

# Mennonite Mirror

volume 16/number 5/january 1987



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## ForeWord

One of the more unusual observers of Mennonites and a researcher intrigued with Russian Mennonite history is James Urry, a relatively young scholar who was born and educated in England and who is now a teacher of anthropology at Victoria University in New Zealand. To begin an interest in Mennonites in England, as Urry did when he based his doctoral research on the topic, and then maintaining a scholarly interest in Mennonites in far-off New Zealand is, to say the least, news-worthy. Urry was in Winnipeg this past December partly to speak at a symposium and partly to add to his research. In this edition, Harry Loewen, a Mennonite researcher in his own right, gives us an insight into Urry and why he has this consuming interest in Mennonites. The cover picture was taken at the Winnipeg seminar by Allan Siebert.

The Mennonite Brethren Bible College was the location of the premiere of a play by one of its own staff members, Esther Wiens. This work explores the difficult decisions and implications of providing sanctuary to illegal immigrants to the U.S. who are fleeing the political turmoil of central America. In another review, George Epp looks at a book that has assembled a number of essays on the relationship between Christianity and science. Finally our book editor, Harry Loewen, provides small summaries of two books, one examining the fundamentalist view of nuclear war, and the other written by Winnipeg physician H. T. Huebert who chronicles the history of a small Russian village that was home to members of his family.

Reuben Epp describes how he "learned" Russian. His first contact with the language took place in his youth and was followed up with more "advanced" training during a trip to the Soviet Union. With humor he describes his experience and makes the point that a little knowledge sometimes helps and sometimes it doesn't.

Roy Vogt's travels through this world of ours are again described in this issue with his usual assembly of diverse observations of life around him.

One of the articles in this issue is a report on the annual meeting of the Manitoba Mennonite Central Committee, where delegates renewed the commitment to refugee sponsorship and passed a controversial resolution on Native land claims.

The Low German section consists of an article by Victor Peters, commenting on inter-town rivalry.

The Mix-Up contest continues in this issue. The contest has endured as long as the Mirror and each month's puzzle is a creation of Bob Matsuo.

As you will have noticed by now, this edition is only 24 pages. With the Christmas break affecting our publishing cycle, we decided to reduce our workload and our costs and print a smaller issue. Next month, however, the Mirror will be back to its usual 32-page size.

### YOUR SUBSCRIPTION MAY BE DUE

The Mennonite Mirror depends on paid-up subscriptions for support. At the same time, it has decided because of rising postal charges to not send notices of subscriptions due. This will be your reminder.

Please check the expiry date of your address label. The number indicates year and month of expiry. For example 8609 means your subscription expired September, 1986. The number 9912 indicates that you are a pensioner and therefore there is no charge. The absence of any figure means you have never paid. Names of those who do not pay will be deleted.

Subscriptions cost \$12 for one year, \$22 for two years; send your address label along with a cheque payable to Mennonite Mirror, 207-1317A Portage Avenue, Winnipeg, R3G 0V3.

# Mennonite Mirror

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

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Subscriptions \$12 for one year; \$22 for two years; and no charge for those on pension.

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## A FORUM FOR SINGLES

What do Mennonite singles do when they want to meet other singles of their background?

Some go to Mennonite singles retreats if they can find them. There are churches that sponsor singles groups. A few are fortunate and meet unexpectedly. One has decided to start a Mennonite introduction service called "Crossroads."

Crossroads is being promoted for Mennonite and like-minded Christians only.

In a few months since its beginning, over 100 inquiries have come to Crossroads. More than 20 persons have already become members. Interested people and signed up members range from 26 to 70 years, male and female, and from across Canada and the U.S.

A brochure telling some of the basic goals of Crossroads — and how to become a member — is available free by writing: Crossroads, Box 32, North Tonawanda, NY 14120. **mm**

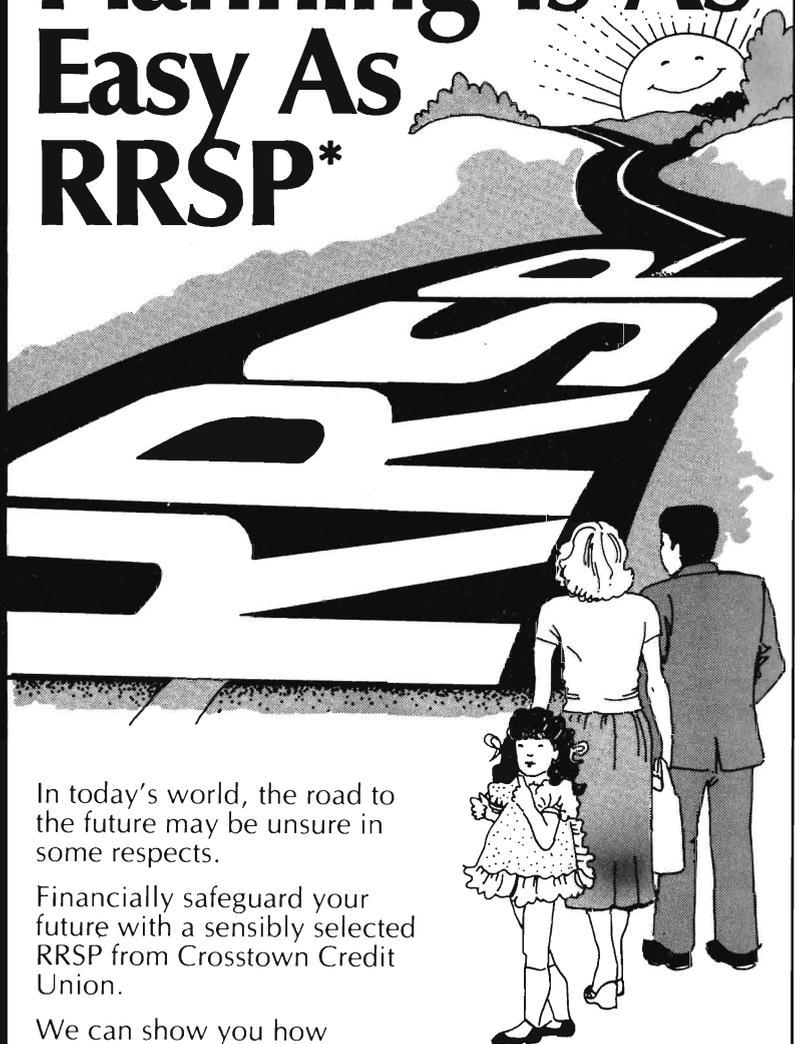
## Arnold Dyck Volume Two

The second volume of the works of Arnold Dyck containing the popular Low German *Koop enn Bua* stories appeared at Christmas time, perhaps not in time to be given to parents, relatives and other devotees of *Plautdietsch*.

Al Reimer has written introductions and has annotated the books that make up this volume: *Koop enn Bua opp Reise*, *Koop enn Bua foare no Toronto* and *Koop enn Bua enn Dietschland*. These introductions are in English and the texts themselves should not be too difficult for a "non-German" Mennonite with Flat German in his bones to make out. For next Christmas the third volume containing all the other Low German stories and plays, also edited by Al Reimer, should appear.

In the meantime it may be advisable to purchase both Volumes One and Two in order to be sure of having the set, which will be complete with the fourth volume (to appear in 1988).  
VGD

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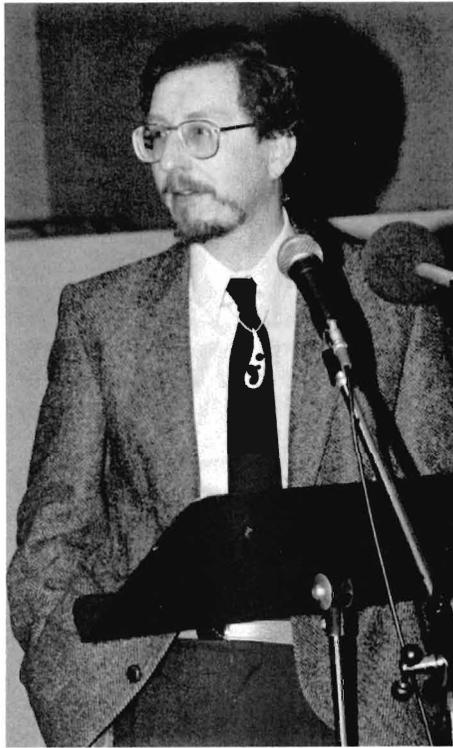


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James Urry

## James Urry and the Mennonites

### ***A scholarly commitment that is fueled by a passionate love for the people***

On November 7, 1986, the beginning of the worst Manitoba blizzard in more than twenty years, a young scholar from balmy New Zealand flew into Winnipeg. Invited by the MB Historical Society to participate in a symposium on Mennonite Brethren faith and culture, Dr. James Urry, an anthropologist at Victoria University in Wellington, New Zealand, spoke at the symposium and on other occasions in Winnipeg and southern Manitoba about things that are closest to his heart: 19th-century Russian-Mennonite history. Between lectures and sessions with Winnipeg academics Urry could be found pouring over documents and records in the archival centres of MBBC and CMBC.

Who is this foreign scholar and why did he become interested in Russian-Mennonite history?

James Urry was born and raised in London, England. His ancestors lived on the Isle of Wight, southern England, and his family name goes as far back as the Middle Ages. Coming from an Anglican church background, Urry was baptized

at the age of five, together with an infant brother. "I remember my baptism," Urry explains with a twinkle in his eye. "Perhaps my 'adult baptism' was the beginning of my interest in Mennonite history," he says laughing.

James Urry became known to the Mennonite academic world while he was working on his doctoral dissertation at Oxford University. *The Closed and the Open: Social and Religious Change Amongst the Mennonites in Russia (1789-1889)*, completed in 1978, deals with the first 100 years of the Mennonite colonies in the Ukraine. In this over 800-page thesis Urry argues that at the beginning of the 19th century the Russian Mennonite world was generally fairly conservative, "closed" to the world outside. But then with the social, economic, educational, and religious developments around them, the Mennonites "opened up" to the many new influences which in turn transformed

the by and large agricultural Mennonites into a complex and variegated society.

