



# PERSONAL FREEDOM OUTREACH

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EDITOR: KEITH A. MORSE

## newsletter

# THE GREAT CONTROVERSY

## SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISM UNDER INVESTIGATION

by STEVE CANNON

The question is often raised as to whether the Seventh-Day Adventist church is a cult. Until recently, a standard answer went something like this:

"It really depends on the particular Adventist Church or even the particular Adventist person. Those who see Ellen G. White's writings as the key to scripture must be considered outside of orthodox Christianity."

"There are, however, some Adventists who are evangelical. They recognize the difficulty in much of what White has written and take the Bible alone as their rule of faith. Also, the SDA church has publicly endorsed the position of the Bible alone and has said that the atonement of Christ was finished on the cross."

"Based on these statements, you can't say that the SDA church is a cult, although there may be some members who make it such by their misplaced devotion."

This answer was based on comparing the research of

orthodox Christian writers who have affirmed that Adventism is a cult with other Christian writers who maintain that it is not.

Because of these contradictions, it has been difficult for many to reach a conclusion about the SDA church. This uncertainty has been perpetuated by the absence of any definitive doctrinal statement published by the SDA General Conference, its governing body. Now, however, the Adventists are taking a firmer doctrinal stand and the repercussions are being felt.

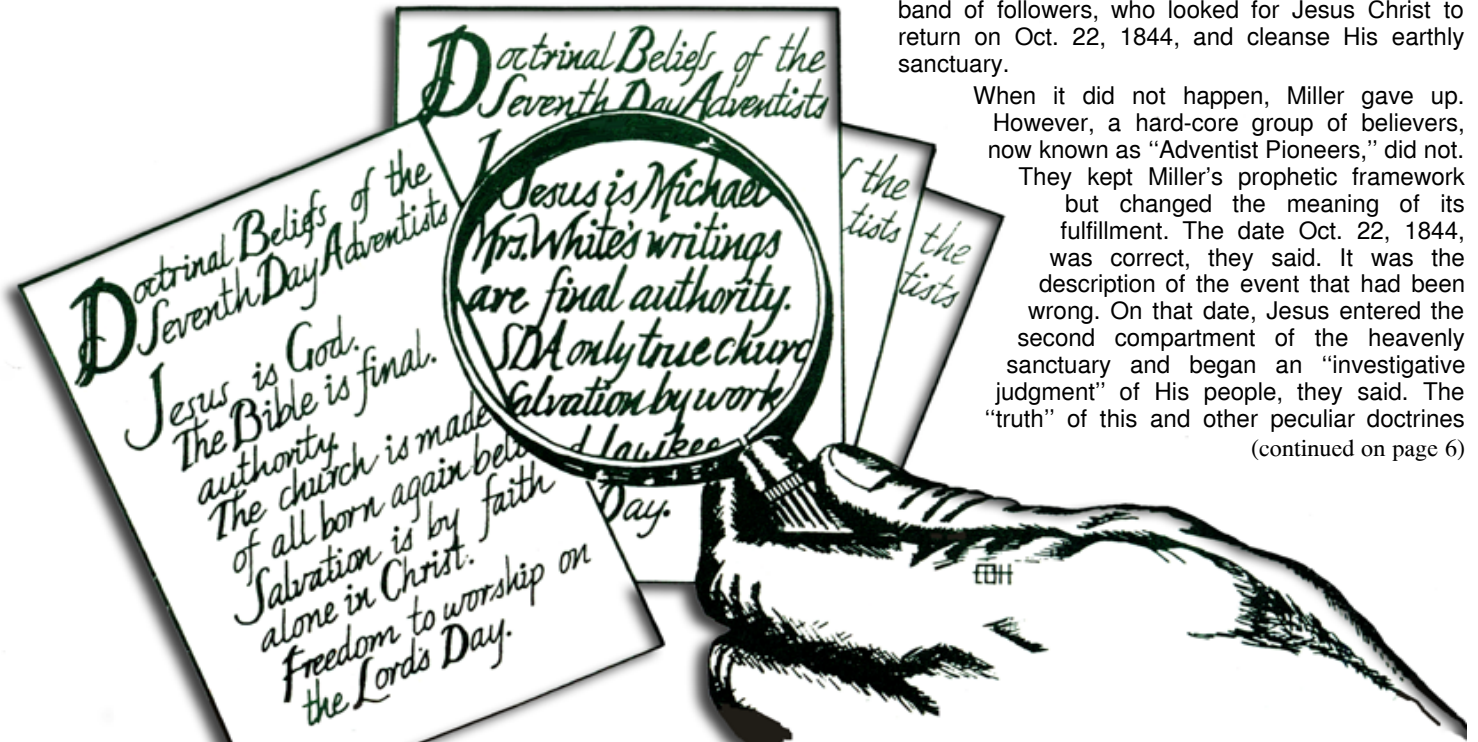
From its inception in the short-lived apocalyptic movement of William Miller to the most recent multimillion-dollar financial scandal involving church leadership, the Adventists are no strangers to controversy. SDA scholars always seem ready to develop new defenses for White, their prophetess. Their latest attempt to defend her caused more than 100 ministers and thousands of SDA laymen to defect to other churches around the country.

The SDA church traces its roots to Miller and his band of followers, who looked for Jesus Christ to return on Oct. 22, 1844, and cleanse His earthly sanctuary.

When it did not happen, Miller gave up. However, a hard-core group of believers, now known as "Adventist Pioneers," did not.

