

# Seventh business meeting

Fifty-third General Conference session

April 21, 1980, 3:15 P.M.

## Session proceedings

MIKE STEVENSON: [Directed the opening song.]

W. DUNCAN EVA: E. C. Lemke, of the South Queensland Conference, Australia, will lead us in prayer.

E. C. LEMKE: [Offered prayer.]

W. J. HACKETT: There are a number of very important items to look at this afternoon. First, R. F. Williams has a report for us.

R. F. WILLIAMS: [Read the names of additional delegates in box on this page, and moved they be seated. The motion was seconded and voted.]

W. J. HACKETT: Several *Church Manual* items are not yet finished. Brother Bothe, can you tell us the page and number of those to be considered now?

J. W. BOTHE: [Read the action "Youth Council—*Church Manual* Supplement," on pp. 14, 15.]

Mr. Chairman, I move the adoption of this *Church Manual* supplement. [Motion was seconded.]

W. J. HACKETT: You will notice that this is for the North American supplement, so will not apply to the overseas divisions. Is there any discussion?

J. L. EVERETT: I believe this document should state that the youth leader should be a member of the church board.

CHARLES MARTIN: I think it would be very satisfactory to incorporate that provision.

W. J. HACKETT: Can we add that by common consent? [Pause.] [The amended supplement was voted.]

J. W. BOTHE: [Read the action "The Church Board/Church Board Meetings—*Church Manual* Revision," on p. 15. It was moved and seconded to adopt the revision.]

DARRELL J. HUENERGARDT: I would like to address my comments to the section entitled "Officers." That paragraph states that the pastor is chairman of the church board unless he decides otherwise. This past week we have heard that the concept that the pastor is a ruler of the church should be abandoned. I feel that this paragraph is contrary to that principle. I move that the motion be

amended to provide for a study of the paragraph beginning on page 39, line 17.

W. J. HACKETT: Would you be happy if the *Manual* said the pastor or the elder could chair the board, leaving the decision to the church?

DARRELL HUENERGARDT: That would be fine.

W. J. HACKETT: How many of you feel that the motion should be amended? May I see your hands? [Hands were raised.] How many do not agree with the amendment? [Hands raised again.] Well, you are outvoted, Brother. The motion to accept the revision is now before us.

R. R. BIETZ: This whole document emphasizes that the board is responsible for evangelism. That is as it should be. I would like to suggest, however, that evangelism includes more than public evangelism, and I am glad to see this emphasized considerably. I would like to move that we add on page 39, line 38, after "planning evangelism," and on page 38, line 16, after "planning for evangelism," the words "in all of its phases."

[The motion was seconded and voted.]

E. J. HUMPHREY: I am in complete harmony with the document, especially as it relates to the pastor as chairman of the church board.

J. H. ZACHARY: I am concerned about areas where there is one pastor for 20 or 30 churches. Perhaps a flooded river prevents his visit to a church for six months. In such cases, I hope the head elder can still serve as the leader of the church and the board in the absence of the pastor.

GEORGE W. SCHLINSOG: Most of the segments of the church are represented on the church board. However, should not the school board chairman, or principal of the school, also be a member of the church board?

W. J. HACKETT: Who will answer this question?

M. T. BATTLE: The section dealing with members of the church board specifies that additional members of the board may be elected by the church if desired. The committee is of the opinion that this statement covers such situations, since in many churches there is no school board, while there may be a Home and School leader.

W. J. HACKETT: Will that be satisfactory, Brother?

GEORGE W. SCHLINSOG: With all due respect, sir, I feel that this does deserve to be specifically included in the membership of the church board.

W. J. HACKETT: Could we add the phrase "chairman of the church school board where there is a church school"? How would that be?

GEORGE W. SCHLINSOG: I would move that, sir.

[The motion was seconded and voted.]

