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volume 7/number 7/april 1978



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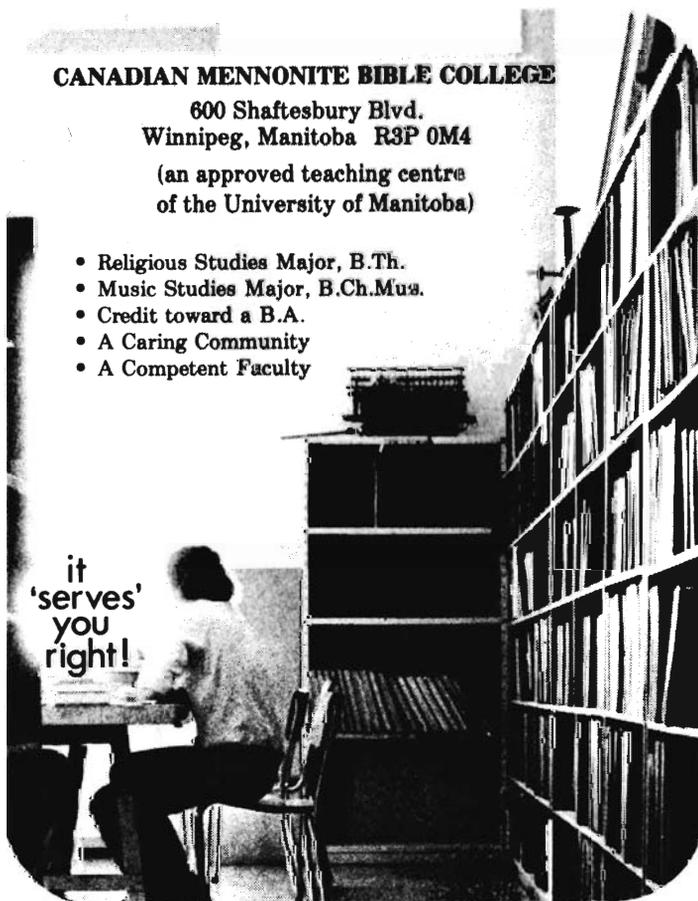
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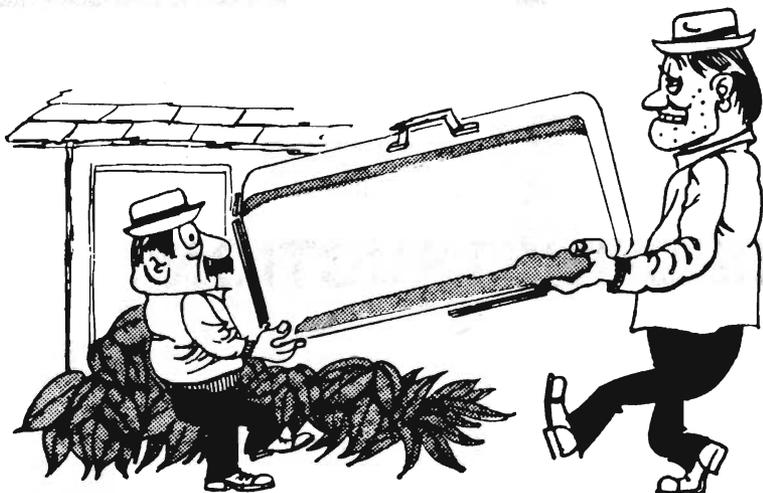


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# mennonite mirror

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## Booze in the brotherhood

# To drink or not to drink: Is there any question?

by Ed Unrau

A permissive spirit tolerating the moderate consumption of alcoholic beverage has arisen within Mennonite circles and appears to be existing side-by-side with the traditional North American Mennonite requirement of total abstinence.

A recent study by Leo Driedger, Raymond Currie and Eric Linden of the University of Manitoba department of sociology, confirms what many people have suspected—Mennonites are consumers of alcoholic beverages. The Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) commissioned and financed the work to get reliable data on alcohol use among Canadian Mennonites.

The study shows a majority of the people who participated in the study, 63.5 per cent, are abstainers. Those in this group include total abstainers, those who drank in the past but not anymore, and those who use alcohol less than twice a year.

In a recent interview Dr. Driedger and Dr. Currie said that extensive steps were taken to ensure honest and anonymous responses to their survey. Further, great care was taken to ensure that the selection of respondents reflected the size of the various Mennonite conferences and geographic areas.

Dr. Driedger said the "study cannot be swept under the rug" because recognized social science research techniques were used to provide quantitative evidence to support what many observers have suspected.

Those invited to participate as respondents in the study are all current members of a Mennonite church that has representation on MCC. Thus the results are not affected, nor do

they include, the responses of so-called "non-practising Mennonites" or "ex-Mennonites."

The researchers said that their alcohol study is a "first" in social science research and accordingly has attracted the attention of other church groups and alcohol education agencies. One of the things which made the study possible was the fact that Mennonites are an identifiable group within the Canadian society and are widespread enough throughout Canada to make a national survey possible. Further, there is the traditional norm of abstinence which can be tested.

Dr. Currie said the study is important for two reasons: first because it is an example of good university/community co-operation—MCC wanted reliable data on Mennonite alcohol use and used university-based researchers to get it. The researchers on their part shared their findings as soon as they were available by reporting to regional MCC meetings. Second, the study provides important information on what social factors affect behavior, the processes which lead to a change in the way people act in society, and how society or a sub-group of it exerts controls on its members.

Both researchers made it clear that respondents' attitudes towards alcohol use came as part of a package of ethical attitudes. For example, abstainers are also extremely likely to hold conservative views on pre-marital sex, abortion, what is appropriate Christian entertainment, hold a literal view of the scriptures, and so on.

The study showed that the degree of alcohol use varies among the Mennonite conferences and that every conference has members who admit to alcohol use. It ranged from a low of

six per cent among conservative Mennonites (Markham-Waterloo, Old Colony) to 62 per cent among General Conference Mennonites. Mennonite Brethren respondents were at the half way point, showing that 34 per cent of them drank. A category called the Mennonite church (which includes the Mennonite Church of Ontario, Western Ontario Mennonite, and North-west Conference) had a 42 per cent use level, while a category of Evangelical Mennonites (comprised of Evangelical Mennonite, Evangelical Mennonite Mission, Evangelical Mennonite Brethren, and Brethren in Christ) showed a use level of 17 per cent.

It was also found that alcohol use increased with urbanization, almost twice as many city-dwellers, 45 per cent, as rural Mennonites, 29 per cent, reported drinking.

There was a similar relationship with education: 47 per cent of Mennonite with more than high-school education reported drinking while 26 per cent of non-university educated respondents reported alcohol use.

The most important reason for not drinking given by the respondents was the example it would set for children; 90 per cent were concerned about their example to children. The next strongly held reason for not drinking was the belief that it was against God's law, 82 per cent. Another 69 per cent cited effects on health, and 64 per cent thought it was against church law.

A majority of respondents thought that the individual, should set the standard for alcohol use (56 per cent), 22 per cent thought it was a family affair, 15 per cent a conference matter, and seven per cent said the local

church should set the standard.

Respondents indicated that if they were to start drinking they expected **disapproval to be strongest from their mother**, followed in intensity by the disapproval of spouse, father, church conference, friends, and family (given in descending order).

The researchers' attempts to relate alcohol use to doctrinal belief found that respondents with a strong fundamentalist base were the most complete in adherence to abstinence, and concluded that fundamentalism is the strongest factor against alcohol use among Mennonites.

One of the observations of the researchers' in their preliminary report says that the "use of alcohol seems to be one of many changes which are taking place among Mennonites today. Increased use of alcohol seems to be a part of increased urbanization, higher education, and more liberal beliefs. To deal with alcohol use would most likely also require working with the other factors. These many factors are part of a total package. One factor cannot be easily changed without changing the others."

Dr. Driedger said that the data clearly shows that two streams of thought are co-existing among Mennonites—moderate drinking and abstinence. At the same time he said that the survey did not turn up any evidence of alcohol abuse among respondents, although use levels varied widely. He said that while the two views may continue to be held by Menno-

nites, he felt that a liberalization process would never continue so far as to even begin to tolerate abuse, because both the society at large and the Bible are strongly opposed to abuse.

Nevertheless there is the problem of what to do with the findings. It is impossible to turn the clock back so that abstinence is a position held by the vast majority. It is equally impossible to undertake a program of alcohol education with a pro-abstinent position without considering the other ethical values related to its use.

Many Mennonites believe, or have been brought up with, the idea that to take the first alcoholic drink is also to take the first step to an address on skid row. Thus moderation is seen only as a way station on the inevitable slide down. Few appear comfortable with the idea that moderation is an end in itself. Drunkenness, alcohol abuse, alcoholism, etc., are undeniably things which have caused untold misery and suffering; but the thoughtful person must ask whether they are the inevitable outcome of the first drink or whether there are other factors which contribute and to what extent they can be controlled to present a downward slide.

Church leaders of the strongly abstinent groups will no doubt be uneasy by the findings. On the one hand, the Bible does not demand abstinence but does condemn drunkenness. On the other hand the increased, perhaps increasing, use of alcohol can be seen as a reduction in the quality and standards of the church; after all, the

connection between alcohol and sin is so strong that to condone even moderation is to "play with fire." The Advice to "flee all temptation" is then the best advice to escape entrapment in the darker side of alcohol.

Nevertheless it is clear from reading the *Mennonite Encyclopedia* that total abstinence among Mennonites is largely a 20th century and North American phenomenon, but one which had some beginnings in Russia. In other words, from the encyclopedia entry it appears that moderate drinking, with controls on abuse, is more the general historical norm among Mennonites than abstinence.

Early Anabaptist writings show that members were forbidden to patronize drinking establishments, that members had undertaken to be abstinent, that members should not be innkeepers, and that Anabaptists were known to refuse to drink toasts in tribute to others. Menno Simons' writings contain numerous reference against the use of alcoholic drinks. But the encyclopedia says "this does not prove that the early Anabaptist required total abstinence, but does indicate a very sensitive conscience on the question of alcoholic drinks." While the Anabaptist reformers were generally consistent in demanding a "sober life" they did not uniformly call for total abstinence. (one must in fairness state that some Swiss Brethren and Some Hutterites did have strict codes concerning alcohol use; and that the attitudes that the Mennonites of Holland in the 17th and 18th

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centuries were ever objectors to alcohol.)

There is also ample evidence to show that in some geographic areas in Europe the Mennonite inclined to accept the drinking customs of their environment even to the extent of becoming manufacturers and distributors (saloon-keepers) of such products. In fact the first Mennonites to come to North America (1683 to 1873) brought alcohol manufacturing skills with them and there are examples of such Mennonite-owned enterprises on this side of the Atlantic. In both Europe and America some of the Mennonite-produced liquors were of high quality enough to be worth exporting outside their region of manufacture.

According to *Mennonite Encyclopedia*, there were by 1819 "several Mennonite brewers in the Chortitza colony and moderate drinking was fairly common in all Mennonite settlements, there being drinking houses in a number of Mennonite villages." But it was the establishment of the *Kleine Gemeinde* in 1830 which brought the first church call for total abstinence. Subsequently, this group's work was followed by the founding of a temperance society which in turn led to a general change in attitude to alcohol use, but not general abstinence, among the Russian Mennonites.

