implying perhaps that the local churches must once again be given the autonomy to determine what responses are being called for and just how those responses should be designed and implemented.

Because every community has its own needs and challenges, each church located in the various communities should also develop their own distinctive mission statements. Nichols states that on the basis of Acts 1:8 and the records of the early church, that every church, regardless of size or geographical location, should have a world view and assume responsibility for its own Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria (Nichols, 1986:89). In lessons learnt from some of the best-run companies in America, researchers have discovered that the most productive organizations are very often the ones that facilitate and encourage autonomous behaviours (Peters & Waterman, 1984:216).

Fritz Guy also argues for broader representation in the decision-making of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. In order for this to be implemented, Guy states that decision-making needs to be moved away from the organizational centres. He believes that people at a local church will be more likely to support plans and decisions which they themselves have helped to make. He continues and says that in most cases, plans implemented at a local level will be more workable and the decisions better informed (Guy, *Spectrum*, v.25(4), p.25, June 1996). In this proposed reorganisation there is no longer a place for a traditional prepackaged theory or an inflexible course of action prescribed by a higher body for each and every church. In a paper on the issue of change in the Church, Tom Norris states that the Church leaders must acknowledge that neither the nineteenth nor the twentieth-century paradigms are working, or will ever work in the twenty-first century and in order for Adventism to survive, urgent changes are going to have to be implemented (Norris, 'The Future of Adventism' 19 November 1997).

While tradition is not necessarily wrong, it must be meaningful rather than mere ritual, and should allow churches in their various localities to tailor their own pastoral planning to meet the different social, spiritual, physical and economic needs with which they are confronted. According to Bosch & Kritzinger (1990:380) it is essentially in the local church's *martyria* (witness), *leitourgia* (prayer and worship), *koinonia* (fellowship) and *diakonia* (service) that the universal church should discover its true existence. A healthy church cannot only maintain current programmes and facilities but must focus on growing ministries that impact upon people's lives.

Seventh-day Adventism was introduced as an established institutionalized religious movement to South Africa. Even after 110 years the present system of church administration has remained a duplicate in almost every aspect of its parent denomination in America. Not only have these foreign structures been extremely costly to maintain, but have also to a great extent prevented the Church in this country from developing structures and institutions that are culturally and linguistically consistent with the South African milieu. Neither has the Church, after all these years developed into a self-supporting and self-governing organization.

Even though the Seventh-day Adventist Church is located in this country, the ultimate decision making centre remains in America. This predicament is not unique to the situation in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa. In other parts of the world there is evidence that changes are urgently needed in the structural organization of the Church, and it appears that church members outside North America are also beginning to resent what they consider to be "colonial aspects of Adventism" (Sickler, *Spectrum*, v.25(4), p.39, June 1996).

The issue of change in the Seventh-day Adventist Church has been very pertinently addressed by Barry Oliver in a Ph.D. thesis completed at Andrews University in Michigan. Dealing with the reorganization of the Seventh-day Adventist Church at the beginning of the 20th century, Oliver makes it very clear that the structures set up at that time cannot rightly be seen as necessarily applying for all time. The basis of the reorganization at the time, Oliver states, was functionality for mission (Cited in Knight, 1995:50).

In his search for organizational structures that will inspire greater confidence with church members, Dr Arnold Reye, an educationist in the field of administration and leadership, says that even though the Seventh-day Adventist Church structures adopted in 1901 has lasted for almost a century, the Church has increasingly come to demonstrate the dysfunctional aspects of a bureaucratic structure with a drift towards even a greater centralization of authority (Reye, n.d., 'Adventist Administration: Accountability and the building of Confidence', p.14, Article in author's possession).

George Knight professor of church history at Andrews University adds to what Oliver says, by stating that, if the church is to be able to effectively manage its worldwide work in the upcoming millennium it should be already changing its power base, structures and administration styles (Knight, 1995:47-53). What these proposed changes signify is that the church structures and the pastoral programmes of the future can no longer be based on foreign hierarchical patterns, but should instead be generated locally and built from below as a result of what Küng calls "free initiative and association" (Küng, 1990:53-57).

In many parts of the world, Christians are beginning to move out from inherited or imposed extraneous institutions and are discovering new ways of worshipping and witnessing. It is primarily movements such as the ecclesial base communities in South America that have stirred and spread the gospel message, exploding and expanding from within. This perspective whereby greater emphasis is placed upon the work of the local church, is not something new. The first person who alerted his readers to what he believed were glaring differences between Paul's missionary methods and those of contemporary missionary agencies, was the missiologist Roland Allen. He postulated that Paul had founded "churches" while modern denominations had founded "missions" in the sense of dependent organizations. He also added that Antioch, which was the sending church during the apostolic era, never claimed to have any authority over the churches in Ephesus, Corinth and elsewhere. These fledgling churches were, according to Allen's understanding, from the first moment, complete churches with everything they needed in order to be true churches of Christ (Bosch et al, 1990:378-379).

Storkey asserts that there is no picture of a specific institution called the church in the Bible. He continues by saying that institutions were a gradual development, a by-product of Christian faith and the saving power of God totally woven in the lives of the early Christians. These early institutions Storkey maintains, did not claim importance and glory for themselves and never used their institutional powers to further the gospel (Storkey, 1979:5).

Interviews with believers in some pastoral districts of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Pietermaritzburg and Pinetown confirmed the fact that a demand most certainly existed in the Church for gospel-centred programmes that would fulfil the needs of a much wider spectrum of people. Some verbalised their frustrations that the style of worship, singing and preaching often left them cold. They thought it an appropriate suggestion that Adventist churches should become user friendly and arrange the services where the language and style of worship could be modified to suit the needs of all the diverse cultural and linguistic groups represented in the Church. Some responded with considerable enthusiasm that questions were finally being asked on issues of multicultural ministry. Many, however, were resigned to the fact that the Seventh-day Adventist Church would never implement the necessary and much needed changes (Interviews with members of the Pinetown Church, June 1997).

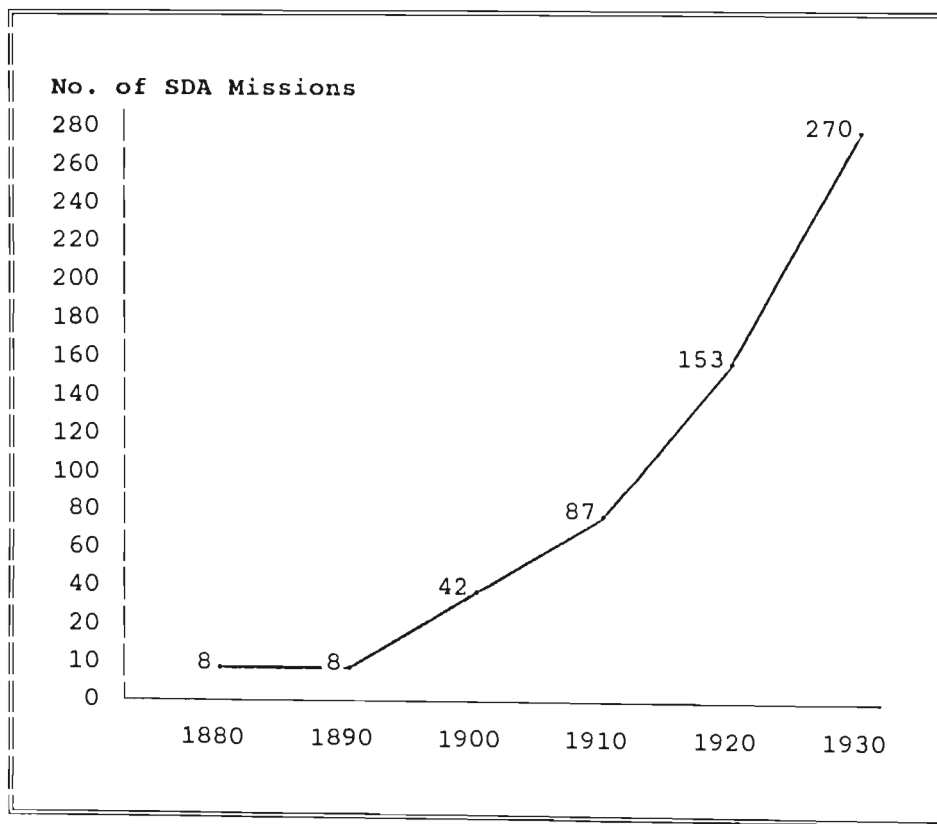
If the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa is to truly fulfil its missionary mandate to reach all the tongues, tribes and people of this country, it can no longer exist as it has done in the past through the mere persistence of ecclesial and administrative structures and worship patterns that were designed in America and reduplicated in this country. These existing structures must out of necessity be renewed through the formation of grass-roots congregations and programmes which will empower and allow people from all walks of life, including the Afrikaans-speaking people, to hear the Word and freely express their faith in a language and culture they love, understand and are comfortable with.

b. The promotion of self-supporting organisations

Over its 150 years of existence the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, can be roughly divided into three phases. At the inception of the Church in the mid-nineteenth century, the Seventh-day Adventist pioneers spoke, preached, taught and ministered to people in America in the locales in which they were situated.

By the mid 1870s the main emphasis of the Church had shifted to taking the Adventist message to people in distant countries (Pantalone, 1996:41-42). In the years following 1874, missionaries, doctors, nurses, evangelists and teachers left the shores of North America, to preach, to minister, and to serve people in many corners of the globe. As the years passed and the Adventist Church also became established in Europe, Australia, Great Britain, New Zealand and South Africa, many people from these countries also volunteered for foreign missionary service.

The following graph presented by George Knight delineates the phenomenal growth of Seventh-day Adventist mission during the latter part of the nineteenth century until 1930. Whereas the Church only had 42 mission station at the turn of the century their number had grown to almost 300 just thirty years later:



Worldwide expansion of SDA missions (In Knight, 1995:72)

Over the last number of decades though, political and ethnic conflicts and the escalation of hostility have torn people apart and deprived them of their land. The vast majority of countries have multi-ethnic populations (Jooste, 1994:5). Depleting resources, stressful economic situations, poverty and destitution together with the changing demographics of the Church's membership has caused the wheel to turn a full circle, with churches in many countries focusing once again upon the urgent need to minister to the needs in their own neighbourhoods, cities and towns (Sickler, *Spectrum*, v.25 (4), p.39, June 1996). In addition to these factors, the countries that were once the sending agencies have themselves, with the growing number of unchurched people, become vast mission fields (Knight, 1995:74). David Bosch states because of the dechristianization of the West that "the world can no longer be divided into Christian and non-Christian territories separated by oceans" (Bosch, 1991:3).

Faced with these situations of detriment and change, many people in the Seventh-day Adventist Church are beginning to feel that they are contributing financially into a black hole, into circumstance, over which they have no control, and where there appears to be no progress. In this third phase, as the focus of churches once again turns inwardly, many people appear to be seriously considering the option of redirecting their tithes and offerings for use in their local churches instead of sending it on to the higher bodies where it eventually goes out of their countries to uphold external and distant church organizations (Sickler, *Spectrum*, v.25(4), p.39, June 1996).

Clay Peck states that there is in fact, a sound biblical base to justify some of these concerns. In Acts 1:8, he states that Jesus provided his disciples with a strategy as well as a mission when he said: "You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." In these verses. Peck says, we can hear Jesus saying, "Your first responsibility is where you are, then the territory around you, and then the uttermost parts of the earth" (Clay Peck, 5 April 1996, <http://www.sdanet.org/atissue/future/eevsion.html>).

These trends whereby churches are turning their focus and financial resources to the needs of their local communities, together with the call that greater autonomy should be given to local congregations, might cause church administrators to sound the panic bells. Understanding that the financial contributions from churches around the world underpins the entire organizational structure of the Seventh-day Adventist Church's multi-layered hierarchical system, it is not surprising that any trends towards any forms of congregationalism have been very strongly opposed.

Is it then being suggested in this study that a congregational form of church government is the only solution for the dilemmas of the Seventh-day Adventist Church? No, there is another possibility, one that could greatly enhance the various branches of the local church's work and at the same time not displace the present form of church government. What is being proposed in addition to the community based programmes, is the promotion and implementation of self-

supporting institutions in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in this country. Self-supporting institutions are defined in the *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia* as the "medical, geriatric, commercial, industrial, or other types of enterprises intended to promote the missionary work of the SDA Church and conducted in accordance with SDA principles but not owned or operated by denominational organizations but by individuals or groups" (*Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, 1976:1168).

Additional church correspondence reveals that members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church not employed by the denomination, have for a long time possessed and exercised the right to conduct a wide range of enterprises, including Seventh-day Adventist schools and colleges. A pertinent example is that of the Madison Institution in America. For almost 60 years from 1904 to 1963 this institution which comprised of a senior college, a sanitarium, a hospital and a food factory, made a great and unique contribution to the work of the Church. It appears that in the USA there have always been powerful independent lay groups operating with recognition from the established Church. These groups successfully conduct research, meet as forums or study groups, federate and maintain liaison with the established workers of the Church. Many of these organizations manage hospitals, health sanitariums, food factories, nursing homes and colleges and publish their own magazines, journals, or periodicals (*Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, 1990, pp.6-11, HBCL).

From the foregoing paragraph it appears that in principle such an association with rights, functions and privileges to be stipulated may exist in South Africa by virtue of the liberties already enjoyed by independent Seventh-day Adventists ministries in operation elsewhere in the world, notably in the United States of America.

Amid the controversy between the Church and the Afrikaanse Konferensie in the early 1970s, in his aim to provide solutions for the problems that had arisen in Church, Edwin de Kock proposed that the Church move in the direction of self-supporting institutions. Afrikaners in the Church were naturally entitled, he stated, to all the democratic freedoms exercised by American church members. He submitted comprehensive plans whereby self-supporting institutions could be established which would greatly benefit the advance of the Afrikaans work in the Church. These plans which stressed the greater participation of church members, recommended the establishment of an *Afrikaanse Adventiste Taal en Kultuurvereniging* (Afrikaans Language and Culture Society), the creation of a research and study group responsible for the promotion of the various aspects of the Afrikaner's work in the church, the establishment of a publication agency, a welfare department, an evangelistic institution and the opening of schools and colleges (Proposed solution for a grave problem, by Edwin de Kock, n.d., pp.1-5, HBCA). There is no evidence that the established Church ever considered the solutions proposed by De Kock, or that it, in the years that followed, gave the implementation of any such self-supporting institutions any serious thought.

The most effective way to implement self-supporting institutions is once again at the local church level. As has already been stated, once the local church has determined, through the processes of insertion, social analysis and theological reflection, the needs of the community in which it is located, and has also targeted the cultural and linguistic group to which it is going to minister, it can take the next step to put its community programmes into effect. These programmes could involve a diverse range and style of ministries, besides preaching the gospel, such as the creation of educational, welfare or medical programmes, adult literacy classes, and the sheltering of homeless children or vagrants, to name just a few. The creation of such ministries does have financial implications. At present with the country in a grip of serious economic decline where fewer people in the Church have less financial resources to pay the bills for ever increasing needs, together with much of the tithes and offerings taken in by the local churches going to the higher organizations to support administrative organizations and missions outside this country, local churches always appear to be so financially strapped that they cannot carry out their aspirations for local mission.

