

# Clarion

THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE

Volume 24 - No. 24

November 29, 1975



# Minister for Life

The postal strike is still on. Therefore we cannot have a news medley this time and this provides us with an opportunity to answer a question which was to have been asked at a league day of the ladies in Ontario but for which no time was found. Then it was handed to me with the request to either pass it on to the speaker at that league day or to answer it in our magazine. Perhaps this is as good a time to answer it as any. Here the question follows:

Is it possible for a minister to resign from the ministry, to follow another vocation, after many years of trial and disappointments, and he feels he can no longer serve his congregation as a minister should?

In the first place: it is always possible for a minister to resign; it did happen more than once in the course of the years. Then I am referring to the Reformed Churches. One of the students of the late Dr. H.H. Kuyper - who promoted the new trend in Church polity and in a doctoral thesis endeavoured to give a scholarly basis to the deviation from the truly Reformed Church polity - later on resigned from the ministry and became a lawyer, just to mention this one example.

A real resignation from office is not possible according to the Romish concept. There the rule applies, "Once a priest, always a priest". With Rome a real deposition from office is impossible, too: all that can be taken away from a priest is the right to execute the functions and the powers of his office; his priesthood itself has an indelible character or nature. Where the priest is, there the church is, even if there is not yet a group of believers there.

Such is not the Scriptural stand, the Reformed doctrine. It is not so that one can be a minister without being the minister of a specific Church. According to the Reformed Church polity it is impossible to do what we oftentimes hear or read, that someone is ordained as a minister and then waits and sees whether there is a congregation that will call him. Who would have the right to ordain one except a local Church? With us no one would have the power, the authority to do so. The institution of "ministers-at-large" is, basically, an institution alien to the Reformed concept of the ministry.

We provide in article 7 of the Church Order that no one shall be called to the ministry of the Word unless he is stationed in a particular place. The only exception is: when he is called and sent for the gathering of the Church in other places. A missionary, for instance, whether he is sent out to faraway countries or to people who are living closer by, does not have to be stationed in a particular place. Yet he has to be the minister of a particular Church, having been called by that Church and working as that Church's missionary. If that Church cannot bear the financial burdens alone, other Churches may come to its aid, yet he remains the missionary of that Church, which has the full responsibility, supervises his work and conduct insofar as this is possible, and does not relinquish any of her authority to the cooperating Churches.

Now back to our question.

In article 12 of our Church Order we do provide that, since a minister of the Word is bound to the service of the Church for life, he is not allowed to enter upon another vocation unless it is for exceptional and weighty reasons. That the minister is bound to the service of the Church is not because the very position of minister of the Word remains glued to his person, so to speak, or because it is allegedly of an indelible character. The reason is that the ministry of the Word is not just a "job" in the sense in which every other trade or vocation or position is a job. We do not claim that the office of a minister of the Word is more "spiritual" than every other "office", as we call it in Lord's Day 49 of our Catechism; it is of a different nature. Church and minister are tied to each other for as long as the minister remains alive. A Church is not allowed to just fire its minister when it is fed up with him or thinks that his work is less than satisfactory; and a minister is not allowed to just quit when things are not going the way he wants it or if there are too many disappointments.

That shows us how important it is for both Churches and those who aspire to the office of a minister of the Word to consider everything well. A Church would not act wisely if it would say, "We need a minister; there is one available, just call him and the Lord will bless us." Such would be an irresponsible attitude. And, on the other hand, whosoever wishes to become a minister should consider all the aspects of this work well before asking an ecclesiastical assembly to declare him eligible for call. It is true: one never knows fully what something means unless one has learned that by experience. But it is always better to return halfway or even three-quarters of the way than to proceed from a certain stubbornness or fear "what the people will say". One can only respect the courage displayed in quitting when a student discovers that he would not be able to bear the burdens of the ministry or when he comes to the conclusion that his real interests and capabilities go into a different direction or are to be utilized in a different field.

A Church has to realize that it calls a minister for life, his life.

A candidate has to realize that he will be bound to that particular Church for the rest of his life.

If a call is received from another Church, the ties may be cut with that first Church. If no call is received - and that is a distinct possibility - the ties remain in force.

May a minister quit after many years of trials and disappointments?

No.

May a minister quit if he feels, after many years of trials and disappointments, that he can no longer serve his congregation as a minister should?

No.

Who will judge that, whether one can serve a congregation as a minister should? The minister himself? But who is able to judge and evaluate his own work correctly? Is

it not oftentimes so that, when you think you have failed in a certain respect, it appears that rich fruits are received upon your labours? And the other way around!!

We shall not be unrealistic. There may be such a development within a certain Congregation that a fruitful cooperation becomes practically impossible. I do not hesitate to state that in by far the most cases such is the minister's fault. It is my experience that our Reformed people are men and women who heed the warning of Hebrews 13:17 and of I Thess. 5:12 and 13. And if a situation develops in which a minister feels that he can no longer fruitfully serve that Congregation, he should start with a thorough self-examination and earnest prayer to the Lord to make it clear to him in what respects he should change his ways.

In almost every Congregation there are members who - oftentimes for reasons which cannot be discovered, sometimes from personal frustration - seem to be out to render life miserable for a minister. But in all Congregations there are many members who show their love to the Lord richly in the manner in which they treat their minister. It is good to say that publicly.

Let us assume that a fruitful cooperation indeed becomes impossible and that no one is able to pinpoint the causes.

For such cases a solution was found in severing the bond between Congregation and minister in the sense that the minister was released from his active ministry within that Congregation and became a minister without a Congregation, although nominally at least still being the (released) minister of the Church at N. We'll further leave this whole question out of the picture.

We do provide for the possibility that a minister enters upon another vocation.

This shall not be done without approval of Classis and of the deputies of the Regional Synod. The first ones to

judge are, of course, the Consistory and the Deacons of the Church concerned.

What are the reasons that could be called "great and weighty"?