LOUIS VENDEN: In the section "Definition and Function [of the church board]," it is stated that the "chief concern is the work of planning and fostering evangelism." In the light of recent discussion of apostasies, I believe that the church board should join the pastor in planning for the crucial work of pastoral care. I move that the words "and pastoral care" be added. [The motion was seconded and voted.]

ELIJAH E. NJAGI: I refer to the section concerning membership of the church board. I have wondered for a long time why the one who is in charge of music, or the choir leader, is not included as a member of the church board.

W. J. HACKETT: Page 39, line 13, provides that "additional members of the board may be elected," if desired.

Can we vote on the motion as a whole? [It was voted.]

W. J. HACKETT: We are very happy from time to time to have brethren in Christ from other communions fellowship with us. I would like to ask B. B. Beach to present our guest at this time.

B. B. BEACH: Brother Chairman and delegates, we have the privilege of introducing Dr. Paul Opsahl, of Houston, Texas, the official observer for the Lutheran World Federation. We are happy to welcome Dr. Opsahl.

PAUL OPSAHL: Mr. Chairman, Dr. Beach, delegates, and friends in Christ, I am pleased to bring you warm greetings from the 17 million brothers and sisters in Christ that form the Lutheran family of churches who circle the globe and form a worldwide church family that in many respects is much like yours.

We also confess our faith in the risen Lord Jesus as the hope of the world, and, like you, God has blessed us with the ministry of caring that circles the globe. God bless all of you in His name.

W. J. HACKETT: We thank Dr. Opsahl for his greetings and for being here with us today.

J. W. BOTHE: [Read the action "The Church Board/Lay Activities Council/Church Board Meetings—*Church Manual* Revision," on p. 15.]

Mr. Chairman, I move the adoption of this supplement to the North American Division *Church Manual* Revision.

[Motion was seconded and voted.]

W. J. HACKETT: Brother Wilson, you have an item for us at this time.

NEAL C. WILSON: For some time we have been considering a refinement of our Statement on Fundamental Beliefs. I think you have that document in your hands. No doubt you have done both some studying and some praying.

We have heard a variety of interesting rumors. Some, it is said, understand that the church leaders want to destroy completely the foundations of the church and set the church on a course that would be un-Biblical, contrary to the tradition of the past and to historical Adventism. My fellow delegates, there is nothing that is further from the truth.

We have also heard that any time we touch the Statement on Fundamental Beliefs we would be introducing the Omega, the final confusion of theological and doctrinal positions of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. I suggest to you that this is also a very unfortunate statement.

I can understand how individuals far removed from where some of these things are being studied, and who may not themselves have been asked to participate in a restudy or refinement of wording, might feel that there is something very sinister, mysterious, and secret going on that will suddenly confront us, and that it may contribute to the ultimate detriment and demise of the Seventh-day Adventist

## Additional Delegates

The following delegates were added as authorized by policy:

### Regular delegates:

#### Northern Europe-West Africa Division

West African Union  
Edward Dorsey

#### Euro-Africa Division

Romanian Union  
Alexandru Timis



Charles B. Hirsch (left), associate director of the General Conference Department of Education, presented a plaque recognizing 46 years of denominational service, all in the field of education, to Walton J. Brown, retiring director of the Department of Education.

Church. My fellow delegates, I assure you that no one who has been struggling with some of these matters has any such intention.

There are others who think they know why this is being done. They believe it is being prepared as a club to batter someone over the head, to try to get people into a narrow concept of theology, not leaving any opportunity for individual interpretation of prophecy, or any individual views with respect to theology or certain areas of doctrine. This also is unfortunate, because this never has been and is not the intention of any study that has been given to the Statement on Fundamental Beliefs.

Some academicians, theologians, and others have expressed the fear that this statement was being developed so that the church could confront them with a checklist to determine whether they should be disqualified from teaching in one of our institutions of higher education. It is very, very tragic when these kinds of rumors begin to develop.

