

mennonite mirror

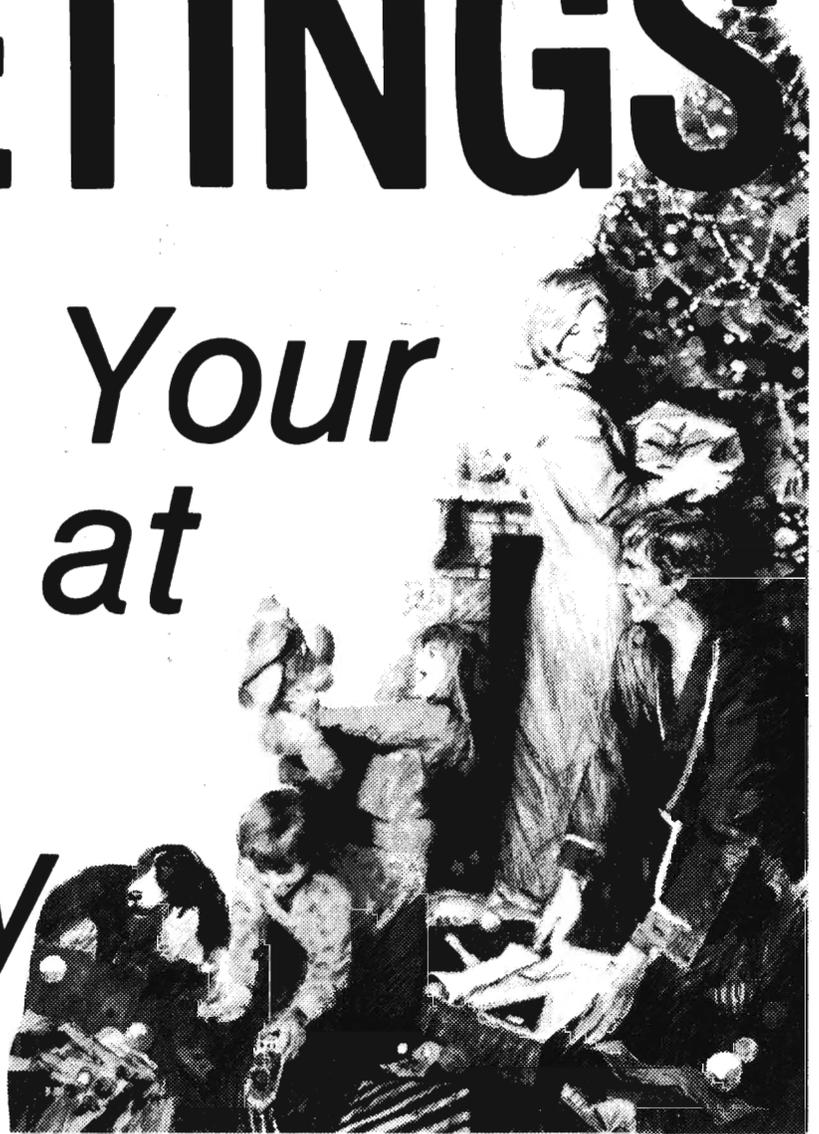
volume 11 / number 4
december 1981



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mirror mix-up

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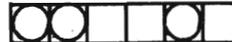
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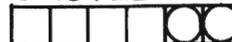
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1981

OOOOO AND



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There were 51 November Mix-up returns and from among them Mary Enns of Winnipeg was drawn the winner. A cash prize is on its way.

Answers to the November puzzle were Dove, truce, accord, pacify, serene.

The letters are to be re-arranged and written in the squares to form words. Letters which fall into the squares with circles are to be arranged to complete the answer at the bottom of the puzzle; the drawing to the right provides a clue.

A winner will be drawn at random from among the contest entries and the prize awarded.

Entries must be sent to the Mirror office by December 21, 1981.

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mennonite mirror

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Canada

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 Minister of State
Multiculturalism Ministre d'État
Multiculturalisme

William Janzen:

"there is a sense in which we are poor — in our ability to love . . . to forgive . . . and its something few see."

by Mary Enns

William Janzen, MCC(Canada) representative to the government, became the first director of their Ottawa office six years ago. J.M. Klassen, executive secretary of MCC(Canada), says "This office provides the important function of obtaining services from and communicating with various government offices and officials. The work requires an understanding of government and of the Church. We are fortunate in having the services of William Janzen as director of our Ottawa office. His training and experience, his commitment to the Lord and the church uniquely fit him to the task to which we have called him."

After a stint with MCC as a Paxman in Africa, Janzen went to Ottawa in 1968 to study political science at Carleton University. When the author spent an afternoon with him in Ottawa a month ago, he had just recently defended his doctoral dissertation, *The limits of liberty in Canada: the experience of the Mennonites, Hutterites and Dukhobors*. This subject matter and the research toward it ties in with his MCC assignment.

Janzen's intrinsically diplomatic nature and scholarly yet forceful approach to various complex problems suit his assignment well. He brings to his position a background of religious studies at Canadian Mennonite Bible College and the University of Ottawa, studies in political science at Carleton, and a year at Osgood Hall Law School.

Prior to 1975 he served the Ottawa Mennonite Church for five years as a part-time minister. He is the author of *Walk Humbly With Your God*, a book of meditations published in 1979. In the chapter "Accepting our Poverty," Janzen addresses a subject high in priority to him:

"I believe there is a sense in which we are poor—poor in our ability to love,

poor in our ability to pursue the true purpose of life and poor in our ability to forgive. We can hardly live without friends and yet we are poor in our ability to maintain and nurture friendships. When Jesus began the Sermon on the Mount with 'Blessed are the poor in spirit' he was, I believe, calling on us to recognize our poverty.

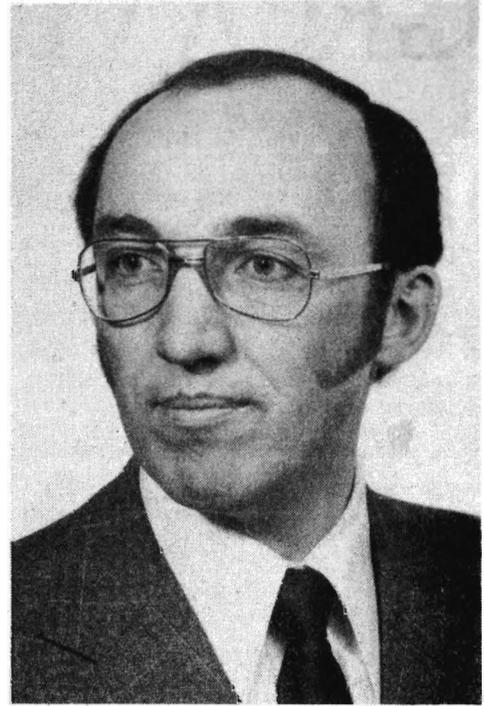
"We work enormously hard to acquire strength, if not physically then intellectually, socially or economically. Our strength gives us a place in the world. But when our pursuit of strength becomes a refusal to recognize our basic weakness and poverty then we are in trouble."

Mr. Janzen was asked whether this thought and the title of his book were indicative of his philosophy.

Janzen: The quote holds a great deal of meaning for me as revealing one of the reasons for our difficulties in relating to each other. And the title—I would probably like to have that as a motto. As this relates to my work here I feel there is something about a rather non-aggressive approach that may in the end be more fruitful.

Enns: Are you a mediator, a liaison between MCC and the government officials?

J: In my earliest reports to the constituency I used the phrase, "the office will probably not do as much good as its strongest supporters hoped and not as much harm as its strongest opponents feared." However, there was a feeling that it would be useful to have an MCC office in Ottawa where concerns that arise out of MCC ministries as they relate to government might be talked about in stronger terms, in terms of witnessing to the world, to the government, lobbying the government, or as some people like to put it, sharing our perspectives and pressing them. Instead



of the Ottawa office having its own agenda, its work grows out of the agenda of MCC and is an integral part of that.

E: What are the issues for Christians, including Mennonites, as they relate to the government in Canada?

J.: The whole matter of international development and the Third World countries remains an important area of concern. We should urge the government as strongly as we can to move forward in that direction. Canada and the government have been back-tracking a little in the last decade in terms of percentage of our budget allowed for these expenditures. Mr. Trudeau has given it some higher priority in discussion with leaders, but these by themselves do not lead to solutions.

E: The failure for this being on economic grounds?

J: That's right. For a number of years now the economic pie has not been growing very fast and yet the demands of Canadians have remained strong. Consequently the poorer countries of the world have received a smaller portion.

Mennonites are involved in various ways: in working abroad, on advisory committees, on the staff of Canadian Economic Development Agency as is Tony Enns, or Len Siemens in Winnipeg. There may not be much improvement but I feel we should do our part as Mennonites and Canadians. This would include supporting MCC financially and through personal service; choosing a career suited toward serving a need in the poor countries; encouraging the government to consider lowering trade barriers; and supporting it when it does.

Our high trade barriers make it difficult for Third World countries to sell their products in Canada.

There are many Canadians, especially in Quebec, who make their living working in textiles, and we want to protect our textile industry. It isn't so much a matter of giving aid to the poorer countries as making it possible for them to sell their goods to us.

Then there is the matter of militarism. The stockpile of armaments is getting enormously large. Though there is a lot of talk about disarmament we're not going in that direction. "Project Ploughshares," in which MCC participates, is doing research on the question.

Another difficult area is economics. All the complaining about the economy has implications for Mennonites internally as well as externally in the sense that the gap between the rich and the poor within Canada will increase. That polarization will become stronger not only in our society but also in the church where it will be difficult to bridge internally. And how do we call each other brother and sister in the light of that? Some bridging here will make our politics more abrasive. I can't imagine Mennonites not giving the matter some thought.

E: Which other areas of concern does your work cover?

J: There is the major area of immigration dealing with refugees from different parts of the world, and that of Canadians serving abroad with MCC—matters like family allowance, unemployment insurance, Canada Pension Plan.

The resumption of Canadian citizenship concerns the Mennonites from Mexico, Belize and Bolivia who were once Canadian citizens. It is a matter of helping those who are coming back anyway to do so legally, thereby also helping them to settle socially. Here we've had remarkable success. And, as a result of our petitions in 1976-77, the government decided to interpret the provision for registration of birth abroad much more leniently than it had done earlier, stretching it virtually from requirement of registration within two years of birth to the present 30.

There is always the ombudsman type of work: supplying information to External Affairs; meeting with these officials to obtain permission for matching grants in sending aid to Vietnam. The government was negative here because of refugee problems and the occupation of Kampuchea. And when our workers return from having served in certain troubled areas of the world we arrange meetings with CEDA or External Affairs where these workers can present their concerns to the officials. Officials might take that into account when they

make policy. They have been singularly receptive.

E: Are officials and politicians in general sympathetic to your concerns?

J: We have found them very approachable. They have regulations and will at times simply say, the law does not allow it. When our request is reasonable they will consider it sympathetically and will bend where they're able to. We have considerably more contact with the civil service level than with the political level of government—with people who are hired to implement laws rather than with those who make the laws. I wouldn't say the politicians are less understanding.

E: How do you relate your life as a Christian and a Mennonite to your contacts in government? Can you?

J: There isn't a great deal of explicit witnessing. I've discussed matters of faith, theology, the Bible and prayer with politicians and civil servants, but those occasions have been relatively few. I suppose another way is by trying to do the work well, responding promptly, dealing fairly. And when you get into an argument it is important to try to understand their side of the issue. In preparing a submission I don't say, this is our theological position—the officials don't quite know what to do with that. In a submission to Mr. MacGuigan for assistance to Vietnam you talk about the work of MCC and the need for food, making a strong appeal to compassion rather than an explicit appeal to theology. I don't know how to appeal on a theological basis.

E: Have your judgements on issues such as capital punishment or Native concerns been affected by your continuing connections with government?

J: The first issue has surfaced several times in the past six years. I wrote against it at the time of the vote and I would continue that. I've not been very involved in Native concerns. Generally speaking, I'm sympathetic to the concerns of the Native people but I don't believe they had a right to this continent entirely. It is only right that it should be shared with others, just as we should be good stewards of and share the resources entrusted to us. In that sense I would not give an absolutist respect to all Native claims. We do have a responsibility, however, and should try pretty hard to find a better course for the future.

E: Are Mennonites gaining better insight into government since there are now more politically-involved people among us?

J: Maybe. I have a certain respect for the needs of people in government. I'm talking now not of civil servants, but of politicians who sometimes do need to compromise. In the church that may be

a bad word. The whole art of trying to bring the differing views of people in a society together to the point where it is possible for us to live together makes it necessary that there be give and take, and the politician's job is trying to arbitrate between the varying claims.

Because I've learned to understand his position better I will not criticize a politician categorically just because he's making some compromises. He's sometimes elected by appearing capable of fulfilling very high demands which later can't be realized. We become cynical and four years later a new messiah comes up only to show feet of clay also. That is one of the problems of our democratic system at the present time, when the pie is no longer growing yet our expectations continue to be high. The politicians can't fulfill them so we're in a kind of schizophrenic situation which doesn't augur well for political well-being.

E: Any long term objectives?

J: I would like to be able to identify for our constituency those issues on which we can encourage and support the government, as that of the North-South dialogue. Twenty-two heads of government recently attended the major summit conference in Mexico. That is surely a concern to the MCC constituency. We should encourage the government to act strongly in that area.

I would like to help our constituency to understand those areas where we are contributing to the problems of our society. There should be a book written by now on the topic of Christianity and inflation. We believe that the gospel has a message for all aspects of life and that maybe we all need to adjust our lifestyle. The institutions of the Church, in all fields, need to become stronger.

