

Afro-Mideast Division Impact

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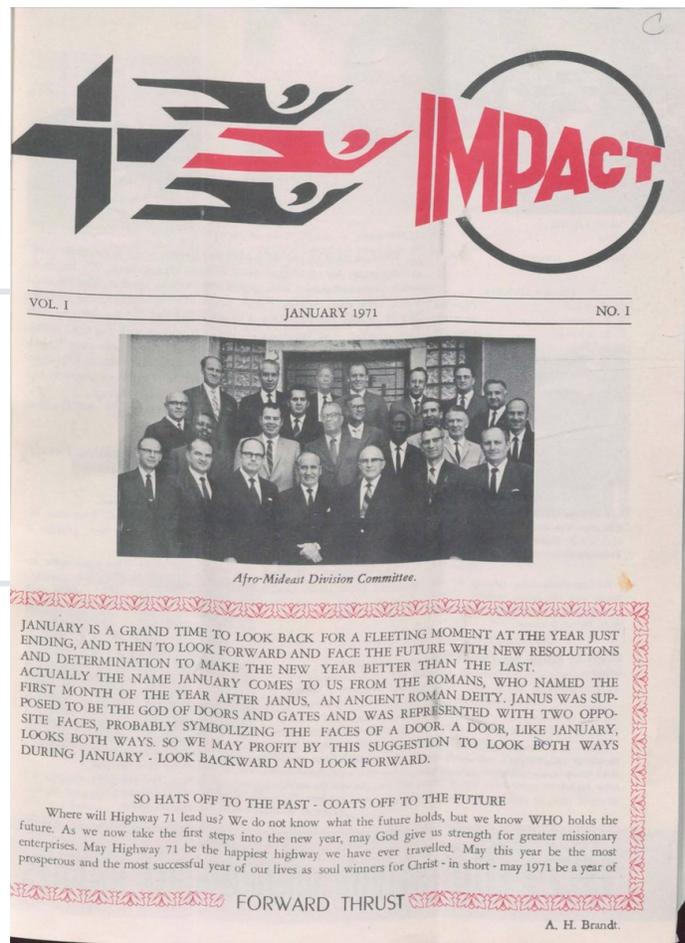
Sven Hagen Jensen, M.Div. (Andrews University, Berrien Springs, Michigan, USA) has worked for the church for over 50 years as a pastor, editor, departmental director, and church administrator in Denmark, Nigeria and the Middle East. Jensen enjoys reading, writing, nature and gardening. He is married to Ingelis and has two adult children and four grandchildren.

Afro-Mideast Division *Impact*¹ was a periodical that served as the official organ of the Afro-Mideast Division from 1971 to 1981.²

With the formation of the Afro-Mideast Division, comprising the East African, Ethiopian, Middle East, and Tanzania Unions,³ a monthly periodical was issued in English to promote the work and bind the division together. It started as an 8-page publication⁴ and was increased to 12 pages some months later⁵ and then to 16 pages at the beginning of 1974.⁶ It was printed in two colors (black and another color, which changed from issue to issue). The subscription

price was 10 Lebanese pounds (LBP) per year, postage paid.⁷ Over the years, it was published by both the Middle East Press and the African Herald Publishing House.⁸ The total circulation was approximately 2,000.⁹

The *Impact*, which displayed the three-angels logo on the front page, played a major role at the beginning of the life of the new division. For its first five years, it was used to promote the "Forward Thrust" theme.¹⁰ The first year's issues carried banners across the pages that highlighted the goals and objectives for every department and church entity, which focused on evangelism and soul winning. Slogans in bold letters like "Forward ever, backward never"¹¹ and "The ever-growing army" were meant to create a sense of movement and growth across the division territory. Encouraging reports from the unions seemed to indicate that the optimistic and faith-inspiring tone of the journal was turned into action by the workers and laypeople of the fields and churches, which bore precious fruit. Personal stories and testimonies of faith from around the division added to the feeling of direction and achievement.



Afro-Mideast Division *Impact*.

Photo courtesy of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists Archives.

The *Impact* kept the readers up to date with what was happening around the fields in the division, such as government relations, opening up new areas of opportunities, entering new countries, changes of personnel, and developments in major educational and other institutions. Whenever there were extensive reports from sessions and other major meetings, the number of pages in the publication was increased.¹² From time to time, reports from the world field and special messages from General Conference officers and departmental leaders appeared. The many black-and-white pictures of people in groups or in action, institutional buildings, or picturesque scenes of African wildlife gave a good impression of the variety and diversity of the Afro-Mideast Division.

The editorial team consisted of the editor and the appointed correspondents from the four unions.

The following served as editors: A. H. Brandt (1971–1975);¹³ Jack Mahon (1976–1979);¹⁴ D. C. Beardsell (1980–1981).¹⁵

SOURCES

Brandt, A. H., ed., Afro-Mideast Division *Impact*, 1971–1975.

“Seventh Business Meeting, June 15, 1970, 3:00 P.M.” *ARH*, June 16, 1970.

Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia, 2nd rev. ed. Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1996.

Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook. Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1971-1982.

NOTES

1. Don F. Neufeld, ed., *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, 2nd rev. ed., vol. 10 of the Commentary Reference Series (Washington D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1996), s.v. “Afro-Mideast Division *Impact*.”
2. A complete set of the *Impact* is not available at the time of writing. Volumes 1–4 (1971–1974) are kept at the General Conference Archives. A special edition of *Impact* in Danish, June–August 1975, which was used for the General Conference Session in Vienna in 1975, is kept at the Center for Adventist Research, James White Library, Andrews University (Emmanuel W. Pedersen’s Collection), Berrien Springs, Michigan, United States.
3. “Seventh Business Meeting, June 15, 1970, 3:00 P.M.,” *ARH*, June 16, 1970, 21–22.
4. Afro-Mideast Division *Impact*, January 1971, 1–8.
5. Afro-Mideast Division *Impact*, November 1971, 1–12.

6. Afro-Mideast Division *Impact*, January 1974, 1–16.
7. Afro-Mideast Division *Impact*, July 1971, 2.
8. The available issues (1971–1974) only mention Middle East Press as the publisher, whereas the 1996 edition of the *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia* also mentions the African Herald Publishing House.
9. Neufeld, *Seventh-day Adventist Encyclopedia*, s.v. “Afro-Mideast Division *Impact*.”
10. Afro-Mideast Division *Impact*, January 1971, 4–5.
11. Afro-Mideast Division *Impact*, April 1972, 4–5.
12. Afro-Mideast Division *Impact*, December 1971, 1–40.
13. Afro-Mideast Division *Impact*, vols. 1–4, and special edition in Danish, 1975.
14. “Afro-Mideast Division,” *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (1977), 107.
15. “Afro-Mideast Division,” *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (1981), 127.

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