A STUDY OF

RHETORICAL STRATEGIES

IN THE RISE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISM

by

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THE RISE OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISM: A RHETORICAL PROBLEM

October 22, 1844, was undoubtedly the most disappointing date in history for approximately seventy-five thousand American followers of lay preacher William Miller who had convinced these adherents that on that date Christ would return to earth in celestial triumph to receive and reward those who looked for and "loved his appearing."[1]

Belief in the second advent of Jesus Christ had been prominent in the Christian church since apostolic times. Historian Leroy Froom has listed names of over one hundred preachers in America alone who, from the sixteenth through the nineteenth centuries, emphasized this doctrine. The list includes such well-known names of the pulpit as Roger Williams, John Cotton, Jonathan Edwards and Timothy Dwight.[2] In other countries during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, there was widespread preaching of the Advent by such prominent advocates as Hentzepeter in Holland, Irving in England, Keller in Germany, Gaussen in France and Switzerland, Lacunza in South America, and widely-roving Joseph Wolff, who spoke fourteen languages native

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[1] An expression common to Advent literature.

[2] Leroy Froom, The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers, Vol. IV (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1950), pp. 44-45.

to the European and Asiatic continents.[3]

The unique feature of the nineteenth century interest in this doctrine lay in the emphasis on the imminence of the event coupled with the closely associated expectation of a fiery end to the world.[4] Miller's conviction that the combined events would occur on a near-future date stirred much interest. History texts which deal with nineteenth century America carry such passages as this:

> One of the major religious extravaganzas of this period was Millerism. William Miller (1782-1849), a Vermont farmer and a converted deist, preached the doctrine of the imminent second coming of Christ with great effect in the rural districts of New England and New York. Careful study of the Bible had convinced him that the world would come to an end on October 22, 1844, and the approach of this date threw thousands into a state of wild excitement.[5]

The aging Miller, an avid scholar but unschooled in public speaking (he had preached his first sermon at the age of fifty), created considerable local interest in the rural churches, but in 1840, when Joshua V. Himes, a born promoter from Boston, came under Miller's influence, he took the message to the big cities and "attracted thousands of adherents, particularly in the Northeast. In great camp meetings and city tent meetings

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[3]M. Ellsworth Olsen, A History of the Origin and Progress of Seventh-day Adventists (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1926), pp. 91-105.

[4]The disciples' question (Matthew 24:3) combines the events.

[5]Dexter Perkins and Glyndon Van Deusen, The United States of America: A History (New York: MacMillan, 1968), p. 465.

excitement rose until it often became hysteria."[6]

Disappointment was inevitable on October 22, 1844, when Miller's prediction failed. For the followers who had been keyed up for months to expect the unprecedented sight of a glorious heavenly extravaganza, it was a bitter experience. Hundreds had been expelled from church membership or had left voluntarily to avoid ridicule for their belief. Now they were left without the comfort of church affiliation or association of brethren which meant so much to people of that day. And, what was even worse for them at this time, the leadership of Miller, Himes and associates, stung by the embarrassment of having no ready explanation for the failure of prophecy, abdicated their positions of leadership and retreated into virtual obscurity.

What happened to the followers who had either longed for the predicted event or had been scared by the prospect of a judgment day? Many who were simply scared into the movement, renounced Millerism as a hoax and returned cynically to normal life. Hundreds, however, found this impossible and refused to give up hope. These continued to be known as "Adventists" as they clung to the hope that there had been some mistake and the Advent was still an eventuality. Meanwhile, minor voices in the movement began seeking to lead Adventists into modifications

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[6]Nelson M. Blake, A History of American Life and Thought (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1963), pp. 199-200.

of the original beliefs. Jerome Clark writes:

> These and other divergent views broke the Millerite movement into factions. Out of this period of confusion arose four main groups, all of which had participated in the Millerite movement: the Advent Christians, the Evangelical Adventists, the Life and Advent Union, and the Seventh-day Adventists.[7]

The Millerite Adventists were quite perplexed as they viewed their fellow believers fragmenting into groups led by such men as George Storrs, a prominent Adventist journalist; Jonathan Cummings, a personable Advent preacher; and Joseph Bates, an ex-sea captain and affluent promoter of Millerism.[8] For approximately fifteen years the remnants of Millerism were the objects of appeals from these men.

Bates' views and appeals gave rise to a group that was known for some years as "Sabbatarians" or "Sabbath-keeping Adventists" (because of their peculiarity in observing the seventh-day sabbath) until 1860 when they adopted the name "Seventh-day Adventists." Bates' efforts initiated a movement, the establishment of which was largely due to the leadership of James White. Though it eventually grew to greater proportions than the Millerite movement or any other subsequent groups, its beginnings were hardly spectacular. Booten Herndon observed: "Certainly no large organization, much less a world-wide movement

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[7]Jerome L. Clark, 1844: Religious Movements (Nashville, Tennessee: Southern Publishing Association, 1968), p. 50.

[8]Ibid., p. 65.

of the size and influence of the Seventh-day Adventist church, has had a less likely-to-succeed beginning."[9]

Two separate beliefs which originated in widely separated places were combined by Joseph Bates to form the basis of the Sabbatarian ideology. Though now penniless, Bates, relying upon the generosity of sympathetic Adventists, kept steadily traveling and visiting among Millerites who would listen to his doctrine. Toward the end of 1846 a younger couple, James and Ellen White, who had both been active in Millerism, joined the aging Bates to spark the new movement.

Bates and the Whites initiated the "Sabbath Conferences" of 1848, publishing ventures that provided communication as well as material for proselytism, and organization of many programs which contributed to the success of the movement in years to come.

While the other Millerite groups steadily diminished or barely held their ground through the years, the Seventh-day Adventists slowly but steadily grew into a worldwide movement which has a present membership of over two million.[10]

The Problem

What would attract men and women to a movement whose

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[9]Booten Herdon, The Seventh Day (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1960), p. 43.

[10]Annual Statistical Report published by General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, Washington, D.C., 1970.

adherents held such unpopular beliefs?

The Adventism advocated by Sabbatarians was less popular than Millerite Adventism, and F. D. Nichol reported that "the pages of this chapter could be filled with newspaper accounts of mob attacks on the Millerites, particularly in the closing weeks of the movement."[11] The added stigma of observing a different sabbath from the rest of their neighbors made this brand of Adventism more unalluring. Nichol lists three specific reasons why the Sabbatarian ideology lacked appeal:

> First, the doctrine of the Seventh-day Adventist Movement has ever proved an obstacle too great for the majority of people to surmount. This, coupled with a code of living that bans liquor, tobacco, the theater, the dance, and kindred amusements, has prevented all but the most ardent believers in the teachings from joining.
>
> Second, anything of a sensational or fanatical character has been discountenanced and condemned. From the first, the leaders have viewed holy living as having no connection with sensationalism in conduct.
>
> Third, the Seventh-day Adventist body has always held that the exact time of the advent cannot be discovered from a study of prophecy. This has inevitably kept the movement from rising to any climaxes of dramatic appeal to the multitudes, which climaxes might have resulted in at least temporarily large expansions of the membership.[12]

And yet, despite these things, the movement prospered. No evidence of affluence exists; there were no rich or well-known

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[11]Francis D. Nichol, The Midnight Cry (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1944), p. 224.

[12]Ibid., pp. 463-464.

individuals in the ranks of adherents to the early movement.

The present study investigates the rhetorical strategies of the leadership of the movement in an effort to determine the degree of credit to attribute to this source in accounting for the success of the movement.

In examining the rhetorical strategies, one is dealing with the judgmental choices involved in planning and executing all movement activities as they involve verbal communication. I take rhetoric to be the rationale of discourse, informative or suasive, oral or written.[13] All extant materials from the movement which have clues to the rhetorical choices of the leadership will be examined.

In this exploration such questions are posed as: What type of individuals created such a movement? What common ideology united them in this cause? How did they go about the task of creating appeals that attracted adherents? How did the leadership react to opposition that arose or threats to fragmentation within the movement? These questions are suggested by Simons' theory of a leader-centered persuasion[14] and need to be answered in order to reveal the significance of the rhetorical strategies.

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[13]Donald C. Bryant, "Rhetoric: Its Function and Its Scope," The Quarterly Journal of Speech, XXXIX (December, 1953), p. 401-424.

[14]Herbert Simons, "Requirements, Problems, and Strategies: A Theory of Persuasion for Social Movements," The Quarterly Journal of Speech, LVI (February, 1970), 1-11.

Additional questions need to be answered about those who responded to the appeals and became Seventh-day Adventists. What types of people were they? What motives moved them to adopt such an ideology with its inherent stigma? How many were representative of the Millerite context? What other contexts were they characteristically drawn from? Answers to these questions should reveal insights necessary to making judgmental evaluations of the effects of the rhetorical strategies.

In evaluating the rhetorical strategies of this movement, the critical focus will be upon effects in relation to the apparent intent of the originator of the strategy or rhetorical act. Leland Griffin, in his pioneering article, "The Rhetoric of Historical Movements," deals with the rhetorical dimension of the movement and includes the following rationale for "effects" oriented criticism: "A first and obvious principle is that the critic must judge the effectiveness of the discourse, individual as well as collective acts of utterance, in terms of the ends projected by the speakers and the writers."[15]

Bettinghaus, in commenting upon the role that persuasion plays in facilitating social change, noted that "persuasion is successful only when a receiver or set of receivers behaves in

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[15]Leland Griffin, "The Rhetoric of Historical Movements," The Quarterly Journal of Speech, XXXVIII (April, 1952), 187.

accordance with the intentions of the source."[16] This same writer adds that, "Judgments of the effects of persuasion cannot be based entirely on immediate, short-range effects of a message that passes between a source and a receiver. Nor can the stated intention of a source be used as a sole guideline for judging persuasion."[17] He concludes that "The estimate of effectiveness must be made by looking at the subsequent behavior of the receiver with respect to changes in his opinions, perceptions, emotions, or actions."[18]

It seems evident that effects of rhetorical strategies in a social movement are evidenced in the vocal expressions of its adherents, but also, and this is more useful to the researcher, in the cooperative behavior such as commitment and action as they relate to various programs of specific rhetorical acts of the leadership.

Certain limitations to the study are necessary. Griffin urged the student to take "the briefest historical movement" he can find.[19] A later writer specified "complexity of the task" as the reason for this limitation.[20]

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[16]Erwin Bettinghaus, Persuasive Communication (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1968), p. 7.

[17]Ibid., p. 15. [18]Ibid., p. 22.

[19]Griffin, op. cit., p. 185.

[20]Herbert Simons, "Requirements, Problems, and Strategies: A Theory of Persuasion for Social Movements," The Quarterly Journal of Speech, LVI (February, 1970), 2.

The focus of this study will be upon the inception period of the movement, "a time when the roots of a pre-existing sentiment, nourished by interested rhetoricians, begin to flower into public notice."[21] It is felt that this is the logical part of the movement to reveal evidence that should account for the rise and continuing success of the venture, and, furthermore, within this limited time period, one should be able to discover adequate proof, if such exists, to substantiate his belief that the success of the movement lies primarily in the area of rhetorical judgments.

This inception period, which had its beginning in the matrix of Millerism, will be considered as ending with the organization of the movement at its highest level, the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, which occurred in 1863. On that occasion nearly three hundred delegates from eight states representing some three thousand five hundred adherents, met in Battle Creek, Michigan, to effect organization.[22] Though not large, the dimensions of the movement at this time were such that it can fairly be said to have "flowered into public notice."

In summary, the problem will involve consideration of the effects of rhetorical strategies of the leadership of the Seventh-day Adventist movement during its inception period from 1844 to 1863. Aims of the study will include (1) isolating the

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[21]Griffin, op. cit., p. 186.

[22]The Review and Herald (July 16, 1861), p. 52.

rhetorical dimension of the social movement, (2) examining and assessing significance of characteristic rhetorical acts and patterns attributable to the leadership, (3) searching out clues to the effects produced primarily upon adherents to the movement, but also upon society at large, and (4) making some evaluative judgments concerning the choices made and the resources utilized which appear to have had a significant part in accounting for the rise of this movement.

Methodology

Scholars from various areas have made contributions of note to the understanding of social movements, but no particular discipline can claim the study of social movements as its registered specialty. Cameron points out that "a single social movement may be a different kind of phenomenon to different observers...consequently, a somewhat different series of questions present themselves to scholars from the various disciplines."[23] The present study, having announced its intent to seek to assess the rhetorical dimension of a movement, will adopt appropriate criteria which will suggest representative questions.

The general methodological approach is in line with that suggested by Ernest Bormann: (1) Describe the work (movement), (2) Apply some criteria for its evaluation, (3) Make some

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[23]William Bruce Cameron, Modern Social Movements (New York: Random House, 1966), p. 172.

Chapter Two: The "rhetorical situation" is dealt with in chapter two. "A rhetorical act occurs only within a situation, and the nature of that act is influenced profoundly by the nature of the encompassing situation,"[30] Brockriede observed. Lloyd Bitzer, who also wrote of the rhetorical situation, notes that "situations grow and come to maturity."[31] Millerism, which built to an intense state of excitement in 1844, produced such a sequence of growth. The situation it produced is surveyed utilizing insights set forth in the book When Prophecy Fails. The emergence of various groups from Millerism under unique circumstances can be most profitably considered in the light of Festinger, Riecken and Schachter's conclusions.

Chapter Three: Leadership, which emerged in the wake of the disconfirmation to give Adventism new meaning for the disappointed followers, is examined in this chapter. Joseph Bates, a retired sea captain and influential Millerite preacher, is recognized as the initial, though not the most aggressive, leader of the young movement. James and Ellen White, both vigorous young Millerite devotees, emerge as the chief leaders, working in marital partnership to unify and stabilize the movement with dynamic strategies.

Chapter Four: Attention is focused first upon the significance

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[30]Wayne Brockriede, op. cit., p. 5.

[31]Lloyd Bitzer, "The Rhetorical Situation," Philosophy and Rhetoric I (January, 1968), 12-13.

of the 1848 "Sabbath Conferences" as the first concerted attempt to unify and bind adherents to the cause. How they were unified on doctrine and activated to make converts to the movement is revealed as this series of conferences is investigated. The conference discussions led to an entry to the publishing field as both a method of reaching scattered interests and providing advocates with propaganda to make them more effective.

Chapter Five: Here the study focuses upon a rhetoric of identification. James White with his "Third Angel's Message" capitalizes on his ability to show direct relevance between the Sabbatarian cause and the original "faith" of William Miller. His attempts to show this relevance through a series of issues of The Advent Review is analyzed with the criteria offered by Wayne Brockriede. His six dimensions of a rhetorical situation--format, channels, people, functions, method, and contexts--serve nicely as a conceptual framework for examining White's rhetorical efforts within the situational context.

Chapter Six: Herbert Simons has suggested that movements be viewed in terms of rhetorical problems faced by their leaders. His leader-centered conception of persuasion in social movements is premised on the assumption that a movement must fulfill certain functional requirements such as attracting and molding workers into efficiently organized units, securing adoption of their ideology by attracting adherents, and reacting to resistance arising against the movement. Chapter six examines programs of

the movement designed to resolve or reduce the first two of these problems. The core of Messengers answered the need for personal visitation and persuasion of the widely scattered Millerites; the movement newspaper, Review and Herald served a number of needs from morale maintenance to medium of defense of the ideology. The youth program was instituted as one means of insuring the future of the movement by retaining children of adherents. A fourth program of significance is examined: the tent campaigns, which attracted unprecedented crowds and brought many under the influence of Sabbatarian persuasion who would never have otherwise been attracted to the movement.

These four strategic programs are examined as the most significant adaptations of strategy innovated by Sabbatarian leadership following the Sabbath Conferences and initial publishing ventures.

Chapter Seven: One of Simon's imperatives which he believes movement leadership must deal with is "resistance." Sabbatarian leaders, preachers and journalists, carried on a continuous rhetorical battle with opponents and spokesmen for other Adventist factions as well as established church leaders. Not only were there outside threats to the movement, but threats to disrupt the harmony of the developing unity also appeared within the ranks. Chapter seven surveys the rhetorical patterns of debate with opposing outside forces as well as the manner in which internal disruption was dealt with.

Chapter Eight: Early in the decade of the 1850's James White saw that if the movement were to achieve unity and growth, organization was indispensable. Chapter eight traces what was his most challenging task--that of achieving support for his organizational objectives. Because of strong negative attitudes Adventists developed through previous experience toward any attempt at organization, White's job was far from easy. From "gospel order" to legal incorporation was a ten year rhetorical battle achieved only by careful strategic planning and firm persistence.

Chapter Nine: In this chapter assessment of the rhetorical efforts of the leadership is found. Summary judgments about the relative merits of the various programs are given and some final conclusions are arrived at.

Sources

1) Adventual Collection: This is the best collection of manuscript sources available on Millerism. It includes over 800 letters written to or by William Miller, the principal Millerite papers, and many copies of Advent papers published after 1844 by men who were Millerites. Here also are found Miller's diary, official biography (by Sylvester Bliss), and a complete collection of the pamphlets constituting the Advent library.

These materials are adequate to provide a full picture of the Millerite background including activities, attitudes, and

intentions. These are particularly useful in understanding the situational context.

2) The White Estate Collection: This is the official White family collection which is supervised by a perpetual committee of high denomination officials, and has to date been under the immediate supervision of the secretary of the committee who is a member of the White family. The committee has carefully preserved all the original manuscripts of the writings of James and Ellen White from the earliest years. There are hundreds of letters as well as the original manuscripts of the extensive publications. Both James and Ellen wrote autobiographies as well as a joint biography. Ellen White, who is said to have written more for publication than any other woman, has set down in nine volumes entitled Testimonies for the Church, running commentaries on situations which occurred throughout the history of the movement during her seventy-five years of relationship to it. James White, who for many years edited not only The Review and Herald, which has been the official organ of the movement since early days of the movement, but he also edited other movement papers such as The Youth's Instructor, The Signs of the Times, and The Health Reformer, in addition to a number of books and pamphlets. Not all of these, of course, are of equal value to study of the movement, but selected portions are of great usefulness to a knowledge of leader strategies and choices significant to the rhetorical dimension. Insights to Mrs. White's role as counselor to the movement as well as to

James White's role as chief advocate and innovator are revealed in these sources located at Takoma Park, Washington, D.C.

3) The Advent Source Collection: This collection housed in a special room and vaults on the campus of Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary at Berrien Springs, Michigan, is a generalized collection which includes a wide variety of Advent material, some of which is not found in the other sources. These rare items include many tracts, pamphlets and books published by the Millerites, the early Seventh-day Adventists, and later theologians and promoters of various movement campaigns and programs. These materials are of particular value in providing viewpoints, in assessing reactions to movement leadership and in discovering consensus or disparity in relationships which are significant to the judging of persuasive effects.

4) Union College Collection: In their vaults at Lincoln, Nebraska, the librarians have an impressive number of source references from early Advent presses including: Miller's official biography by Bliss, Joseph Bates' autobiography, Ellen and James White's autobiography and all their published writings, the original Advent library, Miller's book of lectures, the complete issues of all the Advent publications from the beginnings of the Seventh-day Adventist Movement, several books by early movement participants such as Loughborough, Spicer, and Olsen. Also found here are the Annual Statistical Reports and General Conference Bulletins dating from movement organization in 1863.

Related Studies

Though no master's or doctoral studies of the Seventh-day Adventist Movement have been attempted, the writer feels particularly indebted to the scholarly work of Leroy Edwin Froom whose many years of interest and study of the Advent movement has culminated in two analytical works of real usefulness to this study. Volume four of Froom's Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers, concentrating upon Millerism and the rise of the Seventh-day Adventist Movement, pursues an over-all thesis, "The Historical Development of Prophetic Interpretation." The author has carefully and exhaustively documented his historical basis from original manuscripts, diaries, letters, sermons, articles and interviews of veteran participants in the movement.

Froom's more recent work, Movement of Destiny, gives evidence of further research but focuses more objectively upon unity and disparity within the developing movement. These works go beyond historical research to offering insights to the critic interested in "the crystallization of fundamental issues, the successive emergence of argument, appeal, counter argument, and counter-appeal,..."[32] Though Froom's interest is primarily a theological one, his works offer many helpful suggestions to the rhetorical critic.

The only leader of this movement who has been the subject of a significant scholarly study is Mrs. Ellen G. White. While

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[32]Griffin, op. cit., pp. 186-187.

several papers have been written on her speaking characteristics, the most comprehensive, by far, is Horace J. Shaw's doctoral dissertation done at Michigan State in 1959. Shaw's 550 page work attempts to place Mrs. White in perspective as a speaker within her church and in relation to other female speakers of the nineteenth century.

His study offers valuable aid in identifying through descriptive analysis of her activities, the role she played in developing characteristic views and activities of the movement, her contribution to unity and organization of the movement, and her unique position as guide and counselor to the cause.

Shaw examines Mrs. White's speaking occasions and audiences, provides a rhetorical analysis of invention, arrangement, and style of typical speeches made by Mrs. White, and analyzes her delivery. Shaw also discusses both immediate and long-term responses to her appeals.

While Mrs. White had begun to do very little public speaking in the movement during the period under study in this paper, Shaw's work aids in assessing her contributions in the role she so characteristically filled during the early years, that of guide and counselor. His observations and responses to her influence is also useful. It is hoped that while his study may add depth to this one, this study in turn should give context and added insights to his earlier study.

Rationale for the Study

When Edwin Black published his text on Rhetorical Criticism

in 1965, he observed that few rhetoricians had undertaken the task of analyzing the role of persuasion in social movements.[33] Nevertheless, Black recognized in movement study not only a new area of legitimate study, but also a most interesting one. "Griffin has opened a new and exciting prospect to rhetorical criticism," he wrote.[34]

As a critic studies rhetoric and public address, he cannot help but be impressed that rhetorical acts--speeches and other verbal communications--are not isolated activities which can be understood apart from the rhetorical situation in which they occur and which includes people, objects, and other verbal acts. Richard Gregg argues that "it is seldom, if ever, the case that an important discourse can be understood apart from the more extensive dialogue of which it is a part. Consequently, a number of rhetorical acts must be examined in combination in order to gain a complete historical perspective and avoid analytical distortion."[35]

As for the selection of the Seventh-day Adventist Movement from the many other social and religious movements available for study, the choice was a rather easy one for three reasons:

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[33]He found only three studies reported in speech journals prior to 1965.

[34]Edwin Black, Rhetorical Criticism (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1965), p. 22.

[35]Richard Gregg, "The Study of Rhetorical Criticism," ed. Keith Brooks, The Communicative Arts and Sciences (Columbus, Ohio: Charles Merrill, 1967), p. 45.

(1) It is a completely untouched study by rhetorical critics. (2) It has insights to offer of social and historical value. As Whitney R. Cross points out, it "provided a case history in the westward transit of New England culture."[36] In addition, the subject of religion has broader significance in this period and locality than might at first appear. "Religious forces were the driving propellants of social movements important for the whole country in that generation."[37] (3) It holds for the writer a personal interest, who, as a Seventh-day Adventist layman, is interested in a more objective view of his church's beginnings than is usually afforded by denominational historians. The words of Neal C. Wilson, Vice-President of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists for North America, are especially provocative: "We are living in an age when people like to have the whole story. It should be as honest and as accurate as possible, and the facts should support our conclusions."[38]

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[36]Whitney R. Cross, The Burned-Over District (New York: Harper and Row, 1950), p. ix.

[37]Ibid.

[38]Leroy Froom, Movement of Destiny (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1970), p. 15.

Chapter Two

THE MILLERITE CONTEXT OF ADVENTISM

Seventh-day Adventists, or "Sabbatarians," as they were called for almost twenty of their first years of existence, arose from a matrix of disappointed followers of William Miller. One might say that the Sabbatarian movement was a continuation or revival of the earlier movement, but this would be only partially true for there were other heirs of Miller. In order to obtain a full perspective on the rise of Seventh-day Adventism, one should examine the context of Millerite Adventism to learn of their goals and motives and to discover the significant choices made by Millerites subsequent to the disconfirmation of 1844.

A uniquely interesting and profitable theory of the behavior of people who become involved in messianic or millennial movements is found in a work entitled When Prophecy Fails by Leon Festinger, Henry W. Riecken and Stanley Schachter.[1] The authors postulate that if persons come to a predictive belief, take irrevocable action in its behalf and then are finally presented with undeniable evidence that the prediction is wrong, the persons will, as many historical cases have proved, emerge with

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[1]New York: Harper and Row, 1956.

a renewed fervor for convincing and converting other people to their views.[2]

Such a response to contradictory evidence, the authors of When Prophecy Fails assure us, can only be predicted where certain conditions prevail, including deep commitment, active engagement, specific ideology and a clear and undeniable disconfirmation. These conditions will be used here as criteria, as we examine the Millerite context of Adventism, to determine to what extent the situational context was proper for producing the specified behavior.

1. A belief must be held with deep conviction and it must have some relevance to action, that is, to what the believer does or how he behaves.[3]

Charles G. Finney, noted early nineteenth century evangelist, came to the New York and New England areas in 1825 with his "New Measure" gospel, setting the region aflame with his fervor and initiating what Jerome L. Clark has called a "time of unprecedented religious and social reforms."[4] The unfailing vocal and vigorous response of the people to the numerous reform movements arising here during the 1830's and 1840's, brought to the region the label, "Burned-over District."[5] Because the

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[2]Ibid., p. 3. [3]Ibid., p. 4.

[4]Jerome L. Clark, 1844: Religious Movements, Vol. 1 (Nashville, Tennessee: Southern Publishing Association, 1968), p. 9.

