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ForeWord

This edition includes articles on two quite different people — one in business and the other in MCC. On the surface one might assume that they have nothing in common aside from the fact that their stories appear in the same edition of the *Mirror*. Nothing could be further from the truth because both have what some described as a "social conscience." One is John Buhler and the other is Reg Toews.

Mr. Buhler is famous in Manitoba and Canada as the businessman who succeeds in "turning around" losing companies and making them profitable again. According to the article in this issue, he feels a sense of achievement not in adding bucks to the bottom line but in saving and creating jobs. In fact, his objective is to create 1,000 new jobs. The article published here was first printed in the December issue of *Mid-Canada Commerce*.

Reg Toews' career is quite different. While one expects someone in social work to have a "social conscience" one does not expect such a person to step off an upwardly mobile government career ladder and move into MCC work. Mr. Toews did it and his years at MCC have been as valuable to him as for the organization. While every organization needs executives like Mr. Toews, he nevertheless shies away from taking the credit for any successes it may have enjoyed, preferring to give the credit to the people who serve in its many outposts.

To put into practice the Anabaptist principles of peace and peacemaking is difficult at the best of times; but those who choose to be peacemakers in a "hard" urban environment (such as Los Angeles) and in a culture that is not typically European Mennonite, the challenge is special. Gordon Nickel, who was on the staff of the *MB Herald* before going to the seminary in Fresno, spent part of this past summer with an MB church in a Spanish section of LA. The experience opened his eyes to insights about peacemaking in a violent and difficult setting.

Al Reimer's novel, *My Harp Has Turned to Mourning* has been out for more than a month. While it will be officially reviewed in a later issue, this edition includes an unsolicited commentary by John J. Enns, a judge in the provincial court of Manitoba, who describes the novel as, among other things, a "precious addition to my library."

The recent death of Frank H. Epp marks the loss to the Mennonite community of both an outstanding person and scholar. Roy Vogt pays tribute to his memory and his achievements in an article in this issue.

One item in this edition arises from the death in December of Henry Krahn; the poem by Jack Thiessen in the German section is a tribute to Dr. Krahn, but its words may easily be extended to encompass Dr. Epp as well.

There are more letters in this issue than usual, and it's because these readers have taken the time to write in the past two months. We appreciate the letters and encourage you to write, it shows you care about what we put in these pages.

You will find our regular features in this issue. Take the time to read — or at least skim — each page because you may discover something worth knowing and remembering.

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Mennonite Mirror

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**Still
valid
mission**

"This book is based on the conviction that the radical reformers of the sixteenth century had insight into the nature of the church and its mission to the world which will throw needed light on our questions today."

So says Wilbert R. Shenk regarding *Anabaptism and Mission* (Herald Press, 1984), with chapters by Franklin H. Littell, Cornelius J. Dyck, John H. Yoder, José Gallardo, and others.

"The justification for this volume rests on three considerations," Shenk suggests. "First, we offer this collection of essays as an alternative 'reading' of mission. Virtually all mission history and theology has been presented from the viewpoint of the dominant ecclesiastical traditions. We believe fresh perspectives can be opened up through an alternative approach.

"Second, we are committed to encouraging conversation among the various Christian traditions. This represents a modest contribution to that larger discussion. Third, the missiological literature from a believers' church stance is not plentiful. This, therefore, is an attempt to identify this limited body of literature in the hope it will encourage further development."

"Interestingly, none of the major protestant reformers issued a clear call to mission," Shenk points out. "By contrast, the Anabaptists believed the Great Commission remained binding on Christians and set about evangelizing their society. The Anabaptist understanding of the nature of the church as being essentially missionary is a major contribution to any conversation about the nature and the mission of the church."

Anabaptism and Mission, edited by Wilbert R. Shenk (Herald Press, Scottsdale, Pennsylvania/Kitchener, Ont., 1984); Pb, 261 pages; \$11.95 (\$15.55 in Canada).

From a Herald Press news release.

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John Buhler

John Buhler says if he went broke, he would still be a success

The sign outside the Transcona building that houses Farm King and its various subsidiaries identifies the whole operation simply as "Buhler." The man behind the company, and the name, has a decidedly unpretentious office in the heart of the building, which until recently was a warehouse. Noise from the plant on the other side of one wall competes with the ever-ringing din of his two telephones. The desk is covered with papers, the office itself is cluttered with knick-knacks and trinkets of all sizes and shapes, and the constant flow of visitors, from his secretary to his line managers, refer to the man touted as the 'turnaround king' as "Johnny."

John Buhler is an unlikely knight in shining armour who loves to rescue companies in distress. Elf-like in stature and demeanour, he dresses comfortably, sports a brilliant diamond wedding ring and a large pendant under his tie, drinks a lot of water and harbours a constant smile. Hardly the look of a corporate saviour.

He may not look the part, but he sure does act it. He sloughs off suggestions that he has a gift for knowing which companies can be saved and which are

lost causes, but there's no question he's got something. His good deeds and noble (and usually successful) attempts to support the Manitoba economy — his latest goal is to create 1,000 new jobs in the province by 1993 — have been well-documented, from national media coverage to a chapter in *The Money Rustlers* a new book that profiles some of Western Canada's most successful entrepreneurs.

Buhler is at the same time modest and boastful about his skills and accomplishments. "How do you gauge success?" he asks rhetorically. I want to create 1,000 new jobs in Manitoba, and I'm only at 200 right now. That's only 20 percent."

But on the other hand, "The most important thing is how you feel about yourself. I'm confident — it wouldn't matter to me if I went broke, because I'd still be a success. I have a successful attitude." Pressed to explain, he pauses, looks about the room, then offers, "It's feeling good about yourself. Not everyone feels good about themselves. They

say, 'I can't do that.' But it's because they don't try."

No one could accuse John Buhler of not trying. The son of poor Mennonite immigrants who settled in Morden, Buhler's entrepreneurial spirit manifested itself early. He opened a Ford and Rambler dealership with his own (and borrowed) money while still in his early 20's, and in 1970, at the age of 38, he rescued his father-in-law's farm machinery business from collapse.

In 1978, having worked the business, renamed Farm King, into a successful operation, Buhler decided to expand his horizons. He bought provincially-owned Morden Fine Foods Ltd., a canner in serious financial shape, and after three years of losses managed to turn a profit in 1981. And along the way, he saved 100 jobs for Manitobans, an accomplishment he seems to place above all others. Buhler sold the canner in 1981, and it was bankrupt within a year.

More recent corporate salvages like the Winnipeg plant of the Chicago-based Allied Farm Equipment Inc. and Standard Industries Ltd. saved more than 70 jobs and cemented Buhler's title

by Therasa Harrison

as the 'turnaround King of Manitoba.'

His only real frustration so far came in 1983, when he attempted to bring bankrupt White Farm Equipment of Brantford, Ontario, to Manitoba. Long an advocate of a strong farm machinery sector in this province, Buhler was disappointed when Borg-Warner Acceptance (Canada) Ltd. of Toronto, a subsidiary of the American industrial equipment conglomerate, was successful with its higher bid.

Hanging up the telephone after rescuing yet another damsel company in distress, Buhler talks about himself in a straightforward, no-nonsense manner. "Turnarounds — that's my expertise. I don't know if it's a talent, though. I like to think anyone can do it.

"It comes down to knowing the right time to buy and sell, but it really isn't very difficult to know when to act."

The key to success, he stresses, is the product. It has to be good, and it has to be the right price. "Most people blame their (business) problems on marketing, but that's wrong. If you have a good product, you must sell it at the right price, and that means controlling costs at every level." Buhler keeps his payables in an accordion file — "It gives you a mental picture of how the company is doing."

He is a businessman from the old school, the one that teaches you to set goals and not be deterred by impediments, that maintains a verbal agreement and a handshake are as binding as any written contract, that insists honesty is the best policy. "I tell my purchasing people that if they lie to a client (about a price of a product), they won't be working here tomorrow."

He tells the story of being a schoolboy in Morden and watching a local implement dealer who had gone bankrupt continue to drive around town in his Cadillac. "That upset me, even at that age," Buhler recalls. "I decided then and there that if I ever went broke, I'd work all my life to pay off all my debts."

He need not worry about repaying creditors. Farm King's bottom line last year read \$13.4 million. "We've always had sales increases when the economy was bad," Buhler smiles in explanation. "In a bad economy, when things are tough, people say you can't sell. That's when it's easiest to sell, because everyone else quits." During the 1970s, when other companies were expanding, Buhler says he knew the prosperity would be short-lived, "and I just pulled in my horns and waited."

The president of Farm King says he has put a \$50,000 ceiling on his own

salary, and is not overly impressed with the money the company is making. "Those figures are nothing," he says casually. "I'd like to have \$50 million in sales.

"To reach my goal of 1,000 new jobs, I need \$90 million in sales." A very lofty figure, but Buhler is, naturally, confident he'll reach it. He still hopes to buy Flyer Industries, the provincially-owned and perennially-troubled bus manufacturer. This, he says, will guarantee the jump in sales for which he's looking. "We will have to do it through acquisition. You simply can't do it through natural growth in your own company."

John Buhler once planned to retire when he was 45, but now says he will likely work until he's 90, when "Just as a token, I'll buy a last little factory somewhere and then slow down." He doesn't think himself a workaholic, although "I've always done things in a big way," and he seems tireless in the office and on the telephone. "I've always felt that I'd rather work in a scrapyard than drive a ball around a golf course," he says. "As a result, I'm not a very good golfer."

Somehow, a great golf stroke doesn't seem important when compared with John Buhler's other accomplishments.

His score — the many jobs he's saved and companies he's rescued — is much more impressive.

(Re-printed from the December, 1985, edition of *Mid-Canada Commerce*, by permission.)

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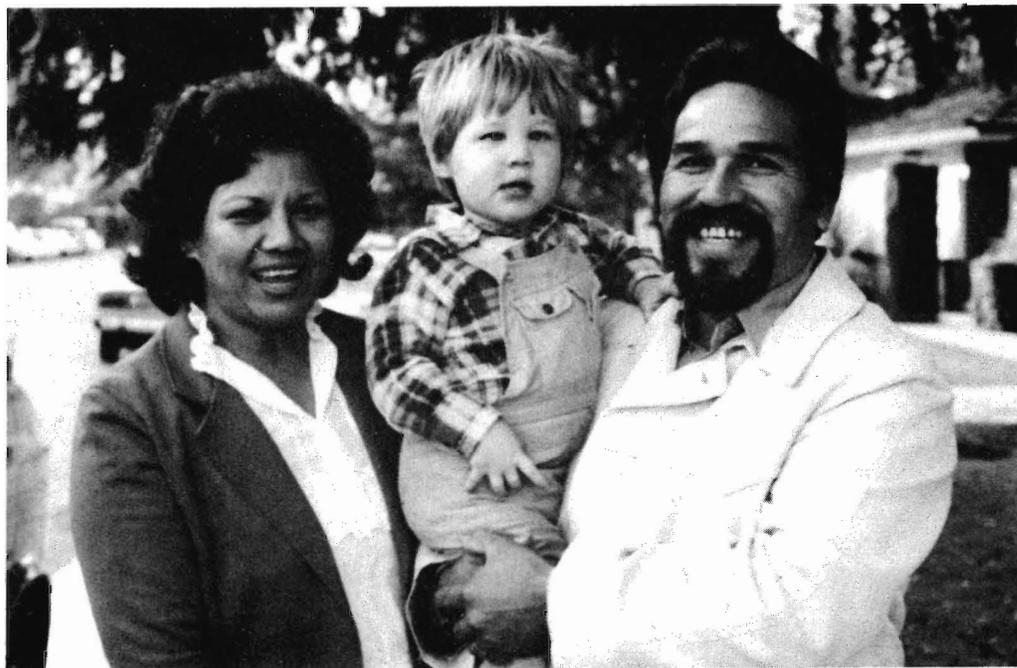
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Gennie, left, and Louis Samudio with the author's son, Daniel.

