

Homosexual Conference at Andrews

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE: The U.S. Jobless Rate (Nov. 2009) / Colporteur Update / The Abortion Crisis

We recently received the following letter from southern California. You will find it of interest.

“Oct. 24 Dr. Fritz Guy (retired president of La Sierra University) was the speaker at the *Glendale Adventist Forum* held at the Glendale City Church in Glendale, California. Shortly before, he had attended the conference on homosexuality that took place at Andrews University in October 2009, entitled *Marriage, Homosexuality, and the Church*.

“This conference was not open to all, but only to a select group of about 150 who attended. The conference was held on a 3-day weekend in mid-October,

“Representatives from nine leading Seventh-day Adventist organizations—most of them General Conference level—were represented. Its listed sponsors were:

“*International Institute for Religious Liberty at Andrews University, Southern Adventist University, the Seventh-day Adventist Theological Seminary, the General Conference Biblical Research Institute, the North American Division Ministerial Association, The North Pacific Union Conference, the Church State Council, the Northwest Religious Liberty Association, and Liberty magazine.*

“Many church leaders and several x-gays took part in the 12 topic presentations, which were as follows:

“1 - **Recent studies on innateness and change in relation to homosexuality**, presented by Dr. Mark Yarhouse, plus testimony by Ron Woolsey.

“2 - **Gay Marriage, Religious Liberty, and the Church**. This was a panel discussion by Barry Bussey (chair), Alan Reinach, Gerald Chipeur, Bill Knott.

“3 - **Gay Marriage, Civil Rights, and Public Policy**. Panel discussion: Nicholas Miller (chair), Gary Wood, Scott Zentner, Jason Hines.

“4 - **The Bible and Theology: Identifying the Issues**. Panel: Ray Gane (chair), Ekkhardt Mueller, Greg King, Richard Davidson, Tom Shepherd.

“5. **The Pastoral Applications of a Three Tier Distinction between Same-Sex Attraction, a Homosexual Orientation, and Gay Identity**. Presented by Dr. Mark Yarhouse.

“6 - **Counseling/Pastoral Issues in Relation to Same-Sex Attraction**. Panel: Harvey Burnett (chair), Robert Gagnon, Mark Yarhouse, Wayne Blakely, Bill Knott, Roy Gane, James Standish, Inga Anderson.

“7 - **What the Bible tells us about Homosexuality**. Presented by Dr. Robert Gagnon.

“8 - **Homosexuality, Society, and the Church**. Panel: Dwight Nelson (chair), Robert Gagnon, Mark Yarhouse, Wayne Blakely, Bill Knott, Roy Gane, James Standish, Inga Anderson.

“9 - **Biblical and Theological Perspectives on Homosexual Practice**. Panel: Roy Gane (chair), Robert Gagnon, Richard Davidson, Miroslav Kis. This included an interview with Inga Anderson.

“10 - **Sex in the Temple**. Sabbath Sermon by Dwight Nelson.

“11 - **Homosexuality and the Bible - What is at Stake in the Current Debate?** Presented by Richard Davidson.

“12 - **Homosexuality, Gay Marriage, and the Church - Where Do We Go from Here?** Panel: Nicholas Miller (chair), Greg King, John McVay, Ester Knott, Bill Knott, Greg Hamilton, Barry Bussey, Peter Swanson, Edward Woods III, Inga Anderson, Lincoln Steed, Ron Woolsey, Robert Gagnon, James Standish.

“On page 13 of the October-December 2009 issue of a General Conference publication, *Elders Digest*, Angel Rodriguez of the Biblical Research Institute in an article titled ‘*Doctrinal Leadership*’ gave careful instruction to local Adventist elders throughout the world field, as to how they must screen possible speakers before they are to let them speak in the pulpits of our local churches.

“He made the startling statement that some of those barred from speaking in our churches included various church workers: ‘In fact, some of them may be retired ministers or may even work for the church’ was his statement.

“Has the situation become so tense that published warnings are being sent to church leaders all over the world, that they must be careful about letting some current workers, as well as retired Adventist ministers, speak in our churches? Whatever happened to church trials that end in removing retirement credentials?