To mention a possibility: If a minister can no longer bear the burdens of his office and if the consulted physicians in their unanimous (unbiased) judgment say that he has to quit the ministry because this type of work is too difficult for him and that this is the only way in which his health can be restored, that would constitute a valid reason. When such a minister is still too young to retire and when he is able to do some other work and in that manner to provide for himself and his family, he does not have the (moral) right just to live off the Church for the rest of his productive life, which may be twenty or more years. I do not speak here, of course, of someone who gradually becomes unable to face the difficulties of his office and whose health becomes impaired as a result of his work, and who for that reason has to retire prematurely. That is a different case. But in the former case, I should say, he should not be declared minister-emeritus, but enter upon another vocation and cease to be a minister. Or if a minister should have his vocal cords removed because of cancer of the larynx and be unable to preach or teach, yet were healthy in every other respect, then he should look for some ways to provide for himself and his family and look for a job.

We can, of course, not foresee what causes and reasons might come up on the ground of which the ecclesiastical assemblies would approve of a request from a minister for permission to enter upon another vocation.

It should not be given lightly.

Trials and disappointments are certainly no sufficient reasons.

Neither is a feeling that one can no longer serve his congregation as a minister should.

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## Letter From a Traveller in Korea (2)

The heading of this story is rather jauntily entitled, "Letter from a traveller", and such it was last time. So with this title we continue, although since our arrival here we haven't travelled at all! But then that wasn't the purpose of this trip to Korea either. The purpose of this trip was to remain in Busan and to be guest-teacher here for a number of weeks.

Well, I've completed my first week. It was rather an easy beginning for me. On Tuesday we had the "Opening of the lessons", as we would call it in Kampen. This was taken care of by professors Huh and Lee.

Right beside the Seminary is a church building with a seating capacity, I would estimate, of three to four hundred people. It is used for

such occasions as this one. It will also be used for my series of lectures, since these will be followed by all the students of the College (more or less equivalent to a four-year university education, with special stress on Reformed subjects - Trans.) and by all the students of the Seminary (an additional three years - Trans.). At the opening ceremony Prof. Huh introduced one by one all the new first-year students (about 70 for the College and 23 for the Seminary) to the other students and to the teachers. These then faced the audience to receive their applause. After that my colleague Huh introduced the teachers one by one. When this was done, the old Dr. Han didn't forget to present Dr. Huh to the audience. My wife and I also received a friendly introduction.

The climax of this gathering was

the speech given by colleague Lee, who spoke about Matthew 16:1-20. (Prof. Oh was kind enough to quietly translate for me.) It struck me how Dr. Lee used the confession of Peter (and of the church of Christ, and also of this Seminary) in the context of Matthew 16, to contrast with the liberalism (vrijinnigheid) of the Sadducees and with the legalism (werkgerichtigheid) of the Pharisees. "Whoever wishes to gain knowledge, but is without faith, has no place here. Whoever studies the Word, but without faith and prayer, had better leave. Our fellowship lives in the confession of Peter, 'You are the Christ, the Son of the living God'." Then, as if to give this extra stress, he repeated this apostolic confession in English. It was moving to hear Prof. Lee call this new generation of students to continue in the confession of the pioneers of this Seminary. *They* confessed Christ as the Son of the living God also in the time of the Japanese occupation.

Then I had to think about my colleague Rev. Knoop, whose "In Memoriam" I was privileged to write for the Handbook of our churches during the last days before this trip to the far East. How remarkable it is, how close we stand together also with regard to the history of our witnesses for Christ!

Thus the study life for the following semesters was begun again. (Here the winter vacation marks the end of the academic school year.) Indeed, this is a study *life*. For most of the students live day and night in or near the Seminary. They study and sleep in their small rooms in the dormitory. They eat in the "mess hall", an old barrack attached to the Seminary building. The student undergraduate club, subsidized by the Seminary, takes care of the "mess hall".

The teachers also eat here at lunch time, but pay as well as everyone else. But this can easily be paid out of their salaries, for the noon-time meal costs about fl.0.50. However, the items on the menu are always the same for that price. (Main items: soup\*, rice, and something very hot with a difficult Korean name.) But one has no problem lasting on this meal, as I have already found out on several occasions. Yes, thank-you, I am already somewhat less clumsy with my chopsticks than that time in Zwolle when for a joke I tried them at the home of family Lee. At that time my charming hostess tried to suggest to me that I showed outstanding handiness with them. Now, I'm not particularly handy with anything, as I well know after half a century. Thus this kind Korean compliment in Zwolle didn't pull the wool over my eyes. While the Koreans are as adept with chopsticks as a juggler with six balls, in our hands they suddenly become like tree trunks. They always turn in exactly the wrong direction or collide with each other. But as I said, I'm somewhat less clumsy. Sometimes I actually get a little rice between them!

Wednesday, then, was the official starting day for me. This was also done in rather an official manner. After the arrival of the new students it is customary in the Seminary to begin with a public presentation, to be compared with our customary meeting held on the birthday of our Seminary on December 6. It was my privilege to give a speech at this occasion.

It was not so easy to choose the topic for this. On the one hand I wanted to give a general picture, but on the other I also wanted to make a real beginning with my series of lectures. These deal with a number of related topics from general church history. First a number of examples from early times, from the middle ages, and from recent church history, to show how the future hope of the Christian Church is falsified by the sects, and to show how the canon of the sect is set above the canon of the Holy Scriptures. This will be followed by a number of examples to show how in the course of church history the belief in the canonicity of Scripture, the reliability and the authority of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, has exercised power. This whole I have labelled "Sign Posts from Church History". But the leading question naturally is, "Is all this interesting and, more so, important for a young church such as the Presbyterian church in Korea? (It wasn't until 1884 that the first Protestant missionaries landed here!) Are they interested in being confronted with OLD history? Are they willing to recognize that they ARE involved, and thus are willing to BECOME involved?"

There then was the theme of my first lecture. My title for this was: "The importance of general Church History for the so-called 'Young' Churches." I criticized the term "young" in this context. With this I had to think about the beautiful remarks K. Schilder made in another context about the crisis of OLD AGE (and not of YOUTH) that a church always has to suffer after a reformation. The contrast here of young-old is actually completely unsound. The institution of a local church could have taken place recently or long ago. But the church is one, in the same way as Christ is One and the Word is One. The church in every locality, on whatever date she has been instituted, is ALWAYS the one church of Lord's Day 21 of the Heidelberg Catechism as it clearly follows the teachings of Scripture - as long as that church lived in oneness of faith with the apostles and prophets.

