

CHAPTER 2
THE BIRTH OF AN IMAGE

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*Saying to them that dwell in the Church, that they
should make an image of the beast.*
Revelation 13:14b (paraphrase)

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INTRODUCTION

The thirty-fourth session of the General Conference convened at Battle Creek, Michigan, April 2 through April 23, 1901. This was an important General Conference session because it involved, not only a major reorganization of the Church, but it was the first General Conference Ellen White had attended in 10 years.

“A feeling of exhilaration and excitement filled the air on Tuesday morning, April 2, as workers and church members began to assemble in the Battle Creek Tabernacle a little before nine o’clock,” Arthur White wrote. “This would be the largest General Conference session ever held.” (Arthur L. White, EGW: The Early Elmshaven Years, Vol. 5, p. 70).

There were 267 delegates at the 1901 General Conference session. The Church at that time had a membership of about 75,000, four fifths of which were in the United States. The organization of the Church in 1901 consisted of only local Conferences and a General Conference. The “General Conference had remained unchanged from 1863 to 1901.” (*ibid.*, EGY, Vol. 5, p. 70). It was time for a change, for a reorganization of the Church structure. Shortly after the “most precious message” was given to the Church by Waggoner and Jones in 1888, Ellen White stated that there was a wrong principle of power at the head of the Church and that this principle needed to be changed.

“For years the church has been looking to man and expecting much from man, but not looking to Jesus, in whom our hopes of eternal life are centered,” Ellen White wrote. “Therefore God gave to His servants [Waggoner and Jones] a testimony that presented the truth as it is in Jesus, which is the third angel’s message in clear, distinct lines.” (Letter to O. A. Olsen, dated at Hobart, Tasmania, May 1, 1895; The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials (page 1338).

The result of this has been in various ways. The sacred character of the cause of God is no longer realized at the center of the work. The voice from Battle Creek, which has been regarded as authority in counseling how the work should be done, is no longer the voice of God; but it is the voice of—whom? From whence does it come, and where is its vital power? This state of things is maintained by men who should have been disconnected from the work long ago. These men do not scruple to quote the word of God as their authority, but the god who is leading them is a false god. Ellen G. White, Manuscript Releases, Vol. 17, pages 185, 186. (emphasis supplied).

“As the institutional interests in Battle Creek grew, businessmen were drawn in to head them, and a strong center developed,” Arthur White wrote. “A General Conference Executive Committee, beginning with three members in 1863, some

twenty years later was increased to five.” (ibid., EEY, Vol. 5, p. 71).

There were seven members on the General Conference Committee in 1887. Two more members were added in 1889, and two more in 1893. By the opening of the 1901 General Conference session the Executive Committee numbered thirteen. The last two had been added at the 1899 General Conference session. (ibid., EEY, Vol. 5, p. 71).

Although the Church had grown in size, the number of leading men at headquarters had not kept pace with the growth. A small group of men controlled the Church at Battle Creek. The 1901 delegation was to move forward with the establishment of Union Conferences between the local State Conferences and the General Conference.

Guard Against Consolidating and Centralizing the Work

“Beginning with 1889 certain measures were strongly promoted to consolidate and centralize various features of the denominational work,” Arthur White wrote. “This would begin with the publishing interests and then reach out to the educational and medical lines.” (ibid., EEY, Vol. 5, p. 72).

Although some wished to consolidate and centralize the work of the denomination, the counsel from Ellen White was against centralization. Testimony after testimony was given against centralization.

“It is not the purpose of God to centralize in this way, bringing all the interests of one branch of the work under the management of a comparatively few men,” Ellen White wrote. “In His great purpose of advancing the cause of truth in the earth, He designs that every part of His work shall blend with every other part.” (Spalding and Magan Collection, p. 404).

“The workers are to draw together in the Spirit of Christ,” Ellen White concluded. “In their diversity, they are to preserve unity. . . . The work of direction is to be left with the great Manager, while obedience to the work of the Lord is to be the aim of his workers.” (ibid., SMC, p. 404).

Notice that their unity was to be in their “diversity.” No one was to rule over the other. Their unity was in Christ and the truth. Christ, not man, is the Head, “the great Manager,” of the work and the Church.

Not only were Adventists counseled not to centralize the work, but also that it was God’s plan that the Advent people should not centralize their homes in one place. The plan was to spread out, to take the Advent truth to all the world.

“It is not the Lord’s plan to centralize largely in any one place,” Ellen White counseled. “The time has passed when there should be any binding about of the work and confining it to a few places.” (Letter, 328).

In 1901 the Review and Herald publishing house at Battle Creek was in dire need of a complete overhaul. The Press was involved in commercial printing and because of this policy the publishing and sale of message-filled books suffered during this period. The policy was that any material would be published that would bring a profit to the Review and Herald Publishing house.

“This included fiction, Wild West stories, Roman Catholic books, and works on

sex and hypnosis,” Arthur White wrote. “When cautioned, men in positions of management at the Review office declared that they were printers and not censors.” (ibid., EEY, Vol. 5, p. 72).

The Corporate Church is in the very same situation today. The proposed (1982) Seventh-day Adventist publishing house in Russia is required by the State to publish the religious books of other denominations. Like the Review and Herald Publishing house in the 1890's, this includes, Roman Catholic books, Pentecostal, Jehovah's Witnesses, *and even works of spiritualism!* Not only that, but this proposed (1982) publishing house in Russia had to have the endorsement of Billy Graham before the Soviet government would permit the General Conference to build the publishing house. The Soviet government would also retain 51 percent of the publishing house; thus the Soviet government would have final control in any altercation. (Note:-Because of the demise of the Soviet Government after 1982, it is not known by the author whether this Russian publishing house, with the proposed (1982) requirements, ever became a reality.)

The Cleansing Fire

“Be not deceived; God is not mocked,” the apostle Paul warned, “for whatsoever a man [or church] soweth, that shall he also reap.” (Galatians 6:7). Is it any wonder that on December 30, 1902 the Lord sent His angels to torch the main building of the Review and Herald publishing plant.

