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ABSTRACT

FACTORS RELATED TO THE BRAIN DRAIN FROM THE MIDDLE
EAST UNION OF THE AFRO-MIDEAST DIVISION

by

Najceb W. Nakhle

Chairperson: Gottfried Oosterwal

ABSTRACT OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH

Project Report

Andrews University

Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

Title: FACTORS RELATED TO THE BRAIN DRAIN FROM THE MIDDLE EAST UNION OF THE AFRO-MIDEAST DIVISION

Name of researcher: Hajeab W. Nakhle

Name and title of faculty adviser: Gottfried Oosterwal, Drs. Litt. et Phil.; D.Litt.

Date completed: May 1975

The migration of the trained national Seventh-day Adventist Church workers is one of the most critical problems facing present-day church administrators in the Middle East Union of the Afro-Mideast Division. Because of this migration a serious shortage of trained personnel exists at various levels of the work of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in this union. This shortage results from the brain drain which not only causes losses in educated, experienced, and gifted personnel who are difficult to replace, but is also responsible for the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Middle East Union losing members.

The purpose of this study is twofold: (1) to develop a body of

systematic knowledge relative to the history (growth and decline) of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Middle East Union, and (2) to explore and identify related factors concerning the migration of the Seventh-day Adventist national workers. This information is based upon interviews with former Seventh-day Adventist national and overseas workers, and also upon a questionnaire which was prepared and sent to fifty former national workers who migrated from the Middle East Union to North America.

Data in tables and graphs, throughout this study, show how the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Middle East Union is suffering from a brain drain. It also describes the minor and major related factors which have caused this migration. The minor related factors describe the church's failure to reach the majority (Muslims) and the minority (Christians) with the gospel message, and also its failure to offer a training program which meets the needs of the constituency in this area. The major related factors to the migration of the Seventh-day Adventist national workers were described as follows: desire to continue one's education, unfair salaries, autocratic leadership, lack of job satisfaction, lack of security of working with the church, lack of equality between national and overseas workers.

This is the first official contemporary study of how former national workers perceive the reasons for leaving their jobs in their home division and migrating to North America. Considering the information received, it was concluded that in order to reduce the rate of the brain drain, the Seventh-day Adventist Church needs to give in-depth study to how it can assist the national worker to be adequately

trained and prepared to meet the needs of his own people, how it can delegate more responsibility to the national workers, how it can improve the communication between national workers and the church leaders, how it can improve the working conditions and make them more challenging, how it can allow more opportunities for promotion in jobs and for further study, how it can make equality possible in pay and position for all workers who have the same qualifications and years of experience, and how it can establish the indigenous church--self-propagating, self-supporting, and self-governing.

Andrews University
Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary

FACTORS RELATED TO THE BRAIN DRAIN FROM
THE MIDDLE EAST UNION OF THE
AFRO-MIDEAST DIVISION

A Project Report
Presented in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Ministry

by
Najeeb W. Nakhle

June 1978

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background and Problem

The problem of the migration of trained national Seventh-day Adventist Church workers from the Middle East Union of the Afro-Mideast Division and from many other fields around the world has alarmed the church. This trend has been especially pronounced in recent years.

Because of this outflow of national workers, a serious shortage of trained personnel exists at various levels of the work of the SDA Church in the Middle East Union. Such a shortage is the result of a brain drain which inevitably causes a loss while definitely retarding church development in this area. This brain drain not only causes the SDA Church in the Middle East Union to suffer losses in membership, but it also causes losses in educated, experienced, and gifted personnel who are difficult to replace.

The important point, however, is not only the size of the outflow of the trained personnel, but the fact that it occurs chiefly from those areas of specialization that are essential for the staffing of elementary schools, secondary schools, Middle East College, the ministry of the churches, and also the key administrative positions in the church's work.

Therefore, one of the most critical problems facing present-day church administrators in the Afro-Mideast Division and other world

divisions is how to attract a sufficient number of qualified national workers. Nevertheless, this is only part of an overall problem of perhaps even greater concern to the Middle East Union--the question of what can be done to retain the educated, qualified, and trained national workers in the union. What are the main factors, then, which cause the outflow of these high-potential workers from the Middle East Union to the developed countries, particularly North America?

Since no study has been done to investigate the main factors which lead the national workers of the Middle East Union to desert their home field, it is hoped that this study will provide a basis for establishing new guidelines, methods, and approaches which will possibly prevent large migrations from occurring in the future, and, if at all possible, bring back the dedicated workers who have already left.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church is committed to a world-wide gospel outreach, and the Moslem world should certainly be included in this outreach. In view of this fact, it is important that national workers from this area should be encouraged and trained for leadership. In addition, more responsibility should be delegated to them so they feel a burden for carrying the message of salvation to the people of the Middle East.

Objective

The objective of this study is to discover the related factors which contributed to the problem of the brain drain in the SDA Church in the Middle East. The results of this brain drain can be seen in its effects on: (1) the indigenous Seventh-day Adventist Church in the

Middle East, (2) the Seventh-day Adventist indigenous workers, and (3) the Seventh-day Adventist Church leadership.

The Brain Drain and the Indigenous Church in the Middle East Union

The objectives in this category are:

1. To discover the factors leading to the desertion of church work by the national workers.
2. To learn what is the effect of the brain drain on the indigenous church.
3. To investigate to see what kind of workers (educated, trained, high-potential) the indigenous church is losing.
4. To discover ways and means by which the indigenous church may retrain its qualified national workers and if possible restore those who have already left.

The Brain Drain and the Indigenous Workers

The objectives in this category are:

1. To investigate why the national workers are not adequately trained and prepared to meet the needs of their own people.
2. To find out the reasons which caused divisions and lack of love, unity, and support among the national workers.
3. To discover why the national workers did not develop a sense of responsibility for reaching out to the millions of the people in the Middle East with the gospel message.

The Brain Drain and the Church Leadership

The objectives in this category are:

1. To discover the effect of unqualified and incompetent leadership upon the brain drain.
2. To consider the slowness of the church leaders in giving the nationals the right to be involved in decision-making.
3. To recognize the shortsightedness of the church leaders in not seeing the gifts and talents of the nationals and therefore grant-
int them full authority in the church work.
4. To consider the lack of security and respect the national workers experienced while they were working with the church leaders.
5. To consider the effect of the failure of the overseas church leaders to understand and adopt the cultural values of the countries they served, and the resultant misunderstanding of the national workers and their needs.

Limitations of the Study

Thus far, the studies carried out in the area of brain drains are still limited and the data somehow inadequate to allow for more than preliminary and, in some instances, very tentative suggestions and recommendations. There is no absolute agreement with regard to the consequences of the outflow and measures that could be taken to prevent it. This study also cannot claim to prove exactly why trained nationals migrate to other countries. It can only report why they say they migrate. A substantial measure of agreement does exist, however, with reference to the broad principles and proposals outlined

in this study--particularly in chapter 6, "Summary, Conclusions, Recommendations, and Suggestions."

It must be borne in mind that even though a study such as this may give clues, through frustrations or factors mentioned most frequently by the respondents who have migrated, yet many national workers experience the same frustrations and still continue to serve in their home countries. It also should be remembered that many trained national workers migrated for very legitimate reasons. Many of them would have been happy to remain and serve if circumstances had permitted, especially when they involved health or education.

This study was designed to be exploratory, descriptive, and suggestive, rather than a correlation of independent variables. It is limited to fifty former Seventh-day Adventist national workers who migrated from the Middle East Union to North America. It would be more conclusive if it covered a larger number of former Seventh-day Adventist national workers. Nevertheless, despite difficulties in tracing the addresses and locations of these people, a representative sample was selected.

This study is not primarily concerned with finding a list of causes for the migration of the former national workers from the Middle East Union. It is, rather, an attempt to discover indicators and factors which might have contributed to the outflow of trained personnel.

Definition of Terms

Afro-Mideast Division

A division is the largest geographical and administrative

unit in the SDA Church next to the General Conference, and embraces a number of unions, missions, conferences, sections, et cetera. The division administration is a section of the General Conference that operates in that area. Its president is a vice-president of the General Conference. The Afro-Mideast Division is composed of the following unions: East African Union, Ethiopian Union, Middle East Union, and Tanzanian Union.

Middle East Union

A union is a unit of church organization formed by a group of several local conferences or missions (or fields, sections, districts, or areas). The Middle East Union is composed of the following countries: Aden, Bahrain, Cyprus, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Saudi-Arabia, Sudan, Syria, Turkey, Arab Republic of Egypt, and Yemen.

Procedures and Methodology

This is a descriptive study based on responses of former Seventh-day Adventist national workers who migrated from the Middle East Union between 1944 and 1976 and who now reside in North America. The business manager of Middle East College provided names and, in most cases, the location of people in this category. This study was designed to determine the contributing factors and the related causes leading to the brain drain which resulted from the outflow of the educated, experienced, and gifted national workers.

The descriptive research method was the principal method used in this study. Investigations were conducted as follows:

1. Literature was surveyed on the history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Middle East Union.

2. Literature was surveyed on the growth and decline of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Middle East Union. Statistical figures have been brought to this study mainly from the statistical reports of the Seventh-day Adventist General Conference. However, due to changes in the organizational structure (fields, unions, and division) of the Middle Eastern area, it became very difficult, if not impossible, to depend upon one source. Therefore, additional help has been sought from the SDA Year Book and also from both editions of the SDA Encyclopedia (1966 and 1976). This was done in an attempt to render the data as accurate as possible.

In addition to these sources. the business manager of Middle East College furnished information and statistical reports which were important to the completion of this project.

3. Correspondence was initiated with former national and overseas Seventh-day Adventist ministers, administrators, and various other resource specialists about their perceptions of the reasons or factors related to the brain drain from the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Middle East.

4. A study was conducted which included interviews with former Seventh-day Adventist national workers and former overseas workers.

5. A questionnaire was prepared and sent to the former national SDA workers of the Middle East Union.

6. In conclusion, the data were analyzed and interpreted through the comparative method.

The techniques employed in this study include the following:

- (1) the recording of data, and the classifying and filing of notes,
- (2) the preparation of a seven-page questionnaire (see Appendix), and
- (3) the conducting of individual interviews with ten former national workers of the Middle East Union residing in North America.

The questionnaire mentioned in technique no. 2 was designed to probe personal and educational backgrounds, expectations, and motivation in home division service; personal relationships and communication between national workers and administrators; reactions to distribution of jobs and responsibilities between national and overseas workers; reactions to factors relating to the decisions to leave the Middle East Union; and suggestions for present administrators on how to improve the attractiveness of church work in the Afro-Mideast Division to present and potential national workers.

The selected sample group represents different ages, different church functions, and the majority of the countries of the Middle East.

One pilot study was conducted on the questionnaire to test its adequacy and to improve its effectiveness. The questionnaire to test its adequacy and to improve its effectiveness. The questionnaire was then duplicated, and in May, 1977, a total of fifty were mailed out with a covering letter, written in Arabic and translated into English, to explain the project, solicit cooperation, and assure confidentiality. A stamped envelope was also enclosed, addressed to the researcher.

After three months all of the questionnaires were returned. This was possible because of many long-distance telephone contacts which were made and the help of friends throughout North America.

The most helpful parts of the questionnaire were the open-ended questions which elicited varied responses, sometimes involving several pages of material. Such responses were classified and divided into categories in order to minimize overlapping. These written materials have been grouped into ten main categories to give the total picture more clarity. These categories are explained with detail in chapters 4 and 5.

The former national workers mentioned in technique no. 3 were selected to represent different countries of the Middle East, different ages, and different church functions. Interviews were also conducted with ten former missionaries representing different church functions at different times, with the purpose of obtaining information on weak points they observed during their years of service in training national workers and in dealing with them. All these interviews were tape recorded, with the consent of each interviewee. The quotations which have been taken from these interviews were quoted word for word from these tapes.

The current literature on the brain drain, emigration, and the outflow of trained personnel from developing countries was investigated by the United Nations. These studies, which have been prepared by the United Nations Economic and Social Council, occurred in January 1971, and on December 29, 1975, and November 12, 1976.

Organization of the Study

Chapter 1 provides an introduction to the study. A historical sketch of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Middle East up to

1960 has been outlined in chapter 2. Chapter 3 discusses the decline of Seventh-day Adventist work in the Middle East Union and the brain drain. Chapters 4 and 5 deal with factors related to the planting of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and also to the church operation in the Middle East Union which resulted in the migration of the national workers. Chapter 6 consists of the summary, conclusions, suggestions, and recommendations. The appendix includes the questionnaire and the covering letter.

CHAPTER II

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH IN THE MIDDLE EAST UP TO 1960

Early History--1879-1920

This brief study concerns itself with the history and development of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Middle East Union of the Afro-Mideast Division. This union is composed of the following countries: Aden, Bahrain, Cyprus, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Saudi-Arabia, Sudan, Syria, Turkey, Arab Republic of Egypt, and Yemen.

It will be helpful to keep in mind the strength of the religious affiliation in this area as we proceed with this study and in particular when we look at the political growth. The Middle East prides itself for being the birthplace of three of the world's religions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. The people to whom the Seventh-day Adventist message is being presented in the Middle East Union are fanatically loyal to their religious heritage whether they are Muslims, Druze, Maronites, Coptics, Catholics, or Greek Orthodox. And because of their religion, which has a firm grip on them, they feel no need for a change in religion, more enlightenment, or cultural changes.

The beginning of the SDA work in the Middle East can be traced back to the arrival of Michael B. Czechowski in Europe in 1864. Through

his work an Italian man by the name of Bartola was converted and was baptized in 1876.¹ Bartola, a traveling merchant, had some Italian friends in Alexandria, Egypt, and on one of his trips to the Middle East shared his new faith with them. They were converted and ready for baptism by September 29, 1878, when Bartola, who was not an ordained minister, baptized eight Italians on the banks of the Nile. This was the first baptism ever conducted by SDAs in the area of the Middle East.²

Many more contacts followed here and there in the Middle East but, like Bartola's converts, none of them were among the Arabs. In 1889 R. S. Anthony, a missionary who originated from Turkey, arrived in Turkey. He was determined to preach the message of the second advent and the Sabbath to his native land.³ He succeeded in gathering a converted little company of people whose religious background was Christian. One of these converts was Z. G. Baharian, who became the great apostle of Seventh-day Adventism to the Turkish people.⁴

After two years of training in Basei, Baharian returned to Turkey and began translating Bible lessons and tracts into Armenian,⁵ thus producing the first literature for Turkey. Baharian became the first SDA minister to be ordained in the Middle East.⁶ He also

¹Editorial, Review & Herald, 52 (November 14, 1878):159.

²E. W. Bethmann, Bridge to Islam (Nashville, Tenn.: Southern Publishing Association, 1950), p. 256.

³A. W. Spaulding, Origin and History of the Seventh-day Adventists, 4 vols. (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1962), 2:235.

⁴Ibid., 2:237.

⁵Ibid., 2:237.

⁶Don F. Neufeld, ed., Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia (Washington, D.C.: Review & Herald Publishing Assn., 1976), s.v. "Turkey" (hereafter cited as SDA Encyclopedia).

distinguished himself as a literature evangelist in Asia Minor (Turkey). He did not limit his work to Turkey, but in 1893 he traveled to Syria where he had evangelistic meetings in Aleppo and baptized four persons.¹

The work progressed in Turkey in spite of the hardships and discouragements. Spaulding reports that ". . . through the last decade of the century [the work] made progress amid opposition, imprisonment, mob action, and riot. As the new century dawned, the Turkish field reported more than five hundred believers."²

Unfortunately, World War I brought with it all kinds of cruelty. For the Christian Armenian, these were years of massacres, starvation, and fear. As a result, all SDA members migrated from the different parts of Turkey except one family who carried on the work, which has centered since that time in Istanbul.

The beginning of the twentieth century was the starting point for SDA work in most of the countries of the Middle East. Syria at that time was called "Great Syria" because it was composed of what is now known as Lebanon, Palestine, Jordan, and Syria. H. P. Holser, after a visit to Syria in 1898, made a call for workers to enter this area.³ Prior to Holser's visit, however, some Adventist publications had reached Lebanon. Elias Zarub, a Lebanese convert, was the first national from the Middle East to come to the United States of America, where he received his training at Emmanuel Missionary College, in Berrien Springs, Michigan.⁴ After six months of study, Zarub returned

¹Ibid.

²Spaulding, 2:238.

³Ibid., 4:89.

⁴SDA Encyclopedia, 1969, s.v. "Lebanon."

in 1903 to Lebanon to start the work in that area.

In 1909, the Syrian-Egyptian Mission was organized, with its headquarters in Beirut. The work force was composed of ten evangelists and Bible workers--one native and nine foreigners. The ten workers were located in Haifa, Joppa, Jerusalem, Cairo, and Luxor.¹ This team used varied evangelistic approaches; they conducted campaigns using public lectures and established a medical mission in Jerusalem, which was maintained for fourteen years.² In 1911, W. K. Ising baptized five persons, among them Shukri Nowfel, the first national to be ordained in what was then called the Arabic Union Mission.³ In 1931, a small group was baptized in the Jordan River. One of them was Boulos Mashni, a faithful layman who, every Sabbath, walked about ten miles from his hometown, Ramallah, to the only Adventist church in that area, which was in Jerusalem. The work grew very slowly during the period between World War I and World War II.

In Egypt, SDA work started in a strong way. In 1899 missionaries from Germany opened health-food restaurants and treatment rooms in Cairo.⁴ Their labor resulted in the 1901 baptism of Awayda Abdual Shalind, who was apparently the first Egyptian to be baptized.⁵ In 1912 George D. Keough, a missionary in Egypt, was led to a group of

¹"The Levant Union Mission," Review and Herald, 57 (July 16, 1910):16.

²Spaulding, 4:89.

³SDA Encyclopedia, 1976, s.v. "Lebanon."

⁴A. W. Spaulding, Christ's Last Legion (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1949), p. 542.

⁵Bethmann, p. 259.

Sabbath keepers in Beni Adi, Upper Egypt. He baptized sixteen of these, and they were organized into the first official Arabic SDA church.¹

In Iran, SDA missionaries worked among the minorities of Christian background (Armenian and Assyrian) who were living in the area. The first Adventist church here was established in 1923, with twenty-two members.

In Iraq the SDA message was introduced to the country not by a foreign worker, but by a native layman. Bashir Hasso, who was baptized in 1911 in Beirut, Lebanon, was a citizen of Mosul, Iraq. Through Hasso's influence, the first SDA church was established in Iraq in 1924 with a membership of nineteen.² He made the church in Iraq a strong church and the only self-supporting SDA Church in all the Middle East.

Until 1940, the SDA message was presented only to the above mentioned countries of the Middle East. Years later, attempts were made to break through in many other Moslem countries, but it seemed that center of the Moslem world was not yet ready to accept the message of salvation.

The organizational structure of the SDA Church in the Middle East has undergone a series of changes caused by the development or lack of development of the work and the political changes in each country of the Middle East. Initially, the Middle East was included

¹ibid., p. 259.

²SDA Encyclopedia, 1976, s.v. "Iraq."

in the Central European Mission.¹ As the work in Europe grew, however, changes in organization were necessary, so the Middle East was kept for a long time as a part of the different European organizations without being a separate organization by itself. Finally, in 1907, the Middle East established its identity and was named the Levant Union Mission.² In 1923 the Levant Union Mission was dissolved and replaced by the Egypto-Syrian Mission under the European Division. In 1927 this was changed to the Arabic Union Mission.³

By 1941 it was necessary for the General Conference in Washington, D.C., to designate the Middle East Mission a detached area directly under its control.⁴ This provision continued until 1951 when the Middle East finally was organized into a separate division, the smallest SDA division in membership. Reorganization again took place at the 1970 General Conference Session, when the Middle East Division became the Middle East Union, and was joined with three other African Unions⁵ to become the Afro-Mideast Division.

Church Growth and Institutional and Organizational Experimentation in the 1940s

After the Middle East Union Mission was established and especially after the political crisis between the Middle East and Europe,

¹Ibid., 1966, "Central European Mission."

