

Mennonite Mirror

volume 16/number 2/october 1986

• A mother remembers • Mediating conflict •



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foreword

All parents worry about their children, and one especially nasty fear is that a child may be abducted, abused and killed. It's a thought few entertain for long. Unfortunately, children do become victims. The Derksen family went through the heart-wrenching experience of having a daughter and sister disappear, followed by the discovery of her body. Few in Winnipeg have forgotten the Candace Derksen story. In this issue, Wilma Derksen, describes in an interview with Mary Enns some of the things she wrestled with as a parent and a Christian.

The Beatitudes tell us that the peacemakers are blessed. One way of making peace is to help resolve disputes and arguments between neighbors, and between victims and perpetrators of some crimes. Mediation Services is quietly building an impressive track record in this kind of peacemaking. It's described in our second article this month, by writer Lora Sawatsky.

The World Bank is hardly an MCC posting, but some of its assignments do take people into the far corners of the world. Mel Loewen, who is formerly from Steinbach and a former missionary to the Congo, cannot resist one more assignment, this time to Rwanda. Marj Toews tells us why.

There is a good run of poetry in this edition. Poetry is every bit as creative as fiction or prose, and when it's well done speaks to the human spirit. In this issue, besides including the work of two people whose pieces have appeared here before, Clint Toews and Jack Thiessen, we include three others whose work may not be so well-known — Dora Dueck, Tim Wiebe, and Helen Baergen.

This issue also includes the Observed Along the Way by Roy Vogt, Manitoba news, three items in German or Low-German, and the editorial. The magazine closes with a letter from a reader.

The Cover: A view of historic St. Andrew's-on-the-Red, the oldest Anglican church in western Canada.

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Wilma Derksen remembers when Candace disappeared, and finds peace in forgiving

by Mary M. Enns

How does one come to terms with the untimely or sudden death of a beloved child, or grandchild? Can one draw on the strength of love found in the family, in the church, and in the community? Does one find a latent core of fortitude in oneself? Or fall back gratefully on one's faith in God? All of us have pondered these questions in private moments.

Wilma and Clifford Derksen were forced to confront this personal agony when on November 30, 1984, their thirteen-year-old daughter Candace disappeared without a trace. A few words on the phone from a young girl on her way home from school and . . . nothing more. Silence. "That first evening was the most difficult," says Wilma as we talk over a cup of coffee. She smiles sadly and her large hazel eyes fill with tears. "We were frantic. As a mother I knew that at that moment she was struggling and I suffered, realizing I was unable to help her."

The agony and fear of the unknown; fighting the images that summon up the worst possibilities. Six and a half weeks of trying to escape into the oblivion of sleep, of waking unwillingly in the night, of facing a new day with still no clue to the plight of their child. That was the Derksens terrible ordeal.



Wilma Derksen

What happens to a husband and wife relationship during a crisis of this stature? Can they still communicate, or does the anxiety create a deadly weight, a helpless, numbing silence? Fortunately, in their seventeen years of marriage Wilma and Cliff had established a relationship the strength of which proved of primary importance for survival at this time. They had always talked a lot, especially at close of day over a cup of tea. They had come to understand one another pretty well. And they talked now too, in spite of the numbness within. When the silences did come, they were necessary ones. Automatically they assumed the roles natural to each — Wilma the practical one handling the many phone calls and the doorbell. Cliff roaming the streets, desperately searching for their child. It was their overwhelming common purpose that kept them going. "Cliff was wonderful. Never did he blame me for not being able to go and pick Candace up after school that day. Blame can become so unreasonable." The searches brought no results.

When in mid-January the frozen body of their daughter was discovered and then lovingly laid to its final rest the tremendous tension was released. Although their love had remained

strong, they now found it difficult to relate to each other without Candace. "But I never expected him to carry me and he did not expect me to carry him. We helped each other." But the family unit had been broken and the family dynamics now needed to be renewed and changed. Friends thought that the other children, Odia 10 and Siras 4, would help by taking the place of their sister. Wilma found that could not be because all three children were distinctly different personalities. In fairness to each other the mother now sought to communicate individually with the two remaining children. No matter how great her own pain and concern, she now discovered that she could not neglect her family. Wilma worked very hard during the ensuing months to regain her former buoyancy. She agrees now that parents absorbed in their own grief can do grave injustice to the remaining children by expecting too much understanding and emotional response from them.

Wilma found relief in private tears. "I found if I didn't cry my quota I became

very emotional at all times. So I would slip away, because if the children saw me cry it hurt them a lot. But we had a tremendous faith — we knew God was with us. His loving care surrounded us like the walls of a fortress. We had never seen so many miracles happen as during this entire time; people coming at the right time. They gave us comfort and love and tangible evidence with gifts for our freezer. Friends supported us and did research for us on psychics when we were unfamiliar with these, and in no position to do anything about it. That was one side of humanity. Our daughter, clearly, had been taken by quite another side. We were unprepared for the obscene phone calls we got. We were now always aware that the criminal element had also come to our door.

"We had earlier learned that God isn't a Santa Claus. He limits himself to our choices. It is we who create an awful world and He is allowing it to run its course. I was angry at Satan, at the degradation of humanity. But never at God. On that first evening, I admit, I questioned it. 'Why, God?' And it was as

though God said: 'Why not? I asked Abraham for his son. I've asked countless people throughout the ages.' I realized then that I actually had no choice. I who loved her so much didn't have the power to help her. Then it gave me immeasurable relief knowing we were in God's hands and that He loved our child."

Wilma began to bargain with the God she loved and trusted. Knowing so well that Candace had always had a very low pain threshold and that she was now in a hostile environment Wilma pled with God to take her child to Himself rather than allowing her to be abused. Today she is convinced that the prayer was answered, and that helped them to carry on. And to know that God is real.

Ester DeFehr was one of many friends who continued to support the Derksens. For Wilma, Ester's friendship was a shelter to escape to when she needed to ask questions. Ester's career was in the area of teaching in Pregnancy Distress Services. Now she was asked to work on the search committee. She recalls: "On one particular day when Wilma phoned

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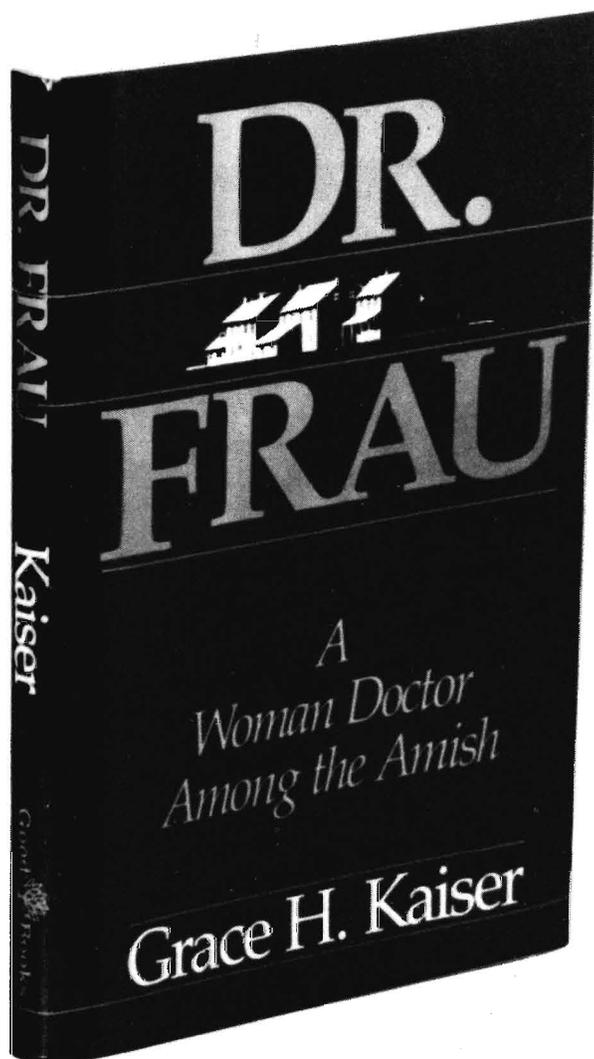


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Her reminiscences of this very private world are full of rich detail. Her picture of those among whom she lived and worked reveals a people different from the idealistic portrait which less trusted outsiders often carry away. Among folk who clearly value children and family, hard work and good food, closeness to God and nature, she also found the tightwads and tricksters, the worriers and gossips, present in any society. Often seen as stern and strict, the Mennonites and Amish populating **Dr. Frau** also possess a hearty, often earthy, sense of humor.

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and asked me to come over to talk I knew what sort of questions she would be asking me. I cried for several hours before I left. We talked about how intricately the human body is made. How God created the nervous system as an internal communications network that enables us to cope and provide a 'switch' that shuts off when pain becomes too much. This seemed to reassure Wilma. It was necessary for her to talk about the possibility of pain in Candace' life. Wilma coped by direct confrontation, talking of what was on her mind, no matter how monstrous the questions became. Thereby she was able to put a handle on her fears. In this way God's peace and assurance came to give her understanding and comfort. She believed her child to be in God's care."

Wilma is convinced that Cliff's sense of humour is important. "He's the first to make it light." His suffering didn't accumulate. He handled it in sizable chunks while his wife always dealt with all of it. Today both are absorbed in their work with the media. Wilma is western associate editor of the *Mennonite Reporter* and Cliff works in communications for Camp Arnes as well as acting as summer program director. When their daughter disappeared they had somehow continued to communicate. Wherever they were in their journey of grief they were there together, each a very different person, but balancing each other's sorrow. Now, however, it seemed their relationship went on hold. "We were not growing, we weren't building. But we were drawing from what we had established over the years. After Candace' body was found we had to make an effort to look at each other . . . to love again after being involved only with our tragedy for so long. We had to learn to appreciate what the other had become through it. I think we saw change rather than growth. We seemed to have grown old and sober, and we had to accept that. We had to give each other space and understanding, allowing the little transgressions which surface when there's so much sorrow."

Is there any possible good that can come out of a tragedy such as this? Wilma's answer is emphatic: for one thing, runaways are now taken much more seriously, and so it has made a difference in police policy-making. The community is taking greater care street-proofing its children.

The love in their church became a national story. It became clear how much we all need each other, especially in a crisis. Wilma feels that inherent in

the Mennonite culture is a bond of faith but also a cultural bond, and that double bond really helped. "There were so many people praying for us. Yes, much good has come out of this. Important to us is that it helped Candace' best friend to begin her spiritual journey.

"As to Cliff and me, we had a choice, either to apply everything we had learned since our childhood from the Bible or to go the secular route and do what would have been my first and natural inclination — go and hide under the bed as I did when I was a child. I felt we were in the worst situation we could be in. We decided to go with the faith of our fathers; to try to overcome evil with good. I'm still struggling, trying to find my way through it. I've learned that the only way I'll make it is by continuing to give. Late that first evening I gave our daughter over to God and experienced a sense of peace — like, it's His ball game now. And giving includes forgiving."