The Mennonite Brethren church founders, according to the encyclopedia, in their pro-abstinent stand specifically forbade the consumption of beverages with a high alcoholic content but did not forbid the moderate consumption of the gentler beverages such a wine and beer. By 1870 most of the Russian Mennonites held the hard beverages in disfavor while apparently continuing the moderate consumption of the softer ones.

In North America a continent-wide temperance movement in the early 19th century, promoted most vigorously by Methodists and Baptists, was the main agent of a change in Mennonite drinking habits. This movement was supported by the early Sunday schools and the infiltration of this Sunday school material into the Mennonite churches had a lot to do with the growth of the abstinence tradition in Mennonites. When the temperance movement got underway there was resistance among the Mennonite conferences which first were uneasy about endorsing the movement at all; then they moved only to forbid members from operating licensed establishments; and the last resistance to total abstinence falling around 1900 under an onslaught of a group of Mennonite proponents of abstinence and the prohibition movement.

From 1900 Mennonitism and absti-

ence go hand in hand, only to be joined in the past decade or so by moderation. mm

## A SHORT THEATRE REVIEW

The **Winnipeg Mennonite Theatre** put on a highly entertaining performance of two short musical comedies at the Planetarium Auditorium in Winnipeg on March 16 and 17. The first comedy was J. S. BACH's *Kaffee Kantate*, performed in German. Some of us were amazed to discover that Bach had a sense of humour. In fact, the music seemed to be a parody of his more serious works. Carol Mosiewich, Arnold Neufeld, and Paul Wiebe sang their roles well, though they were all somewhat stiff in their presentation. They never quite got beyond the "verge" of letting go. The musical ensemble was excellent. The second comedy was *The Maid as Mistress* by Pergolesi. Here the acting by Frank Peters, Leni-Hamm-Lousier and Gerald Loewen was superb. It was one of the most enjoyable hours of theatre experienced this year. Susan Wieser and her staff are to be congratulated on their efforts. The performances were part of a multicultural theatre festival in Winnipeg.

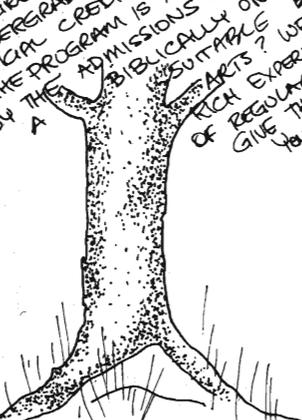
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- 1:00- 3:00 p.m. *Ministry to Special Groups of Adults* — Linda Cannell

SECOND SESSION: July 24-August 11, 1978

- 8:00-10:00 a.m. *Design for Teaching and Training* — Dr. LeRoy Ford
- 10:30-12:30 p.m. *A Biblical Theology of Worship in the Old Testament* — Dr. Gary Smith
- 1:00- 3:00 p.m. *Contemporary Christian Issues: An Exposition of I Corinthians* — Dr. Stephen Woodward

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## Lessons from New China

Dr. Winfield Fretz was the featured speaker at a fund-raising dinner for the MCI, Gretna, at Sargent Avenue Mennonite church, Winnipeg on March 9. Fretz, a professor of sociology at Conrad Grebel College, Waterloo, Ontario was the leader of a study group of Canadians who visited China last fall.

Ex-students of MCI, parents of students and others formed a congenial group for the dinner period and later enjoyed a musical interlude provided by CMBC students, Wes Elias and Chuck Kruger. After a well-chosen anecdote about finances and alternatives leveled at the principal of MCI, Ken Loewen, Fretz launched into his chosen topic of "Old fashioned ideas in the new China."

Fretz began by sharing with the audience his feelings about China. He went there in anticipation of learning much about an ancient and fascinating land. He was surprised however, to find that what impressed him most was their strict adherence to an old-fashioned moral code. Schools there nurture the child with the premise that it must be developed physically, intellectually and morally. The teaching, inculcated early in life, appears to remain. Fretz cited some examples of moral teaching:

**Unselfishness:** In China the welfare of the country comes first, others come second and self last. Christ's injunction to love our neighbours as ourselves speaks to the same point.

**Hard work:** Here is a virtue on which the Chinese place much emphasis. In our culture the work ethic too has had its day but we decry a growing tendency in our society wherein people sniff at manual labor. In China children at school are taught to share in the care of their rooms. High school students spend summers at work in farm communes and factories and then spend an additional two years at this type of labor after graduation. Fretz reiterated what has been said by other visitors to China, people are happy at their work.

**Self reliance:** Communes have different levels of prosperity, but rather than allowing the poorer commune to beg for assistance, it is urged instead to rely on the ingenuity and work of its members to improve its lot.

**Frugality:** Fretz felt that even for him, a person nurtured during the

depression, there was much to learn about utilizing the old and not being wasteful. Machinery and other goods are not financed by foreign powers. Old machines are repaired and even totally rebuilt. Fertilizers are used but not bought at a high cost to the economy. Wastes, even to the dust on streets and hair from barber shops are utilized.

**Sexual modesty:** Students rise at 6:00 a.m., have a half hour of physical exercise, breakfast, classes interspersed with 20 minute exercise

periods and eight to nine hours of study. When questioned, the tourist guides didn't even really understand what an illegitimate child was!

There are of course drawbacks to this society. China is a country where the will of the individual is subordinate to the state. People can't move about freely. About five per cent of the 850 million people, the party members, control the state. Religious freedom is said to be there but no evidence of it can be seen. Yet, virtues are never going to be obsolete. We have, Fretz feels, something to learn.



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# Memories of a mother who helped the girl next door

By Helen Reimer Bergmann

It was late August, 1936. Our family moved from Burwalde, south-west Steinbach, Manitoba to the school district of Gruenthal, situated south-west of Altona, Manitoba. For one who had just celebrated her ninth birthday it was an upheaving experience since it meant leaving behind all that was familiar, including a number of loving neighbours. It meant exchanging scrubby bush country for flat endless prairie. How different to be able to see as far as the horizon on all sides. From our home on the school yard we were soon able to locate the families of the district even though the farms were situated several miles distant.

Directly one quarter of a mile west were our closest neighbours. Here lived Mrs. Daniel Klassen with six children, the youngest 12 years of age. Four older children were already married with families of their own. Shortly before we came, her husband had died on August 12, 1936. As we approached the driveway to the well kept farm, we passed Mr. Klassen's grave to the right. It had a high frame around it and pretty gravel-like stones covered the earth beneath. Later on, while working in the garden and stopping for a chat, it became a convenient resting place.

In a remarkably short time we became well acquainted with these neighbours. How often I walked that quarter mile, alone, with my older brother, or with my father. Mrs. Klassen had an open door as well as an open heart for a little girl whose mother was ill. Her kind but resolute face and her long dark dress and apron seemed to embody a kind of steadfastness so necessary to life.

It was during the second year that we lived there that I really experienced her motherliness. My own mother had died as the cool September winds were blowing. Many times I would spend hours at her hearth and home. Her experienced eye noticed the holes

or tears in my clothing and immediately she would set about mending. As I sat beside her on the *Schloapbenck* while she mended my knitted stockings she would talk to me. One of her admonishments I remember well: "*Bie de Meackjes motte de Knie emma bedeackt senne.*" (Girls' knees should be covered.) Another admonition is written carefully into my autograph book. It is a verse from the Apocrypha, Sirach 3:7 which states the importance of honouring the father and being obedient for the Lord's sake so that the mother can be comforted.

Another time she would notice that my hair was badly in need of washing. In no time there was hot water in the basin in the sink and two of her older daughters were treating me to a royal



Mrs. Klassen in 1961

shampoo. I remember sitting on the open oven door to get all the warmth from the stove when not feeling well. But best of all was the place at the table. How many delicious meals were enjoyed in the company of the family.

For the last two years of our stay at the Gruenthal School the Lord provided another mother. Even so, we often enjoyed the company of the Klassens. Indeed, in the four years that we lived in close proximity, a bond had been established that could not be broken.

In 1961 I had the privilege of visiting Mrs. Klassen again. Her youngest son, Martin, had taken over the farm and she made her home with his family. My husband and I, our two young children and my sister-in-law drove onto the yard one summer afternoon. What a warm welcome we received even though we had been unable to let her know we were coming. In no time we were chatting in the *grote stov* (special living room) with its gleaming linoleum floor. The daughter-in-law left to make supper but Mrs. Klassen called her back. From the corner cupboard with the glass doors she produced a special treat to be included in the menu. Dried prunes! These were delicious stewed with the pork and complementing golden fried potatoes.

Letters from the family members in subsequent years substantiated the fact that Mrs. Klassen was failing in strength as her age was increasing. When the Altona Personal Care Home was opened she made her home there. In the summer of '76 we were able to visit her at this home. We found her in a wheelchair in the guest room. As we tried to make conversation with her, her pleasant manner was evident as she responded weakly: *Das ist aber fein!* Even in these last years she gave joy to those who cared for her. A Trinidadian orderly said: I wish she were my granny! Although she longed to go to the heavenly home, she had discovered the secret just simply to be.

She died December 11, 1977 at the age of 97 years and four months. Her living descendants numbered 248. She had been privileged to see children's children to the third generation. Beside the grave of her husband, on the farmyard where she had laboured many years, her tired body was laid to rest.

This writing is to be a small tribute to this dear lady who was a positive influence in my life. One who reached out and helped in a tangible way. There was another unique bond between us: Margaretha Wolfe Klassen, though born almost half a century before me, celebrated her birthday on the same day as I celebrate mine. mm

## Federal Govt. gives message to ethnic media

Members of the ethnic press received information about new government programs in immigration and multiculturalism in Ottawa on March 20-21. A new immigration law will be in force in Canada as of April 10. The new legislation was passed by Parliament after a nationwide debate on the subject. Chief principles of the legislation are non-discrimination, respect for the family, the humanitarian needs of refugees, and the linking of the immigration policy to the nation's population picture (demography), economic, social, and cultural goals.

The new act abolishes prohibitions which prevented the admission of epileptics, the mentally retarded and the like. Instead of denying entry to those judged guilty of vaguely defined "moral turpitude", exclusions under the new act allow for a degree of intelligent judgement on the part of immigration officials. Exclusions are related instead to the Canadian Criminal Code. Of further interest, for those who have watched newspaper reports which refer to people who hire illegal immigrants in order to exploit them, is that such employers will now be persecuted with due severity.

On speaking to the ethnic media in Ottawa, Bud Cullen, minister of Employment and Immigration stated that for the first time also, the Minister of Immigration will announce annually the governments forecast of the number of immigrants we should be admitting. To set these levels the federal government will work closely with the provinces.

