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The Rise of the New Apostolic Reformation and Its Implications for Adventist Eschatology

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Introduction

There is a new religious movement emerging on the American religious landscape that, if successful, could have major ramifications for the nation and the Adventist view of eschatology. Almost five hundred years after the Protestant Reformation, this new religious movement calls itself the New Apostolic Reformation and is claiming to usher in the most significant changes in Protestantism since Martin Luther. The stated goal of the new movement is to eradicate denominations and form a unified church that will be victorious against evil. They have repudiated the “secret rapture” held by the majority of mainline Protestants. “Instead of escaping the world (in the rapture) prior to the turmoil of the end times, they teach that believers will defeat evil by taking dominion or control over all sections of society and government, resulting in mass conversions to their brand of charismatic evangelicalism and a Christian utopia or “Kingdom” on earth.”¹

They believe in the coming of Christ, but that it is long after they have prepared the earth for his coming. This is not a new idea but a new reformulation of Post-Millennialism. The major difference between them and traditional Post-Millennialism is in their strategy and methodology to

¹ Rachel Tabachnick, “The Ideology and History of the New Apostolic Reformation,” in *Talk to Action*, August 12, 2011. Available online: <<http://www.talk2action.org/story/2011/8/12/1713/01915>>, accessed 11/25/11.

JOURNAL OF THE ADVENTIST THEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

achieve their objectives. Their core theology of Dominionism is not new either, but rather, echoes the Reconstructionist view of Rousas Rushdoony² and others.

The purpose of this study is to present a brief overview of the movement examining its theology, principal proponents, history, strategies, methodologies, and its implications for Adventist eschatology.

Some of the questions I will seek to answer are: Who or what is the New Apostolic Reformation? How do they define themselves? How do Christian groups and secular media perceive them? How are they organized? Who are the major leaders of the movement and how do they see their roles as leaders? What are their strategies and methodologies? How do they see themselves in the stream of Christian history? How do they compare with other modern movements within Christianity? What are the implications and ramifications of their teachings for the nation and Adventists as a Christian group?

Definitions

The New Apostolic Reformation (NAR) is a Protestant Christian movement consisting of charismatics and Pentecostals. There is also a movement of charismatic Catholics that identify with their beliefs. NAR is growing at a rate of 9 million per year. The High Priest of NAR is Dr. C. Peter Wagner, former professor of Church Growth at Fuller Theological Seminary of World Mission. He is also founder of Global Harvest Ministries and presiding apostle and founder of the International Coalition of Apostles and cofounder of World Prayer Center. . . . “There is a hierarchy in NAR that resembles the Roman Catholic Church. Once world domination is accomplished, those at the top will have apostolic authority over the ministries. According to one source the coalition includes several hundred apostles, across the US and about 40 nations, international training centers, and prayer warriors communication networks in the 58 states and worldwide.”³

² Rousas Rushdoony was a leading theologian of Reconstructionism/Dominion theology. Dominion theology is a curious blend of Reformed/Calvinist theology and Charismatic influence. Dominion theology teaches that before the second coming of Jesus believers will take dominion over every area of life in preparation for the coming of Jesus.

³ Marsha West, “Damnable Heresies Invading the Church, *Conservative Crusader*, May 25, 2010, <<http://www.conservativecrusader.com/articles/damnable-heresies-invading-the-church>>, accessed 11/25/11.

O'REGGIO: RISE OF THE NEW APOSTOLIC REFORMATION

Rick Warren, one of the most influential religious leaders of our time and author of the best selling book, *The Purpose Driven Life*, is also associated with this movement. On Sunday, April 17, 2005, speaking before 30,000 at Angel Stadium in Anaheim, California, Rick Warren announced his plan: “The bottom line is that we intend to reinvent mission strategy in the 21st century. As I stated, this will be a new reformation. The first Reformation returned us to the message of the original church. It was a reformation of doctrine—what the church believes. The second reformation will return us to the mission of the original church. It will be a reformation of purpose—what the church does in the world.”⁴

Martha West writing in the *Conservative Crusader* calls it a “damnable heresy” that many Christians are not yet aware of, labeled “The New Apostolic Reformation, (NAR) a.k.a. Dominionism, Replacement Theology.” NAR is not a new movement at all, only the name has been changed to fool people into thinking this is a new wave or paradigm shift taking place in Christendom. Over the years they have used names like “Joel’s Army,” “Latter Rain,” and “Manifest Sons of God.” Their goal is to usher in a reformation greater than the 16th century Reformation.⁵

What makes the movement so dangerous? It is the divine mandate that they think they possess. One liberal pundit described it by sharing that the NAR has a mission to “take control of communities and nations through large networks of ‘prayer warriors’ whose spiritual warfare is used to expel and destroy the demons that cause societal ills. Once the territorial demons, witches and generational curses are removed, the born again Christians . . . take control of society.”⁶

This is no fringe movement, but a rapidly institutionalizing entity larger than most Protestant denominations. The leadership is forged from several elements of Pentecostal and charismatic Christianity and is often referred to as the Third Wave. Under the convening apostle, C. Peter Wagner, they have forged an international entity encompassing thousands of independent, Pentecostal, charismatic churches worldwide, as well as hundreds of cross-denominational, para-church organizations

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

JOURNAL OF THE ADVENTIST THEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

with their own educational and accreditation systems, conventions, media and business.⁷

Self Definitions

C. Peter Wagner, the recognized founder and leader of the movement, gave it the name New Apostolic Reformation. He describes it by writing that “the New Apostolic Reformation is an extraordinary work of God at the close of the twentieth century which is to a significant extent changing the shape of Protestant Christianity around the world.”⁸ He further describes it as a blanket term for churches in the Second Apostolic Age which he says is in an “adopter phase,” which means that many churches have not yet heard of the movement and those who have heard of it, are not yet ready to participate.⁹

John Benefiel, one of the so-called apostles of the movement, describes it not as a fringe movement but a rapidly united prayer reformation network. The movement differs greatly from the traditional Evangelical and Pentecostal movement in its make up. Bruce Wilson describes the movement “as multi-racial and includes women in positions of both apostles and prophets. At first glance many of their organizations might appear to be promoting the social gospel but their message is quite the opposite—while they participate in charitable activities, societal transformation is to be a supernatural event that can only take place as the demons are expelled and society is purged of evil influence such as homosexuality, religious pluralism, and separation of church and state.”¹⁰

How is the Movement Organized?

There is no central organization with an identifiable name, because the New Apostolic Reformation is a coalition of church groups and churches. Their so-called apostles and prophets head up a series of

⁷ Rachel Tabachnick, “Killing Mother Theresa with their Prayers”, *Talk to Action*, Oct 20, 2008 <<http://www.talk2action.org/story/2008/10/20/195730/89>>, accessed 11/25/11.

⁸ C. Peter Wagner, *Churchquake: How The New Apostolic Reformation is Shaking Up the Church as We Know It* (Ventura CA: Regal Books, 1999), 5.

⁹ C. Peter Wagner, *Dominion: How Kingdom Action can Change the World* (Grand Rapids, MI: Chosen Books, Baker Publishing Group 2008), chapter 1.

