



Clarion

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BILL C-10

An Act Concerning Non-Profit Corporations

This time I would like to write something about Bill C-10, introduced into the House of Commons on Thursday, December 17, 1981. I do so with hesitation and trepidation. These feelings are caused by two circumstances. The first one is that one should always hesitate to make public statements concerning issues outside the reach of one's competency. It is clear that an evaluation of the Bill now before Parliament requires more juridical knowledge than this writer possesses. The second circumstance renders the situation worse: I did not see a complete copy of this Bill and making public statements then becomes even more dangerous. Nevertheless, the possible significance of the issue and the fact that delay seemed inopportune caused me to overcome my hesitation.

Let me first mention my sources. Our Theological College in Hamilton received a letter dd. April 15 from the Hon. Walter Baker, MP for Nepean-Carleton, about Bill C-10, An Act Respecting Non-Profit Corporations. In this letter he expressed some concerns that this Bill may dramatically affect the churches' right to speak out on moral issues in our country.

The Executive Secretary of the Council of Christian Reformed Churches in Canada sent a copy of his letter to the Hon. Andre Ouellet, Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. As our readers probably know, the Christian Reformed Churches in Canada have created a national "mouthpiece." The Rev. Arie G. Van Eek is the Executive Secretary and his office is located in Burlington, Ontario. It would be only shortsighted if Canadian Reformed people would not be interested in what this office produced in a letter dd. May 6, 1982.

My third source is the most sensational. The *Toronto Star* of May 15 carried an article in its Religion section entitled *Bill called threat to religious freedom. Critics say courts could destroy any church*. Such a heading makes a freedom-loving Christian lend an attentive eye, especially when the article starts off with the sentence: "Critics of a new law now before Parliament, Bill C-10, say it is the greatest threat to religious freedom since the infamous Spanish Inquisition." Canadians of Dutch extraction know precisely what the Spanish Inquisition did to their Reformed forbears. An eighty-year-war was needed for The Netherlands to obtain the freedom to serve God according to His Word. Would such liberty now become impossible in such a free country as Canada in this twentieth century?

One could try to allay such fears. In Ottawa, a spokesman in the minister's office hinted C-10 is aimed at "religious fly-by-nighters, especially from the U.S." and said that in any case it is not likely to pass into law this year. Critics of the bill, however, contend that if the new law is aimed partly at trying to control religious cults or groups accused of brainwashing, "kidnapping," or using young people as "slaves," there is plenty of law in the criminal

code already to deal with the problem. As far as the pace is concerned, the critics are afraid that it could move toward third and final reading with sudden speed.

One could remark that if Reformed Churches are incorporated, they are incorporated under *provincial* laws and that, therefore, a *federal* act respecting non-profit corporations will not involve them directly. Rev. Van Eek, however, rightly remarks that there is the tendency to conform provincial legislation to federal in human rights related statutes. He is therefore of the opinion that we should address ourselves to the federal government immediately.

I would like to add two observations: in the first place, that voluntary contributions to churches are federally tax deductible and in this respect churches are equated with charitable organizations that are non-profit corporations. Our readers will understand that monetary considerations are not the most important when we deal with the public status of our Canadian Reformed Churches. I am convinced that our church members would rather sacrifice their tax deduction than the freedom of their churches. They do not sell their birthright for a single meal, and they abhor the thirty pieces of silver for which their Lord and Saviour was betrayed. By the grace of God our Reformed Churches have shown what the principles mean to them compared to the price of e.g. Christian education in elementary and secondary schools. That price is gladly paid for principle's sake. But this disposition of willingness to sacrifice does not exclude that we may indicate unfairness — also in educational costs added to our school taxes — and call it what it is: injustice. And this willingness does not stand over against alertness to try to prevent further injustice. Therefore an act respecting non-profit corporations should have the attention of our churches and their members; we should be aware of possible ramifications.

A second observation is that in the Western world secularism has made such progress that in the name of toleration true Christians are being oppressed. There is discrimination against those who desire to live in holiness according to the Word of God. Our readers may recollect what has been written lately about a law in The Netherlands against discrimination: it would be impossible for a Christian school to remove a teacher who lives in common-law or practices homosexuality. The strange situation is that, in the old country, emasculated so-called Calvinists — even theologians at the Free University in Amsterdam and at the Theological Seminary of the synodical Reformed Churches in Kampen — applaud such laws of non-discrimination in the name of solidarity and humanism. A horizontalist Christianity has lost its taste; how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trodden under foot by men (Matt. 5:13). If the children of the kingdom are the salt of the earth, they must react when the antithesis between the

children of light and the children of darkness may not be proclaimed and maintained any longer in whatever country of this world.

But let us become specific and scan what we hear about Bill C-10 now before the Canadian parliament. Clause 116 states that a member of a corporation who claims to be aggrieved because he was disciplined or because his membership interest in the corporation was terminated may apply to a court under Section 214.

If we turn to Section 214, we read that a court may make an order to rectify an act or activity of a corporation. In what case? Well, if such an act or activity *“is oppressive or unfairly prejudicial to or . . . unfairly disregards the interests of any member . . . or, if the corporation is a charitable corporation, the public generally.”*

The Hon. Walter Baker illustrates how these clauses could affect the churches. If the membership of a church member or minister was revoked as a result of committing an immoral act contrary to church constitution, that individual could appeal to a court of law to rule on that disciplinary procedure.

Under clause 214, if the court felt that the offence was not contrary to the laws of the country — homosexuality and adultery are both legal in Canada — the court could order the church to reinstate the member or minister. The court would further order the church to change its constitution in accordance with the court ruling.

For the word “constitution,” our readers will have filled in our church order, or, more broadly, the standards of the Reformed confessions in accordance with Holy Scripture itself.

The Rev. A.G. Van Eek wrote the following evaluation of Section 214 of Bill C-10 to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs:

The affect loaded adjectives and adverbs appear to be informed of public opinion widely held. We submit, sir, that a church or any voluntary association should have the right voluntarily and mutually to adopt standards that may be more restrictive or specific Will the church’s autonomy, standards, and process be honoured by the Act if C-10 becomes law?

This question is to the point. The Minister wrote to Don Blenkarn, the Progressive Conservative Spokesperson for Corporate Affairs, about the possibility that a court overrides a decision rendered by a particular corporation, e.g. a church. If a federal non-profit church decides to discipline one of its members the decision “may be overruled by the court if rules of natural justice were not followed. On this point, any inequity done to a Canadian, whether by a corporation or not, must be subject to judicial scrutiny” The Minister added that our judicial system is the proper means to ensure equity and fairness among all Canadians and should not be viewed as a means of destabilization but rather of stabilization.

When I read these ministerial words, I thought of our intricate and cautious system of church discipline. Or rather, I thought of Moses and of Him of whom Moses wrote, Christ Jesus. There are rules in Moses’ law — e.g. the rule of the testimony of two witnesses — that are basic for Reformed Church discipline. A minister of the Word cannot be suspended from his office by judgment of his consistory alone; a neighbouring church has to give “a preceding sentence.” Whether ministers shall be entirely deposed from office, shall be subject to the judgment of the

Classis, with advice of Deputies of the Regional Synod. And does the rule of our highest Prophet in Matthew 18 not guarantee “equity and fairness” far better than the so-called “rules of natural justice”? Reformed churches do not have to be ashamed of their three “stages” or “steps” in ecclesiastical discipline of church members. Think of the three admonitions of Art. 77 of the Church Order, or think of the famous and typically Reformed rule of Art. 31: If anyone complains that he has been wronged by the decision of the minor assembly, he shall have the right to appeal to a major ecclesiastical assembly . . . , etc.

But will Bill C-10 put in jeopardy the church’s right to determine her own due process and give the individual the right to appeal to a Canadian court? Who determines the so-called “rules of natural justice”? Are they only “formal,” or also “material”? Will the Canadian society or the vocal left wing in it determine that the practice of homosexuality or adultery is not against the rules of natural justice? Will the Church of Christ in Canada no longer have the right to be salt in a corrupt society? I may remind our readers of the trial that an Orthodox Presbyterian Church on the West coast of the U.S. had to undergo when it fired an organist who was practising homosexual. Will we have similar trials in Canada, and will they now already be decided by Bill C-10 in favour of public immorality?