After this, the "normal" college week was started on Thursday and Friday. I give lectures from 11:30 to 1:00 to a class of about 300 people. This is considerably more than we are used to seeing in front of us in

Kampen! But I am already getting used to it. Naturally it is a great advantage for me to have as translator a former pupil of mine, namely Dr. Huh.

On Saturday morning we received students as visitors in our temporary home. This visit had a specific purpose. Three students came to us to interview us for the student paper. They came well prepared with a list of questions set up beforehand. Yet the conversation was very casual. While we were talking about my "special interests", and I was just telling them about Simon Vestdijk, the novelist, who doesn't find any good in any structured religion, yet in his history novels is intensely occupied with church history in order to show that the only road to salvation is that of mysticism and Buddhism - suddenly there stood a living example of Buddhism in the garden gate. We could hear from in the room the dull sounds of wood hitting wood and a sing-song voice. "Do you know what that is?" they asked me. Naturally I had to answer in the negative. Well, this was a Buddhist priest who went from house to house to gather together some rice or other food. When we told him that we were Christians, and thus that he could leave, he disappeared in a hurry. Too bad I didn't get a picture of him. Vestdijk was able to earn a much more generous living than this beggar-priest!

But this scene also showed that the Christians still live in the MIDST of heathenism. They are daily confronted with it. What a riches to know that here many are pulled out of the darkness into the light through the Gospel! What riches, too, to be accompanied by young Korean people who are eager to proclaim the Gospel, while the garden gate slams shut behind a shuffling Buddhist priest. No, Vestdijk, you haven't spoken the last word about the "future of religion".

Hearty greetings from this distant land, with an old church, which renews her youth as that of an eagle.

J. KAMPHUIS

(Trans. Mrs. F. VanderBoom)

*\* including meat - this is an exception in a country where many often do without meat for weeks on end; 100 grams of meat costs about one guilder. But a labourer doesn't earn more than a guilder a day, on the average.*

# press review

## A LETTER TO THE GOVERNMENT

It is already over six months ago that this letter was written and sent away. Nevertheless, I think it is still worth being taken over in CLARION. I mean the letter which our sister churches in The Netherlands, by means of their General Synod (meeting at Kampen), sent to the Dutch government. I give here a translation of the whole letter, which reads as follows:

It is for the first time after their Liberation in 1944 that the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands - by means of their general synod, convened at Kampen - address themselves to You, government and representatives of our people. The synod is convinced that now still keeping silent could later on be reckoned to her as guilty negligence.

For the Reformed Churches are very anxious about a great number of developments that are going on in our country and among our people.

They think here of the sad fact that the name of our God more and more is kept out of public life. The churches enjoy the great privilege that they can unhindered proclaim the gospel and fulfill their other mandates. They are grateful for this to God every day; for in this way they can honour His name for their part. But the government is not allowed to take a so-called neutral stand when the name of the Lord our God is at stake. The government has to keep in mind that she is there as servant of God, and that she rules by His grace. It says in the book of Proverbs: "By Me kings reign, and rulers decree what is just" (8:15). Through the grace of God our nation has known times in which this biblical truth was wholeheartedly endorsed by its governments. Today the public recognition of God's name is painfully missed.

What our nation needs is a government policy which not only aims at "man and his well-being" but, before all, at the honour of the name of God.

## JUDGMENT

The synod further requests Your attention for the continuing undermining of legal authority as it is instituted by the almighty God of heaven and earth and as it comes to the people in the way of all sorts of bearers of authority. The Bible speaks in clear words about these things in, among other texts, Romans 13:1 and 2: "Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been

instituted by God. Therefore he who resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment".

The last part of this text threatens to become applicable to many of our nation. This undermining of the authority can be noticed not only in political, but also in social relationships.

What our people need is a government policy which seriously reckons with God, Who has all power in heaven and on earth, and Who is the source of all legal authority.

Further one must think of the increasing immorality, the disappearance of public virtue, and the undermining of the foundations of marriage. The conviction is more and more gaining ground that man is autonomous and in freedom has his own body and that of another at his own disposal. The expression derived from the Bible, "a chaste and modest life," is more and more conceived of as indication of a life pattern which happens not to fit into time anymore.

The synod may direct You to the Bible, which reveals to us that God has instituted marriage and that it is He Who has the right, strictly speaking, to be in control of our life and body. Also with regard to moral life, public virtue, and sexuality, He has given His good laws to the protection of what is and has to remain clean.

What our nation needs is a government policy which submits to these laws of God, which are laws unto life.

## ABORTION

The synod is especially concerned about Your intention to legalize abortion. Synod definitely does not want to pass by the great human grief which reveals itself in our society and to which abortion often seems to be the sad "solution". But before all synod has to confront You, who are responsible for our legislation, with the clear prohibition of God which says: "You shall not kill" (Exodus 20:13). God wants also budding, still unborn life to be protected. In one of the Psalms (139:13-16) the work of God, Who gives and protects life, is sung of as follows: "Thou didst form my inward parts, Thou didst knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise Thee, for in a wonderful way I am made. Wonderful are Thy works. Thine eyes saw my unformed substance".

Each in his own place and according to his own responsibility, You shall have to keep in view not only the expectant mother and her not yet born child, but also and above all, God, Who unequivocally has made known His norms. To Him You shall once have to give account also with

respect to a possible legal regulation of murder of the unborn child.

## GRIEF

Government and Representatives of our people! It is with grief that the Reformed Churches confront You with what has been said above. We would rather have given thanks to You for a policy that leans on the eternal gospel of Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, the churches are convinced that it is their duty to say these things to You. God's laws and commandments have not been proclaimed only in behalf of certain groups in our nation - they are universal. "Fear God, and keep His commandments; for this is the duty of all men" (Ecclesiastes 12:13).

The Reformed Churches have the lot of our land and people very much at heart. For they know from the Bible that there will be no dawn for a nation which does not speak according to God's law and testimony (Isaiah 8:20).

It is with great emphasis that the Reformed Churches request You not to put this address aside. This, in fact, would mean that You are not willing to direct yourselves in your policy according to the clear Word of the Bible.