They kept Miller's prophetic framework but changed the meaning of its fulfillment. The date Oct. 22, 1844, was correct, they said. It was the description of the event that had been wrong. On that date, Jesus entered the second compartment of the heavenly sanctuary and began an "investigative judgment" of His people, they said. The "truth" of this and other peculiar doctrines

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# EDITORIALS

## THE WATCHTOWER APRIL FOOLS ITS READERS

For nearly two years, the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society has been dogged by the discovery of the fact that it uses a spirit medium's translation of the New Testament to support its doctrine that Jesus Christ is not God.

The Watchtower Society has already stooped to lying to hide the facts concerning its use of Johannes Greber's *New Testament* translation. (See *PFO Newsletter*, Vol. 2, No. 1.)

Jehovah's Witnesses who were told the truth about the Society and Greber were shocked. The Society has taken a strong stand against spiritism. For example, a recently released Watchtower publication, *You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth*, told its readers that "The Bible warns: keep free from all forms of spiritism" and "Those who became Christians in Ephesus burn their books on spiritism — a fine example for us today" (pp. 97-98). This stand seemed incongruous with their open use of a spirit medium's work.

The Society has ignored numerous letters asking why it uses a spirit medium to support its theology. Even a certified letter regarding the subject sent directly to the Society's headquarters at Bethel went unanswered. (See *PFO Newsletter*, Vol. 3, No. 1.)

In the April 1, 1983, *Watchtower*, the Society finally addressed the Greber issue. It was a vain attempt to dismiss the subject.

The inquiry, found in the "Questions from Readers," asks: "Why in recent years, has The Watchtower not made use of the translation by the former Roman Catholic priest, Johannes Greber?"

The wording avoids the real issue. Why not print the question this way: "Why does the Watchtower Society quote a spirit medium to endorse its theology?" The wording of the question saves the writers the task of explaining why the Society quotes a spirit medium. The wording makes one wonder whether it was really submitted by an inquisitive Jehovah's Witness or was written at Bethel by a Watchtower staff member on orders from the Watchtower hierarchy.

The reply to the question only adds to the deception. It leads one to believe that it is only in the foreword of the 1980 edition of Greber's *New Testament* that Greber's spiritistic practices have been revealed. However, the foreword of the 1980 edition is identical to that of the original 1937 edition — the one the Watchtower Society has had all along!

The demonic nature of Greber's translation has been known at Society headquarters for at least a quarter-century. The Feb. 15, 1956, *Watchtower* (pp. 110-111) identifies Greber as a spiritist.

The Society writers stuck their foot in another bucket by revealing that they had 1980 editions of Greber's *New Testament*. That edition lists only the address of the Johannes Greber Memorial Foundation in Teaneck, N.J. This proves that the Society lied when, in 1981, it was asked where copies of Greber's translation could be obtained and replied by providing an obsolete address. (See *PFO Newsletter*, Vol. 2, No. 1.)

The reply also implies that the Society's *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* and the *Emphatic Diaglott* are reliable translations. Numerous published studies have proven both to be otherwise. (For example, the slide presentation *Evaluating the New World Translation*, available from Personal Freedom Outreach.)

Further, the writers of the reply try to play down the demonic nature of Greber's translation by saying that it has only "a close rapport with spiritism." The reply concludes by saying that since it now is known that Greber was a spiritist, the Watchtower will no longer use his work. These are more lies. The Society uses the Greber translation every time a copy of *Aid To Bible Understanding*, *Make Sure Of All Things*, *Hold Fast To What Is Fine*, or 'The Word: Who Is He According To John?' rolls off the Watchtower presses, because each of these currently used books cites Greber's *New Testament*.

Sadly, but as expected, the Watchtower has failed to make an honest evaluation of its use of Greber.

—MKG

## HELPING US HELP YOU

If you'd like to help support Personal Freedom Outreach and pick up handy witnessing materials, read on!

For every \$10 donation, we will send a copy of InterVarsity Press' *A Guide To Cults And New Religions*.

This book contains research by a wide variety of cult experts and examines many of the major cultic groups, such as Mormonism, Jehovah's Witnesses, The Way International, The Unification Church and the Hare Krishnas.

Those sending \$50 will receive one of two *Cult Resource Kits*. These resource kits are valuable for Sunday School classes, home study groups and youth activities. They contain a cassette-narrated filmstrip, a collection of Christian books and an assortment of several hundred witnessing tracts for class use.

These kits may be obtained for churches and would be a worthwhile investment for any church library. The Resource Kits are available for both Mormons and Jehovah's Witnesses. Please be sure to specify which kit you would like to receive.

Your tax-deductible donation to Personal Freedom Outreach goes toward publishing this quarterly newsletter, writing and research for articles and tracts, producing audio-visual material and defraying office expenses.

Personal Freedom Outreach draws no financial support from any church or denomination, It depends solely upon the prayers and gifts of those who believe in the ministry that the Lord has given to us.

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# NEWS UPDATE



## MORMON TEMPLE OPENS IN ATLANTA

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints' new temple in Atlanta, GA., was dedicated June 1.

This temple will be used by Mormons in an 11-state area of the Southeast for sealing their marriages, for proxy baptisms of ancestors and to make personal covenants. Worship services will not be held there.

The temple is the 21st of its kind in the world.

Prior to the dedication, the temple was open for public visits for three weeks during May. Mormon officials expected that 150,000 would visit the temple. As of May 9, more than half of the visitors had been non-Mormons, the officials said.

Meanwhile, the Mormon Church cleared an obstacle to its plans to build a temple in Glenview, Ill. Trustees of this suburban Chicago community voted to accept an out-of-court settlement of their suit, which sought to block the construction of the temple next to a historic nature preserve. A Mormon spokesman said he expected groundbreaking to occur this summer.

