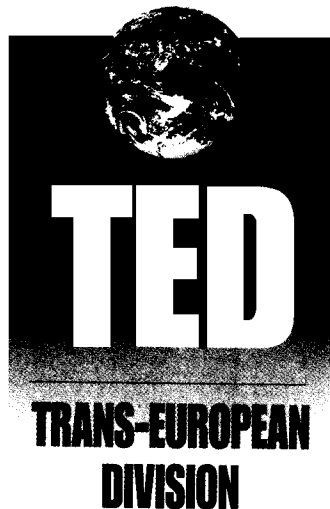


NURTURE, COMMITMENT, AND EXCELLENCE 1995-2000 REPORT



Adriatic Union College campus, near the well-preserved medieval castle of Marusevec in northwest Croatia. This campus's secondary school, which is accredited by the General Conference Adventist Accrediting Association and recognized by the Croatian Ministry of Education, offers nurses' training and a grammar school program that prepares students to enter the university. During and after the war in Croatia (1991-1995), the school faced an enrollment crisis due to the loss of students from the other former Yugoslavian republics. We continue to be challenged to redesign the school's program to meet the needs of its changed constituency.

Despite its problems, the school has inspired life-changing experiences in students like Alexander, whose parents joined the Adventist Church during the war in Croatia, when they were banished from their home.

Alexander was a very confused teenager when he applied to Marusevec to enter the medical program. Because of his serious problems with discipline, he was conditionally accepted. Soon, students began to report alarming things about Alexander, such as that he was planning to become a young Nazi. On the other hand, his teachers saw great potential in this young man. But as time passed, his behavior worsened and it was feared that he would have to be expelled.

A newly registered student had a run-in with Alexander and was seriously burned. Fortunately, the injury was superficial. Although it had been an accident, the teachers felt Alexander must be expelled because he was responsible for it. As the principal visited Alexander in his room, both were in tears. Alexander's sincere repentance was so evident that even the mother of the victim begged for him to be pardoned. After many prayers and a secret vote, the staff decided that Alexander could continue at the school.

Following that experience, Alexander became quite a different person. He joined the choir and other school groups, successfully graduated from the medical program, and is now doing his clinical practice. He plans to return to Marusevec to attend our theological seminary. "I believe that such exciting change can be made only by the heavenly Teacher. What an honor it is to cooperate with Him!" reflected Mrs. Djurdjica Garvanovic-Porobija, the secondary school principal.

At the end of 1999, 14,336 students were being taught by 1,126 teachers in 102 Adventist schools in the Trans-European Division (TED). This represents a modest growth in enrollment, compared with the previous quinquennium. But beyond numerical growth, our goal has been to nurture uncompromisingly a commitment to excellence and to upholding and transmitting Christian values. Accordingly, we have been blessed to meet and exceed national standards of excellence. In addition, an average of 100 student baptisms per year has been recorded during this quinquennium.

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This encouraging picture has been achieved largely because of one key resource—our teachers. We owe them an enormous debt of gratitude for their commitment—first, to preparing themselves as role models and professionals and second, to providing the environment of acceptance, love, and challenge that makes Adventist education unique. Evidence of this commitment is seen in their high level of participation at division and union teacher conventions; in their unstinting support for extra-curricular activities; and in the enormous amount of personal time they expend to meet student needs. Their excellent performance has caught the attention of national education leaders. For example, Dr. Hanna Malaka of Egypt has been listed among the 10 best headteachers in the private school system in that country.

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Mladen Juricevic, with his family, has been preparing himself to be a missionary to Bosnia and Herzegovina, where there are no Adventists. After losing his brother in the recent war in Bosnia and accepting the Adventist message while a refugee in Sweden, he decided to come to our college in Croatia to study theology.

Seminary Level

Our union seminaries in Hungary, Croatia, Yugoslavia, and Pakistan are all contributing significantly to the thrust of Adventist education in the division. For example, the theological seminary in Belgrade exemplifies the positive results of emphasizing not only academic excellence, but also teacher-student mentoring and the spiritual aspects of education. Students there have enthusiastically participated in mission activities such as preaching, witnessing, and evangelistic campaigns, and have helped establish new churches such as the one in New Belgrade. Some of the students and staff

Elementary Schools

Our elementary schools form the foundation of our system. Our secondary schools, however, are on the front line in the struggle to influence youth during the turbulent teenage years. One real test of the value of any school is its effect on the lives of students. To see how the nurture of Adventist education can change lives, we visit the rural

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Orville Woolford is Director of Education for the Trans-European Division of Seventh-day Adventists in St. Albans, Hertfordshire, England.