With the local churches unable to go forward effectively with their programmes of action primarily because of the financial exigencies two things must be allowed to take place after they have received their autonomy. Firstly, the local church must out of necessity retain the greater proportion of its own offerings, so that funds can be made available for its community-based programmes, and, secondly, the local church must seriously consider the possibility of privatizing its envisaged community programmes, in other words, allowing them to be operated, as in America by church members, as private concerns. If so required, they must even be permitted to function totally independent from any church decision-making and administrative and financial control. Can self-supporting institutions though, in any way contribute to solving the present dilemmas in the Church? Most certainly! Once particular needs have been detected for Afrikaans religious literature, or the need to have an Afrikaans academic centre, these institutions can be operated either by individuals or a consortium of people. Self-supporting institutions have numerous advantages. Firstly, they will no longer have to be longer bound by impositions and restrictions made by church policies and be managed by Church leaders who either do not have the expertise to run such programmes or who are often so immersed in other facets of church administration that they do not or cannot give them the attention and quality of management they require. Secondly, those who have ownership over such enterprises are bound to make a success of such endeavours because of their personal financial involvement.

c. Training leaders in multicultural ministry

In this study the conviction was expressed that the Seventh-day Adventist Church in this country has failed to deal adequately with the cultural challenges in its organization because of the lack of thoroughly trained personnel and also because of a distinctive mindset that has prevented fruitful dialogues from taking place on the issues of cultural diversity.

In the light of these two conspicuous shortcomings in the Church, the community churches and self-supporting institutions can only be effective in a multicultural ministry if the leaders of these churches are going to be properly trained on how to minister successfully to people from diverse cultural backgrounds and how to present the supracultural message of the gospel in culturally relevant terms. Unless the pastoral minister or the community church leaders have the necessary convictions and skills concerning multiculturalism and effective pragmatic approaches of how to deal with issues relating to cultural and linguistic diversity, linking gospel and culture in a way that moves beyond translation, accommodation and inculturation, will remain pretentious and unproductive.

Because there is never a cultureless Christianity (Tanner, 1997:26), all community church leaders and communicators of the gospel are going to have to be trained as agents of inculturation, learning to critically mediate between gospel and culture. They need not only to learn to identify with the various cultural groups but there must also be a dialectical encounter between church leaders and the people to whom they are ministering. To state this in another way, the people must be allowed to respond to the call of the gospel with freedom and creativity.

This identification and encounter is obviously more commanding for ministers in cultures that are new or alien to the Christian faith. Notwithstanding the intensity of the task, there is no question that all pastoral communicators are going to need the requisite convictions and intentional approach to inculturation. Training in multicultural ministry will hopefully also teach church leaders not only to come up with more accurate evaluations in cross-cultural conflict situations, but also to prevent "bashing" on all sides and help them to avoid making generalizations about cultural groups in the Church. Duane Elmer (1993:14) undergirds this statement by stating that the acquisition of a new set of cultural lenses by church leaders in multicultural circumstances, results in fewer conflicts, the building of authentic relationships, and an enhanced ability to communicate God's truth.

d. Decentralization of administrative structures

At the inception of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the mid-nineteenth century, a world church was envisioned. Today, more than 150 years later, with more than nine million members in 208 of the 236 countries of the world and preaching and teaching in 713 languages (Knight, 1995:57), it has become that world church. From "everywhere to everywhere" has become a familiar phrase in Adventist mission terminology in the 1990s (Knight, 1995:75). Since the mission of the Church is now viewed in global terms with vast cultural differences from one part of the world facing the Church, the question is: How is the Seventh-day Adventist Church to preserve its unity amid this great diversity of people?

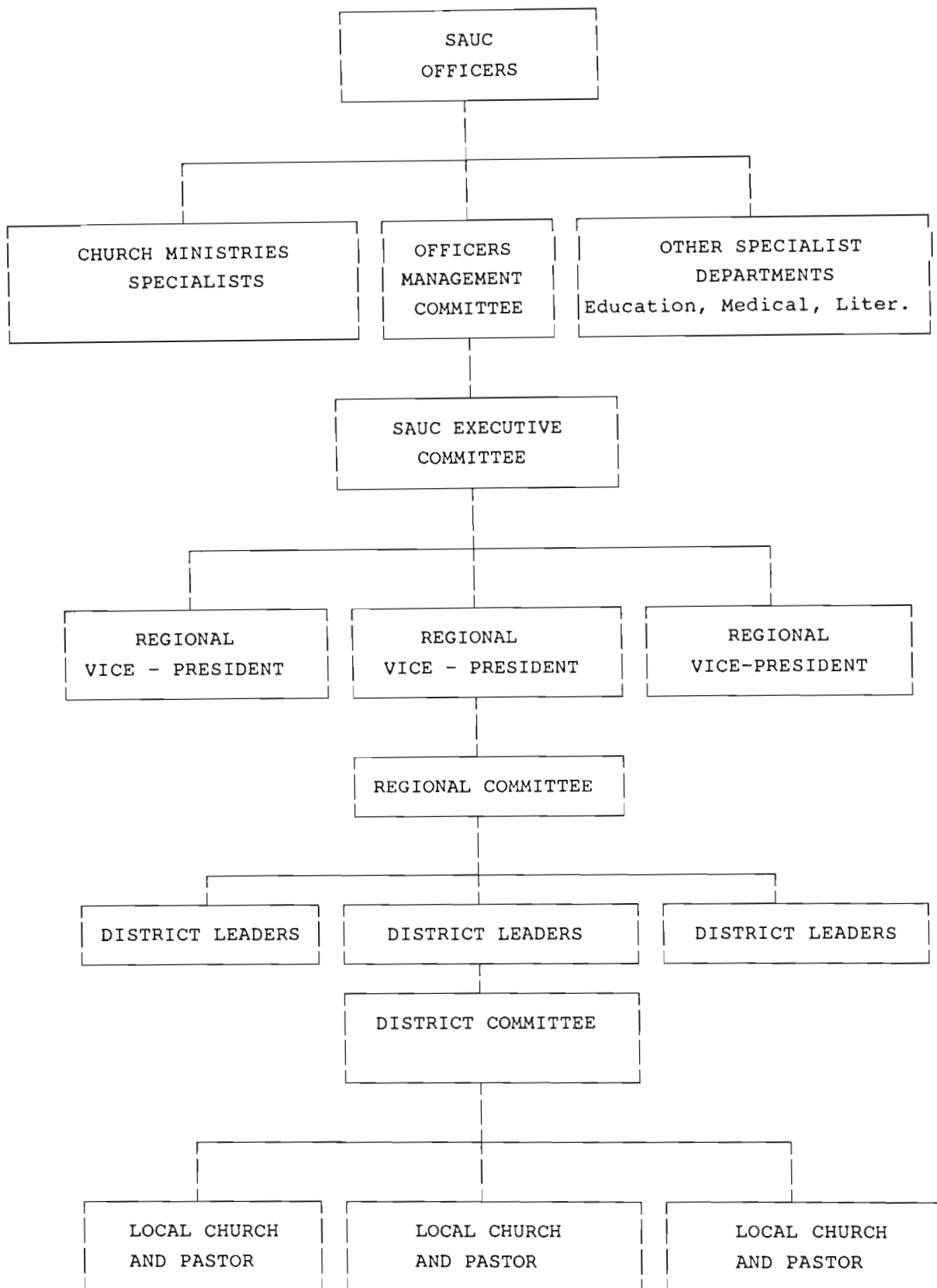
Cottrell states that the Roman Catholic Church has resolved this dilemma by permitting a wide range of religio-cultural variation under strict hierarchical control. Protestant and Orthodox churches, he continues, have resolved it by forming national churches, each of which is administratively autonomous (*Adventist Today*, v.5(1), p.15, Jan/Feb 1997).

As the only world-wide hierarchy other than the Catholic Church (Knight, 1995:47) the Seventh-day Adventist Church could choose one or another of these courses. Or is there a third viable alternative? This is more than an academic question and will ultimately determine the future of the Seventh-day Adventist Church as it stands on the brink of the twenty-first century. The close of this century brings the Church to another major turning point - one that is comparable to that of the reorganization of the worldwide church in 1901 and one that is going to require major decisions and adjustments affecting policy and governance. Suffice it is to say that it must be acknowledged that the nature of the world and the needs of the Church at this present moment are considerably different from those of one hundred years ago.

Early in the nineteenth century, Henry Venn, secretary of the Church Missionary Society (1842-1870), had the vision of missionary service which would make it no longer necessary to send missionaries to foreign countries. That vision would be realised when the whole world became evangelized. In order for this to become a reality in the shortest time possible, Venn encouraged his fellow missionaries to work for the establishment of local churches that would be self-supporting, self-governing and self-propagating (JNK Mugambi, 'Vision of the African Church in Mission', *Missionalia* 24:2, August 1996, pp.233-248, UDWL). The time has also come for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa, especially in the position in which it finds itself, to take full cognisance of Venn's three-self formula and request full decision-making, and administrative and financial autonomy from the world-wide Seventh-day Adventist Church. If the Church finally decided to go in this direction, it would be both a complex and long-term process. Paradigms that could prepare the Church for this change-over will now be examined.

Four years ago, in the deliberations to merge the three conferences in the Cape province, a model of structural reorganization was tendered by the Cape Conference Executive (CCEX) which would decentralize the existing organizational structure of the Church in South Africa into a union-of-churches. The plan was that the existing conference structure, as it had stood for the last ninety years would be disbanded with the territory in which the Church would work, subdivided into separate regions under the supervision of regional vice presidents with the treasury function centralized at the Union. Some of the advantages envisaged by this plan of regionalization was that it would be more cost-effective than the existing one-conference structure thereby making more money available to place additional ministers in the field; that it would promote church unity; that it would give the members of the Church greater empowerment; that it had potential to foster grassroots reconciliation; and that it would facilitate meaningful contact and co-

operation between the various ethnic groups within the Southern African community (See annexure 5, p.318). The organogram suggested by the CCEX was as follows:



At a Special Business Session held on 19-21 August 1994, the constituency of the Cape Conference voted by an overwhelmingly 90% to reject the existing one-conference model as a basis for a possible merger and replace it with the union-of-churches model as proposed by the CCEX. (Cape Conference Minutes, 21 August 1994, p.115, NFSCA; Letter from Bernhard Ficker to Pastor Bradfield, 19 March 1995, CCA). This plan was subsequently outvoted (*The Living Link*, December 1996, p.5, HBCL) after Matthews Bediako, the General Conference representative at the Cape Conference session, had pressurized the delegates at the merger session in October 1996 to revote and the union-of-churches structure was never implemented (Letter from Bernhard Ficker to Garth Bainbridge, 25 January 1997, p.1, CCA).

The feeling among some people in the Church was that the reasons given for the opposition by the General Conference and the rejection of this model were unclear and that the Church leaders had thereby not only made a strategic error but also that a unique opportunity was lost to realign the outdated organizational structure of the Church so that it could enhance all the aspects of its work in this country (Letter from Dr Bernhard Ficker to Garth Bainbridge, 25 January 1997, CCA).

Von Coller states that Afrikaans is the language most widely used in South Africa (Von Coller, *Tydskrif vir Letterkunde*, 1995 33:3, p.54, 'Die politieke magspel rondom taal en letterkunde in die nuwe Suid-Afrika'). Census statistics released by parliament in mid 1997 corroborates the findings of Von Coller. It revealed that Afrikaans was the most widely spoken-language in three of the nine provinces of South Africa and that it was among the top five languages in all the other provinces. By comparison, English was not listed at all among the five most widely spoken languages in three of the nine provinces. Figures tabled by Mr Lionel Mtshali, the Minister of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology, in response to questions posed by National Party member Mr LJ Swanepoel, showed Afrikaans to be the most widely spoken language in the Northern Cape, Western Cape and Gauteng, and second in the North-West, Free State and Eastern Cape, and third in Mpumalanga and KwaZulu-Natal. In a list of the five most widely spoken languages, Afrikaans came as low as fourth in only one province, Northern Province. The top five languages spoken in each of the provinces, with percentages given in brackets based on 1997 census, are:

Gauteng:	Afrikaans (21); Sotho (20); Zulu (19); English (16); Tswana (7).
Western Cape:	Afrikaans (63); English (20); Xhosa (15).
Northern Cape:	Afrikaans (66); Tswana (19); Xhosa (6); English (3); Sotho (1).
Mpumalanga:	Swati (31); Zulu (25); Afrikaans (18); Sotho (12); Ndebele (12).

North West: Tswana (77); Afrikaans (10); Xhosa (4); Sotho (4); English (1).

Northern Province: Sotho (57); Tsonga (22); Venda (13); Afrikaans (3); Ndebele (1).

Free State: Sotho (58); Afrikaans (15); Xhosa (9); Tswana (7); Zulu (5).

KwaZulu-Natal: Zulu (80); English (16) Afrikaans (2); Xhosa (1).

Eastern Cape: Xhosa (86); Afrikaans (9); English (4) (Cited in *The Citizen*, 11 June 1997).

After having taken cognisance of the above-mentioned spread of different languages and cultures in South Africa and the proposals for reorganization presented by the Cape Conference, the union-of-churches model has been subsequently re-examined and the proposition is made that it, with a number of changes and adaptations, be expanded into a regional programme for the entire country. This would, to my mind, not only provide a cost-efficient and more productive structural support system for the community based churches and the self-supporting institutions, but would also go a long way to resolving many of the linguistic and cultural exigencies in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. When presenting this new paradigm and putting forward some suggestions, one is acutely aware that these only consist of broad brush-strokes and not a full-blown set of instantaneous remedies. The solutions that will put the Church in this country on the road to recovery will only be arrived at after all the questions and all the possibilities have been thoroughly discussed and explored by all sectors of the Church.

Although almost five years have passed since the first South African non-racial democratic election in April 1994 and the creation of nine new provinces in this country. The Seventh-day Adventist conferences, are, however, still based on the old provincial divisions of South Africa. Most of these divisions are not only extremely extensive but also very costly to maintain. The territory of the KNFSC consists of the whole of KwaZulu-Natal and the Free State, with this conference administering from its headquarters situated in Pinetown a ponderous district housing almost 200 churches. The area over which the Cape Conference has jurisdiction is even bigger and consists of the entire Western, Eastern and Northern Cape. The Transvaal Conference's area of control is also quite vast and covers all of Gauteng and the Western, Eastern, and Northern Transvaal. Matters are further complicated in the organizational structure of the Church, in that the Transvaal Conference and the Cape Conference have still not merged with the black and coloured conferences in their areas, causing a duplication of headquarters with ministers and workers from the different conferences working in the same districts, towns and cities.

In its implementation of a new organizational structure, in order to initiate the change-over, all the existing conferences and the union office must be disbanded and new territorial realignments must be made within the boundaries of the nine existing provinces. Although George Knight, a professor of Church History at Andrews University, refers specifically to the situation of the Church in North America, he makes a significant contribution in this regard in his book *The Fat Lady and the Kingdom* when he states that:

Perhaps the need is not to argue whether we should do away with union conferences or combine local conferences in North America, but to do away with both, creating in their wake some twenty regional administrative units that could serve constituencies that have moved out of the horse-and-buggy era and now have access to modern means of communication and transportation (Knight, 1995:18).

