

In the early 1990s a group of Seventh-day Adventist laymembers in Maryland, USA learned about the pro-abortion position of their church and the practice of elective abortions in Adventist hospitals in Maryland State. Upon learning of this, the group of Adventists led by an elder began to contact church leadership at the CUC and then the GC. They also contacted the Maryland State Department of Health's repository for hospitals statistics and records to validate their concerns.

The following is a record of their correspondence. It is important to keep in mind that these letters only represent abortions in Maryland State and do not address abortions in the many other Adventist hospitals that were offering abortions at this time.

February 15, 1993	Letter to Ron Wisbey, President CUC pp. 2-4
February 22, 1993	Secretary to Wisbey acknowledges receipt of letter p.5
March 22, 1993	Wisbey responds, claims SDA church not involved in abortion p. 6
May 14, 1994	Records obtained from the St. Paul Computer Center, a secular repository for health care records and statistics for the State of Maryland. These records show that three SDA hospitals in Maryland performed at least 1,698 abortions during the years 1991-1992 for a gross income of at least \$1,850,000. Pp. 7-13
May 26, 1993	Response to Wisbey debunking his claims pp.14-16
September 22, 1993	Letter to GC President Folkenberg p. 17
September 30, 1993	Assistant to Folkenberg acknowledges receipt of letter p. 18
November 10, 1993	GC Health Ministries Dr. Whiting responds, admits that several hospitals are "out of line" pp. 19-20
March 14, 1994	Response to Dr. Whiting pp.21-23
April 8, 1994	Third letter to Wisbey pp.24-25

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Elder Ronald Wisbey, President
Columbia Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists
5427 Twin Knolls Road
Columbia, MD 21045

February 15, 1993

Dear Elder Wisbey,

I am very thankful for the sound spiritual leadership you have provided the Columbia Union, and proud of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and the miraculous accomplishments made throughout our history. We have seen the God of Heaven pour out his blessings on our people in special ways; and I believe it could only be God's blessing that has allowed a relatively small church to accomplish so much in the areas of evangelism, pastoral ministry, education, and medicine. We as Seventh-day Adventists have a most sacred and serious work to do as Christians heralding the soon coming of Jesus Christ and proclaiming to the world the Three Angels Messages. We have always based our beliefs and practices on solid scriptural foundations and should continue to do so.

There is something however, that is bothering many of us. It is causing an ever growing concern among Seventh-day Adventist Church members, and we wanted to come to you believing it to be the proper chain of action. As you may, or may not know, our hospitals are committing an act that is abhorrent to both God and Christians, and when added together with the other agencies performing this act, amounts to an atrocity of apocalyptic magnitude for millions and millions of humans. That heinous act is abortion. I can certainly understand why, when 90% of the abortions performed are for convenience, the world likes to keep this procedure legal. In this age of sexual promiscuity, abortion provides an easy out for people who do not want to assume personal responsibility for their actions. True there are abortions in cases of rape and incest, and yet they are a small percentage of the abortions performed. I would venture to say that most individuals are not opposed to abortions that save the life of the mother, and that is a smaller number yet.

More and more Seventh-day Adventists are discovering that our own hospitals perform this disgraceful procedure, and are saddened, confused, and outraged that we who profess the truth are involved in the abortion business. Recently, I have become aware of how many other churches, Protestant and Catholic, who courageously stand against the killing of unborn children, know full well the extent and involvement of the Seventh-day Adventist Church hospitals in the abortion business. The Seventh-day Adventist Church should not be in the abortion business. Discussing the requirements of God's

law, and particularly the Fourth Commandment, becomes hypocritical when we ourselves kill unborn children. It makes the Word of God of no effect from our lips.