—KAM



## MORMON SCHOLAR SUES TANNERS

Jerald and Sandra Tanner, noted Christian researchers on Mormonism, have been sued by Mormon writer Andrew F. Ehat.

The suit accuses the Tanners of unauthorized duplication of notes made by Ehat from the suppressed diary of William Clayton, the personal scribe of Joseph Smith Jr.

Clayton was known to be a meticulous note-taker. Consequently, his diary reveals aspects about Mormonism's founder not found in other Mormon documents.

For example, Ehat's notes show that Smith, upon instituting the practice of polygamy in the Mormon settlement at Nauvoo, Ill., had a cover-up plan in case the secret practice became known.

The diary has been locked in the vault of the Latter-day Saints' First President, Spencer W. Kimball. Access to the vault is nearly impossible, even for scholars with access to the church archives.

Dr. James B. Allen, a professor at Brigham Young University, said recently that Clayton's diary had never been published and probably never will be. For this reason, even Mormons have been eager to learn what secrets were on its pages.

When copies of Ehat's notes began to circulate around Utah, Ehat tried to buy back the proliferating copies. Eventually, outsiders, including the Tanners, obtained copies. The Tanners put the 80 pages of notes in print to make them more accessible to scholars and laymen.

The suit may precipitate the subpoena of the diary and other church records, the Tanners' attorney said.

—WPW



## RAJNEESH HERE TO STAY?

Indian-born guru Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh apparently wants to stay in the United States and is doing everything he can to ensure that he establishes a permanent base here.

Rajneesh, who once had a reputation as India's free-love guru, bought 64,000 acres of land in Oregon and has watched his followers build \$35 million worth of modular homes, a greenhouse and reservoir for irrigating farmland.

Rajneesh's followers have also taken political control of the neighboring city of Antelope.

Not all is rosy for the Bhagwan, however. An Oregon court has ruled that the incorporation of his religious community, called Rajneesh-puram, violated state land-use laws. The U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service also denied the Bhagwan's application for permanent-resident status.

—KAM



## NEW NEWSLETTER "FOR MORMONS ONLY"

Washington-based columnist Jack Anderson is preparing to start a newsletter for his fellow Mormons, according to the March 14, 1983, edition of *Newsweek* magazine.

The newsletter, called *For Mormons Only*, will report on news of concern to Mormons regarding government policy and alert its readers to criticism of the church, the magazine reported.

Anderson agreed to lend his support to the newsletter after prominent Mormons approached him with the idea, the magazine said. He asked for total control of the publication in return, *Newsweek* reported. He will receive no pay for the work on the non-profit newsletter, which will not be officially connected to the Mormon Church, *Newsweek* said.

—KAM



## JW KINGDOM UNITY CONVENTION

Once again, Jehovah's Witnesses will gather for district conventions this summer. The theme of this year's convention is "Kingdom Unity."

The convention theme follows a recent trend in the Watchtower Society. The theme of last year's conventions was "Kingdom Loyalty." Recent events, such as the expulsion from the Society of Ray Franz, nephew of Watchtower President Frederick W. Franz, apparently has forced the leaders at Bethel to stress repeatedly the theme of sticking together within the Society.

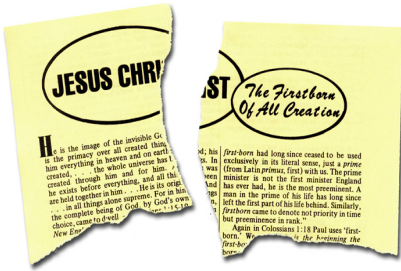
Most rank-and-file Jehovah's Witnesses appear unaware of the disunity in the Society or shrug off reports of such events as isolated cases. However, many Witnesses are quick to point out divisions within other religious groups.

Witnesses attending the four-day conventions in cities around the world this summer will go knocking on doors or soliciting magazines at airports and train and bus depots. Christians can be prepared for the visiting Witness.

Tracts especially for Jehovah's Witnesses are available from Personal Freedom Outreach.

—MKG

Editor's note: Believe us, witnessing efforts are not a waste of time. For proof, read the *Success Story* on page 4.



# “PUTTING THE PIECES BACK TOGETHER”

Judy and Franklin Hanford's escape from the Watchtower Society  
As told by Judy Hanford

My husband and I started studying with the Watchtower Society in October 1967. We were baptized in May 1968. Neither of us really had much Bible knowledge so everything they showed us seemed to be right there in Scripture. We always asked questions as we wanted to understand clearly. We usually accepted their explanation as biblical.

Then in 1969, the Society came out with the *Kingdom Interlinear Translation of the Greek Scriptures*. On one side was Westcott and Hort's Greek text and the Watchtower Society's English transliteration. On the other side was the Society's translation. This is when our nightmare began. We began to see differences. Yet, from 1969 on, we kept thinking that if the Society didn't have the truth, then no one did. As time went on, we noticed more and more differences. We also received many older publications from older members of the congregation, which only revealed more differences!

In 1980, while at an assembly in Green Bay, Wis., our daughter unknowingly took a tract from a CARIS (Christian Apologetics Research and Information Service) representative. When we got into the car, she saw what it was and tore it up.

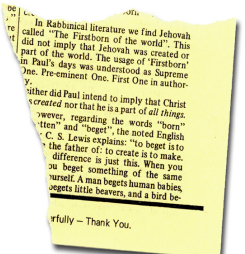


However, I later taped the pieces together and read it. The tract's title was "Jesus Christ, the Firstborn of All Creation." I remember saying to my husband, "It makes no sense." At that time, I could only see the Scriptures the way the Society used them. Still, I put the tract in a Watchtower volume and forgot it.