The letter of Rev. Van Eek deals further with property settlement. As far as Reformed Churches are concerned, the body of the local corporation owns the property. (I would that the Dutch synodical sister churches of the Christian Reformed Church had spoken in this manner.) Now the Rev. Van Eek writes: “We object to church members even taking fellow church members or fellow Christians to a secular court for adjudication of a grievance.” One could discuss the exegesis and application of I Corinthians 6 and ask whether this statement of Rev. Van Eek is not too general. But I certainly remember the court cases that the synodical churches inflicted upon consistories and congregations that rejected the doctrinal and church-political decisions of the synods of 1942 and 1943. I myself was even a victim of the court case that the small minority of the student body in Kampen brought in against the majority. Therefore it is with appreciation that I now read the Rev. Van Eek’s statement that the body of the local corporation owns the property. But this point is now at stake. I quote him again:

If a member leaves to take up domicile elsewhere or is disciplined, there is no financial settlement made. All contributions that have been made to the church are deemed to have been gifts given without accruing any benefit based on that gift. Does section 111b and 113 cover this?

These questions could be multiplied, e.g. with the question: Who may take the initiative for a proposal to change the corporation? Who has the right to initiate new by-laws? Is the position of a Reformed consistory as delineated in the so-called Church Order of Dordt safeguarded? And what about the exclusive right of general synods to change the church order, the common accord of our confederation of churches?

There is reason enough to write to the Hon. Andre Ouellet, Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, Ottawa, or to the Hon. Walter Baker, or to your own MP, and to express your concern. Churches and religious organizations should be removed from Bill C-10.

J. FABER

FREEDOM IN EAST AND IN WEST

In the May 6th *Nederlands Dagblad* there was an article about the situation in Vietnam. A meeting was held in The Netherlands of Vietnamese exiles. There are about six thousand of them there. They came together to remember the fall of South Vietnam on April 30, 1975. One of the exiles had a speech, and parts of it were published in the article. From that I take over what follows here. The man said:

Formerly an officer in the army of South Vietnam, I have been in a communist camp for re-education for almost seven years. At the end of 1981 I was released, but I was forced to work in the agricultural sector (which meant that I went from one prison into the other). I immediately hid in Saigon, and a few days later I went on a little boat together with some friends. Without food we fled In March 1982 I arrived in The Netherlands.

During that period of re-education, I was in a total of six different camps, the last years in camp Song Cai. In this camp there are approximately 1000 prisoners. They belong to several categories of the society, such as:

- 200 prisoners who were released but later arrested again;
- 100 religious prisoners, among them ministers and Roman Catholic priests, Buddhist monks, and others; they are accused of having spread imperialistic reactionary religious literature;
- 100 resisters; they are the intellectual young men, students, belonging to those who did not want to cooperate with the communist government. Most of them never appeared in court, but were "punished" immediately with a sentence of 20 years or for life.
- 100 men (approximately) who belonged to the old non-communist government of South Vietnam. I belong to that category.
- 500 are criminals: smugglers, gamblers, prostitutes, people accused of stealing, or people without a house

In camp Song Cai we had to work hard, from early morning till late at night, without one day of rest. Productivity had to be increased for the sake of the so-called "socialistic labour system." The daily portion of food was very little: 500 grams of a kind of dried root (the tapioca) with salt for those who worked the hardest. Those who did less received only 400 or 300

grams. People who achieved less or had many sick days got only some thin rice soup.

Through the lasting hunger we tried to catch frogs, crickets, worms, locusts, and so on, to fill our stomachs a little bit. Our slogan was: "All that moves and lives one can eat." Through the lasting hunger the communists deprived us of all dignity; they made us vile and mean. We lost all our feelings and became totally thoughtless. It is the intention of the communists to break you completely.

The worst thing is, indeed, that people were spiritually broken. Many of us suffered the loss of memory or became totally insane. We were constantly threatened. If we would refuse to work, or would not strictly follow the camp regulations, or would think of resistance, we would not receive visitors anymore. These people then were led away or chained, after which followed a silent death. However, they did not want to murder us right away; we had to die a slow death through physical tortures and spiritual weakening as the consequence of collapsing.

Life in communist camps can hardly be called human anymore. It is an animal life, or even worse. Animals do not have human feelings and perception. They do not understand what honour, grief, and shame are. The brainwashing, oppression, and compulsion are inhuman and immoral actions which the communist regime applies every day. The communists consider people of less value than animals: "A pig is of greater value than you are, because from a pig we get meat when it is dead, but you we have to bury yet." The penitentiary prisons of this bad regime are beyond description, so degrading, so inhuman they are.

When I left this camp (Song Cai), 200 more people were chosen who were considered to be physically and mentally strong enough to work in Danang. They had to fill out a form declaring that they would go voluntarily, that they would obey in everything and would observe all the communist orders. They were promised that they would get better food and would soon regain their freedom. But it was a terrible deception, because later they were sent to the East-Block countries, among others to Siberia.

That is freedom. It is the freedom for which so many in Europe and America have cried when the Vietna-

mese war was still being fought. It was considered awful that under the regime of Nguyen Van Thieu about 40,000 political prisoners (of course mostly communist agitators and subversive elements) were put in camps. "Freedom" had to be given to the oppressed peoples in Vietnam. Now there are about 800,000, twenty times as many. And their condition seems to be quite a bit worse. But now the world is silent. For Vietnam is "freed." And in Europe and in America people say: rather Red than dead. Do they realize that being Red can quite well mean: some day being dead as well, after much misery?

There is a terrible blindness, political blindness as well, in the so-called free world. The religious anti-Christian power in communism is not seen. That is no wonder when the Bible is a closed book and humanistic thinking has taken over, when God and God's commandments are only some old-fashioned ideas from former times. When a person is spiritually blind, he also becomes politically blind in so many respects. In Romans 1, as well as in II Thess. 2, we read about the wrath of God who surrenders an apostate and rebellious mankind to their own humanistic, destructive conceptions.

In this light one can only appreciate the fact that the British government resists the injustice of Argentina's revolutionary actions. If the West continues to give in and accept things like that, they will soon come to nothing through chaos.

South Africa is being condemned more and more; voices are getting stronger in the West that England should not risk lives; other countries in the West are no longer much in favour of an economic boycott of Argentina. Justice must be done, people cry. Justice in the West. Communist justice.

We may be very thankful, every day, that we do not live under a communist regime, but in a free country. But how long will that still be? Also in our Western world, as I said, people are more and more blinded, because they refuse to listen to God and His wise laws. They refuse to fear Him. They adore their idol: MAN. The result is that prayer is banned from public schools, to mention only this besides what follows. I read this in *Liberty*, "a magazine of religious freedom" coming from Seventh Day Adventist circles, the March/April issue of this year:

In 1980, Mayor Tom Bradley, of Los Angeles, stated that "a Bible study would

not be a permissible use in a single family residential area . . . , since this would be considered a church activity." In a town near Boston the building commissioner notified a clergyman that inviting more than four people to his home for a Bible study was a violation of the Home Occupation ordinance. In Atlanta, a zoning official stated that any kind of regular home Bible study that includes nonresidents is illegal without a special-use permit. Homeowners in Los Angeles were warned that even when one nonresident entered their home for a religious service, a cease-and-desist order could issue. Two Maryland residents were issued a citation for using their home for worship services without a use-and-occupancy permit. In Canton, Michigan, a local pastor was told by a zoning official that any regular Bible study in a home was a violation of the zoning ordinance, and the code for Canton makes no provision for a special-use permit.

All the above incidents have taken place in the past two years . . .

When God surrenders a lawless nation to its own lawlessness, life will be hard for those who want to abide by God's laws. How long can we still be thankful that we live in the "free" West?

It is not so much better in Canada. Some action seems to be going on against Bill C-10, introduced into the House of Commons on Thursday, December 17, 1981. Several of our Churches, and maybe also others, have received a letter from the Honourable (honourable, indeed!) Mr. Walter Baker, Member of Parliament for the Nepean-Carleton constituency in Ontario. He writes that his concern is "that this bill may dramatically affect the churches' right to speak out on moral issues in our country. I may quote from this letter here, because it is of general interest, and we should all make it our concern and react on it in letters to him, to the minister involved and our own MPs. He refers to Clauses 116, 214, and 215, and writes:

Allow me to illustrate how these clauses could affect the church. If the membership of a church member or minister was revoked as a result of committing an immoral act contrary to church constitution, that individual could appeal to a court of law to rule on that disciplinary procedure.