¹⁰ Bruce Wilson, “Harvard Social Transformation Conference to Feature Avowed Witch Hunters,” *Talk to Action*, March 24, 2011, <<http://www.talk2action.org/story/2011/3/24/153323/148>>, accessed 11/25/11.

O'REGGIO: RISE OF THE NEW APOSTOLIC REFORMATION

organizations that provide leadership, direction, strategies, methodologies and theology for the movement. The recognized and authorized leaders are called apostles and prophets. The apostles are the highest authorities and the ones who provide leadership and direction to the group. Using Ephesians 4 as a biblical justification, they assert their leadership role based on the spiritual gifts identified by Paul who ranks apostles as the highest gift. Next to the apostles are the prophets who are God's spokesmen, setting forth God's counsel and wisdom to their people. These prophets, however, are to be subjected to the apostles while working alongside to carry out the mission of the movement.

There are some apostles called market apostles—a work place apostle. Their emphasis is evangelism in the workplace and the eventual "Christian dominion over the mountain of business and finance. Os Hillman, based in Atlanta, heads the International Coalition of Workplace Ministries and Market Leaders. Apostles who are already heavily invested in business are urged to merge ministry with business.¹¹

Proponents

Who are the recognized leaders in the movement? The leading apostle is Dr. C. Peter Wagner (founder of the movement); others among the illustrious group of apostles are Doris Wagner (wife of Peter Wagner), Samuel Rodriguez, Ed Silvano, Jim Ammerman, Cindy Jacobs (top ranking woman apostle), Os Hillman, Julius Oyet, Pat Francis, Bill Haman, Lou Engle, Harry Jackson, Lance Wallnau, and John Benefiel. Some of the leading prophets are Todd Bentley and Rick Warren.

Organizations

There are a number of organizations and ministries that have various responsibilities. Some of those organizations are:¹²

1. International Coalition of Apostles (ICA). This is the network of several hundred apostles in the United States and about 40 other nations formed by the convening apostle, C. Peter Wagner. Each of these apostles has ministries under him/her.

¹¹ Rachel Tabachnick, "Resource Directory for the New Apostolic Reformation," *Talk to Action* January 20, 2010, <<http://www.talk2action.org/story/2010/1/20/131544/037>>, accessed 11/25/11.

¹² Ibid.

JOURNAL OF THE ADVENTIST THEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

2. Apostolic Council of Prophetic Elders (ACPE). It is the inner circle of about two to three dozen apostles.
3. International Association of Healing Ministries (IAHR). This is the Kingdom Health Care System, an international network of healing centers headed by Carl Pierce, an apostle of C. Peter Wagner, a faith healer and demon exorcist. According to Pierce, “healing is the undergarment that God’s army will wear to support the armor for battle.”
4. International Society of Deliverance Ministries (ISDM). Headed by Bill and Janet Sadduth, this is a ministry that exists for the purpose of expelling demons that cause physical and emotional pain.
5. Apostolic Council for Educational Accountability (ACEA). This organization acts as an accrediting system to ensure that all the various organizations and ministries are in line with the ideology and goal of NAR. It is under the apostolic authority of Leo Lawson.
6. Eagle Vision Apostolic Team (EVAT). This is a secretive inner circle group whose membership list is not publicized.
7. Wagner Leadership Institute (WLI). Under the leadership of apostle Carl Pierce, this is an international network of faith-healing centers.
8. Heartland Apostolic Network (HAN). Under the directorship of apostle John Benefiel and based in Oklahoma, this is a coordinating center for prayer networks in the United States.
9. Global Harvest Ministries. This is the personal para-church ministry of C. Peter Wagner and Doris Wagner. It is also the legal parent entity of many of the other NAR organizations listed above including ACEA, ACKW, EVAT, ICA, ISPM, and WLI.¹³

History of the Movement

When, where and why did this movement emerge? Since the movement sees itself as the second great Protestant Reformation, it traces its beginnings back to that event, but its more immediate antecedent may be found in the Second Great Awakening. During the early 19th century, America experienced what became known as the Second Great Awakening, considered the most profound and pervasive religious revival in the history of the nation. American evangelicalism was born out of this great revival. Towards the end of the 19th century a new wave of revivalism growing out of the Second Great Awakening would sweep

¹³ Ibid.

O'REGGIO: RISE OF THE NEW APOSTOLIC REFORMATION

the nation, resulting in the birth of Pentecostalism. Pentecostalism is considered as the major fountainhead for this new movement.

The NAR was founded through the effort of C. Peter Wagner, noted church growth expert and former professor at Fuller Theological Seminary. Since its formation, he has developed an international network of apostles and prophets that has spawn a series of networks and organizations all across the globe.

The New Apostolic Reformation sprang primarily from the Pentecostal and Charismatic movements. Hector Torres traces the roots of the NAR to the beginning of the Pentecostal movement under William T. Seymour. A revival movement broke out in Azusa, California that soon spread worldwide. Speaking in tongues and a Pentecostal spirit that would radically change the structure of the evangelical church characterized this movement.¹⁴ The movement was, in essence, the beginning of a process of exchange and restoration that would continue through the rest of the twentieth century and into the twenty first century. First, “various doctrinal changes were restored to the church... Among these were prophetic Presbytery for ordination to the ministry, personal prophesy, the restoration of praise, dance, the arts, drama and different expressions such as laughter, wailing and being slain in the spirit.”¹⁵

The principles of deliverance and controversy over demon possession of believers were also reestablished. In the seventies, the church experienced restoration of the doctrine of blessing, inheritance and prosperity of saints through faith. Torres here speaks of the prosperity gospel used often by televangelists, some of whom have gone to the extreme and profited financially and have forgotten to proclaim the gospel. In the 1980's and 1990's the restoration of the personal prophetic word to the church, cities and nations brought a renewed understanding of the ministry of prophecy and of its role in spiritual warfare for the end times.¹⁶ Below we see a historical chronology of the movement as it is traced by Torres who was quoting from Bill Haman's book, *Apostles, Prophets and the Coming Moves of God*:

¹⁴ Hector Torres, *The Restoration of the Apostles and the Prophets* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2001), 13.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 23.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 24.

Chronology of the Movement

Restoration¹⁷

Year	Movement	Major Truth Restored
1517	Protestant	Salvation by grace through faith (Eph 2:8-9).
1600	Evangelical	Water baptism, separation of Church and state.
1700	Holiness	Sanctification, the Church set apart from the world.
1800	Faith Healing	Divine healing for the physical body, healing in the atonement.
1900	Pentecostal	Holy Spirit baptism with speaking in tongues, gifts of the Holy Spirit.
1950	Latter Rain	Prophetic presbytery, singing praises and melodious worship.
1950	Deliverance	Evangelist ministry and mass evangelism. Evangelism reactivated.
1960	Charismatic	Renewal of all restored truth to all past movement churches.
1970	Faith	Faith confessions, prosperity and victorious attitude and life. Teacher ministry reestablished as a major fivefold minister.
1980	Prophetic	Prophetic, activating gifts, warfare praise, prophets to nations. Prophet ministry was restored and a company of prophets brought forth.
1990	Apostolic	Miraculous signs and wonders, apostolic ministry, and unity, great harvest of souls. Apostle ministry being restored to ring divine order and structure, finalize restoration of fivefold ministers.