Before the fire came which swept away the Review and Herald factory, I was in distress for many days. I was in distress while the council was in session, laboring to get the right matter before the meeting, hoping, if it were a possible thing, to call our brethren to repentance, and avert calamity. It seemed to me that it was almost a life and death question. It was then that I saw the representation of danger,—a sword of fire turning this way and that way. I was in an agony of distress. The next news was that the Review and Herald building had been burned by fire, but that not one life had been lost. In this the Lord spoke mercy with judgment. The mercy of God was mingled with judgment to spare the lives of the workers, that they might do the work which they had neglected to do, and which it seemed impossible to make them see and understand. Ellen G. White, The General Conference Bulletin, April 6, 1903.

Why is it always so difficult for Church leaders to repent? Have times changed? Will the Lord still visit His people again in judgment?

“And it shall come to pass at that time, that I will search Jerusalem [the Church] with candles, and punish the men that are settled on their lees: that say in their heart, The Lord will not do good, neither will he do evil.” (Zephaniah 1:12)..

“He who presides over His church and the destinies of nations is carrying forward the last work to be accomplished for this world,” Ellen White wrote. “To His angels He gives the commission to execute His judgments.” (Testimonies to Ministers, page 431).

“Let the ministers awake, let them take in the situation,” Ellen White warned. “The work of judgment begins at the sanctuary.” (ibid., TM, p. 431)[were] before the house. (Ezekiel 9:6).

More Centralization

“Notwithstanding the condition of things at the publishing house, a suggestion had been made to bring still more of our work to the Review Office, still more power into Battle Creek,” Ellen White continued. “This greatly alarmed me, and when the fire came, I breathed easier than I had for a long time.” (General Conference Bulletin, 4/6/1903).

“We were thankful that no lives were lost,” Ellen White stated. “There was a large loss of property. Again and again the Lord had shown me that for every dollar that was accumulated by unjust means, there would be ten times as much lost.” (ibid., GCB, 4/6/1903).

Ellen White’s Concern About the 1901 General Conference

The delegates gathered at the 1901 General Conference session with apprehension. They sensed that something important would happen at this session. Ellen White would be present at this General Conference. She had been in Australia and had not attended a General Conference session for the past ten years.

“All were profoundly thankful that Ellen White was to be there, and she carried a heavy burden for the meeting,” Arthur White wrote. “It was this conference with its challenges and its opportunities that had in a large part led Ellen White to close up her work in Australia and hasten back to the United States.” (ibid., EEY, Vol. 5, p. 73).

Not only did Ellen White have to encourage the leadership to reorganize, but she had to deliver pointed testimonies against the Holy Flesh Movement in Indiana. (See above, Chapter #1, “Holy Flesh and Celebration Music”).

A New Constitution

At the 1901 General Conference session a new constitution was voted by the delegates. The two most important changes in this constitution from the previous constitution was as follows:

No General Conference President

(1) The first action established a twenty-five man General Conference Committee instead of a thirteen man committee. The constitution abolished the office of a General Conference President, and established in its place the office of a General Conference “chairman.” Another important aspect was that no officer of the General Conference committee was to serve more than two years. This would do away with one man at the head of the Church. This was a major move away from the form of government retained by the Papacy for over six hundred years when in 533 A.D., Justinian, the Roman emperor, decreed that the Bishop of Rome was supreme over all other Bishops of the Church.

*“We have before proved that the city of Rome was the seat of the dragon, which is here represented as transferred to the beast,” J. N. Andrews wrote. “It is well known that the seat of empire was by the emperor Constantine removed from Rome to Constantinople; and that Rome itself, at a later period, was given to the popes by the Emperor Justinian.” (J. N. Andrews, *The Three Messages Of**

Revelation 14:6-12, page 77, emphasis supplied).

Union Conferences

(2) The second important change established Union Conferences. The Church prior to 1901 had only local State Conferences and a General Conference. This was still not perfect, but would decentralize ecclesiastical authority to a great degree. Under Article #2 it was stated that,

“The object of this Conference shall be to unify and to extend to all parts of the world, the work of promulgating the everlasting gospel.” (GCB, Vol. IV, First Quarter, April 22, 1901. Extra No. 17. page 378).

The New 25 Man General Conference Executive Committee

Article #4, title, “Executive Committee,” Section 1, stated in part:

The Executive Committee of this Conference shall be twenty-five in number, and shall have power to organize itself by choosing a chairman, secretary, treasurer, and auditor, whose duties shall be such as usually pertain to their respective offices. It shall also have the power to appoint all necessary agents and committees for the conduct of its work. General Conference Bulletin, Vol. IV, First Quarter, April 22, 1901. Extra, No. 17, page 378. (emphasis supplied).

New Officers Would Serve Time-Limits

The election of officers and the time they would serve was stated under Section #2:

The Executive Committee shall be elected at the regular sessions of the Conference, and shall hold office for the term of two years, or until their successors are elected, and appear to enter upon their duties. General Conference Bulletin, Vol. IV, First Quarter, April 22, 1901. Extra No. 17, page 378.

Current Objection To the 1901 Constitution

Term-limits have never been popular by those holding office. This is true, not only in church offices, but also in political debates of the day. In his history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, Arthur White objected to this form of church government. He believed that the 1901 Constitution was “weak” on the point of a General Conference chairman vs a General Conference President, and the idea of term limits for those holding office.

“But there was one weakness in the new constitution that did not show up clearly when it was adopted,” Arthur White wrote. “It was to cause considerable concern in the months that followed. This related to the election of the officers of the General Conference.” (EGW: The Early Elmshaven Years, Vol. 5, 1900-1905, page 95).

This “weakness” however, was the opinion of Arthur White. Obviously, it was not the opinion of the duly authorized delegates of the 1901 General Conference session who voted the constitution into law. Neither was it the opinion of Ellen White who was present at that General Conference session.

I was never more astonished in my life than at the turn things have taken at this

meeting. This is not our work. God has brought it about. Instruction regarding this was presented to me, but until the sum was worked out at this meeting, I could not comprehend this instruction. God's angels have been walking up and down in this congregation. I want every one of you to remember this, and I want you to remember also that God has said that he will heal the wounds of his people. Ellen G. White, General Conference Bulletin, April 25, 1901. (emphasis supplied).