Making peace in a violent community: Lessons from a month in City Terrace

by Gordon Nickel

As pastor Louis Samudio was locking up the meetingplace one warm L.A. evening last June, he heard a man approach the chain-link fence and begin to shout at him. Louis looked up and recognized the man as the husband of an abused woman he had been helping just that week. The man was drunk, and he was looking for a fight.

Mondo heard the abusive shouting all the way to the parsonage and came to investigate. By the time he joined Louis, the drunk man had pulled out a knife and was swinging it at the pastor, staggering with every arc. Louis tried to talk with the man, but he was incoherent.

"He's loaded," Mondo observed. "Let's hit him and take his knife away before he hurts somebody."

"No, Mondo," Louis replied. "We don't do that anymore. We follow Jesus now."

The new day, when these two middle-aged Hispanic Mennonites told me their story, I was struck by three things.

First, this experience was nothing unusual for them. Second, neither was frightened by the brush with violence. And third, not only Mondo had struggled with the impulse to lay the man flat — but the pastor as well.

It's so easy when they're drunk," is the way Mondo put it. "All it takes is one good punch," he added, motioning with his fist.

This was just one of many learning opportunities which presented themselves last June when I and my family lived and worked with the City Terrace Mennonite Brethren Church in Los Angeles. While studying at the Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary in Fresno, Gwen and I had been invited by the church to help it prepare a slide presentation on itself. We'd said yes immediately.

We arrived at the beginning of June and found the meetingplace located squarely in the midst of the Hispanic

community on the city's east side. The church arranged for us to live in that community.

On the second day of our stay, Louis told me that when he'd been ordained to be a Mennonite Brethren pastor, he'd had a bit of trouble with the part in the Confession of Faith about not participating in war. That disappointed me. I'd been studying Anabaptist theology during the previous year and had just finished helping edit a book on the biblical way of peace. But I said nothing, reminding myself that I'd come to learn from Louis and not the other way around.

In retrospect I'm glad I kept quiet. As I followed Louis around for a month, he taught me much more about peacemaking than I could have taught him.

I first learned that the neighborhood surrounding the meetingplace is one of the most violent communities in North America. And the congregation hadn't moved to the suburbs to avoid danger,

but was responding to the challenge in a remarkable way.

Violence in the City Terrace community took a number of forms, including gang violence with its retaliation and murder; family violence, especially toward women and children; and the violence of alcohol and hard drugs. Louis and many other members had grown up in the local gangs and had no fear about mixing with them. They invited whole gangs, or even rival gangs, into their meetingplace for special dramas which showed a way out of the cycle of violence.

The family violence in the community is partly a result of an attitude which the Hispanic culture ingrains into men: *machismo*. It is also caused by the abuse of alcohol and drugs. The women and children suffer the most. Here I saw Louis, his wife Genny, and others at work, comforting and counselling, connecting abused women with legal help, and bringing broken families together through the power of Jesus. The neighborhood respected Louis highly for this, and almost daily local people in trouble would call him for help.

Most of the members of the little church had suffered the violence of alcohol and drugs, and some had lived under the bondage of heroin or PCP (a hallucinogenic drug) — including the pastor, who at one point prior to his conversion used to shoot \$350 of heroin into his body every day, supporting the habit by daily thefts. It was here that members had a special burden. Their vision was not to build a fancy new sanctuary in the suburbs, but rather to establish a home for drug addicts where they could be delivered from their addiction and helped through to productive Christian lives.

Louis had been turned around at such a home, called "Victory Outreach," and one day he took me to see it. What I saw was a large home full of about 30 men and 15 women, living a disciplined life of work and Bible study. The home was staffed mainly by ex-addicts who had themselves been delivered at the home. Graduates of the home were setting up new homes in other California centers. The director said that due to lack of space, every day he had to turn down about a dozen requests from addicts.

The second thing I learned was that the church did its peacemaking in a straightforward and unassuming way. Members knew the power of the things that had bound them in the past, and that this power will not be broken by mere words or statements or even confessions of faith. In their experience, there is only one power greater than the power of the

barrio, and that is the power of Jesus. So they offer Jesus in a very unself-conscious way to the people around them.

As I observed this, I remembered something that my seminary studies had suggested to me: that in New Testament terms, the work of Christ is first and foremost a victory over the powers that hold mankind in bondage; and that peacemaking is not passivity, but rather fighting on the right side in the right battle — the war of the Lamb. That thought helped me to appreciate what was really happening in the City Terrace community.

Finally, I learned that peacemaking is a ministry to be done with great joy. Our entire month in Los Angeles was bathed in good fellowship, mutual respect, and, best of all, laughter. Louis' laughter disarmed the people around him, including the *cholos* in the nearby housing projects. It was a laughter that came straight from the heart, and was always very close to prayer or witness.

The Hispanics in the congregation celebrated their fellowship in the ways they knew best — with *burritos* or *enchiladas* and a Spanish song from time to time. As far as I could tell, they saw their ethnicity as a way to build bridges. Thus they were anxious to celebrate what the "minorities" in the congregation brought with them, including a Zairian family, a Jewess, and a handful of Dutch-Prussian-Russians. They also saw family ties as opportunities to pass on the gospel of peace to people caught in the grip of violence — not in a forced or manipulative way, I believe, but out of honest concern and love.

The ministry which the City Terrace church has chosen is a costly one. New converts frequently struggle with the magnet-like attraction of alcohol and hard drugs long after their initial commitment to Christ. They need "intensive care" from the church. Some are not able to hang on. But along with the discouragements come some lively examples of the power of God to change lives.

Gwen and I were particularly impressed with Stella, a young woman who had grown up in the local gangs and had been addicted to PCP during her teen years. PCP is an animal tranquilizer (used on elephants!); dealers acquire the drug illegally and dip cigarettes in it for sale on the street. The City Terrace church helped Stella to commit her life to Christ, and her desire for the drug left her.

Today Stella's life is not easy. She works in the cafeteria of a local school. She is raising two young boys. She

remains married to a non-Christian husband at his request, and receives no encouragement for her Christian walk from him. Yet she told Gwen that her greatest desire in life is to help the people in the community who are living in the bondage that she used to know. She joyfully and fearlessly testifies to groups of prisoners, or drug addicts, of the power that has set her free. She is an active peacemaker in a violent community.

Gordon Nickel is at the Mennonite Brethren Seminary in Fresno, California, and was on the staff of the MB Herald.

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Reg Toews

Reg Toews may give credit to the people who serve in MCC, but some belongs to him too

The last time I'd heard Reg Toews's voice it was in October, 1985, over national radio and he was telling the world what he could about the so-called kidnapping of fellow MCC worker Bob Burkholder in Beirut, Lebanon. As we talked on this particular Sunday afternoon, I was eager to find out what had gone on behind the scenes with Bob Burkholder and how it felt to be at the top when your people were in danger. Before we got to the topic of MCC though, there was his career in the civil service to examine, a career which gave him valuable administrative experience he eventually took with him to MCC.

But there is a chapter even before that. Born and raised — at 6'6" Reg gives new meaning to the word "raised" — in Steinbach, Reg got his first taste of leadership even before he left for university. He was president of the ISCF and also active in the Kleingemeinde (Evangelical Mennonite Conference). We chuckle together as Reg recalls the minister who warned him about the Winnipeg ISCF people because they went to movies and the girls wore make-up.

Reg, as everyone calls him, picks up the story from 1963. That was the year he graduated with his Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Manitoba, as well as the year he decided to go into social work. Reg had entertained notions of being either a teacher or a social worker but the decision was finally made for him when the Department of Health and Welfare offered him a job as a welfare worker in the Interlake. As Reg explains, he really got into

by Marj Toews

social work by accident and the significant question is not how he got in but why he stayed.

After a year in the Interlake he realized he liked social work enough to stay with it and decided to take advantage of a program the then Conservative government led by Premier Duff Roblin was offering its employees. In this program the government would pay the tuition costs of further schooling as well as provide summer employment. The only condition was that the beneficiaries must work two years for the province for every year of education they'd received under this program.

When he graduated with his Master of Social Work degree in 1967, Reg and his wife Phyllis (Dueck) made a decision that in retrospect, Reg feels, was the key to his later career advancement. They asked to be placed in Thompson, Man., an unusual request given that most new graduates would sooner buy their way out of their commitment to the government than leave southern Manitoba. But Reg and Phyllis were ready for something new and challenging and so, undaunted, they headed north to the mining town of Thompson, then in its heyday as a booming frontier city thriving on a robust international nickel market.

Three days after they arrived in Thompson the one other social worker quit, leaving Reg as the only social worker in a town of 13,000. For the next seven months he dealt with every kind of problem 24-hours-a-day. Once he

even found a foster parent for a homeless baby on the ball diamond. Someone suggested the first base lady might be interested in fostering a baby and sure enough, she was.

The job demanded constant creativity. They were tough months but somehow he survived. He and Phyllis had one cardinal rule during this period to head off even more stress. They resolved that no matter how difficult the situation they would never use their own home as a foster home. Their home was busy in any case because their two daughters, Lynne and Barbara, were born in Thompson in 1967 and 1969, respectively.

In 1968, discovering it three days after the appointment, Reg was made acting regional director for the newly-created Thompson region. Overnight he became responsible for administering a staff of 30 in a region encompassing Thompson, Churchill, Gillam, at a time when the Native population was beginning to awaken politically. Reg likens the process of developing programs at the time to "building the boat while crossing the river. You don't dare stop doing either one if you want to reach the other side."

In 1970 Reg and Phyllis and their young family moved back to Winnipeg after Reg had been asked to take over the Eastman region of the Department of Health and Social Development. He was called on to rebuild the region just as the neophyte NDP government was introducing new welfare concepts. The Eastman region was used as an experiment in implementing the policy of sep-

arating welfare from social services, and making all of the latter more accessible by providing them at one location.

Three years later, in 1973, Reg was promoted to coordinator of social services in the department and six months after that he was made executive director of social services for the province with a corresponding legislative title of Director of Welfare. In this new role he was responsible for a staff of 60 at headquarters and 300 more in the field who were delivering the whole gamut of social services, from probation to child welfare to health care.