Theology of the Movement: Dominion Theology

The New Apostolic Reformation can now be defined as a distinct movement with a unique ideology. The leaders of the movement, called apostles and prophets, claim that this is the most significant change in

¹⁷ Ibid., 9.

O'REGGIO: RISE OF THE NEW APOSTOLIC REFORMATION

Protestantism since Martin Luther and the Reformation. The stated goal of the NAR is to eradicate denominations and form a unified church that will be victorious against evil in the end times. Like many American fundamentalists, the apostles teach that the events of the end times are imminent, but unlike fundamentalists, the apostles see this as a time of great victory for the church. Instead of escaping the earth during the rapture, prior to the turmoil of the end times, they teach that believers will defeat evil by taking dominion, or control, over all sectors of society and government, resulting in mass conversions to their brand of charismatic evangelicalism and a Christian utopia or “Kingdom” on earth.¹⁸

In a 2007 letter, C. Peter Wagner, founding apostle of the NAR, stated his views in the following way: “our theological bedrock is what has been known as Dominion theology. This means that our divine mandate is to do whatever is necessary by the power of the Holy Spirit to retake the dominion of God’s creation, which Adam forfeited to Satan in the Garden of Eden. Our goal is transformation. . . . We want to see whole cities and regions and states and nations transformed to support the values of the kingdom of God. This will happen only as kingdom focused saints become the head and not the tail of each of Lance Wallnau’s seven mountains or molders of culture. Here in America we have done fairly well in leading the religious mountain, but not the other six.”¹⁹

The theological basis for this dominion theology finds support in Deut 28:13-14; Gen 1:28; Ps 24:1. Dominion theology proposes the view that Christians gain complete authority over the earth before Jesus comes. Charismatic Dominionists are found within the Reconstructionist camps of Rousas Rushdoony. This is the partnership of dispensationalists and the Dominionists camp that projected the 17 Christian worldview documents, *The Manifesto of the Christian Church*. Charismatic and non-Charismatic covenant and dispensational theologians have joined arms in prayer and hard work to see revival, renewal and reformation in

¹⁸ Rachel Tabachnick, “Who are the Apostles? What is the New Apostolic Reformation? Seven Mountains Campaign?” *Talk to Action*, March 30, 2011, <<http://www.talk2action.org/story/2011/3/30/134253/237>>, accessed on 11/25/11.

¹⁹ Rachel Tabachnick, “The Head and Not the Tail Battle Cry for the Seven Mountains Campaign,” *Talk to Action*, September 13, 2010, <<http://talk2action.org/story/2010/9/13/11834/9878>>, accessed on 11/25/11.

JOURNAL OF THE ADVENTIST THEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

the church and American culture. Since 1980 much of Pentecostalism has begun to adopt aspects of Dominion theology.²⁰

“Dominion theology is predicated upon three basic beliefs: 1) Satan usurped man’s dominion over the earth through the temptation of Adam and Eve; 2) The Church is God’s instrument to take dominion back from Satan; 3) Jesus cannot come or will not return until the Church has taken dominion by gaining control of the earth’s government and societal institutions.”²¹

Dominion eschatology is the examination of future events through the lens of the dominion mandate in Gen 1:28 and in Matt 28:19-29. The church will increase until Jesus returns and stands against opposing views that see the church waning in influence in the last days. This view does not imply absolute dominion as in a sinless world but a preparatory dominion as in the earth being prepared for the return of the King.²²

There are three key points that must be understood: 1) God’s covenant people take dominion of the earth—this is the main theme of every covenant God has made with mankind, and the covenant with the church is no different; 2) the Covenant consists of a two-fold process in which humans blessed by God are given a mandate to take dominion of the earth for purpose of blessing it; 3) the first advent of Christ created the blessed seed on the earth namely, the church. The Second Coming of Jesus will take place after the blessed seed has completed the dominion process.²³

The gospel of salvation is achieved by setting up the kingdom of God as a literal and physical kingdom to be advanced on earth in the present age. Some dominionists liken the New Testament kingdom of the Old Testament Israel in ways that justify taking up the sword, or other methods of punitive judgment, to war against enemies of their kingdom. They assign to the church duties and rights that belong scripturally only to Jesus Christ. This includes the esoteric belief that believers can incarnate Christ and function as His body on earth to establish His

²⁰ Fredrick Clarkson, *Eternal Hostility, the Struggle between Theocracy and Democracy* (Monroe, Me.: Common Courage Press, 1997), 19.

²¹ Al Dager, *Vengeance is Ours: The Church in Dominion* (Redmond, WA: Sword Publication, 1990), 87.

²² Mark Pfeifer, “The Dominion Process” in *Reclaiming the Seven Mountains of Culture*, <<http://www.reclaim7mountain.com/pages?pageid=63709>>, accessed on 11/25/11.

²³ Ibid.

O'REGGIO: RISE OF THE NEW APOSTOLIC REFORMATION

kingdom rule. There is a great emphasis placed on man's efforts, which results in a diminishing of the doctrine of God. A great wealth transfer from the ungodly to the godly facilitates the rapid expansion of the kingdom.²⁴

Dominion theology, as I indicated earlier, is not a new theology for it finds its roots in Reconstructionist Christianity. Others have traced its roots back to American Puritanism. Thomas Ice, quoting Peter Leithart says, "Reconstructionist Christianity is more than a resurrection of Puritanism. It is refined Puritanism, tried in the furnace of opposition and hence more consistent to the basic premises of Calvinism than Seventeenth century Puritanism." The writer suggests that there was the possibility of a fusion with old-time dispensational eschatology, creating a new fundamentalism.²⁵ It appears that is precisely what has happened with the rise of the New Apostolic Reformation. There is now a fusion of Dominion theology with Dispensationalism. However, this union is not equal, for those who embraced the secret rapture are now willing to put that view on pause and embrace a "victorious eschatology," where they will not be secretly raptured from the earth but will remain here to transform and rule over it.

Teachings and Roles of Apostles

One of the central teachings of the NAR is the restoration of apostles and prophets to the overcoming end time church. These leaders would provide direction and counsel to the end time church. Hector Torres in his book, *The Restoration of the Apostles and Prophets*, finds support for the restoration of apostles and prophets in Acts 3:19-21 where God promises to restore all things. Torres describes the last days as "a moment of refreshing revival as a result of genuine repentance. This is a necessary precursor to Christ's coming and in order for this to happen there must be a restoration of all things."²⁶

²⁴ Sarah Leslie, "Dominionism and the Rise of Christian Imperialism," *Discernment Ministries*, <<http://www.discernment-ministries.org/ChristianImperialism.htm>>, accessed on 11/25/11.

²⁵ Thomas Ice, *Dominion Theology Blessing or Curse? An Analysis of Christian Reconstructionism* (Portland, OR: Multnomah Press 1988), 373-377.

²⁶ Hector Torres, *The Restoration of the Apostles and the Prophets* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2001), 1.