Under clause 214, if the court felt that the offence was not contrary to the laws of the country — homosexuality and adultery are both legal in Canada — the court could order the church to reinstate the member or minister. The court could further order the church to change its constitution in accordance with the court ruling.

Under clause 215 the court is not ob-

ligated to pay any attention to the fact that the entire church membership would support the discipline of this member.

Even though some Members of Parliament did protest, the Minister of Consumer Affairs, the Honourable Andre Ouellet, considered the concerns invalid and did not want to amend the bill. Mr. Baker urges the churches, that is also the members individually:

If you are prepared to help me in this, I would ask you that you write to me at the house of Commons (postage free) expressing your concern and tell others who may also be concerned about it to do the same.

I cannot emphasize enough that immediate action is necessary as Bill C-10 has already begun its journey through Parliament. I believe that serious consideration should be given to removing churches and religious organizations from this legislation and dealing with them under a separate bill.

The address of Mr. Baker is: Parliament Hill, Room 105-A, House of Commons, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6. Phone 992-4394.

This Canadian Bill is in line with a bill in The Netherlands which has stirred up the emotions and also shown the moral stand of many. In the March 9, 1982 R.E.S. (Reformed Ecumenical Synod) *News Exchange* we read:

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION BILL UNDER ATTACK

(Amsterdam) The "Bill guaranteeing equal treatment" recently introduced by the Dutch government is meeting with strong but mixed reactions from churches and confessionally oriented groups. If it becomes law, the bill would forbid discriminatory treatment, particularly in the area of sexual preference and marital lifestyle. An exemption from the law would be allowed for activities which are based on a religious confession or life view, such as worship services and certain religious institutions. However, Christian organizations and institutions, such as service organizations, are not included among the exceptions and would have to comply.

The Council of Protestant Christian Education has declared that school boards should have the right to exclude from employment homosexuals and unmarried people living together. The Association for Christian Schools (Unie "School en Evangelie") issued a statement against any discrimination on the basis of sex, homosexuality, or extra-marital cohabitation, but the chairman of the Association, Drs. K. de Jong, took an opposite position. It did recognize, however, that in extreme cases school boards may exclude homosexuals and cohabiting married [unmarried? J.G.] people.

The agitation which the bill has caused is not limited to the schools but has spilled over into the churches. Deputies of the "Liberated" Reformed Churches in The Netherlands have criticized the bill because the proposed law would publicly brand the churches as communities within which the evil of discrimination must be allowed. The Central Office for Catholic Education is of the opinion that the law attacks the evil of societal discrimination too "absolutistically."

Spokesmen for the Evangelical Alliance spoke out sharply against the proposed law . . . The moderamen of the GKN [synodical Reformed Churches, J.G.] asked the government to extend the time in which responses may be submitted. It also asked the Churches' Commission for contact with the government to study the bill. Dr. A. Kuiper, General Secretary of the NHK [Hervormde Kerk, J.G.], and the Rev. A.C. Hofland, President of the General Synod of the GKN, both made a personal statement that they oppose the exclusion of homosexuals from Christian education . . .

After the opinion of Prof. Dr. K. Runia is given who stated that he is "sympathetic to its intent, he contends that in its present form the law goes too far . . . The majority may not impose its views on the minority." Then, in

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ADDRESS FOR EDITORIAL MATTERS:

CLARION
P.O. Box 54,
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A QUESTION AND SOME ADVICE

The Church at Hamilton had the desire to send out a missionary. After much deliberation and investigation Brazil was chosen as the country where such a missionary will work.

Choosing a country, a field is not easy. Many factors have to be considered, too many to be mentioned here.

Choosing — and getting — a missionary may prove to be even more difficult than choosing a country.

Hamilton, too, experienced this difficulty.

Apparently, they could not find a minister willing seriously to consider a call, except one who, however, declined.

Then they turned their attention to candidates.

Generally speaking, it is not wise to call a candidate for this work.

It is much better and wiser to call one who has been in the ministry for five or ten years. Let all candidates first acquaint themselves thoroughly with Church life and the manner in which matters are conducted in the Church before they set out to go to faraway areas, there to bring the Gospel and — if and when the Lord blesses the work so that rich fruit is received — to organize Churchlife there and to teach the fledgling Consistory in what manner all things are to be done “decently and in good order.”

When one receives a degree from the College, which degree gives access to the ecclesiastical examinations, one is standing only at the *beginning* of the road and certainly does not know everything that is to be known for guiding the affairs of the Church in the proper and most beneficial manner.

Going by my own experience, I am deeply grateful to the Lord for the wise and experienced elders who helped me in a truly Christian manner and for the older and experienced colleagues who were never too busy to receive me and to show me the proper way.

How lost I would have been if there had not been such brethren who were instrumental in providing that knowledge and insight which cannot be learned from books or lectures. We can teach and learn the fundamentals at our institution for higher learning, but *true* wisdom is developed only when we stand in the midst of life.

When this is already so, how much more is prior experience in the midst of a Congregation needed when one is sent out to a place where he has to work all by himself, without the possibility of regular contact with colleagues who have more experience.

In the past it was sometimes said that if someone was not good enough to serve in a Congregation, he always could go into the mission. Fortunately, this was not general practice and excellent men served in the mission field. We should rather put it this way: If someone is not good enough to serve in a Congregation, he definitely is not good enough to serve as a missionary.

It would be good if no one were called to serve as a missionary without having served as a minister of the Gospel for at least five or ten years.

However, Hamilton apparently was compelled to turn its attention to a candidate. And: as there is no candidate available in our own midst, they inquired in The Netherlands. Here the difficulties mounted.

A candidate, declared eligible for call in foreign sister Churches may not be called by any of the Churches here.

Yet the Consistory of Hamilton desires to have a missionary in the field.

How to go about it?

When a brother in The Netherlands was known to be willing to consider a call for the work of mission, Hamilton collected information and desired to call him.

Though the Consistory at Hamilton was unanimous in desiring to present his name to the Congregation in Hamilton, yet it felt unable to do so because the Canadian Reformed Churches have not as yet made a ruling to accept candidates from sister Churches abroad, with whom we maintain church correspondence, as eligible for call here. We deplore this fact, but must abide by it. Therefore the Consistory invited Mr. D. and his wife to come to Canada so he could be examined and, the Lord willing, be declared eligible for call within our churches too.

That was the proper procedure.

The brother involved was afraid that it might cost hundreds of dollars without any certainty that, once he was declared eligible and was called, he would indeed accept that call. Thus he requested to send him all available information so that, if he came to the conclusion that the Lord pointed him to Brazil via Hamilton, he could come for the examination and be declared eligible for call here.

Again: that was the proper attitude and I am thankful for this.

Would everything had remained like that!

* * *

Our General Synod of Edmonton 1965 received some proposals to draw up the General Ecclesiastical Regulations of which Article 5 of our Church Order speaks. There we have provided that the calling of ministers shall be done “with due observance . . . of the general ecclesiastical regulations for the eligibility of those who have served outside the Canadian Reformed Churches.”

I shall not elaborate on the background of at least one proposal for such general ecclesiastical regulations. May it suffice to mention that a Church had extended a call to a minister belonging to a Church with which the Canadian Reformed Churches did not maintain Church correspondence. Then the lack of such general ecclesiastical regulations was felt, which resulted in a proposal to General Synod 1965.

What did that Synod decide about the eligibility for call of ministers of foreign sister Churches?

Article 39 of the Acts, under point B, states

Regarding those who are serving or did serve in

churches with which the Canadian Reformed Churches do have correspondence:

1. They may be called without beforehand having been declared eligible for call in the Churches;
2. They may be admitted into the service in one of the Churches if
 - a. they present to the Classis to which the call is submitted for approbation
 1. proof of their having been called to the ministry;
 2. proof that they have been called by one of the Churches;
 3. a declaration that they have accepted this call;
 4. a testimony concerning their confession and conduct;
 5. a declaration that they have been orderly released from their former charge;
 - b. they submit to a *colloquium doctum* which will deal specifically with the Reformed doctrine and Church government.

