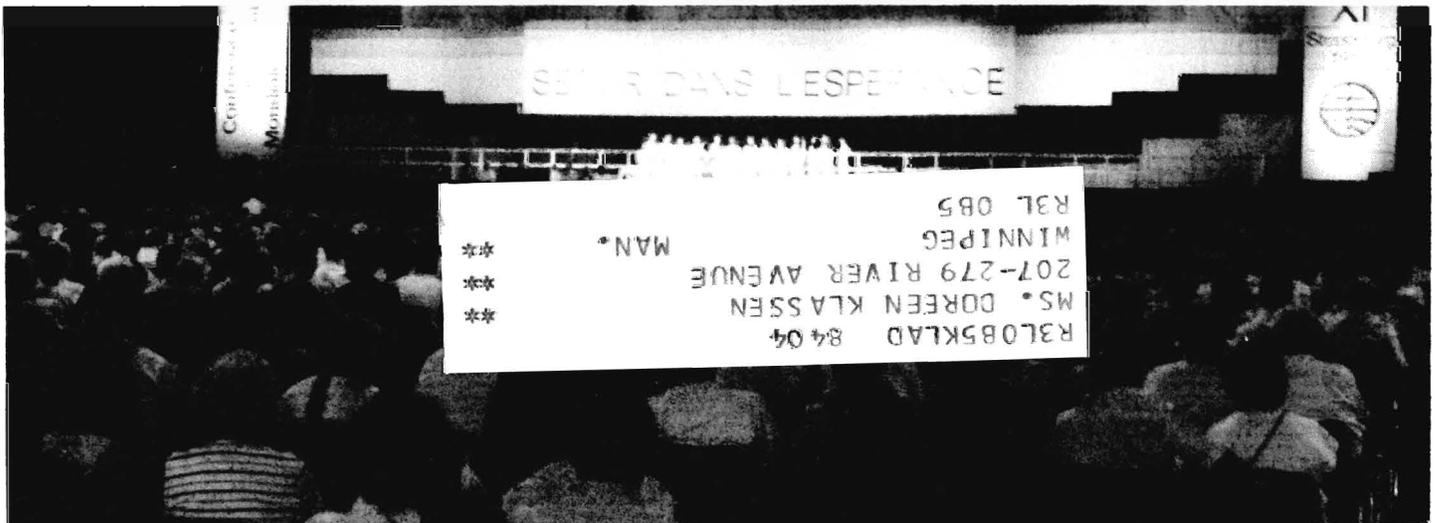


mennonite mirror

volume 14/number 1
september, 1984





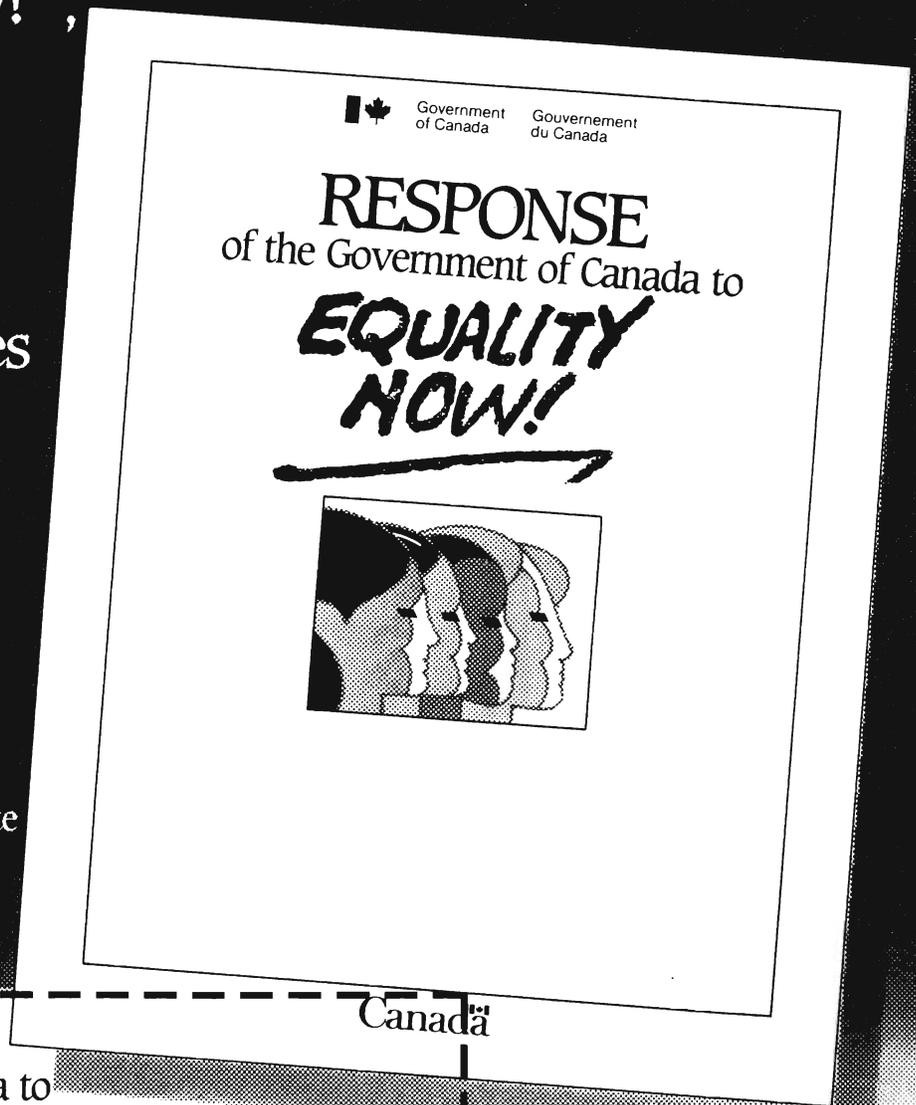
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ForeWord

This ForeWord welcomes you to volume 14 of the *Mennonite Mirror*; that is, our 14th year of publication. There is an aspect to our "survival" that is worthy of note: the *Mirror* has been, and still is, the publishing venture of a group of people who work in addition to their regular vocation. It's a demonstration of our commitment to provide Mennonites with information of their own community and with a sense of what it means to be Mennonite in the 20th century.

Many Mennonites from Manitoba enjoyed the social and spiritual interaction with Mennonites of other countries at the Mennonite World Conference that was held this past summer in France. Two of our articles touch on the event. Mary Enns opens this issue with her impressions of the conference while Al Reimer closes the issue with an Our Word commentary.

It is one thing to teach English as a second language to people who immigrate to this country, but it is quite another to yourself go to another country to teach English, and do it in a setting where you are a stranger to the language and culture. Peter Peters, with his wife Greti and daughter Karen, completed such a year and found that they

learned more than they taught, according to the article by Ruth Vogt.

Our irregular series, Air Mail Word, makes an appearance this month. The idea of the feature is to publish the communications of Mennonites who have accepted assignment abroad and who take the time to write to the *Mirror*. In this issue Ralph Friesen writes about a year at an African assignment and his letter echoes some of the same themes as the one on the Peters — he and his family learned as much as they taught.

The column, Observed Along the Way, is back. Roy Vogt fills it with his inimitable collection of observations of the passing scene. In this one he focuses on his tour of the Soviet Union.

Jack Thiessen is back with a Low German feature, there are three book reviews, five poems, the Manitoba news, a short feature on ships that conveyed Mennonites, and of course the advertisements — without the support of our advertisers there would be no *Mirror*. So tell them you saw them when you looked in the *Mirror*.

NOTE: John Friesen's second instalment relating his experience as a pro-tester of nuclear war, which began as a series in the June issue, is not available. It is expected to continue next month.

mennonite
mirror

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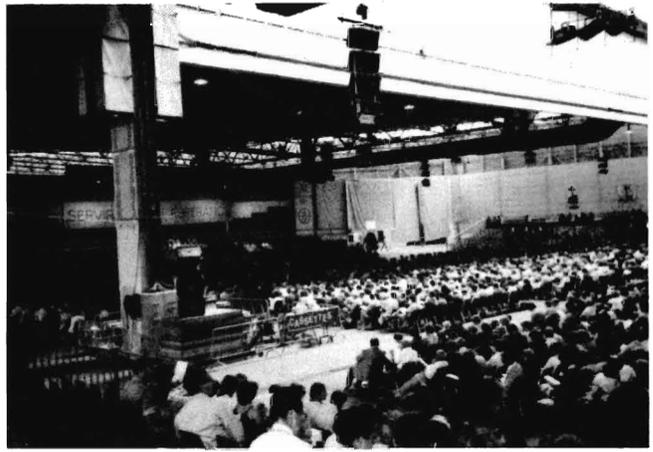
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Strasbourg: Anabaptists once sought refuge there; this year they found spiritual challenge

by Mary M. Enns

More than 7,000 Mennonites from 60 countries converged upon Strasbourg near the French-German border July 24-29. Where this historic city of 250,000 on the Rhine River was a refuge and a haven for the Anabaptists of the 16th century, it now welcomed, with the help of the Mennonites from Germany, Switzerland, and the Netherlands, their brothers and sisters of various colors, cultures, and diverse traditions of worship from all over the world.

These guests to beautiful Strasbourg flooded its fine, old historic and modern hotels, its university dormitories and even its private homes and camp grounds. The white and blue conference name tags became friendly conversation openers and identification not only on the conference campus, but on strolls in the city, which many of us explored as often as possible. They also facilitated orientation measures on day tours into the Alsatian countryside or on city buses. Anyone with a name tag was approachable and no one needed to feel alone or lost or strange. Language barriers were virtually non-existent. For one thing, German seemed to take you a long way just about anywhere on campus or in town. And if you chose to brave it out with your modest French you were made to feel very comfortable.

French customs! We discovered a few new ones on our first breakfast at Robertson University dormitory, where we spent our first night because we had arrived two days early. Picking up our cereal bowl on the breakfast line-up we looked around for the cereal. The bowls were promptly filled with café au lait (coffee with hot milk). This is lifted with both hands in order to drink it. One drinks "café nature" for breakfast and Espresso, three times stronger than normal coffee, after lunch, dinner and in between, in tiny cups. We picked up our baguette, this delicious French bread, crisp on the outside, soft inside, which is intended to be eaten by pulling away morsels of it rather than biting into it.

Those of us fortunate or maybe adventurous enough to have earlier booked a hotel in the most historic section of the city near the cathedral looked down from tiny, grill-work balconies onto a constantly alive, ever-changing slice of humanity on the move. We looked across at the very old, picturesque, red-tiled roofs, the tiny dormer windows — one of these the private seat of an enormous black cat — and the round openings that could only be for swallows.

One evening, bone weary, I fled the Palais de Congrès, Rhenus Dining Hall and its 7,000 faithfuls, took a city bus back to our Hotel de Paris to stroll alone

in the part of the city I had come to enjoy so much. I chose to eat a simple *merceuse* — three tiny grilled sausages in a baguette — bought at a little *pommes frites* stand. From my own little balcony I observed the mob of people filling the street, which had this Saturday afternoon become a market place selling books, records, clothes, shoes, toys and jewellery. Prices were high but quality good, on the whole. Shops selling gourmet foods, elegantly displayed, were very popular.

We were to discover that it was pointless to feel frustrated because of the impossibility to attend all sessions, interest groups, discussion periods, presentations or concerts, fine though they might be. The timely, well-chosen conference theme, developed in various aspects in the plenary sessions, was: *Servir dans l'espérance*, "God's people serve in Hope." Not idealizing martyrdom — for we are not all Bonhoeffers or Ghandis — nor necessarily withdrawing in isolation as *Die Stillen im Lande*, we Mennonites are seeking to meet the new challenges and are prepared to take risks as our mandate from God by helping to prepare for the "Promised Land," the Kingdom of God.

The question, "Why are North American Christians not suffering" was answered with another, "Are we not speaking out to issues and challenging

governments on policy change?" We cannot make claims to aspire to the suffering of the early Anabaptists because our situation today does not call for the same sacrifices in the same way. An early speaker stated that "we have come to Strasbourg to capture God's vision for our generation and as God's people serving in hope we join the saints of the past to become a link to the coming over." Paul Kraybill suggested that the important part of the conference lay not in the messages and the discussions but in the informal meeting of people; and as this happens we serve the working of God's spirit in the lives of many people the world round.

That is exactly what seemed to be happening. Ron Sider, in his talk on "God's people reconciling," pointed out that Jesus is the way to peace but that many Americans, including Brethren in Christ, have endorsed the current arms race at the ballot box. "If we want wars to be fought we ought to have the moral integrity to fight them ourselves. To vote for other people's sons and daughters to march off to death while ours safely register as conscientious objectors is the worst form of confused hypocrisy." The Hebrew "Shalom" suggests "right relationship in every area — with God, neighbour and earth. Jesus' commitment to this made Him a disturber of an unjust peace, and then the announcer of a new peace with God."

The conference campus on the out-

skirts of this tree-rich city is a large one. Many guests were registered at the nearby Holiday Inn and Hilton hotels. One fell into the pattern of it all in a most organized fashion with the initial registration at the Palais de Congrès. There at the *banque* you parted with your Canadian or American dollars in exchange for French francs. The Palais contained various meeting rooms as well as the large Erasmus Hall where, for example, the excellent native American Indian presentation took place. One of their speakers pointed out that the service with a hope theme tied in very well with the Indian philosophy of hope. At the close of the session someone was heard to remark: "*Das war ja besser als all die Theologie.*" It was here we also heard the superb concert by the Südwest-Deutschen Musikstudenten Kammerorchester. Impressive here were the guest soloists — soprano Edith Wiens, München, the daughter of the late D. B. Wiens, Vancouver, and William Reimer, bass, Hannover, and earlier of B.C.

A fair stretch across the campus lay Hall Rhemus where the morning and evening plenary sessions took place. A possible highlight for many guests, the Mennonite oratorio *The Abiding Place* composed by Esther Wiebe and librettist Barbara Smucker and conducted by George Wiebe, was also performed there. The message in song and the powerful narration by Al Reimer, de-

veloped a theme in three sections: A Pilgrim People, a Suffering People, a People of Praise. Besides Wiebe's choir it featured Helen Litz' Mennonite Children's Choir, bass Tim Wiebe, Neil Mathies, tenor, Irma Harder, soprano. On either side of centre stage were two augmenting choirs — the Umsiedler Choir and the partly black choirs from Philadelphia and its fine, highly dramatic, mezzo-soprano soloist. Rhenus 20 held the large dining hall. In another direction was Lycée Kleber with youth facilities and meeting rooms. École Branby was used for children's activities. Parents were virtually free to leave their mobile youngsters in excellent programs and care while they attended sessions.