I fully recognize, and am very willing to admit, that we do need to use extreme care, including a wholesome variety of minds with training and background, to provide input on this kind of statement. However, I do not think anyone should become frightened when the wording of such a document is studied. Perhaps I should go one step further and say that the Seventh-day Ad-

ventist Church does not have a creed as such. Nothing is set in concrete in terms of human words. The time never comes when any human document cannot be improved upon. We feel that every 20, 30, or 50 years it is a very good thing for us to be sure we are using the right terminology and approach. Schools of theological thought are constantly changing. Certain terms mean today what they did not mean 50 years ago. There are certain presuppositions that people develop, and certain terminology is used to describe these presuppositions. It is extremely important that we should understand what we believe and that we should express it simply, clearly, and in the most concise way possible. We should not only state our beliefs but be certain that those who read them do not misunderstand and that they are unable to read three or four meanings into the same sentences or words.

It is just as important today to say what one does not mean as it is to say positively what one does mean in order to make sure that people do not just use words with different presuppositions to arrive at an entirely different conclusion.

We see only good coming from a careful rearrangement, rewording, and perhaps some restructuring.

The most cohesive thing in this church is our message. Some people say that what holds us

together as a great world family is our organization and our policies. Thank God for organization! But what keeps this church together as one in all the world, in spite of all the fragmenting philosophies and the cultural-sociological-racial differences and linguistic problems, is not organization or policy—it is our message.

So it is important that we look at this statement carefully and that when we have finished looking, we know that we have not done violence, that we have not allowed anything to become eroded or weakened, but rather that we have strengthened and helped, and perhaps become more lucid and clear.

We are not suggesting changing any belief or doctrine that this church has held. We have no interest in tearing up any of the foundations of historical Adventism. This document is not designed to do that, nor to open the way so that it can be done. It should be clear that we are not adding anything nor are we deleting anything in terms of historical Adventist theology. We are trying to express our beliefs in a way that will be understood today.

There are a great many individuals, for instance, who write to the General Conference Ministerial Association requesting a simple statement of our fundamental beliefs. We would like to feel that when such a statement is sent to those who are theologically educated or who are proficient in stating Biblical truth simply, they will understand not what they see but rather what we see and what we believe. It is one thing for me to apply a certain set of values and theological-doctrinal principles to a statement and find that it all fits together. Someone else reading the same statement might not perceive the same truth.

Some say to me, "Well, you know, it [the Statement] is not ready yet. It needs a lot more study." I would like to say that it will never be perfect, no matter how many people work on it and for how long. I do not think we should ever be afraid to look at our beliefs carefully and ask ourselves, Can it be said better?

We really should not take the time of this whole group to deal with minute editorial matters. We will provide for a competent editorial committee of scholars and theologians to consider such details. If someone has a really clear point to make that seems to be extremely sensitive or important in terms of content and substance and theology, then I think

this whole group would like to hear it.

Now, you say, are you hoping to get this document voted at this meeting? I would say, Yes. But I also am a realist. If we find ourselves in too much trouble on some rewording, a delay will not create a great problem in this church. We have a statement of beliefs now. Nobody needs to think that we are all up in the air, that we don't know what we believe, that we have nothing to tie to, that the anchors are all pulled up and we are adrift. No one is adrift. We have a clear statement of fundamental beliefs, and we will hold to it until together we decide to refine, reword, and restate it in today's language.

I want to make it very clear that the introduction of this Statement does not suggest that we are not really sure what we believe and that there is a great deal of indecisiveness. This is not the case. There are a few little pockets of concern here and there, and there always will be. We can expect a lot more of those in the future. We have seen only the beginnings of questions, attacks, and endeavors to wipe out certain beliefs. There are those who would like to see some things changed or diluted, watered down, or even wiped out.

I want W. Duncan Eva to make a further statement of the way this matter has developed. After that, we will look at this document, section by section.