“I wish to especially call your attention to the fact that, immediately after his presentation, Dr. Fritz Guy made an extremely significant remark during the question and answer portion.

“Dr. Guy said: ‘**Glendale City SDA Church is the location where SDA Kinship has held its annual business meetings for the past 4 years.**’

“For those who may not know, *SDA Kinship International* is the largest gay/lesbian activist organization connected either by their personal history or current attendance in SDA churches.

“It is a stunning fact that, although many faithful workers and ministers may not be permitted to speak in our churches, yet for four years Kinship has held its annual business meeting in one of our denominational churches, conducting each lengthy session in one of our more important local churches in the Los Angeles area: Glendale City Church (GCC).

“Kinship’s website clearly outlines their objectives for the Adventist Church. Regardless of the views of your read-

ers—whether for or against Kinship’s principles and practices.—the fact remains that, for over thirty years, SDA Kinship’s studied objective has been to change certain historic beliefs of our denomination.

“The question is whether any local Adventist conference, or even one of its churches, should be promoting an organization that is attempting to change such long-held Adventist doctrinal beliefs?”

“Since that meeting I have attempted to talk with Larry Caviness, president of the Southern California Conference (SCC) about the matter. I asked him if he knew about the Kinship meetings. Elder Caviness said he had heard of one of their meetings that had been held at GCC, but thought it was a one-time event. He refuses to tell me if these meetings will be permitted to continue.

“I have since repeatedly tried to call him, till his secretary became weary of my many requests for an answer. She finally said that it was clear to her that he was not going to answer me. I suspect Kinship will continue to use GCC for their annual meetings and Kinship socials.

“The current pastor of Glendale City Church is Dr. Smuts Van Rooyan, who is known to have strongly defended Desmond Ford’s doctrinal positions in the 1980s. Van Rooyan’s comments hint that he has allied himself with those who want our denomination to ordain practicing homosexuals. He has openly stated that neither the Bible, nor the Apostle Paul, ever said anything negative about committed monogamous homosexual relationships. That error is part of the standard teaching put forward by Kinship on its website and publications.

“President Caviness has stated to me that the line he has drawn is the line of ordination. In practice, what that means is that gays such as Leif Lind (whose story is told in the new Kinship/Spectrum book), can preach, teach, counsel, and lead the church (as Lind does at GCC). But they must be listed in the bulletin as “church administrator,” not as “associate pastor”; for the latter title requires ordination,—the “line” which the conference says it will not cross. This situation has placed the Southern California Conference leadership into a very difficult position. Caviness’ solution is to remain silent and do nothing.

“This matter should properly be handled by following the *Church Manual*. But Glendale City Church has never had an open Business Meeting where the issues of homosexuality in leadership could be discussed and voted on by its members. That would require notification given to all members, with each member having a vote.

“The members called to a GCC business meeting should include anyone who was a member since 1980, for that was the year the church started its tilt towards gay revisionism. From that time onward, many members began to move their membership to more conservative churches. However, many still care about GCC

and would come to an open Business Meeting that would determine the future of the church.

“The Glendale City Church was once a vibrant congregation that was even on local radio, with almost every pew full. Over the years an inner circle of liberals has taken control of the church. They do not follow the democratic principles that have been placed in our *Church Manual*. When this occurs in a church, the conservatives go elsewhere. They do not come to church to fight.

“GCC has dwindled to the point where the average attendance on Sabbath is only about 200 people. Yet giving remains quite high. What is the explanation of this?”

“Is Kinship directing its members to give to Glendale City Church because they value the direction in which it is trying to take our denomination?”

“Is part of the problem that President Larry Caviness has in dealing with the heresy at GCC—the fact that the Southern California Conference is financially hurting, and GCC has become a very helpful source of additional income for the conference? The threat of a lawsuit may also be intimidating him in this litigious culture. He may also be concerned that business at nearby Glendale Adventist Hospital could be adversely affected.

“The only proper way this can be appropriately dealt with is by following our *Church Manual*. The only authentic voice that can speak for GCC is a properly called Open Business Board Meeting. The small group of liberal insiders who control its committees and church board are not the true voice of GCC.

