

Extracts from ...

**MINISTERIAL
CONFERENCE NOTES
1969 - 1973**

Raymond F McNair

A WCG minister (in late Nov 2003) sent me a box of old WCG goodies, including some items I didn't have. Amongst them was a photocopy of handwritten notes by Mr Raymond F. McNair from Ministerial conferences about 1970-72. Wish I had the time to scan the document to PDF, but I don't think it will scan too well.

Nevertheless, here are some extracts from his notes un-edited which may be of interest.

Craig

A. 1969 or January 1970:

HWA - "we need to pull together - to respect each other ... we need to learn to go to each other and talk things over. There is the ever-present empire-building tendency among those in responsible departments ... and are very ambitious".

"Mr. A said if there is anything, any difficulty, talk it over - come out with it, don't harbour it!"

B. 13 January 1970:

"just because one isn't in the ministry, it doesn't mean they aren't very valuable"

C. 17 January 1972:

Mr. A said the ministers feel nervous when speaking before him. But he said he does not sit there judging, evaluating- unless there is something outstandingly bad) ...

He said some felt he had wanted ministers only to wear a white shirt on the Sabbath - if speaking, but could wear a coloured shirt if not speaking.

He says he prefers to wear a white shirt on the Sabbath, but does not feel it is mandatory. He would wear a white shirt - if in the audience. **But said this was merely personal preference.**

HWA: watch events and pray. Things to watch:

- a. US of Europe
- b. militant Catholic Church
- c. watch US economic conditions
- d. Jerusalem and Mid East
- e. This Work

17 January 1972 - Pastoral Instruction:

"Be a leader, not a driver."

HWA: A leader should be an example of serving, love, dress - in everything. **He should lead, not drive.**

Men's hair: Beatles started long-hair fad. Now many business and professional men wear long hair, but it is not too long necessarily. If this hairstyle becomes so common among conservative men, (60% or 70% do it), he may follow it and encourage you to do so... "However I am not quite ready to do that yet." "I am not going to start it yet". He hoped none of us would begin doing this, but if we did, he didn't believe it was wrong.

HWA: Ministers, inspire by your example. Lead, don't drive. Some begin to be overlords - heavy handed.

If I want someone to do something, I say "Mell, would you do such and such ..." I don't just order Mell (my driver) around". "Would you mind doing ..." or "will you do ..."

Be kind, learn gentleness and patience.

One man in a position of leadership, beat down and discouraged all of those under him.

"Christ is love. Have an outgoing concern for those under Him. Be warm, friendly, sincere. Request.

Mr A said "I wish I could just quietly put someone in his place". Said he was working to overcome.

Be a servant. Christ was a servant. Don't over use those under you (Min. Assistants) having them serve his own personal needs or wants.

If some are overlords - we might just jerk them right back here.

Ministers must avoid running others lives, businesses for them. Don't make their decisions for them. Merely give them God's basic instructions.

All ministers should sincerely avoid going overboard in styles, dress lengths etc. Look to headquarters as the example.

Mentioned one minister who differed on certain points, but he had never taught these things to others.

You are not at liberty to teach or preach contrary doctrines. These must first be cleared through headquarters.

ITim 3:1 Some may desire office of an overseer, but most who want to be ordained should not be! - HWA said.

Rod Meredith said - We have had tendency to have the people serve us too much. Some have deacons, deaconesses (or women members) serve them without pay. Lawn-mowing, maid services, baby sitting etc. Fix our cars, do our nanny act as nurse or sick maid.

Some church members like to do these things in order to "make points" so he can gain favours with the ministers - perhaps be ordained later.

Let us remember, we are there to serve them - not primarily to have them serve us.

Some members give ministers food, presents, discounts at their business store etc.

There are many of these people who later become offended if they are not ordained - or if they are corrected.

Mr A said that he could not think of one time when he had deacons or members do these things. Mr A said this way is not of God, but is the way of Satan the Devil.