Arthur White Objects To A GC Chairman Serving Only One Year

“According to the new constitution, the delegates attending a General Conference session were empowered to elect the General Conference Committee; this committee in turn was to organize itself, electing its own officers,” Arthur White wrote. “It was recognized at the time that this could mean that a man might be chairman for only one year.” (ibid., EEY, Vol. 5, p. 95, emphasis supplied).

Notice that Arthur White’s real objection to the 1901 Constitution centered on the part that “a man might be chairman for only one year,” and that a new chairman would be elected each year thereafter. This is still the objection of leadership today.

“Undoubtedly this provision came about as an overreaction to the desire to get away from any ‘kingly power’ (Letter 49, 1903),” Arthur White observed, “a point that was pushed hard by Elder A. T. Jones, a member of the committee on organization.” (ibid., EEY, Vol. 5, p. 95, emphasis supplied).

Arthur White suggested that the idea of a new General Conference chairman elected each year, “Undoubtedly. . .came about as an overreaction to the desire to get away from any ‘kingly power.’” Then he gives reference to a testimony from an Ellen White, Letter 49, dated 1903, which was not written until two years later. If indeed there was overreaction to the “kingly power” stated in Ellen White’s testimony, then how could the delegates of 1901 overreact to a testimony that had not been given, indeed, that would not be written for two more years?

Notice also that once again Seventh-day Adventist historians, in their desire to alter history, try to attribute the responsibility or blame for an action they see as false on the shoulders of one man. Arthur White used this method when he stated that it was A. T. Jones who “pushed hard” for the idea of a new General Conference chairman elected each year, rather than a continual office of chairman that would keep one man in the office for years. Indeed, if it was A. T. Jones’ urging that caused the 267 delegates to see the wisdom that no one man should be the head of the Church, and if his urging helped the delegates to vote it into the new Constitution of 1901, then A. T. Jones should be commended, not condemned. Did not Ellen White state that, “This is not our work. God has brought it about.” (GCB, April 25, 190). Are we not true Protestants? Do we still believe in a country without a king, and a Church without a Pope? Are we like Israel of old, continually demanding a visible king over the Church?

“While this arrangement would clearly reduce the possibility of anyone exercising kingly power, it also greatly undercut responsible leadership,” Arthur White lamented. “It went too far, for it took out of the hands of the delegates attending the General Conference session the vital responsibility of electing the leaders of the church and instead placed this responsibility in the hands of the General Conference Executive Committee of twenty-five.” White added further that the new Constitution was “too unwieldy,” and, “There was

no church leader with a mandate from the church as represented by its delegates.” (ibid., EEY, p. 95, emphasis supplied).

The new Constitution did not take “out of the hands of the delegates attending the General Conference session the vital responsibility of electing the leaders of the church,” as Arthur White stated. The delegates elected the twenty-five members of the General Conference Committee. The 25 man Committee then chose their own “chairman,” this person to be replaced each year. Arthur White lamented the fact that the General Conference delegates could not choose who was to be the chairman of the General Conference Committee, and that this “chairman” could not serve for long periods of time. Of course, this thinking would only reestablish the old Constitution which provided for a permanent President of the General Conference.

Arthur White admitted that “this arrangement would clearly reduce the possibility of anyone exercising kingly power,” but he believed that the new Constitution “was too unwieldy.”

Unfortunately, White then argued for a one-man ruler of the Church. **He stated that with this new Constitution, “There was no church leader with a mandate.” That was the idea of the new Constitution, was it not? There was to be no one man at the head of the Church with a mandate from God or man. This would be establishing a Pope, an image of the Papacy!**

“That some of the delegates attending the session of 1901 were not clear on this point is evidenced in the insistence that the Committee elect the chairman and announce their decision before that session closed,” White wrote. “A. G. Daniells was chosen as chairman of the General Conference Committee.” (ibid., EEY, Vol. 5, p. 95). White added further that, “He was the leader of the church and nearly all the delegates were pleased, but they did not discern at this point how he would be crippled in his work, having no tenure and no mandate.” (ibid., EEY, Vol. 5, p. 95).

In his desire to have a king, Arthur White states that A. G. Daniells, the newly elected General Conference chairman “was the leader of the church,” and as such his work was “crippled” because he had “no tenure and no mandate.” What Arthur White really meant was that Daniells had “no tenure and no mandate” because he would be in office for only one year, and then a new chairman would be elected. It was the 25 man Executive Committee that was to have a “tenure” and a “mandate” to oversee the work. The chairman was merely to preside over the conference session. **Daniells was never to be the leader of the Church, Jesus Christ is the leader of the Church.** Therefore, Daniells did not deserve to have a “tenure” or a “mandate.” **He was merely the chairman of the General Conference Committee, not the Pope of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. As stated before, the chairman was to hold this office for one year, after which a new chairman would be elected the following year. However, history reveals that Daniells assumed himself President of the General Conference and wrote a new constitution that was voted into law two years later at the 1903 General Conference session. This “new” 1903 Constitution officially established Daniells in the office of President of the General Conference, which office he held for over twenty years!**

“He [Daniells] assumed the presidency of the General Conference in 1901 at a difficult period in the history of the church,” the SDA Encyclopedia states. “In 1922 he relinquished the presidency of the General Conference and held the post of secretary for four years.” (Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia, Second Revised Edition, 1995, emphasis supplied).

“To take the position that Ellen White’s urging that there be no kings meant, as interpreted by A. T. Jones, that the church should have no General Conference

president was unjustified,” Arthur White wrote. “At no time had the messages from her called for the abolition of the office of president of the General Conference; rather her messages recognized such an office in the organization of the church.” (ibid., EEY, Vol. 5, p. 95). To substantiate this claim, Arthur White directed the reader to Testimonies to Ministers, pp. 95, 96. Again, this testimony rebuking “kingly power” was written two years after the 1901 Constitution was voted! Arthur White’s conclusions just do not hold water.