[5]Whitney R. Cross, The Burned-over District (New York: Harper and Row, 1939), p. 251.

people of these areas were so willing to accept and promote reforms of many types, it was said that "Ultraism" was born here. Whitney Cross has noted that the extremist characteristics of the people caused many New Yorkers and New Englanders to drift away from older, more established religious faiths and ideas into new, untried ways.[6] Extremism can go several directions. Therefore, some became more orthodox and more fundamentalist in their beliefs while others tended toward liberalism and rationalism. David M. Ludlum, historian of the early movements in Vermont, aptly describes the Millerite cause as "the summation of all the reforms of the age."[7]

Much of the appeal of Millerism lay in the deep conviction with which he held his views. They were not the hastily derived ideas of an inveterate religionist. With a background of loyalty and civic service, Miller had settled in Low Hampton, New York, and gained community respect as a gentleman farmer. "He was widely read, especially in history; he had early evinced literary and oratorical ability; he had a talent for persistent and careful research; and, above all, he was sincere and deeply in earnest."[8]

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[6] Ibid., chapter 12: "New Ideas," pp. 198-208.

[7] David M. Ludlum, Social Ferment in Vermont (New York: Harper and Row, 1939), p. 251.

[8] Arthur W. Spalding, Origin and History of Seventh-day Adventists (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1961), p. 20.

William Miller had been a Deist, but, prompted by religious discussions with a preacher-uncle, he declared that he began to study the scriptures with a determination to "harmonize all these apparent contradictions to my own satisfaction or be a Deist still."[9] This study led to his conversion in 1816 after which he soon became the leading member of the Low Hampton Baptist Church and read exhortations in the absence of the minister.

In his continuing study of the Bible, William Miller became convinced that the entire volume of the scriptures was pure revelation, and, guided by nothing but a concordance, he spent fourteen years in proving his contention to his own satisfaction.[10] Miller became fascinated with the prophecies, especially of the Old Testament. It was from prophecies he drew his conclusion that the world would come to an end with the Advent of Christ "about 1843." Because of the incredibility of his discovery and his obsession for certainty, he spent seven years checking and rechecking his calculations before saying a word to anyone of the matter. After determining the certainty of his belief, he became obsessed with exhorting everyone to bring their lives into conformity with the Lord's will in order to be prepared for

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[9]Sylvester Bliss, Memoirs of William Miller (Boston: J.V. Himes, 1853), p. 46.

[10]Ibid., pp. 1-84 is the chief original source of biographical information about William Miller.

that momentous event. Invitations to speak were soon coming to Miller from many rural churches throughout New England. He fulfilled all appointments with marked effect. One minister reported: "I have never witnessed so powerful an effect in any place as in this, on all who heard."[11]

By 1834 Miller was able to arrange his affairs to allow devotion of his full time to lecturing. Not now being able to comply with all requests, he arranged for a printing of his lectures for the purpose of reaching a larger audience. Ten years after his first lecture, William Miller estimated that he preached "about 4,500 lectures to at least 500,000 people."[12]

2. The person holding the belief must have committed himself to it; that is, for the sake of his belief, he must have taken some important action that is difficult to undo.[13]

Early in William Miller's ministry the general response he evoked was pleasing to the ministers in whose churches he appeared. They praised his efforts which had a converting, reforming effect, increasing their devotion to religion. But as Millerism became a recognized movement with a clear focus upon the belief in a premillennial Advent, high church officials were alarmed. Adventism was claiming undue attention of too many of their parishioners,

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[11]Letter to William Miller from E.B. Crandall, January 1, 1838, Adventual Collection.

[12]William Miller, Quoted by Everett N. Dick, "Behold He Cometh," Review and Herald (November 12, 1931), 4.

[13]Festinger, Riecken and Schachter, op. cit., p. 4.

and many of their ministers were making this the central topic of their preaching. Jerome Clark tells why friendship turned to hostility in such a short time:

> By this time 1842 , Adventist lecturers were finding it increasingly difficult to gain entry to the Protestant churches. They had been joyously welcomed in the 1830's, but they were now shunned. Ministers who at first had looked on the movement as a means of bringing revival within their churches now feared the growing influence and strength of the movement. Friendship turned to hostility, and many of the clergy began preaching against the Millerites.[14]

While the thought of an imminent advent was an exciting prospect, it was in opposition to the generally held theological views of most churches whose tenets included belief in a thousand-year millenium prior to the Advent of Christ. Condemnation of the Adventists from pulpits became common in the churches. An increasing number of known believers came under strong pressures to recant or be expelled.[15] This was a painful prospect in a day when church fellowship was valued highly.

False rumors and scurrilous stories were circulated by word of mouth and in the press that were designed to impugn the cause of Adventists. Dozens of Advent papers came into existence to debate the opposition and to correct rumors. Francis D. Nichol wrote: "The story of the running fight--that is precisely

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[14]Jerome L. Clark, op. cit., pp. 38-39.

[15]Church trials described by Ellen G. White in her "Biographical Sketch," Testimonies for the Church Vol. 1 (Mountain View, California: Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1948), chapter IV, pp. 35-44.

the word to use--carried on between the Millerites and their opponents of the religious and secular press would fill a volume in itself."[16]

In the face of this strong opposition and social ostracism, it took a decided behavioral commitment to step out and join the Advent movement. Festinger and associates observed that "This usually follows almost as a consequence of the situation,"[17] in relation to messianic movements and their adherents. They explain their comments in these words:

> If one really believes a prediction, for example, that on a given date the world will be destroyed by fire, with sinners being destroyed and the good being saved, one does things about it and makes certain preparations as a matter of course. These actions may range all the way from simple public declaration to the neglect of worldly things and the disposal of earthly possessions. Through such an action and through the mocking and scoffing of non-believers there is usually established a heavy commitment on the part of the believers.[18]

In spite of the consequences several hundred clergymen risked reputation and career to join in the Millerite crusade. Some of them--Elon Galusha, John Linsey, Henry Dana Ward, Joshua Himes, Charles Fitch, Josiah Litch, Joseph Marsh--had held high prestigious offices in their church organizations. Their commitment cost them a great deal status-wise. Others, not of the

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[16]F. D. Nichol, The Midnight Cry (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1944), p. 89.

[17]Festinger, Riecken and Schachter, op. cit., p. 5.

[18]Ibid.

clergy, made great commitments also. Such a one was H. B. Northrop, prominent New York attorney, who left an established profession to promote Adventism. Many, no doubt, like retired sea captain Joseph Bates sold all their possessions and devoted their entire fortunes to the cause. And there were those like Joseph Marsh, editor of the Palladium, organ of the Christian denomination, who, Whitney Cross states, "swung large portions of his denomination into the Millerite movement before being relieved of his editorial post for over-emphasizing Adventism."[19]

Some went beyond commitment to become aggressive leaders. Such a one was Joshua V. Himes, pastor of the Chardon Street Chapel in Boston, who, with the blessings of William Miller, immediately became a dynamic public relations director for all the activities of the movement when he joined in 1840. In a whirlwind of action, Himes promoted a wide variety of projects that brought the Advent message to the attention of every person in the United States. He founded journals, scheduled speakers, arranged conferences and sent men door to door to fulfill his promise to Miller: "The doors of every city in the Union shall be opened to you; your warning must go to the ends of the earth."[20]

Typical of the itinerant lecturers who made a tremendous contribution to the movement, was George Storrs, late a Wesleyan

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[19]Whitney R. Cross, op. cit., p. 295.

[20]Stewart Holbrook, "The Bridegroom Cameth Not," The American Mercury (May, 1949), 602.

abolitionist, who left home, family and position to hunt out converts on the advancing frontiers. In 1841 he estimated that he had delivered six-hundred-twenty-seven hour-and-a-half lectures and made five thousand converts in a single year.[21]

Initiated by a group of laymen in rural New York State, the "Adventists Associations" began to spread rapidly throughout the movement. These were local units organized to raise funds for the expensive activities multiplying under Joshua Himes' direction. Funds raised in these units supplemented by the large collections taken up in the camp meetings, insured adequate financing. This action on the part of the laymen of the movement increased their sense of involvement and commitment.[22]

Ridicule and persecution had become the lot of the rank-and-file Millerites, strengthening the commitment of the true believers, but one of the most crucial tests of their commitment came in the summer of 1843 when Advent preachers began their insistent call for their followers to come out of the established churches. Whitney Cross wrote:

> The Adventists responded like other, earlier Ultraists. They had the light and were superior to sectarians. Opposition could only emanate from deliberate sinfulness...The 'Whore of Babylon' must have meant the Protestant as well as the Catholic Church.[23]

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[21]Quoted by William Miller in a letter to Truman Hendryx, May 19, 1841, Adventual Collection.

[22]Isaac C. Wellcome, History of the Second Advent Message (Yarmouth, Maine: Advent Christian Society, 1874), p. 231.

[23]Cross, op. cit., p. 302.

The exodus, which was general, could only represent a strong behavioral commitment, and tended to prepare the adherents for the ultimate display of voluntary commitment ever shown by a large group. Responding to suggestions in the Advent papers to "dispose of all you have,"[24] thousands of Adventists in the summer of 1844 demonstrated their depth of conviction by selling or giving away all their worldly goods. The farmer-adherents demonstrated their faith by refusing to harvest their crops.[25]

3. The belief must be sufficiently specific and sufficiently concerned with the real world so that events may unequivocally refute the belief.[26]

William Miller had meticulously worked out his calculations on the advent during early years of Bible study. Francis D. Nichol's account reads:

> Specifically, he put his first and greatest emphasis on the prophetic declaration, "Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed." Daniel 8:14. Believing (as most Bible scholars of his day did) that the 'cleansing of the sanctuary' involved the purging of the earth by fire, the 'days' in symbolic prophecy stand for years (Numbers 14:34, Ezekial 4:6), and that this time prophecy began in 457 B.C. (at the time of issuing the decree to rebuild Jerusalem), he reached this final conclusion: "I was thus brought, in 1818, at the close of my two years' study of the Scriptures, to the solemn conclusion that in about twenty-five years from

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[24]First suggestion found in Editorial, Voice of Truth, July 27, 1844.

[25]Francis D. Nichol, op. cit., pp. 238-239.

[26]Festinger, Riechen and Schachter, op. cit., p. 4.

> that time all the affairs of our present state would be wound up." (William Miller, Apology and Defense, p. 5)[27]

When William Miller began preaching in 1831, he jotted down in a small note book his beliefs which he considered of utmost importance. The five tenets below, taken directly from that note book, show the centrality of Christ's Advent in his thinking.

1. Christ will return visibly in the clouds about 1843.
2. The righteous dead will be raised and join the righteous living to receive immortality and forever reign with Christ.
3. The earth will be cleansed with fire and restored as the dwelling place for the saints.
4. The wicked are to be destroyed at Christ's coming.
5. The Biblical millenium is one thousand years following the resurrection.[28]

After 1840 Millerism had many voices, but the centrality of the belief in the Advent was maintained. Following the first of a series of General Conferences called by the leaders, a statement was released to the press. In addition to assuring the public that the movement's object was not to promote something novel, but "to revive and restore this ancient faith," the statement concluded by drawing attention to their unity on the all-important belief in the Advent:

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[27]Francis D. Nichol, op. cit., p. 33.

[28]William Miller, handwritten in a small note book, Adventual Collection.

> Though in some of the less important views we are not ourselves agreed, yet we are unanimously agreed and established in this all-absorbing point, that the coming of the Lord to judge the world is now specially nigh at hand.[29]

Many means were adopted to insure that views of the movement come to the attention and be understood by every living person. Literature of all kinds was turned out by steam presses which Himes ordered to run twenty-four hours a day. The largest tent Americans had ever seen was ordered and manned by a crew which moved it every few days from city to city. The largest halls available in the large cities were leased and the best speakers scheduled. Traveling agents were commissioned to visit every house with "Advent libraries."

Through Advent newspapers Millerites were oriented toward relating themselves to others in a way to best represent the cause. At the second General Conference in Lowell, Massachusetts, June 15, 1841, guidelines were laid down that were to be followed by all adherents. These are given below to show that they were designed not only to keep Millerites conscious every minute of their commitment, but also keep all their associates aware of their views and yet maintain the best possible image with them.

1. Personal consecration: Labor and sacrifice are essential but watchfulness and prayer are indispensable.

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[29]"The First Report of the General Conference of Christians Expecting the Advent of Our Lord Jesus Christ," p. 12, Adventual Collection.

2. Personal conversation: Converse with others on religious topics, especially that of the second advent. Force yourselves to talk with everyone.
3. Form Bible classes for study of this great question.
4. Social meetings for prayer and exhortation are a must.
5. Make a practice of questioning your ministers on the advent; propose texts of scripture for their explanation.
6. Circulate our books--multitudes will read if supplied.
7. If your church opposes your views, it usually is best not to separate from them. Stay and work to disseminate your views.
8. If you meet with opposition, scorn, reproach never murmur nor be impatient.
9. Be sure every town is supplied with the second advent library and let them be free to all who will read and return them.[30]

These became the accepted "ground-rules" among Millerites for the duration of the life of the movement. They were printed and reprinted widely in Advent newspapers with ample explanation and urging to be faithful, guarding against a "censorious spirit," appearance of fanaticism, or a "holier than thou" attitude.

4. Such undeniable disconfirmatory evidence must occur and must be recognized by the individual holding the belief.[31]

The event predicted was such that denial was virtually impossible. The Millerites had publicly proclaimed Christ's coming in the clouds of heaven to be of such a nature that

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[30]Cited from Signs of the Times (August 2, 1841), 69-70.

[31]Festinger, Riechen and Schachter, op. cit., p. 4.

"every eye would see Him."[32]

The original prediction of Miller had specified the Advent to occur "sometime between March 1843 and March 1844 [limits of the Jewish sacred year]."[33] When this time passed uneventfully, the feeling of disappointment was not too great because the time was considered to be a bit vague, but soon a scholar named Samuel Snow corrected the prediction from knowledge of Jewish time calculations unavailable to William Miller. By mid-summer 1844, anticipation was building toward a much greater climax of fervor and zeal. Snow had pin-pointed the exact date of October 22, 1844 for the Advent, and in a few month's time there was a wholesale acceptance of this date among Millerites. They were fully committed until the day passed. Luther Boutelle, who was among those disappointed, wrote:

> Every one felt lonely, with hardly a desire to speak to any one. Still in the cold world! No deliverance--the Lord not come! No words can express the feelings of disappointment of a true Adventist then.[34]

No one attempted to deny the disconfirmation. What the Millerites believed fully would be their triumph became their ignominy. As Festinger and associates wrote, "There is usually

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[32]Signs of the Times (June 1, 1842), p. 69.

[33]William Miller manuscript, "A New Year's Address to Those Who Believe in the Second Advent of Jesus Christ" (undated), Adventual Collection.

[34]Quoted by Everett N. Dick, "The Great Disappointment," Review and Herald (November 19, 1931), p. 6.

no mistaking the fact that they (the predicted events) did not occur and the believers know that...In other words, the unequivocal disconfirmation does materialize and makes its impact on the believers."[35]

5. The individual believer must have social support. It is unlikely that one isolated believer could withstand the kind of disconfirming evidence we have specified. If, however, the believer is a member of a group of convinced persons who can support one another, we would expect the belief to be maintained and the believers to attempt to proselyte or to persuade non-members that the belief is correct.[36]

Festinger, Riechen and Schachter's fifth condition is concerned, not with the parent movement itself, but is related primarily to activity subsequent to the disconfirmation which one might expect to shatter the movement and disperse the adherents. Their assumption is that the preceding conditions must be present during the life of the movement in order to safely predict that continued proselyting will follow from adherents who refuse to accept the disconfirmation, but that to continue their efforts after disconfirmation requires more than individual determination.

Millerite leaders were plainly baffled over the disconfirmation and had no explanation to offer. Miller himself said simply, "I have reckoned all the time I can. I must now wait and watch..."[37]

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[35]Festinger, Riechen and Schachter, op. cit., p. 5

[36]Ibid., p. 4.

[37]Letter from William Miller to Dr. I. O. Orr, December 13, 1844, Adventual Collection.

With this last public pronouncement, the chief leader of the movement retired, old and ill, to his Low Hampton farm to live out his few remaining years. Nor was there significant positive leadership from the other members of the "Big Four" of the movement. A final conference was called at Albany, New York, in April of 1845, from which there ensued little more than a statement to Millerites urging them to not give up a belief in Christ's Second Advent. Jerome Clark says that "this Albany conference of 1845 was the last serious attempt to hold all the Millerites together in one body."[38]

Though the original movement appeared to disintegrate, it did not die with the Albany Conference. If we consider the essence of Millerism to be a belief in the Second Advent of Jesus Christ, it must be recognized that thousands were unable to forget or reduce the importance of those cognitions. Miller, in a letter to a friend, spoke of some who apparently were merely scared into thinking the event might occur,[39] but subsequent evidence indicates that a good majority refused to accept despair or give up belief that the Advent might yet occur.

This continued interest and revived zeal was due largely to the efforts of younger and lesser leaders in Millerism who came forward to succeed the "Big Four", though they were unable to hold the adherents together in one body. The Adventists, though

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[38]Jerome L. Clark, 1844: Religious Movements Vol. 1 (Nashville, Tennessee: Southern Publishing Association, 1968), p. 63.

[39]Letter from William Miller to Dr. I. O. Orr, December 13, 1844, Adventual Collection.

having a common belief in the Advent, no longer had an impending date which all were willing to rally to. A sizable group followed the leading of George Storrs, editor of an Advent paper called The Bible Examiner, who advocated some minor theological differences. Another larger group followed Jonathan Cummings, a well-known Advent preacher, whose popularity appeared to stem largely from the fact that he claimed to have "new light" on the prophecies from which he preached new possibilities for dates of the Second Advent.[40]

A third group which succeeded at first in picking up only token support from former Millerites was led by Joseph Bates, sea captain turned preacher, who was soon joined by James and Ellen White. This group added to their belief in the Advent, a second basic distinctive tenet, observance of the seventh-day Sabbath, and, thus, became known as "Sabbatarians."[41]

Whatever the loyalty, however, whether to George Storrs, Jonathan Cummings or to Joseph Bates and James White, a great number of those who experienced the disconfirmation continued to hold faith and lend social support to the continued proselyting.

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[40] Arthur W. Spalding, Origin and History of Seventh-day Adventists (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1961), p. 166.

[41] Ibid., p. 143.

Chapter Three

LEADERSHIP IN ATTAINING IDEOLOGICAL CONSONANCE

In just such a situation as was examined in the preceding chapter, Festinger and associates declare that, "we should expect to observe believers making determined efforts to eliminate the dissonance or, at least, to reduce its magnitude."[1] Hans Toch, who also studied similar problematic situations, observed that, "many will lapse into apathy, but other persons will begin to search for plausible solutions."[2]

Less than one month after the disappointment, a statement was published in the two leading Millerite newspapers.[3] There was a frank confession that they had been "twice disappointed." This referred to the disappointment of the prophetic year (1843) prediction by Miller and to the disappointment of October 22, 1844, a date discovered by S. S. Snow. "Those who do not believe with us," continued the address, "honestly suppose that such disappointments cannot be reconciled with an adherence to our faith."[4] The purpose of most of the address that followed was to show how a person could still be a consistent, sensible

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[1]Leon Festinger, Henry Riecken, Stanley Schachter, When Prophecy Fails (New York: Harper and Row, 1956), p. 27.

[2]Hans Toch, The Social Psychology of Social Movements (Indianapolis, Indiana: Bobbs-Merrill, 1965), p. 246.

[3]The Advent Herald, November 13, 1844, pp. 108-112; The Midnight Cry, November 21, 1833, pp. 161-166.

[4]The Midnight Cry, November 21, 1844, pp. 162-163.

Adventist after these disappointments.

In the preceding chapter it was noted that the Millerites fragmented into various groups over secondary views, but all still maintained belief in the Second Advent. Since it is the stated design of this study to investigate the rise of Seventh-day Adventists, the only surviving Millerite group to attain movement proportions, it will be the object of this chapter to focus on how and by whom this movement originated.

Three men, Hiram Edson, Dr. F. B. Hahn and Owen Crozier, all of Port Gibson, New York, emerged from the all-night vigil of October 22, 1844 with a determination to study until they could come up with an explanation for the failure of prophetic prediction made by Miller. Three months later they were convinced that they had a satisfactory explanation and proceded to publish their views in an "extra" newspaper, The Day-Star, dated February 7, 1846.

The explanation held that Miller's calculations (corrected by S. S. Snow) were sound, but their error lay in expecting the appearance of Christ at the end of the prophetic period. Instead, the theory claimed, Christ on that day entered the Sanctuary in heaven to begin judgment procedures on mankind, preparatory to his Second Advent, an event which was still in the future. The "cleansing", then, was not a fiery holocaust, as had been generally expected, but a "cleansing" of the heavenly sanctuary of the sinful records of mankind. Thus, the Hahn-Edson-Crozier explanation came

to be known as the "sanctuary doctrine."[5]

Many miles from Port Gibson, a group of Adventists had built themselves a meetinghouse near Washington, New Hampshire, and were shepherded by a veteran Methodist-Adventist minister named Frederick Wheeler. Into this congregation early in 1844 came a young Seventh-day Baptist named Rachel Oakes who influenced a number of the group, including the minister, to accept the seventh day as the Sabbath.[6] The news of this development caught the attention of two journalists, T. M. Preble and J. B. Cook, who began writing articles setting forth the reasons for the observance of the seventh day in some of the Advent papers.

Joseph Bates, an avid reader, saw the Preble and Cook articles, became interested, and traveled to Washington, New Hampshire, in March, 1845, for an investigation. "In a few days," he says, "my mind was made up to keep the fourth commandment."[7]

Meanwhile, the interest generated by Crozier's articles in the Day-Star prompted Hiram Edson to announce a conference at his home in Port Gibson for the purpose of discussing the findings of his trio. To Edson's invitation, Joseph Bates and James White responded enthusiastically, as they had become

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[5]Arthur W. Spalding, Origin and History of Seventh-day Adventists Vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1961), p. 108.

[6]Letter from Frederick Wheeler to James White, December, 1851, White Estate Collection.

[7]Joseph Bates, The Seventh Day Sabbath, A Perpetual Sign, Pamphlet (privately published by Bates in August, 1846).

interested in the Day-Star's message. Though White, because of a conflicting appointment did not attend, Bates went and not only accepted the Sanctuary Doctrine, but also made a few converts to the Sabbath Doctrine which he had recently embraced.

Fascinated by these two doctrines, the Sanctuary and the Sabbath, Joseph Bates made them the chief focus of his sermons as he traveled thereafter, drawing nearly one hundred Millerites to his views during 1845-6.[8]

James White and Ellen Harmon had been two of William Miller's youngest and most active proselytes. White had become acquainted with Joseph Bates and his views in the spring of 1845 shortly after meeting Ellen Harmon. James and Ellen were married in August, 1846, after which they joined Bates in active leadership of the new cause.[9]

Joseph Bates pioneered the movement and continued throughout the inception period to play a leading part in its promotion. James White worked side by side with Bates for several years until his aggressive leadership began to dominate movement affairs, after which he was recognized as the undisputed leader until his death in 1881. His wife, Ellen

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[8]Ellen White, "Biographical Sketch," Testimonies to the Church (Mt. View, California: Pacific Press, 1948), p. 77.

[9]Ibid., p. 75.

came to occupy a unique position as counselor and visionary guide to the movement.

Before further examining the initial activities of the evolving movement, brief sketches of these three leaders are offered here.

Joseph Bates

Joseph Bates has been characterized as a sincere decisive man of principle, a tireless reformer, and a persuader of unusual clarity.

While a teenager young Bates learned a memorable lesson which helped make him a man of principle. While an impressed sailor captured by the British fleet in the War of 1812, he alone (in a group of captured Americans) escaped having fingers hacked off because he was the only one who told the truth in the interrogation.

Bates, as a young adult, made some rather unusual decisions that were, no doubt, difficult. As he observed the behavior of his fellow seamen, he vowed never to drink alcoholic beverages again. Sometime later he made the same vow with tobacco.[10] Shortly after his marriage in 1818, he vowed to serve God for the remainder of his life.[11]

Bates became an ardent reformer. Not content with reforming

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[10]Joseph Bates, Autobiography (Battle Creek, Michigan: SDA Publishing Association, 1868), p. 180.

[11]Ibid., p. 180.

his own life habits, he had an unusual concern for others. As captain of his own ship he took drastic steps to reform his crew. He forbade drinking, swearing and Sunday labor. His program met with strong opposition, but he stuck firmly by it, providing Sunday worship services for the crew himself.[12]

Bates retired to Fairhaven at the age of thirty-five and occupied himself with reforms and benevolent projects. In 1824 he organized the Fairhaven Temperance Society, reported to be the first of its kind in New England. His concern for the morals of sailors led Bates to form the Seaman's Friend Society. In 1835 he became agitated over slavery and organized the Fairhaven Antislavery Society.[13]

Bates also busied himself with the religious activities of the community. With three other men he financed the building of a new Christian Church in his home town, each paying a fourth of the cost. At the same time Bates was contributing liberally to the Missionary Herald, a journal promoting missions. He also became active in support of the American Tract Society.[14]

A strong believer in vocational training for youth, Bates bought and equipped two farms on which he began the raising of silk worms using student labor from a nearby academy.[15]

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[12]James White, Life of Bates (Battle Creek, Michigan: SDA Publishing Association, 1877), p. 209.

[13]Ibid., p. 206.

[14]Ibid., p. 233.

[15]Bates', op. cit., pp. 242-243.

In 1840 he and his wife became devoted Millerites and shortly sold their farms, home, and expended his entire retirement fund ($11,000) for the sake of the cause.[16]

Though Joseph Bates had little formal schooling (having gone to sea at the age of fifteen), he became a leading advocate and writer in the Advent movement. As a sponsor of the first of the General Conferences of the Millerites he played an important part in subsequent conferences, becoming chairman of the third conference out of which came some of the most important decisions affecting the Millerite movement.[17]

Bates' physical stamina was such that he easily outdid the younger men of the movement. He was the first Advent worker to enter Canada, Ohio, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin. A letter mailed by Bates from Montreal, dated January 1, 1852, reveals a little of the hardships he endured in his labors:

> Have been working our way to the West, along the south shore of Lake Ontario, andowhenever we have learned that there were scattered sheep in the back settlements north of us, we have waded through the deep snow from two to forty miles to find them, and give them the present truth; so that in five weeks we have traveled hundreds of miles.[18]

As an advocate for the Sabbatarians, Bates was not only the first spokesman for the movement, he remained the leading

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[16] *Life of Bates*, p. 243.