She found one of the many articles in the newspapers frustrating when it stated that because the Derksens were Mennonites they were able to forgive. It was expected in some way, it seemed, for Mennonites — pacifists — to forgive. "There is nothing easy, nothing normal about forgiving. It is the Bible which teaches us the need, the ability to forgive. It is our Mennonite culture which provides us with the information, that alternate route. I have to continue to forgive for the rest of my life. Now I find I also **want to.**"

When Candace was found and they were asked to identify their daughter's body it became a difficult day. Late that evening of January 17, when most of the friends had gone home, a stranger came to their door. He identified himself as the father of the cruelly murdered Barbara Stoppel. Wilma's first thought was: is this to be my identity now, the parent of a murdered daughter? They talked for two hours. Mr. Stoppel had come to "prepare them for what lay ahead." Here was a man with broken health. In intricate and vivid detail he recalled and related the injustices, the court appearances, the lies, the hatred. Saddest of all, the man said, he had lost the memory of his daughter as a result of not forgiving; his life was filled with so much hate. The bereft young parents felt devastated. The Derksens decided quickly that to seek justice would destroy them. There was nothing that could satisfy justice for Wilma. "I had to give the need for justice away. We knew we couldn't go before the media with Sunday-School pat answers. Surely it had to be a very lost person, one who

didn't have the total love of a family and community behind him, to do the sort of thing that was done to Candace. Should we lash out at a society that creates these monsters? We tried hard to focus on the positive, to find the good, to find any possible opportunities. Today I say that it works."

Wilma has now become involved with Child Find. She finds healing in the work. And when she and Cliff find that countless parents are now talking to their teenagers just a little more, they know that Candace' death has had a greater impact than her life might have had. God needed Candace, perhaps.

When the funeral was planned all thoughts of private mourning "*im letzten Geleit*" had to be abandoned since the media had been involved in the case from the beginning. When the Derksens were asked what sort of memorial they would like for Candace they could only think of her intense pleasure in swimming with the family in the St. Vital pool and at Camp Arnes. It should, they felt, have some connection with swimming. So a Candace Derksen Memorial Fund was established to build a swimming pool at Camp Arnes. Here many people would eventually reap the benefits. Today the pool is in its final



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Does God sometimes lay the groundwork to prepare people for greater difficulties that lie ahead? Wilma pondered. Nine years ago Cliff and Wilma were living on the Paungassi Indian Reserve in northern Manitoba. Cliff was managing the trading post there and "we were going to solve the Indian problem." On a pleasure jaunt on their skidoo one afternoon, quite by accident they came very near to meeting death. Inadequately dressed for the bitter cold of late afternoon in mid-January, the elements punished them almost past the point of endurance when their skidoo bogged down in the slush. There, Wilma remembers, she felt she had a right to demand a miracle of God. When it didn't come through quite as desired and they just barely made their long walk home she felt such an anger toward God that she "wouldn't speak to Him for almost a year. Why believe in a God that doesn't protect you anyway? Actually, God never promised us a rose garden. He promised us suffering.

"I don't feel we're finished. I have to be able to teach my children why all this happened. When Siras speaks his thoughts and fears, he needs answers. He is sure he wants to grow up to be a policeman and protect Odia. But I know there will be roses once in awhile. When I accept sorrow and accept sacrifice I know there will be happiness too. And then there is joy in the pain. Now we can laugh together again. When there's so much distress you have to lighten it somehow. So we play with the kids or we go to Macdonalds or to the park or to a movie. You have to program even small pleasures into your life."

We wondered whether she agrees with Viktor Frankl when he teaches that the suffering we experience can embitter and finally destroy us, or it can create growth and character-building within us. Wilma hopes the latter has happened to them. And that the depth of understanding gained from the fine, sharp honing will stand them in good stead in their future as a family. **mm**

Literary Society Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the Mennonite Literary Society Inc., will be held on Saturday, November 14 at a location which will be announced later. Members of the society will be notified by mail.

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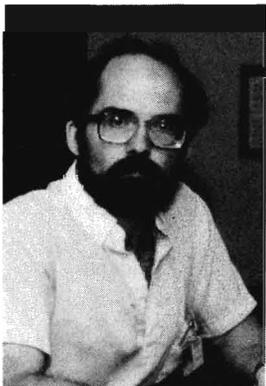
Good fences make good neighbors don't they?

by Lora Sawatsky

Andrea, the receptionist/secretary at 202-818 Portage Avenue, answers the telephone and refers the call to Ray Friesen, director of Mediation Services. The call is from the Provincial Judges Court, and the caller requests that Mediation Services, an MCC Manitoba program, become involved in a boundary dispute between two neighbors. One of the neighbors has been charged with assault. Ray agrees to attempt mediation.

One of the case workers places a call to the victim, Mr. James, who emphatically states that this dispute with his neighbor has been going on for two years, and as far as he is concerned, he will tolerate no further harassment from his neighbor. Mr. James expresses doubt as to the merits of a mediation session, but will consider it on the condition that his lawyer is present.

A staff member visits the offender, Mr. Jones, a sixty-one-year-old retired gentleman. Mr. Jones soon appears interested because somebody is finally listening to his side of the story. He admits that it was foolish of him to attack his neighbor with a garden hoe, but blames his neighbor for provoking the assault by continual harassment.



Ray Friesen, past director

A mediation session is scheduled for the following Monday at the Mediation Offices, 818 Portage Avenue. Letters to confirm this session are sent to both parties. However, prior to the scheduled session, the facts of the case must be clarified. It becomes apparent that a fence has been built six inches too far on Mr. James' property. His neighbor, Mr. Jones, discovered this fact when he became frustrated with Mr. James for building his garage too close to the fence according to his estimation. The fence between the neighbors precipitated an ongoing dispute for the next two years which finally culminated in an assault charge. Although only one neighbor was charged, it became clear that neither was without fault.

Two persons from Mediation Services agree to become involved in the case; one is an experienced case-worker, the other a volunteer in training. At the beginning of the session the two mediators clarify their role — to encourage communication and understanding in an attempt to reach an agreement which will satisfy both parties. During the mediation sessions, which extend over two days, both mediators become aware that there is no easy solution to this conflict because the disputants have conflicting objectives. Mr. Jones' concern is to settle the matter prior to his court appearance two days hence. Mr. James, on the other hand, has a lengthy list of demands.

After a number of joint as well as individual meetings with the disputants, an agreement is reached. Mr. Jones agrees to pay his neighbor \$200 to compensate for lost pay due to injury received from the assault. Furthermore, he agrees to allow his neighbor to be solely responsible for rebuilding and maintaining the fence.

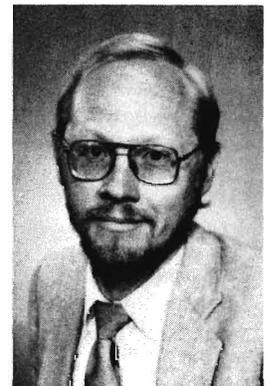
By the time the sessions end both neighbors have begun to break down their wall of mistrust built up over the previous two years. Each leaves his defensive position in order to risk resolution and begin the process of reconciliation. Mr. James offers his hand to Mr. Jones who grasps it warmly, and is surprised that his neighbor would actually shake his hand.

The case is resolved. The following day the judge grants Mr. Jones an absolute discharge on the basis of the agreement reached during mediation.

In 1985, between January 1 and December 31, the Mediation Office received 640 referrals, an average of 53 cases per month. Mediation Services does not always wait for referrals from the judicial system, but rather looks for them. The director peruses the police reports daily and submits suitable cases to a staff inspector within the Winnipeg Police Department and to the Crown Attorney for approval.

During 1986 changes occurred in setting and personnel; but the program and policies remain the same, and the mediation office continues to accept referrals. Ray Friesen, who accepted the case described above, left his position as director of Mediation Services August 29 in order to pursue further religious studies, and was replaced by Paul Redekop the next month. Andrea Wiens no longer takes calls for Mediation Services, and the location of the Mediation offices has changed to 1317 Portage Avenue.

Mediation Services is a program funded by the Mennonite Central Committee of Manitoba, and is currently operated by a director, two case work-



Paul Redekop, new director



Glenda Hildebrand, case co-ordinator, Andrea Wiens, former secretary.

ers, one half-time volunteer co-ordinator, a part-time secretary/receptionist and 30-40 volunteers. Additional personnel, funded by Jobs Fund and CareerStart grants, has been hired to assist with case loads, research, and program development during the summer. One program that began as a summer project is the recently added Young Offender Mediation program.

The cases referred to Mediation Services fall into three categories: diversion mediation, post-plea mediation, and community mediation. Cases handled through diversion are cases where criminal charges have been laid, but if mediation is successful, the crown attorney does not proceed with charges. Diversion mediation handles cases in which laws have been violated, but for which the court is not the best place for attempting conflict resolution between disputants.

The majority of referrals fall into the diversion category. In 1985, of the 640 referrals processed, 413 were handled by diversion mediation. Referrals in this category continue to increase. The number of referrals handled by diversion mediation in 1984 almost doubled for 1985. As of July 11, 1986, the total number of referrals in this category registered a 66 per cent increase over referrals made from January 1 to July 11 in 1985.

Post-plea mediation is not an alternative but an addition to the court room procedure. Because of the nature of the offence and/or the record of the accused, he or she is sentenced by the judge, but mediation is attempted between the guilty plea or conviction,

and sentencing. The mediation report becomes part of the pre-sentence report to the presiding judge.

A more general category, community mediation, includes neighborhood disputes, family disputes, by-law violations, etc. Mediation Services will not handle cases involving domestic violence because of the need for long term, specialized counseling in such cases.

Mediation Services is intended to be a supplement as well as an alternative to a criminal justice system which is restricted in terms of what it can do to bring about healing and restitution between offenders and victims. The program began in April, 1979, when Murray Barkman, a former probation officer, became director of the new Victim-Offender Mediator program on a part-time basis. Barkman found it difficult to push a program for which he had witnessed only 13 referrals by the November MCC annual meeting. By November of the next year, the Victim-Offender Mediator program had become Mediation Services in order to accommodate its extended aim: to serve as an alternative to the court-room procedure. Ray Friesen joined Murray in 1981 as part-time co-director and took charge of the public education part of the program. He became full-time director in 1983.

Ray believes strongly that victims should be given the opportunity to meet with offenders because crime results in a breach of relationship between individuals or within a community. Since reconciliation is central to the gospel Mennonites preach, Ray feels that we

must become involved in seeking ways of reconciling disputants even though we are traditionally conditioned to separate disputants involved in crime-related conflicts. Furthermore, the persons most directly involved in crime-related conflicts should personally take responsibility in the process leading to restitution and healing. Mediation Services holds people responsible for their behavior, particularly in cases where someone has been victimized. However, Mediation Services also tries to provide a way for victims of crime to be directly involved in resolving matters that affect them.