“An earlier statement indicated that she understood that the work devolving upon the president of the General Conference was too large for one man to carry and that others should stand by his side to assist (TM, pp. 342, 343),” Arthur White wrote. “She did condemn the exercise of kingly power.” (ibid., EEY, Vol. 5, pp. 95, 96).

Once again, Arthur White tried to establish that A. T. Jones was the only one of the 267 delegates who believed that there should be “no kings,” no General Conference president. The 1901 General Conference *Bulletin* states that the Constitution was “voted unanimously” by the 267 delegates. **Although Arthur White would like to make the reader think so, A. T. Jones did not vote the new Constitution in by himself!** White then states that the idea that “the church should have no General Conference president was unjustified.” He stated further that at no time had Ellen White “called for the abolition of the office of president of the General Conference.” Arthur White tried to establish that Ellen White endorsed the idea of a General Conference president by quoting an “earlier” statement. (TM, pp. 342, 343). He stated that in this earlier statement Ellen White “recognized such an office in the organization of the church.” White claimed that in this earlier statement Ellen White “indicated that she understood that the work devolving upon the president of the General Conference was too large for one man to carry and that others should stand by his side to assist.”

Just because Ellen White recognized that there was a General Conference president at an earlier time, does not prove that she endorsed the idea. Indeed, she did state that “the president of the General Conference was too large for one man to carry and that others should stand by his side to assist.” This would have been true also of a General Conference chairman. Arthur White admitted that, “She did condemn the exercise of kingly power.” **Ellen White did acknowledge the office of president while it existed, but when the office was abolished at the 1901 General Conference session she stated, “This is not our work. God has brought it about.” (General Conference Bulletin, April 25, 1901, emphasis supplied).**

“The weakness, which soon became very apparent, was corrected at the next session of the General Conference,” Arthur White concluded, “the session of 1903.” (ibid., EEY, Vol. 5, p. 96). The weakness “which soon became very apparent” was the opinion of Arthur White, and Arthur G. Daniells, the supposed acting chairman, who, by the way, two years later was still holding the position of chairman, which was voted by the delegates in 1901 to continue only one year. To Arthur White and Daniells the fact that at the next General Conference session a new Constitution was voted proves the weakness of the first constitution. *It was Daniells who wrote the new Constitution to be presented in 1903!* We must now examine the 1903 General Conference *Bulletin* for ourselves to find out what was “corrected” at the next session of the General Conference – “the session of 1903.”

The 1903 General Conference Session

Two years later the 1903 General Conference session convened in Oakland, California, March 27, 1903. This would be the most important pivotal point in the reorganization of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, for at this General Conference a “new” Constitution would be voted that would forever establish one man at the head of the Church!

The Chairman, Elder Arthur G. Daniells called the thirty-fifth General Conference session to order at two thirty Friday afternoon, March 27, 1903. One hundred and thirty four delegates were seated at this 1903 session, (General Conference *Bulletin*, 1903, page 1).

“Since the last meeting of the General Conference we have organized 12 union conferences and 23 local conferences,” Daniells stated. “Most of these local conferences are within the territory of the union conferences.” (ibid., GCB, 1903, p. 1).

It should be noted that the 134 delegates seated at this 1903 session was 133 short of the 267 delegates seated at the 1901 General Conference session. (ibid., GCB, 1903, p. 1). This was a curious aspect of the 1903 session. The membership of the Church was now larger in 1903 than it was at the previous session in 1901, but the number of delegates was smaller! Why? Arthur G. Daniells, General Conference chairman, was about to introduce still another Constitution, which he had written, a Constitution that would establish himself in the office of General Conference President.

*“The business of the conference proper began Monday morning at nine-thirty,” Arthur White stated. “After a roll call of the delegates, the chairman, Elder Daniells, gave his address. . .” (EGW, *The Early Elmshaven Years*, Vol. 5, page 243, emphasis supplied).*

Notice that in this statement Arthur White admits that Arthur G. Daniells was “the chairman,” and not the President of the General Conference. Why was Daniells still the “chairman” after two years, when the delegates two years prior in 1901 had voted that the office of chairman was to continue only one year?

On Monday morning Ellen White spoke to the delegates instead of the regular business meeting. She had received a vision the night before and wished to convey the message to the Church leadership. She stated in part:

“Today God is watching His people,” Ellen White began. “We should seek to find out what He means when He sweeps away our sanitarium and our publishing house. Let us not move along as if there were nothing wrong.” (ibid., GCB, 1903, p. 31, emphasis supplied).

“God wants us to come to our senses,” Ellen White warned. “He wants us to seek for the meaning of the calamities that have overtaken us, that we may not tread in the footsteps of Israel, and say, ‘The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord are we,’ when we are not this at all.” (ibid., GCB, 1903, p. 31, emphasis supplied).

Notice that Ellen White was warning Seventh-day Adventists that we should not say, like Israel of old, “The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord are these.” (Jeremiah 7:4). We are not to brag that we are the true church, “when we are not this at all.” Why? If we are living in opposition to God’s holy law, we are no longer “the temple of the Lord are we.”

“Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense unto Baal, and walk after other gods whom ye know not,” the Lord says, “and come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, ‘We are delivered to do all these abominations?’” (Jeremiah 7:9, 10).

To pursue Ecumenical ties with the Sunday-keeping churches of Babylon, as the Seventh-day Adventist Church has done in the past 109 years (1890-), is “burning incense unto Baal.” Indeed, this Ecumenical policy is considered by the Lord as “walking after other gods.” (See below, Chapter #3, “Early Ecumenical Concessions,” and Chapter #12, “The Ultimate Betrayal”).

What Might Have Been

In her morning talk Ellen White made reference to a vision she was given in regard to the past 1901 General Conference session:

The Lord has shown me what might have been had the work been done that ought to have been done. In the night season I was present in a meeting where brother was confessing to brother. Those present fell upon one another's necks, and made heart-broken confessions. The Spirit and power of God were revealed. No one seemed too proud to bow before God in humility and contrition. Those who led in this work were the ones who had not before had the courage to confess their sins. Ellen G. White, General Conference Bulletin, 1903, page 31.