Synod Orangeville 1968, Acts Art. 109, decided to delete the word "*doctum*."

It is enlightening to quote a little part of Orangeville's considerations. It was argued that by requiring that ministers from sister churches abroad should submit to a *colloquium* the Synod of 1965 had added another rule to the rules for correspondence.

In the rules for correspondence the Churches have agreed "to accept each other's attestations and to admit each other's ministers to conduct Church services, to preach the Word, and to administer the sacraments."

What did Synod 1968 consider?

With respect to the acceptance of each other's attestations it is to be remarked that the admittance of a minister from foreign churches into the ministry of the Canadian Reformed Churches is entirely different from accepting members of foreign churches into the community of the Church on the basis of an attestation.

The Canadian Reformed Churches do not have, nor have they ever had, any control over the training of ministers in foreign churches or over their admission into the ministry of those churches. Therefore Synod 1965 does not question attestations from foreign churches on the basis of which their members are received into the Community of the Canadian Reformed Churches. It merely established a means for the Churches to ascertain prior to admittance of a minister from foreign churches to the ministry of the Canadian Reformed Churches whether he adheres to the reformed doctrine and Church polity.

* * *

At the Classis Ontario South of March 10, 1982, Hamilton "requests advice concerning the calling for the ministry of a person declared eligible for call in the sister churches in The Netherlands.

It is not clear at all why Hamilton came with this request. They knew very well what the correct procedure is and followed it even themselves. What did they need advice for? Someone asks advice when he does *not* know which course to follow, doesn't he? Or was there a slight hope that this Classis could find a way around the general ecclesiastical regulations? If the latter was the case, the hope was not put to shame. Sorry that I have to dash it again. Classis' reply seems to be the ruby of wisdom but, upon examination, is no more than a painted lump of clay.

Let me first quote the decision. It can be found on page 125 of the present volume of *Clarion*.

Classis advises Hamilton that it cannot object to calling a candidate who is declared eligible for call in the sister Churches with which we have full correspondence.

Grounds:

1. Synod Edmonton 1967 and the rules for correspondence do not forbid it.
2. A previous classis, by its example, has already made a decision in principle that such candidates are eligible for call within the Canadian Reformed Churches.
3. When a Church is convinced that they must call a certain candidate, it should be done in the proper way so that the Consistory and the Congregation can earnestly pray for such a brother who must make a decision.
4. A candidate who accepts a call in the Canadian Reformed Churches must still undergo a preemptory examination and is therefore examined by the federation of Churches before he is admitted to office.

We shall bypass the fact that Synod Edmonton was held in 1965 instead of 1967, although that is not the only mistake which this Classis made.

Let us examine the grounds.

"1. Synod Edmonton 1967 [1965] and the rules for correspondence do not forbid it." Marvellous reasoning, but totally crooked.

Want a few more examples of the same fare?

"Nowhere in the Church Order or Synodical decisions is it forbidden to call women to any office in the Church. So: no one can object if a Church ordains female elders."

"Synod Smithville 1980 decided "to refrain from recommending that the practice of women voting be introduced in the Churches." Synod decided not to recommend it but did not forbid it either. Conclusion: we are perfectly free to do so."

We could multiply the examples.

Synod 1965 drew up general ecclesiastical regulations for the eligibility of those who do not belong to the Canadian Reformed Churches. Only ministers are mentioned.

The proper conclusion is *not*: Those who are not mentioned are *also* eligible; but: *only* those who are mentioned are eligible.

Candidates never entered the picture, not because they were unfortunately forgotten and overlooked, but because they were never considered eligible.

I am only beginning to become acquainted with the large quantity of material connected with Church Polity, and therefore will be indebted to anyone who could show me proof that the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands especially after 1892 have *ever* adopted a rule for or approved of the calling of a candidate from corresponding Churches without this candidate having been declared eligible for call beforehand within the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands. I have never seen any evidence of it; which does not necessarily mean that there is none, but I have to see it before I believe that it does exist.

Synod Edmonton 1965 drew up general ecclesiastical regulations.

It stated: those are eligible who meet the following conditions . . .

Who can conclude in faithfulness to the decisions of the broadest assemblies that there are, therefore, also others who are eligible who are not mentioned in the

decisions?

And if candidates, why not also admit students who are allowed to speak an edifying word in foreign sister-Churches?

With the reasoning of this Classis one can prove anything.

* * *

"2. A previous classis, by its example, has already made a decision in principle that such candidates are eligible for call within the Canadian Reformed Churches."

Yes, I know that "in innocence" calls were extended to candidates.

I know that a previous Classis Ontario South gave an "example," and I am allowed to criticize that because at the time I registered my protest most clearly with the Churches of Ontario South. I do not wish to go into particulars, but now that classis of March 10, 1982 raised the point I ask, "DID we not pay our tuition fee?" (Hebben we geen leergeld gegeven?) as it is said in Dutch. Should that classical decision not impress the more upon our hearts the need for extreme caution and should we not, instead of trying to get around general ecclesiastical regulations or trying to have them changed, observe them faithfully and be thankful for the caution and restraint shown by Synod Edmonton 1965?

What disturbs me more, however, is the reasoning itself.

Since when is it Reformed Church polity that a minor assembly (a classis) has the right to make "decisions in principle" which conflict with properly adopted general ecclesiastical regulations? And since when is it Reformed Church polity that a following Classis has the right to quote such a decision as ground for its advice to a Church to act contrary to such properly adopted general ecclesiastical regulations?

This Classis acted as if it was one of the broadest assemblies of the Churches.

Here, nilly willy, the danger of independentism peeks around the corner.

Brrr!

* * *

"3. When a Church is convinced that they must call a certain candidate, it should be done in the proper way so that the Consistory and the Congregation can earnestly pray for such a brother who must make a decision."

Very pious reasoning, very pious and correct.

However, this very ground condemns the whole classical advice and its first two grounds. When everything is done in the *proper* way, both Consistory and Congregation can "earnestly pray." However, then a Classis should not suggest an improper way so as to prevent such earnest prayer.

"4. A candidate who accepts a call in the Canadian Reformed Churches must still undergo a peremptory examination and is therefore examined by the federation of Churches before he is admitted to office."

Totally irrelevant.

Here, again, Classis reasoned as if it were the broadest assembly.

However: the point is: Is a candidate *eligible for call*? The argument that a candidate has to pass a peremptory examination does not say anything about his eligibility. And that is the point in question.

* * *

Suggestions were made to have one of our following Synods change the general ecclesiastical regulations in such a way that candidates are included.

For several reasons this should never be done.

One of the consequences of emigration is that one leaves the Church federation to which one belongs and, when joining the Church in another country, enters into a completely independent federation.

This certainly does not mean that the unity of faith no longer exists. It not only remains unbroken, it also is to be shown. We do show it in the manner as agreed upon in the rules for correspondence. One of these rules is that mutually ministers are allowed to conduct services as a Minister of the Word. That is all.

If one wishes to act as if we still form one federation, one has not accepted the consequences of his emigration from the one country and his immigration into the other country, and he had better return.

As stated before, as far as I know it would be a completely new phenomenon if the Canadian Reformed Churches should decide to include candidates. The question is justified whether this would be proof of wisdom. Should we not rather let ourselves be guided by the wisdom of our forefathers who did not include them and certainly did so on purpose?

I fully trust our Netherlands sister Churches and the brethren who teach at the Theologische Hogeschool of these Churches. However, has not history taught us that purity of doctrine is *not necessarily* preserved for many, many years either in the Netherlands or in Canada or anywhere in the world? I hope not that this purity will ever be abandoned either here or in Kampen, and I wish to state that I see no signs which make me fear that such will be the case. Yet the possibilities are there. What was left of the Reformed character of the Free University one hundred years after its founding? Have we not warned the Christian Reformed Church that — not for the smaller part — aberrations entered into its bosom via that institution and have we not urged it to close that tap?

Repeat: I fear no danger at present or in the foreseeable future but once a door has been made there where none existed before, it will be extremely difficult to close it once a danger has been diagnosed. Who knows how much infection has slipped in before it is even noticed that something is wrong?