The Minister of Multiculturalism, Norman Cafik, added some interesting notes which reflect on the immigration picture. Cafik, a dynamic 'ethnic' Canadian, insisted on seeing the Soviet Ambassador Vorontsov at a meeting of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe in Belgrade, Yugoslavia March 8th. He strongly suggested to Vorontsov that the Soviets release those people whom they consider to be dissidents and drew his attention to our Parliamentary resolutions on human rights. Cafik disclaimed as a matter of course any intention of interfering with the

Soviet Union's internal affairs.

Toward the end of the discussion between Cafik and Vorontsov, the Minister dwelt on reunification cases which involve Soviet citizens who wish to join family in Canada.

On announcing plans for increases by the government to multicultural funding, Norman Cafik pointed out that approximately 30 percent of Canada's population is neither of British nor French ancestry. One of the freedoms this segment of our population shall continue to enjoy, said Cafik, is the freedom to continue to preserve its culture, religion, language and customs. In addition to this, all Canadians must learn to tolerate the principle of bilingualism in this country. If they don't, and if confederation fails, they will have contributed to its failure by way of intolerance. As he sees it, the idea of support of multiculturalism arose from the principle of bilingualism.

Funding for the preservation of

language and culture is available. However, on a practical level, the road to cultural studies may be blocked by the machinery of bureaucracy. For instance, in Manitoba, it is the principal or superintendent who asks the Department of Education to provide cultural material for use in instruction. It is up to these persons to get the machinery in motion. Hutterites in Manitoba already have cultural teaching kits.

### CORPORATE BOTTLENECK

The company president was annoyed with his executives. "You people," he fumed, "have got to get moving. There's a bottleneck somewhere in this firm, and I want it removed immediately! Is that understood?"

Leaving the president's office, one vice-president whispered to another: "One thing about bottles—you'll notice that the neck is always at the top."

# 10

Wichita  
1978



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# Can an English family keep its reserve when a suitor comes from the East Reserve?

By Ruth Vogt

The tug was pulling the liner away from the dock in Liverpool and I hung over the rails, listening in despair as a large Irish woman in the crowd of well-wishers on shore started to sing "Wish Me Luck As You Wave Me Goodbye." I was only 17 and my father's decision to move the family to Canada had ruined my life. The tears coursed down my cheeks as I raged at him. The moment I finished school and was free, I would come back to England; I was staying as long as I had to and no longer; never, never would I marry a Canadian!

Three short years later, I presented my parents with my Canadian fiance—their first prospective son-in-law. He had a strange name, hard to pronounce, and came from a group of people we had never heard about in England. Furthermore, he had strange, Canadian habits. What grown man, invited for afternoon tea with English visitors, would ask for *milk* instead? And how could one accept a man who, when asked to carve the roast on Sunday, did violence to it by hacking out great chunks of meat, instead of cutting thin, orderly slices? My parents kept a stiff upper lip, went to the encyclopedia, and looked up "Mennonite."

It would be necessary to meet the parents of the groom. The arrangements were made, and my parents sat in their River Heights living room, waiting for a horse and buggy to pull up, and watching for a bearded man and a lady in long skirts with a kerchief on her head to emerge. . . .

I have often been asked whether it has been difficult to adjust to the Mennonite community. Immediately after our marriage, my husband began a three-year course of studies at Mennonite Biblical Seminaries in Elkhart, Indiana, and here we both explored the meaning of the Mennonite set of beliefs. Our friends were all

students, away from home, grappling with the same questions, and so at that time I had no more adjusting to do than any of the other young wives. At university my husband and I had both been members of the Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship and shared similar ideas concerning the Christian faith, even though our backgrounds were quite different. I had been raised in the Church of England (Anglican), baptised as an infant and became a full member of the church through confirmation when I was 16 years old. At the time I was a little tired of the ritual of the church which was repeated every Sunday, and quite enjoyed the novelty of a new form of worship in the Mennonite church. Now, I find that I miss the ritual I grew up with, and know that I would enjoy once more the beautiful language of the Anglican worship service. While at seminary, my husband received a call to become a minister in the First Mennonite Church in Winnipeg. Shortly afterwards, I became a real Anabaptist when, through baptism, I joined the Mennonite church in Elkhart. The decision to be re-baptized was my own, but were that decision to be made today, it would be different. It is not that I regret the decision to join the church, only that, in retrospect, I feel that my confirmation was a valid affirmation, and so re-baptism not really necessary.

In 1960, the First Mennonite Church in Winnipeg was a German congregation. There were no English services. Since my husband's German was rusty, and mine was non-existent, we decided to spend a year in Hamburg, studying theology and learning some German. We had already been studying for the three years of our married life, and had acquired two children and no worldly possessions (but hopefully some knowledge) and we survived the year living in one room rented in the premises of the Hamburg Mennonite Church. We did learn some German,

and had it not been for that year, I feel that my experiences in the Mennonite community would have been quite different. Firstly, it was several years before our congregation began English services and, though there was much I could not understand, I was not completely lost during the services. Furthermore, my limited knowledge of the language enabled me to converse with those members of our congregation who did not speak English, and this helped me to feel a part of the group, despite the fact that I was an "Englander." Coming into a congregation with over a thousand members, knowing almost nothing about their customs and traditions and expectations was a bewildering experience, but perhaps it was made easier by the fact that I was *not* fully aware of the role that I was expected to play.

I have never felt unaccepted because I was an outsider. On the contrary—I have usually felt that special efforts were made to include me—and when a story *had* to be told in Low-German, someone was always kind enough to translate afterwards. In self-defense I have even learned a little Low German, just so that I don't miss all the good jokes.

There is much debate about whether the Mennonites are a religious or a cultural group. No matter how that debate is resolved, a person coming in from the outside has to contend with both the religious and cultural aspects of Mennonite life. Food is, of course, of prime importance to all of us. You marry a boy raised on *vereneki*, *kielke* and *borscht*—you learn to keep him happy with his favorite foods—that is, if you don't want him to run back to mother and her superior cuisine. It was part of our marriage contract. Two weeks after the wedding I was locked into the kitchen with my mother-in-law, with a list of recipes I had to master. *Zwieback* was beyond me, and I have never made "roll-kuchen" or "porschelche", but I tried a

few others. I had generally avoided the kitchen in my own home, so not only was I learning to cook Mennonite food, I was literally learning to cook! Something told me that once the romantic glow subsided a little, there had better be something quite tangible to keep our marriage intact. In our home today the cultural diversity is reflected in our food preferences: a favourite meal for my husband and daughters is vereneki, while my son and I like to sink our teeth into roast beef and yorkshire pudding. I might add that we have both of these meals infrequently: vereneki requiring a lot of work, roast beef a lot of money.

Apart from the food, there is much that I respect and admire in the Mennonite tradition. I have learned a great deal about good Christian living from our friends in the church and my colleagues in the Mennonite schools where I have taught. There are, of course, the weaknesses found in any small, closely knit community—particularly the tendency to be harshly critical of non-conformists. I find it ironic that a group seeking to follow the Sermon on the Mount has so many splinter groups, many of which feel superior to all the different splinters. How can we hope to love all mankind and be witnesses if we can't accept our brother in a different Mennonite group? This is a time of transition for the Mennonites, as for all groups in this rapidly changing society. My hope is that there will be a movement towards ever more co-operation and acceptance between all the people who call themselves "Mennonite." mm

#### JUST KEEP YOUR DISTANCE IF YOU'VE GOT FLEA-BITIS!

Under the heading "IL Literacy?" the February issue of *Hospital Administration* reprinted a list from *Insight* (the bulletin of Blue Cross of North Eastern Ohio) giving some of the more common errors found in their claims:

"High pretension, yellow jonders, flea-bitis, reflective nasal septom and very coarse veins have all been reported. Surgery has been performed to remove plops, humrooks, molds and a sis. There have also been cases of amimonia, kneuwmonia, pmonia and phnewmonia. Then there's the female condition known as pregnate and pregnant, as well as misconception. Other ailments include limp glands, soar throat, boyles, broken color bone, addnoise, goalstones and falls teeth."

## Reimer In Winnipeg's Concert Hall

*Handel's ISRAEL IN EGYPT as performed by the Mennonite Oratorio Choir, William Baerg conductor, at the Centennial Concert Hall, March 17, 1978.*

#### A Review by Al Reimer

Most of the great oratorios—Handel's *Messiah*, Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*, Haydn's *Creation*, Mendelssohn's *Elijah*—achieve a proper integration of choruses and solo parts, so that neither element becomes too dominant. Handel's *Israel in Egypt* is rather different in this respect. In Part I the chorus takes charge after the opening recitatives and maintains control as it reels off eight consecutive choruses and double choruses. Part II employs no fewer than six soloists, but even here the soloists seem to be in a subordinate role as the richness and splendor of the choruses continue to unfold.

*Israel in Egypt*, then, offers a veritable feast for those oratorio-lovers (and they may be in the majority, for all I know) who prefer the grand effects of multiple voices to the less spectacular vocal effects of the soloists. When you have a mass choir of several hundred virile young voices to perform such a work as this the audience can sit back luxuriously and let itself be washed and cleansed by mighty waves of choral sound. Overall, the choir in this performance rose to its rare opportunity nobly and enthusiastically, although in places I was a little surprised, even disappointed, at what appeared to be a deliberate restraint, a reining in of the sheer exuberance that for me has always been one of the great virtues of this student choir.

But perhaps the restraint I sensed is simply a new level of maturity in this choir. The sincerity and conviction of their singing have never been in more evidence than they were the other night. The contrast in the double chorus "He rebuked the Red Sea", where the first line was sung in sonorous triumph before giving way to the hushed awe of "and it was dried up," could not have been more effective. There were also some fine dynamics and shadings in the beautiful double chorus "The people shall hear" as well as in "Thy right hand, O Lord," where the choir opened up in a

mighty crescendo of vocal power.

Yes, for once the choir was the premier attraction of the evening. The six soloists, however, did not suffer by comparison. As a group they were a bit on the small-voiced side beside such a mighty river of choral sound in this large auditorium, but they all sang with confidence, clarity and commendable beauty of tone. I was particularly impressed by the way all six executed with ease and flexibility the typical breath-breaking Handelian runs which have made many a short-winded singer go cross-eyed with effort. Above all, these soloists cared about the words as they threaded together necklaces of clear-cut diction.

Of the six, tenor John Martens must once again be given pride of place. I have praised the unostentatious excellence of this dedicated singer before, and I remain convinced that Mr. Martens is quite the finest oratorio singer in these parts. His diction and tone are peerless, and he is alert to every nuance of meaning in both text and music. He set the mood of sober but relaxed homage and dignity in his opening recitative and maintained it throughout. He must be a conductor's delight, this fine performer.

The alto, Hilda Driedger, does not have a large voice, but she sang with grace and pleasing lustre, especially in her final air "Thou shalt bring them in." The two sopranos, Margot Sim and Heidi Klassen, made a lovely debut in their duet "The Lord is my strength and my song" early in Part II. Miss Sim's "Thou didst blow with the wind" was finely molded if a little small in scale. Margot Sim is a very promising singer; indeed she won the coveted Rose Bowl only a few days after this performance. Heidi Klassen also acquitted herself well. The two basses, Mark Watson and Mel Braun, had their big moment in the duet "The Lord is a man of war." Watson had more vocal weight than Braun but both gave a spirited, well-modulated rendition.