A great deal of credit must go to the mediation staff and the 30-40 trained volunteers (an indispensable part of the program) for struggling to express restitution and reconciliation in an area where the traditional systems dictate punishment and separation. A great deal of commendation must go to Ray Friesen, the former director, who continued to believe in the merits of a program which promises mediation, attempts resolution, and hopes for reconciliation despite periods of opposition. Ray notes that in a ten-month period during 1982-83, Mediation Services received only eight court referrals.

Paul Redekop, who left his position as sociology professor at University of Winnipeg to become the director of Mediation Services, believes it is important for Mennonites to participate positively in society as peacemakers. Paul, who has three years of experience as a volunteer, strongly encourages others to continue to become involved in Mediation Services as volunteers because of the experience to be gained in conflict resolution.

Paul sees government agencies becoming increasingly more interested in Mediation Services, but hastens to add that we must guard against losing the dimension that makes the present MCC program unique — the role of peacemaker. While other agencies also work toward resolving conflicts and reaching agreements, MCC's Mediation Services adds another dimension — it strives for reconciliation and healing. Paul hopes that the program will never become part of a bureaucratic machine which loses sight of caring for the individual.

A question which remains to be answered is what to do with a program which has become so successful that further growth would demand increased funding. Can MCC afford to allot a larger share of its pie to Mediation Services?

mm

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review

Mennonite Brethren Pacifism

Reviewed by Harry Loewen

In 1980 Mennonite Brethren representation met in Minneapolis to discuss the peace position of the MB Church. According to John E. Toews, co-editor of *The Power of the Lamb*: "Some lay people and some pastors thought it was time to relax the Mennonite Brethren commitment. After all, many of them had served in the military in the Second World War, and the men in uniform needed the gospel as much as any people. Furthermore, some worried that the peace confession of the Mennonite Brethren Church was a barrier to evangelism" (p. 1).

Nevertheless, "the long debate ended in an overwhelming resolution to affirm the Confession of Faith," according to Toews. "The resolution included a request for clearer and more systematic teaching on the peace position" (p. 1).

The Power of the Lamb is a response to the need for more teaching on the Anabaptist-Mennonite principle of peace. The book is thus written with the lay reader and young people in mind. Theological and academic jargon has been avoided throughout the book, and the highly visible chapter and section headings will be of assistance for teaching purposes in Sunday School and Bible study classes.

There are 13 chapters in the book — possibly for a weekly three-month study period — written by well-known Mennonite Brethren teachers and leaders: John E. Toews, Elmer A. Martens, John Fast, Mervin Dick, Henry J. Schmidt, Howard J. Loewen, and Wesley Prieb.

Although many writers contributed articles to this book, there is unity of organization and content. The various chapters deal with many aspects of Christian pacifism and peacemaking: Jesus' teaching on peace and love; the pacifism of the early church; Christians' giving in to the state under Constantine the Great; development of the so-called "just war theory;" changing attitudes of mainline and evangelical churches with regard to war and peace; and the urgency of the peace message in our nuclear age.

The authors rightly insist that the heart of the gospel is love and peace and that this central Christian emphasis must characterize the disciple who takes the message and life of Jesus seriously. The authors also imply that the peace position of the "historic peace churches," including the Mennonite Brethren Church, is not only the hallmark of the Anabaptist-Mennonites but also their significant contribution to the other churches and society.

The book concludes with an Appendix on "Mennonite Brethren Statements on War and Peace in North America." These "statements" remind Mennonite Brethren that in spite of the weakening and neglect of the peace principle by some individual MBs and churches, historically the MB Church has sought to be faithful to this important New Testament teaching.

Regrettably, the book has no index of subjects and names and it does not include a list of books and articles on Christian pacifism. While precise documentation is not all that essential in a popularly-written study (there are two or three references to authors and titles), a bibliography would have been most helpful to the more serious student and reader. A list of titles by such authors as Jean-Michel Hornus, C. John Cadoux, Richard McSorley, Ron Sider, John H. Yoder, William Klassen, Millard C. Lind, to name just a few, would have enhanced the value of this fine textbook on Christian pacifism.

The Power of the Lamb, edited by John E. Toews and Gordon Nickel (Winnipeg and Hillsboro, Kansas: Kindred Press, 1986). Paperback; 183 pages; Price: \$9.95 (Canada), \$7.95 (U.S.); ISBN: 0-919797-50-4.

Mel Loewen goes back for one more assignment

by Marjorie Toews

It is a hot summer day in Steinbach during the August long weekend and Melvin J. Loewen and his wife Elfrieda are in town to attend a 1946 SCI class reunion — a class of superior achievers, *The Carillon* of Steinbach says — as well as gatherings of friends and family. With claim to his time as the latter, my mother and I spirit him away to a nearby secluded restaurant for an uninterrupted hour and a half of conversation, which consists of a curious mixture of world and family affairs.

It is only recently that I have come to know Dr. Loewen personally. In any extended family, a short-hand identification process exists whereby family members are identified by certain actions, habits, or idiosyncracies. For example, Uncle So-and-So might be “the one who listens to opera,” and Great-Aunt So-and-So might be remembered for some outrageously liberated thing she did in her youth.

So it is with Mel Loewen. From family lore I know that as missionaries to the Belgian Congo, now Zaire, Mel and his family narrowly escaped death at the hands of Simba rebels during the uprising for independence in the early 60s. The Simbas rounded up all the foreigners in their search for Americans and were examining all passports. Mel initially placed his Canadian passport on top of his wife’s American one, then slid her passport into his pocket while their captors were looking elsewhere. This quick thinking may have saved their lives and at very least won them a small concession. They were allowed to go home, albeit under house arrest.

Shortly after, they were rescued by American troops in a commando-style raid designed to rescue the remaining Americans. With only the airport left in American hands, the whole family was escorted from the house to the airport in an open military truck, while soldiers constantly fired machine guns into the

ditches on both sides. As family stories go, this one is hard to beat.

Through the same family network, news trickled down that Mel and Elfrieda would leave for Rwanda at the end of summer, where he will be the World Bank’s head representative. (In fact, he will function in a capacity similar to that of an ambassador, but without the title.)

Now, sitting opposite us, casually dressed in a sport shirt, slacks, and white leather Reeboks, he bears an uncanny resemblance to his mother, my mother’s Taunte Jreeta. Mel has the same pale blue eyes, and at 61 his face is beginning to arrange itself into a familiar pattern of lines, while his smile is a copy of his mother’s. I also notice that he has her unhurried way of speaking and moving, as well as her warmth and concern for people.

There is something else, too. He has the look of a man who has been trusted with important business in the past and is likely to be again in the future. In spite of his personal warmth, he looks as if he stays cool under pressure — perhaps the result of raising six children. Perhaps, also, these qualities are what impressed his employers at the World Bank.

As the three of us sit over lunch, he tells us his reasons for returning to Africa. One reason is he still has a hankering to live overseas one more time before retiring. At the age of 61 (65 is the mandatory retirement age for World Bank employees) he has three or four years left in his World Bank career. In addition, the six Loewen children have all grown up, including Lisa, the youngest, now in her early twenties. Most important, perhaps, Elfrieda has agreed to be uprooted one last time.

Shrewdly, and correctly as it turns out, Mel figured he would have a pretty good chance of being chosen for a posting in either Zaire, Barundi, or Rwanda, all former Belgian colonies in Africa. First, he is fluent in French, which he learned in Belgium before leaving for the Congo in the 1950s. Second, he had

extensive experience in the area. He started his career in the Congo in 1956 as principal of a teachers’ college and later became academic dean of a new African university. More recently, with the World Bank, he helped African countries set up institutions to train natives in establishing home-grown economic policies for their respective countries.

Mel reflects on the advantages of his new posting in Rwanda. A small country located on the eastern border of Zaire, Rwanda is politically more stable than its larger neighbour, and its small size makes it more manageable. While Rwanda is a poor country, its debt is also quite small.

The World Bank functions much like any bank in reviewing applications for loans, accepting this one, rejecting that one, occasionally agreeing to lend a percentage of the total if other creditors can be found for the remainder. The difference between the World Bank and other banks is that its clients are Third World governments, and its mandate is to assist these countries in a way that will see the least advantaged people benefit the most, a goal which is easier stated than accomplished. In his new role Melvin Loewen will be very much the banker, the “heavy,” involved in the nitty-gritty of negotiation with government representatives. It is a role he is looking forward to filling.

I ask what happens to countries who default on their payments. His eyes twinkle as he explains that among their various creditors countries generally pay off their loans to the World Bank first. It periodically happens, he says, that a new government will come to power in a coup d’état and will issue a declaration stating that they will not honour the previous government’s loans. But two things happen quickly in that case. A World Bank representative will pull out the loan agreement, pointing out that the agreement is between the government of the country, regardless of which government it is, and the World Bank.

If they do not take the hint at this point, the second thing that will happen is that their line of credit with other banks will mysteriously dry up. With its international banking and diplomatic connections, all the World Bank has to do is quietly let it be known that this country is in default. Former green lights will turn red at every turn and with nowhere to go for credit, the new government will quickly find itself paralyzed. Like a business — even a prosperous one — which finds it sometimes has to make cash outlays above its cash reserves, a country, too, has to have access to credit to survive.

With a Ph.D. in political science, Mel considers himself a rarity in an institution dominated by economists. He joined the World Bank in the early 70s at a point in his life, when his family was comfortably settled in Fresno, where he was academic dean of Fresno Pacific College. While reading the paper one night, he noticed an ad recruiting personnel for the World Bank, and applied "for the fun of it." After a perfunctory reply he heard nothing more from the Bank until months later when he was interviewed and offered some contract work which would take him to several European capitals.

By this time Mel is grinning broadly as he relates the story of how he persuaded his wife, who thought they had settled for good, to move to Washington, D.C. where the bank's headquarters are. "Luckily it was springtime in Washington when we arrived to look the city over to see if she would possibly consider moving, and all the cherry blossoms were out. The city was at its most beautiful right then, and . . . well, she thought maybe it wouldn't be so bad after all." Shortly thereafter the Loewens took up residence in nearby Maryland, an easy distance from the capital by commuter train.

When Mel and Elfrieda return to the U.S. in 1989 or possibly 1990, it will be to their same old renovated farmhouse overlooking a beautiful rural valley in California. But until then, they will have a rare opportunity to live and work in the Third World, to observe and take part in the culture and economy of a unique African nation. As well, they will have an enviable opportunity to participate in the international community.