Later, we were in a Bible study with a couple who brought new thoughts into our heads on the way similar Scriptures could be interpreted. I also remember the time I was watching a religious TV show and invited Jesus into my heart and life. I wasn't sure really what I was even doing. According to Watchtower teaching, this was wrong; but for me it just seemed very right!

In May 1982, I broke my leg. I missed many meetings and had time to think without the Society's influence. My husband and I decided we were going to quit limping along!

It was funny, I had pioneered (a pioneer is one of Jehovah's Witnesses who can spend 90 hours a month, or at least 1,000 hours a year, in the Watchtower preaching work) in April, broken my leg in May, and by August I was ready to quit all meetings until we were sure one way or the other. In September, while cleaning, I again found the tract my daughter had received in 1980. This time it made great sense.



So we wrote to CARIS to see if other thoughts we had from the scriptures were shared by others. Also, we needed to see the REAL Society.

It was because of material sent by CARIS and (CARIS volunteer) Carolyn Friedemann's caring letters that we began to be set free from Watchtower bondage.

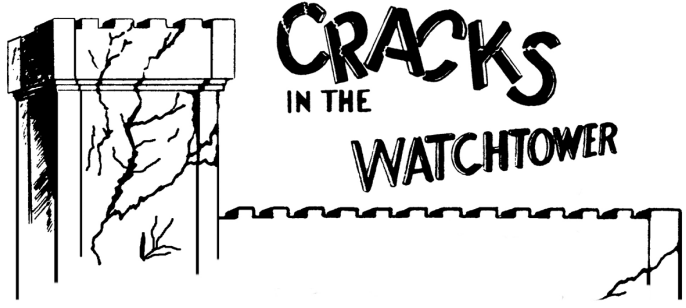
Not only has Christ saved me from my sins, He has improved my health. For the last few years, I had had ulcer problems and was on special medication. Since leaving the Watchtower Society in September 1982, I have had no health problems and our whole family has never been so healthy.

We as a family are learning more each day how very right indeed that the decision by each of us to accept Christ was and is.

If you have a *Success Story* and would like to submit it for possible publication in this newsletter, send it to:

**Success Stories**  
**Personal Freedom Outreach**  
P.O. Box 26062  
Saint Louis, Missouri 63136

## COMMENTS ON



"The Congregational Overseer visited my home and after a couple of low-key, low-pressure meetings with him, I expressed an interest to have a get-together with the Circuit Overseer. They consented to view the filmstrip (*Cracks*) under the premise of 'giving their opinion of the film's documentation.' During the showing, the Congregational Overseer was visibly shaken and he kept pacing back and forth, but the Circuit Overseer just sat and nodded in reaction to various points.

After the filmstrip, the Congregational Overseer remained silent, as the Circuit Overseer tried to vouch for the integrity of President Franz because he knew him at Bethel. He also made other attempts to accuse the makers of the filmstrip of misrepresenting the Watchtower. At the end of our meeting, they consented to look up answers to the claims on the film. In this, and the several meetings I had with the Congregational Overseer later, these claims were never answered.

They finally broke communication with me when they heard I had given someone a piece of anti-Jehovah's Witness literature. Thank you very much for producing these filmstrips."

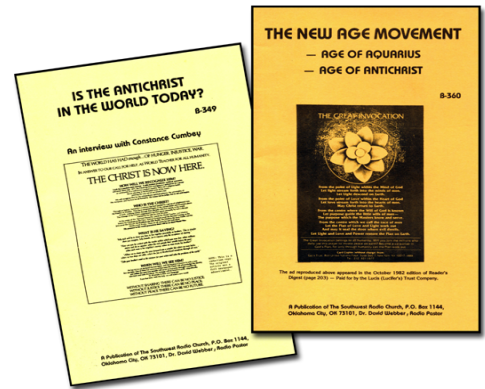
Kyle Patton  
Hampton, IA

**"CRACKS IN THE WATCHTOWER"** — A 48-minute, 88-frame filmstrip examining the authenticity of the Watchtower's claim of being the "one true religion" is available from Personal Freedom Outreach for \$18.95. This presentation greatly aids Christians in their witness to Jehovah's Witnesses and is a must for every Jehovah's Witness who loves the truth. The program is also available in 35mm slide set (with carousel slide tray and narration tape) for \$50.00. Please add \$1.25 for shipping on all orders.

# Doomsday Once Again!

## CONSTANCE E. CUMBEY AND THE NEW AGE MOVEMENT

by M. KURT GOEDELMAAN & KEITH A. MORSE



For some time, a new doomsday prophet, Constance E. Cumbeby, has been criss-crossing the country telling Christians that the Antichrist is about to be revealed.

Cumbeby, a Detroit lawyer, gained the attention of Christians nationwide as a guest on David Webber's Southwest Radio Church broadcasts.

As evidence that the Antichrist's time is near, Cumbeby refers to full-page ads in major newspapers around the world announcing that *The Christ Is Now Here*. The ads, sponsored by the Tara Center of London, announced that "The Christ" is the Lord Maitreya, who Cumbeby says is the Antichrist. Cumbeby adds that the Antichrist is to be revealed by a host of New Age groups from around the world, secretly working with each other.

Cumbeby says her expertise on the New Age Movement stems from reading about 2,000 books on the subject. She has written down her ideas on the movement in a book called *The Hidden Dangers Of The Rainbow*.

