

Clarion

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The Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory

The recent visit of Mr. P. Jongeling to Canada has resulted in a renewed interest in politics. In an attempt to contribute to the discussion I have blown the dust off this two-year-old speech, untangled some of its extravagant sentences, and fought a losing battle with an inherited "germanic" syntax. However, the material, although directed at the western scene, is of sufficiently wide and general application that it can serve in this beginning stage of our efforts.

POLITICS: NEVER MIND THE ANSWERS, DO WE KNOW THE QUESTIONS?

When the human brain receives the signal that the ears have heard the word "politics," it is not so that immediately a clear image pops up for contemplation. Instead, a whole array of structures will appear: governments, citizenship, unemployment, election campaigns, parties. And your perceptions will probably differ greatly from that of your neighbour, even your neighbour in the church pew.

Therefore it is important first and foremost that we establish what for us will be the meaning of that word: "Politics." And if you then expect immediate answers to the questions that are on your mind, questions about the local party-politics, about elections, about the meaning of the vote — is it a witness? as we used to say — then I hope that you will not be disappointed if we have not come up with all that many conclusive answers yet.

For, while around us the answers are being formulated, the answers to the political questions of the day, there — with some embarrassment we must admit (we as a Canadian Reformed Community) — we have not really come around to formulating the questions yet. What really is politics? Do we have a political calling? If so, what is it? Does it mean that we must vote for the most rightist party? Does it mean that we vote at all?

THE *POLIS* IS OF GOD

The word Politics has in it the basis *Polis* meaning: "City." Politics, therefore, has to do with people living together in an organized society. If, for instance, the citizens come together and decide: "Let us build a wall with strong gates against the enemies," then politics is being practiced. And when Adam in Paradise would review the creation around him and — with his helpmeet — ponder the choice of which would be the next task to be undertaken, then that was politics. The work was culture; obedient politics led to God-pleasing culture. But later, when Adam's descendants after the flood deliberated: "Let us build a skyscraper," then they also practiced politics: apostate, disobedient politics; and their work was culture: apostate, disobedient culture. And throughout the ages, whenever man concerned himself with the affairs of mankind, with the calling of kings and the plight of paupers, with threats or promises of neighbouring peoples, or with his natural surroundings, to establish a common goal or purpose, then politics was practiced.

But then it becomes clear that all politics is ruled by the Holy Scripture, as is summed up by Ecclesiastes: "Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man."

Thus the origin of all politics is with the Creator, the Great Politician. Hear how from eternity He deliberates: "Let us make man."

And so God created man in His own image; in His own image created He them. And when we look up in the Catechism what that means: "In His own image," then we receive no theoretical listing of attributes, but a simple summary of purpose: "that he might rightly know God his Creator, heartily love Him and live with Him in eternal blessedness, to praise and glorify Him."

The threefold office of man as God's creation is not to maintain the status of us, but to be busy, to be ac-

tive, as prophet, priest, and king. Man, created in God's image, had a calling, a political calling: to have dominion over the earth; a dynamic calling also; an urbanization program also: to break out in multitude and to replenish the earth; a poetic calling also: hear Adam sing, "Bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh."

And God saw it all — and it was very good.

CREATION AND RE-CREATION: ITS PURPOSE IS FATHER'S GLORY

From this it should also be clear that politics never was, and never can be, an end in itself. It is a means to an end, to a purpose. And the purpose is: the glory of the King of creation.

But then, man fell in sin, giving ear to the devil. "For the commandment of life which he had received he transgressed, and by sin separated himself from God, Who was his true life; having corrupted his whole nature, whereby he made himself liable to corporal and spiritual death. And being thus became wicked, he lost all his excellent gifts which he had received from God, and retained only small remains thereof, which, however, are sufficient to leave man without excuse" (Belgic Confession, Article 14). And when God maintained the world through recreation in the Saviour of the world, then, at the day of that appointment, a new thing was experienced by mankind: driven out of Paradise they found the curse, the result of sin. Thistles and thorns were sprouting up not only from the soil, but from man's heart as well.

We must keep these elements in mind: Mankind was continued for the sake of the Creator's good pleasure; God did not let Satan destroy what He had planned. And therefore He gave the Christ, as indeed the Saviour of this *world*.

In order to enable the completion of that plan, God continued history in which man, now sinful, battled with the accursed earth and with his fellow man. And in this continued history the

call would come to follow the Christ, so to be freed from the slavery of sin.

In the structures of society the fall in sin is a major aspect. So also is the road to redemption.

It is the fallacy of virtually all modern political philosophy that this fact is not just overlooked, but consciously disregarded.

POLITICS FOR THE ELECT

The confession of the Church in Article 36 of the Belgic Confession is to be seen in that same light. The governments are regarded as a gift of God's grace (our gracious God), and the good order and decency which the governments must bring about, again, are not an end in themselves; they serve this purpose: "that the kingdom of Antichrist be destroyed and the kingdom of Christ be promoted." Thus the magistracy must function under the auspices of Jesus Christ's redemptive work.

There is some significance in the sequence of these articles in the Belgic Confession. After the Articles about the Church with its sacraments and its government, follows the confession about the magistracy as a "means" of grace, to pave the way for the Church. And after that is the end in Article 37 when the time appointed by the Lord is come. When is that? When the number of the elect is complete.

Some among us may still remember the address of Prof. B. Holwerda, "The Crisis of Authority." Aside from the beautiful and clear treatise on the nature of authority and power, I believe that his most valuable thoughts were those regarding the function of government in society. Over against all kinds of theoretical approaches, Holwerda clearly projected the government as a servant in Christ's work of redemption. That was exactly along the line of the Scripture; that was prophetic leadership.

ANTI-THESIS: BE OF THOSE WHO HEAR HIS VOICE

In the development of history as revealed in God's Word, there appeared from the beginning the struggle between the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Satan. And the anti-thesis, the dividing line between these two, poses the continuous question: "What side are you on?"

Sometimes that question comes with a thunderous judgment: Psalm 2 — "Why do the heathen rage and the people imagine a vain thing?" Some-

times it comes with persuasion: Psalm 2 — "Be wise, O you Kings, be instructed, judges of the earth; serve the Lord with fear, rejoice with trembling." The struggle is really between highly unequal parties. The Roman Emperor may issue his decrees and seem to have the house of David in submission, but it is only an outward appearance. The Kingdom of God, according to the Scriptures, entails all creation and His power-display causes the earth to tremble.

Opposition — the rulers taking counsel against Him — is answered with heavenly laughter. The Scripture is full of the dramatic development of the establishment of God's Kingdom over against the Kingdom of Satan.

The final words of the Old Testament bring this in perspective: Malachi's eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord. "That day," he said, "shall go to basics in judgment, leaving neither root nor branch, and it shall come with glorious redemption: the Son of righteousness shall come with healing in his wings." The promise of Elijah to come and bridge the generation gap concludes the Old Testament.

When then in the New Testament Elijah has indeed come, i.e., John the Baptist, then he goes to the same basics. "The ax is at the root of the tree." Why? Because the Kingdom of heaven is at hand. *Therefore*, repent! And when John then from his cell sends messengers to inquire about the Christ: "Are you the one or do we expect another?" Jesus refers back to the prophecy: "Am I not come with healing in My wings? The blind see, the lame walk, lepers are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them." Does this not look like much? But this development does constitute the *change in principle* of world history. Admitted, the sun keeps on shining and the clouds go on sailing along the skies, but this *is* indeed the day of the Lord. Jesus made at that moment this remarkable statement: "From the days of John the Baptist until now the Kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force" (Matthew 11:12).