JOURNAL OF THE ADVENTIST THEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

During the Christian era, apostasy infiltrated the church and robbed it of many of its spiritual gifts and brought in false doctrines. Starting with the 16th century Reformation, God began a process of restoration (See restoration chronology). Peter Wagner says: “we are living in the midst of the most epochal changes in the structure of the church. He calls it the ‘Second Apostolic Age.’”²⁷

The restoration of the apostolic ministry, according to Torres, began in the 1990s “with the purpose of the church entering the new millennium in the fullness of Christ having the five ministries: apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. This new movement, called the New Apostolic Reformation by C. Peter Wagner, is described as “generating the most radical changes in church government since the sixteenth century.” Torres describes these changes as God’s work “to restructure the government of the church and to reveal new strategies. In order to accomplish his objective of establishing the kingdom of heaven here on earth, God is restoring all the truth that had been lost. Those who refuse to accept the movement of the Spirit, with its new and marvelous strategies in the end will cease to produce fruit and disappear.”²⁸

In Bill Hamon’s book, *Apostles, Prophets and the Coming Moves of God: End Time Plan for his Church on Planet Earth*, Wagner, in the forward to that book, speaks of a paradigm shift in traditional Christianity.²⁹ What is this paradigm shift? Hamon further explains the nature of this new paradigm in October 1999 at a meeting of the International Gathering of Apostles and Prophets, where he says that “we are seeing prophets and apostles coming forth for a strategic reason . . . we are being positioned to lay new foundations for the dawning of a new kingdom age. We are in the throws of birthing a whole new order dispensation . . . we are about to move from this dispensation of grace to the dispensation of dominion.”³⁰

²⁷ C. Peter Wagner, *Apostles Today: Biblical Government for Biblical Power* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2006) 6-8.

²⁸ Torres, 15.

²⁹ Bill Hamon, *Apostles, Prophets and the Coming Moves of God: End time Plan for his Church on Planet Earth* (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image Publishing, 1987).

³⁰ Hamon’s speech at the Oct 19,1999 International Gathering of Apostles and Prophets, available online at <<http://www.elijahlist.com/words/textonly.html?ID=300>>, accessed on 11/25/11.

O'REGGIO: RISE OF THE NEW APOSTOLIC REFORMATION

Noteworthy is that they claim to hear directly from God and many claim that Jesus visits them in person. Like the true biblical apostles who established the early church, these so-called restored apostles believe they are called to lay the foundation and government for the new kingdom (one world church). Their goal is complete and utter control of the church and subjugation of the current governance to them. They want power, dominion and total control.³¹

The restoration of the apostles has tremendous implications for Christianity and the world. When these apostles are restored, it will mark the greatest harvest of souls, for more souls will be saved in the last one hundred years than all the previous years of the church's existence. The whole world will also be affected because the supernatural prophetic and apostolic words of the apostles will signal the rise and fall of many nations and people. They will distinguish the sheep and goat nations so that when Jesus comes each will receive its due reward.³²

The Seven Mountains Mandate

This is the mandate for bringing the kingdom of God to earth and taking dominion over seven key spheres of society including government, arts and entertainment, media, education, forms of religion, and business. The mountain of business is considered key to taking dominion over others. The promotion of these seven mandates is done by market apostles such as Os Hillman and Lance Wallnau, who is the major motivational speaker in Africa, Asia, South America and Europe.³³

One of their key theological terms is "Social Transformation." A conference on "Social Transformation" took place at Harvard featuring leading New Apostolic Reformation (NAR) apostles Lance Wallnau, Bill Hamon, Pat Francis, and Os Hillman. All four travel internationally promoting the "Reclaiming the Seven Mountains" campaign and are considered to be experts on "workplace" or "marketplace apostles." Transformation is not a generic term to the NAR but a brand used in the

³¹ Mishel McCumber, "A Strong Delusion: the New Apostolic Reformation" *Deception Bytes*, <<http://adeepdeception.com/new-apostolic-reformaton-aposltolic-network-movement/1230-a-strong-delusion-the-new-apostolic-reformation>>, accessed 11/25/11.

³² Hamon, *Apostles*, 2.

³³ Rachel Tabachnick, "Quotes from the Apostles on Social Transformation in Context of the 7M Campaign," *Talk to Action*, <<http://www.talk2action.org/story/2011/4/3/94532/19039>>, accessed 11/25/11.

JOURNAL OF THE ADVENTIST THEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

title of training videos, books, conferences and organizations. As seen in the following quotes from leading apostles, promoting “social transformation” equates with gaining political and societal power or “Christian dominion.” They advertise their charitable activities, but these are secondary to their primary purpose—the mandate to take dominion over society and government, a mandate that includes driving out those they believe to be (literally) under the control of demons.³⁴

Lance Wallnau is the motivational guru for the Seven Mountains. Speaking on Pat Kings Extreme Prophetic TV broadcast, Lance Wallnau says, “the Seven Mountains are almost a template for warfare because the church so frequently does not have a language for how it goes about taking territory.”³⁵ The Seven Mountain mandate is an NAR strategy designed to take control of the power centers of the world. The Ohio Reformation Prayer Network has an abbreviated list of these seven areas on their promotional video:

Family: where generational blessings or curses are passed on to our children

Education: where little truth or lies about God and his creation are taught

Government: where evil is little restrained or endorsed

Business: where people build for the glory of God or the glory of man

Media: where events, news, information are interpreted and passed on to people through the lens of good and evil

Arts & Entertainment: where values and virtues are little celebrated or distorted

Religion: where people worship God in “spirit and truth” or settle for religious rituals

The New Apostolic Reformation is a movement with well-organized international campaigns. The apostles speaking at Harvard all promoted the “Reclaiming the Seven Mountains” campaign. Bill Hamon, Pat Francis and Lance Wallnau spoke, for instance, at the 2009, Give Me

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Rachel Tabachnick, “Heads and Not Tails,” *Talk to Action*, September 13, 2010, <<http://www.talk2action.org/story/2010/9/13/11834/9878>>, accessed 11/27/11.

O'REGGIO: RISE OF THE NEW APOSTOLIC REFORMATION

This Mountain conference, advertised it with the phrase “Possess your promised inheritance in government, family, business, education, arts & entertainment, media and religion.”³⁶ The Seven Mountain mandate is the most explicit expression and implementation of dominion theology. As their seven mountain website declares, these seven mountains are the pillars of society and here was the battlefield where a culture was won or lost. The NAR intend to train agents who will scale those mountains and conquer them for God.

In Apostle Bill Hamon’s 2010 book titled, *Prophetic Scriptures Yet to Be Fulfilled*, he describes the fascinating transformation of the seven mountains of culture and how every nation will become either a sheep or a goat nation. In the end, the restoration of all things spoken of by the apostles and prophets will supposedly release Jesus to return and set up His domain over all the earth.³⁷

In Wagner’s 2008 book, *Dominion: How Kingdom Action can Change the World*, it is stated: “We have now shed our inhibitions over theologizing about taking dominion. Dominion theology is not a flashback to Constantinian triumphalism, but it is a new call to action for a triumphant Church. . . Satan has polluted the land and cursed it. Satan has deployed high-ranking demonic powers to darken the spiritual atmosphere over society and to block the freedom of heaven flowing to earth. Both of these arenas need to be and can be cleansed spiritually. We have the tools to do it, we have the gifted personnel to do it and we have the power of the Holy Spirit to do it. It will be done!”³⁸

In Wagner’s book, *The Church in the Workplace: How God’s People can Transform Society*, he writes, “Now that we have social transformation on our evangelical agendas, it is time for action. I regard ‘social transformation’ as the concept term. However, the action term that will best set us on the road toward that goal is ‘taking dominion.’”³⁹

Charismatic evangelicals have shifted from a dispensationalist to a dominionist theology, from passive theology where believers are

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid. (Bill Hamon, *Prophetic Scriptures Yet to Be Fulfilled* [Shippensburg, PA : Destiny Image Publishers, 2010]).