One wishes them luck of course, but it seems a little unnecessary. For one thing, Mel Loewen has gotten to where he is on more than luck. And for another, he seems able to take care of himself. And if not he, then somebody else is doing a good job of it. mm

poet's word

CHILDREN OF RAGE

(For the abused.)
 Mouth stretched wide in wordless pain
 Rigid and drained
 Flesh crackling under heavy rage
 One small funnel for the
 Crashing waves of other years
 O God, there is something here
 I cannot know
 Helpless watery terror flooding me
 Bursting through my pores into
 The roar of screams heard
 Long after silence comes friendly to my side.
 Crucified, sacrificed, the lamb of rage
 Hangs limp and deeply torn upon his bed
 Thick the wall of mortared hate
 The wreckers ball of love may never break
 When tiny helpless, scarred, and shrivelled
 Doomed by an angel's black and steady purge
 A flower underneath the marching boot
 And gnashing teeth so hellish in formation
 "This is my body broken for you,"
 In the strokes of blinded rage
 The price of every sin was paid.

THE RUNNER

I hold the leather treasure close and run
 To reach the Line
 Pursued like stag with wolves upon his flank
 I visualize myself a tank, a ram
 Lowered head, I smash and heave
 Sinew tight, I slash and weave
 Between the bodies, spin and turn
 Some open turf, my muscles burn
 and lift me clear,
 Around me now I hear the cheer
 My horizon comes to me
 Cutting to evade the kill
 The Land beyond the line
 Receives my body and my will
 I've made it one more time,
 Through this ballet of joy and pain
 The runner stays serene
 A place where even Loss is gain
 A place where I have been.

. . . .
 I hold my program for a while
 And drop it later up the Aisle
 What was the score — I don't recall
 I was too busy playing ball

— by Clint Toews



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Chokecherry Jam

Chokecherries
slither by the cluster
through busy fingers
and bunch in the pail.

Conversation is as rich and free
as this crop
of summer's whim.

Below,
the river runs transparent;
a quiet accompaniment
to the rhythm of interaction
between the generations.

Buckets are brought, brimming
to the farmhouse where the fruit
will be boiled,
sweetened,
poured, thick,
into jars
and suitably labelled.

Months later, when removed
from some cellar shelf
to be savored,
August's sharp vintage will bring, vividly,
to recollection,
the poignancy,
of summer's end.

The Storyteller

Eyes shine in the firelight
as a moment is redeemed.

Gnarled hands are suddenly graceful, recreating:
the word:
a potter shaping a vessel,
filling it with truth
and pouring out a fragrant offering.

The poet is young
old
wise
foolish
profoundly vulnerable;
the probing conscience
of all those with a past.

The voice rises and falls —
populating the darkness
in which the light flickers,
sputters,
but continues to illumine,

In its glow, the silhouette of the storyteller
encompasses us,
and draws us into the fire's heart
to find salvation
as a people.

Rites of Passage

Parking is always a problem
in this part of town.
From perhaps a Golgotha's distance,
I begin walking toward the event. Passed:
ramshackle row houses
independent dwellings leaning, ironically,
on each other
"beware of dog" signs pathetic
attempts at masking fear
unkempt children swinging desperately
on a playground's
skeleton. Well-fed
guilty
uneasy
I
pass quickly by these sordid scenes,
glossy shoes clicking imperiously on
the filthy pavement.

Journey's end: to the left a sterile restaurant,
mass producing satisfaction,
to the right the sanctuary,
filling rapidly with change.

I enter, claim a warm space,
and witness the rites of passage
of the chosen few.

A sense of belonging is renewed as I think back,
during the recessionary,
to the cracked concrete aisle between my world
and its extension here in this haven.

Had I taken more seriously this day's theme
and my own faith,
I would not have walked so empty-handedly but would,
rather, have carried a cross.

— by Tim Wiebe

Correction is the High Road

the church was full that evening
squirmy runny-nosed boys
prissy frilly girls
fathers in Sears' latest cuffs
anxious mothers
buxom lavender-smelling grandmothers
all wearing crepe-paper roses
red if your mother was alive
white if she had 'passed on'
(some kid said he liked white better)
she stood to sing
with her brush-cut brothers
her stern, Evening-in-Paris sister
slapping out the tune
on the voluptuous
80 dollar accordion
then it was her turn
she in the circle-skirted green taffeta
who cares where it comes from
mother had scolded
long as it looks nice
the words came easily enough
(she had always been a good reader)
but the melody so hastily learned
over fasma
hung in mid-air
like the time she yelled 'retard'
and father appeared
out of nowhere
it would not be retrieved
you embarrassed me
half to death
the younger brush-cut told her later
cowering the silence
of the car

correction is the high road to life
neglect reproof and you miss the way

— by Helen Baergen

Grandpa, the Word, and the University Bus

saw her
reading her Bible on the bus today
just like that
on the bus
with Chaucer, Hemingway, Piaget and
punk faces all around
and she had painted nails
two-tone, half pink half red
painted lips pierced ears
plucked eyebrows pruned hair
nails
like pictures of the devil in hell
can you imagine
Hannah, scorned, resentful
imploring God Almighty
with flashy Max Factor lips and
Sarah, withered and barren
in her desert wind-swept tent
beating her chest
with Oil of Olay hands and Mary Kay nails
nails
as long as the devil's in hell
she's mocking the Word, grandpa would have said
making a spectacle of it
that's what she's doing
he would've said
grandpa
smelling of gutters and carbolic soap
sharing the coal oil light with grandma
he reading she stitching
the Word: holy, to be hallowed
not to be taken lightly
justice: rolls down like mighty waters
riches: wither and perish
nails: pierce
didn't know Hosea's God
was laughing, gentle, frivolous
didn't know Paul never meant those things
about keeping women silentsaintlysubmissivestraight
grandpa
knowing only he must lead her
reading the Word hearing the Word
in dim dark silent seclusion
not parading It among people
on a bus yet
with noisy garb gaudy jangles
and nails
like the devil's in hell
she's mocking the Word
grandpa would've said

observed along the way

Roy Vogt
October, 1986

The Sounds and Sights of a Late Summer and Fall

• What is the most common thing that older people say? "My, how time is flying!" Well, I must be getting older. The last few months, from late summer into autumn, have flown by like a dream. But it's been as beautiful dream, and I'd like to recapture some of its special sights and sounds.

• Each season has its own rhythm, and the trick is to catch it and to let it catch you. This year the special rhythm of summer seemed to capture us early, and it carried us along right into autumn. What is this rhythm? It is a blend of privacy and company, of long walks in the woods and lazy times on the beach; it is the joy of children and grandchildren mixed with the agony of golf; it is a daily routine of satisfying work interspersed with quiet talks about life and friends; a frenetic hour defying high waves in the lake followed by an unusually beautiful and peaceful sunset; it is, not least, drinking a cool twist shandy while watching our neighbor Helmut Penner sweeping by on the lake on his purple-sailed surfboard. It's been wonderful — one of the best summers in a long time.

• One of the things we are privileged to observe again is the tremendous curiosity of small children, especially about nature. It takes our oldest grandchild, who is now almost a year and a half, over an hour to walk the short distance from our cottage to the store. Even the promise of an ice cream cone at the store does not prevent him from stopping every ten feet to admire a passing butterfly or bird, to dig among stones at the side of the road, or to imitate a dog coming toward him. There is, very obviously, an exciting new world opening up to him. We do our best to encourage this interest in nature by teaching him how to imitate a number of animals and birds. After a few weeks we are proud to note that he can bellow out sounds like woof woof, moo moo, baa, tweet tweet, and others. This is fine, until it comes to our son's wedding. We

are all gathered at St. Aidan's Anglican Church in Winnipeg one Saturday afternoon, the young couple have just come down the aisle, and the minister begins the service with the solemn words of welcome, "Dearly Beloved, we are gathered here . . .", when, all of a sudden, a few rows behind us, there comes the loud sound of "woof woof, moo moo", and so on. The minister smiles compassionately, a few grapes and marshmallows are stuffed into the mouth of the eager young performer, throttling a loud "Meow" in mid word, and the service slowly stumbles back on to the high road of dignity.

• Part of the summer and fall are spent listening to informal reports from friends on various church conferences that they have attended. I am glad that we have what one might call "institutional Mennonites;" those who give a lot of time and energy to our various church institutions and participate regularly in church conferences. We used to belong to that group, and we like to think that we contributed something to the maintenance of a Mennonite-Christian presence in our community. In the last few years we have drifted into what I would call the silent majority — those who remain committed to the main beliefs of the Mennonite faith but do not participate very actively in the institutional life of the church. People will, of course, have different reasons for doing this. I would find it difficult to articulate our reasons, and it would bore you if I tried, but at present we feel most at ease with a somewhat loose connection to the church. A few interesting things seem to have happened at the conferences this year. At meetings in Kitchener, Ontario, the leadership of the Mennonite Brethren Conference apologized to the "other" main Canadian Conference (the Conference of Mennonites in Canada) for the harsh treatment sometimes given to members of the MB conference who married members of the other conference. The implication of such treatment was, of

course, that members of the other conference were not true Christians. I am glad that we seem to be hitting a higher road here. What needs to be examined more carefully, however, right across the Mennonite church, is the deep-seated self-righteousness and judgmentalism that one encounters so frequently. Friends of ours who moved to Kelowna, B.C. a few years ago, and wanted very much to join a Mennonite Church, found such a negative type of religion in all of the Mennonite churches there that they eventually joined the Presbyterian Church, where they are happy and active.

This judgmental spirit also surfaced at the meetings of the North American General Conference Church in Saskatoon this summer. It was the turn of homosexuals to receive blanket condemnation. I don't presume to have the last word on how one ought to evaluate homosexuality — is it an aberration, a normal variation in human sexuality, a willful act of defiance against normal sexuality? — I don't know, and I don't think anyone of us has thought the matter through carefully enough to be safe in making pronouncements at this point. It is even far less appropriate for such a complex and little-understood problem to be settled on a conference floor. I am reminded of what Mark Twain once said about his faith: "I have a difficult enough time living up to the positive things that I already believe to spend much time quibbling about matters that aren't clear to me."

• Other sights and sounds of summer: a conversation with a bureaucratic nurse in St. Boniface Hospital. The scene is as follows: my father has just emerged from a round of tests; it is 3 p.m. and he hasn't eaten all day. Question to the nurse: "When is dinner?" Answer, "Soon." Next question, "Would it be possible to get a little bit to eat now?" Answer, "I suppose so." Next question, "Could I possibly have a bowl of corn flakes?" (I am personally sympathetic to this last question because I have found when there is nothing else I feel like eating, I always enjoy corn flakes.) Answer from nurse: "No, you can't have corn flakes. That is breakfast food. You can have a sandwich." Then my question to the nurse: "Would it actually be any more difficult for you to get him corn flakes than to get him a sandwich?" Answer, "I suppose not, but he shouldn't be having corn flakes in the middle of the afternoon." My next question, "Would you please get him a bowl of corn flakes?" Answer, "O.K." — not in a very friendly voice. Ten minutes

later the corn flakes is there. No problem. Shades of a scene from *Five Easy Pieces* with Jack Nicholson. There will always be people who respond more to rules and customs than to the needs of people. It is unfortunate that one sometimes finds them in hospitals, schools, and universities — and in the church.