The anti-thesis is now complete and it goes through the entire history of the entire world, to the end of time.

The power-structure of a king of this earth, Pontius Pilate, met head-on with the authority of the King of heaven. At that encounter the legions of

angels are held back, when Jesus identifies Himself as the witness of truth (John 18:37). But Pilate shrugs: "What is truth?" Thus in the confrontation of this political Subaltern with the Prince of the kings of the earth, the heathen does indeed imagine a vain thing. But Christ teaches this Roman: "My Kingdom is not of this world. Yes, I am a King. To this end I was born and for this cause came I into the world that I should bear witness unto the truth. Everyone that is of the truth hears My voice"

OUR PRAYER: POLITICAL ACTIVITY

Those then that heard His voice — His disciples, in the final moments before His ascension — were still identifying the Kingdom with the nation of Israel and then they asked for details of the time schedule: "Will you at this time restore the Kingdom to



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Israel?" But Jesus said: "That is none of your business." Jesus then revealed His expansion policy in which they were to be instrumental: "I shall give you power to spread the Kingdom in Jerusalem and Samaria and to the uttermost parts of the earth. That is your business." And thus speaking He went to take His place at God's right hand: The Head of the Church and the Ruler of the kings of the earth, in Whose hands is all power and authority.

Then on earth things looked pretty much the same. The power remained in the hands of violent men. But the authority is with those who follow Christ. This is given royal perspective: "I appoint unto you a kingdom as My father has appointed unto Me, that you may eat and drink at My table in My Kingdom and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Luke 22:29-30; also Revelation 3:21).

Therefore, when we pray our Christian prayer: "Thy Kingdom come," then, praying for the completion of that work of God in us and for the destruction of the work of the devil, we follow the Christ Who taught us this prayer, and we confess therein that the Kingdom is still underway in its development; it has not come to its fulness. Yet, when we conclude: "For thine is the Kingdom . . .," we profess that there is nothing lacking in God's authority or in His power or in His glory. We confess therein that God's Kingdom has been from eternity and that it is coming through the process of evolution, from Adam to second Adam, and from the ascension day to the final judgment day. History proceeds to the completion of God's plan. He is the Great Politician, because the *polis*, the city, the world, belongs to Him (Psalm 8).

And all political ideals must be subservient to that plan. If not voluntarily, then unwillingly — "The Lord will have them in derision."

We must keep this clearly in mind, not as a colourful Dutch oddity, the settlers' effects of Dutch immigrants, contained in books and brochures that now gather dust on our shelves, an ethnic twist. Rather, this is a reality of most prominent actuality; When we say: "For Thine is the Kingdom and the power and glory," we make a political statement.

CHRISTIAN PRINCIPLES OR PRINCIPLED CHRISTIANS?

When in the several aspects of

creation we set out to decide what is Christian policy, we must be on guard that we do not confuse the actions of Christians with Christian action. This is often done: I am of Reformed persuasion. I think (sometimes). Therefore I bring forth Reformed thinking.

A pious politician does not necessarily conduct Christian politics. One example of this approach was seen in Alberta when the pioneers of Social Credit there, Aberhard and Manning, famous for their radio gospel messages, were criticized on the substance of their political ideas. Zealous followers then answered: "How dare you oppose these holy men of God?" I am sometimes afraid that we do something similar when we establish membership restrictions. The rule, often found: "Members can be those who are members of a Canadian Reformed Church," may have its importance for the safeguard of assets, but it is in no way a guarantee for a truly Reformed outcome of principles.

This identifying of the principles with the people also works in another, far more dangerous direction. It is this, that people, politicians and church leaders alike, will tell you: "You as Christians must sneak into all the structures of social and political life and there, with your thousands, like a gigantic fifth column, you will exercise an enormous Christian influence, and you will occupy many important strategic positions for the Kingdom of God!" This thought, the prevailing thought of today, attractive as it may sound, is thoroughly deceptive! The Christian must then in his own place decide on the questions of principle. I once heard the example recited of the Christian politician who voted in favour of Canada pension plan enactment. His rules of thumb were: "Is it against God's Word?" — No. "Am I my brother's keeper?" — Yes. But this is clear: that the Barthian school from which this proposal originates, denies the right to spell out anything to be called *Christian political principles*.

The basic principle coming from this school, if adopted by any Christian organization, will bring about only one well-formulated principle: the right to self-destruct. One should not underestimate the attractiveness of this deceptive concept on the minds of our young people: Christian involvement.

NO "GUT REACTIONS," BUT OBEDIENT CONTEMPLATION

Therefore, if we want to do any-

thing worthwhile with respect to our political calling, it will have to begin with understanding the necessity to spell out, to articulate, Christian political principles.

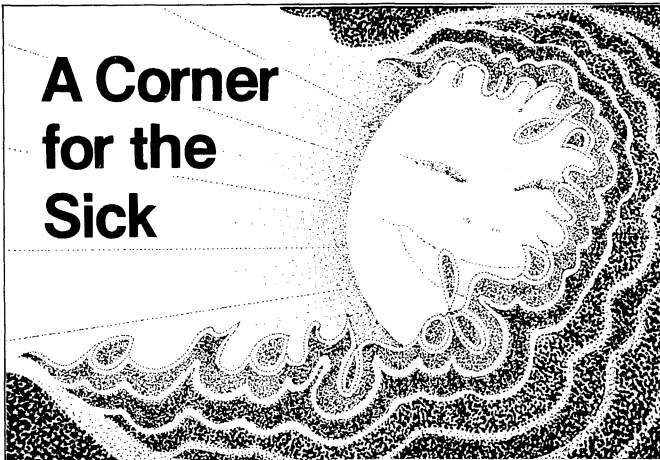
One of the first things that should thereby be taken into account is the fact that the Church has a well defined doctrine regarding the magistracy, laid down in the Belgic Confession. This doctrine, which is based on the Scripture, must be searched out, must be expounded, must be applied in the political reality of today. And that may sound easy, but it requires work. Time must be spent in evaluating principles established in the political world and to compare them with God's revealed will. "Gut reactions" may hit the right answers, but they are not a reliable guide when it comes to charting the terrain. Take, for example, the issue of the death penalty. Some have favoured abolishment by misquoting the Bible: "Thou shalt not kill." Most of the arguments for retention of capital punishment reason along this line: Capital punishment is necessary for two reasons: protection and retribution. Society must be protected, and hence keep the death penalty as a deterrent. Furthermore, society has been wronged by the criminal. Somehow he must be forced to make up; retribution is in order. Opponents argue that the criminal must be rehabilitated, given back his dignity and made ready to take back his rightful place in society. But both parties place themselves high on a pragmatic throne: we will decide what is good for mankind. How often in this hot issue have you heard anybody refer back to the Bible to say that God demands from the government that it administer justice? that the government must punish the evildoer? not for prevention — that is only a side effect — but because of divine command?

And this is only a simple issue which is rather black and white. There are many areas — questions of the government's duty to interfere or not to interfere; economic freedom or protection of weaker groups — where there is no particular, clear command of God. And yet, spelling out Christian principles will always mean that we ask for God's revealed will while attempting to comprehend the issue.

J. DE VOS

to be continued.

A Corner for the Sick



"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved."