In the Reformed Churches every Sunday again the prayer for You goes up because of your responsible position. In view of the increasing abandonment of the Word and renunciation of law - as they were, of course briefly, indicated in this address - the churches have decided to set apart the coming Sunday, May 25, as a day of prayer. Our prayer goes to God, Who so many a time has worked relief in the history of our land and people, and Who also today has the power to work wonders at the prayer of His children. In this time of deep concern the churches pray that God will work this wonder that You and our nation, instead of listening to human ideologies, will anew submit to what God the LORD says in His Word: "Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people" (Proverbs 14:34).

So far this letter. Should we not consider becoming more actively involved in matters of government policies, in line with what we see being done in this letter? There is some activity. But there can be more. Should we as members of the Canadian Reformed Churches not see our responsibilities with respect to our Canadian government and people? The political situation can differ, we cannot establish a real Christian political party such as our brothers and sisters in The Netherlands. But that does not have to prevent us from other, possible activities: that we confront our governing bodies and people with the Word and law of the Lord.

J. GEERTSEMA

# Inflation

The Federal Government has taken steps to stem the tide of inflation which appears to eat away at the very foundations of our economy. I am no economist. I only know how to manage my own finances, but in my simplicity I do not think that there is so much basic difference between managing the finances of a family and those of the country. A basic axiom is, I have always thought, that you should not spend more than you receive. If you spend more than you receive as income you are bound to go broke. Then you live off others, either in the present time or in the future. If you spend more than you earn from all available sources, someone will have to pay for your deficits. That someone is then either the man who sold certain things to you on credit, or your children who do not wish the name of their parents to be burdened with the stigma of insolvency. It is an impossibility to work with always present and ever-increasing deficits.

If I should print money and use that to pay for what I buy without having the necessary funds, I would be prosecuted if caught and I would have to serve time in prison because I passed counterfeit money.

The federal government has it a little easier than the common man: the federal government can print money without being prosecuted. And the federal government can spend more than it really receives, it can increase the money supply at will without there being any real basis for it. The function of gold has been eliminated from the monetary system as far as coverage is concerned and in so far we cannot say that more money is printed than there is real backing. Yet, there must be a real backing for the money that is in circulation, otherwise it differs basically in no respect from counterfeit money.

Inflation is the result, as I see it, of printing more money than the total of services and goods warrants, and thus inflation is not caused by asking too high a price for things, or by asking for too high an increase in wages, but by making more money available than the real value of goods and services warrants and covers. If

people receive more money for doing the same work, that is inflation. If the federal government prints more hundred dollar bills or smaller denominations than productivity has increased, that is inflation: you blow something up with just air. Now we need air to live, but you cannot live from "water and wind" as the older people used to say.

I do not know what the effect would be if the federal government should refuse to print more money than is warranted by increased productivity. I wish that our brethren who have studied that field would serve us with their knowledge and diagnosis. I have an idea that a refusal on the part of the federal government to spend more than it receives and to print more just to give the impression of having received more, would result in some unemployment and in a drastic reduction in wages *and* in prices.

It is now proposed to introduce more or less rigid wage and price controls. I cannot be enthusiastic about that, for I still believe that the rulers are there to restrain the dissoluteness of men, and that all things may be carried on among them with good order and decency, as we say it in the Belgic Confession. I do not believe that the rulers are there to supervise and arrange everything and to give (socialist) guidance and exercise (socialist) supervision over the economy. Wages and prices should find their own level: if there is no buyer the seller will have to lower his price; if the price has to be lowered the cost of producing the product will have to be cut, which will mean that the wages will have to be lowered, which is possible because the prices go down. It will be difficult to decide who will be the first one to take a step in this direction. Right now the spiral is going up instead of down. But what goes up should also be able to come down, should it not?

It is easy and simple to write the above; it will be much more difficult to take such measures which will ensure the return of freedom, real freedom, freedom from marketing boards which oftentimes have broad powers, freedom from the leverpower of the labour unions which now sometimes seem to govern the country, freedom from all sort of interference by "experts" who think that everything can be planned.

One day someone will have to foot the bill. I can only have respect

for the persistent refusal of President Ford to bail New York City out. If no stop is put to too much spending, the whole country will be broke in no time. He who overspends must learn that he cannot do that to infinity. The one who puts a stop to that will not be very popular, to put it mildly, but he will do the country a tremendous favour.

Too many people receive too much money for doing nothing. Everywhere we hear of unemployment, but one concern decided to establish another plant in the Orangeville area because there they could get people to work in that plant; if they had expanded the plant here in Ferris, they were afraid they would not even be able to get enough personnel, for no one is out of work who is willing to work. I read that New York City is so much in debt mainly because it liberally supported everyone who managed to get on the welfare-rolls. What we hear now and then does give the impression indeed that it is too easy to get money for which one does not do one thing.

The federal government, too, could save on countless non-essential expenditures.

At regular intervals we receive an envelope from the Minister responsible for Multiculturalism, the Honourable John Munro. Whenever he has addressed a multicultural meeting, I receive extensive notes on his speech, printed on excellent paper (double spaced). What may not be general knowledge is that the federal government pays hundreds of thousands of dollars on a program "designed to develop an awareness of Canada's cultural diversity and to encourage Canadians to share their cultural heritage with their fellow citizens".

I shall give you some examples of grants given.

In a News Release dated September 4, 1975, we read that The Newfoundland Pipe Band, St. John's, has received \$3,000 for a highland dancing and piping tuition project. The Negro Community Centre, Montreal, received \$11,320 for the annual "Afro Festival 1975", which took place August 2 - 16. The St. Andrews Society of Timmins, Ontario, received \$4,915 for the Northern Ontario School of Gaelic Arts, which teaches piping, drumming and highland dancing. The Sampo Athletic Club, Sudbury, received \$2,600 to refurbish its



rhythmic and folk dancing repertoire. The Veshnivka Girls' Choir, Toronto, received \$5,000 to produce a record of Ukrainian spring songs.

A News Release dated September 15, 1975, mentions that the All Souls Community Theatrical and Folklore Committee, Hamilton, received \$1,200 for music and dancing lessons for some 120 children who will later give public performances. The Regional Folkloric Programmes Committee Hamilton District, Hamilton, received \$9,000 for "Folklore 75", a two-day festival held in June involving folk-performances, open houses, craft displays and ethnic food.