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A chosen child remembers Christmas

A Christmas story by Helena Dueck

Young Peter Kornelsen, walking in from the barn, looked about him appreciatively. This was his little kingdom dressed for Christmas. Frost glittered on the trees and the fence-posts wore sparkling caps. The world was still, almost as still, thought Peter, as the Bethlehem fields must have been so many centuries ago.

Inside, Anna would have supper ready for him. Warmth enveloped him when he thought of her. His Anna, with the deep brown eyes. Even after ten years of marriage, he marvelled that out of a whole world of men, she had chosen him! For he was just plain Peter Kornelsen, eldest son in a family of twelve children. At the early age of thirteen, he had already worked out to help his widowed mother provide for younger brothers and sisters. During those years, the possibility of ever getting married and owning his own home had seemed a remote and unbelievable goal for Peter.

"Hurry up, Papa," called Lisa, "I'm hungry."

Peter's brother Henry was already at the table, with some books beside him. Young Henry's position in the family at the time was that of a son, going to school and helping Peter with the chores. It lightened the load for their mother. Peter and Anna loved having him.

The four of them were happy. They had almost all they asked of life — love, health, a home, and friends. The world was at peace and the depression not yet thought of. The future looked promising to the hard-working young people. But Henry would soon leave to help his mother. Then Lisa would be alone.

Peter enjoyed taking her along when he went to town on business. She had a way of staying close to him, with a ready answer for all questions directed at her. It made Peter feel rich just to hold her small hand in his. But for her to be an only child! That was unthinkable! Children gave meaning and a future to life — somehow to carry on where they left off — keeping the house, milk the cows, and work the fields they loved.

They had adopted Lisa as a small baby, and, at that time, had immediately

applied for a second child. Now, four years later, they were beginning to get impatient. Their regular letters of inquiries always met with the same answer:

"No suitable baby available for adoption yet."

The requirements for both parents-to-be and child, were very stringent. Adoptable babies were referred to as "gold-seal" babies. This meant that they came from satisfactory back-grounds, were in good health and had no visible handicaps. Parents were even more thoroughly checked — or at least so it seemed.

And, as if that were not enough, there were the persistent, but well-meaning warnings of relatives and friends. They were the ones who had given them the sly digs about being unfruitful while flaunting the banner of their own parenthood, and, on the other hand, murmured against the restrictions and demands children made. Why, they wondered, would any couple burden themselves with strange children? What if they brought with them inherent character traits that could be upsetting to Mennonite life? Surely there were enough Mennonite children needing homes instead of taking in total strangers. And to have the mystery of alien blood so subtly introduced by the otherwise conforming Kornelsen's was disturbing.

The Kornelsens listened to these warnings and criticisms, took the very personal tests, and never wavered from their plan. They didn't care about backgrounds and perfect features. All they wanted was children who would be all theirs, not to share with others, as they did when fostering children. True, they had some fears of their own. They were simple Mennonites — a minority group of people, whose lifestyle and religious beliefs were a strong contrast to those of the world at that time. Would they measure up to the expectations of the Children's Aid, and would they meet the needs of these children, not spoil them with love, but train them in the way they should go?

Finally, close to Christmas, they were notified that a baby was ready for them; Peter and Anna set aside all doubts and

warnings.

"Will you really bring a baby sister?" Lisa wanted to know.

"Babies cry a lot," Henry, older by ten years, pointed out sagely.

Anna's hand found its way into Peter's. They knew all about babies. Lisa had trained them well.

Peter and Anna dressed in their Sunday-best, left home by sleigh up to Giroux. There they boarded a train that took them to Winnipeg.

What the Children's Aid worker saw was a big-built man, well over six feet tall. The woman, though much shorter, was also big. In spite of their sober dress, they and an air of joy and excitement about them that was both attractive and reassuring.

After a long wait, a matronly nurse came in carrying a one-year-old girl baby in white furry coat and bonnet. Anna took the baby in her arms and cuddled it. Peter put a trembling arm around them and, for the moment, they were alone with their new responsibility. This baby belonged to them, nothing could alter that.

"Her name is Pearl," the nurse said. "A live pearl for Christmas — such a love present."

They agreed that this was a Christmas present, but the name did not have any significance for Peter and Anna. They had long ago decided to name this little girl Lena.

At the breakfast table next morning, Lisa and Henry looked the newcomer over curiously. She was chubby and firm-limbed, with little rings of blonde hair clustering all over her head. She wore dainty, un-Mennonite white. Only small babies wore white in those days. But the clothes did not matter much. What struck them most forcibly were the stricken, pain-filled eyes that looked at the people around the table briefly and uncertainly, then searched the rooms of their little farm home again and again, and, when at last she seemed to sense that what she was seeking could not be found, she hid her face and sobbed.

That was my first Christmas, as told to me so often. I do not remember it, of course, but I do know that whatever it was that I was seeking, has been given

to me in full measure; pressed down and running over.

The first Christmas I do remember was several years later. The house was clean with white bedspreads on the beds. Mother was cooking and baking.

From the kitchen window I watched my father carrying feed to the barn. His steps, light and quick, kept Lisa at a steady trot beside him. The sun had just set, leaving an arch of gold over the trees behind the barn. Huge drifts of snow, with fascinating paths shovelled through them, looked inviting. I wished I could be out there, too. But they would soon go into the barn, where the yellow lantern light cast eerie shadows, and the pulsing aliveness of the cattle always scared me a little. I looked at Mother. Maybe she would tell me a story. She said later that those story requests came so often that sometimes she ran out of material.

But this time I did not need to wait. Christmas Eve had its own story to tell. I listened enchanted. This was no ordinary story! Imagine angels singing for a baby! I closed my eyes tightly and the whole scene, complete with the heavenly music, flashed before me. Mother could always do that with her stories. This one of Mary, whose baby was God's son adopted by the kindly Joseph, was special. The word "adopted" had a familiar ring. It had happened thousands of years ago, so could not be something new. And Mother said this Jesus was still with us, loving us and hearing our prayers.

That evening, in bed beside Lisa, I looked out through the large unshaded window. Frosty stars gleamed out over still frostier fields heavily covered with snow. What was it Mother had said of a star? I puzzled over this, and the next thing I knew it was morning and the sun was shining in all its winter-time brilliance. Lisa was in bed with Mother. It took me but a minute to snuggle down on the other side of her.

The fire crackled noisily and Father was bringing something to our bed. What could it be, and why was everyone so excited, especially Lisa? He put a cradle, the identical replica of the one I had slept in, beside me, and a daintily-fashioned crib beside Lisa? But the crowning joy was the dolls. They had porcelain china heads with yellow hair, and carved wooden arms and legs. What wonder and delight! I was the doll-playing kind, and no gift could have been more welcome or more used. This doll literally grew up with me.

Years later I learned of the many hours of work our parents did on these gifts after we were in bed, spending some of their happiest hours of that happy winter creating them.

On looking back to those two remote

Christmases, I see in the first one a lonely, little girl seeking love and being taught its meaning by the two people whom I called Father and Mother, and whom I learned to love with a love as enduring as life itself. The second one awakened me for the first time to the custom of giving at Christmas and introduced me to the Christ whose coming into this world brought the message of peace and hope to all mankind. mm

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A welcome place for for kids of the town

The following article appeared in an edition of the *Weyburn Review* last December and was written by its editor, Ernie Neufeld, a native of Steinbach. The *Mirror* asked him for permission to reprint it as a tribute to parents and family at Christmas.

by Ernie Neufeld
editor, *The Review*, Weyburn, Saskatchewan

Sending out Christmas cards, and receiving them, brings to mind many people we don't think of very often from one holiday season to the next.

Every year, however, we receive a card from, and send one to an elderly couple whom I think of considerably oftener; in fact, whenever my mind wanders back to my childhood — from the earliest days to the time I left my home town — for this couple was very much a part of my life.

The family, in my earliest memories, lived kitty corner from us and their oldest son, whose name was also Ernie, was about my age. We went to kindergarten together, and through most of school. At the time, there was also a playpen in their home with two twin boys one of whom is today one of Canada's leading nuclear physicists.

As the years rolled along, three more sons were born to the family, and with a total of six, the parents might have been forgiven if they had discouraged their youngsters from dragging friends into the home.

The opposite was true however. The parents were determined to keep their kids at home and out of trouble, and to ensure this, they had a huge yard and a large house. The upstairs was particularly large as it extended over the little general store that provided the family's living.

The kids had every game you could imagine, and all the essentials for outdoor games, and since kids were always welcome, their home was the gathering place for the whole crowd every Sunday afternoon.

In the spring and fall we were expected to play outside. As I mentioned, the yard was huge, extending at least 500 feet to a wooded area and a little creek.

We played soccer, tag, hide and seek, touch football, cops and robbers, softball, cowboys and Indians, pirates, war and whatever else came to mind.

Whenever the scene got out of hand, or if we picked on the younger brothers

and they ran in for support, either Mrs. Vogt would come out and admonish us gently — which filled us with shame — or Mr. Vogt would thunder at us in his powerful bass voice — which filled us with fear.

Winter or summer, the whole gang was invited for supper, appropriately after the parents had finished their meal in whatever peace was possible with up to 20 kids on the premises.

Then we descended on a table laden with bread and buns and cheese and fruit preserves, and even unrationed cake and several varieties of cookies.

On hot summer Sundays, the family pick-up truck, fitted with a high box, would be loaded up with kids for an afternoon at Riverbend Park or the sand pit, two swimming holes about 12 miles distant.

In winter we played Monopoly, checkers, chess, parchesi and read comic books. At least that's how we started out. But because the Vogt kids had about five zillion wooden blocks and an

unlimited source of soft drink caps, we always ended up playing war. Soft drink caps were flicked from books or boards at enemy forts built out of the blocks.

This exercise, too, took several trips upstairs to lower the noise by a decibel or two.

As we grew older, we played cards for matches, played records on the phonograph, discussed girls and our assuredly brilliant futures — and stayed for supper.

I particularly remember one of the last visits before I left home. One of the gang, slightly older than the rest of us, was already in the army, and home on leave and proudly wearing corporal's hooks on his sleeves.

The parents were out for a drive, and the "brats" were out of the way, so we had the house to ourselves. We started to talk about the war games we used to play, and before we knew it we were building forts and peppering them with bottle caps.

Suddenly the Vogts were back, and I'll never forget the sorrowful, weary look of Mrs. Vogt's face as she surveyed the scene of an army corporal and half a dozen six-footers on hands and knees playing a kiddies' game on a floor littered with blocks and bottle caps.

We stayed for supper.

And we all still get cards at Christmas.

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The advertisement features a large, detailed glass animal figurine, possibly a dog or a bear, in the foreground. The background is dark, with other glass items visible. The text is arranged in a clean, sans-serif font.

Male choir earns deserved praise

A review by Mary M. Enns

Once again the Mennonite Male Voice Choir and Orchestra has provided the Mennonite community hereabouts with a splendid evening of music and song. Fortunately, Mennonite audiences are now mature enough to appreciate not only music and song of a specifically musical character but also secular songs and folk music which celebrates the world of a bountiful God. And if, at times, Mennonite audiences seem a bit stingy with their applause, their caution can be attributed to their traditional fear that too much praise is not good for the soul of the artist. And what if the orchestra contains such non-Mennonite names as Cowan, Mead, Knudson and Longhurst: their presence adds needed strength to an orchestra that is only five years old, after all. When oboist Penny Mead says, "This is the first orchestra I've played in where there is no in-fighting," she is paying a compliment to the basic Mennonite character of the group.

Conductor Bernie Neufeld demonstrated fine musicianship in leading the two groups. And when we consider that the members of the chorus are not professionals but drawn from all walks of Mennonite life, we can readily overlook the at times rather strident, over-robust male voices. Their rendition of Schubert's "An die Musik" was perhaps more strenuous than adoring, but they had no trouble in capturing the spirit of poignancy in the Russian folk song "Suliko". "Es geht mir durch Mark und Bein," whispered my friend when Andy Funk's fine voice rang out in the sweetly plaintive song to Suliko and "die alte Heimat". Here the chorus supported the soloist with great sensitivity.

The orchestra was in particularly good form in Ovanin's "Hatikvah". And the enthusiasm and infectious tempo in Strauss's "Radetzky Marsch" would have occasioned dancing in the Vienna Stadtpark. In the "Bugler's Holiday" we thrilled to the artistry of the trumpet trio and orchestra. Together, chorus and orchestra did their finest work of the evening when they presented the "Chorus of Exiles" from Verdi's *Nabucco*.

As a musical piece de résistance, a special piece had been composed for the occasion — John C. Klassen's "Suite for Male Chorus and Orchestra". Klassen is a teacher of music, computer science and maths in Winnipeg. It was interesting to observe that in this premier performance of his Suite he played the viola, his wife Bertha, also a music teacher, the oboe, his daughter Karen second violin, and son Andy first violin. The Suite seeks to portray our faith and emphasizes the longing for a land where peace reigns and where God may be our peace. According to the composer, he "wanted to portray through music the conflict that has always been present in the music-making of Mennonites — On the one hand, the strong unsophisticated almost simplistic faith as seen in the *Kernlied*, and, on the other, the outside musical influences bombarding us from all sides." Thus, he has juxtaposed simple tunes and choruses with a lopsided rhythmic movement and some strange harmonies. While the audience seemed a little uncomfortable with this strange mixture, it relaxed visibly in the last movement with its dynamic, unifying "hallelujah" conclusion.

As an added treat, the audience was regaled by a brief address from Johannes Harder, the eminent author, lecturer and preacher, here on a visit from Germany. His comments were witty and informal and entirely in the spirit of the evening. The visitor reminisced briefly about his boyhood in Siberia and said that the powerful memory he had of the

singing of Russian peasants was always with him. Song and music, he pointed out, are the culture of the soul, and have the power to drown out the noises of our time. "He who speaks seeks to commune; he who sings, rejoices, and he who plays upon an instrument penetrates confining space," Harder observed.