As a cultural anthropologist Urry has always been interested in the religions of peoples. That he came to study the Mennonites and their religious faith was due to a Mennonite connection at Oxford. It was Peter Fast from CMBC who suggested to Urry that he come to Canada to study the Russian Mennonites. In 1974, the centennial year of the coming of the Russian Mennonites to Manitoba, Urry came to Winnipeg for the first time. Since then he has been back to this city and other centres in Canada several times, always in connection with presenting papers and research into his favourite subject.

In Winnipeg, southern Manitoba and in Ontario Urry learned to know the Mennonite people both as the descendants of the 19th-century Russian Mennonites and as very interesting human beings. Wherever he had a chance he interviewed older persons about what they still knew and had experienced in Russia. In Ontario it was the late Frank

---

by Harry Loewen

---

H. Epp who introduced Urry to the academic communities there and arranged interviews for him with people who could further his research.

Speaking with persons who still know the old Russian-Mennonite world is most important to Urry. He believes that interviews can provide the kind of valuable information which historical documents and records cannot. He loves to tell the story of Helene Janzen who told him that her father in Russia was a shopkeeper, but when it was harvest time and storm clouds gathered on the horizon the entire family worried and prayed. This bit of oral history indicates that the Mennonites around the turn of this century, when many no longer farmed, were still agriculture-oriented.

At first Urry intended to study the more conservative Mennonites who left Canada for Latin America. But he soon realized that in order to understand the Mexican and other Old Colony Mennonites he had to become acquainted with the 19th-century Russian-Mennonite world. When he became involved with that period of history, he "got stuck" in it. He soon found that the Russian-Mennonite world was much more varied and complex than Mennonite historians had realized. With a modest smile, Urry admits that there is still much about the 19th century which he does not know, but he is nevertheless tempted by others to go beyond his area of specialty, namely into the early 20th century when the old Mennonite "commonwealth" in Russia came to an end.

In all his research, publications and discussions Urry suggests new ways of looking at Mennonite history. He both dialogues with scholars and challenges them to probe deeper and see the Mennonites within the larger world around them. No people exists in total isolation, he argues, and the Mennonites too, wherever they might be, are influenced by external as well as internal factors.

Urry does not agree with some Mennonite historians who believe that 19th-century Mennonites were not aware of the cultural, political and literary activities and developments in the world around them. He has shown, for example, that Russian Mennonites subscribed to and read papers and magazines, followed with interest and understanding political and cultural developments in Europe and America, and had meaningful contacts with religious and intellectual leaders both at home and abroad.

According to Urry, Mennonites in Russia were not only aware of what was

happening elsewhere, but they were also conscious of their place and role in the wider society. In fact, according to Urry, Mennonites reflected upon their identity as Mennonite people within a world of non-Mennonites. They were aware of the changes and transformations that took place within their communities and they took the factors which influenced their faith and life seriously. They were most conscious of the tensions which arose from their desire to belong to a specific community and their knowledge that they belonged to a wider world as well.

This reflection upon their identity as Mennonites was not limited to those who studied at Russian and foreign universities. While the "intellectuals" had

a greater awareness of their existence in the colonies, the less formally educated religious leaders, such as Klaas Reimer and Heinrich Balzer of the *Kleine Gemeinde*, were in a sense quite sophisticated and philosophical in their beliefs and views about the religious and social life in their communities.

Urry is not the kind of scholar who jealously guards the secrets of his research until he is able to publish the results of his findings. He is in fact the opposite. While here in Winnipeg he impressed Mennonite academics with the many ideas he has and suggested topics which need to be researched. Time and again he pushed his colleagues to do things: "There is enough material to keep an army of scholars

# Witnesses



# of a Third Way

Henry J. Schmidt,  
Editor

A unique evangelism event, "Alive . . . '85" brought together 1500 church leaders from six denominations to boldly proclaim new life in Christ. Rather than simply affirm traditional evangelism approaches, the conference charted a "third way" of Christian witness and proclamation which links the personal and social message of the Bible.

This anthology contains addresses from the "Alive . . . '85" event.

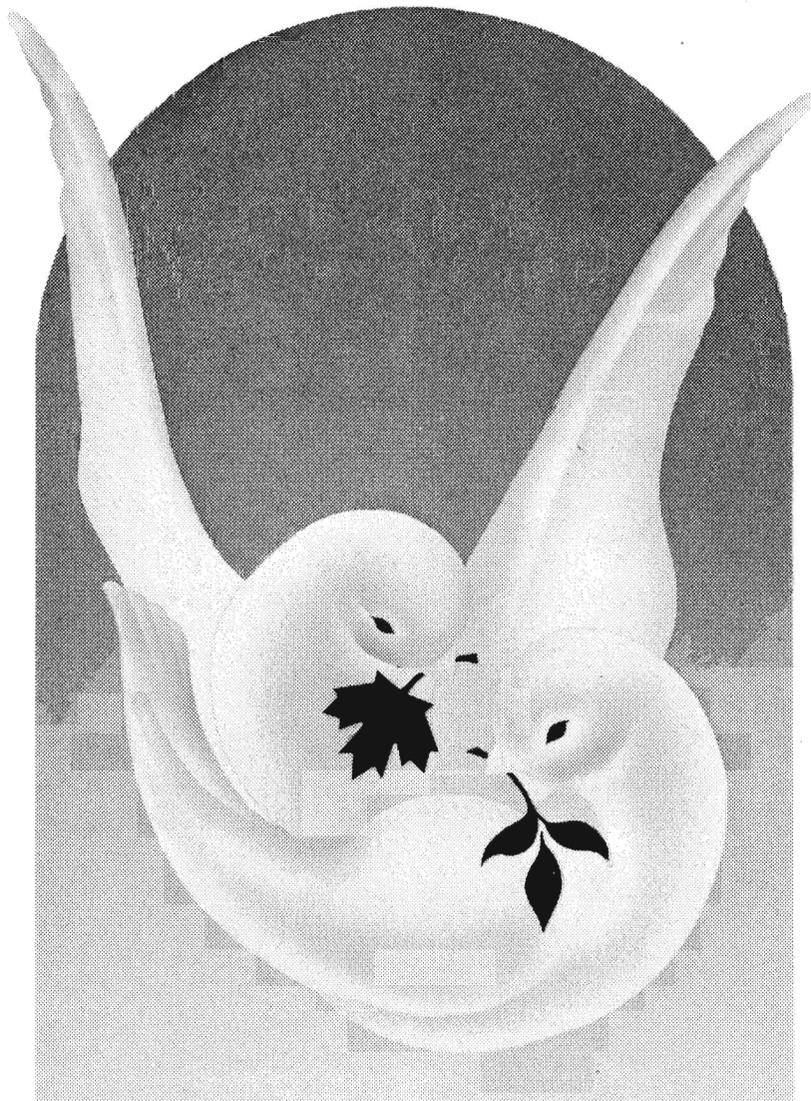
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*In Canada, we share a special sense of family and community, particularly at this time of year.*

*To all – a wish for happiness and prosperity in the coming year.*

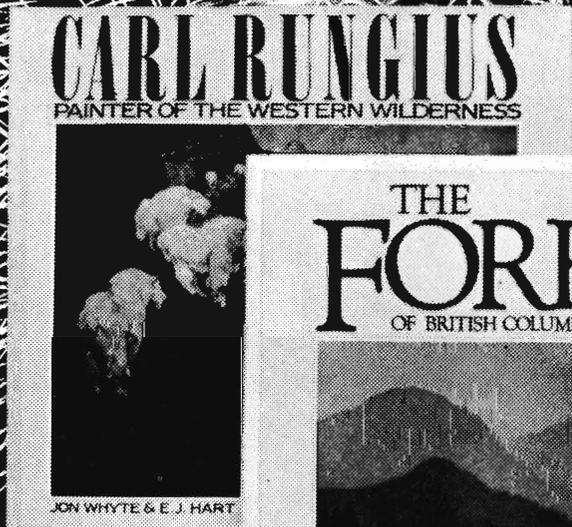
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David Crombie*

*Secretary of State  
and Minister Responsible for Multiculturalism.*

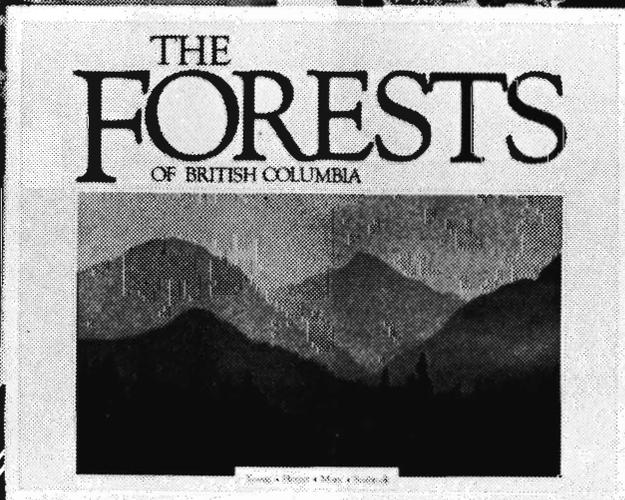


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# our word

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## WHAT YOU EXPECT FROM YOUR MINISTER?

Sometime in November the leading minister at my church accosted me in the foyer with: "Let's have lunch together this week."

Even as we set a date for the following Thursday, the thought went through my mind: "What does he want from me?" The thought is not quite so cynical as it seems, because in my work as a public relations practitioner most personal contacts are designed more to "cultivate" a network or contact than they are for friendship.

In part our lunch meeting was of the "PR-type" because we did exchange views on church matters, a perfectly reasonable conversation because I am the assistant Sunday school superintendent in our church. Other parts of our lunch conversation were of the type one would expect between friends.

But it was the question he posed to me at the end that initiated a train of thoughts; he asked: "What do you expect from a minister?"

I resorted to the kind of hedging practiced by every experienced communicator who doesn't want to commit himself and told him it was something I had never really thought about. My answer was true to the extent that I had never in an organized way thought about what I expected of a leading minister.

To the very limited extent that I ever thought about what I expected from a minister, I must say that my expectations would be summed up in the rather flippant: "I expect a leading minister to leave me alone." I will be first to admit that this tends to close the doors to a relationship even before it begins, but it is based on a dilemma I have always had with ministers in my church. For instance, when I met them I was never sure whether they were interested in me with the kind of genuine friendly curiosity members of the same church are to have towards each other, or whether he was exercising his professional prerogative to give me a quick spiritual check-up, or whether there was some project to which he wanted to recruit me. So there was always a certain wariness.