A similar release, dated September 16, mentions that the Alliance of Transylvanian Saxons in Canada, Kitchener, received \$4,450.00 to defray the expenses of a July seminar that was held to familiarize Canadian youth of Transylvanian Saxon descent with their heritage and the history of their people. The Dutch Cultural Society, Yorkton, received \$1,000 to enable the society to continue and increase their cultural activities in the Yorkton community. A summer ethnic festival was held as well as summer hikes in wooden shoes and entertaining at nursing homes.

And, to quote from the one dated September 24, 1975: The Sidney Ukrainian Folk Dancers, Sydney, N.S., received \$2,290 to increase the proficiency of the folk dance troupe. The Groupe Inter-Ethnique du Nord-Ouest Quebecois, Noranda, received \$10,000 to continue such activities as folk dancing and singing, handicrafts and meetings.

I stop.

And we are meanwhile paying tens of thousands of dollars for our schools without any grants except in Alberta, where they will get it after having operated for so many years.

And we meanwhile are doing our best to pay out no more than we receive.

If you wish to work against inflation and for cutting down unnecessary expenses, above you find a few of the fields where you can start your activities.

See what interference by the governments leads to.

Let them confine themselves to what we confess to be their tasks. And let them issue no more money than insofar as there is realistic backing for it. Otherwise they steal with a show of right. vO

# mission news



## MISSION AID - IRIAN JAYA

This is the first of a series of monthly newsletters, written to keep you informed and up-to-date with whatever is happening on the mission field in Irian Jaya. In this first letter, however, we will talk about several things that had to be done in order to get to our mission field.

First of all, a bird's eye view of what we've been doing in the past year. Guided by our professors and ministers in the Theological College, we studied books about the Old Testament, the New Testament, the Doctrine of our churches, and the Science of Missions. Then we audited a linguistics course in Toronto (linguistics is the science of language). We also audited an advanced first-aid course after we had completed our first first-aid course. Naturally, we had to acquaint ourselves with Indonesian, the national language of Indonesia, which we did through private lessons for approximately three months.

In June 1975, we left for Charlotte in North Carolina to stay on campus there for nine weeks and learned everything we could about linguistics. This course was given by the Summer Institute of Linguistics, which is affiliated with the Wycliffe Bible Translators.

After coming home again, we started making arrangements for our departure. In the middle of October we had, for several weeks, six 45-gallon steel drums (as extra furniture?) in our living room. These drums we used to pack our belongings, and by the time you read this, they will be somewhere between New York and Singapore. So for the time-being we will live from two suitcases.

After the drums were gone, we could make a start with the finishing

touch of our "clear-out". All our borrowed furniture was brought back and we are very grateful for those that have helped us out during the past year.

In between all the moving, we have been to quite a number of congregations to tell about the work of the Wycliffe Bible Translators, the linguistics course we took this summer, and our future plans. We really enjoyed doing these evenings; it was very good to get acquainted and make new contacts. For those who did not meet us and wish to know the address of Wycliffe, here it is: Wycliffe Bible Translators Inc., Box 833, Calgary 2, Alberta, Canada.

Then on November 6th we picked up our plane tickets which will bring us, via Montreal, Brussels, Jakarta and Biak, to Jayapura, from where we hope to arrange a flight to Kawagit with the Missionary Aviation Fellowship (MAF). The Lord willing, we will reach Kawagit in the beginning of December. From Kawagit we will travel by boat to Manggelum, our home-village.

During our stop-over in Holland, we hope to meet Reverend and Mrs. Knigge, as well as Mr. Griffioen, who has been working as an agriculturalist in Irian Jaya. Hopefully we can visit the Royal Dutch Institute for the Tropics in Amsterdam, which could obviously give us very valuable information about life in the tropics.

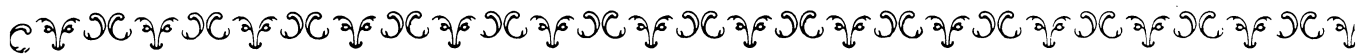
If everything goes well, we will tell you in our next letter about our trip and our first impressions of Irian Jaya.

With greetings and Christian love,

BRAM and JOANNE VEGTER  
Z.G.K. Manggelum  
c/o M.A.F. Sentani, Irian Jaya  
Indonesia

## 45th Wedding Anniversary

Together with most of their children, Mr. and Mrs. K. Kamminga celebrated their 45th Wedding Anniversary on November 6. They came to Canada in May, 1952 with their four daughters and two sons. Except for the mother the family went straight into the beets around Homewood. The daughters did not want mother to go. They said, "You can go, but then we stay home." The family first lived in a garage, where they had "lots of fun". In 1956 br. and sr. Kaminga moved to Carman. There they still live. One of the children went to British Columbia. The others live with their families around Carman (Winnipeg included here). Their address is: Box 533, Carman, Manitoba R0G 0J0.



## PRESS RELEASE

Classis Ontario North held on October 30, 1975, in Toronto.

1. *Opening.* On behalf of the Rehoboth Church at Burlington, Rev. Cl. Stam calls the meeting to order. Psalm 122:3 is sung, after which Psalm 122 is read. Rev. Stam leads in opening prayer and welcomes the delegates.

2. *Constitution of Classis.* The credentials are found in good order and classis is constituted. Rev. C. Olij is chairman, Rev. D. Vander Boom clerk and Rev. C. Van Dam assessor.

3. *Agenda.* After some additions, the agenda is adopted.

4. *Reports.* a) Br. H. DenBroeder presents an interim financial report. In answer to a question, classis is reminded that contributions are \$2.00 per communicant member. Br. DenBroeder is thanked for his efforts. b) A brief, re: church visitation, is presented by the Rev. G. Van Dooren. It is accepted as such. c) The church at Brampton reports that a translation of "De Gereformeerde Praktijk Betreffende Attestaties" is being worked on. d) Preaching arrangements for the church at Ottawa are set, the Lord willing, as follows: November 16, Rev. D. VanderBoom; December 7, Rev. W.W.J. Van Oene; December 28, Rev. C. Olij; January 18, Rev. C. Van Dam; February 8, Rev. Cl. Stam; March 7, Rev. D. VanderBoom; March 21, Rev. G. Van Dooren; April 11, Rev. W.W.J. Van Oene.