By now Reg had moved up from being a Welfare Worker A (or B, he's not sure) at the beginning of his career to a Senior Officer 2, a total of 14 steps up the civil service ladder, and an impressive climb for a boy from Steinbach (and a Kleingemeinder at that) whose minister had warned him to be wary of the Winnipeg young people because the girls wore make-up. Reg stresses that he wasn't more capable than many of his colleagues but that his experience in the north had created opportunities and opened doors that normally wouldn't be open to a man in his late twenties and early thirties.

Having been so involved in implementing NDP social policy, it was not surprising that enquiries were made to see if he would be interested in becoming assistant deputy minister. While obviously comfortable with NDP social policy he was not as certain about NDP economic policy and so it was not pursued.

As it happened Reg and Phyllis had their own plans for the future. In a move reminiscent of their decision to go north, they decided to join the Mennonite Central Committee, the smallish relief, development and service organization founded in 1920 when starving Mennonites in the Ukraine appealed for help from North American Mennonites. Like many people from a Mennonite background with a Christian faith commitment, they wanted to serve a little more directly and MCC was a logical organization to join even if it meant a significant salary cut. Reg deadpans, "We'd never had any difficulty spending my previous salary and we didn't have any spending this one either."

Once again, Reg was at the right place at the right time. After a term as Canadian Voluntary Service director, he and his family moved to MCC headquarters in Akron, Pennsylvania, where Reg became associate executive secretary. MCC was in the midst of trying to integrate more Canadians into administra-

tion and Reg jokes he got the job as a "token Canadian." The next stop for the "token Canadian" was the job of executive secretary of MCC. He enjoyed this position, not least because he came to appreciate the Swiss Mennonites whom he found to be much gentler than the more aggressive and forthright Russian Mennonites.

Reg maintains he never really wanted the job of executive secretary. When there was some difficulty in filling the vacancy when William Snyder stepped down after 24 years as executive secretary, he agreed to serve on a caretaker basis provided the search would continue for a successor. A successor in the person of John Lapp having been duly found, Reg has returned to his former position of associate executive secretary in a term that runs until 1988.

As we talk Reg reflects on some of the changes that have taken place in MCC during his 12 years. For one thing MCC is much larger now. It numbers 900 people, 500 of them overseas. More significantly, perhaps, the U.S.-Canadian relationship has been altered, with the result that Canadians now have a larger and more independent role within MCC's overall framework. Reg characterizes the current partnership as a modern marriage: both partners have separate bank accounts and consult each other before making major decisions. Though the earlier relationship had come close at times to ending in divorce, at present it appears to be as good as it's ever been.

And yet, though Reg can undoubtedly take credit for some of these changes, it is clear that what matters more to him is the continuity of the MCC tradition. The changes have been made, in fact, so that the tradition can continue. Reg describes MCC's spiritual mandate as "an expression of our best understanding of the Bible," with the goal of loving and serving one's neighbor, even if the neighbor is according to government also one's enemy.

More specifically, he feels that a doctrine of nonresistance is really only credible if it is given positive expression. As proof that Mennonites increasingly interpret their faith this way, he points to increasing participation in MCC by American Mennonites in the post-Viet Nam draft era. One might expect the numbers to decrease if nonresistance were merely a matter of non-involvement in war.

If MCC has maintained its spiritual mandate, it has also maintained its particular approach to aid. Right from the beginning in 1920 when aid was sent to

Russia in the combined form of food and personnel, MCC has stubbornly stuck to the principle of accompanying aid with personnel. In the past this has meant turning down generous government grants when personnel to match has not been available. Reg defends this principle, reasoning that the success of MCC is due to its ability to work on a small scale, and that becoming too big, too fast, might endanger the very success governments applaud with their offers of money.

Finally, there is the tradition of Mennonite conferences working together, a tradition begun in 1920 and maintained with some considerable effort ever since. As Reg points out, if there are 12 Mennonites in a room there will be 13 opinions, and if there are 12 Mennonite conferences in a room there will be even more. But underlying his comment is evident satisfaction at having worked with the whole spectrum of Mennonite conferences and having made common ground with all of them at least some of the time. He feels that if support from the Mennonite churches is welcome, so is criticism, for input is essential if MCC is to stay representative of the Mennonite constituency.

At last I get to ask about Bob Burkholder and how Reg has dealt with the fear of seeing co-workers at risk. His response is moving in its sincerity. He admits the subject is worrisome but there is an emotion close to awe in his voice as he expresses his admiration for MCCers who, like Burkholder and his wife, keep working day after day in tense situations, not because of a macho attitude but out of a deep faith and a desire to get on with the job they feel called to do. There is pride and undeniable conviction in Reg's voice as he describes the honour it has been to work with the likes of the Burkholders and many, many more who have shared in the work of MCC. One senses that getting to know and work with the men and women who make up MCC has been the greatest reward of the job for Reg.

And where will Reg Toews go when his present term with MCC expires in 1988? He doesn't know at this point but he feels he has another mini-career ahead of him, maybe with the government, maybe with . . . who knows? Wouldn't it be a coincidence if his next job just happened to require a little maintenance here, a little restructuring there, and a lot of continuity throughout.

mm

Two views of good manners and the Crown Prince's party

Letter from Swaziland: 3 and 4

by Victor Peters

It is September as I write, which is spring in Swaziland. Soon we'll have the rains but meanwhile the fields and pastures look grey and bleak. The Swazi dwellings, known as bee-hive huts, with their slanted thatched roofs, blend into the scene. Add to it the stretched-out dogs sleeping on the warm sand of the roadside, moving only when a vehicle is about to hit it, and you get a somewhat depressing picture. I have never seen such starved, skinny and miserable creatures as these dogs. They are totally harmless. If you lift your hand, and with the tail between their legs and a yelp they slink away with a last sideglance only to lie down again some distance away.

In contrast, the mission station operated by the Catholic nuns presents a most lively scene. There is the school and you see sisters in the classroom or in the library; other sisters are nurses in the clinic; some are outside supervising the irrigation and weeding in the orchard and vegetable garden; one sister is driving a truck to town to get groceries and other necessities for the nuns and for the 200 students who live in the dormitories; there are the teachers' houses, more than 20 units, and one of the sisters, on a bicycle, makes the rounds checking the plumbing or hear complaints about a leaking roof. Dressed in spotless white habits the sisters are readily visible. You think there must be about 50 of them, and you are wrong. There are 13. Their pace and performance are incredible.

Karl lives in a duplex. The other apartment is occupied by Bamfo and his family. They are from Ghana. Besides Karl there is one other white teacher, a Belgian. He is Flemish and his name is Vandarp, which everyone who speaks

Low German knows means "one from the village." He is a likeable young man and has a Belgian girl friend teaching in a neighboring school.

One day Bamfo and his wife had visitors from Ghana. The women prepared a dinner and invited us to eat with them. That is, the men sat at the table while the women occupied themselves in the kitchen. They only appeared when some service was required. The children played outside. We had large portions of rice on our plates and in the middle of the table was a bowl of gravy with generous chunks of meat. I took a good helping but found the meat rather chewy. Finally I asked what kind of meat it was, and was told that it was cow's intestines. People here are easily offended when you refuse what is willingly proffered. One stern look from Karl and I dutifully continued chewing.

Our most frequent visitor is Henry Mhkawanazi, a native Swazi and strong traditionalist. He is a friend and colleague of Karl. Henry knows the folkways and customs of the Swazis down to the smallest details. He is a mine of information and it is a pleasure to engage him in conversation.

One day the topic is marriage. Polygamy is common in the country, as is illegitimacy, and both entail no stigma. Though Henry is a Christian he is not willing to give up all tribal traditions. The Christian church, he feels, has to make some concessions to native ways.

"Is it true," I ask him, "that an unmarried mother can name the father, and even if he denies paternity, the child can bear his name?"

"Yes," says Henry, "the child is always entitled to that name. But whether the man denies paternity or not, his clan is interested in establishing the

truth, for if the man is the father, then the child is a member of their clan whether the accused man likes it or not. This is done in the following way," Henry continues, "the man's mother, his grandmother, his aunts and other relatives go to look at the infant. They study its features, the toes and fingers, hands and feet, the lines in the palm of the hand, the shape of the ears and the earlobes, and many other distinctive parts of the body. Then they arrive at a decision whether the infant belongs to the man's clan or not." You will not be surprised when I say I can spend hours with Henry.

One afternoon one of Karl's students, a boy of about 14, is at the door with a question about the assignment. Karl introduces us and the boy extends his hand to me for a handshake. In doing so the boy supports his right hand with his left hand, and when I touch his hand it is as limp as a rag. Later I ask Karl what was ailing the poor boy. "Nothing," said Karl, "They are taught great respect for adults. This was the boy's way of demonstrating that he was not worthy to raise his hand to greet you, and could do so only with difficulty and the assistance of his other hand. To firmly extend your hand would be brazen and shameless." One boy had told Karl that if at home he looked his mother straight into the eye when he spoke to her she would regard that as disrespect and swat him one. Young people in Swaziland are very polite and well-behaved. They had better be.

The most important ruler of Swaziland was King Sobhuza II (1899-1982). Even today at the end of the evening's televi-

sion program when the national anthem is played his picture appears on the screen. Sobhuza's picture is also in classrooms and on the walls of public offices. Karl's living room is decorated with a poster on which the qualities of Sobhuza are extolled in 10 long verses. Example:

In him we have
 A living computer
 And an encyclopedia,
 A custodian of Swazi
 Law and customs and
 A fountain of wisdom
 From which many drink.

I assume that Sobhuza was a Christian for he had an interdenominational church, the largest in Swaziland, built across from the Royal Kraal. He was also a traditionalist and had many wives. Estimates range from 80 to 240. When Sobhuza died in 1982, leaving many widows and sons, there was some question of succession, but this was taken care of by Swazi custom.

A long time ago the Swazis had a king who was a holy terror, but his temper and viciousness were moderated by his mother. Since that time the king's mother is greatly respected and given the name Indlovakazi, which translated is "The She-Elephant" (the elephant being known for its wisdom). King Sobhuza II, when he died, was too old to still have a living mother, so he appointed his oldest wife as the "She-Elephant." However, after he died there was a palace coup and the old widow was replaced by a much younger widow of Sobhuza as the new "She-Elephant". Her name is Ntombi and she is now the Queen Regent. Her son, Crown Prince Makhosetive, is about 20 years old and studying in England.

The Crown Prince is carefully groomed for the succession. One of the required rituals is that he and a group of warriors slay a lion with their spears and battle-axes. Swaziland has no more lions, but the South African government in a friendly gesture supplied one from the Kruger National Park. We were in Mbabane, the capital, when *The Times of Swaziland*, on August 19, 1985 hit the streets with the headline "Royal Hunt Ends." The first paragraph of the story read: "A lion was slain in the bush for the initiation to kingship of the Crown Prince Makhosetive at the week-end." Some people suspect that the lion may have been tranquilized or perhaps even tethered, but I venture no opinion.