Altogether it was a highly enjoyable evening and the *Mennonitischer Sprachverein* is to be congratulated on their sponsorship of the two groups and this entertaining event. mm

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Part two:

Chortitza: wolf hunt after worship

Just as the last worshippers reach the street and the large crowd is about to disperse, a boy who has been out in the fields on this Sunday morning comes running, panic-stricken, and shouting, "A wolf has attacked Kasdorf's red mare's brown colt!" Because he fled the scene immediately after the first assault, he doesn't know whether or not the colt has actually been killed. (No herdsman is assigned to guard the islanders' horses; they are allowed to roam freely on the steppes. Only a hedge which runs across the island separates these open grasslands from the cultivated fields). The news runs through the crowd like an electric current. Gone, suddenly, is all thought of comfortable rest and pious contemplation. A wolf is a threat to all the cattle of the island and cattle are still the main source of income for these people.

With hurried steps, everyone now returns home. Even though it is barely 9:00 a.m., all know from past experience that this means an early and hasty mid-day meal and a wolf hunt that very afternoon. Because there is still a bit of Nimrod's blood in these islanders, most of them are eager to do battle with this ferocious beast. The women quickly get rid of their Sunday finery and all hands are soon occupied with the preparation of the frugal meal which is hastily set on long, uncovered tables. Any male old enough to run about on his own two legs sees it as his duty to grumble and spur the already breathless matrons on to even greater efforts.

At last all is ready. Young and old sit down together at their dinner tables and begin to clatter about with their spoons in the communal bowl of fish soup. While they are thus occupied, the latest announcement from the mayor arrives: "Immediately after dinner, all able-bodied persons are to report for the hunt and await further orders." This means that as many men, boys and even girls as possible must come. Indeed, in those days, the grown-up girls were quite able to compete with the young men in community work projects. Today, alas, even the young men are all too often "gentlemen" unused to manual work. However, the sons and daughters of these islanders would not have missed a wolf hunt for anything. After all, it was considered a duty to take up arms against this enemy of all mankind, an enemy who would spare neither the proud black stallion nor the innocent white lamb. All must stand united against such a threat.

The following is part two of Kornelius Hildebrand's description of a church service held in a schoolhouse on the island of Chortitza almost 150 years ago. This "reminiscence" was originally published in the *Russian Mennonite Menonitisches Jahrbuch* (1913) and reprinted in *Mennonitische Warte* (Spring, 1937). It was then edited by Victor Peters and republished in the German language in *Zwei Fokumente* (Echo Verlag, 1965).

The entire article has now been translated into English by Dr. Peter Pauls, professor of English at the University of Winnipeg. Part one was published last issue.

But let us return to our story. The young men and grown-up lads sit on their horses, an impressive company, ready for action. The older men who do not excel in marksmanship, the girls and younger lads, with their nimble legs and loud voices, arm themselves with cudgels and rattles. As always, on such occasions, all assemble at Jacob Hoepner's place. Hoepner is always the commander-in-chief of the army at these wolf hunts. The Mayor and his two assistants are also present. As a matter of fact, only the very old, the women and little children remain at home. The large wolf net with its string of long stakes is placed on the wagon. This net of tightly woven "marling" is community property and is kept at the Hoepner place. Special care is required to prevent rodents from damaging it.

Hoepner, the Mayor of the village and his two assistants, hastily discuss battle strategy. The wind has just begun to blow and under such conditions one must be particularly careful. The wolf must not scent the hunters and so the horsemen will ride into the wind, proceeding from the valley to the uplands. The net will be set up beyond the hedge which separates the pasture from the grainfields. Those on foot have no time to lose and yet they must take all the necessary precautions. They are obviously dealing here with an old acquaintance from the devil's tribe, one who has been nicknamed "the crafty one" because he has repeatedly evaded his pursuers by swimming across the river at some secret place. He has probably come over from the Rosengart side this time in order to fetch himself his Sunday dinner.

Hurriedly, but cautiously and quietly,

all now take up their appointed posts. Some excitement is clearly noticeable, especially among the younger ones. But even those who are older find that their hunting instincts, not yet considered sinful, have been awakened. The net into which they hope to chase the wolf is set up. The true hunters, those armed with guns, lie in wait forty to fifty yards away in a ditch that runs between the fence and the net. Each marksman knows exactly what kind of firearm his neighbour has and whether it is loaded with buckshot, grape-shot or slugs. J. Hoepner has, after careful reflection, assigned each man to his place. From experience he knows that the wolf will try to make his escape across the river.

"You, Frank Letkeman, go with one of the marksmen to the smaller gully right next to the net. Be on the lookout in case the old grey one should suddenly emerge from one of those glens in the lowlands. If in his attempt to escape those on foot and pursuing horsemen he should decide to make his customary dash to the river, see to it that he doesn't escape your bullets! Now, everyone pay attention! Above all, keep your eyes open! A rabbit when it senses danger sits down on its haunches, pricks its ears and listens. A wolf, on the other hand, when he scents the hunter, immediately changes his course in full flight."

After a brisk walk, the now perspiring marchers reach the lower part of the valley and position themselves so as to form a long line. This is done to prevent the wolf from escaping over the hilly terrain. The horsemen are given the following instructions: "As soon as you see the wolf, pursue him relentlessly. Don't let him reach the river and so escape to the Rosengart side! Now, forward march!"

And so begins the shouting, clattering and howling of the rapidly moving marchers. The clamour would almost lead one to believe that a swarm of ghosts had escaped from the forest to rendezvous here. Every one of the young heroes tries to outdo his companions with sheer lung power. Now and then someone can be heard shouting: "Have you spotted him yet?" The reply is always the same: "No-o-o-o-o."

The line of marchers moves through the underbrush in double-quick step. Still no trace of the wolf. In the clearings the sun shines warmly. Tongues are swollen and mouths are dry. No one thinks of the possibility of sunstroke or exhaustion: all are imbued with the passion of the woodsman and they are oblivious to everything else. But the

march does take its toll. Those who are tired lag behind or try to walk around the thickly overgrown areas. Even the more energetic marchers are reluctant to move into the thick underbrush as they do not relish the thought of finding themselves suddenly face to face with the wolf on such terrain. The riders find it difficult to keep the lines intact. Again and again, marchers tend to group together. This could provide the wolf an opportunity to break through. Sharp words are spoken and grumbling replies can be heard.

Most of the area under consideration has now been searched but still there is no sign of the wolf. The searchers are becoming discouraged. Of course, there is still one gully left, a favourite hiding spot for wolves. Those who have become tired must be encouraged to renew their efforts. And so, once more, the banging, the howling and shouting are resumed with even greater intensity.

The diabolical enemy has found a cozy spot in the thickest under-growth and lies stretched out there, fast asleep in the shade of an oak tree. He is no doubt dreaming about his latest heroic deeds. He can still taste the wounded colt. He knows that this animal will be stiff and weak by nightfall. It will be lying helpless in the grass while its mother grazes nearby. And so the wolf dreams on, quite confident that he will have his booty.

"It is merely a matter of slashing the jugular. Naturally, the old mare will try to come to the rescue at the first cry of her young. That will mean a hasty, but temporary, retreat. One kick of her hooves and adieu forever the merry life of the wanderer! I wonder how my brother has been faring lately. The week before last his fur coat was severely damaged by gunshot and so he had to take refuge for a few days among the Russian villages in order to give his wounds a chance to heal. There are definitely fewer good marksmen in the Russian villages. Besides, they use mainly sparrow-shot which is not much feared by our kind. Mind you, he hasn't returned yet and he didn't answer my howling last night as he said he would. But now I must get some sleep. Perhaps my growling stomach will settle down at least until evening. Then I'll fetch that colt for my supper. — What's this I hear?"

"Hellow! Hey! Wolf! Wolf! Wolf!"

"Just as I thought. As soon as I take a little bite of one of their stupid animals, the chase is on again. Well, one shouldn't pass judgement on a day's events before evening. Maybe if I wait a bit, until those on foot disappear again into the bushes, I can steal away quickly and get out into the open fields before they spot me."

Yes, you old sinner, it's high time to show your heels if you hope to save your skin! Already someone is screaming mightily.

"There, there he goes! I see him running on the other side of that dale!"

"Where, where?"

"Hey, Hurray! Over there! After him!"

And the riders now begin their pursuit. Soon the entire line of marchers is in disarray. All are hurrying after the riders like so many wild geese in autumn. But the wolf is already out of sight.

The wolf trots along, scheming his escape. For a while he follows a course above the valley. Then he tries to break through to the Dnieper in an attempt to swim across to Rosengart. This time, however, the crafty old wolf had made his plans without taking Ohm Hoepfner into account. Just when he is a few yards from the lower valley where he would find safe refuge, there is a loud bang, a wisp of blue smoke, and the wolf feels something bite him in the chest. Instantly, he changes his direction sharply to the right, hoping to take cover in the thick undergrowth along the riverbank.

The loud bang has alerted the other hunters. Now they know the wolf is coming. These marksmen have been hidden for some time behind the shrubs which grow along the ditch and they are waiting in a state of intense excitement.

"There he is!"

Bang! Bang! Bang! The guns fire in rapid succession. The cunning old sinner staggers, falls and, with a snarl, gives up the ghost. Yes, one can play the same clever trick once too often. This time, "Old Crafty" was guilty of a serious error in judgement.

The horsemen aren't very far away and before too long the perspiring marchers also arrive on the scene. Many of them have taken off their shoes in their attempt to outrun the others. Some have

thrown away their clubs. One of them has lost his cap. All this confusion is the result of their haste to see the fallen enemy.

A few individuals express their frustration and anger by giving the dead wolf a final blow or kick. One of them cannot refrain from making some derogatory remarks now that this sheep and horse thief is lying dead at his feet. Those of you who have never participated in such a hunt may find this behaviour strange. However, anyone who has ever experienced a wolf hunt will not be at all surprised to hear of such antics.

Considerable time passes while each one shares with the other his part in this great success story. After all, this has been an event of the greatest economic and historical significance for the islanders. Then everyone prepares to depart. The sun is already beginning to set and in an hour or so it will be quite dark. There are cheers as the wolf is loaded on the wagon which will lead the triumphal procession through the village. The hunters are ecstatic. No Roman Caesar ever experienced greater joy during a pompous victory march through the flower-strewn streets of Rome.

It was certainly an emotion-packed Sunday, would you not agree, my dear-reader? mm

GRAVE CONCERN

A grave state of affairs is indicated by this note from the minister of a country church in his monthly bulletin: "Churchyard maintenance is becoming increasingly difficult, and it will be appreciated if parishioners will cut the grass around their own graves."

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manitoba news

SOME WIN, SOME LOSE IN PROVINCIAL VOTE

There were 11 candidates in the recent Manitoba election who had clear Mennonite connections. Five were elected, two came in second, and the remaining four came in last.

Consistent with the over-all provincial results, Mennonite Progressive Conservative candidates in rural agricultural ridings were the winners: Bob Banman in La Verendrye, Arnold Brown in Rhineland, Albert Dreidger in Emerson, and Harry Enns in Lakeside. All four were members of the last legislature, with Mr. Banman and Mr. Enns part of the cabinet.

Two other Conservatives, Bill Dueck in Inkster, and Neil Dueck in the Interlake, came in second place.

Vic Schroeder was elected for the New Democratic Party in Winnipeg's Rossmere riding, and is the only Mennonite in the Government benches.

None of the two Progressive Party Mennonite candidates were elected. Jake Froese's attempt to return to the legislature (having once been a Social Credit member) failed in Rhineland; Jack Thiessen in Emerson and Merv Unger in Rossmere also failed. (The last edition of the *Mirror* incorrectly identified Mr. Unger as a Conservative.)

The lone Liberal Mennonite, John Epp, was defeated in Winnipeg's Sturgeon Creek.

In four seats Mennonites campaigned against each other: Rossmere with Mr. Schroeder and Mr. Unger; Rhineland with Mr. Brown and Mr. Froese; and Emerson with Mr. Dreidger and Mr. Thiessen.

Discussions on religious broadcasting and the role of the church in communications have been taking place in various contexts recently. In Winnipeg, an October 2-3 meeting of the Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba's **Faith and Life Communications** was convened to plan a new radio program being developed for North America. Participants in the sessions included **Eric Friesen**, director of program operations, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation Radio, Toronto, **David Schroeder**, professor, Canadian Mennonite Bible College; **Walter Unger**, producer, and **Harold Redekopp**, director of music, both of CBC, Toronto; **Victor Sawatzky**, **Henry Loewen**, and **Robb Nickel**, all of Faith and Life Communications, Win-

nipeg. The recommendation of participants was that Faith and Life develop a program aimed at Mennonite parents aged 35 and over. Program content is to be clearly Mennonite, using anecdotal storytelling to present biblical answers to basic human needs.

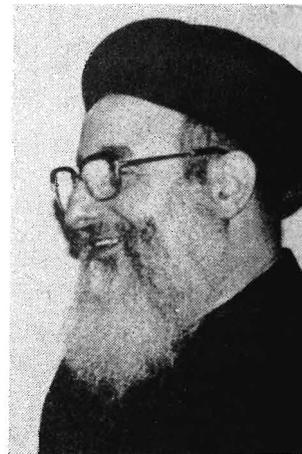
On October 23, members of the **Mennonite Radio and Television Council** met in Winnipeg to discuss a draft of a brief to be presented to the Canadian Radio and Television Commission. Prepared by **Al Siebert** of Winnipeg, the brief outlines concerns about potential restrictions on religious broadcasting. Media representatives at the meeting were from the Mennonite Brethren Church, the General Conference Mennonite Church, the Mennonite Church, the Evangelical Mennonite Conference, and the Mennonite Central Committee (Canada). The CRTC hearing to receive representations on current legislation and religious broadcasting is scheduled for January 26, 1982.

