

Editorial

A New Era

This year the Seventh-day Adventist Church enters a new era and so does SPECTRUM. As a new General Conference president leads the church to undertake fresh challenges, SPECTRUM enters its second decade committed to both the pursuit of truth and the importance of Adventism.

SPECTRUM was begun with the assumption that Protestant Christianity particularly adheres to the priesthood of all believers—the responsibility of each person to seek the truth—and that this belief implies a commitment to a democratic form of church. Furthermore, the journal has held that within a community of free persons an independent press is essential to maintain unity. Only if members can freely exchange ideas, proposals and interpretations can a church quickly benefit from new insights and valid suggestions for innovation, while at the same time criticizing and rejecting those proposals that are foolish and erroneous. It is only through open discussion that a strong consensus can emerge for either continuity or change. Such was true in the early days of the Adventist movement and is true today.

Much of this issue explores how contributors to SPECTRUM have shared with the church their pursuit of truth. These contributors are people who insist that their lives remain integrated by religion rather than by their academic, professional, commercial or political affiliations. They refused to allow their lives to be split into separate halves, to be productive and respected scientists or historians or theologians, who merely happened to belong to the Seventh-day Advent-

ist Church. Rather, the contributors to the first ten volumes of SPECTRUM are Adventists who are so serious about their spiritual commitment that they felt compelled to grapple with what they considered to be central issues. They believed that it was healthier to publicly debate crucial issues than to gnaw distractedly on trivia, or even worse, quietly and dispiritedly to drift away from the church.

During the past decade, most of SPECTRUM's articles have discussed issues of particular interest to Adventists. The journal will continue to print diverse viewpoints regarding issues of concern to those within the denomination. But the journal's greatest task will be to encourage its most thoughtful and articulate contributors to reflect on the unique mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. In the years to come, SPECTRUM is dedicated to participating in nothing less than renewing Adventist identity within the world.

SPECTRUM would like nothing better than to help launch Adventist authors into a lifetime of making the Adventist experience accessible and significant for the wider community. It is anxious to publish creative expressions of how the quality of Adventism's communal life not only renews its own members, but also embodies the gospel to become a redemptive force within contemporary culture. The journal is committed to being not simply a place for publishing a range of opinions, but a spectrum of ways in which Adventists can and do incarnate God's gracious yes to the world.

Roy Branson