[17] Everett Dick, *Founders of the Message* (Washington,D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1938), p. 126.

[18] Letter to James White from Joseph Bates, *White Estate Collection*.

"Messenger" even after there were more than forty advocates. He led the rest in mileage traveled, meetings held and converts won. Dozens of letters appearing in The Review and Herald through the years of the inception period under study were from individuals who gave credit to Joseph Bates for their conversion to the movement. Very frequently these letters pay tribute to Bates' "clarity" and "forceful presentation." In scanning the records of conferences held by the movement, one is impressed with the number of times Bates was elected chairman, a real tribute to the popularity of his leadership.

James White

For a boy who had not been able (for health reasons) to attend formal schooling until his nineteenth year, but then in a period of twelve weeks mastered most of the secondary subjects and received a certificate to teach, one would have to grant that he was mentally alert and determined. After attending Reedfield Academy for a term, White was set upon getting a college education, but upon hearing the preaching of Joshua Himes and William Miller at a campmeeting, he became obsessed to preach Adventism.[19]

Though young and inexperienced when he rode off on a borrowed horse and with borrowed bridle to preach Millerism, White developed a boldness and confidence as he faced stiff

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[19]James White, Life Incidents (Battle Creek, Michigan: SDA Publishing Association, 1868), pp. 12-14.

Universalist and agnostic opposition all over New England. James White's traits of character are best identified by his long-time colleague, Uriah Smith, with whom he worked closely for more than thirty years. Smith says:

> In times of confusion and excitement he was always calm and cool; he was never given to fanaticism; he was endued with remarkable acuteness of perception to determine the most judicial moves to make; he never yielded to discouragements; he looked to future wants of the work and made provision; he was a man of strong personal friendships and of a remarkably generous nature.[20]

William A. Spicer, who knew White as a leader, wrote of him:

> James White had the gift of carrying people along with him in joy and enthusiasm for the truth and work of God, and with a natural unstudied grace and dignity that kept everything to the high, thoughtful, spiritual level. He had the qualities that were needed in a leader in those early days as the Advent movement was taking form.[21]

It was not his comrades alone who saw in James White unusual traits of leadership; members of the public recognized fine traits in his makeup. On the day following his death in 1881, an editorial appeared on the front page of the Battle Creek Journal, in which editor George Williard said:

> He was a man of the patriarchal pattern, and his character was cast in the heroic mold. If the logical clearness to formulate a creed; if the power to infect

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[20]Uriah Smith, Eulogy, delivered at Battle Creek, Michigan in the Seventh-day Adventist Tabernacle, August, 1881. Copy in Tabernacle files.

[21]William A. Spicer, Pioneering Days of the Advent Message (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1941) p. 145.

> others with one's own zeal, and impress them with one's own conviction; if the executive ability to establish a sect and to give it form and stability; if the genius to shape and direct the destiny of great communities; be a mark of true greatness, Elder White is certainly entitled to the appellation, for he possessed not one of these qualities only, but all of them in a marked degree.
>
> He had the rare power of social organization, and laid the foundation, and marked the design, for the erection of a social and religious structure for others to develop and further complete.
>
> He lived to see the Adventist denomination with all its various institutions with which he has been identified as founder and chief executive, firmly established upon a stable basis.[22]

Ellen Harmon White

A sickly youth, Ellen Harmon had little interest in living until at the age of twelve she and her family were stirred by the lectures of William Miller in Portland, Maine. So zealous did they become in Millerism that the entire family was soon expelled from the Methodist church.[23]

Ellen, in her newfound interests, experienced alternate periods of depression and exhileration. She was happy in the satisfaction of service yet saddened by opposition from those who thought her too young to engage in so serious a work. She wrote in her diary: "I often visited families and engaged in earnest prayer with those who were oppressed by fears and

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[22]Editorial, Battle Creek Journal (August 8, 1881), p. 1. Micro-film files of the Public Library, Battle Creek, Michigan.

[23]Ellen G. White, "Biographical Sketch," Testimonies to the Church Vol. 1 (Mountain View, California: Pacific Press, 1948), pp. 9-11.

despondence."[24] This experience in visiting and counseling with various kinds of people gave Ellen Harmon an understanding of individuals which would later be a distinct advantage as leading counselor to the new movement.

As the time of the predicted Advent drew near, Millerites became increasingly subject to ridicule and persecution, causing them to withdraw from society and spend more and more time together in their own circles. In these frequent gatherings they solemnly searched one another's souls for evidence of readiness for the momentous event. Ellen wrote: "Worldly business was for the most part laid aside...We carefully examined every thought and emotion as if upon our deathbeds."[25] Though perhaps the youngest of the hopeful, Ellen Harmon was always found in these gatherings, thriving on the joy of participation. Speaking later of the year, 1844, she recalled that, "This was the happiest year of my life."[26]

This pattern of activity which she developed at this time became a pattern for her subsequent activity after the disconfirmation. One thing was added to bring a charisma to her personal image in the eyes of many--her visionary gift. In December, 1844, she began to experience what she claimed to be "divine visions"

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[24]James and Ellen White, Life Sketches (Battle Creek, Michigan: SDA Publishing Association, 1880), p. 188.

[25]Ellen White, "Biographical Sketch," op. cit., p. 51.

[26]Ibid., p. 55.

months--ostracism from many Adventists. The Albany conference had warned Adventists against new fanatical views and specifically against "Jewish Fables," a direct reproach to the Sabbatarian views Bates had begun to preach.[39]

Now, Ellen White recalls, "We entered upon our work penniless, with few friends, and broken in health. In this condition, without means and with few sympathizers with our views, we began. Most of our meetings were held in private houses. Our congregations were small. It was seldom that any came into our meetings except Adventists, unless they were attracted by curiosity to hear a woman speak."[40]

With two basic, distinctive doctrines, the Sanctuary and the Sabbath, and a following of approximately one hundred scattered adherents, the poverty-stricken Whites, and the now penniless Joseph Bates (he had spent all in the Millerite campaign), faced the challenge of how to turn this handful into a unified, efficient group who would carry their message to the world. How they proceeded to unify and strengthen a core of followers is the subject of the following chapter.

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[39]A. W. Spalding, op. cit., p. 155.

[40]Ellen White, "Biographical Sketch," op. cit. p. 75.

Chapter Four

UNITY UPON "PRESENT TRUTH" THROUGH CONFERENCES

When Joshua Himes assumed the directorship of the Millerite Movement in December, 1839, he used the conference as a "meeting of minds" in which leading men, coming as they had from diversified theological backgrounds, could get together and seek a greater degree of unity. Leroy Froom, speaking of the first Millerite conference in October, 1840, wrote: "This was convened in an endeavor to unify the efforts of these men of divergent backgrounds, and to give added force and unity to their coordinated endeavors."[1]

Millerite leaders convened about fifteen conferences at the top level,[2] but beginning in January, 1842, a different kind of conference was held on the local level. Approximately one hundred and twenty local conferences, largely evangelistic in nature, were held before 1844. Where the former type of conference had been largely study and discussion sessions, the latter followed the speaker-audience format.[3]

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[1]Leroy Froom, The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers Vol. IV (Washington D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1954), p. 520.

[2]Ibid., p. 555.

[3]Ibid., p. 558.

These two types of Millerite conferences led to a composite type conference later used by the Sabbatarians. In such Sabbatarian conferences as that called by Edson at Port Gibson, one at New Bedford and one at Topsham, all in 1846, showed a pattern of individual presentation followed by open discussion by all participants. The glimpse we get of the Edson conference indicates that it was loosely structured. Though the announced topic was Edson's new sanctuary doctrine, Joseph Bates was allowed to make a presentation of the Sabbath doctrine he had recently embraced. Both presentations were followed by open discussions in which several of the participants accepted both doctrines.[4] The conference format which evolved here is significant to the choice of Bates and White for a tool to use in the first step toward unity and strengthening of the emerging movement.

The 1848 Sabbath Conferences

Realizing they were dealing with poor people, Bates and White scheduled the conferences in places most convenient to the largest numbers who were sympathetic to the cause. The conferences were also spread out over several months' time to provide time to travel and for raising expense money.

The conferences, six in number, were held as follows:[5]

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[4]Hiram Edson, Ms "Life and Experience," p. 12, Advent Source Collection, Berrien Springs, Michigan.

[5]Arthur L. White, "The Sabbath Conferences of 1848," Ellen G. White, Messenger to the Remnant (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1954), p. 38.

1. Rocky Hill, Connecticut, April 20-24.
2. Volney, New York, August 18.
3. Port Gibson, New York, August 27, 28.
4. Rocky Hill, Connecticut, September 8, 9.
5. Topsham, Maine, October 20, 22.
6. Dorchester, Massachusetts, November 18.

The choice of the type of meeting seemed wise. The conference was something Bates and White had experience with and knew how to handle. In dealing with people they knew to be of divergent views, it appeared to be a psychologically sound approach that would appeal to the people. It would also give Bates and White a chance to sound out the attitudes of the people, most of whom they had never met before.

The first meeting proceeded apparently with no interruption. About fifty persons came in for the all-day session. According to Ellen White, the entire day was in Joseph Bates' charge. He "presented the commandments in a clear light, and their importance was urged home by powerful testimonies. The word had effect to establish those already in the truth, and to awaken those who were not fully decided."[6] At this first conference, White tells us, "the doctrines were clarified and bound together as a unit of truth; the later conferences served largely as teaching and unifying agencies."[7]

What kind of doctrines were clarified and bound together? Mrs. White, who was present at the conferences, recorded

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[6]James White, letter to Stockbridge Howland, April 27, 1848, White Estate Collection.

[7]Ibid.,

in her Early Writings the "pillars" or foundation tenets of this unit of truth upon which the conferences harmonized:[8]

1. The second Advent of Christ.
2. The binding claims of the seventh-day Sabbath.
3. The third angel's message in its correct relationship to the other two angels' messages.
4. The ministry of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary.
5. The nonimmortality of the soul.

At the second conference held in Volney, New York, Bates and the Whites faced a severe challenge. The conference opened on a depressing note. "About thirty-five were present," Mrs. White recalled, "which were all the friends that could be collected in that part of the state."[9] When the conference got under way, the leaders found considerable confusion and opposition. "Of this number, there were hardly two agreed," she wrote. "Some were holding serious errors, and each strenuously urged his own views."[10]

Joseph Bates again presented the Sabbath doctrine followed this time by a dissertation by James White on the "Third Angel's Message." From what was reported, it appears that the eager listeners were too anxious to participate. A stormy opposition was led by David Arnold who repeatedly interrupted. James White gives us a thumbnail description in his autobiography:

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[8]Ellen White, Early Writings (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1882), pp. 258-261.

[9]Ellen White, Christian Experience and Teachings (Mountain View, California: Pacific Press, 1922), p. 119.

[10]James White, Life Incidents (Battle Creek, Michigan: SDA Publishing Association, 1868), p. 274.

"What confusion of sentiment among this few! A spirit of discussion and contention for points not important prevailed, so that we who had come so far could hardly have chance to give our message."[11]

Arnold's confrontation brought the group to an apparent impasse. When it seemed nothing further could be accomplished, Ellen White intervened in a unique manner by having a rare public vision. The diversion seemed to work wonders. As she came out of the vision, she directed some authoritative words at the opposition to which they responded favorably. "They were told that we had not come so great a distance to hear them, but we had come to teach them the truth."[12]

This change of tactics seemed to be a sudden deviation from the "let's sit down and thrash this out together" approach to a rather arbitrary authoritative one. Blunt as it seemed, it apparently had the desired effect for Arnold and backers swung into line and became strong supporters. Mrs. White wrote:

> Our meeting ended triumphantly. Those who held the strange diversity of errors then confessed them and united upon the third angel's message of present truth, and God greatly blessed them and added many to their numbers.[13]

Regretfully, we have such a brief account of this unusual persuasive success, but we do have better accounts of other

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[11]White, Life Incidents, op. cit., p. 274.

[12]James and Ellen White, Life Sketches, (Battle Creek, Michiga SDA Publishing Association, 1880), p. 248.

[13]Ibid., pp. 248-249.

similar occasions on which Mrs. White faced such opposition. In her Life Sketches Ellen White relates the circumstances of several occasions on which she faced opposition and gives the essence of her words directed to them. On these occasions she addresses sharp, cutting words directly at the men of the opposition. For example, here is a brief excerpt:

> I was shown that the daily lives of these men were in direct contrast with their profession. Under the garb of sanctification they are practicing the worst sins and deceiving God's people.[14]

In recalling these events at a later date, Mrs. White gives this rationale for handling the situation as she did:

> Those were troublesome times. If we had not stood firmly then, we should have failed. Some said we were stubborn; but we were obliged to set our face as a flint...[15]

Ellen White exercised similar authority in the two succeeding conferences at Port Gibson and at Rocky Hill, though no details are given.[16]

Accounts of the two remaining conferences in Maine and Massachusetts give hint of no significant opposition. Both accounts by Bates and the Whites indicate a picture of brotherly love and harmony in which the main topic of discussion was ways

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[14] Ibid., pp. 210-211.

[15] Ibid., p. 230.

[16] James White, letter to H. L. Hastings, October 2, 1848, White Estate Collection; also Life Sketches, p. 249.

of promoting the movement in those areas.[17]

An important topic of discussion at both of these last meetings was the publishing of a paper. During the height of the Millerite excitement there were many Advent papers which were credited with doing a significant work in reaching many people with their message. Remembering this, no doubt, these Sabbatarians felt they must have a paper to set forth their views. Though the project was thoroughly discussed at Topsham, there appeared to be no feasible means of establishing a publishing firm so the matter was "tabled." However, at the final conference at Dorchester, the matter was again discussed with more urgency. This time, it was voted to initiate a paper, but there still was no plan for financing it. After the last conference Mrs. White approached her husband insisting that he must take the responsibility of publishing and depend on income from readers.[18] This he eventually did.

The Strategies and Effects of the Conferences

The six conferences of 1848 was a project planned and launched by Joseph Bates and the Whites in which the two men took the lead in presentational roles. Ellen White also played

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[17]Ellen White, Christian Experience and Teachings, p. 128; Bates is quoted on these conferences by J. N. Loughborough, The Great Second Advent Movement, p. 273.

[18]John N. Loughborough, The Great Second Advent Movement (Nashville, Tennessee: Southern Publishing Association, 1905), p. 274.

an important role though it apparently was unplanned.

There was a noticeable division of labor on subject matter. Bates had concentrated upon the Sabbath doctrine. In 1846 he had published a complete argument on the subject.[19] He now took the leading part in presenting this topic at the conferences. James White took the unique role of showing how the Sabbatarian ideology was based upon the prophetic foundations established by William Miller. While Bates argued primarily from the standpoint of the necessity to keep all the commandments, including the fourth, White took the parable of Matthew twenty-five, which was, the Millerites believed, an explicit description of their movement, as his key text. In these approaches, both men sought to identify with known aspects of their listeners' attitudes.

There is no evidence that the plans for these conferences called for Ellen White to play her usual role as exhorter, following her husband's doctrinal dissertations, as had become her custom. Later in an unpublished manuscript, she admits that "she did not participate in the usual way because, during the whole time I could not understand the reasoning of the brethren. My mind was locked, as it were, and I could not comprehend the meaning of the scriptures we were studying."[20] The role she did play in confronting the opposition was one she

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[19]Joseph Bates, The Seventh-day Sabbath, A Perpetual Sign (Pamphlet) published privately by Bates in August, 1846, Advent Source Collection, Berrien Springs, Michigan.

[20]Ellen White, Special Testimony, Series B, No. 2, pp. 56, 57, White Estate Collection.

had experienced as a Millerite after the disconfirmation, but without the preceding visionary manifestation. On previous occasions her success had not appeared so manifest. Perhaps the awesome impress of the vision (in which visiting doctors were invited to examine her and found she did not breathe) lent authority to her words.[21]

Unusual as her tactics may seem, they had lasting effects. David Arnold, who led the opposition at Volney, became one of the movement's leading exponents as a writer and preacher. Volney became a stronghold of the movement in western New York State with a large membership.[22]

Leroy Froom, who has examined carefully the developments of the emerging movement and hails the conferences of 1848 as a significant first development, comments about the aim of the project:

> James White and Joseph Bates in particular here labored earnestly to bring unity amid many conflicting views, They had set out to establish groups--nuclei or clusters--of believers united upon these great main truths. This they did through these 1848 Sabbath Conferences.[23]

Unity appears to have been the key aim. This was evident in the Whites' great concern expressed about the "divergent views" which existed, and in Ellen's repeated use of the

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[21]Affidavits from several medical doctors are found in the White Estate Collection.

[22]Life Sketches, op. cit., p. 249.

[23]Leroy Froom, Movement of Destiny (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1970), p. 86.

word "unified" in her reports of success of the various conferences. Froom notes that, "Those who came together, still had widely divergent views on many points; but here the distinctive basic doctrines and features of prophecy were so presented as to lead to a largely unified belief on these structural fundamentals."[24] A. W. Spalding, another student of the movement, wrote that, "The Sabbath Conferences were vital, unifying influences in stabilizing the faith of the early believers."[25]

Froom's words above imply another significant accomplishment attained at these conferences. White himself wrote that the initial conferences were instrumental toward this end. "The doctrines were clarified and bound together as a unit of truth," he wrote.[26] Arthur L. White, Secretary of the White Estate and grandson of James White, has made these comments:

> At these conferences, the distinctive doctrines were restudied, and the several points of truth were formed into one unified belief. It was here that the foundations of Seventh-day Adventist doctrine were laid.[27]

In clarifying and relating their views, the following was argued:

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[24] Ibid., p. 85.

[25] A. W. Spalding, Origin and History of Seventh-day Adventists (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1961), p. 181.

[26] James White, Letter to Stockbridge Howland, April 27, 1848, White Estate Collection.

[27] A. L. White, Ellen G. White, Messenger to the Remnant, (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1954), p. 38.

1) To maintain the Millerite position that the "sanctuary cleansing" at the end of 2300 years was a fiery judgment necessarily involving a second advent was to admit the 1844 prediction as a delusion. Proponents must either set another date or look for a presumed error in calculation. Many of them did just this and were eventually again disappointed. The Sanctuary belief advocated by the Sabbatarians, on the other hand, recognized the Millerite movement not as a delusion, but as an honest error of interpretation, the sanctuary "cleansing" being in heaven the beginning of judgment, not the purification of earth. Instead of losing faith in Biblical prophecy then, this view enabled Sabbatarians to retain confidence in the integrity of the Bible.

2) In the second edition of Bates' sabbath tract (1847) he builds his prophetic argument for observance of the seventh day upon the vision of Revelation 14:9-11 as well as Daniel's vision of the little horn (as he had in the first edition). In so doing he provided the basis of argument used by the Seventh-day Adventists throughout the history of the movement to the present time. Francis D. Nichol presents the essence of Bates' argument:

> The substance of Bate's argument to the advent believers is this: The great book of Revelation is the foundation of all the Adventist preaching. We have believed and preached that the message, 'Fear God and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come,' met its fulfillment in the preaching of the Millerite movement. The message of the second angel, who proclaims that Babylon is fallen, and whose message is echoed by another angel in the eighteenth chapter of Revelation that declares, 'Come out of her my people,' also met its fulfillment in the Millerite movement.

> Now...a third angel follows after these two; his message is a warning against receiving the mark of the beast, and those who do not receive that mark are described immediately in this language: 'Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.' Rev. 14:12. Why should advent believers give obedience simply to the first two of these three angels?[28]

Thus, did these two Sabbatarians attempt to relate their belief in the Sabbath doctrine to the corrected view of the prophecy-conscious Advent people. Thus was accomplished a double sense of cohesion: in ideology and in fellowship. "They realized the perfecting of their positions and the development of detail would take time. But the conferences had successfully accomplished their purpose of unification, clarification and consolidation."[29]

Publishing "Present Truth"

The conferences had led to a recognition of the need to publish the Sabbatarian views in a form that could reach single individuals not affected by the conferences. Print could go beyond the efforts put forth in conference and provide something one could sit down and think about at leisure as he studied. The paper that James White took the lead to publish bore that expression so common to Adventist idiom as its title--"Present Truth." Present truth is defined in the first issue as "that

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[28]Francis D. Nichol, Ellen G. White and Her Critics (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1951), p. 186.

[29]Leroy Froom, op. cit., p. 1048.

which shows present duty."[30]

Four issues were all White originally intended to publish.[31] Presumably this was adequate to set forth the distinctive doctrines. The fact that he continued publishing through eleven issues was due to response of readers. Not only did grateful readers send in more than enough money to pay expenses, but as Mrs. White wrote: "Very soon letters came bringing the good news of many souls embracing the truth."[32]

Content of the first four issues of Present Truth is clearly and almost exclusively devoted to the Sabbath doctrine. "The keeping of the fourth commandment is all-important present truth," declared James White,[33] author of most of these first articles. The basic tack taken by Bates of arguing the necessity of keeping all the commandments is plainly the underlying argument of these articles. In deference to those who believed the law to be abolished, there were also articles to refute this belief. The tack here was to show a distinction between the law of Moses and the law of God, and to show that only the former was abolished.[34]

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[30]James White, Present Truth Vol. 1, No. 1 (July,1849), p. 1.

[31]James White, Present Truth Vol. 1, No. 5 (Dec., 1849), p. 47.

[32]Life Sketches, op. cit., p. 260.

[33]James White, Present Truth, Vol. 1, NO. 1 (July, 1849), p. 6.

[34]See "The Two Laws," "The Law of Moses," "The Law of God," and "The Laws in the New Testament," Present Truth Vol. 1, No. 1 (July, 1849), pp. 3-6.

The climactic argument in issue number four is a full sermon, "Repairing the Breach in the Law," which fills almost the entire issue. This sermon takes a cue from Isaiah who specifically calls for men to "repair the breach" created by "turning away from the Sabbath."[35] Though not a product of a seminary, White demonstrates in this sermon his ability to structure a dissertation after the traditional pattern.[36] A brief analysis reveals that he does a deductive analysis of his text first. An interesting part of this first part is his inclusion of Ezekial, chapter four, showing that "repairing of the breach," and "the sealing" in Ezekial are one and the same work.[37]

The second part of his sermon follows accepted patterns of presenting a series of illustrative materials in amplifying applications of the preceding deduction. In connection with the image of the "evil shepherds," he examines the positions of four distinct positions taken by leaders of remnants of the Millerite movement. The effect of "scattering the sheep" mentioned by Ezekial is applied by White to the work the other leaders are doing in fragmenting the movement started by Miller. Turning again to the law, several illustrations from Biblical

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[35]Isaiah 58:13, Holy Bible.

[36]Michael C. McGee, "Thematic Reduplication in Christian Rhetoric," The Quarterly Journal of Speech LVI (April, 1970), pp. 196-204.

[37]This is obviously in the interest of identifying with Bates' argument mentioned previously.

history are excerpted to show that "the power of God has attended the honoring of his commandments."[38] The key idea of "repairing the breach" is again stressed in conclusion with the use of a simple illustration of a garden enclosed by ten lengths of fence in which one is broken. The Apostle James is quoted as stating, "If we offend in one, we are guilty of all."[39]

The pattern of his sermon is clear and the arguments convincing. Furthermore, he has related successfully to the argument of his colleague Bates whose views are more familiar among the Adventists.[40]

After a two-month suspension, White again resumed publication of Present Truth. Now he turned to other vital matters, including the sanctuary doctrine. Most of the articles are authored by writers other than White, David Arnold being the most prominent. These issues also featured letters of response from participants in the recent conferences, testifying to the resulting unity.

Each of these issues appears to have a particular emphasis or goal. The following brief analysis of Numbers five through eleven will indicate the apparent goal and substantiation.

Issue number five while carrying two articles on the

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[38]James White, "Repairing the Breach," Present Truth Vol. 1, No. 4 (September, 1849), p. 25.

[39]James 2:10, Holy Bible.

[40]Joseph Bates, A Seal of the Living God (tract) published privately by Bates in 1849, Advent Source Collection, Berrien Springs, Michigan.

sanctuary doctrine, still appears to have strengthening of the morale of adherents as its primary goal. The majority of its pages contain letters of an optimistic nature received from constituents. Hiram Edson wrote: "Our number is constantly increasing." J. N. Andrews said: "There is ever increasing unity since the conference Topsham, Me. ." The other letters all tell of conversions to the movement, lending a definite morale-lifting theme to the paper.

Issue number six is devoted primarily to one of the most problematic differences between Sabbatarians and the other Adventists of this time--the "shut-door theory." David Arnold, in a lengthy lead article, explains why the Sabbatarians held to the correctness of Miller's prophetic views while the others lost faith in them. This is the basis, he claims, for closing the door to those who had rejected the Advent belief. White joins Arnold with an editorial on the same subject, refuting the charge that Sabbatarians have "departed from the original faith."

Issues number seven and eight both carry a continued "Review" by David Arnold of a challenging work by their most active opponent, Joseph Marsh, entitled, "Seventh-day Sabbath Abolished." It had become popular in Advent papers to "review" an article appearing in another paper with which one disagreed. The resulting review was, of course, highly refutative, but got its name from the fact that the article took significant excerpts from the opponent's article upon which the author took

issue. Arnold earned the reputation, as J. N. Andrews did following him, of 1) being extremely fair by quoting liberally from his opponent, and 2) by being very thorough in researching his evidence used in his arguments.[41]

Issue number nine is entirely devoted to James White's favorite topic: "The Third Angel's Message." The argument here rests largely upon the fact that the Millerites had believed ardently that they fulfilled the first two angels' prophetic messages. White stresses that the picture of Revelation 14 is incomplete until you recognize the third angel who follows the first two. His claim that Sabbatarians represent the third angel rests heavily upon the fact that they boasted of keeping all the commandments, a qualification of the people mentioned by the angel as "the saints."[42]

The aim of issue ten appears to be the bolstering of Adventists' confidence in visions and dreams. A reprint of a well-known (to Millerites) article entitled "William Miller's Dream" is featured. Lengthy footnotes accompany the article to stress that the interpretations implied on various aspects of the dream do apply to the Advent experience. The article is prefaced by an introduction full of scriptural proof that God gives visions and dreams to men and women as a means of

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[41]Leroy Froom cites several examples to show the historical scholarship of Arnold. The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers Vol. IV, pp. 1038.