I didn't answer the minister's question at lunch, but promised him later that I would put some observations on paper for him to consider. In this document I assumed the pastor in question is a committed Christian and theologically in tune with the congregation and conference that employs him; I also assumed that he is competent as a counselor, teacher, preacher, and those other duties that typically go with being a pastor. The balance of my document made a series of observations that are summarized by the metaphor of an automobile. I said "the leading minister is by turns the engine providing the power to move the congregation, the driver providing it with direction, a passenger who along with other members trusts the leadership of others, and finally the roadway providing the basis for movement." The wise minister is one who can identify the category into which specific issues fall and who can then act accordingly. Recognizing that there are limitations to the metaphor, I

expect a leading minister to understand that he is a person who has many roles within the congregation, which must be held in balance and be complementary, such that there is a symbiotic relationship between himself and his congregation.

By the time I finished writing my observations, I decided to re-cast the question by asking him: "What do you expect from a church member?" His answer is still forthcoming.

This leads me to my last question: To what extent do ministers and their congregations exchange information on their expectations of each other?

It is my impression that the relationship between minister and congregation is based on a wide range of unstated assumptions that when transgressed cause forgivable misunderstandings at best and serious conflicts of principle at worst.

Any process to exchange views on expectations is bound to result in a few surprises, but if entered into with a spirit of goodwill and with the intention of laying the foundation of a rewarding relationship, it can only be positive. It does, however, require a minister who is confident of his own abilities and a congregation that is prepared to "minister with" its pastor.

Finally, what one expects from a minister will go a long way to defining the personal characteristics a congregation should be considering during its recruitment process. And for those who are looking for an answer to the question of the role of women in the church, particularly in the ministry, a clear description of what is expected of a minister can only contribute to a viable solution.

Ed Unrau

**NEW RELEASES**

## The Bergthal Colony

by William Schroeder

*A revised and enlarged edition of Schroeder's 1974 book describing the oldest Mennonite daughter colony in Russia and its mass immigration to Manitoba 1874-76.*

1986; 142 pp.; with maps and photos; pb.

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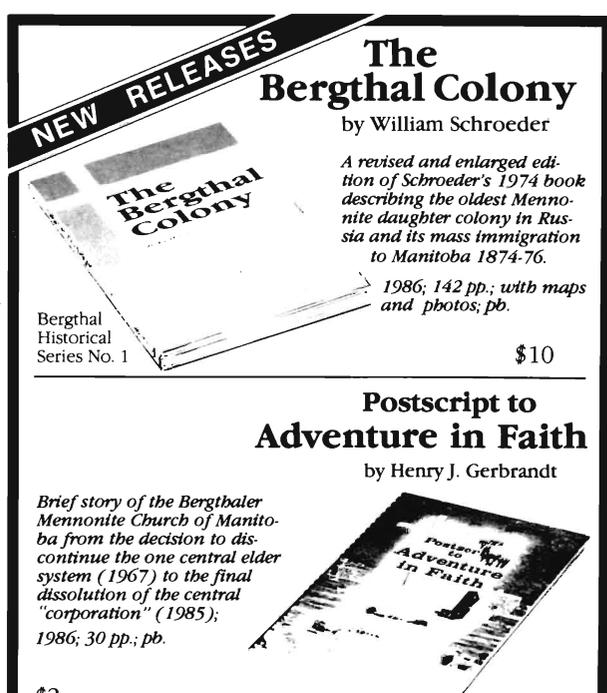
## Postscript to Adventure in Faith

by Henry J. Gerbrandt

*Brief story of the Bergthaler Mennonite Church of Manitoba from the decision to discontinue the one central elder system (1967) to the final dissolution of the central "corporation" (1985);*

1986; 30 pp.; pb.

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# Frieden enn Wintjla und auf Erden

fonn Victor Peters

Dee dree mennische Hauptstäda fonn Manitoba sent Steinbach, Altona en Wintjla. Enn eenem Joa, saje se, fe-tjaft Steinbach mea Koaren aus se enn gauns Russland fetjeepen. (Eti hop blooss daut se doa "Steinbach" leaden too sajen, aunstaut "Stienback".) Altona ess de Sonnenblumenhauptstaut fonn Kanada. Soo sajcht et opp'm Schilt aum Hoachwajch, enn eti jleew daut. Enn Wintjla? Na, eti docht emma Wintjla wea opp'ne Oat de jeistje Hauptstaut fonne Mennoniten. Lange Joaren wearen de Barjtholsche Kjoatj enn de Breedajemeentsche Kjoatj enn Wintjla de jratste mennische Kjoatjen enn Kanada. Fieleicht uck enne Welt. Wintjla wea toosajen enn mennischet Jerusalem.

Wintjla haud freaja uck fäl Jüden: Gladstones, Sirlucks, Mitchells, Danzkers, Warkovs, Saffers, enn aundre. Dee hauden äare eajne Synagoge medden enne Staut. Enn Wintjla gauf et foaken Erwatjungsandachten. Han enn wada jinjen uck eenje Jüden han, omm too seenen wää no fäaren goanen enn too-stoanen wudd, auf se emm Stoa jestolen hauden. (Nijch daut enn Wintjla mea Lied stoolen aus enn Steinbach ooda Altona, oba doa stunde se daut fieleicht wenijstens too.) Oba festoat mie rajcht, soofäl wearen doa enn Wintjla uck wada nijch, woont jestolen hauden, oba dee poa moaken de Fessaumlungen interessaunta.

Nijch emma jintj daut freaja enne Kjoatj frädlich too. Auss de Barjthola eene nije groote Kjoatj büjen wullen, wearen eenje dojäjen. Eena meend, wann de Kjoatj soo groot jebüt wort, enn hee hinjen saut, wurd hee däm Prädja nijch seenen kjennen. Donn säd enn aundra, na dann woa wie eene schroate Floa lajen, hinjen hejcha enn fäaren läaja. Dee Idee haud hee nijch wiels hee emm Teauta jewasst wea; daut

daut wea gauns siene eajne Idee. Enn soo wort daut uck.

Too dee Tiet moak en Ditj, hee wea Temmamaun, de Sätja enn besorjd uck de Doodes. Auss de Kjoatj eascht foa-dijch wea, wort Ditj opp eamol oppster-noasch. Hee säd wann hee met däm Dooden hinjen too de Dää nennkaum, dann wea de Floa soo steil schroats, daut dee Woagen soo sea no fäaren trok daut hee am meist nijch hoolen kunn. He wurd nijch garantären, daut hee sienen Grip opp eamol felearen wurd, enn Woagen, Soatj enn Doode no fäaren bat de Kaunsel pralld.

Pannasch Kjnlals säd, jieda Bejrafniss ess enn Challenge: wurd Ditj sitj je-noach stiepre kjennen, enn dän Soatj bat äaren brinjen kjennen, one daut daut een grootet Onjletj jeef.

Ditj säd uck, daut wea meist nuscht bäta biem rütfoaren. Daut Soatj en dee Doode wullen nijch enopp, enn hee must siene gaunse Krauft brukken, omm nooptokoammen. En hee wort uck nijch jinja, meend hee.

Dee schroate Floa wea nijch daut eensje, waut doa wea. Aun jieda Sied Kjoatj wearen eene Reaj groote Fenstre, bowen schmock spets. Enn doa enne Spets haud de Kjoatjeroat beschloten, roode Fenstarüte entosatten.

Fäle Barjthola meenden, wann wie soo kathoolsch senne wulle, dann haud wie uck goanijch brukt de katholsche Kjoatj too feloten. Wannea se woll beschlütten wurden, de Kindertaufe wadda enntofearen. Bie de Breedajemeent wea je daut aul meist so wiet: dee deepthen aul 12joasche. Barjthola hauden foaken sea bestemmde Meenungen.

Nü wurd jie dentjen, daut bie de Breedajemeent aules selwje Eintracht wea. Oba, so aus Eltesta Happna bie jieda Jeläajenheit säd: "Weit jefehlt, meine Lieben." Dee büdden uck eene

nije, groote Kjoatj, enn dee hauden uck Probleeme.

Wann jie Wintjla enn de Omjäjend kjannen, doa wea nijch fäl Wota. Ferr de Barjthola toom Deepen wea doa emm jenoach. Oba de Breeda kunnen nijch too jieda Joarestiet deepen. Dee Jnodenthola haude woll de Bloomen-goadsche Drentj, enn Wintjla de Dead Horse Creek bie Burwalde, oba dee dreajden foaken too sajen üt. Daut wea en far cry fomm Jordan.

Dee Breedajemeentsche Brooda-schoft beschloot, fearen enne Kjoatj eenen grooten Wotabelheta to büjen. Dann kunne se too jieda Tiet deepen. Enn soo wort daut uck. Too lot worde dee ellere Jemeendelijeda enn, waut passeat wea. Wann se aul enne Kjoatj deepthen, meenden se, dann wea je de gaunse Trouble fejäwst jewasst woarum se üte Kinjchlijche ütjeträden wearen. So waut jeft et nijch!

Nü wort dee Wotabelheta mett Bolen toojedatjt. Kjinja enn Kuasinja worden jewoart, nijch doa rommtoorannen, sest kunne se leijcht enn däm Loch nenndraschen, wann sitj de Bolen feschoowen.

Aul ditt passead lang tridj. Dee Barjthola jewanden sitj mett de Tiet aun äare schroate Floa enn roode Fenstarüten. Mett de Tiet naume uck de Breeda de Bolen fonn'nem Wotabelheta enn deepthen enn kloaret Wota. Seitdäm jeit et enn Wintjla frädlich too. Enn wann jie dise Jeschijchten nijch jleewen, dann froacht Hein Jeatsen enn Winnipeg. Dee wea donn Sindachschoolsuperintendent enn Wintjla.

# your word

## LESERBRIEF

Die Rede von Herrn Professor Johannes Harder anlässlich des in Deutschland umstrittenen Ostermarsches — abgedruckt in der Septemberausgabe — gerichtet einem emeritierten Professor wegen ihrer Forschheit gewiss zur Ehre. Sie enthält nicht nur die meisten gängigen Slogans linker Jugendlicher, sondern darüber hinaus auch farbige Wortspielereien wie „Das Land der Brüder Grimm wird heute von Grimmigen regiert“ und „Wir Grüne wollen Grün und nicht Tannengrün zur Tarnung von Kanonen“.