Mr A said he wanted the Supervisors to see some of these "squirts" and teach them humility - not to abuse these things.

Mr HWA said some of these people look upon ordination more as a coronation.

A. Many ministers are not qualified to advise in business matters. We can only advise on spiritual principles.

Don't be afraid to say, "I just don't know" or feel free to refer a member to another knowledgeable member for business advice.

We used to be a bit extreme on the thing of church government - used to apply this too often in interfering in church family's homes.

Avoid giving the impression of being against the teenagers - not knowing the real facts of what is going on. Teenagers do live in a different world.

B. Must know what you are talking about. We don't want to encourage any "wild" music.

But it isn't always easy to know where to draw the line on music ... Show them that some of the Beatles music is ok. Don't just harangue against teenage music.

C. **If you [ministers] aren't warm and friendly, sincere etc - then why?** Lack of prayer? Study? We are entirely too rank-conscious. Many ministers have a wrong fear ["perfect love cast out fear"].

D. When Mr HWA said it was ok to have shorter skirts lengths on the cheer girls - this was not communicated to the churches.

E. **Let us remember we are not policemen.** Some try to legislate rules to prevent sin ... we need to avoid the two extremes of over- or under-policing. Don't feel that you have to police the Church's people's children ... we can make too many rules that we restrict people and their liberties.

F. In the US Blacks are the best-off financially of any Blacks in the world.

G. HWA: we are not dictators. Christ did speak sharply at times, but only when he had to. Otherwise he handled everything lovingly and kindly.

An ordination is not a coronation. We have to rule - but wisely and in love.

Mr A admitted that he hasn't always corrected as he should. **Don't have people fearing you in the wrong way - trembling before you.**

H. Disfellowshipping is for the purpose of saving others - and of eventually saving the erring brother.

We don't have to "blow our tops" or make asses of ourselves. We want to help.

Don't do this disfellowshipping in such a way to make their name vile for the rest of their lives.

How to disfellowship? That depends. Sometimes, Mr A admits the hasn't done these things as he would like.

Try not to act under strong emotion - where you might do something foolish or irreparable.

Avoid slander, liable. or creating enemies unduly. Consider the welfare of the whole Work.

I. We need to be open, frank and we need to work harder at sincere cooperation among ourselves.

Don't crave status, position, honor - making points with the boss to get ahead.

Learn to communicate - to have a continual give and take of ideas, suggestions etc.

As the Work gets bigger, we can get more carnal if we aren't careful.

Be willing to lay down your life for your friends.

J. Loyalty is a 2-way street. Learn to appreciate and be loyal to those under you - especially in hard times.

Rod Meredith: Some ministers get in a smart alec, sassy, flippant attitude.

Originally, the Methodist movement was very fervent - but after Wesley died, this fervency died out. This type of situation could be repeated with us if we are not careful. [an almost prophetic statement – Craig]

False prophets will rise up from our midst and will come in from the outside. We need to be serious, sober, grave - realize our serious responsibilities.

We want to please, honor God in dress, family, and all we do. Don't resort to "little tricks", machinations etc.

Have monthly prayer meetings with the ministers in England so we can keep close to God.

Certainly pray before meals and pray every night as a family.

K. Mr A said many in the room have had wrong feelings toward others. Even Evangelists against Evangelists.

Mr A said if we have anything against anyone - go to them privately and in love.

Satan would like to divide us. Pull together. Talk things over and work as a team.

L. We are going to plan "as if we had another 100 years" - HWA

We have never set dates officially.

Watch the Work.

Do some of you need to go to each other before you go home? I think some of you owe apologies to others.

In November 2005, the same Minister provided me with even more 'goodies'. Amongst them was another volume of hand written notes by Raymond F McNair of the 1973 ministerial conference.

Here are some extracts from the notes un-edited (they would be too difficult to scan):

16 January 1973:

Many in the Church of God have lost a sense of urgency.