Acts 4:12

Condemned, dead, and lost in ourselves, we have need of a Redeemer, Who will restore to us righteousness, deliverance, life, and salvation. It is not our own doing that we may know "The Way"; Jesus Christ and Him crucified. It is not our own doing, that we may confess, "For I know that my Redeemer liveth." God revealed this to us in His Word. By the preaching of the gospel we may know this Truth. It is by grace only!

Have you ever asked yourself what it would be like to be in a world, lost, and without hope, not knowing the gospel of salvation?

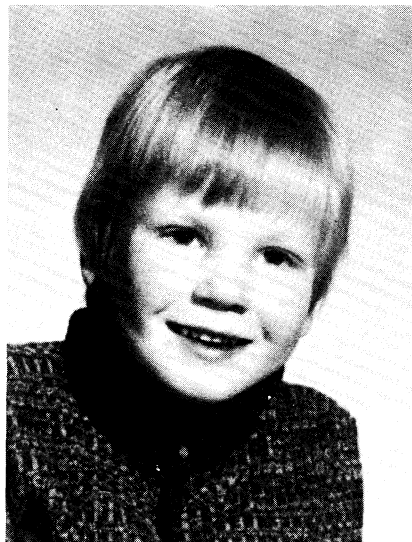
In our Confessions, the Three Forms of Unity, we have received a rich inheritance. Our forefathers with their great knowledge of the Bible, have repeated in their Confession what God's Word teaches about the greatness of the salvation which Christ made possible. We may thankfully confess what our forefathers already confessed during a time of great persecution, "Wherefore we justly say with the apostle Paul that we know nothing save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified; we count all things but loss and refuse for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord in Whose wounds [He was wounded for our transgressions, Isaiah 53:5] we find all manner of consolation" (Belgic Confession, Article 21) and Article 22: "We believe that, to attain the true knowledge of this great mystery, the Holy Spirit kindles in our hearts an upright faith which embraces Jesus Christ with all His merits, appropriates Him, and seeks nothing more besides Him. For it must needs follow, either that all things which are requisite to our salvation are not in Jesus Christ, or if all things are in Him, that then those who possess Jesus Christ through faith have complete salvation in Him."

Hymn 34, Book of Praise (Romans 3-5)

1. Salvation unto us has come
By God's free grace and favour;
Good works cannot avert our doom,
They help and save us never.

*Faith looks to Jesus Christ alone,
Who did for all the world atone;
He is our one Redeemer.*

6. Faith clings to Jesus' work alone
And rests in Him unceasing;
And by its fruits true faith is known,
With love and hope increasing.
Yet faith alone doth justify,
Works serve the neighbour and supply
The proof that faith is living.
5. Since Christ hath full atonement made
And brought to us salvation,
Each Christian therefore may be glad
And build on this foundation.
Thy Grace alone, 'dear Lord, I plead,
Thy death is now my life indeed,
For Thou hast paid my ransom.



Derek Kok

From Derek Kok's mother I received a letter thanking all the brothers and sisters (young and old) for the many cards, notes and two puzzle notes Derek received. It made him very happy! Especially the cards made by Miss Schuller's Grade Two pupils of John Calvin School in Burlington were very much appreciated. Derek showed them all to his teacher at a special school which he attends. A few boys and girls wanted Derek to write to them, but his mother wrote that he is not able to read or write. Maybe in the future he will be able to walk. He is a happy boy and has a smile for everyone! Thank you everyone!

Until next time, the Lord willing!

Send your requests (with permission of the person involved) to:

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Report #90

São José da Coroa Grande, Pe.
January 2, 1978

Esteemed Brethren,

One disadvantage of the reversed seasons is that the busy month of December coincides with the heat of summer. Looking at the winter scenes on the many Christmas cards we received and reading in letters about the harsh winter which covered much of Canada, we could only wish that some of that cooler air would drift southward. Nevertheless, it has been a good month and we may look back on a joyful and happy festive season expressing our gratitude for all that the Lord has done for us, and especially for that great and wonderful gift of His Son Jesus Christ. Many a time did the church bells ring these last few weeks, and many people responded to the invitation to come and worship with us. May the Lord grant that the seed which was sown germinates, grows and bears fruit.

The month started with a sad event. *Paulo Felix da Silva* passed away on December 2nd. (See previous report.) The Lord has relieved him of his suffering and taken him home, at the age of 56 years. The next day we led the funeral, a poor man's funeral where little grief and respect were shown. He leaves a wife and four children at home but it appears that they will be able to receive welfare although the bureaucratic channels will delay matters.

A *congregational meeting* was held on December 2nd with all members present except Joaquim Gomes (who works out-of-town) and Maria Tenório who is passing through a crisis and tempted to live in a worldly style. In such situations the members have not yet learned to help each other but often alienate the weak member more by their derogatory remarks, which he in turn again will use to excuse his own weakness. Human nature is pretty much the same, whatever the color or nationality may be!

On the first Sunday of the month we celebrated the *Lord's Supper*. All members attended, except Maria Tenório. All who had been ill were recovered to such an extent that they could attend Church again.

New Catechumenes: Several persons have again indicated their desire to follow pre-confession classes in order to prepare themselves for membership.

Maria das Dores (42) has been attending Church for quite some time already and has been a member of a Protestant Church before. Unfortunately she has attacks of mental instability. She has had a very difficult life, realizes her own weakness and trusts that the Lord will forgive and help her. She lives with a man with whom she is not (yet) married and raises some of her grandchildren.

José Paulino Gomes (49) and his "wife" *Maria José da Silva* (21) are also well-known to us. Paulino has been a regular attender for a number of years and his present "wife" joined him for the last year or so. Paulino was left by his wife when he was very ill 4 years ago, lived alone for a few years and then found his present "wife" with whom he cannot marry before the law, since, until a week ago, Brazil does not permit divorce. (Costs will still make it prohibitive for the poor people: the paper estimated that the cheapest would be Cr. 10,000.00, a fortune for anyone here). They have one child together now. Both attend Church very faithfully and would like to become members and therefore start to attend classes.

Francisca Barros Lins (43) (a relative of the Vieiras) moved into town about a year ago and is very interested in the Church. Three daughters also attend and take part in the other activities. However, her husband makes it very hard for her. He is an alcoholic and becomes a brute when he is under the influence of drinking, prohibiting his family to attend Church. She either sneaks away on him or takes advantage of the fact that he is out on the sea fishing, in order to be able to attend the services. She likes to follow classes too, but does not know yet if under these circumstances she can.

I intend to start another *pre-confession class* in January for those who wish to receive further instruction.

A "mysterious death" shook the community when a certain dona Nilza

passed away suddenly after having taken some medicine. The people made it more mysterious linking her death to her involvement in spiritism. It drew our attention since several of her children have been coming to church for quite some time and immediately came to us. The children are now living with relatives and also bring several of their cousins to Church now, which amazes us since all of the mothers are involved in spiritism and their leaders are very much against our Church. They know that we openly expose spiritism as being against God's will and His Scriptures, and therefore being the work of the devil. Altogether about seven children are involved, some of them teenagers already, who have been exposed to and participated in spiritism.

On December 17th we all had the honour of being invited to the *Graduation of Tereza Vieira* who received her Teacher's Certificate. I even had the special honour of being her paranympth at this rather formal occasion. We are happy with her that she achieved this goal and hope that this may also be a blessing for the Church here. She is not planning to teach yet, but wants to keep her job at the Town Hall and continue studying in the evening in Barreiros.