Nun, den Wortlaut flammender Aufrufe sollte man nicht auf die Goldwaage legen, jedoch sind dem Redner einige allzu brisante Thesen entschlüpft, die es im nachhinein zu untersuchen gilt.

Da werden zum Beispiel „diese Leute“ — und gemeint sind doch wohl die eigenen Landsleute — pauschal zu

Stauchdieben erklärt. Sie hätten nämlich das Programm der Grünen bestohlen und beklaut, heisst es. — Eigentlich könnten sie froh sein, die Grünen, dass ihre begrüßenswerten Umweltideen begriffen und zunehmend beherzigt werden. Aber nein, sie ärgern sich. Froh zu sein — so scheint es — ist nicht ihre Sache.

„Jeder Krieg ist Wahnsinn“, heisst es weiter. Und: „Verrückte haben ihn erdacht, Verrückte haben ihn geplant, Verrückte rüsten für ihn und Verrückte wenden das alles an.“ — Sehr zündend sowas, aber doch wohl etwas zu global. Denn der Wortlaut dieser These umfasst nicht allein den gefürchteten Atomkrieg unserer Tage, sondern sämtliche kriegerische Auseinandersetzungen seit Menschengedenken. Karl der Grosse, Lord Nelson, Abraham Lincoln — sie wären also Verrückte gewesen, wären dem Wahnsinn verfallen. Das müsste doch wohl erst medizinisch nachgeprüft werden.

Nein, nein, ein Akademiker zumal sollte auch auf dem Höhepunkt rhetorischen Eifers die Dinge nicht vollends aus dem Kontext reissen. Es gab nun einmal Zeiten, da erschien der Krieg im Vergleich mit anderen Drangsalen, wie zum Beispiel der Sklaverei, als das kleinere Übel.

Kurzum, viel Unreflektiertes ist in Harders Friedensbotschaft zu entdecken. Lesen Sie nur noch einmal nach.

Ein Jammer freilich, denn dass solche agitatorischen Rundumschläge dem Frieden in der Welt dienen, muss doch sehr bezweifelt werden. Und gänzlich rätselhaft bleibt, wie ein MM-Redakteur in diesem Leipziger Allerlei gar ein „prophetisches Täuferwort“ zu erkennen vermag.

Hedi Knoop  
Uchte, Germany

## WERTER EDITOR

Met grosser innerer Fraide hab ich das Buch „Predicht fier haite“ jelesen. Bruder Thiessen hat da vieles so schain und wahr beschrieben wie es im Leben auch ist. Vieles darin hat mich jefraut und auch jetrestet. Es ist ja wie Predjer Krahn auch einmal sachte: Das Leben ist wie ein Tjinderhemd, kurz und nich immer rain.

Natierlich hat Bruder Thiessen den Nagel nich immer auf den Kopp jetroffen. Wenn ich den Nagel jehalten haette, haette er mich wohl hin und wieder auf die Finjer jehaut. Oh, das ist schmerzhaft, besonders wenn er so harzofzt zuschlaicht.

Aber, lieber Leser, hast Du nich auch so was jehoert, wenn Du auf der Kirchenbank sasset? Da warnte eimal Predja Wellm Fehr, dass Farmer sich nich immer jleich Traktors kaufen sollten. Jeschepfe wie Ferde haetten doch vielles voraus, meinte er, „Dentjt mal darieber nach,“ sachte er fon der Kassel, „auch wenn zwei Traktors lange gans dicht züsamman sind, nie kriejen sie ein Junges.“ Es war derselwje Fehr, er war ja Reispredja, der eimal auch zu Dietrich Friesen seine Frau sachte: „Lena, haenje Deine Unterwesche auf der Leine nich so dicht bei Dietrich seine, Läite beim Vorbeijehen koenntn auf schlechte Jedanken kommen.“

Vieles was man auf der Kirchenbank jehoert hat, bleibt sehr lange sitzen. Dem Editor wünsche ich noch Mut und Fraide zu seiner Arbeit.

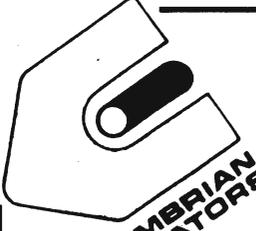
Isaac Bock  
Grünthal, Man.

## NORTH END-SOUTH END

Dear Editor:

The Mennonite Mirror is a very good periodical. It is often very accurate. In one instance, however, I would like to make a correction. In the article by Ed Unrau "From South End to Portage: Half a Century of Church Life," it is stated that the Portage Avenue Church, formerly the South End Church, originated from the North Kildonan Mennonite Brethren Church. This is not the case. South End Members were originally part of the North End Church, then split off from the North End Church to become the South End Church. The North Kildonan Church at no time was involved in any of the development of the South End or Portage Avenue Church.

Yours sincerely,  
H. T. Huebert,  
Winnipeg



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## MANITOBANS JOIN SALT PROGRAM

Eighteen young people recently began one-year assignments under SALT (Serve and Learn Together), a program sponsored by Mennonite Central Committee Canada.

Designed for high school grads between 17 and 21 years old, SALT offers an opportunity to live with a group of others in a unit house in another province, do voluntary Christian service in a meaningful job, and study the Bible together under the guidance of adult leaders. For many participants, a year with SALT is also a chance to test their wings and discover exciting new challenges in Christian life and service.

Three SALT units are operating this year: the "Peace" unit in Vancouver, the "Hagerman" unit in Stouffville, Ont., and the "Aberdeen" unit in Winnipeg. Each group is sponsored by a local Mennonite congregation, which provides a loving church home for the unit members and helps leaders find meaningful service opportunities for each participant within the local community.

The eight Manitobans who joined were:

**Melinda Dyck**, the daughter of Peter and Margaret Dyck of Winnipeg, is involved in a day workshop for mentally and physically disabled adults at the Community Living Society in Vancouver. She attends the Home Street Mennonite Church.

**Kim Friesen** splits her time between three senior citizens homes: Kevin Lodge, Capa Lodge and Shaughnessy Lodge, in Vancouver. She is the daughter of Elma and Martin Friesen and a member of the Mclvor Mennonite Brethren Church in Winnipeg.

**Melanie Hildebrand**, a member of the Sargent Mennonite Church in Winnipeg, is providing childcare at the Montessori School in Unionville, Ont. She is the daughter of Hugo and Helen Hildebrand.

**Linda Neufeld**, who attends the Boissevain (Man.) Whitewater Menno-

nite Church, is working in two Vancouver locations: the Small World Day Care and Moffat House, a home for unwed mothers. She is the daughter of George and Tina Neufeld.

**Steven Pauls**, the son of Peter and Madeline Pauls in Winnipeg, works at High Points, a group home for mentally handicapped people in Unionville, Ont. He attends the Charleswood Mennonite Church.

**Monika Pries**, who attends the Springfield Heights Mennonite Church in Winnipeg, is a second worker at the Unionville Montessori School. Her parents are Jakob and Aganeta Pries.

**Jennifer Warkentin** is another SALTER assigned to High Point and working with mentally handicapped people. She is the daughter of Lorraine and Dave Warkentin of Gretna, Man., and a member of the Glenlea Mennonite Church in Glenlea, Man.

**Stephen Zacharias**, the son of Ed and Susan Zacharias of Gretna, Man., works as an aide to seniors at the Parkview home in Unionville, Ont. He is a member of the Reinland Evangelical Mennonite Mission Church.

**Agatha Hildebrand** of Winkler, is beginning a one-year term with the Intermento program at Biedershausen, West Germany. Hildebrand will be working as a farm and child helper for the Ernst family for the first six months. She will probably move to another placement in the same country for the second half of the year. Hildebrand was last employed as a research assistant at Morden Research Station.

**Gord Penner** of Gretna, is beginning a one-year term with the Intermento program in Gut Lichtenberg, West Germany. Penner will be working as a farm helper in Gut Lichtenberg for the first six months. He will probably move to another placement in the same country for the second half of the year. Penner is a member of Bergthaler Mennonite church in Gretna.

**Ken J. Dyck** of Winkler, is beginning a one-year term with the Intermento program at Limburg, West Germany. Dyck will be working as a farmhand for the Fellman family for the first six months. He will probably move to another placement in the same country for the second half of the year. Dyck was last employed as a laborer in Winkler Triple-E. He attended Elim Bible Institute in Altona, and Swift Current Bible Institute. Dyck is a member of the Evangelical Mennonite Mission Conference Church in Winkler. His parents are Cornie and Helen Dyck of Winkler.



**Kathleen Venema** of Winnipeg, most recently of Lynn Lake, is beginning a three-year Mennonite Central Committee assignment in Ndejje, Uganda, where she will be working as a teacher at Lady Irene Teacher Training College. Venema received a bachelor's degree in English and mathematics education from the University of Winnipeg. She was last employed as a junior and senior high school teacher at West Lynn Heights School in Lynn Lake. Venema is a member of Elmwood Reformed Church in Winnipeg and is also associated with St. Simon's United Church in Lynn Lake. Her parents are Grace and Dave Venema of Winnipeg.



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## NEW VS DIRECTOR TAKES OFFICE

Joan Barkman, currently voluntary service coordinator with Mennonite Central Committee Manitoba, will begin serving as MCC Canada's voluntary service director January 2.

Barkman, a member of the Aberdeen Evangelical Mennonite Church in Winnipeg, previously served as an administrative assistant to Canadian Programs coordinator Dave Dyck and as interim Voluntary Service Director for MCC Canada. Before that she worked in the offices of Mennonite Disaster Service and the Africa Department at MCC headquarters in Akron, Penn.

The new position with MCC Canada was created earlier this year to help meet the expanding workload involved in administering MCC voluntary service programs across Canada. MCC has more than 150 VS workers serving in various areas of need in every province but Prince Edward Island.

Barkman will concentrate especially on programs in Alberta and Quebec, where there is no regional VS coordinator, and will coordinate the efforts of provincial MCCs to ensure a consistent VS program across the country.

She is the daughter of Ed and Tina Barkman of Landmark, Man., and earned a Bachelor's degree in Administrative Studies from the University of Winnipeg.

Barkman's replacement with MCC Manitoba is **Rudy Friesen**, formerly a teacher at Westgate Mennonite Collegiate and vice-chair of the MCC Manitoba board.