Raised a Seventh-day Adventist, Cumbeby joined the Highland Park (Michigan) Baptist Church in 1980 by profession of faith. She says she rededicated her life to Jesus in 1980 and was rebaptized at that time.

Kenneth Travilla, associate pastor of the Highland Park Baptist Church, where Cumbeby had until recently continued her church membership, said she was a member in good standings, but the church did not endorse her timetable for the Antichrist's arrival. She has since withdrawn her membership from the church because it did not support her theory.

While Cumbeby has done much research into the New Age movement and can be credited with alerting Christians to the dangers of mankind's growing fascination with New Age philosophy, her theory that humans are conspiring to reveal the Antichrist is faulty.

First, we are asked to believe that The Way International, Unity School of Christianity, The Unification Church, Children of God, all the followers of secular humanism and countless thousands of other groups are secretly involved in a plot to prepare the way for the Lord Maitreya. Long before Cumbeby appeared in the cults ministry, other Christian cult researchers had already spent years of research on many of these groups and found no evidence of a human conspiracy to usher in the Antichrist.

While it is true that different cults teach some similar doctrines (for example; both Jehovah's Witnesses and Mormons teach that Jesus and Satan are spirit brothers; most Hindu-based cults teach that man can achieve greater powers and realize godhood), this is not because of any human conspiracy as Cumbeby has alleged, but rather a spiritual conspiracy from the pit of hell! This view is widely held among Christians who have devoted their lives to studying and fighting the cults.

The most obvious argument against Cumbeby's conspiracy theory is the personalities of the cults' leaders. Imagine the Unification Church's Rev. Sun Myung Moon, The Way International's Victor Paul Wierwille and Moses David Berg of the Children of God agreeing on much of anything, much less agreeing to work together to let someone else take over the world.

Moon claims to be the one who will finish Christ's messianic mission; Wierwille claims to have been audibly called to teach the Word of God as it has not been taught since the first century; and Berg, through his *Mo Letters*, claims to be God's chosen spokesman.

Imagine these three coming to an agreement. Then imagine adding the leaders of the thousands of other cults.

Another fault in Cumbeby's theory is the material on which she bases it.

Her primary source is Marilyn Ferguson's *The Aquarian Conspiracy*. This book maintains that mankind is adopting a new attitude, one that essentially reflects Hindu beliefs. Other sources include the writings of Alice Bailey, a theosophist and spirit medium who died in 1949; and Benjamin Creme, whom Cumbeby describes as a spokesman for the Tara Center and a practitioner of the psychic arts.

Most of the material Cumbeby cites is written by these and similar people, who are steeped in the occult and Eastern religions. While there is nothing wrong with citing these sources to illustrate the views and intentions of these New Age leaders, it is improper for a Christian to base his or her eschatology on these sources.

Apparently Cumbeby had been burned once already and has had to hedge on her prediction of the date the Antichrist would be revealed. During the first series of interviews with the Southwest Radio Church during Spring 1982, she cited several works indicating that the New Age movement was working toward a 1982 date for the appearance of its leader (*Is the Antichrist in the World Today?* Interview #5, Southwest Radio Church, P.O. Box 1144, Oklahoma City, OK 73101). She also talked about a June 1983 date, but dismissed it as a smoke screen set up by the New Agers and maintained that the Antichrist would be revealed much sooner than 1983. When 1982 passed with no sign of the Antichrist, she adopted the June 1983 date as the time of the Antichrist's arrival.

Other references she cites as supporting her theory are a purported vision that Pope Leo XIII had in 1884, in which he overheard God giving Satan permission and wherewithal to destroy "religion" in 75 to 100 years. She also makes reference to a purported message from Satan himself through Michelle Smith, a former medium.

Throughout her interviews, Cumbeby cites events that actually happened, but consistently draws incorrect conclusions from the facts she has gathered.

For example, Eric Pement of *Cornerstone* magazine has cited the following in his recent article "Consensus or Conspiracy?":

"...it is true that David Spangler (co-director of Findhorn Foundation, board member of Planetary Citizens) has written that we must take a Luciferic initiation if we wish to enter the New Age. It is not true that this single statement can be logically extended to cover all New Age writers, and that it is in fact an overriding New Age goal. Though Spangler's definition of a 'Luciferic initiation' is 100 percent anti-Christian, it has nothing to do with taking a mark on one's

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## DOOMSDAY

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hand, or a formal ceremony of Satan worship, as Cumbey has suggested.

*It is true that Alice Bailey (or her familiar spirit) wrote that the coming new world would outlaw nuclear weapons, but that the United Nations might use them to punish 'aggressive action' by political or religious groups, 'such as the Church of Rome.' It is not true that 'the real plans [of the New Age movement] are to use it [the bomb] on those very same religious groups' which are now endorsing disarmament. A few moments' consideration will show that this is not even a feasible proposal. Though it is conceivable that the Antichrist could nuke the city of Rome (population 3 million) for the sake of the thousand people who live in the Vatican, would he also destroy every other major city in the world where large numbers of Catholics reside? What about religious groups with their headquarters in Los Angeles or Washington?*

*It is true that the Cathedral Church of St. John the Divine (Episcopal) in New York City has had laser devices on the premises. It is not true that they might use them, with a satellite, to stage a holographic laser light show which would show fire coming down from heaven, and produce a talking, airborne image of the Beast, to be seen by one-third of the world's surface, thus deceiving the unwary into thinking the 'Christ' has returned in the air. (This is a real example of how far Mrs. Cumbey will stretch a single point.) Unfortunately, the holographic projection distance is so limited that it's physically impossible to shoot a holograph from space to earth, no matter what equipment is available. What's more, the lasers in question were rented, used inside the cathedral, and returned.*