³⁸ C. Peter Wagner, *Dominion: How Kingdom Action Can Change the World* (Grand Rapids, MI: Chosen Books, 2008), 37.

³⁹ C. Peter Wagner, *The Church in the Workplace: How God’s People can Transform Society*, (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2006), 7-15.

raptured to escape imminent apocalypse horrors, to a politicalized theology in which believers must take control of government and society. A new reality has been created where a more potent movement has emerged like a phoenix from the ashes of Darby's dispensationalism. It is the triumph of Dominion theology and the gradual unleashing of a new breed of spiritual warriors from the restraints of dispensational theology and the transformation of much of the charismatic evangelical world. Different from previous white dominant fundamentalism, this is a more progressive multi-cultural movement. Women apostles and prophets focus on societal transformation, not a social gospel but a full blown "Kingdom Now" theology which is sweeping the globe and impacting churches across the spectrum of Christianity.⁴⁰

Methodology and Strategy of the Movement

What are some of the strategies and methodologies of the New Apostolic Reformation and how do they believe they should proceed in their task of conquering the Seven Mountains of society? NAR is quite open in stating that its grand plan is total world domination. But how do they intend to gain dominion of America and eventually the world?

NAR has unveiled an array of strategies, action plans, and methodologies to achieve their ultimate goal. Some of these are deliverance centers, breaking demonic strongholds and strongmen, breaking general curses, spiritual mapping, kingdom health care systems, great wealth transfers, intercessory prayers for business, the Seven Mountain mandate, transformations, prayer and transformation conferences, evangelical reconciliation programs and organizing young militants who will be willing martyrs for the kingdom. From this list of strategies and methods, we can see that the NAR is deadly serious about their objective of world domination. They have big dreams and grandiose visions and the scope of their strategies and methodologies speak to this.

One of the major strategies of the NAR is using spiritual warfare tactics to achieve ultimate control. They do this through deliverance centers, breaking demonic strongholds, spiritual mapping and strategic level spiritual warfare (SLW). The NAR believes that much of the world is under demon control, which includes many individuals, people groups,

⁴⁰ Rachel Tabachnick, "The Rise of Charismatic Dominionism," *Talk to Action*, <<http://www.talk2action.org/story/2011/8/15/9328/35473>>, accessed 11/25/11.

O'REGGIO: RISE OF THE NEW APOSTOLIC REFORMATION

nations, territories, false religions and ideologies. All these must be conquered. Its demons must be cast out, the territories must be dispossessed and given back to God's people. These demons are described as obstacles to the envisioned kingdom on earth. "They are the source of corruption, illness, poverty, and homosexuality. Purging these demons would result in mass evangelization and eradication of social ills." The apostles teach that their followers are currently receiving an outpouring of supernatural powers to help them fight these demons through what they call "strategic level spiritual warfare."⁴¹

Spiritual Mapping

Spiritual Mapping is a method used to identify and purge both demons and their helpers. "This technique is a key component in strategic level spiritual warfare and prayer strategy. . . . This includes discovering the location of demons, their activities, their names, their power."⁴² Spiritual mapping gives us the military intelligence that we need in order to "bring the Gospel of the kingdom in an area effectively."⁴³

Strategic Level Warfare is a term that pertains to intercessory confrontations with demonic powers concentrated over given cities, cultures, and people.⁴⁴ According to C. Peter Wagner, there are various levels of spiritual warfare. The most basic level is ground level spiritual warfare in which demons are cast out of individuals. The second level is described as occult level spiritual warfare in which there are confrontations with demons operating through witchcraft and esoteric philosophies (examples Free Masonry and Tibetan Buddhism). The highest level of Spiritual warfare is Strategic Level Warfare, which

⁴¹ Rachel Tabachnick, "Who Are the Apostles? What is the Reformation? Seven Mountain Campaign?," *Talk to Action*, <<http://www.talkaction.org/story/2011/3/30/134253/237>>, accessed 11/25/11.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ See an excellent critique of NAR by Michael S. B. Read, *Strategic Level Spiritual Warfare, a Modern Mythology?: A Detailed Evaluation of the Biblical, Theological, and Historical Bases of Spiritual Warfare in Contemporary Thought* (Fairfax, VA: Michael S. B. Read Publications and Xulon Press, 2002).

JOURNAL OF THE ADVENTIST THEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

consist of confronting territorial principalities (high order demons) that control communities, ethnic groups, religions and nations.⁴⁵

Binding the strongmen is a part of the demonic dispossession of the NAR in which the deceptive hold and demonic power over their human subjects are broken. Apostle Caballeros points out that strongmen are not just demons but people who harbor the demons.⁴⁶

Prayer is a major weapon within spiritual warfare. These are “petitions, entreaties and thanksgivings made on behalf of another. Intercession also involves the act of standing between the object of prayer and spiritual forces.” There are also prayer expeditions which are “long-distance, trans-territorial prayer walks along strategically developed routes. Intercession is made for entire countries and regions.” There is also prayer walking which is the “practice of onsite, street level intercession” based on “immediate observations and researched targets.”⁴⁷

The NAR structure includes networks in each state that were originally called spiritual warfare networks, but are now referred to as “spiritual warfare strategies.” Prayer networks and the Global Apostolic Network are under the supervision of leading apostles.

Identification, Repentance and Reconciliation Program

“The reconciliation program was originally coined by John Dawson and the technique is thought to give Christians the power to heal the past. It involves the recognition that the nations and the cities can and do sin corporately and if such sin is not remitted, the iniquity can become worse in each succeeding generation. This cycle can be stopped by corporate or identificational repentance, which effectively removes the foothold Satan has used to hold populations in spiritual darkness and social misery. It is claimed that this will open the way for the revival of churches and unprecedented harvest of souls.”⁴⁸

⁴⁵ C. Peter Wagner, *Warfare Prayer: Strategies to Combating the Rulers of Darkness* (Crowborough, England: Monarch Publications, 1997), 18.

⁴⁶ See Harold Caballeros, *Victorious Warfare: Discovering Your Rightful Place in God's Kingdom* (Grand Rapids, MI: Thomas Nelson Inc., 2002).

⁴⁷ Tabachnick, “Who Are the Apostles?”

⁴⁸ Cited from Rachel Tabachnick, “Strategic Level Spiritual Warfare Glossary,” *Talk to Action*, August 6, 2010, <<http://www.talk2action.org/story/20108/6/135752/1937>>, accessed 11/27/11; For more on reconciliation programs see for example, Cindy Jacobs,

O'REGGIO: RISE OF THE NEW APOSTOLIC REFORMATION

Demons are believed to take control of both the villains and the victims of corporate sin. The purpose of many of the “reconciliation” events that have been held by the movement is to remove barriers to proselytizing various ethnic and religious groups. It is believed that if corporate repentance is done, for instance, repentance for the treatment of Native American Indians, then the demons are removed, opening up the way to mass evangelism of these groups which are considered to be blocked from salvation by territorial demons.⁴⁹

Social Transformation

Rachel Tabachnick defines social transformation as “A condition of dramatic socio-political renewal that results from God’s people entering into corporate vision, corporate repentance and corporate prayer. During these extraordinary seasons, the kingdom of God pervades virtually every institution of human endeavor.”⁵⁰ This work of transformation is already taking place all over the world and is demonstrated through a series of transformation movies.

