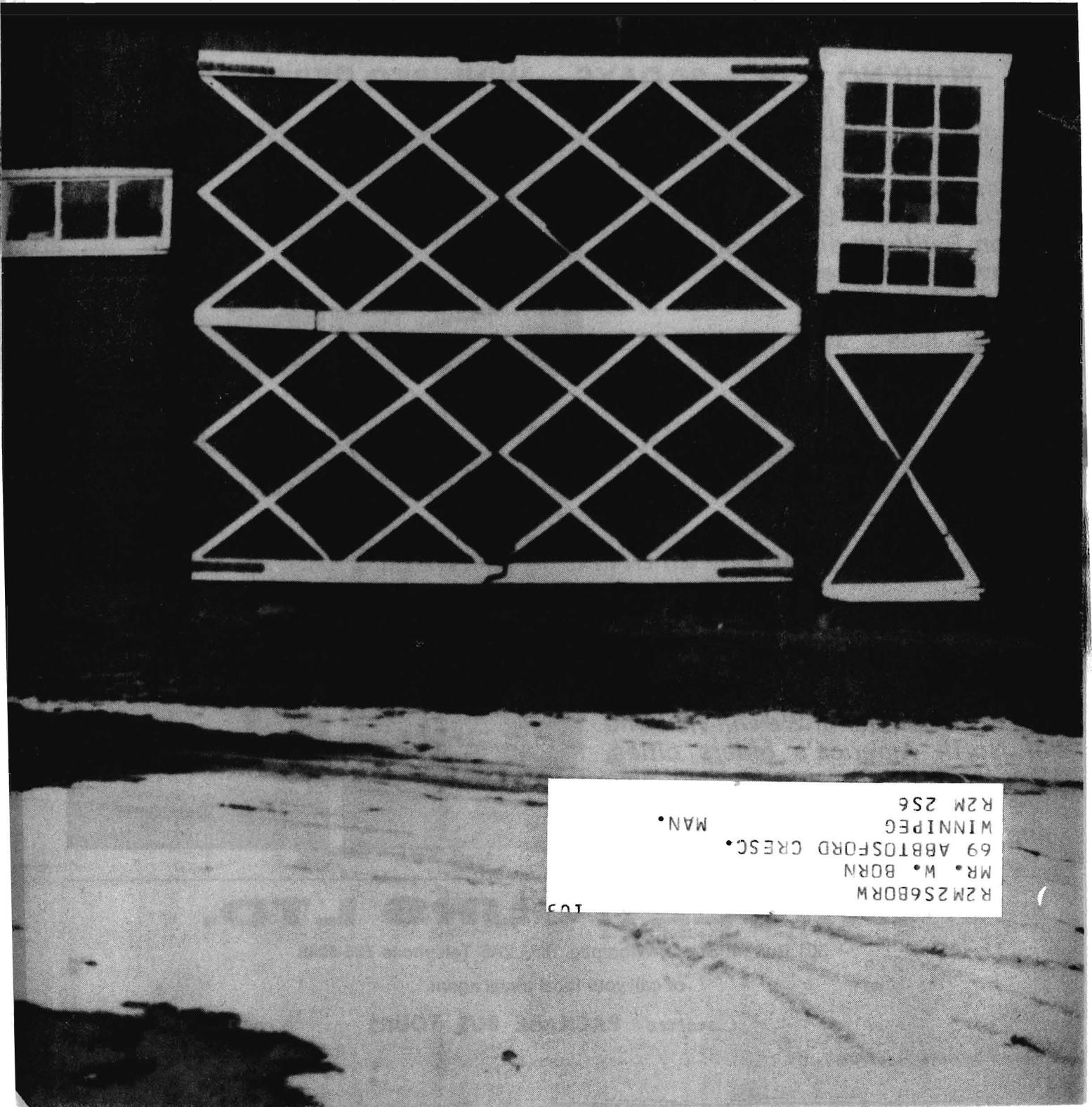


# mennonite mirror

volume 11 / number 8  
april 1982



R2M2S6BORM  
MR. M. BORN  
69 ABBOTSFORD CRESSC.  
MINNIEG  
R2M 2S6  
MAN.



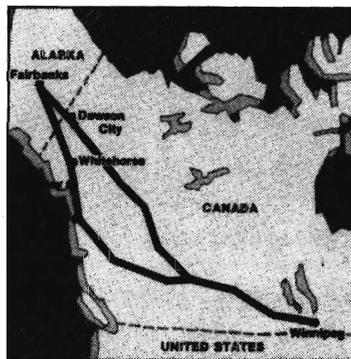
**PICK ONE OF THESE SPECTACULAR  
MOTOR COACH AND SHIP  
COMBINATIONS!**



# *Alaska ~ Pacific Ocean Tour*

**TOUR NO. CT6 — 20 DAYS — WINNIPEG DEPARTURES**

*The many highlights of this tour include a 'Circle Tour of Whitehorse, Dawson City, and Fairbanks', travel via the Narrow Gauge Whitepass Yukon Railroad, and a sailing from Skagway to Haines aboard the MV Malaspina.*



**A \$100 discount on  
June 3 and June 24**



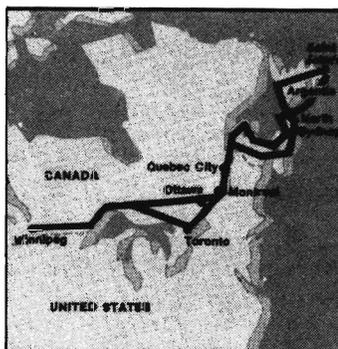
**May 16 June 3 June 17 June 24  
Aug. 12 Aug. 26**

# *Newfoundland ~ Gaspé Cabot Trail Tour*

**TOUR NO. CT7 — 26 DAYS — WINNIPEG DEPARTURE**

*The many highlights of this tour will include travel via the Cabot Trail in Nova Scotia followed by the ferry sailing from North Sydney to Argenta, Newfoundland. We will visit one of North America's oldest cities, Saint John's. Enroute you will also see Toronto, Montreal, Quebec City and Ottawa.*

**June 4 July 2**



**CIRCLE TOURS LTD.**

301 Burnell Street, Winnipeg, R3G 2A6 Telephone 775-8046

or call your local travel agent

*"Carefree"* **PACKAGE BUS TOURS**

*If you are a caring person,  
willing to use your own  
lifeskills to help others solve  
problems in living*

## Psychiatric Nursing



*...may be the career for you.*

We offer a two year program (22 months) leading to a Diploma in Psychiatric Nursing, and eligibility for provincial registration examinations. Current starting salary is \$17,960 plus shift differentials.

Requirements are Manitoba grade XII (3 - 300 courses), or mature university entrance requirements.

FOR MORE INFORMATION WRITE:

Chairman, Admissions Committee  
School of Psychiatric Nursing  
Selkirk Mental Health Centre  
Selkirk, Manitoba R1A 2B5



# mirror mix-up

ALTES  
  
 REPOS  
  
 KASTE  
  
 NISER

TRICKY, WHAT?

ALTES

IS IT: STEAL,  
 STALE,  
 LEAST  
 SLATE  
 TEALS  
 TALES?

APPEARANCES ARE OFTEN  
 DECEIVING. THIS PUZZLE'S  
 NOT A



Winner of the March Mix-up is Helen Doerksen, of Winnipeg, who was drawn from 57 entries.

Answers to March are: petal, plant, shine, youth, flower, eternity.

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

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

Entries must be sent to the Mirror office by April 22, 1982.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/Town \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

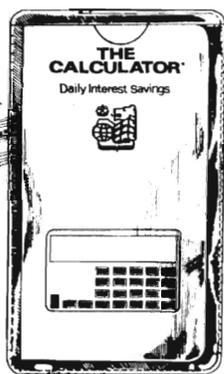
Send Entries to:  
 Mix-Up Contest  
 Mennonite Mirror  
 203 - 818 Portage Avenue  
 Winnipeg, Manitoba R3G 0N4

# The Calculator

## Daily Interest Savings Account.

Earn interest every single day beginning with first deposit

Two free withdrawals/transfers or cheques per month



High interest paid monthly

No minimum balance

Use it alone or jointly



When you succeed...we succeed.



# Lord when did we see you?

We see Christ in the faces of the hungry,  
the sick, the strangers and prisoners,  
and act in His name to respond to their needs.

May we also learn to see Christ in the faces  
of the potential victims of a nuclear holocaust—  
all who will die, suffer burns, be made blind and lame;  
all who will be separated from families  
in a world where earth and water are poisoned,  
where everything normal has been disrupted.

Must we not also act in the name of Christ  
to prevent that awful suffering?

*Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.*  
Luke 23:34

At the MCC annual meeting in January, members  
urged churches to study a meditation, *Nuclear  
Annihilation and a Faithful People*. For a copy and  
more information on the nuclear threat, write to:

Mennonite Central Committee  
21 South 12th Street  
Akron, Pennsylvania 17501

MCC (Canada)  
201-1483 Pembina Highway  
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3T 2C8



# DIE ZAUBERFLÖTE

**MOZART'S The Magic Flute**

**At The Playhouse**

**May 19, 21 and 22, 1982**

**Tickets: \$6.00, \$8.00 and \$9.00**

Available at C.B.O. and A.T.O. as of April 12, 1982

**directed by David Riesen**

**conducted by William Baerg**



**W**hat is music to a child? The wind in a cornfield, the croak of a frog, a mother's lullaby — and oh, a thousand things that grownups cannot hear. But hearing music and making music are different. You give nothing when you only listen to music — but when you play, you give away joy and a part of yourself and your soul. The playing of music — the giving — the sharing — the communication — the rapture.

Help your child's personality grow straight and tall in a world where so much is bent and twisted. Often the world is chaos — in music there is harmony. When men and nations preach hate, music is a bridge between all races. The angels of Heaven and Gabriel, too, have trumpets — but no one has ever said the Angel of Darkness sings or plays one single note of music.

Of all the arts, music is the dancing, shimmering rainbow, building a shining arc between the horizons of men's hearts. Painters, writers, sculptors are few — but almost everyone can sing or play an instrument if given the opportunity. Music is the child of love. A son, a daughter is the child of your love. Hand in hand through life, the two can be as great as any symphony ever written.

*If you feel as we do about music,  
come talk about it — and your child.*

 **YAMAHA MusicCentre**  
YAMAHA MAKES IT MUSIC.

1330 Portage Avenue 786-2461  
6th Floor - The Bay 772-4861



**mennonite  
mirror**

**inside**

**volume 11 / number 8  
april 1982**

**Mirror mix-up / 3**

**Herman Loewen: lost money and  
discovered assets / 6**

**J.J. Neufeld's unique ministry / 9**

**Anatomy of a dismissal / 11**

**Discipleship in dismissal / 18**

**Manitoba news / 20**

**CFAM: creating community / 23**

**Review: Smith's new Mennonite  
history / 25**

**Review: A people can't live  
without art / 25**

**Review: Chaco film worth  
seeing / 27**

**De Pelzdatj / 28**

**In memoriam: John Albrecht / 29**

**Our word / 30**

## **Mennonite Mirror**

**Publisher, Roy Vogt**

**Editor, Al Reimer**

**Managing Editor, Edward Unrau**

**Associate Editors: Ruth Vogt, Harry Loewen,  
Victor Doerksen**

**Writing Staff: Betty Dyck, Mary Enns, Hilda Mat-  
suo, Peter Paetkau, Wilmer Penner, Mavis Reimer  
and Mirror Mix-up: Bob Matsuo.**

**Business committee: Bob Friesen, Rudy Friesen,  
John Schroeder, Jack Thiessen, and Leona Pen-  
ner; advertising sales, Betty Unrau.**

### **Mennonite Literary Society, Inc.**

**President, Roy Vogt**

**Vice-President, Edward Unrau**

**Treasurer, Arkie Wiens**

**Secretary, David Unruh**

**Office Manager, Frieda Unruh**

**Board of Directors: Rudy Friesen, Mary Enns, and  
Wilmer Penner.**

The Mennonite Mirror is normally published 10  
times each year from September to June for the  
Mennonite community of Manitoba by the Men-  
nonite Literary Society, Inc.

All business and editorial correspondence should  
be addressed to 203-B18 Portage Avenue, Win-  
nipeg, R3G 0N4, telephone 786-2289. The Men-  
nonite Mirror observes the following part-time of-  
fice hours: Monday 1 to 4 p.m., Tuesday 9 a.m. to 4  
p.m., Thursday 9 a.m. to noon.

Subscriptions \$7 for one year; \$12 for two years;  
and no charge for those on pension.

**Second class mail registration 2658**



## **Herman Loewen: "I know I've lost all my money. But I've discovered I have a lot of assets . . ."**

by Mavis Reimer

The phone call came on a Tuesday evening. The voice on the other end of the line belonged to a local bank official. It bluntly informed Herman Loewen, an automobile dealer in Steinbach for 38 years, that his business was being placed into receivership. When employees of Loewen Chevrolet Oldsmobile Ltd. reported for work on Wednesday morning, August 12, 1981, they learned they no longer had jobs.

The failure of the Loewen business made spectacular news in southeastern Manitoba. Both urban and rural newspapers headlined the story. Winnipeg television stations carried reports on their local news editions, including interviews with the president of the Steinbach Chamber of Commerce on the effect on the town's economy.

For Herman Loewen, selling cars had been a life-long vocation. He entered the family firm after high school in 1943. Be-

gun in 1923 by his father, Peter T. Loewen, the Steinbach dealership was bought by the three Loewen sons in 1946. They ran the business jointly until 1963, when one brother left to establish a car dealership in British Columbia. In 1966, Herman bought out his other brother and became owner and general manager of Loewen Chevrolet.

His preparation for such an undertaking had been extensive. During the 1940's, he had been invited to spend two years at the General Motors Institute in Flint, Michigan, a post-secondary institution designed specifically for the sons of GM dealers. In his 23 years with the family business, he had worked at various times as both service manager and sales manager.

Despite the energy crisis of the 1970's and the adjustments it caused in the North American automobile industry, General Motors cars continued to sell

well. Showroom and storage facilities at the Loewen garage on Steinbach's Main Street had been inadequate for some time when Mr. Loewen decided to build larger facilities on the outskirts of town. The new garage, opened in 1975, was spread over 24,000 square feet. It had a showroom which could accommodate seven vehicles, 13 bays in its repair department, including four for heavy-duty trucks, eight bays in its body shop, a 5,000-square-foot parts department, and a computer system.

Because of its sophisticated systems and equipment, the Loewen garage became widely known as a leader in automotive sales management. Loewen Chevrolet was invited to participate in two "twenty groups", groups comprised of 20 car dealers who file their financial statements with the National Automobile Association in Washington, D.C., and receive in return comprehensive

comparative charts and reports. Three times a year, the 20 dealers met to discuss the reports and learn from each other about successful management systems and techniques. As a result of his participation, Mr. Loewen became the first Canadian dealer asked to address a workshop at the association's annual convention.

The Loewen business maintained its rates of growth in the late seventies. In 1979 when car sales fell by 18 per cent in Manitoba, Loewen Chevrolet increased its sales by 24 per cent. That year Mr. Loewen was forced to buy new vehicles from Toronto dealers to keep pace with local demand. In 1980, boom turned to bust. Sales rates of new cars were dropping everywhere. For the first time ever, General Motors found itself able to deliver all of the orders placed by its dealers. Because GM manufacturing plants had never been able to fill all orders, dealers routinely placed hundreds of extra orders every year in an effort to insure they had adequate stock. With the unexpected change in practise at General Motors headquarters, Loewen Chevrolet suddenly found itself swamped with new vehicles. Interest payments on the vehicles were astronomical.

## False reprieve

When Herman Loewen sat down with his bank manager in the spring of 1980, he knew the business was in serious trouble. He was half-prepared to hear that the bank contemplated some drastic move. But the bank manager had decided against that option, agreeing to extend Loewen's line of credit considerably on condition that he assign the land and building, held by a separate company, as security for the loans of the operating company.

For the next year, Herman Loewen devoted himself to putting Loewen Chevrolet Oldsmobile back on firm financial footing. By the middle of 1981, he felt that the situation was turning around. In the first six months of 1981, operating expenses had been cut by \$350,000 compared to the same period in 1980. The inventory interest bill had gone down more than a quarter of a million dollars in the same period.