A welcome diversion were the six different tours offered outside Strasbourg. We chose the six-hour Colmar tour. This capital city of Alsace is 75 km south of Strasbourg. The drive through the fertile countryside was a pleasure. We saw vineyards, the grapes hanging heavy and green, soaking in the warm sun and the rain in preparation for late August or early September harvest. Fields of grain were ripe for harvesting. Apples and pears were luscious to look at but only the crimson cherries were ready to eat. The entire area is unforgettably rich with trees and famous for its many varieties of flowers. Our buses stopped midway at a rest stop and we picnicked on lunches in brown paper sacks provided

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**"JESUS INTERPRETS HIS OWN CROSS:
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for us by the conference dining room. We passed reminders of World War II and the Maginot Line. In the distance the purple and blue Vosges Mountain Range. Fields of grain were smaller than those we are accustomed to in our vast Canadian farm areas. The reason for this, we were told, was that most families were richest in children and when the father would continue to distribute or allot plots to his children they were, of necessity, not large. Neither did we see farm houses near the farmer's plots. These were always in town or in the village, by now old but still solid and passed down from one generation to another. The pride of each home was its flower plots — veritable riots of colour. Villages are not judged with the 1, 2, 3, or 4 star symbol but with the same in flowers. In Comar we saw the Evangelical Mennonite church — actually a large house — with a membership of 100 plus some 20 children.

We were impressed, in general, with the way the conference was conducted. If there were those who felt that the principal theme might have been carried through with greater effect and success by just one speaker, others insisted that this was hardly a possibility, for what country would this speaker have been drawn from? All principal addresses were already printed in the conference book. An information INFO sheet was published daily to keep guests up to date, on schedule and well-informed.

A proposal in the 1978 World Conference suggesting that women in general and Spanish speakers be utilized more fully in future congresses was put into practice with good results in this conference.

The Sunday and final session drew a crowd of almost 8,000 worshippers to Rhenus Hall. The service was conducted in French, English and German, always with simultaneous translation. The first theme "What mean these stones?" (1 Peter 2: 4-5) was developed by Emma Richards, a co-pastor from the U.S. Stones were used significantly in Biblical times for story telling, suggesting God's presence and implying permanence and durability. "And when the children shall ask, you will tell them that the church, the living stone, defies all barriers and offers back its gifts to God in Holy Worship."

Greetings were brought by two representatives of the churches in the Soviet Union. Samuel Gerber, Switzerland, spoke on the theme, "God's people rejoice in hope," saying Christians are

people of joyous expectations because they trust God's power, hoping for change. Christ is creating a new people of God, the Church, as salt, as instruments of God. "The new world will be one of righteousness, justice and peace where sorrow and death will be no more," he stated. "We await this with joy for we will see Jesus, the content of our life, without whom we would be as branches cast off from the vine."

The Holy Communion Service at the final plenary session, a deeply moving experience, was also conducted in the various languages, with both men and women serving the thousands of communicants.

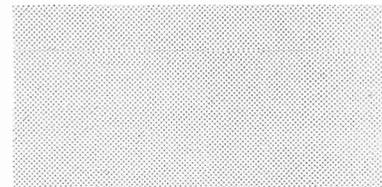
In reflection on this last afternoon of the Conference, we can say with conviction that it was good, very good, to have been here in Strasbourg sharing this event with more than 7,000 other Christians.

Hopefully we shall meet six years from now at XII Mennonite World Conference in Winnipeg, Manitoba.

mm

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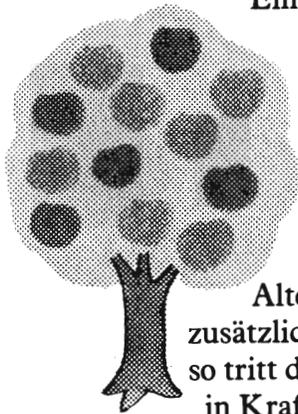
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Teaching English in China pays its reward in warm Friendships

by Ruth Vogt

Peter and Greti Peters returned to Winnipeg this summer from a one-year teaching assignment at Chongqing Medical College in Chongqing, People's Republic of China. The following greetings accompanying carefully re-copied essays by their students show the warm appreciation felt by the students for their teaching:

"I'll always cherish the memory of my English teachers — Mr. and Mrs. Peters."

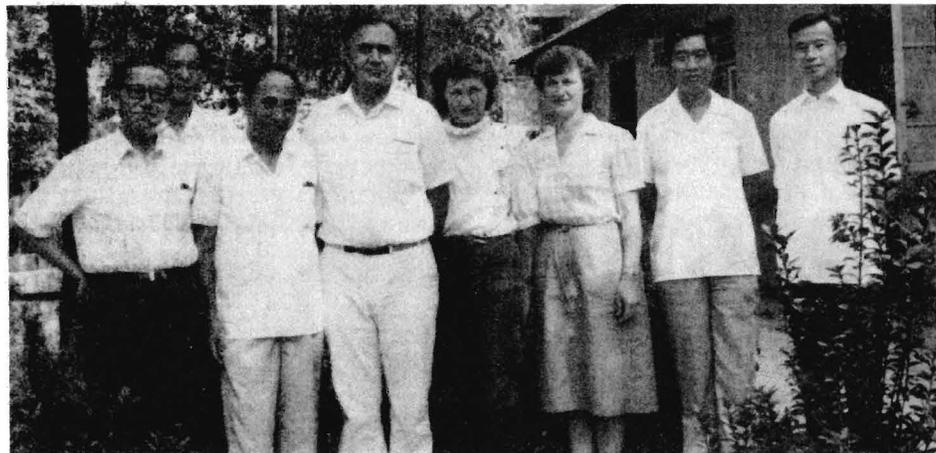
"To my dear teacher, with best wishes."

"I am very happy to study English at this class. I think it is a good way to raise the English level of the Chinese professional."

There is evidence here of the fine relationships which developed over the course of the year.

These relationships, much better than the Peters had expected, provided them with a deep feeling of satisfaction for having undertaken the assignment. The financial rewards were limited — 200 yuan a month (\$200 American), which could not be brought home — but the Peters did bring home something far more valuable: a sense that they had been able to get to know some good people from a different culture.

The Peters have been involved in the work of the Mennonite Central Committee for many years at an executive and local volunteer level, and last year they requested an overseas service assignment with MCC, expecting to go to Africa. They had always wanted to serve in some capacity overseas, and to see another culture from the inside. China Educational Exchange, organized through Goshen College, was looking for English teachers for the medical personnel of Chongqing College, and Peter and Greti accepted this assignment. Both are convinced that such "people to people" experiences help to reduce the fear of the unknown and to promote necessary understanding between the nations of the world. In the 1960's we had the image of China being a threat; the Chi-



Peter, Karen, and Greti Peters, centre, with students.

nese had similar perceptions of the West, and the country with the largest population on earth remained in virtual isolation from the rest of the world. Much has changed in recent years. With the modernization drive that began around 1980, the Chinese began looking to the rest of the world for technical help. A knowledge of English is essential for the acquisition of technological information, hence, English teachers and "foreign experts" are now most welcome in China. The Peters were the second couple from overseas to come to teach English at the Chongqing Medical College. Their students were doctors and college professors, eager to learn English so that they could read medical texts and journals and become better acquainted with the most recent research in their respective fields.

An assignment, "A Class I have attended," written by one of their students, a professor in the college, describes the work of the Peters:

"I passed the exam to attend the Advanced English Class of Chongqing Medical College in Feb., 1984. The characteristics of the class are as follows: first, there is much difference in age, official rank and specialty of medicine among the students; second, the teachers consist of foreign English teachers and a Chinese English teacher; and third, the teaching program emphasizes giving practice to students on how

to listen, speak, read, and write in English. It is a good chance for me to study English.

"The students total 23 in the class. They hailed from 16 specialities of medicine. The age range of the classmates is between 24 and 57 years. Some of them have graduated from medical college about 30 years ago, but some of them have graduated only two years ago. There are associate professors, instructors, assistants, chief physicians among them. Now, they are all classmates and on an equal footing with each other in the same class.

"There are two foreign teachers and one Chinese teacher. The two foreign teachers came from Canada as exchange scholars last year. These are a married couple of middle age and experienced English teachers. They have worked conscientiously and perseveringly. My classmates and I like and respect them very much. The Chinese teacher is one of the best teachers in department of foreign language, who had studied English in United States. Since we have studied under the guidance of these good teachers, we can make a lot of progress in English.

"This class offered five courses — listening and speaking, oral practice, intensive reading, general aspects of America and composition. There are 20 class hours every week. The teaching term is 18 weeks. Every student needs to

study hard and to do many exercises in the class and out of the class, otherwise, one cannot follow the teaching program.

"I am very happy to study English at this class. I think it is a good way to raise the English level of the Chinese professional."

In addition to instructing personnel from the medical college, Peter also taught a class for teachers of English. Accustomed to dealing only with matters of grammar and sentence structure, the teachers were surprised to find themselves being challenged to consider a philosophy of education and methods of interpreting literature. But they didn't really mind. "We like him," they said, "he makes us think."

On Wednesday nights the Peters met with small groups of students for "free conversations" in their apartment. They appreciated being allowed to have these sessions, not part of their teaching assignment. Strenuous as these sessions could be, because of the language barriers, they were beneficial to the students because of the extra opportunity to practise English, and to the Peters for the added insights they received regarding their students' life experiences and the opportunity for closer friendships to develop.

Some spoke of the terrible suffering and turbulence during the "cultural revolution," where they had experienced humiliation and often betrayal from supposed friends. The Peters were impressed by the spirit of forgiveness and reconciliation evident; the determination to forget the past and its hurts and to look to the future with optimism.

For the Chinese, presently, these are indeed the "best of times," the best in living memory. Increasingly confident of their place in the family of nations, they enjoy the current open intellectual atmosphere and sense that growth can take place. Most readers will recall the rousing ovation received by the Chinese athletes as they entered the stadium at the opening ceremonies of the Olympic Games: an indication of the renewed openness now being extended toward this country.

Chongqing, capital of Sichuan Province, is located in the south-western part of China, and with a population of over six million people, is one of the largest cities in the country. It was the capital of China for a brief period, from 1941 to 1945, during the war with Japan. Foreigners are still a rare sight in this part of China, so the Peters' had to become accustomed to the stares of many curious Chinese wherever they went.

Few Westerners would be comfortable with the degree of control that exists in the highly structured Chinese Society. At age 21, everyone is assigned to a unit, and this assignment is generally permanent. While the top graduates of medical schools have some choice as to their job placement, most would be told where to work. This is the case for most young people — jobs are not chosen individually, they are assigned. Should husband and wife belong to different units, they meet only on weekends, or during the summer or spring festival holiday. Most Chinese have few decisions to make — they do what they are told by the authorities in the unit of government. Because of the huge and growing population, families are strictly limited, and most couples do not have the option to have more than one child.

While the Peters feel very positive about their experience in China, there were some hard times and frustrations. Being separated from family and friends was not easy. Their youngest daughter, Karen, was with them for the first part of the year, and she assisted with some language instruction. One Mennonite couple from Edmonton, Barry Nolan and Agnes Hubert, lived in Chongqing. Bi-weekly Bible studies with them and a

small group of North American teachers were very important occasions for them. Since there was no access to telephones, bus travel was difficult, and impossible after 9 p.m. contact with this group was necessarily limited. Apart from letters, news from the west was hard to come by. Not being able to exchange ideas with other people was also frustrating. The climate, cool and damp in winter, hot and muggy in summer, could be depressing, and occasionally the cold of the unheated buildings was uncomfortable.

In reflecting on their experience, though, Peter and Greti both downplay the hardships, and affirm that their year in China was a good one. They feel that it was a privilege to serve the people whom they learned to know and love; that they could serve God through serving His children. When they left Chongqing they were told, "We like to have Church people as teachers." The dedication and commitment had not gone unobserved.

In September, the Peters left for a new assignment. They will be working for the Mennonite Central Committee as country directors in Calcutta, India. The assignment is to work with the Mennonite churches in India. **mm**

Westgate



Remember Westgate

1. A new school year is underway.
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3. Workday — October 12, 1984
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Not what was expected, as hard work and new friends make it worthwhile

by Ralph Friesen

In the distance a dark, oblong object is seen making slow progress over the surface of the brown river whose sluggish, powerful flow winds through dense equatorial forest. Birds and monkeys call through the trees, invisible. In the shallows of the river a patch of reedy green grass grows, and there four or five hippos snort and yawn. The object draws closer; it is a dug-out canoe being paddled by two men, one in the bow and the other in the stern. The outline of their muscles underneath their shining black skin is sharp; the rhythm of their paddling is so even that it appears that they are making no effort in sending the canoe rapidly through the water. Something white reflects from the middle of the canoe; it is a pith helmet worn by a frail-looking, bearded white man, sitting hunched over, his eyes fixed on the rippling back of the paddler in front of him. The canoe rounds a bend in the river to a place where there is a sandy beach, and, just beyond, a grouping of mud huts, and, off to one side, a white-washed building with glass windows and a tin roof. The prow of the canoe ploughs into the sand; before the canoe has even stopped moving the man in front has leaped out and is pulling it up on the shore. A group of children have run down to meet the strangers, and gather in a semi-circle at a little distance, watching, big-eyed. They stare at the white man, who gets out of the canoe a little unsteadily, and pulling a dirty envelope out of his safari jacket pocket makes his way up the beach toward the tin-roofed building. Presently the door of the building opens and another white man, tall, ruddy-faced and military, appears. He extends his big hand, but the bearded man, instead of

taking it, simply gives him the envelope. "It's a letter," he mutters, almost inaudibly. The tall man is looking at him with an expression of shock and pity and contempt. "A letter," repeats the bearded man, his eyes now for some reason filling with tears. "For the Mir — for the Menn —". He collapses onto the dirt at the tall man's feet. "For the *Mennonite Mirror*," he whispers into the dust, and loses consciousness.

Africa as we experience it is nothing like this description, of course — most of the time it's routine and mundane and not at all romantic. We live on a school compound of I don't know how many acres. This was originally a Methodist Mission school, and still is, I guess: the land is owned by the Methodist Church, a church board administers the affairs of the school, we sing out of a Methodist, Shona-language hymnbook every morning (most of the tunes are familiar), the headmaster is a Methodist minister, and the church leases out some of the school land to small farmers. For all that, the students and teachers are free to believe what they like, religious instruction is optional, and there's only one church service a week. The identity of this place is far more educational than missionary or ecclesiastical, and I believe this is the case with most rural secondary schools in Zimbabwe.