Finally, a word of well-deserved praise for conductor Bill Baerg and the orchestra. Baerg's conducting was as confident and controlled as any I have witnessed in these annual oratorio performances. He kept both choir and orchestra firmly within the spectrum of his baton and they responded well. The orchestra was small but full-voiced and blended more harmoniously with the choir than it has in some previous concerts.

A rewarding evening of oratorio, even if the work performed is not quite in the same league as the *Messiah* or the *St. Matthew Passion*. One hopes that this fine series of Mennonite choral concerts will continue for many years yet. mm

# do you know / weetst uck waut



Dana, Sandra, and Doug Penner.

## SCRATCHING RIVER GETS ITS POST

The December 21, 1977 issue of the *Valley Leader*, published at Carman, saw the final "Speaking Out" column written by its editor, Douglas J. Penner, and included the announcement of his resignation as editor. The reason for the resignation is that Mr. Penner, who has long entertained the idea of establishing his own paper and publishing business, now wanted to proceed with the matter.

Subsequently the first issue of another newspaper in the Red River Valley has become a reality, and is to be known as *The Scratching River Post*, after an early designation of the present Morris River. Published by Post Publishing Ltd. of Morris, the first copies rolled off the press of Derksen Printers on Monday, January 16, 1978. A total of 4,600 copies were issued of which 3,083 are distributed free in a designated area serving Morris and surrounding communities from Sperling in the northwest to Dominion City in the southeast. The Post is initially a 12-page tabloid serving particularly the business community in this area, relying primarily on advertising fees and some outside subscriptions, currently at \$10 per annum.

The Post Publishing venture is en-

tirely a family undertaking. Beyond catering to the business community, it is also meant to reflect the heritage of the people in the area. This simply means that, starting with the first issue, it will contain a "Heritage" page with a column in both the French (*Mon pays, Mes Amours*) and German (*Allerhand in der deutschen Ecke*) languages.

"Speaking Out" is by now a well-known column which has been carried by various newspapers in the area south of Winnipeg during the past eight years, and will be continued in the Post. It originated with an invitation from Mr. Eugene Derksen to write a few guest editorials in the *Morris Journal*. Subsequently the columnist inquired about possibilities of employment in the field of journalism. And Doug Milander, then editor of the *Morris Journal* suggested that a regular column should be considered. The title of the column, "Speaking Out" is derived from and reflects the columnist's avid and longstanding interest in the Red River Toastmasters Club at Morris, and was essentially a way of recognizing the contribution the TM club had made through its operation.

In the first issue of the Post Mr. Penner notes that: "it is unlikely Mr. Derksen realized what he was starting when he issued that invitation some seven years and ten months ago. Certainly this individual had no conception of the course that was being charted." It was a route marked off by various newspapers in which the column appeared. First, in the papers published by Derksen, the *Carillon News* and the *Beaver*, and then somewhat later, in the *Dufferin Leader*, the *RRV Echo*, the *Pembina Times*, and finally with the establishment of his own paper. mm

## MENNONITE STUDIES TOPIC OF SEMINAR

A Manitoba Mennonite Studies Seminar, sponsored by the cultural committee of the Mennonite Historical Society was held at CMBC on March 18. Reports dealt with the P.M. Friesen History and other publications. Topics were dealt with by Dr. John A. Toews and L. Klippenstein respectively.

Abe Warkentin told an interested audience how the *Mennonitische Post* was doing. Since the first paper rolled off the press in April of 1977 they have experienced a tremendous response from people who had lost contact

between continents or countries like Mexico, S. America, Honduras, etc. To date there are 5000 paid up subscribers. Free-form unsophisticated correspondence fills the pages of the paper by way of letters from what some call the last real Mennonites. The paper is not problem-free but if success can be measured by means of response, it is tremendous. As one fellow down Mexico way put it, he reads the "Post" from front to back, back to front and if he could he'd even devour it! "Upfreate" sounds better.

Mr. P.W. Enns whose family endowed the Mennonite Heritage Centre also contributed to the morning session. He spoke warmly of their good fortune in finding it possible to help finance such a useful undertaking, introducing his remarks the while by saying that he felt like a weak lamb amongst thorn bushes when in the company of a group of scholars. Although he didn't mean it that way one may be sure that he would be the first to enjoy the additional unconscious humour in the remark.

Rudy Regehr, business administrator for the Heritage Centre added his remarks to the report, saying that a number of firms had donated generously to the undertaking either by way of cutting their part of the construction costs in half, reducing them substantially, or donating their entire services.

The day was rounded off by a scholarly paper on the "Russian Mennonite Experience in Fiction" by Dr. E. Reimer and a speech by Dr. H. Duckworth of the University of Winnipeg with regard to the new chair of Mennonite Studies at that centre. Shorter reports on matters of concern were given by Dr. G. Lohrenz and Dennis Stoesz.

## PURE CLEAR WATER FOR PLUM COULEE

Pure and plentiful water, provided at a cost of just over \$1,000 per resident, and funded extensively by federal and provincial grants, bids fair to making Plum Coulee southern Manitoba's newest boom village.

For 77 years the people of Plum Coulee, now 500 in number, have relied on the vicissitudes of mother nature for much of their daily supply of water. Come April 1978, water in the Hespeler Floodway Channel will be diverted into a large reservoir, with a holding capacity of two million cubic feet, and the new pumping station and water treatment plant will go into operation providing residents with a maximum of 60 gallons of water daily.

According to a *Red River Valley* mennonite mirror/april 1978/15

Echo report, the Mayor of Plum Coulee, Jake Penner, stated that plentiful water will certainly attract industry to the community. "Before this, we couldn't even talk to business men," he said, "now development people are already active."

"We have a projected three-acre development and a builder is planning new homes on 30 lots", says the mayor, "in fact we don't have a single building lot available." He adds that it will be: "A great shot in the arm for residents who have previously collected water from their roofs, and a help to a great many farmers in the area. We can even have a skating rink", he says.

The waterworks project has also garnered the village a great deal of publicity in the news media, including an eight-minute item on CBC Winnipeg's 24-Hours and an article in the

Tribune. CTV crews have also spent an entire day in Plum Coulee recently, preparing an item which will be a part of a farm broadcast in April.

Approximately 60 men and women took a two week course at CMBC for ministers and lay workers. From February 6-10 Rev. George Sweazey conducted a seminar on preaching. He is author of the books *Effective Evangelism* and *Preaching the Good News*. Rev. Stan McKay led a course which focussed on relationships with native people. During the week of February 13-17, five courses were offered. One, "Contemporary Alternative Church Models," stimulated lively discussion. Other courses dealt with counselling, preaching and teaching, music and worship and church membership preparation. The special courses are spon-

sored by CMBC in co-operation with the Congregational Resources Board.

**Royden Janz**, Steinbach area pilot who crashed within half a mile of his home is thought to have, according to onlooker Lawrence Funk, licensed pilot, contributed to his own death. Funk watched the Cessna 185 circle at 400 to 500 feet and noticed it suddenly taking a nose dive at an 80 degree angle. Funk also noticed an increase of engine speed just prior to this. Funk suggested that Janz was trying to make a lot of noise to announce his homecoming while flying over his own home. The federal ministry of transport has recently issued a warning to pilots against exceeding a speed of 125 miles per hour when using planes with the type of skis the Cessna carries. The nose of the plane apparently was forced down when the wind caught the tips of its skis. Janz was employed by Glad Tidings Mission Society which piloted mission personnel in the Canadian Arctic.

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**John Goossen**, teacher and true friend of colleagues and students was recognized for his contribution to the Winkler Bible Institute at a special dinner on April 1st. He is now completing his 25th year with the WBI. Featured speaker for the occasion was Dr. John A. Toews. Friends and former students came to WBI for a homecoming weekend on March 31. Classes were scheduled as usual for Friday, March 31 and guests were able to visit classrooms of their choice. At 7:30 that evening, a Songfest drew crowds to hear, among other selections, the WBI Choristers directed by Mel Unger and the Ladies Chorus directed by Jake Schroeder. The dining hall featured traditional foods like borscht and wareneki with sausages and cream gravy during the homecoming weekend.

**George Sawatsky**, Winkler, has been named Manitoba's "Photographer of the Year" for the third time in his career as a professional photographer. Of five entries in the competition by Mr. Sawatsky four were accepted. The award is given to the competitor with the highest aggregate points. Sawatsky, proprietor of Winkler Photo Studio, previously received the award in 1973 and 1976.



**Wichita Auditorium**

**SETTING THE SCENE FOR  
MENNONITE WORLD  
CONFERENCE**

On July 25, 1978 at an opening session featuring music, congregational singing, and a procession of banners representing churches from all over the world, Million Belete from Nairobi, Kenya, president of the executive committee of the Mennonite World Conference, will make his opening remarks to a representative body of Mennonites from different reaches of the globe. The tenth assembly of the Mennonite World Conference will convene at Century II Convention Centre in downtown Wichita, Kansas. The Conference has convened on nine other occasions: Basel, 1925; Danzig, 1930; Amsterdam, 1936; Goshen/Newton, 1948; Basel, 1952; Karlsruhe, 1957; Kitchener, 1962; Amsterdam, 1967; and Curitiba, 1972.

A program based on the theme of "The Kingdom of God in a Changing World," will be developed through the week and end with a final session on the afternoon or Sunday, July 30.

The purpose of the meeting is to enable members of the Mennonite constituency from all parts of the world to share and interact with each other. As a whole planners look for a low emphasis on formal presentations and steer away from a delegate or business conference concept.

People interested in going, have by now sent in registration forms and are looking forward to brushing shoulders with friends on this continent and an expected 1,000 persons from other continents. If language can act as an indicative factor of diversity among Mennonites, one has only to look at program plans. In other words, all

public sessions are to be translated simultaneously into German, Spanish, French, Dutch, Japanese and Taiwanese, a total of seven languages! (For the benefit of anyone interested in an exercise in numbers—translators first of all, must be conversant enough with any two languages to be able to translate both ways. Union regulations state that a given worker may demand to be "spelled off" every 10 minutes. In practice the time lapse may be longer, depending on the working relationship between translators. In addition to this, translators usually work in groups of three. Briefly, in figuring the needs for a session, you take the maximum number of languages, in this case 7, and lower that number each time so that you are adding 6,5,4,3,2, and 1 for a total of 21 people. Multiply by 2 and you have 42 translators as a minimum requirement for one session.)

Grouping of some activities has been provided for according to age and

language. Young people from the ages of 15 to 25 will participate in adult sessions during the day and move to special activities planned for the evening. This is not all. A scheduled youth work camp, comprised of 25 international, and 40 North American youth members, will provide a unique cross-cultural international work experience for a segment of Mennonite youth. The work-campers, who arrive in Wichita on July 16 and remain till August 1, will serve as helpers at the conference. During the conference they will assist by way of setting up displays and the like, helping at information desks, and directing people in halls etc. Those who range in age from 6-14 will be involved in activities geared to their interests by way of drama, music, field trips and day camp. Babies and youngsters up to the age of five have not been forgotten. Organizers have provided not only for care of the little ones from 8:30 to 5:30, but also have looked into provision for noon lunches and mid-day snacks.

