



Clarion

THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE

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OVERSIGHT:

The First Office of the Elders

Last of three parts.

"Therefore in the first place, the office of the elders is, together with the ministers of the Word to take the oversight of the church, which is committed to them, and diligently to look whether everyone properly departs himself in his confession and conversation; to admonish those who behave themselves disorderly, and to prevent, as much as possible, the sacraments from being profaned: also to act (according to the Christian discipline) against the impenitent, and to receive the penitent again into the bosom of the church, as appears not only from the above mentioned saying of Christ, but also from many other places of Holy Writ, that these things are not alone entrusted to one or two persons, but to many who are ordained thereto."

- Form For Ordination of Elders and Deacons of the Canadian Reformed Churches.

The last section was concluded with the remark that a consistory must show consistency in the pastoral work of oversight, so that the Spirit of the Lord can freely work in the congregation through the service of the office-bearers. This brings us to a next point: oversight is a SPIRITUAL matter.

SPIRITUAL

In our oversight, we are dealing with the Holy Spirit and HIS activity in the congregation. Pastors are His instruments, and therefore oversight is a Spiritual matter.

The investigation (oversight) is followed up — if necessary — by three things: admonition, prevention, and possible further action leading to excommunication and exclusion out of the congregation of the Lord. You will notice that we are now dealing with the calling to exercise DISCIPLINE over the congregation.

And discipline, the Church Order also stresses this in article 71, is wholly of a SPIRITUAL nature. One who is called to oversee and to guard, to gov-

ern and exercise authority, must also be able to ENFORCE. For this reason the civil authorities have received the "sword" (Romans 13:4). So the office-bearers have received the "sword of the Spirit," the Word of God (Ephesians 6:17). This Word of God is called "profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction and for training in righteousness . . ." (II Timothy 3:16), a power of God unto salvation (Romans 1:16). The first and the last form of discipline, therefore, is that of the Word of God. And it is the most POWERFUL discipline, because it leads either to life or to death, but always does the Word of God take effect; the Word is never without desired result (Isaiah 45:23).

Office-bearers must always be convinced of the power of God's Word and must speak this Word with the authority it has in itself. Sometimes — I suppose even often — a pastor can feel weak and somewhat useless, for all he can do is talk and try to convince and persuade, but this activity — seemingly powerless and without effect — truly is the POWER of God! The Word spoken will always work on, long after the elders have left. The weakness of the elder is in this respect his very strength. It is also his COMFORT, for the Lord has said of Himself as the good Pastor, "The sheep FOLLOW Him, for they know His voice" (John 10:3). The shepherd speaks the Word of God, and those who are of the Lord will hear and repent, being reconciled to Christ and to the Church of Christ.

DISCIPLINE

In the world it is as follows: as soon as someone CONFESSES to his crimes, discipline STARTS. In the Church it is the other way around: when someone honestly and wholeheartedly confesses in repentance, all discipline ends. Certainly, then a church-member may still be responsible to the CIVIL authorities, but no

longer is he subject to the particular discipline of the Church. All disciplinary action should therefore be directed to make the brother or sister first SEE the sin as guilt before the Lord, and should lead to a true confession of that sin and a firm desire to BREAK with that particular sin. The example of the prophet Nathan leading David to his confession, "Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned!" (Psalm 51:4ff.) will suffice and also inspire. That was a real HOMEVISIT! Once the confession has been received, the sinner may and must be COMFORTED with the rich promises of the Lord in Jesus Christ.

Special discipline ends when one confesses and repents. Repentance, however, must always be combined with "going and sinning no more." Sometimes, in exceptional cases, a form of disciplinary action must be continued after confession, simply when someone doesn't have the power to leave his/her sin, e.g., in the case of those habitually addicted to alcohol or other drugs. Alcoholics and other addicts may know many moments of sincere grief and remorse over their sin and sickness, but that does not mean that they can leave their habit and fall no more in this particular respect.¹ Would it be wise with regards to such brothers and sisters — whose misery we cannot begin to comprehend — to apply a term of "probation"² until both the person concerned and the consistory are reasonably certain that the addiction has been overcome? Going to the Lord's Supper could then be a concrete GOAL that such a person sets for him/herself and daily strives towards. This also has to do with "preventing, as much as is POSSIBLE, the sacraments from being profaned." One cannot prevent everything, and pastors are limited in knowledge and opportunity, but would it be wrong to protect addicted brothers and sisters from things stronger than themselves? In such special cases, I'm convinced, the pastors should seek the assistance

of skilled professional workers such as physicians and neurologists.

EXCLUSION AND RE-ADMITTANCE

If there is no repentance, the final exclusion will undoubtedly ensue. That is, I am sure, the saddest experience of a pastor. It is disheartening to see a sheep being cut off from the flock beyond which it cannot live or survive. And, most likely, a pastor will experience more excommunications than re-admissions.

But this exclusion is an inevitable, final step, if there indeed is no repentance. Once the procedure of discipline has started, it must continue, if need be, to the very end. Discipline starts under that TENSION; it is one of the two, so to speak: either bend or break. In the end, it will be the Word of God which is the bending or breaking Power. People are always affected by the Spiritual power of Church discipline.

This Word of God must be stressed by the pastors in every official activity. I once made the remark that "I'm a shepherd, not a COWBOY." The shepherd speaks (the Word of God) and the sheep listen to his voice. But a cowboy has a rope and drags them in. If a sheep is LOST and straying the shepherd must certainly go out and seek to find it. But if the sheep demands its portion and heritage and says, "Let me GO," the Father will let him go and not follow him; compare the parable of the Prodigal Son. Pastors must be persistent and not give up easily; but, on the other hand — also with a view to the whole flock — a pastor must know when to quit.

OUTSIDERS

It may not happen OFTEN that the penitent are again received into the bosom of the Church. It may happen more than once that OUTSIDERS are to be admitted as members, and that certainly also is a matter of oversight. Even though "marriage" is not an ecclesiastical matter in our churches, yet the life of the married is, and it is often because of marriage that outsiders request to be admitted. As a rule, of course, the office-bearers will solemnize ONLY those marriages in which both partners are communicant members of the Church and attend regularly (as even the Banns imply), and therefore this membership matter must be resolved BEFORE THE MARRIAGE. Vows to the Lord (confession of faith) must always precede our vows to one another. The consistory

should then see to the following points: whether the incoming member is correctly and adequately motivated, understands the implications of church-membership, and is fully willing to submit to church-discipline. I have found that not always this motivation, understanding, and willingness is present, and this usually shows AFTER the wedding. Consistories sometimes "oversee" things here (in the sense of overlooking).

When someone leaves the Church, either "normally" through attestation, or because of discipline, we follow a SET procedure. There are rules to make oversight EFFECTIVE in these things. I feel that, also in admitting outsiders, there should be a set procedure followed by our churches, so that difficulties can be avoided.

MUTUAL

In view of all this, we understand how extremely DIFFICULT it is to be a pastor and to be called to oversee the Church of Christ. Especially when being responsible for the "keys of the Kingdom of Heaven," one can feel very inadequate and small. Nothing is more important for the office-bearers than the constant PRAYERS of the congregation.

It is for this reason that the form adds, "These things are not alone entrusted to one or two persons, but to many who are ordained thereto." Oversight is not just a personal, but a MUTUAL, matter. One is never a pastor ALONE in the Church of Christ.

Is this added as a subtle reprimand to avoid all strivings toward personal power in the Church and as a warning against any kind of hierarchy? Certainly this is an element which we must not overlook, for pastors are not void of sinful desires. The great danger which stalks every pastor is that he seeks his OWN glory and power, and not Christ's glory in the well-being of His flock. Church history is full of sad examples. And we may be thankful for it that our Church Order is specifically designed to prevent any "lording it" over one another; compare I Peter 5:3, "not as domineering . . ."