Joan Barkman

## CHINESE MENNONITE COUNCIL ESTABLISHED

A six-member North American council of Chinese Mennonites met in Winnipeg September 8-9 for their inaugural meeting. This council, formed during meetings in Saskatoon prior to the triennial sessions of the General Conference Mennonite Church, has representation by Chinese pastors from the United States and Canada, and conference staff people.

Members of the Chinese Council are David Chiu, Saskatoon, facilitator; Ken-son Ho, Boston; Barclay Chong, Winnipeg; Peter Lin, Houston; Don Yoder, Phoenix; and Rudy Regehr, Winnipeg, recorder.

Four areas of involvement were highlighted as being important for the council: church planting, translation work, leadership development, and public relations. A Chinese Mennonite Directory of North America will be published soon to facilitate the movement of members and to underline the fact that there are a significant number of Chinese Mennonite congregations in North America.

Major initiatives in translation work will be continued by the Congregational Resources Board of the Conference of

Mennonites in Canada. The council agreed that leadership and pastoral concerns will be undertaken by the Commission on Home Ministries of the General Conference Mennonite Church.

This newly-formed Chinese council represents congregations of the General Conference and Mennonite Church. A formal invitation for participation has been extended to the Mennonite Brethren Church, which has several member Chinese congregations.

## COLONY RESIDENTS TOTAL 93,000 IN FOUR NATIONS

Residents of Mennonite colonies in four Latin American countries — Mexico, Paraguay, Bolivia and Belize — number some 93,020, according to the best available figures compiled by Isbrand Hiebert and published recently in *Die Mennonitische Post*.

The census is of total residents of European ethnic background, not only baptized church members. In some cases 1986 figures are used; in others the totals are the most recent available.

The largest concentration of such Mennonites remains in Mexico, with an estimated 50,000 people in 18 locations.

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#### ISRAEL, EGYPT AND GREECE — MAY '87

Hosted by Dr. Bernie Wiebe of Mennonite Studies Centre; visit the Pyramids and Coptic churches, 10 days in Israel, stroll through Old Jerusalem, climb Masada, visit Jericho, Galilee, etc.; end with several days in Greece.

#### CHINA AND HONG KONG — MAY '87

Hosted by Jim Pankratz; visit Shanghai, Xian (terracotta warriors), Guilin, Hangzhou, Beijing (walk the Great Wall) and end with great shopping in Hong Kong.

#### SOVIET UNION — JULY '87

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#### GERMANY AND SWITZERLAND — JULY '87

Anabaptist study tour sponsored by MBBC, hosted by Dr. Abe Dueck; open to those curious about the European roots of Mennonites/Anabaptists. Register now.

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**Walnut Receiving Home**, located at 171 Walnut Street in Winnipeg's inner city, opened its doors again in September after extensive renovations. The building has been remodeled to include a one family suite on the second floor, and four bedrooms on the main floor. The building now can accommodate 14 guests. In addition to the renovations, upgrading to meet current fire regulations prompted the installation of metal fire doors, a fire alarm system, and the re-working of the electrical system. Walnut Receiving Home is a temporary residence for native people from northern Manitoba travelling to Winnipeg for medical services. It is owned and operated by the Native ministries board of the Conference of Mennonites in Canada.

**Katherine Marie Sawatsky**, daughter of Wes and Ella Sawatsky of Altona, graduated May 15 in Portales, New Mexico. She received her Master's degree in language and speech pathology from the University of Eastern New Mexico. She has accepted a position with the Ministry of Health in Gibson's Landing, B.C.

## WINKLER PENNERS IS BEST IN CANADA

Penner Foods in the Southland Mall in Winkler has been selected as Canada's best independent grocery store in its category (over 15,000 square feet) by the Canadian Federation of Independent Grocers.

The announcement was made at the federation's convention in Toronto late last month.

The Penner Foods store on Henderson Highway in Winnipeg was recognized as the most improved store in its category and the Steinbach store won an award of merit. (The Steinbach store was ineligible for a gold medal because it is a previous winner.)

Independent groceries across Canada are judged by an independent research firm for the contest.

Company president Jim Penner said "winning these awards gives you a good feeling but the most important award any grocer can win is when your customer continues to give you his or her business every week. That's what we all work for."

Penner Foods has four stores and in the past six years has quadrupled its floor space.



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**Radio Southern Manitoba** — CFAM 950, CHSM 1250, CJRB 1220 — recently won several awards for a Feedrite Chick Starter commercial entitled "Friends." Created and produced at the station, "Friends" won the award for Best Radio Commercial of the Year in the SAM Awards open to all radio stations and advertising agencies in Western Canada. Competing against nearly 700 other entries from radio stations and agencies from across Canada "Friends" then took second place in the Retail Radio Commercial category of the Radio Bureau of Canada Soundcraft Awards. It also received a special Award of Merit, the first ever Larry Heywood Award for creative excellence. This is not an annual award. It is a judges choice award given to a commercial that exhibits exceptional quality in writing and production. In the photo are Terry Klippenstein, Abe Giesbrecht, and Irvin Goertzen.

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# Manitoba news

**Jacob Peters**, sociology, successfully defended his dissertation entitled "Organizational Change Within a Religious Denomination: A Case Study of the Conference of Mennonites In Canada", at the University of Waterloo, Ontario, on October 27, 1986.

**Helen Litz**, founder and director of the **Mennonite Children's Choir**, along with her son, **Reg**, have composed a song *Children Helping Children*, to donate to the work of World Vision Canada. The song was performed at a benefit Christmas concert held during advent in Winnipeg.

Winter Lectures, with guest lecturer **Dr. Peter C. Erb**, will be held at CMBC January 15-16, 1987. Topic will be: Anabaptist Mennonite Spirituality. The lectures will be held on January 15 (Thursday), 9:50 a.m. and 8 p.m. and January 16 (Friday) 11 a.m.

The Mennonite Studies Centre at the University of Winnipeg is offering an eight-session course for people age 40 and up, called "Adding Life to Years." Course director is Dr. Bernie Wiebe. Call MSC: 786-9895 for information.

**Martha Klassen**, a graduate of the Ryerson Institute of Technology drafting and designing program, has opened a shop at the Clearspring mall in Steinbach. She designs clothes under the label "Mandy's Originals." Garments designed by Klassen are featured in designers collections fashion shows in Winnipeg several times a year. Klassen moved to Steinbach two years ago. Previously she had operated a custom sewing shop in Winnipeg; many of her present customers come from the city to purchase her clothes.

**Rudy A. Regehr** has been appointed the Canadian director of the multi-conference development plan on a half-time basis. The plan is designed as a process of renewal in keeping with four goals approved by the delegates of the General Conference at the triennial meeting in Saskatoon in the summer of '86. The goals are: to increase evangelism; to teach and practice biblical principles, to develop and train leadership; and to seek to achieve Christian unity. Rudy's assignment with the development plan will be to arrange a congregational fund drive in Canada.

A new 126-seat "d'8 Stove Restaurant" has been opened in Steinbach. Formerly Miller's Restaurant, it was purchased and completely renovated, with interior layout, decorating and designing done by Jean Rempel, wife of Jake Rempel.

The Manitoba Inter-Faith Immigration Council, in which MCC (Manitoba) participates, has established a new Reception Centre for new immigrants, primarily refugees. Called "Interfaith House," it is located at 159 Mayfair Avenue, and was opened on November 30. The Centre hosts up to 30 newcomers at a time. Volunteer help is welcomed.

The **Manitoba Federation of Independent Schools** has established the Joseph C. Stangl Library Fund in recognition of the years of service given to education by Joe Stangl. The fund will make annual grants to assist the libraries of independent schools in Manitoba. Stangl was a prime mover in the creation of the MFIS in 1974; this organization now represents about 90% of the students enrolled in independent schools, and has become an effective lobby group for independent schools with both provincial and federal governments.

**Richard Olfert** of Winnipeg placed third in the province of Manitoba in the 1986 final examination of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Manitoba. Richard is a lay minister in the Sargent Avenue Mennonite Church.

**Dave Hubert**, formerly directory of the Mennonite Centre for Newcomers in Edmonton, recently began a new position as director of Mennonite Central Committee Canada's new Employment Concerns Program. Hubert's background as an educator in native and immigrant communities will provide him with rich insights into the needs of Canada's unemployed, many of whom are members of the groups MCC most often serves. The Employment Concerns Program was created earlier this year in response to the fact that unemployment is a major contributor to social problems and despair among many of the people whom MCC serves, including natives, newcomers (refugees and immigrants), young people, ex-offenders, people with disabilities and disadvantaged women.

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# Manitoba Mennonites renew commitment to refugee sponsorship

By Allan Siebert

Manitoba Mennonites recommitted their energies to refugee sponsorship and passed a controversial resolution on Native land claims at the provincial Mennonite Central Committee's annual meeting in Blumenort on November 22.

The sessions were jampacked with reports and slide shows as the MCCM board and staff pushed to provide an overview of the farflung provincial program in the few hours available.

The delegates heard discouraging statistics which contrasted the growing numbers of refugees around the world and the declining involvement of Canadian Mennonites in sponsoring them to a new land. Last year, reported MCCM's refugee coordinator Ernie Braun, Manitoba Mennonites sponsored only 49 refugees. "An ongoing ministry to refugees is required," especially for those who are victims of conflict in Central America, Ethiopia and southeast Asia.

A decision was made to pump new life into the provincial Refugee Assistance Program and to appoint someone fulltime to promote sponsorship at the congregational level. "Let's go back to our churches and once more lift up the banner of refugee needs," commented one delegate.

A resolution pushing for a just settlement of Indian land claims in Manitoba drew a more polarized response. Menno Wiebe of the Canadian MCC's Native Concerns office got the discussion going with a report on six years of Mennonite support for a land claims process in the province which would see the government hand over remote, uninhabited crown land to 26 Indian bands. The bands are still owed land promised in treaties they signed over one hundred years ago.

Most of the work has been done but the provincial government is sitting on its final decision, Wiebe said. A little push from Mennonites in favour of an otherwise unpopular policy might help. "What is wrong should be made right."

Kate Geiger, a voluntary service worker fresh from an assignment in a Native village in Alberta, added her observations about the social disintegration which Native peoples experience when their ties to the land are

severed.