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Adventist Theological Seminary students put up posters in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, to advertise an upcoming evangelistic campaign.

Campus spring cleaning at Finland Junior College, Tolvonlinnantie, Piiikkio, Finland.

members have given interviews and preached on local television. In February and March of 1999, seminary students participated in the union evangelistic campaign called "Amazing Discoveries in the Biblical Lands," which attracted thousands. After the NATO bombing in March 1999 interrupted the campaign, "Some of the students were drafted in the Yugoslavian army, where they spent some time on the front line in Kosovo and were privileged to witness to non-Adventists, while during that same period other students were working with ADRA and directly helping the needy," reports Alexandar Santrac, academic dean.

At the peaceful and healthy natural setting of our Adriatic Union College in Marusevec, Croatia, young people can get acquainted with Christ and prepare themselves professionally to serve God and humanity. Since January 1997, modern classrooms in a new multi-purpose building have provided a positive climate for students preparing for the challenge of evangelizing the Catholic and Moslem population of the union, according to Tihomir Sabo, academic dean.

Higher Education

Finally, Newbold and Middle East colleges continue to play a unique role in the educational strategy of the division. "For a relatively small institution, Newbold College is juggling a great many balls in the air," writes Michael Pearson, vice-principal. "Newbold has been able to ensure the quality of its academic program while not neglecting other important concerns. In May 1998, the British accreditation authority again placed its seal of approval on the college's operation. In September 1999, the college hosted an academic con-

A student at Adventist Theological Seminary in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, witnesses as a literature evangelist.

ference, 'From Persecution to Pluralism,' to celebrate the 125th anniversary of the arrival of the first Adventist missionary, J. N. Andrews, in Europe. Adventist scholars exchanged ideas with their peers from some of Europe's best universities, who left knowing more about Adventist life and faith. The college also hosted the third series of lectures in honor of the bridge-building work of W. R. and B. B. Beach. In 1999, the lectures were given by Pastor Ian Sweeney, winner of the prestigious Preacher of the Year competition spon-

sored by the *Times* newspaper, who is a Newbold graduate.

"At Newbold, we do not simply keep academic 'balls in the air' at the expense of others," Pearson writes. In the past year or so, groups of Newbold students have witnessed to their faith in various ways in Croatia, Ireland, the Czech Republic, Austria, and Switzerland, as well as farther afield in north and south Africa. The teachers in the Department of Theological Studies, apart from generating a new master's degree, have run

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a summer education course for pastors in the Baltic republics. No less than eight recent Newbold graduates have assisted with ADRA's relief effort for the victims of the war in the Balkans."

Middle East College (MEC) has a unique setting, context, and location. For more than 60 years, it has provided a Christian university education to students from various religious and national backgrounds. After surviving the war in Lebanon, the school restudied its mission and resolved to continue as the only Adventist college in the Middle East and one of only 12 religiously affiliated colleges and universities in Lebanon. However, what makes it unique is that it is the only Lebanese tertiary institution that requires all its students to take a specific number of religion courses.

For the past two academic years, some courses at MEC have involved students in welfare outreach. The students have donated money, given food to the needy, visited orphanages, and distributed Bibles.

Currently, MEC offers degrees in business administration, computer science, elementary education, and theology/religion. Recently, an external M.B.A. degree from Maastricht School of Management in the Netherlands has been launched.

Although each school has its own unique emphasis and performance profile, yet in the majority of our classrooms, student life continues to be academically challenging, spiritually uplifting, and, in many cases, life-changing. Pray that God may continue to use our schools for the fulfilment of His mission to humankind. ✍

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The Finland Junior College choir visited an orphanage on the way to a music festival in Poland.

Alexander, who was won to Christ by loving Christian teachers at Adriatic Union College, Marusevec, Croatia.

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Students and teachers in front of the entrance to Adriatic Union College in Croatia.

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A happy graduate from the Adventist secondary school in Marusevec, Croatia.

Students at the seminary in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, witness to non-Adventists while on the front line in Kosovo.

The secondary school at Marusevec, Croatia.