And then: What is known of a candidate?

When one has been a minister for some years information can be gathered about all the aspects of his work. The congregation will provide all the particulars needed. Even so trouble may be brewing. Have we not experienced this, too? I only have to remind you of the many difficulties which were experienced by the Winnipeg Church. The Acts of the Synod of Edmonton 1965 gives ample proof of it.

But what is known of a candidate in foreign sister Churches?

Enquirers can go by information given by friends and acquaintances, by fellow-students and by teachers, but is that not too shallow and small a basis to build on from such a distance? Churches in the same country can ask a candidate to come and conduct services, meet with him, discuss various things with him, learn his views on all sorts of matters, have him come back even. Foreign Churches cannot do any such thing for practical reasons. Once a candidate has been called, a visit to the calling Church will certainly not result in a cancellation of the call; and if he accepts, that's it: a bond for life.

The more I think about it, the more I say, "Include candidates? No!"

The future of the Churches is served better by not introducing this novelty.

VO

“... for they shall soon come in.” Ezek. 36:8b (trans. Cooke, ICC)

Halfway There

Tucked away in the prophecies of Ezekiel we find this brief word concerning the imminent return of the LORD's people to their homeland, a return that was to be coupled with many joys and blessings. Literally the text says, “They are nearing to come . . .,” and refers to a time of peace, prosperity and well-being for the children of Israel on their own land. The prophet is called to address the mountains of Israel, announcing the time of blessing and peace to them as well. The whole landscape will share in the hour of the LORD's salvation.

When was the time of this great homecoming? Ezekiel uses visionary, apocalyptic language in describing the hour of the return. Sorrow and bereavement will disappear, vv. 12-14, God's holiness will be vindicated, v. 23, a new spirit will be poured out on the LORD's people, v. 26, famine and disgrace will disappear, v. 30, and the cities will flourish, v. 38. All in all, a picture of complete restoration and well-being. Since this situation never actually arose in Israel's history after the exile, some interpreters maintain that these events are still to happen. The great homecoming is yet to come. So, too, many still focus on the present land of Israel, and wait for a fulfillment of the prophesy in the Middle East. In fact, the eyes of all the world are on the Middle East today. And the questions of Biblical prophesy are only accentuated with the ongoing turmoil there.

However, looking for strictly literal and future fulfillments is not a correct way of reading the Bible. Ezekiel's prophesy must be read in the context of the situation and in the context of his time. Using words and expressions that the people could understand, Ezekiel proclaims the dawn of a new age, an age of salvation, peace, prosperity, and well-being. We may indeed see an initial fulfillment of the prophesy in the return of the people of Israel from the exile. The LORD did bring them back to their land. However, the prophesy does not end there. It continued to apply after the exile, and still applies today. The prophesy still unfolds for God's people.

What time may we then look to as the time of return and restoration for God's people? The return from the exile certainly does not exhaust this prophesy. The real time of return and restoration comes with the work of Jesus Christ. His death on the cross takes the reproach away from God's people. He ushers in reconciliation and peace with God. With His redemptive work, God returns to the land, and brings His people home. In Him, God returns to His people, and dwells among them.

So we may say that the time of homecoming,

and the time when peace and prosperity lives among God's people, is the time of Pentecost, the time of the outpouring of the Spirit of the LORD upon all flesh. It is the coming of a new Spirit, placed within our hearts, that brings life, healing, and prosperity to the land. v. 26. The great return to the land is not simply something to look forward to; it *has happened*, and therefore is something to be remembered and celebrated. The great reconciliation of the world, lands and peoples, comes in Jesus Christ. He pours out His Spirit upon His Church. He has brought us home, gathered us around Him, by His Word and Spirit.

Therefore, we rejoice in the fulfillment of this prophesy first of all. God has brought us back and given us the firstfruits of the Spirit. Through the power of the outpoured Spirit, we may hear the Word of the LORD, believe, and learn day by day to walk in His ordinances — ordinances which also bring life and healing to all our relationships. The great return *has come*; we are more than halfway there.

Actually, only one thing still remains to be completed. Our hearts and lives have been changed, but the effect of the curse upon sin is still there. The *land* still lies under the curse; our *bodies* long for redemption. But with the firstfruits already here, this final chapter is only a moment away. The mountains have been addressed. And, as Paul says, “The creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God,” Rom. 8:19. Because of Pentecost, the Church shares in the firstfruits of the eternal Sabbath; therefore, we may be all the more assured that the fulfillment is coming.

And don't the signs point to it all the more? Today the mountains do not listen anymore. They have heard, and now speak. They groan, erupt, and testify to God's almighty power. They groan in travail, knowing that the great homecoming is approaching its last phase, Rom. 8:22. Indeed, with the Spirit poured out, they groan all the more. A Spirit of longing cries out in all the upheavals of the cosmos — a longing for the day of full redemption.

Therefore we rest assured that the day is coming. As the mountains speak in hope, our hearts, too, may be filled with longing — the eager expectation of those who await the glorious revelation of *full* renewal. The LORD has brought us home. He has turned us to Him, and so brought us together. We may be halfway there. Let us then let His Spirit rule and govern all our actions every day — until we are all the way home.

J. DE JONG

FREEDOM — *Cont'd.*

the last paragraph, we read:

In contrast to Runia, the council of the Theological School in Kampen (where Runia teaches) and the council of the Theological Faculty of the Free University in Amsterdam have protested the idea that Christian schools may use "the freedom of education to bar homosexuals and cohabiting unmarried couples from a place in Christian education." Freedom of education is too precious a possession to be used for this kind of discrimination. Runia's Kampen colleague, Dr. J.C. de Moor,

has disassociated himself from this declaration of the school on the point of cohabiting unmarried couples and has resigned as chairman of the Board.

And so we see that unmarried cohabiting and homosexual practices are legal also in The Netherlands, and that many Christians consider this correct. In The Netherlands churches would be allowed to discriminate. In Canada the judge could declare that discipline and excommunication of sinners who harden themselves in

such and other sins has to be annulled and rescinded, if Bill C-10 becomes law.

And what does the holy God think of all this? Justice exalts a nation. But unrighteousness brings a nation to ruin. This justice is not modern, humanistic justice. This justice is: obeying what He says.

The world we live in is being given over to its own perverse, wicked thinking. God's wrath is revealed. Read Romans 1:18 to the end.

J. GEERTSEMA

In Defence of Freedom to Serve the Lord

In some bulletins I saw a reprint of a letter which was sent by the Hon. Mr. Walter Baker who is the Progressive Conservative House Leader, if I am not mistaken. He brought to the attention of the Church at Ottawa a bill which was introduced by the Federal Government on Thursday, December 17, 1981. Meanwhile, Mr. Baker sent the same letter with appendices to the Church in Fergus and the one in Orangeville as well. Perhaps all Churches received it. From his letter and from the appendices which he enclosed we learn of his great concern caused by this bill (House of Commons Bill C-10).

He is not the only one to express grave concern. The Hon. Mr. Albert Cooper, MP for Peace River, gave an extensive critique of the bill in the House of Commons on December 17, 1981. And Tom Harpur, former professor of New Testament at Wycliffe College and at present Religion Editor of *The Toronto Star*, wrote an article in the issue of May 15, 1982, under the title "Bill called threat to religious freedom. Critics say courts could destroy any church."

After having taken note of the above documents, I phoned the office of our MP, the Hon. Mr. Perrin Beatty, asking whether there was any provision which would prevent me from printing the various provisions and some of the criticism brought in against the bill. I was assured that I could do so freely as long as I give full credit to the sources from which I draw my material.

The sources from which I draw are the letter which Mr. Baker sent, the Hansard report of the speech of Mr.

Cooper on December 17, 1981, and some clauses from Bill C-10 which were added to his letter by Mr. Baker.

In his letter, Mr. Baker states that his concerns with Bill C-10 relate to clauses 116, 214, and 215. The relative clauses are too long to insert here, and therefore I pass Mr. Baker's summary on.

Let us assume that a minister is suspended and deposed on the ground of homosexual practices or on the ground of adultery; or that a member is excommunicated because of hardening himself in the sin of adultery, such a member would have the right — according to the bill — to appeal to a court of law to have this court rule on that disciplinary procedure.