Just the opposite is happening here to what is happening in Canada: school enrollment is increasing fast and by huge numbers, schools are being built (despite the drought), school uniforms are being sold, teachers are being hired, and all this is not yet enough to meet the demand. Strangely, although this growth is stimulating, it also has a

certain deadening effect. First, there is the size of the classes (47 is a standard number here), and second there is the exam-oriented curriculum, both of which often stand in the way of anything unconventional or surprising or creative. You know the students need five "O" level passes to be regarded as high-school graduates, you know that they must write the Cambridge-set exams to get those passes, and so you know that they don't want anything fancy; they want you to help them get those subjects so they can get a job. Meanwhile, the syllabus in English Language calls for the students to write one three-page composition a fortnight, and when you multiply 47 times six classes, you know you've got a mighty lot of marking to do — and I haven't said anything about marking language and comprehension exercises.

On a typical weekend or evening, then, Hannah and I are not to be found hacking our way through the steaming jungle with machetes or hunting elephants or being initiated into the mysterious rites of some lost, primitive tribe — no, we are rather to be found red-inking our way through stacks of exercise books. Each day runs into the next, and so time passes. In two days, I will be 39; I get a sinking feeling when I look at that number, even though I'm feeling fit.

What about the adventure that we came here for? It isn't what we expected (almost any North American or European, no matter how rational he might seem to be, harbors a romantic notion of Africa), but I suppose there is something adventurous even in daily life when that life is lived with people with a culture, language and world-view different from your own. There are some

expatriates who want to carry this adventure to an extreme, who want to become African — learn the language, follow the customs, eat the food, dance the dances. It isn't really possible, and it wouldn't be, even if we were black. I can understand why people want to do it, though, and I think I now understand immigrants in a new way: you come to a new land and you feel a deep need to be accepted, just as you feel a deep regret at ever having left your home. Those Turkish *Gastarbeiter* that Germany is sending back to Turkey are in a devil of a fix; there is no home for them. The more you adapt to a new country the farther you remove yourself from your origins.

So the trick for us is to find a place among the people here, not to delude ourselves into thinking we are one of them (though we do have an African neighbour who, after drinking enough beer, will come over and tell us, with great affection: "You are mine! We are one!"), and not to lose touch with Canada, with home.

It is customary for African men, when talking or walking along together, casually to link hands, in a way that would surely suggest something unpalatable to most white people, but which in fact is entirely innocent and natural. When a fellow teacher first took my hand, a month or so after we got here, I was simultaneously embarrassed and honoured. It was a literal reaching across the barrier between the races. That barrier was erected when the first English settlers came here in 1890, it remains in place to this day, and will not be broken down for years to come. No doubt there are many and complicated reasons for the barrier, but what it comes down to is this: the English, when they came, did not, could not, accept the Africans as equal human beings. The seeds of Zimbabwe's liberation war were sown the moment that the pioneers entered this territory. The society that developed in Rhodesia was based on the principle of separation of races, and although the present government's official policy is one of reconciliation that structure of separation is still firmly in place. At first it was the whites who insisted on it, eventually it became a fact of Rhodesian life, so that today a white man creates more of a stir by being in the "wrong" place than a black man does.

We are in the "wrong" place. Our children, when they were going to the primary school, were in the "wrong" place. Perhaps there were a few isolated examples of white children attending African schools in the past, but

this had certainly never happened before at Sandringham. Jennifer and Nathan were, of course, objects of curiosity (their hair, their skin, the shape of their noses) and sometimes of mockery, but with time they established themselves (Nathan especially) as human beings, and began to make friends. Though they have both now moved to multi-racial boarding schools elsewhere, in a small way their presence at Sandringham made an impression, pointed to a possible future where the separate identities of race and tribe will give way to a more variegated, more interesting world.

But what is this, having to establish yourself as a human being? Growing up in Steinbach, I wouldn't have understood the meaning of such a thing: I as the son of respectable Mennonites in a respectable, Mennonite town. I did not, then, realize that the so-called "DP's", big, rough boys who spoke poor English, and the one or two adopted Indians, and, yes, even the admired "Englanders" — all were placed in the position, to a greater or lesser extent, of having to prove they were human. And this involved some pain.

When a naive Form One asks, "Do white people cry at the death of a loved one?" you realize that the question arises out of ignorance, and the ignorance out of a lack of contact between races, and so you forgive it — but it's appalling, all the same. And you want to protest, like Shylock: "If you prick us, we do not bleed?" As you know, I worked for many years in Canada's multicultural program, and within that program there has always been a tension between two apparently contradictory ideas: one, that the various ethnic groups should be encouraged to keep their separate identities; and two, that the groups should be brought together, encouraged to understand each other. I thought then, and still think, that both

these things are important, but I now believe that the second is crucial. And the so-called "majority society" must be involved. Someone should write a book about it.

All this said the fact is that in the year and four months that we've been here, we have made good friends with some of our African colleagues, and that there is even more warmth in these relationships than in the ones we have formed with our fellow Canadian expatriates teaching at other schools. We play tennis with the Africans, and they laugh when I swear in German when my game goes badly; I'm afraid they've already picked up the meaning of *Teufel*. They like to talk about families, religion, theories of education, and the like; it's a relief to escape the superficial chatter about sports and politics and television shows that is typical of Canadian cafeterias. We have been there to comfort the bereaved on the death of a relative, and people came to sit with us when they found out that we'd received word that my mother was seriously ill.

What has to be taken into account, too, is the fact that we are in our middle and late thirties, that we have friends of long standing at home, and that it would be impossible to make such dear friends now, starting from scratch. We have come through so much with our old friends; only time and experience can tie people together this way. If we had moved, say, to England or Germany, I'm not at all sure that adjusting to those societies would have been any easier than it has been here. We are glad for what we are learning and experiencing here; at the same time we are convinced that after this we want to come home and live, not contentedly (I don't trust contentment) but in the assurance that we are where we belong. If only I didn't have this nagging doubt that, once in Canada, we will start longing for Zimbabwe . . .

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observed along the way

by Roy Vogt

The Summer of '84

The *Mirror* had its usual rest this summer, but most of us didn't. In fact, so many things happened that this retelling of personal experiences will have to be even more selective than usual.

● The month of June is highlighted in our family by the marriage of our oldest daughter — to a hockey player from Edmonton. It is a unique privilege to walk down the aisle with my daughter, and to tie the knot afterwards. For a moment we are puzzled by the problem of how I will both ask and answer the question, "Who giveth this woman to be married?," but we quickly decide to dispense with the question since she isn't really mine to give. The truth is often so simple.

It is a pleasure to share the service in our church with Father David Bauer, a priest who has had a long association with Canada's olympic hockey team. He has both a deep faith and a great sense of humor, a combination which I don't think is entirely accidental. At the reception following the wedding the divided loyalty that my wife and I now feel between the Winnipeg Jets and the Edmonton Oilers is duly recognized: we are both given sweaters with the logo and colors of the Oilers in the back and the Jets in the front. I don't know what the fans behind us will do at future Jet-Oiler games. I am sure that when our fathers and mothers left Russia and England for Canada they never thought that their children would have such problems.

● The last week of June and the first few weeks of July are spent at the cottage, where we soon fall into a very enjoyable routine: a run along the beach each morning, followed by a swim, breakfast, and hours of reading and writing. During the week everything is very

quiet, a perfect setting for my kind of work. The weekends provide a good chance to visit with friends. This is for us the magic time of the year — a near-perfect combination of work, pleasure, and relaxation. The only problem is that food tastes so good at the lake, and the results of overindulgence are so evident. You can't walk along the beach forever holding your breath.

● At the end of July join a group of 40 persons for a three-week tour of Austria, Hungary, and the Soviet Union. Four years ago six of us made a similar trip and we liked it so much that we decided to do it again. In the meantime we talked and wrote about it and our enthusiasm was apparently so catching that 34 others decided to join. Some went to the Mennonite World Conference in Strasbourg first, and joined the tour group in Vienna. Others went directly to Vienna from Canada, where everyone met on July 30. Of the 40 members, 25 are from Manitoba and 15 from Ontario.

● When we meet for the first time as a whole group in our hotel in Vienna on the afternoon of the 30th we know that for 18 days we will be living together in our own world, and we will share both our joys and our inevitable frustrations. As one of the tour members says to me on that first day, "I think we will either love or hate each other by the end of this journey." Remarkably the group displays a wonderful spirit throughout the trip. I cannot imagine another group of 40 persons functioning as harmoniously as this one did. Nothing contributed so much to the pleasure of this trip as the spirit of the group itself. But let me share with you a few highlights.

● Our first evening in Vienna is spent appropriately at the Opera House, watching a superb production of *The Merry Widow*. I grew up with this music and the beautiful melodies and familiar

words are enough to dispel the stifling heat in the building. The highlight of the next afternoon is a visit to the Vienna Art Museum, which features the finest exhibition of my favorite painter, the medieval realist Peter Breughel. While many other painters of his time concentrated on bland portraits of *Madonna with Child*, Breughel portrayed both the joys and the terrors of the common people around him. The opera and the chance to see these paintings would have been enough to justify this stay in Vienna. However, the day is climaxed by a dinner at a small village in the Vienna Woods, where the local wines substitute for bad drinking water and spontaneous duets and choral numbers bring our group together in a spirit of *Gemuetlichkeit*.

● A five-hour bus trip takes us to Budapest where in the Forum Hotel — which will prove to be our best hotel on this trip — we are introduced to our vivacious guide, Kate. She is a substantial, energetic woman (as they used to say in Steinbach, "broad in the beam but smart in the head") who soon has our group well in hand. She provides us with numerous cultural options, and a shopping trip to a nearby village where, so she informs us, "there is a unique clothing store to which I will guide you, where my younger sister is a clerk and where your purchases will add immeasurably to our family coffers." We respond positively to this display of capitalist fervor in a socialist country. But no money can purchase the best thing that she provides us with: a night view of the magical city of Budapest from the peak of the Buda hills. We all lost our hearts in Budapest, and a stay that some feared might be too long turns out to be far too short. When we first met Kate she introduced herself as "Kate — as in 'Kiss Me Kate'", and later when we say goodbye many of us do.



● To go from Budapest in Hungary to Yalta in the Soviet Union is to go from one kind of incredible beauty to another. We spend several days in this Crimean resort, highlighted by long swims in the dark waters of the Black Sea. The days are punctuated by visits to the former Tsarist palace, where in February of 1945 Stalin, Roosevelt, and Churchill, signed the famous Yalta agreements, thereby dividing up the spoils of war even before the war was over, and to the former home of the great Russian writer Chekhov. Here in Yalta members of our group also make their first contacts with Mennonite relatives living in the area. It is a moving experience to see the kindling of family ties. In addition to this, no one in the group will ever forget the full yellow moon that hovered over the harbor of Yalta for two nights.

● The next part of our journey takes us by overnight train from Kiev to Zaporozhye. The latter city lies in the heart of the former Mennonite colonies and is one of our chief destinations on this trip. The 14-hour ride on the train seems almost certain to be a disaster. The compartments are extremely hot, the toilets filthy, and one of our members is sick. However, the group is far from cowed. The sick member is serenaded in her room until she joins in, jokes are made about the toilets, and we all stand wistfully at the windows and admire the steppes that our forefathers used to pass through. When we arrive in Zaporozhye we all hurry from the hotel to the nearby Dnieper River, to swim where all Russian Mennonites dream of swimming. The beaches are even better than I had imagined, and the water is remarkably clear. We realize now what a feat as well as a pleasure it was to swim from the East bank of the river to Chortitza Island. The group is thrilled in the next few days to visit several of the deserted Mennonite villages, like Chortitza, Rosenthal, Halbstadt, Petershagen, Waldheim, and Gnadenfeld, though a large number are now off limits. A good, lively dinner at a state farm in the former Molotschna region caps this part of our journey.

● All roads in the Soviet Union eventually lead to Moscow. The center of this city, with its Red Square and the Kremlin, impresses everyone immensely. Luckily our comfortable hotel is right next to it. This is my third visit, but each time I am fascinated by the crazy beauty of St. Basil's Cathedral, the strange combination of old churches and new communist party buildings within the Kremlin, the chilling demonstration of the changing of the guard in front of

Lenin's tomb (which is as intimidating as it is undoubtedly meant to be), and dozens of small, busy shops within the large GUM department store. The designer of Eaton Place in Toronto must have been inspired at least partially by this famous store.

● A unique feature of our stay in Moscow is a reception held for us by the Canadian ambassador to the U.S.S.R. and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Peter Roberts. The embassy is like an oasis — a little touch of home — and we are able to have a good discussion with the embassy staff. One of the staff members is Paul Koop from Ottawa, who has relatives that some of us know well. The ambassador himself grew up near Coal-dale Alberta and enjoys comparing this group of Mennonites against previous impressions that he had formed. In the interest of diplomacy comments made shall remain confidential. The experience proves to be so enjoyable that when we leave everyone joins spontaneously in a rousing singing of O Canada.

● Five hours from Moscow by air, and twelve hours removed from Winnipeg in time is the asiatic city of Tashkent. We arrive at midnight on a Saturday, to intense heat and a warm welcome by about a dozen relatives, who have waited a day or more, and travelled hundreds of miles, to meet members of our group. Most of these relatives are permitted to stay in the hotel where we are staying, and to eat meals with us. Our Russian guide from Moscow, Ludmilla, does everything possible to ease these important encounters. Altogether during this journey contact is made with 34 relatives, by about half of the members of the group. On Sunday morning we attend a Baptist church in Tashkent, where one of the pastors is Traugott Quiring, who attended the Mennonite World Conference in Wichita in 1976. He invites the two ministers in our group to speak to the congregation (these talks are translated from German into Russian), and our whole group is ushered to the choir loft where we are asked to sing several songs. Under the guidance of Roland Sawatsky we do better than we had expected. Roland himself belts out several verses of Amazing Grace like a Russian cantor. The excellent baptist choir is led by a young woman. More than two thirds of the several hundred people in attendance at the service are female, but the collective leadership that sits in front of the church is entirely male.

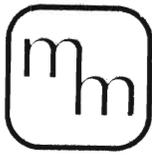
● Those of us who are not meeting relatives in Tashkent rent a bus for a day to

travel through the Vale of Hunger to the fascinating city of Samarkand. Just over a hundred years ago the followers of Claas Epp walked this same route in much less pleasant conditions. They hoped to meet Christ himself there. Our expectations are not so great. We merely hope to get a richer taste of the asiatic culture of this area, and to see the magnificent moslem mosques. We are not disappointed. We feel as though we are on another planet. We are by this time less than 200 miles from the Chinese border, and it would be just as short to return to Canada from here via China as to go back into European Russia.

● But we do go back, to Leningrad, as our last Soviet stop. This city, so beautiful and so steeped in history, is an excellent place to complete our journey. The two summer palaces of the Czars amaze everyone, as does the Winter Palace with its hermitage museum of art. Again and again members of the group are heard to exclaim, "How magnificent — but also how wasteful. No wonder there was a revolution." Our new hotel is excellent, and has a magnificent view of the Bay of Finland.