The next step for the Crown Prince is to begin the selection of a wife or wives, to ensure succession and prosperity for

the nation. The Swazis have ritualized opportunities for this. Once a year there is the Reed Dance. Virgins, most of them between the ages of 14 to 16, from all over the kingdom bring reeds to the Royal Kraal, ostensibly to extend or repair the Queen Regent's enclosure. After that they perform extravagant dances in a special kraal next to the royal residence. This year the Reed Dance was attended, as usual, by the Queen Regent, or "The She-Elephant." But the Crown Prince was there too, as were the country's main dignitaries. Among the lesser guests were Karl and I.

The parade and performance is one which no one in attendance is likely to forget very soon. Imagine about 10,000 maidens (in round numbers, some estimates were lower others were higher) scantily clad with colorful short skirts, tassels around their neck, bracelets on their wrists, anklets made of multi-colored beads, barefooted, bare-breasted and bare-bottomed. Many of the girls had whistles while others shouted rhythmically or sang, in their hands they carried torches, or flashlights, sticks or knives. Every few paces along them marched ferocious warriors draped in their colorful blankets, their lower legs covered with white goat skins, all armed with spear and shield. They were the custodians of virtue. American college and Shriner processions cannot hold a candle to a Swazi parade.

In the pastures next to the Royal Kraal we saw herds of cattle peacefully grazing. "They won't last long," said Karl, nodding in their direction. He was right. Next day we read in *The Times of Swaziland*: "Today there will be slaughtering of cattle and feasting." I am sure those maidens had healthy appetites. Their backsides were ample evidence.

mm

MOVING NOTE

A woman told her neighbor: "We're going to be living in a better neighborhood soon," to which the other replied: "So are we."

"Really? Are you moving, too?"

"No. We're staying here."

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There will be reviews of Al Reimer's novel in subsequent issues of the *Mennonite Mirror*. In the meantime we are happy to print the following response from a most appreciative reader, of *My Harp Has Turned to Mourning*.

— HL, book editor.

My Harp is Turned to Mourning: A sensitive "biography" of a people in trial

Some thoughts and comments concerning Al Reimer's historical novel:

by John J. Enns

From this reader's perspective, the novel is the best depiction of a fascinating epoch in the long history of the Mennonites so far written. It combines the benefits of thorough research with a lucid descriptive style so as to create a completely believable story. The many half-remembered facts many Mennonites may have heard from parents and relatives, or remembered from personal experiences, become, through this novel, a new truth, thus proving precisely what Robert Scholes wrote: "Fact, in order to survive, must become fiction . . . fiction is not the opposite of fact, but its complement. It gives a more lasting shape to the vanishing deeds of men." (from the fly-leaf of the novel)

Prof. Reimer has given us a lovingly detailed description of the settlements and villages of the Molochnaya, the streets, the white picket fences, the acacia hedges, and, of course, the *wirtschaften*. We are reminded of the well-planned institutions, the schools, churches and hospitals, and the carefully tended farmlands.

In a most effective way, Reimer contrasts the peaceful comfort and well-being of the Molochnaya Mennonites with the harsh Russian peasant life in the surrounding areas. These contrasting conditions contribute to the rise of revolutionaries and anarchists such as Nestor Makhno, a name, that for this reader still raises dread and fear from the days of childhood from long-ago told tales of terror about him.

It is evident, however, that it was not Reimer's intention to leave the impression that what some people have called

"the golden age of Mennonite life in Russia," that is the two decades, approximately, before World War I, that that period was not without its fairly serious problems. Aside from the problem of the "landless" or *Anwohner*, class distinctions between the wealthy estate owners, factory-owners, and ordinary landowners are explained. The young Wilhelm Fast, the novel's protagonist, is increasingly estranged from the limited horizons of village life, especially after art studies in St. Petersburg. Conflicting religious views are likewise the cause of further difficulties. And so there is deep insight shown here, which a reader with a penchant for history or biography (and the novel could rightly be considered a kind of group biography) will thoroughly appreciate.

While the work is focused upon the period from 1905 to 1924, Reimer includes a most interesting, almost compelling description of a typical trek from the Prussian Mennonite settlements, overland by covered wagons and horses to the Molochnaya in 1803. This is told in the mind of the elderly Daniel Fast who quietly reminisces about that event. Now old and feeble (in 1852), there is a touching moment when his daughter Neetje brings a photograph of him to him to see. The old man objects, thinking picture-taking unchristian, but Neetje will not take it back, saying (page 25): "But, Father, I can't do that. You agreed to sit for your picture. And you know why: so your descendants can see what you looked like. It's their right, and God has made it possible with this wonderful new machine."

Photography was, of course, in its infancy, and many readers will fondly remember those stiff-backed photographic portraits of our ancestors. But the passage had more significance than

that: Reimer's whole novel is a careful picture which we, the descendants of those Russian Mennonites, have a right to see. Reimer made it possible, and is owed a debt of gratitude for it.

The structure of the historical novel leads inexorably to the cataclysmic events after the outbreak of World War I and the Russian Revolution following 1917. These generally well-known events become terrifyingly real as they impinge upon the lives of what by this time have become well-developed characters in the novel. The isolation and political naivety of many Molochnaya Mennonites is amply demonstrated, but with insight and understanding. We are told about the massive response by Mennonites to the medical corps and ambulance duty. The heroic duties in carrying for the thousands of seriously wounded and dying soldiers is meticulously described. The utter ruthlessness and senselessness of war is grimly made plain.

The description of the sight confronting Wilhelm Fast on his first ambulance train trip to the front in Poland, is graphic and detailed (page 234): "Numb with shock Wilhelm and Snapper carried their stretcher to the densely packed rows of groaning men lying in pools of their own or their neighbors' blood. Darkly stained wounds showed obscenely through ragged rents in the khaki uniforms. Wilhelm stared down in horror, overcome by feelings of outrage at these senseless violations of the body's privacy, of its right to remain intact and whole. Everywhere he looked he saw raw, gaping wounds — like huge black and red insects sucking life out of healthy young bodies, he thought with a shudder. At least some of the wounds were bandaged but so crudely they seemed to have been covered more out of decency than as effective first aid.

Tourniquets and bandages had been applied so haphazardly that it was a miracle some of the men were still alive. Others, the luckless ones, were already stiffening in the casual postures of death."

That last phrase "in the casual postures of death" is typical of Reimer's aptly descriptive prose. Likewise, his use of Russian, Low-German or German occasional words, while perhaps initially a problem for some readers, is appropriate and usually these are explained or are self-evident.

Another example of Reimer's sensitive descriptions arises at page 165 on the occasion of Fast's riding home at night after a worrisome talk with Jacob Priess: "Enough. Worrying about Kolya was making him morbid. He urged Major into a brisk gallop. Ahead was the tiny hamlet of Fabrikewiese, which lay between Fuerstenau and Schoensee. Its handful of farmsteads silent and asleep in the darkness. There was not a stir of movement in the yards and not a single lighted window. The darkened farmsteads told him it was after ten, the traditional hour for rural families to retire. He glanced up at the slice of lemon moon garnishing a salad of dark clouds. He was beginning to feel chilled from the raw autumn wind. He welcomed the protection afforded on the far side of the hamlet by the avenue of giant poplars that run the remaining mile to Schoensee. In summer the high, century-old poplars flung a thick green canopy over the road — from a distance it looked like a shimmering tunnel. Now, in mid-November, the tunnel was broken and gaping where wind and rain had torn away its dying leaves. A remnant of dry leaves still clinging to black limbs overhead rustled like showers of coins. But the dark trucks stood massively soaring, unaffected by wind or weather."

The whole setting of the novel takes place of course, in the midst of the tumultuous political changes in Russia. While the focus of the novel is not Russian and then Soviet Union political life, the facts of the developing Revolution, the roles of real people such as the Tsar, Lenin, various Generals, are accurately depicted within the context of the novel. And so, fact and fiction are melded together into a convincing and interesting narrative.

History writers must often be faced with many unanswered questions. Who knows what all the developments were leading to Lenin's Bolsheviks finally wresting power over the many rebelling groups. Reimer includes a meeting

between Makhno and Lenin. This reader is unaware of any factual basis for such a meeting — but, again, who knows? The description of Lenin, although now well-defined, is consistent with the cunning determination of the Marxist leader.

The subject of the *Molochnaya Selbstschutz* is most objectively dealt with. Here there is no pious judgementalism, but rather an understanding and tragic accounting of the motives and results of its mobilization.

It is obvious from these remarks that the novel very much moved me, rekindled a somewhat dormant interest in my past, and gave me a much better understanding of my people. This would not have been possible without such a work and without that obvious concern Reimer has for his roots.

Throughout the novel, one senses a continuing feeling of warmth and kinship for this unique group of people.

The quiet ending, when the emigrants pass under the famous Red Gate of Freedom is poignant and the reader wishes the book was not coming to an end, much like one experiences when reading the last paragraphs of a Dostoyevsky or Tolstoi novel.

The wealth of material covered in the novel leads me to suggest that Reimer might be well-advised to take from one aspect or another of the novel, the starting point of either a sequel or perhaps a dramatized version of a segment of it.

In conclusion, I again express my personal deep gratitude for this precious addition to my library. **mm**



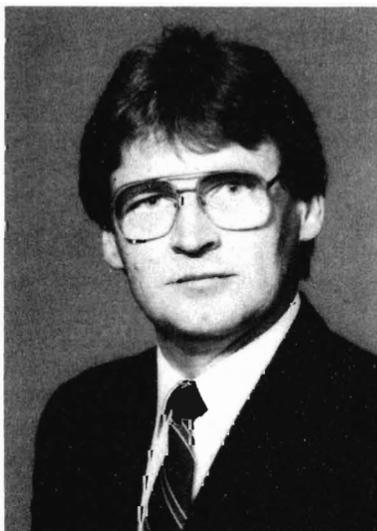
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Helga Elizabeth Kroeger spent the Christmas holidays in Winnipeg with her parents, Arthur and Elfi Kroeger. After 13 years in Germany she is enrolled at the University of California at Berkeley in the LL.M. program (master's degree in American Law). In Germany she graduated from the Albert Ludwig University in Freiburg with the German law degree, specializing in international private law, and taught at the same university while working on her doctor's thesis. After earning her doctorate, she worked in corporate law for a Frankfurt law firm, which granted her the year's leave to go to Berkeley.

Barbara Schmidt of Calgary placed within the top ten in the 1985 Alberta Institute of Chartered Accountants examination. She is a graduate of the University of Calgary, faculty of Commerce, and is now working for Arthur Anderson, a Calgary accounting firm. Barbara is the daughter of Vern and Nettie Penner of Winnipeg.

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The community of **North Kildonan** has been described as the first Mennonite urban colony. Concerns expressed in recent years about the rapid rate of urbanization among contemporary Mennonites and its effects led to a decision to undertake a social history. Sociologist Paul Redekop believes this study will show that Mennonite culture and community remain strong within North Kildonan; furthermore that the social networks established in this community can provide a model for other Mennonite urban communities in future. The study will describe and analyze Mennonite social networks within North Kildonan, based on family and kinship, church membership, work relationships, voluntary associations, etc. As a central part of the study, the contributions of the pioneers of this community and their descendants toward the preservation and growth of the Mennonite community in North Kildonan will also be documented. Any of the original or early settlers or their descendants who would be interested in being interviewed for this study, and/or making a contribution in support of this work can contact Dr. Paul Redekop or Dr. George K. Epp at the Mennonite Studies Centre, University of Winnipeg, 380 Spence Street, Winnipeg, Manitoba (Phone: 786-9895).