I understand that meetings are going on regarding the issue of abortion, and our Church is formulating a statement concerning this issue. I have heard that the statement would be opposed to abortion except in cases of rape, incest, or the health of the mother. This is currently the law of the land and we can see that it has done nothing to reduce the number of abortions. The phrase "health of the mother" is so general that people now use this to obtain abortions for any reason. I think it is an important fact to note that in the late 1960's hospitals found loopholes in unmeasured terms and generally worded statements, such as the one above, to accommodate the many women desiring abortion. A psychological clause for suicidal women was abused to the point that it became the standard means for obtaining an abortion. It came as no surprise then that there was an increase in women seeking abortions who claimed to be "suicidal". Therefore, if our Church makes a general statement alluding to unmeasured standards such as the "health" of the mother, we have taken no stand different from the pro-abortion groups and current abortion legislation. This is unacceptable to myself and the increasing number of Seventh-day Adventist Church members becoming informed on the issue of abortion as it applies to Seventh-day Adventist hospitals and our Church as a whole.

I am not writing this letter to petition the Seventh-day Adventist Church to lobby the government to change the abortion laws. I am writing this letter to voice the opinion of many members, that Seventh-day Adventist hospitals should have a policy of performing no abortions except to save the life of the mother. If Seventh-day Adventist Church members want to receive an abortion there are more than enough facilities to accommodate them. The Seventh-day Adventist Church, as an official Christian organization should not be in the abortion business since abortion is in direct opposition to the Holy Scriptures and the Three Angels Messages.

I understand the fact that there is much money involved for the doctors and institutions performing abortions, but for Christians this is nothing more than "filthy lucre", and can do no more than incur the wrath of God in judgement. It is now time for our hospitals to turn away from this practice and take a stand for the lives of unborn children, and do what is morally right by getting out of the abortion business.

Again I thank you for your leadership and pray that God will assist you in your awesome responsibilities as the Church moves forward in these trying times. I thank you for the

opportunity to be heard and know that you will consider my appeal. I realize the issue may not be resolved immediately, and I see this letter as a positive step toward future dialog. Many of us feel strongly about this and will continue our efforts as necessary. In the meantime we look forward to your response.

In Christian Fellowship,

████████████████████ member: Waldorf Seventh-day Adventist
Church
4229 Mockingbird Circle
Waldorf, MD 20603
(301) 932-4716

And concerned Seventh-day Adventists:

"We have moved into a gray world where we change our labels by intent. If a doctor wants to kill off alpha (being sure to use the most deadly technique) then alpha becomes an 'abortus.' If he wants to preserve it, it is an 'immature' or 'premature.' In late abortions, if he wants it to die, the operation is labeled a 'hysterotomy'; if he wants it to live, it becomes a 'Caesarean section.'"

Aborting America, Bernard N. Nathanson, M.D. with Richard N. Ostling, page 276.

cc: Al Watson, Pastor of the Waldorf Seventh-day Adventist Church

February 22, 1993

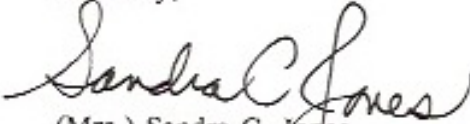
Mr. [REDACTED]
4229 Mockingbird Circle
Waldorf, MD 20603

Dear Mr. [REDACTED]

I have received your letter expressing the deep concerns you and several other members of the Waldorf SDA Church share over the church's present position on abortion. Unfortunately, Elder Wisbey will not be in the office this week because of travel related to his job responsibilities within the Columbia Union territory.

I am sure he will read your letter with great interest upon his return Friday. Thank you for caring enough to share your concerns.

Sincerely,


(Mrs.) Sandra C. Jones
Secretary to the President

sj

March 22, 1993

Mr. [REDACTED]

Waldorf, MD 20603

Dear Brother [REDACTED]:

Thank you for your letter of February 15 regarding your concern for the abortion issue. I am enclosing a document that was voted at the 1992 Annual Council of the Church in October of this past year. While this statement is not perfect, it comes to the church after several years of very careful study by Ephesus and theologians and a wide range of people from around the world. It received almost two full days of debate, including listening to a minority report presented by several members who had served on the Commission who were opposed to the final document.