Christmas: This year we had a triple celebration of Christmas. We started with a festive, special service on *Christmas Eve* which was well attended by the members and many other visitors. After the regular features of a service we presented a special program with the singing of the Girls' Choir, Young People's Society, Youth Club and a musical contribution by the family Kuik. All in all, a joyful and thankful celebration of the great event that our Saviour came into the world.

On *Christmas morning* we had the celebration with the children (and many adults). Approximately 150 children attended and 30 adults, more than previous years. Added features to the otherwise regular Sunday morning program were a declamation by the children of the Sunday School, a story told by br. J. Kuik and singing by the Girls' Choir. And of course, last but not least, the handing out of surprises: 93 booklets to the regular children of the Sunday School, and candy-bags and used Christmas cards to all who attended. It was encouraging and inspiring to see so many attend and also that this year many more adults than usual showed their interest. The last of the

Christmas services was the worship service of Sunday evening which showed a slightly above-average attendance.

New Year: On New Year's Eve we held a *thanksgiving service* and on New Year's Day a *prayer service* in the evening. Since there are no marked seasons of Spring and Harvest, it seems most appropriate to hold these traditional services at the changing of the years.

Other Festivities: As is customary by now, we also give a little party at our home for the Young People and for the Youth Club. The first was held on Friday, December 29th, and the latter Monday, January 2nd. Some simple games and a good supply of refreshments always make these enjoyable events. All the mission-workers participate as well, and their help is needed, especially with the Youth Club, 26 lively youngsters! It is hard to believe that these children when they first visited us several years ago hardly dared to talk. They have certainly lost all shyness, but it is more enjoyable this way.

Acknowledgement: We wish to make mention of the thoughtfulness of a brother and sister in Canada who sent us some most interesting and useful books which are to remain in the study of the missionary, also when he is replaced by his successor. The books are: "Jesus of the Spirits" (Pedro McGregor), which gives the history and nature of Spiritism in Brazil, "Death in the Northeast" (Josué de Castro), expounding the social problem and its history of the Northeast of Brazil, and "Miracle at Joazeiro" (Ralph della Cava), the history of Padre Cícero, a priest who became a mythical or legendary figure after his supposed miracles. In many homes here in town you will find images and pictures of this man, and pilgrimages are made to the town where he once performed his duties, Joazeiro.

I mention these books in this report so that some who wish to acquaint themselves more with these subjects know where they can find some excellent reading.

From the Family: We are thankful that we may report to you that the whole family enjoys good health. The boys have now entered their summer holidays from the Brazilian school and have passed their grades. From their English studies they only had a short Christmas break.

We wish to thank all the brothers and sisters who have sent us their best

wishes for the festive season and the New Year in the form of cards, letters, etc. It was nice to hear from so many of you again and we wish to take this opportunity to wish you all the Lord's blessing for this New Year. May His grace again be upon you all!

This month (January) my wife will have a short break. Linda and Trudy must cross the border in order to be able to have their tourist-visa extended, and my wife decided to accompany them on their trip which will take them by bus to Curitiba and from there to Foz da Igauçu, the border with Paraguay. All in all the trip should take about 10 days, from January 12 to January 21.

Mission Conference: With the arrival of the new year the Mission Conference, to be held in Curitiba, is also drawing rather close. It is scheduled to be from February 6 to 13, although I will have to return on the 11th in order to be here that Sunday. The participants from Curaçao and Surinam plan to visit us for a weekend on the way down. They are Rev. J. Schreuder, and Rev. D.T. Vreugdenhil and br. J.T. Sikkema from Curaçao and Rev. K. Verlind from Surinam. We are looking forward to their visit. The organizers of the Conference, Rev. S. Braaksma and Rev. J.T. Oldenhuis have drawn up a good program and if we all find time to prepare ourselves for it, it should be very instructive, and serve the mission work in Latin America.

REVIEW — 1977

General: The general opinion is that 1977 has been a slightly better year for Brazil than 1976. Still, the inflation rate stood at 38.7% while other sources give a figure of 43.1% for this region: very high for North American standards, but slightly below the figures of the previous year.

In spite of this inflation progress continues and also locally we experienced several improvements to the town. The influx of tourists increases yearly, a number of houses have been constructed and another bigger project is under way, mostly summer homes. Although the town definitely benefits from this tourist trade, some good industries, providing steady employment, would serve the population more.

Also the past year we enjoyed peace and quietness in the country and the work in the Kingdom could be conducted unhindered and under the pro-

tection of the authorities. There are indications, however, that work conducted by foreigners is less welcome than it has been. The granting of permanent visas for missionaries has come to a near standstill, Protestant and Roman Catholic alike. As of the end of 1977 the government no longer allows foreign workers among the Indians. 500 workers had to leave their posts, of whom there were 200 Wycliffe workers. They are allowed to remain in the country and must therefore get involved in training the nationals while there still is the opportunity. Different reasons are given, but I get the impression they aim at restricting foreign influence.

I am afraid that President Carter's human rights campaign is not helping matters. A common reaction, put in plain words is: "Mind your own business, you have enough problems of your own." However, there has been a tightening of the borders before followed by more relaxed regulations. A strong, National Protestant force may help to ease legislation regarding foreign mission workers.

Igreja Reformada: 1977 has been a blessed year for our Congregation here. The work could be conducted unhindered. The Lord gave us all health and many open doors so that the Gospel could be preached openly and freely. Again there were visible fruits to the preaching of the Word. Three adults professed their faith and became members of the Church, while two children were included, of whom one received baptism. Another child was born into the Church and also received the sign and seal of the covenant.

With sadness we also report the loss of members. One child was suddenly taken away by the Lord, and one sister withdrew herself together with three of her children.

This means that at the end of 1977 there were 16 communicant members and 13 non-communicant members.

The number attending the services is at least triple of that of the members and a number of them show true interest and desire also to become a member. Some are required to remove certain obstacles in their style of life first, others have not attended pre-confession class as yet, and still others are more recent visitors.

The young still show great interest. The Sunday School shows an attendance of around 60 children as a

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news medley

Our meeting today will not be one of long duration. Since the Churches have not provided me with much news, I cannot pass on much. And it is the Churches that "compose" our medley.

Yes, let me start off with thanking all those who took the trouble to tell me that the word "donator" does exist. It is found in the newer and "better" dictionaries which have appeared since I acquired my — now old — copy. I am happy to say that once more it has become clear that our medley is being read and is being appreciated. And also that our readers do not hesitate to write when there is a "cry for help," as one said it. Thank you.

We begin with something which will have given the Congregation concerned much joy. I mean: the first service in the new church building in Lincoln. According to the (rather enthusiastic) report of the Rev. Werkman, "on Good Friday we hope to have a service at 7:30 p.m. in our new church building! We are thankful it has finally come that far. Let us fully enjoy it! After the service we will enjoy a cup of coffee with each other downstairs, while there will be an opportunity to take a tour through the whole building."

The building committee gave some additional information and had to report that "the organ will not be completely done, but we were promised that part of it can be used by Good Friday. The remainder will be finished after Easter."

That must have been a happy throng there on Friday, March 24th. Now it won't take long, I presume, and there will be an official "dedication evening" about which we shall hear in due time and, perhaps, also see something. Congratulations.