Victor Neufeld earned the highest marks in Manitoba in the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Manitoba 1985 final examination and received the institute's T. Harry Webb Memorial Gold Medal. Victor is the son of Henry and Jessie Neufeld of Randolph, and is employed with the chartered accounting firm of Price Waterhouse.



Karen Loewen, originally from Justice, and most recently of Winnipeg, is beginning a two-year Mennonite Central Committee assignment in Washington, D.C. She will be working as office manager and receptionist with the Community of Hope health department. Loewen is a member of the River East Mennonite Brethren Church in Winnipeg. Her parents are Jake and Marg Loewen of Justice.

PHIDVENI

mirror mix-up

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D E V I N E

This edition we announce the winner of the December puzzle and from among the entries, M. Plett-Lyle of Winnipeg was selected winner.

Answers to the December puzzle are pear, sheep, angel, mercy, silent, crass.

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 from among the contest entries and the prize awarded.

Entries must be sent to the Mirror office by March 17, 1986.

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Organizers have outline in place for MWC Winnipeg

Although the next Mennonite World Conference is still more than four years off, planning for it is well underway.

This world conference will be held July 24 to 29, 1990, in Winnipeg and is expected to attract at least 12,000 registrants.

Jake Pauls, minister of the Bethel Mennonite Church and the current chair of the local organizing committee, said the Winnipeg event will be organized to emphasize "worship, fellowship, and Bible study." Because registration is open to anyone who is Mennonite, it will be a "peoples' conference" and not a conference of leaders or elected delegates. Accordingly, it will be a unique forum in which to see the varied ways "being Mennonite" is expressed around the world.

Rev. Pauls also emphasizes that the 1990 MWC is being hosted by the Canadian Mennonite community, and as such is an event that happens to be held in Winnipeg. The Canadian organizing committee, therefore, includes representatives from each Mennonite conference in Canada, two of which (Brethren in Christ, and the Mennonite Church) do not have congregations in Manitoba.

The organizing committee is comprised of 15 members, and within that group there is a five-member executive that has been meeting twice a year.

The main conference site will be the Winnipeg Convention Centre, which is ideal for small group meetings and for simultaneous translation, but which at the same time is too small for large plenary meetings of all the delegates. Rev. Pauls said the organizers are still wrestling with this logistical problem, and predicts that one solution may be to minimize the number of plenary sessions and "de-centralize" the program by organizing many meetings of smaller groups in the convention center and elsewhere.

In any case, a meeting of the Men-

nonite World Conference council will be held in Paraguay in 1987 to establish an overall theme for the Winnipeg event. After that meeting planning for the Winnipeg MWC will increase in intensity with the establishment of a conference office in Winnipeg (as a branch of the main MWC secretariat in Lombard, Illinois), the establishment of sub-committees to handle specific facets of the event, and so on.

The MWC secretariat does not exist only to organize the world conference, Rev. Pauls said, explaining that when the MWC council meets it convenes throughout the world. These meetings he said become a "mini-world conference" in their own right, highlighting the international and intercultural characteristics of the Mennonite church but also supporting the "oneness" that all Christians must have towards each other.

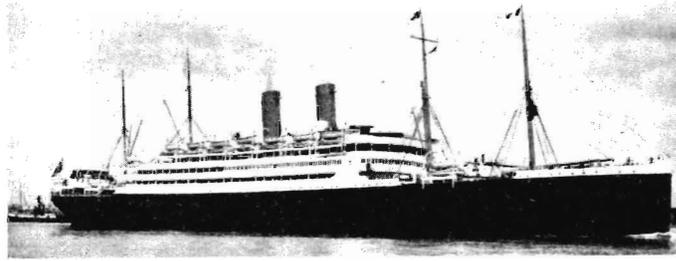
In terms of a world conference, however, Rev. Pauls said the MWC council determines the program and then works with the site organizing committee to ensure that the physical facilities are in place to support the program.

One feature of the 1990 event will be the approach taken to participant accommodation; Rev. Pauls said to the extent possible the organizers want to billet registrants in homes to ensure as much interaction among individuals as possible. For those Mennonites from abroad, meeting Manitoba Mennonites in their homes will be a unique experience.

Again, there will be a travel fund to support individuals who should come to Winnipeg but who would not be able to afford the cost of attendance on their own.

Rev. Pauls said so far the experience of serving on the organizing committee has caused him and his committee colleagues to adopt "a perspective that is worldwide and transcultural."

— Ed Unrau



Mennonites and the ships that brought them here

by Dr. Peter Lorenz Neufeld

The *Mennonite Mirror* article of September/84 '60 Years Ago: The Ships That Brought The Mennonites' evoked considerable interest. Also, there was much interest in a weekly newspaper article I'd written a bit earlier on ships transporting the mid-1870s Mennonite migration to the Canadian Prairies.

As a regular writer for the Montreal-based magazine *Seaports and The Shipping World*, I've researched and written about several dozen ships with Canadian Prairies connections. In so doing, I often come across information on steamers related to the above mass migrations.

Following the *Mirror* article, which focussed on the CPR ships *Bruton*, *Marglen*, *Melita* and *Minnedosa*, Helen Dyck of Rosthern, Saskatchewan wrote: "I was a (child of eight) passenger on the *SS Bruton*, which we boarded at Libau on July 17, 1923. After a stormy passage across the North Sea we arrived at the Southampton port on July 23. We continued on the *Bruton*, leaving England on August 4, and arriving in Quebec on August 17 after a rough passage on a stormy Atlantic. Smaller groups of Mennonites left for Canada on the *Empress of Scotland* and the *SS Melita*. The *Bruton*, I am told, was old and the passage very rough, but to me, as a child, the days on her were exciting. I wasn't seasick and the sailors and ship personnel were very kind. The *Bruton* made another passage across the Atlantic before it was scrapped."

Arthur Harder of Lantana, Florida wrote that I "failed to mention one very important ship, the *Empress of France*, on which my family arrived in Quebec City on August 8, 1924. I was a young lad among the 1,000 Mennonites who stepped onto Canadian soil from the famous boat."

The 678-foot *Empress of Scotland* was launched August 29, 1905 by Vul-

can Werke of Stettin, Germany. She was slated to be called *Europa* but when Kaiserin Auguste Victoria christened her for the Hamburg-America Line, she was instead named for that royal person. In March 1919, she became British property as part of war reparations and until 1920 used by USA for bringing troops home from Europe. Briefly she sailed for the Cunard line on charter trips, bought by Canadian Pacific and on August 5, 1921 was renamed *Empress of Scotland*. Refitted and converted to oil fuel at Hamburg, she left Southampton on her first CP voyage January 1, 1922. In June '23, the summer of Helen Dyck's voyage, the *Empress* collided with the *SS Bonus* at Hamburg, but I don't know if Mennonites were aboard. Two years later, she became famous when the international news media focussed on her while rushing film and photographs across the Atlantic from Southampton to the St. Lawrence concerning America's 19-year-old Gertrude Ederle who'd just set a world record swimming the English Channel. In '27, she made news transporting HRH Prince of Wales from Quebec. Sold to Hughes-Bolckow Shipbreaking of Blyth, England as scrap in December '30, she caught fire in the yard there shortly after, broke in two the next year when moved; demolition finally completed in November/31.

The 571-foot *Empress of France* was launched 22 March/13 by W. Beardmore Co. of Glasgow as the *Alsatian*. A year later, she was requisitioned for First World War service as armed merchant cruiser but soon graduated to flagship of the Tenth Cruiser Squadron, in which capacity she served three years fighting German ships and submarines. Refitted, she became the *Empress of France* on April 14, 1919 and sailed for Canadian Pacific henceforth, mostly on the Southampton-Quebec run. Aside from assisting with the Mennonite migration

from Russia to Canada in mid-1920s, she seems to have made peacetime news only once, transporting the Prince of Wales in 1923. In November '34, she was scrapped by W. H. Arnott and Co. — in the very yard in which she was built. Technologically, she was one of the first ships ever fitted with a gyro compass, installed just before Mr. Harder sailed on her.

In his book 'Reinland, an Experience in Community,' Peter Zacharias lists five steamships which brought the bulk of the 1870s migration of Mennonites to Manitoba. Of these: *SS Hibernian*, *SS Sarmatian*, *SS Peruvian*, *SS Sardinian* and *SS Quebec*, all except the last-named sailed for the world-famous Allan Line. I've yet to come across the *Quebec*, which sailed from Liverpool 8 June 1876 arriving at Quebec with families like Franz Froese, Franz Rempel and Abraham Dueck 15 days later.

Popularly known as the Allan Line but actually registered as Montreal Ocean Steam Ship Company by Canadian, Sir Hugh Allan (later a CPR founder) with financial backing by powerful British family members and Montreal friends, its ships sported a red funnel with white band below a black top and red-white-blue vertically-striped flags with a long red pennant above. For 60 years this line, more than any other, connected Canada to Europe, and through the years brought millions of immigrants to our country. Lloyds of London in England lists a total of 75 Allan vessels operating at some time or other between 1854 and 1914.

Zacharias records the *Hibernian* as arriving at Quebec, August 27, 1874 with families like Jacob Fehr. This 1,900-ton steamer came into service in 1861, at that time one of only six Allan ships. She and her sister *Norwegian* were often claimed to be the first "spar deck" steamships on the North Atlantic.

Originally 280 feet long and 38 feet wide, she'd been lengthened to 351 feet in 1871 and tonnage increased to 2,752. From 1870 to 1884 she plied the Glasgow–St. John's–Quebec–Montreal run, sometimes including Liverpool and Baltimore. In 1884 she was converted to cargo ship, masts reduced to two and tonnage increased to 3,440. For two years she hauled freight between Glasgow and Boston, six between Glasgow and Philadelphia and the last seven again between Glasgow and Boston. In 1901 she was scrapped in Germany.

The *SS Sarmatian* docked at Quebec 6 July 1875 from Liverpool, bringing families like Peter Wiens, Wilhelm Esau, Jacob Wiens Sr. and Jr., Isaak Dueck, Peter Harms, Peter Wiens Jr. and Jacob Fehr. On June 30, 1877 she arrived with others like John Bergmann and John Vaehr. When this 3,650-ton vessel was constructed in 1871, she was by far the largest Allan unit afloat and the first to contain twin engines. A sleek 371 feet long and trim 42 wide, she plied the Liverpool–Quebec–Montreal run until 1890. That year triple-expansion engines were installed and she was transferred to the Glasgow–Quebec–Montreal route two years, Glasgow–Boston two, her final years involving

London–Quebec–Montreal. In 1908 she was scrapped at Rotterdam.