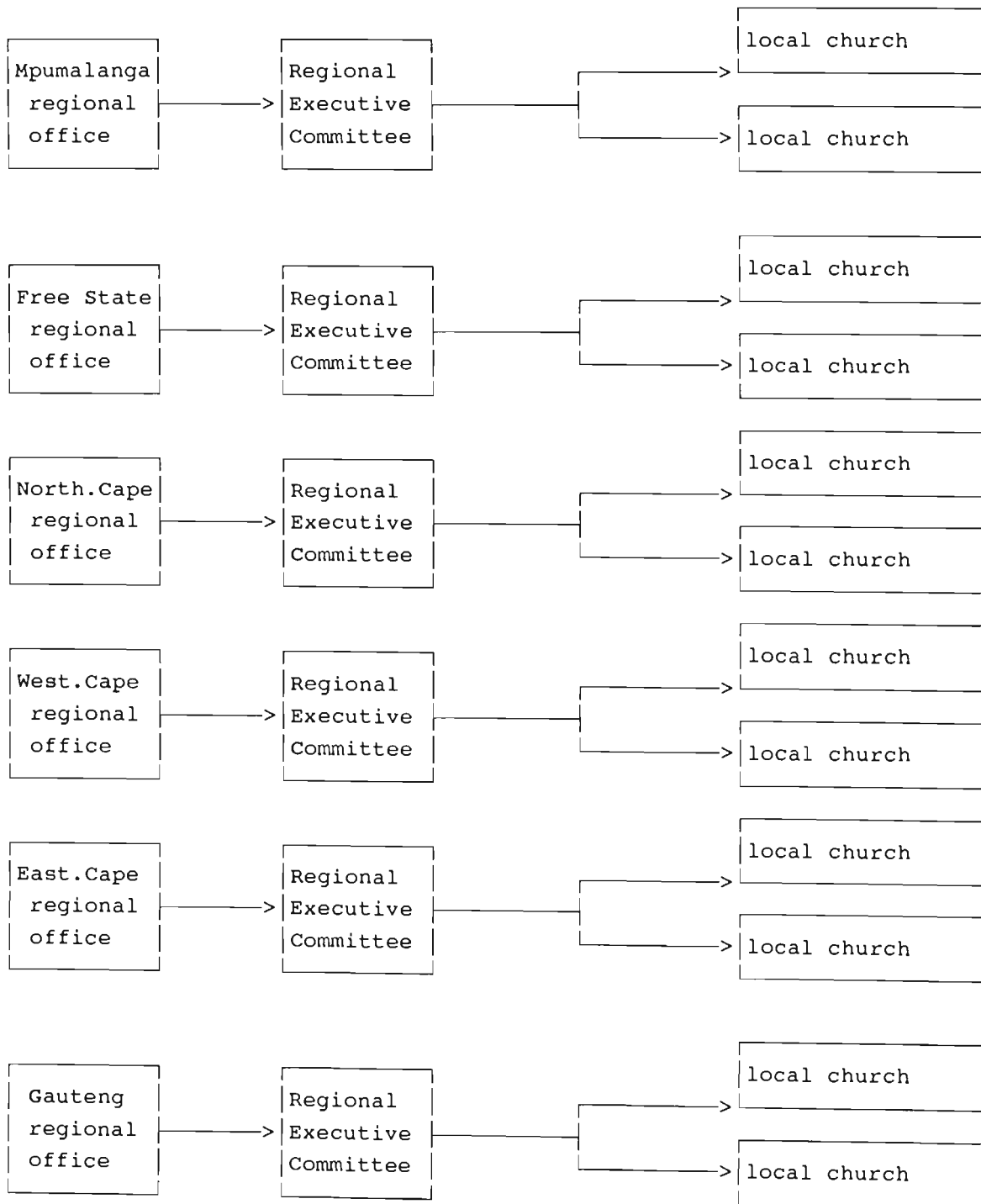
This proposed reorganization will divide the work of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa into nine separate regions which will be designated as the KwaZulu-Natal region, Free State region, Gauteng region, Western Cape region, Northern Cape Region, Eastern Cape region, Mpumalanga region, Northern Province region, and the North West region. The following statistics, tabled in 1995, show how the population of South Africa is spread over these nine regions:

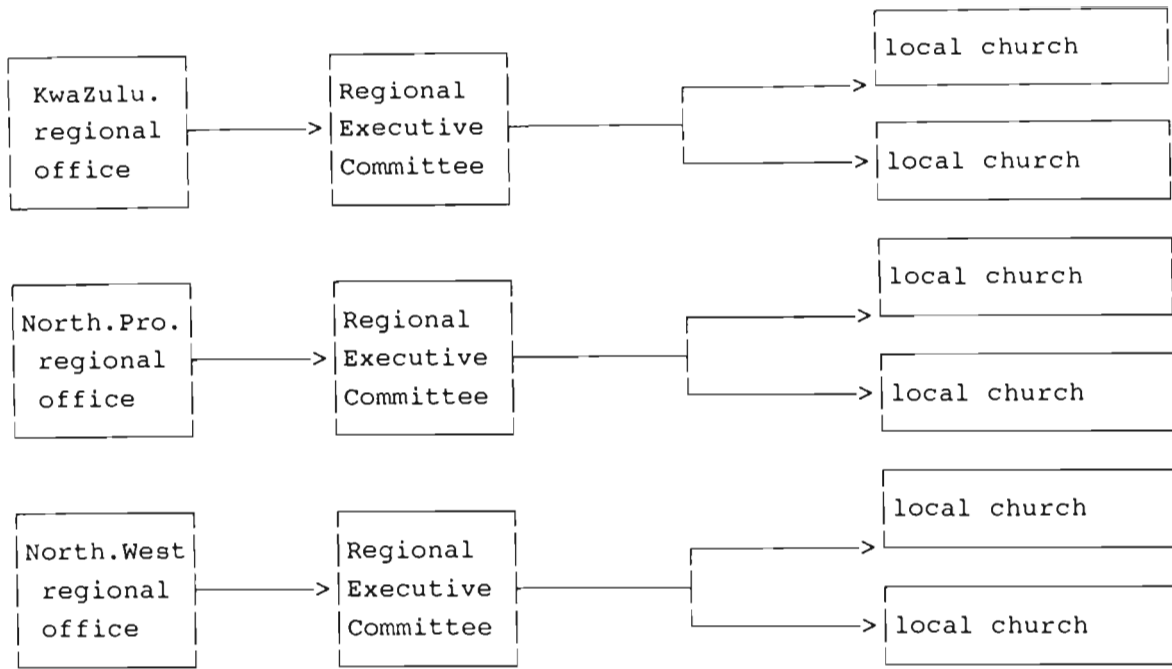
Province	Population 1995	Area km (square)
KwaZulu-Natal	8 953 474	91 481
Gauteng	7 086 995	18 760
Eastern Cape	6 975 292	170 616
Northern Transvaal	5 399 464	119 606
Western Cape	3 761 481	129 386
North West	3 684 877	118 710
Eastern Transvaal	2 980 020	81 816
Free State	2 908 647	129 437
Northern Cape	786 547	363 389
Total	42 536 824	1 223 201

(Source (population): Development Bank of Southern Africa (1995) in *New Secondary School Atlas for South Africa*, p.31).

In place of the conferences, each of these nine regions should have an elected regional coordinator with appropriate managerial and administrative skills, and a secretarial team to administer that area from strategically located

regional offices. Like the conductor of an orchestra, the regional coordinators will oversee the playing of the 'score'. They would not delude themselves into thinking they had to be masters of every instrument. Their job would, however, ensure that the expertise within the 'orchestra' was utilized to the fullest. Areas with a large number of churches such as the Gauteng, Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal regions will perhaps need to have more than one regional office to administer these areas. The proposed organizational structure for the Church, separated into the nine regions, can be graphically outlined as follows:





The nine coordinators will be elected by the delegates from the churches within a particular region at a regional business session and will serve for a period of three years. Each regional coordinator will not only serve as overseer of each region, but will also, together with the pastors from the local churches and allocated lay representation from the area, form part of the regional executive committee. This committee will meet at least four times a year to keep track of the progress of the work within their areas of jurisdiction. The various regional offices will also be responsible to keep records of the local churches in its jurisdiction, such as membership statistics, the number of baptisms, deaths, transfer of members to and from other regions etc. An additional function of the regional office will be to liaise with the Seventh-day Adventist Church headquarters in America.

Even though local churches will have been given greater autonomy to plan and prepare their own programmes in the communities in which they are located, their tithe returns should still be sent to the various regional offices. Assuming that the Church in South Africa will be granted financial autonomy, the tithe received from the local churches would no longer have to be sent out of the country and would be used to budget for the remuneration of gospel ministers, school teachers, lecturers, literature evangelists and other church employees operating within a particular region. All the placement of church employees and the payments of salaries will done in consultation with the local churches from the regional offices. Besides the offerings taken up by the local church at its weekly services which it would employ for the overhead expenses of the church and the funding of some of its intended projects, each of these churches would operate on an annual budget which it would have to present to its regional office before the beginning of each financial year, together with an outline of its programmes, plans of action for the year and intended expenditure.

ADVANTAGES OF REGIONALIZING THE CHURCH

1. **Cost efficiency:** Although it has been proposed that the number of regions be expanded from three to nine, the new simplified organizational structure can still be cost-effective. This will be made possible through the scaling down of the macro-sized, costly bureaucratic conference and union office structures, to smaller regional offices, and also through the reduction of staff employed at the union and conference offices. Because of the intended implementation of self-supporting programmes, and because the local churches will have been given greater freedom to plan and finance their own community based programmes, much of the administration work presently being done by secretarial staff at the union and conference offices, will be delegated to lay-members running those programmes at a local church level.

2. **Improved lines of communication:** Because the jurisdiction of each region will become much smaller than the area presently served by the three conferences, lines of communication between local churches and the administration of the region will understandably improve. The Seventh-day Adventist church situated in Uppington in the Northern Cape or the church in Nongoma in northern KwaZulu-Natal, for example, no longer have to perceive themselves to be hundreds of miles from the Church headquarters but will be much closer to their regional offices. This is in actually a two-way street, in that the regional coordinators would also have more intimate contact with the local churches in their regions. With the present organizational structure the various presidents of the conferences have itineraries in which they make concerted attempts to visit some of the churches at least once a year. Even this is not always effective and it means that the conference presidents have to be out visiting a different church every weekend, some of them hundreds of miles away from the conference offices. As the regional coordinators travel and familiarize themselves with their territories and the local churches under their jurisdiction, not only will communication improve, but they will be able to determine for themselves, in consultation with the pastors and other leaders, how the people are responding to the programmes being presented by the local churches. This improved and more regular contact between administration and local churches will hopefully also allow for the detection and solving of problems before they become serious issues.

3. **More effective utilization of local church funds:** Because funds will, under this new structure no longer be leaving the country, together with the huge savings made from the elimination of the union and conferences offices, financial resources will be available at a level where the people of that particular region will benefit most. Contributions to the missionary work in their own region, where people can see tangible evidence of how their contributions are being utilized

will most certainly encourage persons to give offerings more faithfully. Proposed community based projects that have had to usually be put on hold at the local churches because of financial restraints, will also, as resources become more freely available, become a reality. In this way as the local church becomes more active in its missionary outreach in the community in which it is located, so too will its relationship and its standing improve with those who benefit from its various programmes.

4. **Employment of workers:** At present the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa finds itself under tremendous strain because of the dire shortage of ministers and teachers. Some ministers are at present pastoring as many as six churches, some of them hundreds of kilometres apart. This situation has arisen partly due to the high percentage of workers who have recently emigrated, and also partly because of the deficiency of funds in the Church.

With the removal of the conference and the unions and the intended scaling down of administrative staff, numerous experienced pastors and evangelists presently tied up with administrative functions will once again become available for full-time ministerial work. To make mention of just one conference, namely the KwaZulu-Natal Conference there are at present [1998] no less than six trained ministers occupied with administrative work at the conference's headquarters, while other ministers in the vicinity, as has just been stated, are pastoring as many as six churches.

In this proposed arrangement regional coordinators do not have to be theological graduates, as is the case with the present conference presidents, but can be competent persons with administrative, managerial and economic qualifications. The increased availability of funds will also make it possible to employ ministers, teachers and administrators on a more regular basis when they graduate from Helderberg. At present many students are reluctant to go and study at Helderberg, especially prospective ministers and teachers, because of the slow employment of graduates at present by the conferences. As more funds become available and the regions begin to employ the graduates, more students will be inclined to go and study at Helderberg College.

In turn, as the student enrolment from the various regions increases, and the need arises, because of the language and cultural diversity of this country, the College will have to restructure its training so that it meets the needs of all its students.

At the Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit, because of the need that had arisen, two new Afrikaans courses have recently been introduced for teachers in the black traditional schools. These courses which soon grew into accredited diplomas have been received with great enthusiasm

by students (Coetzee, *Karring*, 1997, Somer, p.14, 'Afrikaans by RAU: Twee Nuwe Kursusse', UNPMB).

Professor Hans du Plessis from Potchefstroom University maintains that there is considerable enthusiasm among many students to take study courses in Afrikaans. It is, however, chiefly the teachers, he continues that are dissuading students not to enrol for courses in Afrikaans. Professor Du Plessis therefore maintains that if a demand exists for Afrikaans at tertiary level that it must catered to (Du Plessis, *Karring*, 1997 (13), Somer, p.17-18, 'Afrikaans op Universiteit: Gee wat die Mark Vra', UNPMB).

In a longitudinal study of language attitudes, preferences and usage among students at the University of the Western Cape, Charlyn Dyers discovered that although some students revealed strong negative attitudes towards Afrikaans because of its political connotations, that some of these same students were highly competent users of Afrikaans. In her study, although there were many students who responded negatively about the future of Afrikaans (70% opted for English at university) she still discovered a measure of support for Afrikaans even among African language speakers (Dyers, *Karring*, 1996, Herfs, p.24-27, 'Uncovering Attitudes towards Afrikaans at the UWC', UNPMB).

In 1996 98% of Tukkies' 20 593 student population was white. There were only 293 African and 34 Indian students on campus. A multiparty congress of all groups on campus led to the establishment of a Broad Transformation Forum in 1996. All students, workers, academic staff and management groups were represented at this forum. In 1997, only one year later, the number of African students had risen to 5 717 and the number of Indian student to 547. By 1998 the number of black students had increased by another 28%. This has been achieved by: An aggressive recruitment campaign in communities in and around Pretoria, A residence transformation plan that gives disadvantaged students from out of Pretoria precedence, Financial plans worked out for poor students with academic potential, And multilingual classes and academic support programmes (*Financial Mail*, 17 April 1998).

Under these kinds of arrangements, with Helderberg also hopefully offering study courses in the near future in Afrikaans, Zulu, Xhosa, English, Tswana and Venda to name just a few, and catering more attentively to needs of all students, they will leave Helderberg College properly trained, in what ever discipline they have studied, so as to effectively meet the needs of the people among whom they are hoping to work.

