

the seventh-day adventist non-identity factor

Only rarely do our denominational entities use the name, “Seventh-day Adventist,” in their titles to identify themselves.

Here is what a survey of the *latest (1999) Yearbook* reveals:

Outside the United States:

Of the 1,673 church entities, periodicals, and broadcast stations throughout the world which are listed, only 101 include the name, “Seventh-day Adventist,” in their name.

If we omit overseas small clinics and dispensaries, that number reduces to 34.

Inside the United States (where the trademark lawsuits are being fought):

Out of all those church entities and print and voice media, only 2 of those are in territory controlled by the United States. Oddly enough, both are in way-out localities, where few people would ever be likely to find them:

Holbrook Seventh-day Adventist Indian Mission School, Holbrook, Arizona.
Guam Seventh-day Adventist Clinic, Tamuning, Guam.

Not included in the above list are denominational offices and local church congregations; an increasing number of these, in order to reach the younger generation, are no longer named “Seventh-day Adventist.”

Two primary reasons were presented by the General Conference at the March 13-16, 2000, Florida Trademark Lawsuit as why they should be permitted to have sole control of the name, “Seventh-day Adventist.”

- The General Conference Department of Archives was able to produce 250 documents, including journals which included the name “Seventh-day Adventist” somewhere in them, and photographs of church facilities which have the name on them.

- The independent ministries do not need the name, since at least one of them does not use in its official title. The example cited was the fact that Steps to Life does not have the name, “Seventh-day Adventist,” in its official title.

This morning, the present writer spent several hours researching the matter in the latest (1999) edition of the denominational *Yearbook*, and discovered facts which greatly undercut both of the above points.

While the General Conference wants to sue any independent group, to keep them from using the name,

“Seventh-day Adventist,”—the denomination itself—on all levels—does not want to use the phrase to identify its subsidiary organizations, programs, broadcasts, and publications.

On cross examination at the trial, the General Conference attorney asked John Grosboll for the name of his organization; and John replied, “Steps to Life.” Although his group also has a local church named the “Prairie Meadow Seventh-day Adventist Church,” the lawyer made a big issue of the fact that John’s organization did not have “Seventh-day Adventist” in their name. Since that is so, the attorney said, it is not necessary for independent groups to have access to the name!

Yet there were two reasons why the General Conference attorney did not make a good point. Unfortunately, those counterpoints were not brought out in the trial.

First, Steps to Life is a missionary project, and could be compared to a denominational missionary project like the Voice of Prophecy. But the Voice of Prophecy does not have “Seventh-day Adventist” in its

name either. Nor do any of our other denominational missionary or evangelistic entities. Not one.

Second, all other subsidiary organizations of the Seventh-day Adventist denomination, itself, generally do not have “Seventh-day Adventist” in their titles either!

The current 1,026-page edition of our large denominational Yearbook lists the official, legal name and location of every denominational entity throughout the world field. (In some instances the name has been accurately translated into English, but we can still know what the name is.)

Carefully examining that large book we find that, contrary to the directions given by Ellen G. White, the Seventh-day Adventist denomination consistently tries to avoid using the phrase, “Seventh-day Adventist.”

DENOMINATIONALLY OWNED HOSPITALS

Of the 153 denominationally owned hospitals in the world, how many have “Seventh-day Adventist” in their official name? ONLY EIGHT.

Of that number, how many in the United States are identified by the name, “Seventh-day Adventist”? NONE.

You will find this list of denominationally owned hospitals on pp. 509-540 of the *Yearbook*.

Asamang Seventh-day Adventist Hospital, in Kumasi, Ghana (West Africa).

Community Hospital of Seventh-day Adventists in Port of Spain, Trinidad (West Indies).

Jengre Seventh-day Adventist Hospital, Plateau State, Nigeria (West Africa).

Ottapalam Seventh-day Adventist Hospital, Kerala, India (Southern Asia).

Seventh-day Adventist Cooper Hospital, Monrovia, Liberia (West Africa).

Seventh-day Adventist Health Services, Nairobi, Kenya (East Africa).

Seventh-day Adventist Hospital and Motherless Babies’ Home, Aba, Abia State, Nigeria (West Africa).

Seventh-day Adventist Hospital ILE-IFE, Ile-Ife, Nigeria (West Africa).

Although many are called “Adventist,” for one reason or other, they do not wish to be publicly known as “Seventh-day Adventist.”

Only one in every 19 denominational hospitals calls itself by the special name which the God of heaven gave to His people, by which they are ever to identify themselves.

Apparently, only our people in India and Africa really value the name, “Seventh-day Adventist,” or consider it a means of distinguishing between their hospitals and others in their local communities.

Since the few denominational entities which do call

themselves “Seventh-day Adventist are outside the United States (and therefore not an issue in the U.S. trademark lawsuits), **we will, below, only list the number in each nation which so identify themselves.** But we will give the *Yearbook* page numbers, so you can verify this for yourself.