• Another late summer scene, this time in Steinbach. It is the 70th birthday of my Aunt Liesa, a **very** favorite person, who thought years ago that she would never come anywhere near this age. It has been a valiant struggle and the large group of friends that have gathered to celebrate the occasion truly admire her spirit. On an evening like this Steinbach resembles Hawaii at its best. The gardens are lush with flowers and the lawns are a deep green. In the back of the garden I think I can hear the crickets that used to cheer me to sleep as a boy, when we lived close to the creek. People are discussing politics, doctors ("who is the best at diagnosing prostate trouble?"), recent trips, and what A. D. Penner is up to these days. It is a good place to be, and a good place to be from.

• But now it is early fall. Many of the leaves are already changing color. The usual fall melancholy sweeps over me. Why can't one squeeze the good times and hold them? The setting sun shifts further and further to the south. There is a nip in the air — another good time has passed all too quickly. I am deeply moved one evening as I read how the late British novelist, Elizabeth Bowen, described her feelings upon leaving Rome after a lovely visit there: "Such a day, when it comes, has nothing particular about it. Only from the train as it moved out did I look at Rome. Backs of houses I had not ever seen before wavered into mists, stinging my eyes. My darling, my darling, my darling. Here we have no eternal city."

• Luckily, the demands of work call us back from such sadness. The last few months have been fruitful. In my little "writer's shack" at the lake I have managed to revise my textbook in economics just in time for the publisher's deadline. Early in September the students are back, in larger numbers than ever. I look at 94 faces in my first-year class, and many of them seem eager to get on with learning. That is partly first-day illusion, but I know from past experience that a good handful will likely discover during the year, if they haven't already, what a tremendous privilege it is to be at university and to pursue wisdom. For those moments one lives!

mm

review

Mennonites and Reformed in Dialogue

Mennonite World Conference has announced that copies of the new study guide, *Mennonites and Reformed in Dialogue*, are now available from MWC headquarters in Lombard.

MWC had originally expected to receive the books around the first of this year, but due to publishing delays in Europe, the books did not arrive until recently.

The 89-page study guides are jointly published by MWC and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches as part of an ongoing dialogue between the two church bodies, sometimes called the "twin brothers of the Reformation."

The booklets include a preface statement by MWC and WARC; an introduction by the editors — Henk Kossen and Larry Miller for the Mennonites and Hans-Georg vom Berg and Lukas Vischer for the Reformed; and articles on "Who Are the Mennonites Today?" by

Cornelius J. Dyck, "The Reformed Family: A Profile" by Alan P. F. Sell, "Who Are the Reformed Today?" by Jean-Marc Chappuis, "The Attitude of the Reformed Churches Today to the Condemnation of the Anabaptists in the Reformed Confessional Documents" and "A Mennonite View on the Reformed Condemnations" by Heinold Fast.

The study guide is intended for use by persons interested in discussing Mennonite/Reformed relations at the local or regional level in congregations, conferences and ad hoc groups. In the preface, MWC and WARC "urge Mennonite and Reformed churches to enter into or deepen dialogue with each other."

The books are available from Mennonite World Conference, 528 E. Madison St., Lombard, IL 60148 at a cost of \$3.00 each, or \$2.50 in quantities of 5 or more, postpaid.

This Mirror is moving down Portage

The offices of the *Mennonite Mirror* and the Mennonite Literary Society Inc., will be relocating to 207-1317A Portage Avenue, Winnipeg, R3G 0V3, around the 10th of October.

Our phone number will remain the same.



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Manitoba news

Canadian broadcaster **Roy Bonisteel** was the guest speaker at a fund-raising banquet for Bethesda Hospital in Steinbach on September 22. Bonisteel is host of the CBC television religious program *Man Alive*. The banquet was planned to raise funds for the hospital's expansion project.

Albert Loewen, Steinbach trustee who has been on the Hanover School board for 26 years, has decided to step down. He served as board chairman for 12 years, and also served on the provincial public schools finance board.

The *Mennonite Community Orchestra* will present a family concert on Sunday, October 19, at 4 pm at the Mennonite Brethren Collegiate Institute. Special feature will be a performance of *Peter and the Wolfe*, by Prokofiev, narrated by Al Reimer.

Two Steinbach groups, the **Treble Teens Choir**, and the **Steinbach Junior High School stage band**, received financial assistance from the Manitoba government's Expo '86 Travel Assistance Program to enable them to travel to Expo and perform.

The Carillon of Steinbach was awarded two prizes at the Canadian Community Newspaper Association convention in Calgary. The newspaper was judged to have the best front page in its circulation class of more than 10,000; and the December 18 issue won an award in the best Christmas edition competition.

The Canadian national junior men's and women's volleyball teams both earned silver medals at the North Central Caribbean (NORCECA) zone volleyball championships held in Puerto Rico in August. Their top-three finish earns both teams berths in their respective world junior championships in 1987. Both teams lost only to Cuba, which finished first in both divisions. The men's team is coached by **David Unruh**, and the women's team by **Mike Burchuk** both of the University of Winnipeg.

Rev. David Wiebe has been appointed as director of evangelism and church growth by the Conference of Mennonites in Manitoba.

Choice Books of Winnipeg recently had to purchase a new van. A banquet was held on August 21 at the Mennonite Brethren Bible College in order to honour the many volunteers who assist in the work, and to raise funds to further the work in Central Canada. Anyone interested in assisting should write or phone Choice Resources, 1421 Erin St., Winnipeg, R3E 2S9. Telephone 783-7447.



Andrew Klassen, saxophone student of Dale Stammen, was the winner in the final round of the 1986 Lawrence Genser Scholarship Competition held last April at the School of Music, University of Manitoba. In June, he placed first in the Women's Musical Club scholarship competition, and also received one of two senior scholarships from the Wednesday Morning Musicales. That same month, Andrew completed with first class honors the exam requirements for the A.Mus (Western Board) and ARCT (Royal Conservatory of Music) diplomas. In August, Andrew received the second place award in the woodwind class of the national competitive festival of Music held on the UBC campus in Vancouver. Through local and provincial music festivals he had won the right (together with five other Manitobans) to represent the province at the national level. Andrew is currently teaching saxophone and theory in the U of M Preparatory Division and Academy for Gifted Youth, and completing his final year of the integrated B.Mus/B.Ed. program. He is the son of Bertha and John Klassen of Winnipeg.

Anne Unruh is the new Resource Centre manager for the Conference of Mennonites in Canada. She replaces Evelyn Peters-Rojas who has left for a term in Bolivia with MCC. Anne is a member of First Mennonite Church in Winnipeg.

George Braun has resigned as pastor of the Morden MB church. He has moved to Lethbridge to begin work at the Lakeview MB Church.

A new concept for seniors' housing is taking shape in Southern Winnipeg. **Markham Village** is a community being developed by nine Mennonite churches, with an emphasis on inter-generational residency. A wide range of housing types will be built, with special facilities for older people, but also homes for younger couples with children. The philosophy of the non-profit corporation is to respond to the total needs of seniors, ensuring that they remain a vibrant part of an inter-generational, caring community.



Lori Vogt recently attained her fellowship in the Royal College of Physicians of Canada in psychiatry. She is working at the Brandon Mental Health Centre. She is the daughter of Prof. and Mrs. Ernest Vogt of Winnipeg.

COMING EVENTS

October 16: First lecture in Winnipeg Mennonite Elementary School lecture series, Helping Parents Become the Primary Sex Educator; topic The Adolescent; 7:30 p.m., 26 Columbus Crescent. Early Childhood topic follows on October 23. Cost \$5 per session.

October 18: Winnipeg Mennonite Elementary School garage sale, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the school, 26 Columbus Crescent.

October 18th, 7:30 pm at Young United Church, Benefit Concert featuring Mennonite Children's Choir, Faith & Life Male Choir and Henriette Schellenberg; for Independent Living Resource Centre, non-profit service organization to the disabled to live independently in the community. For information call 947-0194.

October 19: 4 pm at MBCI, Mennonite Community Orchestra Family Concert: *Peter and the Wolfe* and *Vivaldi Concerto in A Minor*.



Karen R. Klassen has completed the requirements for a violin degree in Western Board and Toronto Conservatory of Music. She received first class honours and the AMUS and ARCT degrees in June, 1986. She previously received these same degrees in piano. She is a graduate (Education) of the University of Winnipeg, and has spent three years teaching strings in schools and privately. Her teacher is Donna Grescoe. She is the daughter of John and Bertha Klassen.

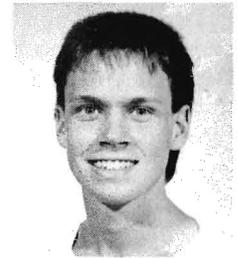
Arthur Fast, who together with his wife **Helene** has been teaching in China for two years, has returned to Winnipeg, and will now be a part of the leadership team of Sargent Avenue Mennonite Church.



Margaret and Lawrence Peters of Winkler are beginning two-year Mennonite Central Committee U.S. assignments in Minneapolis, where they will be serving as MCC program coordinators. The Peters' previously served with MCC in Attawapiskat, Ont. Margaret was last employed as a registered nurse in The Pas, Man. Lawrence last worked as a high school teacher in The Pas. The Peters' are members of Emmanuel Fellowship in Winkler. Lawrence's parents are Jake and Lydia Peters of Winkler. Margaret's parents are George and Mary Baerg of Winkler.



Ingrid and William Reimer of Winnipeg, are beginning five-year Mennonite Central Committee assignments in Sudan, where they will be serving as MCC country representatives. The Reimers previously served with MCC in Nigeria. William received a bachelor's degree in mathematics from the University of Winnipeg. Ingrid received a nursing license from St. Boniface School of Nursing in Winnipeg. William was last employed as a teacher in Winnipeg at Mennonite Brethren Collegiate Institute. The Reimers are members of North Kildonan Mennonite Brethren church in Winnipeg. Their children are Anna, Jason and Maria. Ingrid's parents are Elsa and Peter von Kampen of Winnipeg. William's parents are George and Olga Reimer of Winnipeg.



Ruth Rempel of Winnipeg, has begun a three-year Mennonite Central Committee assignment in Uganda, where she will be working in secondary education. Rempel previously served with MCC in Kenya. Rempel received a bachelor's degree in sociology from the University of Manitoba. She is a member of the Fort Garry Mennonite Fellowship in Winnipeg. Her parents are Henry and Johanna Rempel of Winnipeg.

Ron Lipp of Winnipeg, is beginning a one-year SALT assignment with Mennonite Central Committee in Araguacema, Brazil, where he will be serving as a maintenance worker at a boarding school for children. Lipp was last employed as a sales clerk in Winnipeg. He is a member of North Kildonan United Church in Winnipeg. His parents are Janice and Rome Lipp of Winnipeg.