*It is true that Jim Jones and the People's Temple were listed in the 1972 edition of the **Spiritual Community Guide**. It is not true, as Cumbey asserts, that 'The role of the centers (listed in the SCG) is to spread "The Plan," as laid out by Alice Bailey.' The directory's purpose was to list alternative forms of spirituality and in later editions of the book even some Christian groups were included, such as Christian*

*World Liberation Front, which spawned the Spiritual Counterfeits Project' (pp. 18-19).*

Further, Mrs. Cumbey does not present well-researched facts. One example is the assertion she makes that the New Age *Great Invocation* of Lucis Trust, which was published as a full-page ad in the October 1982 issue of *Readers Digest*, "has gone out in nearly all the world's languages, almost as many as the Bible at this point." An inquiry made with the Lucis Trust Company of New York reveals that its *Great Invocation* has been translated into approximately 60 languages. The American Bible Society of New York states that the entire Bible has been translated into 279 languages and certain sections of Scripture have been translated into an amazing 1763 languages.

The Cumbey conspiracy theory will remind some of the John Todd fiasco of a few years back, in which the Illuminati were destined to overthrow the world. In addition, Cumbey uses the same ploy that Jack Chick has used for the past several years; Those who do not agree are part of the problem or conspiracy. Cumbey has recently taken swipes at several cult researchers and Christian authors who disagree with her hypothesis, saying that they are really part of the New Age movement.

In summary, it could be said that Cumbey's work is good and original. However, that work which is good is not original and work which is original is not good. Those wishing to make a more accurate study of the dangers of the New Age movement should contact Spiritual Counterfeits Project (in Berkeley, CA) or Cornerstone magazine (in Chicago, IL). Both for many years have studied the New Age groups and have provided reliable materials in respect to Christianity

Yes, Christians should be concerned and aware of the New Age conspiracy going on. It is a conspiracy that began in the Garden of Eden and was started by Satan, the enemy of our souls. Christians have been inundated with countless theories on eschatology and spiritual conspiracies. Cumbey's theories can be added to that flood. The danger of all these theories is that Christians can become so caught up in the sensationalism, spending their time waiting for Christ's Second Coming, rather than laboring in the fields, harvesting souls for their Lord. Many of these theories produce nothing but paranoia among Christians and skepticism among non-Christians when the events do not unfold as predicted.

## ADVENTISM

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was later "confirmed" through visions by White, an up-and-comer within the ranks.

White's visions also confirmed the sect's doctrine that the true mark of God's remnant was keeping the Saturday Sabbath. Sunday worship was said to be a Roman Catholic invention and would ultimately be revealed as the "mark of the beast" spoken of in Revelation.

The group grew and controversies continued. Most of the questions revolved around the theology and authority of White. White found the questions intolerable. She was God's instrument. The "spirit of prophecy" that she possessed made her the final arbiter of doctrine. If the dissenting parties did not recognize and assent to this position, they were disfellowshipped. Concerning her own writings, White said:

"If you seek to turn aside the council of God to suit yourselves, if you lessen the confidence of God's people in the testimonies He has sent them, you are rebelling against God as certainly as were Korah, Dathan, and Abiram" (*Testimonies*, Volume V, pg. 66).

With the opposition silenced or out of the way, White warned that Satan's final ploy would be to cause many of the faithful to question her revelations and fall away from the truth. This statement brought a consolidation of White's authority and all was fairly smooth until the 1950s.

In the late 1950's, Walter Martin, then a contributing editor to *Eternity* magazine, was commissioned to study thoroughly SDA doctrine, and decide whether the SDA church was a Christian denomination or a cult. Martin, after talking to many SDA figures, came to the conclusion that the SDA church was not a cult, in spite of several unusual doctrines. How the SDA scholars and ministers could present such a facade to Martin is a story in itself

During the first half of this century, many SDA ministry students attended non-SDA seminaries and universities. They were exposed to the doctrines of justification by faith and the Bible as God's only inspired Word. The result was an SDA clergy that was moving away from more traditional SDA doctrine and toward evangelical Christianity. They were only too happy to cooperate with Martin so they could sound more evangelical and dispel the SDA church's cultic image.

Under the aegis of Review & Herald Publishing Association (the official organ of the SDA church) a book titled *Questions on Doctrine* was published in conjunction with Martin's research. This book gave the Adventists a decidedly evangelical appearance. In the preface of his book, *The Truth About Seventh-Day Adventism*, Martin states, "to eliminate misunderstanding of the true position of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church with regard to theology, history, and prophetic interpretation, the writer has drawn heavily from recognized Adventist theology entitled, *Seventh-Day Adventists Answer Questions On Doctrine*. This work, which presents the true position of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church, was written to answer questions about their

theology and doctrine.”

However, the publication of *Questions on Doctrine* (hereafter referred to as *Q.D.*) touched off a furor with traditional Adventists. To many, it was looked on as a “compromise with the churches of Babylon.” Many articles have been written in SDA publications to refute the “heresy” of *Q.D.* Because of this great controversy, the book was taken out of print and is no longer looked upon as a “definitive” treatise of SDA doctrine. That action negated many of Martin’s findings, and gives serious reasons for re-evaluating his conclusions.

When, in addition to White’s dependency on other literary sources, the renewed emphasis of her authority is considered, the need for a wholesale re-evaluation becomes more apparent.

### The Two Ellen G. Whites

As one evaluates the SDA Church, one must realize that White often contradicted herself. A study of her writings reveals Ellen G. White “A” and Ellen G. White “B.”