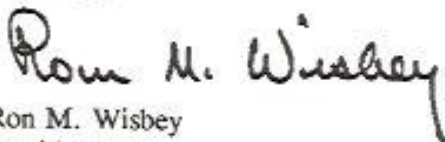
While this may not care for all of your concerns, at the present time, it is the stand of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and the basis for which our hospitals will handle these matters in the future. It is not a document placed in cement. Over the coming years, I am confident it will be revisited for evaluation and for change, if necessary.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church, historically, has not attempted to dictate and overcome a persons own conscience, and will not attempt to do so in this matter. The church stands strongly against abortion as an elective issue. Our hospitals stand with us in this and have voted the procedures that are outlined within the document enclosed.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church is not in the abortion business. While there are unfortunate rumors, and the vast majority of them cannot be authenticated.

I respect your right to your own thinking on this or any other issue. But I urge you to consider carefully the facts of the document that is enclosed, realizing that the church has come to this position over many years of very serious, careful consideration. I can also assure you that our healthcare institutions will abide by these policies as they have the previous policies that have been put in place by the church.

Sincerely,



Ron M. Wisbey
President

Enc SDA Church Position on Abortion, Voted 10/92

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Maryland Outpatient Ambulatory Surgery Data (1989 1990 1991 1992)

Maryland Private Psychiatric Data (1989 1990 1991 1992)

United States Medicare Data (1985 1987 1988 1989 1990 1991)

New Jersey Inpatient Data (1982 TO 1992)

New York Inpatient Data (1984 1985 1986 1987 1988*)
*Partial year data depending on hospital

California Inpatient Data (1989)

Arizona Inpatient Data (1990)

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DATE : 5/14/93

STATISTICAL
SUMMARY BY HOSPITAL/DRG

MDT0704S
PAGE : 1

HOSPITAL	<i>DRG</i>	CASES	CHARGES
WASH. ADVENTIST HOSPITAL	380	1	1103
WASH. ADVENTIST HOSPITAL	381	189	160573
WASH. ADVENTIST HOSPITAL	** TOTAL **	190	161676
LELAND MEMORIAL HOSPITAL	380	3	1796
LELAND MEMORIAL HOSPITAL	381	19	19823
LELAND MEMORIAL HOSPITAL	** TOTAL **	22	21619
SHADY GROVE HOSPITAL	381	406	333474
SHADY GROVE HOSPITAL	** TOTAL **	406	333474

1991 O/P DATA

DATE : 5/14/93

STATISTICAL
SUMMARY BY HOSPITAL/DAG

MDT04S
PAGE : 1

HOSPITAL	<u>DAG</u>	CASES	DAYS	ALOS	CHARGES
WASH. ADVENTIST HOSPITAL	380	18	26	1.44	27655
WASH. ADVENTIST HOSPITAL	381	55	80	1.45	99685
WASH. ADVENTIST HOSPITAL	** TOTAL **	73	106	1.45	127340
LELAND MEMORIAL HOSPITAL	380	2	1	.50	2093
LELAND MEMORIAL HOSPITAL	381	23	22	.95	41374
LELAND MEMORIAL HOSPITAL	** TOTAL **	25	23	.92	43467
SHADY GROVE HOSPITAL	380	27	39	1.44	44023
SHADY GROVE HOSPITAL	381	89	107	1.20	149300
SHADY GROVE HOSPITAL	** TOTAL **	116	146	1.25	193323

1991 I/P

Attachment 1

DATE : 5/14/93

STATISTICAL
SUMMARY BY HOSPITAL/DRG

MDTOT04S
PAGE : 1

HOSPITAL	DRG	CASES	CHARGES
WASH. ADVENTIST HOSPITAL	380	1	684
WASH. ADVENTIST HOSPITAL	381	230	240942
WASH. ADVENTIST HOSPITAL	** TOTAL **	231	241626
LELAND MEMORIAL HOSPITAL	380	5	3139
LELAND MEMORIAL HOSPITAL	381	24	28218
LELAND MEMORIAL HOSPITAL	** TOTAL **	29	31357
SHADY GROVE HOSPITAL	381	454	408493
SHADY GROVE HOSPITAL	** TOTAL **	454	408493