Coming up, we stop in Ebenezer Burlington. "Due to overwhelming interest and attendance, the Women's Society 'Faith and Knowledge' had to split. Now there are two (English-speaking) Women's Societies in Ebenezer Church." Isn't that something! Generally speaking, the interest and attendance at our societies is more a topic for concern than a reason for joy. Here is so much interest and such a faithful attendance that it is necessary to split up the society. And again I say, "Congratulations."

The Rehoboth bulletin contains sort of an article by the Rev. Cl. Stam about the appointment of the Rehoboth Church (together with the Edmonton Church) to organize days of fasting and prayer. He writes that the word "fasting" is not found in the text of our Church Order and that it was removed by the Synod of Utrecht 1905, as a result of which we do not have it either, since we took over the Church Order of Dort as it read in 1951.

Rev. Stam expresses the wish that no difficulties come up if it is deemed necessary to call such a day of prayer and . . . fasting. I would not know why difficulties should arise when that is done.

It is obvious that the text of the synodical decision and appointment is based on the old redaction of the Church Order Article. It is also clear that in our present Church Order we do not speak of "fasting." Yet I am happy that the word "fasting" is inserted in the synodical decision. Fasting is a means by which we are able to show the seriousness

of our plea. It does not have to be a total fast; it can be restricted to using only the most necessary things and it can be done by denying oneself or one's family any luxury for one day or for a couple of days. Fasting in itself has no value, but as an expression of humiliation and of seriousness it has great value. The Lord was moved by it even when King Ahab appeared to have sackcloth for a garment. The Lord listened to the pleas and cries of the inhabitants of Nineveh and to the lowing of the cattle that were deprived of food and drink upon the command of the king.

Most likely it is because of the merit which was ascribed to fasting by people who made it a regular "feature" that it has become discredited. I would, however, deplore its disappearance from the charge given to the above mentioned two Churches. And I think that we should seriously consider to re-introduce it into our Church Order. However, I don't want to write an article about it right here and now; just to give you some food for thought.

In order to gather some more grains from the field of ecclesiastical literature we have to move all the way to Coaldale. That "the ruler for election will remain un-

50th Wedding Anniversary



The scene was the city of Haarlem, The Netherlands, where br. and sr. Hart entered the state of marriage on April 26, 1928.

Since his early years, br. Hart worked with his father and brothers in the family bakery. In 1948 br. Hart "stood the test in agriculture" in order to emigrate to Canada. On April 8, 1948 they left Holland and settled in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario. Their first years in Canada brought them hardships. During the early 50's many a family or single person shared the shelter of their home; many of those are to be counted today in their circle of friends. Sr. Hart has coped with heart problems for the last 22 years and consequently has to watch her activity. Br. Hart enjoys good health and together with his wife are enjoying the comforts of the Maranatha Home in Burlington, Ontario. Br. Hart has contributed much of his life in the service and upbuilding of the Church as elder, prior to his retirement.

On their golden anniversary they are counting the many blessings which God has given them and are eagerly awaiting the day on which they may celebrate this happy occasion together with their children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.

Their address: Maranatha Home, 3260 New Street, Burlington, Ontario

changed" is in all likelihood a typist's mistake. But I have more problems with the request to "short and close the catechism classes with prayer." And, to top it off, I have great admiration for the person(s) who put the following problem before the Consistory: "There was a request to start a Sunday School during the afternoon services at such times that they do not interfere with church attendance, i.e., not during the Church services." Is there any one who can figure that one out?

Before I get into trouble, I move on to Houston.

"The matter of the Dutch Worship Services is discussed at length. As of May 1978 the Dutch Worship Services will be discontinued."

Another point that was discussed at the Houston Consistory meeting was: "The possibility of calling a Minister by the Church of Houston." Yes, I can well understand that the Church at Houston wishes to have a minister of their own. We remember that also London and Watford decided to call one each. That is a good thing, for — as it was said at the latest Classis Ontario North — "we must also create vacancies." One thing has to be borne in mind, of course, and that is that the ministers should not become the victims because of extremely low salaries. Striving after having a minister of their own is good, as long as the Churches can afford it, or as long as they can get sufficient financial support from the sister Churches.

We should prevent that a situation develops in which a candidate *has* to accept a call because it is the only vacancy that exists, but will have to live on a salary which is below the level of most of the members of that Church for the simple reason that the number is too small to fulfil the Church's obligations. Calling must be possible, reasonably possible.

Bearing the above warning in mind, I am nevertheless thankful for the desire expressed. Such decisions will also have effect on the number of students, I would think.

I would not be surprised if there were young men that

have started figuring: so many Churches, so many ministers, so many students, after so many years everything will be full. The number of Churches is not so large after all, and, if the Lord spares the lives of all the ministers we have at present, not too many of them will retire within the next ten years.

I hope that no one reasons along those lines. There are not a few Churches that are too large in my opinion and without undue burdens we could have at least four more vacancies right away. When, besides, smaller Churches are enabled to call a minister of their own, we discover that there are many places available and will become available in the future.

Please do not take the above "meditation" ill of me. It is something which has been in my mind for a long time and now I had the opportunity to say it. Are we sufficiently convinced of the necessity to *expand* and to *spread out*? Or are we flocking too much to a few places where we can form a colony?

Let me close with offering our congratulations to brothers and sisters who have special reason for gratitude and rejoicing.

There are two couples who may celebrate their fiftieth wedding anniversary. Half a century together as husband and wife. What a blessing!

Our heartfelt congratulations go to brother and sister Th. Hart and to brother and sister A. Van der Veen, both in Burlington, Ontario. With them we are thankful for this great privilege which the Lord has given to them. And is it not a coincidence that they both may remember this fact on the 26th of April? Have a happy day, a day filled with gratitude and rejoicing with children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren and with the brotherhood insofar as they will be able to shake your hand. The Lord be with you also on your further pathway.

On behalf of all, vO.

mission news

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rule, of whom many attend the other activities as well. Quite a percentage of these children have been with us a number of years and are entering their teen-age years with a fairly good knowledge of the Scriptures. Whether they can withstand the temptations of adolescence remains to be seen, but we hope and pray that the Lord will grant them the strength to remain faithful and become living members of His Church.

LOOKING FORWARD

Upon entering 1978 the forthcoming changes on the mission field begin to occupy our mind more. If all goes well, we hope to welcome our successor, Rev. R. Boersema and his

family, towards the end of February. This is also the time that the family Kuik plans to leave for furlough. During the following four months Rev. Boersema can concentrate on the study of the Portuguese language and in between we should have the opportunity to introduce him to the work here. Early July we hope to be able to leave for Canada, shortly after the return of the family Kuik.

With great interest we follow the developments regarding a second missionary to be stationed in the neighbouring town of Maragogi, in the state of Alagoas. We hope that the Lord will bless the efforts of New Westminster and that a second worker will be found this year. This will be of great importance to the development of the Church here as well, and also for the workers to be able to work as a team of missionaries: close enough for frequent contact and far enough for independent work.

All indications are that the Church here will see a further growth and develop to further maturity, the Lord willing. We do not know how much time the Lord will grant us, but we do know that the end will not come before the number of elect, those whom are chosen to everlasting life, will be full. In this confidence we will continue to work in the Kingdom of the Lord.