[42]Revelation 14:12, Holy Bible.

communicating His will.[43] Though James White states that his "object in the above remarks has been to remove objections to dreams,"[44] it seems rather obvious that his object specifically is to remove objections to his wife's visions. Miller had been held in high esteem by Adventists, so it seems a happy coincidence that Miller had at least one dream of this nature.

The final issue returns to an emphasis on the Sabbath doctrine focusing upon "the true issue" between Sabbatarians and other Adventists. The true issue is identified as whether the origination of the Sabbath is separable from the particular day to be observed.[45] The Sabbatarians, of course, take the negative, based on the argument that the rest day for man must correspond with the rest day taken by the creator at Creation.[46] The final pages of the issue draw attention to another paper which White, aided by a publishing committee, was promoting. Several letters from readers are printed expressing appreciation for the Advent Review, a paper which is examined in the next chapter.

In the conferences and subsequent publishing experience, James White was learning that, "Present Truth must be oft repeated, even to those who are established in it."[47] These

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[43]Joel 2:28; Acts 2:17; Deut. 13:1-5; Jude 8; Jeremiah 23:25-28, Holy Bible.

[44]"Brother Miller's Dream" Present Truth Vol. 1, No. 10 (May, 1850), p. 73.

[45]Present Truth Vol. 1, No. 11 (November, 1850), p. 83.

[46]Ibid.

[47]Present Truth Vol. 1, No. 1 (July, 1849), p. 1.

first steps were having effect. "During the year 1849-50, under the influence of the papers and the labors of Elder Bates, many accepted the message in Vermont, Michigan and other states."[48] "Furthermore," wrote Francis D. Nichol, "they felt that their views were now rather clearly outlined, well buttressed with scripture, definitely interlocked, and prophetically timed as 'present truth'."[49]

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[48]J. N. Loughborough, op. cit., p. 278.

[49]Francis D. Nichol, The Midnight Cry (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1944), p. 195.

Chapter Five

SABBATARIANS IDENTIFY WITH MILLER THROUGH THE ADVENT REVIEW

One of the indispensable rhetorical requirements suggested by Herbert W. Simons is that the leaders of a movement "must secure adoption of their product by the larger structure."[1] This corresponds with Festinger and associates' fifth condition for continued proselyting which states that "the individual believer must have social support" if he is to withstand the stigma of disconfirmation.[2]

In this chapter a special publishing project of the Sabbatarians will be examined in order to determine how Adventist leaders sought to "secure adoption of their product by the larger structure." The project was a series of six issues of a paper edited by James White with the help of a publishing committee of four associates. The plan took shape in the summer of 1850 at which time he wrote to a friend of his plan.

> The Lord has shown Ellen that I must publish the testimonies of those who acknowledge the work done and the advent move of God after 1844. I expect to get out a paper called the Advent Review, sixteen pages, the size of Present Truth...The cause

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[1]Herbert W. Simons, "Requirements, Problems and Strategies: A Theory of Persuasion for Social Movements," The Quarterly Journal of Speech LVI (February, 1970), p. 3.

[2]Leon Festinger, Henry Riecken, and Stanley Schachter, When Prophecy Fails (New York: Harper and Row, 1956), p. 4.

> calls for it. I hope to get out six numbers, 3,000 copies each; will cost $250. I shall move as the means come in.[3]

Five sequential issues came out between August and December. A special forty-eight page special composite of the best material from the first four numbers was published about the first of October, making the sixth number. Untold numbers of the special issue were printed; two years later they were still trying to find names to mail the leftover papers to.

In order to insure a systematic analysis of this project, Wayne Brockriede's six dimensions of a rhetorical situation will be used as a procedural framework.[4]

Format

The discussional stage was passed. It has been noted that early in the Sabbath Conferences of 1848, the distinctive doctrines were outlined through group study and mutually accepted. Ellen White expressed the group confidence that the basic tenets were settled when she wrote to a friend in March, 1849: "Our position looks very clear; we know we have the truth."[5] With the formative stage of doctrine settled, Sabbatarian leaders were now engaged in teaching and advocating their beliefs in a speaker-listener or writer-reader type of format.

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[3]James White, Letter to Leonard Hastings, July, 1850. White Estate Collection.

[4]Wayne E. Brockriede, "Dimensions of the Concept of Rhetoric," The Quarterly Journal of Speech LIV (February, 1968), pp. 1-12.

[5]Ellen White, Letter to Br. and Sr. Leonard Hastings, March, 1849, White Estate Collection.

Channels

According to James White (as previously quoted), the later conferences had become teaching devices, and these resulted in many converts; but obviously it would be impractical for further proselyting to be carried on through conferences. Even if traveling money were available, there would have to be nuclei of believers to arrange such conferences, and no more such nuclei were to be found at the present. At this stage there were too few advocates to reach the widely scattered individual interests. What was needed was a paper that would speak for the doctrine, its thousands of copies capable of reaching unlimited numbers. The Present Truth had done its job well of setting forth Sabbatarian views, but a special effort was now to be put forth to show what Millerism had originally believed and how Sabbatarianism related to these views. The success of Present Truth proved to White that this special project could be best carried out through the media of the press.

People

Sabbatarians, having been Millerites, still believed in the 2300 day prophecy that had been William Miller's key hope, though they did not concur with the event he predicted at the end of the prophetic period; this had been disconfirmed. Generally, other Millerites believed Miller now to be completely wrong. This difference led the Sabbatarians to feel, as did

Miller, that those who rejected the Millerite message were now rejected of God. This "shut-door" theory was responsible for Sabbatarians considering only known Adventists as eligible for membership in this movement up until 1852 when they finally discarded the theory. Like Present Truth, the Advent Review would be intended only for Millerite Adventists.

Recent migration trends had scattered Millerites widely across the frontier lands to the mid-west and to wilderness areas of Canada. These people would have to be reached and in a way that would appeal to their thinking in the context of their past beliefs.

Functions

Many of these former Millerites who were now scattered over the frontier had been bitterly disappointed in the failure of the Advent but, White felt, if they once believed in sincerity, they must still harbor vestiges of hope and attitudes to which he could appeal. The special project paper must be different from Present Truth; it must not simply set forth new "truths," but must revive confidence in that which they once believed and relate the new truths to the former views. Of course, many of these Adventists had found renewed hope in the new rescheduled dates set by Jonathan Cummings for the Advent, but several of his dates had passed--1845, 1846, 1848--and with each passing disconfirmation, numbers of Adventists lost confidence in Cummings' predictions.

To gain the interest and confidence again for Adventism, it

appears evident that James White and his associates must clear the confusion that disappointment and recent conflicting claims of Adventist leaders had brought. A change in their present attitudes or a reinforcement of their former attitudes must be accomplished if they were to be reclaimed for Adventism and specifically for Sabbatarian Adventism.

Brockriede has suggested that in adapting to the attitudes of recipients, message presentation may have designative, evaluative, or advocative functions, whatever appears most appropriate.[6] The Advent Review utilized a combination of these presentational functions, concentrating mostly on the designative (informative) and advocative. The evaluative was used more subtly as the next section will reveal.

Method

The materials selected is the basic criterion of method, followed by structure or arrangement and style.

The six issues of Advent Review are largely filled with select reprints of articles which had appeared in leading Advent papers. These articles had been written by the best known Millerite leaders, including Miller himself. A theme slogan which was prominently displayed over the masthead of every issue of Advent Review was "Call to remembrance the former days!"

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[6]Brockriede, op. cit., p. 35.

The introductory argument was designed to convince that the Millerite experience had NOT been a mistake, a hoax. "You have need of confidence that you have done the will of God."[7] White declared as he sought to prove to them that the present was a testing time in which God designed to try their patience and trust. He argued that the failure of the Advent on the predicted date was not conclusive proof that the movement was a delusion. Even that event had its use in arousing interest White declares in the following passage:

> Those who claim to be Adventists should, to be consistent, acknowledge the means God has employed (proclamation of Advent date) to bring them to the light of the advent truth. No one will deny that it was the proclamation of the time, that aroused the Advent people to look for the Lord. We cannot, therefore, see the least consistency in the position of those who call themselves Adventists, and at the same time call the very means that has brought them to this scriptural faith and hope, 'a mistake'..."[8]

Those who received the papers and recognized the familiar names of their former leaders as well as the articles from their pens which the recipients probably recognized as materials they had read some years before, were not kept in suspense as to the reasons for the production of the Advent Review. White admits:

> Our objective is to revive these sweet testimonies, that were written in the pure,

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[7]James White, untitled introduction, The Advent Review Vol. 1, (August, 1850), p. 1.

[8]Ibid.

> cheering and soul-stirring spirit that attended the advent movement from the commencement, hoping that many will be led to see the 'old paths' clearly and once more stand on the 'original faith.'"[9]

To restore confidence in Millerite experience was clearly the first objective, but, in a real sense, it was only a means to an end as we see in this passage from White's introduction.

> In reviewing the past, we shall quote largely from the writings of the leaders in the Advent cause, and show that they once, boldly advocated, and published to the world, the same position, relative to the fulfillment of prophecy in the great leading advent movements in our past experience, that we now occupy; and that when the Advent host were all united in 1844, they looked upon these movements in the same light in which we now view them, and thus show who have LEFT THE ORIGINAL FAITH.[10]

In those challenging words, James White informed his former colleagues and fellow-believers that he intended to show that basically the Sabbatarians alone had remained true to the original ideology. With this, he concluded his introduction and invited the reader's consideration to the first of a series of selections he had made from the Advent papers, with the declaration that, "it will lead you to have confidence in your past experience in the holy advent cause...[11]

It is evident that selection of articles was made on the

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[9]James White, "The Paper," The Advent Review Vol. 1, No. 1 (August, 1850), p. 16.

[10]James White, The Advent Review Vol. 1, No. 1 (August, 1850), p. 1.

[11]Ibid.

basis of their clarity in presenting what had been the Millerite views, their optimism in exuding confidence in the cause, and, of course, the highest, most-respected leaders were the authors chosen.

The first article was uniquely suited for its position. It was an official extended statement from the top journalistic spokesmen for William Miller which was issued shortly after the disappointment in October, 1844, and was printed in the Advent Herald, December 11, 1844. It contains a frank admittance that the Advent did not occur (since a few to save face claimed it had taken place in secret). But the article also exhibits a strong degree of confidence that the movement is not all wrong. The position is taken boldly that the leaders maintain, "we have been mistaken in the nature of the event we expected to occur,"[12] and call upon adherents to hold fast to their faith in the Advent of Christ.

Selections of letters or abstracts from letters are made a significant part of the make-up of this series of papers. Abstracts from several letters written by William Miller to his fellow Advent leaders after the disconfirmation are used to show his continuing confidence even after the disappointment. "This is a time for patience...unto the coming of the Lord,"[13]

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[12]J. V. Himes, S. Bliss, A. Hale, "Address to Believers," The Advent Review Vol. 1, No. 1 (August, 1850), p. 7.

[13]"Extracts of Letters Written by Bro. William Miller," The Advent Review Vol. 1, No. 1 (August, 1850), p. 8.

Miller declares over and over in these abstracts. It is significant that the editing of Miller's letters also includes his argument that, "God has SHUT THE DOOR; we have done our work in warning sinners; we can only stir one another up to be patient [emphasis is White's]."[14] Another letter written by a former prominent Advent preacher, F. G. Brown, carries on the same theme: "We know that God has been with us...Cheer up, all's well. You have finished your work, and now be patient, and you shall receive the reward."[15]

A letter from another formerly prominent Advent preacher, O. R. Fasset, which was written and published shortly after the disconfirmation, deplores the "almost universal" despondency among Adventists over the disappointment. "At one time they were fully convinced...Now because they were disappointed in the character of events to be fulfilled at the time, they are now ready to forget all that God then did for us, and put it down as an error in judgment."[16]

Selection of feature articles was obviously made in the interest of setting forth the Millerite doctrine and restoring confidence in it. Articles by J. B. Cook, a well-known journalist in Advent circles, on "The Doctrine of Providence,"[17] and

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[14] Ibid.

[15] "Letter from F. G. Brown," The Advent Review Vol. 1, No. 2, (August, 1850), p. 17.

[16] "Letter from O. R. Fasset," The Advent Review Vol. 1, No. 2, (August, 1850), p. 19.

[17] The Advent Review Vol. 1, No. 2 (August, 1850), pp. 23-31.

"The Necessity and Certainty of Divine Guidance,"[18] are discourses using the thesis that God guides those who sincerely and ardently try to do His will.

> To deny that God does thus guide his people is to deny God's agency in his own great work, contradict the prayer and promise of Jesus Christ, and so far 'do despite to the spirit of grace'.[19]

After establishing this point, Cook invites his readers to, "notice the wonderful precision with which Jesus sketched the Advent history, in order to illustrate the reality of the scripture doctrine of Divine guidance."[20] Application is then made of Matthew 24:45-49 and Matthew 25. Cook concludes by declaring confidently, "So we know, without doubt, that the Advent movement is Divine in its origin, Divine in its progress."[21]

Finally, a lengthy narrative by Joseph Bates in which he gives a detailed human interest story of the Advent Movement, rounds out the reprints,[22] as far as they relate to the primary objective. He too makes it a point to show how the early Millerites came to agree on basic ideology and how confident they all had been in the cause.

Two more selections go beyond the original views of Millerites. They are the two articles which spawned the Sabbatarians

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[18]The Advent Review Vol. 1, No. 3 (September, 1850), pp. 33-42.

[19]Ibid., p. 35.

[20]Ibid., p. 36.

[21]Ibid., p. 42.

[22]Joseph Bates, "Second Advent Way Marks and High Heaps," The Advent Review Vol. 1, Nos 4 and 5 (September and November, 1850), pp. 51-56; pp. 65-72.

when they appeared in 1845. They are: J. B. Cook's original article on "The Sabbath,"[23] and O. R. L. Crozier's "The Sanctuary"[24] which set forth the distinctive two tenets adopted by the Sabbatarians.

Beyond these two articles, White used several letters and his own original materials to advocate the cause of Sabbatarians. The letters chosen were written by John Lindsey, Otis Nichols, and S. W. Rhodes, who had all been prominent Advent preachers for Millerism. They each related briefly their experience in Millerism and how they had found renewed hope in the Sabbatarian cause.

James White's own materials varied from footnotes to full-length articles. Wherever there is opportunity to draw an inference or make a comment advantageous to his cause, White inserts his own views. To illustrate how he took a cue to inject his own interpretation, note this open-ended inference from the Himes, Bliss, and Hale article:

> We cheerfully admit that we have been mistaken in the nature of the event we expected would occur on the tenth day of the seventh month; but we cannot yet admit that our Great High Priest did not on that very day, ACCOMPLISH ALL THAT THE TYPE WOULD JUSTIFY US TO EXPECT. WE NOW BELIEVE HE DID.[25]

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[23]The Advent Review Vol. 1, No. 2 (August, 1850), pp. 31-32.

[24]The Advent Review Vol. 1, No. 3 (September, 1850), pp. 42-47

[25]"Address to Believers," The Advent Review Vol. 1, No. 1 (August, 1850), p. 7.

Whatever was inferred here, White took the advantage to turn the inference toward his own views. Sabbatarians emphasized the point that Adventists had been mistaken in the nature of the event expected, and that Christ, the High Priest, accomplished in the heavenly sanctuary what was intended on that day. In order, therefore, to place his own construction on this inference, White used emphasis of italics and bold print to draw attention to the inference and placed a footnote just below it stating the Sabbatarian view.

In other places White edits excerpts from letters and articles to focus on certain thoughts, and then inserts his own comments. For example, under the title "Something Wrong Again," White draws attention to a running debate between two of the leaders of Millerite factions by presenting excerpts of their statements. White comments: "These views and feelings of Marsh, Storrs and the Advent brethren in general have been shown to be wrong and caused confusion among the ranks."[26] He then quotes Jeremiah 25:34, 35: "Howl, ye shepherds, and cry; and wallow yourselves in the ashes: for the days of your slaughter and of your dispersions are accomplished; and ye shall fall like a pleasant vessel."

White also inserts several short articles in strategic places which clarify certain views on which there has been some controvers even among the Sabbatarians who are not fully indoctrinated. These

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[26]The Advent Review Vol. 1, NO. 1 (August, 1850), p. 12.

include "The Day of Judgment,"[27] and "One Hundred and Forty Four Thousand."[28] These seem to be subjects of particular interest to Adventists in general at this time, which, no doubt, accounts for selection of the particular subjects.

Arrangement of Material

James White appears to have arranged his material in project Advent Review primarily according to importance of content. A secondary consideration appears to be authorship.

That much of the material in the first three issues is selected for its potential in reviving hope and confidence in Millerism is clearly evident. The writers are optimistic and fiercely loyal. Strong testimonies by respected leaders is a very influential combination under usual circumstances, and this seems to characterize the material selected for the first issues. Rather than lead off with impersonal doctrinal discourses, White has heavily loaded the first two issues with personal testimonial type materials. Even the initial article which purports to convey the official position of Advent leadership following the disconfirmation, reads like a spontaneous, free-flowing conversation. Letters, which seem to be particularly apt at revealing dynamic personal attitudes and convictions, make up the bulk of these issues. Extracts from several of William Miller's letters are followed by others from leading voices of the former movement.

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[27] The Advent Review Vol. 1, No. 4 (September, 1850), pp. 49-51.

[28] Ibid., pp 56-57.

The material White places foremost is not only designed to restore confidence but also to set forth Millerite beliefs in unusual clarity. Himes, Bliss, and Hale review the development of Miller's ideology in simplistic terms, fulfilling White's promise to "show what the original faith had been."[29]

This clarity of the original views is placed in dramatic contrast to the confused quibbling that ensued from the leaders of the Millerite factions which evolved after the disappointment. Lead articles and letters from the top leaders of the movement gives the publication an official authenticity which any Millerite would recognize. This was followed by a clever composite of excerpts representing conflicting claims, views and recrimination from articles written by subsequent Advent leaders, as put together by White.[30] This composite seems to have been designed to draw attention to differences in subsequent Advent views in contrast to the unity of Millerism.

The Advent Review was designed not only with the preceding aims, but each issue included material which hopefully would lead the reader to see that Sabbatarians were the Adventists who were most conscientious in adhering to the Basic Millerite ideology. The tact was subtle. Every issue from the first exhibited definite Sabbatarian influence yet there was little or

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[29]James White, "Remarks on This Work," a sheet tipped into all unsold copies of the special edition of The Advent Review in in 1853.

[30]James White, "Something Wrong Again," The Advent Review Vol. 1, No. 1 (August, 1850), pp. 11-12.

no doctrine in the first two issues. Instead, the approach was through testimonies of those who had been devoted to Millerism and who now claimed that Sabbatarian ideology was the only meaningful sequel. The first of these testimonies was from John Linsey, a well-known Advent preacher, who had previously been a minister of a New York Methodist Church of distinction. Letters from two other active Advent preachers told in a disarming manner how they had turned to Sabbatarianism as the only sensible alternative to the views of Storrs, Himes, and Cummings.

One short doctrinal article is inserted as the last feature in Advent Review number two. This is followed with another as the final article in number three. These are the Sabbath and Sanctuary articles previously mentioned as the basic doctrines of Sabbatarians. The first is short, far from a full exposition on the subject, but enough to give basic information and arouse interest. The sanctuary article is developed more thoroughly in a follow-up feature in the third issue.[31] The third issue departs from the format of the first three in that it is liberally filled with White's original material clarifying several select topics on which there has been controversy in Advent circles.[32]

The final issue is exclusively devoted to Joseph Bates

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[31]O. R. L. Crozier, "The Priesthood," The Advent Review Vol. 1, No. 4 (September 1850), pp. 57-64.

[32]James White, "The Day of Judgment," "The One Hundred and Forty-four Thousand," The Advent Review Vol. 1, No. 4 (September, 1850), pp. 49-51; pp. 56-57.

human-interest story of the Millerite movement, recounting the manner in which it developed and the bases of the views it advocated.[33]

Before the final issue came out in November, 1850, the publishing committee responsible for this project, issued a special edition of forty-eight pages, including much of the material in the first four issues of The Advent Review with some interesting deletions. The testimonial letters of Sabbatarians, along with Bates' history, White's articles and his comments are omitted from this edition. "The Sabbath" and "The Sanctuary" articles are the only distinctly Sabbatarian materials remaining. Of course, James White's influence is still present, not alone in the selections made, but also in the editing and composite articles embodying extracts of letters and passages from Advent journalistic debates. All the materials are printed in approximately the same sequence as they had appeared in the single issues so as to accomplish, presumably, the same objectives. A decision of the publishing committee to widen the circulation accounts for the production of the special edition, but we are left to conjecture to account for the make-up which seems to tone down the Sabbatarian appeal. We can only guess that the cut back to a strict reprint content may be a concession

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[33]Joseph Bates, "Second Advent Waymarks and High Heaps," The Advent Review Vol. 1, Nos. 4, 5 (September and November, 1850), pp. 51-56; pp. 65-72.

to the opinion that more Adventists would read the publication with less prejudice if it were less obviously Sabbatarian propaganda.[34]

It would be instructive at this point to have a detailed, objective study of the effects of The Advent Review project by which to assess its value to the movement, but, unfortunately, it is difficult to distinguish its effects from other efforts put forth. One of the Advent preachers who received The Advent Review had this reaction:

> I think the 'review' will be read with considerable feeling by all classes of Adventists and by the honest seekers after the truth with profit, and it is at this time, the best thing that can be published.[35]

It is impossible to say how many were attracted to the ideology through this project, but some idea can be gleaned from Joseph Bates' observation made a year after the project (July 11, 1851):

> Within two years the true Sabbath keepers have increased four-fold in Vermont and New Hampshire. Within the last year we believe they have more than doubled their number and they are daily increasing as the paper and the messengers go forth.[36]

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[34]This is hinted in Ellen White's reference to the existing prejudice during this project in her "Biographical Sketch," Testimonies to the Church Vol. 1 (Mt. View, California: Pacific Press, 1948), p. 89.

[35]Otis Michols, Letter to James White from Dorchester, Massachusetts, August 21, 1850, White Estate Collection.

[36]Joseph Bates, Letter to James White, July 11, 1851, Advent Source Collection.

It is very possible that a significant measure of the effect observed by Bates is attributable to the strategic impact of The Advent Review project.

Traditionally, style has been considered largely in terms of clarity. The Whites gave priority to clarity of ideas in this project simply because much confusion had come into Adventist thinking as a result of a babel of voices of would-be leaders attempting to succeed Miller and Himes. Among the Adventists, Ellen White says, "There was much talk about standing by the landmarks. But there was evidence they knew not what the old landmarks were."[37] Representative articles of Millerism were so well selected and edited that the reading of them led many to write to Advent Review headquarters words similar to the following from a former Millerite preacher's wife:

> Many were confused and had ceased to take an interest in the Advent belief; but by the aid of Advent Review in calling to remembrance the evidences of the past work and power of the Lord, interest once more revived.[38]

Clarity of presentation was a vital requisite to the goal of setting forth Millerite views. That they were successful is a fact attested to by this reaction from an Advent preacher:

> I have been reading your Advent Review and think you have set forth both the former views

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[37]Ellen G. White, Ms 13, 1889, White Estate Collection.

[38]Mrs. A. S. Stevens, Letter to James White, Paris, Maine, December 8, 1850, Advent Source Collection.

> and the present situation very correctly. I feel very grateful for the clarity of your paper.[39]

Another Millerite found it to be an accurate presentation: "We receive your paper, and are highly pleased for it is just what we believed, and what we have experienced."[40]

In sum, then, The Advent Review, a series of six papers, prepared by the leaders of the Sabbatarians, was successful to some significant degree in recalling many despondent Adventists to a renewed interest and confidence in the original views of the movement, which had ended in disappointment, by convincing them that Miller was not altogether wrong, but only in one interpretation. To restore confidence in their former experience, and lead them to see the disconfirmation as only an error in the event predicted, was the key to inducing a good number of Millerite Adventists to join the Sabbatarians' cause.

Sabbatarian leaders were shortly to discard the "shut-door" theory and open their appeals to all who were susceptible to the kind of ideology they held. Thus, they embarked on a decade of strategies and innovations which were greatly to enlarge the scope of the movement as well as to organize and stabilize it.

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[39]J. B. Sweet, Letter to James White from Oxford, Ohio, December 24, 1850, Advent Source Collection.

[40]Lewis Martin, Letter to James White from Bennington, New Hampshire, January 1, 1851, Advent Source Collection.

Chapter Six

FOUR INNOVATIVE PROGRAMS DESIGNED TO "SELL" THE MOVEMENT

Through the early years in which Seventh-day Adventism was emerging, Joseph Bates, James White and the Messengers aimed their persuasive appeals only at known Adventists who had come through the Millerite experience. The 1848 Sabbath Conferences, The Present Truth, and the Advent Review projects, which had engrossed the attention of the leadership until 1851, were designed for those who had and still believed in Adventism. But soon after the beginning of publication of the movement journal, The Review and Herald, editor James White began to disclaim belief in the "shut-door" theory in his editorials. A. W. Spalding wrote:

> It was the early 1850's before the 'shut-door' theory faded out entirely. But by this time the Sabbath and Advent message was making more headway among the general public than in the ranks of former fellow Adventists, and the 'shut-door' of mercy was a thing of the past.[1]

There was little noticeable broadening of the scope of appeals to attract non-Adventists. Wherever the Messengers went they cultivated interests shown by anyone in their message.