The Work was built on 'bad' radio time and we are using 'bad' TV time now – but we will get on better TV time as we go along.

We need to learn to put Biblical truth in secular language.

Mr A said we are trying to get out one [new] booklet per month.

Doctrinal Team – Rod and others are now going into many doctrinal subjects.

Divorce and Remarriage – We have been too lenient – not too strict.

Mr David Antion said he found our District Superintendents could do more work than they were doing – didn't have enough to do.

Qualifications for District Superintendents:

1. an AC graduate
2. 5 years of experience
3. wisdom and perception

4. leadership and inspiration
5. outgoing personality
6. administrative and organisational ability
7. a good speaker
8. etc (incomplete list)

The biggest reason for cancellation of receiving Church materials is “I am now studying with the Jehovah’s Witnesses” – 59%!

17 January 1973:

Mr A asked if we have had any problems, as ministers, with people in the Church criticizing our children. We need to guard against this and handle diplomatically – don’t need to make a big issue of this.

GTA said the world is a powerful pull on our kids. He said we don’t need to beat over the head, be suspicious of our children etc.

18 January 1973:

Mr A said the headquarters ministers (top) have been having a number of doctrinal meetings – to discuss any points in question.

Tithing:

HWA: We should tithe on gross income, but we can deduct legitimate expenses. One can deduct some types of traveling expenses.

In countries where tithes cannot be deducted, or where taxes are exorbitant, one may not be required to tithe on the gross income. Further research is being done on this.

HWA: The Levitical priesthood analogy should not be overdone. We are ministers under the Melchizedek priesthood.

[There is no need to re-type all the notes as everything and more are contained in the paper *Tithing: Review of Principles and Update of Policies*].

Rod Meredith mentioned that in the past ¼ or 1/5 of some congregations were unconverted.

Rom. 14:1-4 shows one can be baptized without knowing the finer points of life. “Mr Armstrong baptized some who were still smoking and eating unclean meats.” But he knew they were so repentant they would obey when they understood.

HWA: none of us have complete, perfect knowledge.

19 January 1973:

We are going to have to have “some kind of revival.” He said we are not having as many healings as we should have. “We are not having the miracles performed now that we did in the past.” HWA said we need a new booklet on healing.

Skirt lengths: women should not show thighs sitting or standing.

22 January 1973:

Medical questions: we cannot forbid people to go to doctors, hospitals etc. Christ said ‘according to they faith be it unto you.’

You cannot live other peoples lives for them – you cannot decide for them!

Mr A said let us find out if going to doctors, hospitals etc – is the same as Ahaziah going to Baalzebul.

Mr A said we must not give up or change our beliefs – the truth – just to please or appease those in the world, newspaper reporters etc. [try telling that to some folk who think we should ordain women to the ministry, who are going soft on homosexuality, refuse to speak out on abortion and euthanasia etc, wish to water-down British-Israel, do not see that the Gospel is to be preached as a witness and warning etc].

Diet: Eat only those things which will spoil, before it spoils. Eat natural things, natural goods and avoid sauces, gravies, too much spices, dressings etc. Avoid too much sugar. But Mr A said he uses a little white sugar. Said he has eliminated most deserts from his diet.

We need to avoid becoming cranks re food, diet etc [today, however, we have clearly gone to the other extreme].

Proof of the Bible: Mr A said we had taken our Babylon, Tyre proofs from a SDA booklet. But we have since come to see that we were in error by applying these scriptures to present-day Tyre and Babylon – when they really apply to “the Day of the Lord.”

Herman Hoeh: Matt 18:15-17 – we are told to go to our brother if he sins against us.

“I am not a liberal. I am a progressive” said one member-employee. We have gotten away from focusing in on a way of life and have concentrated on lifestyle.