1992 O/P DATA

DATE : 5/14/93

STATISTICAL
SUMMARY BY HOSPITAL/DAG

MD70T04S
PAGE : 1

HOSPITAL	DAG	CASES	DAYS	ALOS	CHARGES
WASH. ADVENTIST HOSPITAL	380	21	28	1.33	37648
WASH. ADVENTIST HOSPITAL	381	32	58	1.81	76637
WASH. ADVENTIST HOSPITAL	** TOTAL **	53	86	1.62	114285
LELAND MEMORIAL HOSPITAL	380	1	2	2.00	2627
LELAND MEMORIAL HOSPITAL	381	22	26	1.18	46901
LELAND MEMORIAL HOSPITAL	** TOTAL **	23	28	1.21	49528
SHADY GROVE HOSPITAL	380	26	34	1.30	46674
SHADY GROVE HOSPITAL	381	50	44	.88	86305
SHADY GROVE HOSPITAL	** TOTAL **	76	78	1.02	132979

1992 I/P

STATISTICAL SUMMARY OF
ABORTIONS AND GENERATED INCOME
1991 & 1992

	1991		1992		TOTAL
	<u>IN</u>	<u>OUT</u>	<u>IN</u>	<u>OUT</u>	<u>INCOME</u>
WAH	73	190	53	231	\$ 644,927
Leland	25	22	23	29	\$ 145,971
Shady Grove	<u>116</u>	<u>406</u>	<u>76</u>	<u>454</u>	<u>\$1,068,269</u>
	214	618	152	714	\$1,859,167

Total Abortions in 1991-1992 = 1,698

Gross Income from these Abortions = \$1,859,167

Abortions by DRG code:

DRG 380 = Abortion without D&C

DRG 381 = Abortion with D&C

Abortion by Aspiration Curettage

Abortion by Hysterotomy

	DRG <u>380</u>	DRG <u>381</u>
WAH	41	506
Leland	11	88
Shady Grove	<u>53</u>	<u>999</u>
	105	+ 1593 = 1698

These statistics reflect the two year period of 1991 and 1992
for the following hospitals:

WAH = Washington Adventist Hospital

Leland = Leland Memorial Hospital

Shady Grove = Shady Grove Adventist Hospital

IN = Inpatient procedure

OUT = Outpatient procedure

Attachment 2

Elder Ronald Wisbey, President
Columbia Union Conference of
Seventh-day Adventists
5427 Twin Knolls Road
Columbia, MD 21045

May 26, 1993

Dear Elder Wisbey,

Thank you for your informative and timely reply of March 22, 1993. We appreciate very much seeing the official statement of the Seventh-day Adventist Church regarding abortion. As you pointed out, there are many rumors circulating of which "the vast majority of them cannot be authenticated". Factual and informed discussion is always the most rewarding and productive.

The document is for the most part a clear and perceptive interpretation of the Scriptures to support the right and sanctity of unborn children while providing redemptive support for individuals finding themselves in this difficult situation. It is also a strong statement upholding God's Law. We are sincerely glad that after 20 years of legal abortion in the United States resulting in 30,000,000+ deaths of innocent children, the Seventh-day Adventist Church is beginning to take a public and scriptural stand on the issue. When we follow the revealed will of God from Scripture and support others in following it we perform our greatest service to God. It is assuring to hear you acknowledge that the document is "not perfect", not "placed in cement", and "will be revisited for evaluation and for change, if necessary".