5. **Unity and Cooperation between people of different race groups**

Under this proposed arrangement, because the regions will be organized and administered on a non-discriminatory basis, and because the local churches have the freedom to determine the kind of programmes and worship styles that will best meet the needs of their own communities, there will no longer be an imposed or prepackaged plan that all the churches have to conform too. Ministers and lay-leaders alike will thus have the creativity and freedom to adapt their programmes to suit the various languages and cultures of the people in their churches. Church services, if the numbers warrant it, can for example be divided into various time-slots to accommodate diverse styles of praise and worship. The Afrikaans-speaking people, who are normally appreciative of a more reserved style of worship and enjoy listening to sermons in Afrikaans, can hold their services at a specific time, while the other believers who are more expressive in their worship and who wish to hear the Word of God in their own language can attend their services at other designated time slots. The benefits arising out of this kind of system are multifaceted. Firstly, believers of diverse persuasions will have the opportunity to express their praise and worship to God in the style, environment and language with which they are most comfortable and satisfied. Secondly, this will circumvent any imposition by any particular language and culture upon another and no one group will feel dictated too. Thirdly, this form of work in a Church will hopefully create a sensitivity and respect among the church people for each other's cultural and linguistic differences and at the same time also strengthen the unity of the Church as they all come to understand that God neither dictates to anyone how they should sing and worship nor what language they should use for communication, and that God enjoys and appreciates diversity in the Christian church. Fourthly, this mode of church management will not only increase participation in both the church's work and worship services by the lay-members, but will also provide avenues for many more people to gain hands-on leadership experience within the church where they choose to worship. Fifthly, because the regionalization of the church is based on principles that do not discriminate against any persons from the diverse race, colour, speech and cultural groups in this country, it will help to foster a unity and fraternity that will transcend the tensions and differences created by the dehumanizing ideology of apartheid that has for so many years promoted the superiority of one race over another and divided the believers of the Church. As the Seventh-day Adventist Church, through the concept of regionalization, disassociates itself from the ideology of apartheid and deplores all forms of racism, exhibiting within its own ranks the unity and love that transcends racial differences it will not only overcome the past alienation that has existed between the various groups in the Church but will also undoubtedly gain the cooperation of many more of its members to a vigorous pursuit of the reconciling ministry which has been assigned by God to all the Christian churches in this country.

Unity and cooperation among the various ethnic, cultural and linguistic groups can also be enhanced on a regional level by the holding of annual church gatherings during which all the local churches meet together for combined fellowship and worship. During such meetings, as the various groups are exposed to the different styles of worship and singing, as they hear the message of the gospel preached in different languages, as they are confronted by the great variety of people, they will in spite of their diversity, know that they are worshipping the same God. Only then will the three angels' messages of Revelation which reaches all nations, tongues, tribes and people, take on its most meaningful significance.

6. **Specialization of ministries:** Because the regions will be smaller, more manageable, and, as has already been mentioned, more cost-effective, the training of both ministers and lay-members in specific areas, such as evangelisations, medical missionary work and multicultural ministry can also be enhanced with both the local church and regional administration staff participating. Through this kind of closely monitored training, most effective use can be made of the reservoir of knowledge and skills available in the churches. The New Testament teaches extensively on the importance of spiritual gifts and that every member has been given a gift to be used in building up the Body of Christ (1 Cor. 12; Eph. 4; Rom. 12). Members should, therefore, be placed in ministry according to their gifts, passions, personality styles and calling.

III. CONCLUSION

For many years, Swiss-made watches dominated the world market. In just the space of three years from 1979 to 1982, the employment in the Swiss watchmaking industry dropped from sixty-five thousand to fifteen thousand. This is how it happened. In 1967, the research division of the Swiss watchmaking industry created the quartz watch. However, when this innovative concept and the first prototype was presented to the Swiss watch control board, the owners and administrators were not interested. In their thinking, Swiss watches had to be fitted with gears and springs. This new kind of electronic watch just did not fit into their existing paradigm. In the interim, Seiko and Texas Instruments, two smaller companies, somehow got wind of the quartz concept. Relatively new in the watchmaking industry they were not tied to traditional technology. They thought laterally and saw potential in the new idea and began manufacturing and aggressively marketing the new electronic watch. Before long the Swiss watchmakers, initially so innovative, fell out of pace with the changing needs and their technological inventions were overtaken by their competitors. Whereas new paradigms are very often perceived as threatening, they do not necessarily have to be viewed in this fashion. It must be borne in mind that even the existing paradigms were at one time new paradigms that were needed at a specific time and place. The greatest problem in this regard is that too many people have a tendency towards

vertical thinking. They remain content at digging deeper and deeper into the same hole. As a result, they become oblivious to other viewpoints and become defensive about existing traditional boundaries and sanctioned patterns of living. Their axiom becomes: "We have always done it this way, so why change!" All too often when confronted with the possibility of change, groups resort to developing their own set of sanctions - reward and punishment mechanisms - intended to keep their members in line and at bay. Pressure is so often placed on individuals or dissenters to conform. If they do not, sanctions escalate. It is then that witch-hunts flourish with high levels of intolerance, bitterness and anger (Arbuckle, 1993:1-2).

History has shown time and again, in so many different spheres and in perhaps almost all disciplines that paradigm shifts (i.e. total break from preceding ways of operation) became imperative for survival. Taking all the numerous challenges raised by this study into account, the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa has reached a point where radical changes are imperative for its continued well-being. Confronted with the rapid and far-reaching social and political changes that are taking place in this country, along with an institutionalized image of reactionary stagnation, there has been very little attempt by the Seventh-day Adventist Church to play a role which is creative and fruitfully imaginative in relation to both the problems inside and outside its walls. This study has ascertained that all too often the Church has followed the beaten track rather than attempted to reform the life of society. All too often the Church has been content to passively follow, rather than to courageously challenge. Far from projecting an image of self-sacrificing activity, the Church, has sadly, all too often reflected an image of apathy. God forbid that at a time such as this the Church will neglect the things that make for peace and the opportunities that will establish brotherhood and sisterhood through the achievement of justice and equality for all the people.

The aim of this thesis has been to highlight the conflicts that many Afrikaners experienced in their quest to attain linguistic and cultural autonomy in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa. It was also an endeavour to develop, out of this ongoing and highly contentious and complex situation, an alternative theological model that will hopefully lead to constructive and beneficial transformations in the work of the Church for all people of this country and unite Christian witness in a changing South Africa.

This study has dealt primarily with the question of Seventh-day Adventist Afrikaners who felt that they were being oppressed and discriminated against, who saw themselves as victims of history and circumstances, and who hankered after cultural and linguistic autonomy within a strongly English American orientated church. It could however not shy away from the much wider drama that was being enacted within the Seventh-day Adventist Church, namely the great impact that the philosophy of apartheid has had on the black members on the Church (see pgs.171-176). This study has highlighted the fact that like most other Christian churches in South Africa, the Seventh-day Adventist Church, while proclaiming its ideals and desire to preach the Gospel to every

nation, kindred, tongue and people, succumbed to the unbiblical ideology of the government and implemented both on an administrative, educational and on a parish level, segregated systems for blacks and whites. There is no question that the gap between resolutions taken at the highest administrative level of the Church and the practice at the grassroots has been as evident in the Seventh-day Adventist Church as in the other Christian churches. The full impact that this detrimental influence has had on the Seventh-day Adventist Church in this country has not been easy to ascertain (see pgs.309-310). Although the issue of apartheid and the practice of discrimination against blacks in the Seventh-day Adventist Church was dealt with in this study (see pgs.171-176) it emerged as a study of such great magnitude that it became obvious that it would have to be explored further at a deeper level in a separate study project.

Even though there is no longer a legal basis for apartheid on a national level, the social, economic and political inequalities between white and black South Africans unfortunately continue to exist. There are also many persons who cling to their unbiblical and outmoded ideas of separatism between blacks and whites. In spite of this, significant changes have taken place in the last decade in the Seventh-day Adventist Church in this country with regard to relationships between people of different races. Places of worship are now open to people of all races. Schools and colleges are fully integrated. Mergers have taken place between some conferences that were once separated. And at the end of 1997 the Church replied to an inquest from the TRC and finally confessed its compliance to the sinful and inhumane policies of apartheid (see pgs.309-311).

The vision that the Seventh-day Adventist church has, is admittedly stupendous - one fellowship from every nation, kindred, tongue and people. It will obviously not be easy to achieve. Attitudes and prejudices will have to yield. The grace of God however, will be sufficient for every need. Only in that grace lies the promise of the fulfillment of this vision and the only hope for healing the trauma we have experienced in South Africa. In conclusion, the moving prayer that was used to bring the 7th International Dietrich Bonhoeffer Congress held in Cape Town at the end of 1995 to a close is also relevant here. A part of this prayer was worded as follows:

Lord, because of who you are, send us into the world to be people for others. Send us into the world to witness faithfully to both the unity and truth of your Person. Send us into a world come of age, to think and act theologically, in a way that will be of use to the challenges facing contemporary society (Cited in 'An Adventist Struggle with Bonhoeffer' by Monique Viljoen, January 1996, in a paper presented at the University of Cape Town, Document in author's possession).

May the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa in the years to come, be truly faithful to its calling.

ANNEXURE 1

**STATEMENT OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN UNION CONFERENCE
ON UNILINGUAL/BILINGUAL CONFERENCES - October 1970**

Even though the following statement by the SAUC is rather extensive, it was thought expedient, in order to be able to determine the precise reasons why the church chose not to move in the direction of unilingual conference, to reproduce the entire resolution:

VOTED to adopt the following statement on unilingual conferences:

WHEREAS it is impossible to determine the actual reasons that motivated the establishment of bilingual conferences in South Africa, other than the fact that the whole process was a gradual one in which practical considerations such as the distribution of believers, finance and the rapid growth of Afrikaans with its resultant bilingualism, featured prominently, and

WHEREAS we can gather guidelines from the practice of our church in the world field as well as from the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy such as the following:

1. 1 Cor. 1:10 ...that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; and that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.
2. Col. 3:10-14. As different nationalities Christians are to live together in tolerance, forbearing one another in love.
3. Gal. 3:27,28. National or class difference between Christians should not be evident as among the heathen.
4. Eph. 2:13,14. Because of the blood of Christ reconciliation has come between groups once estranged.
5. 1 Cor. 12: 1-31. The unity of the church is in its purposefulness and co-operation in spite of diversity. Verse 25: There should be no schism in the body; but members should have the same care one for another.
6. Eph. 3:19. In Christ we all take on the new nationality of heaven,
7. Generally speaking the church follows the plan of organizing administrative units that are geographically determined. Where otherwise it was done
 - a. in areas where the practical execution of such was reasonably easy,
 - b. in order to meet situations of great prejudice.
8. 9T.pp.195-198. It is not the Lord's plan for his people to separate themselves into separate companies because of differences in nationality and language.
9. 9T.pp.179-183. Wherever possible let us break down the walls of partition between nationalities. No matter what nationality a Christian is, he will bear the stamp of Christ.
10. DA.p.103. Mrs White warns that the spirit which separated Jew and Gentile is still active today.

WHEREAS only factors such as

- a. a substantial increase of the Adventist population,
- b. a change in the population patterns of Adventists in South Africa,
- c. a change in the existing population patterns of English and Afrikaans South Africans,
- d. a reversal in the bilingual policy of the South African Government,
- e. a sudden deterioration of relations between English and Afrikaans Adventists to the point where the work is hampered, will at present to be factors that can indicate a change in the bilingual policy of the church in South Africa,

WE RECOMMEND that the church be prepared to keep a watchful eye in developments within the country and the church with a constant desire to seek God's will in this matter.

Furthermore, in the light of present understanding, we accept the following three-part report presented to the 26th Business Session of the South African Union Conference:

PART I - SEVEN PRINCIPLES

That we reaffirm the seven principles previously accepted by the SAUC (1941/684/69) and that they be amended to read as follows:

1. The Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy makes unity in worship and in organization, in heart and in action basic to the existence of the church and to the fulfilment of the divine mission entrusted to it.
2. Within the world church such bodies as Divisions, Unions, Conferences, Fields, Institutions or separate language congregations are organized, but this is for geographical, linguistic or other reasons, and should in no wise break the unity of God's household.
3. Where differences between basic races are pronounced, the contingencies of the work may sometimes make separate organizations entities desirable, this without prejudice to church unity.
4. The Republic of South Africa and South West Africa is moving towards closer unity between the two European language groups. South Africans are not divided into Afrikaans and English blocs on the municipal, provincial and national levels of administration. The administration could well show similar concepts of administrative unity today
5. In the Adventist church we recognize the primary function of language as a medium of worship and witness and any local conference should be administered in the language or the languages understood by the people. In South Africa we believe that one conference administration covering a given geographical area serving both language groups adequately and fairly is considered advantageous.

Furthermore, bilingual conferences under present circumstances, encourage the breaking down of walls of partition between different nationalities and the development of tolerance.

6. The medium of languages used in the local church worship services should be such as would best serve the congregations, therefore in South Africa churches will vary from bilingual to unilingual as directed by the needs of the situation, Christian charity and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
7. If the present framework of our conferences is to be maintained, then special steps should be taken to meet more adequately the specific needs of our people.

PART II IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SEVENTH PRINCIPLE

Language

In order to implement the seventh principle, the following procedure should be adhered to;

1. Every effort be made to appoint bilingual administrators and department secretaries at local conference and Union conference level.
2. In the appointment of nominating and executive committees on union and conference level, care is to be taken to rightly reflect the language interests of the constituency by appointing a proportionate number of representatives from English and Afrikaans churches.
3. WHEREAS there is a crying need for more Afrikaans books for use by church members and the public, a SAUC publication Board consisting of bilingual members be appointed and that it have the following terms of reference:
 - a. that it be responsible to the SAUC Executive Committee;
 - b. that it recommend to the SAUC which books are to be translated, written or printed either at the Sentinel or elsewhere;
 - c. that it present annually, at the beginning of a year, a production programme and a progress report to the SAUC Executive Committee;
 - d. that it recommend to the SAUC to set up a publication fund which must be sufficiently large for a dynamic printing programme.

FURTHERMORE, that a Publications Board be appointed by the first SAUC Committee meeting after the Session and that it be asked to render its first report by December 1970.

4. WHEREAS the existence of an off-shoot movement in South Africa serves as a continual source of agitation against the church, and
WHEREAS the rift in our church is not to the glory of God,

We express our deep sorrow that some have broken away from the church and that our workers and members be encouraged in all our contacts with these individuals to invite and encourage them to return to the church, and

FURTHER that the SAUC committee give study as to what steps can be taken to further clarify the issues involved and to appeal to those who have left the church to return,

5. That when an effort is held in one language, and people of another language group accept the message, the evangelist be instructed, where possible to guide the converts into the church serving their language group.

6. WHEREAS Afrikaans evangelism in the large centres faces particular disadvantages in moving the public to well established and representative church buildings, it is

RECOMMENDED that in our Municipal [sic] areas such as Johannesburg and other large cities, representative church buildings be erected for our Afrikaans-speaking members.

7. That study be given to having more vital, uninterpreted sermons at campmeetings simultaneously but separately in both languages.

Money

WHEREAS there is danger on the part of the members misunderstanding the fiscal practice of the church in South Africa with special reference to monies leaving the country, it is

RECOMMENDED that the church follow a policy of open communication on these vital matters.