● On August 17 we rise early, because in one day (24 full hours) we will fly from Leningrad to Warsaw to Amsterdam and then all the way to Toronto and Winnipeg. The trip has gone by with hardly a hitch. Our Russian Intourist guides have been extremely helpful, and even the transfers with all our luggage through numerous airports and train stations have gone remarkably smoothly. Unfortunately, a little incident at the Leningrad airport mars the departure. After clearing customs and while waiting to board the plane the only member of our group with an American passport is suddenly asked to accompany two army officials to a corner of the waiting room. In the meantime the rest of the group is escorted to the bus to be taken to the plane. A few of the members stay behind to keep company with our American friend. It is not clear what will happen. In retrospect it appears that a little cruel intimidation was all that was intended. After some sharp words in Russian everyone is allowed to leave, just in time to catch the flight. We hear later that Leningrad was the site of several anti-American acts just during that time. A wonderful trip — but the last experience reinforces a feeling that begins to grow on all long trips — a feeling expressed in the words of one of my mother's favorite songs from the 1920s: "Highways are happy ways when they lead the way to home."

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manitoba news

The third annual **MCC Auction Sale** will take place on September 22 on the Morris Stampede Grounds. Approximately 150 Mennonite churches of Manitoba are working together in this venture, which raised more than \$60,000 last year. Funds are used to assist Third World countries in relief and development projects.

Arthur Driedger, associate overseas director for Mennonite Central Committee, has resigned after 21 years of MCC service. He was first a volunteer in Europe in 1956-1959, then in Bolivia from 1963-69. He was Manitoba director from 1970-77 and joined MCC Canada in 1977. His future plans are undecided.

An Inter-Faith **Coalition for Reconciliation** was formed in Winnipeg in June with the goal of healing some of the wounds created by the divisive French language rights debate. There were representatives of the United, Anglican, Jewish, Unitarian, Lutheran and Mennonite faiths at the initial meetings.

A public dedication took place on August 26 at the **Steinbach Mennonite Village Museum** for the restored former Blumenhof village private school. The school, built in 1881 by Peter Wolfe, was closed in 1919 due to pressure from the provincial government. A one-room school with attached teacherage, it is typical of those built in Mennonite villages after the immigration from Russia in the 1870's and 1880's. The restoration was financed by private donations and provincial and federal government grants. The school was donated to the museum by Abram P. Driedger of Gretna, on whose property the school was located.

World Food Day is being observed on October 16. Begun in 1981, the event marks the anniversary of the founding of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization in 1945. Over 500 million people in our world still suffer from hunger and malnutrition. Working together to find ways to reduce this unacceptable number is a goal of World Food Day.



SelfHelp Crafts stores in Canada last year sold \$972,672 of Third World crafts. The new Olive Branch Gift Store in Winnipeg has become the second largest single outlet for SelfHelp in North America, with sales approaching \$100,000 in its first year.



Ben and Helena Dueck of Steinbach left on August 23 for a four-month period of voluntary service in the Self-help centre of MCC in Akron, Pa. Ben is an English teacher and Helena operates Helena's Hairdressing in Steinbach.

The 1984-85 executive board of the Canadian Mennonite Health Assembly include **George Loewen**, President, of Clearbrook, B.C.; and **Kay Froese**, assistant administrator of personal care services at Donwood Manor Personal Care Home of Winnipeg, as executive secretary. The 1985 Conference of the Assembly will be held in Winnipeg.

MCC Canada received an invitation to send 20 Mennonite representatives to an ecumenical service with **Pope John Paul II**, to be held at St. Paul's Anglican Church in Toronto on September 22.

Manitoba artist **Wanda Koop** recently sold her painting of The Raven to film actress Diane Keaton. The painting was included in the 1983 Hurtig publication *Contemporary Canadian Art*. A cover story on the work of Wanda Koop is a feature of the new Canadian magazine *Canadian Art*.

A plan to move **El Dad Ranch**, a home for marginally retarded men who have broken the law, from Randolph to Ridgewood, received opposition from local residents at a meeting in Giroux in August. Managed by Addison Klassen, the ranch receives support from MCC (Manitoba). The future of the ranch is presently uncertain.

Mary Jane Hiebert of Steinbach, and **Crystal Braun** of Landmark, were recipients of awards for singing at the provincial music festival finals May 12 and 13.

In late April, **Rudy P. Friesen and Associates** got some important and welcome news. The design submitted by the Winnipeg architectural firm was chosen from over 80 entries as the winner of the Vieux-Port de Quebec. The competition, set up by the Canada Lands Company (Vieux-Port de Quebec) Inc., and endorsed by the Royal Canadian Institute of Architecture, was the first of its kind to be held on a national scale. Designs came from more than half of the Canadian provinces; the winner was Manitoba's lone entry. Rudy is on the Board of Directors of the Mennonite Literary Society.

Brian Lewicki, executive chef at the St. Regis Hotel, where the Mennonite Mirror annual meetings are held, is a member of Manitoba's six-man team of Chefs de Cuisine. The team will travel to Frankfurt Germany to participate in the World Culinary Olympics in October.

Eric Friesen, formerly with the CBC in Toronto, has taken on a position as executive director of the Public Radio Network based in St. Paul, Minn. Friesen was associated with the CBC for many years as broadcaster and producer. He was formerly a staff writer for the Mennonite Mirror. Early in his broadcasting career, he worked for CFAM. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Ted Friesen of Altona.

Cemetery Approval

On July 19 the Public Utilities Board awarded Mennonite Memorial Gardens of Winnipeg a licence to operate a public cemetery for the Mennonite community. A 20-acre site has been purchased of which three acres are being developed at this time. The cemetery is located on Symington Road at Navin Road east of Winnipeg.

Although much development work remains to be done, an area for 80 plots has been sodded and surveyed and is ready for immediate use.

Abe Peters, developer of the cemetery, has met with representatives of 14 Mennonite churches in Winnipeg to review the by-laws and operations of the cemetery. The by-laws state that a Cemetery Advisory will be formed to provide a link between the owners and those churches that wish to use the cemetery. In future, changes in the operation of the cemetery would be presented to the Advisory for review.

COMING EVENTS

Opening Programs

WESTGATE: Sept. 28. 7:30 p.m.

MBCI: Sept. 24. 7:30 p.m.

CMBC: 2:30 pm Sept. 23 — First Mennonite Church.

September 22: MCC Manitoba Relief Sale, Morris Stampede grounds

September 28-29: Special mid-year meeting of the board of MCC (Canada)

October 16: World Food Day

October 19-21: Retreat for deacons and families — Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba.

October 23-24: J. J. Thiessen lectures at CMBC. 10 a.m. and 8 p.m.

November 17: CMBC Oratorio Performance.

November 23-24: MCC Manitoba annual meeting: Altona Bergthaler Church.

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Serving the Mennonite People of Manitoba

The Schwartz House Restoration Group officially began its fund-raising drive August 15th — with a souvenir land sale. The former Elim Bible Institute at Altona will be relocated west of the Rhineland Pioneer Centre and north of the Centennial Park. The new site has been divided into square foot parcels, with souvenir land title deeds available for purchase at \$10. The souvenir land titles will be available from Braun Agencies, Altona, Schulz Music Centre in the Altona Mall and from committee members. The relocated house, built in 1902, will be turned into a heritage site housing a local museum and crafts' centre. The Schwartz House Restoration Group is a non-profit corporation dedicated to the preservation of Altona and area architectural heritage.

CMBC Notes

After two years of serving with the Mennonite Central Committee in Uganda, **Adolf Ens**, his wife Anna and daughter Anita will be rejoining the CMBC community. In Uganda, Adolf taught religious studies at the University of Makerere. Through his stay in Africa he has come to a greater appreciation for what the African church can teach us in North America. Adolf and his family are glad to be back in Winnipeg and he is looking forward to once again teaching Mennonite studies.

David Schroeder, a longstanding professor at CMBC, has been granted a sabbatical leave for the 1984-85 academic year. Together with his wife Mildred, Dave will be spending the year at Woodbrooke College, Birmingham, England. Woodbrooke College is a Quaker school and is situated on the campus of Selly Oaks University. Dave will be lecturing on the New Testament and peace studies as well as studying in the library.

After his one year appointment as CMBC's Interim President, **Helmut Harder** will be leaving this position and concentrating upon teaching. He enjoyed his year in the president's chair and found that the work was very satisfying but demanding. Helmut is looking forward to spending more time in the classroom and with students. There was much appreciation for the leadership Helmut provided.

John H. Neufeld, former pastor of the First Mennonite Church in Winnipeg, has begun his duties as the College's new president as of August 1st. John is an alumnus of the school, having graduated in 1956. In 1982 he completed a Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.) program at Bethany Theological Seminary, Chicago. Leaving the church he served for 15 years was difficult for John but he is looking forward to the challenges of his new position.

CMBC is also happy that **Brian and Linda Matwichuk** have joined the faculty team as our resident co-directors. Their responsibilities are the administration of the campus residences and student development in the personal and spiritual areas. Along with their two children, Laura and Amy, they have moved into the bungalow situated on the CMBC campus. Brian and Linda were raised in Manitoba and have spent the last few years in Clearbrook, British Columbia where Brian was teaching at the Mennonite Educational Institute. Linda has her Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology from the University of Manitoba. Brian and Linda are both members of the Bethel Mennonite Church in Winnipeg.

Annie Janzen, the head cook at CMBC for the past 27 years, has left the college to pursue a different area of service. She will be working for Native Ministries as a cook at Walnut Receiving Home. As well, **Hertha Penner** who has also been a familiar face in our kitchen for 25 years has retired. Many former students will remember Hertha and Annie for their dedicated service and good food.

Taking on the formidable job of head cook at CMBC will be **George Friesen**, a CMBC graduate of 1968. George comes with a strong background in the area of food services as he has spent the last five years working with the "D'8 Shtove" restaurant. Besides his role as a co-owner, George helped to develop many of the recipes at the restaurant.

For our spring semester, **Mary Oyer** of Goshen College will be joining our faculty. Mary specializes in hymnology, music of non-Western cultures, and the relationship between Christianity and the Fine Arts. Mary was the executive secretary of the hymnal committee that produced *The Mennonite Hymnal*.

"Jesus Interprets His Own Cross: A Middle Eastern Cultural Approach" is

the topic for the 1984 J. J. Thiessen lectures at CMBC. **Dr. Kenneth Bailey**, professor of New Testament at the Near East School of Theology, Beirut, Lebanon, will be the special guest lecturer. He has been at the Near East School of Theology since 1967 and has spent a total of 36 years of his life in the Middle East. In 1974 he founded and directed the Institute for Middle Eastern New Testament Studies.

He will be delivering four major addresses on his topic of "Jesus Interprets His Own Cross": 1) Informal Controlled Oral Tradition and the Synoptic Gospels; 2) The Atonement: The Post Easter Church; 3) The Atonement: Jesus of Nazareth (I); and 4) The Atonement: Jesus of Nazareth (II).

The J. J. Thiessen Lectures will be held on Tuesday and Wednesday October 23 and 24. The morning address will begin at 10 and the evening address at 8 p.m. All lectures will be at the CMBC campus. There is no cost.

Anabaptist Colloquium

Harry Loewen, professor of Mennonite studies at the University of Winnipeg, took part in an international colloquium on history of the 16th Century Anabaptists. The colloquium took place in July 19-23, 1984, in Strasbourg, France. Loewen's paper dealt with Menno Simons' understanding of Christian faith (*Der wahre Glaube: Zum Glaubensverständnis bei Menno Simons*).

The week-long colloquium included some 34 presentations on the 16th-century reformers and Anabaptists and spiritualists. The discussions which followed the formal presentations, were lively, stimulating and most informative. The more controversial papers evoked both criticism and praise from participants.

Among those who attended and took part in the colloquium were such scholars as John H. Yoder, Heinold Fast, James Stayer, John Oyer, Martin Brecht, Irvin Horst, Peter Erb, Carl Brüsewitz, Jean Rott, Werner Packull, Paul Peachey, Albert Mellink, Gottfried Locher and others. The participants came from North- and South-America and many countries in Europe, both East and West.

The colloquium was sponsored by Groupe de Recherches sur les Non-conformismes Religieux du XVIe et l'Histoire des Protestantismes, Association Francaise d'Histoire Anabaptiste-Mennonite, and Het Doopsgezind Seminarium te Amsterdam. Responsible for the Colloquium were Prof. Irvin Horst, Dr. Jean Rott and Dr. Simon L. Verheus.

Historical Meeting

The board of directors of the **Manitoba Mennonite Historical Society** held its summer meeting at the Mennonite Village Museum June 9.

The first session of the meeting dealt with reorganization of the board and planning. The number of directors will be increased to 18 for 1985. Three new committees were constituted 1) constitution and nominating committee; 2) finance committee; and 3) program committee.

The Board also considered the following Committee reports: Dr. Rheinart Friesen joins Ruth Bock and Roy Loewen in the publicity and membership committee. The board appropriated \$1,300 for the newsletter and advertising in the Mennonite Historian. The committee was also encouraged to produce an annual news report focusing on the MMHS activities. The arts and interdisciplinary committee chairman Doreen Klassen presented further details for a Mennonite music composers competition. The board committed \$1100 over a two-year period. The geneology and local history committee is now functional and consists of chairman John Dyck, Margaret Kroecker from Mennonite geneology and Henry Fast, Steinbach Bible College. Funds were approved for a fall geneology workshop. It was decided that the fall meet-

ing of the board would be held at 2 p.m. on October 5th, 1984 at the Mennonite Heritage Centre, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Anyone interested in the MMHS may obtain a free informational pamphlet from Archives, 77 Henderson Hwy., Winnipeg, Manitoba R3P 0M4 or phone 1-888-6781.

Visions, Drums and Kisses: Eccentrics Among Russian Mennonites

The chair in Mennonite studies at the University of Winnipeg is happy to announce a series of lectures on 19th-century Russian Mennonites. The focus will be on individuals and groups who for various reasons sought to realize their visions outside of the conventional or established norms (hence eccentric — off centre).

Klaas Epp and the Kleine Gemeinde were the first to rebel against the increasing worldliness of the Mennonite brotherhood in Russia. Al Reimer, a descendant of Klaas Reimer, will present a paper on this often misunderstood Mennonite leader.

Historian P. M. Friesen expressed surprise at some Prussian-born Mennonite

teachers and ministers who not only loved Russian literature but also supported and praised in their poems and songs the Tsar's wars. How do we account for this? George Epp will try to answer this question.