W. D. EVA: Mr. Chairman and brethren and sisters, the need for restating—not changing, but restating, as Elder Wilson has so clearly indicated—has been felt for several years. About two years ago a committee spent many days studying the beliefs as they are now stated. A number of the theologians looked at the Statement prepared by this committee and made suggestions that resulted in a rewording of the Statement. This was brought to the Annual Council in 1979 and was accepted in principle, with the understanding that it would receive wide exposure to the world field and that written suggestions would be welcome. It was sent to members of the division committees immediately after the Annual Council and also to our unions and overseas colleges. The Statement appeared in the ADVENTIST REVIEW and after still further study was sent to all delegates to this General Conference session. Last week the Home and Overseas Officers considered the Statement again, and the suggestions, as far as possible, were included. It was reedited in its present form here.

NEAL C. WILSON: I think we are ready to begin with Section 1, "The Holy Scriptures."

J. W. BOTHE: [Read Item 1, "The Holy Scriptures."]

R. H. BROWN: I could wish that, as a church, we were able to simply say that we base our belief and practice on the Bible, the Bible alone, and the entire Bible. But unfortunately the enemy has confused the situation so that it becomes essential for us to declare to the world and to ourselves what we mean by such a statement. We have to specify where in the spectrum of theological viewpoints we stand and what we understand to be the nature and authority of the Bible. Seventh-day Adventists accept the Bible on a broader basis than only that of faith and practice. We accept it as historically valid. To meet the needs of the church, we need to strengthen this section on the Holy Scriptures to make it express fully the attitude of the Seventh-day Adventist Church toward Holy Scripture. To accomplish this, I would like to suggest a rewording of the second sentence to read like this: "These Scriptures are the living, all-sufficient, trustworthy, and authoritative revelation of God's gracious purpose, His will, and His activities in human history." I feel that this addition is absolutely essential in order to state to the world and to ourselves where we really stand with respect to the testimony of Holy Scripture. The same suggestion should be included where Ellen White's attitude toward Scripture is referred to.

JAMES LONDIS: I think, Brother Chairman, that there is no doubt that the Statement would be strengthened by the word *historical* or the words *historical activities*. As it stands, it can be misinterpreted, I fear, by people who are unfamiliar with the difference between the existential approach to the Bible and the historical approach.

I would also like to comment on another point.

NEAL C. WILSON: Surely.

JAMES LONDIS: I wish to sound a word of caution about using the word *infallible* in any statement with respect to the Scripture. We have bypassed using it in reference to Scripture as a revelation of God's gracious purpose and will. Rather, we have said it is authoritative and trustworthy. To be consistent we ought not to use that word with respect to faith and practice.

NEAL C. WILSON: Would somebody like to comment on this matter of the use of the word *infallible*?

W. R. MAY: I would strenuously object to deleting the word *infallible*. I think it is imperative that it remain.

NEAL C. WILSON: In that exact place?

W. R. MAY: Either there or somewhere else.

NEAL C. WILSON: Jim, do you see it fitting in some other place in the document?

JAMES LONDIS: My concern is that Seventh-day Adventists avoid being designated as verbal inspirationists. I also appreciate the concern of those who do not want to diminish the authority of the Bible.

ROBERT OLSON: I can appreciate what Jim Londis is speaking about, but I don't think that this expression as it stands gives the wrong impression. Ellen White speaks about the Bible as the infallible revelation of God's will to us. She does not call the Bible inerrant. I do not think we should use the word *inerrant*, but expressing that the Bible is the infallible revelation of God's will, I think, is very correct. It certainly is in harmony with the Spirit of Prophecy.

J. J. BATTISTONE: I would like to speak to the two points Dr. Londis mentioned. First, with respect to the Holy Scriptures and the reference to the historical witness of the Scriptures to God's presence. Doctrine number two brings this out; so if the first statement were amended, it would be consistent with the reference to God, who acts in and through nature and history.

The second point has to do with the word *infallible*. Are we sacrificing anything substantial when we omit the word *infallible*, substituting for it the word *authoritative*?