There will also be tours, local half-day affairs, which place an emphasis on Mennonite life and heritage. Charges for tours are reasonable and include tickets to museums and the cost of an evening meal taken in fellowship with co-tourists. Visitors who arrive in cars will, as a matter of course, be encouraged to rely on self-guided tours.

To enable the reader to fully appreciate the formidable amount of planning which goes into such a conference, there are additional aspects of the five-day program which bear mention. To be fair to all planners involved one must mention the work entailed in providing for official recording of sessions by way of tapes and provision for photography, simple meals, preparation of conference material in five languages, arrangements for insurance, billeting, registration and last but not least, arrangement for program speakers and training of persons involved in every aspect of making the meeting a working success.

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**Doris Longacre** is looking into a *More-with-Less II*, book. Persons interested in contributing to the book are asked to tell briefly about some way one can conserve resources. Practical ideas on subjects like housing, home furnishing, gardening, farming, clothing, recreation, transportation, teaching values to children, celebrations, worship and arts and crafts are of interest. Some 30-50 very special recipes will comprise one chapter. As an example Longacre shares this: In Java where it is hot all year, the whole country holds to a schedule where they take time off to relax and take a bath at 4:00 p.m. On hot summer days in the States they still follow this practice. It helps to keep them comfortable in a home without air-conditioning. Send name and address plus your idea and how it originated to *More-with-Less II*, Mennonite Central Committee, 21 S 12th St., Akron, PA 17501.

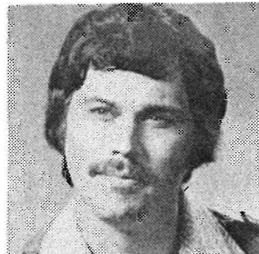
**MCC (Canada)** offers research assistance to Mennonite students in Canadian colleges and universities on papers with topics related to MCC's work. Students whose applications are accepted will receive an honorarium of \$35. to \$250. depending on the length of the paper and the grade received. A portion of the expenses will also be paid. After selecting a topic from a list which MCC will circulate, students will submit a proposal and an estimate of expenses. Assistance will be given only to senior, honours and graduate students who receive an A or B grade on the paper. For further information write to MCC (Canada), 201-1483 Pembina Highway, Winnipeg, R3T 2C8, telephone (204) 475-3550.



**Karen Klassen**, daughter of John and Bertha Klassen won the Beryl Ferguson Trophy, highest award for B-class instrumentalists at the Manitoba Music Festival. Runner-up was Peter Wiebe. Karen qualified for the trophy competition by reason of winning both an advanced sonata class and an advanced Bach class. She won in addition to this, highest standing in a sight reading accompaniment class and a two piano duet. The latter win was shared with Randy Peters, a student of Karen's mother. Sixteen year old Karen in a grade 12 student at MBCI and sings in both the MB Concert Choir and the Ladies Choir. She finds time also, in addition to playing the piano and violin, to do some teaching of piano and recorder.

**Dr. Frank H. Epp**, president of Conrad Grebel College and well known Mennonite historian and writer won the Liberal party nomination in Kitchener-Waterloo for the forthcoming Federal election. His main opponent in the nomination campaign was the president of the local school board. Observers report that the Liberal candidate in that area will be in a very strong position to win the election.

A message from the **Consumer Help Office**, International Centre, 65 Redwood Avenue, telephone 586-8212—Merle Wilson. "May I help you? Do you have a consumer problem or do you wish to have advice on a purchase or do you wish information about the protection offered in the marketplace today? I am in my office every day from 9 A.M. to 5 P.M. and every Thursday till 9:30 P.M. If you are not able to speak English too well, there are interpreters here.



**Bruce Enns**, basketball coach at the University of Winnipeg, was recently named Canada's coach of the year. The honor was bestowed in Halifax, at a banquet preceding the Canadian Intercollegiate Athletic Union championships. Prior to his appointment to the University of Winnipeg, Enns was a successful teacher and coach at Mennonite Brethren Collegiate Institute.

**William Unruh**, formerly of Winnipeg, is one of four Canadians who have been awarded Sloane fellowships for basic research. The fellowships are awarded to outstanding young scientists in Canada and the U.S. Dr. Unruh is currently a member of the department of physics at the University of British Columbia and will use his award in his research in gravitation theory, an area of pur research shared by fewer than 20 scientists in the world.

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**WANTED:** Photos of Mennonite life in early Manitoba to be displayed at Mennonite Art Festival in May. Town and school photos especially desired. Submit to Mrs. Ruth Vogt, 311 Brock St., Winnipeg R3N 0Y8. Photos will be acknowledged and returned after the festival.

## DATES

**May 6:** Women in Mission Annual Conference at Winkler Bergthaler Church.

**May 16 and 18:** Study Conference on the Believers' Church in Canada '78. Two public rallies at 7:30 in Portage Avenue M.B. Church.

**May 28:** Mennonite Art Festival, Polo Park.

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**CT7**

**LAKE SUPERIOR —  
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May 27 and August 12th**

Kakabeka Falls, Thunder Bay and the Sleeping Giant, Duluth to Green Bay, Wisconsin, Milwaukee, Wisconsin Dells, Tour Rochester's Mayo Clinic, Minneapolis and Home to Wpg.

**CT8**

**GASPE — CABOT TRAIL  
NEWFOUNDLAND TOUR**

**26 Days — Departs Winnipeg  
June 8 and June 22**

Thunder Bay, Sault Ste. Marie, Tour Toronto, Kingston, Montreal, Quebec City, St John's, Nfld., Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Ottawa and much more.

**CT9**

**CANADIAN ROCKY  
MOUNTAIN TRAIL**

**Tour 12 Days — Departs Winnipeg  
June 10 and June 17**

Jasper, Lake Louise, Banff, Radium Hot Springs, Waterton Lakes, Lethbridge, Regina and then home to Winnipeg.

**CT10**

**BLACKHILLS —  
YELLOWSTONE TOUR**

**14 Days — Departs Winnipeg  
June 11th**

Bismarck, Badlands National Park, Rapid City S.D., Cody Wyoming, Yellowstone - visit Old Faithful and spend the night at Old Faithful Inn. Butte Montana, Glacier National Park, Fernie, B.C., Radium Hot Springs in Kootenay National Park, Banff and the Columbia Ice Fields.

**CT11**

**CANADIAN ROCKY  
PACIFIC OCEAN**

**15 Days — Departs Winnipeg  
July 1 and July 21**

Jasper, Prince George, Prince Rupert, Board the ferry "Queen of Prince Rupert" for a 20 hr. boat cruise of the Pacific Ocean, Victoria, Vancouver, Kelowna, Golden B.C. and Banff.

**CT12**

**CENTRAL PLAINS  
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## There's fire under the bathtub

The "Miagrope" was a huge walled-in cast iron pot that stood next to the cook-stove in the outer kitchen "Sommerkueche". This extraordinary pot was used in many ways. First of all, every Saturday it was filled three-quarters full of water and was used as the family bathtub. Saturday, at noon, Marija had to start a fire under it, mostly feeding it straw, sticks or dung cakes. Everyone in the house took his turn for his weekly scrub-down, which was run on a come-first, hop-in-first, basis. Whoever came first, had the cleanest water for his bath.

Marija was sly and fast as a weasel, she would strip in a hurry and try to get in first. But being first sometimes worked against her, for the fire underneath was not yet out, and her bath often turned out to be the nearest thing to being boiled alive. Marija would then have to climb out again, slip on her frock and go outside (summer or winter) and fetch a pail or two of water out of the well in the backyard, dump the cold water in, climb in again and resume her weekly bath.

"Ah! This is better!" Once in and up to her neck in water, Marija would loathe to get out, but she was prodded and urged to do so, and in a hurry too, by the other members of the family, for the water would cool off quickly now that the fire was out, and everyone hated to be second or third into the same now-grey water.

The other great occasion for the big pot to be very much in demand, was the day of the slaughtering of the pig (Schweineschlachten). The pot was again filled with water which was brought to a boil this time. After the pig was slaughtered and dead, the men put it onto a ladder which was laid over a trough, and poured boiling water over the animal. After that they shaved it all over. Once all the meat was cut up into proper portions, the lard was rendered out in the "Miagrope." That done, and when the sausages were ready, they were cooked in the boiling lard. Later some of the sausages were hung in the chimney chamber together with the hams to be smoked.

The "Miagrope" was also used for boiling up slop for the hogs, and for boiling down beet-juice to make syrup.

by Mary Francis

### LOVE FOREVER AFTERALL

A few nights ago I came home from Mom's  
Feeling too sad to sleep,  
And so I did three things that helped me immensely.  
First, I wrote down all my bitter and angry feelings;  
Second, I wrote a five page letter to Benjamin  
So that someday he will know how I feel about Dad and his death;  
And he will know a bit about his Grandpa like I wanted him to.  
Then I wrote this  
And I want to share it with people who loved him too.

We all now ask why he had to die?  
Someone explained it like this:  
"Death belongs to life as birth does.  
The walk is in the raising of the foot  
As in the laying of it down."

In death I don't want to make  
Abram Martens out to be a King,  
Or a Man who lacked faults.  
He was neither.  
He was a man who struggled  
And didn't always cope well.  
But he did something that is almost a miracle.  
He defied all the people in the world who say:  
"People never change."  
He did.

In the last four years of his life  
I felt that he changed into an open, loving and interested  
Husband, Father, and Grandpa.  
He was able to put away  
A lifetime of hardships and burdens  
And appreciate the moment for what it was.  
He didn't have riches,  
But he learned that you are never poor with love to spend.  
Love is how we remember him.  
And that feels good.

We will miss that dear man very much.  
But I felt a small consolation as I read,  
Because Dad would like us to think of his parting thus:  
"I have got my leave. Bid me farewell, my brothers.  
I bow to you all and take my departure.  
Here I give back the keys of my door  
And I give up all claims to my house. I only ask for last  
Kind words from you.  
We were neighbours for long, but I received more than I could give.  
Now the day has dawned and the lamp that lit my dark corner is out.  
A summons has come and I am ready for my journey."