This has given Adventists the ability to quote her in some instances and sound evangelical and in others to sound unorthodox. It all depends on which quote is being used. For example, on the atonement, Ellen G. White “A” says:

“Christ’s sacrifice in behalf of man was full and complete. The condition of the atonement had been fulfilled. The work for which He had come to this world had been accomplished” (*The Acts of the Apostles*, pg. 29).

However, Ellen G. White “B” says:

“Now, while our great High Priest is making the atonement for us, we should seek to become perfect in Christ” (*The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan*, pg. 23).

On the nature of Christ, “A” says:

“He is a brother in our infirmities, but not possessing like passions. As the sinless One, His nature recoiled from evil” (*Testimonies*, Vol. I, pg. 508).

“B” says:

“He took upon His sinless nature our sinful nature” (*Medical Ministry*, pg. 181).

On the authority of Scripture, “A” says:

“I recommend to you, dear reader, the Word of God as the rule of your faith and practice. By that Word, we are judged” (*Early Writings*, pg. 78).

and,

“The Spirit was not given — nor can it ever be bestowed — to supersede the Bible; for the Scriptures explicitly state that the Word of God is the standard by which all teachings and experience must be tested” (*The Great Controversy*, Introduction, pg. vii).

Yet, “B” states:

“The Spirit fell upon me and I was taken off in vision. I saw the state of some who stood on present truth, but disregarded the visions, — the way God had chosen to teach in some cases, those who erred from Bible truth. I saw that in striking against the visions they did not strike against the worm — the feeble instrument that God spoke through, but against the Holy Ghost. I saw it was a small thing to speak against the instrument, but it was dangerous to slight the words of God. I saw if they were in error and God chose to show them their errors through visions, and they disregarded the teachings of God in visions, they would be left to take their own way, and run in the way of error, and think they were right, until they would find it out too late” (photocopy of 1849 broadside).

These are only a few examples of White contradicting herself.

The problem that arises is obvious. In any authoritarian organization, the laity usually defers to the edicts of the leadership in theological matters. It is the leadership that interprets the special revelations of prophets or apostles and passes the “truth” along to the masses. It is then up to the individual to either conform or get out. This is what is now happening in the SDA church.

Current events have shown that the SDA General Conference has committed itself to maintaining Ellen G. White “B” — the authoritative, saved-by-grace, kept-by-works infallible one. One has only to pursue recent SDA literature to substantiate this fact.

For example, the Dallas Statement of Beliefs, Statement #17, 1980, says:

“One of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is prophecy. This gift is an identifying mark of the remnant church and was manifested in the ministry of Ellen G. White. As the Lord’s messenger, her writings are a continuing and authoritative source of truth and provide for the church comfort, guidance, instruction and corrections. They also make clear that the Bible is the standard by which all teachings and experience must be tested.”

Morris Venden, writing in *The Pillars* (Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1982), says this about White’s writings on page 30 of his book:

“Fact #14: There is hope for every remnant believer today who sometimes feels confused at all the differing views taken by different scholars and commentaries. We have an inspired commentary that was given for the purpose of settling the disagreements among the uninspired commentaries. ... God has given to our church an inspired commentary to settle the disagreements among the uninspired commentaries, and we can still be thankful for that today.”

It is to that “inspired” commentary (White’s writings) that we now turn our attention.

### Ellen G. White and Plagiarism

Maurice Barnett, in his short work *Ellen G. White and Inspiration* (no date, published by author) on page 27 says:

“One of the biggest controversies among Adventists presently concerns Ellen White’s literary borrowing. The Adventist authorities and apologists have been scrambling to explain what she did. More and more evidence has been coming to light as to the extent of her borrowing. She would not only borrow paragraphs and whole pages from other authors, but would paraphrase from them and follow the same order of composition in producing her own works.”

“This is true of her letters, sermons, diaries, articles, books and even her visions.’ These facts were known to a limited extent in the early days of the movement. There was some trouble over it then. There were several prominent Adventists that ‘fell away’ because of their loss of faith in Ellen White.”

Ronald Numbers, in his book *Prophetess of Health*, touched off the modern explosion with revelations of her dependence on the health reformers of her day. The second, more serious shock has been the work of Walter Rea. During his 33 years as an SDA minister, Rea had probably put more time and effort into studying White’s writings and publishing his findings than any other Adventist. He has published one book, *The White Lie*, (M&R Publications, 1982) and is working on another one.

The extent of her borrowing is becoming increasingly clear. For many years, SDA authorities dismissed the subject as inconsequential. They insisted that the borrowing amounted to nothing more than a few simple historical facts, and perhaps a word or two here and there. Rea has challenged them to find even 20% of her work that was strictly original.

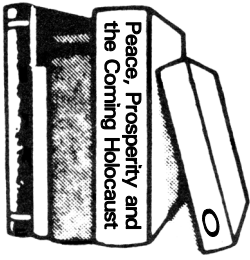
In order to preserve White’s authority — for it is in her writings and not in the Scriptures that doctrines peculiar to the SDA church are found — SDA apologists are trying to come up with a new definition of inspiration. Many SDA “scholars” are now saying that, yes, White did borrow quite liberally from other sources, but she did nothing different from other Bible writers. “Did not Matthew, Mark, Luke, John and some others copy extensively from other sources to come up with the gospels?” they ask. “If they were inspired, then Mrs. White is inspired!” (see *The White Truth*, John J. Robertson, 1981, Pacific Press Publishing Association).

This scramble to redefine inspiration in order to keep its “inspired commentary” has only made the SDA church look more like a cult.