Transformation Movies and Conferences

This area of NAR is under the leadership of George Otis. This sentinel group promotes the spiritual warfare and orthodox evangelizing methodologies of NAR. The series features prototype of ethnic communities, critics, and nations claimed to be a part of a wave of transformation in advance of the utopian kingdom on earth. Transformation has become the buzzword for the evangelization of entire communities and nations. There has been a tremendous growth of transformation ministries, transformation organizations, and transformation conferences all over the world. Two of the most famous conferences took place in Hawaii in 2007 and Harvard University in 2011.

Edgardo Silvano, one of the market apostles, remarks in his book: “Now we are going for entire nations, in fact for all the nations of the world. The discipling of nations is our primary task on earth. To disciple

Possessing the Gates of the Enemy (Grand Rapids, MI: Chosen, 2009 [1st ed. 1991]).

⁴⁹ Richard Twiss and John Dawson, *One Church Many Tribes: Following Jesus the Way He Made You* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2000).

⁵⁰ Tabachnick, “Strategic Level Spiritual Warfare Glossary.”

someone means to turn that person into a follower of the teachings you espouse.”⁵¹ He continues further, “The Romans “discipled” nations conquering and imposing on them Pax Romana. Lenin and his followers “discipled” Russia and the Soviet Union by molding them in a regimented and all-encompassing way the lives of millions with Communist philosophy. Mao did the same in China, the largest nation on earth. Militant Muslims actively take over nations and disciple them à la Ayatollah Khomeini; and even though they don’t use the term disciple, they are making entire populations into followers—disciples—of Mohammed.”⁵²

The Great Wealth Transfer

One of the seven mountains that NAR intends to conquer in society is the mountain of business. Connected to this concept is the idea of a great wealth transfer. This is where the resources of the wicked will be transferred to the Christians. C. Peter Wagner’s book, *Dominion! How Action Can Change the World* summarizes his strategies of taking over dominion of the earth within a democratic framework. “He views the great wealth transfer and workplace apostles as key to this transformation.” At the apostles’ yearly summit many of the sermons focus on how to take back the mountain of business and finance which is considered the “key mountain” in order to control the other six mountains.⁵³

Organizing Young Militants

The NAR is preparing for the future by training young people to become change agents for the organization, in their own words, “Our goal is to enlist one billion foot soldiers for the kingdom of God, who will permanently change the face of international mission to take on those five global giants for which the church can become the ultimate

⁵¹ Edgardo Silvano, *Transformation: Change the Market Place and you Change the World* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2006), 42.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Rachel Tabachnick, “Generational Curses, Deliverance Centers and the Kingdom Care Health System” *Talk to Action*, November 23, 2009, < <http://www.talk2action.org/story/2009/11/23/2349/5841>>, accessed 11/27/11; See also C. Peter Wagner, *Dominion: How Kingdom Action can Change the World* (Grand Rapids, MI: Chosen Books, Baker Publishing Group, 2008).

O'REGGIO: RISE OF THE NEW APOSTOLIC REFORMATION

distribution and change agents to overcome spiritual emptiness and self-serving leadership, poverty, disease and ignorance (illiteracy).⁵⁴

Bill Hamon's book, *Prophetic Scripture Yet to be Fulfilled*, describes the final or third reformation of the church and its purpose: "To fulfill God's original mandate to subdue all things, to take dominion and fill the earth with a mankind race in God's own image and likeness."⁵⁵

Sometimes called "the new breed of men" or Joel's army, these young people will be trained for their tasks by modern apostles and prophets and will execute God's judgment on earth. Hamon makes reference to this "army of the Lord movement," wherein "God is preparing His church to become an invincible unstoppable unconquerable, overcoming army of the Lord that subdues everything under Christ's feet. There will be a sovereign restorational move of God to activate all that is needed for his army to be and to do what he has externally purposed. . . . God's great end-time army is being prepared to execute God's written judgments and Christ's victory and divine judgment decrees that have already been established in heaven. The time is set when they will be administered and executed on earth through God's saintly army. All that is destined and needed will be activated during God's restorational army of the Lord's movement."⁵⁶

George Warnock wrote in "The Feast of the Tabernacle" that this generation of overcomers or manifest Sons of God would have powers like Jesus.

The overcomer, therefore will live the same life of the only begotten Son of God. . . many more miracles than we have mentioned or even imagined possible shall be performed by the Sons of God in the day of their manifestation. They will even require a glorified body to do these things.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ Rachel Tabachnick, "The NAR Apostles and Manifest Sons of God Theology: Training the Army of God," *Talk to Action*, <<http://www.talk2action.org/story/2011/4/5/141110/1743>>, accessed 11/27/11.

⁵⁵ Bill Hamon, *Prophetic Scripture Yet to be Fulfilled: During the Third and Final Reformation* (Destiny Image Publ. 2010), 25.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ George Warnock, *The Feast of the Tabernacles* (Springfield, MO: The Church in Action, 1951), chapter 14.

JOURNAL OF THE ADVENTIST THEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Warnock describes this generation of overcomers or manifest sons as being of the royal priesthood of Melchizedek. He claims that nothing will hurt them, not even the most powerful atom or hydrogen bomb.⁵⁸

Rene Holvast lists the three leading advocates of the manifest sons of God theology: Bill Hamon, Paul Cain and Rick Joyner. Holvast quotes Joyner to say:

Angelic appearances will be common to the saints and a visible glory upon some of them for extended periods as power flows through them. There will be no plague, disease or physical condition including loss of limbs, Aids, poison gas or radiation which will resist the healing and miracle gifts working in the saints during this time. . . . Here again, the task is to take action aggressively in order to obtain dominion over the earth. The church is to be guided by the spiritual elite who are supposed to be able to wield a technique like spiritual mapping with extraordinary effectiveness.⁵⁹

According to Casey Sanchez, a young militant group is on the rise within the NAR under leaders like Todd Bentley, a thirty-something “heavily tattooed, body pierced, shaved head, Canadian revivalist preacher.” These young militants, called Joel’s army, are to become a “military form of young people with a divine mandate to physically impose Christian dominion on non-believers.” Bentley declares that his end time army has one purpose and that is “to take ground for the kingdom of God under the authority of Jesus Christ, the Dread Champion.” Many of these young people consider themselves to be the final generation to come of age before the end of the world.⁶⁰

Deliverance Centers

The NAR is busily developing demon deliverance centers around the world. An example of this is the cleansing stream mountain network. These centers are located not only in the United States but in Canada, Hong King, the Netherlands, and Germany. In their 2009 brochure for

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Rene Holvast, *Spiritual Mapping in the United States and Argentina, 1989-2005: A Geography of Fear* (Leiden; Boston, MA: Brill, 2009), 164.