The issue triggered an emotional debate. How can we possibly right the wrongs of our grandfathers?, asked one delegate. What implications will the land resettlement plans have for farmers? Do Indians want their land too? What right do we have to tell the government what to do? We should stick to our own concerns. Other delegates countered that the church has a responsibility to speak when wrongs have been committed and to challenge governments to act justly.

In the end, the resolution calling for MCCM "to encourage the government to seek an equitable solution to the Native lands question" passed with a majority of 196 to 41.

The major event of the past year was the construction of a new headquarters building, in partnership with MCC Canada. MCCM staff moved into the \$1.4 million structure during the summer. Treasurer Helmuth Peters reported that the Manitoba half of the shared cost is only \$55,000 short of being covered although Manitobans must still shoulder their share of the national agency's investment in the new building.

No major changes in the provincial program were announced. A total of 46 volunteers are serving in 25 projects. The 13 thrift shops continue to thrive and SelfHelp Crafts sales are expected to grow following the move to a new warehouse.

A diversified program draws its revenue from many sources. MCCM's total income last year was \$2.74 million, down slightly from the previous year when giving to Ethiopian famine relief reached its peak. Half of the total Manitoba budget arrives in the form of donations. Other sources include the thrift shops (\$492,202), SelfHelp sales, two relief sales, material aid donations, and a handful of small government program grants.

In the past year MCCM reached its goal of forwarding 80 per cent of all constituency contributions to MCC Canada for national and international projects, Peters reported. A four per cent increase was forecast for next year's budget.

Early in the sessions, Winnipeg pastor Hugo Janz urged Manitoba Mennonites to follow the path of justice "like the first gleam of dawn." Being God's people may mean belonging to "the company of the frustrated and uncomfortable" in a world that lives far from the requirements of God's sense of justice.

"But we should be frustrated and uncomfortable in a way that will propel us in a positive direction." His words seemed to sum up the agenda that Manitoba Mennonites will pursue through their partnership in the provincial MCC.

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## Christianity and Science

A review by G. K. Epp

David C. Lindberg and Ronald L. Numbers, eds., *God and Nature, Historical Essays on the Encounter between Christianity and Science*. University of California Press, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, 1986, 471 pp. \$14.95 U.S.

The editors of this collection of eighteen excellent articles on the encounter between Christianity and science share the conviction that this encounter was not only unavoidable but also necessary and beneficial to all concerned. For historians this point of view is not difficult to accept and serious theologians agree that Christianity, as we know it, was shaped by encounters between the Christian church and ancient culture, the church and oriental culture, and finally the shaping of our Western civilization, as the editors point out, was profoundly influenced by the encounter of Christianity and science.

It is always difficult to come to grips with eighteen papers in a book review, especially when all the authors maintain an almost equally high standard throughout the collection, so that the reader's preference for one or the other is determined only by his better preparation for certain areas of the discussion. All of these essays certainly will appeal to the reader with a fairly good background in the sciences and with some background in the history of the "Christianity and Science" debate of the nineteenth century. Maybe we are for the first time introducing a book that will have greater appeal to the scientists than to lay ("home-made"! ) theologians, and that in itself is not a bad idea. However, those of us, who have only a few science courses to our credit (or none), should not be afraid to pick up this significant collection of well-written and mostly superbly presented arguments. The realization that we may be rather naive in many areas of this discussion

## review

can be very beneficial, because it could prevent us from making those statements which so often are pregnant with ignorance, especially when we deal with issues of science.

There are several papers in this collection which will attract the special attention of Mennonites. The essay on "Modern Physics and Christian Faith," by Harvard professor, Erwin Hiebert (member of a Hillsboro, Kansas, MB church), offers an excellent demonstration of the shifting spotlight of the discussion, from a preoccupation with the physical sciences in the sixteenth century to an almost exclusive concern for the origin of the species in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. "Even the origin of the solar system provoked relatively little discussion" in the church. The author then traces the development of the debate between faith and science, attempting to identify "the self-image of the scientist as an interpreter-practitioner of religion." He tries to explain the rapprochement between science and religion, to discover the means by which this rapprochement was achieved, shedding light on the scientific dimensions of religion and on the religious dimensions of science.

Other articles that will find much interest in the Mennonite community are A. Hunter Dupree's "Christianity and the Scientific Community in the Age of Darwin," Frederick Gregory's "The Impact of Darwinian Evolution on Protestant Theology in the Nineteenth Century," and Ronald L. Numbers's "The Creationists." All of these papers are generally written with a good balance of insight and tolerance. This is worthwhile heavy reading — a good reason why this book *should be on our shelves*.

mm

# Insight into early 20th century

Noted by Harry Loewen

An attractive booklet celebrates the life and work of a Russian-Mennonite who lived for his family, church and people. In some 56 pages Helmut Huebert, a medical doctor in Winnipeg, sketches the life of his uncle, Kornelius Martens, who lived through some of the most difficult times in early twentieth-century Russia. The second half of this well-written booklet includes a collection of Martens' extant poetry and examples of his prose.

Born and raised in the Molotchnaia, Kornelius Martens studied in St. Petersburg and later taught school in the Mennonite colonies. In 1919 he interceded for Mennonite young men who had resorted to violence (self-defense) against Nestor Makhno's bands and the Red Army. Having worked for the

church and his people, he was arrested and exiled in 1937. Martens died some time after World War II.

While most of Martens' poems and prose appear here in their German original, one poem, *Die alte Weide*, has been translated by David D. Duerksen. The first stanza of "The Old Willow" reads: "Near the Dnjepr grows the willow, / branches dipping in its flow, / plaintive song of pain and sorrow / softly tells of heart-felt woe." (p. 34)

In an evaluation of Martens' poetry, Victor Doerksen writes: "One has the feeling, after reading these poems and the biography of their author, that he indeed forgave much. That hard fate which took from him his home, his loved ones, his livelihood, certainly the idyllic beauty he saw and sought — that fate also took his own life and thereby saved him from the hell of 'not forgetting' what he had forgiven." (p. 53)

Helmut Huebert, author and editor, *Kornelius Martens: Our Skillful Advocate. A Biography and Collection of Poetry and Other Writings* (Winnipeg: Springfield Publishers, 1986). Paperback, 56 pages. The book may be obtained from Springfield Publishers, 6 Litz Place, Winnipeg, Manitoba R2G 0V1.

HEAVEN

# mirror mix-up

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Wishful thinking:

PEACE in '87 -

Won't it be

HEAVEN

In this edition we announce the winner of the November contest: Mrs. E. Schellenberg, of Winnipeg, who was chosen from among 13 entries.

Answers are dear, crate, leash, dairy, spine, and children.

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.

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Christmas season is broken by the death of a close friend, who is almost exactly our age. We had seen it coming for several months. In fact, I have hardly felt so sad in my life as one day this past summer when our friend stood on top of the cliff at our cottage and looked down wistfully at us cavorting in the water. One knew at that moment that he knew. But he carried with him to the end a quiet hope and courage — and the support of a very loving family. We will always think of him very fondly.

- Such experiences make one almost feel guilty as one's own family arrives from different parts of the country for Christmas. What started off as two has now grown to nine — and what a joy it is to celebrate together! As usual, the highlight of this season is the candlelight service on Christmas Eve. As in past years, more than 2,000 persons crowd the church sanctuary to re-live the Christmas event. The human spirit clearly needs this elevation of its hopes.

- Well, it is now Christmas, the book is nearing completion — the house is filled with talk and laughter, including the attempts of our oldest grandson to say "Oma" and "Opa." The parents have trained him hard for this. We plan to spend a few days before New Year's at an economics conference in New Orleans. But that will be told in the New Year. mm

# Militant Evangelists on the Road to Nuclear War

Book notice by Harry Loewen

There is a new book which is both interesting and frightening. Author Grace Halsell writes about what she believes is a connection between what modern TV evangelists believe and breathe and the possibility of a nuclear war. The following excerpts from the publisher's news release indicate what the book *Prophecy and Politics* is all about.

"Militant TV evangelists are preaching that a nuclear holocaust is inevitable, and their message is influencing top level governmental leaders in the U.S. and Israel and elsewhere."

"Reaching an estimated 60 million North Americans, charismatic war-minded evangelists insist that they have the right and power to help orchestrate not only their End of Time, but doomsday for all the rest of the species."

"As one of the estimated 18 million North Americans who reportedly read Hal Lindsay's *The Late Great Planet Earth*, Ronald Reagan began public musings as early as 1971 that indicate his apparent acceptance of a biblical interpretation of prophecy holding that a nuclear war is inevitable."

"Along with Hal Lindsay, TV evangelists Pat Robertson, Jimmy Swaggart, Jerry Falwell, Jim Bakker, Oral Roberts, Kenneth Copeland, Richard De Haan and Rex Humbard, all preach that only a nuclear war will bring Christ back to earth. Convinced that God has fore-ordained that precisely those of us living in this generation must wage the Battle of Armageddon, they tell their millions of listeners that we can do nothing to prevent the ultimate holocaust. Arms negotiations, they insist, are useless and any talk of peace is 'heresy.'"

The author is most critical of Christian fundamentalists who support militar-

ism, armament buildups, U.S. superiority, and Israeli Zionism. Halsell, who accompanied Jerry Falwell on tours to Israel, found that this evangelist was more interested in Israel's politics with regard to Arab Palestinians than in meeting fellow Christians and visiting Christian holy places.

Halsell mentions the Mennonites among those who called for an end of Israel's occupation of Arab lands: "This was carried forward especially by the peace churches in the council [NCC] — including the Quakers, Mennonites and Church of the Brethren as well as the Presbyterians and the Methodists, who over the years had become increasingly emphatic in urging study of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict" (p. 152).

Grace Halsell concludes her book: "Somehow in all the sermons of Jerry Falwell and other TV evangelists, I miss their telling us about the Sermon on the Mount. And I miss their reminding us that Christ possessed a way that was not based on military strength. His way was not to obliterate property and people for the sake of a temporary political kingdom on earth. Rather, He came to advance and enhance life. He came with a message of peace. With peace He taught that we might have life — and have it abundantly" (p. 200).

*Grace Halsell, Prophecy and Politics. Militant Evangelists on the Road to Nuclear War* (Westport, Connecticut: Lawrence Hill & Company, 1986. In Canada: NC Press, Box 4010, Station A, Toronto, Ont.). Clouth bound, 210 pages, \$16.95.