²Ibid., s.v. "Levant Union Mission."

³Ibid., s.v. "Middle East Division."

⁴Ibid.

⁵These African Unions are as follows: (1) the East African Union, which is composed of the Republic of Kenya, Uganda, and the Seychelles

American missionaries went in great numbers to the Middle East.

One of the denomination's most important goals in the Middle East during the 1940s was the opening of a training school for all eligible SDA young people. This training school, which first was called the Adventist College of Beirut,¹ was moved to different locations in Lebanon, as well as to Jordan and back to Lebanon. In 1946 it was finally located on 70 acres² in the foothills of Lebanon's mountains, overlooking the city of Beirut and the Mediterranean Sea. From a two-year training school, it became a senior college and was named Middle East College. This college became the backbone of the SDA Church's work in the Middle East. The countries of the Middle East played the role of springs, and fed the college with young people. The college, in turn, served the constituency by feeding the schools with teachers, the churches with shepherds, and the fields with evangelists.

As the SDA Church in the Middle East started to grow, its main emphasis was on opening educational and medical institutions and reaching the population through these. In 1946, Dar es-Salaam Hospital was opened in Baghdad, Iraq. This institution earned a reputation for providing the best medical service in the whole country. The Adventist

Islands; (2) the Ethiopian Union Mission, which is composed of Ethiopia, French Somalia Coast, and Somalia; and (3) the Tanzania Union, which is composed of Tanzania, Zanzibar, and the Pemba Islands.

¹SDA Encyclopedia, 1976, s.v. "Middle East College."

²Ibid. Middle East College offers courses leading to a Bachelor of Arts degree with majors in biology, business administration, chemistry, education, English, history, mathematics, religion, and theology. Many minors are offered in different lines. The strongest department in this college is the business administration department, in which many students major, especially those who are non-SDAs.

Eye Clinic, Anak Mission Hospital, and later on Sultanabad Hospital were established in different parts of Iran. The Jerusalem Institution for Massage and Hydro-Electric Therapy continued to serve in the 1940s.

Perhaps more importantly, in the 1940s the church established several educational institutions. By 1944 the SDA Church had opened ten elementary schools in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, and Lebanon.¹ As has been noted, the Beirut Training School was founded and later developed into a senior college. The educational program continued to grow until by the end of the 1940s there were sixteen elementary schools beside the training schools in Fayoum, Egypt, the Iraq Training School in Mousl, and the Middle East College in Lebanon.²

Also during this decade two branches of the literature society were established. The Arabic Literature Society was located in Alexandria, Egypt, and the Iran Literature Society was opened in Teheran, Iran.³

In 1947 the Middle East Press was founded in Beirut, Lebanon. This publishing house, with facilities for publishing in six languages, was operated by the Middle East Union, and served the immediate constituency.

An orphanage was also established in 1947⁴ which accommodated

¹Seventh-day Adventist Year Book (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1944), pp. 209, 210 (hereafter cited as SDA Year Book).

²Ibid., 1949, p. 233. ³Ibid., 1944, 210.

⁴SDA Encyclopedia, 1966, s.v. "Matariah Mercy Home."

about fifty children. It was called the Matariah Mercy Home. Neal C. Wilson, an American missionary in Egypt from 1944-1958, who started this orphanage, says, "It was one of the first orphanages operated by the SDA Church. It was a source of great blessings and has touched a lot of lives."¹ For the general condition of the SDA Church in the Middle East during the 1940s see table 1.

TABLE 1
STATISTICAL REPORT OF THE CHURCH GROWTH
IN THE MIDDLE EAST UNION FROM 1944-1954

	Number of Churches		Church Membership		Laborers	
	1944	1954	1944	1954	1944	1954
Cyprus	-	1	-	27	-	3
Egypt	11	16	324	785	23	68
Iran	8	8	205	203	10	13
Iraq	3	3	33	177	7	22
Jordan	3	3	77	127	11	8
Lebanon	1	6	100	387	10	22
Libya	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sudan	-	1	-	4	-	1
Syria	1	2	50	127	2	4
Turkey	1	1	75	66	4	3

¹Interview with Neal Wilson, General Conference Vice-President for North America; Berrien Springs, June 3, 1977. Wilson served as president of the Nile Union Mission for 14½ years (1944-1958).

Expansion of Institutions, Memberships, and
Other Work Areas of the Church in the 1950s

Even though the foundation of the work was laid in the 1940s, the work of the SDA Church reached its highest growth level in the 1950s. In the first year of that decade, the Middle East Division was organized, taking the place of the Middle East Union Mission. The headquarters of this new division were located near the college in Beirut. Establishing a division in the Middle East resulted in a considerable amount of money being poured into this young division. This helped to start many programs to evangelize the countries of the Middle East.

The work met with great difficulties. In many parts of the Middle East, the "SDA Church was not only unknown but unwanted as well!"¹ says Wilson. He tried every way possible to convince the Egyptian government to recognize the SDA Church and obtain freedom to preach the gospel. He begged for an opportunity to prove to the government what kind of church the SDA Church is. Through the blessing of the Lord, a good relationship was established with the highest rank of the government. This opened the way for the church to prove its genuine interest in helping all kinds of people and meeting their different needs, regardless of religious background.

During this decade (1950s) a number of evangelistic programs were outlined and put into effect. The work was led by foreign workers who worked together with the nationals in many parts of the Middle East. As a result of attempts to evangelize many countries of the Middle East, sixteen churches were opened in Egypt alone, the greatest

¹Interview with N. Wilson.

number of churches ever to function in Egypt or anywhere in the Middle East. For the leaders, these years, from one standpoint, were years of high hopes and ambitions and the church progressed in a remarkable way. In 1957, Egypt was divided into three sections: Upper Egypt, Central Egypt, and the Delta Section. The goal was to reach Egypt with the everlasting gospel. Many people accepted the truth, especially among the youth. Those youth later received their education from Middle East College and went out to work for the church. Since Middle East College was established, the Egyptian students have always outnumbered all students of other nationalities of the Middle East.¹

In Beirut, Lebanon, an evangelistic center was opened in 1959 and provided space for the work of the Voice of Prophecy Bible Correspondence School and Bible classes. In this center the first series of public meetings in Arabic was presented. A recording studio for preparing broadcasts was constructed on the campus of Middle East College, although this was not used until recently. Lebanon became the center of evangelism not only for the Lebanese, but for the surrounding countries as well.

In Syria, evangelism was conducted only through preaching. The SDA Church tried several times to start the work by opening churches and medical and educational institutions. The Syrian government turned down their requests. The local government never recognized the SDA Church or gave it permission to preach the gospel. Yet, while at times

¹Personal knowledge of the author.

suffering because of this condition, Adventist workers and church members found more vindictive opposition from Christian churches, especially Greek Orthodox, who often denounced them to the authorities, than from the nation's rulers. From time to time false accusations led to the repression of the Syrian SDA Church by the government. For example, the SDA Church members in Bezag, a village on the Syrian sea-shore, built a church, the only such in Syria. It was used only once.¹ It was closed by government decree. Frequently free assembly was denied and ministers and laymen were imprisoned. However, lay missionary work prospered and the membership continued to increase (see table 1).

As time went on, the work in Iran was carried on in many languages in order to reach its many national groups. But the Adventists prospered mainly among the minorities (the Armenian). Many of the young people went to Middle East College where they were trained, and then returned to spread the message further in their country. During this decade many people of Iran came for the first time within the scope of SDA work through the Voice of Prophecy Bible Correspondence School.

In Iraq, church work was rapidly growing. The number of workers increased and were stationed in different parts of the country. New churches were organized and different channels were used to evangelize this country. However the Hassos, who owned factories in Baghdad, became the financial supporters of the church. Through their good reputation and prestige, the church gained special favor and recognition by the government. Also, through their businesss they were

¹SDA Encyclopedia, 1976, s.v. "Syria."

able to witness to and influence the people of the upper class of society of Iraq.¹

In Jordan, church membership also climbed sharply, from 50 members in 1950 to 164 in 1957,² as a result of the intensive work of evangelism in many parts of Jordan. Not only churches were used for evangelistic meetings but also homes of members, schools, and small chapels. Likewise active Sabbath Schools were established in cities and towns.

Evangelism in Turkey declined after World War I and started to pick up again in the 1950s when an SDA Church was built in Istanbul, the first SDA Christian church in Turkey. There was only one worker, but in 1959 a graduate of Middle East College joined the Turkish Mission and started to revive the work in this strongly Muslim country.

In the 1950s camp meetings were accelerated in different countries of the Middle East, from camps for juniors to senior camps. Also the literature evangelists did an outstanding job in the Middle East. Colporteurs, especially from Middle East College, went out during the summer to the Muslim countries of the Middle East and placed thousands of health and some religious books in Muslim homes. They had the courage to enter homes and reach people which it would have been impossible to do otherwise.

The 1950s could also be called an educational decade. The number of schools increased in many countries, sometimes from two

¹Personal knowledge of the author.

²SDA Encyclopedia, 1966, s.v. "Jordan."

schools to twelve schools. The schools were also improved to a quality that made them respected and recognized by the local governments.

In addition, the 1950s was a decade for the construction of buildings. Many church buildings, auditoriums, and centers were built. Some were built for large audiences even though their membership was small (for general growth of the SDA Church in the Middle East during the 1950s see table 1).

By adding another floor to the Middle East Press, the production of the press increased tremendously. In the 1950s a wide variety of health, educational, home, and religious books were published, mostly in Arabic, including Arabic translations of some of E. G. White's books. Also, two outstanding magazines were published in Arabic; al-Rijal (Hope), and Hida al-Sahha (Call to Health), in 1955. These magazines, which carried the full SDA message (religious and health), made a deep impression on the people of many countries of the Middle East.

During this decade, the Middle East Division was blessed by some high-quality foreign missionaries, most of whom were wonderful, warm brothers and sisters in Christ. They were tenderhearted, fully dedicated to God's service, and prepared to sacrifice life itself to win the lost to Christ. Some of them opened the work in the countryside and learned the culture of the people by mingling with them. They ate their food, spoke their language, shared their hopes, joys, and sorrows. Naturally, the people saw Christ in these missionaries and because of that they joyfully accepted the truth and joined the church.

SDA Church growth during this decade could be summarized

in the words of Robert Darnell, who said:

During the 1950s there was good progress along all lines of development. A wide variety of church programs were initiated, institutions were established, personnel were recruited, etc. This took place during a time of tension in the area between the remnants of colonial power and the national movements. This tension as it was reflected in the church was resolved by placing the national worker in a position far superior to that achieved by the rest of the church in Africa and Asia. Church building took place until ministers were ordained, and the ministry built up so that every church had its own pastor. A national church was organized in every country in which we had members, with full mission or section status consisting of officers, department leaders, office facilities and unusually a correspondence school and other institutions.¹

In conclusion, the Seventh-day Adventist Church in some countries of the Middle East grew very slowly, especially during the early period (1875-1920). In the next three decades, especially the 1940s, the church established itself through building educational and medical institutions in countries such as Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, and Lebanon. In the 1950s the SDA Church progressed and developed in many areas of the church work.

It should be pointed out that the SDA Church entered many countries in the Middle East, but in each case its approach was to the minorities of the people in these countries, namely the Christians. Therefore, the expansion of the church and its growth in the Middle East refers in essence only to the work among the minorities who compose 10 percent of the populations of the approached countries.

¹Robert Darnell, Professor in Middle Eastern Studies, Loma Linda University, to Najeeb Nakhle, April 22, 1977, personal files of author. Darnell worked in the Middle East for twenty-five years and had a wide variety of positions. He served as secretary of the Middle East Division, field secretary of the division, president of Middle East College, and editor-in-chief of Middle East Press. His major positions were president of the Jordan Mission (1951-1957), and president of the Middle East Union (1970-1976).

CHAPTER III

THE DECLINE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST WORK IN THE MIDDLE EAST UNION, AND THE BRAIN DRAIN

The SDA Church continued to grow in the first few years of the 1960s. Then it reached a point where it started to decline in many of its programs. This decline caused setbacks to the SDA Church's work in the whole Middle East. R. Darnell says in this regard:

However, starting in the early 1960s a regressive movement was evident. The structures, institutions, and programs of the church had outgrown the capacity of the church to maintain them. Personnel had been increased so as to have absorbed the constituency and provided jobs for employable converts. Further increase in expatriate workers was not possible. The advanced structure of the church provided management positions for a large segment of the workers, but the size of the constituency and the attractiveness of positions did not provide leadership resources in the Middle East or abroad sufficient for the need. The result was a gradual reduction of the church to a more manageable size. In 1970 the budget allocations were significantly reduced. Emigration continued to erode the church. By 1977 the structures, institutions, and programs of the church had been reduced to pre-1950 levels and in some instances the survival of the remaining institutions is questionable.¹

As a former national worker, the writer joins many other former national workers in observing the deterioration of the SDA Church with great sorrow and sadness. It is obvious to the majority of those who are acquainted with SDA work in the Middle East that the church work is not standing but rather that it is dying as was

¹Interview with R. Darnell.

recently pointed out by a SDA elementary school principal in Iran. This concept might not be shared by all concerned, especially the SDA foreign workers currently in the Middle East Union. But the present decline of the SDA church in the Middle East is a challenging fact to all, none the less (see tables 1 and 2).

TABLE 2
STATISTICAL REPORT OF THE CHURCH GROWTH
IN THE MIDDLE EAST UNION (1964-1974)

	Number of Churches		Church Membership		Total Laborers	
	1964	1974	1964	1974	1964	1974
Cyprus	1	1	24	30	5	1
Egypt	13	14	947	2,475	57	31
Iran	7	6	295	197	29	15
Iraq	4	3	173	170	21	6
Jordan	3	6	142	124	27	27
Lebanon	6	7	527	630	57	67
Libya	1	-	38	-	17	-
Sudan	-	-	3	1	-	-
Syria	4	-	176	50	5	-
Turkey	3	1	62	42	5	1

In the 1940s there were twenty-eight SDA churches scattered throughout the many countries of the Middle East. Even though the membership of these churches was small in number (only 864, about 300 more than in 1914), they were spiritually strong and were active in

working and witnessing. By 1954, the number of churches had increased to forty-one, and the membership had more than doubled (1,901 members).

By 1964, the number of churches had dropped to thirty-nine, although the membership had risen to 2,346. A decade later, in 1974, the number of churches dropped again to thirty-eight, and the number of laborers decreased from 224 in 1964 to 148 in 1974 (see fig. 1). Yet in 1974 the membership had increased to 3,622 (see fig. 2). This membership increase can also be seen in table 3, which shows the church membership growth in each of the countries of the Middle East Union.

Figures 1 and 2 show that the membership in most of the countries (Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Libya, Sudan, Syria, and Turkey) declined during the period 1964-1974. The only two countries which showed a sharp increase in membership were Lebanon and Egypt. Lebanon's gain of 117 was due mainly to the African students who moved their membership to the College Park Church, Beirut. After the new Afro-Mideast Division was organized in 1971, Middle East College served the constituency of the whole division. Therefore, African students came to the Middle East College and made up ninety percent of the dormitory residents. Also, the number of the expatriate workers increased because the division headquarters was in Beirut, Lebanon.

Egypt's membership jumped from 947 in 1964 to 2,475¹ in 1974. This gain may be an exaggerated figure. It is alleged to be easy in Egypt to bring hundreds of converts into the church in every evangelistic effort, but hard to keep them in the church after they have been baptized and church members for a few Sabbaths. This is a widespread and well known allegation throughout the entire Middle East Union.

¹For further information see note under Figure 2.

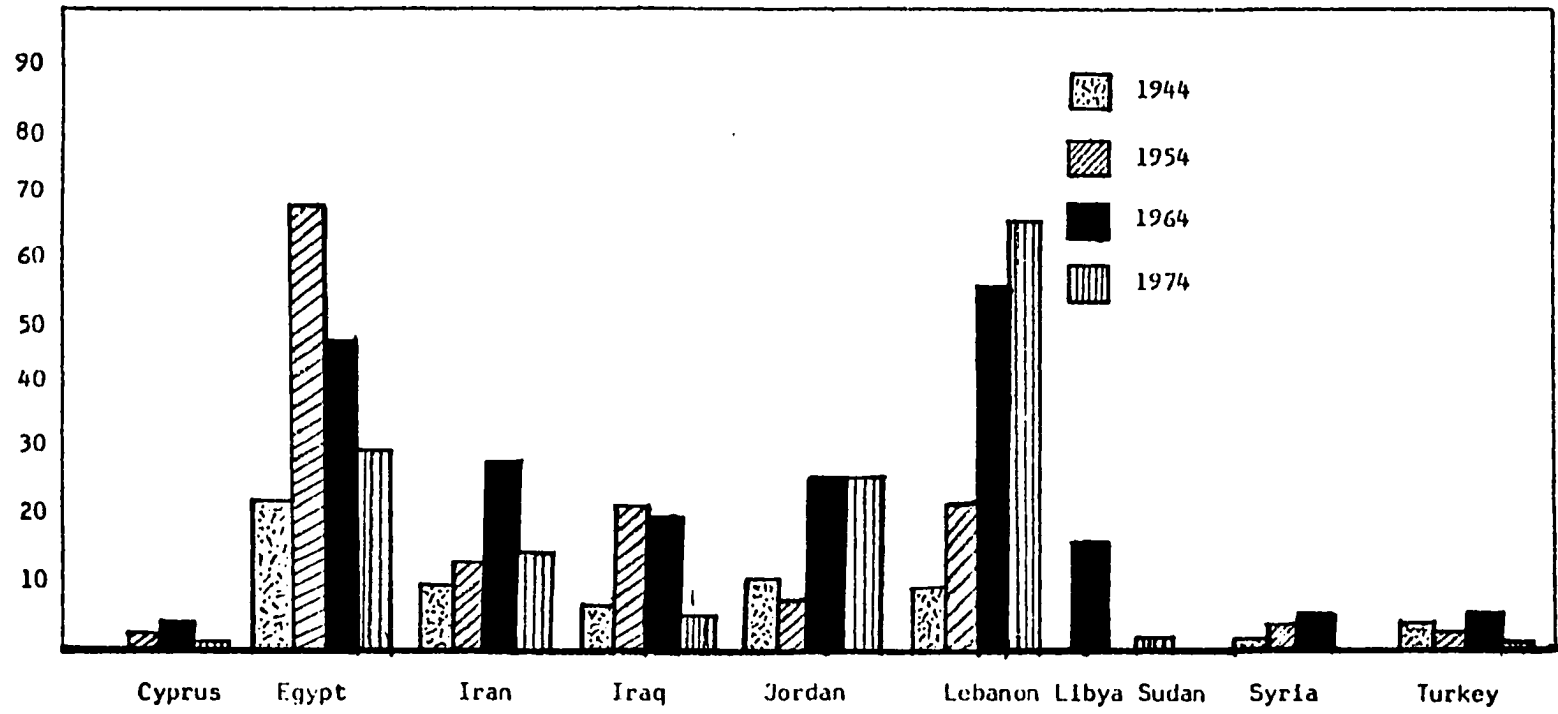


Fig. 1. Statistical report of the number of the Seventh-day Adventist Workers in the Middle East Union in each of the four decades: 1944, 1954, 1964, 1974.