⁶⁰ Casey Sanchez, “Arming for Armageddon,” *Intelligence Report*, 131, Fall 2008: 38, Also available online <<http://http://www.splcenter.org/get-informed/intelligence-report/browse-all-issues/2008/fall/arming-for-armageddon>>.

O'REGGIO: RISE OF THE NEW APOSTOLIC REFORMATION

the International Society of Deliverance ministries annual conference there were sessions advertised on witchcraft and curses, mental disorders versus demons and sexual and identity issues.⁶¹

Generational Curses

The NAR is obsessed with the removal of demonic forces and generational curses from society. “Many personal problems are attributed to sins of ancestors. For example, the involvement of a grandparent or great grandparent who were Free Masons can supposedly cause many types of physical and mental problems for their descendants.”⁶²

Those who specialized in the removal of generational curses made it clear that they are not talking about character weakness, but about demonic control over a person due to the sins of their ancestors, or even an attack on their ancestors, which allowed demons to enter the family line. They claim that demons can jump from person to person in the family.⁶³

“The pitch and intensity of the militancy and rhetoric of this branch of the global Dominionist movement has increased since the beginning of 2008” writes the Discernment Research group that tracks what they call heresies or cults within Christianity. One can only wonder how long before this transforms ends in real warfare with actual warriors.⁶⁴

Comparisons with Other Christian Groups

What is the relationship of NAR with other Christian groups, especially the Emergent Church, which has also been a popular label in recent times?

The New Apostolic Reformation is of Pentecostal and Charismatic origins and as has been explained before, sees itself as the continuation and culmination of the Protestant Reformation. Most are Evangelical Protestants and although they do not fit neatly in either the right or left of the religious traditions of Protestantism, judging by their theology and those who they support, they are far more comfortable on the Religious Right. Their theology has been connected to Kingdom Now Theology.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Sanchez, “Arming for Armageddon,” 38.

JOURNAL OF THE ADVENTIST THEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

They are criticized by both the Right and the Left, but the Left has greater concerns about them than the Right. Marsha West Writing for the Conservative Crusader calls the movement, “Damnable Heresies Invading the Church.” A writer on the Left calls them, “America’s Own Taliban.” Neither of these writers is positive in their critiques of the movement and both seem to be sounding a warning to the American public of the danger of this group. I have quoted from these writers earlier in the paper.

Regarding their relationship to the Emergent Church, there are some similarities with this group but the dissimilarities are much greater. Both see themselves as a post-Evangelical protest movement against the way evangelicalism is currently practiced. They both seek to transform society, the Emergent Church through the individual lives of believers living out Christ’s life and ministry to the world; for them orthodoxy is not that important—rather, they prefer orthopraxy.⁶⁵ The New Apostolic Reformation, on the other hand, seeks to transform society through the control of the major institutions and structures of society (Seven Mountain Mandate: religion, family, education, government, media, arts and entertainment and business.) Both movements use an inclusive approach to attract various groups, so both communities consist of groups across the entire religious spectrum. Their worship styles, although not always similar, tend to depart from the traditional evangelical style and are likely to be more creative, innovative, emotional and at times dominated by the “Spirit Presence.”

The differences are much greater than the similarities. The Emergent Church is focused on the post-modern generation and how to make the gospel more appealing and accessible to them, even at the cost of doctrinal orthodoxy. They see Jesus’s words, “then shall men know that you are my disciples when you have love for one another,” as the most important mandate of the believer. For them nothing is more important than relationships. However, the focus of the NAR is not on this generation in particular, but the whole world and the ages to come. They want to establish God’s kingdom here on earth. It is a macro and global view that necessitates the control of the major influence centers of the world. In matters of church governance the Emergent Church is very

⁶⁵ Matt Slick, “What is the Emerging Church?” <http://carm.org/what-emerging-church>, accessed 7/6/2012.

O'REGGIO: RISE OF THE NEW APOSTOLIC REFORMATION

democratic and allows room for each community to decide how to govern themselves. NAR views on church governance, on the other hand, go back to Paul's counsels on gifts in Ephesians 4:11,12. They take literally Paul's words that Apostles and Prophets should govern the church, so they have a system based on Apostolic hierarchy⁶⁶ (see my previous explanation on this). The Emergent church leans left politically, as they seem to be very concerned about poverty, justice, and environmental issues, inclining many of them to vote Democratic in the U.S. The NAR leans to the political right as they tend to support Republican conservative candidates and are typically more concerned about moral and traditionally conservative issues.

Eschatological Implications of the New Apostolic Reformation

If the NAR achieves its goal of conquering the Seven Mountains of culture and gains religious dominance over America, how would that impact Seventh-day Adventists and their unique understanding of end time events? The implications would be consequential and far-reaching. Seventh-day Adventists are premillennialists who believe that this world will not get better but worse, according to 2 Timothy 3:1-5. Evil men and seducers will get worse and worse. The social, political, economic, and spiritual conditions of our planet will deteriorate more and more as we near the end of time. The Church will not be able to do anything to control this deteriorating condition. Only the dramatic intervention of Jesus can save the planet. The preparation that the Church makes is not making the planet a utopian *political* kingdom for Jesus to come back to. The preparation of the Church is the sharing of the Gospel to the entire world so that everyone will have an opportunity to make a personal choice to become part of Christ' *spiritual* kingdom. When Jesus was standing before the temporal rulers of the time, He said: "My Kingdom is not of this world." The idea of "spiritual transformation" of the church is fundamentally at odds with the "political dominion agenda" of the NAR.

A columnist for *Al Jazeera*, Paul Rosenberg, calls the New Apostolic Reformers, "America's own Taliban" because of the radical nature of their goal and strategy. He describes their ultimate goal as the

⁶⁶ C. Peter Wagner, "The New Apostolic Reformation is not a Cult," <http://www.charismanews.com/opinion/31851-the-new-apostolic-reformation-is-not-a-cult> 8/24/2011, accessed 7/6/2012.

replacement of secular democracy both in America and the world with a Christian theocracy (Dominionism) and to purify the world for Christ's return by strikingly similar ultimate goals compared to what the Taliban believe, but "significantly at odds with more common long standing Christian beliefs about the end times, as well as the nature and purpose of prayer and the role of human and divine power."⁶⁷ Rosenberg may have overstated the case in comparing NAR with the Taliban because the differences between the groups are much greater than the similarities. Right now the NAR is not engaged in a violent revolt against any government, using suicide bombers to kill innocent civilians, or publicly executing those who break the Divine laws and denying women their basic human rights. Why then this comparison? It lies only in the theocratic intent of the NAR and their proposed mission to combine church and state and impose their brand of religion on all.

The goal of the NAR to eliminate denominationalism, forming a unified Church that will be politically victorious against evil in the last days contradicts Adventist ideology of religious freedom and separation of church and state. How will NAR relate to groups like Adventists, groups that will refuse to join with their religious confederacy and also refuse to submit to their religious authority and doctrine? Failure to do so will certainly jeopardize the peaceful existence of Adventism. This movement seems to be a fulfillment of Adventism's own understanding concerning the confederacy of apostate religious groups in the end time that will seek to impose their brand of religion on the world.