Under clause 214, if the court felt that the offence was not contrary to the laws of the country — homosexuality and adultery are both legal in Canada — the court could order the church to reinstate the member or the minister. The court could further order the church to change its constitution in accordance with the court ruling.

Even if the entire church membership should support the action taken, clause 215 gives the court the right to ignore such support. As the offences as such are not against the Canadian law, are no criminal offences, every one has the right to do these things and he may not be penalized in any way for doing them.

Mr. Baker requests that citizens write to him at the House of Commons (postage free), expressing their concern and telling others who may also be concerned about it to do the same.

He states, "I cannot emphasize enough that immediate action is nec-

essary as Bill C-10 has already begun its journey through Parliament. I believe that serious consideration should be given to removing churches and religious organizations from this legislation and dealing with them under a separate bill."

We may assure the Hon. Mr. Baker that we share his concern and that we are thankful to him for giving so much time to this matter and for going into the trouble of writing us about it. We are thankful that our representatives do really care and we wish to do our share to make them feel and experience that we stand behind them in these matters.

* * *

From the remarks of the Hon. Mr. Albert Cooper, as recorded in the *Hansard* the same concern becomes evident. He stated, among others, the following:

Clause 116 is one with which I have more concern about. In this clause we see a dramatic shift to another direction. I will read clause 116 because I think it is important. It says:

A member of a corporation who claims to be aggrieved because he was disciplined or because his membership interest in a corporation was terminated, may apply to a court under Section 214.

What I want to emphasize at this point is the fact that if a member was disciplined by a charitable organization — I think back to this church in my riding — and his membership was revoked for violating their particular code of law or ethics, he could dispute that in the

court. That becomes very interesting and intriguing if you think of the fact that when the member joined, he probably had an understanding of the guidelines and regulations which defined his right to be a member of the organization he was joining. Yet he can appeal to a court when he disagrees with the discipline which was handed out to him.

That small church in my riding is a fundamental church and I am sure it would have regulations which state that a member must not commit adultery or engage in fornication or, in fact, if he were to engage in any of those activities, it would be grounds for retiring that member from membership in that church. It becomes very interesting when we realize that the very things for which they could reject him from the organization as being illegal in their organization, would not be illegal under Canadian law. If this member who is disciplined were to appeal to the court, the court would find that it is not contrary to the law. Those ramifications will become very serious, as I will illustrate later.

What results from this bill is that when that member appeals and the court upholds his appeal, the court can dictate to the church that it must change its regulation to be in accordance with government regulations.

I can envisage a massive involvement by the state in the church, which may well have some very serious and dramatic effects in the future on a number of church organizations.

Thus far the remarks made by Mr. Cooper.

* * *

From these remarks it is clear where the danger lurks. Clause 214 gives the court the right to order the corporation "to regulate a corporation's affairs by amending the articles or by-laws or creating or amending a unanimous member agreement." Further the court has the right to issue "an order appointing directors in place of or in addition to all or any of the directors then in office." Another right which the bill gives to the court is to issue "an order liquidating and dissolving the corporation."

Clause 215 provides, among others,

In an application made or an action

brought or intervened in under this Part, the court may at any time order the corporation or its subsidiary to pay the complainant interim costs, including legal fees and disbursements, but the complainant may be held accountable for such interim costs upon final disposition of the application or action.

This means that if a member is excommunicated for reason of hardening himself in a sin against any of God's commandments, the court may require that a Church pay all the costs not only for the defence of its own actions but also those of the complainant, of the person who appeals to a court. If the case is dismissed, the complainant will have to pay it all back, but in the mean time the Church would have to pay it with the possibility that the complainant has nothing to pay back all of it or even part of it.

The financial danger and loss would not be the worst aspect. If we had to suffer this loss and damage, we would have to be thankful that we are allowed to suffer for the sake of the Lord.

The worst aspect is that the civil court could order the Church to change its regulations, in other words, that the civil courts could order the Church to replace the commandments of the Lord our God by human ordinances which are completely contrary to the divine ordinances.

The courts could also replace all the legitimately chosen and ordained office-bearers and appoint others in their steads, people who, of course, value human ordinances higher than the Law of our God.

Let no one think that this law does not apply to the Church. It is An Act Respecting Non-Profit Corporations. As Churches are Non-Profit Organizations, they come under this Act.

* * *

In this above mentioned article, Mr. Harpur states that, according to critics of Bill C-10, "it is the greatest threat to religious freedom since the infamous Spanish Inquisition."

He also quotes Toronto lawyer Glen How, general counsel for the 65,000 Jehovah's Witnesses of Canada. Mr. How commented, "There is no restriction as to (a judge's) discretionary power to destroy any church he may disapprove." Any Church, How said, could be dissolved (in essence declared illegal) at any time if it does any act of which the judge may disap-

prove.

That this evaluation is correct can be concluded from what I quoted above from the provisions of the Act itself.

Thus we see clearly how grateful we are to be to those who pointed out the dangers and disastrous implications of what is now under consideration. The bill has already gone through second reading and, although a spokesman for the minister said that he did not expect the bill to pass into law this year, there is always a possibility that Mr. Ouellet decides to rush it through third and final reading. Then it is too late to do anything about it, unless someone takes the road of asking the courts to declare it unconstitutional. That could take a long time and would require large sums of money. In the meantime irreparable damage could have been inflicted on the ground of this bill.

It is mandatory that we make our objections known to our Member of Parliament and to the cabinet. It should be pointed out to them that this is an impermissible infringement upon the rights of Christ's Church. In the Church the Law of God is supreme, irrespective of what the general public considers permissible or impermissible. Public opinion may change and does change; the Law of the Lord remains the same throughout the centuries and it supersedes all human ordinances. It is to that Law that we are subject above all and before all.

Oftentimes we read about persecutions in centuries past; we also read about persecutions in countries under communist domination; and we think that it is far from us, for we live in a free country.

Bill C-10, however, shows clearly that persecution may not be all that far from our doorsteps, and we had better realize this.

If at any time we should be summoned to appear in court to defend our actions in disciplining a member because he hardens himself in a sin against any of God's commandments, we shall give account of the hope that is in us. If we are told to reinstate the member we shall have to say that we ought to obey God rather than man and we are to risk fines and imprisonment for this.

Isn't that far yet.

Let it not be through our negligence when it does come that far.

Write!

vO

On May 13, brother and sister U. Kampen in Burlington were married for 55 years. That is quite a number of years. It was feared at first that brother Kampen would be taken away by the Lord before they could celebrate this anniversary, for he had to be hospitalized. However, the Lord spared his life, and there was some initial recovery. It is our sincere wish that they may be spared for one another and for their children as well as grandchildren for some more years. They are residents of the Maranatha Home in Burlington now, but lived, for as long as I knew them, in Toronto. All those who know them will rejoice with them and join in the prayers for restoration of health and continuation of life.

All the way in Calgary there is another couple whom we are to remember in our medley. They are brother and sister Van den Hoven, who, on June 17, will celebrate their 45th wedding anniversary. Ten years make quite a difference at that age, but 45 years is a memorable occasion, too. We wish to join all the others who will send them their congratulations and bring them their best wishes. When I met this couple first, they were living in Winnipeg, but have resided in Calgary now for a few years, if I am not mistaken. Anyway: may the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ add more years to your forty-five together as husband and wife.

From Calgary we travel first to the Bulkley Valley. This time we are not going to mention anything about the two congregations there, but quote what the Rev. G.H. Vischer wrote about the brothers and sisters in the Okanagan Valley. We have to keep this warm too, don't we?

"A word can also be mentioned here about our brothers and sisters assembling together in the Okanagan Valley," he writes. "At the moment there are about twenty people gathered there. There are also about six families interested in moving into the area, but they are reluctant to do so at the moment because the current economic situation makes it an inopportune time to sell their houses. However, the Okanagan members are still optimistic about the future of their group."