What we would like you to explain to us is how our Church can make the leap from this document to justifying our hospitals performing abortions for reasons other than to save the life of the mother. While we agree with you that it is not our job to force and coerce people to obey God, neither is it our job to provide the means to disobey God. Following that logic it would be reasonable to set up cigarette vending machines in our hospitals for those exercising their liberty to choose to smoke. It would also seem reasonable to provide alcohol in our cafeterias, as well as pornography in our libraries. To our knowledge our church does not do this nor would we even consider it.

I read with great interest your appeal in the Visitor urging church members to write President Clinton for stronger anti-tobacco legislation due to the fact that nearly 400,000 deaths occur annually as a result of this insidious drug. I applaud you in this appeal and agree with you 100 per cent. I would like to see a similar appeal concerning abortion since there are nearly 1,600,000 deaths annually from abortion. Nearly 4

times the number of deaths from tobacco use. These figures do not include the accidental deaths of women during the procedure, nor suicides resulting from depression following the procedure. If you are unwilling to make the latter appeal to church members via the Visitor, then please make the appeal to our hospitals privately.

You said in your letter that our Church and hospitals stand "strongly against abortion as an elective issue". We would like for you to define elective, as used in this case. What is abortion if it is not elective? When is abortion not elective except to save the life of the mother?

You stated emphatically that "the Seventh-day Adventist Church is not in the abortion business". I apologize if I implied that abortion is the business of our church. I assure you I do not believe that. However, our hospitals are in the abortion business. I grant you it is not their primary business, but it is part of their business nonetheless.

In keeping with informed, factual and authenticated discussion, I have enclosed a set of statistics which reveal to what extent abortion is part of our hospitals' business (See Attachment 1). These statistics were obtained from St. Paul Computer Center, Inc. which is the repository for the databases of the State of Maryland Department of Health. They maintain the databases and provide statistical reports on information submitted by Maryland hospitals to the Department of Health on a yearly basis. These statistics cover the two year period of 1991-1992. In that time period Washington Adventist Hospital, Leland Memorial Hospital and Shady Grove Adventist Hospital performed 1,698 abortions with a total income from these procedures at \$1,859,167. That is close to \$1,000,000 a year of income directly from abortion business. This is in sharp contrast to Fairfax Hospital which performed 29 abortions in 1992, and Arlington Hospital which has a policy of only performing abortion to save the life of the mother. Both of these hospitals are public and secular.

I have enclosed a separate sheet to make the statistics easier to understand, and define the Diagnosis Related Group (DRG) codes 380 and 381, that specify the type of abortion performed and the total number of procedures done at the three hospitals listed (See Attachment 2).

We again appeal to you to consider carefully the facts enclosed as we continue our dialog. We appreciate your time, involvement and willingness to work with us. Let us not wait to revisit this issue years from now, since with each passing year the death count of thousands of innocent children increases.

Sincerely in Christian concern,

[REDACTED], member: Waldorf Seventh-day Adventist
Church
4229 Mockingbird Circle
Waldorf, MD 20603
(301) 932-4716

And concerned Seventh-day Adventists:

cc: Al Watson, Pastor of the Waldorf Seventh-day Adventist
Church

Elder Robert Folkenberg
General Conference of
Seventh-day Adventists
12501 Old Columbia Pike
Silver Spring, MD 20904

September 22, 1993

Dear Elder Folkenberg,

There is an increasing concern among Seventh-day Adventists who are becoming informed about the number of abortions performed in our hospitals. This concern shared by some of the members of the Waldorf Seventh-day Adventist church initiated the writing of a letter to Elder Wisbey, President of the Columbia Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Elder Wisbey replied to our first letter, but we have yet to receive a reply to our second letter dated May 26, 1993. Therefore we are writing to you.

We have enclosed all of our correspondence to date with Elder Wisbey to provide you with information about our concerns, factual data of the abortion business in three of our local hospitals (with the current exception of Leland Memorial), and our desire that Seventh-day Adventist hospitals adopt a policy of performing abortions only to save the life of the mother. We believe this to be the only consistent path to follow as the Church professing to believe the Truth.