Then came the phone call. The bank officer would not listen to protestations. The decision, he said, had been made by his superiors in Winnipeg. It was out of his hands. Because of the agreements Mr. Loewen had signed one year previously, not only the assets of the operating company, but the land and buildings held by a family company, were taken over by the bank. Without the income from the com-

pany, the Loewens knew they would be unable to service the debt on the family home. Within a week, Herman Loewen and his wife Doris walked away from their home and the town where they had spent their lives. Both in their mid-fifties, they had to find a way to start over.

Seven months later, Herman Loewen still winces at some of the memories. "I felt," he says, "sick at heart. I felt I had lost everything." The failure of his business, he admits, was a tremendous blow to his self-image and pride. "When you spend so many hours and so many years at a business, a lot of your self-image is tied up with it. And I had served in many different capacities in the automotive industry — on the board of the Federated Automobile Association, for example — and was recognized for running a good dealership. To have it go broke . . . I was a lot prouder than I thought I was."

The automotive industry seems to have been faring badly in the current economic climate. Since the failure of the Loewen dealership, several other large Manitoba dealers have gone under. But having been a leader in many other areas, it was particularly humiliating for Mr. Loewen to be among the first dealerships to fail financially. "In this case," he grins wryly, "to follow a trend is not as bad as leading it!"

Beneath the deep feelings of loss and humiliation, there were as well feelings of extreme frustration and anger. These feelings were directed not so much at the local bank officials, who may have been as powerless as he was, as at the people without faces in the system who had made the decisions that irrevocably altered his life. "Since this happened, I've been asked whether I think the laws with regard to lending institutions should be changed. Yes, I think that more human responsibility is needed. But I don't think you can legislate this."

## Wind-up drags on

The anger and frustration remain though as Mr. Loewen watches the process of settling the company's financial affairs grind on. Property, he says, is being sold at a fraction of its value. One piece of equipment bought less than a year ago for \$1000 was recently sold for \$25. The reserve bid at the auction of the Loewen home was set for tens of thousands of dollars less than it had originally cost to build.

Despite the frustration and despite his endless reviews of past business decisions, Mr. Loewen was most concerned about getting on with his life. Within a

short time, his wife found a job as a nurses' aide at the Health Sciences Centre and he was hired as a life insurance salesman for the Imperial Life Assurance Company.

"From the very beginning, I knew I had to work. I needed the income, but I knew that psychologically too I had to work. I would have worked at nearly anything." He admits he had hoped that someone in the automotive industry would want his expertise, but "many of the car dealers are struggling now." And, although the product has changed, he finds that many of the sales skills he learned over the years are useful resources to him in his new position.

Feeling he needed to understand something about the experience he was going through, Mr. Loewen consulted a psychiatrist shortly after his business failure. The doctor spoke not only about the volatile emotions but also about some of the "when I would feel physically numb. At other times I would feel twitchy all over."

## The people who helped

The greatest support in the difficult period of adjustment, however, were people who cared. Their children, says Mr. Loewen, rallied around him and his wife. They lived briefly with two of their daughters in Winnipeg while they hunted for an apartment of their own. "The children spent a great deal of time with us. They wouldn't allow us to withdraw too much." A married daughter in Steinbach, although she was expecting a baby within a few months, made room in her home for her youngest sister who wanted to finish her high school in town. Of his wife, Mr. Loewen says simply, "Doris has been remarkable. How many women would walk away from their dream home without ever looking back?"

Support came too from business friends. A group of his local colleagues got together and arranged a loan for Mr. Loewen should he need it to re-establish himself. "They managed it in such a way that I wouldn't have to approach an individual, but I knew the money was there. They set no terms on repayment. I didn't take the money, but their offer meant everything to me."

Returning to Steinbach and facing people he had known was a difficult experience. Being a commissioned salesman, however, he needed sales. And his acquaintances and associates in Steinbach were the most obvious source of potential clients. On the first occasions, he had to steel himself to approach people. But people, he says, have been open and sym-

pathetic to him. Recently, in fact, the trustees of the Hanover School Board discussed the possibility of taking their business away from the Toronto-Dominion Bank as a means of censuring the bank for what they see as the "calous" treatment of Mr. Loewen.

According to Mr. Loewen, no one has expressed feelings of moral condemnation or disapproval to him. "My biggest enemy in that area was myself. I judged myself far more harshly than anyone else did," says Mr. Loewen. Regardless of where the responsibility for the closure lies, the fact is that many other people's lives were also affected by the failure of the Loewen business. At a business meeting after the closing, Mr. Loewen approached a small businessman who, as an unsecured creditor, is unlikely to receive any of the money owed him. "I understand," said the man, "It wasn't your fault." But, says Mr. Loewen, he knows that this man is himself struggling to keep his business afloat. The closure of the business meant that 52 people were put out of work. He worried particularly about a handicapped employee who might have trouble finding another position.

Returning to the town was difficult. Returning to the church in which his family had worshipped was even more difficult. "Other people I spoke to told me that they had left their churches because of the reception they got after going through a bankruptcy." Two weekends after the collapse of the business, Mr. Loewen realized he had agreed to teach an adult class on the following Sunday. Although he had already met and spoken to some of the individual members of the congregation, he went to church that day with some reluctance. "I wondered whether they would want me to teach," he says, "But when I got up to begin the class, the whole room broke into applause. Coincidentally, one of the topics for discussion that day was the sustaining help of God. It was a moving and humbling experience."

The future will undoubtedly necessitate other adjustments and other decisions for Herman Loewen. "I'm basically an optimist though. My first feelings were that I'd lost everything. I know I've lost all my money. But I've discovered I have a lot of assets in business knowledge, in people's skills, in friends, and in family."

mm

# WESTGATE



We invite you to consider Westgate

Mennonite Collegiate

Gr. 7 - 12

Registrations are accepted as of

April 1, 1982.

## Upcoming Events:

- April 21 - Banquet (First Mennonite)
- April 25 - Art and Music Festival (Polo Park)
- May 1 (8) - Cyclathon
- May 6 - Spring Concert
- May 27-29 - Junior Operetta

**Westgate Mennonite Collegiate**

**86 WestGate**

**775-7111**

## Assiniboine Travel Service

219-818 Portage Ave. Winnipeg, Manitoba

Phone 775-0271

Out of Town Phone (1) 800-262-8893

### Special Departures:

**A) Russia - July 3 — Leningrad, Kiev, Moscow, Alma Ata  
Karaganda 21 Days — John Schroeder**

**B) Church History Tour July 10 — 31  
"From Rome to Witmarsum"**

**C) China - \$1,470. July 11 — 29  
Host — John Friesen**

**D) Portugal & Madeira - March 27 — April 3 - \$1,150**

**E) Bach Festival, Madeira - \$2,200 - June 12 — 10 nights  
— Ruth Wiebe**

# J.J. Neufeld's unique ministry in Low-German

by Peter Paetkau

Deeply impressed on my mind is the memory of an evangelist first heard almost 30 years ago in the small country church where I attended. He had come to the Sperling Mennonite community to hold a series of evangelistic meetings. In a very dynamic way he was exhorting the community to a consideration of "Heaven and Hell" in very vivid and picturesque language. His name is John J. Neufeld, better known as "*de plaut-dietscha Niefeld*", or even "*Ons Johaun*", to thousands of radio listeners in North, Central and South America.

Rev. Neufeld seems to fit in to his surroundings at Mennonite Brethren Communications where he has had his office for many years and continues to prepare the weekly Low German broadcasts — and talks to numerous people coming to him for Christian counsel, and where he now was talking about his life and work.

He was born south of Plum Coulee, "*op'e 36-2-2, op'em Nordwast Viedel, doa em Dreackj aun'ne Laechjt, aun'ne Plumelaechjt,*" but grew up at Grosseweide and is a descendant of the Bergthaler Colony group who arrived east of the Red River over a hundred years ago during the years 1874 - 1880.

In Grosseweide the Sommerfelder and Mennonite Brethren churches stood at opposite corners of the same section. The Neufeld family attended the Sommerfelder place of worship.

Rev. Neufeld became a Christian in 1929 while attending the Canadian Sun-

day School Mission camp at Gimli but in the immediately following years admits to not quite knowing which way to turn, realizing that he was growing older and ought to join the church. Much of his indecision arose from problems within the Sommerfelder denomination during the 1930s, which brought about the establishment of the new Rudnerweide (EMMC) Church. The choice open for him appears to have been to join either the Sommerfelder of his parents or the Mennonite Brethren where they attended evening and young people's services. "Somehow there was in me the desire to fellowship with the young people" at the little MB church where spiritual longings were more fully met.

Although the elder Neufelds were Sommerfelder people, and always remained with that denomination, they were not of the orthodox type who were opposed to any association with the more evangelical churches. When Rev. Neufeld went into the ministry in the MB Church his parents supported him wholeheartedly, and his father would say, in respect to the problems within the Sommerfelder group: "*Jung, du best gleckjlicht daut du be ons nicht best!*" When he was baptised in the MB Church they temporarily found it difficult to accept because of the mode of baptism, then a critical issue to them. Nonetheless a fairly strong Christian attitude prevailed in the Neufeld family, On occasions when the weather prohibited the

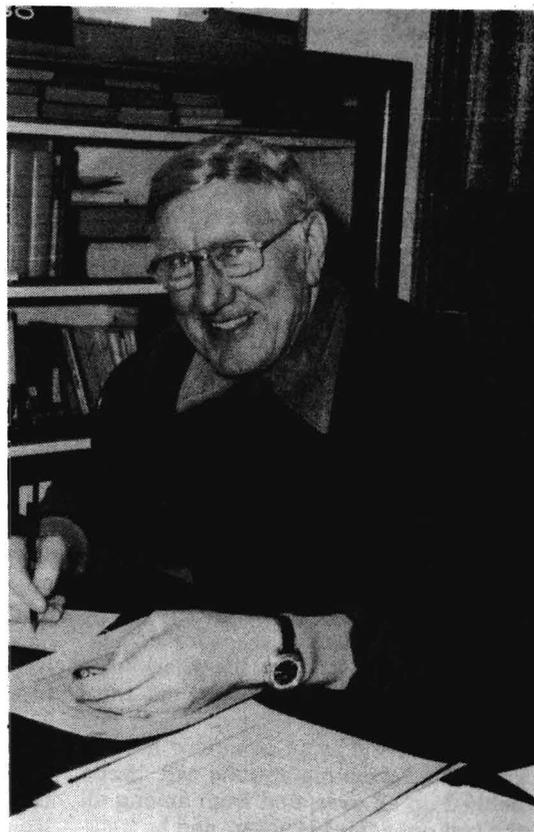
family from attending services, Father Neufeld would summon family members for devotions.

The pastorate at Grosseweide fell upon Rev. Neufeld when their pastor became ill. In those days D.K. Doerksen who was teaching in the area, was already involving Rev. Neufeld in preaching at religious programs the MBs presented in outlying areas, as far away as Carman and Homewood. As he demonstrated his preaching abilities the church was quick to recognize his potential in the ministry and placed increasing responsibility upon him.

Consequently John Neufeld attended the Winkler Bible Institute, graduating in 1944, and was forthwith ordained to the ministry at Grosseweide. After the date for the ordination had been set, the Grosseweide pastor Rev. Jacob Heide died on the night before the Sunday set for the event.

Two weeks after his ordination by ministers Rev. Abraham H. Unruh and Rev. Gerhard Pries these same brethren came to designate him as leader of the Grosseweide congregation, which Neufeld held the succeeding sixteen (1914-1960) years. Weddings and a baptism yet arranged by the former pastor were taken over mid-stream — and J.J. Neufeld was initiated full-fledged in the ministry.

While it is true that Rev. Neufeld is in many ways "just a simplistic preacher, not educated sufficiently to run too far



astray from the Word of God," he has updated and improved his education through the years. He has attended MBBC (1953) and received some credit at Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary, Fresno, when he took the five-week archeological study tour to the Middle East some years ago.

"I dug up Sarah's kitchen," he says, and continues to recount that outstanding experience: "I have never choked as often as I did when I stood on the Mount of Olives and read the entire Sermon on the Mount during a Sunday worship service — it all became so real!" The experience has significantly influenced his perception of the ministry, he admits.

Many people just pass by places noted in the Bible without catching their deep significance, he says, "but to be really down where the shepherds are . . . is to realize that every word of the Bible has its meaning. One evening we saw shepherds taking their sheep for a drink. I saw with my own eyes this whole mass of sheep, all types of sheep, and their shepherds standing around. When one of them walked away from this herd of sheep, and gave his specific call, heads bobbed up all over, and from among all the rest out came his sheep, and he walked away and his sheep followed him."

After Neufeld was ordained to the ministry in Grossweide he intensified his work as an evangelist and was involved in evangelistic work as much as 15 weeks in a year, replying to requests from villages all over southern Manitoba, preaching primarily in schools. By the time he commenced his radio work in 1959 Neufeld had been pastor in Grossweide for 15 years.

The radio ministry began with one broadcast per week. "In those days when I had one program," he says, "I was out in evangelistic work as much as 200 days per year, and I was constantly covering the area to which I had broadcast".

"There was one particular evening when I gave the invitation that the whole Melba School (south of Plum Coulee) building was packed, and you couldn't see more than a few people sitting. The entire body was on its knees. Entire family units got saved, and all over people were seeking the Lord. And while we were praying with one person another would come over and say, 'Pray for me too'. The Holy Spirit was moving among the people of all backgrounds: Sommerfelder, Rudnerweider, as well as Bergthaler and Mennonite Brethren — we all were there!"

And the Mennonite community supports the work of this servant of God. Some of the more conservative groups, even when they fully accept this work, will refrain from expressing it — "Wann

*se uch doa be sent, se sent en baetje trigtriakjend,"* — but consider him as their minister: "dit es'je ons Jehaun," they will concede.

Rev. Neufeld's Low German messages contain no High German or English words. He has adopted the Johannes Gessen's style of writing, which he describes as being clear and sensible and without the use of 'unnecessary' letters "that really have no need to be there". One of the foremost authorities an *Oltkolonischet Plautdietsch*, Neufeld points to the similarity of Germanic languages. He is concerned about standardizing the pronunciation and writing of Low German, and has in his library as many as 80 Low German volumes of literature, with about as many different dialects. His Low German New Testament translation, now half completed, is being written in Gessen's style.

*Licht vom Evangelium*, begun as a once-weekly half hour broadcast, has been revised to constitute a 15-minute program aired on week-days in Manitoba and Paraguay, and weekly in Swift Current, SK, Kingsburg, CA and Philadelphia (ZP 30) in Paraguay. In addition, a tape ministry is extended to Mexico, British Honduras and Bolivia.

Circumstances have changed considerably in Mexico since the time when Rev. Neufeld and H.R. Baerg first visited this country in 1964 and were reported to the local authorities by the Elders. In Cuauhtemac the Old Colony have lost control to the Conference of Mennonites. The MB once operated a large mission compound at Durango but it was confiscated by the colony *Vorsteher* when it occurred to them that foreigners may not own property. When a long-time mission worker in Mexico was permitted to purchase a building in New Ideal the situation was remedied.

With limited time available on radio the principal emphasis in his ministry is on the basic tenets of the Christian faith: salvation, holiness, and discipleship — each following the other.

Before making his move to Winnipeg complete Rev. Neufeld pastored the Domain MB church. In 1967 they asked him to "bridge them over" until they could find someone to lead their congregation. But the bridge was never completed, and he found himself pastoring this church until its dissolution in the 1981.

Rev. Neufeld has served in the ministry for 30 years, and in March it will be 23 years that he has been in radio work. Although Rev. and Mrs. Neufeld are officially members of the Portage Avenue MB, he continues to preach in the churches just about every Sunday. Counselling and visitations in hospitals is also a great portion of his continuing

ministry. Even though he is not a pastor, he does perform marriage ceremonies and serves at funerals almost as often as if he were the leader of a church.

Rev. Neufeld is quite optimistic that this Low German ministry on radio will continue, that it will not die when he retires from it. At present Mennonite Brethren Communications is looking for a suitable person and would like Neufeld to conclude the translation of the New Testament into Low German. A biblical truth is most appealing in a good sweet language such as the Low German, he concludes. "Du kausst en kjenne aundre Sproak 'leeftolichj' sajen".

mm

### First Mennonite Church Choir

presents

### BRAHMS REQUIEM

conducted by  
Rudy Schellenberg

Good Friday, April 9th  
7 p.m.

at First Mennonite Church  
Notre Dame & Arlington  
an offering will be taken.