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[1]Arthur W. Spalding, Origin and History of Seventh-day Adventist (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1961), pp. 164-165.

There is no evidence that any attempts were made to exclude interested persons who were not Adventists. Newly opened lands in western states were drawing many New Englanders. This spreading out over the frontier offered a real challenge to the Sabbatarian leadership. Following the lead set by Joseph Bates, dozens of Messengers for Sabbatarianism took up the challenge and fanned out over the frontier to search for those who were interested in their beliefs.

Communication with and among these scattered Messengers and the interests they cultivated seems to be the primary motive for establishing a regularly-issued journal. One can only guess as to the roles James White envisioned for The Review and Herald when he started its publication in November, 1850, nevertheless, the varied roles it came to serve become evident to the candid observer of ensuing issues. Many other publications were issued but The Review and Herald served a unique purpose in the growth of the movement.

In response to letters of concerned parents, James White inaugurated in 1852 a program to attract and indoctrinate youth. He began publication of a small journal he called The Youth's Instructor in which were printed a series of studies called "Sabbath School Lessons." This was the beginning of a special program to adapt the appeals of the movement to the youth.

In 1854 problems involved in the holding of public meetings led to the highly successful tent campaigns which continued throughout the summers and fall seasons of the inception period.

These were the four most significant programs inaugurated by the leadership which account for stimulating growth of the movement during the decade of the 1850's: the work of the Messengers; The Review and Herald; the Youth Program; and the tent campaigns. These are examined in turn.

The Itinerant Messengers

There is no evidence until after the 1848 Conferences that any advocates other than Joseph Bates and James White itinerated with the Sabbatarians' views beyond their local communities. But the conferences apparently stirred a number to fervor in proselytizing as Bates and White had. A number of names of capable Millerite preachers are mentioned in issues of Present Truth and Advent Review as having embraced Sabbatarianism. Men like John Lindsey, George Holt and Samual Rhodes had come to Millerism as experienced ministers. Others such as J. H. Waggoner, R. F. Cottrell, Merrit Cornell, and John Andrews were too young to have gotten much experience as Millerite advocates, but as they went forth in the new cause, they soon became leading advocates. Still others who had no ministerial background, became valuable Messengers, as these itinerant advocates came to be called. In the last group were such men as Hiram Edson, H. S. Case, David Arnold and John Byington.

The only source from which we can piece together a descriptive picture of the activities of the Messengers is the letters they have written to James White, and from the letters from grateful recipients of the message. A few such letters were printed in

the first few issues of The Review and Herald. As White saw the effect of such letters, he encouraged Messengers to write regularly and to send reports of their activities. Of these, he printed a large percentage. From these letters one can get a vivid picture of the Messengers' activities and typical itinerary. Their work appeared to be directed toward two ends: (1) visiting those who already confessed allegiance, and (2) studying with those who were interested with the object of converting them to the movement. A typical report gives this information: "We visited among them from home to home and lectured seven times."[2] The lecturing usually took place in a local schoolhouse, one of which was always available to the itinerant speaker. Sometimes a local church house was offered but usually with unsatisfactory reservations.

Most of the Messengers traveled in pairs. Besides the obvious advantage of companionship and helpful assistance, pairing of advocates seemed to work advantageously in the nature of the work they were doing. Partners were changed frequently until a satisfactory partnership was formed. Some of these remained together for years as in the case of Hall and Stephenson of Wisconsin and Snook and Brinkerhoff of Iowa. Froom points up the functional nature of the teams: "I.D. Van Horn, who was known to have the gift of the common touch, paired up with J. H.

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[2]Letter from Stephenson and Hall to James White, Rosendal, Wisconsin, April 12, 1854, White Estate Collection.

Waggoner, a man with a reserved manner, made an uncommonly effective pair."[3] Sperry and Hutchins of Illinois, pairing youth and vigor with age and experience, formed another exceptionally effective team.

Until James White began to take responsibility in suggesting itineraries which would eliminate duplication of effort and give attention to some neglected areas, the work was rather haphazard because the Messengers traveled wherever "the spirit moved them." Each acted as his own boss; thus their itineraries were without meaningful pattern. The Messengers were subject to the hospitality of the people they traveled among. Naturally they were inclined to travel among those they felt would be most generous in their gifts. White could not tell them where to go but he made it common knowledge through The Review and Herald where the Messengers were at all times thus eliminating overlapping of efforts, and he constantly called attention to neglected territories, urging Messengers to visit these places.

A typical tour can be reconstructed from a series of Joseph Bates' letters written in the winter of 1853-54. Leaving home in Fairhaven, Massachusetts, on December 1, 1853, he met with a group of Adventists in New Ipswitch, New Hampshire, the following day. From there he hastened to keep an appointment in Springfield, Massachusetts. After spending a few days in

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[3]Leroy E. Froom, The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers Vol. IV (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1954), p. 1105.

Rochester and Fredonia, New York, Bates took a thirty-six hour stage coach trip west to Jackson, Michigan, where he arrived on December 27. Here he began traveling on foot through the state. He entered northwestern Illinois about January 17 and began searching for interested persons in this relatively unworked territory. Here he simply roamed at will from community to community until March 29 when he returned to Michigan. He preached in several rural schoolhouses until mid-April when he decided to go down into Ohio. From this point he worked his way steadily back East, arriving home in Fairhaven on May 22, 1854, after an absence of five months and twenty-two days.

Reports from the Messengers reveal that the two main problems which affected their morale and hindered their effectiveness were: (1) poor health and (2) providing for themselves and their families. Moving as they did from place to place constantly, drinking from strange sources, and exposing themselves constantly to the diseases in many communities, resulted in the Messengers often falling victim to debilitating ills. Diphtheria, scarlet fever, and various lung diseases were at this time taking a fearful toll in human life all over the frontier. Frequently The Review and Herald carried a note of condolence such as this one: "We are sorry to learn that our beloved brother J. N. Andrews is suffering with feeble health, and unable to labor for the advancement of the cause."[6] When he learned of illness

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[6]"Brother Andrews," The Review and Herald, Vol. V, No. 7 (March 7, 1854), p. 56.

among the Messengers, White always started a fund for their aid by contributing twenty-five dollars and appealing in The Review and Herald for others to follow suit. Occasionally one of the Messengers had to return home to care for his family or farm. White deplored this necessity and used the occasion to make a strong plea in the paper for stronger and more consistent support of these advocates. White applauded the generosity when a new buggy or horse was donated. Still there were "drop-outs" from the Messenger forces too often to suit James White.

The Messengers' letters generally were optimistic and indicated conversions in every place visited. The following is a typical excerpt:

> It was truly encouraging to meet with so many true believers in the third angel's message where but a few months ago there was no gathering on God's Holy Day. During the week we visited Lynn, Salem and Marblehead, and held meetings at the places where we found hearers. August 1st, returned to Boston, and held another Sabbath meeting with the brethren. Then visited Randolph and Bridgewater. In all these places we found them ready to receive the message, read the books, and give their names for the paper.[7]

On August 5, 1851, Joseph Bates reported in a letter to The Review and Herald: "Within two years the true Sabbath keepers have increased four-fold in Vermont and New Hampshire. Within one year we believe they have more than doubled their number, and they are daily increasing as the paper and the

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[7]Letter from Dexter Daniels, The Review and Herald Vol. II, No. 2 (August 19, 1851), p. 15.

messengers go forth."[8]

There were several matters of special concern to James White as he assumed more and more of the movement leadership relating to the Messengers. He recognized their work as indispensable, and he wanted it to be improved for greater efficiency. Though careful not to appear to "boss" their operations, he discussed their problems with increasing freedom in The Review and Herald. He traveled every minute he could get out of the office so as to get the feel of their work and understand their problems more completely. Frequent discussions of various problems appeared in the paper. In July, 1852, he wrote:

> We would suggest the propriety of holding meetings where circumstances will admit, twice the length of time they are usually held. It takes two or three days to overcome opposition, and when the opposition is broken down, and the way open to accomplish great good, they leave to attend other appointments and leave the ground for opposers to cast a blighting influence before the word has taken deep root.[9]

Judging from subsequent letters he received from Messengers, his advice was welcomed and used to modify methods. White tried to produce publications which would best suit the needs of the Messengers. These men came to depend heavily on his publications as he promoted their use. Here is an excerpt from one of his many public letters to the Messengers:

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[8]Letter from Joseph Bates, The Review and Herald Vol. II, No. 1 (August 5, 1851), p. 7.

[9]"The Meetings," The Review and Herald Vol. III, No. 6 (July 22, 1852), p. 48.

> They [the Messengers] have so many calls to preach the word that they cannot generally remain in one place a sufficient length of time to give a full course of lectures. It is, therefore, of the highest importance that preaching brethren should have with them, publications covering the whole ground of our faith, to supply the people where an interest is awakened by their labors.[10]

The loyalty and persistent efforts of the Messengers, who numbered (as near as we can calculate by letters to the paper) between fifty and sixty, did much to establish the movement, and James White fulfilled a real communicative and morale-boosting need in coordinating and directing their efforts. His constant interpretations of the Messenger's needs kept the importance of their work ever before the rank and file of the movement. "The Messengers have cheerfully left their homes and have traveled long distances in the cold and heat to spread the truth,"[11] he reminded movement members often. A grateful reader wrote an apt description of these men in a letter: "We were happy to meet with Brethren Rhodes and Holt at this meeting. They are much worn with constant labor, yet happy in hope, cheerfully wearing out in the cause."[12]

James White knew that all these Messengers could not labor with greatest effectiveness for the movement unless there was

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[10]"Advent Tracts," The Review and Herald Vol. V, No. 1 (January 24, 1854), p. 4.

[11]"The Present Truth," The Review and Herald Vol. III, No. 1 (May 6, 1852), p. 5.

[12]Letter to James White from L. B. Kendall from Granville, Vermont, July 17, 1852, White Estate Collection.

some central directing agency to "bind" the work and workers into a togetherness. To meet this most important need, The Review and Herald was established to be the official organ of the Sabbatarian movement.

The Varied Roles of a Movement Newspaper

The few issues of Present Truth and The Advent Review each had their special objectives which were attained with a reasonable degree of success toward establishing the movement. Toward the end of the year 1850 James White began another publishing venture that was to have great significance in the success of the movement, The Review and Herald, which was to serve as the movement newspaper. Beginning in November, 1850, it appeared monthly for two years, then became a semi-monthly and finally a weekly with 3600 subscribers before the decade was over. Initially it was established as a voice of Sabbatarianism, setting forth the beliefs that were considered to be distinctive. It served primarily as a clarifying agent for their ideology, supplementing efforts of the Messengers wherever they went. One of the first achievements the Messengers usually reported after entering any new area and arousing an interest was taking subscriptions to the Review. Even ten years after the first issue, James White declared editorially that the aim of the paper remained essentially the same: "We design to give the reasons of our faith and hope as far as possible without crowding out other important matter."[13]

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[13]"The Review and Herald," The Review and Herald Vol. XIX No. 1 (December 3, 1861), p. 4.

The "other important matter" alluded to here has reference, no doubt, to the other important roles the Review came to play as its editor persistently sought to adapt to needs of the movement.

White was quick to see ways in which the Review could serve as a channel of information. The paper soon carried announcements of various kinds related to movement activity. Notice of important meetings, time, location, and directions for getting there came to be a regular feature in early issues. Location and itineraries of the Messengers aided in cutting down on the over-lapping of their efforts and in keeping track of areas that had been unworked. Announcement of a conference was a boon to many of the Sabbatarians who would often drive horse and wagon or buggy a hundred miles or more so eager were they for fellowship. Through the Review, White could economically and quickly apprise almost all adherents of happenings, situations, and needs within their ranks. With this potential, it is not surprising that James White's office became the center of communication for the entire movement.

First, and foremost, however, the paper was an agent of proselytizing. Many letters arrived at the Review office which expressed sentiments similar to those in this one: "I feel it my duty to acknowledge my gratitude for the paper, which comes as a messenger of mercy to enlighten my dark understanding in the truths of the Bible."[14] White urged the circulation of

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[14]Letter to James White from E. S. Eastman, Hatley, Canada East, January 12, 1852, White Estate Collection.

the paper among any persons who were interested enough to read it. He called upon all readers to act as agents for its circulation.

> Go to those you hope to benefit, with the paper in your hand, even to those who may have prejudice against our views, and talk with them. Remove their prejudice and they will listen to the truth. And if they wish to receive the paper, send their names and addresses.[15]

A three-month trial subscription was offered free to anyone interested.

For many of the scattered and isolated believers who seldom saw a preacher, the Review was a welcome visitor and served as a substitute for a sermon. A woman located in a remote area of Canada wrote: "The Review is to me a welcome messenger. Situated as I am, being alone, the truths it contains are very precious."[16] White once told of one Isaac Brown of Waverly, Michigan, who had never heard an Advent preacher but "by reading the Review, he and his family had become believers in the movement."[17]

It continued to be important to the movement leaders to identify with Millerism. Frequent reprints of choice articles written by William Miller and other leading men of that movement

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[15]"Promoting the Paper," Review and Herald Vol. V, No. 15 (May 2, 1854), p. 116.

[16]Letter from Fanny Owen, Catherine, Canada East, March 25, 1853, White Estate Collection.

[17]"Western Tour," Review and Herald Vol. IV, No. 3 (June 23, 1853), p. 21.

kept up the persuasive appeal initiated by James White in the earlier Advent Review of "calling to remembrance the former days." This was a strong appeal for former Millerites who retained fond memories of the hopes entertained in that movement.

To furnish fresh, original materials for the paper, White located and lured to his staff some of the best of journalistic talent. John N. Andrews who was headed for a law career was induced to join the Review staff. His articles were scholarly and thorough, and brought respectful recognition from other religious papers. J. H. Waggoner came to the paper from Baraboo, Wisconsin, where he had been an editor of an influential political newspaper. He wrote extensively and remained one of the Review's most popular writers. White came to rely most heavily upon a young man from West Wilton, New Hampshire, Uriah Smith, who turned from a lucrative teaching job to join White as an associate and subsequently spent over fifty years on the Review staff. George Amadon came as a printer's assistant but rose quickly to a job as editor of the youth paper, the Youth's Instructor. Many of the Messengers, including M. E. Cornell, R. F. Cottrell, J. B. Frisbie and John N. Loughborough were frequent contributors of feature articles, but one of the most loyal writers was Joseph Clark of Portage, Ohio, a farmer-teacher and later a Messenger, whose dialogues and essays were refreshingly original and interesting.

The Review was not filled exclusively with doctrinal articles and informative announcements. White saw to it that a variety of inspirational and human-interest material was included.

Instructional articles such as "Duty to our Children" were found in almost every issue. From the first issue a poem appeared regularly on the front page. Often this was an original from a talented person among the readers or on the staff. For four years a young lady named Annie R. Smith contributed poems and songs to the paper, some of which became the most popular Advent hymns used by the movement in the years following her untimely death.

After his conversion in 1852 Joseph Clark of Ohio contributed regularly one or two articles for every issue. These ran the gamut of originality from a humorous dialogue with a moral to parables. For a time he produced a regular column entitled "Miscellaneous" in which he offered pithy sayings and inspirational anecdotes. About 1855 White began to run a column of "Foreign News" on the last page of the paper. Presumably this had special interest for many of the frontier readers. During this decade a great national interest in "Spiritualism" arose. For several years White ran a column on the latest in Spiritualistic science, including book reviews. Though the Sabbatarians did not approve of this activity, nevertheless, they apparently enjoyed reading about it.

In some of the early issues a few letters from readers were printed, and they brought such an appreciative response that White continued to print two full pages from the sixty or more received weekly. He explained, "we take the liberty to publish a large portion of our correspondence on account of the interest which the department possesses for a great portion of

our readers."[18] From the many expressions of gratitude received it was obvious that the letters were serving an important morale-strengthening function. One New Yorker wrote: "When I read the cheering epistles from my brethren of like faith I feel strengthened."[19] A lady from New Hampshire wrote: "I often find my own views and feelings expressed more clearly than I can do it."[20] Many of the letters expressed hope and confidence in the movement and its ideology. Such letters brought delighted responses like this one: "I have just received the Review and read the letters from the dear brethren and sisters, and I rejoice to hear their bright hopes of the future."[21]

Another aid to morale among readers was found in the reports sent in from the Messengers. Joseph Bates set the example by furnishing reports of his activities for the first issues. They were received so well that White encouraged other Messengers to report regularly. Each issue usually carried three or four of these reports which were lively and cheerful and told of the progress of the work. Readers apparently were encouraged to hear of others joining the movement. One wrote: "How thrilling

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[18]"Correspondence," Review and Herald Vol. VIII, No. 1 (April 10, 1856), p. 56.

[19]Letter from J. A. Loughhead, Elmira, New York, June 13, 1854, White Estate Collection.

[20]Letter from Elizabeth Dow, Newport, New Hampshire, September 1852, White Estate Collection.

[21]Letter from J. M. McLellan, Hastings, Michigan, June 30, 1853, White Estate Collection.

to follow the accounts of the Messengers. Our souls are encouraged to see the message being accepted by a growing number."[22] The reports kept the readers feeling that they were connected with a dynamic, "going thing."

Sales promotion came to be one of the paper's major functions. White kept up a high-pressured campaign to promote an ever-widening circulation of the Review with the objective of obtaining enough paying subscribers to make the paper a weekly. Meanwhile the plant was evolving into a growing publishing firm for books, tracts, and pamphlets for the cause. By 1859 the Review was carrying a full column listing of publications available at the office in every issue. Many of the editor's communiques promoted the sale and use of these publications.

At the heart of the Review and Herald was the opinion-molding potential that came in time to be more and more effectively directed by White himself. Editorially, he showed himself concerned with every phase of the movement and innovative in expanding the evangelistic programs of the movement. His influence over the movement grew tremendously during the inception period under study. He was constantly communicating with the Messengers, informing them, counseling them, sympathizing with or disciplining them. The Review became the "clearing house" for the widening activities of the movement and a forum under White's supervising authority for discussion of doctrine and ideological attitudes. He

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[22]Letter from L. Martin, Bennington, New Hampshire, September, 1852, White Estate Collection.

expressed concern from time to time that proper perspective be given to the movement's most distinctive beliefs. Recalling the chaotic period which followed the disconfirmation of 1844, he urged that "it should be a very important part of the present work to lead minds from distracting views, and to show them that they must be united in the third angel's message."[23]

The Review and Herald, then, eventually becoming a weekly publication, served the roles of evangelist, morale-strengthener, informant, promotional agent, and general central headquarters for the movement during the decade of the 1850's. In these roles James White adapted to and served vital needs of the movement during this crucial part of the inception period.

Youth Program

The appeal of the Sabbatarian ideology was to adults; the sermons, the literature, the arguments, were all prepared on that level. As the adults joined the movement in increasing numbers, there arose a concern for the young people who were not accepting the peculiar Advent beliefs of their parents. Many of the Messengers were youthful when they became actively involved, yet these were young men who had a particular interest in religion for the most part. James White received many letters expressing parental concern for their children. The Whites who had personally shown special concern for so many young people and brought them to devote their talents to the movement, decided that some kind of

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[23]"Our Present Work" Review and Herald Vol. II, No. 2 (August 19, 1851), p. 12.

youth program should be initiated. In 1852 James White announced in the Review the publication of a magazine which would contain appropriate reading material adapted to the young children of Sabbatarians. In August, 1852, the first number of the Youth's Instructor appeared. The front page of the little magazine featured an "Address to Those Who are Interested in the Youth's Instructor," in which White, who served temporarily as the editor, wrote:

> For some time we have been impressed that we had a more special work to do for the youth, but have not been able to commence it until the present.
>
> The young, at this day, are exposed to many evils and dangers, and they must have right instruction to enable them to know how to shun them.[24]

The Address continued by soliciting parents' cooperation in the program launched, and concluded by promising good reading matter.

> We design that the Instructor shall be filled with sensible matter, not only for the benefit of small children, but for the instruction of the youth from sixteen to twenty years of age.[25]

In an editorial note found in the same issue which introduced the new publication, the editor called attention to a feature of the new magazine which was to grow rapidly into a prominent activity promoted by the movement. He said: "We design to give

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[24]Youth's Instructor Vol. 1, No. 1 (August 1852), p. 1.

[25]Ibid.

a Sabbath-school lesson for each week."[26] Sabbath Schools (similar to Sunday Schools in other churches) caught on quickly among Sabbatarians. White himself promoted the Sabbath School idea vigorously. He wrote the lessons himself until the pressure of other duties forced him to turn it over to others. Adults formed Bible Schools and met at the same time each week that the youth met in Sabbath School session. Eventually, both adult and youth groups came to be called "Sabbath School," and the movement leadership created a separate department to promote Bible study.

Pressure was kept on adults through the Review to see that all children of their acquaintance had a chance to see copies of the magazine.

Writers were solicited for materials; even the children themselves were invited to write for the magazine, but White remained for two years the primary producer of material for The Instructor. F. R. Cottrell and George Amadon soon devoted their talents particularly to this project, giving White some relief and providing variety.

The magazine was received enthusiastically and gradually gained subscribers. One of the Messengers wrote: "I have seen the first number of this little sheet, and am much pleased with it. Every child that can read should have a copy."[27] A parent

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[26]"Youth's Instructor," Review and Herald Vol. III, No. 8 (August 19, 1852), p. 64.

[27]"Youth's Instructor," Review and Herald Vol. III, No. 8 (August 19, 1852), p. 63.

wrote: "I am glad to see something started for the benefit of our dear children; something that will be safe and salutary for them to read."[28]

James White was proud and zealous about the new magazine.

> It is strictly a religious paper, free from the common trash and nonsense that too often finds a place in such papers. Each child needs a copy, as much as school-children each need a text book.[29]

Though the Youth's Instructor attained a wide circulation among the Sabbatarian Adventists during the period under study and the Sabbath Schools rapidly became established throughout the denomination within a relatively short time, it must be recognized that these programs did not make a contribution of the same magnitude of the movement newspaper, the Messengers or the tent campaigns of the latter part of the decade, however, these programs formed the bases of facets of the work that were to become highly significant in promoting the success of the movement in later years.

The Tent Campaigns

Tent use by the Sabbatarians came as a novelty. Large tents had not at this time been used for religious meetings. One of the Messengers, John Loughborough, recalled, "At that time large tents were very rarely used for other purposes than

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[28]Letter from C. Munroe, Conway, Massachusetts, October 28, 1852, White Estate Collection.

[29]"Youth's Instructor," Review and Herald Vol. V, No. 6 (February 28, 1854), p. 48.

circuses, menageries, and shows of various kinds."[30] Their initial use came as a hopeful solution to a growing problem. Schoolhouses were nearly always available for meetings but were characteristically small. In the spring of 1854 many of the Messengers were beginning to complain that the schoolhouses generally were too small to hold the number of people who wanted to hear them. White himself, in a report of one of his tours, recalled that "On the first day the house was filled at an early hour, and many stood up, not able to get seats, and others gathered around the windows outside. Some went away, because they could not hear."[31]

As noted earlier, established churches frequently offered their buildings for use of the Sabbatarians, but the minister usually retained the right to interrupt proceedings for a debate or even to evict the Sabbatarian speaker if he chose. Stevenson and Hall described such an event in one of their reports:

> The Baptist Church in this place gave us the use of their meeting house, but the leaders in their church, becoming fully satisfied that the influence of our meeting was not calculated to advance the interests of their peculiar sect, entered into such bitter complaints about being exposed in their own house that we were forced to vacate.[32]

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[30]John N. Loughborough, The Great Second Advent Movement (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1905), p. 326.

[31]James White, "Western Tour," Review and Herald Vol. V, No. 19(May 30, 1854), p. 148.

[32]Stephenson and Hall, "Labors in the West," Review and Herald Vol. V, No. 17 (May 16, 1854), p. 133.

As Messengers began to avoid such situations, they inevitably faced the problem of inadequate schoolhouses. Loughborough pins the decision to use tents on such a view as the following:

> On one occasion such a crowd of people came together that two schoolhouses of that size could not have held them. To be heard by all, the speaker stood in an open window and spoke to those in the house and to a larger audience seated in their carriages and on the grass. It was the sight of this large assembly that led to the consideration of holding tent meetings.[33]

Subsequently White announced in The Review and Herald that the first tent meeting would open in Battle Creek on June 10. The resulting attendance was stunning to speakers Loughborough and Cornell. The local newspaper estimated that well over one thousand crowded into the tent that night.[34]

This success in Battle Creek created a widespread interest within the movement in the use of tents. In Vermont a tent was hastily purchased to duplicate successes of the Michigan tent which was being moved rapidly from city to city and attracting capacity crowds. Cornell wrote from Shelby "We now wish we had a ninety foot tent. We have 1500 to 2000 daily."[35] As proprietors of a suddenly very popular phenomenon, Cornell and Loughborough found themselves in tremendous demand. In a letter to James White dated July 17 of that first summer, Cornell wrote: "Whole

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[33]Loughborough, op. cit., p. 327.

[34]"Tent Meeting at Battle Creek," Battle Creek Journal (June 11, 1854), p. 4.

[35]"Michigan Tent," Review and Herald, Vol. V, No. 24 (July 18, 1854), p. 188.

communities hearing of our meetings sent an agent to invite us to visit them with the tent. We have had calls to go in many different directions."[36] James White wrote elatedly in the Review: "The Cause in Michigan never was as prosperous as at the present."[37] A skilled tent maker was located among the Sabbatarians and retained by White in behalf of the movement. Other states were encouraged to make use of the tents available through this source. The Review began to advertise services of the tent maker. White wrote in August:

> We are satisfied that the time has fully come to move out with tents in the different states. There could be six or eight meetings held this season, and we should be ready for early operations next season.[38]

At the end of the first summer and fall season in which tents were used in public meetings, an assessment of their use appeared in The Review and Herald, written by three men who had pioneered with their use in the Eastern states:

1) We are satisfied that one fourth of the congregation could in no ordinary way have been called out to listen to our faith.

2) A great deal of prejudice is removed, and the way is open to be followed up by laborers.