“This might have been,” Ellen White continued. “All this the Lord was waiting to do for His people. All heaven was waiting to be gracious.” (ibid., GCB, 1903, p. 31, emphasis supplied). The complete vision Ellen White referred to is found in Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 8, pages 104-106, under the title, “What Might Have Been.” The testimony was sent to the Battle Creek Church from St. Helena, California, January 5, 1903.

Debate Over A New Constitution

“The second major debate of the 1903 General Conference session, which came toward the end of the meeting, was centered upon the new constitution, specifically the provision for the election of a president and other appropriate officers for the General Conference,” Arthur White wrote. “Actually, it was but a slight revision of the 1901 constitution, but it was handled as a new document.” (ibid., EGW, The Early Elmshaven Years, Vol. 5, page 256, emphasis supplied).

Notice the contradiction in Arthur White’s statement. The proposed “new” 1903 Constitution was not “a slight revision of the 1901 constitution,” because this “new” Constitution provided for “the election of a president.” This was a major step backward! Two years prior the 267 delegates had voted that there would be no President of the General Conference, but merely a new chairman to be elected each year. Now the proposed “new” Constitution would reinstate the office of President of the General Conference. “But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a king to judge us.” (I Samuel 8:6a, emphasis supplied).

“Two reports were filed with the session from the Committee on Plans and Constitution,” Arthur White wrote. “The majority report supported the new constitution, which would provide for the leading officers of the General Conference to be chosen by the delegates, thus giving them a mandate from the church.” (ibid., EGW, EEY, Vol. 5, page 256, emphasis supplied).

In this “new” Constitution, Arthur White referred to the “leading officers,” but the central issue was the provision for a new General Conference President, and it was this new General Conference President who

would be given “a mandate from the church.” Arthur White had stated before that A. G. Daniells, the General Conference “chairman,” did not have a mandate from the Church. (See above). Today, in political circles of the United States Congress we hear much about “mandates,” and “term-limits.” The political leaders and Church leaders indeed claim a “mandate” from the people that would give them complete authority to enact what they think the people should have. But what does God say about this worldly policy in the Church? “Vengeance will be executed,” Ellen White warned, “*against those who sit in the gates deciding what the people should have.*” (EGW, *Manuscript 15*, 1886, emphasis supplied).

Obviously political and Church leaders want a “mandate” of authority. However, neither political nor Church leaders want “term-limits.” Why is this? Because “term-limits” would put them out of power and out of office in a relatively short period of time, thus breaking the “undue authority” of their leadership.

*Christ foresaw that the undue assumption of authority indulged by the Scribes and Pharisees would not cease with the dispersion of the Jews. He had a prophetic view of the work of exalting human authority to rule the conscience, which has been so terrible a curse to the church in all ages. And His fearful denunciations of the scribes and Pharisees, and His warnings to the people not to follow these blind leaders, were placed on record as an admonition to future generations. Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, page 596. (emphasis supplied).*

In his narration of the history of the 1903 General Conference session, Arthur White added a curious statement that, “On this [majority] committee were a number of conference presidents and W. C. White.” (*ibid.*, EGW, EEW, Vol. 5, p. 256). Obviously, local “conference presidents” would be in favor of the establishment of a permanent General Conference President.

A Question Of Inspiration

This statement by Arthur White implies that because W. C. White, (son of Ellen White, and father of Arthur White), voted with the majority committee, this would make the “new” Constitution valid. However, it must be noted that W. C. White and his father, James White, did not possess the gift of prophecy. Although they were Godly men, their writings or opinions were not inspired as were the writings of Ellen White, and therefore it was possible for them to err. On the other hand, E J. Waggoner and A. T. Jones, (who were both on the minority committee), did receive an inspired message from the Lord. Note carefully the confirmation of this fact from the Spirit of Prophecy.

“The Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to His people through Elders Waggoner and Jones,” Ellen White wrote about the special messages given at the 1888 General Conference session. (Testimonies to Ministers, pages 91-97, emphasis supplied)

“The message given us by A. T. Jones and E. J. Waggoner,” Ellen White stated, “is a message of God to the Laodicean Church.” (Letter S-24, 1892, emphasis supplied).

In a *Letter* posted May 1, 1895, from Hobart, Tasmania, Ellen White stated further about Jones and Waggoner, “If you reject Christ’s delegated messengers, *you reject Christ.*” (See, TM, pages. 91-97, emphasis supplied). Quite an endorsement of Jones and Waggoner and the 1888 message, wouldn’t you say? History testifies that the central theme of the 1888 message involved,

- (1) Righteousness by Faith,
- (2) the human nature of Christ,

(3) *the exclusion of ecclesiastical authority in the life of the Christian!*

(See, Elliot J. Waggoner, *Christ and His Righteousness*, Pacific Press; Publishing Association, 1890; Elliot J. Waggoner, *The Glad Tidings*, Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1900; Alonzo T. Jones, *The Consecrated Way*, Review & Herald Publishing Association, 1905; Alonzo T. Jones, *The Two Republics*, Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1896).

The Minority Report

“The minority report, signed by three men largely connected with institutional interests, claimed that the proposed new constitution would reverse the reformatory steps taken at the General Conference of 1901,” Arthur White wrote. “These men argued that the constitution of 1901, which provided that the General Conference Committee could choose its officers, should not be ‘annihilated’ without giving it a fair trial.” (ibid., EGW, EEY, Vol. 5, p. 256).

Two of these statements by Arthur White are just not true. Notice carefully how Arthur White jumbled the dynamics of the two important points.

(1) It was just a passing coincidence that the three men who signed the Minority Report were “men largely connected with institutional interests.” The three men were, E. J. Waggoner, David Paulson, and P. T. Magan. (*ibid.*, GCB, 1903, p. 147). Arthur White implies that, because these three men were “largely connected with institutional interests,” their judgment would be biased and prejudiced towards the “new” Constitution. However, this is just not true! Let us consider the qualifications of just one of these three men, P T Magan.