A request from the Fergus consistory to relieve Rev. W.W.J. Van Oene from the Ottawa schedule was not granted.

5. *Appointments.* a) As church visitors: the Revs. D. VanderBoom, G. Van Dooren, W.W.J. Van Oene,

C. Olij. The following schedule for church visitation is adopted: Brampton on December 9; Ebenezer Burlington, November 25; Rehoboth Burlington, January 6; Fergus, December 5; Guelph, February 6; Orangeville, December 29; Ottawa, March 6; Toronto, January 15. b) As deputy for Article 19 C.O.: the church at Guelph. c) As deputies for needy churches: Rev. C. Olij, br. J. VanBodegom, br. G. Lodder. d) As deputies for ecclesiastical examinations: co-ordinator, the Rev. C. Olij. e) As deputy for archives: the Ebenezer Church at Burlington (address: Box 124, Burlington). f) As classical treasurer: Br. H. DenBroeder. g) As deputy for auditing books (Art. 19, C.O.): the church at Guelph. h) As deputy for checking the archives: the Ebenezer Church, Burlington. i) As deputy for auditing the books of the Treasurer: the church at Toronto.

6. *Regional Synod.* The church at Toronto informs classis of the request by Classis Ontario South to convene Regional Synod. The following delegates are chosen: Revs. D. VanderBoom, C. Van Dam, W.W. J. Van Oene, Cl. Stam. Alternate: Rev. C. Olij.

Elders: G. DeBoer, H. Oosterveld, H. Van Veen, H. Vis. Alternates: elders R. Grit, A.L. Hartman, A. Keep, J. VanderWoude.

7. *Question Period ad Art. 41 C.O.* Guelph informs classis that their correct address is P.O. Box 1636, Guelph, and asks that the consistories please take note of this.

8. *Personal Question Period* is held.

9. *Preparation for Next Classis.* The date is D.V., March 11, 1976, with the church at Fergus as convening church. The suggested executive is as follows: chairman, Rev. Cl.

Stam; clerk, Rev. C. Olij; assessor, Rev. D. VanderBoom.

10. *Censure ad Article 43 C.O.* is not necessary.

11. The Acts and Press Release are read and adopted.

12. *Closing.* Hymn 5 is sung and the chairman leads in closing prayer.

For the classis,  
C. Van Dam, assessor.



THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE

Published biweekly by Premier Printing Ltd.  
Winnipeg, Manitoba.

Second class mail registration number 1025.

ADDRESS FOR ADMINISTRATIVE

MATTERS: (subscriptions, advertisements, etc.):

CLARION, Premier Printing Ltd.  
1249 Plessis Road, Winnipeg  
Manitoba, Canada R2C 3L9  
Phone (204) 222-5218

ADDRESS FOR EDITORIAL MATTERS:

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Ontario, Canada N1M 2W7

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SUBSCRIPTIONS:

\$15.00 per year (to be paid in advance).

ADVERTISEMENTS:

\$4.00 per column inch (width of column:  
one-third of page). Contract rates upon  
request.

Advertising copy for weddings, anni-  
versaries, meetings, etc., must be in our  
office three to four weeks prior to  
event.



## Letter-to-the-Editor

Dear Editor,

For several years I have felt the need to share some positive thoughts on cigarette smoking with the readers of our *Clarion*. Frankly, I have been reluctant to do so, since a subject like this is a poor one to win a popularity contest with: some of my best friends, as well as brothers (sisters) are addicted to the weed. The purpose of this letter is therefore not to condemn cigarette-addicts, but an effort to help them, as well as our Churches as a whole.

I am sure that I am not assuming too much when I state that we all agree that *too much* cigarette smoking is contrary to the 8th commandment (poor stewardship) as well as sin against the 6th commandment (that I harm not myself). It is my conviction that it is also sin against the first commandment: something besides Him, a return to a house of bondage.

The first point of disagreement is of course the real meaning of "too much" in the previous paragraph, since we all agree that too much of anything is wrong. I admit, moderation is the key to many, many beautiful gifts of God to man. But I have no single indication that cigarettes are one of these beautiful Gifts. Cigarettes in themselves are not pleasing to the eyes, they do not produce beautiful sounds. Nor is the taste or smell pleasing except to those who are already accustomed to it. Nor is there anything pleasant in the "feel" of a cigarette. So what then is the real motive to continue smoking after one has started just to conform with his peers? The answer is obvious: cigarettes are habit-forming when the smoke is inhaled. (For the purpose of this letter I ignore non-inhaling cigarette-smokers: do they still exist? Every cigarette-smoker I have seen recently inhales the smoke: even though the full page cigarette ads hypocritically state, in a footnote: "avoid inhaling"). Inhaling of course brings nicotine and tar into the lungs, the lungs which our God created for nothing else than the breath of life. This nicotine enters the bloodstream and may cause addiction, that is, slavery to a habit.

Is addiction (slavery to a habit) sinful? As stated above, I believe addiction to be contrary to the first commandment: a child of God may not be enslaved by anything, not even by things which are otherwise good in themselves (I Corinthians 6:12). In my opinion: cigarettes are not among those things which are good in themselves: "Food is meant for the stomach, and the stomach for food". How would you like to

read: "Smoke is meant for the lungs, and the lungs for smoke"? However, the Bible does not deal directly with addiction to drugs, tobacco, or even alcohol, but the Holy Scriptures are very clear in their condemnation of drunkenness. Drunkenness is the logical conclusion of addiction to alcohol, and I believe that it is therefore not farfetched to state that the Bible condemns addiction to alcohol on equal terms. The Bible does not speak about the use of drugs at all, but I believe that we agree that not only drug addiction is sinful, but that *all* non-medical use of drugs is playing with a grave danger to one's health, and therefore sinful.

But what is so different when we talk about the smoking of habit-forming cigarettes? First of all, that the end results are not quite as devastating. But there is also a history, which causes one to look more mildly towards *this* particular life-destroying habit.