All know about the *Fröhliche Richtung* (movement of exuberance) among the early Mennonite Brethren. To express their new freedom in Christ, MBs shouted and leaped for joy, beat the drum and kissed the sisters. Harry Loewen will analyze this movement.

Believe it or not, there were Zionists among the Russian Mennonites, individuals who sought to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem. Victor Doerksen will take a close look at the Templars among the Mennonites.

And finally, there were Mennonites who believed that because of the wickedness of Western ways they had to move to South-East Asia where they expected to meet the Lord toward the end of the 19th century. Abe Dueck will deal with Claas Epp and his visions.

The lectures and discussions will take place on Thursday, October 4, 1984, at 8 p.m. and on Friday, October 5, at 11:30 a.m. and 8 p.m. in Room 3C01, University of Winnipeg.

Food gets Through to Those in Need

Canadian farmers donated 22,590 tonnes of grain to developing countries through the Mennonite Central Committee Canada Food Bank last year. But did the grain actually get to the hungry?

The answer, according to a group of farmers from Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba who toured India and Bangladesh on behalf of Food Bank, is yes. "Grain shipped through the Food Bank gets to the needy," says Harold Penner, a tour participant from Arnaud.

"We have to be honest and admit that some of the wheat is siphoned off," says Penner. "But, by and large, the MCC shipments get to their destinations intact."

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The Altona Sunflower Festival is the only annual country fair to feature theatrical productions in Low German.

While there is another Sunflower Festival held annually at Emerald, Australia, and there apparently are many more sunflowers grown in that country, the Low German theatre known as the *Aultneiv Knackzoat Kuta* at the Altona Festival has no equivalent anywhere in the world.

That is not to say that there is no other theatre in this language in southern Manitoba. Through the years there have been various special productions such as *De Tjoasche Hatj* commissioned for Winkler's 75th Anniversary in 1981. Only the town of Altona has had a regular *Kuta* for so many years that nobody could tell me just how long.

The 1984 *Knackzoat Kuta* gives an afternoon performance. After a ladies' singing group ("By Hieberts in the Henhouse") has opened the show, Art K. Dyck, introducing "The Upside Down World" of the A.K.K. T.V. Station, knees knocking nervously behind the podium, claims he is not dressed up traditionally like the rest because he is to be the "anchorman". In his dark modern suit he looks somewhat like Howard Cosell, "long legs, short pants and big shoes", trying to "hang things together".

Further songs like "Daut Darp Altona" and "Mennonitische Darpa" are interspersed between readings, a newscast and a few advertising breaks. Al Schritt, who did not grow up Mennonite, reads a humorous Jack Thiessen tale: "Say Thank You, Peter!" Dora Doell and Cleo Heinrichs presented a short soap opera, "Good-bye". It could easily have been called, "As The World Turns"!

It is time now for a "station break" and the news. The news is read by Walter Krankheit and Knowlton Loewen (Knowlton Nash is not available). After a take-off on Canadian political leaders during the current election campaign there has to be another break so that Walter Krankheit can clean his smudgy glasses. During this time a government regulation banning disposable diapers is announced. The local Altona news (hilarious) follows. The news is followed by a major reading by Ken Braun regarding his recent trip to Paraguay, concluding ninety minutes of pure entertainment by the *Knackzoat Kuta*.

by Peter Paetkau

Mennonites decline in Canadian population

by Karen Vogt

A comparison between the 1971 and 1981 Canadian census reveals that the percentage of Mennonites in the Canadian population has declined slightly.

From 1971 to 1981, the Canadian population increased by 12.9 percent, while the Mennonite population only increased by 12.6 percent, thus the percentage of Mennonites dropped. The Canadian population as a whole increased from 21,568,300 in 1971 to 24,341,700 in 1981. The Mennonite population on the other hand, increased from 168,150 in 1971 to 189,370 in 1981.

A further comparison between the 1971 and 1981 census also reveals many fluctuations in the Mennonite population in specific regions of Canada. In looking at these statistics, though, it must be taken into account that the census does not define a Mennonite strictly on the basis of church membership. Rather, a Mennonite is defined as someone who regards him or herself as a Mennonite. When the census was taken, persons were asked the question, "What is your religion?" Those responding indicated the religion to which they belonged, or favoured. It should also be noted that the census included children and infants. For young children and infants, the religion to be reported was the one in which they were being brought up. There is also one difference between the 1971 and 1981 census which should be kept in mind when looking at the statistics. The 1971 census included all the residents of institutional collective dwellings, such as nursing homes, jails, children's homes and other such facilities, while the 1981 census excluded all such residents.

The prairie provinces showed significant changes in their Mennonite population from 1971 to 1981. Saskatchewan was the only province which had a smaller population in 1981 than in 1971. The number of Mennonites in Saskatchewan decreased from 26,315 in 1971 to 26,265 in 1981. Alberta showed the greatest increase, from 14,645 Mennonites in 1971 to 20,540 Mennonites in 1981. Manitoba and British Columbia both showed a substantial increase. The number of Mennonites in Manitoba increased from 59,555 in 1971 to 63,490

in 1981, while in British Columbia the number rose from 26,520 in 1971 to 30,895 in 1981.

Within Manitoba itself, there were large fluctuations in the Mennonite population in different regions from 1971 to 1981. The tendency seems to have been a rural to urban shift, whereby the population in the urban areas increased significantly as the population in the rural areas decreased.

An urban area was defined by the census as the following: 1) an incorporated city or town with a population of over 1,000 or 2) an unincorporated place with a population of 1,000 or over having a population density of at least 1,000 per square mile or 3) the built-up fringes of 1 and 2, having a minimum population of 1,000 and a density of at least 1,000 per square mile. The census gave the figure for the Mennonite population in both urban and rural Manitoba in 1971 and 1981. The number of Mennonites living in urban areas increased from 28,605 in 1971 to 33,505 in 1981, while the number living in rural areas decreased from 30,955 in 1971 to 29,990 in 1981.

Within the rural areas of Manitoba there were also some interesting trends in the population growth. The number of Mennonites living on farms decreased greatly, while the number of Mennonites living in rural non-farm areas increased. The 1971 and 1981 census gives the statistics for the rural-non farm population of Mennonites and the rural farm population of Mennonites. The rural farm population is defined as all the members of households of farm operators. The rural-non farm population is defined as all those living in rural areas, but not members of the household of farm operators. The rural farm population decreased from 18,770 in 1971 to 13,945 in 1981, while the rural-non farm population increased from 12,180 in 1971 to 16,040 in 1981.

The census also gives the figures for the Mennonite population in Winnipeg in 1971 and 1981. In keeping with the rural to urban shift, the Mennonite population in Winnipeg increased, from 17,820 Mennonites in 1971 to 19,105 in 1981.

mm



To Love the Russian Communists?

A review by Harry Loewen

North Americans in general and Mennonites in particular find it most difficult to approach the subject of Russians and the Soviet Union objectively and fairly. The Americans view the Soviets as their enemies who intend to "bury" the West and the Mennonites remember the Soviet regime as the system which destroyed their world in 1917 and caused untold suffering among their coreligionists since then. Thus anyone who tries to understand the Soviet Union's policies and build bridges between the Russians and western society is both unpatriotic and suspect.

The book *What About the Russians?* is "a Christian approach to U.S.-Soviet conflict" in which scholars and laypersons try to deal redemptively with the relationships between the two systems and societies. Their objective is to understand the differences between the Soviet Union and America and on the basis of the similarities between the two attempt to establish links of communication and possibly reconciliation.

Throughout the book it becomes clear that people in both societies are afraid of the future, that questions with regard to survival and peace are uppermost in the minds of both systems, and that because of the awesome reality of nuclear arms no one side is eager to start a war. Moreover, the authors show that the 50,000,000 professing Christians in the Soviet Union are as much concerned about the consequences of a nuclear holocaust as the Christians in the West.

The authors argue convincingly that contrary to what Westerners are led to believe, the United States is no different from the Soviet Union when it comes to aggression, the arms build-up, the breaking of treaties, and invading other countries. In fact, some statistics show that the U.S. has been more aggressive and less willing to negotiate peace issues than the Soviet Union. John Swomley, for example, deals with the myths of Soviet intentions, showing that what Americans are led to believe about the Russians is mostly wrong. One such myth is "that the Soviet Union is the

source of conflict and evil in the world. President Reagan in his March 1983 speech to the National Association of Evangelicals referred to the Soviet Union as 'the focus of evil in the modern world.' He called it 'an evil empire' and American-Soviet rivalry a 'struggle between right and wrong, good and evil.'" (p. 67-68)

N. Gerald Shenk deplores the fact that some Christians in the West do not think it necessary to act morally or according to Christian principles when it comes to the Soviet regime. He writes: "Western Christians have often argued that because Communists are godless, we need not observe their rules and regulations. Since they oppose religion, we are allowed to break their laws." (p. 115) Most disconcerting of all is the perception in the Soviet Union that Christian leaders in the West support the arms race and fuel the enmity toward the Russians. As Anthony Ugolnik observes: "Despite the antireligious bias of their government, Russian Christians see our government as a danger. They are acutely aware that we are the party who actually used the bomb, who will not promise not to do it again, and who will see them, after all, as its primary targets. The Soviet press publicizes, accurately, the statements of Christian nuclear apologists. When Jerry Falwell speaks, he creates for Soviet Christians the model of a Christian pastor who

would hold over their children the threat of incineration." (p. 43)

What can be done to improve East-West relations and thus help to prevent a nuclear war? One writer pleads that we "pray for our enemies." It is difficult to harm the person for whom one prays. Another believes that we must "change perceptions of each other." "The greatest evil in the world is not atheistic Communism. The greatest evil is self-righteousness. Atheistic Communism declares that there is no God. Self-righteousness says that we do not need God." (p. 135) Jim Wallis states that we can follow Jesus' teaching: "Jesus offers us a new way to deal with our enemies, a different way of responding that has the potential to break the endless cycle of retaliation that now threatens us all with ultimate violence." (p. 139)

Authors of articles in this book include among others such names as Rolf H. W. Theen, Paul Valliere, George Kennan, Dale Aukerman, Bishop Leroy T. Matthiesen, Senator Mark Hatfield and Ron J. Sider. While some articles are scholarly treatments of the subject, many shorter pieces are Christian appeals "to love our enemies."

This important book should be read by Church leaders, by those who are concerned about the deteriorating relations between East and West, and all those who travel to the Soviet Union to visit relatives or as tourists. Readers of this book will no doubt begin to see the citizens of the Soviet Union as fellow human beings with their fears and hopes, and Soviet believers as their brothers and sisters.

Dale W. Brown (ed.), *What About the Russians? A Christian Approach to U.S.-Soviet Conflict* (Elgin, Illinois: The Brethren Press, 1984); 159 pages; Paperback; \$6.95.

The book may be ordered from your bookstore.

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reviews

Amish and Mennonite Quilts and Recipes From "Good Books"

Reviewed by Harry Loewen

Merle and Phillis Good of Pennsylvania have teamed together in many interesting and worthwhile projects. They have staged plays with Amish/Mennonite themes; manage an arts and crafts centre called The People's Place in the village of Intercourse, east of Lancaster, and run an Old Country Store, featuring the work of local craftspeople; publish a magazine, *Festival Quarterly*, that explores the art, faith and culture of the Mennonites; and have produced a motion picture, *Hazel's People*, based on Merle's novel *Happy as the Grass Was Green*.

In 1979 the Goods began publishing educational booklets such as *20 Most Asked Questions About the Amish and Mennonites* and *Plain Buggies* by Steven Scott. In 1984 Good Books has published two beautifully designed books: a book on Amish quilts and an Amish and Mennonite cookbook.

The World of Amish Quilts is the most complete collection of Amish quilts

ever assembled. This handsome book is full of vivid color, subtle interaction of shapes, and the delight of variety. It features the most exquisite of Amish bedcovers in poignant context of these people's lives. Each pattern receives full treatment with detailed description and full-color illustration.

The cookbook, *From Amish and Mennonite Kitchens*, comes in a square-format with a text done entirely in calligraphy. The book contains 12 main sections: breads; soups; salads; vegetables; meats; casseroles; pies; cakes; cookies; desserts; jams; jellies, and relishes; candies, beverages, and snacks.

Although restrained in their choice of clothing, home decor and use of money, and little entertainment, the Amish and many Mennonites have celebrated almost extravagantly around food. No doubt because of their intense physical labour, they have traditionally eaten heartily and heavily. Young Amish and Mennonite cooks thus face a new challenge — how to maintain the delight and love this rich food offers, while eliminating calories that people today do not require. In the recipes of this collection the cooks are refining the old dishes for modern food lovers.

Both books would make excellent gifts and grace the coffee tables.

The World of Amish Quilts by Rachel and Kenneth Pellman (Intercourse, PA: Good Books, 1984); *Deluxe Paperback Original*; 128 pages; \$15.95 US.

From Amish and Mennonite Kitchens collected and edited by Phyllis Pellman Good and Rachel Thomas Pellman (Intercourse, PA: Good Books, 1984); *Deluxe Paperback Original*; 420 pages; \$11.95 US.

Traditional Amish Table Prayer

Enable us to use Thy manifold blessings with moderation;

Grant our hearts wisdom to avoid excess

in eating and drinking
and in the cares of this life;

Teach us to put our trust in Thee
and to await Thy helping hand.

(from *Amish and Mennonite Kitchens*,

p. 6)

the poet's word

FIRST SOUTH WIND

Watching father plow wheat stubble
toward sundown

I first felt south wind.

Today the wind blows faint memories
of father, mother, brothers, sisters,
who knew that south wind once
but having felt death-wind
are more silent now than
rare soft southern breezes were,
and I alone feel wind blowing me
like the leaves it carries
to the graveyard at the edge of town,
where, seven hundred miles north,
I'll join them in the dust where
we all started.

— by Elmer Suderman

MIDNIGHT IN WINTER

midnight in
winter's
the stillest
hour

of night
no birds
sing
no crickets
chirp

in our town
the cars
are

all quietly
parked
in winter

the only sound's
the fan of
furnace

i
lie in bed
pleased

— by Elmer Suderman

WALKING INTO THE DARK

Walking into the dark
I listen.

Immovable, silent,
the prairie lies
like an old dog asleep.
I listen.

No wind shivers Cottonwood leaves.
The prairie barely breathes.