The *SS Peruvian* arrived at Quebec from Liverpool 13 July 1875 with families like Isaak Vaehr, 30 June 1878 with ones like John Walle, Wilhelm Rempel and Peter Abrams. Built in 1864, the 2,500-ton steamer (whose sister was the *Moravian*) had started out very unlucky, having stuck during launching and being gutted by fire while fitting. Once afloat, she became highly successful. For instance, almost immediately she set a 24-day 15-hour round trip record from Moville to Portland. Until 1871 this 312 x 39-foot ship continued to ply the Liverpool–Portland run, then Liverpool–Baltimore two years. In 1874 she was lengthened to 373 feet, tonnage increased to 3,000 and twin engines installed. From 1874–86 she sailed between Liverpool and Quebec, then three years Liverpool–Baltimore. In 1901 a second funnel was added, as well as new twin improved engines. For two years she connected Glasgow and Quebec, two Glasgow and New York, six mainly Glasgow and Boston, two Liverpool–St. John's–Halifax. She was scrapped in 1905.

The *SS Sardinian* made at least three voyages that included Manitoba Men-

nonite settlers: docking at Quebec from Liverpool October 5, 1875 with families like Hermann Dyck and Jacob Giesbrecht; June 23, 1876 with others like Johann Peters, Johann and Cornelius and Jacob Vaehr, Peter Letkemann; 30 July of the same year with ones like Bernhard Bergmann.

The brand new 4,350-ton 400-foot *Sardinian* had a varied career. Launched in 1874 by R. Steele and Co. of Greenock, she'd made her maiden voyage just two months before carrying Mennonite settlers. For 22 years she joined Liverpool and Montreal. Less than two years after her third trip with Mennonites a violent explosion rocked her while at anchor in Moville, caught fire and had to be scuttled. Refloated and repaired, she resumed service later that year. In 1897 triple-expansion engines were installed by W. Denny & Bros. and she entered the Glasgow–Montreal and often New York run.

In early winter of 1901 the *Sardinian* made international history. Nobel prize-winner and world-famous Italian inventor Guglielmo Marconi was on board for Newfoundland, where soon after the first trans-Atlantic radio signal was received. In 1905 she was put on the London–Montreal route, 1914 Glasgow–Philadelphia. Three years later she was taken over by CP together with what remained of the Allan fleet, 12 ships having been sunk during the war. From 1919–20 she hauled cargo between Canada and Avonmouth. In late 1920 she was sold to Astoreca Azqueta Co. of Spain for service as a hulk at Vigo. In 1934 she was bought by Compania Carbonera and in mid-1938 towed to Bilbao to be scrapped.

Many people believe a steamer usually has only a single captain throughout her entire life. Not so, especially in large lines like Allan–CP. For instance, one of that line's captains, Robert P. Moore, who later retired to the Boissevain–Whitewater area of southwestern Manitoba, commanded 12 ships within 18 years. These included the *Sarmatian* 1879–80 and *Sardinian* 1894–5. During the time the *Hibernian* was transporting Mennonite immigrants in 1874, he served aboard her as mate (second-in-command).

Canadian Pacific continued the Allan Line's commendable policy of transporting vast numbers of European immigrants to Canada, often at greatly-reduced rates. In fact, if it hadn't been for the Allan–CP line, few Manitobans of Mennonite ethnic origin would likely be here today. Let's thank God for Hugh Allan's dream of 130 years ago. **mm**

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poet's word

mmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmmm

— by Elmer Suderman

TO CARRY MY WORDS

Minnesota north wind blows hard enough today
to carry my words to that country graveyard
where side by side mother and father sleep
as they worked together for nearly fifty years.
If I'm lucky a whirlwind may take this poem
right up to the heaven they believed in
with all their hearts. They had no time
for poetry on that Major County farm father
homesteaded when the Cherokee Strip opened
September 16, 1893. They read *The Enid*
Morning News, the *Zionsbote* from Hillsboro,
Kansas, the *Rundschau* from Winnipeg. No poetry
unless you count the doggerel we recited
on the last day of school at Peerless,
district 166, or at Christmas Eve Programs
at Süd Hoffnungsfield Mennonite Brethren Church.
If they read these words, I hope they won't
be too disappointed. They distrusted poetry
and surely never dreamed they'd have a son
who'd write about the wind rather than face
it plowing wheat stubble toward sunset.
If they were alive they'd say: "You write
what isn't true. Only the Bible is true."
Perhaps now that father's been in heaven
for forty and mother for ten years and they've
had lots of time to read (It couldn't be heaven
if they didn't read, could it?) they'll understand
that poetry isn't so bad and can be used
to tell them that their word-minded son remembers
them. I hope they'll understand what I'm trying
to say; it was always hard for us to talk.
I liked to talk; they didn't, wary of words
and rhymes as I still am — sometimes.

TO KNOW THAT I AM

When I was younger
I used to wonder
why
we were put here.
I had time to think
milking by hand six at times eight
cows though I usually finished milking one
just as I'd get a good thought going
and was interrupted
starting a different cow.
Even worse was when a cow would aim its tail
at a fly and miss
and smack me just across my open mouth.
It's no wonder I never figured out
why
or if I did why I've forgotten.
What cows have on their tails
would make even Plato forget
I guess.
He'd spit, like I did and
lose his train of thought.
I quit thinking why long ago
and now since I won't be here much longer
with weeds and wheat wind and sun
under all this sky
I reassure myself
watching chicken hawks gliding
overhead and listening to bull frogs
after a rain
satisfied to know at least
where and that
I still am.

to their enemies (Mt. 5:10-13; 10:24-31).

Please note how Menno Simons correctly distinguishes between the abuse of discipline and the correct function of it (CWMS, pp. 988ff). He says, "We testify before the Lord and before you that we desire nothing upon earth more ardently than that we may return a poor erring sinner to the right way" (p. 565). There is no coldness here but a compassionate love. The Wismer Articles (pp. 1041f) also show that marital avoidance has its limits in the case of a weak conscience which is recognized according to Scripture and therefore a "careful investigation" is called for to determine whether it is a matter of conscience or the flesh (Article III. Note that Helen's instincts to move toward him in love, represents fleshly love over against her knowledge of what is right — agape love).

When a part of your body is diseased, you have it removed by radical surgery for the sake of the health of your body. Is not the health of the soul of much greater importance? Do you love your body when you let the disease fester and grow? Is it not really a sign that you love the disease and in transferred meaning, the sin? (*Von der Ehescheidung*). Walpot also refers us to Matthew 19:29 where Jesus says, "And everyone that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold . . ." (The Luther and Zuerch editions include "Wife" as do Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, and Alford. The Nestle text relegates it to a footnote and so modern translations like the NIV omit it.)

So if *The Shunning* were a true tragedy, the hero should be of noble character with a flaw that causes his downfall. The audience should identify with him and experience a purging of this fault in their own characters. Yet while all the elements of a good drama are suggested in the outlines, it does not come off correctly, because the audience is led to celebrate the pride and apostasy, the nonconformity in an evil sense, that results in a broken church and marital relationship, and that ends in the senseless killing of chickens and self-destruction. It is like as if you felt great about the stand that Judas took in the Scriptures. The experience sort of parallels the situation when a sick society admires Nixon and his gang. So much for the psychological aspect.

The sociological aspect is also confusing. The audience obviously con-

demns the church, yet there is no true evidence of an abuse of disciplinary function except to refer to a "cold love" which strikes me as a misconception because the audience interprets love as accepting the sinner in his sinful state rather than in a regenerate state. Is it not evident that a great gulf exists between the true Anabaptist who is banished or put to death and how he dies in praising God in his nonconformity, and the way in which the "hero" exits from life here?

While the author too, evidently blames the church society for the tragedy, this is actually misconceived. That "love covers over a multitude of sins" is a word of comfort to the repentant sinner, but it is abused as Schlatter explains, if with that word we wish to excuse or strengthen a malicious will, for then our sin infallibly destroys our love (1. Peter 4:8). Yet that is how a "warm love" is misconstrued by our hero and the audience. According to Mavis Reimer, I would understand that the apostate knows that he is wrong, but that like Judas, he cannot find true repentance. This is how the drama should have been conceived and understood and you may not idealize that kind of nonconformity, but rather the nonconformity to the world as represented by Jesus. Only then can we test and approve what is good in the divine sense (Rom. 12:2).

Regarding Hans Denck you must remember his confession, that as soon as he started to love as Jesus did, he got into trouble everywhere. It is true that he was suspected of teaching universalism, but you cannot conclude from that, as Harry Loewen does, that he did teach it. The internal evidence from his writings is against it, because he emphasized that no one may teach God's grace if he does not teach of his wrath at the same time and he certainly emphasized discipline and the ban against false brethren

(*Schriften*, p. 82). Furthermore, he says that he who is not able to reconcile contradictory scripture passages, of which he gives us forty samples, lacks in basic understanding of truth. Examine the following: 16) "I will not be angry forever" (Jer. 3:12). "Then they will go away to eternal punishment" (Mt. 25:46). 27) "For God has bound all men over to disobedience so that he may have mercy on them all" (Rom. 11:32). "Whoever does not believe is condemned" (Mk. 16:16; cf. #17, 1. Tim. 2:4 and Mt. 20:16).

It is wrong to praise a church for standing behind its beloved elder without reference to the truth question. That is like saying: My country right or wrong! Bultmann says that if someone is aware that he errs, one should do him the honor of pointing it out to him.

Footnote: Rev. Donald Evans, Associate Professor of Philosophy, U. of T. quotes from Billy Graham's *Decision* magazine: "As Christian believers we love the Communists, but we hate their system. We only wish you would join us in the fight not against our fellow human beings whom we love, but against principalities and powers of darkness."

For Evans this is a blasphemous misuse of scripture as if napalm was dropped on an evil system and not on fellow human beings. (*Peace Power and Protest*, p. 39). Let this be a warning not to deviate to the right nor the left of the norm, Jesus.

David Janzen,
Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario

BY WHOSE VIEW

Regarding the comments by Henry Funk that Mennonites are not an ethnic group, that's much like claiming the world is flat. It's interesting that when he quotes Webster it is as "the foremost authority of the English language" but when I quote the man then the defini-

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tion becomes inaccurate and that of Neufeld's personal viewpoint. It seems he can't see beyond his pocket, or elementary school, edition. Were he to consult one in his local high school, regional or university library his problem would evaporate. Surely no one seriously believes that the definition in current use has anything to do with being "a gentile, or heathen." That's how that word began: anyone who didn't practice the Jewish faith was considered "a gentile, or heathen." Even Mr. Funk's a gentile or heathen under that definition.

"My main concern was," states Mr. Funk, "to keep the Mennonite faith, but also the language, as pure as possible." My article had nothing whatever to do with the Mennonite faith. How does one keep the Mennonite language pure? In fact, what is it? Certainly not German! If so, why did the early Mennonites worship, and educate their children, in Dutch? Also, did founder Menno Simons ever advocate using German?"

"After all," continues Mr. Funk, "so-called ethnic-Mennonitism is only man-made and contains some of all the others, Dutch, Prussian, Russian, Ukrainian, American, Canadian and what have you." Here he confuses ethnic with nationality. Although an ethnic group occasionally also is a nationality, that's seldom the case. Of the six he lists, only Dutch might qualify. Canadians, Americans and Russians, for example, are made up of hundreds of ethnic groups. His claim that the ethnic part of being Mennonite is "man-made" and thus of little importance, the assumption being that the faith portion is God-made and all-important is, to say the least, a unique perspective. True, choosing a marriage partner is "man-made" to a degree; so is having intercourse and babies. But there are many who would argue that good marriages are made in heaven; many couples, parents, ministers and congregations pray that they are. Isn't God involved in making babies? Regarding the faith aspect even, whether or not doctrines (pacifism, adult baptism, etc.) are part of one's faith can't only be of God otherwise everyone but Mennonites would go to hell.