We may add to this a word from the Okanagan pioneers themselves. "With the holiday season coming nearer, we are attempting to arrange for the use of a church building. If last year's visitors were any indication, we definitely need something larger than one or another's home." They are looking for something which would be somewhere in the middle between Shuswap and Osoyoos. For those who are not familiar with the area it be mentioned that this "somewhere in the middle" between the two above mentioned places still would require a drive of some one hundred kilometers for both extremes; but then, what does a drive through beautiful regions hurt when one is on holidays anyway? And who would wish to sleep his holidays away? Sometimes I hear someone say, "When I am having holidays I can sleep in and lie on my back dozing the day away." I find this utterly foolish. I haven't any holidays in order to sleep them away! I want to enjoy every minute of them and for this one has to be wide awake. "Get out!" I would say, and take the drive, even though it

may take you one-and-a-half hours one way. Seeing the brethren and sisters you will be strengthened in spirit. And if you wish to sleep your holidays away, there are still six days left in that same week during which you can make up for what you miss on the Sunday.

I found the above statement from the Okanagan people in the *Church News* of the Fraser Valley. We continue with some news from the same periodical.

In the Surrey Consistory "the Deacons have a special request to choose deacons first, since only younger deacons are left after the retirement of the brethren D. and W. With their departure the experience as well as the ability to speak the Dutch language is reduced considerably." I found this a wise request and the Consistory did comply with it. The general idea that one starts off young as a deacon and then gradually moves on to the office of elder is completely wrong. I knew grey-haired men, past their retirement age already, who were a deacon every time anew. They brought an inestimable treasure of experience and knowledge with them and I am certain that the younger deacons benefited greatly from this. It is for this reason that I pass this item from Surrey's Consistory on to our readers.

Cloverdale is next. "The Committee of Administration will be asked to look into the feasibility of having a speaker system in the sanctuary." Apart from the word "sanctuary" — which, I think, should not be used in our ecclesiastical language — I am wondering whether not the brothers and sisters who are hard of hearing are the main reason for the above decision. A sound system opens the possibility of such members to have a hearing aid. As for the size of the Cloverdale building, I don't think that a sound system is needed under normal conditions. More and more our congregations proceed to install such a system, and the blessings of being able to listen in and join the others in learning the Word of God are far outweighing the cost.

The Immanuel Church in Edmonton decided to reduce the number of elders to 7; the Church at Langley, on the other hand, decided to increase the number of elders from 7 to 9. That there is an uneven number will be in connection with the special task which the clerk has, I presume.

The Church at Abbotsford "decided to discontinue the worship service on Ascension Day. The fact of Christ's ascension will be commemorated on the Sunday following that day."

And from the information provided by the Church at Chilliwack I learned that the contributions for the Mission Aid are \$48.63 per communicant member. I pass this on, also for the instruction of the members in Ontario who may think that \$30.00 per communicant member is quite steep. In the West they pay more than 1½ times that amount. Take into account that, generally, the wages are higher there — but so is the cost of living — and we may say: one-and-a-half times higher.

From the general news of the Valley we learn something about the troubles which the Rest Home Society is facing.

It was the intention to build on a property adjacent to that of the Langley Church and of the Highschool. Personally I found this property far too small. We should not build such a home unless we have ample acreage available. When we visited an old age home in Clearbrook many years ago, when we just started talking about such facilities, they had just built another wing onto it and deplored

the fact that they had only such limited acreage available. When it was pointed out to me last year where the rest-home was going to be built, I shook my head, for I am convinced that the space would be too cramped within a few years. However, let me tell you the problems the society is facing.

They have trouble getting a building permit for the property which they now hold. There is a "remote possibility to build but that will take a long time." Perhaps it is a blessing in disguise, when it comes to the point.

"In the mean time the Board is investigating in the Cloverdale area for property. The Baptist Church is not suitable for renovating to a Rest Home. The price for that property is about \$300,000.00 for 1.6 acres. It is not a bad location, close to church and stores in Cloverdale and a building permit is easier to obtain than in Langley, but the cost is a lot higher." I would say so!

Some cheerier news comes from the Providence Church in Edmonton. They purchased a parsonage to shelter the Van Beveren family after their arrival in that city. "I can report that the Christian Credit Union has approved our loan, as requested, for interest at 1½ % less than previously reported." There are always silver linings around the clouds.

Five hundred kilometers south we find Coaldale.

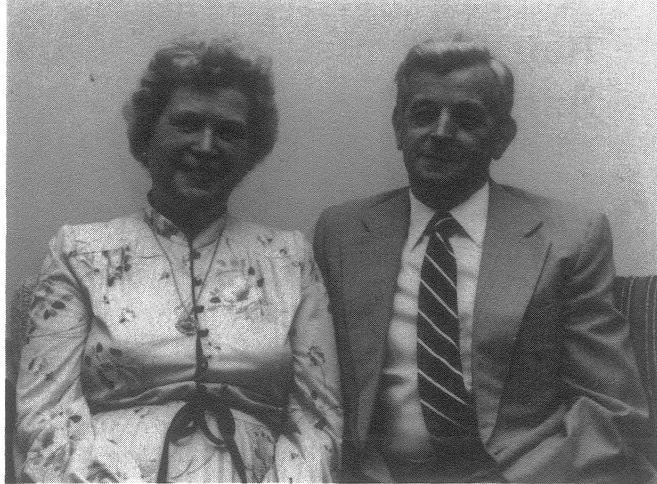
"Due to the enlarged council the existing arrangement for the elders is discussed. (It is) decided that only three elders will enter the church with the minister and the remaining part of council will enter the church before the singing of the first song; that the Council as a whole will start with prayer for the blessing over the service, that the elders that leave with the minister will close with thanksgiving after the last service of the day."

Perhaps the plans are not exactly as described in this quotation, but when I read this I had to think of services in a Netherlands Reformed Church which I attended sometimes during my holidays with relatives. There was an elder who came out first, gave the first song, after which he read the Ten Words, and Scripture reading, and while he was doing these things the minister appeared mysteriously through a door in the back of the pulpit. Thus the minister came later instead of being there right at the beginning of the service. As I said, I had to think of that when I read that in Coaldale "the remaining part of council will enter the church before the singing of the first song." Does the rest then come after the singing of the first song? Is it not the normal course that all the office-bearers enter before the start of the service? However, perhaps they have the custom of singing a song before the service starts, and meant to say that part enters before the pre-service song is sung, after which the "official part" enters and the service begins.

In a previous medley I mentioned the Vacation Bible Schools. In Coaldale the goal "of 50 children may well be surpassed as we already have 17 children from the community confirmed. An awful thought comes to mind, 'What if there are more children out there willing to learn than there are members of the congregation willing to teach?'"

Sorry that I have to let you jump all the way to Smithville, but that's how it is today.

From the Smithville bulletin of a few weeks ago I learned that the Rev. Cl. Stam underwent surgery: appendectomy, but everything is well, and he is back in full swing.



On June 26th, the Lord willing, Mr. and Mrs. J. Huizing (nee Oosterhof) hope to celebrate their 40th Wedding Anniversary with their children and grandchildren. They were married on June 26, 1942 in Enschede, Overijssel. In May 1954, they emigrated to Canada with 3 children and settled in Toronto, where another son was born. They still reside in Toronto. Both are in good health and enjoying retirement.



A very sad piece was the following.

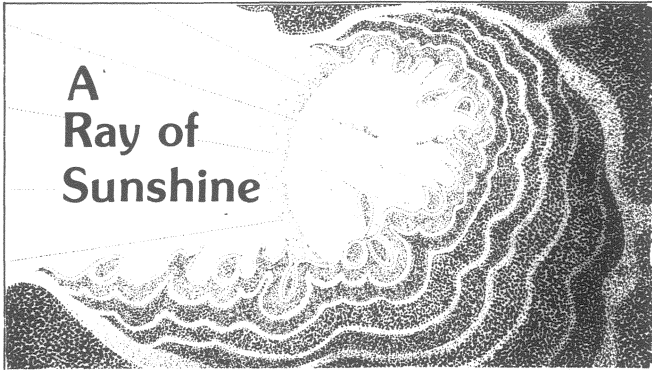
"Last Monday all the children brought home a letter about the John Calvin Women's Auxiliary Meeting on Thursday, May 6, 1982. At our meeting nine ladies were present of whom four were board members; this is from two congregations. Due to this extreme lack of interest we have hereby decided to dissolve the John Calvin Ladies' Auxiliary. We are very sorry we had to make this decision, but over the past few years the workload was left to a very few. We feel we cannot operate sufficiently."