But this subtle reprimand also has great COMFORT. I cannot and need not do it alone. There are fellow-pastors, and together these oversee the flock of Christ. Doesn't the Bible say, "In the abundance of counsellors, there is victory" (Proverbs 24:6). Pastors may see to ONE ANOTHER, support one another, together discuss and

decide on the basis of God's Word what must be done and how it must be done. The pastor who feels that he alone must do it and alone can do it, is a very POOR pastor. If an elder is to function well within the congregation, he must first know his place within the CONSISTORY. He must be a man of COMMUNION to all sides.

That's how the Lord Jesus Christ intended it to be. He appointed twelve apostles, not one. Through the PLURALITY of pastors who stand together in the bond of faith, He achieves the UNITY of the Church.

Pastors must look over the congregation in such a way that the congregation in turn looks up to the Lord Jesus Christ alone. If our pastoral care may achieve that goal, the Lord Jesus Christ has greatly blessed us. Then the Good Shepherd is glorified in the work of many pastors.

Cl. STAM

NOTES:

¹ Cf. *Een Zwak voor Alcohol* by Dr. P.H. Esser et al. Uitgeverij Callenbach. An excellent introduction into the problems of addiction.

² During the discussion a number of brethren disagreed with this notion of "probation," stating that repentance is only true if it means "leaving the habit." On the other hand, it was argued, repentance doesn't immediately remove the effect of sin (addiction) but is a first step on the way to freedom.

C.I.S.



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First . . . Priority in the Life of a Christian Wife (2)

“FIRST WOMEN’S LIB”

The beautiful harmony of “God’s Image, male and female,” as created in the beginning, was soon destroyed. Woman, created to be a “helper fit,” a partner for the Man, betrayed and deceived him by listening to the serpent, by eating from the forbidden tree and then — instead of standing *next* to the Man in fulfilling the double mandate of “be fruitful” and “have dominion” — deceived him into eating.

She should have done what Paul later wrote, “Let her ask her own husband at home”! After all, the LORD God had spoken to him (Genesis 2:17), not to her. And as soon as Satan tried to twist God’s Word, she should have run to the Man. She, however, thought that she could manage all by herself — and darkness fell.

Let’s notice this first: sin started when Woman no longer obeyed the *divine institution for marriage*, as our Form says, “First, that husband and wife, united by sincere love, help and assist each other in all things that belong to this life and to the life eternal.” Woman sinned, literally, against every word of this “*First*”! She sinned against Marriage.

PUNISHMENT

Punishment followed right away. “To the woman the LORD God said, ‘I will greatly multiply . . .’” (Genesis 3:16).

A careful and exact consideration and translation of this verse leads to the conclusion that this punishment came in *five* parts or stages.

1. “*I will greatly multiply your pain*” (or suffering). Most translations combine “pain” with what follows. The next word, however, means “conception” rather than “childbearing.” (Here the KJV is better than newer translations.) “Childbearing” would also be a repetition: The LORD would have said the same thing twice. In addition, one cannot say that “conception” as such involves much pain. (On the contrary! Except when a virgin is deflowered, but does one have to assume that Woman, at that moment, still was a virgin? That would lead to

all kinds of “anabaptistic” conclusions, as though “sex” started after the fall, and . . . would be sin!) Thus the conclusion: the first punishment is that the life of women would, in general, become a life of suffering. Think of the ages past (and present); how many millions of women have spent their lives in suffering!

2. “*I will multiply your conception.*” Think again of ages past and present: child after child, year after year, till hundreds of thousands of women collapsed when still young. Have you ever seen an old cemetery here in Canada, telling the story of pioneer-women: “Here lies our beloved wife, mother of seven children, passed away at the age of 31, 32 . . .,” succumbed in pain and tears? Heart-breaking, to say the least.

3. “*I will multiply your pain in child-bearing.*” That was a punishment, an abnormal thing. Think again of all those millions of births, without any alleviation. (N.B.: “Kraamvrouwenkorts . . .”)

4. “*Yet (!!) your desire shall be for your husband.*” Notwithstanding all that is mentioned under 2 and 3, she goes right away back to her husband who . . . (but we keep that for 5). “Desire” means, very simply and realistically, sexual desire. As we read in Proverbs 30:15. “Three, four never say, ‘Enough!’” and one of them is not the “barren womb” but the “empty womb.” Even though she may die from it, and even though all the pain and suffering may start all over again, she goes back into his arms. Again, I would suggest, think of the history of centuries: the results of sin in the lives of millions and millions of Eve’s daughters.

5. “*And he shall rule over you.*” Do I really have to prove that this was part of the punishment? Do I really have to point out that this “*rule*” most certainly was *not* the same as the beautiful harmony of “God created man as His image, male and female He created them”? This is the harsh, often the cruel rule with which, in the course of history, millions of men have thrown their wives around the place, bossing over them, maltreating them

more than they ever would one of their cattle. The woman is no longer the “wederhelft” (other half), but (forgive my Dutch) “slaafje en sloofje” (slave and drudge).

* * *

MISUNDERSTANDINGS . . .

At this point the misunderstandings multiplied, as I have noted in the first article.

Let me first write down what I said before the discussion, and then mention something about that discussion.

All too often the character of punishment in these words is not recognized. Even our Form for Holy Wedlock goes wrong here. (I was just told that in The Netherlands they have changed this, but that may be hearsay.) Our Form quotes Genesis 3:16, as though Christ has died in vain for the women, as though it is God’s will that in a Christian marriage the relationship still is and has to be exactly as it became after the fall. As though women cannot sing Psalm 32!

I quoted here a Dutch commentary (Aalders) which I now try to translate. “Instead of a ‘fit helper’ woman became a subject (onderdane) of the man. She was degraded, reduced to a lower rank. The harmonious relationship was disrupted. Instead of the right relationship, in which indeed the man has the leadership (he was created first), but in which nevertheless the woman stands *next to* (naast) him, she now, as a punishment upon sin, comes to stand *under* him.” Then the commentator continues: “Always the *demand* remains, according to the original intention (bedoeling) of the Creator, to approach the ideal (I prefer: original) relationship of the *equal* helper.” (I would also prefer “to restore” instead of “to approach.”)

Jesus Christ, as Dr. K. Schilder did not tire of repeating, has come to *restore* what His Father created in the beginning, reconciling us to God by taking away our sins. But that will have our attention somewhat later.

First a bit more about the discussion, the misunderstandings, even the apparent unwillingness to be convinced by Scriptural arguments.

I would like to start by stating that, of course!, God’s punishment as we read about it in Genesis 3, was “mixed” with mercy. “In His wrath He remembered His mercy.” One has only

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DEMONSTRATION OR REPRESENTATION?

No one among us advocates abortion as a legitimate means to solve certain "parental" problems. Most of us, I imagine, have in some way tried to protest against this legalized genocide, either via organizations or petitions.

Apparently our brothers and sisters in The Netherlands have to struggle against similar problems as we in this respect. On September 11, a huge demonstration was organized in The Hague (in front of the House of Parliament), even endorsed by the Reformed Political Association (GPV), and a petition was handed to the Secretary General of the Department of Justice, Mr. Oranje (see center photo). This demonstration was called in connection with up-and-coming parliamentary debates on legalizing abortion, sort of a "last-ditch" stand. It didn't really help this time. Despite the (Reformed) demonstration, the House legalized abortion.

Enough about that. What concerns me this time is the whole concept of demonstration. It was a quiet and orderly demonstration in The Hague, but in the Reformed world we have always shunned demonstrations as a wrong way of getting a point across. As I envisioned, in our Dutch sister-churches also, protest arose against this advocating of demonstration in The Hague. Everyone agreed that abortion had to be objected against (that wasn't the point) but was massive demonstration the way to do it, even at the "eleventh hour"?

In the GEREFORMEERDE KERKBODE (of Groningen, Friesland and Drenthe) the Rev. D. van Dijk makes a few important remarks concerning this idea of demonstration. In the first place, he argues, this demonstration was unnecessary, because the government already KNEW that many were against such legalization of abortion, and a silent protest-march of some twenty-thousand people did not uncover any unknown facts. But the most important thing: demonstration is a matter of WRONG influencing of the government.