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# observed along the way

by Roy Vogt



## The Christmas Season, 1986

• For many people the month before Christmas is the busiest month of the year. For those of us who teach at the university December is a month of relief. Classes end early in the month, and though most students have exams to write — which must be marked — we have a chance to do some new things and to catch up on some old. Unfortunately the peace of this particular December is marred by a writing deadline to which I committed myself a year ago. Ten chapters of a book must be ready by January 1st — or else! (The “or else” is quite concrete: it means the loss of a financial advance.) It is not the actual writing time that worries me so much as the fact that even when one isn't writing the mind is never at rest. There are always better ways of saying something and the head is constantly revising what the typewriter has already put on paper. Almost everything that I write must be written at least three times — including this column. The longest distance in the universe is not between our earth and the furthest star but between what one thinks one has captured in the mind and what actually ends up on paper. A consolation is that most writers find this to be so.

• It is impossible, of course, to write all the time, and December is made interesting by a number of events, only a few of which are directly related to Christmas. During this time, for example, we are required by circumstances to go through the agony of getting a new car. We have asked our children in Princeton to take our 10-year-old Chevelle off our hands. They have consented to drive it until it drops and then give it a decent burial. I hate shopping for a new car. Some of the dealers treat you like an idiot. They lure you into their sales office with a guarantee that they have the very car you want at a price much lower than you have been offered elsewhere. When you get there an hour later they lament the sale of that car in the brief interval after you called, but of

course they will sell you a more luxurious model at only \$2,000 more. Some go through the charade of carrying offers back and forth to the salesman — who must be the devil incarnate because much to the chagrin of the salesman he never agrees to his promises. With another car dealer I feel sorry for the owner, because the salesman doesn't return calls. There are, nevertheless, some good, straightforward people around and we finally lease a Taurus from Brian McDowell at Tara Ford because we get the straight facts in 15 minutes. My only complaint is that with such a good car they provide you with a \$1 aluminum key which breaks in half the first time I try to unlock the front door. Unfortunately that happens to be downtown late at night, and my poor wife has to get out of bed and rescue me. It doesn't help the next day when the parts man puts up an argument about replacing the key. He seems to feel that I should have waited for warmer weather before trying to unlock the door.

• In early December I enjoy a panel discussion organized by MEDA (Menonite Economic Development Associates) at the Fort Garry Hotel. Several of our businessmen and a government economist deal very helpfully with the issue of free trade. It appears that the low value of our dollar and a certain amount of protection are helping many of our business firms to do quite well in the American market. The feeling seems to be that we should leave well enough alone. As an economist I have been trained to think that in the long run free trade is good for countries, and protection is bad, but the problem is that this is not equally true for all industries, and it is only true if your trading partners follow the same rules that you do. We are in a weak bargaining position with the United States because we depend much more on them (for 75 per cent of our exports) than they depend on us (our exports amount to only 20 per cent of their imports). I suspect that after years

of bargaining almost nothing will change.

• An evening in mid-December takes us to Winkler, where we have been asked to participate in the annual dinner for the management and employees of Triple E. This large motor-home firm now employs more than 300 persons in Winkler alone. Back in the early 1970s, when we first published this magazine, I travelled to Winkler quite often to observe the growth of industry there. Triple E was then in its infancy. After some good years, and some very difficult ones, it has emerged as a very dynamic corporation. The more than four hundred guests at this dinner enjoy an excellent meal, some vigorous carol singing, and the presentation of free trips to Florida for about a dozen couples whose spouses have completed ten years with the company. The evening is enlivened by an exciting musical family from the Rosenort area, consisting of husband and wife and five daughters and a son, all adept at highly-amplified musical instruments and with excellent voices. I particularly enjoy their imitations of the Bony M. It is, however, a hard act to follow. I console myself, and the audience, with the thought that after all that food and coffee, and exciting music, they may have been wondering how they would get to sleep this night. Well, no fear. Fifteen minutes of my talk should just about do it. Having grown up in that fine metropolis of Steinbach I also feel it is my duty to remind these citizens of Winkler that they too can aspire to a place in the sun. I mention the example of my uncle, who was born in Gretna, then taught for several years in the Plum Coulee-Winkler area and finally rose to the very top by becoming the mayor of Steinbach. Granted that not everyone in *Jant Sied* can expect to reach such heights, it is important that they do not stop trying. Unfortunately the guffaws of Mayor H. F. Wiebe of Winkler, who is directly in front of me in the audience, indicate that he is not intimidated by my comments. I had hoped to goad him into a duel with my uncle. Maybe the old rivalry between *Dit Sied* and *Jant Sied* will yet be settled without a war.

• We enjoy some Christmas merriment at the Manitoba Theatre Centre, with its production of Dickens' *Christmas Carol*. If only people like Scrooge could be converted to a life of generosity as easily as the Scrooge in this play is! The play is followed by a very enjoyable dinner with friends whose spirit is the very opposite of Scrooge.

• As happens so often, the joy of the

that we try for some ice cream. I agreed, wondering where we would have to go to find it. Victor led the way towards a street kiosk on which was inscribed in large letters the word *mopoxohoe*, except that the X in the middle looked more like )(I. Well, I wasn't about to argue about the Russian way of printing an X, but I asked Victor why we were heading for the *mopoxohoe*. Victor again explained that this word in the Cyrillic alphabet read *morozhonoye* which is the Russian equivalent of *ice cream*. When I asked Victor about the pronunciation of the X in *mopoxohoe* he explained that the funny looking X that I saw was actually pronounced as ZH or as Z in azure.

Sure enough, when we approached the *mopoxohoe* booth we were able to buy ice cream bars not unlike our Rev-els. My knowledge of Russian and the Cyrillic alphabet was growing by leaps and bounds. I now knew that on a warm day when you're hot and dry, look for the *kbac* tanker or the *mopoxohoe* stand. Nice to know. And not bad — this *Morozhonoye*.

Several days later when we were staying in a hotel without a restaurant, we were being guided at lunch time toward a building on which was a large sign that read *pectopah*. Before I could ask Victor, realizing that this new word probably exceeded my proficiency in Russian (which it did, even though I was becoming surprisingly fluent), explained that in our alphabet this word would spell *restoran*. So all I needed to do was to compare letters to get the drift. Another milestone. The process seemed easy.

The next evening I decided to strike out on my own to buy ice cream. I soon spotted a booth with the now-familiar *mopoxohoe* sign. When I got there I found the door closed, but on it was a sign which said *KNOCK*, with the N upside down. Well, I realized that in a foreign country one shouldn't be too critical about a little thing like a reversed N, but thought it a strange way of doing business. Anyway what do you do in a strange place when you are asked to knock for service? You knock, of course. So that's what I did.

While knocking I saw Elisabeth and Victor coming over, and they seemed very happy about something. As a matter of fact, they were laughing. They came and asked me what I was doing. I replied that I wanted to buy ice cream and that I was knocking for service as the sign suggested. They told me in great merriment that the booth was obviously closed and that the sign did not read *knock* as I thought, but *kiosk* in the Cyrillic alphabet. Well, I already knew that a *kiosk* was a booth and that I was standing before one, but now I also learned that *knock* does not necessarily mean *knock*, especially when the N in it is printed backwards.

The next day we headed for the airport. As happens when you're travelling, you sometimes need to know where to go when you gotta go. And so it was at the airport. But this time I did not need to rely on my accumulated knowledge of Russian or Cyrillic; I simply and unerringly followed my nose to the place.

It's sure nice to know foreign languages and customs when you're travelling like that. mm

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# I learn Russian

## (in a very elementary way)

by Reuben Epp

As I recall, my first experience with the Russian language was many years ago when I first heard my grandfather speak to a Doukhobor in our community. I remember asking my father what language grandfather was speaking and how he came to know it. My father answered that grandfather was speaking Russian which he had learned as a boy in Russia. My curiosity was satisfied, but not completely and not for long.

My next experience came when the Mennonite immigrants from Russia arrived. I was amazed at how they could talk to the Doukhobors in what seemed to me an impossible language. They seemed to speak it even better than grandfather. As I grew into my high school years I got to know some of the Doukhobor boys when they came to town to attend high school. Those boys took it upon themselves to teach me Russian. Of course I was interested because my grandfather spoke it, although my father didn't.

The Doukhobor boys taught me all kinds of words and expressions, and appeared to be delighted at how I wrapped my tongue around Russian words when none of the others in our grade could manage it. The other boys could only utter those familiar sounds heard in English or *Plautdietsch*. Beyond that, their tongues simply could not maneuver. The girls of course wouldn't even try, so they didn't count. It wasn't until years later that I found out that although the sounds I was making in Russian weren't bad, some of the words were.

Still later when we lived in Prince Rupert I read that the Russian ship *Orsha* was coming to port to load prairie wheat. Of course I had to see it, so I was at the dock when it arrived. After the ship docked I got a closer look and

noticed that it was not the *Orsha* after all, but rather the *Opwa* that was paying us a visit. When I mentioned this to an acquaintance, he explained that this was in fact the *Orsha* and that *Opwa* was the Cyrillic spelling.

This aroused my curiosity, so I went home to my encyclopaedia and looked up the Cyrillic alphabet. In no time I had figured out that the strange CCCP that Russian hockey players displayed on their uniforms actually read SSSR, which was obviously more easily related to USSR. I was feeling more confident about getting the hang of Russian. By then I had fortunately forgotten most of the Russian words that the Doukhobor boys had taught me, except for *Pazhalst* and *Spasiba* which I had been told were safe in any company because they meant "please" and "thank you". With this background of Russian words and the Cyrillic alphabet, I decided that I was now ready to join a Mennonite tour group to Russia under the leadership of the late Gerhard Lorenz.

Realizing that I might still encounter some difficulties if spoken to in Russian, I asked Mr. Lorenz for some help. He said the Russians would probably understand if I simply said, "*Nye panyamaish*." And so, for the first few encounters with Russians who spoke to me, I "*nye panyamaished*" my way through without difficulty. Of course everything our group needed had been arranged for in advance, and besides that we had Lorenz who spoke Russian and a Russian tour guide who spoke good English (not to mention that Lorenz could speak *Plautdietsch*, which was even better).