Mennonite delegates attended a recent two-day ecumenical conference in Toronto examining the impact of new communication technologies on the church. Among the innovations discussed was the home computer system. Churches, it was suggested, ought to be advocating now the right to present religious views through the new media. Among the Mennonite delegates were **Ken Weaver** of the Mennonite Board of Missions, Elkhart, Ind., and **Barth Hague**, General Conference Mennonite Church.

Richard and Anne Penner of Winnipeg are returning to Afghanistan, where only eight months ago they and a team of medical personnel hastily withdrew after the murder of two of their co-workers. The Penners left Canada September 7 for Kabul where, except for these past months, they have lived with their three children since December 1978, under the sponsorship of Mennonite Brethren Missions/Services. Richard Penner resumes managerial duties with International Assistance Mission, an agency which operates a 100-bed eye hospital. The February slaying of a European couple working with IAM is still unexplained.

The Canadian Union of Postal Workers has placed the Steinbach local of the union under trusteeship for not taking part in strike action this summer. A union representative said the action means Steinbach postal workers will no longer have any rights as union

members. Placing the local under trusteeship is a means of censuring the members for accepting the benefits of the strike while not respecting picket lines, the representative said. **Lloyd Barkman**, former shop steward of the Steinbach local, said he was not particularly concerned about the possibility of Steinbach employees losing their jobs. Members of the local have no regrets about not joining the strike, he said. "There are only so many silly issues you can support in life."



Bishop Samuel, spokesman for the Coptic Orthodox Church in Egypt, was among those who died during the October 6 assassination attack on President Anwar Sadat. The bishop, a well-loved religious figure in Egypt, had been deeply involved in acting as an advocate for the church with Egyptian Islamic and government leaders. Bishop Samuel was a close friend to Mennonite Central Committee workers in Egypt. He helped to develop MCC programs in cooperation with the church and insisted MCC workers gain an understanding of the Coptic Church.

A report in the **Mennonite Weekly Review** notes that undergraduate enrollment in five of eight U.S. Mennonite colleges is down this year. The combined enrollment at the eight colleges is 5,220, down 203 students from last year. Losses in enrollment are mainly from among the population of full-time students in four-year programs. Gains in enrollment were reported at both institutions with two-year programs. Other gains were concentrated in special programs such as Bluffton (Ohio) College's business program run in cooperation with Northwestern Business College and Fresno (California) Pacific College's graduate program and in the part-time student population.



Gloria Nickel, 25, of Horndean arrived home October 25 after being detained for 15 months in Columbia, South America. Miss Nickel, daughter of Edwin and Helen Nickel, was held in Columbian jail for three and a half months while authorities investigated her passport, purported to have been falsified. She was later released from jail although ordered to remain in the country while the investigation continued. A year after her release from prison, Miss Nickel, still waiting in Columbia, tried to escape to Panama. She hiked through the jungle and survived a treacherous seven-hour journey on a small motorboat only to be escorted back to Columbia by officials as soon as she landed in Panama. On October 23, Miss Nickel was finally told that a Columbian judge had signed the documents permitting her release.

Nineteen teachers in Hanover School Division received recognition for 25 years or more in the profession at the recent Hanover Teachers Association banquet in Steinbach. Among those honoured were **Margaret Hildebrand** (35 1/2 years), **Ben Dueck** (34), **Susan Friesen** (32), **Peter Hiebert** (31), **Hardy Kehler** (30), **Susann Enns** (29 1/2), **Abe Friesen** (29), **Jake Siemens** (28), **John Reimer** (28), **Ben Klassen** (27), **Art Wiebe** (26), **Melvin Toews** (26), **John Bestvater** (25), and **Elbert Toews** (25).

Albert Loewen was returned as chairman of the Hanover school board on November 3. With the exception of one year, Loewen has been a trustee since 1959. Eleven of those years have seen him sitting as chairman.

Two Mennonite family-run agricultural firms were among the recipients of DREE grants recently announced by Lloyd Axworthy, federal minister of employment and immigration. **Loewen Manufacturing**, owned by Jake L. Loewen of Altona, has accepted an incentive offer of \$59,465 to construct an addition to its agricultural machinery parts manufacturing plant. **Evergreen Industries**, operated by Abe J. Froese of Rosetown, has accepted an incentive offer of \$47,800 to purchase equipment and construct additions to its seed-processing facility.

A **Ben and Esther Horch** Appreciation Evening took place November 13 at the Mennonite Brethren Bible College in Winnipeg. The couple is well-known for their years of involvement in Mennonite music-making. Hosted by the MB Historical Society, the evening also saw the inauguration of the music collection at the Centre for MB Studies.

A **Canadian Association of Christian Humanitarian Agencies** has been formed by interested agencies in Canada who are active in relief, rehabilitation and development ministries in underdeveloped countries. The prime purpose in its formation is to provide to federal and provincial government agencies a representative voice that clearly reflects not only the unique overseas ministry but also the Christian mandate. Participating agencies include the Mennonite Central Committee and Mennonite Brethren Missions/Services.

Scott Braun, 11, of Lowe Farm is attending the Columbia Boy's Choir School in Princeton, New Jersey, this year. The only Canadian at the school, Scott won a scholarship to become a member of the choir. Scott first heard the boys in concert last spring in Altona and subsequently sent an audition tape to director Don Hansen. The touring boy's choir performs in the United States, Canada, and Europe.



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Bethesda Heath Service in Steinbach, incorporating Bethesda Hospital and Bethesda Personal Care Home, ended the 1980-81 fiscal year with a small surplus of \$4,000. The annual meeting October 21 was told the hospital has also begun to turn around a generally-declining bed occupancy rate.

Harry Loewen of the Chair of Mennonite Studies, University of Winnipeg, presented the main paper at the In-Service Training Session for Teachers of German, held on September 24-25 at the St. Benedict's Educational Centre in Winnipeg. His paper was entitled "Why Study Languages?" On October 29, Dr. Loewen presented an invited paper on the various groups of Canadian Mennonites within Canada's multi-cultural mosaic at the University of Mannheim, West Germany. The lecture was part of Mannheim's "Canada Days" and sponsored by the city of Mannheim and the Canadian Embassy in Bonn, Germany.

Patrick Friesen of Winnipeg was elected president of the first autonomous Manitoba Writers' Guild formed August 22. A media specialist in charge of audio-visual productions for the Manitoba Department of Education, Friesen is also a well-known poet in Manitoba circles. His most recent volume is *The Shunning*. **Victor Enns**, author of *Jimmy Bang Poems*, was elected vice-president. The guild provides support system and communication links for Manitoba writers.

The Mennonite Brethren office of Manitoba Home Missions and Church Extension have filled four positions this summer. **Gerald Hildebrand**, a graduate of MBBC and the University of Winnipeg, has assumed duties as chaplain at the Headingley Correctional Institution. **Walter and Mary Balzer** are pastoring at Snow Lake and **Jim and Leona Totske** will be working at The Pas. **Bruno Wiebe** is the new pastor of the Portuguese congregation in Winnipeg which meets in the Salem Mennonite Brethren Church.

Three Mennonite Central Committee projects are among the five recipients of grants announced recently by the Manitoba government. Funds were assigned for an Ethiopian forestation project (\$22,251), a Botswana teacher training programme (\$8,530), and a small turbine and mills project in Nepal (\$6,272).

"People Helping People" was the theme of the MCC (Manitoba) Women's Auxiliary sessions held October 17 in the Portage Avenue MB Church, Winnipeg. The sessions were attended by over 300 women. Chairperson of the auxiliary is **Helga Froese** of Steinbach.

On October 30 and 31 nine representatives from the five provincial advisory committees for the **MCC (Canada) Handicap Awareness Project** met in Winnipeg to discuss the year's activities and to plan for the future. **Henry Enns**, resource person for the project, chaired the meetings. Reports for the year indicated that many Mennonite churches across the country have been made accessible to the handicapped.

Eighty students from 11 North American Mennonite colleges, seminaries and bible institutes participated in the 1981 **Intercollegiate Peace Fellowship Assembly** October 22

to 24 at Bluffton College. They addressed the theme, "Christian Peacemaking and the State." Students from MBBC and CMBC in Winnipeg, as well as students from Elim Bible Institute in Altona and Swift Current Bible Institute, were among those sharing their concerns and ideas.

Nearly 300 people attended a banquet for the **Mennonite Disaster Service** hosted by the Blumenort EMC congregation on November 5 and another 200 attended a similar evening at the Whitewater Mennonite Church in Buissevain on November 6. It was noted

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MENNONITE CENTRAL COMMITTEE

that, while Manitoba itself has not suffered large-scale disasters, Manitobans made up half of the international squad this past summer. Presently, **Curtis Guenther** of the Steinbach EMB Church is on a Florida project involving housing for Haitian refugees.

The board of Mennonite Central Committee (Manitoba) approved a budget calling for \$950,000 from member churches, at its sessions in Winnipeg October 24. The board represents eight Mennonite conferences. New staff introduced at the sessions included **Menno Plett**, voluntary service coordinator. Plett has returned from a four-year assignment in Zaire, the last three as country director. He and his wife Lydia are members of the Landmark EMC congregation. **Ray Friesen** was appointed to Meditation Services staff on a half-time basis. He has been in the team ministry of the Aberdeen EMC Church in Winnipeg. The board affirmed that priority will continue to be given to native concerns and to core area programmes.

On short-term voluntary service assignments are **George and Helene Neufeld** of Winnipeg working at the SELFHELP warehouse in Pennsylvania; **Anne Penner** of Winkler working with Choice Books in Winnipeg; and **Ken Pauls** of Winnipeg working in Hutchinson, Kansas.

COMING EVENTS

January 21, 1982. Canadian Mennonite Health Assembly meets to discuss the theme, "Rediscovering the Place of the Church in Health Issues." At the Morrow Gospel Church in Winnipeg, from 8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.

February 23, 1982. The CBC Winnipeg Orchestra features violinist **Rennie Regehr** in a concert highlighting the music of Germany. At the Hotel Fort Garry.

*"Wishing You A
Joyous Christmas
And Blessings in The
New Year"*

cp
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FALL CONVOCATIONS

Fall convocations at the University of Manitoba and the University of Winnipeg recently saw a number of Mennonite students receiving degrees.

UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG

Bachelor of Science (4-year)

Irene Margaret Dyck

Bachelor of Science

Loretta Joan Wiebe

Bachelor of Education

Judith Darlene Dick

Larry George Friesen

Ellen Nanck Klausen

Wilma Maxine Helga Siemens

Bachelor of Arts (Honours)

John Wayne Giesbrecht

Joanne Elizabeth Riediger

Bachelor of Arts

Ronald Abe Banman

James Leslie Braun

Agatha Gertrude Fast Doerksen

Dora Ruth Sueck

Janice Denise Funk

Lydia Marie Harms

William David Hildebrandt

Kirsten Leigh Klassen

Hilda Rempel

Mary Thiessen

David Earl Toews

Edwin Walter Toews

Lynda Darlene Unrau

Anna Wiebe

UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

Doctor of Philosophy

Otto Bernhard Toews

Master of Arts

Doreen Helen Kassen

Master of Science

Robert Wayne Derksen

Gary William Falk

Master of Education

Judith Sylvia Dick

Albert Paul Penner

Bachelor of Arts

David George Blatz

Beverly Anne Enns

Laverna May Loewen

John David Gordon Neufeld

Norbert Penner

Vivian Carol Penner

Elsie Rempel

Victor Goerge Thiessen

Bachelor of Laws

Ruth Elizabeth Ens

Bachelor of Social Work

Veleda Elvira Toews

Bachelor of Education

Verna Eileen Funk

Joanne Beverly Heppner

Caroline Alice Martens

Jennifer May Janzen

Dennis Reimer

Teresa Lynn Wiens

Manfred and Dorothy Enns of Winkler are presently serving a two-year voluntary service assignment at MCC headquarters in Akron, Pennsylvania. Manfred is working in maintenance, while his wife is serving as hostess. Until recently, Manfred worked as an electrical contractor in Winkler and Dorothy as a piano teacher. They are members of the Grace Mennonite Church in Winkler and have three children and three grandchildren.

John J. Martens celebrated his 90th birthday on September 15. Family and friends gathered at Autumn House on this day for a delightful coffee hour. Although Mr. Martens was born at Münsterberg in the Molotschna on the 2nd of September, 1891, his formative years were spent in Tiege, Sagraowka. He left Russia in 1924 and settled in Springstein, Manitoba. A teacher in Russia and a farmer in Canada, he soon abandoned both careers for a life in the business world. Guests participated in a well-balanced program which recalled the intervening years and interspersed bits of pure entertainment such as the song *Die Uhr* as sung by Harry Enns. Two program items, a humorous poem which dwelt on the vagaries of aging as

read by Mrs. Wall and recollections as recited by Elisabeth Peters brought peals of laughter. Ministers, John Neufeld, Isaak Klassen and Jacob Wiebe also spoke, with each in his way contributing to the celebration, thoughts for the day and the morrow.

William Klassen, who has served for the past 10 years as professor of New Testament at the University of Manitoba has been appointed director of resources at Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, B.C. Klassen, who also served as head of the department of religion for nine years, has been living in Burnaby since last January while finishing his teaching at the University of Manitoba. He will be in charge of fund-raising, will teach one course per term, and will continue his research and writing. The appointment takes effect on January 1, 1982.



When they saw the young child with Mary His Mother, the wise men knelt down and worshipped Him. They opened their treasures and presented their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. As we recall the miracle of Christmas, we offer praise and thanks.