“A similar problem exists at Southern California Conference headquarters. Currently it appears that Larry Caviness is managing this problem all by himself. Yet the problem is too heavy for his shoulders alone. He needs to discuss it with his Administration Committee; and they will probably need to refer it to the SCC Executive Committee, who may need to send it to members of the conference for a final decision at a duly called SCC Constituency Meeting. For it is only the constituency—the conference membership—that is the authentic voice of Southern California Conference. That is proper church order.

“Please pray! If any who reads this wishes to do so, they can call Larry Caviness. (818-546-8400) and Smuts Van Rooyan (818-244-7241).

“Every world leader in our denomination needs to carefully consider what is happening in Southern California.

“The Anglican Church in Africa has said ‘Once the West had the Gospel of Salvation from sin and brought it to us in Africa. Now we need to return as missionaries to the West and preach the same gospel.’ If there is anyone who is impressed by God to give that call, I would ask that they go to GCC and lovingly plead with them to return to our historic standards in regard to moral principles, as well as letting our members vote whether these new changes should be made.”

—Letter from Southern California, December 2009

The U.S. Jobless Rate - as of November 2009

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The U.S. jobless rate jumped from the 0.4 percentage point to 10.2% in October, the highest level since April 1983. The government's broader measure of unemployment shot up even more, rising half a point to 17.5%.

When, on December 4, the *Bureau of Labor Statistics* reported that the unemployment rate had fallen to 10.0% in November from 10.2% the month before,—**the more accurate measure remained at 17.1%. Yet most Americans are unaware of this.**

The comprehensive—most complete—gauge of labor underutilization is known as the “U-63 unemployment measure”—or, simply, **U-6**. That is the classification given by the U.S. Labor Department to **all people in America who have stopped looking for work or who cannot find full-time jobs.**

This is significant because its continuing divergence from the more common, official rate (the “U-33 unemployment measure”—the U-3) indicates the job market has a long way to go before growth in the economy translates into employment for those seeking it.

The U-6 rate, at 17.1%, is now the highest since the Labor Department started this particular data series in 1994. The 10.0% unemployment rate is calculated based only on those people who are without jobs, available to work—and *have actively sought work in the previous four weeks.* The “actively looking for work” definition is fairly broad. This includes people who contacted an employer, an employment agency, a job center, or friends; maybe they sent out resumes or filled out applications; perhaps they answered or placed ads, among other things.

The U-6 figure, which is generally not mentioned by the press, includes everyone in the official rate plus “marginally attached workers”—that is, *those who are neither working nor looking for work, but say they want a job and have looked for work recently. This includes people who are employed part time for economic reasons, meaning they want full-time work but took a part-time schedule instead because that's all they could find.*

In the coming months, the U-6 measure may be an important signal for the labor market. The official jobless rate is likely to rise through at least the first half of next year as more people return to the job market. That means Americans who now fall into the U-6 category, for stopping their job searches due to discouragement, will eventually fall into the U-3 category as they restart their job hunt.

A U-6 figure that converges toward the official rate (even an official rate that's above 10%) could indicate improving confidence in the labor market and the overall economy. But the convergence could be months away. And, when it comes, it will keep unemployment above 10% for a painfully long period.

U-6 unemployment was at 17.2% in November, down from 17.5% the month before, and up from 8.4% two years ago.

Although the U-6 status did not exist before 1994, the *New York Times* calculated it based on data from the *Bureau of Labor Statistics*. **It is estimated that, in December 1982, the U-6 was 17.1%—which makes the present unemployment rate the worst in many decades.**

In the 1990s, the U.S. had lower unemployment than most of Europe; today the situation has reversed. According to the most recent internationally standardized data, **the United States is now tied for the fourth highest unemployment rate among major Western nations.** In March 2009, the U.S. unemployment rate was 8.5 percent,—only lower than Spain (17.4 percent), Ireland (10.6 percent), and France (8.8 percent), and level with Portugal.

Sixteen other major economies had a lower unemployment rate—including Denmark (5.7 percent), Germany (7.6 percent), Italy (6.9 percent), the Netherlands (2.8 percent), and Sweden (8.0 percent).