The House of Commons ALREADY is representative of the people. Any influencing of the House must go via their own representative, or rather, via their own political party. Once the people massively and de-

Circumspection...

monstratively start to influence the very body they have themselves chosen, effective governing is made quite impossible. Chaos results: the one will demonstrate for this cause, another for that cause. Rev. van Dijk writes, "We may freely speak and write for the people and express our views everywhere in our magazines and meeting. But to address the government DIRECTLY, we have our representatives in the House of Commons, the provinces, and the municipalities."

I agree, it should be beyond our style to demonstrate. Such massive



demonstrations belong in the realm of revolutionary parties which try to influence the government, if need be, even with violence and sabotage. Reformed people should seek legitimate means to get their point across. And in The Netherlands such means were fully present via their own political organization (GPV) which even has two M.P.s.

What struck me then, is that we here in Canada have no Reformed Political Organization which e.g. could speak up directly against legalized abortion. Certainly, there are a few broad-Christian organizations, but I cannot consider them Reformed because they have not developed and do not defend a sound program of Reformed principles for Canada. Actually, I'm not represented at all in Ottawa or elsewhere. The only way to make my opinion known would be via demonstration, and that's not acceptable. So politically I'm a non-entity.

By not having our own political organization, we are either being represented by men — who cannot re-

present us because of their un-Reformed principles — or we are silencing ourselves because we may not demonstrate. There is no other real way to address the government DIRECTLY within this democratic system than via REPRESENTATION. If I am not represented somehow in a responsible political organization, I cancel myself out. And is self-cancellation not poor citizenship?

As it stands, I do not wish to demonstrate. And I cannot be represented by all kinds of generally Christian organizations only because they promote a FEW points with which I also happen to agree. More is at stake: membership entails FULL responsibility, and I may only be responsible for Reformed policies. As it stands, I cannot vote. For neither Trudeau, nor Clark, nor Broadbent CAN represent me and defend the glory of God in the affairs of the nation. Besides, contrary to North American tradition, I do not vote for PEOPLE, but for POLICIES, and the general policies of the political parties in this country do not contain much that is worthy of undivided Christian support.

Please, I do know that the Canadian political system is different e.g. from the Dutch one. I know of regional vs. national representation. But the issue is not that we immediately have a representative in Ottawa; the issue is that we set up a Reformed Political Association with a clear platform with which we can publicly be identified and out of which we can operate. We are FIRST represented in the organization and its public policies, and if the Lord blesses us, this party will receive a voice in the Commons, the provinces, and the municipalities.

I can understand that once upon a time our people were not so politically-minded. Immigrants cannot immediately be involved in the affairs of their new "home-land." But in most cases immigration has resulted in citizenship. A decisive step. Being a citizen means that we have taken upon ourselves also POLITICAL RESPONSIBILITY. Only Canadians are responsible for the affairs of Canada and Canada's place in the world. We

Continued on page 423.



News items are published with a view to their importance for the Reformed Churches. Selection of an item does not necessarily imply agreement with its contents.

CONTACTS ABROAD

Kampen, The Netherlands. In the coming year, professors of the Theological Seminary of the Reformed Churches (Liberated) in The Netherlands will engage in expanding academic contacts abroad. In March 1977, Prof. Dr. C. Trimp (Pastoral Theology) hopes to deliver guest-lectures at the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches at Hamilton. Prof. Trimp has also received an invitation to lecture at the Calvin College of the Christian Reformed Church at Grand Rapids, USA. Prof. Dr. J. Van Bruggen (New Testament) will travel to Korea during May 1977 to lecture at the Theological Seminary in Busan, South Korea. Prof. Drs. H.J. Schilder

(Old Testament) recently visited South Africa and was requested to lecture at the Theological College of Die Gereformeerde Kerk van Suid-Afrika at Potchefstroom. Prof. Schilder is presently also preparing an information-booklet about the Seminary in Kampen in both the English and the German language.

MAJORITY FOR EUTHANASIA?

London, England. The chairman of the Roman Catholic Welfare Committee, Bishop A. Harris of Liverpool, has strongly criticized the results of an opinion-poll which showed an alarming 69% in favour of euthanasia in certain cases of incurable diseases. In a reaction in THE CATHOLIC HERALD, bishop Harris declares that polls are not suited to make the fundamental distinction between killing a sick person and the decision not to use the means at hand to keep a terminally-ill

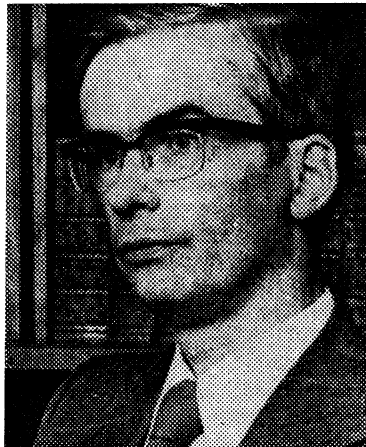
person alive artificially. Clergy in Great Britain have generally found the polls alarming.

MULTI-RACIAL SYNOD?

Pretoria, South Africa. A special committee, made up of delegates from the four Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerken in South Africa, has recommended to form a multi-racial Synod. The committee was formed by twelve delegates from the white NG Church, the coloured NG Church, the Indian NG Church and the Black NG Church, and the results are regarded by many as a major breakthrough in inter-racial problems. Dr. J. Vorster, moderator of the NG-Synod, has submitted a minority-report against the formation of such a Synod.

SENSITIVITY-TRAINING A THREAT?

Frankfurt, West Germany. The Pastoral Care in the large Evangelical Church of West Germany (the "Evangelische Kirche") is being threatened in an increasing measure by the so-called "sensitivity-training." This was one of the most important conclusions of a Congress held in Frankfurt (headed by Prof. Dr. Beyerhaus) of a number of concerned groups within the Evangelical Church. One of the speakers, Dr. Horst Beck, characterized sensitivity-training as a trend which "unites two important modern philosophies, namely, Freudianism and Marxism." Horst Hofmann, a second speaker, mentioned seven vital arguments against usage of sensitivity-training. According to Hofmann, it tries to get away from God's commandments, reform the feelings of the participants,



Prof. Dr. J. Van Bruggen
"to Korea . . ."

FIRST . . . PRIORITY IN — Cont.

to look at the previous verse, Genesis 3:15, "I will put enmity . . ." etc., rightly called by our Catechism (Lord's Day 6, Question 19): "the holy gospel, which God Himself first revealed in paradise." But this gospel, if I may put it this way, was in turn also "mixed" with judgment, punishment. It is often overlooked that the LORD God foretold in this verse that there would be death on *both* sides: not only on the side of the serpent (head crushed) but also on the side of the Seed of the Woman: if a poisonous serpent bites you in your heel, that means death: the death of Jesus Christ on the Cross. One would have to agree with Dr.

Wiersinga, in order to deny that there was punishment, also in verse 15. And what about the following verses, 17, 18, 19 . . ., ". . . you are dust, and to dust you shall return"? Punishment mixed with mercy, but also mercy mixed with punishment: it resulted in Adam and Eve being removed from paradise.

The remark was made, "But these words are spoken *to the Church*", the intention being that in the Church everything should be, and remain, exactly as is written in Genesis 3:16-19. Think of the consequences! Nothing to be done to alleviate the pain of childbearing ("We deserve it . . .") nor "eating your bread in the sweat of

your face." Of course, every word in Scripture is given to the Church. But at the very moment that the LORD God spoke these words, *there was no Church yet!* Or I must change our Reformed Confession, which says that the Church is the gathering of believers. *At that moment* in history, Adam and Eve were not yet believers, just two trembling, naked sinners. Yes, soon thereafter they believed God's Word, were re-united and there started the first "house-congregation." But once more: though mixed with mercy, Genesis 3:16 spells punishment for the Woman, and her daughters. I was told that some ladies, in a bus on the way back home, came to the conclusion



Prof. Dr. C. Trimp "to Canada . . ."

give the conscience a totally different direction, give concepts such as sin and guilt a vastly different content, govern the Seminaries, reinterpret history, and force non-ecclesiastical (revolutionary) tasks on the Church.