What's really ironical in this endless debate is that it might make a glimmer of sense if our roles were reversed. Here am I, not at all concerned with whether Mennonites continue as an ethnic group in the years ahead making positive statements about Mennonites as an ethnic group. (My children, for instance, aren't married to ethnic Mennonites and I fully concurred with their choices.)

And there is Mr. Funk, who would probably suffer a stroke if his children married outside the Mennonite community, bad-mouthing Mennonites as an ethnic group. (He would define this as "marrying within the faith" and the real test would come if they were recent converts like Indians, Negroes and Asiatics.) Only in Canada, you say?

Well, here ends my involvement in this stupid debate. I don't mind debating ISSUES. But ethnic groups revolve around genetics; scientific FACTS. In short, neither Mr. Funk's opinions or mine on it matter one iota. The world will still be round tomorrow even if every single person living on it believes it flat. And even if all the readers of this magazine wish to support Mr. Funk's position that Mennonites are not an ethnic group, it really doesn't matter and isn't worth further argument.

With best wishes,
Dr. Peter Lorenz Neufeld
Minnedosa

REALLY NO OPENINGS?

I would like to respond to a letter by Bill Schulz in the November issue. In it the writer makes a broad critique in an area that is sensitive. The issue is women in the church, and more specifically pastoral positions for women.

My first problem is that the accusation: "no openings for women," is directed in such a way that a number of offices might be implicated, including the one in which I serve. "General conference office" (no capitals) complicates the matter further.

The second problem lies with accuracy in reporting the events described. When I read the letter I asked myself whether the writer was referring to my office. I tracked it down, and now wonder with what kind of integrity it was recorded. Could there be another interpretation? Was all the relevant data shared?

By way of explanation I want to say that "conference offices" do not place pastors; men or women. Congregations hire them. The conference office makes congregations aware of personnel available, and informs interested candidates of positions that are open. If congregations seek a male pastor we have to respect that. On the other hand we do encourage congregations to consider hiring a woman.

If I'm granted more space I would venture to say a few things about the issue per se.

There is a growing openness to women in ministry, slow though that

growth may be. About 13 women are active in ministry in Canada, and in the total General Conference the number is 40. The number of Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba churches that now have or recently had, women on the pastoral team is 5. Let me quote from a statement on ordination approved by the delegates of the general conference in August of 1974 — "Affirming that in Christ there is neither male nor female and that God is no respecter of persons, neither race nor class nor sex should be considered barriers in calling a minister." In this I believe there lies some reason for hope.

The editorial in the same issue of the *Mirror* is also a trifle shrill. In the same paragraph where the conference office is accused of sexism, it seems to be implied that they claimed the policy was biblical. Was that in fact claimed by the conference office in question? And can you imagine the 'tamasha' if one of our theological institutions would bar women? To complain that not all are where we are in our understanding, is like complaining that not all tomatoes ripen August 15th.

On the other hand I agree with the main message of the editorial, and would plead for patience and sensitivity on all sides.

Bill Block, Director
Committee on Ministerial Leadership
Conference of Mennonites in Canada
Winnipeg

VARIED VIEWS

Although I am on pension, I don't mind paying for the *Mirror*. I find some interesting articles in it.

I specially enjoyed your last issue, the article about Henriette Schellenberg. We had the privilege to sit at her table at the Steinbach Fund Raising Banquet, I just thought her voice and her singing was the best I have ever heard and to read in the article, that she wants to serve the Lord with this wonderful talent is just marvelous.

I also appreciate reading the article about the life of my dear friend Corny Loewen. He truly used his talent to the utmost. May the Lord bless his family.

The one thing I did not appreciate and disagree strongly with the concluding remarks by Harry Loewen: "Jesus, who was the greatest radical, critic and heretic of all time . . ." may the good Lord forgive him for such remarks.

Sincerely
A. A. DeFehr
Winnipeg

Frank Epp



Reflections on the Life and Work of Frank Epp

by Roy Vogt

With the death of Frank H. Epp in January, at the age of 56, the Mennonites of Canada lost their finest historian and journalist. Through his pioneering editorship of *The Canadian Mennonite* in the 1950s and 1960s, and in such solid historical works as *Mennonite Exodus* and the two completed volumes of *Mennonites in Canada*, Frank Epp became widely recognized as the most outstanding interpreter of the Mennonite experience in Canada.

He was never content, however, to be a mere interpreter of events. He was driven by a vision (or, perhaps better said, a series of visions) and an amazing personal energy to give shape and direction to the development of his own people and, especially in his last years, to his country. His successive roles as editor, pastor, college president, writer, peace advocate, and political aspirant, enabled him to translate his Christian vision into numerous useful endeavours. There can hardly be a Mennonite institution in Canada which was not touched by his activity.

Our paths crossed very often, especially in the 1970s, and what follows is a brief, personal reflection on the impression made by Frank Epp on such occasions. Like many energetic men he was somewhat small in stature. One learns very quickly not to look down on such people. His large, commanding eyes were his outstanding physical feature. They accurately conveyed the fact that here was a man with very strong convictions. I believe he was by nature an extremely serious person, one might say overly serious, though he could laugh warmly at the humour of others.

He took a strong personal interest in people but, paradoxically, a deep core of reserve kept him from being particularly personable. My impression was that through some tough experiences he may have learned to reduce his vulnerability to others. One of his warmest qualities was the genuine interest that he showed in the children of his friends. Without ostentation he would single them out for attention.

He possessed in abundance a quality that seems most elusive among human beings: courage. His work on the Canadian Mennonite brought him into numerous conflicts with church leaders and others, and though he was prepared to listen carefully to opposing views he would express his own without flinching. A relatively closed community like the Mennonite community of Canada is never very comfortable with a free press, and Frank often paid the price in choosing personal integrity over communal conformity. This was especially true during the Vietnam War when his Anabaptist peace position came into conflict with the extreme anti-communism of many of his readers and listeners. Frank Epp did more than anyone else to keep the traditional Anabaptist position alive during those difficult years. Years later, when he decided to run for federal political office, he was often criticized by a new generation of Anabaptist scholars who felt that he was compromising his previous convictions to make them conform to his new political goals. Unfortunately, there appears to be little room for compromise in the Anabaptist tradition, and I personally tended to side with Frank in the course that he was trying to chart, but to the extent that he

had earlier contributed to such an uncompromising stance it might be said that he was the victim of his own (earlier) excesses. I am sorry that we were never able to discuss the irony of this.

Like most men who are driven by visions, Frank sometimes found it difficult to listen to the little visions of others when these conflicted with his own. A few years ago, for example, he was asked by a group of businessmen in Winnipeg, called "Friends of Higher Learning," to draft a proposal for a Mennonite liberal arts college. The vision that he came up with was incredibly sweeping in scope (one could say grandiose) and uniquely his own. His mandate called for him to discuss these ideas with academics in Winnipeg, and he did, but one had the feeling through all the discussions that followed that he was trying much harder to persuade us of his vision than to listen to ours. The tragic result was that neither his ideas nor ours contributed much to the plans that were finally developed. The late Harold S. Bender, who occupied a position of leadership among American Mennonites quite similar to the position occupied by Frank Epp in Canada, was often called "Pope Bender" behind his back. A similar term would occasionally have been appropriate for Frank. Both men were naturally strong leaders, and very good scholars, who were not above reinforcing the power of their visions with the power of their position in order to drive others with them. It is quite possible, of course, that that was more often good than bad for us.

In the last few decades of his fruitful life Frank's concern for peace and justice launched him into endeavours far

beyond the boundaries of the Mennonite community. This is evidenced by his extensive writings on the Middle East, and by his attempts to be elected as a Liberal member of Parliament. These two endeavours were ultimately connected. As a result of my own involvement in Canada's multicultural movement at the time, where matters of this kind were often discussed, there is no question in my mind that one of the reasons why Frank narrowly missed election was the sympathetic ear that he gave to the Arab side in his writings on the Middle East conflict. I don't think that anyone could fairly accuse him of being anti-Jewish or even pro-Arab, but his attempt to be fair to both sides was interpreted as anti-Jewish and he was roundly condemned for it. The tragedy was that a good man was lost to politics for wrong reasons and he was stymied in his attempts to enlarge the scope of his work.

The people and institutions he served, and the books he wrote, are a fitting memorial to the life of Frank Epp. That he left undone more than most people ever attempt, only underlines the unique scope of his vision.

mm

Ein

Enttäuschendes Paket!

von Gerhard G. Thiessen

Pakete, Päckchen, oder wie man sie wohl nennen mag, sind meistens zur Freude für andere bestimmt — aber ich will den Ereignissen nicht zuvorgreifen.

Es war in Deutschland in den Jahren der Nachkriegszeit, als alle Waren noch rationiert wurden. Amerika war bereit zu helfen, darunter auch C.A.R.E. und das MCC. Ich hatte mich bei einem Bauern vermietet, um Essen und Obdach zu verdienen. Über Hunger brauchte ich nicht zu klagen aber die Kleidung liess zu wünschen übrig.

Unter meinen Arbeitskollegen war auch ein Mann namens Josef, von allen kurz 'Sepp' genannt, der schon seit 1939 beim Bauern als Kriegsgefangener gearbeitet hatte. Trotz der vielen Zeit hatte er aber nicht die deutsche Sprache meistern können, vor allem kam er nicht von kindischen Ausdrücken los, die man ihm früher beigebracht hatte.

• • •

Der Schwarzhandel stand in voller Blüte. Wer an Lebensmittel herankam, an Tabak oder Kaffee oder Kakau, der konnte sich auf dem Schwarzen Markt alles leisten, denn solche Waren waren Gold wert.

Nun geschah es, dass ich einige C.A.R.E. Pakete von Verwandten aus Kanada erhielt, in welchem sich auch Packungen von Zigaretten befanden.

Sepp war ein leidenschaftlicher Raucher. Er gab viel für eine Zigarette, überhaupt, wenn es dazu noch „tailor-made“ war! Er erzählte uns nun er habe eine Schwester in den U.S.A. und, da wir aus Kanada Pakete erhielten, sollte es doch ein leichtes sein, solche auch aus den U.S.A. zu bekommen. Alles, was er zu tun brauchte, wäre an seine Schwester zu schreiben und um ein Paket zu bitten. Gesagt, getan.

Nebenbei erzählte Seppe, seine Schwester hätte sich ein Radio gekauft, auf dem man den Sprecher sehen konn-

te (Fernsehen!), für ganze \$1000, und da sollte sie wohl auch in der Lage sein, dem Bruder etwas zu schicken. Ungeduldig wartete er auf das Paket, das da kommen sollte, ja, kommen musste.