MAGAN, PERCY TILSON (1867–1947). Physician and administrator. He . . . worked as a licensed minister in Nebraska in 1887, and entered Battle Creek College in 1888, from which he later graduated. After a journey around the world in 1889 as secretary to S. N. Haskell, he became associate secretary of the Foreign Mission Board (1890–1891), head of the Department of Bible and history at Battle Creek College (1891–1901), and dean of Emmanuel Missionary College (1901–1904) [Now Andrews University]. He was cofounder, with E. A. Sutherland, of the Nashville Agricultural and Normal Institute (1904), later generally known as Madison College, and was its dean. He took the medical course at the University of Tennessee and soon after, in 1915, was elected dean of the College of Medical Evangelists (now the Loma Linda University School of Medicine), and later served as president (1928–1942). He was active in raising funds for the medical college and was largely responsible for its accreditation. A biography on Magan was written by Merlin L. Neff, under the title *For God and CME* (1964). *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, Second Revised Edition, 1995, Article Magan, Percy Tilson. (emphasis supplied).

Anyone who has studied SDA history knows that E. J. Waggoner was given a special theological message from the Lord to the Church in 1888. As noted above, P. T. Magan had ministerial credentials and served as such. That leaves only one other on the “minority report” who was an institutional administrator, David Paulson. So the three man Minority Report was not “signed by three men largely connected with institutional interests,” as Arthur White stated. Only one man was solely into institutional work. Let us look more closely at the credentials of this man.

The *SDA Encyclopedia* states in part:

PAULSON, DAVID (1868–1916). When 8 years of age, David attended the first camp meeting held in South Dakota and was impressed by the preaching of James and Ellen White, who were there. He was baptized at that time. In 1888 he heard W. W. Prescott speak on the value of Christian education, and determined to attend Battle Creek College, from which he graduated in 1890. He then began the study of medicine at the Battle Creek Sanitarium, continued it at the medical school of the University of Michigan, and transferred in his senior year to the Bellevue Medical College in New York. . . Paulson taught in the American Medical

Missionary College, and in 1899 he took charge of the sanitarium's medical missionary work in Chicago and became editor of the *Life Boat*, the magazine devoted to the promotion of the sanitarium's charitable, medical, and social work in Chicago. In 1904, with the assistance of one of his wealthy patients, he established a small sanitarium at Hinsdale and afterward devoted his life to developing that institution not only as a medical service to paying patients but as an institution providing and promoting charitable work, first in the city of Chicago and later in the community in which it was situated.

Always public-spirited in his thinking, about 1906 he became president of the Anti-Cigarette League, in connection with which work he traveled and lectured extensively. He never enjoyed robust health and died in 1916 after an illness that lasted several months. *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, Second Revised Edition, 1995.

This was the man Arthur White suggested was not capable of discerning error in a new Constitution because he was an institutional administrator. If there were more institutional administrators today like David Paulson, perhaps Seventh-day Adventist Health System hospitals would not merge with those of the Roman Catholic Church. (See below, Chapter #18, "The Invaders").

White stated further that, "Dr. Kellogg strongly favored the minority report." (*ibid.*, EEY, Vol. 5, p. 256). By this statement White could bring reproach upon the opinion of the minority committee because Dr. Kellogg later apostatized from the Church on a totally unrelated issue. The implication is that, *If Kellogg was for the minority report view, then it must be wrong!* Arthur White was wrong about the integrity of E. J. Waggoner, P. T. Magan, and David Paulson, and he was wrong on this issue.

(2) Arthur White stated that, "These men argued that the constitution of 1901, which provided that the General Conference Committee could choose its officers, should not be 'annihilated' without giving it a fair trial." These men on the minority committee did indeed argue that "the constitution of 1901. . . should not be 'annihilated' without giving it a fair trial." However, the 1903 *General Conference Bulletin* reveals that "these three men" did not object to the new plan that the delegates at large should elect the General Conference committee members. What they did object to was the establishment of a permanent General Conference "President," instead of a temporary General Conference Chairman. They also objected to the fact that the 1901 Constitution had only been tested for two years. Again, it should be noted that A. G. Daniells was still "chairman" in 1903, two years later, when the 1901 Constitution called for a new chairman each year. The primary objection of the minority committee to the new Constitution was in reference to the head of the Church.

Actual Words Of the Minority Report

The minority of your Committee on Plans and Constitution beg leave to submit that the Constitution proposed by the majority of the Committee appears to us to be so subversive of the principles of organization given to us at the General Conferences of 1897 and 1901 that we can not possibly subscribe to it. The proposed new Constitution reverses the reformatory steps that were taken, and the principles which were given and adopted as the principles of reorganization, in the General Conferences of 1897 and 1901, and embodied in the present Constitution; and this before that Constitution or the organization according to it, has ever had adequate trial.

We therefore recommend that the Constitution of 1901 be given a fair trial before it be annihilated. General Conference Bulletin, 1903, No.10, pages 146, 147. (emphasis supplied).

The Minority Committee Report was signed by three men, E. J. Waggoner, Dr. David Paulson, and Percy T. Magan. Notice that the major contention of the Minority Committee was that the first constitutional

revision in the history of the Church, that had been voted two years prior in 1901 by 267 delegates, had not been in effect long enough for a just evaluation.

The “new” Constitution proposed by the Majority of the Committee reinstated the office of “President” of the General Conference. This would abolish the office of a General Conference “chairman” to be elected each year. The new President would serve as chairman of the Executive Committee, and would continue in office for years. (A. G. Daniells, who was elected President at this 1903 General Conference, served as President for over twenty years).

The majority Committee Report on this point was as follows:

ARTICLE IV--EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, SECTION 1. At each session the Conference shall elect an Executive Committee for the carrying forward of its work between the sessions.

The Executive Committee shall consist of the president, two vice-presidents, the presidents of Union Conferences, the superintendents of organized Union Missions, and twelve other persons, among whom there shall be representatives of all the leading departments of conference work, including the publishing, medical, educational, Sabbath-School, and religious liberty.

ARTICLE II--EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, Section I. During the intervals between sessions of the Conference, the Executive Committee shall have full administrative power, and shall fill for the current term any vacancies that may occur in its offices, boards, committees, or agents, by death, resignation, or otherwise, except in cases where other provisions for filling such vacancies shall be made by vote of the General Conference.