LEWIS O. ANDERSON: I feel that we should retain the word *infallible* where it is. I think that this is a proper statement of our view concerning the Bible. If we remove that now, it will be seriously misunderstood by many people.

RUSSELL STANDISH: I want to support Dr. Brown's statement that we recognize the Bible as authoritative when it comes to the area of history. I think we are all aware that we are not talking in a vacuum today. There are many among our believers who project the concept that the Scriptures are perfect for their purpose. Now, that sounds like a benign statement until it is understood that what is meant is that Scripture is authoritative as a guide to salvation, but it contains many errors of history and science. I believe that the Holy

Word of God is just as authoritative in matters of history and science as it is in matters of salvation. I would even go further than Dr. Brown and insert science into this statement as well as history. I believe, as have most of the other speakers, that the word *infallible* is very proper and that we would lose very much if we drop it.

JAMES LONDIS: In keeping with your statement at the beginning that we must be careful to say not only what we mean but what we do not mean. If we use the word *infallible*, I would suggest that we then state what we do not mean by *infallible*, that it is defined as absolutely perfect and unerring in a verbal inspiration sense.

NEAL C. WILSON: That is something that might be worthwhile for this church to state.

J. J. AITKEN: The great genius of the Seventh-day Adventist Church is that we believe in the infallibility of the Holy Word of God. There are many teachings today that would discredit certain parts of the Bible.

W. DUNCAN EVA: I would like to make a suggestion that will satisfy as many as possible. I would suggest that instead of the word "authoritative" on line 18, we use the word *infallible*. And that instead of the word "infallible" on line 20, we use the word *authoritative*. In other words, transpose those two words. I would suggest further that we refer the question of a definition for the term *infallible*, as Dr. Londis has suggested, to an editing committee, with the suggestion that a footnote be added defining what we mean by "infallible." I think it would be difficult to write it into the text.

MARIO VELOSO: I would like to support the presence of this word *infallible*. A definition, if desired, would be better placed in the text because footnotes are easily lost. I think the word *infallible* does not give any wrong impression. We will not lose anything by retaining it, and changing it could be misunderstood by many Adventists.

NEAL C. WILSON: Very well stated. Thank you, Dr. Veloso. Let me get a reaction from you. Let us tentatively agree that we will use the word *infallible* in connection with revelation. This is really in harmony with how Ellen White used it. Then let us use the word *authoritative* for the standard of faith and practice, and ask a small committee to submit a statement with respect to our understanding of the definition of the word *infallible*. We can decide later whether the def-

inition should be part of the body or a footnote.

[A straw vote was taken, and the suggestion was overwhelmingly supported.]

NEAL C. WILSON: Now, I would like to settle the desirability of including something in terms of history. Could I have an expression from you about that? [A straw vote was taken, and the suggestion was supported.]

NEAL C. WILSON: Now, I would like an idea from you about this very sensitive area of science; that is a word which can be broadly interpreted and can be a stumbling block. We should be cautious not to suggest that we do not feel that Scripture has anything to say about science.

R. H. BROWN: Thank you, Elder Wilson. I greatly appreciate the suggestion of Brother Standish with respect to including the term *science* here. But I think that for our purposes, the term "God's activities in human history" includes what many of us consider to be science. A statement like this is strengthened if it can be made as succinct as possible, with as few divergent terms as possible. I do not think the addition of the word *science* is necessary.

LAWRENCE GERATY: I am very pleased with the statement the way it is with the modifications that you have suggested. I think all of us feel that the word *infallible* would be in relation to the revelation of God's gracious purpose and will. I, however, would have a very difficult time as a teacher of history to state here that the Bible is all sufficient in matters of history and science. There are many areas in which I have questions, and I wish the Bible said more. Unfortunately, it is not all sufficient. In areas where it speaks, it speaks the truth and it is certainly trustworthy.