Erven and Rose Dyck of Carman, have begun two-year Mennonite Central Committee assignments with SELF-HELP Crafts in Ephrata, Pa. The Dycks are members of Homewood Mennonite Church in Carman.



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Rev. Franz Wiebe is the new leading minister at **First Mennonite Church** in Winnipeg. He and his wife **Ilse** and three children have been in Germany for the past three years, where he has served churches in Regensburg and Munich. Prior to that he was pastor in Winnipeg at the Douglas and Springfield churches. Rev. Wiebe replaces **Victor Kliever**, who is the new principal of **Elim Bible School** in Altona.

Mennonite Brethren Collegiate Institute has a capacity enrollment of about 430 students, approximately the same as last year. Staff members who have left MBCI include: **William Reimer**, now in Sudan, serving with MCC; **Edith Schmidt**, who has moved to Hamilton; **Carol Enns**, teaching physical education in Ken Seeforth Junior High School in Winnipeg; **Marion Friesen**, presently working in her church; **Don Dyck**, working in his father-in-law's lumber business in Ontario; **Dave Teichrob**, on study leave in Fresno, and **Mary Unruh** on study leave at Red River Community College. New teachers are **Peter Krahn** who has been teaching in Jamaica; **Hans Froese** who also has been teaching in Jamaica with MCC; **Julian Hudson** from Saskatchewan; **Peter Luitjens** from Waboden; **Rob Neufeld** from Winnipeg and **Bev Jacelski**, who will teach physical education. Construction is underway for an addition to MBCI, which should be completed by the end of the year.

Enrollment at **Westgate Collegiate** is 275, approximately the same as last year. Some changes in staff have occurred. **Gayle Wiebe**, music and English, has left for studies at the Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart,

Indiana. **John Enns**, Math and English, has a one-year leave of absence. New teachers include **Vic Pankratz**, music; **Ed Epp**, returning from a two-year teaching assignment in China; **Ruth Dyck**, senior high mathematics; **Ruth Vogt**, grade 12 English.

Mennonite Collegiate Institute in **Gretna** has several changes in personnel. **Rudy Friesen**, former business administrator, has left for work in Taiwan. He will be replaced by **Wes Sawatzky**. New physical education directors are **Nancy Graber**, formerly of Freeman, S.D., and **David Petkau** from St. Catharines, Ontario. **Robert Wiebe** of Winnipeg will be the new music director replacing **Rudy Krahn**. **Henry Dick**, who has taught mathematics and physics at MCI for several years, is taking a one-year leave of absence. Enrollment at the school this year is approximately the same as last year at 130 students.

The **Winnipeg Mennonite Elementary School** has a significant increase in enrollment this year; 223 students are enrolled, compared with 189 last year. The school is filled to capacity and now has a waiting list. Three new staff members have been added: **Elisabeth Peters** teaches Kindergarten half time; **Elisabeth Bergen** teaches Grade 5; **Janet Penner** has a Grade 2/3 classroom. **Erna Schroeder**, who has taught for several years in the school, has resigned.



Daniel and Wilma Wiens of Winnipeg, are beginning three-year Mennonite Central Committee assignments in Swaziland. Wilma will be working as a nursery school teacher and Daniel as an agricultural technical assistant. Daniel received a bachelor's degree in agriculture from the University of Manitoba. He was last employed as a carpenter in Winnipeg. The Wienses are members of St. Boniface Evangelical Church in Winnipeg. They have one child, Joshua Daniel. Wilma's parents are Henry and Susie Loewen of Winnipeg. Daniel's parents are Hilda and Ted Wiens of Winnipeg.

mirror mix-up

TYP I



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So, don't be a



This edition we have no winner to announce because the closing date for the September puzzle has not passed yet.

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 November 4, 1986.

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Agnes and George Epp of Thompson, are beginning three-year Mennonite Central Committee assignments in Neuwied, West Germany, where George will be working as assistant secretary for MCC Europe. Agnes received a bachelor's degree in sociology from the University of Alberta in Edmonton. George received a bachelor's degree in English from the University of Alberta. George was last employed as an English teacher in Thompson. Agnes last worked as a primary teacher in Thompson. The Epps are members of Thompson United Methodist Church. They have one child, Cindy. Agnes's parents are Mr. and Mrs. A. G. Zacharias of Rosthern, Sask. George's parents are the late Mr. and Mrs. Gerhard J. Epp of Rosthern.

Barbara Claassen Smucker of Waterloo, writer of children's books, received an honorary D. Litt. degree at the May 29 convocation for Arts and Human Kinetics and Leisure Studies graduates, University of Waterloo. Smucker's interests have spanned a wide variety of involvements. Now retired from Renison College at the University of Waterloo, where she served seven years as chief librarian, she started her working life as a teacher of English and journalism in the public high school system in Kansas in 1937. From 1939 to 1941 she was a reporter for the *Evening Kansas Republican*, in Newton. After almost 20 years as a full-time mother and homemaker (1941-60) she resumed high school teaching. By this time she had already published two children's books, *Henry's Red Sea* and *Cherokee Run*. In 1969 she began an eight-year term as children's librarian at Kitchener Public Library when her husband Don received an appointment at Conrad Grebel College. In 1977 she published the highly successful *Underground to Canada*. Since then there have been *Runaway to Freedom*, *Days of Terror*, *Amish Adventure*, and *White Mist*. Recognition for her achievements as a children's author reached a peak in 1979 when she won a \$5,000 Canada Council prize for *Days of Terror* as well as the Ruth Schwartz award for the best children's book in Canada. In her 71st year, Smucker is currently completing her eighth book.

Ken and Heidi Franz have been commissioned by the Transcona Community Church for work in Shamshabad, India, under the MB Missions/Services Board. Ken will be teaching in the Bible School and Heidi will be doing some instructing on health care.

****ANNUITIES**

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In 1951 A. K. (Bill) Gee — who had assumed the leadership of Celebrity Concerts — had an urge to try something new in the field of entertainment. "Travelogues," with roots in the 19th century Lyceum lecture series was the answer.

The first series began at old Grace Church, which old-timers of Winnipeg will remember was a landmark at the corner of Notre Dame and Ellice. That night 150 frostbitten prairie dwellers with global curiosity basked in celluloid fantasies of Brazil. The following season, World Adventure Tours moved to the Playhouse Theatre and also expanded to other cities throughout Western Canada. When Winnipeg's Centennial Auditorium opened in 1968 it became the permanent home of World Adventure Tours in our City.

During these 35 years travel has become more affordable, more accessible and more creative. The whole planet is open to many of us (and even outer space is attainable to a few). World Adventure Tours continues to expand — now under the able direction of a third generation of Gees, Nancy Gee Danwich, granddaughter of Fred M. Gee. Beautiful new theatres have just been built in Thunder Bay, Ontario and Richmond, B.C.; and, World Adventure

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Menno Simons Symposium

Menno Simons formally joined the Anabaptist movement 450 years ago in the Netherlands and became an important leader of the Mennonites who bear his name. To celebrate this anniversary, Mennonite Studies at the University of Winnipeg will focus on the life and work of this radical reformer of the sixteenth century at its annual fall symposium.

Egil Grislis, a Lutheran theologian and a professor of religion at the University of Manitoba, will deliver three lectures on Menno Simons and his significance in the history and theology of the Christian church.

The topics, dates and times of the lectures are as follows:

- Menno Simons and the Incarnation (Wed., Oct. 8 at 7 P.M.);
- Menno Simons and Good Works (Thur., Oct. 9 at 11:30 A.M.);
- Menno Simons and the Apostle Paul (Thur., Oct. 9 at 7 P.M.).

College and university students, faculty, and the public are invited to attend one, two, or all lectures. After each presentation by Prof. Grislis there will be time for questions and discussion. All lectures take place in Room 3C01, Centennial Hall, University of Winnipeg.

Those who come to the symposium might also be interested in touring the new facilities of Mennonite Studies, including the newly-established Mennonite Studies Centre at 380 Spence Street (McNamara Hall). **H.L.**

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“Waut jü got?”

fonn Victor Peters

Wie wachten opp däm Toronto Airport no onsen Flug no Winnipeg. Opp'm Airport ess nijch fäl to doonen aus Menschen too beoabachten. Twee Steela fonn mie auf saut eena enn opp däm sien Schemmedaun wea de Flag fonn Australian oppjebackt.

Etj säd, “You an Australian?”

Hee auntwoad, “I am an Austrian.”

Etj wea febleft. En Kanada enn enne Stäts femischen Lied foaken “Australia” en “Austria.” Sajcht eena “I was in Austria,” sajcht bolt wäa, “I have always wanted to go to Australia.”

Etj froach am nü aus hee dietsch kunn. Natierlich kaun etj daud, meend hee, etj sie doch Östreicha. Nü reisd hee auf omm Noaden fonn Edmonton eene Asbestos Mine to beseetjen. Omm Asbest üte Ead too hoalen brucke se meeren-deels österreische Maschienen. Hee wea en “trouble shooter” enn sach donoa daud soon'ne Maschienen rejchtijch oabeiden.

Etj haud mie mett dissen Menschen fetald, opp eemol see etj eenen grooten Kjediel jeit langsomm nom Information Desch. He haud en dunklen Anzug aun, droach schlips enn haud eenen Fountain Pen enne Suitfupp. Opp'm Kopp haud hee eenen Stroohoot. Etj docht bie mie, “Woone mennische Konferens trifft sijch nü en Ontario?” Too miene Frü säd etj, “Sachst Du Kloassen hia febie schlentjren?”

“Etj weet wäm Du meenst,” säd miene Frü, “oba woaromm nannst Du am Kloassen?”

“Mie lat'et däm no eenem Kloassen,” säd etj. “Dee litjent mank dee Grossweidsche Kloasses, doa Noaden fonn Horndean.”

“Mie sitt dee mea noa eenen Jiesbrajcht,” säd miene Frü. “Etj jleew daut's en Jiesbrajcht.”

Etj sie frädlich: “Joa, daud kunn uck eena fonne Plum Coulsche Jiesbrajchts sennen.”

Nü kaum Jiesbrajcht tridj en satt sijch bie siene Frü han. Dee wea ernoa jee-stuckt, kjitjt frintlijch äwa äre Brellejläsa en satt sitj dän Hoot trajcht. Daut wea en groota, witta Stroohoot mett eenen bleiwen Baunt eromm. Daut latste mol haud etj soonen Hoot opp'm Kopp fonn'ne Prädja Peeta Appsche fonn Morden jeseenen. Daut wea aune 1930.

Daut kaum soo daud opp'm Airplane de Jiesbrajchts kratjt hinja ons too setten kaumen. Daut Flugseijch fonn Toronto bat Winnipeg as lang nijch soo groot aus daud fonn Frankfurt bat Toronto. Doa setten blooss sass Lied enne Reaj, dree aun jieda Sied fomm Gang.