Cigarettes have only become a scourge since the First World War. Before that time the comparative small use of tobacco in pipes, cigars, chewing-tobacco and snuff did little harm. It seldom was an addiction, nor a danger to one's health or finances. Even early cigarette-smokers did not inhale the smoke, and were therefore not addicted. But since that time millions upon millions all over the world (including thousands of Reformed people) have become enslaved to this dangerous (health and fire) and expensive habit against their will, without even making any claim to enjoyment. Indeed, thousands openly say that they would like to be freed from their habit, but do not know how. That addiction to cigarette smoking is both wrong and possible, even for Reformed Christians, needs no further evidence.

For those who take the above sincerely, but believe in moderation, one vital question remains: "How can one tell who is addicted and who is not, and how does one start on the road to addiction? What are the tell-tale signs of being or becoming addicted?"

As with alcohol, it is sometimes difficult to tell who really is addicted, and who is not. Modern sociologists believe that addiction to alcohol for instance is part of one's basic personality. One person becomes easily addicted with a little, while another can take much without ever becoming a slave. But there are nevertheless some sure tell-tale signs of addiction:

1. When the first sign presents it-

self to others, the victim is usually already past the so-called "point of no return".

2. One proof of addiction is the urge to gratify oneself, even when one cannot socially share.
3. A second proof is that such a person will fulfil his desires when in company, even though no one cares to join him, and in extreme circumstances even against the expressed wishes of the others.
4. The addict will usually not admit to anyone, including himself, that he is one.
5. Becoming an addict can be a very slow process, sometimes covering many years, and therefore almost unnoticed by close friends and relatives until the victim is totally and helplessly enslaved.

Is there hope for a cigarette addict? Of course there is hope, just as much as there is hope in any other humanly hopeless situation. Lord's Day 33 summarizes Scripture when it says:

Q. 89: "What is the mortification of the old man?"

A.: "It is a heartfelt sorrow that we have provoked God by our sins, and *more and more* to hate them and flee from them.

Obviously an addict cannot free himself; he needs to ask God for help. He needs to ask the help of his family and friends, ask them to take the matter seriously. A real brother or sister will then do all they can to help on this road of "more and more" and above all not to lead in temptation. Perhaps such a helpful brother, being a self-professed "moderate-smoker" himself, might even discover a need for deliverance himself when he tries to abstain (for a lengthy period), to help his brother. Yes, this "more and more" might be a struggle of six months to a year for an addict, but through it he will experience what L.D. 33 repeats from Scripture in Q. 90: "What is the quickening of the new man?" Answer: "It is heartfelt joy in God through Christ," etc.

Dear reader, you might say: "why so many words over such a small matter?" Yes, a cigarette is small indeed, and smoking one is a small matter, but addiction and unwillingness to help those who are addicted, and that against one's better knowledge, can be a sin, which, if persisted in, can be the symptom of a much more dangerous spiritual disease.

In closing, three quotations:

Someone has said: "Both my Freudian and non-Freudian friends agree that a man who must have something in his mouth several hours a day - be it a cigarette, a cigar, or a pipe - is substituting

# Perspectives in Teaching

## TEACHING FAITH

*But how are men to call upon Him in Whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in Him of Whom they have never heard? So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes by the preaching of Christ. (Romans 10)*

God wants us to live, and as there is no life without faith, He wants us to believe. The believers have life eternal; to them passing away is a passing into a fuller life, a perfect life of worship without shadows or tears. The believers may fall asleep, but they never die. Those who do not believe, are dead and when they pass away, there is no hope for them; they remain dead. As disintegration and destruction become apparent in the 'life' of the unbeliever and in his society, so the beginning of eternal joy becomes apparent in the life of the believer and in the communion of saints. Faith, then, is a matter of life and death. Our main concern, if not our only concern, in the education and upbringing of our children is that they will embrace faith, walk in faith, walk in the fear of the LORD.

All men believe. They believe that what they see is real, that what they perceive with their senses is true; they believe that they have been born; they believe that  $2 + 2 = 4$ . Any child has the ability to believe, is willing and forced to believe, but he is not born with true faith. True faith must be worked by God Himself, by His Spirit through His Word. Shall we draw back our hands then from the child and

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR - Cont'd.

same for his thumb." This might be true, but there is more to it than that. Encyclopedia Britannica says: "Nicotine and related alcaloides of tobacco furnish the habit forming and narcotic effects which account for its world-wide use". Brothers (and sisters), this letter is dated on Reformation day: let us also in this respect continue the Reformation of our personal and Church-life, and not become conformed to the world. "Let us send cigarettes the way of chewing tobacco and snuff."

And thank you editor, for placing this rather lengthy letter, without shortening it.

Yours in Christ,  
GERRY DENBOK, Burlington.

leave it up to the LORD lest we are in His way? We must not create a false dilemma, but humbly and gratefully acknowledge that we are allowed to be and are charged to be the very instruments of the Holy Spirit: we may be the preachers of Christ. We shall talk to Him when we sit in our homes and when we walk in the streets, when we go to bed and when we wake up; Christ will be in and on our minds every minute of the day; He shall be bound as a sign upon our hands and as frontlets between our eyes; His name shall be on the doorposts of our houses and on our gates. The mothers may lead their little ones to Jesus; the fathers may tell to the coming generations things they have heard and known, which their fathers have told them; the parents take it upon themselves to instruct their child, as soon as it is able to understand, in the faith. The LORD Himself has revealed it so clearly: Faith must be *taught* and faith *can* be taught.

The same faith which obeys the call of the Spirit when we go to church on the first day of the week, guides us through the remainder of the week. As we instruct our children in our homes in faith, so we shall cause them to be instructed in faith when we are forced to delegate our mandate to others, to professional teachers. Faith comes from what is heard, is it not? And what is heard comes by the preaching of Christ, is it not? May then the instruction of our children be given into the hands of faithful teachers who feel the beginning of eternal joy in their lives as the parents do and who do not show the beginning of death: despair, fear, lonesomeness and uselessness.