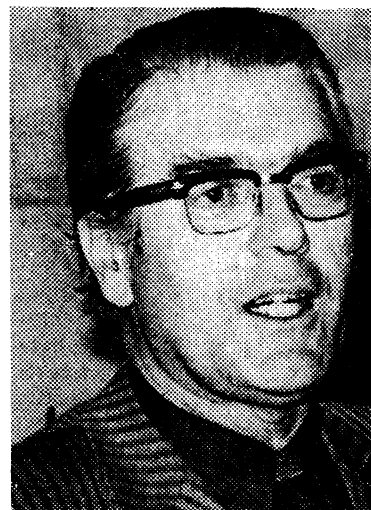
GENERAL ASSEMBLY PCA

Greenville, South Carolina. From September 14-17 the Fourth General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) met in South Carolina, USA. The assembly adopted a statement on abortion in which the Presbyterian Church in America "protests, abhors and decries this mass slaughter of babies who are persons by every right of the just laws of God and men." The assembly also approved a number of recommendations which recognized the PCA's active membership in the recently formed North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council (NAPARC, with, as

other members, the CRC, OPC, RPCES, RPCNA, and the ARPC under consideration). It was decided to study the matter of participation in the Reformed Ecumenical Synod (RES). Ecclesiastical fellowship was encouraged on a local level with the other NAPARC churches.

REACTIONS TO "SAAMHORIG"

Amersfoort, The Netherlands. The first edition of the new Dutch magazine "SAAMHORIG" (see previous *Clarion*), initiated by members of both the Reformed Churches (Liberated) and the Reformed Churches (Outside the Federation) is being greeted in the Dutch press with "mixed feelings." The Rev. Drs. M.K. Drost (Editor of *Kerkblad voor Overijssel*, etc.) received the impression that the guilt for the schism in 1967 and following years was unjustly being sought with both



Ds. Z.G. Van Oene "relieved . . ."

sides and that hardly a word was written in SAAMHORIG about the real causes of the split, namely, the doctrine of Rev. B. Telder on Lord's Day 22, the "Open Brief," and the rise of independentism. Prof. Dr. J. Douma (Editor of *DE REFORMATIE*) said he appreciated the initiative as such, but considered the time not to be ripe. Besides, he felt many members of the so-called Buiten-Verband Churches were too far removed from the notion of "saamhorigheid" (federative unity) to make full reunion possible. The Rev. Z.G. Van Oene (Editor of the *Buiten-Verband Kerkblad Voor Noord en Oost-Nederland*) said, "With a sigh of relief I have seen that there are more people who cannot stand this being torn-apart. When I look at God's command, then I say: this schism is forbidden." C.I.S.



Drs. M.K. Drost
"real causes forgotten . . ."

that (according to Rev. VanDooren) "sex is sin." Yea, even a result of sin. Yea, even worse, getting children is a result of sin.

Now I ask you! Before the fall God created man male and female; for what purpose? Not only and exclusively (I hope to come back to that) "to be fruitful and multiply," but also (Genesis 2:24, 25) "the man shall cleave to his wife and they become one flesh." Please do not try to be more "spiritual" than the Bible is. What do we think of, when we read about "cleave" and "one flesh"? Sex is beautiful, and it was that (already) before the fall, right with creation, part of creation — a wonderful part.

We should be careful not to slide into all kinds of "strange" ideas, such as: before the fall male and female did not have intercourse — "that was really too 'low' for their high position." From Dr. A.G. Honig we as students learned that the fall must have come pretty soon, "otherwise there would already have been children, at least one child," according to this wise professor.

Although it is difficult for us to imagine a world-without-sin, we must say: if woman had not deceived man, male and female together would have fulfilled the double mandate of "be fruitful" and "have dominion." And that all would have been beautiful,

without any shadow, sex and everything included. And of course: getting children would have been among the most beautiful things.

Sin destroyed an awful lot, also, and foremost, in the relationship between the Man and his Woman. But Christ came to restore the beauty, to remove the dirt, to deliver from sin, and to present us to His Father, as husbands and wives in whose lives shall be "First . . . united by sincere love . . . help and assist each other . . . in all things that belong to this life and to the life to come." That is the "First" and also the "Last" of a Christian marriage. But, we need another article for that. VANDOOREN

news medley

Via our **News Medley** we are being kept informed about what happens in the midst of the Churches. That is one of the means by which we can be aware of each other's circumstances and of what is going on here and there. The only weak point here is that the situation may have changed considerably by the time our readers can learn of the various happenings.

It is, therefore, quite possible that our brother, the Rev. M.C. Werkman is back in full swing by the time you read this, but at the moment he is still in the hospital. On Sunday, November 7, he fainted at the end of the service and was brought to the hospital by ambulance. A heart attack has been ruled out as the cause; his blood is being tested several times per day, but thus far no cause has been found. We wish him a speedy recovery and may this recovery also be complete. Perhaps the tension of farewell and inauguration was a little too much for him.

Oftentimes we take it for granted that we shall wake up in the morning, that we shall be able to complete our daily task, and oftentimes we find it quite normal when a minister appears on the pulpit week after week without interruption except for a classical appointment. We are grateful that the Lord deals so kindly with us every day anew; but let us never get used to His blessings and let us never receive them as if they are a matter-of-course.

From Lincoln we begin our journey through the Churches and "their territories."

Hamilton is the first Church to be mentioned. There it was decided to start the meetings of the Consistory at 7:30 p.m. and to adjourn them no later than 10:30 p.m. When I read that they begin at 7:30 p.m., I thought, "Why not?" In a farmers' community this will cause some undue difficulties, but in most other congregations this would not be too difficult, I presume. We are in the habit of setting the time for our meetings at eight o'clock, but in many instances we could just as well start earlier and also close earlier. Something to think about, I presume.

As for the services in the Dutch language, Hamilton decided (at least for the time being) to discontinue them. In March of next year everything will be discussed again. Only a relatively small number attended the Dutch services so that it may not be necessary even to resume them. The time of discussion is March, "when most of winter is over," the report states. Hopefully.

Hamilton reports on the "Pastoral Drive." That, as I understand it, is not a drive organized by the pastor, but a drive organized to get special funds for the parsonage. It is a gratifying result: of the projected total of \$15,000 the sum of \$14,330.00 was either promised or already in the possession of the committee.

The bulletin of the Ebenezer Church in Burlington reports that the Consistory decided to have the form for Ordination or Installation of Missionaries as adopted by the Dutch sister Churches translated into English, and then to submit it to the Synod 1977 for adoption. It is a fact that the form for the ordination or installation of ministers sounds somewhat strange in some respects when it is be-

ing used in the case of one who has expressed the desire to become a missionary. Thus this may be a good point to consider.

In the series of "Winter Lectures," the Rev. G. Van Dooren spoke on "The Challenge of Neo-Pentecostalism." And the Rehoboth, Burlington bulletin states that "there is talk that these lectures afterwards might be put into print." We can only support such a suggestion.

The Toronto bulletin received a face-lift and now shows us the image of the Toronto Church building. One of the results of this change of appearance is that the liturgy for the services will no longer be printed in the bulletin but on a separate sheet. Another result of all this is that the bulletin will be handed out after the service whereas before it was available before the services so that everyone had the liturgy in front of him.

Toronto's Consistory decided that "No more request- ed announcements will be made from the pulpit on Sun- days." That appears to be a wise decision, too. When you make an announcement, you only make use of the fact that the Congregation is together. But oftentimes the very same thing could have been made known via the bulletin. And if the secretaries were negligent, the pulpit should not be used to make up for their laxity. Perhaps the bulletin will be read more carefully, too, when it is known that everything the Congregation has to know is in there and that there is no possibility to make something known via the pulpit. I do not hear services via the radio very often. I would rather have a good piece of music; but whenever I happen to tune in on one and whenever I can bring myself to leaving it on for a while, I am appalled at the many announce- ments for all sorts of causes which are taking up such a large part of the service. We do have some matters which have to be announced during the services. Those are, e.g. the names of those who have been called to an office in the midst of the Church; or the names of brethren or sis- ters who will be excommunicated in due time if they do not repent. If a couple wish to get married, the banns will have to be published "in an audible voice during the divine serv- ice." But those are about the only announcements which should be made. All the rest can be brought to the attention of the Congregation by means of the bulletin and announc- ing from the pulpit should be restricted to emergency cases.