Eene Frü saut aum Fensta, dann de Jiesbrajchtsche, dann Jiesbrajcht, en dann wea de Gang. Foats aum Gang aune aundre Sied saut en Dietschlenda. Dee nobad pienijch mett de Frü woont bie de Jiesbrajchts saut — opp Hoagdietsch.

Schliesslich dreid Jiesbrajcht sitj no dee Frü aum Fensta enn säd: “Kommst Dü aus Daitschlant?”

De Frü säd: “Ja, ich stieg in Frankfurt ein.”

Daut wea emm August, oba Jiesbrajcht mach aun Paraguay jedocht haben en froach: “Ist da jetzt Winter?”

“Nein,” säd de Frü, “Deutschland hat jetzt Sommer, genau so wie wir.”

Jiesbrajcht wea en bät febleft, oba donn kaum grots eene Stewardess. See wea eene schmocke Jüdemejal, en wiels see de Lied en de Reaj haud heat dietsch räden, froach se: “Was wollen Sie trinken?”

Jiesbrajcht froach, “Waut jü got?” oba hee wea mette Jedanken noch emma biem Wada en Dietschlaund en donn säd siene Frü: “Orange Juice.”

Boolt kaum dee Mejal uck mett eene kjeleene Powos aunjetost en stalld bie de Jiesbrajchts twee Jläsa Orange Juice han. Donn kjitjt Jiesbrajcht opp en säd gaunss

erstaunt: "De Dietschlenda kjreach Wien!"

Nü roopt Jiesbrajcht de Deenstmejal tridj en säd: "Wein, please."

De Stewardess: "Red or white?"

Jiesbrajcht: "Yes".

De Stewardess smeild, trock äa Woachtje noda en gauf am werklich twee Buddeltjes. En de Jiesbrajchtsche wea uck jlecklich; see haud nü twee Jläsa mett Orange Juice ferr sitj.

Wäa opp'm Flugseijch jewasst es weet daut soon Powostje em Gang emma han-en-hää juckat, wiels irjent-wäa well emma waut. Daut wea jiedamol eene goldne Jeläajenheit fe Jiesbrajcht wann de Powos febie deideld.

Jiesbrajcht wort mett de Tiet sea rädrich. "Wie lange bist Dü schon en Kanada?" froach hee de Frü aum Fensta.

"Ich bin in Portage la Prairie geboren. Ich war nur in Deutschland um die Verwandten meines Mannes zu besuchen," säd de Frü.

"Dann haben Deine Eltren mit Dich immer schön Daitsch gesprochen. Viele Leite tun das nicht mehr."

"Nein, meine Eltern sprechen nicht deutsch. Das sind Engländer. Mein Familienname ist Tupper. Aber ich heiratete einen Deutschen, und er und besonders seine Mutter haben mir Deutsch beigebracht."

Jiesbrajcht stalld langsam sien Glauss han. Uck de Jiesbrajchtsche kijitj soo aus wann se en biblischet Wunda ferr sitj haud.

"Dauss is ja meist nich zü glauben," säd Jiesbrajcht. "Du'sprichst ja wie eine aus Daitschlant!"

Nü interessead sitj uck de Jiesbrajchtsche: "Hast Dü auch Kinder?"

"Ja," säd de Englische, "sie sind 18 und 14 Jahre alt."

"Sprechen die auch daitsch?" forsch Jiesbrajcht nü wieda.

"Die sprechen ein besseres Deutsch wie ich und lachen wenn ich Fehler mache."

Ditt wea de Jiesbrajchts äare easchte Reid opp'm Plän. No Ontario weare se mett'm Buss jefoaren. Fe Jiesbrajcht wearet meist toofäl: Daut easchte Wunda, woo soon grootet Flugseijch mett aul dee Menschen sitj enne Loft hilt, dann daut Orange Juice so leijcht mett Wien too ersatten jintj, en schliesslich daut ne enjlische Frü so dietsch räden kunn. "Nä," säd Jiesbrajcht aus hee biem rütgonen sitj no siene Frü dreid dee hinja am jintj: "Ditt ess onse easchte oba nijch de latste Reis opp'm Flugseijch!" 

MENNOS SPRACHE

(Oder Tun und Lassen)

Nächtlich sprechen Mennos viel von guten Taten,
Tagsüber raffen sie die Körnlein ein,
Sie gehen in die Welt, zu helfen und beraten —
Und lassen ihre Väter in der Welt allein.

Sie reden von dem Königreich zu bauen,
Sie sagen es mit stets gebeugtem Haupt —
Die Augen solcher kann man selten schauen,
Ihr junges Wesen die Wahrhaftigkeit beraubt.

Sie sprechen zu dem Jesus-Gott in stets vertrautem Tone,
Doch heilig ist für sie schon lange nuscht nicht mehr,
Die Kirchen voller Prunk-verstecktem Hohne —,
Und zanken sich durch Mittler hin und her.

Sie sprechen viel von Stewardschiffens-Namen,
Und bauen, richten, halten Sitzungen stets ab,
Und beten oft und wohlgefällige Amen,
Und brechen über all Gewesenes den Stab.

Sie haben die Geschichte neu geschrieben:
„Vorfahren hatten drüben selber schuld!“
Das Leben und die Leistung solcher ausgerieben,
„Weil Gott,“ so sie, „verlor mit ihnen die Geduld.“

Die Sprache wurde in den Wind geworfen,
Sie zeichnen sich durch Monolingua aus,
Die Gräber überall in alten Dorfen,
Kein Raum für sie im Kanada-Vermehrungshaus.

Es kommt der Tag, wo wir uns alle sehen werden,
Wir treffen uns in dem Nachhauseheer!:
Es wird der Abschied schwer, wie je, von unsern Erden:
In Sachen Ehrfurcht find Er unser Säcklein karg,
Und unser Acker wüst und leer.

von Jack Thiessen

**Welches war das "gelobte Land"?
Wer konnte es 1930 wissen?**

Amerikapest in Burwalde.

Durch Aktivität und Organisiertheit zeichnet sich Burwalde bekanntlich nicht aus. Weder ein Dorfkativ, noch eine voranzgehende Dorfarmenorganisation, noch vielmehr ein auf der Höhe seiner Aufgaben stehender Dorfrat sind dort zu Hause.

Dabei sind aber in Burwalde durchweg „arme“ Leute. Sie haben nicht einmal so viel, um ihren Beitrag in den SDS leisten zu können. Auch die 100 Tausend Rubel, die sie 1929-30 beim Duseprostitoi verdient haben, vermögen die „große Not“ nicht zu lindern.

Wo liegt das Geheimnis der „Massenarmut“?

Für den sozialistischen Aufbau haben die Burwalder nichts übrig (von wenigen Ausnahmen nicht gesprochen). Der liegt ja hinter der „dichten“ Hülle der „fernen“ und „unbestimmten“ Zukunft. Und sie haben viel „nähere“ Zukunftsziele. — Der

Anmerkung der Schriftleitung: Über die in dem Artikel ausgemerkten Tatsachen kann man sich bei Gen. Nagy — Chortika vergewissern.

Frühling naht heran, und da heißt es, „stets bereit“ zu sein für den Massenabmarsch ins „Gelobte Land“.

Wegen diesen „Zug“ vermögen auch die trostlosesten Briefe der schon abgewanderten „Rechtgläubigen“ nichts zu machen.

Nachte Tatsachen sind für sie keine Beweise.

Entgegen der allgemein bestehenden Ansicht sprechen bei ihnen ~~Satte nicht~~. Trotzdem sie aus der Feder eines unverdächtigen Zeugen, der im vorigen Herbst ausgewandert ist, die Mitteilung haben, daß man, ausgewandert als Kulak, jetzt nur noch über „eine Marke“ verfügt (wo bleibt denn die „Spende“ von Hindenburg, dem alten Ruch?); daß in den berüchtigsten Lagern von Hammerstein, Hamburg u. s. w. „nur noch wenig ganz gesund“ sind; daß man das Massenmorden der Kinder in den Konzentrationslagern in den schmutzigsten Kaffern un widerleglich bestätigt bekommen hat, — beharrt man auf der Auswanderungseinstellung.

Man stellt sich der „künstlichen Auswahl“ zur Verfügung.

Bisher haben wir die „künstliche Auswahl“ der Besten nur im Tier- und Pflanzenreich angewandt gesehen. Die Burwalder scheinen dagegen sich der Zukunft der Menschheit freiwillig als auslösen zu wollen. Um den Preis der Aufopferung von Kranken, Kindern und Alten die wahrscheinlich freieren könnten, stellt man sich der „Völkertliga“ von ärztlichen Untersuchungskommissionen in Deutschland zur Verfügung, um das Glück zu versuchen, in der Zahl 100 von 5 Tausend ins „Gelobte Land“ zu gelangen.

Auch die Blutproben nimmt man dabei mit in Kauf. Oder werden die vielleicht nur von den Alten und Schwachen einzupressen, sie zu verjüngen; um auch aus diesen noch Profit zu schlagen. Dies scheint jedoch immer mehr unwahrscheinlich, da es noch genug Dumme unter den Gesunden gibt, die sich der Malaria in Brasilien etc bereit sind auszusetzen, und da die Arbeitslosigkeit draußen ohnehin groß genug ist.

Die Steppenkommune gestern und heute

— Ein Zeitungsblatt aus dem Jahre 1930

Vor einiger Zeit erhielten wir die Zeitung, die hier abgebildet erscheint, zugeschickt. Sehr abrupt führt sie uns eine Zeit vor, die für unsere Leute in der Ukraine eine Schreckenszeit war. So aktuell erleben die meisten von uns nicht einmal in unseren Geschichtsbüchern und in erzählten Geschichten was damals vor sich ging.

Heute fahren mennonitische Gruppen regelmässig nach der Ukraine, um die alte Heimat als stille Ruine zu „erleben“. Bei diesen Ausflügen kommt man gewöhnlich zu einem alten Dorf,

damals Grossweide genannt, wo heute eine sowjetische Steppenkommune mennonitische Touristen freundlich aufnimmt und bewirtet. Für unsere älteren Geschwister muss dieses ein seltsames Erlebnis sein.

Wer es nicht selbst erlebt hat, kann in den Büchern von Scholokow oder sonstwo nachlesen, wie die Dörfer kommuniziert wurden. Heute sieht man das Resultat, und man fragt sich, ob das Verlorene und das Gewonnene überhaupt in eine Rechnung eingetragen werden können. Wer kann das Blut und

die Tränen, das bittere Los der vielen auf einen Nenner bringen?

Für die „Arm- und Mittelbauern“ versprach das Blatt: „Euch dagegen erwartet hier eine ganz andere Zukunft (als in Amerika), als Begründer eines neuen Lebens mit voller Gleichberechtigung aller!“ (siehe Schluss des Aufsatzes „Amerikapest in Burwalde“.) Das Zeitungsblatt wurde uns freundlicherweise zugestellt von Fr. Anna Martens, Rabbit Lake. VGD

Proletarier aller Länder, vereinigt euch!