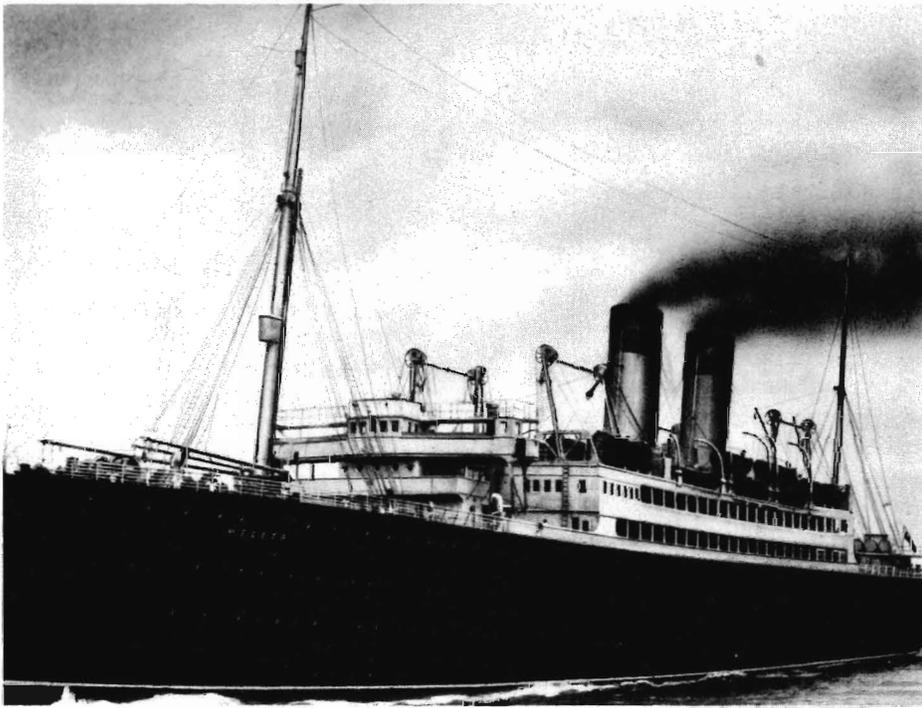
— by Elmer Suderman

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Sixty Years Ago: The Ships that brought the Mennonites

by Dr. Peter Lorenz Neufeld

Following the bloody Russian Revolution and subsequent turmoil, thousands of Mennonites sought to leave their repressive homeland to find a better one in Canada. In 1922 Ottawa modified its rather restrictive immigration policy and extended an invitation to them. Both Canadian and American Mennonites raised funds and extended credit to help transport and settle their brothers and sisters in this country. Canadian Pacific co-operated by striking a special through rate of \$140 from a Baltic port to the centre of the Prairies and by also extending credit. In Alberta, CPR went a step further and sold many acres of farmland on easy-to-meet installments to this and other ethnic groups.

Four CPR ships, *Bruton*, *Marglen*, *Melita* and *Minnedosa*, transported the bulk of those Mennonites during that massive 1923-6 emigration project. My parents, grandparents, uncles and aunts were among them. Old-timers still reminisce of the eventful voyage aboard one of those ships that took them away from fear-ridden Russia to a country filled

with hope and freedom. The sea voyage was in two stages. After disembarking from cattle cars at Libau, Latvia, the emigrants took the second leg of their exciting journey to Southampton, England, or Antwerp, Belgium, there to undergo a brief quarantine period and thorough medical examination. The third stage ended at Montreal, from where CPR passenger trains carried them westward.

This article is not about the details of that fascinating voyage, so often described already in magazines and books. Rather, it's to provide thumbnail sketches of the CPR and related Allan steamers involved, two of them named after Manitoba towns near and in which many of those very passengers settled soon after. The *Bruton* transported the first contingent of Mennonites in 1923 with three trips to Southampton; the somewhat larger *Marglen* transported the second one in 1924 with two crossings to Antwerp. The large sister-ships *Minnedosa* and *Melita* usually sailed together and made the long trans-Atlantic voyages.

The *Bruton* was only 430 feet long, 54 wide with a molded depth of 28. Her gross tonnage barely topped 6,000. Launched in 1899 by Workman Clark and Co. of Belfast, Ireland, as the *Sicilian*, (but registered at Glasgow, Scotland as #111225), she first carried troops during the Boer War as *Transport 57*. Ironically, perhaps, those particular soldiers fought men very closely related ethnically to Mennonites. In 1910 she was converted to cabin class and with tonnage increased by over 1,000 began operating out of London, England. During 1921-2 she inaugurated the West Indies service from Montreal. Laid up for repairs at Falmouth, England, she returned to the North Atlantic as the *Bruton* to transport thousands of Mennonites before being retired to Falmouth. In 1925 she was sold as scrap to the firm Franchi Gregorini of Italy.

The *Marglen* (#129547) was 515 feet long by 60 by 24 with gross tonnage of 10,319. She'd actually been built a year earlier than the *Bruton* at Belfast, by Harland & Wolff. As the *Statendam*, she sailed for the Holland-American Line until 1911 when the Allan (later CPR) Line bought and renamed her *Scotian*. In 1922 she became the *Marglen*. Following the Mennonite voyages, she was repaired at Southampton and for a year chartered for trips to Bombay, India. In 1926 she too fell to the cutter's torch in Italy, at the Genoa firm of D. L. Pittaluga.

Like the steamers *Brandon*, *Calgarian*, *Medora*, *Miniota*, *Montreal*, *Nanaimo*, *Prince Rupert*, *Victoria* and *Vancouver*, the *Melita* (#136367) and *Minnedosa* (#142717) were named after well-known CPR centres. Launched together in Belfast in 1917 by Barclay Curle and by Harland & Wolff, displacing 14,000 tons and measuring 520 by 67 by 42 feet, they were immediately requisitioned as allied troopships, as the First World War was then at its height. The *Melita* barely escaped annihilation by German submarine. With the war over, the sisters hoisted the CPR houseflag of six alternate white and red squares in two rows and for four years worked the Liverpool-Montreal run and for another three the Antwerp-Southampton-Montreal route. It was during the latter period that they transported many of the over 20,000 Mennonites permitted to leave Russia. A. H. Notley, who had commanded the *Melita* since 1922, was one of the four sea captains to whom our people owe a debt of gratitude for carrying them safely to their new homeland. A second was

the *Minnedosa's* Captain R. M. Stuart, holder of the Victoria Cross for conspicuous bravery while commanding the *Pargus*. He saved his own men from drowning when the *Pargus* sank from a direct torpedo hit while simultaneously sinking the enemy submarine that had fired it.

In 1925 the sisters were refitted and tonnage increased by 1,000. The *Melita* made news that year by transporting the biggest silver fox consignment ever shipped to Canada, and the next year by being the 10,000th ship to enter Antwerp that year. In 1925 the *Minnedosa* carried the Canadian delegation to the Holy Year festival in Rome where her passengers helped with the Pentecost Sunday ceremonies and were received by Pope Pius XI. In 1927 she transported a very rare exotic bird shipment to Canadian zoos, and the next year made one of the fastest steamer voyages ever from the St. Lawrence to the Clyde. In 1929 she carried many British farm workers to help harvest Canada's bumper crop, and also large numbers of Lewismen from Montreal to Stornoway, Isle of Lewis, for a massive reunion. The following year she carried a party of Canadian Icelanders back from Reykjavik during Iceland's millennial celebrations. By 1930 the sisters were completely overhauled and converted to luxury cruise ships, usually sailing to the Canary Islands or Mediterranean on tourist trips lasting about two weeks. The *Melita* made the last one alone in 1934. Next year they were sold as scrap to Ricuperi Metallici of Turin, Italy.

Unlike the *Bruton* and *Marglen*, which had been immediately demolished, fate decreed otherwise for the sisters. A new world war was on the horizon. The Italian navy requisitioned them both as troopships. The *Melita* was renamed *Liguria* and the *Minnedosa* called *Piedmonte*. En route from Palermo to Naples in 1942, the latter was torpedoed by allied submarines and run aground. Refloated, she was towed to Messina, repaired and left in dry dock. Next year the allies bombed and sank her. In 1949 she was salvaged and finally scrapped in Spezia. During the Italian invasion of Albania, her sister was torpedoed by British submarines near Durazzo with heavy loss of life but somehow survived. In early 1941 she was set aflame in an allied air raid at Tobruk and scuttled.

The *Bruton*, *Marglen*, *Melita* and *Minnedosa* played a brief but significant role in Canadian Mennonite history. They will always be remembered!

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Through the Watches of the Night

by Pearl Helena Dueck

It all began in Winnipeg at the corner of Main and Broadway. The lights changed from green to amber, and in my mind I already saw red. I braked fast, but a decided bump moved our car several feet past the stopline. It was that time of day when cars are lined up from one light to the other. I glanced into the rear-view mirror, but already a young man was at our door.

"Are you all right in there?" He didn't sound angry.

"Us all right? Sure," I answered. "What about you?"

"Not a scratch," he answered. "All you do now is move as soon as the lights change."

I looked at my husband reassembling the papers on his lap. He never said a word but went right on correcting. And I, who had been strongly tempted to cancel this trip, thought of the words: "He will not suffer my foot to be moved. He that keepeth me will not slumber."

At the airport we found that my plane to Minneapolis already was one-and-a-half hours late because of weather conditions. Weather disturbances? I saw nothing disturbing there. The warm summer sun was lowering in a sky dappled with a few innocent-looking clouds, and clover-scented winds were about. Nothing there to cause me the unease I felt.

"Could I change my flight till next day? I would get there in time for the conference — or even cancel?"

"No vacant seat then and no refund for the ticket you have," I was told.

So I remained at the airport. While waiting, the past eight months of my life flitted through my mind. A severe stomach flu the previous autumn had developed into festering ulcers and played havoc with my nervous system and vice versa. Fears of every type attacked me. It seemed as if I never had been calm and sane and relaxed. Finally, when I was sure that I needed more than penicillin, I went from doctor to specialist

for tests, therapy and medications. I never knew a winter could be so long but by spring, they assured me, I would be well and wiser. With this in mind I had enrolled in *Decisions* writers' conference scheduled for June. So here I was experiencing a new surge of fears, as if they were not yet over and done with.

Weather warnings continued all through the evening, even after I was safely buckled into my seat. As always, I watched the miracle of the receding city with awe. Quickly trees and cars and twinkling lights were replaced by whirling grey, cloud drifts and then impenetrable darkness. But it was a friendly darkness, and for a short while I relaxed and looked forward to the conference.

In Minneapolis the first thing I did was call Bethel College. I called again and again but received no answer. Then all my former uneasiness came back. I stared at the throngs of noisy people going by. Everyone seemed to know where he was going. "He will not suffer thy foot to be moved; He that keepeth thee will not slumber."

At the information booth I received little more help, except that they did the phoning. Neither was there any message for me from the *Decision* people. I stood around in uncertainty for awhile, not knowing in the least what to do or where to go.

"Could I sit in your waiting room till morning?"

"We're not allowed loiterers there." The answer was impatient.

"What then?"

"Hey there, Bob, take this lady along on the limousine to city centre. See that she gets a yellow taxicab and give the driver these directions to Bethel College."

Reluctantly I followed. The miles to downtown dragged. There were no lights anywhere. And when we arrived in the city one by one the other passengers got off. Soon it was my turn. The

city looked as alien as the darkness had. A cold north-west wind tore at my hair and went wailing down the street. It was late, and my "ifs" and "buts" and "wherefores" were clamoring for an answer. It came: "Fear not; I will supply all your needs."

"Take the taxi opposite, give the cab-driver this address and he'll have you at Bethel College in a jiffy."

I climbed into the taxi. The driver looked young and thin and tired — as if he would rather go home than take another passenger. But he was polite. After another long ride he said we were there. I saw the bleak-looking buildings with weeds surrounding them. Surely no writers' conference could be held there. My cabby investigated and found only old, empty buildings. "The college must have relocated somewhere in the country," he said after more map-searching. "Let me see your letters for more detailed information."

Apparently he found the clue he needed, for he started the taxi and drove on through miles of city lights and then into the country. Darkness hovered close around us. I leaned back in my seat briefly, mesmerized by the steady hum of the motor, the ticking of the minute-minder, my feelings so mixed that I couldn't sort them out. It seemed as if I had been on the road for years, driving, driving and going nowhere. "A hundred years in Thy sight is but as yesterday when it is past and a watch in the night."

When we came to the state college sign we drove onto the grounds, but found no sign of life except a sleepy policeman. He was able to give my cabbie the right way to Bethel College. Another 20 minutes took us around Lake Valentine to the Bethel College gate. We found it chained up for the night. Could I go back to the airport? No! The best thing would be to stay at a nearby motel for the night, and from there phone Bethel College in the morning.

So we began looking for motel lights and signs. My cabbie said he did not know the area we were in, and with all our circling around had lost his way. Momentarily I felt resentful that the city would employ a driver who did not know the area better.

Looking for a motel in the dark should have been easy. We stopped at the first lighted-up place we chanced on. It was a posh private club. Our second stop was the real thing.

"Let me take your bags," the cabbie said. I was surprised, for I thought by then he would be only too glad to be rid of me.

At the motel's receiving desk a young man with a leery smile greeted us. Yes, he had rooms. He gave us a key and directions where to go. We walked down endless halls and stairs only to find what looked like storage rooms. Back at the desk, we were given another key and directed the opposite way. Instinctively I now remained close beside my cabbie. He told me to lock the door and rest. "By morning things will look different."

He unlocked the door, set my bags inside the room and flicked on the light. But before I had a chance to follow, he had reversed this procedure and nearly backed me down. "Someone is sleeping in there," he said in a strange voice.

Mechanically I followed him back, too dazed, afraid and exhausted to feel much of anything.

Back at the front desk, he boldly confronted the clerk. "Have you no way of knowing which rooms are occupied?" He walked behind the counter and took the book from the clerk. "Surely you must have a card system or something."

"I have another room that I know is empty." He took out still another key.

"This time you check it," my cabbie said with authority.

The clerk was halfway down the hall when my cabbie called him back.

"I have a better idea. May I use your phone? I want to call my wife." The clerk stopped and stared at my cab driver. "Do you want to take her to your home?" he asked.

I looked at the cabbie curiously at first, then with a rising sense of incredulity. Surely, surely this could not be happening to me. My heart was doing all kinds of strange beats, and I had a strong need for privacy.

"George calling," I heard my cab driver say as I stepped out of the back door with never a fear of being locked out or anything else. It was dark there and wonderfully still.

"Thank you, God, for George, my cab driver," I said.

"Shall we go?" There was George looking lean and tall and unusually familiar.

"You should be wearing a coat." I was smiling and all the while brushing tears away.

"That's what my wife said before I left. She's usually right."

He started the taxi again but left the minute-minder off.

"I've got my directions straight again," he laughed easily. "We have a long way to go to our house."

"Long ways seem to be in the air this evening," I answered.

And it was a long ride. Where we had been silent before, George now talked a lot. He began with politics and ended with information about his family. "We have five children and a niece staying with us for awhile now."

Did he say five children? I looked at him in disbelief, then asked him the question uppermost in my mind.