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Winkler welcomes past as ex-residents return

by Peter Paetkau

The year 1981 marks a milestone in the history of the town of Winkler. Celebrating its 75th anniversary with a series of events taking place each month throughout the year the activities undoubtedly set somewhat of a precedent in the way of such celebrations. Among the events to take place were the Dr. C.W. Wiebe Night, the Music Night, the Civic Centre opening, the Homecoming Weekend, and the great Saengerfest.

The first of these major events transpired on the night of April 10, 1981, when about 275 people turned out for a banquet dinner at the Winkler arena to honour Dr. C.W. Wiebe, who has spent most of his life in dedicated service to the people of the Winkler area. The doctor, now in his 88th year, was presented with the Winkler Kinsmen Club's fifty annual citizen-of-the-Year Award. The award, given in recognition to individuals who have given outstanding service to the community, was presented to Dr. Wiebe as the Pioneer Citizen to have made the greatest contribution during Winkler's first 75 years.

The guest speaker for the occasion, the Honourable Douglas L. Campbell, former Premier of Manitoba and longtime friend of Dr. Wiebe, referred to their association in the Manitoba legislature, and noted that "the contribution that Dr. Wiebe made to the community was largely due to his dedication and interest, and looking for-

ward to the younger people coming along."

Winkler's Old Time Music Night, sponsored by Sun Valley Radio and the Winkler Anniversary Committee, on May 26th at the Winkler Bible Institute auditorium, attracted about 800 popular music fans.

After approximately six years of planning and a further year of construction, the new Winkler Civic Centre was officially opened at a gala ribbon-cutting ceremony on June 20th.

The new Civic Centre, containing 21,000 square feet of space, properly reflecting the prosperity and progress of Winkler, will adequately serve its fast growing population and constitute a focal point for much community activity. Besides providing accommodation for the town's administrative offices and council chambers, the building will also house the Winkler Police Department, the local Chamber of Commerce, the Winkler branch of the South Central Regional Library, as well as some government offices.

A representative of the Valentine Winkler family was present to unveil the plaque commemorating the contribution of Valentine Winkler to the establishment of the Town of Winkler in 1906. The plaque on the clock tower honours Valentine Winkler, 1864-1920, after whom the Town of Winkler was named.

It is interesting to note, as Mayor Wiebe pointed out, that "No levy on taxes will be made for this project. The delay of over five years in construction,

has given Council the opportunity to budget in advance for this project. It is completely paid for. The ultimate saving by prepaying this project, is at least a minimum of \$1 million in interest charges at today's rates".

The major event to celebrate Winkler's 75th Anniversary, of course, was the three-day Homecoming on the weekend of July 31st to August 2nd.

An estimated 1,000 people arrived early Saturday morning for the pancake breakfast and, with hundreds of others soon crowding in for the official opening of the Homecoming Days, constituted a fairly large mass of people lining the sidewalk along Main Street to view the anniversary parade immediately following the brief opening ceremony.

The 75th Anniversary parade with eighty entries, made up of about 150 units, was the largest parade ever seen in Winkler, perhaps also the first one to be staged complete with "entry by entry" description, here successfully accomplished by CFAM's Harry Siemens and Diana Howe.

A Homecoming program on Saturday and Sunday night featured good musical entertainment and down-to-earth reminiscing. Of particular interest were the remarks by Dr. Elisabeth Peters in her recollection of early Winkler in outlining the drama she was commissioned to write for presentation during the anniversary year. Entitled, "The Cherry Hedge", the play depicts "life on Shady Street" during the 1940's.

The Homecoming concluded with a delicious Beef Pit Barbecue put on by members of the Winkler Fire Department. Over 800 pounds of tender succulent beef was thus served to over 3,000 people on Sunday afternoon after the final program.

Possibly the finest and most unforgettable event to take place during Winkler's Anniversary Year was the community Saengerfest taking place on Sunday, October 25th, in the spacious Bergthaler Church. Composed of an afternoon and evening performance, it was a great occasion in the grand manner of Winkler's finest and most dedicated musicians who have in the past worked tirelessly to foster an appreciation for the best in religious and classical music.

The Saengerfest essentially paid tribute to the work of men like Dr. Karl H. Neufeld, Jacob A. Kroeker, Benjamin Horch, Jake P. Redekop, and others by performing favorite selections from their repertoire. Redekop the successor to K.H. Neufeld, who subsequently worked for many years as a teacher and musician in Winkler, directed a large mass choir in the singing of these selections and himself paid tribute to Karl H. Neufeld. mm

Common heritage in Ukrainian book

DOWN SINGING CENTURIES: Folk Literature of the Ukraine. Translated by Florence Randal Livesay, compiled and edited by Louisa Loeb with the generous assistance of Dorothy Livesay. Hyperion Press, Winnipeg, 1981.

A review by Al Reimer

For a lover of books there are few pleasures equal to the pleasure of picking up a new book which not only promises interesting reading but which is in its format, design and execution, a work of art in its own right. *Down Singing Centuries* is that rare kind of book. It is as pleasing to the eye as it is to the mind and heart.

This handsome volume of Ukrainian folk poems, songs, and legends, is a combined labor of love by three talented women and one man. The materials were originally translated and published 65 years ago by Florence Randal Livesay, a remarkable woman in her own right, and the mother of Dorothy Livesay, one of Canada's most outstanding poets. The editor, Louisa Loeb, is a scholar of Ukrainian and Mennonite background who is specialist in pedagogy at Brandon University. The man on the team is the Canadian artist Stefan Czernecki,

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Benefactors \$1000 or more annually; patrons \$500 to \$999 annually; sustaining members of \$100 to \$499 annually; donors \$25 to \$99 annually.

who provides 12 of the most beautiful color illustrations I have ever seen in a Canadian book. As added bonuses, there is a Forward by Gov. Gen. Schreyer, a superb Preface by Dorothy Livesay and an Introduction by the well known Slavic Studies specialist Dr. Jaroslav Rudnyckyj.

In the early years of this century, Florence Randal Livesay, according to Prof. Rudnyckyj, was "the first English Canadian to offer English speaking fellow Canadians the treasures of Ukrainian folklore and literature in general." From her Ukrainian domestics she first heard the beautiful songs and poems which became her passion, one might almost say her obsession. Louisa Loeb became interested in the Livesay translations and wrote a doctoral

dissertation on Florence Randal Livesay's work.

The book is meticulously edited and annotated and the various songs (*dumy*) and legends placed in proper historical and cultural perspective. These translations open up the rich imaginative world of the Ukrainian peasant as has nothing else I have ever read. They are the stuff of universal myth, but they retain also the earthy, bluff air and texture of the common man who must come to terms with the inexorable demands of existence in a fascinating but often harsh and cruel world.

As I read these colorful stories I could not help but wonder how many of them would be familiar to older Mennonites who were born and raised in the Ukraine before the revolution. If any of their children or grandchildren are looking for a suitable Christmas gift for Oma and Opa, they should consider this beautiful book. Hyperion Press, Designer Arlene Osen, and everyone else who contributed to this project deserve to be highly commended for this fine achievement.

mm

LOVING EACH OTHER AGAIN

"For those who are tired"

Over the ocean, a young child is dying
Her mother in hunger sits helplessly by,
The night is alive with rockets and bombers
Her father stares beaten too saddened to cry

What have they done with their might
and their power?
Where are the angels who sang way back then?
All that they want is a chance to
be loving, Loving each other again

Down in the suburbs of one of our cities
A teenager sat down with pen in hand
She wrote out a letter addressed to her parents
And these if you read them
Are the words that she said:
"Mother and Father I remember a Christmas
When I was just five and beginning to grow
We took a family picture and we were all
smiling, But Today looking back
That seems so long ago"

So lets put the love back in living
this year
Remember the Saviour and then
reach out and touch all those people
around you, Loving each other again.

— by Clint Toews

music and words copyright 1981.

A grandmother reflects on her many blessings

As told to Helen Rose Pauls

It is undeniably satisfying to sit in my rocking chair in our modern home with six appliances humming to do my work: two freezers—one for meat from the boy's farm, one for the fruits and vegetables we still raise; a fridge, an electric stove, a dishwasher. My washer and dryer would have sent my own mother into ecstasy.

It is very tempting to think that life will go on like this forever. A warm house, a steady pension cheque, surrounded by children and grandchildren who really care. Who could have imagined in their wildest dreams that things would turn out so well?

I remember having only four diapers for my first infant. Clothes and linens were impossible to get in Russia in the late 30's. And a machine to wash them with? Not even a scrub board. We were thankful for a mud shack to call our own. I made the mud bricks myself while Peter was at work for long hours. I dug the basement with a shovel. In Canada I have not seen such hard clay!

When World War II came, we managed to flee to Danzig with the German army when they retreated. I remember praying on the trip, that our listless feverish son could die peacefully and be carried into the arms of Jesus. It was too hard to watch him suffer. Is he the same son who now farms four sections with three sons of his own?

Sometimes I still wake in a cold sweat, fiery bombs exploding all around me, tiny children clutching my skirts, a half-dead baby in my arms. But I wake to hear the reassuring hum of the gas furnace. I feel the sheets and soon roll over to sleep again The memory is so real, although it's more than 35 years now.

Then there were the years when Peter and I were separated. He was impressed into the German army. He had no other choice. It was that or the firing squad. Before he left he managed to arrange that I and the little ones would take a ship to Gutenhafen, Germany. He hoped we would be safer there, farther from the advancing Russian front. I was assigned

to work on a farm in Germany. We were shown one cold room in the farmhouse, one single bed and an old cupboard. Neither I nor the children had eaten much for days. My daughter kept opening and closing the cupboard doors. I cried as I watched her. The cupboard was empty. Now she has two freezers and rows of canned goods.

The older ones helped the younger ones while I did a man's work from dawn to dusk: feeding pigs, milking, gardening, spading, manuring out barns. How we ate potatoes! Our hosts considered us a burden. We probably were. But we were alive and were eating.

Each Sunday, I escaped going to the Catholic church with my host, by walking to town with my children. We would visit the cemetery.

The children ran from tombstone to tombstone and picked flowers. I watered the flowers with my tears. Where was my Peter? Was he long dead in some unknown unmarked grave far from here? Was he cold, starving, sick, injured?

If I had known that he would find us after the war through the village directory—Germany was very organized, even in war time—and that we would live together in that one room, I would have been reassured.

Today, it seems like a fairy tale. We were reunited. We were sponsored by relatives in Saskatchewan, and came to Canada. We worked hard to buy a farm of our own. We had other children together and often joke about "Russia" family and our "Canada" family.

Their children sit in my family room and watch TV. At Christmas, they enjoy my Halvah, and often beg for plum or cherry *verenike*. But their German doesn't go beyond *Oma*, *Opa* and *Aufwiedersehen*. They are rosy-cheeked Canadians.

Sometimes their mothers ask me why I never use my cannister set and electric knife. The slow cooker and blender which my daughters gave me, decorate the kitchen untouched. If they knew with what I started out But it is too hard to explain. I have too much already. I am choked with blessings. And I have peace. mm

POEM FOR MY GRANDFATHER

Seventy-seven sundustwind-wrinkled years formed in
the scampering gopher-quickness morning

Skysmile dreams between grasswisps meeting
the train hurtling loneliness
into long gasps of cold night

A newcontaining of unseeding dirt
under-around a wife complete with six kids

Dark-shivering the moon nailhard clear
the relief line crawls

A rich man in his sunday-worst
picking at cheese from the east

While granpa totters with forgiveness
the neighbour's cattle graze on his crewcut grass

Why not go
to green B.C. or beautiful California
(already I hear Friesens have a car bought there)

but he stayed
to be there when th family album died
to bury unspoken country-city jokes

to celebrate again our contented pastimes

— by Maurice Mierau

Summerfallow credits due to Mennonites too

by Dr. P.L. Neufeld

As an historian, it always annoys me immensely whenever I read a book or article describing some notable achievement by a Canadian and credit is given the wrong person. Especially when, as an ethnic Mennonite deeply proud of our heritage, such recognition rightly belongs to one of my own people. A flagrant example of this is found in Helen Palk's popular *Book of Canadian Achievement*, which includes a chapter outlining Angus Mackay of Indian Head, Saskatchewan's 1885 "discovery of summerfallowing"—a method of dry farming used so successfully by North American prairie farmers the past century.

Well, it certainly wasn't Angus Mackay who discovered summerfallowing. Perhaps Mackay actually believed he did. As this method was a new and most radical innovation to his Indian Head area neighbors recently arrived from Ontario, it likely was believed generally in Saskatchewan that he was the originator. But he wasn't; not by half a century.

During the 1830s, thousands of miles away on the vast treeless Russian Steppes, one of Europe's greatest agriculturists, Johann Cornies, developed the crop rotation with summerfallow system. There it was used with great success from then on. This is well documented in history. Personally, I recall my own father (born at the turn of the century, who lived there until mid-1920s) telling me that summerfallowing was used by his father's generation, and his grandfather's before that, long before he was born.

How does that relate to the Canadian Prairies? When a large body of Mennonites left the Steppes during 1874-6 to settle in the treeless Steinbach-Altona-Winkler region of Manitoba, the farmers among them—brought up on four decades of summerfallowing-crop rotation heritage—immediately applied it to the similar Red River Valley setting. In short, hundreds of Mennonite farmers there were using this method of farming a full decade before Angus Mackay "discovered" it at Indian Head.

Enroute to his Saskatchewan home-
stead from Whitby, Ontario, Mackay

passed through Red River Valley in 1882 when summerfallowing was already widely practiced there. It's quite conceivable he learned of it there, simply utilized the concept on his own farm several years later when faced with a drought problem. No evidence has been submitted that Mackay, himself, ever laid claim to having evolved summerfallowing. Indian Head area residents seem to have made this claim in later years. Let's give credit where due.