Yours in His service,
C. VAN SPRONSEN

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OUR COVER

Niagara Falls, Ontario. Courtesy of Ministry of Industry and Tourism, Toronto, Ontario.

press review

STRUGGLE ABOUT THE BIBLE

In *Clarion* the Appeal was printed that went out to the Christian Reformed Community from the Canadian Reformed Churches. In this Appeal it is said that the relation which the Christian Reformed Church maintains with the Reformed Churches (Synodical) in The Netherlands is an impediment for the Canadian Reformed Churches to continue contact, with the goal of unity. It is also stated that this maintained relation with those Dutch Churches has brought their liberalism into the Christian Reformed Church. This is once again clearly shown in a discussion which appeared in *The Banner* of February 10, 1978. In this discussion Dr. Harry R. Boer reacts to a review on his book *Above the Battle. The Bible and its Critics*. This review was written by Dr. Alexander De Jong and appeared in *The Banner* of September 23, 1977. Dr. Boer works for the Christian Reformed Church's Mission work in Nigeria, at the Theological College.

I shall first quote from this review. The reader is then immediately informed about the issue. Dr. De Jong wrote:

Boer believes that since the Bible is a thoroughly human production it is subject to the same critical evaluation as any other book

Boer presses the humanity of the Scripture so far as to make room for the fact that it contains error, discrepancy, and contradiction

According to Boer, the Holy Spirit communicates through the obvious humanity of the Bible, *together with its inadequacies, disparities, and errors, the infallible realities of revelation*. According to him "deeply imbedded in the historic view of the infallibility of the Bible is the idea, the massive idea, of the unbreakable, ever-valid revelation of the creation, redemption, and consummation of all things in Christ, who is Himself the Creator, the Redeemer, the Consummator." *It is apparent that Boer does not apply the word "infallible" to the Biblical text, a text determined by the legitimate use of lower criticism, but only to the revelational realities which lie beyond, behind, or above the text [Italics mine, J.G.]*.

Dr. De Jong concluded his review as follows:

It is time for the Christian Reformed

Church to speak clearly on the issues involved in infallibility, inerrancy, and inspiration of the Bible. We thank Dr. Boer for his unambiguous presentation of issues which confront the Christian Reformed Church. We regret that we must characterize his views as contrary to the consistent historic position of the Reformed community since the days of John Calvin, and worse yet, contrary to the Bible's teaching concerning its own nature and authority as well as contrary to the confession of the Church as articulated in Articles III-VII of the *Belgic Confession*.

We see in this picture from the book of Dr. Boer that he belongs to the liberal camp. There it is said that the *truth* of the Bible is infallible, but the *Bible text* is not. It contains (many) errors and discrepancies. In this camp the parallelism between the Bible and Christ, between the inscripturated Word of God and the incarnate Word, is often used: both are divine and human. But this comparison is misused. It is to be the basis for the assumption that the human side of the Bible shows many errors.

The Bible critics support this view by pointing to the differences, for instance, between events related in the Gospels. Those differences must be seen as human errors, according to them. Now it is true that there are differences, for example, between Luke and Matthew. But in the course of the years and centuries this has been seen by those who believe(d) the infallibility also of the Bible text. And many good explanations and harmonizations are given. Besides, it is always admitted that writing errors can have been made in the process of copying the text. We no longer have the original copies. And this fact has never compelled honest Reformed Bible Scholars to deny the infallibility of both the truth and the text of the Bible. On the other hand, the liberals who use this fact of the differences to defend their liberal views often at the same time wrest commandments of the law of the LORD and also come to the denial of more and more points of the Christian and Biblical doctrine. I may refer the reader to the book of Dr. Harold Lindsell, *The Battle for the Bible*; and

for those who can read Dutch there is, for example, *Betwist Schriftgezag* by Dr. C. Trimp.

We go back to the discussion mentioned above. Dr. Boer reacted to the review of his book by Dr. De Jong in a "letter to the Editor" under the column "Voices" in *The Banner*, of February 10. From this reply I quote the following. Dr. Boer writes:

I am fully aware that my views about the infallibility of the Bible sharply contravene the conventional understanding of the church's position. That conventional understanding is that the Christian Reformed Church holds to the inerrancy of the Bible. In the popular mind, insofar as it has taken note, Report 44 teaches and fortifies this understanding. It certainly uses inerrancy language. But does it teach the inerrancy of the Bible?

Report 44 was a report that dealt with the nature and extent of the authority of the Bible. Dr. De Jong calls this report ambiguous. Dr. Boer agrees that "ambiguity is the hallmark of the CRC teaching on Scripture." For further information about this "Report 44" I may refer the reader to the Appeal, mentioned above. Dr. Boer says further about this ambiguity:

The most recent demonstration of synodical ambiguity on the doctrine of Scripture was unambiguously effected by the Synod of 1977. Approving a revision of the constitution of the National Association of Presbyterian and Reformed Churches, it averred that it stands "fully committed" to the "inerrancy of Scripture in all its parts."

And now comes the ambiguity according to Dr. Boer. He continues:

But not quite. Having so "committed" itself, synod went on to say, "that the proposed revision of the constitution of NAPARC does not bind the CRC beyond that which recent synods of the CRC have endorsed (cf. Acts of Synod, 1959, 1961, 1972)," Acts of Synod, 1977, p. 36.

He says further:

When one examines that material, which must necessarily include Report 36, he will find that the Christian Reformed understanding of the meaning of the absolute and unambiguous word "inerrancy" has ins and outs that cannot possibly be reconciled with any definition of inerrancy.

Dr. Boer could have added another proof of the ambiguity at the Christian Reformed Synod 1977. Over against that stand of full commitment to the "inerrancy of Scripture in all its parts" is the fact that this same Synod did not want to state clearly that teachings of another minister in the Christian Re-

formed Church, which go against the doctrine of "inerrancy," cannot be allowed.

I shall give one more quotation from what Dr. Boer writes:

So Dr. De Jong is unhappy because synod's infallibility does not mean all he wants it to mean.

And I am unhappy because the acceptance of NAPARC's "inerrant" obscures the true situation.

Both of us are more than individual commentators on the problem. *We are representative men* [Italics mine, J.G.]. I am not aware, however, that we and those of our mind, accepting each other as brothers in Christ, and with common appeal to Scripture as the highest and final authority, cannot honourably and fruitfully live together under the same denominational roof. In fact, that is what we are doing all the time in our ecclesiastical fellowship The movement of synodical decisions from 1961 to 1972 is definitely in the direction of coexistence.

Dr. De Jong replies to this reaction of Dr. Boer in the same issue of *The Banner*. From this I quote only what he says about the last part: that of the coexistence of the two views on Scripture. Dr. De Jong writes:

Both you and I perceive that we are a deeply divided church theologically. Whether or not you and I, as theologians, continue to live under the same denominational roof is not for me to decide. There are official and properly delineated channels which should handle this question. As we still continue to live together in the CRC let us be totally honest with our membership. You should admit that your views are more neo-orthodox than historically consistent with the history of the Reformed faith since the days of John Calvin [This is what Dr. Boer did, see the first quotation from his reply, J.G.].

Your *redefinition of what is Reformed* [Italics mine, J.G.] presents a very practical problem for me and for many whom you say I represent. You are in the employ of the denomination. I must personally contribute to your salary. Can I responsibly subsidize you and others like you in the denominational employ who teach what I honestly oppose and believe to be detrimental to God's people? May I help you propagandize what I believe to be error?

You wish me to treat you with acceptance in our denomination. At this point in time I am willing to do so Church politicians can no longer camouflage the deep division in our church.