## Investors SYNDICATE LIMITED

PERSONAL  
FINANCIAL  
PLANNING

Head Office: Winnipeg

• WE TAKE THE TIME •

## ART KROEKER

Chartered Financial Planner  
204 Grant Park Plaza  
Winnipeg

Bus 284-0570 Res. 269-7467

## Anatomy of a dismissal:

# An article on an event that should never have happened

### Why the dismissal is an important issue:

The way Peter Peters was dismissed from his post as principal of the Mennonite Brethren Collegiate Institute has become the topic of countless conversations in Mennonite Brethren and other Mennonite circles.

Mr. Peters' dismissal, along with the recent dismissals of a General Conference principal at a school in Ontario and of a General Conference pastor in British Columbia, raise questions about the way Mennonite employers, churches and businesses alike, treat the people they employ. Because the way Mennonite em-

ployers treat employees has serious implications for the way Mennonite Christianity is perceived and understood, the *Mennonite Mirror* is using the Peters dismissal as a case study. The dismissal of Mr. Peters was chosen both because it is news within our primary circulation area and because it is a case that has come to the attention of a majority of our readers. The *Mennonite Mirror* is consciously inter-Mennonite, and independent of any church conference. It is interested in all Mennonite activities, particularly in the province of Manitoba.

The issue of Mr. Peters' dismissal was a major topic on and off the floor of the

Manitoba MB conference in late February, and the way it was resolved at that conference raised more questions than it answered. Normally reasonable people, who had no reason to take sides or to question the motives of the conference Board of Educational Institutions, are genuinely wondering where the truth is to be found. The events surrounding the dismissal have generated such an intense debate within the Mennonite community that it has become a topic for the news media.

The matter has become too public to be ignored. Those who have argued that the dismissal is an "internal" Mennonite

---

**A letter to our readers and advertisers, from the editors and publisher of the *Mennonite Mirror*, regarding Freedom of the Press in the Mennonite Community:**

On this page begins a detailed report on the dismissal of the principal of the Mennonite Brethren Collegiate Institute in Winnipeg. Reactions to earlier comments in the *Mirror* regarding this issue prompt us to make a statement about the freedom of the press in the Mennonite community.

Most of our secular institutions have learned to live with the searching light of freedom of the press. Politicians, public servants, heads of corporations, and others, have come to accept media scrutiny. They may squirm at criticism and bask in praise, but few would deny that the public has a right to ask questions about their activities and that the press has the duty to provide answers to such questions. A free press may hurt as well as enlighten, it may distort as well as reveal, but it is the indispensable foundation of justice and freedom. Good actions must not only be good but they must be seen to be good.

Our churches have not adjusted nearly as well to media scrutiny. They have grown accustomed to doing things quietly, so that the dirty linen won't show. Therefore many church members are extremely sensitive to public criticism and reluctant to react publically to such criticism. Instead, private attacks are made on writers and publishers, and attempts are made to put economic and social pressure on persons in the media to get them to modify their position or to stop publishing altogether. Our church papers are frequently unable to print articles or letters which might hurt or embarrass others. Though our church communities are committed to freedom, an appeal is often made to alternative values of loyalty and peace to suppress the free exchange of information.

But how can one test the meaning of one's loyalty to a church institution if that institution refuses to be open about its dealings, and how can there be real peace in a brotherhood which controls and suppresses the thoughts and questions of its members?

The Mennonite church desperately needs a free press. Our people must learn to explain and defend their actions in a public forum. The *Mennonite Mirror* has become such a forum. With your support and public criticism it can perform a vital and responsible function within the Mennonite community.

The *Mirror* is committed to responsible reporting. What does that mean? To answer that question it must be noted that at least two different types of reporting are used by the *Mirror*, as well as by other publications. First, the *Mirror* permits the expression of **personal opinions**, both by its own staff and by its readers, in the form of signed articles or letters. Regular examples of this are the column, "Observed Along the Way," written by the publisher, and "Our Word," written by one of the editors or the publisher. Opinions expressed in these columns are personal, and they don't depend for their validity on measurable facts. It is always a case of one person's opinion against another. Do you agree with it? Fine. If you don't, there is no need to fume about it. The writer may simply be wrong. In that case write and tell him or her so. If the writer's views are startling and perhaps even disturbing, but merit some attention — well, think about it. Maybe there is something to it. All that we ask of our writers and readers is that they express their ideas sincerely, without malice. The fact that an opinion is expressed vigorously, or that it may offend or even hurt someone, does not mean that it is malicious. The people of Israel were "hurt" by many things the prophets told them. Some resent any kind of criticism. Others can tolerate a lot. We take seriously the difficult responsibility of deciding when criticism by readers or writers is excessive and malicious, but at the same time we believe we should be a forum for varied viewpoints.

Brethren church concern lost any hope of containing the issue when it became the topic of discussion among so many people.

There were other factors which take Mr. Peters' dismissal out of the realm of an internal concern. One is the fact that MBCI serves a community of families that is comprised of a mix of MB, GC, and non-Mennonite homes. Another is the fact that Mr. Peters holds executive office on the board of MCC (Manitoba), and in the Canadian Association of Mennonite Schools (CAMS). He sits on the boards of MCC Canada and North America and is vice-chairman of the Manitoba Federation of Independent Schools. Thus his rather high level of visible involvement makes him a "public" figure.

The so-called "gentleman's agreement" among the editors of the Mennonite press to refrain from commenting on the internal affairs of a church conference cannot be applied to this case at this time because too many people have discussed it and too many people in both conferences as well as the community at large have been affected by the events. There was, however, an attempt to honor the "gentleman's agreement" to the extent that the *Mennonite Mirror* was prepared to wait until after the *Mennonite Brethren Herald* published a news item before publishing one of its own. The logic of this was the belief that it should be a conference paper which initiates a story

of internal sensitivity. However, it was learned in January that the *Herald* had been prohibited from publishing any news or commentary on the dismissal, at least until after the February conference, even though the *Herald* editors had spent considerable time preparing a story.

The *Herald* has recently published a report, and the editorship of the *Mennonite Mirror* has decided to undertake a more detailed examination by publishing this article, reviewing the events and information relating to the dismissal of Mr. Peters.

The right of a conference board to employ, and to continue to employ, the personnel of its choice is not questioned. But with that right comes the responsibility of ensuring that the management of those individuals is seen to be fair by all observers. The fairness in this case is not perceived by many reasonable people. The perception of fair play must be present regardless of the "facts" or "truth" supporting the position of either side. A Christian community, more than any other, must be seen as a place where "fair play" is evident.

It is hoped that this article will help those who have despaired of separating fact from fiction, and who want a comprehensive review of the events in order to arrive at their own conclusions.

Since the *Mirror* editorship is concerned about the justice of these proceed-

ings, some judgements are unavoidable, but every attempt has been made to report the facts accurately and to support judgements with facts.

#### What led up to the decision?

On December 21, Cornelius Martens, chairman of the MBCI executive, and Peter Isaak, chairman of the Board of Educational Institutions of the Manitoba MB conference, met with Peter Peters, principal of MBCI, and asked him to resign. Four reasons were given for the request: 1) poor discipline in the school (a recent problem with unsolved theft was cited as an example); 2) lack of support for new teachers; 3) too much time spent by the principal on a "faith and life" emphasis which, in the view of the board, has little or no spiritual value; and 4) lack of obedience to the board in, for example, matters of teacher hiring.

Mr. Peters was shocked and surprised by the request, and did not comply because he felt the board had not given adequate documented reasons for its request.

This request came in the eleventh year of Mr. Peters' administration. During those years the school grew from 317 students to the present 450, and gained a fine reputation for its high academic standards. Last year, around 200 students were turned away because there

## Celebrating 25 years of broadcasting

**CFAM**  
950

**CHSM**  
1250

**CJRB**  
1220

was no more room. To all outward appearances, and in the eyes of most students, staff, parents and the administration, things seemed to be going well. What then, had gone wrong?

First, in any small, close-knit community, any person who has to make decisions, particularly in the area of discipline, is likely to create some bad feelings over time. Often the principal is caught between the pressure from staff to act, and the personal feelings of parents and students. Sometimes, when decisions are made on the basis of compassion and immature students are allowed a "second chance," those who favor a more rigid authoritarian approach are disappointed. There will be conflicts between parents and teachers, students and administration. Sometimes tempers will flare. These can result in ill-feelings which are shared with outsiders, so that the resentment accumulates. Events become distorted with time and the feeling grows that "there should be a change." The feeling is vague, lacking substance, connected with personality, and passed on to the board as a concern.

Secondly, Mr. Peters has had to work, in the past 11 years, with seven executive committee chairmen, each of whom held different views of what should be happening in the school. For example, in 1977 chairman Vic Neufeld reported to the conference that "the (faith and life) focus

on such social-spiritual issues like world starvation and Native concerns, is in fact the kind of stuff that we need more of in our schools." It is precisely this kind of emphasis which was cited by the present executive committee as a reason for Peters' dismissal. Mr. Peters, whose educational philosophy is a matter of record, has not always agreed with every idea of the executive, particularly in more recent years. His disagreement has lately been regarded as "insubordination," yet one must ask to what extent a board must give latitude to an administrator to provide continuity and vision to an institution.

Another factor causing concern was the fear in the minds of some people that Mr. Peters was leading the school in the "wrong" direction. As already stated, the "faith and life" days were seen as a "wrong" move, emphasizing "works" rather than "faith." Some felt that there should be more emphasis on evangelism, that chapels were not "Christian," and that the need for conversion was not stressed adequately. This, despite the fact that Mr. Peters invited several MB ministers to give evangelistic talks.

All of these reasons appear to have led the executive committee to ask Mr. Peters to resign. Prior to the December 21 meeting, Mr. Martens contacted a friend of the principal, requesting him to approach Mr. Peters with the suggestion

that he resign without being officially requested to do so. Since it appeared to Mr. Peters that the school was functioning well, with a majority of staff members and parents showing support for the program, and since this was not an official request, he did nothing about it.

### How was the decision carried through?

As noted, Mr. Peters was asked for his resignation on December 21. The decision was made at an executive committee meeting on December 14. Though Mr. Peters knew nothing of that decision until the 21st, it was being talked about in the community before that date. For instance, a member of the MBCI executive, the non-voting chairperson of the home and school committee, Herta Janzen, heard about the December 14 meeting from a member of the community and tried, unsuccessfully, to be invited so she could speak on behalf of the parents of the school. She later prepared a statement in which she observed: "On the weekend prior to the December 14 meeting of the MBCI Board we [she and her husband, who are co-chairpersons of the home and school committee] were called by a concerned parent saying that a meeting of the MBCI Board was being called to discuss the tenure of the MBCI principal, Mr. Peter Peters. The parent asked,

## SPECTACULAR SAVINGS

Our 1st Anniversary Sale

**Grand Pianos from 4195.**

(List price from 6450)

**Upright Pianos from 1895.**

(List price from 2700)

FINAL DATE FOR THESE PRICES IS APR. 24/82

All new Pianos include bench, Wpg. delivery, & our exclusive 1 year service contract.

Having tuned & repaired Pianos in Wpg. for over 40 years, Herman Doerksen, along with sons Don & Ian, is celebrating our first year of business together. Besides a selection of new Pianos, The Piano Store offers complete Piano rebuilding, refinishing, key recovering, tuning & regulating. Through our combined years of experience & training in the music business, we strive to offer the finest possible service & products to our friends & customers.



Featuring

STEGLER  
*Knabe*



**THE PIANO STORE**

233 Henderson Hwy.

669-1518

*We're big on service*

"What is the Home and School Committee input to that decision?" I was not aware of that meeting and so called Mr. Corny Martens to enquire as to whether in fact such a meeting was taking place. He confirmed that information. I told him of the parent meetings and expressed my desire to present the parent responses to the Board. I was informed that the December 14 meeting was an in-camera session and that I was therefore not invited. I then wrote a letter . . . which was delivered to the in-camera meeting, asking for an opportunity to be heard. To date that letter has not been acknowledged. The decision made by the Board at that meeting was again heard third hand rather than by direct communication to the Home and School representative."

Mrs. Janzen was trying to share with the MBCI executive the results of a series of meetings held with parents to obtain their input to the executive, but its members showed no interest. She wrote in her letter to the executive: "As you know, the Home and School Representatives are meeting with all the parents whom they represent to discuss mutual concerns and to give encouragement to the MBCI staff and Board. To date we have written reports from three groups. Overall the support for the MBCI program and staff is positive. By the beginning of January 1982, all the reports will be in and compiled. Since these reports represent direct input by parents and in view of their content we therefore feel strongly that the board should hear these reports before making a major decision on the status of the principal."

The executive did not respond to this letter nor did it make any attempt to delay the decision-making process to benefit from the information provided by the parents.

On December 28th the MBCI executive committee reported its recommendation to the Board of Educational Institutions, its parent board. Mrs. Janzen was now able to make her statement on behalf of the home and school representatives, but the decision was already made and her statement was now merely an expression of frustration and regret. A petition, signed by a number of representatives of the MB constituency, was also presented at this December 28 meeting by Harry Loewen and Victor Doerksen; it expressed concern regarding the consequences of dismissing Mr. Peters as principal.

At this meeting the MBCI executive produced a document briefly outlining its reasons for the resignation-dismissal recommendation. This was not found to be satisfactory by the Board of Educational Institutions, which then asked for a more substantial statement. This revised statement, dated the same day, December 28, is the central document in the whole process. It formed the basis for the later board action (in Carman, January 15) confirming the decision of the MBCI executive.

In the December 28 document (as revised) two of the four grounds for dismissal

are different from those given to Mr. Peters December 21. The previous allegations regarding discipline and lack of support for first-year teachers were dropped, possibly because of protests from first-year teachers who felt that Mr. Peters was supporting them very well. The reasons given on December 28 fall into four categories:

- 1) Personal integrity (new);
- 2) insubordination to the executive;
- 3) theological concerns;
- and 4) ever-increasing pressure from the MB constituency (new).

Included in this document was a list of negative comments taken from faculty evaluations. The faculty had submitted confidential evaluations of the principal in the fall. Mr. Martens later admitted, under questioning from faculty, that the evaluations were basically positive. However, in the document of December 28 only negative comments were presented, creating the false impression that the majority of teachers were critical of the principal. These comments were read to Mr. Peters at a meeting with some executive members in order to induce him to resign. Following a vigorous protest from the staff at a tense meeting on January 4, the executive apologized for its misuse of such information. On January 6, the executive wrote: "We deeply regret the pain that has resulted because of our position paper dated December 28 . . . We humbly ask forgiveness from you, the MBCI staff, whose trust we violated in quoting some of your comments." Despite this admission that part of a crucial document was based on distorted information, the MBCI executive showed no inclination to review its decision. No apology was made to Mr. Peters, on whom the distortions understandably had a devastating effect.

It is clear that the December 28 document changed the grounds significantly, and made new and more serious charges, especially concerning the integrity of the principal. However, the arguments brought forward do not clearly establish any of these charges. The points made are in part untrue, in part misleading, and generally matters of differing interpretation or point of view than of established fact. For example, there is reference to a

Kerr  
owned and  
managed since  
1887



120 ADELAIDE STREET  
WINNIPEG 2, MANITOBA  
CHAPEL OFFICE 943-6688

## Your full service home Centre



1126 Henderson Hwy.

Phone 668-4470

**POLET LUMBER & SUPPLY LTD.**

LUMBER • HARDWARE • FLOOR COVERING • DRAFTING AND DESIGN

survey of community attitudes toward the school carried out five years ago, purportedly "under the direction of Dr. John Bock." The *Mirror* has checked into this and discovered that the survey was not conceived, carried out or even evaluated by Dr. Bock, and was not done in an open or objective way. Its "findings" cannot be given any credence whatsoever.

On the issue of insubordination, no instance is cited where Mr. Peters deliberately rejected the advice of the board, which might be grounds for a peremptory dismissal. There were, however, disagreements, as described below, over the interpretation of particular instructions.

On the issue of personal integrity, a serious charge, usually implying at least some major moral shortcomings, the MBCI executive cited two examples, neither of which falls into this category. The principal had been asked by the executive to give a copy of the *MB Confession of Faith* to each prospective teacher. The principal understood this to mean that each teacher should be given a catalogue in which the Christian philosophy of the school is presented. He felt that he had thereby fulfilled the request of the executive. The executive thought otherwise. Granted that this misunderstanding forms the basis for a disagreement, was the board justified in calling it an act of wilful insubordination, let alone an act

reflecting on the principal's personal integrity?