I do not know whether the situation was really that serious in Toronto, but I thought that the treasurer must have moved some hearts with the following lines:

What you can do today

Till tomorrow do not delay.

The treasurer spoke,

We're almost broke.

If that doesn't help, little else will.

Before we leave Ontario, we quote from the Ottawa bulletin that "As a custom newcomers to the catechism classes will receive a Bible." That is the first Church of which I read something like that.

Skipping Manitoba, we proceed to Alberta, where — as the Edmonton bulletin informs us — an office-bearers conference was scheduled for November 9.

The news which I wish to quote from Neerlandia's in- formation documents concerns more the school-situation. Alberta seems to be the only province thus far which recog- nizes the existence and the importance of independent schools. Many people still call them "private schools" and that is how they are known also in the Alberta official lan-

guage. Yet it is better not to use the name "private schools," for this name has the "stigma" of being a school of and for the privileged and financially strong. That certainly does not apply to our people. "Independent schools" is a much better "title." However, I was going to tell you something.

In Alberta such an independent (or "private") school has to have been in operation for three years before they can apply for subsidy. But then they do get subsidy provided they meet certain (technical) conditions. For pupils in the grades I-VI the province pays \$246.00 per child. For students in grades VII-IX the amount is \$271.00 per child; and for students in grades X-XII (there is no XIII in Alberta as far as I know) it becomes \$370.00 per student per year. I was thinking what that would mean for the Fergus/Guelph school: more than \$25,000 per year. And then the Guido de Bres Highschool, e.g., would receive some \$70,000 per year! It still would be peanuts compared with what the public school system devours, but it would be of considerable help to the parents and supporters!

I doubt, however, whether Neerlandia would need it. It is in the oil province, and I was thinking of an oil-well when I read, "Br. N. reports that a new well will cost approximately 31.3100.00. After advice from the Building Committee the consistory decides to go ahead with the drilling of a new well." When we ignore the period in the amount (the first period, that is) we come to an amount of over three hundred thousand dollars. I think, however, that the typist is at fault here and that our expectations were too high.

For a long time you have not heard anything about Coaldale. You know that I do not make up news; and when I do not hear anything, I cannot pass anything on to you either. But this time there is something.

First, the Coaldale bulletin, too, has undergone a face-lift, plastic surgery, so to speak. And: the "face-lift" is not just on the outside: "A proposal was received from the **Organ Committee** to buy a pipe organ and to have it installed above the pulpit. This proposal was accepted."

Oftentimes we have to say: "There is grave danger in delay." Here it seems that there was a great advantage in waiting. Coaldale has the great advantage that they receive the advice and the help of an expert in the field of organs as well as of organ-playing. For the total price of some \$6,000 they expect to have an organ installed of 8 ranks, with 450 pipes! They hope to have it ready by Christmas or early in the new year. In any case, the brethren who will go to the General Synod will be able to enjoy it, I expect.

By the way, the date for the next Synod has been set, too. It is November 8, 1977. That is on a Tuesday.

The Coaldale Consistory received a request from an organization which operates a Daycare Centre. They wish to rent the Church basement from 7:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m., "exceptions being made for all Church-related meetings." Children of ages 3-5 will attend that daycare centre.

"In the discussion it appeared that most of the brethren were sympathetic to this request. It was acknowledged that this organization is doing some outstanding work in a preventive way. It was also mentioned that this might be a way to 'break the ice' with the community and to project a more concerned image for the needs of our neighbours than is sometimes done. It was stated too, that if the go-ahead was given, it should first be done on a temporary basis."

The Consistory decided first to ask the Congregation for their thoughts on this matter.

It is especially that argument that granting the request

would project a more concerned image for the needs of our neighbours, which appealed to me; and I started thinking about our place and calling in the midst of our communities. It is a fact that relatively few of our members take part in the life of the community. We have the reputation that we are very much on our own, that we are little concerned with the needs of the community. In our better moments we even take the trouble of starting the car and going to the polling station to cast our ballot, but as for the rest, how many of us are involved in municipal politics, just to mention that one thing? How many of us do take part in activities in the interest of fellow-citizens or the community as a whole? Yes, I know: oftentimes we cannot take part for reason of principle, since activities take place which would compel us to do something which is against the will of our God. Is it, however, so that we do try? Or are we staying away from everything because of eventual wrong elements that may come to the fore? Or are we staying away from all activities because we are . . . afraid, too scared to speak up, too insecure to face the controversies??

We do pay rather large amounts for the maintenance of the ministry of the Gospel and for the establishing and maintenance of the schools we have received from our God. But should that prevent us from donating to all sorts of worthwhile causes within the community where we live? Or that we are busy in the congregation, should that prevent us from dedicating any moment or day or time to the care of our fellow-citizens? What is the reason why so few of us are ever mentioned when communal activities are going on? We are to be a salt, but when the salt is accumulated in one place and does not get into the dough, it has no influence whatever. The salt itself should not lose its salinity; but if it is to work, it has to be found throughout the material it is supposed to keep from spoiling!

That was a brief "meditation" on the argument used by Coaldale's consistory.

We had better move on.

From The Valley we mention only the following exceptional event in Abbotsford: "The attendance at Catechism classes is reviewed; all children of the Church appear to attend." Miracles do happen, don't they?

In Houston the "use of the Dutch language in our worship service was discussed. It was decided to bring this up at a congregational meeting." There are not many Churches left where the Dutch language is used in the services.

In the shadow of the Hudson Bay Mountains we learn that eighteen members reacted to the request of the Smithers Consistory for names of ministers to be called in the vacancy. Meanwhile, a call has been extended as you all know.

For the Organ Committee quite a few members give their time and talents. A sister "has volunteered to do paintings of any kind on a commission basis. 50% of the sale price will be going to the organ fund."

With the departure of the Rev. J. Van Rietschoten, provisions had to be made for the teaching of Catechism classes. The Consistory decided to request the school-board "to permit the teachers to teach catechism in school." The meaning of that is, perhaps, that the teachers shall take over part of the task which the minister fulfilled. It is a good thing when men can be found to perform the various tasks in the Church that have to be done.

The above had been written when I as yet received three bulletins from Calgary. As you will recall, they will have to seek (at least temporarily) other facilities for the

services, since the Seventh Day Adventists are planning to erect another building. It is not even known as yet whether they would wish to rent their new building again to the Calgary Church. The latter is now faced with the necessity of seeking accommodation elsewhere. A decision was made to approach the United Church in Inglewood, but no reply had been received when these bulletins were sent out. Especially when a Church is not large, the prospect of having

a building of their own is not bright. Yet we express the wish that the Calgary Church may see its way paved by the Lord.

And thus we have again reached the end of our trip. It is not my fault that we are stuck in the foothills of the Rockies. However, you could have become stranded in a worse location! Let us say that, the Lord willing, we shall begin our next trip where we stopped this time.

So long then!

vO

mission news

Dear brothers and sisters,

August 17th is a very important day here, namely Independence Day. It is celebrated in all government places and for the people in this area that is Kouh. Due to the many days required to travel to and from Kouh, most of August is usually spent as a holiday. There is no school, no work in the kampong, for all the government officials and all the teachers leave for "the 17th." And so it has been for us a quiet month in a certain way; the people that had not left for Kouh were out in the jungle, only a handful of people were left in the kampong.

The guru's from Heyokubun, Sawagit and Manggelum left for Kawagit (guru course) on Monday, August 2nd. From Manggelum a sick man was taken along to receive medical treatment in Kawagit which could not be given in Manggelum. It is always difficult to persuade the people to go to Kawagit. Sometimes they die on the way down; especially with smaller children when the parents wait too long to bring them. Regarding older people: even if they do want to come, it's hard to find the family or others willing to take them. When they are very sick, they often prefer to stay in their village, so that they can die in their own surroundings.