We appreciate very much your time and consideration of this matter as we are well aware of the heavy responsibilities that rest upon you in your office. Our prayers are with you and for you in your duties. We look forward to your reply.

In Christian concern,

[REDACTED], Elder, Waldorf Seventh-day Adventist
Church
and,
Concerned Seventh-day Adventists,

cc: Merrill Caviness, Pastor, Waldorf Seventh-day Adventist
Church
Ronald Wisbey, President, Columbia Union Conference of
Seventh-day Adventists

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT



General Conference of

Seventh-day Adventists

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20904-8600 USA TEL: (301) 680-6000 TLX: 440186 FAX: (301) 680-6824 CEN: ADVENTIST, WASHINGTON

September 30, 1993

[REDACTED]
Waldorf SDA Church
4229 Mockingbird Circle
Waldorf, MD 20603

Dear Brother [REDACTED]

Thank you very much for your letter addressed to Elder Robert S. Folkenberg, General Conference President.

We appreciate the concerns you have expressed regarding abortions being performed in Seventh-day Adventist hospitals, and have forwarded your letter and copies of letters to Dr. A. S. Whiting, director of the Health and Temperance Department, asking that he give careful attention to your concerns.

Wishing you heaven's blessings.

Sincerely,

B. E. Jacobs
Assistant to the President

BEJ/dw.

xc: A. S. Whiting



Seventh-day Adventists

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20904-1608 USA TEL. (301) 680-9300 TTY: 480-1100 FAX (301) 680-6090 CBL ADVENTIST, WASHINGTON

November 10, 1993

[REDACTED]
Waldorf SDA Church
4229 Mockingbird Circle
Waldorf, MD 20603

Dear Brother [REDACTED]

Your letter to Robert Folkenberg was passed to my office. Your concern over the abortion issue is certainly understandable. It is an issue that has concerned many within our church.

Enclosed with this letter is a copy of the action taken at the 1992 Annual Council. You undoubtedly have seen this action published in the REVIEW. These recommendations on abortion came to the Annual Council after the issues were studied for a period of three years. Although not a document of the church or policy thereof, the guidelines presented do address some important issues. Of interest is that the Adventist Health Association Cabinet (North American Division SDA hospital leadership group) voted to accept the guidelines for following in Adventist hospitals (the guidelines were rewritten into a standard hospital format). If the recommendations of the guidelines voted by the Annual Council were followed universally, 95% of all abortions would never be done. In my opinion, this is a major step in the right direction. It also represents a position far to the right of where most of the world is. The guidelines as voted support the sanctity of life and stand as a "pro-life" stance. Some may feel that the recommendations do not go far enough against abortion. Those who take this view do not see the very positive nature of the document which if followed would set apart Adventist hospitals from other community hospitals.

Surveys of our SDA institutions indicate that only a few have been out of line with the intent of the document. It is expected that these institutions will adjust their policies accordingly.

Page two

November 10, 1993

You have a legitimate right to be concerned with abortion issues. You can help address these issues by supporting the document the church has voted. Even though you may consider it deficient, it is a major step in the right direction. We now have these voted guidelines which help the church make a positive stand on abortion. The document encourages ongoing dialog, and there may be a time when the contents may have to be altered. For the time being, let's unite behind what is positive and what has been accepted as a helpful position on a critical topic.

Sincerely,



Albert S. Whiting, M.D.
Director

r

cc: R Folkenberg

March 14, 1994

Albert S. Whiting, M.D., Director
Health and Temperance Department
General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists
12501 Old Columbia Pike
Silver Spring, MD 20904-1608

Dear Dr. Whiting,

I appreciated your timely response of November 10, 1993, as well as the attached hospital guidelines concerning abortion. I delayed my response to that letter while waiting for the abortion statistics to arrive at the St. Paul Computer Center, Inc., from the Maryland Department of Health. The 1993 figures were not available until after February. Even at this date only the first six months of 1993 data for out patient procedures are available. The available data, however, show no meaningful change in the number of abortions performed at either Washington Adventist Hospital or Shady Grove Adventist Hospital. Six hundred to eight hundred terminations of unborn children per year, executed by two Seventh-day Adventist hospitals is unacceptable at the very least, and tragically horrible at the most. Therefore I have decided to write now even without the data for the second half of 1993.