Die Steppenkommune

Wanderzeitung des Saporoschjer Kreiskomitees
der K. P. (B). U.

Степова Комунa

— Виїзна газета —
Запорізького Округкому КП(б)У

№ 9

Chortitza, 26. Februar 1930.

№ 9

Unter den Dörfern des Chortitzer Manous steht Nieder-Chortitza an erster Stelle. Die Dorfarnut an der Spitze eines gut organisierten Aktivs marschiert in revolutionärem Tempo vorwärts zum Sozialismus.

Auf der Höhe ihrer Aufgaben.

Die Bauern, Arm- und Mittelbauern von Nieder-Chortitza sind sich dessen ganz bewusst, daß sich ihr Weg von demjenigen der Kulaken und Ausbeuter trennen muß.

Die kompakte Kollektivisierung war schon vor einem Monat beendigt. 147 Wirtschaften mit einer Landfläche von 1670 Desjatin sind in eine große Kollektivwirtschaft vereinigt. Kulaken wurden nicht aufgenommen.

Das Statut der Genossenschaft für gemeinsame Bodenbearbeitung befriedigt die vorwärtsstrebenden, klassenbewußten Arm-

und Mittelbauern in Nieder-Chortitza schon lange nicht mehr: die Arbeiten im Kollektiv „International“ überschreiten bei weitem die Rahmen des S.S.S.

Die Vergesellschaftung der Zugkraft, des gesamten Inventars, des Pferdegeschirrs, des Futters usw. ist schon beendigt. Die Einrichtung von Ställen einiger Kulaken zu Kollektivzwecken geht auch ihrem Ende zu.

— Wir sind eigentlich gar kein S.S.S. mehr, sondern schon ein Artel“, sagen einige Verwaltungsmitglieder stolz.

D. B.

Liquidiert die Schädlinge des sozialistischen Aufbaues.

Nirgends, wahrscheinlich, wurde die Dorfarnut in den früheren „herrlichen“ Zeiten von den Dorfprotzen so angebeutelt, wie bei uns in Nieder-Chortitza,

auch ein schöner Vogel. Im Ausbeuter konnte er es mit einem Beliebigen aufnehmen. Ist gegen alle Maßnahmen der Sowjetregierung.

Heraus zum sozialistischen Wettbewerb!

Die allgemeine Versammlung der Kollektivmitglieder in Nieder-Chortitza beschloß, den sozialistischen Wettbewerb zu organisieren.

Als Bewertungspunkte kommen in Betracht:

- 1.) Übergang auf das Statut des Artels.
- 2.) Bestmögliche Organisation der Arbeit in den Kollektiven.
- 3.) Beste Durchführung der Frühjahrsansaatkampagne.
- 4.) Mächtigste Verbreitung der Traktorenscheine.

Die allgemeine Versammlung wählte eine Kommission zwecks Abschluß nicht später als zum 1. März eines Vertrags mit den Gegenbewerbern, als welche das Oberwider und Neuenborjer Kollektiv aufgerufen werden.

Wir bitten die Redaktion der „Steppenkomune“, die Rolle

des Vermittlers übernehmen zu wollen und Vertreter zum Abschluß der Verträge zu schicken.

Vorsitzender des Kollektivs
K e u p e l.

Nehmt Beispiel an Nieder-Chortitza!

In Hinblick der Mobilisierung von freien Mitteln steht Nieder-Chortitza im Manou an erster Stelle. Die Arbeit wurde rechtzeitig und richtig eingeleitet.

Die Kontrollziffern von Einlagen, überfristige Schulden, Obligationen, Einklagen von Kulakenwirtschaften usw. sind restlos ausgefüllt.

Als nächste Aufgabe stellt sich der Dorfrat die schnellste Verbreitung der Traktorenscheine.

D.

our word

A modest but lucrative proposal to Intourist in the Soviet Union

Since the early 1970s Mennonite tourist groups have visited the Soviet Union, seeing the remnants of the old Mennonite commonwealth (as David Rempel has called it), looking up relatives and friends in the eastern areas around Alma Ata, Tashkent, Novosibirsk, etc., and of course paying some heed to the considerable attractions of Moscow, Leningrad and Kiev, to say nothing of the Black Sea resorts. Some go out of a sense of duty to their relatives; others have a fascination for Mother Russia — all agree that a trip to the Soviet Union is like no other and should not be compared with holidays in Hawaii, for example. Even trips to eastern Europe do not measure up to the peculiar lure of the Soviet Union.

Of course all trips to Russia are arranged through Intourist and travellers soon become familiar with the hotel and flying procedures, which as one can imagine are the products of a monolithic structure and must be accepted as such. One need not fear being spoiled by these facilities.

But Mennonite tourists do not go to the Soviet Union to luxuriate in plush surroundings; they have their own good reasons for going, which may have little to do with what the travel posters and pamphlets announce. And this is what causes much of the difficulty between the tourist agency and its customers, which after all it should be seeking to satisfy.

Why, asks the concerned guide, either explicitly or implicitly, do Mennonites want to go and see these ruined buildings, these former churches which are now used as barns? Why are you so dissatisfied with our tour of Lenin Square (street, monument, building, museum, etc.) and so impatient when we show you the achievements of our society in the fields of economics, industrialization, space, etc., or the monumental monuments showing the fierce fighters who will guarantee peace in the future?

Of course, Soviet guides now show tourists more than that. They point out with a kind of perverse pride the “free markets” where beautiful fruit and vegetables are sold at exorbitant prices to people who obviously have more money than available goods. And at the same time they do show Mennonite tourists the imposing mansions of the Willms, Lepps, Wallmanns, etc., presumably to show what their earlier entrepreneurship had ultimately led to, while being reluctant to show the average Mennonite village on the Ukrainian steppe.

By and large there is a general and predictable tension between what Mennonite tourists want to see and do in the Soviet Union and what Intourist expects of them. It seems to me that there is one way of resolving this tension.

The Soviets are clearly interested in earning as much hard currency as they can through tourism. For travellers who have

gone several times it will be clear that more such currency is being extracted from the customers than previously. Mennonites should find some unmistakable way of letting Intourist know what it is that they would like to see and do in the Soviet Union. If that organization is truly interested in building up this lucrative business, then they will make those things available for that currency. If they would do that, tourists would, I think, flock to that country in much greater numbers. What are the improvements that would bring about a significant change? Here are some:

- Intourist, with some Mennonite help, should devise some really good tours to the former Mennonite colonies, with visits to villages which would allow for time and conversation with locals. There are many interesting sites that have been off limits and that would draw interested tourists, like Yushanlee (the estate of Johann Cornies) for example.

- Visits with Mennonite relatives and friends should be enhanced by offering good local arrangements and other circumstances (like visits to more of these relatives' homes, churches, etc.). Recent experience has shown that good visits in Intourist hotels are possible, but there is no reason why it should not be possible for visits to the local homes to take place, even when these are outside the particular Intourist town or city.

- In the cultural centres of the Soviet Union first-class tourists are treated like second-class citizens by Intourist, which arranges Beriozka concerts (circuses, ballets, operas, folklore ensembles) for them. Although some of these are very good, they are no substitute for the excellent concerts and programs that could be offered to discriminating art and music-lovers who happen to be tourists. Why is it not possible to have a summer season as is done in cities like Vienna, Munich and many others? Indeed, such concerts with the best performing artists could earn the Soviets a great deal of hard currency.

These suggestions are offered free of charge and in a spirit of goodwill. Tourists who have been there will have heard much about peace and goodwill while in the Soviet Union. In my trips there I have taken these statements seriously and have entered into various dialogues sincerely. Perhaps a real dialogue will only be possible when Soviet citizens also can visit our country and praise and blame our facilities and conditions. Even while in Russia it is difficult for the tourist, certainly the Mennonite tourist, to make contact with “average” Russian citizens. More tours will make such contacts more likely, and that is presumably how progress must be made in getting along together in the global village.

Victor Doerksen

your word

A VERY NARROW GATE

I wish to commend Roy Vogt for his perceptive and honest appraisal of the "limits" of traditional Anabaptist theology (*Mirror*, May 86) and in particular for his questioning of the Anabaptist dogma which holds that to be a true follower of Christ, a Christian can and must *always* be willing to respond to evil and violence with love and non-violence. Where does this dogma leave that vast number of Christians, including thousands of Mennonites, who are involved directly or indirectly with government, and in particular with those functions of government which are based ultimately on some form of coercion/violence, such as the police forces, the regulatory agencies, the judiciary, the correction services, the military, etc. . . . If we are to restrict membership in Christ's Kingdom only to those who are prepared under all circumstances to meet evil with love and violence with non-violence, then we have fashioned

a very narrow gate to Heaven indeed!

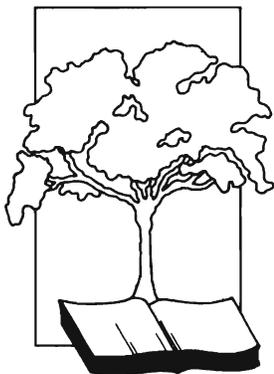
I acknowledge Jesus as my Saviour and Lord and I love my fellow human beings but I also feel compelled to participate actively and constructively in the affairs of the society and the nation in which I live. To do so, I have to accept the fact that at some stage my society/nation and its various regulatory, protective and security agencies may (regrettably) have to resort to coercion/violence in order to restrain the evildoer and contain evil. The doctrinaire Anabaptist would insist that in so doing I negate the teaching of Jesus on "unlimited" love and thereby forfeit my claim to be a follower of His. I would rejoice that there are limits in the real world to the efficacy of love to contain evil, that secular government is an institution created and blessed by God to promote law, order and justice in society and that, as a citizen of a democratic nation, withdrawal from the affairs of state and rejection of secular government is not a viable option for me. I believe therefore that I can remain true to Jesus and His teachings and live a Christ-centered life within the fellowship of a Mennonite church community, while at the same time participating fully and responsibly

in the affairs and functions of my society and nation.

I hope that we as Mennonites will always maintain and strengthen our distinctive focus on peace and reconciliation and on service to and love for mankind but let us not continue to propagate the dogma that only those who accept "unlimited" love as the complete answer to evil in the world can claim to be true followers of Christ. I join Roy Vogt in a plea for the development and articulation of an extended ethic and a more comprehensive theology which will continue to exhort us to counter evil with love and violence with non-violence but which will also permit us to participate actively and responsibly in affairs of state and work with and for government at all levels to promote law, order and justice in society and throughout the world.

Yours sincerely,
Jake Koop
Nepean, Ontario

(A further commentary on Roy Vogt's essay was published last edition, which was published on page 10 but unfortunately without the Your Word heading it should have had.)



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