It would, of course, be vastly simpler and more effective for an historian unearthing an invalid claim of great achievement being widely credited to one person, were he able to correct it by substituting the name of the correct person. Rather than a large group years later introducing that achievement into their adopted homeland. Unfortunately, in this particular case, the one single person deserving the credit never lived in Canada; in fact, died 33 years before said event was even supposed to have occurred. Not even one Johann Cornies descendent made it here, for all were murdered by the Communists during the Russian Revolution. Only a monument commemorating this agricultural genius stands on the eastern rim of those Canadian Prairies his profound ideas helped make great.

Johann Cornies walked tall not only among fellow Mennonites, but equally among Hutterites, fiery Nogaier tribesmen and Czarist Russia's military giants—Cossacks. The Hutterites named a colony after him there, Canadian descendents speak reverently of him and history books laud his accomplishments. Nogaier tribesmen affectionately called him Batschka Ivan (Father John) and Nimitz Sheik (Great German Leader). Cossacks presented him with an invaluable riding horse. Baron von Harthausen claims he could have become a Russian governor, refused because he wanted to farm. Russian royalty frequently visited him, and he was honored with one of Russia's highest medals.

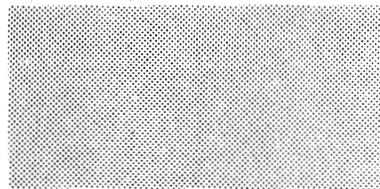
In 1838, Czar Alexander I recognized Cornies' phenomenal agricultural success at grassroots level by appointing him director of the Agricultural Association, which overnight became an economics-cultural department umbrella for

all Mennonite colonies in Russia. Under his expert hand, the Ukraine's most massive tree-planting program ever flourished. Farm shelter belts, shady village streets, complete forests sprang up. At great expense, he imported pure-bred cattle, sheep and horses. Naturally, his own crop rotation-summerfallow method of preserving valuable soil moisture was introduced on a large scale. The Ukraine's flour-milling industry was developed almost solely by colonists under Cornies' direct supervision, my wife's great-grandfather being one such mill owner. This industry rocketed into international limelight when flour began winning gold medals at world fairs. He organized one of Russia's finest reference libraries, and conducted more archaeological studies in the Ukraine than ever known in that country. By 1843, the whole Mennonite educational system was added to Cornies' administrative guidance.

No, it wasn't really Angus Mackay of Indian Head in Saskatchewan who discovered summerfallowing on this continent. It was Johann Cornies of the Ukraine who developed it, and inspired ardent proteges to transplant his unique system to Red River Valley in Manitoba well before Mackay's "amazing discovery."
mm

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UNFAIR TO CREATION

The article 'Scientific Creationism vs. Evolution; begs some comments. I do not think the creationist was treated fairly, and so I shall speak to several indirect accusations. The statement 'Christians should be warned that the creationist don't have all the answers either' implies that creationists make such vast claims for their ideas. I have known a number of scientists that are creationists and have never detected such pride or pretence.

The statement 'If creationists want to be taken seriously they will have to do some pretty hard work substantiating their claim' would be equally true if we substituted the word 'evolutionist' for 'creationist'. But the real intent seems to be that creationists are too lazy to do research. I recommend reading 'Ten Years of Creationist Research' by ICR for anyone that is interested. We must remember also that research costs money, and whereas the government spends millions on research in evolution, creationist must finance themselves. Likewise there is a reluctance on the part of scientific journals to publish any work supporting creation.

The statement 'So the evolutionary view of the past is pretty secure as far as biologists are concerned' is incorrect if he means all biologists agree to it. I know three biologists who although they once taught evolution in university, now have refuted that view of the past.

This article brings to our attention to the predicament we are in as soon as we allow human speculation to replace the authoritative Word. Is it really possible to be a creationist and yet believe in evolution? This seems to be the position taken in this article.

The article ends in a commendable way. Man was created in the image of God with the responsibility and dignity therewith implied. It is true that there will be many unanswered questions but these need not destroy our faith in our Creator and Savior. I look forward to the day when Glen Klassen and I get our answers in God's classroom.

Sincerely,

Abe Enns

Winkler,

and president Creation Science Association of Manitoba Inc.

WHY FOCUS ON CREATION?

Dear Sir:

Re the article, Scientific Creationism vs Evolution by Glen Klassen, would

like to make a few comments.

God was also supposed to have created a flat static earth, but it turned out that He had a mind of his own and created a globe-shaped one that not only travelled, but spun as well.

In spite of that, the six-day creationists still can't credit God with the intelligence and capabilities to have been able to create life in His own way. The only problem, as I see it, is that the human mind isn't developed far enough to be able to comprehend it fully. In fact, it seems that in some cases it hasn't even developed to the extent that it tries to understand. God created life, but the salvation of your soul will not depend on whether he did it your way, my way, or His way. So why make it THE major issue in religion? After all, haven't we all been told that God works in mysterious ways His wonders to preform?

W.B.Barkman

Seinbach

LONG DISTANCE NOTE

Dear Sir:

Just a small note of affirmation for the publication. There is some considerable geographic as well as cultural distance between here and there, but I do enjoy certain aspects of most issues.

Actually, "hailing" from that mecca called Steinbach I have appreciated the space given to review of Mr. P. Friesen's work. The bookstores here have yet to start carrying the book so I have not managed to read the material for myself.

I hope that the publication can print a relatively broad spectrum of voices. One of the dilemmas that mennos have is the seeming inability of critical voices to survive within the group and the result verges on a sort of collective narcissism. The phenomenon is universal enough though one always hopes that groups that have a significant affliction with the "us/them" disease will find a way to join the rest of us. Some "real live" out-

side views might even prove beneficial to the group.

The view from here (in an urban area with innumerable immigrant groups) makes the menno experience in the new world look rather normal. At the most basic level, the human body, I often have difficulty distinguishing the hasidic jews in Brooklyn from my memory of the holdemans in my home town. At a more ethereal level, one does tire of the unending insistence that the menno position is indeed so unequivocally unique (read superior).

Anyway, gird your loins for the turn of the century, menno or otherwise. With any luck or a lot of luck homo sapiens might even make it into the age of aquarius without frying ourselves and the earth. After all, these times are hellish enough to make all the apocalyptic evangelicals gleeful going on smug. And at least here in the new world they are seemingly gaining increasing ideological and political strength. Conceivably this is ordained?

James Rempel

Brooklyn, New York

P.S. I was most pleased to see the 90th birthday photo of my parternal grandmother, Mrs. J.S. Rempel, in your last issue. The 2 unnamed gentlemen in the picture were my uncle Ed J. Rempel, and my father, Arthur B. Rempel, of Steinbach.

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I am thankful for the *Mennonite Mirror* which I now appear to be receiving as a senior citizen.

I enjoyed Rhinehart Friesen's *The Loveliest Coffin* for its perception, insight, gentleness and delicacy of feelings.

With best wishes

Helen Janzen

Winnipeg



Christmas Choral Concert

The Mennonite Brethren Collegiate Institute will present its annual Choral Concert Monday, December 14 - 7:30 p.m. at the M.B.C.I. Gym, 173 Talbot Ave. The school will feature its choirs and some bands. Come and enjoy Christmas music at M.B.C.I.

De Kosibock

Von John C. Neufeld

Daut jefft aulerhaund Batj. Doa ess de Holtztjibock onn de Soagibock onn uck de Bock enni Rock, wann jemaund schlachta Laun ess, oada de jischoatni Bock wann jemaund aewa daut Oha jihaut haft tjreaji. Onn dann send doa uck noch Menschi de heti Bock. Oba nu well eck von enim rejlrachten Kosibock vutalli.

Dis Kosibock woahnd dicht bie de Darpschol enn Tiegenhoagi enn de Molotchna Kolonie. Dit weha aul so en jigrommda. He wisst sich got enn sieni Welt tracht to fingi. De groati Schiela haudi vael Spoas mett ahm wann se ahm bie de Heana faust hildi onn ahm goot bossich moaki. Oba vo ons tjleni Aunfaenja wea he en woahra Schratji. Eck saj junt dis Kosibock wisst emma gaunz jinau wann daut Tied wea fo de Aunfaenja no Hus to goani, nae ranni. Dann wea he aul emma opp Datj ons mett Volldaump opp dem Wach to brinji.

Verlaengst de Gaus, aun jiedat Sied wea en breda Tejeltun, so auls de menonitische Darpa daut jiwoenlich haudi. Wann wie dann red weari dann moak wie eascht en baet de Scholdea oap onn tijtjti auf he aul doa wea. Dann jintj daut emm Hurrah opp dem Tejeltun. De wea

so Bret daut maun doa ruhig boawi goani kunn. Onn so kaum wie dann von ahm wach.

Dit wea aul waehrend de knaupi Joahri. Schoh kunn maun nich tjepi. Omm de Not auftohalpi wordi Sandali onn Schlorri von Holt jimoakt. Onn fo de Maetjis wordi soni schmoecki mett hoagi Aufsatz jimoakt. De sach saut seha so auls waut maunchi Daumi nu droagi. Holtschlorri sent oba to Tiedi en baet schwierig opp de Feet to holi.

Nu passead daut enis Doagis daut ons Kosibock wadda seha drock juhaut haud aulis enni Schwung to brinji. Peta, ena

von de jratri Schiela, haud daut Unjleck eni von sieni Holtschlorri to voleari. De Kosibock sach daut wo Peta sich betjt omm de Schlorri wada aun sienen Plautz to brinji. Na dissi Jilegenheit kunn he sich nich derchgoani loati. Daut schiend so he wea uck aul gaunz dichtig von de kommunistische Propaganda aunjisteckt. Endoal mett aulim, enn eni nieji Ordnung jischaufft, wea daut Schlagwoat to de Tied. Na onns Kosibock wea doamett gaunz envostoani. He duckt sienen Kopp rauf, hoald aun daut de Stoff floach onn jef dem Peta von hinji so enin jiwaultjin Drusch

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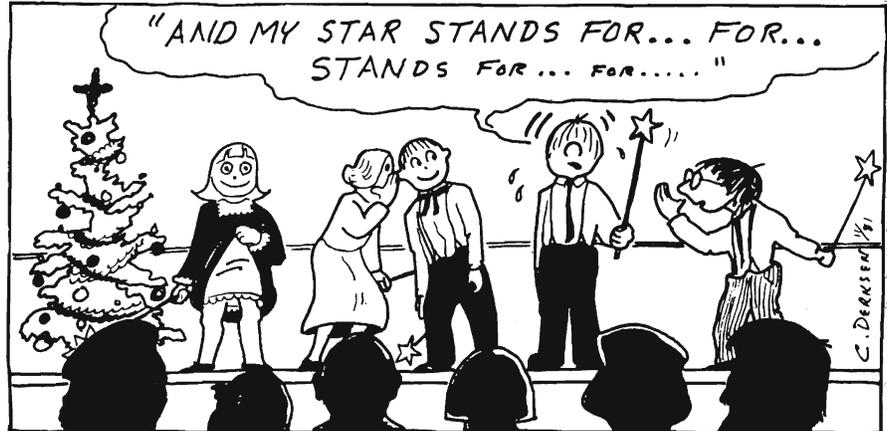
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Little ike — Praire Boy



daut de Peta mau so heistakopp opp dem Stich rolld.

Die Kosibock docht so dit sull noch mau blost de Aunfang senni. He jintj rueckwoats omm noch enmoal aun-tohoali. Oba de Peta haud aundrit emm Senn. He sach daut he opp dem Tun kaum. Auls groata Jung fer dem Kosibock derchtogoani onn opp dem Tun to hupsi, wea kratjt so vael auils toto jewi daut he angst haud, daut heet, eni Strempp wea.

Onn so kaum daut, daut dem Peta ditt Riemsel to Ehren jidicht wort. Doa wea dann uck emma jemaund de ahm daut friewellig oppsaed.

De Peta ess opp dem Tun juhuppst, wiel de Kosibock ahm jischuppst. Peta, Peta Hoasifoot, Ess dem Kosibock nich meha goot.

mm

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Harder impressed and and impressive

by Mary M. Enns

The recent two-week visit to Winnipeg of Johannes Harder, the well-known Mennonite author, minister and polemicist from Germany, made a profound impression on all those lucky enough to hear him at least once. In addition to lectures at CMBC and the University of Winnipeg, Prof. Harder spoke at two Mennonite churches and at several special functions. His blazing eloquence, dynamic presence and intense conviction on a number of topics left his audiences in a state of delighted awe. His sharp comments pungent analysis and side-splitting anecdotes at social engagements further delighted friends and admirers in our community.

Originally from Alexanderthal in Russia, Harder completed his education in Germany and became an author, editor and then a professor of sociology at the Pedagogical Academy in Wuppertal. After the War he became a minister and then elder of the Mennonite church in Frunkfurt. Over the years he also found time to write at least a dozen novels (of which the first was translated as *No Strangers in Exile* by Al Reimer in 1979), as well as many other books, chapters and articles on everything from theology to Russian Mennonite history. Dr. Harry Loewen, Chair of Mennonite Studies, who sponsored Harder's visit, has called him "the greatest German-Mennonite author living today." Now close to eighty, Harder is a whirling dervish of physical and intellectual energy, throwing out ideas and observations as fast as his nimble tongue can utter them.

Johannes Harder's activist Christianity is based squarely on the Sermon on the Mount. It is his inspiration, his standard, and his justification for his passionately argued conviction that politics and religion cannot and ought not to be

separated in this world. "Religion," he said in his lecture on "Religion and Politics" at the University of Winnipeg, "is a longing, a search for truth and purpose. No matter how we look at it, we are all of us—Christians and atheists—in one way or another obligated to society, dependent on one another, and thus thrust into an invisible common net." According to Harder, Christ calls for a radical turning, a new way of life. Humility is greater than heroism. As followers of Christ we are called upon to continue the work He began with His death on the Cross. And the way to do that is through the justice, compassion and forgiving attitudes taught us in the Sermon on the Mount. "We need to convert truth into reality. As representatives of Christ it is up to us to continue the changes begun by Christ in this world."