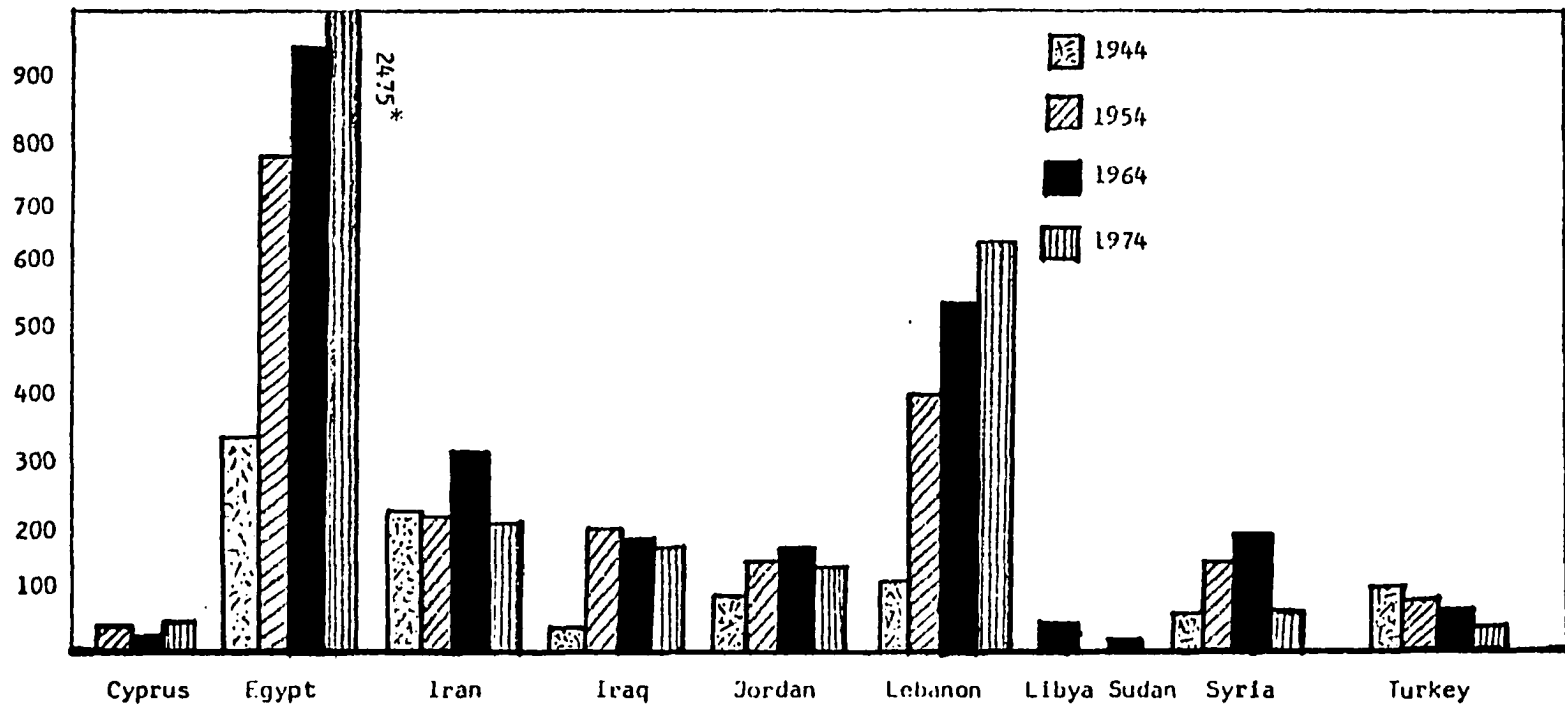


Fig. 2. Statistical report of the number of the Seventh-day Adventist Church members in the Middle East Union in each of the four decades: 1944, 1954, 1965, 1974.

*Note: There is strong reason to question the validity of this figure for the following points: (1) this gain may be an exaggerated figure, (2) church leaders at the time refused to report actual decline, (3) the frequent changing of the leadership in Egypt led each administration to accept the previous reports of the former administration without questioning their validity. Therefore, Egypt stands out as a rare exception to trends reported in this paper.

Also, such an increase in membership does not correlate with the drop in Egyptian national workers, from 57 in 1964 to 31 in 1974 (see fig. 1).

A slight increase was seen in the Cyprian church membership, but it dropped later because of the civil strife in Cyprus.

The Decline in the SDA Medical Work in the Middle East Union

By the 1970s, all medical centers and clinics were closed down, including the Dar-es Salaam Hospital in Iraq and the Benghazi Adventist Hospital in Libya, which were both nationalized by the government of each country. Where the medical and health centers ceased to function, the SDA Church lost one of the pillars of the evangelistic effort to reach this vast Muslim center.

Decline in SDA Literature Evangelistic Work

The work of the literature evangelist prospered throughout the years mostly through the work of the students of Middle East College. During the summer vacation, students from Middle East College used to get out into the Muslim countries where they left thousands of health books and magazines. Through the work of canvassing the author and likewise the majority of the student body made their way financially through Middle East College. However, the work of student literature evangelists started to decrease sharply because of the few SDA Middle Eastern students left in the college.

Decline in SDA Educational Work

Setbacks in the church's work are also seen in the decline of the number of educational institutions, their national staffs, as well

as the student bodies. For example, the educational institutions had grown from ten elementary schools in the 1940s to twenty-five elementary schools in the 1950s. Likewise, secondary schools had opened in many countries of the Middle East. However, by 1974, the number of elementary schools was reduced to ten. In some countries all our educational institutions were either nationalized or closed down by government decree.

During the two decades of growth (1940s and 1950s), SDA schools were staffed with SDA teachers and a majority of the students came from Adventist families. But in recent years, especially in the 1970s, the majority of the teachers as well as students have been non-Adventists. Anoush Kashishzadeh,¹ principal of the Iran SDA elementary school, says that out of twenty teachers in the secondary school in Iran, only two teachers are SDA. Likewise, ninety percent of the students are non-SDA. Similar though less drastic situations exist in Lebanon, Egypt, and Jordan.

However, in spite of the discouraging situation in the SDA educational institutions, these schools are still in operation, even though they are not fulfilling the function for which they were established. This is due to the fact that the majority of the SDA church members depend on these institutions for a living. In fact, closing down these institutions could lead into an apostasy among many of the workers, and thereby a decline in church membership, since a high percentage of the church members are employed by the church.

¹Interview with Anoush Kashishzadeh, principal of the Seventh-day Adventist elementary school, Iran, held at Berrien Springs, Michigan, July 10, 1977.

Thomas S. Geraty, former president of Middle East College, comments on this problem as follows:

Maybe we have been too institutional in the Middle East Division. We might have focused too much attention on building institutions and having institutions recruit personnel to work in them. We need both the so-called mission workers who are salaried and those who are self-supporting, and those who are working laymen, and witnessing for God. We should review, perhaps, not only our objectives, but also our operations, to see whether or not we might be over-emphasizing institutions to the extent that people think that unless they belong to an institution and receive a salary from the church as such, they perhaps cannot witness for God as they should.¹

Decline in the Number of SDA Middle
Eastern Students and Ilational
Faculty Workers at Middle
East College

Since 1970, Middle East College has not really been serving the Middle East Union constituency, but rather the African unions. In the 1950s and 1960s ninety-five percent of the graduates from Middle East College were Seventh-day Adventists. This percentage decreased until by 1970 two-thirds of the graduating class was composed of non-SDA members. In 1974, only ten percent of the student body was from the Middle East Union. The rest were African students. These figures reflect the condition of the SDA Church in the Middle East Union where the senior members outnumber the young people. The lack of social life has discouraged the young members of the church. George A. Keough believes that this problem caused them either to leave the church or migrate.

¹Interview with T. S. Geraty, Chairman of the Education Department, Andrews University, Berrien Springs, on May 14, 1977. Geraty was president at Middle East College (1950-58), and Middle East Division Missionary Volunteer Secretary and Division Director of Education.

Unless the evangelistic work is being done in the Middle East we are not going to have the young people coming to the college. It is very important that evangelistic work be done in various areas so that the young people can come. However, when that evangelistic thrust was not continued--where in Egypt there were difficulties in having young people come over to Lebanon--then, of course, it really did affect the college. It seems to me that it isn't the college that gets the work moving so much. It's direct evangelism of the missionary doing this work and bringing in the young people, and then the college trains these gifted young people to go back to their people and do the work that needs to be done.¹

In addition to the student problem, Middle East College lacks national workers on its staff. In 1974 the college was staffed with forty-two faculty members; twenty-seven of them were nationals and the other fifteen were foreigners. In 1976 only twelve national faculty members remained at the college. The other fifteen nationals, who migrated in 1975 and 1976, were a highly qualified group. For example, two of them hold Doctoral degrees, two Master of Divinity degrees, two Master of Arts degrees, and one a Bachelor of Arts degree. As a result, key positions were left vacant, such as academic dean, head of the theology department, head of the education department, registrar, dean of men, biblical language teacher, and educational psychology teacher. All these positions had to be filled by non-nationals.

The Brain Drain--Migration to North America

But where are these former national workers now? Do they leave their jobs in the church and find work outside of the church, witnessing

¹Interview with George A. Keough, history professor, Columbia Union College, at Berrien Springs, Michigan, on May 27, 1977. Keough served twenty-seven years in the Middle East. He was the first president of Middle East College (1939-1944, 1961-1965), and served as a teacher in the college and as educational secretary for the Middle East Union.

as laymen? No, this study has found that ninety-five percent of the national workers who left their jobs in the Middle East Union migrated to North America, where some of them continued to work in SDA institutions and hold key positions while others found themselves jobs outside the church institutional work. The majority of these former national workers hold highly educated status, as will be seen later on in this chapter, and continue to be members of the SDA church.

It is found in the same study that a heavy line of migration has taken place since the 1960s (see fig. 3). Also notice the percentage of the migration from the countries of origin (see fig. 4). It is obvious that such a large number of national workers now permanently outside the Middle East should have a direct and immediate effect on the SDA church work in the Middle East Union. Right here the argument could be established that the deterioration of the church work and the decline in the church membership is closely related to the large-scale emigration of the trained national workers of the Middle East Union to North America. This phenomenon is known as the "Brain Drain" (which is felt and which is a well-recognized fact). In reality these former SDA national workers who now reside in North America could establish national churches with a large and highly educated membership in different parts of the United States of America.

The phenomenon of the brain drain, which is the object of this study, is illustrated in table 3. It has been found that the excellent quality of SDA national trained personnel were drained out of the SDA Church in the Middle East Union, compared to what is left. Before we evaluate this phenomenon, one thing should be kept in mind: 174 persons

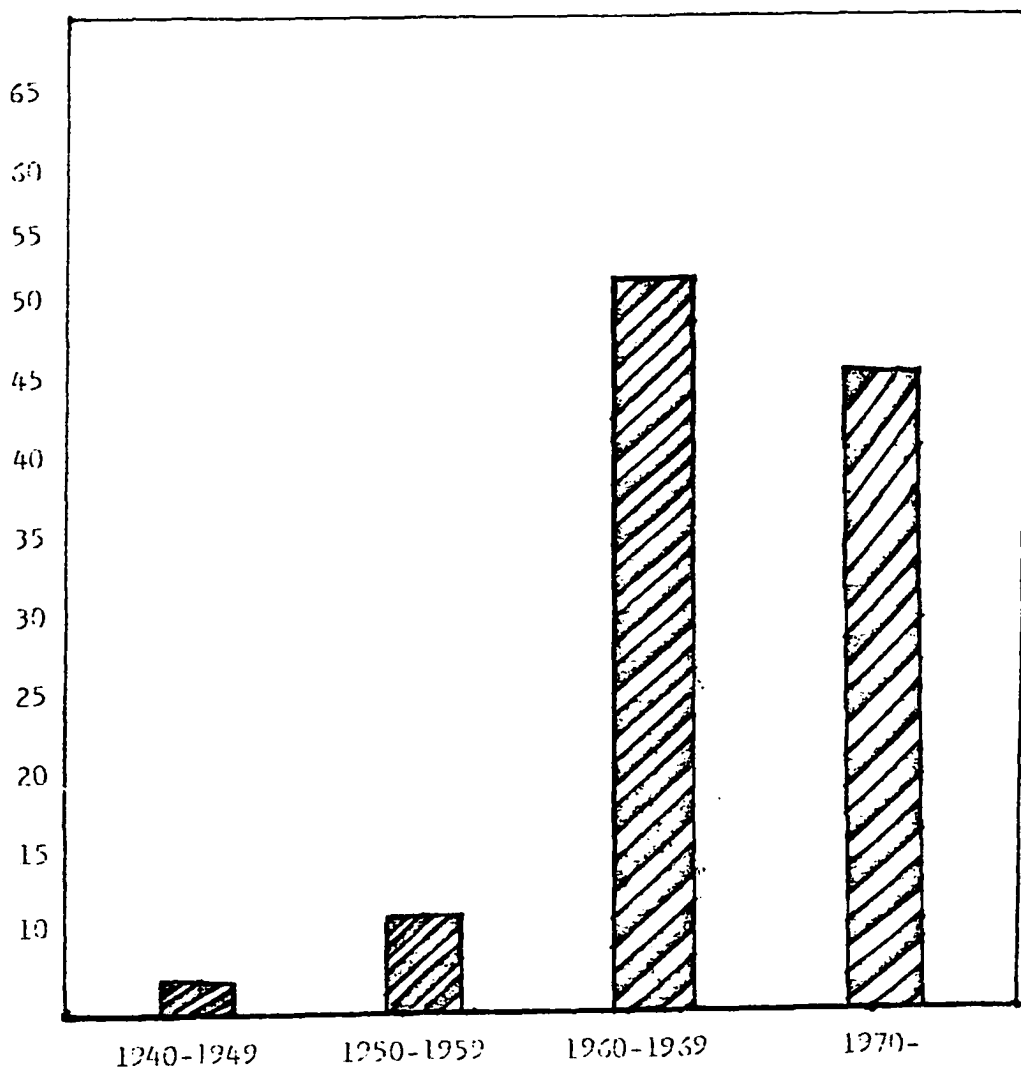


Fig. 3. Percentage of SDA national workers who migrated from the Middle East Union in four decades: 1940-1959, 1956-1959, 1960-1969, 1970-1976.

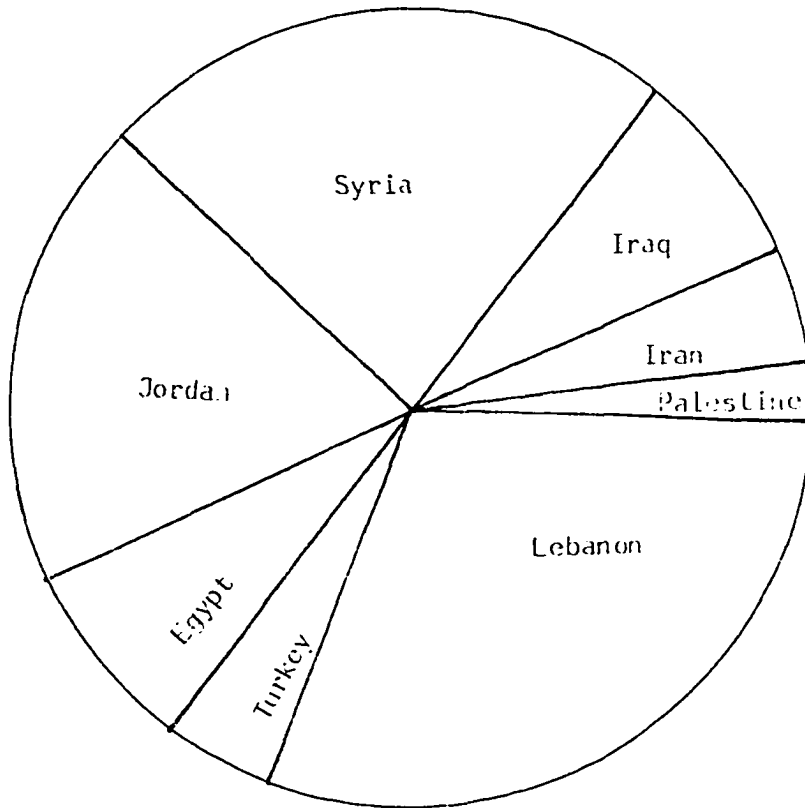


Fig. 4. Percentage of the Migration of the SDA national workers of the Middle East Union using their countries of origin.

Note: no attempt has been made to identify further the specific reasons for the differences between the various countries from where the people migrated to North America. It is evident that a complexity of factors is responsible for these differences: level of education, culture, standard of living, the nature of the church work.

TABLE 3

STATISTICAL REPORT OF HIGHEST LEVEL OF ACADEMIC
ACHIEVEMENT OF SDA NATIONAL WORKERS
IN THE MIDDLE EAST UNION, 1976

Persons Holding Bachelor of Arts	
Elementary, Secondary, College Teachers	11
Pastors	14
General Church Business	<u>7</u>
Total	32
Persons Holding Master of Arts	
Elementary, Secondary, College Teachers	8
Pastors	<u>1</u>
Total	9
Persons Holding Master of Divinity	None
Persons Holding Doctoral Degrees	
College Teachers and Administrators	2
Afro-Mideast Division Officers	<u>1</u>
Total	3

have graduated from Middle East College since it was opened in 1945 as a senior college up until 1974. Some of these graduates have continued on their education; the others have been satisfied with their Bachelors degrees. However, of the SDA national workers who are now employed by the church, 32 persons hold a Bachelor of Arts degree, 11 of whom are teachers, 14 are pastors, and 7 run the church finance. There are also 9 persons holding a Master of Arts degree, 8 of whom are teachers. In addition, there are three persons holding Doctoral degrees, one a teacher and the other two administrators.

Comparing these findings with the field's demands, we find that

in 1974 there were 120 elementary school teachers and 68 secondary school teachers in the SDA schools in the Middle East Union. Correlating the degrees among these teachers, we find for 198 teachers of both elementary and secondary schools there are only 11 Bachelor of Arts degrees and 5 Master of Arts degrees. That means that 172 teachers are holding a few years of college, high school diplomas, or something less. For example, in Lebanon, where SDA elementary and secondary schools are considered among the best schools in the Union, we find that in Boshrieh Adventist Secondary School the principal alone holds a Master of Arts degree, while all the other teachers have either one or two years of college, a high school diploma, or even less. Interestingly, eight of the ten teachers are wives of SDA workers who cluster around the SDA institutions, some of whom have absolutely no training at all. The same situation is repeated in all of the SDA educational institutions outside of Lebanon. It should be kept in mind that there are a large number of non-SDA teachers who join the staff of these schools.

Obviously, the SDA institutions and other departments of the church are "brain drained" through the emigration of the highly qualified workers (see table 3). Through an investigation done on the former SDA national workers who left the Middle East with Bachelor of Arts degrees, we find that 76 persons remained on the level of their college degrees, 39 persons continued and received their Master of Arts degrees, 2 persons finished the Master of Divinity, and 15 persons got their Doctoral degrees in the fields of history, medicine, public health, semitic languages, sociology, theology, and other lines. These are not very adequate statistical data, because there are many other former

national workers living in North America whose whereabouts are unknown to the author (see table 4 and Figure 5).

TABLE 4

STATISTICAL REPORT OF THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF ACADEMIC
ACHIEVEMENT OF SDA FORMER NATIONAL WORKERS
NOW IN NORTH AMERICA, 1976

Persons Holding Bachelor of Arts degree . . .	76
Persons Holding Master of Arts degree	39
Persons Holding Master of Divinity degree . .	2
Persons Holding Doctoral Degrees (Business Administration, Education, History, Medicine, Semitic Languages, Sociology, Theology, and Other Lines)	15

In general, serious shortages of trained personnel at various levels exist in all departments of the SDA Church in the Middle East Union. In a recent letter, M. Nazirian, President of the Middle East Union, wrote to the author saying: "As you are aware, there is a great shortage of workers in the Middle East Union. We urgently need more ministers and teachers."¹

Such a shortage has resulted mainly from the brain drain which inevitably causes a loss which definitely retards the church development in this area. Therefore, the brain drain causes the SDA Church not only to have quantitative losses (membership), but also qualitative losses (educated, experienced and gifted personnel who are difficult to replace). The important point, however, is not only the size of the

¹Manoug Nazirian to Najeeb W. Nakhle, July 27, 1977, from the personal files of the author.