The teaching of faith, the instruction in faith is an incomprehensible and humanly speaking illogical process because we cannot teach the act of believing itself. We are unable to tell the child how to believe. Believing is not a skill to be explained, understood, practised, and finally mastered. We do not put on display a series of saints' lives as the Roman Catholics do; we do not even put forward the Christ as the One Great Example to be imitated. The Bible does not provide us with a

number of stories of believers whose acts of faith must be copied or equalled. The Bible tells us how God, inspite of unbelief and little faith, fulfils His mighty plan of salvation. Not what Abraham did or Jacob did, nor what David believed or Joash professed, but what the LORD performed through the ages is revealed in Holy Writ. If the (hi)story of Adam and Abel and Seth and Noah had to function as examples for faith, indeed a daily lesson in Bible History and a secular training for other skills would do, but Christ has to be taught as the One Who is the basis of all order and law in creation (Mathematics), as the One Who maintains life in all its forms and appearances (Geography and Science), Who enables man to speak and communicate with God and neighbour (Language).

Faith itself cannot be taught, but that faith does not save us either; we do not profess, "I believe in my faith." Not the act of faith, but the object of our faith must be taught, since by that object of our faith - Christ in Whom all is fulfilled - we are saved. We may believe that the Holy Spirit Himself will make that jump from 'WHAT we believe' to 'what we BELIEVE'. How unbelievable it is that we, people of little faith, are charged and enabled by God to instill faith in our children in home, church, and school. With Paul we exclaim, "O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and how inscrutable His ways!" (Romans 12:33)

E. GOSKER

## OUR COVER

*Mount Rundle, Banff. (Alberta Government Photographic Services.)*

Church  News

Called:

REV. J. Visscher

of Coaldale, Alberta, is called for the mission work in Brasil by the Church of New Westminster, B.C.

# our little magazine

Hello Busy Beavers

Here it is nearly December! Seems to me as if winter just sort of quietly crept up behind us and now . . . here it is! Does it seem that way to you? Or have you been looking forward to winter, and anxiously waiting for the snow and ice? After summer and fall fun, it is nice to have a change, isn't it? Snowforts and hockey, snowfights and skating are fun too!

Busy Beaver *Grace Jongs* would like to share this poem with you. It should get you in the mood for winter if you aren't already!

### Falling Snow

See the pretty snowflakes Falling from the sky; On the walk and housetop Soft and thick they lie.	On the window-ledges On the branches bare Now how fast they gather Filling all the air.
Look into the garden Where the grass was green, Covered by the snowflakes Not a blade is seen.	Now the bare black bushes All look soft and white, Every twig is laden - What a pretty sight!

Author unknown

\* \* \* \* \*

Busy Beaver *Tammy Alkema* sent in this poem a while ago already. And now is a good time for this poem which has such a lovely message for all of us. Thank you for sharing, Tammy!

Wide, wide as the ocean, High as the heavens above, Deep, deep as the deepest sea Is my Saviour's love.	Still I am a child of His care For His Word teaches me That His love reaches me "Everywhere".
--	--

### BIRTHDAY WISHES

This time we want to wish all the Busy Beavers with December birthdays a very happy day and many, many happy returns! May the Lord bless and keep you also in the year to come.

Karen Bergsma	Dec. 4	Walter VanGrootheest	19
Pieter Nyenhuis	5	Rita Bouwsema	21
Bonita Stiksmā	5	Edward Versteeg	21
Yolanda Jongsma	6	Linda Meliefste	23
Alinda Greta Kuik	6	Karl Veldkamp	24
Albert Riemersma	6	Corinne Welfing	24
Loretta Dam	8	Corinne Medemblik	25
Wilma DeVos	8	Pearl DeVries	27
Sharon Koerselman	11	Audrey Bultena	28
Wendy Endeman	12	Betty Ann VanderMeulen	28
Anna Riemersma	15	Christine VanZandwijk	29
Denise VanAmerongen	15	Wilma Bouwman	30
Jacqueline Kobes	17	Louis Dijkstra	30
Margaret Eelhart	18	Jackie Bakker	31
Jack Lodder	18	Theresa Boersema	31
Charles Lodder	19		

### Tobogganing

John and Frank flew down the long hill on their toboggans.

"Let's go down the next hill too, Frank!" called John as they slowed at the bottom.

"Think we should, John? We're pretty far from home, and I've never been there."

"Oh come on, Frank." And with a laugh John had already started up the next hill. What awaited them on the other side?

Frank and John flew down the next hill. It was very long and big. It was hard to get back up again. Now it was getting pretty dark outside and the boys had no idea it was getting so dark out. They kept on tobogganing down the long hill. Suddenly they felt they were getting cold and tired, and they looked around. It was dark and cold out. They became afraid. They started walking. But where was home? They looked and they looked. But they could only see snow, and stars in the sky. They felt lonely and they were afraid. Frank said,

"I wish we were home," once more.

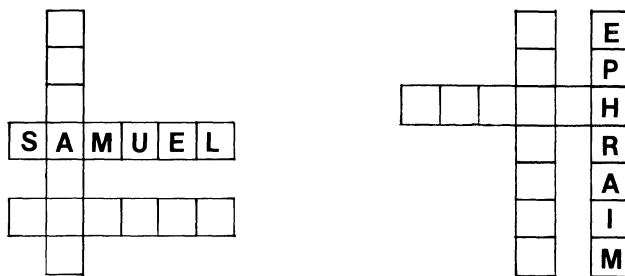
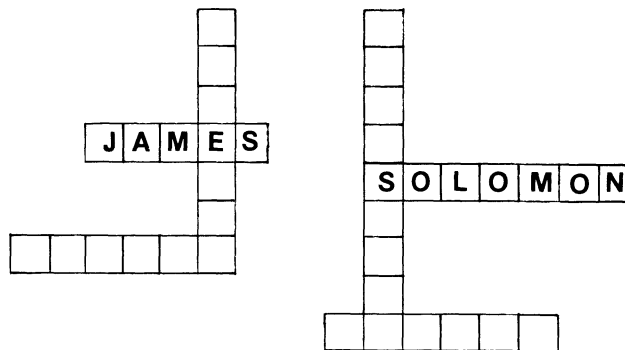
Suddenly they heard a voice calling them,  
"John! Frank!"

It was their mother calling. She had come to look for them. Now they knew that soon they would be warm and safe at home. Never again would they go so far from home.

by Busy Beaver Catherine Smouter

### QUIZ TIME

Did you like doing the Mother, Father, Son puzzles we did the time before last? Here are some more for you to try!



Bye for now, Busy Beavers. I do hope to hear from some of you very soon!

With love from your Aunt Betty