That is the heart of the radical message brought by this remarkable man. Johannes Harder fearlessly preaches the radical gospel even if that compels him at times to preach against the churches and other man-made institutions which often come between the gospel and human beings searching for the truth in a dark world.

By the end of his visit he had many of us seeing him as a kind of modern prophet. With his short, pixiesh figure and merry, mischievous face, he does not look like an Old Testament prophet, but with his straightforward zeal and tongue of fire he certainly sounds like one.

In North America for the first time, this unassuming but compelling man has already vowed to come back to a city where he "experienced such genuine friendliness and beautiful hospitality." Those of us who met and heard him can hardly wait. mm



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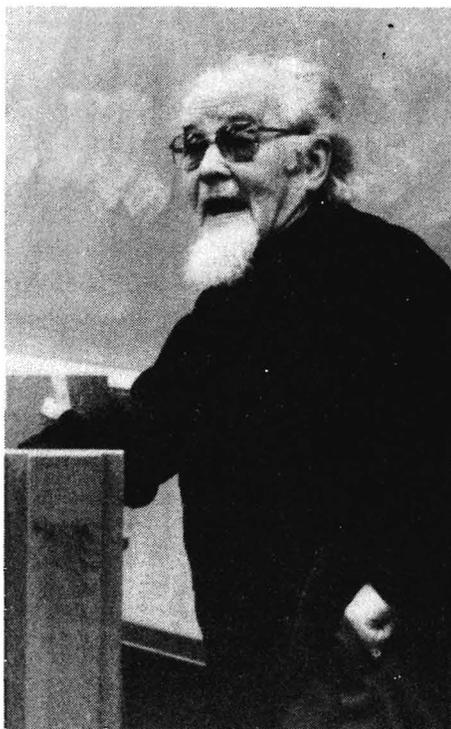
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Der Mensch Johannes Harder

von Harry Loewen

Letzten Monat hatten viele Mennoniten in Winnipeg das Vorrecht Professor Johannes Harder, Deutschland, zu hören und kennenzulernen. Nicht nur beeindruckte Harder seine Hörer mit dem, was er sagte, sondern auch mit *wie* er es sagte.

Harder ist ein geborener Erzähler, in dem ein Schauspieler verlorengegangen ist. Und doch wohl nicht. In seinen zahlreichen Schriften, die Romane, Erzählungen und Aufsätze einschließen, und in seinen lebensnahen Vorträgen und Predigten ist er höchst anschaulich und gar dramatisch. In seiner fließenden Sprache und Vortragsweise tritt das Thema konkret, ja fast fühlbar und sichtbar, hervor.

Und doch ist es Harder nicht um das Schauspiel zu tun. Was er zu sagen hat, ist nicht nur ernst gemeint, sondern ist Ausdruck einer Bürde, die Harder schon jahrelang auf dem Herzen trägt und ihn zum Propheten in unserer Zeit macht.

Johannes Harder stammt aus der mennonitischen Kolonie in der Wolgagegend, in die seine Vorfahren in der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts aus Preußen kamen. Nach dem ersten Weltkrieg floh er mit seiner Familie nach Deutschland, wo er dann in den Dreißiger Jahren mit der Bekennenden Kirche verbunden war. Im zweiten Weltkrieg diente er als Dolmetscher in Rußland und nach dem Kriege hatte er an der Bergischen Hochschule in Wuppertal, Deutschland, den Lehrstuhl für Sozialwissenschaften inne.

„Johannes Harder lebt seit einigen

Jahren im Ruhestand und kommt doch nicht zur Ruhe,“ wie sein Freund Hans-Jürgen Goertz schreibt, „er steht noch auf Kanzeln und Kathedern und ergreift das Wort, wo christliche Maßstäbe verrückt werden und die gesellschaftliche Moral zu verkommen droht.“

Nach Johannes Rau, dem Ministerpräsidenten von Nordrhein-Westfalen, hat Harder „seine Kräfte für ein lebenslanges Engagement nicht aus sich selbst. Die Sache Jesu ist für ihn gegenwärtig wirksam. . . . Dieser Sache sich verpflichten, als Lehrer, Prediger und Schriftsteller, das hat für ihn die politische Dimension immer selbstverständlich eingeschlossen, im Sinne Christoph Blumhardts.“

Am 17. August 1979 wurde Johannes Harder eine große Ehre zuteil, als ihm das „Große Bundesverdienstkreuz“ von der Regierung verliehen wurde. In seiner Dankrede bei dieser Gelegenheit erklärte Harder, daß er nicht ein Ordensritter, sondern ein „Kreuzträger“ im christlichen Sinne des Wortes werden möchte. Auch versprach er in dieser Rede, „unter allen Umständen zu verhindern, daß mir der Lorbeer zur Augenbinde auswächst.“

Nichts ist Harder so zuwider wie Augenbinden und Scheuklappen. Furchtlos und mit Nachdruck spricht er immer wieder von dem, was die heutige Welt und Kirche brauchen: Wahrheit, Liebe, Toleranz, und individuelle und gesellschaftliche Freiheit und Gerechtigkeit. Er ist immer gegen Zwang und Versklavung, woimmer sie sich auch zeigen mögen, und er ist im-

mer auf seiten der Bedrückten, Armen und Leidenden. Ihm geht es nicht um Ansehen und Ruhm, sondern in seinem Leben und in seiner Tätigkeit versucht er in aller Demut den Lehren und Beispielen des „Bergpredigers“ nachzukommen. „Und der Mann von Nazareth,“ wie Harder sich ausdrückt, „hat uns auch heute noch — gerade heute — viel zu sagen. Doch die Botschaft Jesu ist nie populär gewesen.“

Wenn man Harder sieht und hört, denkt man unwillkürlich an die alten Propheten und frühen Täufer. Wie die Propheten und Täufer ist Harder „radikal“, das heißt, er geht der Sache bis zur Wurzel nach und erinnert uns an den Ursprung und an das Herz der Gottesbotschaft, nämlich Gottes Liebe zum Menschen und menschliche Verantwortung der gefährdeten Welt gegenüber.

Ein Prophet, wie Harder es ist, ist nirgends so recht willkommen und schon gar nicht im eigenen Hause. An Harder scheinen sich die Geister zu scheiden — und nicht nur die mennonitischen. Entweder wird er geliebt und seine Arbeit geschätzt, oder er wird verdacht und als Störenfried empfunden. Doch sind solche Störenfriede heutzutage sehr *notwendig*. In einer Welt, wo die Kirche — einschließlich die Mennoniten — zum Teil von ihrem Ursprung abgewichen ist, helfen diese radikalen Nachfolger Jesu, die *Not*, in der sich die Christenheit und Welt befinden, zu *wenden*.

Menschen wie Johannes Harder geben uns Hoffnung für eine bessere Zukunft, wo Armut, Gewalt, Feindschaft und Hass durch etwas mehr Freundlichkeit, Menschlichkeit und vor allem Liebe hier und da abgelöst werden. Wie Harder sich in den Worten Christoph Blumhardts ausdrückt: „(Die Leute Jesu) wissen, daß ‚noch alles gut wird‘.“

Harders Art und Weise hat aber auch eine weniger ernste Seite. In seinem Umgang mit Kollegen und Freunden scheint sein Humor, Wirklichkeitssinn, und „Lust zu fabulieren“ ohne Grenzen zu sein. Bei seinen Witzen und Geschichten muß und darf man ungehemmt lachen und Harder selbst lacht laut und herzlich mit, wenn er Witze und humorvolle Geschichten hört. Wer da glaubt, daß ein Christ als Kopfhänger durch die Welt gehen muß, der ist bei Harder an die falsche Adresse gelangt.

Harder glaubt wie Blumhardt, den er oft enthusiastisch zitiert: „Viele wollen . . . viel zu sehr alles im Himmel suchen . . . Ich möchte aber sagen . . . Hier unten, nicht droben in der unsichtbaren Welt, nicht um den Thron Gottes, sondern hier auf Erden ist Jesus erschienen, und hier auf Erden will er immer wieder der Erschienenen sein, und hier auf Erden dürfen wir ihn als den Erschienenen und als den Erscheinenden suchen.“ mm

Herr Arthur Woelcke, gebürtig aus Schönsee im Danziger Werder, lebte mit seiner Frau, Käthe, in Lübeck, West-Deutschland. Er starb im April 1977.

Vor einigen Jahren schrieb er auf Bitten seines Sohnes seine Erinnerungen über den 1. Weltkrieg nieder. Er betitelte seine Aufzeichnungen: "Erinnerungen eines alten Mannes."

Der erste Teil des "Tagebuches" erschien in der letzten Nummer des *Mennonite Mirror*. Hier folgt nun die Fortsetzung und Schluß.

Sibirisches Tagebuch II

von Arthur Woelcke

(bearbeitet von U. Woelcke)

Endlich kam er. Wir verliessen das Lager und nach einigen Minuten hatten wir ein geraeumiges Holzhaus erreicht in dem die bewusste Familie wohnte. Der Name ist mir entfallen. Der Herr des Hauses war ein Ingenieur und viel in China unterwegs. Seine Frau, ich werde sie "Mama" nennen, und Olga, eine deutsch-sprechende junge Dame, empfingen mich sehr freundlich. Man bat mich, meinen Mantel draussen auf dem Schnee liegen zu lassen, damit der Barackengeruch verschwände.

Die anderen Hausgenossen waren Mamas 3 Toechter — Rusja 17, Tanja 15 und Ninitschka 10, der Tscheche Franz, und nicht zu vergessen, Drusch und Druschok, die beiden Hunde. Mama und ihre Toechter waren sehr gut aussehend und sehr hoeflich. Am ersten Tage meines Besuches wurde mir durch Olga gesagt, dass ich nicht zu arbeiten brauchte. Man gab mir deutsche Zeitschriften zu lesen, und ich kam mir vor als waere ich in einer fremden aber ugemein schoenen Welt. Die folgenden Wochen und Monate vergingen viel zu schnell. Ich hackte Holz, fuellte die Wassertonnen, plaettete sogar Waesche und besorgte im Fruehling den riesigen Garten. Mit Rusjas Hilfe lernte ich etwas russisch, und wenn ich abends zurueck ins Lager ging drueckte mir Mama oft eine kleine Gabe in die Hand; mal einige Kopeken, mal ein Taschentuch, eine Decke und gar ein Kissen.

Doch alle guten Dinge haben ein Ende. Im Lager hoerten wir viele Geruechte, dass es nach Hause gehen sollte, und weil ich Angst hatte, ich koennte vielleicht den Transport versaeumen,

entschied ich mich von meiner Pflegefamilie Abschied zu nehmen. Es war ein trauriges Auseinandergehen. Ich musste mich in das Musikzimmer setzen und Mama spielte wehmuetige Abschiedslieder. Rusja kam noch einige Male ins Lager und bat mich zurueckzukommen, aber ich liess mich nicht erweichen.

Kurz danach erkrankte ich an Typhus, und statt nach Hause zu fahren kam ich ins Lazarett. Aber ich sollte nicht wie so viele Kameraden in russischer Erde begraben werden. Ich gesundete. Leider waren meine Lagergenossen, mit denen ich mich befreundet hatte, abtransportiert worden. Wohin? Ich habe keinen wiedergesehen. Vielleicht nach Murmansk zum Eisenbahnbau? Man sagt: dort liegt unter jeder Schwelle ein Gefangener.

Im Dezember 1916 wurde ich einem Transport zugeteilt, der uns weiter nach Osten brachte. Kurz vor Weihnachten wurden wir in Rasdolnoje ausgeladen. Es war sibirische Kaelte. Die Unterkuenfte waren Kasernen und zu den Laeusen gesellten sich jetzt Wanzen. Die Holzpritschen waren rot von diesen Quaelgeistern. In jedem Nagelloch sassen sie drin.

Das zweijaehrige oede Lagerleben wurde dadurch unterbrochen, dass wir hin und wieder vom Roten Kreuz Besuch erhielten. Meistens durften diese Besucher nicht mit den Gefangenen sprechen. Doch eine dieser Besucher bestand darauf sich mit uns unterhalten zu duerfen: das war Elsa Brändstroem, bekannt als der "Engel von Sibirien" vom schwedischen Roten Kreuz. Diese Schwester war energisch und liess sich

von keinem Lagerkommandanten abhalten mit den Gefangenen zu sprechen und sich ihre Noete anzuhoeren. Diese Frau hat viel fuer die Gefangenen getan.

Wieder einmal wurde es Fruehling (1918), und auf eine Anfrage nach Landarbeitern meldete ich mich mit zehn anderen Kameraden. Unser "Boss" war ein Pole namens Lipski, der nach Sibirien verbannt worden war. Er hatte seine kleine Farm vor den Toren der Stadt. Bewirtschaftet wurde sein Land von zwei Chinesen, die uns sehr misstrauisch ansahen. An Gebaeuden waren da das Wohnhaus, zwei Staelle und eine Scheune. In der Scheune sollten wir schlafen. Aber in der ersten Nacht war an Schlaf nicht zu denken. Ein Unwetter mit Donnern und Blitzen liess uns kein Auge zumachen, wie auch ein Geraeusch als ob jemand um die Scheune herumliief. Das letztere besorgte uns der unfreundlichen Chinesen wegen. Es gab in der Gegend naemlich Banden von Tungusen, die Doerfer und kleinere Staedte umzingelten, die Bevoelkerung durch Schuesse in Angst versetzten und die wohlhabendsten Bewohner gefangen nahmen und dann gegen Loesegeld wieder freigaben. Am Ende stellte sich heraus, dass die tungusische Bande aus einem Kalb bestand, das in der Nacht vor dem Unwetter wohl eine Unterkunft suchte. Auch die Chinesen entpuppten sich als harmlose Menschen, mit denen wir uns sehr bald befreundeten. Der Bauer selbst wohnte meistens in der Stadt und kam jede Woche einmal raus und brachte Lebensmittel mit. Wir bekochten uns selbst. Der Bauernhof lag ganz dicht an einem Fluss, so dass wir nach beendeter Arbeit dort viel badeten und uns erfrischten. Als das Heu eingebracht war und das Getreide in Hocken aufgestakt war ging einer der Chinesen in den Stoppeln Froesche jagen. Er sah einfach putzig aus: bekleidet war er nur mit einer kurzen Hose und Sandalen. Den Froeschen, die er gefangen hatte, band er die Hinterbeine zusammen und steckte sie an den Guertel und an die Sandalen. Er sah doll aus, wenn er so mit Froeschen bespickt einher wanderte. Die Froesche benutzte er als Koeder (bait) und fing grosse Welse (catfish). Ich hatte die Ehre bei ihm zu Gast zu sein. Die Fische schmeckten ausgezeichnet.