The other example cited concerned an invitation to a prospective teacher whom this MBCI executive was eager to hire and whom they felt Mr. Peters did not wish to hire. Assuming for the moment that the charge was true, would this normally be considered an example of lack of personal integrity? But is the charge even true? Did Mr. Peters obstruct the MBCI executive in its desire to hire this teacher? He claims not. He maintains that he was concerned about the fact that this particular person had not taught for 12 years and that his expertise fell somewhat outside the kind of position that the executive was trying to fill. He claims further that while he expressed these reservations to the executive, he did make serious attempts to hire the individual. The name of this person is revealed in the documents and the *Mirror* checked with him regarding his impression of what happened. He said: "I felt that both the board and Mr. Peters were genuinely interested in hiring me. When I indicated that I had some reservations about the load that would be involved, Mr. Peters made an effort to rearrange the workload to suit me. At no time did I get the impression that Mr. Peters did not want me. My reasons for turning down the position had nothing to do with the attitude of either the board or Mr. Peters."

The theological concerns included what Mr. Martens claimed to be a "lack of balance between social concerns and spiritual emphasis." According to an article in the March 12, 1982 issue of the *MB Herald*, the teaching of evolution in science courses at MBCI was also an issue, but not specifically mentioned because "the executive did not feel qualified to deal with it."

Mr. Peters replied to the revised charges, which he was finally shown on January 2, in a statement which he read at a meeting of the Board of Educational Institutions at Carman on January 15. However, before the Carman meeting Mr. Peters was asked to several meetings with a few MBCI executive and board members. At these meetings, which he attended in the hope that substantial matters would be discussed and reconciliation would be attempted, he found himself instead under persistent pressure to resign. Several outside people, such as Walter Regehr, a former MBCI executive member, and David D. Duerksen, were brought in ostensibly to persuade Mr. Peters to resign, but when they saw the matters at issue, they counselled Mr. Peters not to resign. They were subsequently shunted aside by Mr. Martens and Mr. Isaak, who were now directing the official side of the matter.

In these meetings, whether deliberately or not, Mr. Peters was increasingly

WE INVITE YOU  
TO EXPERIENCE CHRISTIAN, POST-  
SECONDARY EDUCATION WITH US.

- BIBLE
- THEOLOGY
- MUSIC
- CHURCH HISTORY
- PRACTICAL THEOLOGY
- ARTS

The college of the  
Conference of Mennonites in Canada

**CMBC**  
CANADIAN  
MENNONITE  
BIBLE  
COLLEGE

An approved teaching centre  
of the University of Manitoba

isolated, since the "procedures" did not seem to allow him to bring anyone along to speak for him, and this when he stood accused of a lack of "personal integrity." Later, due to pressure from an increasing number of people disturbed by the nature of these events, Peters was allowed to bring one or more "friends" with him, though strict limits were always placed on what they could say at a meeting. By and large, his rights were seriously limited at several of the proceedings; certainly a parallel procedure at a public school or university would be much more careful to safeguard the rights of the person being charged.

Members of the community who hoped for a positive solution and saw deadlocks ahead, or worse, suggested formal mediation. This procedure was set up through the conference personnel committee and its chairman, Harry Olfert. A mediator, Jim Pankratz was acceptable to both sides and a date for a hearing was set. Unfortunately, it was hastily done and planned in such a way that no proper justice could emerge. First, the mediation hearing was scheduled to take place almost immediately (on January 13) and to be resolved in one day. No one seems to have considered that it would take time as well as wisdom to set up proper guidelines to ensure a just hearing. No one seems to have worried that the evidence should be properly heard and studied,

and enough information gathered to make such a hearing meaningful. No proper provision was made for Mr. Peters to call character witnesses on his own behalf. Instead, the well-meaning mediator hurriedly read as much documentation as he could on a working day, presided at the hearing, and then reached a decision.

Harry Olfert, chairman of the personnel committee, insists that Mr. Pankratz was given full authority to deal with any relevant matters and recommend accordingly. However, after some of the "spiritual concerns" were raised and an attempt was made to get to the root question about causes for dismissal, the MBCI executive refused to deal further. One executive member later explained: "When it became 11 o'clock we all figured there was nothing more that we could do. We were tired." The mediator's report states that he had not been able to effect substantial mediation. Whose fault was that? The mediator could not, or did not, exercise the power Mr. Olfert claims he had.

It was supposedly important to get the mediation out of the way so it wouldn't interfere with the board meeting, planned for January 15. Despite extreme cold and weather warnings, the board met at Carman on Friday, January 15, hopefully to arrive at a final decision on this matter. To help him face the 22 member Board and several conference members, such as the moderator and representatives from the personnel committee, Mr. Peters had brought along several friends. Again, these friends were told that their presence would be tolerated, but that they would require special permission to speak. The "open" part of this meeting lasted some hours, during which the charges from the document of December 28 were read and answered by Mr. Peters. He also read a statement of his own in which he made the following statements: "I feel that I have been falsely accused . . . I have been seriously wronged in the manner in which this whole process has been conducted . . . If the request that I resign is withdrawn, I am prepared to do the following: a) work for improved com-

munication with the executive committee; b) seek a closer harmony regarding the spiritual direction of MBCI; and c) continue discussions about the goals of the school, including the possibility of an amicable parting at some suitable date."

The last statement in particular should have been a signal to the board that an amicable compromise was possible.

There was discussion of some of the items, but not of Mr. Peters' proposal. As he would do again at a later date, Mr. Martens used this occasion to raise further charges against Mr. Peters, charges which had not been dealt with before. Just as the obviously erroneous parts of the written document were never officially retracted or corrected, so here, too, these new charges were not ruled out of order by the chairman. The board then went into closed session and in relatively short order decided, almost unanimously, to support the resolution of the MBCI executive committee.

The decision was conveyed to Mr. Peters that he should resign because the board "had lost confidence in him". Since Peters felt that the charges against him were substantially wrong, he resolved to stick to his decision not to resign.

On January 25, a parents' meeting of the home and school association devoted some time to an open discussion on Mr. Peters' dismissal. While the MBCI executive chairman, Mr. Martens sat silent in the face of a barrage of concerned and angry questions, Mr. Isaak and one other committee member attempted to give answers. Mr. Issak said that if Mr. Peters would only resign, then it would not be difficult for the board to honor him on his going. Mr. Isaak pointed out that if his superior would ask him to resign "for some reason or other," he would probably do it. Most people wanted to know the reasons and were not satisfied by the board's refusal to answer. Some people in attendance thought that discipline was the issue, not knowing that this had been removed from the grounds for dismissal. Others wondered what new kind of religious emphasis was intended, to which Mr. Isaak replied rather vaguely that things would remain much the same.

— best value tours —

**MENNO TRAVEL SERVICE**

**TOURS '82**

\*2nd annual  
**Scandinavian Hilites**

21 days — May 30 - June 19  
escort: C.J. Rempel

\* **Journey to the Biblelands**

16 days — May 3 - 18  
visiting: Egypt, Jordan, Israel  
and Greece  
escort: Pete Peters

\* **Discover Your Heritage**

16 days —  
October 30 to November 14, 1982  
Visiting Egypt, Jordan, Israel,  
and Vienna.  
escort: Dr. Bernie Wiebe.



\* **China Orient Tour**

visiting: Tokyo, China (10 days),  
Hong Kong, Manila, Taipei,  
Seoul, Korea 24 days — Oct. 2 - 25  
escort: Mr. D.E. Redekop

More details

**MENNO TRAVEL**  
851 Henderson Hwy.  
Winnipeg 334-4347



For all your home-sewing needs

**REMNANTS**                      **FABRICS**  
By the Pound                      By the Yard

**PATTERNS**                      **THREADS**                      **ZIPPERS**

**ECONOMY TEXTILE**

Main Store 1021 Pacific	714 Watt Street	2086 Ness Avenue	1123 St. Mary's Road
----------------------------	-----------------	------------------	----------------------

Apparently the executive was unhappy that this meeting had taken place at all, and considering the information shared by the board, the parents attending also had reason to be unhappy.

On February 1, Mr. Peters was handed a letter informing him that if he did not resign by noon, Wednesday, February 3, then his appointment was to be considered terminated as of June 30, 1982. The only reason that was finally given was that the Board had "lost confidence in him". In the official conference policy statement on dismissals, very specific reasons are given for which a conference employee may be dismissed. Not one of these reasons was cited in the firing of Mr. Peters, and certainly nothing as vague as "loss of confidence" is cited as a reason for dismissal. Peters did not resign.

On Wednesday, February 3, several persons, including Rev. Alan Labun, moderator of the Manitoba MB Conference, urged Mr. Peters to avail himself of the grievance procedure of the conference. Mr. Labun promised Mr. Peters a more satisfactory arbitration (or reconciliation) panel, chosen by both sides, in which Mr. Peters would be able to have some confidence. Again, the mediation machinery was put into place in haste. Mr. Peters, it turned out, had no say in the selection of this panel, despite the assurance that had been made. All five members were selected by the conference personnel committee.

Here again Mr. Martens countered with new and not properly admissible material; for example, the charge that Roy Vogt, who had made some comments in the *Mennonite Mirror* regarding the issue, had been permitted to participate in the MBCI Faith and Life Days. (Vogt had in fact been invited long before and through proper channels). Mr. Peters was also, at this meeting, accused for the publicity in the Winnipeg newspaper, *The Sun*. At no point in the dismissal proceedings was the executive committee put to the proof of its charges, but the arbitra-

tion panel unanimously supported the decision of the committee.

The action of the MBCI executive committee and the Board of Educational Institutions was supported by delegates to the meeting of the Manitoba MB conference on February 26 and 27, though no reasons were given for the dismissal, and serious questions were raised from the floor by many delegates, some of whom had been actively involved in part of the process. The questions were ignored by the board members, who sat silent throughout the proceedings. They had decided to "tough it out", and the strategy worked.

### What was wrong and what can we learn?

It is clear that the model followed in this procedure is the business model that is followed in some of the boardrooms of the nation. This model assumes that the board has a job to do; if it feels that a man should go, he goes! Several people at the conference, reflecting this mentality, were overheard saying "If he's fired, he's fired!" The model is one of confrontation between two parties and assumes the adversary position between employer and employee.

The fact that there was so little questioning of the board's action at the conference supports the contention that this is the accepted mode: one must submit to authority. Several church members have stated their opinion that it does not matter whether the board was right or wrong. If the board decided Mr. Peters should leave, then he should do so! Where, in all of this, does *brotherhood* come in? Where is the sense of a mutual sharing of and resolving concerns? Should the church really be run like a large business concern? Should Christian business concerns be run in this way?

Another question which must be raised is the haste with which this action was brought to a conclusion. If there were significant questions about Mr. Peters'

administration of the school, could not the MBCI executive have initiated discussions earlier and perhaps eventually have come to a mutual decision to "agree to disagree." It is also hard to understand why the most significant section of the constituency, namely the parents who have children in the school and the staff, were not properly consulted. The MBCI executive listened selectively to certain constituent members, and to certain staff members, and then concluded and reported that there were problems, but could provide nothing to substantiate the claims they made.

As our investigation has shown, falsified information was used on several occasions to make a case against Mr. Peters. This should alarm anyone who is concerned about Christian decision-making. It is not enough to make apologies for such mistakes. What is necessary is to go back over the whole review process to determine the validity and fairness.

The mechanisms set up for mediation and arbitration in such a case as this also need to be revised. It is commonly accepted in secular institutions that as an elementary principle of justice, both parties to a dispute must agree on the persons selected for the arbitration; they must provide full documentation, have the time to examine such documentation, and select whatever witnesses are necessary to present their own position or to examine the position of the other party. Much time and effort was put into these proceedings by conference members, but unless the procedures are fair to begin with their deliberation remains open to serious criticism. Why should principals and staff in secular institutions be more secure than those in our church institutions? It is hard to understand why an arbitration committee in accepting a reason as vague as "lack of confidence" did not follow the explicit guidelines of the conference as to what constitutes grounds for dismissal. Furthermore, it is very disturbing that an arbitration committee itself presented new material in the case, and allowed others to do so.

It is also unfortunate that the Carman meeting of January 15 did not look seriously at the conciliatory proposals made by Mr. Peters. His letter to the Board of Educational Institutions offered a reasonable compromise. Had this compromise been accepted, then none of the ensuing pain and split of the brotherhood need have occurred.

In a letter dated January 19, a concerned member of the church and a former teacher at MBCI prophetically warned Mr. Martens of the consequences of a failure to seek conciliation of the dispute. He pointed out that there would be deterioration in the atmosphere in the school and that the staff would resign; the press would pick up the issue and the

## Woodland Supply & Mfg. Co.

861 McLeod Avenue,  
Winnipeg

G. Bock

Telephone 668-0079

W. Regehr



Experts in millwork, stairwork, cabinets,  
and finishing supplies.

Suppliers of hardwood, door casings,  
mouldings, and hardware.

witness of the MB conference of Manitoba would be seriously damaged; bitterness would result and the task of the conference leaders after brother had been pitted against brother on the conference floor would be unenviable. None of these voices was heeded.

Since the boards of the conference were not prepared to back down from the decision, their entrenched, hard-line position has indeed resulted in pain and hard feelings on the part of many people. The personal hurt and damage to Mr. Peters and his family is incalculable. The staff has undergone severe stress and many now will be redirecting their teaching careers because of their own lack of confidence in the board. Many staff members are upset about the methods used by the board, particularly the misrepresentation of facts and the unsubstantiated charges of lack of personal integrity.

It was mentioned at the MB conference in February that a truly professional person would resign if asked to do so. First, it is not at all clear that such submissiveness is inevitably a mark of a professional. Many outstanding public servants in Canada have refused to resign under pressure because they felt that they stood for some important principles. Under such conditions it may indeed be more "professional" to allow oneself to be fired. But should a Christian in the professions be guided primarily by what is commonly held to be proper professional behavior? Aren't Christians, whether in the professions or outside of them, expected to act in accordance with their beliefs rather than in accordance with their position in society? Should they tacitly agree with their critics by silently vacating their position? We will have to rethink the practice of asking for voluntary resignations. In many cases it may be more honorable for both sides to acknowledge that each holds to a position with integrity, and if over a considerable period of time their positions cannot be resolved, the side with the balance of power will ask the other to leave, without expecting him or her to resign.

There was room for compromise and for a fair, amicable resolution of this difficult matter. The letter of Peter Peters of January 15 provided a wide-open door for such a resolution. If a spirit of reconciliation had been present at that meeting the olive branch would have been grasped, and much of this sad chronicle would never have been written.

The full shock of what has been allowed to happen now seems to be hitting concerned members of the conference, as staff members begin to resign and more information becomes available about what actually took place. Many would like to ease the pain of injustice, but the question remains how and whether it can be corrected. **mm**

# Discipleship in dismissal: A management right of last resort

by Ed Unrau

Mennonite businessmen, church congregations, conferences, and related institutions should make a public declaration that a decision to fire, or dismiss, an employee will become a management right of last resort, to be exercised only after both parties have mutually explored the reasons why the employer/employee relationship appears to have failed.

This kind of declaration, and its practical application, is necessary if Mennonite employers want to give a clear expression of their commitment to the welfare of the people whose lives they control. Moreover, it would be an expression of Christian ethics and discipleship that would be understood by the "world".

I make this proposal on the basis of my experience as a manager, as a member of a church committee that has faced personnel issues, as an observer of how Mennonite employers and church organizations hire and fire staff, and the theoretical knowledge gained from management programs.

As a class, North American employers are inept managers of their employees, largely because they see, or want to see, employees in the same way they see a machine — as a unit of production that responds to the "commands" of the manager. Indeed, one has the impression that managers resent having to employ human beings at all and would much rather pour overhead dollars into equipment.

In general, Mennonite employers, whether in business or in church contexts, show the same lack of managerial competence. And it is distressingly easy to find examples of Mennonite managers who are worse than their secular colleagues. Given the fact that Christianity is concerned with the souls of human beings, and given the fact that Christians are compelled to live within an ethic of love, it is a sad commentary on managerial behavior when these concepts are not evident among Christian managers.