3) The members are much refreshed and have a determination to press nearer to a gospel union.[39]

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[36]Letter to James White, July 17, 1854, White Estate Collection

[37]Editorial, Review and Herald Vol. V, No. 22 (July 4, 1854), p. 172.

[38]"Tent Meetings," Review and Herald Vol. VI, No. 1 (August 15, 1854), p. 4.

[39]Frederich Wheeler, Josiah Hart, and Elon Everts, "Tent Meetings," Review and Herald Vol. VI, No. 12, (November 7, 1854), p. 96.

Following the discovery of this new means of attracting large numbers to hear Sabbatarian beliefs in the summer of 1854, there was eager anticipation among the leaders to use this new tool to a greater advantage when the spring season came again. The people too were excited about this new development. Many letters came in which expressed the following sentiments: "The tent meetings held this past season have been the means of much good."[40] As Spring neared, issues of the Review were filled with discussion which reflected the excited anticipation of the coming season. A note appeared in the April issue signed by Sabbatarians in Vermont who had eagerly backed use of a tent in their state the preceding season. The note was an offer to assist Sabbatarians in other New England states to purchase and put into operation a tent in their territory. It was an expensive project and it was difficult to get outstanding speakers to accept the grueling task of pursuing such a long seasonal campaign. Hall and Stephenson purchased a tent for Wisconsin and placed an appeal in the Review for funds to pay for this and another tent in the near future. Michigan leaders met in Jackson on April 20 and made plans to put a second tent into operation in their state. By mid-summer there were five tents in operation, according to White's announcement in the Review which observed, "God seems to bless this mode of conveying

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[40] Letter to James White, December 18, 1854 from A. Stone, White Estate Collection.

the people to hear."[41] It was the beginning of many summers of successive tent campaigns in the Sabbatarian movement. Throughout the inception period the attendance held up consistently. D. P. Hall wrote in July, 1855: "We have already preached to more people than we could have done during the entire summer without a tent."[42] In 1883 James White reflected on the tent campaigns in these words:

> Tent operations were an effective method of enlarging the movement. Beginning in the summer of 1854 in Michigan, these meetings called out large congregations and have greater publicity to our views, by means of the oral lecture...Since that time tent meetings have been held with great success in New England, New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Illinois, Wisconsin, Iowa and Minnesota.[43]

These, then, were the four most significant programs of the movement which contributed to its success during the decade which began in 1850: the Messengers (Sabbatarian preachers), the movement newspaper, Review and Herald, together with the books and pamphlets published, the Youth Program launched by the magazine, Youth's Instructor, and its Sabbath School lessons, and the Tent Campaigns of the latter part of the decade. These were responsible for the aggressive front which brought expansion

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[41]"The Cause," Review and Herald Vol. VII, No. 1 (July 10, 1855), p. 4.

[42]Letter to James White from D. P. Hall, Aztalen, Wisconsin, White Estate Collection.

[43]James White, Life Incidents (Battle Creek, Michigan: SDA Publishing Association, 1883), p. 296.

to the movement, but these programs tended, naturally, to stir opposition, and, as might be expected, there was some dissension in the ranks.

Chapter Seven

THREATS TO THE MOVEMENT FROM WITHIN AND WITHOUT

New theories and innovations ordinarily evoke resistance. Especially does this appear to be true in a social setting where proselytizing of religious views is seen as a threat to the membership of established groups or churches. Advocacy of Millerism met with great resistance from church leaders as well as friends and relatives of those who showed interest in these views. Herbert Simons, in his article mentioned earlier, recognized as one of the major rhetorical requirements of movement leaders that they successfully react to resistance to their movement.[1]

Generally the developing Sabbatarian movement was plagued by two types of resistance: (1) Outside resistance from those who did not believe as they did, and (2) internal dissension from those who had become adherents to the movement but for one reason or another had come to differ with the leadership, causing threat of fragmentation.

Initial Struggle an Adventist Affair

As has been indicated, active proselytizing until 1852 was aimed at and limited to known Adventists. Sabbatarian leaders

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[1]Herbert W. Simons, "A Theory of Persuasion for Social Movements," The Quarterly Journal of Speech LVI (February, 1970), p. 4.

felt that only Adventists who had accepted Miller's beliefs were eligible to become members. They were known as the "shut door" and Sabbatarian Adventists because they kept the seventh-day Sabbath and adhered to Miller's view: "God, in his providence has shut the door; we can only stir one another up to be patient; and be diligent to make our calling and election sure."[2] Himes led the larger group of Adventists in opposing this view. Joseph Marsh, Sylvester Bliss, Elon Galusha, and George Storrs soon followed Himes' lead, thus leaving the Sabbatarians virtually alone to defend the theory. During the first few years of their existence, then, the Sabbatarians became condemned by the other Adventists as those queer, Jewish Shut-door people. Letters in the resource collections indicate that this was the early point of issue which stigmatized the Sabbatarians. However, Sabbatarian leaders soon began to have second thoughts on this positional view as non-Millerites came into their organization. White and Bates first modified their view and gradually let the shut-door theory be relegated to an insignificant position in their views.

Apparently realizing that this was not the proper basis of issue with their former colleagues, White and Bates took steps to emphasize the distinctive views they held. This being before any attempt at publication had been made, both of these men published privately pamphlets which served notice to other

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[2] The Advent Herald (December 11, 1844), p. 142.

Adventists what they considered to be their distinctive beliefs.[3] Thus the Sanctuary and the Sabbath beliefs came to be the main subjects of controversy in the ongoing debate between Sabbatarians and their former colleagues in Millerism.

Though Seventh-day Baptists were scattered throughout the Eastern states and had preached their Sabbath doctrine for many years, they had drawn little attention to themselves, but the Sabbatarians had so combined and related the Sabbath tenet to their judgment hour message that they were attracting attention of so many other Adventists as to cause alarm to the leaders of these other remnant Millerite groups. Leroy Froom offers a noteworthy concise commentary on the appeal of this theological relationship:

> Although the Seventh-day Sabbath came to the attention of a group of Adventists through the Seventh-day Baptists, it was the light on the sanctuary and the prophecy of Daniel 7:25 coupled with that of Revelation 14:4-12 that invested it with a significance and an importance that the Sabbath had never had under the Seventh-day Baptists. They had long held that all the commandments are moral, not ceremonial; that they are unchangeable, being a revelation of the character of God; and that the change of the Sabbath was made by the papal church without authorization from God. Their position in this was impregnable. But Mrs. Preston, in Washington, New Hampshire, simply urging the claim of the unchanged seventh-day Sabbath did not have much initial success. Only in the sanctuary setting did it begin to grip hearts. The belief that men were living in the judgment hour, and were to be

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[3]Bates had published "The Seventh-day Sabbath" in August, 1846, and White had published a similar small pamphlet entitled "A Word to the Little Flock" in May, 1847.

> judged by the great unchanged standard of the judgment, with the coming of Christ drawing near, drove home the conviction that the Lord was calling men to obey all his commandments.[4]

The reaction of the Adventist leaders to the Sabbatarians was quite bitter. They viewed their course of action as fanaticism. Advent journals representing various groups differed on points of theology, but appeared to concentrate their choice venom on the Sabbatarians. The Advent Herald represented Joshua Himes and Sylvester Bliss; the Bible Examiner, George Storrs; the Advent Harbinger, Joseph Marsh. These were the major opponents of Sabbatarians, and they attacked them more and more vigorously as they saw them making steady inroads upon their memberships.

Regular publication of a voice for Sabbatarians began with Present Truth, but it was largely the voice of James White alone, while the Advent Review was largely a reprint paper. With the publication of The Review and Herald, Sabbatarian rhetoricians enjoyed a medium in which they could engage in the polemics with opponents that were so common to their day.

Though the Messengers were constantly engaging in confrontations in their community preaching, we have little objective perspective of what occurred, since the only records of these events are brief allusions by the Messengers themselves in their

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[4]Leroy Froom, The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers Vol. IV (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1954), p. 960.

reports. These obviously would be biased. We believe that the running verbal exchanges carried on between The Review and Herald and the other major Advent journals reflect a great deal more perspective on the rhetorical patterns of argumentation which characterized the rhetorical battle essential to survival of the movement.

Rhetoricians and Their Rhetoric

While many voices of Sabbatarianism are found in successive issues of The Review and Herald between 1850 and the cut-off point of this study--1863, there were only these few who took a leading part and could be called the leading rhetoricians: Joseph Bates, James White, John Andrews, David Arnold, Merritt E. Cornell, J. H. Waggoner, John N. Loughborough, and Uriah Smith. It may be evident in the earlier chapters of this study that James White and Joseph Bates shouldered the heavy responsibility for defending and explaining Sabbatarian views initially, but much of this responsibility was shifted to younger and more capable shoulders as soon as feasible. Bates joined White in supplying much of the early copy for publication, but after 1851 he wrote very little except his regular reports on traveling and preaching. White, of course, continued in his editorial position throughout the fifties, yet he turned much of the editorial responsibility over to the capable hands of Uriah Smith, an unusually orderly man and a clear thinker. David Arnold, the volatile opponent at the second of the 1848 conferences, became for a time White's closest associate in publication and

wrote the first refutations of the "No-Sabbath" arguments which appeared in Present Truth, but Arnold longed for the freedom of the pulpit, and, after 1850, wrote very infrequently for publication. John N. Andrews early came to James White's aid in writing the substantial and scholarly articles needed to keep the Review active in ongoing argumentation with other Advent journals. Loughborough, Cornell and Waggoner joined the movement shortly before 1854 and quickly became leading exponents of Sabbatarianism.

The most relentless and aggressive opponent was Joseph Marsh, editor of the Advent Harbinger. Marsh had an impressive background of twelve years as editor-in-chief of The Christian Palladium, organ of the Christian Church in North America. He had been secretary of the American Temperance Union and a leading voice of Millerism. While editing the Voice of Truth for Millerism, he had established a reputation as a "fearless voice."[5] Marsh also utilized the talents of two veteran Millerite journalists, J. B. Cook and O. R. L. Crozier, both of whom had espoused Sabbatarian views for a short time.

The nature of Sabbatarian appeals were such as to arouse antagonism of opponents. The following excerpt from Joseph Bates was typical of the bluntness which characterized their argumentation:

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[5] Ibid., p. 635.

> We believe they [the other Advent leaders] influenced hundreds of honest souls to become backslidden and lukewarm. These are the ones we are trying to seek out and show them their helpless condition and utter destruction, if they do not forsake them [the Advent leaders] ; for there is no promise of hope for them where they are. I exhort you again to flee from the Laodiceans as from Sodom and Gomorrah. They have changed their views from the 'original faith' of Miller without cause. Their teachings are false and delusive; and lead to utter destruction. DEATH! DEATH! DEATH! ETERNAL DEATH! is on their track.[6]

Bates' blunt warning and plain spoken language was characteristic of the polemics in the early issues of The Review and Herald. White, too could be vehement and impulsive, often alienating those who could have been potential allies with his hasty words. In an early issue of the Review he wrote;

> I fear it would be wrong in me to withhold from you my views of most of our advent brethren. They compose the Laodicean Church--Start not, but hear my reasons. This church is neither cold not hot, but lukewarm...Where was the Laodicean Church organized? At the Albany Conference! I ask where has been the brotherly love in this body since?[7]

John N. Andrews brought a modification of the Sabbatarian discourse. Youthful as he was, he lent dignity and respect to the argumentation. Quiet and unassuming but with deep convictions he quickly established a reputation as "a logical reasoner and dauntless advocate of the Advent faith."[8] In 1850 he began

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[6]"The Laodicean Church," The Review and Herald Vol. 1, No. 1 (November, 1850), p. 7.

[7]Untitled editorial notes, The Review and Herald, Vol. 1, No. 4 (February, 1851), p. 47.

[8]Froom, op. cit., p. 962.

writing on the sanctuary, prophecy, and the three angels' messages while White spent more time out among adherents in personal appearances. He was particularly zealous in behalf of the Sabbath doctrine, arguing tenaciously against the "No-Law" position held by Joseph Marsh. Froom says: "In this he was bold and determined. He took up the cudgels with such men as O. R. L. Crozier, who had now turned against the faith he had once championed."[9]

But Andrews' greatest contribution, on which he had spent years of study and research, was unquestionably the scholarly History of the Sabbath and of the First Day of the Week--presenting the scriptural and historical evidence on these paralleling institutions. In his Review articles Andrews adopted a unique format for "debating in print." "Discourse with Brother Carver" is one of the first of his articles utilizing this approach. Having received a letter from H. E. Carver which presented a lengthy and involved argument on the laws of the Old Testament as they relate to the validity of Sabbath, Andrews divided the letter into small segments of content, quoting and following each in turn with a lengthy "Answer." In this way he makes a thorough analysis of his opponent's argument and provides for the reader a penetrating and impressive commentary on each part of it.

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[9]Ibid., p. 962.

Debate Focuses on Sabbath Doctrine

It has been noted that one of the larger remnants of Millerism was led by Jonathan Cummings who continued for several years to set specific dates on which he predicted Christ's Advent. With each passing date a number of his disappointed followers lost faith in his predictions. The Himes and Bliss group, the Storrs group and the Marsh group all held a sort of "wait-and-see attitude" toward the Advent. With this uncrystalized view on the subject of the Advent, these latter named groups along with the drop-outs from Cummings' fold could hardly make an issue of their differences with the Sabbatarians on the Advent. Logically, too, the other distinctive view--Sabbath doctrine--became the object of a long and bitter debate between the Advent groups.

The debate was initiated by Joseph Marsh in the Advent Harbinger on September 27, 1851, in an article entitled "Seventh-day Sabbath Abolished." The article which was declared by the editor to be unanswerable, was reviewed thoroughly in the Review and Herald by editor James White. His review quoted frequently from Marsh's argument and was organized around such questions as: "What is the signification of the Sabbath? For whom was the Sabbath instituted? What was the design of the Sabbath?" White's essential argument was based on a distinction between the two Old Testament laws and evidence that it was the law of Moses which was abolished, not the law of God. Marsh published a lengthy reply to White's review which White analyzed

as an inconsistency on the basis that Marsh had suggested man's need for rest as the original reason God had given man a Sabbath and yet he claimed the Sabbath to be a Jewish institution. Why should Jews alone need a day of rest, White questioned.[10] Exchanges between White and Marsh continued in their respective journals for months. Meanwhile Marsh published an article by O. R. L. Crozier which brought Andrews into the debate with a review of Crozier's article. Crozier had classified the Sabbath as a Jewish ordinance which had been nailed to the cross at Christ's death. Andrews established a clear example of refutation by quoting a few lines at a time from Crozier and presenting comments, objections and evidence between each quotation. This discourse by Andrews was later combined with a series of "Letters to O. R. L. Crozier" and bound into a book which continued for several years to be in great demand among adherents of the movement. They lauded it highly as a clear and forceful argument for the Sabbath doctrine.

Another Advent journal, Advent Herald, edited by Sylvester Bliss, joined in the debate though the arguments were marred by inconsistency. In one issue Bliss attempted to show that the Sabbath of the fourth commandment was not the original one but instead the first day was the original Sabbath. In a later issue, however, proof was presented that the Sabbath had been

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[10]"The Sabbath," The Review and Herald Vol. II, No. 8 (December 9, 1951), p. 61.

changed from the seventh to the first day of the week.[11] Neither was there complete consistency between the arguments of two writers for the Advent Harbinger. Marsh used J. B. Cook's article which was aimed at proving the Sabbath law had been "relaxed" and did not now constitute a Christian duty, whereas, Marsh himself insisted that the whole canon of the law had been abolished. But since Crozier sided with Marsh's view of an abolished Sabbath, the Sabbatarians focused their attacks on this position.

The Sabbatarian cause was immeasureably strengthened in 1852 when one of Marsh's strongest supporters suddenly became a convert to Sabbatarianism. Merritt E. Cornell, who had been a decided opponent of seventh-day Sabbath teaching now became an eager advocate. Froom describes him as "bold, enthusiastic and dynamic, he was a hard-hitting evangelist and an ardent debater--sometimes called the 'Stormy Petrel'."[12] His contributions to the ongoing Sabbath debate were definitely helpful to the cause. Cornell's unique contribution was a compilation of "Extracts From the Writings of Eminent Authors," attesting the fulfillment of the key features of prophecy. Cornell's Facts for the Times was designed to show that the positions maintained by the Sabbatarian Adventists were supported

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[11] The Advent Herald, issues for April 12 and 19, 1851.

[12] Froom, op. cit., p. 1103.

by many of the most noted and pious writers, both of the past and of contemporary times.

Another outstanding spokesman and experienced editor joined the movement in 1852. J. H. Waggoner, a native Baptist of Wisconsin, had been editor and publisher of a political newspaper in that state. He joined heartily into evangelism, writing and editing and became a leading exponent of Sabbatarianism almost immediately. His contributions were positive and inestimable, especially in his native state of Wisconsin during the later rebellion which occurred there.

So consistently did the Sabbath doctrine continue to be the chief focus of debate between Sabbatarians and the other Adventists that a charge of "one-idea people" came to be leveled at White and his cohorts. White wrote an editorial on this in June, 1854, in which he said: "We admit that when we speak of the law of God, we lay great stress on the fourth commandment, and we do this because this is the contested point."[13]

The Sabbath doctrine continued for several years to be the most hotly contested issue between Sabbatarians and the other Adventist groups. The debate narrowed however with the demise of the Advent Herald when Himes and Bliss became estranged. Marsh and Crozier of the Advent Harbinger continued to be the primary foe with their argument that the Sabbath had been

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[13]"One-Idea Folks," The Review and Herald Vol. V, No. 21 (June 20, 1854), p. 164.

abolished along with the law. After several years of bitter exchange in their respective papers, the argument culminated with a standing challenge in the Review guaranteeing anyone a five hundred dollar reward for a text of scripture that plainly proved the Sabbath abolished. Soon after this appeared, another notice offered anyone another similar reward who could give Biblical approval of the change of Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday. The offers stood through several years' issues without anyone accepting the challenge or collecting the reward.

In the debate each side had vehemently claimed to reveal the "truth" of the matter. Since ascertaining the "truth" is not the object of this study, a thorough analysis of the theological implications of the argument was not attempted. Rather, the relative effectiveness of opposing arguments was our concern. The Sabbatarian discourse appeared more orderly, more clearly presented and more free from abusive invective. But overshadowing the possible bias of the study rises the incontrovertible evidence that Adventists were slipping away from the other groups and the Sabbatarians were the only ones who were showing steady growth. The pressure of this outside resistance was easing off by 1855 but trouble was now brewing within the movement.

The Rebels and the "Messenger Party"

One of the first Messengers to enter Wisconsin was H. S. Case whose straight-forward presentation of the message of Sabbatarianism promptly brought J. H. Waggoner of Baraboo into the movement. Waggoner, a talented speaker, went to work almost

at once as a Messenger for the movement and remained almost exclusively in his home state for years. He, in turn, was responsible for winning to Sabbatarian view two young men of Wisconsin who became the pride of the movement as effective Messengers, J. M. Stephenson and D. P. Hall. Their lively reports in the Review spoke for their enthusiastic pursual of converts and their continued success in winning Wisconsinites to the movement.

In the fall of 1853 the Whites became aware of a few individuals in Jackson, Michigan, who, becoming disaffected over Ellen's visions, began to cause dissention. On a trip to Jackson, James White reported that, "at Jackson we found the church in great confusion. They began to fight Mrs. White's testimony and here commenced what is called the Messenger Party."[14] It was at first a confused situation. For a few months no one knew exactly what was going on. Then it became clear that the veteran Messenger, H. S. Case, was leading the Messenger Party. The group began a paper called Messenger of Truth whose mission, it seemed, was little more than to circulate rumors about leaders and to defame the Sabbatarians. J. N. Loughborough recalled that, "as it was our first experience with such an open attack, we thought it our duty to refute its slanderous statements."[15]

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[14]James White, Life Sketches (Battle Creek, Michigan: SDA Publishing Association, 1883), p. 303.

[15]John N. Loughborough, The Great Second Advent Movement (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald, 1905), p. 325.

In June, 1854, White met with Stephenson and Hall in El Dorado, Wisconsin, for a conference and was shocked to learn that they held views which he had considered incompatible with Sabbatarianism. They assured White at this time that they were firm believers in the "Age-To-Come" theories, which up to this time had been little known.[16] After a long session in which he pled with these Messengers to give up their "heretical" views, he made a deal with them. He agreed not to publish any thing in the Review against "Age-To-Come" in return for their agreement not to preach the theories in public meetings. Apparently he told none of his associates of this agreement, and in his absence, Uriah Smith printed an article by J. B. Frisbie against the theories. No mention of an agreement is found in correspondence or in any issue of the Review until December 4, of the following year (1855). Meanwhile Stephenson announced publicly at a conference in Mill Grove, New York, in April (1855) that a covenant made with White at El Dorado almost a year earlier was now null and void. He cited the article by Frisbie in the Review as proof that White had failed to keep the covenent in good faith. From April until December, White and Smith tried vainly to ward off an open break. They pleaded the excuse that White was absent and failed to leave orders. When Stephenson and Hall remained adamant, they offered to restrict the controversy to the publishing

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[16]Originated by a Dr. John Thomas of Richmond, Va., the theories almost defy explanation as each adherent seemed to have a different version.

of tracts and each party would share the expense. But the Wisconsin Messengers refused any further compromise. Instead they returned to Wisconsin, took the big tent recently purchased by the Sabbatarians of that state and campaigned across the state denouncing the Sabbatarian leaders.

When James White and Uriah Smith saw the futility of compromise, they told the complete story in the Review, confessing regret that they had ever entered into any compromise with the "rebels." Stephenson and Hall's popularity in Wisconsin was something to be reckoned with. In a short time these personable Messengers had attracted to themselves a great number of the Wisconsin Sabbatarians, including several leading Messengers--Waterman Phelps, E. S. Sheffield, W. Wiltsie, T. M. Steward--all of whom formed a committee to publish propaganda for the rebellious group. After some consideration the group decided to form a coalition with the "Messenger Party," and cooperate with Case and Wyman, two more former Messengers, who were publishing the "Messenger of Truth."

White and Smith apparently realized the gravity of the situation. In the Review announcement they were careful to tell every detail of the involvement and careful to avoid denunciation of the group.[17] J. H. Waggoner, who felt a personal burden for these two men he had brought into the

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[17]"The Review Sectarian," The Review and Herald Vol. VII, No. 10 (December 11, 1855), p. 80.

involvement, also reviewed the circumstances leading up to the rebellion for Review readers. He concluded:

> Though the course pursued in the Review may not have been the most judicious, or beneficial for the cause of truth, yet it was pursued from convictions of right, and feelings of respect and love for those who differed with them on that doctrine. It is always well to oppose error, and never safe to compromise the truth; and we think that time has demonstrated that a different course would have been attended with better results.[18]

Waggoner went to the battlefield in Wisconsin and spent the next two years in the difficult job of going from one community to another where the rebel's had sowed seeds of dissent, visiting and reasoning with the people who had been influenced to defect.

Editors of the Review promised to do their part. In an editorial White said, "The sole reason the Review has been silent is on account of the compromise at El Dorado, but since this compromise has been pronounced 'null and void' by the party of the first part, it can certainly influence us no longer; and we intend therefore to bring out the 'truth' on this question fully and fearlessly."[19]

Smith, in another editorial defending the course taken by leaders of the movement, declared, "Compromise was entered into strictly in the interest of unity and because of our confidence

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[18]"The Age to Come," The Review and Herald Vol. VII, No. 11 (December 11, 1855), p. 93.

[19]Untitled editorial, The Review and Herald Vol. VII, No. 17 (January 24, 1856), p. 136.

in the integrity of the persons involved. But we are not convinced that the Review should ever have been free from all compromise with those who hold error."[20]

For a time in 1856 it appeared that the leaders were losing ground against the rebellion which had spread to Ohio, Illinois and to Vermont. Other Messengers who had seemed indispensable in these states had indicated sympathy with the defectors--men like Manning Curry, H. V. Reed, E. R. Seaman, A. N. Seymore, and H. L. Hastings.

White and Bates went out among the adherents, working tirelessly, while Andrews, Smith, Cornell and Cottrell concentrated all the editorial persuasion of The Review and Herald toward quelling the growing trouble. J. H. Waggoner, a native of Wisconsin where the trouble originated, was appointed general in charge of front-line operations there. He called in Merritt Cornell, John Loughborough and other reliable veterans from the East to aid in meeting the people face to face as far as possible who were being influenced.

Uriah Smith, now Editor-in-chief of the Review, did a noteworthy job of showing the public through a free and open exchange with Stephenson and Hall, rebel leaders, that their Age-To-Come theories lacked substantiation. Waggoner in Wisconsin won back the man who next to Stephenson and Hall had been most

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[20]"A Free Paper," The Review and Herald Vol. VII, No. 20 (February 14, 1856), p. 160.

instrumental in drawing sympathy of the local Adventists to the rebel cause--T. M. Stewart. From this point on the battle against the rebels seemed to gradually favor the main leadership but it was only through exhaustive labor and intensive personal work that the defective influence was overcome. Several of the Messengers returned to the movement in 1857 and were reinstated. Tent campaigns heavily concentrated on Wisconsin and Ohio brought new life and renewed optimism to the Adventists of these areas.

Though recovery was slow, White began to talk optimistically about the outlook in 1857:

> It is true the cause in the West has been chilled by the defectors...and friends of the Third Message there saddened by their dire influence, but better days have already come. The leaders have run from one heretical sentiment to another till the candid are losing confidence in them.[21]

The chief leaders continued to lose their following to the renewed vigor of Sabbatarian persuasion until both Stephenson and Hall quit the contest. According to a statistical report of 1858, there was definite evidence of recovery from the influence of rebellion in Wisconsin. James White noted that "at the time of the disaffection, the value of holdings of the cause was only seven hundred dollars, and now, five thousand; then, there were only one thousand subscribers to the Review; now two thousand."[22]

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[21]"Remarks," The Review and Herald Vol. X, No. 1 (May 7, 1857), p. 8.