Mit Ende des Herbstes war unsere Freiheit leider auch wieder zu Ende und wir mussten in unser Gefaengnis zurueck. Weiter ging es nach Osten im Herbst. Ein neuer Transport brachte uns in ein Gefaengnis, welches Spaskoes? hiess. Zu unserer angenehmen Ueberraschung kamen wir in trockene Kasernen mit nur wenig Ungeziefer. Auch hier sollten wir nicht

lange bleiben. Der Kampf zwischen Weiss und Rot war inzwischen ausgebrochen. Tschechische Truppen, die sich durch den Vertrag von Brest-Litowsk in Russland gestrandet fanden, marschierten entlang der Transsibirischen Eisenbahn in Richtung Wladivostok. Sie kaempften auf der Seite der Weissen Garde. Auf ihrem Vormarsch nahmen sie alle deutsche Gefangenen noch einmal gefangen und uebernahmen die Bewachung.

Unsere Situation verschlechterte sich zusehends. Schlechtes Essen, wenig Ausgang und schlimme sanitaere Verhaeltnisse waren die Gruende, dass die Japaner unsere Betreuung uebernahmen. (Viele Laender versuchten die bolschewistische Revolution aufzuhalten und schickten Truppen nach Ost-Russland. Der Haupthafen war Wladivostok. Unter diesen Laendern befanden sich Japan, U.S.A., Frankreich und England).

Die Japaner waren sehr tolerant und in jeder Weise entgegenkommend, und fuer mich begann der letzte Teil meiner Gefangenschaft.

Unter den sogenannten Expeditionskorps der Alliierten befanden sich auch Amerikaner. Sie trieben einen lebhaften Handel mit den Russen, und um den zu bewaeltigen brauchten sie billige

Arbeiter. Das waren natuerlich wir — die Gefangenen.

So kam ich denn mit ungefaehr 600 Mann zu den Amerikanern. Das Lager, 5 riesige Holzbaracken, lag dicht am Hafen von Wladivostok. Wir mussten hier die vielen Schiffe entladen, die von den U.S.A. herueberkamen. Die Schiffsladungen bestanden aus Lebensmitteln aller Art fuer die Soldaten, Futter fuer ihre Maulesel — uebrigens praechtige Tiere — Kohle und vieles andere mehr.

Unsere Wachmannschaften behandelten uns anfaenglich recht rauh. Wenn immer einer von uns zum Waschraum musste, kam ein Amerikaner mit aufgepflanztem Seitengewehr mit. Sie merkten aber bald, dass wir harmlose Leute waren und die Behandlung wurde besser. Jeder Gefangene erhielt ein Feldbett mit Strohsack und Decke und im Winter warme Bekleidung und gutes Essen. Fuer jeden wurde ein Sparkonto angelegt, das genau gefuehrt wurde. Ich glaube wir erhielten 15¢ pro Arbeitsstunde, davon wurden die Kosten des Essens abgezogen. Unsere Antreiber bei den Aussenarbeiten waren zwei Serganten. Beide gaben sich sehr grimmig. Der eine war ein Schwabe, der noch recht gut deutsch sprach und im Grunde sehr gutmuetig war. Der andere war ein Antreiber. Wir nannten ihn "Pick-it-up," weil er diese drei Worte sehr haeufig gebrauchte.

Wenn wir auch von Amerikanern bewacht wurden, so brach der Verkehr mit anderen Lagern nicht ab. Ein reger Tauschhandel entwickelte sich besonders mit dem japanisch geleiteten Lager. So gab es sich, dass ich mich mit einem Deutschen, Hans Stahmer, anfreundete (Hans Stahmer blieb ein lebenslanger Freund meines Vaters — U.W.). Stahmer verriet mir, dass die unter japanischer Bewachung stehenden Gefangenen frueher in die Heimat abtransportiert wuerden als die anderen. Er arbeitete in der Lagerverwaltung und musste es wissen. Er sagte, "Sieh zu, dass du von den Amerikanern ausrueckst, komme zu uns; ich Sorge schon dafuer, dass du in unser Lager reinkommst."

Diese wunderbare Gelegenheit konnte man sich ja nicht entgehen lassen. Mein Bettnachbar, ein Mann namens Hirsch, hatte auch von diesem Geruecht gehoert und war Feuer und Flamme auch mitzumachen. Er war schlau und hatte Verbindungen mit anderen Gefangenen, die sich auch in Verwaltungspositionen befanden. Hirsch war bereit unseren Fluchtplan zu organisieren. Wir wussten bereits, dass es uns wohl etwas kosten wuerde. Dieses dedarf einer Erklaerung: manche Gefangenen hatten es geschafft, sich aus Lagern herauszukaufen — gewoehnlich durch Bestechung (bribes).

Sie hatten wohlhabende Familienmitglieder und starke Verbindungen, so dass sie auch in den Besitz von Geldern kamen. Diese Leute hatten kleine Geschaefte aufgemacht und als sie nun hoerten, dass die geschlossenen Kriegsgefangenenlager bald in die Heimat abtransportiert wuerden, wollten sie natuerlich wieder in die Lager zurueck — aber wie?

Hirsch hatte die Antwort: fuer je \$100.00 kaufte er unsere Namen an zwei interessierte Leute. Diese wuerden sich nach unserem "Abschied" unter unseren Namen und mit unseren Ausweisen ins Lager schleichen.

Ein Problem blieb aber noch: wie sollten wir aus unserem Lager herauskommen? Wieder einmal hatte Hirsch einen Plan: Fuer \$10.00 fand er einen amerikanischen Soldaten, der bereit war uns mit seinem Lastwagen aus dem Lager zu schaffen.

Gesagt — getan. Der Ami fuhr an unserer Baracke vor, lud zwei grosse Dreckkuebel auf, in denen wir unsere Sachen verstauten. Dann fuhren wir am Posten vorbei in die Stadt. An einer stillen Ecke hielt er an und wir spragen ab. Er fuhr mit leeren Kuebeln wieder zum Lager zurueck. Wir luden unsere Klamotten auf einen Panjewagen und fuhren bis zu einer Muehle, die dicht am japanischen Lager war. Dort arbeiteten auch Gefangene, die uns fuer eine Nacht aufnahmen. Am naechsten Morgen kam unser "Kontakt" aus dem japanischen Lager mit den noetigen Paessen. Als "Martin Wudarek" kam ich ins Lager.

Nach drei Wochen fuhren wir tatsaechlich mit der "Scotland Mary", einem von der deutschen Regierung gecharterten japanischen Dampfer, der Heimat zu. Wir konnten es gar nicht glauben, dass wir frei waren, als wir aus dem riesengrossen Hafen in den pazifischen Ozean hinausfuehren. Unsere Freude war unbeschreiblich. Sollten wir nun doch die Heimat wiedersehen? Seit meiner Gefangennahme waren 5 Jahre vergangen.

Es war eine interessante Fahrt. Kapitaen und Mannschaften waren freundlich und das Essen gut. Ueber Shanghai, Sabang auf Sumatra, durch den Indischen Ozean an Eden vorbei fuhren wir durch das rote Meer, und warfen Anker in Port Said. Von dort ging es ins Mittelmeer an Malta vorbei, und durch die Strasse von Gibraltar in den Atlantik hinein.

Am 20. Mai 1920, nach 50taegiger Seereise, lief das gute Schiff "Scotland Marv" Brunsbuettel an. Die Bevoelkerung begriesste uns herzlich und nach einigen Tagen Quarantaene wurden wir von der Wehrmacht entlassen.

Wir waren frei — die Heimat hatte uns wieder. mm

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THE MYSTERY OF FAITH

I have always envied people who have little difficulty believing in God. I mean those people who, despite tragic personal experiences and the evidence of so much cruelty and suffering all around them, continue to be serene and strong in their faith. I envy such faith but I must confess that I don't fully understand it.

The faith that I envy has virtually nothing to do with the number of things that one professes to believe. Talk is cheap and there are all kinds of "believers" in the Christian Church who confuse the fervent affirmation of dogma with genuine faith in a living God. Some even make a virtue out of such verbal faith. Those who can affirm a certain number of "articles of faith" are considered to be in the virtuous circle; those who can't are outside of it. As though a primary purpose of having faith is to be able to club others with it!

To me, faith in a living God is a tremendous gift for which one ought to be thankful. Those who possess it are indeed blessed. They will naturally wish that others have it too, but they will find no reason to separate themselves from others because of it, or declare that they are therefore superior to others. Those who have genuine faith do not judge. They rejoice quietly in what they have and are glad to share it.

But how does one come to such faith? To me there has always been a certain mystery about it. It is a gift, and there is a mystery behind most gifts. But faith is a gift that comes to those who seek it (which, however, does not explain why there are those who do not seek it). "Seek and you shall find" is the beginning of faith. All of us who participate in the human drama are faced at all times by evidence which seems to speak of a loving and powerful God, and evidence which appears to deny it. Those who choose the road to faith are aware that there are road signs pointing in other directions, but they deliberately choose to follow the positive signs. In a world of both light and darkness they choose to illuminate the darkness by lighting a candle in it. In that sense one can say, without being derogatory, that people believe because they want to believe. Such "wanting" is the foundation of all faith.

The question that intrigues me, however, is the relative ease with which different people proceed along the road of faith. There are those who, once having taken the positive direction, never seem to waver in their decision. They know that there is evidence to the contrary, but they are not haunted by it. They believe, at all times, under all conditions. Then there are the rest of us who, I would like to think, have taken the road of faith just as sincerely, but who continue to be buffeted by doubts and anxieties. "We believe, Lord help our unbelief."

Reinhold Niebuhr, the late American theologian, describes two older ladies that he got to know in the first year of his pastoral ministry. Both were pillars of the church. Both seemed to have a genuine, serene faith. Both also received the news, at virtually the same time, that they were dying of cancer. The one absorbed this news with remarkable calm. The other one almost fell apart. Niebuhr visited both women frequently, but try as he might he could not understand why their responses to a similar tragedy were so different. He saw no justification for praising the one or condemning the other. He envied the woman whose faith remained strong, and felt sorry for the one whose faith seemed to crumble, but he concluded that he was dealing with a mystery in which judgment of any kind had no place. His on-

ly purpose as a pastor and as a Christian was to rejoice with the one and console the other.

That is the way I feel about fellow believers who appear to possess a faith less troubled than mine. They are to be envied, but they need not be praised. A good friend, whom I respect very much, once confided to me that he had never found reason to doubt his faith. This person has had his share of disappointments and griefs but I believe him when he says that none of this has disturbed his faith unduly. I believe him because he tells me that not in order to show up my type of faith but with an almost wistful feeling that he *could* share some of the agonies of the soul that others are prone to.

That kind of faith is similar to *courage*. We can envy people who have it, but we don't know exactly what it is or why some people have more of it than others. Audy Murphy, the famous American war-hero, said that after four years in the front lines of battle, and after having received numerous medals for valour, he still didn't know what courage was. "Why do some soldiers jump boldly out of their trenches to attack the enemy, while others scramble out in fear or cower in the trenches as long as possible?" He was never able to find a satisfactory answer to that question. He felt it had little to do with virtue. People of courage were more reckless than others, more liable to believe in patriotic slogans, less prone to doubt their cause, but they weren't, as far as he could observe, "better" people than those with less courage.

For me, and some others, faith is a struggle. It does not come easily or naturally. I believe in God, and I think there is much evidence to support such belief, but my belief is never completely free of doubts caused by the miseries of others or by the general human condition. I have chosen, for thousands of good reasons, to travel the road of faith and I hope to travel it for the rest of my life, and to rejoice in it, but at all times I am mindful that there are other roads as well, travelled not just by people who are less virtuous or sincere than I am but by honest individuals who are more affected by the tragic aspects of our existence than by the hopeful.

I would likely be on that other road if it wasn't for one person and one event. At this season, and at other times in the year, I am moved to reflect upon the person of Jesus Christ. I believe Him when He says that we are the children of a loving Father. I believe Him because I sense in Him the same kind of agony over the condition of the world, the same sense of remorse over its evil and even — in His final cry on the cross — the same terrible fear that at times we are forsaken, that I sense in myself. He knows me. He knows the world. But He also appears to know God. When He speaks about God I am forced to listen. Here is someone who was born in poverty, who was intimately acquainted with human sickness and betrayal — and yet, He says, "There is a Father who loves the world, and who loves you." I believe Him. I don't always believe myself, I am not always encouraged by the things I see around me — but I believe that Man and that Spirit. Now again, at Christmas, He challenges my unbelief!

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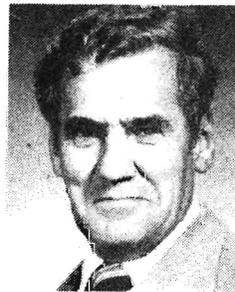
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