Histories of Rev. 2 & 3 reflected the economic, social and religious aspects of the seven churches. **This is true of us today. We are being influenced by this world’s attitudes and ways.** Righteousness, according to one student, was being tolerant of other’s life styles. [man, does that sound like the liberals in the Churches of God today].

Dr Hoeh says that many conclusions, judgments and decisions [by ministers] are made without first establishing the truth of the matter. One man said he didn’t have any confidence in the ministry and didn’t want the ministers solving his personal problems. “The relationship between the ministers and executives is like that of the

nobility and peasants” said one woman in the Church. One person asked how often the ministers have operations – had heard of Dr Meredith’s operation.

Go through the proper channels in ironing out a problem. Don’t go to the top first. Go up the ladder of authority. “We have not first gone one to another.”

Hoeh: “we have resolved the problem, but it has left a scar.” Learn to go to one another.

Mr A said a number of Kings in Old Testament were zealous in their youth, but fell away in their old age. He said he fears – and does not want to follow their examples. Mr A said he feels he is making progress [with his spiritual life].

Mr A said in Oregon they used to study the Bible in private fellowship. But not so today [he lamented]. He said today there is a competitive spirit. “If we don’t do something about it the Church will fall apart.” [how prophetic]

23 January 1973:

We need a ‘renewed sense of urgency.’

HWA: “I don’t know of any other church which teaches the truth re out being born into the God family. We will never be equal to Him in power and authority. What other church teaches the Gospel of the Kingdom of God?”

HWA: We need to be more alert to the fact that there is a devil, and he is broadcasting his evil ways. Satan is subtle and he is getting at many in the Church.

Personal Grooming, Style and Dress:

Are we setting our affection on things above?

We want to avoid extremes – undue tolerance or too much letter of the law obedience.

“Ministers’ wives should set the example for others.” [how about growing their hair – much too many women with man-ish short hair nowadays].

Mr A said tin the Sardis Church the wives of the ministers were liabilities to their husbands [in the 1930s]. Mr A said God gave him a find wife but said there will always be ripples in any marriage.

We are not setting a definitive no. of inches for skirt lengths, but they must cover the thigh.

Mr A said he hasn’t “cracked down” at HQ but he has preached a number of sermons etc, to combat wrong styles, fads etc.

New booklet on Proving the Bible thru 10 chapters coming.

GTA: He recommended that the local minister might visit a hospital once a month – visiting non-members. He said this may not [always] be a good idea. He said he feels the ministers could visit “half way houses” and learn what it is like to help people overcoming drug problems. He feels we need a more open, freer approach to people.

Mr A said if our hearts are right we will not be too picky about exactly defining every principle. Mr HWA said some women are bound to show a lot of thigh, but we are not to be overly critical or pounce. We are not to be too picky – “but I will not be specific to the exact no. of inches.’

The Church doesn’t have authority over our unconverted daughters [ie those not drawn into the Church]. But we (parents) do have.

These things are important but don’t get down to the exact fraction of an inch. Avoid extremism.

“If all men do it” – when “half or more” do it – wear side burns, then Mr A said he feels we could follow the styles. He said if 80% of Australians (according to Mr Cole) wear long side burns etc, it would be ok to do this.

We are ministers of the spirit of the law – not the letter. But Mr A said he likes to see a woman’s skirt cover the knee.

24 January 1973:

Mr HWA said he was amazed and dumbfounded to see mushrooming departments and lavish expenditure.

Mr A asked the Ministerial wives to examine themselves to see if they are doing their job – are a proper help to their husbands. A wife can be a very great help [in the ministry]. She can give constructive criticism to their husbands.

Encourage your sons to come to you. Be a good listener.

Mr A said some tend to drink too much. Most of Mr A’ drinking (99%) is wine. He drinks a little beer – especially after perspiring. Some have been put out of the ministry because of being unable to control their drinking. God’s ministers cannot be drunkards.

Neck ties: be stylish – but not wild or way out – not gaudy. We should not wear dull or dry colours.