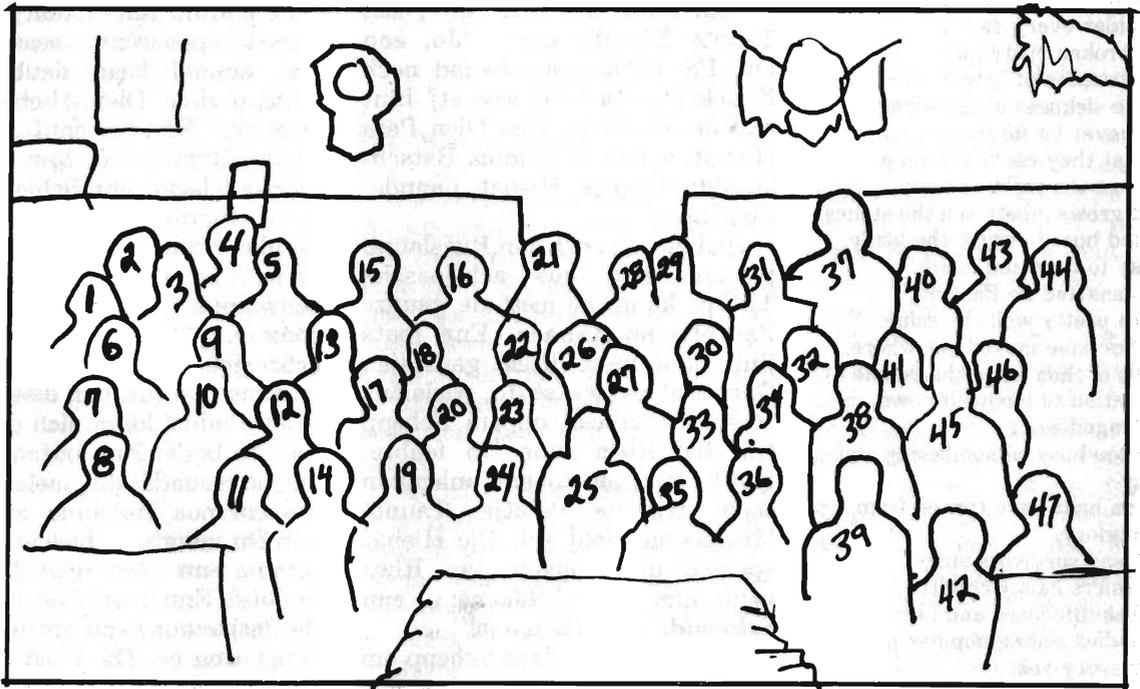
So to him I end by saying . . .  
time flies  
suns rise  
and shadows fall  
let time go by  
love is really forever afterall.

by Cathy Hopper, December 29, 1977  
On the death of her Father  
Abram John Martens.

# Cover photo: history at Burwalde

This is a picture of the 1900 class of the Protestant School District of Burwalde No. 529 which was organized in 1888. Originally Burwalde was a bilingual school in which instruction in English was in the forenoon and German in the afternoon. This was gradually reduced to German after 3:30 p.m. No German was used after the First World War. In 1890 the school inspector was H.H. Ewert. In his inspector's report for 1891 Rev. H.H. Ewert said there were four district schools in the West Reserve, including Schanzenfeld and Burwalde. There were cordial relations between English and German. The Burwalde School had two rooms and instruction included Grade X. (Note abacus in photo above the blackboard). In

1900 the board chairman was Peter Rempel and other early board members were Gerhard Braun, John Nickel, Franz Loewen, Jacob Banman, C.G. Wiebe, Sam Kuhl and C.H. Lloyd; he latter served as secretary for many years. These school trustees engaged excellent teachers including J.A. McTavish, P.H. Neufeld, David Toews, J.E. Doerr, C.C. Everson, Henry Riesen, A.A. Dick, J.E. Dyck, J.E. Suderman, and John Kugler. The surviving members of the group shown here are Abram Banman, Winkler; Annie Brown, Winkler; Mrs. Kate Lloyd Kugler of Salmon Arms, B.C. The photo information was supplied by Mr. Peter Brown.



The people on the picture are: 1, Isaac Brown/ 2, Jeffrey Lloyd/ 3, Alston Naylor/ 4, Frank Brown/ 5, Mary Hoepfner/ 6, Henry Toews/ 7, Abram Toes/ 8, John Hoepfner/ 9, Peter Klassen/ 10, Abram Goertzen/ 11, Isaac Wiebe/ 12, Teena Wiebe/ 13, John Stepler/ 14, David Rempel/ 15, Lena Miller/ 16, Anna Hoepfner/ 17,

Ada Wheeler/ 18, Hartly Lloyd/ 19, Franz Miller/ 20, Mary Brown/ 21, Clara Stepler/ 22, Lizzie Hoepfner/ 23, Lena P. Banman/ 24, Johann Gruenwald/ 25, Ruby Ball/ 26, Pearl Wheeler/ 27, Mr. J.E. Doerr/ 28, Anna Banman/ 29, Theresa Stepler/ 30, Katie Wiebe/ 31, Marjorie Lloyd/ 32, Margaret Goertzen/ 33, Annie

Toews/ 34, Kate Lloyd/ 35, Gerhard R. Wiebe/ 36, Henry Banman/ 37, George G. Brown/ 38, Annie Brown/ 39, Cornelius Banman/ 40, Peter Rempel/ 41, Lizzie Wiebe/ 42, Abram Banman/ 43, John G. Brown/ 44, Bernhard Hoepfner/ 45, Susan Hoepfner/ 46, Margaret Hoepfner/ 47, Joseph Matthew.

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## Long Since Then

The shells without their bullets,  
Like the women without their men,  
Lie cold and all forgotten,  
Like the ones who never went.  
There are men who look alive,  
Men who died in forty-five;  
Is the big war really over,  
Is the Bismark really down?  
Have the children found their mothers:  
Are there any orphans born?  
Have you got the peace you fought for;  
Or like the plastic wreath you lay,  
Does the brightness of your conquest,  
Just dry up and fade away?  
And the ladies selling poppies,  
Just get older every day.  
Hear the broken rusty gate  
Of those furnaces of hate  
Scream the sickness of the living  
Who can never be forgiven  
Giving what they could not keep,  
Till they lost the right to sleep.  
The grass grows inbetween the stones,  
No polished boot to crush the blade,  
On its way to hurt and maim,  
No Shermans and no Panzers,  
They were pretty well the same.  
The horrors have moved elsewhere,  
The people of then leave the people of,  
this generation to mourn its own,  
peculiar tragedies.  
They are too busy remembering and  
forgetting.  
The Legion halls have turned from  
booze and glory,  
From the sad survivors story,  
To the soldiers happy children,  
Come for shuffleboard and beer.  
And the ladies selling poppies just  
Get older every year.

By Clint Toews

## Auna, Lidj Stell

Von Jack Thiessen

“Sat Junt mol aula han”, sad  
Taunte Klosche latzt, “Jo, enn  
Du, Pa, holst mol schwind noch  
Knacksot, enn dann woa etj Junt  
mol de Jeschicht vom Olen Peta  
Hiebat, wonen wie emma Batsch-  
la, oda Pieptje Hiebat nannde,  
vetalle.

Hiebat wea noch enn Russlaund  
jeboare, oba aus achtjoascha  
Tjnirps kaum he mett de ganze  
Famielje no Kanada. Enn foats  
jintz daut mett disem gaustajen  
Onnousel los, wiels? Jo, wiels aus  
se bie Moorhead oppem Schepp  
em Red Riefa aune '75 foahre,  
fäld he mett einmol enn aulemaun  
socht Hiebats Petatje. Taunte  
Hiebatsche hield aul, Ole Hiebat  
speajch ut, twelstad em Riwa  
nenn enn sad, “Sukensin, enn  
Schnodda em Schmaunt!”

Well, nu stund daut Schepp em  
Red stell, de Schapräda oakade  
langsam enn latjde enn stunde  
dann ganz stell, Taunte Plume  
Sewautsche vetalld aul, wo Happ-  
nasch Obrauntje uck mol emm  
Nippa vedrunke wea, enn sad  
dem Petatje haude se aul lang  
gout “siene druggelje Bultjes”

vollhewe sulle. So sad de Se-  
wautsche! Oba Peta wea nich to  
finje enn nu jintj Ohmtje Hiebat  
selwst oppearnst seatje. Enn  
met einmol head daut ganze  
Schepp dem Olen Hiebat losre-  
scheare, “Enn sur enuff, enn tom  
aulen Donna, enn tom Kuckuck  
manke Klucke, enn Schietareiasch  
emm Suaramp, enn Otboasch  
manke Kruckebeete, doa ess Pe-  
tatje!” Jo, wo weara? Emm Red  
schwompa! doa emm Wota  
romma. “Tom aulen Donna!”  
schreajch Ole Hiebat, “foats  
tjemst Du rut, enn disem schat-  
tajen Puddel lohnt sich daut go-  
nich to bode. Enn butadem mott  
wie no Kanada, doa faele opplatzt  
aul ein poa Indiauna auftoladre  
enn Du murchelst hiea emm Blott  
romma enn deist hiea de Drentj  
pollute! Enn tratj Die uck foats  
de Betjse aun, enn ein baet jicha  
sonst woa etj Die noch de Stars  
enn Stripes emm Hinjarenj nenn  
shtample! Enn Du, Panna, goh  
saj dem Capten, he saul Steam  
jaewe, wie welle foats noh Kanada  
foahre!”

Jo, Jo, dis Petatje kaum noh  
Kanada oba uck hiea leete siene  
Chouse nich noh, he wea ein



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hasselja Baedel, enn "gauschtaja aus Adam, de sich uck emma enne Aupelberstaun 'rommadreif" saed Ole Hiebat. Petatje saed oba. he deid mau prektesse Indiauna to spaele, wiels de sent willa aus de Wille Wiens ut Niegortitz, so haude de Lied vetallt.

Well Hiebats Petatje, bold Hiebats Peta, donn Peta Hiebat enn schliesslich Ohmtje Betschla Hiebat bleif ein Spuchterieta. De Lied saede emma, he wea goastrich, oba dauts goanich so, he wea mau utjelote, enn he saed "Jo" to jiedrem Wintjel emm Laewe. "Na, etj weet uck nich" saed Taunte Klosche wieda, "enn nu komt mol aula ein baetje noda, wiels waut etj nu vetalle woa, vetallt nich wieda; nae, daut vetall etj mau aulein wannet neidich ess, vestohne? Jo? Na, dann mol wieda; weet Jie aewahaupt worum se Betschla Hiebat ute Jemeind rutschmeete? Nae? Na, komt noch ein baetje noda, enn Du Pannasche vetall ditmol uck nich wieda, enn Du, Krohnsche, vetall uck nich, wiels Diene Jeschichte vom Jnodefeldschen Peta Thiesses Haunsa sent morschig aewadraewe! Oba mei, mei, tridj no Onkel Hiebat. O yes, daut wea so. Stallt Junt vaea, de Betschla Hiebat wea je goanich befriet enn wie wisste je uck goanich, waut he nohm Fiaowent deid. Oba waut jedohne woat he woll habe enn "Dets fe Shure", saed de Boatelsche. Well, eines Doages saut he aum Sinndag enne Tjoatj enn bold schorrd he ein baetje top, enn mett einmol schnoatjt he uck aul. De Praedja vetalld nu noch luda, wo Cain dem Abel eint mettem Kohfot aewrem Tjriets jeresst haud enn donn noch eint oba Onkel Hiebat saut tweschen Peta Leewe enn Tobia Jaunz enn schnoatjt. Jo, schnoatjt sous ne jestrjitte Bausfiddel ohne Seide, schmustad emm Schnurrboat nenna enn hold noch einmol derche Naes enn opnet Mul Loft enn smeild enn hold wada ut opp siene Bausfiddel enn smeild enn frinteld enn pust" PIRRRHHH! Enn doch bucheld Jaunz dem Hiebat doch eint mettem Alboage enne Rebbe, enn waut saed Hiebate? Jo, waut saeda doa emm Schlop bie tounje Oage enne Tjoatj? Jo, waut saeda donn blos? Well, yes, Betschla Hiebat saed blos, "Auna, lidj stell!" mm

## Studentenehe

Von Monica Krahn

So manchen Seufzer der Erleichterung kann man dieser Tage von den daheimgebliebenen Ehepartnern eines Studenten hoeren, da sich das Universitaetsjahr dem Ende naehert. Welch ein herrliches, doch fremdes Gefuehl wird es sein, den Ehemann nun nicht mehr nur zeitweise um sich zu haben!