[22]"The Cause," The Review and Herald Vol. XI, No. 10 (January 14, 1858), p. 326.

This brief presentation of the developments ensuing from resistance from without and within the movement surely leaves many things to be said about the situational effects, but one conclusion seems evident, at least, and that is the effect of both types of "trial" to the young movement served to draw the leadership and adherents closer in a feeling of "belonging." It pointed up to the leadership as perhaps nothing else could the necessity of organization, a subject which is examined in the following chapter.

Chapter Eight

FROM GOSPEL ORDER TO LEGAL INCORPORATION: ORGANIZATION

Any growing enterprise involving large numbers of people must face the necessity of organizing to attain its goals efficiently and effectively. James White admitted in 1864 that he had not seen the need for complete organization in the beginning.

> Ten years since, we did not see the necessity of a complete organization of churches, conferences and General Conferences, with Seventh-day Adventists. We have, however, pled for order in the church, as the several volumes of the Review for the past twelve years testify.[1]

White could have given another reason for not considering organization at an early date. Millerites had been oriented to deplore organized religion. They were indoctrinated to believe the Bible spoke of established churches as "the whore of Babylon."[2] This attitude carried over and remained a part of their beliefs as Sabbatarians. Letters in early Sabbatarian publication indicate strong negative attitudes among Adventists toward any attempt to organize a "church."

Bates and White both felt from the early days a need for church order among the groups of adherents which were developing

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[1]"Organization," The Review and Herald Vol. XXIII, No. 21 (April 19, 1864, p. 164.

[2]See chapter two for background on this attitude.

throughout their movement. Frequent articles in early Reviews stressed the need for a simple degree of "gospel order," as it was termed, which would bring a respectability to the Adventist groups. Nothing could be done or accomplished without order, White urged. Another pressing need often urged in the Review editorials and articles was a distribution of responsibility among the adherents for supporting financial needs of the movement. White strongly believed that the few who were giving heavily during the early days should not be bearing the burden which should be equally borne by all adherents.

These early drives for church order and for every-member support of financial needs provided an appropriate and needful basis for the later organizational programs which White sponsored. The need for complete organization eventually became an obsession for him. He gives this rationale:

> But as the cause advanced, the increase of numbers, the demand for efficient labor and the varied forms of distracting error continually arising, proved to us that order, secured through organization, was indispensable.[3]

In tracing the development of organization within the Sabbatarian movement, it is necessary first to show how the persuasive campaigns for church order and for systematic benevolence prepared the adherents psychologically to accept the big steps of legal incorporation and complete conference-

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[3]"Organization," The Review and Herald Vol. XXIII, No. 21 (April 19, 1864), p. 164.

type structuring. The second part of the chapter will then examine the rhetorical strategies for gaining acceptance of these final organizational procedures.

"Gospel Union" and "Gospel Order"

The winning of adherents to the movement, which was progressing steadily through enthusiasm of the Messengers from Maine to Michigan, did not insure harmony of view or action. Though they had accepted the distinctive views on the Sanctuary and the Sabbath, many Sabbatarians held additional views which often caused dissention. A notable example of this occurred in Wisconsin where some of the Sabbatarians held "Age-To-Come" views which caused disruption in the ranks. Even on the distinctive doctrines there arose differences which proved troublesome. For example, the controversy which arose over time of beginning and ending Sabbath spread through the adherents of Sabbatarianism and caused considerable trouble before it was settled. Unity of views was that which White decided to attack first. He called it "Gospel Union."

In an article entitled "Our Present Work" which appeared in The Review and Herald August 19, 1851, James White reminisced about the unity achieved by Millerism in the early 1840's, and urged Sabbatarians to come into that same spirited union. He called on the Messengers to exert a "powerful effort" to "lead the minds of the brethren from distracting views, and to show them that they must be united in the third message, as we were

in the former ones."[4] Dwell on the main doctrines and minimize other distracting views, he counseled. In his frequent tours among the Sabbatarians, White actively promoted "Gospel Union" and reported optimistically in each issue of the paper. "The brethren came together," he wrote typically, "not to establish any peculiar views of their own, but to be UNITED in the TRUTH."[5]

James White made it especially clear that the Messengers should set the example. His charge to them was, "That there may be union and order in the church, it is of the highest importance that those who go forth as religious teachers should be in perfect union; union of sentiment and action."[6] When in 1854 he discovered that Stephenson and Hall, influential messengers in Wisconsin, believed in the "Age-To-Come" theory, he pleaded with them to suppress these views for the good of the cause and preach only the distinctive doctrines. This they agreed to and complied with the agreement for several months. White made an unprecedented deal with these men in a desperate attempt to preserve "Gospel Union."

As the promotion of "Gospel Union" advanced, expressions of its goals of achievement led to consideration of order in relation to this unity of views. In December, 1853, White

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[4]"Gospel Union," The Review and Herald Vol. II, No. 2 (August 19, 1852), p. 12.

[5]"Tour Report," The Review and Herald Vol. I, No. 14 (March 23, 1852), p. 108.

[6]"Gospel Union," The Review and Herald Vol. IV, No. 23 (December 13, 1853), p. 180.

wrote in another of his frequent editorials on the subject: "Nothing can be more desirable than gospel union; and there can be no real gospel union without union of sentiment, interest and action."[7]

To achieve the "action" called for "Gospel Order." White began to write articles on "Gospel Order" in terms of cooperation among Sabbatarians and with the Messengers. In one article he wrote: "We know it is the will of heaven that this cause should prosper; but God will not, in our opinion, suffer it to advance any faster than it moved in "gospel order."[8] To accomodate further advancement we must have order, he insisted. His favorite illustration was reference to the anatomy of the human body. Each member of the body performs a distinct function, he noted, and this should be true of each member and group in the movement.

Commenting upon intragroup dissention within the ranks, White observed that "if principles of order and discipline had been carried out, much confusion would have been saved. They [the dissenters] will have to learn that God has not called any of His people away from the confusion of the churches, designing that they should be left without discipline."[9]

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[7]"Gospel Union," The Review and Herald Vol. IV, No. 22 (December 6, 1853), p. 172.

[8]"Eastern Tour," The Review and Herald Vol. IV, No. 15 (October 18, 1853), p. 117.

[9]"Gospel Order," The Review and Herald Vol. IV, No. 22 (December 6, 1853), p. 173.

There were some mild protests toward his suggestions of "order" as constituting organization, and, thus, tending toward "Babylon." To these protestors he replied, "Babylon connotes confusion, and God is not the author of confusion, but of peace and order among the saints. We go for order and strict discipline based on New Testament rule of faith and practice."[10]

The order called for by James White's program was nothing more complex than election of one or two Elders and Deacons. This gave groups men to look to for authority, and provided representatives for their group. This, he felt, was minimally necessary for everyday common functioning, but this simple program brought a surprising amount of needed order to local groups. These elected men in local groups assumed responsibility, and, in doing so, influenced other members to behave more responsibly.

James White worked hard through the press and on his tours to induce members of the movement to shoulder individual responsibility. All through his editorials in The Review and Herald ran the theme" "Nothing could be better to create and preserve union than for each and every member to unite in efforts to promote the movement (1) with his prayers and (2) with his means."[11]

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[10]"Gospel Order," The Review and Herald Vol. IV, No. 23 (December 13, 1853), p. 180.

[11]"Gospel Order," The Review and Herald Vol. IV, No. 25 (December 27, 1853), p. 196.

Response to the appeals for "Gospel Union" and "Gospel Order" were general throughout the membership and fairly positive. The spirit of the response shows in this excerpt from a letter from an Elder in Fairhaven, Massachusetts, Joseph Bates home town:

> The brethren in this vicinity have for sometime considered the importance of Gospel order, and of maintaining such order in the church. We therefore, selected two brethren to act the part of "deacons." The action met the approval of all the brethren in conference without a dissenting voice.[12]

There was not, however, uniform acceptance throughout the ranks. In the Eastern states there was a marked attitude of skepticism toward White's suggestive programs. He despaired of modifying the minds of Eastern adherents and finally in 1855 moved his base of operations to Michigan in the West in order to escape the effect of these constraints and be among those who were more enthusiastic and ready to follow his leadership. To an Easterner's query as to what was wrong with the movement in the Eastern States, White wrote this caustic reply:

> God will not suffer it [the movement] to move faster than it moves right. He is waiting for his people to get right and in gospel order, before he adds more to our numbers.[13]

By 1854 the Sabbatarians were commonly referring to their groups as "churches." Now the term "Gospel Order" was changed

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[12]Letter to James White from H. S. Gurney, Fairhaven, Massachusetts, December 18, 1853, White Estate Collection.

[13]Letter to J. M. Lister from James White, March 28, 1854, White Estate Collection.

to "Church Order." More and more stress was now being placed on orderly ways and means. White's example encouraged others to promote the subject. Two of the more persistent voices were those of Joseph Bates and J. B. Frisbie. Bates' lengthy article on "Church Order" called attention to Christ's example in ordaining certain men to preach and also the example of the Apostle Paul in ordaining elders and deacons in every church he visited. Bates described in some detail the qualifications such men should have, and his article closed with this appeal: "Let us all labor for perfect union, harmony and order, in this rising glorious church of God."[14] Frisbie, in a series of articles exploring every angle of the subject, presented a thorough study of organization from every clue to be found in the Bible, noting that Christ was head of the church and under him organization was effected to add those daily who do his will, and dispel those who chose to behave themselves in a disorderly fashion.[15] A little over a year after publication, Frisbie's articles were revised, amplified and reprinted in The Review and Herald with editorials by White calling attention to his "good study" of the subject in view of the fact that adoption of church order was lagging in some areas. In 1857 James White wrote for the benefit of non-cooperators in the program:

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[14]"Church Order," The Review and Herald Vol. VI, No. 3 (August 29, 1854), p. 22.

[15]J. B. Frisbie, "Church Order," The Review and Herald Vol. Vi, No. 19,20 (December 26, 1854, January 9, 1855).

> Some labor under the mistaken idea that order in the church is an abridgment of their religious rights. They have broken away from the bondage of creeds, and human organizations, and rejoice in freedom; but overlook the order, and organization of the church set forth in the Word.[16]

Order, however, was coming into the movement at the lowest level and becoming fairly general. Now as this was taking hold, White began to stress the need of distributing the burden of financial support and systematizing the giving into regular and habitual patterns. This program he labeled "Systematic Benevolence."

Systematic Benevolence

As with other programs, James White launched systematic benevolence through the movement newspaper which he controlled, The Review and Herald, and actively campaigned for it in his frequent tours among the Sabbatarians. White had struggled to establish the Review and print the growing volume of tracts and books used by advocates of the movement views. He had cut with a hand scythe forty acres of wheat to pay for the initial issues and had worked far into the night writing copy, proofreading it and folding and mailing the finished product. He had continually wrestled with the problem of paying bills with far too little cash. In March, 1852, White began to hint broadly to his readers that he would like to have some relief

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[16]"Unity and Gifts of the Churches," The Review and Herald Vol. XI, No. 8 (December 30, 1857), p. 60.

from the constantly nagging frustration of not having means to work with. As yet only a few were giving rather generous donations. His burden was to see all who claimed membership in the movement give somewhat equally and regularly. "We wish to see each having the pleasure of doing something instead of a few free-hearted souls doing the whole,"[17] he wrote.

White had a great burden also for the growing number of Messengers who were going into the various states entirely on their own with no means of support to preach the message of Sabbatarianism. Many of these men had families at home who must be taken care of. In almost every issue he alluded to their plight, often drawing touching verbal pictures of their pathetic needs and heroic sacrifices.

When his initial appeals failed to bring the response he desired, White began to speak more plainly and bluntly of the matter. He called attention to the fact that only a few supported the Messengers, giving one an occasional overcoat or pair of shoes, when they should be seeing that these messengers of the gospel were comfortably fixed and their families well taken care of. He spoke bluntly of the handful who paid for the Review or sent in donations. In alluding to these few, he wrote:

> But there are many calls for their means, besides to publish the Review and Herald. This is

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[17] "The Paper," The Review and Herald Vol. II, No. 14 (March 23, 1852), p. 108.

> but a small item--other publications have been, and must be circulated.
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> And above all, the Messengers of the Lord who go out to teach the unpopular truths of God's word, must be sustained.[18]

Typical of the manner in which projects were supported was the mission to Wisconsin and Illinois which was decided upon at a conference in Jackson, Michigan, in June, 1853, at which time the adherents were called on to furnish the two Messengers with means to get to their field of labor. They were given a few dollars to get there, and a supply of books and tracts to sell when they got there to sustain them.[19]

Editor White continued to dramatically paint word pictures of such incidents in the columns of the Review until he had awakened the sympathies of Sabbatarians in general. Something must be done about the situation, he insisted. "Let the friends of the cause ALL contribute of their means that the work may go forward."[20] One of the first conferences to consider ways and means of getting more support from adherents was the Rochester, New York Conference of June, 1854. A proposal was made here to put The Review and Herald on a cash-in-advance basis. White accepted the proposal, but this did not solve

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[18]"The Review and Herald," The Review and Herald Vol. III, No. 15 (December 9, 1852), p. 120.

[19]"Western Tour," The Review and Herald Vol. IV, No. 3 (June 23, 1853), p. 21.

[20]"Tracts," The Review and Herald Vol. IV, No. 11 (September 20, 1855), p. 88.

the whole problem as there were over four hundred on the subscriber list who were listed as "too poor to pay." Eventually White persuaded the Sabbatarian churches to pay for those among them who were too poor.

But as White had pointed out, the expense of publications was only a small part of the total problem. Too many of the Messengers were having to drop out of active duty to support their families who in some cases had become destitute while the breadwinner was out preaching. Beginning in 1855 the tent campaigns in each state became a boon to the movement but cost considerable to maintain. Some of the tents had to remain in storage because of lack of funds.

In a December issue of the Review (1855) James White set forth a program he called "Systematic Benevolence." In an article entitled "As the Lord Hath Prospered" White suggested a system based on the Apostle Paul's suggestion of putting aside each week on the first day a certain amount of money for the cause (I Corinthians 14:1,2). The plan was specific in suggesting amounts each member--male and female--should set aside each week together with so much for each one hundred dollars worth of property owned.[21]

The systematic benevolence plan was adopted by scattered numbers of groups through the mid-1850's as White continued to publicize it with an occasional editorial. When a letter

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[21] The Review and Herald Vol. VII, No. 13 (December 27, 1855), p. 101.

arrived asking what to do with the money collected, White published an article suggesting that they keep a certain amount on hand to help Messengers as they arrived to preach, and the rest should be sent in to be used in the tent campaigns that were being conducted each summer in the various states. He wrote: "Those messengers approved by the church, must be set free from worldly cares. The church must do their duty in making them God's free men."[22]

White defended his plan by pointing out that it was "scriptural, reasonable, tests the sincerity of the rich, and furthermore, it shows who the real friends of the movement are."[23] Finally, becoming disgusted with the slow-moving progress of the adoption of his plan, White gave vent to his frustration in an editorial:

> I am tired of seeing statements of want among our preachers and appeals for funds in the Review. I am tired of writing them. These things are a blot on the cause. Real friends of the cause will respond with a hearty "AMEN" to the above. These general appeals and trying to raise means without form or order are proving a failure and something must be done more definite and effectual. Of 1600 members in Michigan, if only 1000 followed the systematic benevolence plan, well over five thousand dollars would result. Let the readers look at these facts and act promptly.[24]

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[22]"Letter to Brother Ingraham," The Review and Herald Vol. XI, No. 13 (February 4, 1858), p. 101.

[23]"Systematic Benevolence," The Review and Herald Vol. XIII, No. 26 (May 19, 1859), p. 203.

[24]"The Cause," The Review and Herald Vol. XIV, No. 1 (May 26, 1859), p. 8.

This outburst apparently had the hoped-for effect to start things going. Battle Creek broke the ice with a conference to consider the feasibility of the plan. J. N. Andrews, J. B. Frisbie and James White were each invited to address the conference on the subject. The whole affair including the addresses were printed verbatim in the Review, insuring the event of plenty of publicity. These men reiterated White's original plan for each man, woman and child of the movement. They urged each church group to keep accurate records and report to their groups regularly in session on how each person was keeping up their commitment. This they felt would be encouragement to continue what was once begun. In the next issue of the Review White jubilantly reported the results of the Battle Creek beginnings of the program. In great detail he reported what had been committed by this model church and the amount of money which should result from their commitments. A special offer in the same issue offered free to all church groups special ruled record books prepared especially for the purpose. White stated hopefully, "We hope to hear from brethren in other states as well as Michigan."[25]

Soon letters were coming in every mail delivery reporting adoptions of the systematic benevolence plan. I. C. Vaughan of Hillsdale, Michigan, wrote that the group there "like it

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[25]"Systematic Benevolence," The Review and Herald Vol. XIII, No. 12 (February 10, 1859), p. 92.

very much."[26] The March 31 issue of the paper featured a whole page of letters which enthusiastically endorsed the plan.

On a trip to northern Michigan in 1861 James White discovered some groups who had become lax in operation of the plan. Back in his office at Battle Creek he quickly inaugurated another series of articles urging that the plan be kept alive. "Do not let it grow slack and run down," he urged, "for if you do, we fear your religion will run down with it."[27]

Legal Incorporation

Undoubtedly, it was worry over money matters that bothered James White more than anything else in his position of leadership. Frustration over continued indebtedness drove him to write endless appeals in The Review and Herald for money. The office of publication was moved from the East to Michigan in 1855 in the hope that the more generous adherents of the West would extract White from the heavy accumulation of debt which was at this time about three thousand dollars. But though this was paid, the problem continued because there was no regular systematic income. The cash in advance plan and subsequent relief from providing a large number of subscriptions for the poor, put the Review on a business-like basis, but by this time the book and tract publishing had grown to the proportions of

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[26]Letter from I. C. Vaughan, Hillsdale, Michigan, March 3, 1859, White Estate Collection.

[27]"Systematic Benevolence," The Review and Herald Vol. XIX, No. 5 (December 24, 1861), p. 32.

big business. White was still personally responsible for this and with no substantial income.

The problem of personal responsibility for property also had become a giant-size source of concern for him. The buildings and the equipment were legally his personal property as they were held in his name. Each of the growing number of church buildings throughout the denomination were registered in the name of some individual. In several cases these individuals had defected from the movement or had died, and the property was a loss to the group that had contributed to pay for it. Wherever there was a fire, they suffered loss as there was no insurance. On several occasions White appealed to the movement at large through the Review to do something to relieve him of the heavy burden of concern as well as something to remove the risk involved in personal ownership of movement property.

James White was convinced that legal incorporation was the only answer to the whole problem. This would allow ownership of property in the name of the group or denomination. However, this would require organization at top level and the taking of an official name for the movement which had up to this time simply been called "Sabbatarians" or "Sabbath-keeping Adventists." Furthermore to accept legal status would constitute an "unholy alliance" of church with state. Such steps as these would seem unthinkable to these people who believed any move toward organization of this type, especially legal recognition, would surely brand them as "Babylon" like the other established churches.

In his frequent appeals for money White let it be known that he was having to borrow money on his own signature to meet bills. Finally in February, 1860, he ran a headline across the editorial page:

"BILLS ! BILLS ! BILLS !"

in which he detailed in easy-to-read format all the current publication costs and the amounts for which he had borrowed money. Some overdue items were placed in upper caps, drawing attention to their urgency. On the lower part of the page he ran an article entitled "Borrowed Money," in which he poured forth the depths of his pent-up frustration. He recounted occasions on which individuals had pledged, and he had borrowed money on the strength of their pledge only to be left "holding the bag." The burden of his appeal was: "There are no reasons under the sun why I should be responsible for borrowed money used for the benefit of the movement."[28] He also drew attention to the lack of insurance. In case of fire, he pointed out, the property would be a total loss. A bold expression of his personal desire appeared at the conclusion of the article: "We hope in time not far distant, church property will be insured and held in the proper manner."[29] This statement was enough to stir up a veritable hornet's nest of protest and opposition.

Some of the most influential voices of the movement sounded

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[28]The Review and Herald XI, No. 14 (February 23, 1860), p. 108

[29]Ibid.

forth in immediate opposition. J. N. Loughborough wrote a sympathetic missive as far as White's personal position was concerned but questioned the propriety of the suggested move toward incorporation. R. F. Cottrell took a decided stand in opposition, calling White's move unbiblical and a questionable course of "taking us a name."[30]

Uriah Smith, acting editor, printed Cottrell's letter while the Whites were on a tour East. James White was tremendously upset at Cottrell's opposition. He telegraphed the office: "We are very sorry R. F. Cottrell's letter has voiced this opposition before we had a chance to explain fully."[31] He requested Smith to hold further correspondence until he returned.

Upon returning to Battle Creek, White wrote a scathing rebuke to Cottrell in an article in which he repeated the details of the situation which he found himself in. Something must be done, he urged. White brooded over Cottrell's "treachery" in several subsequent articles on the subject.

Though the movement's top debater, M. E. Cornell, came out strongly in White's defense, two more major blows were to fall in rapid succession. Waterman Phelps, one of the most dependable of the Messengers, resigned from the movement, and the Ohio group announced secession from the movement. For a few weeks

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[30]"Making Us A Name," The Review and Herald Vol. XV, No. 19 (April 5, 1860), p. 152.

[31]Note on White's telegraphed message to Uriah Smith, April, 1860, White Estate Collection.

the situation was rather chaotic. In the ensuing debate White conceded the issue of insurance, but was unwilling to give in on legal holding of property. "Don't you as an individual expect your property to be protected by law?" he asked. "If so, what's the difference in an individual and a group being protected?"[32]

M. E. Cornell admitted that he had felt as Cottrell did, but White's arguments and explanations had changed his mind. Cornell brought out some more significant points such as the fact that the movement had been losing large amounts of money from those who would will their property and money to the cause but could not simply because the movement was not legally recognized. He also drew attention to the embarrassment adherents experience when people ask them to what religion they adhere or to what church they belong. "What do I tell them?" he asked.

With this the topic of discussion on the tongues of Sabbatarians everywhere, it was thought best to have a general conference of the leading men at Battle Creek to discuss the subject. The conference went through five lengthy sessions with opinion evenly divided, but there were two notable results. In the fifth session the leaders did agree on an official name for the denomination: Seventh-day Adventists. The second

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[32]"Making Us A Name," loc. cit.

decision was to establish a Publishing Association and approve its incorporation to handle the legality of all the publishing business of the movement. There was some delay until the state legislature passed requisite laws, but the incorporation took place on May 3, 1861.

James White was somewhat molified by letters from R. F. Cottrell renouncing his opposition and abjectly confessing sorrow for his negative influence. Letters also from leaders in Ohio revealed that the announcement had not reflected widespread or majority opinion among their number. White continued, however, to chafe over Cottrell's initial influential effect, over the silence of many of the Messengers whose support would have given him much comfort when he needed it, and also over the limited success of his incorporation battle. "Buildings throughout the denomination are still owned by individuals,"[33] he complained.

White was elected president of the new Publishing Association as well as the editor of the Review and Herald at the first association meeting on May 23, 1861. Back at his editorial desk he renewed the fight for full incorporation of the movement. In the ensuing exchanges he discovered why some of the Messengers did not respond. An anonymous correspondent informed him that it was his angry rebuke of Cottrell that caused the others to

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[33]"Seventh-day Adventist," The Review and Herald Vol. XVII, No. 24 (April 30, 1861), p. 189.

clam up. White revealed this in a public presentation of the situation in an issue of the Review in which he expressed regret that his approach had affected anyone in this manner, but he defended his position on the basis of established need, and he attacked his opponents for not offering any alternate solutions.[34]

His position began to strengthen as Joseph Bates, R. J. Lawrence, Isaac Sanborn, J. N. Loughborough and others began to write strong defensive articles for his position. A second conference held in October in Battle Creek, rallied to his support, and White in grateful tribute said to the men assembled:

> The unity existing among the brethren at this conference, the eagerness to take a decided position upon organization, and the general readiness to sustain the Publishing Association, have greatly encouraged us.[35]

Full legal incorporation came eventually but it came only through the culmination of organization which developed through conferences, an aspect which we must now consider and trace its development.

Conferences and Organization

In a previous chapter attention had been drawn to the use of conferences as one of the initial strategies for uniting a nucleus of adherents to the movement during the late 1840's. In this context the conference was understood as a meeting for mutual study and presentation of views peculiar to the movement

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[34]"Organization," The Review and Herald Vol. XVIII, No. 7 (July 16, 1861), p. 52.

[35]"Michigan General Conference," The Review and Herald Vol. XVIII, No. 19 (October 7, 1861), p. 148.

with the design that they be better clarified and better understood.

Conferences held for the purpose of consideration of Sabbatarian views continued to be a common feature of the ongoing activity of the movement for a number of years. The movement newspaper, The Review and Herald, carried announcements of conferences wherever they were held. In the early issues there was only an occasional one, but the number held rapidly increased until by 1855 each issue of the Review carried several of these announcements. The conference idea was commonly used to attract a number of those who had believed in the Advent under Miller. Together they would study the old views pertaining to the Advent before introducing the Sabbatarians' newer and more peculiar beliefs. In the conference announcements it was often urged "that a special effort should be made to get Advent brethren who have not heard the reasons for our position presented, to come to the Conference."[36] Many of these conferences were held to bring Sabbatarian brethren closer in unity as had been the case in the 1848 conferences studied in an earlier chapter.

Eventually conferences began to include business sessions for consideration of ways and means to promote the cause. Precedents were set for such activities in conferences as early as February, 1852. One of the first on record was a conference held in Fairhaven, Massachusetts, Joseph Bates' hometown, on

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[36]A Conference Announcement, The Review and Herald Vol. II, No. 7 (November 25, 1851), p. 62.