Preachers in Mennonite pulpits continually remind their congregations to be an example in the world. But this positive example is seldom evident in the ethics of

Mennonite employers. There are few who are held up as examples of good employee relations; secular management tests are full of case studies demonstrating how people can be managed as the unique individuals they are. Take one example from these texts: the concept of reward. There are varied aspects to this concept, but only one will be used in this example — it is well-recognized that a timely word of encouragement or praise often does wonders to a person's morale, yet this idea of rewarding with a word of praise is something too few managers exploit, even though it costs no money. A management professor recently conducted a seminar in Steinbach where he explored the concept of balancing words of criticism with words of praise. At one point a participant observed that the Mennonite background of many of those present predisposed them to emphasize the critical aspects of manager/employee interaction, because their religious ethic tends to assume that good behavior is to be expected without encouragement. The Apostle Paul in the New Testament describes how members of the Christian community are to "encourage" each other to continue in the faith. The workplace has no direct resemblance to the situation of the early Christians, but the "encouragement" that kept many of them in the faith is the same "encouragement" that will keep many an employee productive. Perhaps one could observe that when it comes to establishing fair employment standards we are dealing with an area where there is "conversion" but not much evidence of discipleship.

One of the recurring themes of the Scriptures is the responsibility the powerful have to the less powerful. The employer/employee relationship is one example of a power relationship because in most cases, particularly in small business, the owner/manager decides who shall be employed, who continues to work, the rate of pay, and other policies — all things that come under the rubric of "management rights". On at least two occasions the Bible addresses the employer/employee relationship by condemning those employers who exploit their

laborers by withholding wages. The Bible also says that we must treat others in the same way we want others to treat us; this "command" continues in force even when a person (or "neighbor") becomes an employee. These themes taken together clearly suggest that an employer living within a Christian ethic must develop employment principles that are appropriate to that ethic.

Here is one example: In Exodus 21, beginning around verse 28, there is a description of the consequences arising when an ox goes on a rampage and gores other livestock and humans. One penalty is that the offending animal is destroyed. The other penalty is for the owner — if he knew the animal to be dangerous and did not take any steps to protect the community, then he, too, was to be put to death. This Old Testament principle has implications for the workplace because it would make the manager responsible for preventable injuries. In other words, according to this principle, a manager who sacrifices elementary safety in favor of higher production or efficiency is responsible for the injuries, or deaths, that result. There would be less need for workers compensation or workplace safety legislation if this principle were followed.

Everyone agrees that an employer has the right to employ any person he or she wants. At the same time an employer with Christian ethics has the responsibility to ensure that each employee is treated fairly, and if possible, even generously. This means setting employment standards (not production standards) that are better than those in the secular context. It will also mean that "profit" is not an end in itself, but a "reward" for having done something good with, and for, people. To do this the employer does not give up "authority" to run the firm, but does relinquish his right to exercise authority in terms of "power".

One reason why Mennonite employers should limit their right to fire employees, as suggested at the outset, is because such a dismissal is too easy a solution. First, it assumes that the problem and the employee are the same thing. Objective examination often shows that there may be other factors beyond the staff member's control that made it impossible for him to work, or it may be that the manager is equally the problem. Second, firing lacks compassion because the employee is the loser — he has no job and usually has no decent understanding of why he was let go. The emotional impact on an employee who has long ago passed the "probationary" period is even greater, and he's the one who is let go with some vague explanation that the employer has "lost confidence" or that he is now "redundant".

Anabaptists were known for their radical vision of Christianity. One way

for Mennonites to recapture this radical vision in a way that would impress a secular society would be for Mennonite employers to make "firing" and "dismissal" an employment action of last resort.

Even though a manager and an employee may agree on the task, their responsibilities, and the performance expected, there will be times when it is necessary to ask an employee to leave. In such cases the employer should give the person time to find a new job (particularly in those cases where the staff member has a reasonable record of service), or actively help the person find new employment. Situations where an employee has openly defied management authority, was convicted of crime, has maliciously damaged employer's property, or has lost the ability or competence to do the job, will have to be treated on a case-by-case basis, perhaps involving as consultants non-involved members of the Mennonite community to ensure that the decision is just and fair.

The employment of persons in church settings must be treated as a separate issue in at least one aspect. Those who sit on the employing boards and those who accept employment will say, without exception, that they are acting in accordance with God's "call". This is fine as long as both sides agree. But what happens when they don't? Boards, of course, can practise good management techniques to minimize such conflict. But when a board begins dismissal proceedings against a staff member (usually of senior rank) it must recognize that it is dealing not only with the Lord's "call" as it applied to the board, but also as it applied to the staff member. If the employee insists that his current employment is his "calling" and if the board insists that his dismissal is also God's leading, both sides should be mature enough to work out a mutual agreement. It is clear that God can't have two "calls" in the same situation; thus parties who had different interpretations of that divine calling must work out those differences lest the outcome be interpreted as one side imposing its version of God's will on the other. The leading of God is too holy to become the reason for "losing confidence" and too precious to become the issue of adversary politics on a conference floor.

The net effect of making dismissal an action of last resort would force Mennonite managers in business and church contexts to face employment issues and to see employees as unique individuals created in the image of God.

mm

## SOVIET UNION TOURS

— your choice —

\* May 23 to June 11

Leningrad, Moscow, Alma Ata, Karaganda, Yalta, Simferopol & Zaporozhye  
Escort: Martin Durksen  
\$2499.00 from Winnipeg

\* July 12 to Aug. 1st.

Helsinki, Leningrad, Moscow, Karaganda, Frunze, Zaporozhye, Simferopol & Yalta.

Escort: Dr. G.J. Lohrenz  
\$2750.00 from Winnipeg

more details:

**MENNO TRAVEL SERVICE**  
851 Henderson Hwy.  
Winnipeg 334-4347



**Fellowship Bookcenter**

## BOOKS, GIFTS and RECORDS

for the  
entire family

Come to us for:

- Mennonite literature history, theology, creative writing
- V.B.S. materials place your order early
- Inspirational and study books for all ages.

**We accept mail and phone orders**

1477 Pembina Highway  
(next door to MCC)  
Ph. 453-4919

3111 Portage Avenue  
(2 blocks west of Grace Hospital)  
ph. 885-3407

# manitoba news

Neil Friesen of Ontario, formerly of Plum Coulee, has designed a unique home water filter with a two-column design and a four-filter arrangement. The filter was highly praised in tests conducted by the Environmental Protection Agency and Canadian Microbiological Laboratories. It is available through the Sil-O-Wet Water Filters company.

Bill Rempel of Winkler has been commissioned to edit a pictorial history of Winkler's 75 years of incorporation. Although Rempel already has 1,500 photographs, he is still collecting material for a 250-page book to be ready in summer. When the book is finished, Rempel hopes it will contain about 1,000 pictures. Rempel welcomes inquiries and contributions despite the late date. Call him at 1-325-7127.

Program priorities and policies were major issues at the January 28-30 Council of Boards of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada. Jake Franssen, chairperson of the conference, had cautioned at the introductory session that the conference was "fast running into a deficit position." A major review of conference publication needs also continues. In other business, the General Board announced that a task force on the conference and higher education will be named shortly. A study of the issue of leadership and authority in the church will proceed in the summer.

In an effort to provide an alternative to regular theatre fare, the Pembina Valley Film Club was recently established. Dave Dueck of Dueck Film Productions, one of the originators of the project, says, "There is an increasing number of good quality family films being produced, which unfortunately are not distributed through the regular theatre outlets." Dueck believes the

newly established film club will begin to make these family films more available to the public. The club, in co-operation with the Winkler Bible Institute, plans to offer a series of inspirational films this spring.

Two medical clinics in Steinbach have been broken into twice within a month. In each case, cash and prescription drugs were stolen from the premises.

A two-vehicle accident involving a school van and a school bus, both transporting students from school, occurred January 22 just south of Altona. The van driver, Hugo Voth, and four students were taken to hospital for treatment. Three of the students were released quickly. However, Glenn Schroeder, 16, of Gretna, sustained back injuries.

The Pacific Mennonite Children's Choir sang at the opening ceremonies of the British Columbia Legislature in Victoria, November 23. The choir is comprised of children from Abbotsford-Clearbrook area under the direction of Nancy Dick.

Eden Mental Health Care in Winkler recently announced the appointment of Tina Letkeman as psychogeriatric worker for south-central Manitoba. Letkeman, a graduate of Grace Hospital in Winnipeg, served as clinical instructor for the school of nursing there for a period of thirteen years. During this time she taught medicine and surgery as well as psychiatry. Letkeman's assignment as psychogeriatric worker will make her available to nursing homes and personal care homes in southern Manitoba. She will also conduct workshops and seminars on subjects related to the emotional well-being of the elderly.

Pamela Grace Janzen, daughter of David Janzen of Gretna, received the

German-Canadian Business and Professional Association of Manitoba Scholarship in Germany at the 1981 Brandon University annual awards ceremony. She was one of three former Mennonite Collegiate Institute students to receive awards at the Brandon ceremonies. Other former MCI students receiving awards were Sandra Fast of Brandon and Peter David Wiebe of Winnipeg.

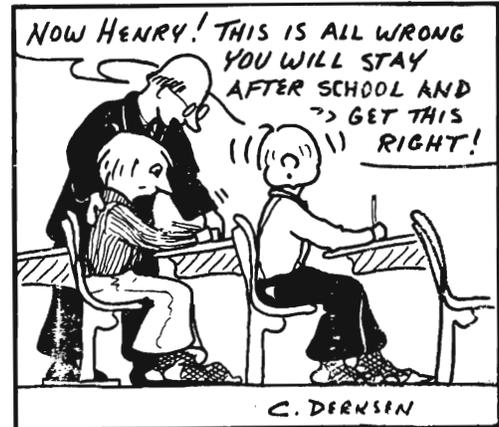
Two positions for General Conference Mennonite women become available on the MCC Task Force on women in Church and Society this summer. If interested, state your interest in writing. Address it to Ron Flickinger, Peace Section, 21 South 12th, Akron, PA 17501 by March 15, 1982.

The MCC Task Force on Women has, in the past, responded to issues of women in the church and society through scholarly research and study papers. The task force is now soliciting creative responses to the same concerns in the form of short stories, poetry, dramas, ink sketches, songs, and black/white photos. Please send contributions to Esther Wiens, 77 Henderson Highway, Winnipeg, Manitoba R2L 1L1, by June 1, 1982 for consideration in a published collection of artists' approaches to women's concerns.

Winnipeg Mennonite Elementary School Inc. is preparing for expansion in the fall of 1982. Interested parents and prospective staff (including applications for the position of principal/administrator) should inquire early by phoning the school at 339-1617.

CBC Radio Music's National Auditions, begun in 1978, continue to offer Canadian musicians an opportunity to perform on national radio. Each spring and fall, the CBC invites soloists or ensembles up to a quintet, to audition for broadcast. These auditions are open

## Little Ike: Prairie Boy



to performers of serious music, who have proof of a minimum of three professional engagements. Applications may be obtained by writing CBC Radio Music National Auditions, Box 500, Station A, Toronto, Ontario M5W 1E6.

### SCHOLAR SPEAKS IN INDIANA

Professor Harry Loewen of the University of Winnipeg was recently invited by the Mennonite Historical Society of Goshen, Indiana, to give two lectures at Goshen College and at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminaries, Elkhart, Indiana. Speaking before faculty and students of the college and seminaries, Loewen's papers were entitled: "Canadian-Mennonite Literature: Longing for a Lost Home," and "Anabaptists and Utopia in Grimmelshausen's *Adventurous Simplicissimus*."

The first paper traced Mennonite creative literature from its early beginnings in pre-revolutionary Russia to modern prose and poetry written by such Canadian Mennonites as Rudy Wiebe and Patrick Friesen. Loewen argued that Russian-Mennonite literature was born out of the upheavals around 1917 when Mennonites lost their Russian homeland. The literature which emerged, including the later novels and poetry written in English, reflects, according to Loewen, the Mennonite loss of their former homeland and spiritual values.

The Grimmelshausen paper analyzed the Anabaptist chapter in the seventeenth-century novel *The Adventurous Simplicissimus* and connected the chapter with the novel's themes of utopia and the ideal Christian society. Loewen showed that while Grimmelshausen longed for the truly Christian life exemplified by the early Anabaptists, he was too realistic and pessimistic to believe that such an ideal life was possible in the real world.

**Dora Driedger** of Gretna returned home from Seattle, Washington recently after undergoing two unusual transplant operations. She was asked to donate bone marrow and blood to nine-year-old **Trevor Penner** of Landmark, who is suffering from leukemia, when it was found that her blood was an ideal match. Mrs. Driedger, a great-aunt of Trevor, was among 25 people contacted for testing. After doctors gave up the search for a match, **Wesley Penner** and other neighbours of Trevor's parents **Ron and Ruth Penner** took up the hunt for a donor. Such matches are most likely to occur within the immediate family. The operation in Seattle involved the transplanting of bone marrow from Mrs. Driedger's hips to young Trevor. A second operation took place February 22 because the first was not entirely successful. Trevor and his parents remain in Seattle while doctors wait to determine the results of the second operation.

Over 300 persons took in the 35th annual sessions of the **Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba** held in the Altona Bergthaler Mennonite Church February 19 and 20. Elected to succeed outgoing moderator **Bernie Wiebe** was **John H. Neufeld**, pastor of the First Mennonite Church in Winnipeg. Returned to the executive were **J.K. Klassen**, vice-moderator; **Neil Heinrichs**, secretary; and **John Dyck**, personnel chairperson.

A Mennonite delegation was one of 40 groups invited to present their views on religious broadcasting at a special hearing before the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications in Hull, Quebec in late January. A brief from the **Mennonite Radio Television Council** was presented by MRTC marketing director **Neil Klassen** and researcher **Allan Siebert**. The Mennonite brief stated that Mennonite broadcasters are generally satisfied that they can work within the existing policy and broadcasting system. They are not necessarily opposed to religious stations, but

would not seek a licence for themselves. A brief prepared by ten Members of Parliament, including **Benno Friesen** of British Columbia and **Jake Epp** of Manitoba, suggested that minimal regulations were the best way to guarantee freedom.

Radio Station **CFAM**, established in 1957, marked its 25th anniversary on March 13. To celebrate the anniversary, CFAM staff visited communities in southern Manitoba, producing live broadcasts from various locations. The grand opening of the station's new Winkler office in the Gladstone Mall on March 12 was tied into the station's anniversary celebrations.

Three families from the Steinbach area and 15 families from the Altona area were among those who recently received **Centennial Farm** awards. The provincial department of agriculture presents the awards to families which have maintained a farm on the same piece of land for 100 years or more. Receiving awards were **Ben F., Eileen and Mark Reimer** of Blumenort; **Jim and Barb Leppky** of Tourond; and **John, Barb, Michael and Tony Friesen** of Niverville; and **Jacob H. Schroeder, John L. Klassen, David**

## Westgate Mennonite Collegiate



invites applications  
for 1982 - 83 teaching positions in  
the following areas:

- Language Arts
- Social Studies
- Religion

Candidates must be able to relate well to young people and to model Christian discipleship. We stress high academic standards and mitigation of Christian values in all our programs.

Apply to:  
**Erwin Strempler (Principal)**  
**Westgate Mennonite Collegiate**  
**86 WestGate**  
**WINNIPEG, Manitoba**  
**R3C 2E1**

With Compliments of . . .

**Peter Lettich** CONSTRUCTION LIMITED

P.O. BOX 786 - R3C 2N4

Winnipeg

and Barbara Wiebe, Barry L. Dyck, Richard Klassen, A.H. Friesen, Jacob S. Hildebrand, Abe E. and Cathy Kehler, Ron Driedger, and David N. Sawatzky, all of Altona.

Some 300 participants attended a youth retreat, "Winterbreak '82," during the weekend of February 12 - 14 at the **Winkler Bible Institute**. The annual event is sponsored jointly by the school and the youth committee of the Conference of Mennonite Brethren Churches of Manitoba.

A group of drama students at the Garden Valley Collegiate recently staged *The Cherry Hedge*, a play written by **Elizabeth Peters** of the University of Manitoba. The Low German version of the play is expected to be staged by a community group this spring. The play was commissioned for the town's 75th anniversary celebrations last year.

The minister of education has approved preliminary sketches for the construction of a new school at **Rosenfeld**. Funding has been set at a maximum of \$455,570 at this stage. The proposal is for a four-classroom facility not exceeding 9,000 square feet.

**David Ewert**, presently professor at the MB Biblical Seminary in Fresno, California, returns to Winnipeg this summer for a three-year term as president of the MB Bible College. He was previously registrar and dean at the college from 1953 to 1972.