Die Ehe selbst ist eine ganz neue und wichtige Lebenserfahrung. Was es jedoch bedeutet mit einem Studenten verheiratet zu sein kann nur der verstehen, der es selbst durchlebt hat.

Meine Leidensgefuehrtinnen, ich verstehe euer Dilemma genau und wuerde noch heute einen "Club fuer Studentenwitwen" gruenden, haette ich damals als ich diese zwei vielsagenden, beruehmten Worte "Ich werde" sprach gewusst, dass auch ich bald dieser "Witwengruppe" an gehoeren wuerde.

Das Schulsesemester faengt so anspruchslos an, dass man es sich einfach garnicht vorstellen kann was so schwierig daran sein soll, mit einem Studenten verheiratet zu sein. Schliesslich ist es nicht so schlimm, wenn er ein paar Abende die Woche mit Hausaufgaben beschaeftigt ist. So geht es einige Monate weiter, — doch wohl um die Frau langsam auf

Schlimmeres vorzubereiten, bis sich dann eines Tages die ganze Wahrheit mit Macht enthueilt!! Das Ende des Semesters rueckt heran und die volle Wirkung was es wirklich bedeutet die Frau eines Studenten zu sein, kommt mit einem Mal so ganz zum Bewusstsein.

Warum haben wir diesen menschlichen Zug mit Aufsuetzen und Abhandlungen die schon vor so langer Zeit aufgegeben worden sind stets bis zur letzten Minute zu warten ehe wir sie einreichen? Schrecken haelt seinen Einzug, wenn es heisst einen Aufsatz in wenigen Stunden abzuliefern! Als seine "bessere Haelfte" sitzt du und tippst verzweifelt, waehrend "er" in panischer Angst die letzten Seiten beendet und sich sicherlich wundert: "Warum konnte ich nicht frueher damit anfangen?" Doch mit jedem Aufsatz oder Aufgabe bleibt es die gleiche Geschichte. Endlich ist es soweit beendet und abgeliefert und du sagst zu dir selber "Wir haben es geschafft!"

Nacht fuer Nacht gehst du alleine schlafen, nicht wissend wie lange "er" aufbleibt um zu bueffeln. Schliesslich schlaefst du ein in der Hoffnung ihn am Morgen zu sehen, doch von solchem Glueck kann keine Rede sein. Die Nacht geht vorueber und beim Aufwachen stellst du lediglich fest, dass er schon seit Stunden ueber seinen Buechern

hockt.

Gegen Ende des Semesters bekommt ein Student nur ein Minimum an Schlaf. Die Stimmung sinkt, man wird leicht reizbar und Enttauschungen wachsen schnell.

Geht das Semester dem Ende zu, heisst es nur noch sich auf einige Examen vorzubereiten. Wie angenehm, dachte ich bei mir. Zu Hause am Abend einige Stunden mit Studieren zugebracht und im Handumdrehen sind die Examen vorbei. . . . Auf mich wartete eine Ueberraschung, besser gesagt ein Schock!

Das war die Zeit, in der ich die Bedeutung "Studentenwitwe" erst wirklich kennenlernte. Einsame, lange Stunden die man Tag fuer Tag zu Hause verbrachte nur mit dem einen Wunsch "lass die Examen bald vorbei sein." Mahlzeiten vorzubereiten wird eintoenig wenn man nur fuer sich alleine kocht und niemanden hat der es mit einem teilt. Ich fuerchtete mich vor dem Morgen da ich wusste, dass ein neuer Tag anbrach den ich alleine verbringen musste. Acht Uhr morgens, mir

bleibt nicht viel mehr uebrig als ihm einen Blick nachzuwerfen waehrend er aus der Tuere eilt. Ein oder zwei Telephonanrufe waehrend des Tages wurden unsere einzige Verstaendigungsmoeglichkeit. Ich wusste, dass er nicht vor zehn Uhr abends zu Hause sein wuerde.

Die Examen sind jetzt ueberstanden, aber die Angst vor den Zensuren haengt immer noch ueber unseren Koepfen. Eine Feier zeichnet das Ende des Semesters aus — eine Woche Ferien — und das Spiel faengt wieder von vorne an!

Das Jahr, das mit der Promovierung endet muss doch wohl das schwerste aller Jahre sein. Neben dem ueblichen Druck der von der Universitaet ausgeuebt wird ist noch der Druck, nach all dem Studieren auch eine Anstellung zu finden. Die unzuehligen Male, die du deinen Mann beobachtest wie er wieder aus dem Hause geht um sich erneut um eine Stelle zu bewerben in der Hoffnung dass er dieses Mal Glueck hat. Die Frau sitzt zu Hause und drueckt die Daumen, waehrend ihr Mann wieder einem Interviewer gegenuebersitzt, hoffend das Richtige zu sagen und nicht die Dinge zu vergessen, die er doch zu Hause so gut eingeuebt hat. So geht es weiter, ein Interview nach dem anderen, waehrend man geduldig auf den Brieftraeger wartet, der doch hoffentlich bald das so ersehnte Stellenangebot in den Briefkasten wirft. Endlich, wenn man schon fast aufgegeben hat trifft die gute Nachricht ein — ein Gewicht scheint von den Schultern gehoben!!!

Jetzt ist es nur noch ein paar Wochen bis zur Promovierung. Eine Zeit, auf die alle Studenten und deren Ehepartner sehnsuechtig warten. Wir sind uns alle bewusst, dass es ein langer, schwerer Kampf war, der es jedoch Wert war ausgekaempft zu werden. Frueher sagte ich es und bin immer noch der Meinung, dass des Ehepartners Name auf des Studenten Diplom eingeschlossen sein soll (schliesslich hat man es zusammen durchgestanden).

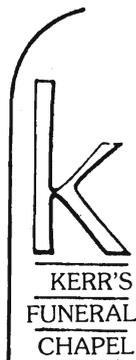
Aus eigener Erfahrung sprechend, wuenschen wir euch allen das Beste, die ihr dem Jahr der Promovierung zustrebt. mm

## Kleiner Unterschied

Von Jacob Siemens

Der Wolf ist ein Raubtier, nicht nur dass es raubt und reist zu seinem Lebensbedarf. Er hat Lust am Morden und Martern. Wenn es einem Wolf oder Rudel Wolfe gelingt einem Schaffstall, oder Schaffherde einzudringen, dann reist er so viele Tiere wie er eben kann, oder es ihm die Zeit erlaubt, gegebenenfalls auch alle. Dabei waere er auch von einem einzigen satt geworden. Also, die grosse Lust am Morden. Eben so macht es der Iltis wenn er in einem Huehnerstall gelangt, oder die Katze, wenn sie Maeuse faengt; und auch der Fuchs mit seinen Verknifigen Gesicht bildet keine Ausnahme. Selbst der Mensch steht nicht zurueck: Napoleon wusste im Siegesrausch keine Grenzen ebenso wie Hitler mit seinem Drang nach mehr "Lebensraum". Den Alliierten ging es auch nicht nur um den Sieg ueber das Hitlerregime. Sie hatten daneben Freude am Toeten; warum sonst wurden die Passagierzuege und Bauernhoeefe von Flugzeugen aus beschossen und Fluechtlinge bombardiert. In Suedvietnam und Komboqscha ging es den Kommunisten nicht nur ums Siegen; sie hatten—genauso wie die Woelfe—Freude am Zerreißen. Der Grund dafuer, dass Hess solange gestraft wird, was mit so vielen Unkosten fuer den deutschen Steuerzahler verbunden ist, liegt auch nicht nur in der Sicherung des Friedens, sondern es geschieht auch hier aus Freude am Martern und Quaelen. Und der Stalien Terror in Russland, der da wuttete wie ein Sodom und Gemora, und die kuenstliche Hungersnot, die Millionen hinraefte, ohne Grund und Ursache. Kann sich der Wolf noch messen, im Morden mit den Menschen? Der Wolf ist wohl ein Lustmoerder, doch seine eigene Wolfs-Brueder laesst Er in Ruhe, nicht wie es der Mensch macht. So weit laesst er sich nicht fuehren. Im Morden schlaegt der Mensch alle Rekorde. Es ist nur ein sehr kleiner Unterschied zwischen Mensch und Tier. . . . Das schlimmste ist der Mensch in seinem Wahn! mm

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## ... your word

Dear Sir

One subject which everyone in Canada has been thinking about lately has been the threat of Quebec seceding. This has set me to thinking.

Why is it that the French in Quebec want to set up their own country? There are, as far as I can see, three main reasons.

The first is their language, distinct from that spoken in most of Canada. There is a concentration of French-speaking people in Quebec, and they feel that, in order to preserve their language, they must prevent the contamination of close contact with the English language.

A second reason is the unique culture of the French-Canadians, a factor closely linked with the problem of language. The culture of the French Canadians is also based, in large part, on the Roman Catholic church, still a powerful force in Quebec. The French-Canadians can also be said to have a distinct cuisine, consisting mainly of pea-soup and maple syrup.

The third reason is the fact that the French feel that they are putting more into Canada, financially speaking, than they are getting out.

Does all this not begin to sound suspiciously like our own situation?

As regards language, Low German is recognized by most as a significant element in the history of the Mennonites as a people. Today, it is in even more danger of dying out than French (after all, how many government documents are labelled "Government of Canada/Kanadier Regierung"?).

As to culture, surely borscht, zwieback, and rouladen are as "cultural" as pea soup and maple syrup! In place of the Roman Catholic church, do we not have a number of Mennonite denominations, all basically the same?

Last, but hardly least, we have the question of finance. We Mennonites have traditionally been, and continue to be, pillars of whatever communities we happen to be in. Our average income, I would surmise, tends to average higher than the masses, and our ranks include a disproportionate number of millionaires. Consequently, we are heavily taxed to support the Canadian welfare system, from which we gain little.

My premise is that, given the above facts, the Mennonites of southern Manitoba have as good a case for secession as the French in Quebec. The French feel that, because they are concentrated in one province, they can

take that province out of Confederation with impunity. What's to stop us from taking, say, Steinbach, Winkler, and/or North Kildonan out of Confederation?

If you agree with this view, how about writing your (mennonite) mayor and/or councillor, and stating your opinion. If you don't agree, don't write them.

Thank you for your time.

Jon Penner  
Winnipeg

Dear Sir:

This is subscription fees for your paper which I saw for the first time at my sister's home and appreciate much. Another Mennonite  
A.P. Toews,  
Ferguson, Mo.

