



General Conference of

Seventh-day Adventists

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November 10, 1993

[REDACTED]
Waldorf SDA Church
[REDACTED]

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.

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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

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cc: R Folkenberg