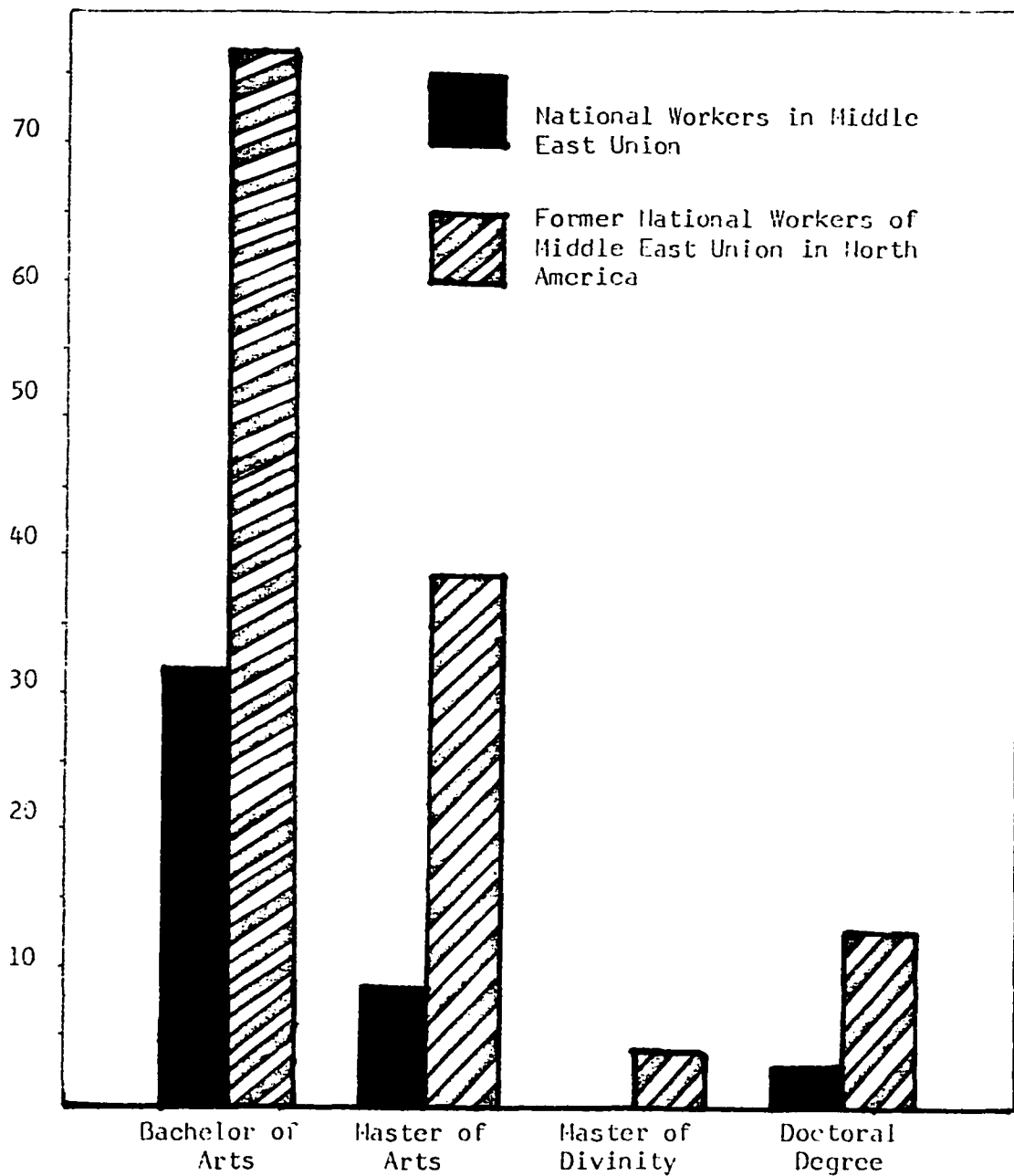


Fig. 5. Academic achievement of SDA national workers of the Middle East Union compared to the academic achievement of the former SDA national workers in North America (1976).

outflow of trained personnel, but the fact that it mostly occurs from those areas of specialization that are essential for the staffing of elementary and secondary schools, the college, and for ministering to churches and also for administering key positions in the church work or even in public sectors.

The brain drain has not been restricted only to the SDA Church in the Middle East, but it has been the concern of most organizations, agencies, and governments in the Middle East. There is in general considerable outflow of specialized and trained personnel from the different countries of the Middle East. In fact, the outflow of trained personnel from developing to developed countries "is significant enough to justify the international concern and warrant the formulation and the implementation of policies to reduce, if not stop, this net outflow."¹

It is found in a study conducted by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) that the large scale migration of trained people from developing to developed countries is a problem from which many countries around the world suffer, particularly the Middle East (selected country--Lebanon).² These trained emigrants are composed mainly of medical personnel--physicians, dentists and nurses, teachers, science graduates, engineers, technicians, and other skilled

¹Martin Godfrey, The Outflow of Trained Personnel from Developing Countries--"Brain Drain": The Disengagement Alternative (New York: United Nations Economic and Social Council--Commission for Social Council, 1976), p. 2.

²United Nations Institute for Training and Research, United Nations Institute Report and Research, the Brain Drain from Five Developing Countries--Cameroon, Colombia, Lebanon, the Philippines, Trinidad and Tobago (UNITAR Research Report, no. 5), 1971.

manpower. However, in most of these countries, the factor which seems to bear most directly on the problem of the emigration of professional and skilled manpower is one of economics. This is not surprising, since the economic base of most developing countries has not yet been able to generate sufficient employment to absorb all the professionals they train. Those professionals and skilled persons who do succeed in obtaining employment are frequently dissatisfied with the salaries they receive.

Working conditions in these countries are another factor. These may include the lack of sophisticated equipment, the non-availability of competent technicians and assistants to support the work of scientists and technologists and the lack of opportunities for on-the-job training.

Another major factor causing emigration is the absence of adequate research facilities which would affect the most highly trained and research-oriented national.

In addition to these factors, the political instability has directly aggravated the problem of emigration, particularly (in the case of the Middle East) during the recent years of war between Israel and the neighboring Arab countries.

The SDA Church in the Middle East Union shares in some of the above-mentioned factors this brain drain, with its negative effects. Yet there are other more specific factors which play a large role in causing this brain drain. These factors will be studied in the following chapters.

CHAPTER IV

FACTORS OF BRAIN DRAIN RELATED TO SDA METHODS OF CHURCH PLANTING

Seventh-day Adventist Church Failed to Enter the Center of the Muslim World

It has been mentioned in previous chapters that the Seventh-day Adventist message was brought to the Middle East by the expatriates (missionaries). Entering the Muslim countries, the foreign workers were filled with zeal and enthusiasm. But, as G. A. Keough says:

Their knowledge of doctrine and Bible studies was only suitable to the Christians, mainly the Western world. They were not thoroughly prepared to approach the Muslims. In fact, they were frustrated and lost in some of their attempts. They had problems of understanding the basics of Islam and relating them to the basics of Christianity. They were discouraged when they discovered the high walls or barriers between them and the Muslims which were very hard to knock down.¹

The expatriates' lack of preparation was not the only setback they suffered. An example of their understanding of the Muslim religion is given by Uriah Smith:

A false religion was set up which although the scourge of transgressions and idolatry filled the world with darkness and delusion . . . they came as destroyers, propagating a new doctrine, and stirred up to rapine and violence by motives of interest and religion.²

Regarding the prevailing traditional Christian attitude and approach to Islam, K. S. Oster notes that until the last decade or so

¹Interview with George A. Keough.

²Uriah Smith, The Prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation (Nashville, Tennessee: Southern Publishing Association, 1944), p. 497.

the attitude of the Christians toward the Muslims had undergone little or no change. The Christian attitude towards the Muslims has been one of apathy if not outright hostility. Distorted stories about the life of the prophet Mohammed were circulated. Not only was the prophet portrayed as an ambitious, worrying hypocrite, but generation after generation was fed on malicious distortions of his teachings and on wicked interpretations of his actions. Mohammed's religion was presented as a religion of fraud, lust, and violence. The Christian church as a whole has never been particularly concerned about the world of Islam. In fact, the church has often considered Islamic studies difficult to understand and has turned away from it. However, when attempts to understand Islam were made, the intent seemed to be to prove the superiority of Christianity over Islam, of Christ over Mohammed.¹ With such a concept they subconsciously built up another wall of separation and further precipitated the failure in their outreach to the Muslims.

The Muslims, on the other hand, cannot see or accept Christianity as superior to their own faith. Muslims equate Christian society with high crimes and violence, racism, immorality, western fashion, and drinking. Hollywood films are seen as the product of these Christian countries. In addition, the western countries are guilty of waging war and using atomic bombs, destroying thousands of lives. Therefore, Muslims believe that western missionaries should

¹Kenneth S. Oster, "Evangelism Among Muslims" (D.Min Project Report, Andrews University, 1975), pp. 14-17.

work first for their own people. When they are converted and their lives produce the fruits of gentleness, love, and peace, then, and only then will Muslims follow in their footsteps.

There are crucial difficulties which missionaries find hard to face when they attempt to preach to Muslims. These difficulties are described by K. S. Oster:

1. Cultural Difficulties. Christian missionaries enter the Muslim countries with the presupposition that theirs is the better religion and way of life. But it should be remembered that the Arab (Muslim) feels the same about his religion and life. Therefore, the missionary must continually bear in mind the impossibility of changing ingrained social habits unless he is willing to be changed himself before he is able to change others. The missionary in a foreign land is not there to change the culture, nor is he there to Americanize the people, or to modernize their ways. His mission is to communicate the gospel of eternal life through Jesus Christ.

2. Doctrinal Difficulties. The crucial differences are listed under eight headings:

- A. God. Islam just as Judaism and Christianity, is strictly monotheistic. Muslims stress the omnipotence and greatness of God. They believe God is one, not three persons.
- B. Holy Spirit. Muslims believe the Holy Spirit is a "medium" or an angel through whom truth was brought down to man.
- C. Scripture. In this regard, Muslims differ from Christians. Inspiration of the Quran is completely different from the Bible.
- D. Satan. To Muslims, God is the cause of evil as well as good.
- E. Predestination. Muslims believe that whatever has been or shall come to be in this world, proceeds entirely from the Divine will, and has been irrevocably fixed and recorded on a preserved table by the pen of fate.
- F. Diet and Health. Concerning food, Muslims have a clear distinction between clean and unclean meats and also forbid strong drinks.

3. Problems Connected with the Person of Christ. Muslims think of Christ as a spirit from God and a messenger of God. He is considered to be the same as any other prophet. Muslims do not believe in Him as the Messiah, the Son of God, or even as a

Saviour. In fact, their concept of salvation is completely different from that of the Christians.¹

The lack of understanding and preparation on the part of the missionaries (and their negative attitude) did not set a good example for the Middle Eastern Adventists. These missionaries continued in the same tradition as their fellow missionaries. The only Iranian SDA convert from a Muslim background spoke about this issue with sadness.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church failed in preaching the gospel to the Muslim people in the Middle East. From the beginning the missionaries found it easier to work among the minorities of Christian background than among the majority of Muslim background . . . the missionaries developed trust and confidence in the minorities, while they were very suspicious of those who come from the majority and show interest in Adventism. They question their intention and honesty, saying, "Why is this Muslim coming to the church?" or, "What does he want?"

I had a very hard time. I was rejected from my own people as well as the SDA Church. I had a very hard time getting married to an SDA young lady . . . and I always felt like an outsider.²

He could understand why the SDA Church had such a difficult time working for the Muslims in his country while other Protestant churches succeeded and are still working among the Muslims. For example, he observes that:

Other Protestant churches announce openly and in Muslim newspapers that Muhammad of so-and-so has become Christian and ordained as a bishop of so-and-so church. This is not likely to happen in the SDA Church. Even though the SDA Church worked very hard to bring Muslims to the truth, yet once they are in the church they would face a bitter experience with the church as a whole.*

¹Ibid., pp. 68-81.

²The identity of this and some of the following sources cannot be revealed. Subsequent references to such sources will be noted by an asterisk (*).

There are probably strong reasons which make Christians, in general, react this way toward Muslims. Most of these reasons go back to the years when the Christians were persecuted and badly treated by the Muslims. To illustrate some of the horrors of the massacre of the Armenian Christians during the First World War, particularly during the years 1915 and 1916, Lord Bryce describes the inhumane actions which cost the lives of over one million Armenians:

The whole Armenian population of each town or village was cleared out, by a house-to-house search. Every inmate was driven into the street. Some of the men were thrown into prison, where they were put to death, sometimes with torture; the rest of the men, with the women and children, were marched out of the town. When they had got some little distance they were separated, the men being taken to some place among the hills where the soldiers, or the Kurdish tribes who were called in to help in the work of slaughter, despatched them by shooting or bayonetting. The women and children and old men were sent off under convoy of the lowest kind of soldiers--many of them just drawn from gaols--to their distant destination, which was sometimes one of the unhealthy districts in the centre of Asia Minor, but more frequently the large desert in the province of Der el Zor, which lies east of Aleppo, in the direction of the Euphrates. They were driven along by the soldiers day after day, all on foot, beaten or left behind to perish if they could not keep up with the caravan; many fell by the way, and many died of hunger. No provisions were given them by the Turkish Government, and they had already been robbed of everything they possessed. Not a few of the women were stripped naked and made to travel in that condition beneath a burning sun. Some of the mothers went mad and threw away their children, being unable to carry them further. The caravan route was marked by a line of corpses, and comparatively few seem to have arrived at the destinations which had been prescribed for them--chosen, no doubt, because return was impossible and because there was little prospect that any would survive their hardships.¹

This kind of experience left a deep scar on the mind of the Armenian people. Psychologically, they cannot feel secure or at peace

¹A. J. Arberry, gen. ed., Religion in the Middle East, 2 vols. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1976), vol. I: Christianity in the Middle East: Survey Down to A.D. 1800, pp. 489, 490.

around Muslims. Therefore it is hard for them to accept Christians from Muslim backgrounds into their midst or let Christians feel they are part of them.

There are a few other Muslim young people who were converted and joined the SDA Church, but almost all of them left the church for two reasons. First, they could not endure the extreme pressure from their own people. Second, they did not feel they belonged to the group (church) through marriage and work. They were undermined and distrusted. One young man from a Muslim background, who has since become a Seventh-day Adventist, migrated to the United States in the summer of 1977. He is now trying to establish himself in this country.

It was reported that:

He was not able to continue his life in the Middle East. He could not go to his relatives and marry a Muslim girl. He gave up trying to marry from the church because he always had to face the problem of coming from a Muslim background. . . .*

These problems did not come up suddenly. They go back to the first contact with Muslims. G. A. Keough testifies that:

If a person is a Muslim and he shows an interest in this church I find that the tendency is to be skeptical and to say, "Wait a minute, what is he coming here for? Perhaps he wants to marry one of our girls. We have to be careful now. Or maybe he wants work. We don't have any work for him. If we have any work we have to keep it for our own young people, not for an outsider coming in." And this skepticism and fatalism about the Muslim makes it very difficult for a person to be able to do anything for him.¹

Because of such an attitude from both the foreign and national workers, "Ninety percent of the whole Middle East population is out of reach. The Seventh-day Adventist Church has not been able to reach

¹ Personal interview with G. A. Keough.

the Muslims yet with all their efforts."¹

The low rate of Muslim acceptance of this unintentional, misrepresentation of the gospel is an important factor in the migration of the Seventh-day Adventist national workers. There seem to be two reasons for this migration. First, Seventh-day Adventist national workers who come from Christian backgrounds become frustrated in dealing with Muslims. By birth they are prejudiced toward the Muslims. They have no respect for the Muslim religion or their great prophet. The Adventists, in general, give no consideration to studying the Muslim religion or trying to understand the basic concepts of the Muslim faith. The overseas workers, in addition, were not very helpful in training nationals for such a work since they themselves lacked a thorough preparation. The national workers chose to migrate rather than face the problem of work for the Muslims, not only because it was difficult, but to them it seemed hopeless, if not impossible.

The following suggestions come from former overseas workers who spent a long period of service in the Middle East:

What I would like to see, which may be too radical, idealistic, or impossible, is somebody saying, "I feel that God is calling me to work for the Muslims. I am going to go and work for them." After he has been a Paul to the Muslims and has had, say, 10 or 15 years of experience among the Muslims, then he can come back and then he can teach at Middle East College and he can say, "This is what I did, and it was successful. This is what I did and it failed." This means that somebody has to be a foreign missionary who learns the language or it has to be a national who is willing to be killed, because that is likely to happen. If he might not be killed, he might be beaten; he will be treated as the early apostles were treated. But until we have some people who are willing of themselves, and they are like Paul, until we get

¹ Ibid.

people that God has called that way and do go in answer to that call, I think that we shall have to wait.*

I think we have to be positive in our approach to people in seeking to help them, and just as Jesus went about doing good, I think the ideal for the missionary--whether he be a foreigner or whether he be a national--is that he goes around and he sees whether there is a need for help, whether it is medical, whether it is education, or spiritual, and then he seeks, by God's grace, to fill those needs. It seems to me that if we were not so much concerned with "Is he a Muslim or isn't he," but is he a person who is sick and needs some help, does he need some teaching, are his children in need of help? If we can think in terms of human people, and we are humans and that God is over all, and work that way, I think that that is the ideal.*

A son of a former missionary who spent a few years in the Middle East says:

I would suggest that if the work is ever going to go anywhere with the Muslims in the Middle East it would have to take a radical revision and it must start working with those groups whom Islam treats relatively poorly, particularly the women. I think that an approach through sewing classes--no public meetings. . . . The women carry on the religion. The women transmit the religion to the children. They are the core of Islam. A man professes Islam but it doesn't mean much. It's a formality. He was born and reared that way. Not a matter of deep spiritual beliefs. If you can crack it at the stage of the woman, the mother, then it seems to me that you have a chance of getting in where you won't get in otherwise. This is a rather radical view and it probably won't get in either with the missionaries or the nationals, but it's going to have to be something like that, on a mass basis, not public meetings held by an evangelist from the United States, or imitating the methods of an evangelist.*

The Seventh-day Adventist Church Attempts to Mingle
Among the Minorities (of Christian Background)
in the Middle East

The Christian communities comprise 10 percent of the whole population of the Middle East. These minorities were, and still are, almost the only targets for the work of the SDA Church in the Middle East. According to the study described in chapter 1, backgrounds of people joining the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Middle East are

as follows: 70 percent Greek Orthodox, 9 percent Roman Catholic and Maronite, 19 percent Armenian Gregorian, and 2 percent Muslims (see figure 6).

The majority of these members came into the church through personal contact. Few of them came into the church as a result of evangelistic meetings. Most of these members severed relationships with their families and relatives. Very few came in as a family. Most of these individuals faced persecution and ostracism from their communities.

Much damage has been done in the way these members were taken away from their immediate surroundings and mother churches. They lost their identification with the rest of the group by adopting the new faith of Seventh-day Adventism. In reality, Adventism completely changed their outlook on their culture. For in preaching the SDA message, a new set of cultural values was introduced (directly or indirectly). A few examples will be given as this study proceeds.