PART III - BACKGROUND MATERIAL

That the following serve as background material:

Point 5 in [sic] the general statement of seven principles it is stated that one conference administration covering a given geographical area, serving both language groups adequately and fairly, is considered advantageous. Listed below are some of these advantages:

- a. Conference workers have the opportunity of labouring for people of both language groups and learning to love and understand them.
- b. English and Afrikaans people are so intermingled in residential areas that to consider those living in a given province as belonging to the one conference family gives administrators, local workers and laymen a common burden for men and women of different languages.
- c. In an age of racial tension the bilingual conference can demonstrate the unity of the gospel and can help to break down walls of prejudice and build bridges of understanding.
- d. The conference administration in a geographic area would prevent a duplication of travel on the part of administrators, department secretaries and local workers. This would be less expensive than two conferences working within the same area.
- e. With the growing emphasis on bilingualism in South Africa, the bilingual conference would fit into the pattern of the country and would guard against a narrow, insular outlook.
- f. Our schools are not large enough to always cater for only one language group. This is particularly true of Sedaven and Helderberg. A conference serving both language groups would be more interested in supporting a high school or a college offering opportunities for both groups of young people than would a unilingual conference.
- g. The Methodist church [sic] in South Africa is a good example of the unilingual conference working plan. The message of Wesley is brought to a segment of the population but the Afrikaner is neglected. The Dutch Reformed church [sic] is an example of a largely Afrikaans Calvinistic approach. The unilingual conference can very easily neglect the people of the other group within its boundaries.

The Advent message is not confined to a nation; it contains a worldwide imperative (Eighth meeting of 26th Session of the South African Union Conference, 5 October 1970, pp.18-24, On Microfiche, Ellen White Research Centre).

ANNEXURE 2

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE

The Seventh-day Adventist church is organized with a representative form of church government. This means authority in the Church comes from the membership of local churches. Executive responsibility is given to representative bodies and officers to govern the Church.

Four levels of church structure lead from the individual believer to the worldwide Church organization:

1. The local church made up of individual believers.
2. The local conference, or local field/mission, made up of a number of local churches in a state, province, or territory.
3. The union conference, or union field/mission, made up of conferences or fields within a larger territory (often a grouping of states or a whole country).
4. The General Conference, the most extensive unit of organization, made up of all unions in all parts of the world. Divisions are sections of the General Conference, with administrative responsibility for particular geographical areas.

Each level is "representative," that is, it reflects a democratic [sic] process of formation and election. Local churches elect their own officers and church boards by majority voting. Churches elect delegates to the conferences which meet "in session" every two or three years.

Executive authority between sessions is exercised by the Conference Executive Committee and the executive officers (normally president, secretary and treasurer), all of whom are elected by the session.

A similar process operates for union sessions and the General Conference sessions, at which times, officers and committees are elected, reports given and policies decided.

Within these four levels, the Church operates various institutions. In their world outreach, Adventists serve the whole person and have developed educational, health-care, publishing and other institutions. The multiple units of the world Church, whether congregations, conferences, health-care institutions, publishing houses, schools or other organizations, all find their organizational unity in the General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventists in which they have representation.

The General Conference is the highest earthly authority for the Church. The General Conference in session and the Executive Committee between sessions, is the highest organization in the administration of the Church's world-wide work, and is authorized by its constitution to create subordinate organizations to promote specific interests in various sections of the world.

When difference arise in or between organizations and institutions, appeal to the next higher organization is proper until it reaches the General Conference in session, or the Executive Committee at the Annual Council. During the interim between these sessions, the Executive Committee shall constitute the body of final authority on all questions where a difference of viewpoint may develop.

Administratively, the world-wide Church has 12 Divisions, which are composed of churches grouped by a collection of missions, fields, or states into unions of churches.

The Divisions, *headquarters*, and geographical descriptions are:

- * **Africa-Indian Ocean (AID)** *Abidjan, Cote d' Ivoire*; 32 mostly French-speaking countries across Africa to Indian Ocean islands,
- * **Eastern Africa (EAD)** *Harare, Zimbabwe*; ten nations primarily along the east coast from Djibouti to Botswana,
- * **Euro-Africa (EUD)** *Berne, Switzerland*; three Portuguese-speaking nations of Africa attached to 25 central European countries because of common languages,
- * **Euro-Asian (ESD)** *Tula, Russia*; states in the Commonwealth of Independent States (certain of the countries of the former Soviet Union),
- * **Inter-American (IAD)** *Miami, USA*; 46 nations including Mexico and four countries on the north rim of South America, and the Caribbean Islands,
- * **North-American (NAD)** *Silver Springs, USA*; the United States, Canada, Bermuda, two Islands in the Pacific Ocean beyond Hawaii, and two off the coast of Newfoundland,
- * **North-Asia Pacific (NSD)** *Seoul, Korea*; China, Korea, Japan and Mongolia (200,000 believers in the People's Republic of China direct their own program in cooperation with the Three-Self Movement),
- * **South American (SAD)** *Brasilia, Brazil*; eight nations below the rim on the north of the continent which are associated with Inter-America,
- * **South Pacific (SPD)** *Wahroonga, Australia*; Australia, New Zealand, Kiribati and islands of the Pacific lying south of the Equator between 140 East and 120 West longitudes,
- * **Southern Asia (SUD)** *Tamil Nadu, India*; India, Nepal, Bhutan, and the Maldiva Islands,
- * **Southern Asia Pacific Division (SSD)** *Manila, Philippines*; 13 countries in the Orient and Pacific Islands north of the Equator,
- * **Trans-European (TED)** *St Albans, England*; 30 + diverse nations of Great Britain, Scandinavia and the Baltics southward from Poland through the Balkans to Greece and the countries of the Middle East, Pakistan and Afghanistan.

(All the information and statistics copied verbatim from an e-mail directed by the SAUC. <http://www.adventist.org/pages/structuregovernance.html>.)

ATTACHED FIELD - SOUTHERN AFRICA UNION
(Bloemfontein, South Africa)

Departments:
 Children's Ministries, Communication and Education, Ministerial and Sabbath School, Spirit of Prophecy, Stewardship,
 Voice of Prophecy Bible School, Women's Ministries, Youth
Legal Association: Sedcom
Agency: ADRA
Services: Adventist Community Services, Prison Ministry, Retirement

CONFERENCES, FIELDS and MISSION

Departments:
 Church Ministries, Education, Ministerial, Trust Services
Legal Association: "Sedcom"
Services: Adventist Community Services

Cape Conf	KwaZulu Natal - Free State Conf	Lesotho Field	Namibia Field	Southern Hope	North-East Namibia	Southern Conf	St Helena Island Mission	Swaziland Field	Trans- Orange Conf	Transvaal Conf
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CHURCHES , GROUPS AND COMPANIES :

Total *180*
(KwaZulu Natal Free State Conference)

MEMBERS

Membership *9 907*
(KwaZulu Natal Free State Conference)

UNIONS
(with various Departments and Institutions)

1	2	3	4	5	6
AFRICA-INDIAN OCEAN Central African Union East Zaire Union Indian Ocean Union Nigeria Union Rwanda Union Sahel Union West African Union West Zaire Union Attached Field, Burundi	EASTERN AFRICA East African Union Ethiopian Union Malawi Union Tanzania Union Uganda Union Zambezi Union Zambia Union Attached Fields	EURO-AFRICA Anglo Union Austrian Union Bulgarian Union Czecho-Slovakian Union Franco-Belgian Union Italian Union Mozambique Union North German Union Portuguese Union Romanian Union Southern German Union Spanish Union Swiss Union Attached Field, Mediterranean Territories	EURO-ASIA East Russian Union Moldova Union Southern Union Ukrainian Union West Russian Union Attached Fields	INTER-AMERICAN Caribbean Union Central American Union Colombian Union Cuban Union Dominican Union French Antilles-Guiana Haitian Union North Mexican Union Puerto Rican Union South Mexican Union Venezuela-Antilles Union West Indies Union	NORTH AMERICAN Atlantic Union Canadian Union Columbia Union Lake Union Mid-America Union North Pacific Union Pacific Union Southern Union Southwestern Union
7	8	9	10	11	12
NORTHERN ASIA-PACIFIC Japan Union Korean Union Southern China Island East Asia Association	SOUTH AMERICAN Austral Union Bolivia Union Central Brazil Union Chile Union East Brazil Union North Brazil Union Northeast Brazil Union Peru Union South Brazil Union Attached Fields	SOUTH PACIFIC Central Pacific Union Papua New Guinea Union Trans-Australian Union Trans-Tasman Union Western Pacific Union	SOUTHERN ASIA Central India Union Northeast India Union Northern India Union South India Union Attached Fields	SOUTHERN ASIA-PACIFIC Central Philippine Union East Indonesia Union Myanmar Union North Philippine Union Southern Philippine Union Southeast Asia Union West Indonesia Union Attached Fields	TRANS-EUROPEAN Baltic Union British Union Danish Union Finland Union Hungarian Union Middle East Union Netherlands Union Norwegian Union Pakistan Union Polish Union South-East European Union Swedish Union Attached Fields

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

GENERAL CONFERENCE

Washington DC, USA

Departments:

Adventist Chaplaincy Ministries (Includes National Service Organization), Children's Ministries, Communication, Education, Family Ministries, Health and Temperance, Ministerial Association, Public Affairs and Religious Liberty, Publishing, Sabbath School and Personal Ministries, Stewardship, Trust Services, Women's Ministries, Youth

Agency:

Adventist Development and Relief Agency International (ADRA)

Services, Corporations, and Other Organizations:

Adventist Health System/Loma Linda, Inc, Adventist Risk Management, Inc., Adventist World Radio, Auditing Service, Biblical Research Institute, Centre for Global Leadership, Chan Shun International Foundation, Christian Record Services, General Conference Corporation of SDA's, Geoscience Research Institute, Global Centre for Adventist Muslim Relations, Global Mission, Information Systems Services, Institute of World Mission, International Health Food Association, Jerusalem Study Centre, Office of General Counsel, Rebok Memorial Library, Transportation and International Personnel Service, White Estate - Ellen G Incorp

Institutions:

Educational Institutions, (*Schools, Colleges and Universities*) Food Industries, Healthcare (*Clinics and Dispensaries, Hospitals, Nursing Homes and Retirement Centres, Orphanages and Children's Homes*) Media Centres, Publishing Houses (*Periodicals, Books*) Radio and TV Stations, Risk Managements.

DIVISIONS

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Africa-Indian Ocean	Eastern Africa	Euro-Africa	Euro-Asia	Inter-American	North American	Northern Asia-Pacific	South American	South Pacific	Southern Asia	Southern Asia-Pacific	Trans-European

308

ANNEXURE 3

RESPONSE OF THE SOUTHERN AFRICA UNION EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE TO
THE TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE AVAILABLE MEMBERS OF THE
SOUTHERN AFRICA UNION EXECUTIVE
HELD AT THE HEAD OFFICE IN BLOEMFONTEIN
ON TUESDAY 2 DECEMBER 1997

VS Wakaba, BH Parkerson, G Baxen, J Bekker, CAE Botha, GT du Preez, J Julies, PM Mawela, DH Swanepoel, Mrs HB Tredoux, G van Niekerk, Mrs J van Wyk, RA Zeeman.	PRESENT
M Moeletsi.	PERMANENT INVITEES
H Bekker, EJ Harris, MJ Lototo, D Meyer DF Venter, Mrs BN Wakaba.	BY INVITATION
VOTED to approve in principle that the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa make a submission to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)	SUBMISSION TO TRC 312
VOTED to approve the following statement of confession and to include it in the submission document to the TRC before 14 December 1997:	STATEMENT OF CONFESSION 313
<p>We confess that we have misrepresented the gospel of Christ in our sins of omission and commission regarding apartheid. We realize that this has had a hurtful effect on our society, on our corporate church and its individual members. We are deeply sorry and plead for the forgiveness of God and our fellow citizens.</p>	
VOTED to submit the following document to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission on behalf of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa.	DOCUMENT TO TRC 314

The Seventh-day Adventist church community in South Africa was a victim of a governmental system that has ridden roughshod over normal human rights in many areas of everyday living. Legislation enacted during these years has been well documented. Laws were enacted to govern every aspect of society literally from the cradle to the grave. The effects of these societal manipulations have impacted on all sectors of our membership. We list a few of them, but by so doing we do not and indeed cannot quantify the human emotion, pain and sorrow that is engulfed in these scenarios.

A. GROUP AREAS ACT

Hundreds of Seventh-day Adventist families were forced to leave their homes. The cascading effect on society was devastating. Congregations were forced to sell their churches to Community Boards set up by the state. No profits were allowed to be made. Therefore new church buildings could not be afforded and the World Seventh-day Adventist Church was called upon to subsidise the funding of replacement church buildings. The process itself took many years and during the interim period many members were forced to worship in classrooms and unfit community halls.

An unfortunate feature of this process is that scores and scores of our talented members left the country to settle in less threatening circumstances

B. COMPULSORY DRAFT SYSTEM

The compulsory draft system set up by the state to maintain the establishment created much anguish amongst a sizeable proportion of our membership. This segment of our church membership were schooled in a thought pattern that affected ideals and ideology and clouded the values system.

C. CLOUDED VALUE SYSTEMS

Because the governmental system in vogue in South Africa in which an ideology was systematised and given Biblical and theological support, effects of the system rubbed off on to [sic] the thinking of our church leadership. The church imbibed wittingly and unwittingly the political philosophy in vogue and created structures which mirrored the political structures. In this way the church was divided into two Union Conferences with separate administrations, one to cater for the Blacks and the other for Indians, Coloured [sic] and Whites. Separate colleges were confirmed for theological and teacher training and separate Welfare [sic] structures were ratified. Indeed the two structures did not communicate with other except for certain essentials such as in formulating certain broad church policy.

We are ashamed to admit that by and large the church acquiesced through its silence and often at times by its example both inside and outside South Africa, to the injuries caused to our total membership across the board. It appears that members were deliberately schooled to think in terms of race and culture as the only criteria in the measurement of personhood.

The emotional and spiritual damage to our membership can only be estimated and our sincere hope is that all persons in this fair land both within and without the ambience of our influence will be in a position to grow in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ who understands our mortal frames and the frailties of our beings and offers compassion on all of His children.

We are constrained therefore by the love of God that has grown more keenly in our hearts to confess that we have misrepresented the gospel of Christ in our sins of omission and commission regarding apartheid. We realize that this has had a hurtful effect on our society, on our corporate church and its individual members.

We are deeply sorry and plead for the forgiveness of God and our fellow citizens.

A VISION FOR THE FUTURE

The Seventh-day Adventist Church has now begun a process of unification.

Officially all our churches are open to full membership and participation rights. All educational institutions enjoy membership from anyone wishing to study; salaries are being equalised irrespective of race or gender over a phase-in period. Our Community Service program is working under a revised constitution approved by the department of Welfare. This service is under constant review by our national body located in Bloemfontein and our stated aim is to provide a more efficient service to the poorest of the poor.

Our administrative structure continues to present a challenge. We have succeeded only partially in uniting our various population groups in the various provinces in a unified conference structure. At present only KwaZulu-Natal has a conference set up in which all groups are represented.

OUR DREAM FOR THE FUTURE:

- That we be incorporated into the normal world structure of the Seventh-day Adventist church.
- that we complete the unification process by loving persuasion and by example.
- that we demonstrate in our personal lives an acceptance of all persons as our neighbours.
- that we will never again be silent in the face of injustice to any of our fellow citizens
- that we will speak out from our pulpits and elsewhere on issues afflicting the broad society such as abortion, violence, abuse, capital punishment, sexual deviations etc.
- that through our not inconsiderable expertise in the Welfare program, Meals on Wheels Services and Adventist Relief Agency (ADRA SA & International) we will endeavour to demonstrate compassion in real terms to people in real need.
- that through our educational system train health educators, child-care givers, pre-primary teachers to serve in areas where help is need most
- that our literacy program be developed to help with the backlog that exists currently
- that through proclamation of the Word we tell of the love of God with conviction so that the healing of mind body and soul will continue in our beloved land and the hope of the establishment of the Kingdom become a reality in our time.