Sec. 2. Any five members of the Executive Committee, including the president or vice-president, shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of such business as is in harmony with the general plans outlined by the Committee, but the concurrence of four members shall be necessary to pass any measure before the Committee. (*ibid.*, GCB, 1903, No.10, p. 146, emphasis supplied).

Sec. 3. Meetings of the Executive Committee may be called at any time or place, by the president or vice-president, or upon the written request of any five members of the Committee. *ibid.*, *General Conference Bulletin*, 1903, No.10, pages 145, 146. (emphasis supplied).

The Majority Committee Report was signed by ten men, H. W. Cottrell, E. T. Russell, C. W. Flaiz, W. C. White, W. T. Knox, E. H. Gates, G. E. Langdon, C. N. Woodward, Smith Sharp, and S. B. Horton. (*ibid.*, GCB, 1903, No.10, p. 146). As the reader can plainly see, the Majority Report requires no further comment.

The next action was that W. T. Knox made a motion for the “adoption of the majority report.” D. E. Lindsey seconded the motion. (*ibid.*, GCB, 1903, No.10, p. 147).

“Now, if it is the wish of the delegates, this report may be read through entirely; or, if you desire, it can be taken up one section or article at a time,” said the Chairman, H. W. Cottrell. “If this be the mind of the delegates, the secretary may read the first article.” (*ibid.*, GCB, 1903, No.10, p. 147).

Percy T. Magan Speaks

“The congregation will all see that the minority report deals only with certain general vital principles, which we believe are transgressed in the proposed new constitution,” P. T. Magan stated, “and therefore, in order that that matter may be brought before the house, as it is the vital thing in the consideration of the whole subject, I move that the report of the minority be substituted now for consideration in place of the report of the majority.” E. J. Waggoner seconded the motion. (ibid., GCB, 1903, No.10, p. 147, emphasis supplied).

The motion for the Minority position was put, *and was lost!* (ibid., GCB, 1903, No.10, p. 147, emphasis supplied).

E. J. Waggoner Speaks

“My dissent from the report of the majority of the committee is on two lines,” Waggoner stated. “I will give those two lines as briefly and concisely as possible, and dispassionately.”

“The first objection I have to the report is that it is fundamentally and diametrically opposed to the principles of organization as set forth in the Bible,” Waggoner continued, “and as, up to the present time, adhered to in the main by this body. This being so, I regard the [majority] report as revolutionary and inconsistent.” (ibid., GCB, 1903, p. 147, emphasis supplied).

Waggoner Defines the Concept Of Who and What Is the Church

“I think we are all agreed in this, that the church, the local body of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, in any place, is the unit of organization and the standard,” Waggoner stated. “Thus in any company of believers, wherever they may be, in whatever city, we have there the epitome of the whole body of believers throughout the world.” (ibid., GCB, 1903, p. 147, emphasis supplied).

“Now the movement, although I am sure unconscious and unintentional on the part of the brethren, toward the adoption of this [majority] report does essentially lie in the line of the adoption of a creed,” Waggoner continued, “and that, although the churches of the world and the people of the world regard as essential to organization, we who know the Scriptures and know the falling away that came in in the early days and has been perpetuated until this present time, – we know is essentially disorganization.” (ibid., GCB, 1903, p. 147, emphasis supplied).

“The Bible organization is opposed to the exaltation of any person over others,” Waggoner said. “Now the question will arise and be presented to me: ‘Why, then, do you sign this report, which recommends that we maintain the present constitution?’”

“I am not inconsistent,” Waggoner concluded. “My second objection is to this constitution itself, which, in some of its particulars, I regard as the worst constitution ever devised among Seventh-day Adventists.” (ibid., GCB, 1903, p. 148, emphasis supplied).

“Brother Magan made a request to speak on the question as a whole,” the Chairman, H. W. Cottrell said. “If there is no objection, his request will be granted.” (*ibid.*, GCB, 1903, No.10, p. 150).

Percy T. Magan Speaks

“As a member of the minority of the Committee on Plans, and as a man, if I had not been on the Committee on Plans at all, I am conscientiously opposed to the proposed new constitution,” Magan stated. “I have always felt that the hardest place that any man could be put in in this life is to have to stand conscientiously opposed to what the majority of his brethren believe to be right.” (ibid., GCB, 1903, No.10, p. 150, emphasis supplied).

“To me it has always appeared to be a much easier thing to stand in a position of opposition to the world, and even to have to face a court of justice in the world, for your faith, than to have to face your brethren for your faith,” Magan continued. And therefore I shall say to-day, as briefly and modestly as I know how, what I have to say.” (ibid., GCB, 1903, No.10, p. 159, emphasis supplied).

“The minority report expresses in a word the feelings which actuated the minority in making the report, because we believe that the constitution proposed by the majority of the committee appears to us to be so subversive of the principles of organization given to us at the General Conferences of 1897 and 1901,” Magan continued. “Those principles were given to us by the Spirit of God. In my judgment, and in the judgment of the minority of the committee, this constitution is absolutely subversive of those principles.” (ibid., GCB, 1903, No.10, p. 150, emphasis supplied).

Magan’s Startling Conclusion

“It may be stated there is nothing in this new constitution which is not abundantly safeguarded by the provisions of it,” Magan concluded, “but I want to say to you that any man who has ever read ‘Neander’s History of the Christian Church,’ Mosheim’s, or any of the other of the great church historians, – any man who has ever read those histories can come to no other conclusion but that the principles which are to be brought in through this proposed constitution, and in the way in which they are brought in, are the same principles, and introduced in precisely the same way, as they were hundreds of years ago when the Papacy was made.” (ibid., GCB, 1903, No.10, p. 150, emphasis supplied).

“Further,” Magan emphasized. “This whole house must recognize this, before we are through with this discussion, that the proposed new constitution, whatever improvements may be claimed for it, whatever advantages it may be stated that it contains, that, in principle, as far as the head of the work is concerned, it goes back precisely where we were before the reformatory steps of two years ago.” (ibid., GCB, 1903, No.10, p. 150, emphasis supplied).