Let us look at what has been done in working with other Christian churches. G. A. Keough comments on what should be done:

Now, let us look at the Christian world--this other 10 percent. The Christian is so loyal to his church; he tattoos on his hand the cross to say "I'm a Christian and I can never rub that out, and if you want to kill me, you can, because you see I am a Christian." This means that he tends to be a little closed, now, to anything else; and the Greek Orthodox say to me, "We are the original church. We have been here for centuries. Your church was founded about a hundred years ago, and you are coming over here. Do you know we know more about Christianity than you do? What do you have to teach us?" And I have found myself having to be very humble and say, "Yes, I have to learn from you." And if we were a little more humble--willing to learn from them--getting into close dialogue, very soon we might learn from them and they might learn something from us, and then something happens. The Spirit of the Lord can work and we break down some of these barriers and then

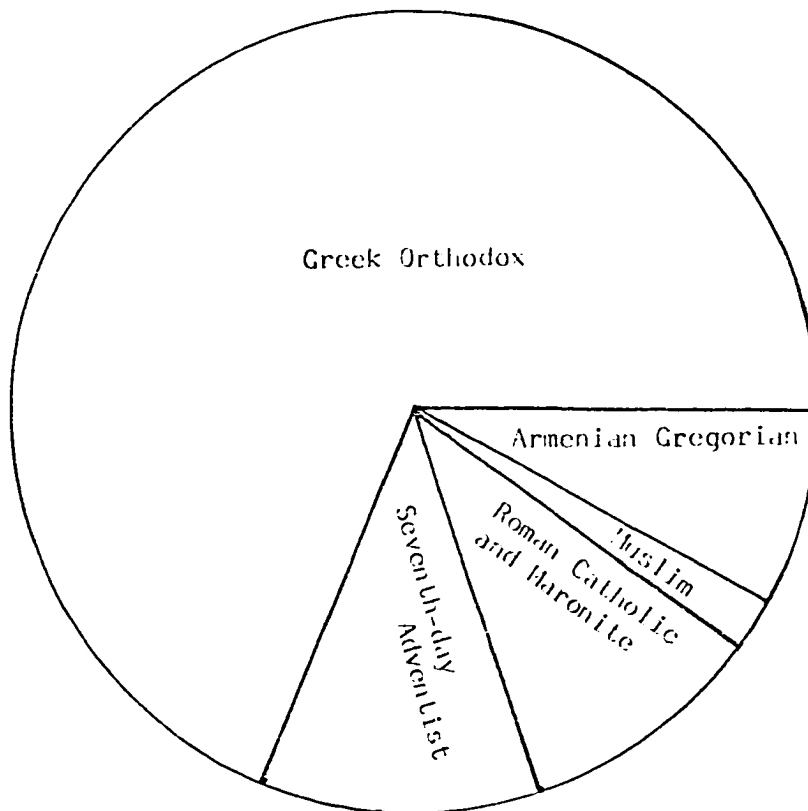


Fig. 6. The religious background of the Seventh-day Adventist Church members in the Middle East Union as it has been shown in the group sample.

something can happen. But unless we have that holy, dedicated missionary who comes not with a spirit of "I have something that I am going to teach you," but rather, "I have an experience that I am willing to share with you. . . ."¹

These churches, particularly the Greek Orthodox church, awoke to find some of their members being won, not only by the Seventh-day Adventist Church, but also by other Protestant churches. That aroused some of these old, dying churches to life. But they became more angry when the preachers of the SDA Church began to point their fingers at the leaders of these churches, calling them "whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within (they are) full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness."² Many of these preachers were not aware of the basic principles of communicating with other church communions, particularly the principles which are mentioned by Ellen G. White:

Do not feel it your bounden duty the first thing to tell the people, "We are Seventh-day Adventists. We believe the Seventh-day is the Sabbath. We believe in the non-immortality of the soul," and thus erect most formidable barriers between you and those you wish to reach. But speak to them, as you may have opportunity, upon points of doctrine wherein you can agree, and dwell on practical godliness.³

On the contrary, their attack on the doctrines and leaders of these churches caused the SDA Church to be persecuted in some countries and restricted in their preaching in others. For example, one Adventist preacher warned a Greek Orthodox church leader that he was leading Greek Orthodox people to death. The next Sabbath the

¹Interview with G. A. Keough.

²Mt 23:27, RSV. Perhaps this is due to SDA thinking and theology which tends to describe other churches as Babylon. This concept is rooted in the minds of SDAs and it is very hard for them to accept other denominations as God's churches and to be openminded toward them.

³Ellen G. White, Letter 12, 1897. Ellen G. White Research Center, Berrien Springs, Michigan.

Adventist minister's church was stoned. The Adventist minister was glad for what happened, thinking that such an act was indeed one of the signs of the end of time.

Unfortunately, persecution of the Seventh-day Adventist Church did not end at that time. Because of the continuing Adventist attitude toward the other Christian churches, heavy accusations were leveled against the church in Syria. The church was persecuted more than once. The most recent persecution ended Adventist usefulness in the country, forcing the national workers to leave. Some of them migrated to the U.S.A. One of these ministers served the church for 24 years. He says that he could not stand "the government restriction on his movement in the country or on his preaching." So he decided to migrate.

Seventh-day Adventist methods of preaching in the Middle East should be changed. Adventists should stop making accusations against other people or churches and begin to preach the gospel. In the opinion of some of the ministerial students in the Middle East College the majority of the church members were more converted to church doctrine than to Jesus Christ. This opinion was formed as a result of an analysis of the condition of the church members in the Middle East and the effect the method of preaching had on them.¹

There is one other aspect which should not be overlooked: the health message, a distinct Seventh-day Adventist belief. This message, which could be used as an outstanding tool to build up confidence and establish good relationships, was misrepresented by the way it was introduced in the Middle East. The emphasis was on renouncing smoking, alcoholism, drinking of tea or coffee. Also included as a "taboo" was

¹Personal knowledge of the author.

the eating of meat, eggs, or any other animal products. These "health principles" were pronounced as distinctive characteristics of God's people in what Adventists call the "last days." Concerning this method, an interviewee said:

We perhaps have let Christ down a little. We have given the impression that we are more vegetarians and Sabbath keepers than Christians. When we have preached it has been the more minor things like coffee and meat, etc., rather than the temperance message. I know there has always been an interest in temperance and people have come over internationally and had an impact on temperance, but I am afraid we have not expressed the concept of healthful living--just a series of do's and don'ts.*

So the church did not reach many people through preaching the health message. In fact, the temperance message became a barrier and hardened the hearts of the people, closing their ears to other things Adventists had to say.

The Role of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Does It
Change Some of the Cultural Values of the
SDA National Member in the Middle East?

Seventh-day Adventist methods of preaching the gospel caused a significant change in the cultural values of those who joined the church in the Middle East. Many missionaries came to the Middle East with little knowledge of the cultural values of these countries. The error of such methods are now realized by many former missionaries. Yet, grave mistakes had already been made in this area. One of these former missionaries says:

I think the question that every missionary has to ask when he comes to teach new people is "What is Christian and what is my culture?" You have to constantly ask yourself that question and you should not westernize or Americanize . . . and I really believe the missionaries have failed in the Middle East in that Particular aspect.*

One major change in cultural values was music. The tone of music is uniquely distinguished in the Middle East. Perhaps it is not stimulating to the Western people, but it is full of meaning and beauty to the Middle Easterner. The Arabic songs and music carry a deep emotion which touches the hearts of its listeners. It brings with it a special kind of feeling toward the country and the people. Arabic music and songs are considered to be a composite part of the Arabic culture.

But when the missionaries came, one of the first things they did was to begin teaching the new converts songs and music which were completely foreign to them. They abolished their Middle Eastern music, labeling it evil. So many Adventists learned to shut off their radios and not to tune to any Arabic music because it was considered a part of the "world."

However, the Adventist nationals were able to adjust and enjoy the Western music, particularly in the church where the songs were literally translated from the Western church hymnal to Arabic. Yet, these songs, which carried with them different tones of music, somehow caused a division between the SDA national members' taste in church music and that of the other churches. Adventists might be admired by Middle Easterners for the beauty and organization of the music in their churches, but these songs and music isolated them from the rest of the community.

Now, many of the former missionaries of the Middle East think it was a great mistake such a change took place. It was certainly better to teach the people how to praise God in their own words and

according to their own culture, to express their gratitude and feelings in their own unique way, yet, at the same time, it was important to keep the identity of the church within its culture. Comments from some former missionaries to the Middle East were:

The Middle East has had its music and its tradition of music long before the Western world. So the challenge to the Adventists in the Middle East is to develop their own Adventist music and idiom of the Middle East.*

I would say, for cultural reasons, they are a complete disaster. Although there have been baptisms and wonderful souls have been led to the Lord through them, I think that as an efficient means of preaching the gospel, I think that the Lord could have led those people to Him through other ways and many more. I think we have erected our own barricades by having public meetings with singing, with cultural features which are unacceptable.*

Definitely, we have tried to make little American Adventists in the Middle East. And to take a people, especially in the Muslim sections, who have no tradition of religious music (now that is not true of the Christians) and to have your song service and your special music and to have weddings in the American style. I don't see that that would attract someone to the church. In comparison, a Baptist missionary who was in Beirut translated a complete songbook and arranged a complete book of Arabic hymns. Now that, I think, is a very worthy achievement and it's very unfortunate that nothing like that was done by Adventists.*

It may be concluded that in preaching the gospel, the Seventh-day Adventists, intentionally or unintentionally, brought with them a new set of cultural values which caused a direct change in the total way of life to the Adventist nationals in the Middle East Union. Due to the adoption of these new cultural values, the Adventist national lost his flavor and preservative power as "salt" among his own people, the principle pointed to by Jesus Christ in Matthew 5:13. The total way of life in the Middle East is composed of various units which are called "cultural values." Pulling out any of these units affects the total way of life. But this philosophical concept was overlooked by

the missionaries and thus serious changes have taken place in the lives of the newly-converted Seventh-day Adventist members.

For example, Middle Eastern music and songs were regarded as evil and were replaced with Western songs. These hymns were either sung in English or were translated into Arabic. Other cultural traditions, such as weddings, church services, friendships, and social participation, were modified or replaced by the Western traditions of the missionaries. The nationals were taught to believe that their church is the "true" church and all other churches are false and lead people away from God. They adopted the Seventh-day Adventist concept that all other denominations are "Babylon" and should therefore be avoided.

The future workers, the children of the Adventist nationals, were also introduced to a different program of education which, in principle, was not compatible with their own cultural setting. Middle East College offered its education in English rather than Arabic. Textbooks were imported from the United States. These books were written by Americans and oriented to meet the needs of the American culture. The students not only studied and learned the American way of thinking, but also they were oriented to American programs and propaganda films. The result of such an educational program made it much easier for a Seventh-day Adventist educated at Middle East College to fit into an American surrounding rather than enjoying the company of his own people. Thus, migration was the easy way out.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church Failed in Offering
a Training Program which Met the Needs of
the Constituency

In connection with the training program, Adventist nationals were not considered well-trained to meet the needs of their own people. Adventist organizations put a great deal of emphasis on theoretical training while nothing had been done on the practical level, such as the vocational training which forms the foundation for the work of the layman.

Thus, the training program in Adventist institutions encouraged everybody to prepare to serve in one of three areas: teaching, preaching, or administration. But, even in some of these areas, as already mentioned concerning preaching, the workers were not equipped with the right knowledge to pursue a successful and satisfying career.

The program offered in the Adventist institutions was taught by overseas teachers with an American orientation. For example, SDA students at Middle East College were required to study all their subjects in the English language. The majority of the courses offered in the Middle East College were found in Western SDA colleges. Students were required to study Western history while no course was offered in the Middle Eastern history. The worst inequity was teaching American homiletics and witnessing programs to students preparing to be preachers in an Arabic society!

One former missionary who taught for twelve years in Middle East College says:

Well, I think we (missionaries) Americanized the Middle Eastern students. They studied from the American textbooks. They were entertained with American programs and propaganda films. They

saw the American way of life in their teachers. And they just got into the idea that it was easier to work in the American society than for the Arabic people.*

Other comments on this subject by other former missionaries, mainly teachers at Middle East College, include the following:

. . . for the twelve years that we were there, there was too much of an attempt to export a brand of Christianity which was not suitable to the Middle East, specifically.*

I could see how that might be so. If you import American teachers and they arrive in Beirut and go right up to the college and begin to teach I can see how the training that people would get would not prepare them for service there. . . . There are many cultures that come together at Middle East College. You have the sophisticated society of Lebanon. You have the village culture of Jordan; you have Iraqis, Egyptians, the Armenians, the Iranians, people from Cyprus, and so on. It seems to me that those groups ought to be reflected in the teaching staff and there ought to be a pride developed in Arabic culture, literature, language, traditions, history, and we ought to teach people that they are Adventists, first of all, but in their expression of Adventism they ought to be Lebanese Adventists, Jordanian Adventists, not American Adventists.*

In response to a questionnaire, the following statements made by respondents (former national workers of Middle East Union) illustrate their opinions concerning the Adventist methods of preaching and training in the Middle East Union:

Syrian

My life-style and education was Americanized. I felt more comfortable with the Western people than with my fellowmen, the nationals.*

Lebanese

The missionaries kept preaching America as the "new heaven" till it became the dream of every young man and woman.*

Iranian

From the very beginning the methodology of preaching the gospel in Iran was not right and had affected almost all the SDA work in this country.*

Syrian

The missionaries did not use the best methods to convey the gospel to the people in the Middle East. They did not get the

right approach to go and teach their fellow-nationals how to reach out to their own people. . . .*

Syrian

Definitely the preaching methods have delayed the progress of the work. But this is the best information the national worker knows and learned from the missionaries. If they knew better, probably they would go and preach better.*

Jordanian

I think we are teaching and preaching mainly doctrines. We are not preaching Christ to the people. We are pointing out their sins, not advocating Jesus.*

Lebanese

I think that we have a lot of fanaticism and SDAs go to extremes in emphasizing the form and not really the meaning of worship or the meaning of the gospel. For example, if I ever had to drive on Sabbath to see my parents over the weekend, they would ask, "Why did you drive on Sabbath?" The whole system, the way our church operates as far as our workers are concerned. We have tithe deducted from an employee's paycheck there. We never were brought up to enjoy paying our tithe. I never paid my tithe. I wanted to, but it was always deducted from my paycheck. . . .*

In summary, Adventist nationals left their jobs and their people and migrated to North America. Some of them became very frustrated as they stood in front of the "iron wall" which separated them from the majority, eighty-five million Muslims in the countries of the Middle East. Some of them found it impossible to work, even for the Christian minorities, because of the unpleasant relationship established between them and the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and also because of the wrong approach used by the early Adventist workers. Some of the nationals were forced to leave their countries because they felt like outsiders in their own society, and among their relatives. They had learned to live differently, think differently, and therefore they did not enjoy their former social lives. They were not accepted culturally by their society or families.

The training and educational program was a strong factor in the migration of the nationals. First, it was oriented more toward Western than Middle Eastern society. Second, the lack of vocational training, which was vital for the existence of the layman, made the church the only possible place for the young people to maintain jobs, especially when all jobs outside the church required work on Sabbath. Since the church in the Middle East is relatively small, the job offerings were limited. Also, young people did not find opportunity for work advancement or work challenge. Therefore, the easiest solution for the workers was to migrate.

CHAPTER V

FACTORS RELATED TO SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH OPERATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST UNION

One of the most critical problems facing present-day church administrators in the Afro-Mideast Division is how to attract a sufficient number of qualified workers. But this is only part of an overall problem. Of perhaps even greater concern to the Middle East Union is the question; what can be done to retain the educated, qualified, and trained national personnel in the union? What are the main factors which cause the migration of these high-potential workers from the Middle East Union to the developed countries, particularly North America?

In this study sample it is found that the general opinion of the respondents is that the Adventist church operation in the Middle East Union is to be held responsible for this migration of its national workers. Respondents were asked to state the major factors at the time of their decisions, which they felt resulted in their migration from the Middle East Union where they had been employed.¹ Other approaches were also used in the questionnaires and interviews to elicit additional

¹Both the major factors (those factors 50 percent or more of the respondents felt were significant) and the minor factors (less than 50 percent believed these to be significant), which contributed to migration of Adventist national workers from the Middle East Union, are discussed in this chapter.

information of importance. An analysis of their statements is provided in this chapter.

Why Did They Leave?

There are several major factors which contributed to the migration of the trained national workers (see table 5).

TABLE 5

MAJOR CONTRIBUTING FACTORS TO THE MIGRATION OF THE SDA
NATIONAL WORKERS FROM THE MIDDLE EAST UNION

Number of Respondents in Each Case is Fifty	No. of Persons	%
Continued one's education	32	64
Unfair salary distribution between nationals and overseas workers	31	62
Autocratic church leadership	30	60
Lack of job satisfaction	25	50
Lack of security of working with the church	25	50
Inadequate national workers' salaries	27	54
National workers are not treated the same as overseas workers even though both have the same qualification	34	68
Insufficient opportunity for personal growth	27	54
Further work advancement	26	52
Political instability in the Middle East	25	50

These factors are listed below with illustrative quotations. In the brackets following each quotation are the position, age, and years of service, respectively, for the individual.

Education

One of the most frequently mentioned reasons for leaving was to continue one's personal education (32 persons, or 65 percent of the group), and/or for the sake of the children's further education (20 persons, or 40 percent of the group). The following statements made by respondents illustrate the opinions expressed.

There was no church school for my children where I was ministering. I requested the Division to move me to a place where a church school was located but my request was turned down [administrator, pastor, 55, 25].*

One reason we left is because we did not have good elementary schools for SDA children, and, because most of the teachers were not Adventists and did not hold a B.A. degree [teacher, 40, 5].*

Education was our main reason for our decision to come to the States, and also because of the time element in losing credits acquired in Beirut during two extension schools [pastor, 40, 20].*

Leadership

Sixty percent of the group gave "autocratic" church leadership and the behavior of church leaders toward the national workers as the second most frequently mentioned factor in the decisions to leave the Middle East Union and migrate to North America. Respondents expressed their opinions in various ways: "I left because of the blind prejudice prevailing among the American leaders" [teacher, 35, 5].* "The leaders did not appreciate the work of the nationals" [administrator, 35, 10].*

There was injustice on the part of the leaders in dealing with the national workers . . . not one of the leaders was willing to listen and help us solve our problems. No security at all [pastor, 50, 25].*

I left because of the communication problem with the leaders. I left in order to achieve a few positive goals and to avoid a few unpleasant experiences [teacher, 40, 10].*

Leaders do not look for qualified persons for jobs. Because of the civil war in Lebanon the college was closed and the leaders ended my service. This was my reward for twenty-two years of service. I left because of the unfair policies and practices of the church [administrator, 40, 15].*

I left because I lost confidence in the integrity of the administrative government of the Division, Union, and the field. Also, because of nepotism, favoritism, and much politicking and back-knifing among the leaders [teacher, 27, 5].*

I left because of the lack of wisdom on the part of the leaders and because of the discrimination between national and overseas workers [pastor, 45, 15].*

I left because there was no equal treatment. I left also because there was not a good relationship among the leaders, administrators, and fellow workers [administrator, 50, 20].*

Job Satisfaction

A third major factor frequently mentioned as a reason for leaving was the lack of job satisfaction and security in working for the church. This was mentioned by fifty percent of the group.

I felt that a person working for the church has no future . . . There was no equality . . . I left because although I was given the job as a national, I felt I would remain as an apprentice even in fields where there was no one else to do better than I could do [administrator, 45, 15].*

I left because my education was American and my lifestyle Americanized. I felt more comfortable with the Western people than with my own. . . . I left because there was no job security, for two reasons: (1) one is educated for mission-type service, (2) there is no chance to work outside the Adventist orbit because of the Sabbath problem. I left because the work was not very challenging and the leaders did not appreciate the work of the nationals [teacher, 40, 5].*

I could not stay in the same job, same country, and same office for more than twenty-four years of service. I asked for a change, to serve in a different country, but my request

was turned down. So I left. I also left because the national workers are not treated the same as overseas workers, even though both may have the same qualifications for the job [treasurer, 50, 24].*

Economic

Economics seem to be another reason for national workers to leave the Middle East. About fifty-five percent of the group consider the national worker's salary inadequate, and about sixty-two percent of the group believe the salary difference between national and overseas workers is unfair. However, few personal comments were listed. Those given are listed below:

I left because of financial difficulty--unreasonable salaries, which need to be increased [administrator, 35, 10].*

I left because of the difference between the national and overseas salaries, even though both may carry the same qualifications [teacher, 35, 5].*

No financial security. Because of my position as a treasurer of the field and for the twenty-four years of service I had served, I was getting a top salary in the national worker bracket. Yet, if I wanted to send my son to Middle East College I could not afford it . . . Academy school expenses and transportation have worked a great hardship on us financially. . . . Unfair salaries, no security, no indemnities to wives . . . economic necessity. Our school simply does not pay a livable wage . . . national workers are not getting the opportunity that they should get [business manager, 45, 20].*

Political Instability

The political instability in the Middle East in general did not have a direct influence on the decisions to leave. However, the recent years of war, particularly the civil war in Lebanon, had a significant impact on national workers to leave. Former national workers who spent about twenty-five years in church service made comments

to this effect: "I left my job as college teacher and came to the U.S.A. because of the recent war in Lebanon. The school was closed for a year and we were told that there is no need for our service. . . ."*
 "We left the Middle East because of the savage civil war in Lebanon. During this time we did not have light, water, or any security, specially lack of food."*

In addition to the above-mentioned major related factors, there are minor related factors to migration of the SDA Church's former national workers in the Middle East Union. These minor factors are stated in table 6.