Dear Sir:

We enjoy all the articles very much, many of them widen our horizons of the Mennonite world. We always look forward to the next issues. Thank you.  
R. Regehr  
Winnipeg

Dear Sir:

Happy and Blessed Easter to all of you hard working people. I enjoy reading the MM very much. The high and low German and English. It should have some Russian yet to make it real Mennonite. Oh well, can't have everything. Special Hi to M. Enns. I like her writing.

Mrs. B. Kliever  
Winnipeg

Dear Sir:

Our copy of MM invariably arrives after the entry deadline of the Mix-up. On the other hand we are thankful that the postal authorities are not charging a storage fee for keeping the paper safely hidden and request our subscription be renewed.

P. Enns,  
Edmonton

*(Ed's Note: The Mix-up deadline will be extended to accommodate victims of our postal system).*

### DEAF DIALOGUE

A Canadian was seated opposite a nice old lady in the compartment of an English railway car. For several minutes he chewed his gum in silence, then the old lady leaned forward.

"It's nice of you to try to make conversation," she said, "but I must tell you that I'm terribly deaf."

### SILLY JOKE

There's a new movie out starring the shark from Jaws and the Loch Ness monster. It's called Loch Jaws.



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### The Excommunicated Horse

In the continuing saga of Holdeman excommunications we have come across an interesting story of the excommunication of a horse. When a certain Holdeman was excommunicated from his church in southern Manitoba he was not able to buy hay for his horse from his Holdeman neighbors because they shunned him. He was forced, therefore, to buy it from a French-Canadian farmer some miles away. When this farmer asked the Holdeman why he had to come so far for his hay the only answer that occurred to him was, "Because they have excommunicated my horse."

The logic of this reply seems inescapable. After all, how else would you explain to the horse that he could no longer feed on the neighbor's hay? Poor horse. Poor man. Poor church. Lucky French-Canadian farmer!

## Are Mennonites Pacifists?

Whenever Mennonites are asked to explain how they differ from other Christians they point to their pacifist tradition. A typical reply runs as follows: "We Mennonites don't believe in going to war," or, "We Mennonites don't believe that it is right to take human life. We are pacifists."

The question is, are we? We know that there have been periods in our history when we clearly have not been. Mennonites in Russia formed an armed self-defence corps in the chaos that followed the 1917 revolution. Thousands of Mennonites fought in the Second World War, on both sides. But we can look upon these, and other incidents, with regret, and say that they represent a departure from our true beliefs. But do they? What is it that we really believe on this question?

It is our feeling that both now and in the past a very small number of Mennonites have actually believed in an absolute pacifist position. By "absolute pacifism" we mean a complete renunciation of any force which could result in the death of another person.

Who among us is willing to renounce the use of force in such a total way? To be an absolute pacifist means that we refuse to bear arms either in war time, as members of the army, or in peace time, as members of a police force. Surely it also means that we renounce the bearing of arms on our behalf. Someone who calls the police to correct a situation is setting in motion a force which could result in the death of a human being. An absolute pacifist would not do this. But, if such a yardstick is used, how many of us really qualify as pacifists?

We remember with great sympathy the anguish that our missionaries in the Congo felt in 1960 when they permitted themselves to be escorted out of the country under armed guard. Some missionary lives were lost before the army arrived. Without armed protection the casualties would undoubtedly have been higher. We were working for the Congo Inland Mission at the time, in Elkhart, Indiana, and the stories that the missionaries brought with them were painful to hear. Added to the pain was the realization that in a difficult hour, when all kinds of evil forces had been unleashed and all restraints had been broken, it had taken the intervention of the army to restore peace and to lead them to safety.

We live in that kind of a world all the time. The edge of the jungle is never far from our doorsteps. When the lights go out in New York or the police force goes on strike in Montreal we discover all too quickly how dependent we are for our daily survival on armed, protective forces.

There are many types of evil in this world. There is a very common variety which is accompanied by signs of conscience and which can therefore be checked and corrected easily by a display of moral force. Whenever we fail we hope that others will recognize such a store of good intentions in us, so that our failure will be checked gently. We in turn are reminded each day, as parents, teachers,

and friends of others, that the wayward behaviour we observe in others is far from incurable. A soft word of rebuke and a good example are usually enough. There is another kind of evil, however, which seems to be impervious to any kind of moral challenge. Rather than cowering in the face of goodness it seeks to exploit that goodness. When evil of that type is combined in an organized force, symbolized most dramatically in our society by the Mafia, it takes a counter force of even greater strength and better organization to subdue it. How many of us would actually refuse to call upon such a protective civil force when confronted with such evil? The answer to that question is a good gauge of the extent to which we are committed to an absolute pacifist position.

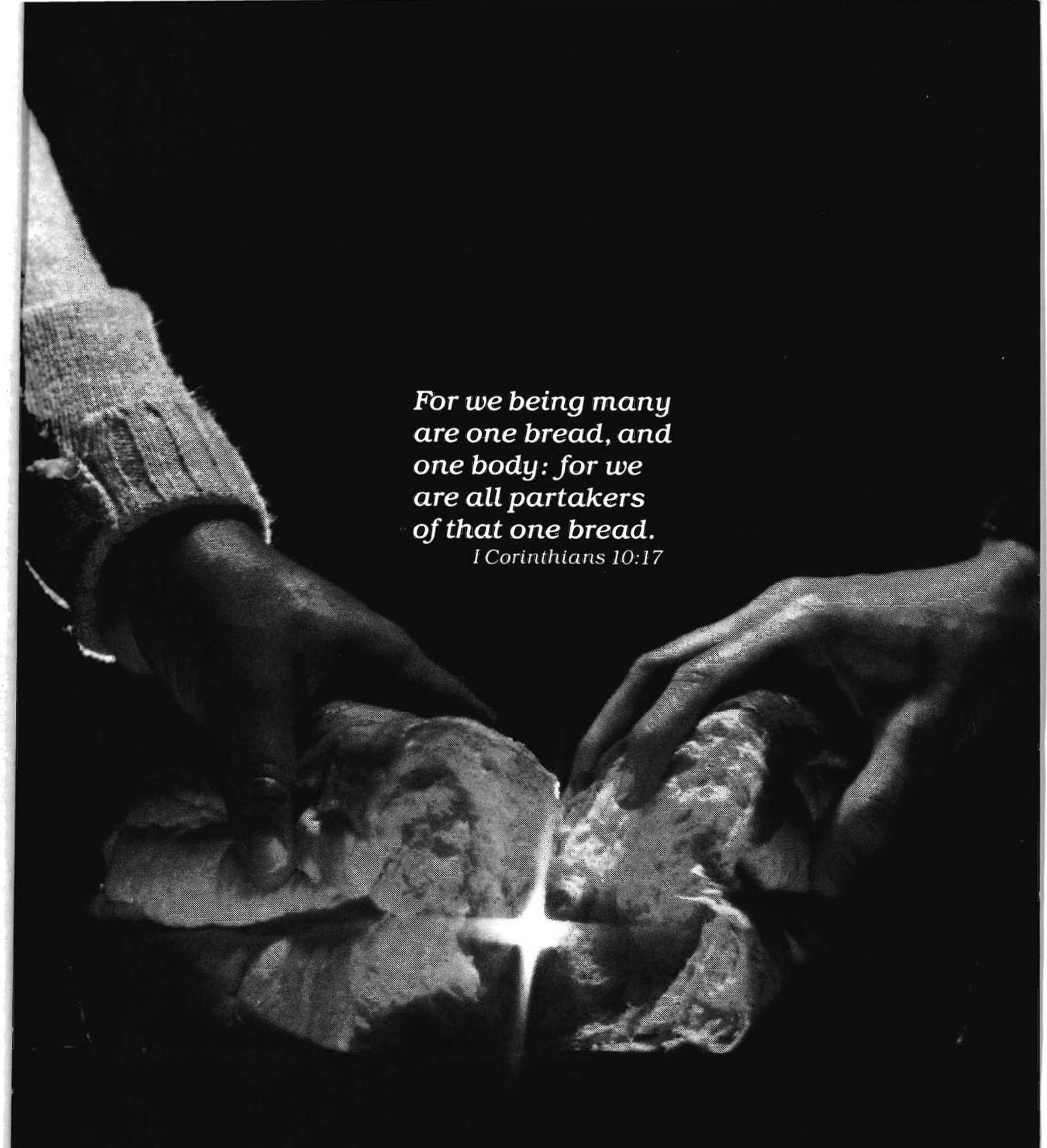
Most of us had better be honest and admit that we are not pacifists in such an absolute sense. The best that we can probably say for ourselves is that we try, whenever possible, to confront the evil of others with the greatest gifts of love and understanding that God has given to us. When our best efforts seem to have no effect, and when our attempts to be compassionate are exploited, we rely, for the sake of our own safety and the safety of others, upon the civil or military forces at our command.

Unfortunately, such an admission seems to fly in the face of the clear teachings of Jesus. Didn't He ask us to love our enemies, to turn our cheek to those who strike us? Yes. As we said in a recent editorial, it is central to the meaning of the Christian Cross that God encounters our evil with infinite compassion. And that is the Cross which we are asked to carry when we become Christians. Let us not try to escape from the problem we have just raised by denying this.

The point of this editorial is to remind us, first of all, that we are all, in varying degrees, failing to carry the full weight of that Cross. It doesn't make much difference whether we bear arms in war or whether we call upon a police force to protect us in peace. In either case we are relying on force to check the evil around us. This should, at the very least, prevent those who refuse to go to war from pointing their fingers self-righteously at those who go.

Having said that we remain personally bothered by the kind of world in which God has chosen us to live. Why is there evil which seemingly resists all moral challenge? Are we really meant to give such evil free reign? Even if we are prepared to do it for ourselves, doesn't love itself require that we resist it for the protection of others? We may forgive a robber who steals money from our church, but doesn't love for others who might be robbed by that person require us to report the person to the police so that his destructive behaviour can be stopped? And doesn't love for that person himself require that we put a stop to it? Do we really have his best interests in mind if we extend easy forgiveness to him?

We are personally inclined to answer all of those questions with a yes. Love may both accept and reject, though ultimately (as we think the Cross shows) it accepts; peace is maintained and restored both through the power of love and the fear of power. It is tempting for the serious Christian to assume that because he renounces one form of armed power (but accepts another), he is clearly different from other Christians. This form of Mennonite pride can hardly sit well with God. However, it is just as tempting to assume that because we are sometimes forced to use force there is little point in combatting evil in other ways. Sometimes in our containment of evil a trigger may have to be pulled. Let us not in our Christian zeal deny that, or deny that we depend on it. Having admitted that, let us also admit that we are inclined to pull the trigger far too quickly. The Christian faith urges us to explore other ways. It assures us that it is in our daily experiments with such ways that we come closest to God's own understanding of evil and His solution to it. **R.V.**



*For we being many  
are one bread, and  
one body: for we  
are all partakers  
of that one bread.*

*1 Corinthians 10:17*

Christ through His broken body unites believers across national, racial and economic barriers. An important goal for MCC is to work in partnership with local churches around the world in a ministry to the hungry, the captives, the blind, the oppressed.



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