DENOMINATIONALLY OWNED SCHOOLS

Of course, one would expect that all of our schools and colleges would have the name. Is not that one place where we are sure to have “Seventh-day Adventist” in the title?

Of the 452 denominationally owned educational institutions in the world, how many have “Seventh-day Adventist” in their official name? ONLY 24.

In the United States, how many of our denominational colleges and universities have it in their title? NONE.

In the United States, how many secondary schools (“academies”) have it in their official titles? ONLY ONE: Holbrook Seventh-day Adventist Indian School, in Holbrook, Arizona.

You will find this list of denominationally owned colleges, universities, and secondary schools on pp. 385-501 of the *Yearbook*.

Of the 452 educational institutions listed in the *Yearbook*, only 24 schools anywhere in the world have “Seventh-day Adventist” in their name! So for every one that has the trademarked name, 19 do not bother to use it. **All but one of the schools which do have it are only primary or secondary schools** (the exception is a teacher training school in Ghana). **As a general rule, only our workers in Africa and India are not ashamed to use the name, “Seventh-day Adventist.”**

Because all of the following educational institutions are outside the United States, I will only list the nations where these “Seventh-day Adventist” schools are located. (The list is not alphabetical, but in the order in which they appear in the *Yearbook*.)

3 - Ghana, West Africa

1 - Ethiopia, East Africa

1 - Antigua, West Indies

1 - Marshall Islands, Pacific Ocean

12 - India, Southern Asia

1 - Holbrook, Arizona, USA (Indian school)

1 - St. Lucia, West Indies

1 - Nova Scotia, Canada

2 - Virgin Islands, Caribbean

1 - St. Kitts, West Indies

Holbrook is a little town, far off in an Indian reservation in northeast Arizona.

In addition, there is just one school in the world field which has “SDA” as part of its title: SDA Academy, Chicago, Illinois (USA). (It was the only “SDA” as part of a title, that I found on any of these lists.)

Apparently, most of our workers do not wish to use

“Seventh-day Adventist” as a means of distinguishing between their schools and the others in their local communities.

DENOMINATIONALLY OWNED HEALTHCARE SYSTEMS

Of the 10 denominationally owned healthcare systems in the U.S., how many of them have “Seventh-day Adventist” in their official name? NONE.

(Our denomination has no healthcare systems outside the United States.)

You will find this list of denominationally owned healthcare systems on pp. 229-231 of the *Yearbook*.

DENOMINATIONALLY OWNED CLINICS AND DISPENSARIES

Of the 354 denominationally owned clinics and dispensaries in the world, how many of them have “Seventh-day Adventist” in their official name? 67.

Of that number, how many in the United States are identified by the name, “Seventh-day Adventist”? ONE (on the island of Guam, located in a small village, Tamuning, northeast of the capital Agana.)

You will find this list of denominationally owned clinics and dispensaries on pp. 540-546 of the *Yearbook*.

- 1 - Rwanda, C Africa
- 24 - Kenya, E Africa
- 9 - Uganda, E Africa
- 20 - Tanzania, E Africa
- 1 - Jamaica, West Indies
- 1 - Zambia, W Africa
- 1 - Guam, Pacific (U.S.A.)
- 6 - Ghana, W Africa
- 1 - Palau, Pacific
- 1 - Nepal, Southern Asia
- 1 - Zimbabwe, C Africa
- 1 - St. Vincent, West Indies

Of the above 67 clinics and dispensaries which have the name, “Seventh-day Adventist” in the title, all but 3 are in Africa. None are in continental U.S.A., where the trademark suits are being waged.

DENOMINATIONALLY OWNED FOOD FACTORIES

Of the 14 denominationally owned food industries (factories) in the world, how many have “Seventh-day Adventist” in their official name? NONE.

Of that number, how many in the United States are identified by the name, “Seventh-day Adventist”? NONE.

You will find this list of denominationally owned food factories on pp. 503-507 of the *Yearbook*.

All are very careful to hide any connection with the denomination. If we have worthwhile “health” foods, we ought to be proud of them.

DENOMINATIONALLY OWNED NURSING HOMES AND RETIREMENT CENTERS

Of the 78 denominationally owned nursing homes and retirement centers in the world, how many of them have “Seventh-day Adventist” in their official name? ONE.

Of that number, how many in the United States are identified by the name, “Seventh-day Adventist”? NONE.

You will find this list of denominationally owned nursing homes and retirement centers on pp. 547-549 of the *Yearbook*.

That one retirement home is located in one of the most deserted areas of Australia—the far west.