Also on the 2nd we had a visit from Sawagit people here in Manggelum: not a friendly visit either. Nine men from Sawagit were over to take away three men from Manggelum. Everyone was sitting in the house of the Kepala Desa (Head of the area), discussing the matter. What happened? Someone in Sawagit had passed away and — according to the Sawagit delegation — this was the result of man-man (black magic), done by the three Manggelumers. And so they had to be taken along to receive punishment for their deeds. After we talked the whole thing over together, we agreed to leave the three men in Manggelum, although the Sawagit people insisted that the men promise not to practise man-man anymore So the matter seems to be solved, but as you see, superstition is still very much alive here.

On Wednesday, August 4th we left by outboard for Kawagit. We, that is Nyora Bakai and her daughter Marta, Joanne and Emily, Silas our house help and I. If you fit that plus some luggage and a gastank in an

outboard that measures only 4x11.5 feet, then you realize it's full! The water was low, but the weather was beautiful fortunately. We took Silas along because he could warn us against stones, trees, etc, in the river. I don't know about the stones and trees, but he did show us 2 crocodiles taking a nap on the river side. We had a good trip and arrived in Kawagit in 2 hours.

The next morning I joined the course for guru's (guru's from Kawagit, Manggelum and their surrounding villages) and introduced Paul's first letter to Timothy. It is not always easy to explain — in Indonesian — exactly what it says in the Bible, but then Rev. Zandbergen and Mr. Ben VanderLugt were there to help me out. Afterwards we evaluated my work and I received some worthwhile advise and remarks.

The program for the course looked like this: From 8-9 a.m. I led the Bible study, then till 10 a.m. Rev. Zandbergen about the subjects in the Heidelberg Catechism. After break there was the opportunity to do some woodworking with the assistance of Mr. Ben VanderLugt, then in the afternoons and evenings the gurus were invited to have a personal talk with Rev. Zandbergen and/or Mr. VanderLugt. Not a busy program you say; that's true, but like I said, August is the holiday month and this also goes for the gurus. The course went on till Tuesday, August 10th.

On that day we heard the good news that the Kruidhof family received a healthy baby girl from the Lord. Her name is Irene and everyone is doing well.

While we were in Kawagit, we stayed with Miss Janet Velvis, the nurse. Joanne had a good opportunity to learn more from her about organizing and operating our polyclinic. Janet sends her greetings to all of you.

Also on August 10th in the afternoon we had the first combined meeting of the Digul-congregations. Representatives of the following congregations were present: Bi, Butiptiri, Firiwage, Kawagit, Kouh, Niop, and Tirop. Matters that were brought forward and discussed were:

1. Offertories (only a small amount of money is coming in generally).
2. Life of the congregation (the matter of men having or wanting to have a second wife).

3. Weakness in the congregation (regarding, coming to second service; praying; a christian's walk of life; witnessing; belief in the powers of satan and black magic; providing for the guru or guru-evangelist).
4. An Evangelist for Kawagit.
5. Helpers for the guru-evangelists in the surrounding villages.
6. The bible school in Boma.

Also spoken about was the problems of Butiptiri people to gather the wages for their future Evangelist, Paulus, who finishes the Bible school, d.v., in the end of this year.

Mr. Kees de Wolf (from Kouh) has been contacted in the meantime and right now Butip has two large saws. Any planks or beams they can sell now to him or else in Bade or Tanah Merah and so also in this way money is coming in. The next meeting is planned to be held in February 1977.

On Wednesday, August 11th I left Kawagit again. The water was very, very low, therefore Joanne and Nyora Bakai stayed behind in Kawagit. She and Emily plus the Nyora and Marta came the next day by float-plane.

Back in Manggelum we were shocked to see the condition of our big watertank. Although the posts and its platform (6 feet off the ground) were still standing, the tank itself and its cover had come down and were hanging somewhere in between. The tank consists of a large metal ring, approximately 5 feet high and 6 feet in diameter with a heavy plastic bag suspended in it. Well, we took it all down, hammered some dents out of it, patched the holes and now it's up again. Naturally we improved the construction also, and right now it's standing a lot sturdier and better than before. After that I fixed a drainage pipe to our kitchen sink, hung 2 plastic hoses in the tank and so we now enjoy the luxury of running water in the kitchen and an original "blue band" shower in the bathroom, (Blue Band is the popular brand of canned margarine here).

On Friday, August 13th the VanderLugt family and Miss Janet Velvis were flown to Senggo again. Ard VanderLugt had become sick again and Mrs. VanderLugt is

OUR COVER

Hundreds of miles of highways in Canada's Yukon Territory and Northwest Territories are covered by RCMP patrol cars such as this returning to Whitehorse, Y.T., from duty in Dawson City.

expecting a baby in the beginning of September. Right now Ard is doing fine, and we keep in touch with them via our radio. (On September 10th a healthy baby boy was born — his name is Gerrit.)

Sunday, August 15th and also the 22nd I was able to lead the services in Manggelum. The first Sunday there were approximately 20 people, the second Sunday about 50, and it was good to come together to listen to the Word of God.

On Friday the 27th, guru Y. Bakai and I went up by outboard to Heyokubun to speak with the villagers there regarding the life of their guru-evangelist, guru K. Wandenge. His behaviour in the last weeks has been a reason to have some serious conversations with him about the life of a Christian and naturally, in his case, of a guru-evangelist. His marriage, about two months ago, with someone from Heyokubun, left some eyebrows raised. Before marriage his future wife ran off into the jungle and was brought back. After they married, she was kidnapped by people from an upriver village. At the moment things seem to be settling down and we hope that everything will work out well.

The people in Heyokubun are content to have the guru back again, although they initially did not agree with him, marrying a woman from their own village. This he has done anyhow, but the people seem to be able to accept it now. We still have the impression that things have been forced a bit by the guru and we shall hope that all this will not have a lasting effect on his teaching and preaching in Heyokubun.

Please remember the work of our gurus here in your prayers.

On Friday, August 27th guru Musiri (the head over all the teachers here) came to Manggelum from Kouh in order to inspect the school here on Monday the 30th. He was pleased with the work that he saw, both that of the teachers and of the students. We also discussed the school building, which is not in very good shape. However, we wait till the new house for guru Y. Bakai has been made (it is not started yet), after which a new schoolbuilding will be erected.

First a guest-house and a tool-shed in the village have to be finished after which the people will make a start on the guru's house.

We hope for guru Bakai that it doesn't take too long, for his old house is starting to fall apart.

Guru's house (guru O. Pekey's that is) has been completed in the meantime and looks very nice.

Thus far the news for this month.

With Christian love,
BRAM and JOANNE VEGTER

This issue of "Clarion" was mailed from Winnipeg Central Post Office on November 22, 1976.

Impressions of Kampen

The editor has requested me to pass on some impressions of the Theologische Hogeschool here in Kampen, and to point out some of the differences with our College in Hamilton. That is not an easy task, since many structural changes are being introduced in both schools at the same time. It is particularly difficult for a newcomer to understand the full import of the changes here. On the whole it appears that Kampen is moving closer to the American semester system while our College has become more European with the addition of a "propedeutical" year. Yet there are still many differences.

This is also a year of changes in the facilities available in Kampen. The present building will be vacated for renovations, and everything will be moved to a new magnificent complex across the street. The new library building has just been completed and the students were recruited for two days last week to haul books. Built in an older architectural style to blend with the surrounding area, the building has two floors along with a beautiful brick mezzanine at the front. The stacks are on the ground floor, while the second floor contains the library offices, a study area and a reference section. Opposite to the library, on the other side of the mezzanine is another restored building, which, when everything is completed, will be used for offices and meeting rooms. Owned by the city and considered to be a historical site, the building is rented to the Hogeschool for a very small fee; in return, the Hogeschool must take care of the building.