How did Former National and Overseas Workers View
the Middle East Union While They Served?

Respondents were asked to state their views of the condition of work in the church and to give their impression of the leaders of the church in the Middle East. They were also asked to express their opinions concerning church policy. At the same time, former missionaries were also asked to state their convictions in regard to the above-mentioned items.

Church Organization--Comments of
Former National Workers

Respondents were asked to make a judgment and state a conviction concerning the function of the church as an organization. The former missionaries were also asked to express their opinion regarding the same matter. Again, the position, age, and year of experience are listed respectively in brackets.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church work in the Middle East needs more positiveness /teacher, 35, 5/.*

TABLE 6

MINOR CONTRIBUTING FACTORS TO THE OUTFLOW OF THE SDA
NATIONAL WORKERS FROM THE MIDDLE EAST UNION

Number of Respondents in Each Case is Fifty	No. of Persons	%
Lack of work challenge	23	46
Recent war in the Middle East (Lebanon)	14	28
School attendance on Sabbath day	14	28
Educated to serve American society	13	26
Requirement of test-taking on Sabbath	13	26
Disagreed with the school's policies and program	11	22
Close to my relatives	10	20
Requirement of army service which includes bearing arms	9	18
Lack of religious freedom	9	18
Husband/wife moved away	8	16
Social prejudice against SDAs	7	14
Was not rehired	6	12
Health reason	5	10
For better climate	2	4

In the SDA Church there is no definite objective; there is so much nepotism; there is so much favoritism; there is so much of this clan business. I wish it would run like a decent corporation. In the SDA Church in the Middle East Union there are people in high positions who are unfit for that, and they place people who are unqualified under them--automatically an unfit environment is created. And there are people who will not work under such circumstances as long as there are the same people in these key positions [teacher, 60, 24].*

People get jobs because they have friends and sometimes relatives in positions regardless of their qualifications [press worker, 45, 10].*

I am sorry to say that I never saw unity among the SDA Church workers. One of the greatest mistakes the church has ever done is rejecting the majority and working for the minorities. Administrator never asks or discusses when workers leave their jobs. If he does ask them about it it is not in a friendly way. Therefore they lose so many. There is a poor management in financial matters. The missionary's life is secure; the national's salary, however, is inadequate; housing and future retirement is not satisfactory. There is no opportunity for promotion; new ideas are not welcome. The main problem is communication and inadequate information. . . . Changing foreign workers comes too often. They are not given enough time to grasp the language, culture, and understand the people [administrator, 55, 25].*

SDA national workers might be ambitious and they feel that they can contribute more to the church. But, however, they feel that they cannot progress. They are not given the opportunity that they would like to be given . . . I do not think there is enough training or opportunity given for the nationals to carry the work [teacher, 35, 5].*

The SDA Church has not yet entrusted the nationals to take upon themselves the responsibility of the work. There are politics in the church. There is no harmony among the workers; neither do they support one another. I think the SDA church failed in preparing national workers to take the responsibility of the work in the Middle East [pastor, 50, 10].*

I personally think that section one and section two of the policy should be abolished, and if missionaries need any adjustment, this adjustment could be made by their home country to them directly to help them out when they come back to their homeland. The missionaries and nationals should be treated the same [administrator, 55, 20].*

Financial differences between the national and overseas workers should be narrowed down maybe at one stage when the overseas worker arrives. There are lots of things he does not know. Maybe the church organization should give him one or two years to adjust to a certain schedule. But after that, there should be no difference in salaries. I know that there is a good number of educated and trained national workers who are able to carry the church work in the Middle East. But they were not given the opportunity to carry such responsibilities. This is basically all the frustration . . . also being over-protective. It is hurting the work rather than helping it [teacher, 35, 5].*

One area that aggravates me, knowing the policies as well as I do, is the policies are so rotten . . . they've been written a century ago . . . and they have been updated sometimes by ministers who have no training in organization or policy formation. So you read the policy and you will find it so discriminatory and old-fashioned. It might have worked a hundred years ago, but it does not work now . . . we are all human beings. We have needs. We have socialization needs, not just a need to eat and sleep and to have a shelter . . . individuals . . . we have self esteem needs. We need to feel that we are making a contribution to the church. We need to have some decision-making roles and policies. We need representation. Why are the key positions in the hands of the foreigners? Why are the presidents of the field, Union, and of the Division foreigners while the nationals are standing by?!! [administrator, 35, 10].*

Church Organization--Comments of
Former Overseas' Workers

A former president of Middle East College believes that missionaries should train national workers to carry the responsibility of the indigenous church. He said:

I think those who would be the most qualified are the national workers. This is because of their experience, their background, and the knowledge of the language. They would be able to communicate and be able to accomplish much more than those who come in from the outside.*

A former overseas worker who spent about twenty-seven years of service in the Middle East Union, and who formerly served as the president of Middle East College, said:

It seems to me we're a little too condemnatory towards many young people who had high ambitions and goals . . . I remember one young man who had finished with college but because he was not given the opportunity to lead out or feel that he was doing something for the church, he decided to leave. He said, "I was told that I just have to do the visiting, and so it seems as though my capacity is limited."*

The same person also held key positions and had a great deal of influence in establishing and forming the policies of the SDA Church in

the Middle East. He stated his belief and understanding of the financial matter and its importance in that part of the world. He said:

Here is a person who has his doctor's degree. He goes out now. He is qualified. Again, I might say, why not give him all that goes with that office? I would be willing to say that his salary ought to be in relationship to that, but the argument against that is, "Listen, if I give twice as much now, that means I can't employ _____, and if I give both _____ and _____ this salary, that means I can't afford to employ _____ and somebody else." In other words, somebody says, "We've got so much money. Which is better, shall we concentrate all the money on four people, or shall we divide the money among eight people? And that question is really a problem, and I don't know what the answer is, except that I would say that ideally I would want the missionary to make the same kind of a sacrifice that the national makes. This doesn't mean to say equality of salary and it is difficult to gage this matter of sacrifice. I would want the person to look at this and I would hope that our salary is sufficient for a person to live on, to satisfy his needs. Now in the case of a mission organization, let's look at the local situation. This is an argument that is usually brought. Supposing there is a _____ who has brothers and sisters and uncles and aunts and friends and relatives over there, and they see what happens to Hagib. He comes over here (the U.S.) and gets his doctorate degree; he goes back there, and suppose he gets this great big salary. What are all the relatives going to say? Is this what you get from going to the United States? We'll all go there. That's the route. And you see what we have done is, we have been very nice to _____, but we've so separated him from the others that he isn't able to do anything for his people. They are all going to follow the same route, you know. But if _____ comes back, and they say, "You've got this and you've got that and you've got the other. You've got more than the American missionaries. You ought to get this and this and this." And _____ says, "Listen, I'm not thinking about this at all. That's foreign to me. I don't want that. I am dedicated to this. Please don't bring up this subject again." People are going to say, "Listen to this. This fellow really has a burden," and they listen to him.*

This argument is answered by another overseas worker who spent about thirteen years in the Middle East holding different posts, mainly as president of the Nile Union. He noted, in regard to the financial inequity between the overseas and national workers who have the same qualifications:

There has been great reluctance in the past to give this topic its right because there had been a fear that even though nationals were qualified and had equivalent or superior education at times to overseas' workers, that their influence would be diminished among their own people if they were at a different living standard or different level of remuneration of payment. But I think there is some change coming up because I think this is recognized in most countries that people with training who have prepared themselves for certain responsibilities, professionally qualified, may not necessarily have to be held at the same level as someone with lesser training. . . . But if the national workers conduct themselves in a professional way and with dedication and commitment, they certainly should be able to be more effective than somebody from some other part of the world who knows so little about the backgrounds and cannot relate in a way, and who knows so little about the language . . . and I think there is an openness now on the part of our divisions and the General Conference to look now in a more realistic way to this matter of returning nationals.*

A former overseas worker who spent twelve years serving mainly as the dean of men at Middle East College, as well as a few other positions, responds to the difference in salaries between national and overseas' workers who hold the same qualifications. He said:

. . . there was duality of remuneration . . . and I think if one could put his finger on a single item which caused difficulty, it would be the wage scale. . . . I really think that when one works in a foreign country one should be under the wage scale of that country.*

The next person quoted, the son of a former Adventist missionary to the Middle East, spent about five years there while his parents were in service, and afterwards kept up a strong connection with the area by visiting and writing. Now he is a professor in a Seventh-day Adventist university. He strongly opposes the argument which would make the qualified and trained national worker receive less in salary than the overseas' worker because the former's influence would be diminished among their own people if they are placed at a different living standard. He said:

I do not see it working this way. Our mission is not a materialistic one. Houses, cars, land, and so on have nothing to do with the gospel. It is the kind of people we are, the way we relate to one another, no matter what we have, that makes the difference.*

Church Leadership--Comments
of Former National Workers

The former national workers unanimously agreed that qualified, competent, and understanding leadership is indispensable, and its worth cannot be measured in monetary units. The whole structure collapses when the leadership is immature. To these nationals, leadership sets the pace for every human interaction within the organization, and its prime responsibility is to look beyond its individual intrinsic likes, dislikes, feelings, and attitudes.

But it is found in this study that the majority of the former national workers had experienced unpleasant relationships with the leaders. They believe the leadership has not only been unqualified, but they also feel that the kind of leadership which they have had in the Middle East has been the main factor in causing the national workers to leave their jobs and responsibilities and migrate to other countries. Respondents were asked to express their opinions regarding church leadership in the Middle East. Samples in this regard have been taken from the former national workers' responses.

Leaders did not follow a policy of fairness and equality in dividing privileges and opportunities. The overseas' leaders should demote and not promote national workers who act as secret agents for them and who tear down the reputation of fellow workers. Also, overseas leaders need to be closer and more understanding and considerate to the national need. . . . [administrator, 50, 20].*

One problem is lack of planning and foresight on behalf of the leaders in the Afro-Mideast Division. They did not direct

my attention, at the time I requested to leave, to some specific responsibility while I studied in the U.S.A. . . . if our leaders could get to be more people-oriented rather than policy-oriented, our work could start moving . . . crises in management and indecisiveness plague our work in the Middle East [teacher, 27, 5].*

Leaders were spending time and money to Americanize the people rather than preach to the people . . . Division leaders in my time did not try to understand the national situation [pastor, 55, 25].*

Local and foreign leaders should learn to seriously and honestly put a better evaluation for our young people. Let this be an evidence, that almost all of those workers they have lost, some of whom they were treating as "a pain in the neck," have assumed great responsibilities in the States and are greatly appreciated by both the local churches as well as in their work within or without the denomination [college dean, 55, 20].*

An Iraqi former national worker of about thirty years old, who spent almost ten years as treasurer in the Middle East Union, said:

The leader should treat the workers as human beings and understand their problems. I am sorry to say that the leaders over there are an autocratic-minded people and do not like suggestions [treasurer, 30, 10].*

The overseas leaders grudgingly give in here and there by delegating some responsibility in less important areas, but seldom surrender major positions into their hands (i.e., to the national). National workers stay ever children, and never grow. They are not ready for the major role of leadership yet. I think the national workers were children like everybody, but they need to learn how to walk. They will never walk all the way without falling. What they need is experience. . . . I think the national workers (some) are educated and trained and have reached the stage where they can handle responsibilities, but they are still treated as babies. And if the overseas' leaders think that the nationals are still unqualified to carry a job, then the nationals will say, "We'll go to some other place and prove to them that we can successfully carry responsibilities" [teacher, 35, 5].*

The leaders give an ear to gossip and believe what others tell them without talking to the other party. In my case, somebody whispered in the leaders' ears some gossip about me

which led to my decision to migrate. After we came to the U.S.A. the leaders found that all of these reports were wrong [administrator, 50, 10].*

With this type of leadership in the Middle East you cannot build continuity and you cannot set objectives and reach them. Leadership has no long-range goals . . . also I think we should improve our communication tremendously. There is nothing that can create more conflicts than some secret actions [teacher, 23, 5].*

Overseas' leaders hold key positions, acting as if they are gods, or as superiors looking at the national workers as a vessel to be used, or as second-class brothers. Their opinions are not worthy of consideration even if they are right . . . nationals will not stop their migration unless the overseas leaders start working with the national workers on the same level, and put aside their pride and selfishness [press editor, 50, 25].*

Church Leadership--Comments of Former Overseas Workers

From the interviews with former overseas workers from the Middle East, it is discovered that many of them agree to a certain extent with former national workers in the Middle East. They think mistakes could happen any place around the world. Leadership listened to gossip and sometimes mistreated the national workers. Communication was also very poor between the leaders and the local workers. One of the outstanding problems was the inequality between the national and the expatriate workers. Some of the comments of former overseas workers are listed below:

One former overseas leader who served as president in one of the unions of the Middle East Division, and who was also an officer in the Division for some time, now assumes the responsibility of a Division president. He was asked, if given another chance to serve in the Middle East, what he would do differently. He said:

I think there are perhaps few things that I might have done a little differently. I think that perhaps there was a weakness in that we did not bring about a great equality between national workers and those who were expatriates or called from some fields overseas. But there were times when I was aware of the fact that simply because a person came from another country he or she was considered to be "qualified." He or she had certain additional benefits. He or she was expected to assume a leadership role, and oftentimes they were not as well qualified as some of the nationals. And because of a philosophy that had developed over a period of years, the individual who had been called in from outside to serve in a place like Egypt or some other country, was immediately considered to be an expert in a particular field. Many of them were less prepared for that kind of challenge than the national workers who might have developed more of a determination to stay and to carry on responsibilities and leadership. As it stands, these national workers say, "Well, if the leaders are going to bring everyone from outside to try to do this, they probably do not need us as much and we will go to the States or some other part of the world to further our education." And once they are there, it is difficult for them to return.

Another great weakness was communication. Those from other parts of the world were always too willing to listen to some criticism. I think there were good individuals whose reputations were diminished in time by gossip. There was little getting at the things and settling it and sitting down with the parties and saying: "O.K., we are not simply willing to accept rumours or stories or accusations unless there is evidence or proof of the matter." Instead of dealing openly and fairly with the thing, they allowed these things to fester and to grow to the point where people became discouraged, left their jobs, and migrated.*

Reflections of Former National Workers and Missionaries about Each Other

Former National Workers' Reflections on Missionaries who Served in the SDA Church in the Middle East Union

In this study it was found that the majority of these former national workers agree that many of the missionaries who served the Adventist church in the Middle East were dedicated, sincere, lovely people, particularly those who arrived first to the area. Some of them displayed true missionary vision and passion for service. The former

national workers still do not believe that the day of the missionary is over. In fact, they believe the greatest and most glorious days for missionary work are yet ahead. However, a majority of this group strongly criticize most of the missionaries who have served in the Middle East in recent decades. They believe most of these missionaries are not the same as those who served in the past. They believe present missionaries to the Middle East need a new, honest, soul-searching recognition of the root causes of the irritations which caused the national workers to decide to drop their jobs and migrate. When the respondents were asked to state their reflections on their experience of working with the missionaries, the majority expressed bitter disappointment with the experience. Below are some samples of the respondents' opinions of the missionaries:

Missionaries are the cause of the problem. The church sends them as ambassadors for Christ, that they may by their lives show Christ's love, simplicity, and unselfish work. Instead, we see most (if not all) holding key positions and acting as if they were half-gods. Also, they think that they are superior to the national, looking at him as a second-class brother. The nationals' opinions to them are not worthy of consideration [administrator, 50, 25].*

National workers had some golden days when the missionaries really trusted them. And we have seen that during that period the church work moved much better. The missionaries were willing to give the nationals enough dignity and enough decision-making. Things were moving in the right direction, until we "sold" so to speak, and we were told that we were not able to manage on our own yet . . . so since that time nationals need recognition and they do not seem to get it. They get tired of being untrusted. They feel that their chances to grow are very minimal, when they know that they could just cross the ocean and go to North America and be what they can really be. We all have talents, and many of the nationals have not been able to develop their talents, or have not been given the chance to. In fact, many of us have come to the States who thought before we came here, "Oh, we can never make it." But I am glad that many of us have been able to conquer this kind of feeling. We have come

here and successfully worked for the church and we will continue to work for the church . . . I think that the time must come when the missionaries are willing to adjust and they must learn to take orders from a national and work together, side by side. But until missionaries are willing to give the nationals their worth, the outflow of the national workers will increase and none of the former national workers will accept to go back [administrator, 30, 5].*

Many of the missionaries who served in the Middle East were not prepared to work for the Middle Easterners. They also could not prepare national workers to work for their own people. Many of them were excited to go there and visit the Holy Land. They were just touring the places, holding cameras, and taking pictures. . . . [Administrator, 50, 10].*

The missionaries who worked in the Middle East wanted to make sure that the work in the fields is doing fine. So they did almost everything by themselves without the participation of the national workers. I think they were over-protective. Not because of bad intentions, but perhaps for the sake of the church work. By being over-protective they were hurting the work rather than helping the work [teacher, 35, 5].-

The missionaries did not understand the nationals. They took sides, one group against the other. Also, they were not careful in putting the right people in the right place. They did not encourage the nationals to hold key positions in the church [teacher, 30, 10].-

Clear relationships between missionaries and workers would give better cooperation. The missionaries can understand the problem of each worker and help them to solve their problems, if they are willing to know "who is" and "what is" each worker. Many times appraisal and promotion was given by missionaries not in their place to do so [union evangelist, 50, 25].*

Missionaries were easily influenced by those who can "apple polish." They did not act from principle [teacher, 35, 15].*

Former Missionaries' Reflections on Mission Program While they were in the Middle East

From interviews with many former missionaries to the Middle East, it was found that nationals are right on many points held against the missionaries. A few samples have been chosen to show where missionaries fell short in their methodology and approaches.