1 - Busselton Seventh-day Adventist Retirement Village, Busselton, W.A. [West Australia], Australia

DENOMINATIONALLY OWNED ORPHANAGES AND CHILDREN'S HOMES

Of the 17 denominationally owned orphanages and children's homes in the world, how many of them have “Seventh-day Adventist” in their official name? NONE.

Of that number, how many in the United States are identified by the name, “Seventh-day Adventist”? NONE.

You will find this list of denominationally owned orphanages and children's homes on pp. 549-550 of the *Yearbook*.

DENOMINATIONALLY OWNED MEDIA CENTERS

Of the 27 denominationally owned media centers in the world, how many of them have “Seventh-day Adventist” in their official name? NONE.

Of that number, how many in the United States are identified by the name, “Seventh-day Adventist”? NONE.

You will find this list of denominationally owned media centers on pp. 551-554 of the *Yearbook*.

Included under this heading are a variety of different facilities, some larger and many smaller. **If Steps to Life had been a denominationally owned subsidiary, it would have been listed under this category in this *Yearbook*.**

DENOMINATIONALLY OWNED PUBLISHING HOUSES

Of the 54 denominationally owned publishing houses in the world, how many of them have “Seventh-day Adventist” in their official name? ONE.

Of that number, how many in the United States are identified by the name, “Seventh-day Adventist”? NONE.

You will find this list of denominationally owned publishing houses on pp. 555-568 of the *Yearbook*.

I suspect the reason the one in Pakistan calls itself by our name is because the government requires it to do so.

1 - Qasid Publishing House of Seventh-day Adventists, Lahore, Pakistan

DENOMINATIONALLY OWNED PERIODICALS (in English)

Of the 111 denominationally owned English periodicals (magazines, journals, newsletters) in the world, how many of them have “Seventh-day Adventist” in their official name? NONE.

Of that number, how many in the United States are identified by the name, “Seventh-day Adventist”? NONE.

You will find this list of denominationally owned periodicals on pp. 569-572 of the *Yearbook*.

One would expect that the name would appear as part of the title on at least a majority of these denominational periodicals. Instead, the name is carefully avoided.

DENOMINATIONALLY OWNED PERIODICALS (Other Languages)

Of the 282 denominationally owned foreign language periodicals (magazines, journals, newsletters) in the world, how many of them have “Seventh-day Adventist” in their official name? NONE.

Of that number, how many in the United States are identified by the name, “Seventh-day Adventist”? NONE.

You will find this list of denominationally owned periodicals on pp. 572-580 of the *Yearbook*.

This would seem to be incredible. Why does the denomination want to control a name it does not use very much?

DENOMINATIONALLY OWNED DIVISION PERIODICALS

Of the 5 denominationally owned division periodicals (newsheets published by division offices) in the world, how many of them have “Seventh-day Adventist” in their official name? NONE.

Of that number, how many in the United States are identified by the name, “Seventh-day Adventist”? NONE.

You will find this list of denominationally owned division periodicals on p. 581 of the *Yearbook*.

DENOMINATIONALLY OWNED UNION CONFERENCE PERIODICALS

Of the 33 denominationally owned union conference periodicals in the world, how many of them have “Seventh-day Adventist” in their official name? NONE.

Of that number, how many in the United States are identified by the name, “Seventh-day Adventist”? NONE.

You will find this list of denominationally owned union conference periodicals on pp. 581-582 of the *Yearbook*.

DENOMINATIONALLY OWNED RADIO AND TV STATIONS

Of the 77 denominationally owned radio and TV stations in the world, how many of them have “Seventh-day Adventist” in their official name? NONE.

Of that number, how many in the United States are identified by the name, “Seventh-day Adventist”? NONE.

You will find this list of denominationally owned radio and TV stations on pp. 583-589 of the *Yearbook*.

Many of them are “Voice” of this, or “Voice” of that; but none of them is “Voice of Seventh-day Adventists” or some other such title using the name. This is not because each station name must be different; 14 are named “Voice of the Spirit.” Are we Pentecostals?

DENOMINATIONALLY OWNED INSURANCE AGENCIES

Of the 6 denominationally owned insurance agencies in the world, how many of them have “Seventh-day Adventist” in their official name? NONE.

Of that number, how many in the United States are identified by the name, “Seventh-day Adventist”? NONE.

You will find this list of denominationally owned insurance agencies on pp. 591-592 of the *Yearbook*.

That concludes an overview of every General Conference facility and subsidiary in the world, with the following exceptions: church offices and local church congregations.

Most people never see the various offices, but the local churches are more conspicuous. However, there is an increasing trend (called the “Church Planting Movement”) which was started about four years ago by the North American Division—to start new churches with non-Adventist church names, wild music, small band music, skits, and theatrics; all these are designed to attract younger adults.

The Seventh-day Adventist denomination is gradually emptying itself of its God-given name. Yet a small group of men in the General Conference want to forbid anyone, not under their control, from using it. —*vf*