The library system here is entirely different from that in Hamilton, or for that matter, from most North American college and university libraries. There books are filed according to subject, and are normally numbered according to a particular catalogue system; the 60,000 volume library here is filed according to author. A book has a call number, but it is only for internal use, to facilitate locating the book. Another difference is that here students do not have access to the stacks; only a separate shelf area where most frequently used books are directly available for their use. If the student wants another book, he must fill out a request-form, and then one of the library personnel will pick it up. This system has the advantage of ensuring that neatness and order is maintained in the library; however, a student does not really get to know a library under this system.

One of the biggest differences between the two schools is that in Kampen students may, for the most part, work at their own pace, while in Hamilton one is more bound to a fixed schedule. Here the examinations in the earlier years are set at certain dates, but a student may miss an examination if he doesn't feel ready for it, and take it at a later date. Similarly, if he fails, he may also

take it again at a later date. In the later years most examinations are oral. No grades are given; a student either passes or fails. Certain features of this system are also noticeable in Hamilton, but it is very rare in undergraduate study at Canadian universities, as far as I know.

On the whole, the system here is much freer, and allows the student to complete the program at his own pace. More and more, however, students are being encouraged to work within a schedule and at a uniform pace. This trend follows the pattern of the universities here. It is also one of the reasons for introducing the semester system. Apparently there is more interest today in having a student finish as soon as possible. Perhaps more can be said about the semester system next time, the Lord willing.

Despite the many differences, one notices, almost immediately, one thing that is the same: the teaching is solidly based on Scripture and on our confessions, and from this basis it tries to come to grips with and scientifically meet the teachings of modern theologians. The teaching is antithetical: it sets itself overagainst the spirit of the age. That is something to be thankful for, since that can be said of only a few institutions in the world today. Being able to maintain these schools in freedom is a great blessing from the Lord, and it is only through His power and strength that they are there.

J. DE JONG

CIRCUMSPECTION — Continued.

are Reformed Canadians. If our confession and faith has to do with ALL of life, and we are to be Reformed in EVERY respect, why do we not have a national Reformed political association? Should our citizenship not have this positive effect and blessing for Canada that we confront our government and countrymen with the true principles of God's Word?

Not only for Canada, also for ourselves. Must we not create a Reformed political awareness, also for our children? Or shall we let them meander off into the pragmatic camps of Trudeau and Clark? The immigration years are past, and now a fully-Canadian generation is growing, Reformed Canadian citizens who need a Reformed political organization to identify with and to use in executing their political responsibilities.

If we do not extend our confession to all areas of life, also political and social areas, in the end we forfeit it. Canada's only real future lies in Reformed politics. Cid.

Bless the Little Children ⁽¹⁾

OUR OBLIGATION TO THE RETARDED

The Office Bearers had asked me to say something about our obligation to retarded members of our Churches. I have chosen to approach the issue by developing a perspective on problems with children. This does not mean that problems with retarded adults are less important. In fact, it may be more timely for us to respond to the needs of the adult retarded people as they will be receiving less support from members of their own families who are also getting older. While I was preparing this article, I was made aware that a Steering Committee had been organized in Ontario to gather information about retardation among our own people, and to consider the feasibility of setting up an Association. It is hoped that this article will make a small contribution to the initiative that has already been taken.

The trend today is to regard the problem of retardation as part of the general problem of what makes some people different from normal people. Hence, a person who is suffering from what might be called a mental problem, and a person who has limited intelligence, are similar in that both have difficulty coping with the usual expectations of daily life. Also both persons have in common that they are labeled and viewed as different from the general stream of society and thus require special attention. In this regard it is important for us to identify some of our own prejudices concerning "exceptional" people, and we also need to be careful that some of our wrong assumptions do not make these people experience an even larger gap between themselves and the mainstream.

In order to understand the condition of retarded children it is useful to review some other categories of exceptionality. The categories under consideration are: the Emotionally Disturbed; the Learning Disabled; the Physically Disabled; the Retarded.

EMOTIONAL DISTURBANCE

This category is difficult to define and there are many interpretations of what constitutes disturbed behaviour. It is suggested that the Emotionally Disturbed category includes youngsters who have developed poor ways of coping with the daily demands of living. They are sometimes confused in their thinking, and their feelings are

often erratic and unrelated to what is going on around them. These are the children who exhibit symptoms ranging from bedwetting and excessive nail-biting, to the more serious manifestations of temper tantrums and loss of control. Others may be very passive and withdrawn from the world, and they may be preoccupied with their own fantasies to compensate for feelings of loneliness and an inability to make meaningful contacts with people. Because of their passive nature some of these youngsters, who are basically disturbed, may be mistaken for retarded individuals and they may be exposed to inappropriate treatment. In these cases there is a real need for professional help to establish a clear diagnosis and a plan of action.

LEARNING DISABILITY

This category contains youngsters who possess average to above average intelligence but have serious difficulties in having their brain make connections between what they hear and see. They have problems memorizing and formulating new concepts and ideas, especially when these are presented in writing. The child with learning disabilities is very often the child who is restless in school and has a short attention span. He is easily distracted by others in the classroom. This youngster may be quite adept in verbal communication, but he is unable often to translate his words in writing. The consequence is that such youngsters, without special help, will begin to lag behind others in the class, and he will run the risk of giving up and believing that he is a total failure.

In some ways the child with a learning handicap may be mistaken for a person who is retarded. He may also resemble the disturbed youngster in that his frustrations in learning may lead to problems in behaviour, or cause him to retreat from normal activities and draw into a shell. As with the emotionally disturbed category, it is important to make the proper distinctions so that the proper help can be offered. In some of our own schools this is being facilitated by special testing; other schools may wish to consult with local testing clinics, while some might even be in a position to retain a special education teacher who would

have some expertise in making the right distinctions.

PHYSICAL DISABILITY

This is a more obvious category in that it is more easily identifiable. The category includes the hard of hearing and those with impaired vision. It also includes children who have suffered from certain birth trauma and developed conditions such as Cerebral Palsy. Others may have epileptic conditions and, even though epilepsy has been brought under control through medication, this condition would still have some impact on how the youngster sees himself as different and maybe less acceptable than normal children. As with the other categories secondary problems may result. The child who has a condition of Cerebral Palsy, for example, and fumbles along trying to gain control over his limbs, may see himself as inadequate and stupid, and this is often reinforced by others around him.

MENTAL RETARDATION

This is the primary focus of this article and thus it requires more elaboration. In Canada an estimate of 3% of the population is retarded. There are about 210,000 retarded people in Ontario according to the Williston report.² The mentally retarded are divided into four groups: the Mildly Retarded or Educable; the Moderately Retarded or Trainable; the Severely Retarded; the Profoundly Handicapped.

Mildly or Educable Retarded persons account for about 75% of the retarded population. In terms of intelligence they fit into the Intelligence Quotient³ range of 50 to 70 (the average intelligence range is considered to be 90 to 110). These people are educationally subnormal and their ultimate understanding would ordinarily reach that of the normal child between the ages 8 to 12. They can master academic work of Grade 2 to Grade 6 in special classes in the regular school system. They are capable of simple work training, but they require a measure of supervision especially in vocational and job placement. About 90% of the mildly retarded can learn to take their place as ordinary citizens doing ordinary things and thus become fairly well integrated into society. But in order to do so, they sometimes have to overcome difficult hurdles and cope with a lot of misunderstanding and frustration.

Moderately or Trainable Retarded

The Needs of Our Handicapped Individuals

persons have an Intelligence Quotient range of 32 to 50. Their mental age at adulthood is from 4 to 8 years of age. They are capable of mastering only the rudiments of grade school, if they are taught in a very special way. A number of them can be taught, with a great deal of perseverance, to read to about a grade two level. Almost all of the moderately retarded will require care and support throughout the entire duration of their lives. Mongoloids usually fall into this classification.

The *Severely Retarded* have an Intelligence Quotient ranging from 18 to 32. They have a mental age between 2 and 4 years. They can usually be toilet trained and taught to dress themselves and make their own beds. They require programmes geared to personal management, hygiene, and social training. They can participate in industrial therapy and can do very simple assembly and packaging work, and thus have some meaningful work involvement, although on a limited scale.