You stated in your letter that "If the recommendations of the guidelines voted by the Annual Council were followed universally, 95% of all abortions would never be done." If this truly is the case, and if applied to the two hospitals mentioned above, why have the number of abortions performed by them not decreased to thirty or forty procedures per year. Or could it possibly mean that the six to eight hundred abortions currently performed each year are 5% of the 12,000 to 16,000 abortions they would perform each year without the guidelines to provide control? What would that be? Roughly four times the membership of Sligo Church?

The statement that "The guidelines as voted support the sanctity of life and stand as a 'pro-life' stance" could not be farther from the truth. In fact the statement as voted reads very much the same as the "Freedom of Choice Act", which is probably the most unrestrictive "pro-choice" document to date. I would be more than willing to send a copy to you for review if you find that hard to believe. As for the guidelines standing as "pro-life", I would like to know by whose definition. I am willing to send a copy of our guidelines to any five or ten "pro-life" organizations in the United States and solicit their comments and "pro-life" rating of the guidelines, and share the results with you. I feel extremely safe to say that the guidelines would never be

considered "pro-life." Especially troubling in our guidelines is Section B INTENTIONAL TERMINATION OF PREGNANCY AFTER VIABILITY. By the definition of viability stated right in Section B, and personal conversations with obstetricians; if a woman's life or health is in danger after the child is viable, delivery of the child would be the preferable treatment rather than ending the child's life. The only provision that the guidelines set forth to save a viable child, is that if in "the course of termination" (which is an aseptic way to say killing) the baby accidentally lives. This is abhorrent and is in direct opposition to the teaching of the Scriptures and, up to this point in time, the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

I am truly saddened by the responses from the Union and now the General Conference. In each case I feel that the appeals I am making are falling on deaf ears. I know that you are extremely busy men, and my prayers and support are with you. Please believe me when I say that. But I cannot in good conscience support this document because we are talking about people's lives. I truly believe that if our hospitals were taking two and three year old children into operating rooms and killing them by tearing off their heads and limbs, or injecting them with salt or chemicals, that you would be one of the first ones there to save them. So what then makes doing this to children who happen to be younger any different?

I suppose this leads me to the only real issue in this discussion - Do you believe that the unborn child is a person? The guidelines begin by saying that "Prenatal human life is a magnificent gift of God and deserves respect and protection." Do you believe that? Because if you do, the remainder of the guidelines are far from consistent with that statement. I realize that you are not solely responsible for the document, but you are in a God appointed position to change it. If you have never reached a conclusion as to whether or not the unborn child is a person, I appeal to you to consider it and decide one way or the other. I personally made that decision years after being a Seventh-day Adventist, having been pro-abortion in my own philosophy and never having or taking the time to be informed. I highly recommend the book "Aborting America" by Dr. Bernard Nathanson (I have a copy that I would be glad to lend you if you cannot obtain one). He is the OB-GYN that started the abortion rights movement (NARAL) in the 1970s. He presents the issue in a very non-biased, medical way. It could be that these sins are being committed out of blindness.

In the mean time however, we as a Church must not say what is right and then proceed to foster that which is wrong. This is not a Sabbath School discussion nor a classroom ethics exercise. This is six to eight hundred people a year who will

never live because of two Seventh-day Adventist hospitals. In ten years that number increases to six or eight thousand.

I now believe I must pursue other alternatives to aid in the cessation of these abortion practices in our hospitals. The advice from the Union and you is to accept and support this position, and one day down the road there may be changes. I deeply regret that my church's leadership takes this position. How many more children have to be killed? In the past year it has been six to seven hundred more. It is my feeling that the church leadership would like me to accept and forget, but I cannot.