"Why would you take me, a complete stranger, to your home?"

"Jesus told me to," was his simple answer. "You'll be safe with my wife. She is safe to be with," he said as he opened the door of their home.

The place looked like a room I had known a long time ago. Plants and pictures and worn furnishings were attractively arranged. The room was small but had a friendly look about it, the look of Sunday. Frilly little dresses, pants and shirts, the wearing apparel of a young family, covered the table, and nearby a young woman was ironing. She was a slender girl with a cloud of thick brown hair and fine grey eyes. She put her iron down and we looked at each other.

"She looketh well to the ways of her household and eateth not the bread of idleness. Her husband's heart can safely trust in her." Trust. That was what I needed. And here it was. I turned and looked at George. "Why, she's young, very young and so beautiful." The words just spoke themselves. I turned and walked into her open arms.

George just stood there for awhile, grinning, then, "I'll take the taxi back."

It was past four in the morning before I got to lie down on their sofa, but I did not sleep. And the night wasn't long or dark anymore. I had a great deal to think about and to thank God for. In the past six hours my usual attitude of "You keep your distance and I'll keep mine" had been turned upside down. In the two small bedrooms were six children and the young parents sharing one pillow because they gave the other one to me. "He that hath two coats, let him give to him that hath none."

I had all my needs supplied.

A tree brushed friendly arms against the window. The winds were folded away. Stars in the sky were slowly fading in the dawn of a new day. It seemed as if life had folded back and I was new and alive and interested once more. In the morning I would join a host of writers at the School of Writing. Was Bethel College to the south or north from where I was staying? Daylight would tell: "The day is Thine, the night also is Thine. Thou hast prepared the light and the sun."

mm

Beim Dachau-Besuch

Unter dem DACHAU-Schild
auf dem Bahnhof
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der vorigen Zeiten

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des Grausens gelangen
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nach Mass und Lot gezogen
die Gräben und Wachtürme
der Bunker und Stacheldrahtzaun
die Gaskammer und Krematorien

Gedächtnis- und Versöhnungskapellen
am unteren Ende des Lagers
architektonisch eindrucksvoll
erst in den 60er Jahren gebaut

Wo waren sie vor 50 und 40 Jahren
als die Opfer gebetet
um Hilfe riefen
und planmässig starben?

the poet's word

— von Harry Loewen

Sonntagabends

An diesem Abend, wie's schon immer war,
Die Botschaft sonntags, nun schon Jahr für Jahr:
Es ist die Stund, die mir die Frage stellt:
Wie steht's mit der Behausung in der Welt?
Die Antwort war: Ich weiss es nicht.

Die Zeit verrann, auch andren ging es gleich,
Man fragte, wenn man's durfte, nach dem Reich,
Wo es doch besser wäre — an dem Sonntagabend —
Wo ist die Quelle, die gesund Dich labend?
Die Antwort war: Ich weiss es nicht.

„Man sollte sich versichern!“ war die Kunde,
Sie kam aus vieler Richtung, aller Munde:
„Reih Dich nur ein, dann hast Du Ruh und Frieden,
So glaube nur, dann wird's Dir schon beschieden“ —
Die Antwort blieb: Ich weiss es nicht.

Du musst, mein Sohn, mit dem Geheimnis leben,
Das lautet: Es lohnt sich nur Bestreben,
Die Antwort für die Menge, das ist die Deine nicht,
Die Welt hält selten oder gar nicht, was sie Dir verspricht. —
Die Antwort blieb: Ich weiss es nicht.

Die Lichter gingen aus, vorbei die Last der Welt,
Es galt mir nun: Lös auf geschwind Dein Zelt!
So löste ich denn auf und endlich wusste,
Wozu das ganze Spiel doch wohl sein musste.
Gelassen nun: Ich glaub es, weiss es aber nicht . . .

— von Jack Thiessen

mirror mix-up

NARLE

□ □ □ □ ○

RADGE

□ □ ○ □ □

DUGIE

□ □ ○ □ □

TUROT

□ □ ○ □ □

SUCROE

○ □ □ □ □

School daze!



"It is only the ignorant
who despise



Publius Syrus

1st Cent. B.C.

There were several dozen entries to the June Mix-up, and from among the correct entries, Mary Doerksen, of Rosemount Avenue, Winnipeg, was selected the winner.

A cash prize is sent to each winner.

Answers to June are sport, canoe, train, beach, shower, and insects.

Now turn your attention to this month's puzzle.

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

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

Entries must be sent to the Mirror office by October 2, 1984.

Name

Address

City/Town

Postal Code

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Daut Bruttjeled

Von Jack Thiessen

Onkel Kjnals wea Elloaga. Enn soo's de measchte Elloage nu mol weare enn sent, wea hee een laewendja enn lostja Kjeadel, enn nich oppet Mul jefolle. Aulnoch foaken jintj hee emm Darp han enn hää, enn maunchmol weppt hee uck een bät mett de Scheestje. Jo, hee wea een oppjeriema enn een utjelotna Kjneewel. "Een trauma Uchazhor," säde de Frulied, "een ileia Kjeadel, "säde de Mäatjes, "een prautsja Dettat," säde de Junges.

Oba eenes Doages leet uck bie Onkel Kjnals daut Stolzeare no; hee wea feleeft. Seea feleeft wea hee, enn nu trock hee de Flichte een bät enn. Enn boold haud hee eene Brut. Enn waut ferr'ne Brut!: Eene schmocke, lostje Buschtje met Festaund enn Hoat. Enn Jemiet? Gauntse Spitjasch foll. Enn Oage? Gaunts Russlaund speajeld sijch doabenne.

De Tiede worde schwoa enn hoat, enn de Woltje enn Russlaund wulle nich meea fetratje. Enn soo kaum'ett, daut de Ellre fonne Brut, Peeta Radekopps, sich entschloote no Kanada uttoowaundre. Onkel Kjnals wull noch een haulwet Joa enn Russlaund bliewe; fleicht word'et doch noch aulatoop bäta. Wann jo, wudd Jreeta, siene Brut tridjkome, enn wann nich, wudd hee no Kanada kome. No sas Monat sullet Kjust jäwe, hiea ooda doa . . . Woo schwoa soon Aufscheet ess, kaun kjeena beschriewe. Wäär'ett erläft haft, weet soo waut, waear'ett nich erläwt haft, woat daut uck nich derjch Weada bejriepe.

Aum 23 August, 1928, wea dee Dach jekome, enn dis Dach bestemmd: Aufscheet näme. Jreeta enn Kjnals weare stomm enn meist jelämt — soo schwoa word ahn daut. "Audee, mien Kjnals, fejat miene Oage nich. Etj sie die goot." "Audee Jreeta, nemm mien Hoat enn dit Packtje mett no Kanada."

Enn Russlaund jinje boold aule Lichta ut, enn daut Menschehoat leewad boold meea Angst aus Leew, enn meea Messtrue aus Fetruue. Oba woa bleewe Kjnals enn Jreeta? Kjnals haud een Plemenitj enn Kanada enn dee fetalld. Eascht wea hee eene lange Tiet stell oba eenes Owens noh Joare, aus wie toop enn Dietschlaund weare, fetalld hee. "Interessaunt, schnorrig, schnoppig ooda waut uck emma, etj kaun dise Jeschicht nich enn Kanada fetalle, oba hiea kaun etj nich senne, one se too fetalle."

"Ons Onkel Kjnals," soo fong Jeat aun, "wea Tänedokta. Dee Doktarie haud hee enn Dietschlaund stedeat, enn hee wull fleicht uck aul enn Dietschlaund bliewe, oba ahm fäld de Stap, de Nippa, de Sonn enn siene Mensche, säd hee. Enn soo fua hee tridj no Russlaund enn wea doa Tänedokta. Hee wea enn Elloag aulnoch een Dandy, soo's se enn Kanada saje, oba eenes Doages feschwung hee platslijch fonne Gaus. Jreeta äa Hoat haud ahm een Beentje jestallt, enn nu wea hee bloos noch fe de Tookunft mett ahr enjestald. Onkel Kjnals docht kratjcht soo's de measchte Menniste: daut dee Kommunismus mau een kortet Onnwada senne wudd. Oba daut word meea, fäl meea. Jreeta, siene Brut äa Foda, säd hee trud dem poliatischen Brode nijch, enn hee feleet mett Famielje toop noh Kanada. Dee oole Radekopp haud aul enn Russlaund jesajcht, "Dee woare mett ons opprieme, enn nich bloos weajne Relijoon." Dis Utspruck wea eene schwoare Hypothek fe Radekopp, enn dise Belaustung naum hee mett no Kanada. Dee Menniste enn Kanada säde, hee wea Kommunist, ooda weens meist eena, oba see säde daut nich too ahm sonda unja sijch. Daut uck de Epaschte dise Aunsejcht weare, word

Radekopp enn aus hee mett siene Famielje toop sich de mennische Jemeend aanschlute wull. "Eascht betjanne, eascht aules betjanne," word fonn ahm felangt. "Etj hab mie enn Russlaund nich jebetjcht, enn etj woa mie uck hiea nich betje," säd Radekopp, enn hee trock mett Famielje toop wajch. Wajch. Enne dietsche Jaejend em Siedwaste Saskatchewan, "woa de Puisse wone," säd hee, "enn etj nehme aule Kjinja mett, uck mien Popptje Jreeta. Enn miene Adress? Dee weet de leewe Gott. Aude!" Enn fua auf.

Kjnals Thiesse, de Briegaum enn Tänedokta enn Elloag word mett eemol platslich enn, de Wäaj, dee Dääre enn de Puate weare enn Russlaund no bute han too. Too, dicht enn fesiejeld. "Enn doamett basta!" säde de Russe. Oba hee saut enn Elloag enn hopd enn wacht enn hee bangt sich krank. Hee wull noh

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CHILD-CARE

Part-time babysitter required commencing September for two pre-school children in my home two days per week. Vicinity North Kildonan. Christian non-smoker preferred. References required. Call or write Marlene Janzen, 74 Delbrook Cr., Winnipeg, R2G 3H4, Ph. 667-7202.

Jreeta enn Kanada. Enn sien Läwe beweid sich tweschen twee Polarität: Hop enn Fetwiewlung. Mol haud eent de bowahaund, kort nohäa daut aundre. Maunchmol wea hee siene Sach sejcha, maunchmol sach hee schwoat; enn soo jintj'et de Tiet äwa. Daut Jreeta ahm tru wea, daut säd ahm sien Hoat, oba woa see jebläwe wea, daut kunn ahm kjeene saje . . . Han enn wada kjreajch hee opp Omwäj eene wietleftje Norejcht, oba daut wea uck aules. Breew kaume nich meea aun. Enn Jreeta? See wond doa tweschen Liebenthal enn Rastatt enn wacht. Enn wacht. De oole Radekopp word Manager fonn eenem kijienen Jetraejd-Elewäta, enn soo schloage see sich schlaecht enn rajcht derjch. Jreeta schreef jieda Wäatj, enn see sad Bloome fe de Kjast enn eene Myrt fe ähren Brutkraunts. Enn oppjoa wada, enn dann noch eenmol . . . Woa foaken Jreeta äa Bruttjeled woll aunjetrocke haft — joh, dauts waut doa emm Aufscheetsjeschentj, emm Paktje wea — weet woll kjeena.

Onkel Kjnals sien Plemenitj head nu opp too fetalle, hee wea oppjestone enn een bät rutjegone, oba nu kaum hee tridj. Wie saute noch emma enne Schentj, Niedlingsmuehle heet dee, enn hee fetalld wieda. "Dann kaum enn Russlaund wada eene Hungaschnoot, enn donn worde aule Famielje enne Ukraine feräte enn donn gaufet Kjrijch. Enn nu kaume de Dietsche bett enne Ukraine nenn. De dietsche Wehrmacht haud biem Taenedokta Kjnals Thiesse äa Hauptquetea enjerejcht. Dee Jrind weare eefach: Onkel Kjnals haud een grootet Hus, enn hee kjand waut fonne Meditsien enn hee kunn goot Dietsch, enn butadem wea hee een feninfija Mensch. Dee Kjrijch schluag aune '43 tridjaun, enn eenen Owend säd de diet-

scha Major too Thiesse emm Fetruue, 'wie woare ons morje tridjtratje enn äwrem Nippa mascheare enn eene niee Stalung betratje. Saj diene baste Frind, see kjenne mettkome. Enn Du uck. Morje klock tien ess daut soowiet. Wäa bett dann nich äwre Bridj ess, dee blift hiea, wiels de Nippabridj woat nom latsten Soldot jesprenjt. De Russe send dichtbie." Wada jintj mien Berechta enn Fada Jeat een bät wajch, wada ohnd etj Onheel. Hee kaum boold tridj, bestalld sich een Glaus Moot enn fetalld wieda. Naum eenen gooden Schluck — etj naum twee — enn fetalld wieda. "Onkel Kjnals wull den gauntsen latsten Owend rut, wiels hee noch waut drinjendet too beschetje haud, oba de dietscha Offitsiea haud noch too fäl too beräde enn too doone, enn doobie must Onkel Kjnals ahm too Haund gone. Enn soo fejjintj dee Owent enn een Deel fonne nacht. Fleicht tsemorjes . . . Met de Dietsche mettgone? Daut wea beschlohtne Sach. Aum haulf näjen ut fonge de Dietsche aun äwre Bridj sich tridjtootratje; feadel no näjen weare de latste Offitsiere enn Soldote wajch. Ferhäa porrde see enn foddäde Onkel Kjnals opp, hee sull sich doch spoode. Aus'e aula fuat weare, jintj Onkel Kjnals mett eenem Spoadem emm Oaftgoade nenn, besennnd sich een Stootstje, enn donn jintj hee jlity no eenem Apelboom opptoo enn fong aun too groawe aus een Willa. Eascht floage de Soode, dann de Ead enn dann een baetje Graund. Enn je dolla hee groof, je dolla fejjintj dee Tiet. Daut Loch word jrata, de Tiet doajäjen kjarta. Klock tien wearret febie, haude dee Offitsiere jesajcht, dann word de Bridj jesprenjt.

Tien ferr tien haud Onkel Kjnals nu endlich daut Jesochte jefunge. Waut? Siene Goldresarwe toom Täne blombiere lage doa emm leiwendjet Biedeltje njrem Boom festoake. Emman tien Pund Gold sulle nu doch schwind mett. Enn nu packt hee daut Gold schwind ennen grooten Sack, woa hee uck siene Reesche Tweeback fe unjeweajes benne haud, enn loos jintj'ett mett dem Biedel oppem Ridje no dee Bridj opptoo. Onkel Kjnals, soo säde se, haud jerannt aus de Jud enne lange Nacht, fleicht noch stoatja. De Dietsche sache ahm kome enn schreaje, soos bloos Dietsche schriee kjenne, "Spood Die, Mensch, schwinda!" während de aundre "Tridj, tridj!" schreaje.