The *Profoundly Retarded* have an Intelligence Quotient under 17 and a mental age of under 2 years. Since they do not learn to guard themselves against common dangers, they will almost always be entirely dependent on others for protection and care. They can be trained to do only the simplest things. Some of them cannot be toilet trained or learn to dress themselves. Many in this category also have serious physical disabilities.

It is important to know that many retarded individuals have other associated difficulties. A large number of moderately retarded lack co-ordination and many have minor brain dysfunctions. While some retarded persons are physically very attractive, others have the obvious stigma of retardation. Some are prone to emotional and psychiatric problems and they can develop serious frustrations and acute loneliness. Often they are teased and misunderstood and have been outright ill-treated. While they often find it difficult to communicate, they generally are affectionate and responsive to kindness and attention.

(to be continued) H.C. VANDOOREN

FOOTNOTES:

¹ The label "Exceptional" is being used throughout the article to refer to people who deviate from the norm. There might be a preference for different labels such as "Handicapped" or "Abnormal."

² Williston, Walter B., *Present Arrange-*

During the last few months, interest and discussion have arisen out of a concern for handicapped children and adults within our Canadian Reformed community. At a meeting of some concerned people, it was felt that there was indeed a need to provide some care for this small, often forgotten, group of individuals who are also very much a part of the communion of saints. At present, parents of handicapped children are sending them to special institutions for educational instruction. Some parents, unable to care for their children at home, have had to place them in a public institution.

At this same meeting, a tentative steering committee representing Burlington East and West, Hamilton, Lincoln, and Smithville was set up. The committee was assigned the task of exploring the possibilities for providing facilities that would serve the needs of handicapped individuals in our midst.

At the first meeting of the committee, the possibility of erecting an educational institution was discussed. After a look at the facts and figures (facilities, staff, number of children, etc.), it was evident that this would be an undertaking so large that it might not become feasible for quite some time. However, there was something which the members of the committee felt could and should be done first. This is the establishment of a home which would care for children and adults who cannot live on their own and need a place to live when it becomes impossible for them to be kept at home. This home will hopefully help relieve parents of the worry of what will happen to their handicapped children should sickness, accident, old-age, or other circumstances come to them. The existence of a home of our own will not force parents to place their handicapped children in a public institution. The purpose of this home is not to educate but to provide care

ments for the Care and Supervision of Mentally Retarded Persons in Ontario, Ontario Dept. of Health, August 1971.

³ An "Intelligence Quotient" is derived from special psychological tests and is supposed to reflect the intelligence level of the person being tested. Results from such tests can sometimes be misleading and need to be interpreted by a trained person.

and to send them out to schools or work areas whenever possible.

Visits have been made to some parents who have handicapped children. In general, wholehearted support was found among these parents. Ministers and consistories also expressed approval of action in this direction.

Assured that there was interest and potential support among our people, the committee decided to approach the remaining congregations in Ontario in order to have the committee function on a regional basis. The plan is to have a representative in each congregation who will either attend meetings in person or correspond by mail.

At present committee members are visiting existing homes to obtain information about government regulations for facilities, staff, and recreational programs.

There is still much groundwork to be done before the committee will be prepared to come with a proposal to the congregations. Until that time the committee hopes to send out reports on progress made in order to keep the congregations informed.

Church News

CLASSIS PACIFIC of November 4, 1976, meeting in Classis Contracta in Abbotsford, B.C. has granted the Rev. J. Van Rietschoten, Smithers, B.C., honourable release from service due to his departure to the Church at Carman, Manitoba. This release will take effect on November 29, 1976.

* * *

Called:

by the Church at New Westminster, B.C. for mission in Brazil:

Candidate J.P.D. GROEN,
Groningen, The Netherlands.

* * *

Called:

REV. J. MULDER

of the Church at Cloverdale, B.C. received a call from the Church at Smithers, B.C.

* * *

REV. J. VISSCHER

of the Church at Coaldale, Alberta received a call from the Churches at Langley, B.C. and London, Ontario.

our little magazine

Dear Busy Beavers,

Did you ever want to enter a story-writing contest of ours but just couldn't get a start?

Well then, THIS contest is for you! I will give you the start and you write the story. Simple, right? Of course we hope everybody will enter! And I hope you all enjoy writing your story!

Please send it to me at this address:

Aunt Betty, Box 54, Fergus, Ontario N1M 2W7

Now here's your start:

The Birthday Surprise

"It's my birthday today!" Kim sprang out of bed, but jumped right in again.

It seemed so quiet in the house, and a little cold, too.

Then suddenly . . .

Before we do anything else let's say "Happy Birthday" and "Many happy returns!" to all the Busy Beavers celebrating December birthdays! May the Lord guide and keep you also in the year ahead.

Pieter Nijenhuis	Dec. 5	Walter	
Bonita Stiksmma	5	Van Grootheest	Dec. 19
Yolanda Jongsma	6	Rita Bouwsema	21
Alinda Greta Kuik	6	Edward Versteeg	21
Albert Riemersma	6	Linda Meliefste	23
Glenn Leffers	7	Karl Veldkamp	24
Loretta Dam	8	Corinne Welfing	24
Wilma De Vos	8	Corinne Medemblik	25
Sharon Koerselman	11	Pearl De Vries	27
Wendy Endeman	12	Audrey Bultena	28
Anna Riemersma	15	Betty Ann	
Denise Van		Vander Meulen	28
Amerongen	15	Christine Van Zandwijk	29
Jacqueline Kobes	17	Miriam Bosma	30
Margaret Eelhart	18	Wilma Bouwman	30
Jack Lodder	18	Louis Dijkstra	30
Charles Lodder	19	Jackie Bakker	31

You did very well on your crossword puzzle *Evelyn Geusebroek*. Keep up the good work! And thank you for the BOOK LOOK, too. Write again soon, Evelyn.

Hello *Charles Slaa*. Thank you for the very nice quiz which the Busy Beavers are sure to enjoy! Next time, probably, all right? Did you enjoy your prize, Charles?

Thank you for the funny riddles, *Julius Wierenga*. I'm sure everybody will enjoy them! Did you have a nice birthday, Julius?

I haven't counted our membership lately, *Joyce De Gelder*. But I'll let you all know some time soon. I'm happy to hear you're glad to be back in school after a good holiday.

Did you have a good time, *Marian Linde*, on your birthday? And how is your skating coming? You did very well on your crossword puzzle, *Marian*. Keep up the good work!

Thank you for the nice poem and story, *Florence Visser*. And I liked your picture, too! I'm glad you like school, and I hope you like your reward too. Bye for now, Florence.

Thank you for your nice letter *Cynthia Linde*. Did you like your teacher's birthday party? And have you been able to make a snowman yet? You, too, did very well on your crossword puzzle, *Cynthia*. Keep up the good work!

I think we still have room for Busy Beaver *James Slaa's* story. Thank you for sharing, James.

The Frog that had no Friend

Once upon a time there lived an old, old frog that sat on a log, nothing to think about, till the sun started to set. And then all of a sudden a frog jumped on him. And they played in the water every day. Then the other one told that she was a lady. And they were sure enough to get married. So they invited two more frogs, and one rat, two dragonflies, and a bumblebee. And they lived happy ever after!

QUIZ TIME

Let's start with the riddles from Busy Beaver *Julius Wierenga*, and then we have some picture riddles from Busy Beaver *Glenn Leffers!*

1. Why did the man tiptoe by the medicine chest?
2. What runs but has no legs?
3. Why does a dog bark?
4. Where does the sea begin?
5. Who never understands what he says?

What are these words?



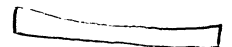
bee



come



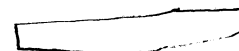
cup



board



skate



board



From the Mailbox

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Caroline Marissen*. We hope you will really enjoy being a Busy Beaver and joining in all our activities. Please write and tell me your birthday, Caroline, so that we can include you in our birthday wishes.

And a big welcome to you too, *Glenn Leffers*. I'm glad you enjoy *Our Little Magazine*, and I know the Busy Beavers will enjoy doing your riddles. How are all your pets doing, Glenn?