To this end we dedicate our lives and our resources. So help us God.

Prayer VS Wakaba (Southern African Union Conference Executive Committee, 2 December 1997, 'Response to the Truth and Reconciliation Committee, KNFCA).

ANNEXURE 4

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE SAUC EXECUTIVE
BY
PASTOR ANTONIO PANTALONE
14 December 1997

I. INTRODUCTION

While a document of this nature has been long overdue, I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratefulness and thankfulness that the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa has responded positively to the wishes of the TRC and declared their culpability in the violation of the physical, emotional and spiritual rights of the black, coloured and Indian members of our church.

I will admit that I did have some fearful moments when I thought that the church was perhaps not going to step out and respond to the TRC.

HOWEVER: I believe that I have been led by the Holy Spirit to respond to the document drawn up the SAUC and make a number of observations. I wish to let the executive committee know right at the outset of my letter that I am not seeking to cause any divisions in the church. I also wish furthermore to express these observations through the correct channels and will undertake not to spread my concerns to any other members in the church.

II. UNSATISFACTORY DEPARTURE POINT

The first point I would like to deal with is the unacceptability of the departure point and the irresolute foundation upon which the document has been built. I quote:

- > The Seventh-day Adventist church community in South Africa was a victim of the governmental system... [underlining added] (page 86).
- > Because the governmental system in vogue in South Africa in which an ideology was systematized and given Biblical and theological support, effects of the system rubbed off on to [sic] the thinking of our church leadership... [underlining added] (page 87).
- > Because the church patterned itself after the thinking of the politicians, dreadful inequalities soon became apparent... [underlining added] (page 88).

Dear friends on the Executive Committee, these statements are not merely unacceptable but a mere attempt at SHIFTING THE BLAME from the Seventh-day Adventist Church onto the previous South African government.

Sure, the past government did enact tough legislation, we are all aware of that. However, I must say, I really do not think the TRC are interested at this point of time in what the government did, how they influenced and dictated to society and the vehicles that were used to foster the policies of apartheid.

They know as well as we do, that the National Party carries the accountability for much of the heartache and deprivation experienced by so many of our people in South Africa.

I am sure the real reason that they want the church to appear before them, is so that they can hear for themselves what was the church's involvement during the apartheid years and what is its present position in this regard.

From what I can gather, the Seventh-day Adventist Church in South Africa already does not have a very good standing in the eyes of the present South African government because of the status-quo and the indifference that it adopted towards people of colour during the apartheid era.

Let us ask ourselves honestly then, what are we going to achieve by making the past government the scapegoat?

Accordingly, if we present the viewpoints to the TRC sitting, as they appear in the document what is it going say about the prophetic nature of our church?

Try and picture it, the Seventh-day Adventist Church, that church who have for so long professed to be the bearers of the final message before the Second Coming of Christ, stating that they have weakly and timidly succumbed to the ideology of the state, have become victims of a governmental system, and have patterned their thinking in non-biblical doctrines of the state. What kind of message is this?

A church that is truly prophetic and bases its teaching firmly upon the Word of God:

- > Must be relevant to the times in which it finds itself, always sinking its roots into the very pulse of history;
- > Enters into solidarity with those that are being oppressed and discriminated against;
- > Defends the rights of ALL people and speaks on their behalf, no matter what the circumstances may be;
- > Helps the poor people of every denomination, race, ethnic, gender and cultural group;
- > And like Micah and Amos, a truly prophetic church can never allow itself to be swayed by the government or rulers in power, but if necessary must admonish these ruling powers and oppressors and workers of iniquity as strongly as possible for the injustices and wrongs being committed (See Amos 3:9; 4:1-3; 5:11-13; 8:4. Micah 2:1-2; 2:6-11; 3:1-12; 7:1-3).

In these verses we not only read of God's anger and announcement of approaching judgment because of what was happening in Israel but also of the prophet's fearless, authentic and forceful transmission of these messages to those who were guilty.

Have we not merely, by adopting an insipid unprophetic and unbiblical type of thinking, placed ourselves in the same position of many of the Evangelical Churches in Germany who supported the NAZI government during the time of Adolf Hitler and the *Kirchekampf* but after the war said that they were given no other option?

What would happen friends, and we pray that it never will, if another change of government occurred in which people were again oppressed, would we merely follow their leading and legislation again?

III. THE UNBIBLICAL NATURE OF THE CONFESSION

Secondly, if the document was meant to be a confession and our admission for the hurts and suffering we caused our fellow church members, it must then take the nature of a true confession.

Friends, once again a confession (and especially one of this nature that is going to be read out at a meeting that receives national coverage) cannot be based on three or four lines that have become passé and contain no element of repentance. I quote once again:

We confess that we have misrepresented the gospel [sic] of Jesus Christ in our sins of omission and commission regarding apartheid. We realize that this has had a hurtful effect on our society, on our corporate church and its individual members [underlining added].

We are deeply sorry and plead for the forgiveness of God and our fellow citizens (page 86 and repeated again almost word for word on page 88).

Dear friends on the Executive Committee, I repeat again THIS IS NOT A TRUE AND COMPREHENSIVE CONFESSION! Let us be honest, after all these years, is this all the church has to confess and be sorry for. Listen to what Bonhoeffer has to say about confession:

True confession compels men and women to fall upon their knees before Christ and to confess *mea culpa, mea maxima culpa* (My culpability, my culpability entirely) (Taken from Bonhoeffer's *Ethics*. p.112).

The church did not only "misrepresent" or warp the message contained in the Gospel, but by allowing itself to be swayed in the manner described in the document and by adopting the spurious, detrimental and evil ideology of the State into its organizational structures, SINNED AGAINST GOD HIMSELF.

Let us never get away from the fact that APARTHEID WAS AND REMAINS A DREADFUL SIN. Inhumane treatment and the marginalizing of fellow believers (or any people for that matter) is also a sin. If the church was part and parcel of this process (as it has admitted in the document) - why has it been so afraid to say so and why has it been reluctant to make a full confession in this regard?

We are no longer playing table games, we are living in the *Kairos* (critical times that demand resolute action) of world's history. We preach that the coming of Christ is at the door. The eyes of many are upon us. Are we going to stand up and take this precious opportunity to speak on the real issues confronting us, or are we going to continue to "whitewash" and faintheartedly attempt to cover up the wrongs as we have done in the past and simply pretend that they did not exist?

Almost thirty years ago, the church was in a tremendous upheaval with the establishment of the *Afrikaanse Konferensie*. At this time the established church also inflexibly refused to listen to their complaints, did not recognize any of their grievances, snubbed the reasons for their walk-out at Sedaven in December 1968, declined to enter into meaningful dialogue and refused to admit that the Afrikaner in the church had been sidelined. This unbending attitude not only caused a five year schism in the church but, in my opinion, it also never led to the proposal of any really positive solutions. As a result, whether we would like to believe it or not, many years down the line the church is faced once again with problems of the same nature. (I am at present completing a Doctoral thesis on this period of time in the church and therefore do not speak of this specific issue without the necessary knowledge and understanding of what took place).

In his *Ethics* Dietrich Boehoeffer makes some very enlightening observations on the church's confession of guilt and the nature that it should adopt:

- > The church confesses that she has not proclaimed often and clearly enough her message of the one God who has revealed Himself for all times in Jesus Christ and suffers no other gods beside himself.
- > She confesses her timidity, her evasiveness, her dangerous concessions. She had often been untrue to her office of guardianship and her office of comfort. And through this she has often denied to the outcast and to the despised the compassion which she owes them.
- > She was silent when she should have cried out because of the blood of the innocent was crying aloud to heaven.
- > She has failed to speak the right word in the right way and at the right time...
- > The church confesses that she has witnessed in silence the spoliation and exploitation of the poor... [underlining added] (Taken from Bonhoeffer's *Ethics* pp. 113-115).

IV. DISTORTION OF THE MISSIONARY MANDATE ENTRUSTED UNTO THE CHURCH

And then thirdly, How would we explain away the very clear and explicit Biblical imperative or the missionary mandate as outlined in Revelation 14 and Matthew 28 to go out and preach the gospel to ALL peoples, of ALL languages ALL ethnic and ALL cultural groups?

Our ministers preached about it, we studied about it in our Bible lessons, we read about it in the *Spirit of Prophecy* and yet when it came to the reality or the implementations of these notions the church simply swept our coloured, black and Indian fellow-believers under the rug of obscurity.

This was done by preventing them from worshipping in the same churches, barring them from attending our educational institutions, dividing the organizational structures (and then many still glibly say "Oh but our black brothers wanted to be separated from the whites"), forcing them to go to separate campmeetings, supplying them with literature and other reading materials of a quality far inferior to those supplied to the white constituencies.

I am not even going to try and enter into any debate to try and outline the vast differences in remuneration between the white and black ministers and the contrasts in allocations and the type of housing allocated to these two respective groups.

I am however going to use just several examples taken from my Master's Thesis (not quoted).

In 1928, Helderberg College went into operation. After purchasing the farm Bakkerskloof for about ten thousand Pounds upon which to build the school, several decent looking buildings were erected upon this property (Admin block, Boys dorm and girl's dorm).

While this was happening in Somerset West and while huge sums of money were being spent to make the facilities as comfortable as possible for the staff and students, just a few miles down the road, Good Hope College was also organized.

Our coloured friends however, were confined to using an old weather-beaten, leaky tent, for sleeping quarters for students, for a eating place and classrooms! And this long BEFORE the years of the apartheid government. Later they managed to move into some old classrooms - Is this not dreadful? I often wonder if all our people and even some of our administrators are really aware of what took place in the church?

What about our black friends secluded at Bethel College and then at Spion Kop Missionary College?

What about the time that fellow Adventists and others were forcefully evicted from the white Churches?

I had some Indian church members who drove all the way to Witbank to visit relatives. On Sabbath they went to church as is their custom. However after eventually arriving at church they were pointed in the direction of the black church. Needless to say they never went to church that Sabbath. Friends this did not happen very long ago!

In Springs Church just four years ago a black man (a member of the KwaThema Adventist Church) was actually thrown into the street!

And then what about the depreciative language that was used when we referred to the other race groups in the church? We only need turn to the church's correspondence (SAUC and NTC minutes) to find heaps of evidence of this.

What about the time (not very long ago) when black, coloured and Indian students (including some that were studying theology) had to sit outside the dining room at Helderberg to eat while the white students sat inside?

What about the silence that was evident during the years of oppression, when not one leader of the church in South Africa stood up to decry this state of affairs, or if the lone voices were heard, they were treated as communists, ANC or PAC supporters and radical trouble makers? Do we really understand that these things makes us just as guilty as the churches, or organizations that documented and openly supported apartheid?

Did the church ever issue any statements at the time of the Sharpeville shootings or during the Soweto riots? Did they write at the time when the Tri-Cameral Parliament was implemented? Probably not.

No, the church does not get involved in what they consider to be "politics" and they usually do not consider this important. However, how do we understand the church's periodic motions of loyalty and confidence in the National Party government? I actually also have in my possession a document wherein the church even swore a strong oath of allegiance to the King of England in the mid-1930's. Is this not political?

(Should anyone require a fuller study in the area of discrimination enacted against members of our church in South Africa, refer to An Appraisal of Seventh-day Adventist Mission in South Africa - A Missiological Evaluation, Masters Thesis, 1996, University of Durban Westville).

Many of these things were sinful practices of the highest order. In the light of this could we really have called ourselves the Church of God during these years? Could we truly say that we were obediently fulfilling the Divine missionary mandate entrusted unto us? The most dreadful thought that comes to mind at this moment is that if the church did not fulfil its obligations to all the believers of this country it has then been a flawed instrument for more than 100 years.

Are we ready to confess these things before the Truth and Reconciliation Committee? If not maybe we should rather stay away all together for it will end up to an exercise in futility and serve no real purpose.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE COMPILERS OF THE DOCUMENT

Well, what has happened in the past nobody can bring back again. Are we ready however, in the *Kairos* in which we find ourselves, to alter the focus of the present document and make an appropriate confession, based on the sinful practices that the church undertook rather than simply shift the blame upon the government?

I wish to state once again that I am not suggesting that we throw out the present document, there are undoubtedly some very strong and valid points in this writing.

However, are we going to make our document more Biblically based? The entire document incidentally only includes one Bible text, namely Matthew 9:36 (Page 88).

Should anyone want to investigate what I consider to be a full confession, they can read the final chapter of the book *The Road to Rustenburg* which contains the confession of the churches in South Africa made at the ecumenical gathering held in Rustenburg in 1990.

At this encounter which brought almost every religious faith in South Africa round the table to discuss *Apartheid* (the Seventh-Day Adventist Church was once again enigmatically absent), and its detrimental influence and the pernicious consequences that came in its wake, this declaration was eventually signed which in my mind encapsulates the spirit of true confession and repentance that we should study and emulate.

It was at the above-mentioned meeting that Dr Willie Jonker from the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa confessed to its leading in the development and its participation in the evil system of apartheid.

Bonhoeffer's *Ethics* which I used earlier in the document also offers some deep enlightenment on the authentic nature of the confession of the church.

Some final points for consideration:

1. What about the representation on the SAUC commission that drafted this resolution to the TRC? Does the scope of people that attended cover the very best people we have in this country? I am sorry to have taken note that people like Dr. John Webster, Dr. Isak van Zyl and Pastor Johan Japp did not form part of the committee.

In these men, the church not only has the expertise but the specialization to be able to construct a much more substantive theological, missiological, historical and Biblical document. I of course speak on this regard as one of their former students at Helderberg College.

2. What about representation from our Indian friends in the church? Are their opinions and viewpoints not also important at this time?
3. What about an inclusion of a statement that we are going to call for a specific day of fasting and prayer. That we are going to place these issues before all our church people and confront them with the fact that we need to confess and repent not only on a corporate basis but also on an individual level for what has transpired in the church? Will this not carry more weight at the TRC?
4. Can your document also not first be published in the church's newspaper and let everybody read it before presenting it to the TRC? In my mind this is the correct way of doing it. I know the time is short but I am sure that it if we approach the TRC with our predicament that they will perhaps postpone our hearing for a short while.
5. What about the representation that is going to appear before the TRC? Are they people that can represent the church's viewpoints and answer the questions that may be put to them in the very best way possible? Here again I think of Dr John Webster, who is used to appearing before academics and people of the highest calibre. Have you considered him as a possible person? I am not speaking on his behalf - I have in fact had no contact with Dr Webster for several months now.

Finally, I would like to state that if our church does not issue a document wherein it truly highlights and confesses its sin against God and the black, coloured and Indian believers, I don't know if I could ever minister again in this church with full confidence, and a clear conscience in the message that it proclaims.

I am truly doing this in a personal capacity, following the dictates of my conscience, working under the guidance of the Holy Spirit as I write. Neither has it been my intention to depreciate our church, its message which I love dearly, or its leaders for which I have the highest regard and respect. Like Martin Luther however, I am compelled at this time to stand firmly by what I believe. I had to speak and could do no other.

Yours in the Blessed Hope

A.Pantalone

Copies: Transvaal Conference President
Cape Conference President
Southern African Union President
Natal-Free State Conference President ('An Open Letter to the SAUC Executive', 14 December 1997, Document in author's possession).