### Nursing Opportunities in the Semi-Jungles of Belize

Requirements:

- Christian Commitment
- Speak Low-German,  
English & Spanish
- Registered Nurse & Midwife

For more details contact:

**Miss Mary Driedger**  
Box 66  
Orange Walk Town, Belize

CMBC is accepting applications for a secretary. Duties to include reception, typing, filing, etc. Position begins May 1. Send applications to Business Administrator, CMBC, 600 Shaftesbury Boulevard, Winnipeg, R3P 0M4 or telephone 888 6781.

**John Klassen**, a grade five student at the Gnadenthal school, took third place in his category in the Manitoba Electrical Week school poster competition. The theme of the competition was "how electricity improves our lives." John's poster depicted a kitchen scene with electrical appliances prominently displayed. John, age 11, received a certificate and a cassette-clock radio.

### NEWS FROM THE MCC

The **Mennonite Central Committee** is sponsoring a peace study tour for Mennonite leaders in May. The tour, led by **Walter Sawatzky**, MCC Secretary for Europe, is intended to promote a peaceful exchange between citizens of the East and West, broaden North American Mennonite contacts with the USSR, share with Soviet Christians, and see former Mennonite colonies.

Negotiations are completed which will transfer 31 acres of land from the **Second Mile Christian Community** to MCC (Canada). The property includes a kitchen and a dormitory and is located five miles north of Kenora, overlooking a small lake. MCC plans to use it as a base for resource development work with the native people of northwestern Ontario.



**Ron and Karen Martens** of Altona have begun a three-year assignment with MCC in Bangladesh. Ron will be serving as a food technologist and Karen will work as a nutritionist. Ron received B.Sc. and M.Sc. degrees in agriculture from the University of Manitoba. He also attended Canadian Bible College in Regina. Karen received a Bachelor of Home Economics degree from the U of M and a Certificate of Biblical Studies from Winnipeg Bible College. She was recently employed as an extension home economist in St. Pierre-Jolys, Manitoba. Ron and Karen are members of Southdale Alliance Church in Winnipeg.

**Henry and Justine Falk** of Winkler have begun a three-month assignment at MCC headquarters in Akron. Henry is doing maintenance work, and Justine is working in the production room. The Falks are members of Blumenort Mennonite Church in Winkler.



**Harvey and Joanne Warkentin** of Killarney have begun a two-year voluntary service assignment with MCC in Toronto. Harvey is doing community service work and Joanne is serving as assistant administrator at Warden Woods Community Center. Harvey received training as a heavy duty equipment mechanic at Assiniboine Community College in Brandon and was recently employed as a mechanic in Killarney. Joanne received a legal secretary diploma at Herzing Institute in Winnipeg and was employed as a legal secretary in Killarney. The Warkentins are members of Killarney Mennonite Church. Their parents are Walter and Doris Warkentin of Gladstone and Cornelius P. and Anne Thieszen of Killarney.

### MEDA CONVENTION '82

Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA) will hold its annual Convention in Winnipeg, Manitoba this fall. Convention dates are November 11 - 14. Convention theme will be **Full Value: Where Faith and Economics Meet**. That theme will be dealt with at several plenary sessions and in three working sessions during which participants will be involved in looking at actual case situations.

MEDA will sponsor two all-day seminars on November 11 prior to the formal opening of the convention in the evening. One seminar will focus on issues related to the organization and the manager and feature films by management specialist Peter Drucker.

The second seminar will be of interest to those with concerns about how Mennonite congregations deal with financial issues. That seminar entitled "Money and Economic Issues" will rely on the work commissioned by Mennonite Mutual Aid and carried out by Daniel Kauffman and John Rudy in a year-long study of Mennonite congregations and how they deal with money and economic issues.

Further information about the Convention is available from MEDA, 201 - 1483 Pembina Highway, Winnipeg R3T 2C8.

# CFAM: Creating a sense of community in Southern Manitoba

by Ed Unrau

Community newspapers are fond of claiming credit for creating and maintaining a sense of community in their essentially rural communities. But there are times when this credit is not deserved and it becomes clear that another medium can do the job just as well, if not better.

The establishment of the AM radio station CFAM in 1957 and its evolution into the Radio Southern Manitoba network with three stations in a crescent from Steinbach through Altona to Boissevain is one example.

CFAM passed its 25th anniversary in late March. It was established in 1957 by a number of local businessmen who felt that their community could benefit from a radio station that was explicitly rural in its orientation (as opposed to the urban bias of the Winnipeg-based stations then heard in the area), and which would try to be a "family" station in terms of its programming.

At the same time CFAM would provide an advertising medium for rural businessmen that was regional in its coverage, particularly in its ability to penetrate those small rural communities without a local community newspaper.

The current general manager, Elmer Hildebrand, who has been with Radio Southern Manitoba since the day it opened, said that as CFAM developed into its current network of three stations, the concept of community in the south part of the province has changed.

The Red River, for example, was a major physical as well as psychological barrier, clearly dividing the region in two; the ability of CFAM to transcend those barriers, as well as the circulation boundaries of the community newspapers, did a lot to re-shape people's perceptions of the region to the extent that they now perceive common interests.

Mr. Hildebrand says that this regional spirit of common rural interests is encouraged by the station's way of identifying itself on the air — it is always referred to as Radio Southern Manitoba or related to its regional context (ie. The Pembina Triangle).

CFAM was initially established in Altona with an output signal of 1,000 watts on its first day of broadcasting on March 13, 1957. A year later its signal

was increased to 5,000 watts, and still later to 10,000 watts. Hours of broadcasting began with 17 hours per day and were soon extended to 24 hours per day.

CFAM's signal covered the central area of southern Manitoba very well, but was unable to penetrate the eastern and western sections of the province well enough to provide decent community service. Accordingly CHSM was established in 1964 from a Steinbach base, and CJRB went on the air in 1973 from its Boissevain base. With this network of three stations, Radio Southern Manitoba covers the most rural region of the province.

CFAM continues to be the main station in the network, although the other two stations do produce their own programs of local interest.

CFAM is not a "small" radio station. It employs a total staff of 45, has a news staff that is exceeded in size in the private broadcasting sector by the staff of Winnipeg's CJOB, and maintains a Winnipeg news bureau. (Staff at CHSM and CJRB are an additional 20 or so people.)

Mr. Hildebrand said that CFAM, and its sister stations, maintain their community ties in a number of ways. The station is a member of every Chamber of Commerce group in its coverage area, it supports community events by cooperating with community organizers or organizing them on its own, and it recruits its staff from southern Manitoba. Mr. Hildebrand said the latter policy has sharply reduced staff turnover because the employees have ties to the region, as well as the staff can "feel" with the communities in the region because they know it well.

As well, CFAM now provides what is probably the most comprehensive agricultural news service in the province, and in this sense is moving into a vacuum created by the CBC, which once provided that coverage but has now sharply cut back in order to become more "urban".

Mr. Hildebrand said that the primary focus of the station's program is rural Manitoba, although he notes that about half of the CFAM listening audience is in Winnipeg.

The station's programming is designed to serve a range of listening groups, from young to old, and with different information needs. Mr. Hildebrand said they also try to be in "good taste" at all times so

that it can be a "family" station.

Indeed, anyone who has listened to CFAM regularly or intermittently since it started will have noticed that the type of music currently aired is much broader than it once was, that the religious programs are perhaps more "mature", that specific community needs are consciously recognized, and so on.

Mr. Hildebrand said that AM stations typically pick a listening group and then develop program formats designed

to attract and

maintain the loyalty of that group (a point that is easily illustrated by tuning in to the Winnipeg stations and listening to them for a day or more in turn). He points out that from a revenue aspect it would be to Radio Southern Manitoba's advantage to choose its own narrow segment. But he believes that then its "family" and "community" orientation would be lost. Choosing a program form designed to serve a range of distinct interests within the "family" and "community" criteria, he suggests has made the station unique in North America.

mm

## The Mennonite Collegiate Institute

invites dedicated educators to apply for 1982 - 83 in the following areas of expertise:

- *Girls' Physical Education*
- *Conversational French*
- *Librarian*
- *House Parent Couple*
- *Private Piano, voice and theory*

MCI stresses high academic standards, Grades 9 - 12, the spiritual heritage of the Anabaptist Mennonite people, and a well rounded music and extra-curricular program on its resident campus.

Apply to:

**Ken H. Loewen, Principal**  
**Box 250**  
**Gretna, Manitoba R0G 0V0**

**Ph. 204-327-5891**

## MAGIC MUSIC

With the voluntary help of the best local soloists and choristers available, the Winnipeg Mennonite Theatre is currently in full rehearsal for Mozart's operatic masterpiece *The Magic Flute* or *Die Zauberfloete* as it is entitled in the German language in which it will be performed.

Under the capable direction of David Riesen, who so successfully directed the company's last major musical production, *The Gypsy Baron* (*Der Zigeunerbaron*) in 1979, this production promises to be even more pleasing. Conductor William Baerg, well-known in Winnipeg musical circles, speaks highly of the cast which includes such accomplished soloists as John Martens, in the role of Tamino, William Thiessen as Papageno, Judy Janzen-Berkel as Queen of the Night, Heidi Geddert as Pamina, and Allan Blanchette as Sarastro.

Tickets moderately priced at \$9, \$8 and \$6 are available from all cast members, and as of April 12th, from CBO and ATO outlets. The performances will take place on May 19th, 21st and 22nd at 8:05 P.M. in the Playhouse Theatre.

For further information, call H. Janzen at telephone number 783-5912.

MBCI was among the more than 190 bands that entered the week-long festival held February 22-27, at the Convention Centre. Three adjudicators award each band an A, B, or C grade for their performance. The MBCI concert band was awarded three "A" grades. They are all directed by Ken Epp. The grade 9-10 band, under the direction of Richard Klassen received three "B" grades. Of special significance was the Commendation Award given to the bands of MBCI for being the most musically prepared school of the festival.

## NOTE TO READERS:

The publisher was so busy observing things this past month that he didn't find time to write the column, "Observed Along the Way". The column will reappear in the next issue.

## COMING EVENTS

**April 17-18** The Treble Teens present their 1982 spring concert, "Listen to the Music," at the Steinbach Regional Secondary School theatre. The Saturday performance is at 8:00 p.m., the Sunday performance at 2:30 p.m.

**May 20-24** "Together in Hope," the first ecumenical, bilingual and national religious festival will be held in Ottawa.

# Polo Park, Music, Art Set For April 25

On Sunday, April 25th, the 11th edition of the Mennonite Festival of Art and Music will take place at the Polo Park Shopping Mall from noon to 6 p.m. The festival has by now settled into a familiar format enjoyed by thousands of Manitoba Mennonites annually. It is a day for meeting old friends and acquaintances not recently seen or lost track of in the daily press of living. In the spacious atmosphere of the mall scores of conversations in all three Mennonite languages can go their lively, catching-up way without let or hindrance, except from other friends and acquaintances passing by.

Holding center stage, however, are the arts and crafts brought together in richer profusion every year. Once again there will be a concert given by Mennonite church choirs, as well as a group of "wandering minstrels" to provide an accompaniment to the socializing. As usual, there will be an assortment of needle crafts, paintings and other visual arts produced during the year and brought together to be viewed and examined by the visiting throngs. A special feature this year will be the children's art section, where youngsters can try their hand (?) at fingerpainting and other creative exercises. There will also be a book display of Mennonite authors and, hopefully, readings of poetry and prose by some of our growing group of creative writers.

And, as always, food will be a central attraction. In addition to the usual far-

mer sausages, verenike, plume mous and platz, there will be a special table of tortes — yes, heavenly, richly layered, calorie-laden tortes of all descriptions and sizes.

Those who have attended this event in the past will need no urging to attend this year's edition of the Festival. Those who have yet to attend have a treat in store. And if you come, sharpen your Low German and your appetites; you'll need both.

mm

## MEDA Dinner Meeting:

MEDA (Mennonite Economic Development Associates) is featuring an evening dinner with *Bill Regehr*, executive assistant to Premier Howard Pawley, on the evening of *May 6*, at the Holiday Inn South, in Winnipeg. All professional and business persons interested in the work of MEDA are invited. Bring a friend or associate, or spouse.

For further information call 475-3550 and ask for the MEDA representative.

## Stewardship in farming

Christian stewardship in farming was the theme of an all-day seminar held in the Carman Mennonite Church on Saturday, February 13.

The seminar, sponsored by the Mennonite Central Committee (Manitoba), attracted a few hundred agricultural people from south central Manitoba. Resource speakers for the seminar were Prof. Ben Smile of St. Andrew's College in Saskatoon and Dr. John Giesbrecht of the Agricultural Research Station at Morden.

The forenoon session opened with an excellent paper by Prof. Smile, who received his early training in philosophy and theology at the University of Toronto, and later pursued graduate work at a number of American theological institutions. Pertinent to the interests of partici-

*Wishing all our friends and  
customers a very Happy Easter.*

FROM

**RIEDIGER'S SUPERMARKET**

188 Isabel St., Winnipeg, Manitoba Phone 774-2451

pants at the seminar is his work in the United Church of Canada, which includes nine years as chaplain at the University of Saskatchewan and his present position as professor of social ethics at St. Andrew's College, the United Church seminary for western Canada. Most recently he has edited a book entitled, *Political Theology in Canadian Context*, to be published in 1982.

Prof. Smile is much interested in the relationships of agriculture, people and theology, a subject discussed here under the title: *Land — The Tension Between Gift and Grasp*.

At the outset of his lecture Smile noted that modern technology has placed us into a massive dilemma in which it is becoming increasingly more important to secure a hold of the land in order to survive. Quoting figures from Statistics Canada he showed that the facts are becoming more depressing in regards to what is happening in the technological take-over of agricultural life. No matter what may be considered as a solution to the problem, the speaker urged, we must return to the ways in which our biblical roots determine what we say and do. There is an ideology of growth behind most assumptions of farming trends which produce much inequality in the distribution of the world's resources. For those of us ever aware of the limits to growth this becomes particularly serious, he said.

The speaker then proceeded to look at the biblical responsibilities in understanding how one lives and works with this ideology of growth and comes to terms with the tension between gift and growth. In doing this Smile cited biblical passages related to the doctrine of Creation and stewardship of the land.

The most interesting account of Creation, he said, is to be found in Deuteronomy after the children of Israel have been through the Egyptian experience and are enroute to the Promised Land. Aware of their origin in slavery they have been led out by the mighty hand of God, and there is nothing that they were able to do which they may contribute to their natural goodness in the achievement. God owns the land, and the first lesson that they must learn is that their attempt to grasp it will always bring destruction to them, and anything which they may reap from the land is given to them by God as a gift.

But the problem with the Land of Plenty, says the professor, is always that the more prosperous you become, the more assured you become that everything that you have is yours by divine right. Therefore there is a need to hold to a doctrine of Creation which recognizes the problem of sin and wrong-doing, and that the way in which to view Creation properly is as a covenant people of God whose tenure of

the land is for the benefit of God and humanity.

The seminar continued in the afternoon with another lecture by Dr. John Giesbrecht on the proper usage of chemicals and fertilizer. To be good stewards of the land, he said, we should leave the land in at least as good a condition as we found it. This means that the amount of nutrients removed by growing crops must somehow be restored or the productivity of the land will be depleted. This more specialized paper gave rise to considerable discussion, concluded appropriately by a comment by an American student currently studying at Mennonite Brethren Bible College who has a farming background and previously studied

soil science at the University of Nebraska. He asked what has happened to the Anabaptist concept of the church working together on the question of land ownership and the passing on of the land from one generation to the next. Having already made considerable input to the afternoon session, he proceeded to suggest that we need to work this out in prayer, fellowship and deep commitment to what we believe.

While the seminar produced no definite answers, it at least raised some important issues that need to be pursued, and that, said Prof. Smile at the conclusion of the seminar, is much more than most people are doing.

— by Peter Paetkau

---

## Smith's story of Mennonites a new look for a new edition

C. Henry Smith, *Smith's Story of the Mennonites, Fifth Edition Revised and Enlarged by Cornelius Krahn* (Newton, Kansas: Faith and Life Press, 1981); Paperback; Pp. 589; \$17.95 U.S.