NEAL C. WILSON: The group here did rather overwhelmingly feel that they would like to see something included with respect to God's activities in human history. Is your objection to that phrase, which was overwhelmingly accepted here, or to the inclusion also of science?

LAWRENCE GERATY: I have no problem with God's activities in human history. What I am afraid of is the way that Dr. Brown suggested that it be added here. In that way the Bible would be presented as all sufficient and infallible in matters of history. That would not be good, and adding science would make it just that much worse. In other words, the Bible is not a textbook in these areas.

NEAL C. WILSON: I believe we understand your point about God's activity in human history. We feel that Scripture is a revelation of that. I think, in that case, let the editing group try to reword this for us and bring it back, so we can see it on paper.

Now, could I get an expression from you on the matter of the word *science*? How many of you feel that something ought to be included about the word *science*? Those of you who feel we ought to include *science*, will you raise your hands? [Few hands raised.]

All right, apparently we will not include that word or refer that to our small editing committee.

Well, I think that pretty nicely does Section No. 1. I would like to suggest that we go on to No. 2 at this point.

J. W. BOTHE: [Read Section 2 of the Statement.]

NEAL C. WILSON: Here are several lines packed with a lot of meaning. Who has some help for us on this or some question with regard to the Godhead or Trinity?

A. V. WALLENKAMPF: I will read the whole of the third sentence: "He is infinite and beyond human comprehension, yet known through His self-revelation." I am somewhat apprehensive of the statement, "His self-revelation." To me it opens the door too wide. It could open the door to almost anything, and

certainly pseudocharismatics will crawl in through it. Instead of saying "His self-revelation," I would like to say "the Holy Scriptures."

There is one more observation on the next line, "He acts in and through nature and history." This is the very reverse of the other one. This does not describe my God. This limits God to acting only through nature and history. My God acts through nature and history, and any other way He pleases. He is not limited to nature and history. I would like to add a few words at the end of that sentence: "He acts in and through nature and history and beyond both," or something similar. He has other means that supersede both nature and history.

MARIO VELOSO: The sentence that begins, "God is all-powerful, all-knowing, and ever-present" is followed by phrases that concern me, "above all, through all and in all" which is almost a quotation taken from another context. In the context of the church, this is true, but in the context of everything which is referred to here, it takes on the connotation of pantheism. I would like to suggest that this sentence "above all, through all and in all" be deleted. It would be just fine to put the period after "ever-present." I would also like to support Elder Wallenkampf on the sentence, "He acts

in and through nature and history."

LEIF HANSEN: In this discussion of the Trinity, which is always a difficult matter to discuss, I wonder if a certain misunderstanding could be eliminated by saying "a unity in purpose" so that the matter of physical unity may be eliminated.

NEAL C. WILSON: I see your point there. Maybe we ought to make it a unity in purpose rather than a physical unity.

J. G. BENNETT: The statement about the Godhead and the Trinity goes on to use the pronoun *He*. Later as the Father, Son, and the Holy Ghost are discussed, we use the same pronoun *He*. I do recognize and accept the Trinity as a collective unity, but I would have a little difficulty in applying the pronoun *He* to the Trinity or the Godhead. For me this has deep theological implications.

VICTOR H. HALL: I refer to the phrase "Yet known through His self-revelation." Surely the only self-revelation that God has made is in His Son.

NEAL C. WILSON: We had a suggestion that rather than "self-revelation" we ought to use "Holy Scriptures." Now, of course, Christ is the Word and your point is that His revelation is in the Son.

VICTOR H. HALL: No one has seen God at any time.

NEAL C. WILSON: You have a point there. The problem is, how do we see God today if it has to be through the Son? We have to see the Son through the Scriptures. I think the intent of those who drafted the statement was that there is no way for us to see God or the Son today except through Scripture.

H. J. HARRIS: It seems to me we have a conflict or a contradiction in this statement, "There is one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, a unity of Three co-eternal Persons." Would not it be more clear if we were to say "There is one God consisting of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit"? We begin with "one God." Then, without any explanation, we use "Father, Son, and Holy Spirit." Later, we go to "a unity of Three."