ANNEXURE 5

A SYNOPSIS OF THE UNION OF CHURCHES MODEL AS SUGGESTED BY THE CAPE CONFERENCE

The Cape Conference Special Business Session recently voted overwhelmingly to merge with the other conferences of the SAU in a Union of Churches. The Union of Churches model is set out below, along with a list of the main advantages as perceived by the Cape Conference constituency.

I. ADVANTAGES

1. CHURCH UNITY

The present model according to which the Good Hope, Southern and Cape Conferences are organized would be expeditiously replaced by a non-racial one which promotes church unity. A Union of Churches involving the entire SAU may take longer to achieve but the three conferences mentioned above could be merged within months.

2. COST EFFICIENCY

The vital objective of cost-efficiency in the use of denominational funds will be achieved. By centralizing costly technical functions such as treasury, secretariat and church ministries at union level, wasteful duplication can be eliminated. Far less will be spent on maintaining bureaucratic structures and more resources will be available for the all-important pastoral/evangelistic ministry of the church. A number of experienced pastors presently tied up with administration will once again be available for direct soul-winning activities.

3. EQUAL REMUNERATION

It appears that this model will permit immediate parity for all workers with respect to salaries, child allowances, car depreciation and travel allowances. For Southern Conference workers, parity in the other allowances such as rent and tax subsidies will need to be phased in as tithe growth permits. The alternatives under consideration (One and Two conference models) cannot achieve this level of parity.

4. OPERATING EXPENSES

The budget of the One Conference model presents an operating deficit (at 1994 figures) of more than US \$ 500,000. On the other hand, with the Union of Churches model the budget can be balanced.

5. SET-UP COSTS

Unlike the One Conference model, the Union of Churches model does not require costly set-up arrangements such as the purchase of a new costly office complex, office furnishings and certain removal expenses. These set-up costs were to be funded by a GC special [sic] of nearly one million US dollars.

6. INVOLVEMENT AND EMPOWERMENT OF LAITY

This model gives the laity great say in the running of the church both at congregational and district levels, and more responsibility to see that it meets the challenge of global mission. The local minister and his lay leadership will also require more intensive training in the various branches of ministry and this will lead to a better equipped membership.

7. LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

This model will need numerous district leaders, thus giving many more people the opportunity for hands-on leadership experience within the church organization. More strategic planning and problem-solving will need to be done at a lower level within the church structure. These leadership opportunities are not nearly as numerous in the traditional One Conference model.

8. CO-OPERATION

The Union of Churches model, with its district committees, provides a structure that will facilitate meaningful contact and co-operation between the various ethnic groups within the Southern African Adventist community. This model has the potential to foster genuine grassroots reconciliation and unity.

SPECIAL NOTE:

Some have expressed the understandable concern that the Union of Churches model is an attempt to achieve "apartheid by the back door". For those who share this concern two documents have been attached to help the reader understand the spirit in which this model is presented:

a) Page two of the "Strategic Restructuring Proposal" presented at the Cape Conference Special Business Session, specifically the section entitled "The Apartheid Legacy".

b) A page from the session minutes containing action 420, specifically sub-section 1.

II. ORGANIZATIONAL CHART (has already been reproduced on p.284)

III. EXPLANATORY NOTES

These notes form a brief description of how the Union of Churches model would function at each level or tier of its structure

1. THE PASTOR AND HIS/HER CONGREGATIONS

- 1.1. The number of congregation grouped under a pastor's care will vary according to such criteria as membership, tithe and proximity.
- 1.2. Pastoral budgets will be allocated to churches according to a formula based on both membership and tithe income. (This formula needs to be worked out in consultation between the SAU and the conferences). This will ensure that not only the wealthy or "advantaged" congregations and companies, not directly qualifying for their own pastor can be linked with other groups in order to meet the criteria and thereby qualify for a shared pastor.
- 1.3. Congregations will have a greater say in who is called to pastor them which should result in increased mutual accountability and improved pastoral performance.
- 1.4. It is envisaged that a percentage of tithe will eventually be retained for various forms of church growth and evangelism in the local congregation. These funds could be used for such local projects as an evangelistic series, a youth pastor's salary, or a Bible School.

2. THE DISTRICT

- 2.1. Congregations will be further configured into districts according to such criteria as membership, mutual interest, proximity, accessibility and language. Such alignments may be altered as changing circumstances require and are not meant in any way to inhibit church growth.

- 2.2. In each district a District Committee will be formed with representation from each of its churches. This committee will control the evangelistic/church growth funds allocated to the district and also be responsible for the strategic global mission planning for the same area.
- 2.3. District Committees will also have a say in the staffing of those pastoral budgets allocated to them.
- 2.4. District leaders will be appointed by these District Committees and they will function as committee chairperson. District leaders will be selected from among the pastors and lay leaders in the district and the appointments may be reviewed annually.
- 2.5. If District leaders require any secretarial help this should be paid for at district level using non-tithe funds.
- 2.6. Within each district or region certain pastors may be encouraged to develop a "parish-plus" type of ministry in which they not only look after their congregations but also assist other churches with training and resources in specialist fields like youth work, outreach seminars and family ministry. Any inter-district training programmes will need to be co-ordinated [sic] by the District leaders and the Regional Vice-Presidents.

3. THE REGION

- 3.1. If the Union of Churches model is accepted across the SAU then the grouping of districts into regions will need much wider input. There are however, at least three possible ways of constituting regions within the Cape territory:
 - * Dividing the old Cape Province into three regions with the regional vice-presidents located in the major metropolitan centres of Cape Town, Port Elizabeth and East London.
 - * Dividing the territory into two regions, one comprising the Northern and Western Cape and the other consisting of the Eastern Cape.
 - * Following the new provincial structure: Northern Cape, Western Cape and Eastern Cape.
- 3.2. The Regional Vice-Presidents would be appointed during regular union sessions by the delegates attending from that region and serve for a full five-year term. They will be expected to have a strong personnel function (Ministerial) and act as a "pastor" to the pastors in their regions. The personnel function would require them to perform on-going pastoral evaluations. (Proper evaluation instruments that can be used by district leaders, pastors and church boards must be developed). They will need to provide strong spiritual leadership and help in conflict resolution when called upon. It will also be their responsibility to foster the interests of global mission and guide in the strategic planning for the region.
- 3.3. Although it will not be necessary to rent or purchase offices for the regional Vice-Presidents they may require secretarial help. Provision for this on a 5/8 basis has been made in the proposed budget.
- 3.4. It is suggested that the Regional Committee members serve for the full term of five years and that they be appointed in the same manner as the Regional Vice-President. The need for representation and specialist expertise should both be used as a guide in the appointment if these members.

3.5. The calling (from other organizations) and relocation of pastors will be coordinated by the Regional Committee. Calls will obviously need to be routed through the union. Regional committees will also be responsible for allocating the regional budgets for pastoral staffing and evangelism after consultation with local districts.

3.6. It must be stressed that this model favours, and should foster, a "from the pew upwards" approach to the management of the church. Local congregations and districts must be encouraged to have their own workable strategies for church growth. Regional Committees are expected to facilitate rather than prescribe.

3.7. The Regional Committee may appoint various specialist sub-committees to advise it on matters like financing, building, church ministries, etc.

4. THE UNION

4.1. All technical functions such as treasury, DCM and secretariat, previously taken care of at conference level will be centralized at union level.

4.2. Provision has been made - from the Cape Conference tithe - for the following personnel to be employed at the union in order to care for the additional technical responsibilities it will take over:

- * An associate in Secretariat with an office secretary.
- * An associate treasurer with an office secretary.
- * An accountant/cashier.
- * Two church auditors.
- * A computer operator.
- * One school treasurer (two are usually required).

4.3. The minimal cost of any office additions, renovations or other improvements required by these extra personnel should be funded from the GC special [sic] which was to have been applied to the purchase of a new headquarters in PE under the proposed One Conference Model.

4.4. The DCM and other specialist departments of the union will need to communicate directly with the churches, especially in the provision of resources, as the Regional Vice-Presidents will not have the staff or expense budgets to handle these functions.

4.5. This additional work load may require an additional office secretary in the Union's DCM department. This additional budget has not been provided for in the provisional budget, however every effort must be made to ensure that our church's are properly supplied with DCM resources.

4.6. The maintenance of accurate church records, especially membership lists, needs to be taken care of at union level by the Secretariat.

4.7. The regular SAU committee should meet only once a year in November to approve policy and strategic plans (macro planning) for the union. Members should receive as much relevant information as possible beforehand and proceedings should be streamlined. The Regional Vice-Presidents will need to serve on the SAU Committee.

4.8. The SAU constitution should be amended to permit the formation of a Union Management Committee which can meet on a regular basis to manage matters during the rest of the year. This committee's members should be available at short notice and minimal expense. The various "technical service" departments of the union should be represented on this committee ('A Synopsis of the Union of Churches Model as suggested by the Cape Conference', 28 September 1994, CCA).

ANNEXURE 6

**Memorandum from dissatisfied Helderberg students
January 1995**

Hail Helderberg! This has long been our song and motto, a place where dreams were meant to become a reality. Sadly our hopes and dreams were dashed by an attitude of noncommitment [sic] towards addressing long standing, legitimate grievances of the disadvantaged student population of Helderberg College.

We the disadvantaged students of Helderberg College, therefore are left with no alternative but to record our grievances in a manner of protest that Christ himself would be proud of. "Is this not the fast that I have chosen: To loose the bonds of wickedness to undo the heavy burdens and to let the oppress [sic] go free."

We hereby submit a memorandum which is a declaration of our grievances whereby we demand our right as students for our grievances to be addressed within our stipulated dead line [sic].

Bursaries:

Our evaluation of the present bursary structure reflects many irregularities. We therefore demand the present college policy on the distribution of bursaries. We further demand that the allocation of bursaries for the next quarter be suspended forthwith. Allocation of bursaries must be equitably distributed, taking cognisance of the divergent ethnic cultural groups represented at our College, based on an evaluation of the student's need for such a bursary.

Academics:

We demand that Helderberg become an English medium institution. This would mean that no lecturers should be allowed to address students in Afrikaans and all test and examination papers should be written in English only.

We would like the rector to notify all staff members in writing about this issue.

A response to this item must be obtained by 1 p.m. Monday afternoon and the results should be seen in the forthcoming examinations.

In conclusion, we the students hope and pray that our grievances are resolved amicably. We further record our right to meet with the administration during the course of the academic year should any problems of injustice and maladministration arise on this campus again ('Memorandum from dissatisfied Helderberg Students', 25 January 1995, HBCA).

ANNEXURE 7

Notes regarding diagram SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH

Relationship of Conference/Mission organization

1. The diagram illustrates the relationship among the various levels of organization in the Church.
2. It shows in a simplified way the flow of authority and responsibility among Church organizations.
3. It shows that the Church is composed of individual members and is organized on four distinct levels to fulfil its mission to the local community and, in ever-widening circles, to the world. The four levels of organization and their areas of services are:
 - a. The local (organized) church level. Churches serve local communities and the church members in their respective congregations.
 - b. The local conference/mission level. Local conferences/missions serve specific geographic areas and their constituent churches.
 - c. The union conference/mission level. Union conferences/missions serve larger geographic areas and their constituent local conferences/missions.
 - d. The General Conference level. The General Conference and its divisions serve the world and the sisterhood of constituent union conferences/missions.
4. The diagram also illustrates the flow of two distinct types of authority/responsibility in the Church: constituent and administrative.
 - a. On the left side is shown the flow of constituent authority/responsibility. The arrows show upward movement and the fact that constituent authority flows from the local church to the local conference constituent session. From that level, it flows through the church's system of representation to the union conference and the General Conference constituent sessions. Between constituent sessions, the elected executive committees represent their respective constituencies.
 - b. The horizontal arrows in the centre at each level point to the right. These show that between sessions constituencies at each level delegate responsibility for the administration of their respective conferences to elected administrative organizations. In each case, these are centred in an executive committee.
 - c. On the right side is shown the flow of administrative responsibility. The arrows show downward movement and the fact that administrative authority flows from the higher organizations to the lower. This also illustrates the fact that the church assigns to higher organizations a degree of administrative to the organizations placed under their care. At the local level the church has the pastoral responsibility to care for each of its members.
5. Reference to mission organizations is found only on the right side of the diagram. This is because missions do not have full constituent authority since the higher organizations carry a portion of the responsibility for their operation.
6. The letters which appear on the diagram to designate organizational units on the same level (i.e. Church A,...M, N, O,P; Conference A,..D,E,F; Union A,...F,G) are used only for convenience in illustrating the fact that many churches compose a conference, that several conferences compose a union, and that many unions compose the General Conference and its divisions (Beach & Beach, 1985:135-136, HBCL).

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INDEX

- Advent Park, 139,140,142,
190,
Advent Verlag, 265,
Adventhelpers, 202ff.
203ff.,204,205,206,215,
222,223,224,225,232,233,
Aerotorium, 199,220,
African Division, 53,55,57,
58,90,
African Division Outlook, 59,
82,85,87,88,89,94,95,172,
African Mission, 82,83,
Afrikaanse Konferensie, viff.,
Afrikaanse Advent
Vroue Vereniging, 213ff.,223,
Afrikaanse Taal en kultuur
Vereniging, 66,
Agter die Blou Gordyn, 98,
99,100,
Alberton, 126,
Allen Dave, 247,
Allen Roland, 280,
America, 1,20,37,38,39,40,42,
43,45,48,50,57,69,73,81,83,
85,86,105,111,112,164,165,168,
170,180,209,248,252,258,264,
278,279,280,281,283,284,290,
292,
Amiens, 15,
Andrews Nevin John, 1,264ff.,
Andrews University, 209,279,
290,
Anglo-Saxon culture, 29,
Anthony RS, 69,83,
Antioch, 280,
Babylon, 273,
Badenhorst WHJ, 152,194,238,
Bakkers Kloof, 59,
Bapsfontein, 189,193,213,220,
230,
Basel, 264,
Beaufort West, 87,
Bediako Matthews, 247,255,288,
Belfast, 208,
Benoni, 192,198,
Bernese Oberland, 265,
Bethal, 92,
Bethel, 173,
Bethlehem, 87,
Beyers CF, 31,
Bibault Hendrik, 12,
Birkenstock David Dr., 62,
244ff.,245,247,
Birkenstock I, 213,
Birkenstock Josef, 57,103,105,
106,116,117,118,121,155,163,
187,194,200,205,215,216,217,
218,219,223,224,226,227,229,
234,237,238,
Birkenstock JJ, 57,90,95,
Birkenstock Karl, 92,106,114,
116,118,195,196ff.,197ff.,
198ff.,199,215,222,223,225,
229,230,235,238,
Bloemfontein, 22,81,271,
Blood River, 22,267,268,
Boekhout, 56,
Boeren-Hollands, 14,
Boers, 10,17,21,22,23,26ff.,
28,31,43,
Boksburg, 193,
Bonhoeffer Dietrich, 261,298,
Bonnievale, 87,
Boomplaats, 22,
Boshoff IJC, 237,
Bosman HC, 30,
Botha Louis, 32ff.,33ff.,
Brabbeltaal, 25,
Brakpan, 192,
Branson Henry William, 57,
58,59,88,
Brentwood Park, 106,118,119,
120,184,201,
British, 14,15ff.,16,17,18ff.,
19,20,21,22ff.,23,25,26ff.,27,
28ff.,29ff.,30,32ff.,33,34,36,
Brits, 92,
Burleigh George, 69,
Bushman language, 65,100,
Bybel Korrespondensie Skool,
211,
Bywoners, 29,
Caledon Earl of, 29,
Calitzdorp, 87,
Calvinistic theology, 19,
26,225,
Campbell Francis, 145,205,233,
234,238,240,
Canadian, 56,
Cape Colony Conference, 85,86,88,
Cape Conference Executive, 243,
286,
Cape Town, 16,18,37,38,40,49,59,69,
73,74,80,82,83,86,
Carnavon Bathhouse, 74,
Carnegie Commission, 27,
Carolina, 198,193,
Ceylon, 27,30,
Celliers Jan, 31,
Christelike Nasionale
Onderwys, 30,
Christ in Song, 94,95,
Circle of Praxis, 257,258,259,266,
Claremont Sanitarium, 69,74,80,84,
Claremont Union College, 45,49,50,
83,84,
Clifford Roy, 117,118,122,123,138,
139,142,143,147,148,149,159,190,
197,198,202,211,218,219,
Cloete Josias Abraham, 22,
Coetzee AO, 210,
Coetzee GJE, 211,
Coetzee JD, 132,133ff.,134,135,145,
235,238,239,
Coetzee PH, 60,
Coetzer Paul, 50,64,
Combrinck JJB, 113,
Comunidades de base, 258,
Concentration camps, 26ff.,29,
Congregationalism, 282,