The picture is clear. An evaluation of the SDA church cannot be based on research made in the 1950s when the church wore an evangelical hat. It must be done in light of more recent findings.

When statements such as “The atonement was not completed at the cross. This fact may startle you. But it’s as true as your Bible” (*The Pillars*, pp. 28-29) and “not hearers of the law ... but doers shall be justified” (*The Great Controversy*, pg. 435) are used to pressure Christians to leave a church, then that church can no longer be considered orthodox.

(continued on page 8)



# BOOKS IN REVIEW

## PEACE, PROSPERITY, AND THE COMING HOLOCAUST THE NEW AGE MOVEMENT IN PROPHECY

BY DAVE HUNT

Harvest House, 282 pages, \$6.95

Many Christians may not take the time to read science fiction any more, but with the abundance of books on conspiracy theories and the end times, there's hardly any need to. Fans of science fiction and speculative fiction, add Dave Hunt's *Peace, Prosperity and the Coming Holocaust* to your collections.

Hunt opens his book by surveying various proposed end-times scenarios, all of which call for gloom and doom.

Then Hunt gives his readers what he calls a "contrary scenario": a coming "boom," a time of unprecedented peace and prosperity.

Hunt claims that the "survivalists" and others fearing an imminent takeover or nuclear war will soon unite as they realize their need to cooperate. This, Hunt says, will lead to the very opposite of the trouble they fear.

And, Hunt says, because the arrival of the Antichrist is just around the corner, this cooperation will usher in a time of deceptive "peace and safety" just when mankind is about to be doomed.

How Hunt can be sure that all of this is about to happen is never revealed, even if his premise is right!

The other principal character in Hunt's book is the New Age movement. He sees the New Agers — a collection of followers of Eastern religions, positive-thinking philosophies, mind-science groups and occult practitioners — as providing the main thrust of a "cosmic conspiracy to install the Antichrist."

Hunt claims that the New Age movement is seducing Catholic, Protestant, Liberal and Evangelical alike yet offers no real proof or documentation for this sweeping statement.

The turning point in Hunt's scenario is the Rapture. Hunt predicts a pre-tribulation Rapture and cites scripture to back up his opinion. It is one of the few places in the book where he quotes the Bible.

Hunt foresees two major effects of the Rapture: The decline of the United States as a world power, because of its large percentage of born-again Christians; and the rapid ascent of the Antichrist because of the absence of the Christian influence and the fear that an event such as the Rapture would instill in those left behind.

Hunt foresees all nations and peoples quickly falling in line behind this new leader, putting aside all political, philosophical and religious differences.

Hunt has one rule in judging theories: They are valid if they fit into his scenario and invalid if they don't. Theories that groups such as the Trilateral Commission are about to take over the world are called "exaggerations" and "a bit too much to believe." Then, almost in the same breath, he quotes from H. G. Wells to establish what he calls a group of "sincere conspirators."

Hunt says Wells "prophesied" about an "open conspiracy" that would establish a new order. Furthermore, Hunt quotes various scientists, UFO literature, and a smattering of occult and eastern mystical writings, all to prove that the "Plan" will be completed "over the next few years!" He then speculates that the Antichrist is "probably alive on the planet earth."

Hunt's heavy use of Marilyn Ferguson's *The Aquarian Conspiracy*, a popular book that outlines the rise of the New Age movement, to "prove" the "Plan" shows that he has missed the meaning of her book altogether!

Apparently it did not occur to Hunt to ask if any of the writers he quotes are infallible and can really determine the future.

That Hunt would give any credence to Benjamin Creme and Jeanne Dixon (pages 84 and 92) is startling. That he can name the Antichrist "Lord Maitreya," supposedly a 2000-year-old Tibetan, is even more startling.

In the final chapter, Hunt tries urging Christians to adopt a positive mental attitude. The attempt falls flat. This book stands a better chance of fostering confusion, paranoia, unrest or even a gnostic pride in people who see themselves as having inside information. Hunt claims in his introduction: "In fact this is not your ordinary book. If you have read everything that is available on the subject of prophecy ... then you still have not read most of what this book is about."

In this reviewer's opinion, Hunt takes 282 pages to establish just another speculative doomsday scenario — one almost identical to that of Constance Cumbey. (See article on page 5.) Who borrowed from whom is not clear, but the details are quite similar.

Overall, there is too little scripture, too little proclamation of the church's strength and victory in Christ and far too much speculation and guesswork in Hunt's book.

This reviewer is no prophet but will venture to say that this book will shortly take its place on the curiosity pile with all the other false end-times and conspiracy predictions.

Rev. G. R. Fisher

## ADVENTISM

(from page 1)

Donald McAdams, president of the SDA Southwest Union College, sees the problem clearly, and states in his *A Response to Ellen White's Role in Adventist History*, pages 3, 5:

"Do we use Ellen White in such a way as to give her control over the interpretation of Scripture in much the same way that the Catholics of Luther's day gave church tradition the right to interpret Scripture? The answer for most Adventists is yes, we do ... if we

grant Ellen White hermeneutical control over the Scriptures we will blunt, perhaps destroy, our witness. We will be seen as a cult that makes the Bible say what we want it to say."

To that can be added a hearty Amen.

For more information on the Seventh-Day Adventist church, the following publications may be obtained from Personal Freedom Outreach:

- *Ellen G. White And Inspiration* by Maurice Barnett — \$2.50
- *The Shaking of Adventism* by Geoffrey J. Paxton — \$3.95
- *The White Lie* by Walter T. Rea — \$12.95

Please add \$1.00 postage and handling.



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## NEWSLETTER

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