February 27 of that year in which a resolution was adopted approving Elder White's course of action in managing the Review and Herald.[37] Another conference in Pultney, New York in September of 1852 considered the subject of church order and adopted a resolution of approval.[38]

By the middle of 1853 it seemed that it was becoming an accepted matter for conferences to be called for the express purpose of considering problems or discussing better means of propagandizing their views. A Rochester Conference held in August, 1853, was reported in the Review as having the following purposes:

> The principal object of this meeting was to consider the interest of the church of Christ, our present duty as a people, and the best plans to advance the cause of truth.[39]

A report from Joseph Bates of a conference in Ohio that same month indicated similar concerns for promoting the movement:

> Our conference was convened in Milan, Ohio. A strong desire was manifested by the brethren present to help spread the message throughout the entire state.[40]

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[37]"Conference," The Review and Herald Vol. II, No. 14 (March 23, 1852), p. 108.

[38]"Conference," The Review and Herald Vol. III, No. 10 (September 16, 1852), p. 80.

[39]"Rochester Conference," The Review and Herald Vol. IV, No. 6 (August 4, 1853), p. 48.

[40]"Report from Milan," The Review and Herald Vol. IV, No. 8 (August 28, 1853), p. 64.

It was a conference held at Battle Creek, Michigan, in April, 1855, which called for the headquarters of the movement (which consisted of a small publishing plant) to be removed from Rochester, New York, to Michigan.[41]

The concept of the "General Conference" was coming into existence about this time. The General Conference was not restricted to any locality, but was understood as being open to all from any distance who felt it their duty and within their ability to attend. One of the first announcements in the Review of such a general meeting specified: "a general gathering of the preaching brethren, also one or two from all the several churches who may be selected by their brethren; and see it their duty to attend, would seem to advance the cause of truth."[42]

From that time onward the term "General Conference" was reserved, it seemed by mutual consent, to refer to conferences which called for a more or less official representative gathering of the leading men of the movement. Such a conference, and the first to deal with affairs of the movement at large, convened at Battle Creek in May, 1856. "Consideration of the Book Fund, Tent Enterprizes, and the wants of the cause at large will be taken into consideration,"[43] so read the notice given of the

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[41]"Conference at Battle Creek," The Review and Herald Vol. VI, No. 29 (May 15, 1855), p. 228.

[42]"General Conference at Rochester," The Review and Herald Vol. V, No. 13 (April 18, 1854), p. 102.

[43]"General Conference at Battle Creek," The Review and Herald Vol. VIII, No. 5 (May 8, 1956), p. 32.

conference in the Review. A general attendance from Michigan as well as a full delegation from other states and Canada was solicited.

Ultimately, a state conference came into use. This type or level of conference derived from a problem of coordination of personnel (Messengers) between the state areas. A number of letters had been received by White at headquarters complaining that state groups hardly knew how to plan for the year's activities because they never knew what preachers to count on being in the state at any given time. As noted before, no attempt had been made to co-ordinate the comings and going of the Messengers; they simply moved from state to state as the spirit moved them. In answer to this problem, White suggested that each state hold an annual meeting at which planning is done and at which time they could place their bids for the Messengers they wished. "We lack system," White complained in the article embodying the suggestion. "We should not be afraid of system approved by sound sense."[44] A number of the states followed the suggestion and began to hold regular annual sessions.

Michigan, in their second annual session, decided to form a state organization, a precedent which was adopted by Ohio, Vermont, Minnesota, Iowa, Wisconsin, Illinois, and New York in rapid succession. The trend was not unanimous, however;

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[44]"Yearly Meetings," The Review and Herald Vol. XIV, No. 9 (July 21, 1859), p. 68.

Pennsylvania voted against it and several New England states failed to take action. As they organized, each state was recognized as a state conference. The unorganized areas were known as missions.

Thus, after the Methodist manner, conference came to mean a permanent and operating union of a group of churches, equivalent in a geographical sense to the Episcopal diocese.

Complying with an invitation from the Michigan Conference Committee, a General Conference was convened in Battle Creek, Michigan, on May 20, 1863, at which time all state conferences except Vermont were represented.[45] It was decided on this occasion to form a "General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists" which would give official leadership to the movement at the top level. A Nominations Committee after deliberation invited James White to become the first president of the denomination, but since he had been so active in promoting organization he declined the honor and John Byington of New York was given the office.

Church history books fail to tell the full story of organization. The most thorough is Arthur W. Spalding's, and he considers only the development of organization through conferences. This encompasses only the latter part of the work as this chapter has shown. Spalding concludes his chapter on "Organization of the Church" with these words:

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[45]"General Conference Proceedings," The Review and Herald Vol. XXII, No. 1 (June 2, 1863), p. 4.

> This great work or organization, thus carried through in two and a half years, was a momentous event. It formed the basis of the efficient and militant application of the resources of this people, who have since girdled the world with their mission and message.[46]

But Spalding misses much of the rhetorical battle by not starting in the early 1850's with "Gospel Union" and "Gospel Order" and tracing the various strategies such as systematic benevolence and the campaign for legal incorporation. In the triumph of successfully selling twelve thousand dollars worth of shares in the publishing association, White declared: "Organization has saved the cause."[47]

Not only did White believe with an obsession that it was indispensable to the future of the movement, he now felt that finally the necessary work of organization had been completed. In a retrospective editorial in 1864 he wrote: "Organization among our people has proved a perfect success."[48]

The accomplishment of this objective had called for a long and difficult rhetorical battle James White could look back to with satisfaction.

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[46]Arthur W. Spalding, Origin and History of Seventh-day Adventists (Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1961), p. 310.

[47]"The Association," The Review and Herald Vol. XXII, No. 21 (June 2, 1863), p. 4.

[48]"Organization," The Review and Herald Vol. XXIII, No. 21 (April 19, 1864), p. 164.

Chapter Nine

RHETORICAL STRATEGIES OF THE MOVEMENT IN RETROSPECT

In the history texts of our time brief remarks, if any, are accorded to the rise of Adventism in nineteenth century America. Generally historians give mere mention to a brief period of excitement created by Miller, but note that Adventism collapsed with Millerism in 1844. Perkins and Van Deusen observe that after the great delusion, "here and there Adventist sects continued to exist."[1] The best clue, we feel, as to what actually happened is found in Morris and Greenleaf: "A peaceful dawn of October 23 spelled the virtual end of the Millerite movement although it proved to be only the beginning of the Adventist Movement in organized form."[2]

This study has discovered that Millerism was more of a frenzied campaign than a structured movement. Miller and his associates worked frantically against time to warn as many as possible of an impending event which they believed would occur in 1844. Though the date passed without bringing the predicted event, Millerism succeeded in drawing attention to Adventism in such a dramatic manner as to give rise to an emphasis on

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[1]Dexter Perkins and Glyndon G. Van Deusen, The United States of America: A History (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1968), p. 465.

[2]Richard B. Morris and William Greenleaf, U.S.A. The History of a Nation, Vol. I (Chicago: Rand McNally Company, 1969), p. 519.

Adventism unprecedented in previous historical experience. While Millerism, largely contingent upon a specified date, collapsed, great numbers of "Adventists" remained and continued to search for information about this great event which would somehow reduce the dissonance created for them by Millerism.

It is the view of this study that researchers such as Festinger and Toch (quoted in earlier chapters) were right in observing that persons in such a situation will tend to cling to their basic belief in the face of contradictory evidence and search for plausible solutions. Just such a situation existed after the disappointment Millerites experienced in 1844, and posed a competitive challenge to minor leaders who would come forward to offer possible solutions to their dilemma. In this competitive situation many chose to follow a leader who again set a specified date for the Advent, while a considerable number, who presumably were more conservative or cautious, chose to follow a leader who refused to set any further specific dates. Thus, most of the Millerite followers initially chose between the leadership of Jonathan Cummings or George Storrs, both of whom made definite breaks with Millerism, or else they chose to stay with the original group which maintained for a time as their titular head, Joshua Himes. Very few chose initially to follow the leadership of Joseph Bates, not because his Sanctuary explanation was so incredible, but because of the stigma he assumed in embracing the old "Jewish Sabbath."

Yet as time passed Bates' Sabbatarian Adventism, sparked

by leadership of the Whites, not only attracted to its following a great number of Cummings', Storrs' and Himes' adherents, but eventually far outdistanced these other groups to become the only remnant of Millerism to grow into a worldwide movement. How and why this occurred is of great interest to this study because the lead in attracting adherents to Adventism was assumed by the Sabbatarians during the inception period--the period of their movement under focus for this study. We believe that rhetorical strategies are the prime factors accounting for the success of the Sabbatarians during this period. But before these can be assessed, we believe one must understand that the behavior of Adventists during this state of affairs depends significantly upon their intense desires to interpret the Bible literally and obey its commands explicitly. This desire drove William Miller to renounce personal comfort and ambition and devote his life to study and advocacy of the prophecies. This basic desire was reflected in the behavior of his followers in leaving the established churches. Whitney Cross notes their action and distinguishing characteristic in this passage:

> The Millerites who gathered during the early forties came from all denominations, but in the largest numbers from the Baptist, Free Baptist and Christian Churches. Like the Christians, these Adventists claimed to be nonsectarian and noncreedal except for a literal belief in Scripture.[3]

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[3]Whitney Cross, The Burned-Over District (New York: Harper and Row, 1950), p. 263.

These Millerite Adventists were known to be people of the Bible. Cross observed that "on every subject but the millenium the Adventists found the same Bible meanings others found and held to them more rigidly than most. Their peculiarity lay not in radical change from traditional notions but in intensified adherence to them."[4] The intensity of their zeal appears to be the factor which led them to keep examining proposed solutions and to embrace unpopular doctrines, if need be, to satisfy their basic desire to be "at peace with God." But while these considerations caused the former Millerites to be susceptible to Sabbatarian persuasion, it did not by any means guarantee acceptance. A carefully planned and coordinated program of rhetorical strategies, making doctrines relevant and peremptory, was necessary to attract significant numbers.

Examination of the rhetorical strategies used by Sabbatarians in the inception period of their movement has made possible certain conclusions regarding their relative effectiveness. Strategies, as defined in chapter one, are considered as the strategic means which leadership employed to accomplish objectives. It is the general conclusion of this study that rhetorical strategies as utilized by the leadership of James White, as implemented in the work of the Messengers, and as carried out in the publications of the movement, are primarily responsible for the attraction of increasing numbers of adherents, for bringing increased dedication

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[4] Ibid., p. 320.

among the adherents, and for achieving stability and form for the movement.

The Leadership

As Joshua Himes brought vigor and life to the plodding Millerite movement in 1840, so did James White with his youthful enthusiasm and zealous convictions quicken the pace of the Sabbatarian cause. Herbert Simons has said of leaders like James White, "How he adapts strategies to demands constitutes a primary basis for evaluating his rhetorical output."[5]

James White's rhetorical output is particularly impressive in the areas of promotional, theological and organizational strategies.

Promotional Strategies

It seems safe to conclude that Sabbatarianism would never have reached movement proportions under the original proponents of the distinctive doctrines of this sect. Hiram Edson, the only member of the trio who originated the Sanctuary doctrine to remain loyal to it, was an effective local preacher and became increasingly effective later under White's leadership, but lacked qualities necessary to inaugurate a movement. Joseph Bates, who showed great devotion and persistence in his ministry, also showed lack of leadership qualities necessary

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[5]Herbert W. Simons, "A Theory of Persuasion for Social Movements," The Quarterly Journal of Speech Vol. LVI (February, 1970), p. 7.

to head up a movement, but worked very effectively with White through the conferences of 1848, after which he was content to become one of the leading Messengers under White's direction. It was precisely in the area of promotion that James White appeared to be endlessly resourceful and persistent, and this was what was needed to inspire people to work vigorously and cooperate effectively. White led Sabbatarians by persuasive precept and example, both of which involved effective communication as a key factor.

Promotional strategy was first evidenced in the series of conferences held in 1848. It is difficult to visualize any other choice of strategy which would have accomplished what was initially needed as did these conferences. All denominational historians attest to the soundness of this approach to bring the unity and crystalization of beliefs which was so much needed before any other moves could be made. Out of these conferences came not only a unified feeling of a definite message, but also a response which provided Messengers, the much-needed advocates of the ideology, as well as a willingness to support the new movement. Without this groundwork and these results, it seems doubtful that subsequent efforts on the part of the leadership would have been fruitful.

As support from adherents became substantial, James and Ellen White were provided with the means for financing other promotional strategies. Present Truth was published to expand the concentric circles of influence to include scattered

individuals whom the conferences had not reached. The Advent Review was then published with the specific goal of showing relationship between basic Sabbatarian ideology and that of the "original faith" of William Miller and associates. These publications in the hands of the growing corps of Messengers, the rhetoric of the printed message combined with the personal approach, more than doubled the number of adherents in New York and New England, according to a Bates report previously cited. Meanwhile, James and Ellen White were also traveling incessantly as well as publishing, meeting and exerting the powers of persuasion on individuals and groups wherever they found interests.

Previous publications were only a prelude, though serving distinct and necessary goals, to the big project launched in November, 1850--The Review and Herald, a movement newspaper. The media of the Review served White's promotional goals as no other conceivable tool could. Through this paper he promoted the ideology, support for the movement and the binding of adherents and leaders together in ways that indicate plainly "Promotion" was the keynote of his leadership. His "power to infect others with zeal and impress them with his convictions,"[6] is borne out in the results which are evident in the steady growth of the movement.

In his endless drive for funds White had a penchant for

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[6]Cited from an Editorial, Battle Creek Journal (August 8, 1881), p. 1.

placing forceful emphasis upon the adherents' giving as an accurate indicator of their commitment. A few gave sacrificially, but White was not satisfied with this; he wished every adherent to contribute so that they would feel more involvement in the cause. By 1863, total contributions came to eight thousand dollars, a per capita contribution of two dollars and twenty cents, which is not a bad accomplishment during war-time economy.

His sympathy for the Messengers was strongly reflected in the amount of space given in The Review and Herald to pleading for their support. White knew that the Messengers were indispensable to expanding the movement. His promotional tactics in their behalf became many-faceted. He encouraged all qualified personnel to engage in this activity until he had fifty or sixty from Maine to Minnesota constantly criss-crossing the territory in search of converts. He promoted diversity of their tactics but uniformity of their views. He promoted their status among adherents until they were held in high respect. He promoted every means of improving the conditions of their work until they were living in houses provided by movement adherents and could feel a normalcy in their existence such as other professional men and their families enjoyed.

James White continued throughout the inception period and afterwards as long as he was active and able, promoting programs which were designed to expand and improve the effectiveness of the movement. His youth program, which was initiated with publication of The Youth's Instructor and led to establishment

of Sabbath Schools throughout the movement, was instrumental in arousing interest among children of adherents and retaining many of them and their talents for the future of the cause.

Theological Strategies

Though James White had no part in creating the two distinctive doctrines of Sabbatarianism, his contribution to the theological strategy of the movement was a key factor in attracting so many adherents, particularly among former Millerites. His "Third Angel's Message" was undoubtedly the prime argument which persuaded many Adventists of the binding claims of Sabbath-keeping as related to God's will. Arthur Spalding writes that "from that time 'third angel's message' became an idiom with the Sabbathkeeping Adventists to express their cause, an expression which has endured to the present time."[7] At this time it was effective, as attested to by many letters received by White, for convincing many Millerites of the relevancy between Sabbatarian ideology and the reverence they held for their former experience with Miller.

Another notable use of theological strategy to advance his objectives was White's success in overcoming the pervading notion among Sabbatarians that the established churches constituted "Babylon," a symbolic city which had sold its soul to the devil.

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[7]Arthur W. Spalding, Origin and History of Seventh-day Adventist, Vol. I (Washington, D.C.: REview and Herald Publishing Association, 1961), p. 12.

This notion stemmed from the Millerite call in 1843 to Adventists to renounce their church memberships because of the increasing ridicule they faced. White was then one of the Millerites who preached the "Come out of Babylon" message, but now that it constituted a hindrance to the advancement of his objective to organize the movement, he was able to change the interpretation of the Biblical passage. With scriptural reference he argued that Babylon connoted "confusion" instead of a fallen church. His new interpretation was eventually accepted by the majority of Sabbatarians.

White always used scriptural references in abundance to lend authority to his promotions. "Give as the Lord has prospered" was the key slogan in article after article in The Review and Herald as he promoted the Systematic Benevolence program. In great detail he explained how it was based on the Apostle Paul's plan in I Corinthians 14:1,2. When his programs were questioned, his strongest defense among the Biblically-oriented Adventists was that it was "scriptural."[8]

Organizational Strategy

James White is the undisputed strategist who brought about organization in the Seventh-day Adventist movement. As described in chapter eight, White accomplished this in the face of great odds. Millerites had been strongly prejudiced against

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[8]"Systematic Benevolence," The Review and Herald Vol. XVIII, No. 26 (May 19, 1859), p. 203.

organization, but though White himself had believed as they did, he changed his attitude when in a leading position. White wrote that "as the cause advanced, the increase of numbers, the demand for efficient labor, and the varied forms of distracting error continually arising, proved to us that order, secured by thorough organization, was indispensable."[9]

Movement organization was accomplished through sustained and persistent persuasion through The Review and Herald and frequent personal appearance tours. From the simple demands of "gospel order" to legal incorporation, his carefully planned and persistent tactics eventually won over majority support.

Work of the Messengers

Neither effective leadership nor cleverly edited publications could have accomplished the objectives reached during the years of the inception period without the indispensable work of the Messengers. It was a period of migration from the Eastern seaboard to the inland states, and these men roamed the frontiers and combed the backwoods areas searching out those who were interested in the Advent message. By 1852 an average of fifty to sixty Messengers were reporting regularly in The Review and Herald. Their letters, optimistically relating experiences and progress, were a source of morale for one another as well as other members of the movement.

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[9]"Organization," The Review and Herald, Vol. XXIII, No. 21 (April 19, 1864), p. 164.

The Messengers were the front line "shock troops." It appears evident that the movement would have advanced little beyond that which was achieved by the 1848 conferences had it not been for these Messengers. There is hardly any other conceivable way that leaders could have reached interested individuals who were by not scattered widely over the frontier states. Regretfully, so little detailed knowledge of the Messengers is known other than what is described in Chapter Six, however, it is clear that they went from community to community advocating their message in the schoolhouses, churches and private homes, and in many cases they aroused the initial interest which was nurtured through publications supplied by James White's publishing association.

Importance of Publications

Publications mailed to individuals or in the hands of representatives of the movement played a vital part in advancing the cause of the movement. As in the Millerite campaign, books, pamphlets and papers supplemented in a significant way personal efforts to provide Messengers of the movement with copious and appropriately designed literature for their use. Numerous letters received by White confirm that clarity and relevancy of the literature supplied through a Messenger made converts of them after the Messenger had gone on his way.

We have already described the work of the major publications: Present Truth, Advent Review, and The Review and Herald, each of

which were designed for specific objectives. The Review and Herald continued as a permanent movement journal, adapting and expanding its services to fulfill needs and potentially effective roles such as information medium, morale booster, promotion agent, as well as silent evangelist.

Countless books, pamphlets and other materials continued to come from the presses in growing numbers to supply the movement with supplementary means of persuasion. Publishing had, by 1863, become the number one item of business meeting agendas among Sabbatarians.

Summary of Observations on Choices of Rhetorical Strategies

In the absence of mass media such as we know it today, and within the limitations of their means, it appears that the leadership of Sabbatarian Adventism made strategy choices that were as fruitful as any they could have made. It has been observed that the conferences of 1848 and the subsequent publication of Present Truth established unified groups on a crystalized set of beliefs. Nothing we can visualize could have been substituted for this approach. It activated a productive corps of Messengers and initiated supportive response from adherents.

The second move of significance was carried out through the Advent Review, a rhetoric of identification with Millerism. The strategy deserving special recognition for its importance in the success of this project is White's theological rhetoric which was acknowledged widely among Adventists as successfully

relating Sabbatarian ideology to that of original Millerism.

These were the important initial moves, but the movement would never have attained proportions of significance had it not been for the work of the Messengers who, inspired by the examples of Bates and White and the impetus of the 1848 conferences, literally "hunted out" every interested person scattered across frontier states. Their work is viewed as indispensable.

Of secondary importance was the publication of books and pamphlets which were very helpful to satisfying the reader's interests once they were aroused by the Messengers. In many cases the individuals read their way to conversion. These materials as well as the regular publication of The Review and Herald served important but complementary roles. They complemented the efforts exerted in personal contacts.

The successful tent campaigns represent the Sabbatarians' adaptations in a problematic situation. After making this happy discover, they were alert to use the resulting knowledge to full advantage for the advancement of the cause.

Finally, White's sustained drive toward organization holds an inestimable value in terms of order, efficiency and increased devotion of adherents to the movement. A growing movement could hardly dispense with the order and organization promoted by White. Especially noteworthy also were his choices, under the particular circumstances, in gradually introducing order until the movement was eventually fully organized.

Long-Range Effects

While rhetorical strategies have been examined primarily with the view of their immediate effect in establishing the movement, much of the strategy can best be viewed in the light of continuing growth after the inception period. This continued growth attests to the quality of strategic planning during this initial period.

The movement of this study is now over one hundred years old and presents a picture of continuous steady expansion in sphere of influence and in numbers of adherents. Though the growth has not been spectacular, it appears impressive for such a strict reform-type religious ideology such as the Seventh-day Adventists hold.

The fifty Messengers of 1852 had grown to 64,692 full-time workers in 1970. One hundred twenty-five meeting houses of 1863 had developed into 16,257 in 1970 with a total property value of twenty-one million dollars. Having begun in rural New England, the movement has steadily expanded until by 1970 members were found in 193 of the 226 countries and political sub-divisions of the world. The single publishing plant in Battle Creek was the forerunner of forty-six plants in 1970 which boasted sales totaling forty-two million dollars annually in the publication of literature for the movement in 273 languages. Movement membership showed a steady growth from the 3,550 in 1863 to slightly over two million adherents in 1970. White's plan of systematic benevolence has well-financed the movement

through the years. Seventh-day Adventists have for many years led all other denominations in per capita giving. Total contributions to the movement rose from eleven thousand dollars in 1863 to approximately two hundred million dollars in 1970.[10]

Concluding Observations

The Seventh-day Adventists might be accounted for simply in terms of a reaction to aborted hopes raised by Millerism, the reality of which they refused to accept, or as lunatic-fringe fanatics with bizarre Biblical insights. Too many have passed lightly over this movement and reached such conclusions. Cues from sources cited at the beginning of this study have helped the researcher to see the movement development primarily as effects of rhetorical strategies initiated and carried out by leadership.

The Sabbatarians seemed basically to fit the same pattern set by earlier Millerites: persons with obsessions to reform their own lives and the lives of others in frenzied preparation for an imagined imminent event and in strict conformity with Biblical injunctions. Yet the Adventism of Sabbatarians appears to the close observer and researcher as a conservative contrast to the typical image we have of the Millerite. While both placed the second Advent of Christ foremost in importance in their ideology, the Sabbatarians settled into a more resigned

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[10]All figures taken from the Annual Accumulative Report of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

attitude of normalcy in contrast to the Millerite who generally ignored mere temporal obligations under the influence of a frenzied expectancy.

The rhetorical patterns differed too. While the anxiety-ridden Millerites instituted a crash-type program to reach as many as possible, the Sabbatarian strategy followed a more calculated, deliberate approach. James White shouldered a tremendous initial undertaking virtually alone, but he worked toward preparing for diversification of responsibility as the movement grew. He selected and trained young men for special leadership purposes who would expand the movement in ways not generally understood at the time by the rank and file of the movement. He established long-range programs which would serve to advance the cause long after his death.

The Seventh-day Adventists would be the last to admit that the growth and success of the movement was due to rhetorical strategies and carefully planned persuasion of men. None of the historians of the movement give any stress to this aspect. They are a people who believe strongly that their movement was ordained of God and came forth in "the fullness of time" at His command and that it has prospered only because God wills it. James White, the man to whom, more than any other, they owe their existence as a people, had what appears to be a fairly balanced perspective on this issue. He wrote in 1875:

> Our strength is in the proclamation of clearly defined propositions, sustained by the word of God taken in its obvious meaning.[11]

In the study of movements such as this one, special attention needs to be accorded the beginnings. Bitzer, Toch and Brockriede are wise in their counsel to consider carefully the situational context. Understanding of the movement appears impossible without a careful consideration of the context from which it sprang. The competitive situation which emerged after the disconfirmation of Millerism could well offer an additional dimension to the observations of Festinger, Riechen and Schacter who imply that a believer will continue to believe if he can get social support. Obviously, very few Millerites continued to believe that Christ had come on October 22, 1844 (few believed that He came in secrecy). Most of these Adventists were seeking credible solutions of explanations which would allow them to continue to believe that Christ would come but at some later date.

The underlying ideology of a people involved in such a movement can be ascertained perhaps with more certainty from their behavior than from their stated beliefs. In a study of such people as Millerites and Sabbatarians, it becomes evident that they would identify with the most unpopular of doctrines, if necessary, to attain their basic goal of seeking to understand and obey the will of God.

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[11] "Seventh-day Adventists," The Review and Herald Vol. XXXV, No. 18 (February 18, 1875), p. 60.

Another insight which this research revealed is the tremendous importance of leadership in a movement. This was truly a leader-centered movement, especially during its inception period. It became increasingly evident as the study progressed that Simon's theory was to be unquestionably the most important criteria in the methodology. His guiding questions or "rhetorical problems" were indispensable in creating a sequence or framework for studying the persuasion of this movement.

Finally, the study would have to concur with the study of Rodney Cole that still more refined critical tools are needed for in-depth studies of movements.[12] A movement is so complex and embodies so many variables that it is difficult to know if one has taken into consideration all significant elements. Though it still seems apparent that a study of patterns of rhetorical strategy gives a better perspective on a movement than does individual speeches, even the study of the smallest of movement periods is a tremendously complex undertaking and will probably continue to be avoided by most graduate students in Speech Communication.

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[12]Rodney M. Cole, The Issue Was Kansas: The Persuasive Campaign of the New England Emigrant Aid Company, unpublished dissertation, University of Kansas, 1970.

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