A review by Harry Loewen

Perhaps no other Mennonite historical work has enjoyed such popularity and wide usage among North American Mennonites as C. Henry Smith's *Story of the Mennonites*. First published as *The Mennonites* in 1920, then as *The Story of the Mennonites* in 1940, the present revised and enlarged version is the fifth edition of a story which by now has become a Mennonite saga approaching classical proportions. Like the classical epics, Smith's *Story of the Mennonites* not only narrates the long history of a particular people but also reflects this people's identity and peoplehood. Mennonite people everywhere can identify with this story and accept its praise and criticism of them. Countless students throughout the last half century have used the book as a text and reference work and many teachers have followed its outline for class preparation and further research into some subject related to Mennonite history. This latest edition of the *Story* will no doubt be as popular as its predecessors.

Smith's *Story* has been reviewed many times before. Hence, this review will not deal with those portions of the book which have remained unchanged in the present edition but concern itself with the changes, revisions, deletions and additions which were undertaken by the editor, Cornelius Krahn. The new parts of the *Story* require some scrutiny, for they were designed to enhance the story

of the Mennonites, bring it up to date, and make it more relevant to modern students of Mennonite history. In general Dr. Krahn has succeeded well in what he set out to do, but in some instances, as will be seen, some questions remain concerning an editor's freedom and limitations in his task.

When Luther translated the Bible into German, he was accused by his critics of carrying a "Protestant spirit" into his version, that is, of making his translation emphasize such Lutheran teachings as justification through faith alone. While Cornelius Krahn was highly qualified to undertake the enormous task of revising Smith's *Story*, there is no doubt that Krahn's spirit is much in evidence in the revised work, especially in those sections which deal with more recent historical material. In places Smith's interpretation has been "tampered" with. For example, Krahn has sometimes deleted paragraphs which were critical of some Mennonite groups and substituted for them his own comments and views. Thus in connection with the Claas Epp Jr. episode in South-East Asia, Smith drew a lesson from history by stating that Mennonites have in the past been "susceptible to unwholesome influences of this sort" (p. 462). Krahn deletes the entire paragraph and instead adds his own view with regard to some of the Mennonites who went with Epp: "At the turn of the century, the disillusioned followers of Claas Epp and Abraham Peters developed a longing 'for the fleshpots of Egypt.' Many got in contact with friends and relatives in the United States . . ." (p. 298-99). This comment is confusing at best. There were of course many among

the Russian Mennonites who suspected the motives of those who toward the end of the 19th century emigrated to Canada and the United States. Even the historian P.M. Friesen felt that way at first, but later he revised his opinion on this matter.

On the other hand, one might ask whether Krahn should have left unrevised Smith's rather biased opinion of such leaders as Klaas Reimer, the founder of the Kleine Gemeinde. Smith wrote concerning Reimer as follows: "A rather sensitive soul with a somewhat narrow religious horizon, contentious and critical in spirit, he was out of step from the beginning with the rest of his fellow ministers in the Flemish church" (p. 274-75). Krahn could have provided an editorial footnote to correct this obviously one-sided view of Klaas Reimer, pointing out that Reimer's opponents thought of him thus.

Smith's and Krahn's accounts of the origin of the Mennonite Brethren Church differ in some respects. Smith's account is longer than Krahn's and seems to be more objective, although Smith states that the MBs "weakened the Mennonite heritage" in Russia. Krahn's account emphasizes the influence of such non-Mennonites as Eduard Wüst, Joseph Höttmann, and the Baptists on MB beginnings. Krahn, however, states that the MBs in America share in the revival of interest in a recovery of the Anabaptist heritage and vision ("in which the Mennonite Brethren are strongly involved"). Krahn also feels that the separation between the two groups was not really necessary: "If the separating Brethren and the traditional Mennonites in Russia in the mid 1800s would have been less radical and better informed about 'the faith of our fathers', their parting could have been prevented" (pp. 344-45). Krahn feels that such things as differences in emphasis, conversion, and mode of baptism could have been accommodated within the general Mennonite Brotherhood.

Questions will also be raised by readers with regard to Krahn's comments about the Mennonites in the Soviet Union today. It is one thing to observe that the Mennonite Brethren in Russia affiliate

more readily with Baptists than with other Mennonites (p. 342), but it is quite another thing to state almost editorially: "It is easy to predict that most of the Mennonite Brethren in Russia will, at places where they have close relationships with the Baptists, lose or alter their former spiritual and cultural identity as Mennonites" (pp. 343-44). Fortunately, Walter Sawatsky has in the meantime provided us with a more exhaustive study of the difficulties of Russian Evangelicals, including Mennonites in the Soviet Union (*Soviet Evangelicals Since World War II*, 1981).

It is both ironic and humorous to note that whereas Smith favoured a slight Goshen bias Krahn has replaced it by one which favours Bethel College. Thus, in listing the two journals *Mennonite Quarterly Review* and *Mennonite Life* as the two scholarly periodicals Mennonites publish, Krahn elaborates on what *Mennonite Life* is all about and what it emphasizes while merely mentioning that *MQR* is published by Goshen College (p. 530). Similarly, in mentioning the Mennonite libraries, colleges and research centres, Krahn again elaborates with regard to Bethel that "a large collection of items in this area of interest can also be found in the Kauffman Museum on the campus of Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas" (p. 533).

Of special interest for readers of this magazine are Krahn's comments on Canadian-Mennonite activities in the arts, literature and scholarship. In describing Mennonite contributions in the areas of literature and the arts he observes that Winnipeg is becoming quite a Mennonite cultural centre. Krahn states: "Soon one may be tempted to compare Winnipeg with Amsterdam and Haarlem of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries when the role of the Mennonites in the fine arts, social work, government, law, medicine, and business was outstanding in comparison to their number" (p. 516). Among the "outstanding" Mennonite writers Krahn singles out Rudy Wiebe; and of the magazines that reflect and promote the development of the arts among Canadian Mennonites,

he mentions the *Mennonite Mirror* (p. 516).

Some chapters in Smith's *Story* were left more or less untouched. Hardly any new material was added to the stories of the Swiss Mennonites and the Hutterites. The Dutch-Mennonite story, Krahn's specialty, has been brought up to date with historical material since the last world war, emphasizing the Dutch-Mennonite search for and recovery of the Anabaptist vision.

With regard to the German Mennonites, Krahn comments on the continuing debate about Mennonite involvement in Nationalist-Socialism during the Hitler years. He mentions a Hamburg Mennonite scholar, Hans-Jügen Goertz, who "pointed out that the German Mennonites had surrendered and betrayed their Anabaptist heritage in the days of Hitler" (p. 223). While not naming the author Diether Goetz Lichdi, Krahn refers to his book *Die Mennoniten im Dritten Reich* (1977) which attempts to answer Goertz's charges, but, according to Krahn, "the interpretation of the events is not satisfactory to all" (p. 223). Both German authors and titles are not included in the bibliography of the *Story*.

The book includes useful maps and illustrations, a Foreword by Robert Kreider which summarizes C. Henry Smith's life and work, a helpful bibliography and an extensive index. While the paperbound edition keeps the price down, this nearly 600-page volume should have also appeared in a hard-bound cover. Libraries will thus have to bind this book themselves in a justified anticipation that it will be extensively used by students and faculty. The extensive use of *Smith's Story of the Mennonites* will be the best expression of gratitude of Cornelius Krahn for a work faithful and generally well done.

mm

## PEMBINA INSURANCE SERVICES

284 Pembina Highway  
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3L 2P5  
Bus. 452-4913 Res. 256-5181



Fire, Life, Commercial, Residential, Auto & Bonding



OSCAR EPP



AUTHORIZED  
NCR DEALER

## Universal Paper Rolls & Supplies

120 ISABEL STREET  
WINNIPEG, MAN. R3A 1G4  
772-4910

ELMER C. ENNS  
MANAGER

# A people cannot live without art

Michael Bird and Terry Kobayashi, *A Splendid Harvest. Germanic folk and decorative arts in Canada* (Toronto: Van Nostrand Reinhold Ltd., 1981). Pp. 240, Hardcover, \$29.95.

## A review by Harry Loewen

British governors and clergymen in the early years of Canada's history felt that the French in Canada had no language and culture worth preserving and that the Germans in this country were rude and uncultured people. This book demonstrates that while the German newcomers to Canada were largely ordinary farming people, they brought with them artistic skills which they put to good use in expressing their culture and heritage in a most unique and original way.

Bird's and Kobayashi's anthology of Germanic decorative and folk arts in Canada is itself a work of art. The numerous colored and black and white photographs of decorated cradles, grave markers, dishes, quilts, furniture and illuminated pages are professionally and artistically produced and classified according to regions from the Maritimes to the western provinces. Each section of the book is adequately introduced by the authors, explaining briefly the history of the Germanic people who came to these regions and the decorative arts characteristic of each group and area.

This book is in a sense, a philosophic statement about a people's need to express itself artistically. It shows in words and pictures that a people, however simple and unsophisticated, cannot live without art, that is, without some symbolic representation of what it believes and cherishes. No matter how much a community or group of people might emphasize spiritual values, human beings are so constituted that they need concrete things or tangible symbols to express the spiritual realities they live by.

Even such people as the Mennonites and Hutterites, who from the beginning of their history suspected art in all its forms, were nevertheless creative and certainly artistically inclined. Whether it was illuminating a page to celebrate the birth or baptism of a child or decorating a quilt, their aesthetic impulse came to the fore and enabled the community together with its craftsmen and artists to celebrate its faith and life. For Mennonites such symbols as the Bible and the plough have characterized what they believed and lived, and represented the things they valued most: God's Word and a place to live. But, as this book shows, the Mennonites who with other German people came to Canada from the United

States and Europe, went beyond these basic traditional symbols to create many other objects of beauty which today are in great demand by collectors.

The book's most original contribution is no doubt the last section which deals with the arts — mostly Mennonite and Hutterite — of the prairie provinces. That Germans in the Maritimes and Ontario and the "Pennsylvania-Dutch" Mennonites have a long tradition of decorating, carving and engraving, has been known for some time. But that there exists so much decorative art among the Russian-Mennonites and Hutterites of Manitoba and Saskatchewan, is less known. The artistically decorated cupboards, storage chests, sleeping-benches, clocks, trinket boxes, towels, and history books (not to speak of Mennonite architectural styles and the Hoepfner and Bartsch grave markers), belie the notion that Russian Mennonites were devoid of artistic sensibility.

The authors of this book point out that the value of German-Canadian art has been recognized by antique dealers and art collectors south of the border. In producing this book, the authors have rendered Canadians an invaluable service in that they have not only brought to light what German-Canadians have produced in the realm of decorative and folk arts, but also in alerting Canadians to the aesthetic and spiritual value of these arts.

The book has an extensive bibliography and a useful index. It is well bound and the paper is of high quality.

mm

## Chaco film worth seeing

*Pioniere im Chaco, A German film documentary filmed and directed by Otto Klassen and narrated by Victor Sawatsky, at the Playhouse Theatre, March 19, 1982.*

## A Review by Al Reimer

Sponsored by Faith and Life Communications, the premiere showing of this 90-minute film about the Mennonites of Paraguay was enthusiastically received by the capacity audience in

attendance at the Playhouse Theatre. Designed especially for Mennonite schools in Paraguay, this documentary consists of three half-hour film segments which together portray the dramatic story of how the Mennonites settled in the "geenen hell" of the Chaco in the twenties. From the unbelievably arduous early years they have with unrelenting persistence, courage and a stubborn faith in their special destiny created the successful and progressive Menno Colony of today.

That dramatic story is vividly and faithfully told by Otto Klassen in this interesting film. Klassen, who lived in the nearby Volendam Colony before moving to Canada in the fifties, treats his subject with an insider's knowledge and sympathy. He has obviously won the trust of the people in the film and they have cooperated with him to portray themselves and their story with touching honesty, dignity and gentle humor.

That the film was made at all is entirely owing to the enthusiasm and dedication of its only begetter Otto Klassen. He is one of those rare individuals who puts his ideals and faith and pocket book at the disposal of a creative vision. A master mason by trade, with a thriving business in the building of fine fireplaces, Otto Klassen spends his spare time and money creating films that will preserve and bring alive the history of the Mennonite people he loves with boundless passion and fierce pride. His enthusiasm is so infectious that he can get even non-Mennonites to donate their time and expertise to his costly film projects. His first full-length film was *Prairie Pioneers: the Mennonites of Manitoba*, made for the Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society in the centennial year of 1974.

The Mennonites of South America have been our neglected "country cousins" for generations. It is gratifying to see them at last get the attention and respect they deserve. *Pioniere im Chaco* will also appear with an English narration shortly and is in every way a worthy companion to *Heimat für Heimatlose*, the film on Paraguayan Mennonites made by Dave Dueck last year. There are, of course, weaknesses in Klassen's film: some viewers may find the treatment of farm animals and details of farming a bit obsessive; and the scene that shows the Indians of the Chaco being trained into models of industrious, pious brown Mennonites seems a bit self-serving. But overall this is an attention-holding documentary told with visual skill and a clear, simple narrative style.

Before the showing began Otto Klassen was awarded a plaque in honor of his selfless efforts in making Mennonite historical films. It was a well-deserved award which should inspire the recipient to make further film documentaries.

# De Pelzdatj

Von John C Neufeld

“Oitj” sacht enn sieni Babelgeschichti emm Mennonitischen Speajel daut de Russlaenda aulerhaund no Kanada mettijschlappt habe. Daut errinad mie aun Hiebats Tjnals onn waut he mie von eni Pelzdatj vertald de sieni Paupi onn Mammi no Kanada mettbrochti, onn uck aun aulit aundri waut doamett tophonk. Onn ditt ess waut he mie vertald.

Daut wea aul en olit Boarifall. Daut ritjt muffich onn sach gaunz mettjinomi ut. Daut ritjt onjifaehr so auls de Pharaonisch Jraeva wann de noh dusendi von Joahri tumm easchten Moal oapjimoakt woari. Enn Russlaund bruckti sieni Aelri de Pelzdatj aeri Feet woarm to holi wann se emm Winta foahri. Oba enn Kanada wort de tumm Motoa emm Model T woam holi jibruckt, oada omm de Eatchocki vom verfreiari to holi.

Na, Hiebats Tjnals saed mie he haud sonst nich foats schis. He kunn gaunz ruhig opp dem Empire State Building stoahni ohni daut ahm schwindlich waart. Oda duckt ahm twintig Schoh unja Woata onn he fehlde sich secha auls enni Ent. Oba wann he de Pelzdatj sach, dann wort he enfach gaunz wild. Jiedrit moahl wann de Pelzdatj dicht bie wea, dann wea ahm so auls musst he stecki. Daut wea so auls wann ahm de Hauls toschnead. Dann wort ahm emma gaunz schratjlich angst.

Enis Doagis erwaehnd he daut to sienem Frind wo ahm daut jink. Dis Frind wea aul ziemlich jigrommt onn haud uck aul waut von Psychology wach. Na, kort he haud daut hingri Ohri setti. “Du”, saed sien Frind, “Daut ess eni ernsti Sach. Opp Englisch heet daut claustrophobia. Wann du von disi Angst los koami wellst dann mottst du no enim Psychiater goahni.”

“Waut ess en Psychiater?” froagt Tjnals.

“Ach” saed sien Frind, “daut woascht du doch nich verstoahni. Oba daut ess en seha gelehda Maun de die gaunz ute-naunda nehmi kaun omm to sehni waut doa ejentlich ess waut die de Grimsi jeft.

Dann stalt he die wada toap.”

“Na oba wann he dann nich aulis aun Oat onn Staed tjricht, waut dann? froagt Tjnal.

“Seh moal, die ess waut enn dieni Tjin-jajoahri pausead waut mau blos en Psychiater rutfeschi kaun. Du hast daut vergaeti oba daut sett noch emm Unterbewusstsein faust. Daut duckt he dann los,” saed sien Frind.

“Menst jo?” saed Tjnals.

“Na jo oaba secha, go mau blost schwind no enim Psychiater de waut wada aulis enn Ordnung bringi,” mend de Frind.

Onn so moak sich daut, daut Tjnals sich bie dem gebildeten Harr veastald onn ahm saed waut am schoad. Waut ahm oba noch Sorgi moak wea daut Unterbewusstsein. Woa stoak daut ejentlich? He froach dem Dr. Psychiater oba de mend daut saut noch vael depa auls de Moag. Tjnals sull sich nich doamet schwoa moaki. He wurd daut aul fingi.

Tjnals musst sich mau schmock opp de Ruhbaenk laji, onn de Oagi tomoaki. Onn dann raed de Psychiater to ahm so ruhig onn tovertrulich daut ahm bolt seha au-

nfong to schlepri, onn eha he sich versach wea he uck aul enn enim depen Schloap.