I can understand this practical difficulty: Can we give our money for a bad cause, even within the church to which we belong? For our money is the Lord's, and we are the stewards

over it. But what I cannot see is how Dr. De Jong can say that he is willing to accept and to work together with persons in the church of the Lord of whom he is convinced that they bring errors into that church of the Lord and in that way break the Lord's church down. The recent history of the church in The Netherlands teaches us that the view of, for example, Dr. Boer, on the Bible, namely, that it is infallible only in its doctrine and not in its text, (while, then, the liberal theologian determines what that doctrine of the Bible is!!!), is not isolated from other modern liberal views. Men like Kuitert, Baarda, Wiersinga, and others in the Synodical (once Reformed) Churches in The Netherlands have also accepted revolution, socialism/communism, abortion, freer sex, homosexuality, and more things of which the (*text* of the) Bible says that it is sin and forbidden by God.

The Christian Reformed Church Order says in Article 5 that "All office-bearers, on occasions stipulated by consistorial, classical, and synodical stipulations, shall signify their agreement with the doctrine of the church by signing the Form of Subscription." And Article 88a reads: "Ministers, elders, and deacons, besides being subject to general discipline, are also subject to special discipline, which consists of suspension and deposition from office." Article 89a adds to this: "Special discipline shall be applied to office-bearers if they violate the Form of Subscription, are guilty of neglect or abuse of office, or in any way seriously deviate from sound doctrine and godly conduct."

When for Dr. De Jong and those whom he represents the sound doctrine, meant in the Church Order, and the Reformed doctrine, meant in the Form of Subscription, is the unambiguous doctrine of the Reformed Creeds and not the ambiguous decisions of the synods, they cannot feel happy and their consciences must be plagued. Is applying "special discipline" not possible any longer in the Christian Reformed Church (as it is no longer possible in the synodical Dutch Church), because the CRC is already a deeply divided church where "yes" and "no" are both factually accepted? It is sad. But the Appeal is fully justified. I see it this way: if the way of obedience, namely, of applying "special discipline," has been made impossible and is not followed, there is one other way of obedience that remains

open: it is the way of separation like in 1834 and in 1857. May God give the Reformed brothers in the Christian Reformed Church wisdom and strength and faithfulness in their grievous situation.

I should like to make one more remark. Dr. Boer says that he is

not aware, however, that we and those of our mind, accepting each other as brothers in Christ and with common appeal to Scripture as the highest and final authority, cannot honorably and fruitfully live together under the same denominational roof.

In the first place I think that reference here to the Scripture as the highest and final authority makes no sense and is deceiving. Dr. Boer reads the Scriptures in a basically different way than Dr. De Jong does. When Dr. De Jong says, "This and this is what Scripture says," Dr. Boer will answer that he (De Jong) does not read the Bible in the right way. And vice versa: when Dr. De Jong says, "Also the text of Scripture is infallible and inerrant," Dr. Boer will reply, "No, only the doctrine about creation, redemption, and consummation is infallible, not the detailed text of the Bible about these points." Thus referring to the Bible as the final authority is a farce in the context of the discussion between the two opposing views.

In the second place it seems so friendly and nice when Dr. Boer says that he is not aware that those holding the two views "cannot honorably and fruitfully live together," and that there cannot be an "accepting each other as brothers in Christ." That is what one always sees: those who deviate from the old Reformed track say to those who want to remain Reformed: we accept you as brothers in Christ in the same church! So, please accept us also from your side. That is what, for instance, the Arminians also said in the days of the Synod of Dort. But the ones who deviate from the Reformed Confession have no right to say to those who maintain that Confession: we accept you in the Reformed Church, for an un-Reformed view does not belong in a Reformed Church, nor does the person who holds and propagates such an un-Reformed view. That is agreed upon and expressed clearly in the Subscription Form.

J. GEERTSEMA

**ANSWER TO WORD SEARCH
PUZZLE NO. 24** Church in History

In October last year Rev. de Vries travelled to Butiptiri by boat with the intention to visit also other villages in the South Digul area. However, in Butiptiri he received word that cholera had broken out in Kouh and that the boat, the "Saksi," had to return to Kouh to decrease the danger of infection. Rev. de Vries had actually wanted to visit Butiptiri earlier already, but due to illness and being very busy there was no time for it.

In his report Rev. de Vries tells us about his meeting with the consistory which was held on a Saturday. The usual congregational meeting could not be held due to heavy rain. Rev. de Vries assisted the consistory in dealing with several cases of discipline. There were quite a few: marriage problems, people staying in the jungle, members not attending congregational meetings, and also the case of a man whose wife had passed away in the jungle after having been bitten by a snake. Thereafter their baby became sick, and the father prayed for recovery. Back in the village the elders paid him a visit and also prayed. However, when there was no sign of recovery, the father had someone practice *mau mau* (black magic) and later on the child passed away. During a visit from the penginjil (evangelist) and an elder, he confessed the sin of *mau mau* and promised not to do this again. This case was explained at a congregational meeting.

On Sunday evening two children were baptized and Holy Supper was celebrated.

The salary of the penginjil is being brought in regularly. However, there are several brothers who haven't paid anything yet. It was pointed out that this is a reason for admonition, especially if they are able to pay but do not want to. Whatever is short on the salary for the penginjil via the regular contributions is being added from the church collection. The penginjil teaches religion regularly at the elementary school.

Temporarily there has been a decline in the attendance of the Women's Society, but the last time it went better again. The histories of the New Testament are all dealt with now with the help of the red booklet of sister E. Nie-



Paulus Omba with his family, evangelist at Butiptiri.

boer; next are the stories of the Old Testament, also with the help of that red booklet.

There are 29 adults in Butiptiri who regularly attend catechism classes.

The consistory has plans to visit at home those from the Roman Catholic village, Quiptiri, who regularly attend the church services, e.g. in case of illness.

Formerly the *katekis* (Roman Catholic evangelist) had reported to the priest that so many Roman Catholic church members attended the Reformed services. The priest had mentioned this to the government. He wanted, according to the consistory, to force these people, via the government, to go again to the Roman Catholic church. The government has, in connection with this case, paid a visit to Butiptiri and has called the people together. At that meeting the Roman Catholic church members who attended our services declared that they did so without any coercion, and completely of their own free will. Thereafter the government has declared that they could indeed become Protestant, but then they had to stay and not return

again to the Roman Catholic church.

At a "counting" held recently, it appeared, according to penginjil Paulus Omba, that over 240 inhabitants considered themselves to be Protestant. A little over forty considered themselves to be Roman Catholic. This means that a little less than half of the Roman Catholic church members want to be Protestant from now on. The number of 240 we can consider as the total number of church members (communicant and baptized) and listeners who regularly attend the services.

Rev. de Vries concludes by saying that he planned to visit Butiptiri and other villages in the South Digul area again, somewhere around the turn of the year. However, right now the "Saksi" has been damaged and they are not sure if it can be repaired soon enough. "In mid January I have to teach at the Bible School, followed by the ZGK meeting, elder conference, and 'classis.' So it will probably take a while before a next visit can take place. We are particularly happy that the visa for Reverend Versteeg has been granted. We wish him a hearty welcome and hope that he can also do a good work in the South Digul area.

PRESS RELEASE

of Classis of the Canadian Reformed Churches in Alberta/Manitoba held at Edmonton on March 14-15, 1978.

Evening session Tuesday, March 14 from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m.