RICHARD HAMMILL: There are several comments I would like to make. Regarding this last suggestion, I think it is rather difficult to use the verb *consist* with God. I think we ought to be very careful in using terms that the Bible does not use of Him. When we framed this statement we tried to use Biblical phrases as much as we could.

The next concept has to do with that of self-revelation. I think it would be a mistake to limit this, because God reveals Himself in many ways. He reveals Himself certainly through

*Continued on page 14*



Slide presentations that run continuously inside the *Adventist Review* exhibit tell the story of the paper's pioneers, its nine editors, how the *GC Bulletins* are printed, and a unique conversion experience. The fifth program is an excerpt from the program "Immanuel—God With Us."

Continued from page 11  
the Scriptures, as we have stated. He has revealed Himself in nature. Ellen White explicitly says there are two books—the book of the Written Word and the book of nature—and God sometimes reveals Himself in ways the Bible says we don't expect and don't always understand. So we tried to be no more or less explicit than the Bible is here. If we define this word, we rule out others that I think we have to understand when this is read.

The next matter is the concept about God in and through all. This is an exact Biblical statement. It could be in quotes except stylistically we have not been putting Biblical phrases in quotes. But Ephesians 4:5 uses these phrases with the verb *is*—God “is.” Just because there have been some pantheistic views in our past history, I don't think that we ought to try to rewrite the Bible, not wanting to use this verse of Scripture. The Bible does say that God is in all, and through all, and above all, in ways that we do not understand. Since this is a Biblical clause, I think we should try to maintain it.

My last comment has to do with the thought that God acts in and through nature and history. This does not say that these are the only ways that God acts. God acts in many, many ways, but the Bible explicitly says that He does act in nature and in history. When we say that, we are not denying others, but we are making an affirmation of that which the Bible clearly states.

MIGUEL CASTILLO: It has been interesting to me to find a statement of Ellen White that says that God acts in each natural phenomenon. This is in perfect agreement with the Biblical statement “My Father worketh . . . and I work.” The statement, therefore, that He acts in all, above all, and through all, is in perfect agreement with both the Scripture and the Spirit of Prophecy as far as I am concerned.

W. G. C. MURDOCH: I would suggest that we use the expression “The Godhead or Trinity” rather than “Trinity.”

J. J. BATTISTONE: There was a reference to the pronoun *He*. We are talking about the Godhead, so the antecedent of the pronoun is God, not the three persons. In the reference to His self-revelation in Scripture, I prefer that reading.

PAUL C. CHIMA: I would suggest that when this goes back to the committee, Sister White's writings be studied to see what

term she used to describe God the Father and the Holy Spirit. Let us use a lot of her terminology to define this. Whatever decisions are made and expressions found, let us be content with them.

W. R. LESHER: I am concerned about words and phrases that would seem to limit God or to change the view of God that is given to us in Scripture. One of these is the suggestion that was made that we not use the word *He*. I presume that the speaker was referring to the use of “They” in paragraph 2. And, of course, the statement of Scripture is that “The Lord our God is One Lord.” And to speak of “They” or some other pronoun than “He” would make us tritheist, instead of believing in one God. The expression “consisting of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit” might read more nicely. It seems to me it does introduce a limiting factor. It is much more in harmony with the mystery of God to simply say there is one God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. My same observation would apply to the expression “a unity of purpose.” We assume that there is a unity of purpose in the Godhead. Still, God is a mystery. And we do not know in what ways that unity might exist other than in purpose. There are some ways in which we can seem to say that God is not a unity. But even then we are not sure what we are talking about. The idea of three Beings that are One is a mystery, and it seems to me that we should not try to remove all of that mystery from the statement.