U-3 unemployment at 11 percent would be a post-World War II record. Only once since then has joblessness hit double digits in the United States—from September 1982 to July 1983, topping out at 10.8 percent.

“It's not a good report,” said Dan Greenhaus, chief economic strategist for New York-based investment firm Miller Tabak & Co. **“What we're seeing is a validation of the idea that a jobless recovery is perfectly on track.”**

Already, consumer confidence for October came in well-below what analysts were expecting. Shoppers' sentiments about the state of the economy are the gloomiest in nearly three decades.

October was the 22nd straight month the U.S. economy has lost jobs, the longest on record dating back 70 years. Losses at factories, construction companies, retailers, and financial services companies far outweighed gains in education and health care, professional and business services, and elsewhere. Government payrolls were flat.

—Read below, in order to be employed again!

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***COLPORTEUR UPDATE:* We are going to prepare one or more instructional DVDs in January. A little later, a seminar will be held. More news later.**

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A Brief Overview of the Abortion Crisis

In the United States, abortion laws began to appear in the 1820s, forbidding abortion after the fourth month of pregnancy.

In the mid-to-late 1800s, all states passed laws making it illegal to perform or attempt to perform an abortion. These laws were supported by the medical community, which noted abortion's moral implications and danger to women.

Through the efforts primarily of physicians, the American Medical Association, and legislators, **most abortions in the U.S. had been outlawed by 1900.**

Illegal abortions were still frequent. They became less common during the reign of the *Comstock Law*, which essentially banned birth control information and devices.

During this time period, notable activists in the women's suffrage movement, such as Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, spoke out against abortion in their efforts to protect women and children.

In 1959, efforts to liberalize state abortion laws were increasing; and model legislation to legalize abortion in limited cases was proposed at the state level. Abortion advocates often cited as many as ten thousand illegal abortion deaths each year as reason for legalization. However, statements from those on the forefront of this movement reveal that this number was, at best, unsubstantiated and, at worse, purposefully exaggerated.

Another argument for legalizing abortion was that it would enable licensed physicians, rather than unlicensed amateurs, to commit the act. However, in 1960, before abortion was legal, Mary Calderone, former president of *Planned Parenthood*, wrote that trained physicians performed "90% of illegal abortions."

By 1965, all fifty states banned abortion, with some exceptions which varied by state: to save the life of the mother, in cases of rape or incest, or if the fetus was deformed. Groups like the *National Abortion Rights Action League* and the *Clergy Consultation Service on Abortion* worked to liberalize antiabortion laws.

In 1968, Colorado, California, North Carolina, and Oregon reformed abortion laws to allow abortion in some cases. Between 1969-1970, a dozen other states followed suit.

On January 22, 1973, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down every state abortion law through two rulings, *Roe vs. Wade* and *Doe vs. Bolton*. **In the case of *Roe vs. Wade*, the Supreme Court declared most existing state abortion laws unconstitutional.** This decision ruled out any legislative interference in the first trimester of pregnancy and put limits on what restrictions could be passed on abortions in later stages of pregnancy.

Current Status:

The number of annual reported abortions in the U.S. peaked in 1990 at 1.4 million abortions before dropping in subsequent years.

More than one million abortions are performed in the U.S. each year. Based on current abortion rates, about one in three women will have an abortion by age 45.

Forty-four percent of women who had abortions in the U.S. had at least one previous abortion.

Eighty-two percent of women who had abortions in the U.S. were unmarried.

Fifty percent of U.S. women having abortions are younger than 25 years old.

Recent public opinion polling indicates a majority of Americans support additional limits on abortion, including bans on late term abortions. They are not comfortable with the virtually unrestricted access it currently enjoys.

Most abortion laws are in effect at the state level. Since *Roe* and *Doe*, the U.S. Supreme Court has granted states some latitude in regulating and restricting abortion. As a result, **many states have passed measures mandating parental involvement in minor abortion decisions and uniform counseling with reflection periods.** A federal ban on a specific type of late-term abortion, "partial birth abortion," was upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court in April 2007.

The legal battles to save unborn babies continues on down to the present time.