Auls he endlich oppwoak tjitjt he mett willi Oagi romm sich. Oba de Psychiater saed ahm he sull sich mau beruhji. Aulis wea enn Ordnung onn he wudd ahm foats saji woarm Tjnals so angst ver de Pelzdatj haud. He haud daut ut Tjnals sien Unterbewusstsein rutjihoalt. Onn nu vertald de Psychiater ahm disi Jischicht.

“Daut wea emm Joah 1924 enn Russlaund auls dieni Eltern mett Famielji sich aunscheckti no Kanada uttowaundri. Du weascht dann noch en tjlena Jung. Emm Somma sull daut losgoani. Nu wulli de Eltern noch enmoal aeri Jeschwista enn Gnoadenfeld biseatji. Wea wisst auf sich noch enmoal wuddi wadasehni. Dien Paupi spaund de latzti Koh ver enim Tweroda. Diene Mutta sad sich opp dem Seeliducka, denn sowort de Tweroda jinannt, onn Paupi leid de Klemp biem Taejel so daut de nich bie jieda Krut aunhilt omm to groasi. Oba du onn dien junga Broda mussti unji emm Kausti to Mutta aeri Feet setti. Wiel de Pelzdatj so sondaboa ritjt, onn wiel daut unja de Datj von Tied to Tied groti Odemnot gauf, stoak jie juni Tjap rut omm freschi Loft to schnaupi. Oba dann schof juni Mammi de Tjap schwind unja de Datz onn datjt noch fausta to. Jie sulli nich de Schnopp tjrieji.

Na, de Stratj von Schoenau bat Gnoadenfeld mett eni Koh to foahri naum doch ziemlich vael Tied. Desto wieda de Seeliducka foah desto jrata wort de Odemnot. Oba doa wea tjen Erboami. So auls en Kopp rut kaum so wort de wada unjajiduckt, onn doamett steach de Angst. Daut waut doa setti blef nannt maun Claustrophobia.”

Auls de Psychiater daut so vertald donn kaum dem Tjnals daut aula wada enn Erinnerung. Seit dem haft he nie meha Angst ver de oli, stoffji Pelzdatj jihaut. **MM**

## Gretna History

Gretna is planning a book on its rich history. We need the help of people of Gretna, past and present, and of all who are interested in its story. Any documents, letters, stories, diaries, photographs of Gretna life, or any leads as to where information can be found will be most welcome.

All material will be catalogued, labelled and safely stored in the vault of the Gretna Municipal Office.

Information should be mailed to:

**VILLAGE OF GRETNA**  
Attn. M. Lundin  
Box 159, Gretna, Man.  
R0G 0V0

# In memoriam: John Albrecht

Von Karl Fast

Hans Albrecht war ein ganz gewöhnlicher Mensch, der mit beiden Füßen auf seinem ihm von Gott zugewiesenen Platz stand und zu gleicher Zeit mit seinem ganzen Tun und Handeln, ja mit seinem ganzen Sein das Reich Gottes baute, wo immer er dazu eine Gelegenheit fand. Er stand immer mitten auf dem Bauplatz Gottes und dort fand ihn der Herr, als er ihn zu sich in Sein Reich rief, damit er nach vollbrachtem Lauf endgültig Feierabend machen sollte. Und Hans, der Freund, Berater und Tröster so vieler Menschen gehorchte auch in dieser Stunde. Er starb wie er gelebt hatte: still und bescheiden.

Als ganz gewöhnlicher Mensch war John Albrecht dennoch etwas ganz Besonderes, denn ihn bewegte eine überaus grosse Liebe zu Gott und zu den Menschen um ihn her. Und gerade diese Liebe führte ihn zu den übrigen Kindern Gottes und durch diese Liebe ist John den Menschen, die mit ihm auf den Strassen des Lebens gingen, zum Segen geworden.

Seit Ende des Krieges ist John in North Kildonan zu Hause gewesen und hier hat er die längste Zeit seines Lebens gewirkt. Hier kannte man ihn am besten, hier schätzte man ihn, hier wurde er geachtet, hier gehörte er zuerst zu uns, obwohl man dieses fast überall von ihm sagen konnte. Als wir die Nachricht von seinem Tode vernahmen, kam mir ganz unwillkürlich der Text des Liedes *Der gute Kamerad* in den Sinn: "Ich hatt' einen Kameraden . . . , als wär's ein Stück von mir!"

Die meisten von uns kennen John als einen, der sich unser in liebender Weise annahm, als wir Ende Vierziger Jahre einwanderten. Er ist der Freund der Neueinwanderer geblieben, er beriet sie, er half ihnen mit ihren grossen und kleinen Sorgen, er stand ihnen zur Seite, wo sie ihn gerade brauchten.

John Albrecht legte überall Hand ans

Werk: er war der erste beim Autowaschen, auf dem Kirchhof, als Finanzberater in der Bank, er sorgte sich um die Flüchtlinge aus Vietnam, wie er sich um uns gesorgt hatte, man fand ihn als Sänger in Chören und in Operetten, er leitete Gemeindegemeinschaften und Musikkapellen und sang mit seinen Kollegen aus der Bank auf den Treppen des Kaufhauses der Hudsons Bay zur Weihnachtszeit. Seine Musik erfreute die Müden und Kranken im Concordia Krankenhaus, in den Altenheimen Bethania und Donwood Manor, er musizierte für die Insassen eines jüdischen Altenheimes. Seine Musik tönte auf Begräbnissen zum Trost der Traurigen und begleitete auf unzähligen Hochzeitsfesten die Jungvermählten ins frohe und hoffnungsvolle Leben. Hans Albrecht war überall beteiligt, wo er jemand beistehen konnte. Hans liebte die Arbeit, denn sie machte ihm Freude und war für ihn innere und äussere Erfüllung. Wie oft sass er in seinem Bankbüro nach der üblichen Arbeitszeit hinter seinem Tisch, um finanzielle Schwierigkeiten der in Not geratenen Kunden zu vermindern! Als Gemeinderatsleiter der Springfield Heights Mennonitengemeinde kannte er keine Ruhepause und fand daneben noch Zeit für das Mennonitische Zentralkomitee, für die Konferenz der Mennoniten Manitobas und von Kanada. Er besuchte Weltkonferenzen und nahm an grösseren und kleineren Reisen für die Gemeinde teil.

Sein "letztes Projekt", so sagte Hans, seien die Schulden des Westgate Mennonite Collegiate. Wer zählt die Stunden und den Kraftaufwand, die er für diese Sache, die ihm so sehr am Herzen lag? Als ich ihn zum letzten Mal sprach, erzählte er mir, dass er frühzeitig zur diesjährigen Konferenz der Mennoniten Manitobas fahren wolle, damit er dort die nötige Auskunft über die Schule geben könnte, wenn man darüber

verhandeln würde. John war in Altona auf der Konferenz.

Dort hat man ihn zum letzten Mal im Dienste seines Meisters gesehen und gehört, als er zum Schluss der Konferenzverhandlungen die Resolutionen für die zu fassenden Beschlüsse verlas.

Gott hat John Albrecht, unseren Freund und Bruder, nach Hause gerufen. Vielen wird er fehlen, denn irgend wie und irgend wann ist er vielen in den Weg gekommen und ist dadurch "ein Stück von ihnen geworden."

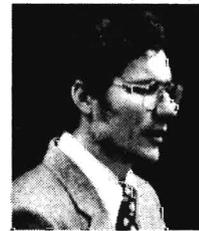
Als seine Freunde gönnen wir ihm die Ruhe von ganzem Herzen, obwohl es nach unserem Ermessen für Hans Albrecht noch viel zu früh war, von dieser Erde zu gehen, denn es gab für ihn noch so viel zu tun. Als Springfield Heights Mennonitengemeinde haben wir einen lieben Mitpilger zur ewigen Heimat und einen werten Arbeiter im Reiche Gottes verloren und werden seine Stimme und seinen Rat noch oft vermissen.

Andererseits aber sind wir unserem Herrn und Meister dankbar, dass John Albrecht so lange hat unter uns leben dürfen und dass er so viele Jahre mit uns für die Sache Gottes eingetreten ist. Von John kann man fürwahr sagen, dass Gott ihn segnete und für viele zum Segen werden liess.

mm

## EINGESCHLOSSEN ABER NICHT ABGESCHLOSSEN...

Wir besuchen Sie  
im Radio



RADIO-PASTOR  
REV. GERHARD FRIESEN

Schalten Sie ein für:

- SCHÖNEN GESANG
- INSPIRATION
- SEELSORGE

Hören Sie  
LICHT des EVANGELIUMS  
in der deutschen Sprache

an jedem Sonntag über  
CFAM (950) um 8 Uhr morgens  
CHSM (1250) um 8 Uhr morgens

MB COMMUNICATIONS  
Box 2 - Station F  
Winnipeg - Man. R2L 2A5



# our word

## EASTER EDITORIAL

"Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, . . . 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' " The curtain of the temple was torn in two. Then Jesus, crying with a loud voice said, 'Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit!' And having said this he breathed his last." (Matthew 27:46 and Luke 23:46)

What are we supposed to do when we are confronted with a devastating setback in our lives, or when we are told that death itself is just around the corner? We are sometimes told that if we are Christians we should accept all misfortune, even rejection and death, with serenity. We must accept our fate quietly and submissively.

But that is not what Jesus himself did. He knew early on in his life that those who plotted his downfall, and ultimately his death, would be successful. Did he just give in to their plans and accept his fate? No! For a few years he went about the countryside speaking and acting vigorously against wicked people who oppressed others and who were intent on doing him in. He was infinitely tender to the oppressed, but he scathingly denounced those who did the oppressing, whether they were rulers or leaders of the religious establishment. Only after a vigorous fight did he accept what was seemingly inevitable. Even then, the final acceptance was not achieved without some personal, inner struggle. When he wrestled in the Garden of Gethsemane with his God he pleaded first that the cup of suffering be taken from him. On the cross he suddenly felt completely forsaken by God. Was this really to be his fate? If God was in control, could He allow evil to triumph in this way? Again, Jesus fought, and it was only after a struggle that he was able to utter the final cry of faith, "Into thy hands I commit my Spirit."

Survivors of the Soviet concentration camps tell us that in order to survive inwardly in such hostile circumstances it is vital that one never surrender his spirit to the guards. They will try to defeat you by humiliating you, by making you want to submit to them. Only the person who fights back maintains a sense of dignity and personhood. As one of them said to me last year, "From the moment you hear the gates of the prison close behind you, you must resolve always to remember that you are worth something, that you have been given a personality and a dignity by God which you will not surrender to your captors. That is the only kind of person they cannot defeat."

Evil and death are not our friends. We are meant to fight against them. If that were not so, why do we admire courage and why do we hail the achievements of medicine?

Dylan Thomas, the Welsh poet, says it well:

"Do not go gentle into that good night,  
Old age should burn and rave at close of day;  
Rage, rage against the dying of the light."

However, while we should actively resist those who mean to strip us of our dignity, and while we should fight evil wherever it raises its ugly head, and even try to halt the encroachment of death, there comes a time in our resistance when, if fate doesn't change, we must accept it, even if it appears to be unjust. We must not only accept it, but in the end we must also embrace it and make it part of the overarching meaning of our life. That doesn't excuse those who impose the injustice on us, but it is an essential condition of our own further growth.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer fought vigorously against the evil of Nazism in Germany in the 1930's. He was imprisoned for this, but even in prison he encouraged the resistance of his friends by writing courageous letters. His faith and boldness were admired both by guards and fellow prisoners, but as it became clearer that he might be executed for his beliefs, those around him also noticed a new spirit of serenity about him. At the moment that evil seemed to triumph over him, when he heard himself being called to the gallows, he turned quietly to an agnostic friend and said, "This is the end of life, but for me the beginning." The famous book, *Letters and Papers from Prison*, which contains his last letters, has a much more appropriate title in the original German: *Widerstand und Ergebung* (*Resistance and Acceptance*). Bonhoeffer raged, raged, at the dying of the light — but in the end God gave Him the grace to accept his fate and to see it as part of a greater triumphant whole.

That was the grace operating in Jesus. The Cross represented the evil which he resisted so vigorously in his life, but in the end he was able to see it as part of a grand, victorious design which he could embrace and accept. Christians through the ages have been strengthened by the knowledge that Jesus did indeed emerge triumphant from the Cross.

In this Easter Season we can rejoice with all those who are able, with God's grace, to finally accept whatever cross God has chosen them to bear. But let us also pay tribute to the courageous struggle that some people put up against the unjust stripping-away of their integrity, and even their struggle against the ultimate indignity, death. Shame on us if we are angered or embarrassed by those who refuse to give up their hopes and ideals easily, without a vigorous fight. Christians must resist and resist again, and again, any verdict that seems unjust, including the verdict of death. We do not live in a neutral world. We live in a world where we are assaulted daily by destructive, evil forces. It belongs to the essence of the Christian faith to fight those forces even with the second-last breathe, and the second-last cry.

As Origen said long ago,  
"The Savior Himself says:  
'He that is near Me is near the fire.' "

— by Roy Vogt

## THORNE RIDDELL

Chartered Accountants

Offices throughout Canada



Suite 300-386 Broadway  
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 0A9  
Telephone (204) 957-1770

International Firm:  
Klyneld Main Goerdeler & Co.

## Garth P. Reimer

Barrister, Solicitor and Notary Public

CAMPBELL, MAXWELL, KOZMINSKI,  
JACKIEW, HUCK, & REIMER  
400-208 Edmonton Street  
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3C 1R7

Telephone 942-3311

Residence 475-5655

## G. K. BRAUN INSURANCE SERVICES LTD.



LIFE AND GENERAL INSURANCE

INCLUDING



For service, phone or come to:

171 Donald St., Rm. 301 Box 130.  
Winnipeg, Man. R3C 1M4 Rosenort, Man. R0G 1W0  
Phone: 942-6171 Phone 1-746-8411

## WILLIAM MARTENS

BARRISTER AND SOLICITOR

601-330 Portage Avenue  
WINNIPEG, MANITOBA R3C 0C4

Telephone 943-4427

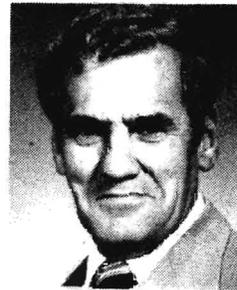
## Winnipeg Building & Decorating (1968) Ltd.

GENERAL CONTRACTORS

● A COMPLETE REMODELLING SERVICE ●

DONALD T. MacANGUS — HENRY THIESSEN

56 Ellen St., Winnipeg, Man. — 942-6121



## JOHN FEHR INSURANCE

1110 Henderson Highway  
Phone: 338-7811

HOMEOWNERS PACKAGE  
COMMERCIAL • FIRE • LIFE

AUTHORIZED  AGENT

Courteous Professional Service

Call us for a Quotation for all your Insurance needs

Buying or Selling  
Your Home?

Call me!



Abe Banman  
338-5852

Ph. 338-7915  
5-1110 Henderson Hwy.



WINNIPEG WELDING SUPPLIES LTD.  
45 ARCHIBALD STREET, WINNIPEG, MANITOBA  
R2J 0V7

PETER W. DOERKSEN

Business 233-3434  
Residence 269-3877

## HAVE YOU HEARD ABOUT OUR NEW NON-SMOKER'S TERM

... term insurance designed especially for non-smokers. If you are a non-smoker (you haven't smoked a cigarette in the last 12 months), then you may be able to take advantage of the lowest term insurance rates ManuLife has ever offered. You owe it to yourself to find out more about ManuLife's Non-Smoker's Term ... it's worth the saving.



ABE HARDER

1224 - One Lombard Place  
Winnipeg, Man. 942-0041

**ManuLife**  
The Manufacturers Life Insurance Company

## Henry Kroeger

North Kildonan Motors & Auto Body Ltd.

1372 Henderson Highway  
Winnipeg, Manitoba R2G 1M8  
Telephone: 338-1551 or 334-6156

A sunburst graphic consisting of multiple lines radiating from the center, some single and some double, creating a starburst effect behind the text.

**CHRIST IS RISEN...**

WISHING ALL MEMBERS  
AND FRIENDS A

**JOYOUS EASTER**



171 Donald St.  
1250 Portage Ave.  
1200 Henderson Hwy.

947-1243  
783-7081  
338-0365

**Serving the Mennonite People of Manitoba**