If you believe that the majority of Seventh-day Adventist Church members support these abortions, I think you are wrong. As I talk with members and inform them of what is going on, most are shocked, surprised and had no idea that this was happening to this extent. There is a "sleeping giant" out there that will awaken. Therefore, I believe that an important step for me to take now is to publicize to our members and to the people using our hospital facilities just what is being done in them, since, if I understand what you are saying, we have reached the end of the road in our dialog.

I appreciate the time you have taken to listen, and I certainly appreciate belonging to a church that allows this type of freedom to express concerns. But if all we ever do is discuss the issues and write letters back and forth, we have done nothing to prevent the deaths of innocent children. True, there are circumstances where abortions are at times necessary. But I have researched this issue too deeply to believe that the large number of abortions performed by our hospitals fall into that category, when two area public hospitals perform fewer than fifty abortions a year. We as a Christian church must stop this outrageous and senseless killing in our hospitals, and the time is now. I plead with you in the name of Jesus to do what you can to stop this.

I have enclosed a statistic sheet that shows the 1993 figures as well as the two previous years data. My prayers are with you in your work, and I ask that your prayers be with me.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]
New Life Community Church of Seventh-day Adventists
4229 Mockingbird Circle
Waldorf, MD 20603 Phone: (301) 932-4716

Elder Ronald Wisbey, President
Columbia Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists
5427 Twin Knolls Road
Columbia, MD 21045

April 8, 1994

Dear Elder Wisbey,

Greetings. I congratulate you on the position you will assume as the liaison between the Seventh-day Adventist Church and the Adventist Health Care Association. I once again appeal to you to do all that you can to reform the abortion practices of our hospitals. Your new job appears to place you in a very effective position to bring about changes in our hospitals that will protect the lives of many unborn children, and be consistent with Biblical, Seventh-day Adventist principles.

Sadly, I received the statistics for abortions performed at Washington Adventist Hospital and Shady Grove Adventist Hospital in 1993. There is no meaningful change in the number of abortions still being performed by our hospitals. The continued high number of unborn children being killed by these two hospitals constrains us to write this letter to you for assistance. With the turn of events that place you in your new position, we are seeking counsel from you for advice, suggestions or recommendations that you might have to offer that will aid the efforts to end this ungodly practice.


As long as our hospitals retain the current guidelines on abortion these high numbers will continue, since the loopholes in the guidelines make it extremely easy to provide abortion for any reason. We as a Christian church must insist that the only way to reduce the large number of abortions performed by Seventh-day Adventist hospitals is to adopt the policy that abortions will only be performed to save the life of the mother. That is the current policy of Arlington Hospital (Arlington, Virginia), a public, secular hospital, and the number of abortions performed there per year are less than fifty. I admire the courageous stand they have taken for the sanctity of life, and pray that we as Christians proclaiming the Truth and providing a world wide healing ministry can take the same stand.

I have enclosed a copy of the response from Dr. Albert S. Whiting, Director of the General Conference's Health and Temperance Department, to our first letter to the GC, as well as our response to his letter.

We believe the time has come to inform and educate the Seventh-day Adventist Church membership in the Columbia Union about what is being done in our hospitals as well as provide the facts about what the abortion procedure does to the woman and her child, spiritually, physically and psychologically. We again request your counsel for guidance and recommendations for the best way to do this. We sincerely believe that it is preferable for this issue to be addressed and resolved rapidly within our own organization.

Please, do not let this issue sit on a back burner. The lives of literally thousands of children are at stake. Our prayers are with you and for you in your new responsibilities. Please keep in communication with us.

With deepest Christian concern,

 Elder
New Life Community Seventh-day Adventist Church
4229 Mockingbird Circle
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Donald Hayes, Elder
New Life Community Seventh-day Adventist Church
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