The NAR vision of the last generation, contrary to those of Adventism, is not those who are perfecting their characters after the example of Jesus Christ and who are empowered by the Holy Spirit to proclaim the Gospel to dying men and women. Their version of the last generation is of militant young people (Joel's army) who will take over the world, conquer the Seven Mountains, exorcize demons and do whatever it takes to accomplish this task.

The NAR version of the last day triumphant church is not the remnant church being persecuted by the beast powers of Rev 13 and who nonetheless are proclaiming the final message to a world that is on the brink of total destruction. No, their version is a militant triumphant

⁶⁷ Paul Rosenberg, "America's Own Taliban," *AlJazeera* <http://www.aljazeera.com/depth/opinion/2011/07/20117259426336524.html>, accessed 11/25/11.

O'REGGIO: RISE OF THE NEW APOSTOLIC REFORMATION

church that is on the march defeating demons, taking territory, and taking the seven major areas of culture (education, business, media, arts, entertainment, business, home and religion). Although there is a grain of truth in the NAR' view of the future triumphant church, according to the Bible, God's true Church will not be fully triumphant until Jesus comes and Prince Michael rises to delivers his people from the final persecution of the wicked (Dan 12:1).

Rachel Tabchnick has identified six reasons why Americans should care about what has been happening recently in Uganda concerning religious liberty. I believe these also have relevance for the Adventist view of the end times.⁶⁸

1. Although this could mean life or death to some gay Ugandans, this issue is not limited to gay and lesbian citizens nor is it limited to Ugandans. Soon other noncompliant groups like Adventists can easily be targeted and thus the beginning of religious persecution.
2. Uganda is viewed as a prototype for merging church and state. The NAR is working out some of the kinks of their grand plan and Uganda maybe a testing ground for this emergence of church and state and as students of history we are well aware of the dangers. Adventists see danger for the believers when the power and goals of church and state unite.
3. The religious/political onslaught in Uganda is a multi-faceted effort by several groups that promote Christian dominionism over society. The religious dominionism is being worked out in places like Uganda to see how it will function. Uganda is a laboratory to test some of these ideas.
4. Dominionism is packaged in progressive terminology that sounds almost like liberation theology or the social gospel, but has a very different agenda. Dominion theology is promoted using the language of love and compassion so that it can be made more palatable—as it were, devils appearing as angels of light to deceive many in the last days.
5. “Reconciliation” events promoted by the movement are about conversion, not acceptance or religious pluralism. Reconciliation events are intended to draw in historically oppressed groups within the umbrella of the movement but the ultimate goal is the conversion of all to the

⁶⁸ Rachel Tabachnick, “Six Reasons Why Americans Should Care About What is Happening in Uganda,” <http://www.talk2action.org/story/2010/10/14/154827/99>.

JOURNAL OF THE ADVENTIST THEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

NAR vision of the Christian message. This could be the beginning of one world religion that Adventists predict will come.

6. The Transformation movement is not just about religious supremacy but also about taking dominion over all aspects of society.

These transformational events, movies, and the movement itself, are not necessarily about the fundamental transformation of people and society from bad to good, but rather, about the transformation of society and individuals into the NAR's version of what they think is good. This transformation does not emphasize a personal conversion to Christ and growth in holiness, but focuses more on a corporate societal transformation. How is that possible when sinful men are still in charge even though they may call themselves Christians?

Os Hillman, one of their leading prophets, has suggested that, instead of using the word Dominionism, a better choice would be influence, which comes as a result of our love and obedience to God. Hillman explains: "Jesus never sought to have dominion; rather, He encouraged others to love and obey God. It is better that we avoid the word dominion in our culture today due to the connotation that comes with this word of control and manipulation of others. It also reminds people of a flawed movement in the body of Christ called dominion theology that caused great harm to many."⁶⁹ While Hillman may take this position *in words*, the vast majority of the other leaders take a different, and more aggressive stance. They are quite explicit about what dominion means and they make no apologies about it.

Thus, too many negative aspects of the movement remain. There seems to be little focus on the cross of Christ as central to the Christian gospel. The work of the Holy Spirit in the conviction and conversion of the individual is not emphasized. There seems to be an obsession with demons, demon possession, and the need to expel demons. Most of the ills and problems of the world are attributed to demons. While from even a traditional Christian perspective there is some truth to this assertion, the NAR view is far too simplistic in explaining human problems. If all the demons were expelled, would the human problems of poverty, crime, violence, war, and sickness be solved? It is doubtful. An overemphasis

⁶⁹ Os Hillman, "Reclaiming the 7 Mountains - Is it Dominionism?" *Reclaiming the 7 Mountains of Culture*, <http://www.reclaim7mountains.com/articles_view.asp?columnid=4347&articleid=76021>, accessed 11/27/11.

O'REGGIO: RISE OF THE NEW APOSTOLIC REFORMATION

on demonic causation has lost sight of the human culpability in many of the problems that afflict humanity.

One of the most unsettling things about this movement is their militancy and their stridency. Much of the language used to describe their taking back and having dominion is devoid of the compassionate love of Jesus. A good picture of this strident call to arms can be seen in the words of one of their prophets, "We are coming to the time when passive Christianity and passive Christians will cease to exist. There is maturity, a discipline, and a divine militancy coming upon the people of God. Those who have succumbed to humanistic and idealistic theologies may have a hard time with this, but we must understand that God is a militant God. The title that he uses ten more times than any other in Scripture is the "Lord of Host," or "Lord of armies." There is a martial aspect to his character that we must understand and embrace for the times and the job to which we are coming."⁷⁰

This kind of thinking clearly seems contrary to the teachings of Jesus, who clearly said my kingdom is not of this world. Matthew Henry captures this thought beautifully in these words: "Christ never intended that His gospel should be propagated by fire and sword or his righteousness wrought by the wrath of man. When the high praise of God is in our mouth with them we will have an olive branch of peace in our hands. Christ's victories are by the power of His gospel and grace over spiritual enemies, in which all believers are more than conquerors. The Word of God is the two-edged sword (Heb 4:12), the sword of the Spirit (Eph 6:17).⁷¹ Spurgeon supports this idea by saying, "The kingdom of this world is not of this world, or otherwise would his servants fight! It rests on a spiritual basis and is to be advanced by spiritual means. Yet Christ's servants gradually slipped down into the notion that His kingdom was of this world and could be held by human power."⁷² Christians are called to be Salt and Light to the world, through their

⁷⁰ Rick Joyner, "TAKING THE LAND—We are Establishing Our Eternal Place and Position Here on Earth," *Elijah List*, <http://www.elijahlist.com/words/display_word.html?ID=3617>, accessed 11/27/11.

⁷¹ Matthew Henry, *Exposition of the Old and New Testament*, 3 vols. (London: Joseph Ogle Robinson, 1828), 2:467.

⁷² Rev. Charles Spurgeon, "Christ Universal Kingdom and How it Cometh," in *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit: Sermons*, vol. 26 (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1881), 262.

JOURNAL OF THE ADVENTIST THEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

loving and obedient lifestyle believers will seek to persuade others to their loving Savior. This a methodology based solely on love, not force or power or compulsion. The views of these latter day apostles and so-called prophets are at odds with the gospel of Jesus Christ. Faithful believers must sound the alarm and warn the world that in the last days false prophets and false Christ's will arise to deceive many.

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