Nach langem Warten war es dann eines Tages doch so weit. Sein Paket war angekommen (und klein war es nicht!). Stolz sollte er es jetzt vor unser aller Augen aufmachen.

Zu allererst, obenauf, lag eine hübsche Kravatte, korrekt zusammengelegt. Dann folgten Kleidungsstücke aller Art, wohl gebrauchte, aber von guter Qualität. . . . Keine Zigaretten!

Sepp hatte für all den Plunder keine Augen und suchte Zigaretten. Statt dessen wieder eine Handvoll Kravatten, wohl zwei Dutzend an der Zahl. Sie wurden an Ort und Stelle verteilt. Was sollte er mit Kravatten? Zigaretten, ja es müssten doch Zigaretten drinnen sein! Leider kamen nur noch etliche Kleidungsstücke zum Vorschein, aber kein Rauchwaren.

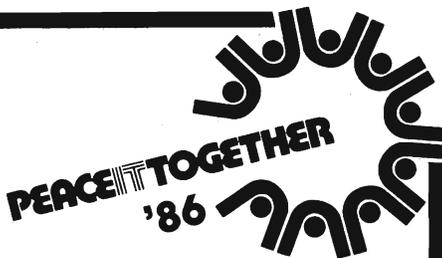
Dem Sepp riss die Geduld und er fing an zu schimpfen. So kannten wir unsern Sepp doch nicht. In der Sprache aller Herren Länder verrief er die Schwester, bloss weil sie keine Rauchwaren ins Paket getan hatte.

Es dauerte eine Weile ihn ein wenig zu beruhigen. Er könnte ja einige Sachen für Zigaretten umtauschen, die Schwester könne ja nicht wissen, dass er rauchte, usw. Jedenfalls war Sepp sehr enttäuscht über das so sehr ersehnte Paket.

• • •

Diese Geschichte hat vielleicht keine scharfe Pointe aber dafür eine nützliche Moral: Wenn jemand jemandem Freude machen will, so sollte er dieses nicht unüberlegt tun; es könnte statt Freude, Ärger und Verdruss anstiften, gerade das Gegenteil von dem was man gewollt hat.

mm



Becoming Active Peacemakers

Speaker:

Arnold Snyder, Professor at
Conrad Grebel College

**MARCH 7-9,
1986**

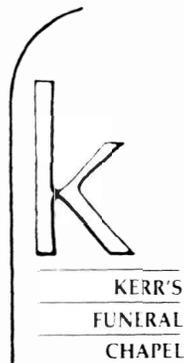
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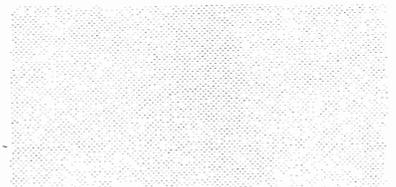
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Zur Diskussion: Mediengespräch

*Es trägt Verstand und rechter Sinn
Mit wenig Kunst sich selber vor.*

Goethe, Faust.

Ich habe immer angenommen, dass die Ausführungen, die in dieser Diskussionsspalte erschienen, entweder absolut überzeugend oder aber undiskutabel gewesen sind. Nicht, dass es an Telefonanrufen oder beiläufige Bemerkungen gefehlt hat, aber zu Wort hat sich fast keiner gemeldet, was ich als Optimist natürlich positiv auslegen möchte.

Heute rief ein Kollege aus der mennonitischen Medienbranche an und bezeichnete einige Texte die im *Mirror* erschienen als rein destruktive Schriften, die nicht nur die Bestrebungen unserer Filmmacher zerstören, sondern auch die ganze mennonitische Gesellschaft zersplittern sollten.

Ich dagegen beklagte mich bei ihm darüber, dass die, die sich betroffen fühlten, nicht die Gelegenheit wahrnehmen, im *Mirror* zu antworten — das Blatt stehe ihnen ja offen! Ich wies auf den *Boten* hin, der ja oft weitläufige Diskussionen von verschiedenen Seiten in Hülle und Fülle bringt. Solche Offenheit wünschten wir uns auch im *Mirror*, behauptete ich.

Ist es nicht so, fragte ich, dass man gegenüber Kritik zu sensibel ist? Warum sollten unsere Produkte, ob Bücher oder Filme oder Theaterstücke, nicht einer sachgemässen Prüfung unterzogen werden? Und ganz besonders, wenn es um allgemeine mennonitische Themen geht, die uns allen angehen?

Denn es kann ja nicht darum gehen, gegen Personen vorzugehen, sondern Kritik geschieht um einer Sache willen. Ob man über ein Buch wie Al Reimers neuer Roman oder der nun schon alte von Rudy Wiebe, oder über das Theaterstück von Walter Schlichting, oder auch über den Film *And When They Shall Ask*.

Solche Werke gehen uns allen an und bedürfen einer sorgsam Prüfung. Da soll der Kritiker verantwortungsvoll handeln, aber nicht weniger der Künstler/Hersteller! In der Besprechung von Reimers Buch geht Gerhard Ens im *Boten* z.B. auf die Frage des Selbstschutzes ein und prüft sehr genau, **wie** Reimer dieses heikle Thema behandelt hat. Das ist sein gutes Recht und sogar seine Pflicht, denn das ist eine Frage, die von grosser Bedeutung für uns alle ist.

Wenn nun der Film *And When They Shall Ask* ähnlicherweise unter die Lupe genommen wird, von einem Sachkenner nämlich, dann lohnt es sich doch wohl, diese Rezension zu drucken. Gegendarstellungen wären im *Mirror* auch willkommen (sie sind auch schon erschienen!).

Was ich aber eigentlich sagen wollte — wir, die wir mit den verschiedenen Medien zu tun haben, wir sollten doch auch unter uns ein Gespräch führen können. Wozu ist diese ganze westliche Freiheit gut, wenn wir sie nicht zu einem freien Gespräch über uns wichtige Themen benützen?

VGD

Jagdkönig und Kreissaal

von Hedi Knoop

Herbst und Winter — in Deutschland die Zeit der Treibjagden, wenn sich die Jäger im grünen Rock, Gewehr auf der Schulter, Hund an der Leine, versammeln und dann nach vorher festgelegtem Schlachtplan auf Felder und Auen hinausschwärmen. Wehe nun dem armen Meister Lampe, dem grauen Feldhasen, wenn er aus seiner Sasse aufgestöbert wird und in die volle Schrotladung des Jägers rennt. Aber auch Rebhühnern und Fasanen ergeht es schlecht, sobald die eifrigen Treiber diese hochgemacht haben und sie sich als willkommenes Ziel vor dem Grau des wolkenverhangenen Himmels abzeichnen. Vor Dunkelwerden liegen sie dann allesamte als Jagdbeute hübsch geordnet vor ihren Bezwingern auf der Erde, und es erklingt für sie aus Jagdhörnern immerhin noch ein ehrenvolles Halali.

Für Jäger und Treiber aber setzt nun der gemütliche Teil des bisher anstrengenden Jagdtages ein: das Schüsseltreiben, das kräftige Essen nämlich in der warmen Stube einer Gastwirtschaft, mit anschließendem Umtrunk bei einem geräuschvollen Palaver über das Wo und Wie und Wann der geglückten oder auch missglückten Abschüsse.

Am Hut des erfolgreichsten Schützen steckt der Bruch, ein Stäusslein aus Tannengrün. Er spendiert sogleich eine Runde Schnaps und bekommt dafür ein dreifaches donnerndes „Horrido“. Ja, er ist der glücklichste von allen an diesem für ihn denkwürdigen Jagdtag.

Pech freilich für seine Ehefrau, wenn sie sich ausgerechnet diesen Ruhmestag aussucht, um ein Kind auf die Welt zu bringen:

Jagdkönig und Kreissaal

Am frühen Morgen stöhnt Frau Anne und spricht zu ihrem Ehemanne:
„Du, Karl, ich glaub, es ist so weit.
Fahr mich zur Klinik, es wird Zeit.“
„Wenn du man nicht im Irrtum bist,
wo heute doch die Treibjagd ist.“ —
„Nein, Karl, wir müssen uns schon sputen,
sie kommen alle zehn Minuten.“
„Na gut, dann aber schnell; um neune,
da trifft man sich bei Summans Scheune.“
Er fährt sie hin so gegen acht
und geht um neune mit auf Jagd.
Die Anne überfallen Wehen,
und es vergeht ihr Hör'n und Sehen.
„Frau Meyer, ich halt's nich mehr aus!“ —
„Gut pressen! Schön so. Nun ist's raus.“
Gleich wird der neue Mensch gewindelt,
geputzt, gewogen und gebündelt.
Frau Anne sieht es mit Behagen.
„Ach Gott, was wird mein Mann nur sagen!“

Am Abend klingelt's Telefon.
„Er ist's, gebt her, ich ahnt' schon. —
Hallo, ach Karl, das Kind ist da!
Die Meyern sagt, ganz der Papa.“ —
„Recht so, doch hab ich Zeit nur wenig,
denn stell dir vor, ich bin der König!
Jagdkönig heut zum ersten Mal.
Vier Kreaturen an der Zahl:
ein Fuchs, zwei Hasen und ein Huhn,
ein Bruch am Hut — was sagst du nun?
Ich muss zurück in Summans Saal
zum Umtrunk. Mehr ein andermal.“ —
„Und unser Kind?“ — „Ach ja, du Ännchen,
sag auf die schnelle: Ist's ein Männchen?“ —
Frau Anne seufzt. „Soweit ich sehe,
mein lieber Karl, ist's eine Fähe.“

Aus: *Torfgeschichten aus dem Uchter Moor* Hedi Knoop, erhältlich bei Margaret Kroeker, 86 Hazel Dell Avenue, Winnipeg, R2K 0P4.

Der Pflug steht still, der Acker ist bestellt

Der Pflug steht still, der Acker ist bestellt,
Und einen Hauch der Stille, bestimmt miteinst die Welt,
Die Zeit haelt inne, eine grosse Hand nun ruht,
Vorbei, vollbracht, die Arbeit auf dem Gut.

Geschichten schweigen nun; Bedaehtigkeit, das Wort . . .
Es ist nun alles aus, vorbei gewohnter Hort,
Wo Vater Abraham sich teilte allen mit:
Wie er so freudig, voll durch's Leben schritt . . .

Wir schweigen nun mit ihm: — dann meldet Hoffnungskunde:
„Es gibt ein Wiedersehn,“ geht dann durch alle Runde —
Ja, Vater, Dir und Dir sei Dank in grosser Zahl,
Wir wissen Dich und sagen allzumal: —

„Bleib Du bei uns, lass troesten uns Dein Geist,
Bleib gegenwaertig uns, denn Du, oh Vater weisst,
Es gibt noch viele Felder zu bestellen,
Es gilt zu meistern manche Lebenswellen —
Bis unsere Hand, wie Deine faellt,
Und wir dann rufen, „Leb wohl, Du alte Welt.““

Denn muede war er, ging zur Ruh,
Gott drueckte ihm die Augen zu!
Oh neige Dich zu uns, mit Deinem Segen,
Begleit uns sanft an diesem Tag und alletwegen!

Auf den Tod der Henry Krahn von Jack Thiessen

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