One British former missionary who served the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Middle East for about twenty-eight years as an administrator, said:

When a missionary is sent out as being say president of the college, he goes out because he thinks he knows something about education. He accepts that position. He goes out and looks it over and he very soon decides that we ought to have this and we ought to have that, even before he has asked anybody any questions. Now, if he is wise, he will ask a few questions first, and if he asks a few questions and people give him suggestions and he accepts those suggestions, then he has got the cooperation of the others that are with him. The more a missionary is willing to recognize that he is only a member of a field and that he is dependent upon the others for input and he is willing to work along with others, the more he is successful. And, I am afraid, perhaps we have made a mistake in the past. . . . But then again, we as missionaries, when we go out there, tell them to make comparisons. We say, "You know, you folks over here don't have what we have over there." And we show pictures from the United States Information Service about the country and the prospects of the wages and everything else, you know. And then, after we have placed that propoganda before their eyes, and then we say to them, "Close your eyes to all this. Don't go." It's just asking too much. I don't think we're being human at all. It seems to me that sometimes we have been as missionaries perhaps too repressive. . . . Speaking of gossip, I am afraid that it is true that the missionaries have listened to current gossip, if you like (it hasn't been referred to as gossip; it is usually confidential information), and they have been influenced by various ones so that I know individuals for whom I had high regard, whom my fellow missionaries had heard from other nationals who were opposed, and I would try my best to try to defend this other person, but I wasn't getting anywhere. So I think, to a certain extent, that there is a certain amount of gossip that is listened to. But that is done everywhere, and I wouldn't call it gossip exactly. I think some of those who gave the information were very honest. They didn't realize in themselves the prejudices that they had.*

A son of an American former missionary who spent about five years in the Middle East, living with his parents, and who kept in touch with the Middle East through frequent visits and through correspondence, gives his reflection on the missionaries at that time. He said:

I was bothered acutely as a teenager in the Middle East by how the missionaries brought their culture with them and did not adapt to the culture of Lebanon which had marvellous things to offer. And for the missionaries to live together in a compound . . . there is absolutely no excuse for that kind of thing. I wouldn't want to serve in that kind of situation unless my neighbor--I mean, if they want to say that "this house is the president's house," whoever that is, and "this house is for the business manager," but it is not dependent upon his nationality or anything like that. Those kinds of trappings of the American way bother me . . . the Fourth of July celebrations and those things; they really bother me. I mean, in Lebanon, it seems to me that you should celebrate the national holidays, and so on. Now, if two or three or four American families want to get together and have Thanksgiving, why not? And if they want to invite whoever they want to, they could, but the school should never celebrate an American holiday as such. It shouldn't be a day off for the Division staff. There should be absolutely no official ties, with Americans, the American ambassador. I mean, Middle East College should have nothing to do with America in Lebanon. That is my feeling, anyway. I am proud to be an American, to be a citizen, to have a passport--makes travel easy and what not, but when I am in Lebanon I would play down my Americanness very much and try to absorb and adapt to the culture as much as possible. I think that is the only way to reach people in any country, to be as much like them as you can, not try to transport your own culture. . . . The missionary's job is, as quickly as possible, to find somebody to replace him who is qualified, and then let the missionary start something else, and then look for somebody to replace him there, and so on. I think that too often missionaries come over to the mission field for their own advancement rather than to really help the people of those countries. They look upon their mission service as a stepping stone to advancement in their home country. . . . But if you replace yourself with a national and you do a supportive role, you don't come to public attention as much--which is the spirit of Christ. You know, if you're really interested in building up the work in a country it really doesn't matter what people think of you and what your reputation is, so long as the reputation of the work is prospering.*

A former missionary who spent twelve years in Middle East College as a dean of a residence hall believes that:

People from America would continue to project "American Christianity." People from Europe would also project "European" kinds of Christianity. Should Christianity be different in America, in Europe, or in the Middle East? Yes, in a sense that the cultures of each place are different. But

Christianity says, first of all I am a Christian, and second I am a European, I am a Britisher, I am an American, and I think that by and large missionaries with whom I came into contact were first of all American, or British, or European, and then secondarily Christian.*

An American former missionary who served about fifteen years in the Middle East as a president of a union and as a division officer, said:

Many of those who were expatriates from other parts of the world working in the Middle East to help, to teach, to develop and to train, had very little patience. They also had very little understanding of the tremendous cultural background and benefits that existed. They had very little understanding, also, of some of the social circumstances--the closeness of families and some of the aspects that one has to be very careful and tender about. Furthermore, many of them did not really diligently try to speak Arabic, even conversational Arabic, to say nothing of reading and so forth.*

Was a Definite Effort Made to Keep These Former
National Workers in the Middle East Before
Their Departure?

Psychologically, it is very important for a person to know that he is wanted and appreciated in his job. It is so crucial that a former national worker's perception of countermeasures taken to hold him in the face of an attractive offer from outside may strongly influence his decision to remain or to leave. Respondents who had left the Middle East were asked whether or not they felt the Adventist Church in the Middle East had done all in its power to hold them in the church work there. Thirty-three (66 percent) stated they believed the church in the Middle East did not do all that was within her power to hold them there. Thirteen (28 percent) indicated they felt the church needed them and urged them to remain. Some of these respondents expressed their opinions frankly.

Not a single person discouraged me from leaving the Middle East. They did not show any interest in our service [administrator, 50, 20].*

Nobody seemed to care that we were leaving. After coming to the U.S.A. we wrote a letter asking what line would be best for us to take so we could be a better type of worker when we returned to college to teach. The answer was that every position was filled. There was no need for us [executive secretary, ?, 15].*

They encouraged me to leave and wished me a good life in the U.S.A. [teacher, ?, 15].*

Several national workers were encouraged to leave. We were told that they wanted to get rid of us [pastor, 50, 25].*

What Did These Former Nationals of the
Middle East Union Suggest
for Improvement?

The respondents were asked, in the light of their experience, to make suggestions they thought might improve the attractiveness of the church work in the Middle East Union to both present and potential national workers. A number of items were suggested by the former national workers. These suggestions touch on different phases of the church's operation. But, most of all, emphasis was placed on the role of the missionary and church leadership. One other area the former national workers strongly stressed was delegating responsibility in important areas into the hands of the nationals. As many as possible of these suggestions will be stated in the following samples.

1. Respect and take seriously the responsibilities of national workers where these are delegated.
2. Insure continuity, particularly in educational institutions, and general overall mission program.
3. Capable, honest leadership.

4. Incorporate within the division policies a fair-minded, ethical, unstratified, non-imperialistic form of Christlike government.

5. Make working conditions (spiritual, social, and if possible, physical) attractive enough to draw and keep the best we have. It is a folly to work on a program of "imposed sacrifice." A free sacrifice is the only true one.

6. More responsibility should be delegated to national workers so they feel the work is theirs. More selectivity without discrimination should be encouraged. More challenge should be promoted in the work.

7. Equality of pay. All those who have the same education and the same years of service should have the same opportunities in pay.

8. Equal furlough opportunities should be given to those who are working away from their own countries.

9. Position equalities should be adhered to as far as possible.

10. Educational opportunities should be made available to all workers.

11. Improvement in housing should be considered.

12. More attention should be given to Middle Eastern young people. Somehow, many of them are neglected or not even appreciated in their own church--so they leave their countries.

13. A closer relationship between leaders and workers would foster better cooperation.

14. The leaders should understand the problems of the workers and try to help them.
15. Appraisal and promotion should be given when they are due.
16. Nationals should be trained and given more responsibilities.
17. Double-faced leaders should not be existing in the church work.

Following are more extensive comments from former national workers who had suggestions to make concerning improvement in the Middle East Union.

Missionaries should give more responsibilities to nationals and stop criticizing all their moves and not try to put them down every time they do something disagreeable to their own ideas. Also, they should stop grouping and forming circles of influence to fight and destroy opposition [press worker, 45, 10].*

I think our policy in the Middle East Union should be changed. I think the policy as it stands now is a stumbling block to the nationals who live in North America, because we come over here and start working and get accustomed to a certain standard of living and work, which definitely makes it hard to go back and live on the same old standard. The former national worker in North America will not go back under these conditions [teacher, 35, 5].*

I think we should pause for a moment to understand the culture and the people that we are dealing with, then try to modify our policies to meet the type of situation that we have, and so improve our practices. Get more of God--not "God talk," but God's Spirit in our committees and in our choice of people and our dedication of institutions [administrator, 30, 5].*

Section one and section two should be abolished, and if missionaries need any adjustment, this adjustment could be made by their home country to them directly to help them out when they come back to their homeland, but missionaries and nationals should be treated the same. I also feel that everyone should come close to the people and not spend too much time in administration [pastor, 55, 15].*

Another former national worker who served for about twenty-five years as a treasurer offered the following list of suggestions:

1. The work should be in the hands of strong leaders.
2. Overseas' leaders should delegate more authority to the local field leaders.
3. More of the national culture should enter into the school program rather than dictate American ways of thinking.
4. Better communication between the leaders and the national workers should be encouraged.
5. Better training should be made available to nationals.
6. The salaries of the national workers should be increased [treasurer, 50, 25].-

Under What Conditions Would Former National Workers
be Willing to Commit Themselves to a
Return to the Middle East Union?

In this study the respondents were asked the following question: If you received a call to go back and serve under the current working policy in the Middle East Union, would you accept the call? Thirty-two (64 percent) said that they were not willing to serve under the present church policy. Thirteen (26 percent) said that they would accept the invitation and go back to the Middle East. Five persons showed no interest in answering the question.

However, another question was addressed to the group. That was: If you were invited to join the Seventh-day Adventist church work in the Middle East Union today, what are the factors which would influence the possibility of your accepting such an invitation?

1. Forty-seven (94 percent) desired to have a good relationship with the leaders, administrators, and fellow workers.

2. Forty-seven (94 percent) would like to be adequately prepared to meet the needs of the people of the Middle East.

3. Forty-five (90 percent) would like to have the opportunity to work in the line of their preparation.

4. Forty-five (90 percent) desired to have equal treatment (pay and opportunity) as a missionary who has the same qualifications.

5. Forty-four (88 percent) want to be sure that there is need for their service in the Middle East Union.

6. Forty-three (86 percent) believe in equality. That means to put national workers who have become American or Canadian citizens on the same basis as other missionary workers.

7. Thirty-nine (78 percent) consider the behavior of the church administrators and leaders as a very important factor.

8. Thirty-nine (78 percent) consider the possibilities for future advancement very important too.

9. Thirty-seven (74 percent) desire to have an adequate salary which meets budgetary needs without wife working.

10. Thirty-six (72 percent) desire to have adequate housing.

11. Thirty-three (66 percent) would like to have a chance for possibilities of future education.

12. Thirty (60 percent) would like to have a change or to update the Afro-Mideast Division policy concerning reimbursement by the Division for the cost of education for the unsponsored students who finished graduate studies.

13. Twenty-six (52 percent) would like to have equality in connection with prestige of position offered.

In summary, the brain drain from the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Middle East Union is the consequence of many varying factors which contribute not only to the migration of the professional and trained personnel, but also of many national church members. This migration, which has been discussed in chapter three of this study, definitely retards the growth and the advancement of the church work in this hard part of the world.

The purpose of this study is to bring out the various factors which relate to the migration of the SDA national workers. These factors are gathered only from the responses of former national workers and from the interviews with former overseas workers who served in the Middle East Union.

The writer intends to inject his opinion as he evaluates these gathered factors which relate to the migration of the national personnel. In the opinion of the writer there are legitimate reasons for the migration of many national workers. Some of these factors are related to health problems while others are connected with the desire of many nationals to further their education. The particular situation which requires school attendance and test-taking on Sabbath also caused many members to leave the Middle East with their families. In addition to that, the Adventist young people grow up to face a serious problem because of tension between the Arabs and Israel. This problem is the conscription laws. Army service, including the bearing of arms, is required by almost every country in the Middle East. Such factors forced many faithful church workers out of their countries.

The factors already mentioned are often mistaken for the real

reasons, which sometimes do not appear on the surface, of the migrations of the SDA national workers. However, beneath the surface there are many important reasons which influence Adventist national workers to leave their jobs in the church and migrate to other countries. Some national workers covered up their hurt and pretended that the reasons for their leaving was due to their interest in furthering their education. Others gave the education of their children as the reason for leaving. Still others aired their reasons and pointed out the real factors which led them to leave the responsibility of God's work in the Middle East and migrate to North America in particular.

Some of these factors are indeed worthy of mention. First, there is strong, bitter feeling on the part of the former national workers toward the church administration in the Middle East Union (Division). These bitter feelings are directed particularly against the so-called autocratic leadership (overseas workers). Many former national workers believe they were treated as second-class brethren by the overseas workers. They feel the overseas leaders acted as demi-gods. The Division leaders also surround themselves with a small group of nationals and thus cut themselves off from the rest of the national church. The channel of communication between the national workers and the leadership was very poor, and in most cases was completely shut off. Therefore, many problems arose and misunderstandings took place, and because of such conditions, unhealthy feelings of frustration developed, which led many people to migrate as a way out.

The second main factor which caused many national workers to leave, or, at least, not to go back, is the inequality which existed

between the national and overseas workers. This factor is not the loud cry of the Adventist national workers in the Middle East Union, but it is the loud cry of the people of the third world as a whole (with the exception of South America). The national workers, who are educated and stand at the same level with their fellow overseas workers, cannot understand why most of the Division, Union, and field officers are from the overseas personnel. They also do not understand why an overseas worker who has the same degree and years of experience receives a higher salary than they do. To them, this is discrimination. The plea on the part of the nationals is not to be paid as their fellow overseas workers, but that the latter be paid the same wage as the nationals, regardless of how much money is saved for them in their home base.

If the secular world seeks to uplift the principle of equality among all people, regardless of color and race, and holds up human rights as an example for our present age, what is the responsibility of the Christian church in this regard? This question is especially relevant to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Adventism presents to the world the Third Angel's Message, which includes the soon coming of Jesus and His coming judgment upon the world.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, SUGGESTIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The descriptive study undertaken in these chapters has as its objective the uncovering of the factors related to the migration of the Seventh-day Adventist national workers from the Middle East Union to North America. The goal of the Middle East Union has long been that of obeying Christ's commission to His followers to preach the gospel to all people, but this migration has had an immediate and adverse effect upon that effort. The Muslim countries of the Middle East have always presented a difficult challenge to the Christian church. At times it has seemed to the Christians that the Muslims are so fanatically loyal to their religious heritage that they will never respond to the Christian message.

One of the most critical problems facing the SDA Church in the Middle East today is that of attempting to find a way to reduce the outflow of educated, qualified, and trained national personnel. Such an outflow is identified as a "brain drain," and it has caused serious shortages of trained personnel at many levels, definitely retarding the work of the SDA Church in that area.

The suggestions and recommendations set out in this chapter are based mainly on information elicited through questionnaires and interviews given to former Middle East national workers who are now residing in North America, and also to former missionaries to Middle

East countries. Other studies on the subject have also been taken into consideration.

Summary and Conclusion

In the historical sketch of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Middle East, it was found that the work began in this area in 1876 when the message was first heard in Egypt. Later on the work spread to other countries of the Middle East. During these early years of 1878-1920 the church grew very slowly, but gained momentum especially during the 1940s. The church reached a growth peak during the 1950s, when a wide variety of church programs were initiated. The missionaries established educational institutions and used many different approaches to evangelism, such as public lectures, medical missions, treatment rooms, and health food restaurants. Most of these activities were carried out by missionaries, and few nationals played definite roles in the advancement of the SDA Church in most Middle East countries.

Starting in the early 1960s, however, a regressive movement became evident. The work started to decline in the following areas:

1. Number of churches
2. Church membership in most countries
3. Educational institutions
4. Qualified teachers
5. Medical work (both the Dar-es-Salaam and Benghazi Adventist hospitals were nationalized)
6. Literature evangelistic work

7. Numbers of SDA students and national faculty from the Middle East at Middle East College

The problem of migration has not been restricted only to the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the Middle East, but has also been the concern of the governments of many countries in that area. Therefore, the church shares with these countries some of the factors which seem to bear most directly on the problem of personnel migration. These general factors are:

1. Economics (inadequate salaries)
2. Working conditions (lack of equipment)
3. Absence of adequate research facilities
4. Political instability

There are, however, more specific factors which play a large part in the church workers' migration. In view of this, nationals now in North America were asked to list the major factors which they felt had, at the time of their decision, led to their migration from the Middle East where they had been employed. Other approaches were also incorporated in the questionnaires and interviews to elicit additional important information.

During the analysis of these questionnaires, the writer divided the elements contributing to the "brain drain" into major and minor factors. Major factors were those most frequently listed as reasons for migration, items mentioned by half or more than half of the respondents. Minor factors were those listed by less than half of the respondents.

The findings reveal that the minor factors relating to migration were of three types:

1. Factors related to the church's failure to reach the majority (the Muslims) in the Middle East:
 - a. Cultural difficulties between national and overseas workers. Many felt that missionaries should bear in mind the difficulty of changing ingrained social habits, and that they should be more willing to change themselves than to change others.
 - b. Doctrinal difficulties--especially problems connected with the Person of Christ.
2. Factors related to the SDA Church's failure to use the right methods in approaching the Christian minority in the Middle East:
 - a. The missionaries' lack of knowledge and understanding of social structure and family relationships
 - b. The missionaries' failure to comprehend and understand the Middle East culture
 - c. The missionaries' failure to understand the major differences in the nationals' sets of values in regard to such things as music, funerals, weddings, etc.
3. Factors related to the SDA Church's failure to offer a training program which meets the needs of the constituency:
 - a. The training program was oriented more towards Western society than Middle Eastern (particularly at Middle East College).
 - b. The lack of vocational training programs
 - c. The lack of opportunities for work advancement or challenge

These, then, were the minor factors influencing the exodus of the national workers from the field where they were badly needed. What, then, were the major factors?

1. The most frequently mentioned factor was that of education--to continue one's own education or to further his children's education.

2. The second most important factor was the autocratic characteristics of the church leaders and their behavior toward the national workers. The church leadership was described as:

- a. Blindly prejudiced
- b. Unappreciative
- c. Unjust
- d. Unapproachable (lack of communication)
- e. Unqualified
- f. Unwise
- g. Unable to relate
- h. Unable to maintain confidence in the administration's integrity

3. The third major factor was the unsatisfactory work situation, unequal treatment, and lack of security while working for the church. Specific items listed were:

- a. No future for the nationals working for the church
- b. Inequality (in position or payment)
- c. Unequal treatment of national and foreign workers even though both had the same qualifications
- d. Education offered prepared nationals only for church work
- e. Education offered left nationals feeling more comfortable and secure working for Western people than for their own Eastern people
- f. Frustration due to lack of training in dealing with Muslim majority. Most workers dealt only with a restricted Christian minority.

4. The fourth important factor for leaving the Middle East was known as the "Myth of the unqualified national," and was stressed mainly by those who held a degree in higher education. These unqualified nationals believe that they have been ready to take over the work for a long time, but that the missionaries did not share that belief and were unwilling to relinquish the administrative positions.

5. The financial aspect was cited by many as a reason for leaving the field. The majority of respondents believe that the national salaries are inadequate, and that the salary difference between national and overseas workers is unfair.

6. The final factor seems to have a more indirect bearing on the migration problem. It is the attitude of the national workers toward each other. Unity and mutual support is lacking among the national workers. In many cases, promising and intelligent workers (especially young workers) were ill-treated, pressured, or falsely accused. In many of these instances the nationals chose to leave rather than face further unpleasantness.

Former national workers were asked to express their opinions concerning the function of the SDA Church in the Middle East. In regard to the Middle East organization as a whole, respondents said:

1. There is no definite objective in the SDA Church there.
2. There is no unity among the church workers.
3. The church has not entrusted nationals with the responsibility for the work.
4. There is too much inequality between national and overseas workers.

5. Organizational policies should be updated.

Former overseas' workers who were asked the same questions had these comments:

1. The national workers are the most qualified to take over the responsibility of the church work.

2. The church organization was a little too critical of many young people who had high ambitions and goals.

One influential former missionary discussed the financial situation and the differences between national and overseas salaries. He felt that it was asking too much of a missionary to accept the same salary as the national worker, even though both had the same qualifications. He thought that the missionary should make the same sacrifice that the national makes, but this did not mean equality of salary. He pointed out that there is a disadvantage in regard to making money, that high salaries might build up a barrier between the national and his relatives and lessen his influence on others (see further discussion on page 74).

The former national workers replied that "money itself could be a blessing when used in the right way, or a curse if misused," that this applied to anyone, any time, any place--not only to national workers. They suggested that:

1. Sections I and II of the SDA wage policy should be abolished.

2. The church should give the missionaries one or two years of gradually diminishing salaries while they adjusted to the economy, and after that there should be no salary differences between nationals and overseas workers with the same qualifications.

3. Financial church policies should be updated to reflect equality. There should be equal treatment for expenses incurred in obtaining a doctoral degree, and in such things as "outfitting" allowances (current policy gives the missionary appointee going outside his division \$1,000 outfitting allowance. A national returning to his home division from abroad receives \$125 if single, \$250 with a family).

Former missionaries report that they also would like to change this situation, but indicate that Division and General Conference administrators resist such a change. One missionary, now in a high General Conference post, remarked, "I think there is some change coming up concerning these issues." Another former missionary thinks that an overseas worker in a foreign country should be under the wage scale of that country.

The question which was found to be an extremely important factor and which received the strongest reaction from former national workers was that of how they viewed the leadership in the Middle East Union. They believed that the strength, prestige, success, and character of an organization is derived chiefly from two sources-- its leadership and its workers. It may be difficult and even impossible to say which of these factors is more important, but it is generally agreed that no organization can be greater than its leadership. One former national worker of the Middle East Union said:

Leadership sets the pace for every human interaction within the organization and it is its prime responsibility to see and look beyond its individual intrinsic likes and dislikes, feelings, and attitudes. It can make the atmosphere gay or gloomy, tense or relaxed. A worker will produce much more when a gay,

relaxed atmosphere dominates the organization. He will be happy, cooperative, and easy-going with nothing to interfere with the accomplishment of his duties which are geared to the achievement of the aims and goals of the organization.