1. Br. T. Vander Brink, chairman of the Convening Church at Barrhead, opens the meeting of delegates. He requests us to sing Psalm 100 and reads with us I Corinthians 3:10-17, after which he leads us in prayer.

2. The credentials of the delegates are checked and found in order. The churches at Barrhead, Coaldale, Edmonton and Neerlandia have an instruction.

3. Classis is instituted. As officers are appointed the brothers Rev. D. De Jong, chairman; Rev. S. De Bruin, clerk; Rev. J. Van Rietschoten, vice-chairman.

4. The agenda is adopted. Letters have been received from the Church at Neerlandia, from br. E. Wierenga and from Rev. De Jong.

5. Reports, a. The Church at Edmonton reports that the books of the classical treasurer, br. E.C. Koning Jr., have been audited and are found in good order. This report is adopted with thanks.

b. The classical treasurer submits a financial report. The treasurer's report is adopted. Br. Koning receives the thanks from Classis and is discharged of the work done to date.

c. The Church at Barrhead, appointed to inspect the archives of Classis, has no report available.

d. Reports from the church visitors of visits to the Churches at Barrhead, Edmonton and Neerlandia are received with gratitude.

e. A report, submitted by the Committee for Support of Needy Churches is received with gratitude. The Committee reports that the amounts pledged for the support of needy churches are adequate. The Committee is discharged of work done up till now.

7. Question Period according to Article 41 of the Church Order. The Church at Coaldale requests advice with respect to the colloquy with the Rev. J.D. Wielenga from Albany, Australia who has accepted the call to the Church at Coaldale. Classis decides that such a colloquy should take place in Classis, and not in a Classis Contracta.

8. Appointments. The Church at Calgary is appointed convening church for the next Classis. Tentative date for the next Classis is sometime during the month of August. The exact date to be arranged by the Convening Church in consultation with the Church at Coaldale. The place where the next Classis will be held is Edmonton. Suggested officers for that Classis are, Rev. S. De Bruin, chairman; Rev. D. De Jong, vice-chairman; Rev. J. Van Rietschoten, clerk.

9. Classis decides to adjourn till 9 a.m.

Wednesday, March 15. After the singing of Psalm 92:1, 2, the chairman leads in prayer and adjourns Classis.

10. The chairman, Rev. D. De Jong reopens the Classis at 9 a.m. Wednesday, March 15. He reads I Corinthians 3:18-4:7 and leads in prayer. We sing Psalm 63:1, 2.

11. Correspondence received. The Church at Neerlandia informs Classis of its decision to withdraw a request, placed before Classis, and introduced by the Convening Church under point 9 of the Provisional Agenda. Classis removes this point from the agenda. A letter from br. E. Wierenga is dealt with in closed session. A letter from the Rev. D. De Jong is dealt with in closed session also. After these letters have been dealt with Classis continues in open session.

12. Proposals and Instructions. a. Four vacant churches ask for pulpit supply. The following schedule for preaching arrangement is adopted, May 7: Barrhead/Neerlandia, Rev. Van Rietschoten; Coaldale, Rev. De Jong; Edmonton, Rev. De Bruin; June 4: Barrhead/Neerlandia, Rev. De Jong; Coaldale, Rev. De Bruin; Edmonton, Rev. Van Rietschoten; June 25, Barrhead/Neerlandia, Rev. De Bruin; July 2: Coaldale, Rev. De Jong; Edmonton, Rev. Van Rietschoten; August 6: Barrhead/Neerlandia, Rev. Van Rietschoten; Coaldale, Rev. De Jong; Edmonton, Rev. De Bruin; August 27: Barrhead/Neerlandia, Rev. De Bruin; Edmonton, Rev. Van Rietschoten; September 24: Barrhead/Neerlandia, Rev. De Jong; Edmonton, Rev. Wielenga; October 22: Barrhead/Neerlandia, Rev. Wielenga; Edmonton, Rev. De Jong.

b. The Church at Neerlandia requests as counsellor the Rev. J. Van Rietschoten. This request is grated.

c. The Church at Barrhead brings to the attention of Classis an omission from the Acts of Classis October 25-26, 1977. Article 10 C is completed to read, "As church visitor was also appointed the Rev. S. De Bruin."

d. The Church at Calgary points to another omission from the same Acts, Article 2. This Article is completed to read, "Present were also the delegates of the Church at Neerlandia, the brothers S. Tuininga and J. Van Assen."

13. Personal question period. No questions are asked.

14. As delegates to the forthcoming Regional Synod, to be convened by the Church at Smithers, B.C. some time in May, are appointed the brothers: from the ministers, Rev. S. De Bruin, Rev. D. De Jong, Rev. J. Van Rietschoten; from the elders, C. Bos, T. Vander Brink, C. Veldkamp; Alternates, P. Van Bostelen, C. Van Vliet, S. Kok, C. De Wit, in that order.

15. Censure ad Article 43 Church Order. No censure is needed under this Article.

16. The Acts of this Classis are read and adopted.

17. The Press Release is read and approved.

18. We sing Psalm 122:1, 3. The Rev. J. Van Rietschoten leads in prayer. After this the chairman dismisses Classis at 2:30 p.m.

J. VAN RIETSCHOTEN
e.t. vice-chairman

Consulaat-Generaal der Nederlanden CONSULATE GENERAL OF THE NETHERLANDS

10 KING STREET E.,
TORONTO, ONTARIO M5C 1C3
PHONE: 364-5443

ONDERWERP: OPSPORING

BUDAY, Zoltan Endre, geboren 5 november 1952 te Boedapest.

MES, Aletta Isolde Leonora, geboren 6 januari 1954 te Amsterdam.

HAANSTRA, Jelle Maria, geboren 5 december 1933, laatstbekende adres Willowdale, Ontario.

VAN DER HAM, Gerrit, geboren 31 augustus 1912.

VAN DER HAM-BONTEBAL, Grietje, geboren 30 oktober 1912.

HOMAN, J., geboren 11 december 1912, naar Canada vertrokken op 1 mei 1957.

KOOLE, Pietje Maria, geboren 27 juli 1947 te Rotterdam.

NOORLANDER, Hyronimus Simon, geboren 29 juni 1938 te Amsterdam, laatstbekende adres 2 Bernick Dr., Barrie.

NOORTHOEK, Johannes Hermanus, geboren 27 februari 1913 te Amsterdam, naar Canada vertrokken op 16 augustus 1954.

RAGHOEBIER, Deodatt, geboren 13 februari 1947, naar Canada vertrokken op 8 december 1976.

VAN RENSEN, Peter, geboren 1 september 1952, naar Canada vertrokken op 22 januari 1974.

VAN RIET VAN SUYLENBORGH, Carl, geboren op 10 september 1923 te Rotterdam, naar Canada vertrokken op april 1974.

VAN STIJN, M.G.E., geboren 21 juli 1950 te Warmond.

VAN ZUILEN, M.D., geboren 30 november 1952 te Soest, naar Canada vertrokken op 28 februari 1977.

DE ZANGER, Abraham, geboren op 1 januari 1913 te Rotterdam, laatstbekende adres Overijsselsestraat 42 te Rotterdam, naar Canada vertrokken op 15 juli 1954.

De Consul-Generaal, voor deze: -
W.M. VAN GENNIP, kanselier.

FOR THE READER'S INFORMATION

This issue of *Clarion* was mailed from Winnipeg Central Post Office on March 31, 1978.