Onkel Kjnals wea jrods oppe Bridj aunjekohme aus de Sprenjstoff loosjintj. Hee dreid sich omm enn rannnd tridjaun, soo word mie fetald, oba aus



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hee sich noch radde kunn, ooda aus de Roode ahm met Reesche-Tweeback enn Gold fuats jeleewat jenome habe? Wäa weet? Jenoaag, Onkel Kjnals, ons Onkel Kjnals: er ward nie mehr gesehen. Enn siene Brut Jreeta? Toop met Onkel Kjnals sien Plemenitj, mien Fada Jeat also, fua etj noch den selwjen Hoafst no Siedwast Saskatchewan. Enn doa frug wie, enn söchte enn fruage wada. "Fleicht eent fonn de dree ladje Hiesa, dicht biem fefollnen Elewäta aune Bon, aun de stelljelajde Stratj doa hinje emm Struck." Wie kaume doa aun: Eule Nomes weare nu opp englisch omm-jewatjselt worde, oba wie funge den Elewäta. De Fenstre weare twei, Schindde fälde oppem Dack. De Jeträjdtrubb dreid emm Wind mol hiea enn mol doa han, enn moak doabie soon unheemiljet Jereisch. Dee Trubb knoad enn piepad enn knoad soo jetjwäld, enn fong donn uck noch aun too jule aus de Wind doa derjch blod, daut ons gruseld enn onmaklich word. Wie haude Angst, oba wie wulle daut Jeheemnis lefte. "Sajcht doch waut jie weete," wull etj too aul daut Felotnet saje, "fetall mie doch fonn aul dee, woone hiea jeoabeit, jelacht enn jehielt habe. Wiest mie doch dee Städe, woa see wonde, enn woa see jehopt enn jetwiewelt habe." Kjeene Auntwoat, nich mol een Echo. Nom Elewäta-Besuch besocht wie aule dree ladje Hiesa, enn funge uck doa nuscht. Fleicht enn jant, daut tweestockje Jebied doa hinje? Een Hus met Leew jebut, enn mett eenem Goade, woa noch Dell enn een poa Bloome wild emm Oktoba wosse. Dee Schornsteen stund noch, oba daut Dack wea een bät toopjekuakst. Wie jinje nenn, de Däa wea nich toojeschlote, Wie kjitte ons omm, funge oba nich fäl. Enne Kjaetj stund noch een oola Heat met kruggelje Been, enn aune Waund hong een oola Kelenda fonn Fraejoa, enn emm enjebuden Atj-schaup wea een Eatens-Kelenda enn daut wea aules. Eene doodje Sproak word hiea läwendig.

"Wann Du de Däa oppmoakst, goa etj de Trap nopp." Jeat foot aune Daeahrejaep aun enn trock. Eascht stiepad sich de Däa, see knoad enn wäad sijch, oba donn leet se no. Enn etj läd nu no miene Wies loos . . . Oba mau eene Stoop. Enn donn hild platslich onse Welt Uagenbletj den Odem aun: Aune Waund, hinje Däa, hong een langet, wittet Kjeled mett Spetze enn Kruzheltjes. Een oolet Kjeled, oba nijch aufjedroagt. Enn aum Kroage, unre Spetze, stund utjeneit met utjeplatjte bleiwe Sied, de Buakstowe "G.R. fonn C.T." **mm**

Lew Kopelew: Aufbewahren Für Alle Zeit

von Victor G. Doerksen

Im Sommer liest man oft Bücher, die man schnell wieder vergessen wird — oder möchte. Aber es kann auch vorkommen, daß man plötzlich von einem Buch gefangengenommen wird und daß man nicht wieder leicht davon loskommt. Das geschah diesen Sommer für mich bei der Lektüre eines dicken Buches von Lew Kopelew, einem russischen Germanisten der heute in Köln wohnt, und der in diesem Buch seine Erinnerungen aus der Kriegs- und Nachkriegszeit niedergeschrieben hat. Er war in dieser Zeit Offizier in der Roten Armee gewesen und wurde dann Insasse verschiedener Straflager und Gefängnisse, infolge seiner allzu humanen Einstellung an der Front. Während seines Prozesses — eine Geschichte die an Kafka erinnert — sah er auf den Akten über seinen Fall die Worte gestempelt, die er zum Titel seines Buches gemacht hat: 'Aufbewahren für alle Zeit'. Er war nicht gewillt diesen Fall, dieses Stück Leben, in den Ordnern der Bürokratie verschwinden zu lassen und hat sich bemüht, diese Erfahrungen auf eine andere und angemessenere Art und Weise 'aufzubewahren'.

Interessant und ergreifend zugleich ist die Lektüre, weil Kopelew nicht nur seinen Fall als solchen behandelt, sondern weil er sozusagen anhand seines Falls eine ganze Welt dem Leser zugänglich macht, von der man schon oft gehört hat und manches gelesen, allerdings, aber doch meistens in schwarz-weiß. Hier ist diese Welt vielfarbig. Es geht ja darum, daß Kopelew, ein parteilicher Marxist, aus der Partei verwiesen wird und dann wegen 'Mitleid mit dem Feind' verhaftet und verschickt wird. Da möchte man sicher eine schwarz-weiße, eine einseitige Beschreibung erwarten. Aber dafür ist Kopelew ein zu guter Künstler und Mensch. Der Leser merkt sehr bald, daß der Autor nicht nur mit dem deutschen 'Feind' Mitleid hat, sondern auch mit ihm, den Leser, sowie allgemein mit den Menschen. Dieses zeigt er darin, daß er die vielen Menschenschicksale vor unseren Augen evoziert. Er setzt sich für seine Mitmenschen ein — ob sie gute Menschen sind oder Schufte —

Lew Kopelew: Aufbewahren für alle Zeit!

Nachwort von Heinrich Böll



und er tut dieses als Künstler (ich will nicht sagen: Dichter, denn es sind ja wahre Geschichten über wirkliche Menschen!).

Es ist gar nicht möglich hier auch nur andeutend auf die vielen Geschichten einzugehen, aus denen dieses Buch besteht. Aber diese verschiedenen Teile fügen sich dadurch zu einem gelungenen Ganzen, daß sie immer irgendwie den Erzähler angehen. Und der Leser verfolgt ja dessen Geschichte, dessen Prozess. Da bleibt dann immer die Frage, ob oder inwiefern diese Menschen auf den Ausgang seines Prozesses einwirken werden. Sind es offene oder heimliche Feinde? Sind es Spitzel, die später gegen ihn aussagen werden? Für den Autor, der offensichtlich nie zu vorsichtig gewesen ist, können solche Umstände von großer Bedeutung sein.

Solche Faktoren geben dem Ganzen eine Spannung, die man sonst nicht in einem eher epischen Erinnerungsbuch erwarten würde. Und Kopelew gelingt es ohne Zweifel, einen Ausgleich zwischen dramatische Spannung und epische Breite zu finden. Aber die meisterhafte Form ist nicht die größte Leistung des Autors. Für mich war wichtiger, daß er diese Form gebraucht hat, sich für Menschlichkeit und Humanität einzusetzen. Wenn man Kopelews früheres Buch, "Und schuf

mir einen Götzen", gelesen hat, dann weiß man durch welche Schulen er gegangen ist, um seinen Platz in der kommunistischen Partei und in der Sowjet-Gesellschaft zu finden. Brutal ist in den zwanziger und dreißiger Jahren der Mensch dem System geopfert worden. Trotzdem hat Kopelew (und wahrscheinlich auch andere) das Ideal in Auge behalten: Der Sabbat (lese: das System) ist für den Menschen gemacht und nicht umgekehrt. Diese Linie hat Kopelew verfolgt — in diesem Sinne ist er linientreu geblieben. Wenn er nun also die vielen Menschen in erstaunlichem Detail beschreibt, in ihrem Kummer, in ihrer Niederträchtigkeit, in ihrem Schmutz, dann merkt man immer doch als Leser, daß der Erzähler sich dessen bewußt ist, daß alles andere für diese Menschen da sein sollte und nicht umgekehrt, und dadurch entsteht die Ironie, die sich durch das ganze Werk zieht.

Kopelew wurde verurteilt wegen 'Mitleid mit dem Feind', 'Propagierung des bürgerlichen Humanismus'. In diesem Buch beweist er, daß er mit dem Menschen Mitleid hat. Das ist nicht nur der beste Marxismus, sondern auch, wie Kopelew zugibt, bestes Christentum. mm

more about Our Word

century. The Umsiedler from Germany, on the other hand, are still so conservative and traditional in approach and style that they seem to have been lifted right out of some Russian-Mennonite backwater settlement of the last century.

Such groups would seem to have little in common if one compares their political views, social attitudes and ethnic styles. And yet, is there not an element of hope in the very fact that such drastically dissimilar groups of Mennonites can get together at all for the intense, interlocking experience of a five-day conference, to share the same space and forum, so to speak, without open hostility and mutual disdain? And there did seem to be at least a general agreement on such issues as the need for a peace witness (even though the models differ), concern for the Mennonites of the Third World and the need for better parent-child relationships, as well as the important and pressing issue of women's rights.

As one would expect at a MWC, the peace witness issue was a dominant one. Easily the most dramatic and controversial major address was Ron Sider's "God's People Reconciling," in which he boldly advocated not a traditional "isolationist pacifism" but a vigorous frontline peace initiative that, if implemented, might cost thousands of young Mennonite lives in the next 20 years. The idea of an active Mennonite peace-keeping "force" in countries like Nicaragua is inspiring and timely. And no doubt courageous.

And yet something kept nagging at me as I listened to Sider's challenging message. It came to me later that what had bothered me was the nature of the model he was offering. Why is it that in our confrontational times all public causes and crusades, no matter how good in themselves, tend to get expressed and translated into military models and metaphors? Old men have always made wars and sent young men to fight them to their deaths. Should we be following the same model for peace as well? Young Mennonites marching off to die for peace in war-torn countries so that the rest of us can take satisfaction that we have realized our Anabaptist heritage in troubled times? Can't we find a new non-military model for keeping the peace?

One always wonders, finally, whether the speeches at conferences such as this will really get off the page or podium and become programs for action. Or are they designed mainly as

shock tactics to shake complacency and smugness for a few hours? At least the young activists at Strasbourg were prepared to put action where their rhetoric was.

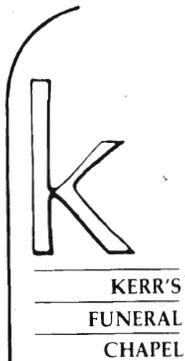
Still, I found Strasbourg to be a most stimulating experience. There was much Mennonite warmth and friendliness in evidence and audiences showed sincere concern and a tremendous capacity for faith in and goodwill for the Mennonite cause. The closing mass communion was an exhilarating act of worship that made one humbly grateful to be a Mennonite and a Christian.

This was my first Mennonite World Conference and on the whole I am glad I went, in spite of the mixed feelings I have tried to express. The next MWC will be held right here in Winnipeg in 1990. Much may happen before then. As Samuel Gerber said at the final session: "This World Conference may be the last one, not because of opposition, persecution, wars, etc. but because the Lord Jesus Himself may return between the 11th conference and the 12th." Barring the end of the world, however, or some other major catastrophe, Mennonites from all over the world will be meeting again six years hence.

If so, let us hope that we may go a bit farther in reversing the myth of the Tower of Babel by refining the babble of voices we now speak into a universal language of hope and faith. With a Mennonite accent.

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Can We Reserve the Tower of Babel?

"O *Strassburg, O Strassburg, du wonderschoene Stadt,*" goes the old German folksong. In July some 8,000 Mennonites from all over the world verified those words when they met in the charming old city for the XI Mennonite World Conference. White (predominantly still), black, brown and yellow Mennonites with varied backgrounds, cultures and lifestyles came together for this sexennial Anabaptist love-in. Never mind that the overwhelming majority of them were members of the affluent North American and European middle classes — those who could afford to come and did, as compared with those who perhaps should have been there from the poorer nations but weren't because they couldn't afford to be.

And perhaps "love-in" is a term that must be applied with a certain irony to this fascinating, in some ways disturbing event. And confusing. What to make finally of the welter of conflicting impressions one was left with? How to sort them out, arrange them in patterns that will give them some lasting meaning? One searches for an integrating metaphor or two, perhaps a unifying symbol that can somehow tie these shifting impressions and hectic contacts together. More than once as I listened to the powerful prophetic voices, the high-powered rhetoric, the animated discussions, including civilized disagreements in the various official languages of the conference — English, German,

French and Spanish — I was reminded of the Tower of Babel. But the myth in reverse.

Perhaps in coming together like this every six years, we Mennonites are trying to cut through the babble of tongues and cultures and forms of faith to some higher, purer language of spiritual unity and common purpose. That common purpose being not to build a tower or monument to our own glory, but to attune ourselves to God's purposes and to honor Him. There were moments when one distinctly heard at this conference a metalanguage of faith and unity on such themes and issues as suffering, love, repentance, grace, peace and a life of service. "Servir dans l'espérance: la tâche du peuple de Dieu, God's People Serve in Hope," was indeed the theme of the conference. And perhaps, as is so often the case, one heard that metalanguage in its purest form in the many beautiful musical concerts and worship in song that graced the event all week long.

Much of the time, however, there was still a confusion of tongues and purposes as symbolized by the Tower of Babel. Apparently German radio reports from nearby Saarbruecken criticized the conference for its navel-gazing and narrow parochialism. That criticism seemed to be based on ignorance. The real problem, it seemed to me, was the opposite one: that the conference tried too hard to be all things to

all people. The sad truth is that there are by now too many Mennonites among the over 700,000 in the world who are Mennonite in name only — at both ends of the spectrum. There are those evangelical and fundamentalist-oriented Mennonites who look upon the name Mennonite and Mennonite-Anabaptist tenets and practises with barely concealed impatience as irrelevant to their own faith and spiritual concerns. But there are also many nominal Mennonites who despise or ignore the Mennonite church altogether, while retaining just enough nostalgic sense of Mennonite cultural identity to travel to a Mennonite world conference in order to socialize with friends and acquaintances for a week in an interesting European atmosphere.

The conference in Strasbourg demonstrated that we Mennonites, like a catch-all modern political party, are trying to keep wildly divergent, perhaps even inimical, groups and factions together under the banner "Mennonite." It is only a slight exaggeration to say that there were Mennonites from two different centuries here. The radicalized young Dutch Mennonites, for example, militantly demanded a dramatic peace witness and an immediate confrontation with the governments of the world. These young people are completely in tune with other radical movements representing the trends of the late 20th-

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