N. C. WILSON: I would like now to appoint a committee to do some editing for us with these suggestions in mind. I would like to suggest that Dr. Richard Hammill serve as chairman and that the following serve as members:

Thomas H. Blincoe, dean of Andrews Theological Seminary  
W. Duncan Eva, of the General Conference

Larry Geraty, of Andrews University

W. R. Leshner, from the Biblical Research Institute

James Londis, pastor and Biblical scholar

Robert Olson, from the White Estate

Jan Paulsen, from Newbold College

Mario Veloso, from South America

G. R. Thompson, chairman of the Church Manual Committee

M. T. Battle, secretary of the Church Manual Committee

This makes a committee of 11. It might be well to add R. H.

Brown also, since we are dealing with some areas of science.

W. J. HACKETT: We have a report from the Nominating Committee, which we will release at this time.

H. H. SCHMIDT: We will ask J. G. Smoot, our secretary, to bring the report.

J. G. SMOOT: We have a rather lengthy slate to present this evening. [The report was presented and accepted. It appeared on p. 32 of Bulletin 4.]

L. M. HAWKES: [Benediction.]

NEAL C. WILSON,  
Chairman

W. J. HACKETT,  
Chairman

D. H. BAASCH,  
Proceedings Secretary

J. W. BOTHE,  
Actions Secretary

## Session actions

### Youth Council—Church Manual Supplement Addition

*Voted*, To insert a new section, Youth Council, in the North American Supplement of the Church Manual, to read as follows:

The Adventist Youth Society organization as listed in the Church Manual is the official world plan of organization for youth ministry in the local church. However, in the North American Division an alternate organizational plan known as the Youth Council has been adopted and is followed in some churches. This plan differs from the Adventist Youth Society plan of organization mainly in its concept that all activities involving senior youth in the local church are planned and executed by one organization under the leadership of one person, known as the church youth leader. This organization includes the youth Sabbath school, youth temperance activities, Adventist Youth Society meetings, youth witnessing, and youth recreational activities.

The youth leader, an adult who has demonstrated mature abilities to relate to youth, is elected by the church and is chairman of the Youth Council. In larger churches he will be assisted by one or more church-elected associate youth leaders, one of whom would serve as secretary/treasurer of the Youth Council. One associate youth leader would serve as youth Sabbath school leader. In small churches, the church youth leader may not only be the youth leader for the church but may

serve as leader of the youth Sabbath school or class.

The Youth Council is to be made up of these church-elected officers and young people selected by these officers and the youth themselves to serve on the council. The size of the Youth Council is adaptable according to the size of the church.

The responsibility for the youth Sabbath school in this organizational plan is with the Youth Council. The youth Sabbath school will, however, use the resource materials and foster the objectives and program of the General Conference Sabbath School Department. It also will receive guidance from the local Sabbath School Council.

The detailed organizational plan of the Youth Council which was adopted by the 1974 Annual Council is printed in a special leaflet available from the local conference youth director. Further information and helps are available in *Youth Ministry Account*, a quarterly journal published by the General Conference Youth Council which is sent free to each conference for distribution to the churches in North America.

### Adventist Junior Youth Society

In the North American Division the Pathfinder Club has replaced the Adventist Junior Youth Society (formerly JMV Society) in the local church. However, an Adventist Junior Youth Society is a part of the devotional and witnessing activities of each church school. Each classroom is considered a society with the teacher as the leader and the students serving as society officers.

Pupils in grades one to four are designated as Adventurers, while students in grades five to eight are listed as regular members of the Adventist Junior Youth Society. In larger schools where each grade is in a separate room, students in grades five and six would be members of the Adventist Junior Youth Society while those in grades seven and eight would be listed as members of an Adventist Earlteen Youth Society. This harmonizes with the divisions of the Sabbath school.

Society meetings are usually held the first period on Wednesday or Friday mornings and include not only programs which the students develop but also the study of the Adventist Junior Youth Classes (formerly JMV Classes) and Adventist Youth Honors (formerly MV Honors). An Investiture MV service is