“Ellen White did not enter into the debate on the question of the constitution,” Arthur White wrote. “W. C. White spoke strongly in support of the changes proposed, as did some of the other respected leaders, such as Loughborough and Butler.”

“The opinions of learned men. . .the creeds or decisions of ecclesiastic councils, as numerous and discordant as are the churches which they represent, the voice of the majority--not one nor all of these should be regarded as evidence for or against any point of religious faith,” Ellen White replies. “God will have a people upon the earth to maintain the Bible, and the Bible only, as the standard of all doctrines and the basis of all reforms,” (The Great Controversy, page 595. emphasis supplied).

The New Constitution Voted and Ratified

That very evening, April 9, 1903, the vote was taken. The new Constitution was ratified. The minority report was rejected. The plea by P. T. Magan that the principles of the new Constitution, “are the same principles, and introduced in precisely the same way, as they were hundreds of years ago when the Papacy was made,” was also rejected and ignored. At that very hour, an image of the Papacy was established in the Seventh-day Adventist Church. In ninety five years that image has prospered and increased until institutions of the SDA Church are merging with those of the Roman Catholic Church. (See below, Chapter #18, “The Invaders”).

“The matter was not settled quickly,” Arthur White stated. “A vote with a three-fourths majority was needed.” (*ibid.*, EGW, EEY, page 257).

One hundred and eight delegates were present. Eighty-five voted for the new Constitution, “carrying the action by a majority of four.” (*ibid.*, EGW, EEY, page 257). How sad that an image of the Papacy was carried by a slim margin of only four votes.

“When men who profess to serve God ignore his parental character, and depart from honor and righteousness in dealing with their fellow-men, Satan exults, for he has inspired them with his attributes,” Ellen White stated. “They are following in the track of Romanism.” (EGW, 1888 Materials, page 1435, emphasis supplied).

“We have far more to fear from within than from without,” Ellen White warned. “The hindrances to strength and success are far greater from the church itself than from the world.” (Last Day Events, page 156. See also, Selected Messages, bk. 1, page 122, emphasis supplied).

Notice that Ellen White did not say, “We have more to fear from within.” What she did say was that we have “far” more to fear from within than from without. How sad it is that, “The hindrances to strength and success are far greater from the church itself than from the world.”

Daniells’ Later Confession

“In 1946, I was in the U.S.A. and the General Conference asked me to take meetings at various Camps,” George Burnside, noted Australian SDA evangelist stated . “I roomed at two camps – New Jersey and East Pennsylvania – with pastor Meade MacGuire and we chatted much about the old days.” (George Burnside, 95 Browns Road, Wahroonga, N. S. W. Australia 2076,

February 7, 1987).

“He had known A. T. Jones,” Burnside continued. “Pastor MacGuire spoke highly of Jones, especially of his knowledge of Church history.” (ibid.).

“His [Jones’] big concern was the trends in S. D. A. organization,” Burnside recalled. “Jones opposed A. G. Daniells (then Gen. Conf. president) on church organization as Jones felt it was drifting Romeward. Finally Daniells broke Jones, with the result that Jones finally left the church.” (ibid.).

Years later, Daniells and Pastor MacGuire were attending Camps in California. They were returning to Washington D. C. by train. Pastor MacGuire said Pastor Daniells was sitting looking out of the carriage window thinking. He [Daniells] looked up and said, “You know, Meade, I believe Jones was right and I was wrong.” He was referring to the question of organization. ibid., George Burnside, 95 Browns Road, Wahroonga, N. S. W. Australia 2076, February 7, 1987.

“Pastor MacGuire said that Pastor Daniells did all he could to rectify things, but as he was then out of the presidency no one paid much attention to him,” Burnside concluded. “This is the account as I recall it.” The document was dated February 7, 1987, and signed, George Burnside, Wahroonga, N. S. W. Australia.

Testimony Given Immediately Following the 1903 General Conference

“Ellen White returned home to Elmshaven from the [1903] session some time between April 10 and 12,” Arthur White wrote. “Of the significant and far-reaching events in the early summer of 1903 she wrote: ‘My strength was severely taxed while at the conference, but the Lord sustained me through the meeting, and by His blessing, I am recovering from the strain. . . .’” (op. cit., Arthur L. White, EGW: The Early Elmshaven Years, Vol. 5, page 259).

One week after returning home from the 1903 General Conference session Ellen White wrote the following testimony dated at St. Helena, California, April 21, 1903:

In the balances of the sanctuary the Seventh-day Adventist church is to be weighed. She will be judged by the privileges and advantages that she has had. If her spiritual experience does not correspond to the advantages that Christ, at infinite cost, has bestowed on her, if the blessings conferred have not qualified her to do the work entrusted to her, on her will be pronounced the sentence: “Found wanting.” By the light bestowed, the opportunities given, will she be judged. Ellen G. White, Testimonies for the Church, vol. 8, page 247, April 21, 1903. (emphasis supplied).

Notice that the Seventh-day Adventist Church “is to be weighed,” in the balances of the sanctuary. Not maybe, or perhaps, but will be. “If her spiritual experience does not correspond to the advantages that Christ, at

infinite cost, has bestowed on her. . . on her will be pronounced the sentence: 'Found wanting.'" Also it is stated that by the light bestowed, the opportunities given, "*will she be judged.*"

How does the contemporary Seventh-day Adventist Church in 1999 measure up to "the privileges and advantages that she has had?" How does the corporate Church measure up to "her spiritual experience?" How does the Church measure up to "the advantages that Christ. . . has bestowed on her?" How does the Church measure up to "the blessings conferred" upon her. Has the SDA Church been faithful to the truth that would "qualify her to do the work entrusted to her?" And the most important questions of all – Has the contemporary Seventh-day Adventist Church already been judged? And if so, has she been found wanting?

"*Listen to the music, to the language, called higher education,*" Ellen White counseled. "But what does God declare it?—*The Mystery of Iniquity.*" (*An Appeal for Missions*, page 11, emphasis supplied).

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