I also met Elisabeth and Victor Peters, who were on the same tour. On our first evening in Leningrad, Victor and I went for a walk down the street, enjoying the beautiful soft July air as we strolled along. I began to look for a shop that might sell soft drinks because I was get-

ting thirsty. Instead, I saw at the roadside what appeared to be a 500-gallon tank trailer on two wheels, obviously filled with something to drink because there was a queue of people lined up at the hitch-end of the trailer and the fellow at the head of the line was being served a glass of something that looked like beer, which he tipped down as he stepped away from the line. The next man in line did the same thing. On the side of the tanker was the word *kbac*.

Since I knew that Victor had been born in Russia, I asked him what *kbac* meant. He explained that these were Cyrillic letters that read *kwass*. Well, I had heard about *kwass* before but never before had I seen it spelled *kbac*. My education was coming right along. Victor and I got in line. When we got closer to the matronly bar-maid who would be serving us our *kbac*, I noticed that there were only four drinking glasses and that the bar-maid rinsed the glasses under a jet of water after each use. When we got still closer and I could see this rinsing arrangement at close hand, I realized that the tanker was not connected to any visible source of fresh water and that the drain from the rinse basin appeared to lead right back into the cabinet from which the rinsing water came in the first place. Hmm, hmm, I thought, and mentioned it to Victor. He took this rather philosophically and replied that we were after all in Russia, and that the drink didn't seem to be killing any of the Russians so we might as well give it a try. Being quite thirsty by then and having never tasted *kwass*, I agreed.

Well, we eventually arrived at our turn for service, paid our six kopeks each for our glass of *kwass* and with a "spasiba" stepped out of line to drink it. Again I had increased my knowledge of Russian. I don't remember getting back in line to learn more, but the first drink was actually not bad.

Later that evening Victor suggested

# review

## Exploring what it means to provide refuge

*Sanctuary*, a play written and directed by Dr. Esther Wiens performed at MBBC, November 7, 1986.

Reviewed by Sarah Klassen

A sanctuary is a safe place where oppressed people, fleeing for their lives, can find refuge and immunity from the law. In recent years, the Old Testament concept of sanctuary has taken on contemporary meaning, as American Christians have become willing to open their homes and churches to illegal refugees from Central America. They have done this, knowing that such involvement will bring down on them the disapproval of community and country, will affect their own economic welfare, and may even land them in jail.

Dr. Esther Wiens of Mennonite Brethren Bible College spent a good part of her 1985-86 study leave researching the underground sanctuary movement in California and writing a drama based on this research. November 7, *Sanctuary*, written and directed by Esther Wiens, premiered at MBBC to a full house.

The story revolves around the Reimers, a California farm family, who find themselves harbouring illegal refugees on their way, underground, to Canada. As the play opens, Peter Reimer (Terry Goertzen) is informing his family of the imminent arrival of the Romeros, an El Salvadoran family. The reactions to his announcement mixed. His wife Sophie (Debbie Reimer) is miffed at his graceless manner of springing the project on her and at his failure to take into account the practical details such an undertaking entails. Son Douglas (John Janzen) is frankly alarmed that this involvement will plunge the family into illegal hot water, while daughter Amy (Lorelei Loewen) is delighted that finally there is to be some real action at the farm — until she discovers that she is expected to share her room with a refugee.

With the arrival of the Romeros (played by Dan Balzer, Valerie Speiser and Janice DeFehr) the testing of the Reimers begins. They must deal, on the one hand, with hurting fugitives from an alien culture, and on the other hand with unsympathetic fellow Americans,

represented in the play by the sheriff (Don Mabbott) and the lawyer (Goeff Braun). The presence of the refugees precipitates all the expected problems, and some unexpected ones as well. All this places a strain on the family, in ways Peter Reimer had not anticipated.

It becomes necessary for each family member to work through his or her response to this effort at harbouring the homeless, starting with Peter, who admits that he stepped into this experience with insufficient thought. In the process of coping with the personal and legal ramifications of this dilemma, each of the Reimers undergoes a measure of growth.

The play is sound and carefully structured. Each scene introduces new insights or complications that keep the plot moving. Humour is often used in the characterization and this provides a balance to the fundamental seriousness of the drama. A number of visible and verbal symbols serve to link the plot artistically with the theme.

The theme is one that should engage an Anabaptist audience especially, whether familiar or unfamiliar with the sanctuary movement. Mennonites are well-acquainted with the emphasis on the cost of commitment in the teaching of the church. This drama, based on a current issue, provides a fresh opportunity for us to rethink the quality of our discipleship and the extent of our willingness to take risks and make sacrifices for the Kingdom of God.

The young actors and actresses from MBBC, ably directed by Esther Wiens, are to be commended for their competent playing of this piece. They entered their roles with an enthusiasm that spilled over into the audience. Terry Goertzen, probably the most experienced of the cast, was familiar to the audience for his portrayal of "Everyman" two years ago. He brought both energy and sensitivity to his role, and his confidence helped the others to play their parts well, too.

The production crews, too, deserve credit for their part in mounting this worthwhile production. The set was interesting and amazingly effective, given the inadequacies of the stage.

The audience on November 7 consisted mainly of MBBC alumni, who prior to the performance had enjoyed a shared meal of cornish hen and trimmings served from the college kitchen. Well fed and willing to forget the inadequacies of the auditorium and the accumulation of snow outside, this audience was attentive and responsive.

Mennonites have been staging dramas for a long time. Still, an original drama created by a Mennonite artist and communicating an Anabaptist theme, is still a rarity. For that reason *Sanctuary* is a play to be grateful for. **mm**

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Venice — Genoa — Siena — Amalfi  
— Rouelle — Capri

##### USSR:

Host — Dr. John E. Redekop  
April 17 — May 6  
Moscow — Novosibirsk — France  
Almata — Zaporozhe — Leningrad  
— Karaganda — Helsinki

##### China:

Host — Dr. Roy Vogt  
August 1 — August 22  
Japan — China — Hong Kong

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going for many years to come."

While he is quite humble about his own achievements and likes to work closely with fellow scholars, Urry can also become impatient and even critical of persons who do shallow work. "Some just scratch the surface," he complains, "and don't bother to look up the available sources." He knows that the Winnipeg archival centres hold most valuable, untapped source materials that wait to be explored. "All you people need is time to do the work," he says.

It is somewhat embarrassing to hear from Urry that Mennonite scholars in Winnipeg are often too busy with committee work, administrative duties, and teaching many classes to find enough time to do more serious in-depth research. He adds with an understanding smile: "I have the luxury in New Zealand to devote a great portion of my time to what I love doing — studying and writing Mennonite history." Urry teaches one course in anthropology, where the word "Mennonite" is not even mentioned, and a few honours students. The rest of his time is given to his "Mennonite passion."

This concentrated study of and reflection upon Russian-Mennonite history has led to new discoveries and emphases. The following are just a few of them which according to Urry require more work and development. Urry believes that the some 18,000 Mennonites — about a third of the entire population — who left Russia for North America in the 1870s did so not only because they saw their non-resistance and the German language threatened but also because they wished to get away from their more "worldly" brethren. It was these more conservative Mennonites, including the Bergthalers and the *Kleine Gemeinde*, who wished to preserve the older traditions. Similarly, the Mennonites who left the Soviet Union in the early 1920s for Canada were the ones who refused to come to terms with the new regime. Many of those who remained behind, including some of the really poor and the intellectuals, perhaps believed and hoped that a new and better future was in store under the new Soviet government. However, when Stalin came to power and introduced his economic and political plans, things changed and it was too late to emigrate. Urry admits, however, that such questions as to who stayed and why, need to be researched carefully before conclusions can be drawn.

Does a serious scholar like James Urry just work and have no fun? Urry laughs

easily, tells jokes and is most entertaining. He is a good friend and is fun to be with. When asked why he was so interested in Mennonite history, he thought for a moment then burst out laughing and said: "Because I'm mad!" He is not working in Mennonite studies because this will advance his academic career, but because he loves it for some reason. Nor is he profiting financially from his Mennonite research. He is not even accepting honoraria for presenting papers or writing articles in the Mennonite field. At the moment Urry is completing a book on the Russian Mennonites which may be published here in Winnipeg. He has said that he does not expect any royalties from it. His concern is that the book find as wide a distribution among readers as possible, especially Mennonite readers.

Asked whether he has any hobbies, Urry seems nonplussed. After some thought he says, "I read for pleasure — and I cook." He also mentions that his family makes claims on his time. With pride he pulls out from his pocket a colored photo of his family. There is his wife Rita flanked by their three children, Kathrine, 17, Judith, 15, and Nicholas, 8. Characteristically, the proud father and husband stands in the background. Since their house in New Zealand is small the Urrys' bedroom floor is practically covered with notes, books, and archival materials. Rita, apparently, is not all that happy about that!

On the last Sunday of his stay in Winnipeg, Urry attended the Elmwood M.B. Church service. Before walking into the auditorium an usher asked me whether the young man with me was my son. Both Urry and I laughed. I told the usher that Urry was not my son but I wished that he were. In a sense those of us who have become acquainted with James Urry consider him our brother, friend, and certainly respected colleague. It is not difficult to love this young man who has earned the respect and gratitude of all those who take Mennonite scholarship seriously.

Before returning to New Zealand in mid-December Urry stopped over in California to visit his friend and mentor, retired professor David Rempel. Prof. Rempel was one of the first scholars to write on Russian-Mennonite history, having completed his doctoral dissertation, *The Mennonite Colonies in New Russia: a Study of their Settlement and Economic Development from 1789-1924*, as early as 1933. There is no Russian-Mennonite historian whom Urry respects more highly than David Rempel.

In my last discussion with Urry I was impressed again with this scholar's love of and enthusiasm for his field of study. "History tells us about the wonder of humanness," Urry maintains. "History is rich with both uplifting and unpleasant stories." It is the historian's task to reconstruct, to tell both sides. "You can't just sanitize history," Urry insists.

In writing history Urry would no doubt agree with the advice given to Peter M. Friesen, that great Russian-Mennonite historian of another generation: "Write truth . . . the good and the bad, as the Bible did concerning David." And with regard to writing Mennonite history Friesen states: "The following was the fundamental principle of historical integrity: to say as much good as was possible and as much of the bad as we had to in order to remain truthful."

This search for the truth is what Mennonite scholarship — indeed scholarship generally — is all about. And those of us who are engaged in this pursuit of truth in Mennonite history are grateful for scholars like James Urry who are helping us and showing us the way. mm

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