Hoog-Hollands, 14,
 Hunt William, 37ff.,38ff.,
 Hyatt WS, 42ff.,43ff.,44ff.,
 46,48,53,74,77,80,87,88,
 Hydrotherapy, 89,
 Inculturation, 248,285,
 Indigenization, 248,
 Insertion, 258,259ff.,262,
 263,266,272,
 Interim organization, 186,
 188ff.,189,190,
 International Tract and
 Missionary Society, 69,
 70,76,
 Italian, 263,264,265,
 Jameson Raid, 42,
 Japp JA, 131ff.,132ff.,150,
 Joint Declaration, 138,139,
 140,141,143,
 Jordaan LJ, 222,223,
 Joubert Hofni Dr., 35,
 Journal of Health, 76,77ff.,
 Kaaps-Hollands, 14,
 Kempton Park, 189,192,198,204,
 Kestell JD, 30,
 Keulder Pieter, 149,
 Kimberley, 37ff.,76,77,82,
 Knight George, 264,279,281,
 282,285,286,290,
 Kotzé Gilbert, 71,
 Kritzinger JH, 216,237,
 Kroonstad, 87,
 Kruger Paul, 71,
 Krugersdorp, 92,
 Kuyper Abraham, 26,
 KwaZulu/Natal Free State
 Conference, 175,189,
 Ladysmith, 58,
 Lantern, 141,142ff.,143ff.,
 153,159,197,
 Latin School, 16,
 Leipoldt Louis, 31,
 Lentedal, 208,
 Liberation Theology, 257,258,
 Librairie Polyglotte, 264,
 Lichtenburg, 192,
 Lind ME, 138,139,152,190,194,
 Lindlahr College, 207,
 Lindley, 93,
 Literature Evangelists, 38,
 69ff.,84,86,87,99,
 Living spirituality, 273,
 Local church, 257,258,278ff.,
 280,282ff.,284ff.,286,287,
 291,292ff.,293ff.,294,296,
 297,
 London, 77,
 Louis XIV, 10,
 Kenilworth, 49,
 Khoikhoi, 11,13,21,25,
 Kriel BV, 114,
 Krugersdorp Church, 191,
 Madison Institution, 283,
 Maison D'Edition, 265,
 Mandela Nelson, 242,
 Majuba, 26,
 Malan DF, 69,
 Malay, 13,
 Manifesto, 17,
 Marais Eugene, 31,
 Marais Kowie, 31,
 Matigheidsbond, 209,
 Matriculation exams, 53ff.,
 McNay, 93,
 Medical Work, 69,75,79ff.,80ff.,
 81ff.,82ff.,83,87,166,173ff.,
 174ff.,176,199ff.,200ff.,201ff.,
 207ff.,209,212,
 Merger Task Force, 254ff.,
 Michigan Conference, 85,
 Miller William, 110,111ff.,
 Millerites, 111,
 Mills Merle, 103,105,116,117,
 118,121ff.,123,152,153,159,
 180,190,202,211,233,234,235,
 Milner Alfred, 3,28ff.,29ff.,
 30ff.,31,32,
 Mocke Jan, 22,
 Modisane Bloke, 176ff.,
 Mooihoek, 87,
 Moses, 19,20,136,
 Mtshali Lionel, 288,
 Multicultural, 242,248,249,277,
 280,284,285ff.,297,
 Names,Badges,Uniforms,Act, 146,
 Nantes, 10,
 Natal Field, 247,
 Natalia, 22,
 National consciousness, 19,
 National Party, 34,56,65,66,67,68,
 69,135,
 National Welfare Board, 223,
 Na Vyf Maande, 131ff.,132ff.,136,
 150,151,
 Nebraska, 50,
 Nederduitse Hervormde Kerk, 66,
 Netherlands, 8,10,15,
 Newcastle, 250ff.,251,252,
 Newman JW, 114,115ff.,
 Niemandt GM, 113,132,135,136,
 137ff.,154,160,164,167,169ff.,
 170,171,179,180,181,
 Nigel, 192,
 Normandien, 250ff.,251,
 Off-Shoot Movements, 132,133ff.,
 134ff.,135,
 Olsen OA, 84,
 Open Church, 273,274ff.,
 Oppenheimer, 67,
 Orange Free State, 85,90,91ff.,
 92ff.,93,
 Orange Grove Church, 253,254,
 Orange River Colony, 87,
 Orange River Conference, 49,88ff.,
 89ff.,90ff.,
 Orange River Territory, 22,
 Orangia Unie Party, 32ff.,
 Oranje-Natal conference, 91ff.,
 92,114,115,132,138,175,247,
 Organizational unity, 159,162ff.,
 Oron-la-Ville, 265,
 Orthopraxis, 275,
 Ossewa-Brandwag, 68,

Ossewatrek, 19,
 Oudtshoorn, 81,87,
 Oxbridge accents, 18,
 Paarl, 24,70,71,72,
 Paradigm shifts, 298,
 Pastoral Response, 257,
 259,277,
 Paxton, 110,
 Pedagogy of the Oppressed,
 257,
 Pelsler FC, 127,133,135ff.,
 136ff.,196ff.,197ff.,198ff.,
 Petit, 192,
 Petrus Steyn, 92,
 Pietermaritzburg, 91,200,280,
 Piet Retief, 192,
 Pierson RH, 194,235,153,
 Plat-Hollands, 14,
 Plumstead Orphanage, 74,
 Plumstead Sanitarium, 80,81ff.,
 200,
 Portuguese, 13,
 Predestination, 20ff.,21,70,
 Prescott WW, 42ff.,
 Pretoria, 199,207,208,231,233,
 Primrose, 192,
 Prime Minister, 122,123,
 Privy Council, 29,
 Protestant Reformation, 110,
 Puritans, 20,
 Quebec, 10,
 Raad der Gemeente, 17,
 Racially divided, 166,170,
 172,173,174,175,176,
 Randfontein, 126,196,
 Raubenheimer John, 57,58,93,
 Rebellion, 126,128,135,136,
 Regional coordinator 291,
 293,294,
 Registration of Afrikaanse
 Konferensie, 188ff.,189ff.,
 201,202,210,
 Remnant, 111ff.,125,
 Retief Flippie, 106,118,127,
 128,129ff.,155,159,187,192,
 195,215,237,
 Retief Piet, 19,
 Revisionist historians, 267,
 268,
 Riversdale, 87,
 Robinson Asa, 42,49,83,
 Robinson Virgil, 37,38,49,
 50,53,69,70,
 Roeland Street Church, 69,
 Roman Catholic Church, 286,
 Rossburgh, 198,
 Rustenburg, 192,198,
 Rustica Church, 48,
 Rustica Press, 73,74,
 Sabbath, 37,38,44,47,70,71ff.,
 Sal daar erkenning wees, 132,
 136,137ff.,154,160,161,164,
 167,168,169,171,179ff.,
 Sand River Convention, 23,
 Sarel Cilliers, 19,
 Scholtz GD, 70,71ff.,72ff.,
 Schwarz RW, 37,38,57,85,
 Sedaven, 102,117,118,119,124,
 125,
 Segundo Luis Jean, 257,
 Self-supporting institutions,
 279,281,283ff.,284ff.,285ff.,
 286,289,293,
 Selous Courtney, 17,
 Sentinel Publishing Association,
 95,97ff.,98ff.,99,100,124,125,
 127,145,157,209,
 Serfontein C, 228,
 Seventh-day Adventist ecclesiology,
 109ff.,114,
 Seventh-day Adventist Church
 polity, 113,
 Shankel GE, 59,
 Short DK, 99ff.,100,
 Synodical church polity, 226ff.,
 227,
 Skans Publikasies, 146,210,211,
 Slagter's Nek, 19,25,267,
 Smuts Jan, 27,29,32ff.,56,
 Social Analysis, 266ff.,272,284,
 Somerset Charles, 16,17,
 Somerset West, 59,
 South African Commercial
 Advertiser, 23,
 South African Conference, 42,43,
 46,47,48,49,73,82,83,84,85,88,
 90,93,94,96,
 South African Medical Journal,
 83,
 South African Observer, 66ff.,
 67ff.,68,
 South African Party, 32,
 South African Police, 205,
 South African Sentinel, 51,52,
 73,75ff.,76,77ff.,
 South African Training School, 54,
 South African Union Conference,
 85ff.,88,89,91,95,98,99,102,
 106,117ff.,119,120,122,125,126,
 128,139,141,142,150,155ff.,156,
 157,158ff.,163,169,170,174ff.,
 190,197,201,233,235ff.,237,238,
 241,247,
 South African War (1899-1902),
 26ff.,28,31,34,36,42ff.,52,53,
 75,101,
 Southern Conference, 254,
 Southern Union, 247,
 Special Session, 104,116,
 117ff.,118,121,124,128,131,
 137,142,148,150,153,155,156,
 158,163,186,191,200,209,213,
 218,237,
 Spioen Kop, 53,54,59,
 Spion Kop College, 54ff,55ff.,
 56ff.,58ff.,59ff.,61,62,64,65,
 94,100,
 Spirit of Prophecy 27,142,160,
 165,170,239,
 Splinter group, 121,122,126,129,
 135,139,142,145,147,159,
 Springs, 126,192,198,208,220,
 Staples AW, 90,
 St. Helena, 30,74,

Standerton, 93,94,
 Starrenberg Johnannes, 12,
 Steenkamp Anna, 21,
 Steenkamp JAZ, 211,
 Stellenbosch, 79ff.,80ff.,
 81ff.,87,
 Stevenson GS, 114,115,
 Stille-Waters, 207,208,225
 Suid-Afrikaanse Konferensie,
 106,151,
 Swanepoel LJ, 288,
 Swart CR, 66,
 Swellendam, 87,
 Switzerland, 1,165ff.,256ff.,
 263,264ff.,265ff.,
 Tarr AF, 90,
 Tarr Jessie, 80,
 Tarr WF, 59,
 Tarr FE, 17,
 Testimonies for the Church,
 134,163,164ff.,165,
 The Bible Readings, 76,
 The Desire of Ages, 76,
 The Helderberg Student, 244,
 Theological Reflection, 272ff.,
 284,
 Thompson Ron, 45,48,49,53,57ff.,
 58,59,70,73,89,90,
 Three angel's message, 1,111,275,
 296,
 Three-self formula, 286,
 Totius, 31,
 Trans-Africa Division, 119,120,
 121,126,128,139,141,142,148,149,
 152,153,157,180,190,194,235,
 Trans-Africa Division Outlook,
 38,70,
 Transorangia, 22,
 Transvaal Conference, 91ff.,92,
 99,102ff.,103,105,106,107,108,
 114,115,116,117,118,120,121,122,
 124,126,127,128,129,130,131,136,
 137,138,139,140,141,142,144,146,
 147,148,149,150,151,152,154,155,
 156,159,163,175,178,180,185,186,
 188,190,191,193,194,196,197,199,
 201,204,209,219,233,238,
 Truth and Reconciliation
 Committee, 175,176,177,
 Tweedetaal Beweging, 31,
 Union Conferences, 85ff.,
 Union Jack, 22,
 Union of churches, 286ff.,288,
 289,
 Unity, 276ff.,277ff.,
 Van den Bergh ANP, 106,118,219,
 Van der Merwe Jan, 57,58,116,
 Van der Stel Simon, 10,
 Van der Stel Wilhelm, 11ff.,12ff.,
 Van Druten George, 37,38ff.,
 Van Eck PP, 102,103,105,114,115,
 116ff.,117,122,123,131,140ff.,
 142,143ff.,148ff.,149ff.,150ff.,
 151,152ff.,153ff.,154,159,190,
 197,198,201,202,211,219,
 Van Eden, 87,
 Van Heerden memorial chapel, 117,
 Van Jaarsveld FA, 8,10,11ff.,
 12,19,20,21,22,25,26,27ff.,
 28ff.,30,31,32,33,34ff.,36,
 Van Riebeeck, 8,10,13,
 Van Wyk Rita, 224,232,
 Van Wyk WA, 207,223ff.,224ff.,
 Van Zyl IJ, 37,39,46,50,53,
 57,59,60,69,70,73,83,85,86,
 102,112,149,156,174,199,258,
 Venn Henry, 286,
 Venter PA (snr), 48ff.,49,51,
 56,57,58ff.,90,93ff.,94ff.,
 Verberg Commander, 9,
 Vereeniging, 92,
 Verhandeling oor Rebelle, 132,
 Verkramptes, 67,68ff.,
 Verligte-Verkrampte stryd, 37,
 67,68ff.,
 Vereenighde Oost-Indische-
 Compagnie, 8,
 Verwoerd Hendrik, 34,65,66ff.,
 67,68,
 Victoria College, 80,
 Victoria Hotel, 126,
 Volk, 19,23,25,30ff.,
 Volkskerk, 30,
 Trekkers, 17,19,20ff.,21,22,35ff.,
 Von Hörsten Fritz, 106,118,126ff.,
 127,140,141,149ff.,185,188,209,
 210,211,224ff.,225,229ff.,230,
 231,232,233ff.,234ff.,235,237,
 Von Hörsten Hendrik, 210,
 Vorster BJ, 34,66,67,68,
 Vorster Koot, 66,
 Vrij burgers, 8ff.,9ff.,
 Vrijbrieven, 8,
 Vryburg, 192,
 Vryheid, 192,198,
 Warmbaths, 192,198,235,
 Yudelman David, 267,
 Webster EC, 187,
 Welkom, 92,
 Wessels family, 44,47,
 Wessels Phillip, 40ff.,41ff.,
 Wessels Pieter, 37,38ff.,40,
 42,50,51,
 White Ellen, 39,40,41ff.,42,
 43ff.,44ff.,45,51,83,84ff.,
 110ff.,114,133,134ff.,135,
 163ff.,164,165,169,170ff.,
 171,172,199,
 William V, 15,
 Winburg, 22,
 Winthrop John, 20,
 Wright JF, 89,
 World War II, 68,
 Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek, 22,
 71,
 Zuid-Afrikaanse Taalbond, 46,
 Zulu, 250ff.,253,263,288,289ff.,
 295,
 Zürich 264,