Even though the education factor made up the most frequently mentioned reason for leaving, yet the factor related to leadership (second most frequently mentioned reason for leaving) has been given the most attention, particularly in the open-ended question of the questionnaire. The former national workers felt that the leadership has not only been unqualified, but has also been the main factor in causing the national workers to leave their jobs and responsibilities and migrate to other countries. A summary of their expressed opinion in regard to this factor is as follows:

1. Leaders did not follow a policy of fairness and quality in dividing privileges and opportunities.
2. Leaders lacked planning and foresight.
3. Leaders spent money to Americanize the people.
4. Leaders should give more value to their evaluation of the young people.
5. Leaders are autocratic-minded people.
6. Leaders did not delegate very many of the responsibilities to the nationals. They still think that the national workers are not qualified to carry the work responsibilities.
7. Leaders acted as if they are half-gods--superiors.
8. Leaders gave an ear to gossip, and therefore mistreated many nationals.
9. Leaders could not build continuity and therefore could not set objectives and reach them.

10. Leaders had a very poor way of communicating.

Respondents were asked about their reflection on the missionaries who served in the Middle East while they were church workers. One thing stands higher than anything else in the minds of these former national workers, and that is the failure of the missionaries in training national leaders to carry on the church work in the Middle East. It is known not only in the SDA Church but also in other Christian churches, that in order to reach the world with the gospel, missionaries must multiply national Christian leadership. Once nationals are trained for leadership they must replace the missionaries. Overseas workers will not be able to reach the whole world for Christ on their own. Missionaries can no longer assume, consciously or unconsciously, that people of other nations are second-class human beings. Such an attitude will no longer be accepted. Missionaries are constantly in danger of under-rating those whom God is raising up to lead His church. They delegate some responsibilities to the nationals but in less important areas. They seldom surrender major elements of the work into their hands unless certain conditions force them to do it.

Nationals say the missionaries always remind them of those indigenous workers, promoted to higher positions in the work of the church, who miserably failed. Of course, missionaries overlook the long, sad record of missionary failures. The nationals realize that they are children and they need to learn how to walk. But they will never walk all the way without falling. What they need is experience. People who have always had their decisions made for them, having been denied the instruction of experience, will still be as children in

their adult years. Not realizing the tragic consequences of not allowing the nationals to experience the struggles of leadership themselves, the missionaries say that the nationals are not ready for the major role of leadership yet. "Someday they will be ready, but not now. In the meanwhile, we better hold on to things." But the nationals see through the apparent sham of the missionaries' over-protectiveness and feel that the missionaries' slowness to give them their rightful place is not an evidence of love, but a selfish desire for continuing power. This kind of attitude is no longer acceptable to nationals.

The majority of the national workers also believe that missionaries who hold the same qualifications as a national worker should be treated equally in position or pay. Nevertheless, nationals feel that if missionaries need any adjustment in their salaries, this financial adjustment could be made to them directly by their home country to help them out when they return to their homeland. Otherwise, there should be no difference in salaries.

Some former national workers believe that most missionaries encouraged gossip and criticism from a few national workers about their fellow-nationals.

Former national workers criticized the missionaries for bringing their own culture with them and imposing it on the nationals. They did not excuse the missionaries for separating themselves, living together in a compound with no national workers living among them. Missionaries had their own section of the best houses and beautiful locations.

At the time of leaving the church work, the majority of national workers did find the church interested in them, and encouraging them to remain in the Middle East. However, in some cases some of these national workers were encouraged to quit their jobs and migrate.

Suggestions and Recommendations

Suggestions and recommendations arising out of this study are basically derived from expressed opinions by former national workers. It is hoped that the findings of this preliminary study of the problem of migration of the national workers from the SDA Church in the Middle East will stimulate church leaders, at the Division level, as well as the General Conference level, to realize the seriousness of the problem which affects the future growth and development of the church, not only in the Middle East, but also in other fields around the globe.

Basically, the question at hand is, What can be done to decrease the outflow of the national workers from the Middle East Union and to retain them in denominational work there? The answer involves many areas of concern.

1. National workers should be adequately trained and prepared to meet the needs of their own countrymen.
2. Ways should be studied to build a more genuine fellowship among the national workers.
3. More responsibility should be delegated to the national workers so they feel the work is theirs.
4. National workers are to be appointed to jobs in the line of their preparation.

5. Upon returning to the homeland after studying abroad, the national worker should not be considered as being necessarily subservient to the missionaries, but as one on the same team.

6. The SDA Church in the Middle East needs more positiveness and more definite objectives.

7. There is a need for improving the communication between administrators and workers. Administrators should respect workers' opinions and welcome new ideas.

8. Working conditions should be made challenging and attractive enough to draw and keep the best workers.

9. Opportunities must be allowed for promotion.

10. More of the national culture should be brought into the school program rather than adopting Western cultural standards.

11. National workers who become U.S. or Canadian citizens should be treated the same as other missionaries.

12. Church financial policies should be updated, especially in connection with nationals who study abroad--first concerning the reimbursement for expenses incurred in obtaining a doctoral degree, and second concerning outfitting allowance for nationals called to go back home (it should be equal to the missionary's outfitting since both parties come out from the same country).

13 There should be equality in dividing privileges and opportunities, especially for further study.

14. Overseas and national workers should be under the same wage scale within a country.

15. Committees on all levels (field, Union, and Division) must

be composed of no less than 50 percent nationals, chosen by the national church members.

16. Leaders should be appointed on the basis of qualifications and competency, not nationality.

17. Leaders should give the national workers opportunity for decision-making.

18. Leaders should make a real effort to keep the national workers from migrating, by closer personal contact, giving them greater responsibilities and by giving them the feeling that the work of the church in the Middle East is really theirs.

19. Missionaries must learn to respect nationals and learn to work side by side with them.

20. Missionaries should learn the language and use it in communicating with the people, even though the school program is in English.

21. Missionaries should not take sides--one national group against the other.

22. Missionaries should seek advice from nationals and accept their suggestions.

23. Missionaries should adopt the culture of the country they serve instead of trying to change the culture and replace it with their own.

24. A missionary's major duty is to establish the indigenous church--self-propagating, self-supporting, and self-governing.

Throughout this analysis, one thing which stood out clearly was the need on the part of all church workers, national and overseas,

to follow Christ's example in sacrificing His life for the salvation of others. The sacrifices required might vary, but the principle is valid for all. The missionary might be required to sacrifice his own culture and take another in order to become one of those whom he was called to serve. He may have to give up material comforts, aims, or ideas, and particularly shift his thinking on evangelistic methods from an individualistic approach to a group approach, in agreement with the culture. Christ was the perfect model who became in every sense one of us.

The national, on the other hand, might be required to make a financial sacrifice and accept what he feels is an unfair salary, or he might have to give up some ambition, some desire for position, or even to temper his thinking to become more cosmopolitan and less national in his outlook.

APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE ON FACTORS RELATING TO MIGRATION OF
THE MIDDLE EASTERN NATIONAL WORKERS

National workers of the Middle East Union often leave their jobs and migrate to North America. The seriousness of this problem endangers the work of the church in the Middle East. This questionnaire is designed to find the major factors which cause this migration to take place. Please answer these questions to the best of your ability. There is no need to sign your name. Your help is greatly appreciated.

SECTION I

Directions: Fill in the box next to each question with the one number which represents the right answer.

1. Sex (1) Male (2) Female
2. Age
(1) Under 25 (2) 25-34 (3) 35-44
(4) 45-54 (5) 55-64 (6) 65 or above
3. Marital status at the time of departure from the Middle East
(1) Single (2) Married (3) Widowed
(4) Separated or divorced
4. Family size at time of departure
(1) No children (2) One child (3) Two children
(4) Three children (5) Four children or more
5. The chief job held previous to departure from the Middle East
(choose only one):
(1) Pastor (2) Bible worker (3) Teacher
(4) Nurse (5) Accountant
(6) Division, Union officer, or Field officer
(7) Administrator (8) Other _____
Please State
6. Length of service in the Middle East
(1) 1-4 years (2) 5-9 years (3) 10-14 years
(4) 15-19 years (5) 20-24 years (6) 25 and over
7. Country of Origin
(1) Egypt (2) Iran (3) Iraq
(4) Jordan (5) Lebanon (6) Palestine
(7) Syria (8) Other _____
Indicate

8. Date of migration to North America
 (1) 1940-1949 (2) 1950-1959 (3) 1960-1969
 (4) 1970-
9. Parents' religious background
 (1) Armenian Gregorian (2) Chaldean
 (3) Christian, Greek Orthodox (Eastern Church)
 (4) Christian, Maronite (5) Roman Catholic
 (6) Seventh-day Adventist (7) Moslem
 (8) Other _____

Indicate

10. Elementary school education
 (1) Public (2) S. D. A.
11. Secondary school education
 (1) Public (2) S. D. A.
12. College education
 (1) Public (2) S. D. A. (3) None
13. Graduate education
 (1) Public (2) S. D. A. (3) None
14. My highest level of academic achievement at the time of my departure from the Middle East was
 (1) Elementary (2) High school
 (3) 2 years of college (4) 4 years of college
 (5) Graduate
15. My present occupation
 (1) Pastor (2) Bible worker (3) Teacher
 (4) Nurse (5) Accountant (6) Administrator
 (7) Technical worker (8) Others _____

Please choose the answer which best describes your present situation

16. I am presently
 (1) Working for the S.D.A. Church in North America
 (2) Working outside the S.D.A. denomination in North America
17. Present income bracket (Yearly)
 (1) Under \$6,000 (2) \$6,000-9,000 (3) \$10,000-19,999
 (4) \$20,000-24,999 (5) \$25,000-29,999 (6) \$30,000-49,999
 (7) \$50,000 and above
18. Present family status
 (1) Single (2) Married (3) Widowed
 (4) Separated or divorced (5) Remarried

19. Present family size
 (1) No children (2) One child
 (3) Two children (4) Three children
 (5) Four or more children

20. Present religious affiliation
 (1) S.D.A. Member (2) Other _____

SECTION II

Directions: Rate the following items as you felt about them while you were working in the Middle East. Put the number of the one statement which best describes your attitude in the box to the left of each statement.

21. I found working for the Church while I was in the Middle East
 (1) Greatly satisfying (2) Generally satisfying
 (3) A little satisfying (4) Not at all satisfying
22. My relationship with the Church was
 (1) Strong (2) Satisfactory
 (3) A little satisfactory (4) Not at all satisfactory
23. My relationship with the Church leaders was
 (1) Very good (2) Good (3) Not so good
 (4) Bad
24. My relationship with fellow overseas workers was
 (1) Very good (2) Good (3) Not so good
 (4) Bad
25. Potential for my career advancement within the S.D.A. Church in the Middle East was
 (1) Very good (2) Good (3) Not so good
 (4) Not at all
26. My participation in the work of the local church program--such as giving Bible Studies, giving out tracts or other activities--besides my own job was
 (1) Very often (2) Often (3) Hardly ever
 (4) Not at all
27. My preparation or training for the job I held in the Middle East was
 (1) Very adequate (2) Adequate
 (3) Somewhat adequate (4) Inadequate
28. The distribution of jobs and responsibilities between national workers and the missionaries was
 (1) Fair (2) Unfair

29. The quality of communication between workers and administrators was
 (1) Very good (2) Good (3) Not so good
 (4) Bad
30. Housing conditions for the national workers in the Middle East was
 (1) Very satisfactory (2) Satisfactory (3) Adequate
 (4) Fairly adequate (5) Poor
31. If you could have transferred to another area in the Middle East
 would you have left for North America?
 (1) Yes (2) No
32. If you had been given another assignment would you have left for
 North America?
 (1) Yes (2) No

SECTION III

Directions: Rate each of the following items as to the importance you feel it had on your decision to leave the Middle East. Rate each item according to the following scale (put only one number in each box):

- (1) Extremely Important
 (2) Important
 (3) Somewhat Important
 (4) Not at all Important
 (5) Does not Apply to Me

I left the church work in the Middle East

33. Because of health reasons
34. Because my husband/wife moved to North America
35. Because of social prejudice against Seventh-day Adventists
36. For a better climate
37. To be close to my relatives
38. Because I felt a lack of security working with the church
39. For the sake of my children's further education
40. Because my children were required to sit for tests on Sabbath
41. Because all schools in my country require school attendance on Sabbath

42. For personal continued education
43. For further work advancement
44. Because of insufficient opportunity for personal growth
45. Because I was dissatisfied with my job
46. Because of a lack of work challenge
47. Because of the lack of religious freedom
48. Because of the political instability in the Middle East
49. Because of the recent war in the Middle East--especially Lebanon
50. Because of the required army service which includes bearing arms
51. Because church leadership was too autocratic
52. Because of the behaviour of the church leaders
53. Because I disagreed with the school's policies and program
54. Because I felt I was more educated to serve American society than my own
55. Because national workers are not treated the same as the missionaries even though both have the same qualifications
56. Because of salary differences between national workers and missionaries which were unfair
57. Because I was not rehired
58. Because a national worker's salary is inadequate

SECTION IV

If today you would be invited to join the Seventh-day Adventist Church work in the Middle East Union, how would you rate EACH of the following items as to its relative influence upon the possibility of your accepting such an invitation? Rate ALL items (Put only one number in each box):

- (1) Extremely Important
 (2) Very Important
 (3) Somewhat Important
 (4) Not at all Important
 (5) Does not Apply to Me

59. An adequate salary which meets budgetary need without wife working
60. Possibilities for future work advancement
61. Possibilities for future education
62. Prestige of the position offered
63. Behaviour of the church administrators and leaders
64. Adequate housing
65. Opportunity to work in the line of my preparation
66. Adequately prepared to meet the need of the people of the Middle East
67. Equal treatment (pay and opportunity) as a missionary who has the same qualifications
68. A good relationship with the leaders, administrators and fellow workers
69. Reimbursement by the Division for the cost of education for the unsponsored student who finished graduate studies
70. To put national workers who have become U.S. or Canadian citizens on the same basis as other missionary workers
71. The need of the Middle East Union for my service

SECTION V

Please respond to the following questions:

72. At the time you decided to leave church work in the Middle East, did you have the impression that the church leaders were doing all that was within their power to hold you in church work over there?
 (1) Yes (2) No

جامعة اندروز
١٩٧٧ / ٤ / ٢٠

تحية وسلام ،

لقد عدت مع زوجتي انيسة وابنتنا ملودي من لبنان في اوائل تموز عام ١٩٧٦ بعد ان امضينا فترة من الزمن نعمل في كلية الشرق الاوسط . لقد عشنا سنتين الحرب باكملها ومررنا بايام لا بل شهور رهيبية لا نسمع فيها سوى دوي المدافع ولعلعات الرصاص عدا الحرائق التي كان لهيبها يضيء الليل ودخانها يحجب شمس النهار . كم رغبتنا اساتذة وطلابا الهرب من هذا الجحيم واغلاق الكارثة ، لكن ارادة الله كانت بان يبقى ونذهي السنة الدراسية . وكما كان اختيارنا رائعا عندما تسكنا بيومعيد الله اكثر من اي يوم هذا وجعلنا اتصالنا به وثيقا وهذا ما جعل عجايبه جليلة للجميع ، وكان لهذا الاختيار اثره العميق في حياة كل منا .

لقد تركنا لبنان بمرهين بسبب انتواء الفترة المحددة لاقامة ابنتنا ملودي وبضرورة عودتها الى الولايات المتحدة . وكان خروجنا من لبنان قصة لا تنسى ، فلقد نجحنا ان نصل الى عرفات برفقة احد اهل من القنابل والرصاص حينما اخذنا قاربنا الى قبرص ، واختيار السفر هذا لم يخلو من البرارة كما ان معظم الركاب اصحابهم دوار البحر بشدة طوال الليل . لقد تركنا كل ما انا في لبنان وخارجنا بوضع عشاءنا في اربابنا ، وكاننا نلجأ الى الله في كل هذا بل حزننا بزيادته .

ان العناء الشديد للغاية انما احق بلبنان المغالي من عواقب زواله وزيادتنا حينما نجد ان تفكيرنا حل " بلبنان الاخضر " . اننا لم نزل نعطي ليس لسلامة اخواننا وحسب بل من اجل الامة اللبنانية بأكملها .

ان غرضي من هذه الرسالة ان اورد كتابتنا التي وضعتها كهدية هائلة لاشيائكم الفكرة التي بين ايديكم ، فبعد عودتي هذه من لبنان رفقت ان انهي ما تبقى من العمل على المادة المذكورة في الدين من جامعة اندروز وهو كتابية الاطروحة "Dissertation" ورغم اختياري للموضوع والمرافقة عليه ، وجدت ترحيبا شديدا من الجامعة وشهادة ال Mission Department . بدعوى من الجميع العام ، على تغيير الموضوع والكتابة عن مشكلة تعانيتها الكنيسة في اكثر من مكان حول العالم ، وهذه المشكلة هي ترك العمال الوطنيين امالهم ونزوحهم من بلادهم الى بلدان اخرى خادمة اميركا الشمالية . وهذه الهجرة تترك بالغ الاثر على الدول وبشكل خاص في الشرق الاوسط والمنطقة الصعبة والخطرة من العالم . ويظن ان قادة الكنيسة الان فتست السبتيين وشققيها ادركوا ان عهد المرسلين "Missionaries" قد ولى وان تقدم العمل في اي مكان من العالم يجب ان يهمل على عاتق

اهل البلد نفسه . والقصد من ارسال اجانب الى اي مكان هو تدريب الوطنيين لوضع المسؤولية على عاتقهم ومسك زمام امور الكنيسة باكملها في ربوع بلادهم .

ويعلم الجميع ان هذه الطريقة هي الوحيدة لانجاح عمل الكنيسة في الشرق الاوسط وفي كل مكان . ولما لا يبدون على احد ان ير كلمة الله تتعثر في الشرق الاوسط ، والعمل بشكل عام يتراجع بتقيفرا الى الوراء . ومن المؤسف ان نرول هذه الساعة ان العمل في الشرق الاوسط ما زال ينتظر الاجانب لادارته ولانجازه ولكنه سيكون بلا جدوى كما كان في الماضي .

من هو المسؤول عن فشل العمل في الشرق الاوسط؟ هل فشلت الكنيسة منذ البدء بتدريب العمال الوطنيين ؟ او هل فشلت بنشر البشارة في الشرق الاوسط ؟ او ان الخطأ يقع علينا نحن العمال الوطنيين كما يقول البعض ؟ لهذا السبب جئت باسئلتني هذه راجيا الاجابة ويقدر الاثكان على كل سؤال حتى يمكننا ان نخرج من هذه الدراسة باستنتاج واضح ليس مبني على تحيز شخصي وانما على ادراك اجمالي ان هنالك عوامل رئيسية تحض ان لم تضغط على عمال الكنيسة الوطنيين للتخلي عن اعمالهم والتزوجهن عن اولادهم الى بلدان اخرى .

سيكون لهذه الدراسة تأثيرا كبيرا كبيرا وسما عدة جمة ليس للشرق الاوسط وحسب وانما لبقول اخرى لانها مناسبة لنا جميعا لتعبير عن شعورنا ونفسي رأينا في وضع العمل في الشرق الاوسط وحالة الكنيسة هنالك بعدنا بحال انهاء هذه الدراسة ان نؤدكم بالنتائج حية . سنضع ملخصا موجزا لرسالته لمن يشاء من هؤلاء الذين ساءوا في اكمال هذا الدرس ، اذ ان اردتم نسخة من الملخص نريد من انكم لارسالها فورا ، شكرا جزيلاً لما تشعبوه من وقت في املاء الاسئلة .

الرب يبارككم جميعا وايحفظنا اناء لجيئه القريب .

صديقكم المخلص ،

نجيب

نجيب نخله

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