I can well understand the frustration of our sisters in Lincoln-Smithville. I can also understand their decision to call it quits. Personally I have been more than once on the verge of doing so with the work for *Clarion*. Here, too, it appears that everything has to be done by very few people. One can send out pleas for help, but there are only very few who respond... they are mostly the same people all the time.

In the various bulletins it is very clear that our Ladies' Auxiliaries or whatever name they may bear do a tremendous amount of work from which the schools benefit most of all. Countless hours are spent in planning and organizing, in serving at weddings, at receptions, "manning" the stands on fairs and shopping malls, making things and selling them; and all this at no personal gain but only for the sake of the Church and the School. Thousands of dollars have been collected by our sisters and many things were made possible by their activities and endeavours which otherwise would have remained within the boundaries of the realm of dreams and pious wishes. I wish to salute our sisters openly and honourably and assure them that their work is greatly appreciated. I also express the wish that the Smithville-Lincoln decision may have been a salutary

— Continued on page 211.

A Ray of Sunshine



The following is a quotation from
The Art of Christian Living

by Ralph Heynen

The Power of Hope

Many books have been written about faith, and also about love, but few have been written about the other member of Paul's familiar triad — hope. It is, however, also one of the great vital powers of our lives.

The dictionary defines hope as "a feeling that what is wanted will happen, a desire accompanied by anticipation and expectation." Karl Menninger submitted the thought that "hope is an awareness of unconscious wishes which, like dreams, tend to come true."

A Frail Hope

In the literature and art of the world the thought of hope has often been minimized. The Greeks considered hope as an evil, for to them it was only an illusion, and a false one at that. The symbol used for hope was that of a frail girl, bending over a lyre. But this instrument which normally has seven strings, had only one string left. Hope is trying to pluck out a tune from this one remaining string.

In everyday language we often use the word hope in the same way. It is often said, "I don't expect it to happen, but I can still have hope." This is not using the word correctly. For hope is "a desire accompanied by anticipation."

There are many who have carried on in life, in spite of great difficulties, because they had a strong hope. We have often met people who have feelings of hopelessness. This is a tragic and devastating feeling. Life seems in vain and the prospect for the future is no brighter. The extreme feelings of hopelessness are found in depressive patients, especially those with suicidal feelings. In my experience, this is the worst suffering that man can endure.

We also know of people who, through the loss of hope, seemed to accelerate the arrival of death. If they lose their hope, they give up the fight for life, and this contributes to the loss of the battle.

Aware that hope is such a vital force in keeping the spark of life aglow, we can readily see that it is also an important power in our lives when we are healthy and in the thick of the battle. A hopeful approach is always a healthy one.

A Worthwhile Incentive

Hope affects us in our daily work. When there is

no incentive for improvement in the job we fill, we tend to trudge along, finding the routine of life tiresome and boring. But when a man is challenged by his work, he has something that drives him and gives joy to his tasks.

We all need something to draw us, to encourage us to do our best, to goad us to achieve greater heights. For this reason it is important to set goals for ourselves, something on which we can center our hopes. It may be taking a trip, or developing some hobby, or writing a book. We may never reach our goal, but it nevertheless gives something to shoot for.

There are numerous things that tend to dim our hopes. When we experience many setbacks and disappointments, or when we are often frustrated in reaching our ideals, we may lose some of our hopes. But try to be one of those people for whom "hope swells eternal in the human breast."

Christian Hope

Hope is a vital power in the Christian life also. To be sure, hope is a source of comfort as we walk the last mile of the road. But it is also a great consolation to those who are left behind. Yet hope does more than that. "Every one who has this hope set on Him purifieth himself, even as He is pure," says the Apostle John.

The hope of heaven inspires men to purify their hearts and lives. This is the loftiest incentive for a Christian life. It is this hope that inspired the martyrs to face "the tyrant's brandished steel, the lion's gory mane." It is this hope that enables men to give lives of wholehearted devotion and service. And it is this hope that enables them to overcome great obstacles and difficulties. For the eye of the Christian is fixed on the future — a future that is sure and steadfast in the Person of the unchanging Christ.

The God and Father of our Lord

Be blest for evermore.

Great is the mercy He has shown:

Him honour and adore!

He caused us to be born anew;

A living hope He gave

Through Jesus Christ, who rose again

Triumphant from the grave.

The inheritance in store for us

Is free from all decay;

It cannot spoil or be defiled;

It will not fade away.

It's safely kept in heaven for us

Whom God's own power will shield.

Till full salvation is at last

On His great Day revealed.

Hymn 28

Hymn Section of Book of Praise

* * * * *

Send your requests to:

Mrs. J.K. Riemersma

380 St. Andrew Street E.,

Fergus, Ontario N1M 1R1

NEWS MEDLEY — *Cont'd.*

shock which revived the patient and caused the Ladies' Auxiliary to be reorganized and to continue with renewed vigour.

That societies can be revived is clear from the Grand Rapids bulletin: "We are very happy to learn that the Band has started again." Sound the reveille! Sleepers, awake!

The Home Mission Committee in Brampton tells us that "The committee has organized the delivery of the Sermon series to 100 homes in the English and Main Street areas. Twelve sermons were delivered over a period of six months. A questionnaire was sent to the recipients whether they wished to continue receiving the sermons. The two positive responses will be followed up by committee members."

I am wondering whether the Sermon Series is meant or the pamphlets which are printed with the speeches given for the radio program "The Voice of the Church." I can hardly imagine that twelve sermons are delivered to 100 homes in a certain area. Apart from the fact that some vacant Churches might be burning with curiosity to know where the committee in Brampton got the twelve sermons, I do not think that it would be a good idea to distribute sermons. They are directed towards the Congrega-

tion and not towards outsiders. Thus I assume that the "radio speeches" are meant. However discouraging it may seem to be that only two out of a hundred replied in a positive sense, we are thankful already that there are two who answered in the affirmative. Even if one of them comes eventually to know the one true God and joins us in serving Him according to His Word all the efforts are well rewarded.

Speaking about the "radio speeches," I suddenly remember that there was sort of a promise from the Western ministers that they were going to exchange tapes. Or am I all that wrong in this? Until now I have not heard any contribution from them and I do listen quite regularly to the broadcasts. Recently we had five "re-runs" during the month of May. One of the speakers suddenly withdrew. "Too busy" you know. The time was too short to find a replacement. Things would have been different if we had had the promised exchange tapes. When are we going to get them? Perhaps this will also make it a little easier on some of us here.

Please ponder this question seriously during the next two weeks.

vO

PRESS RELEASE

of Classis Pacific of April 28, 1982, held in Cloverdale, B.C.

On behalf of the convening Church, the Church at Cloverdale, the Rev. J. Visscher opens the meeting. Upon his request we sing together from Ps. 107:1, 2, whereafter he reads from Colossians 1:1-20, and leads in prayer.

Rev. Visscher welcomes all the delegates. He remembers the fact that the Church at Chilliwack called Rev. J. Mulder, who declined and that Rev. C. VanSpronsen has a call from the Church at Orangeville. He hopes that a blessing may be received in these respects. He also notes that visas were received by Rev. and Mrs. Meijer, and that br. and sr. Souman arrived in Brazil as mission aid workers; both are surely reasons for gratitude.

The credentials were examined; it is reported that all Churches are duly represented. Classis is then constituted, with Rev. J. Geertsema as chairman, Rev. G.H. Visscher as vice-chairman, and Rev. J. Visscher as clerk. The agenda is discussed and adopted.

A letter is received from brothers assembling in the Okanagan Valley. They express their appreciation of the present arrangement with respect to preaching. Classis decides to continue this arrangement.

A report and a financial statement from the Classis Treasurer are read. Since the treasurer is present, some questions are addressed to him. He is thanked for his re-

port and for his willingness to do this work. It is decided to assess the Churches two dollars per communicant member.

The Church at Houston reports that the Archives of Classis are in good order.

The following appointments are then made:

a. *Committee for Examinations:* Exegesis O.T., Rev. C. VanSpronsen; Exegesis N.T., Rev. G.H. Visscher; Systematic Theology, Rev. D. VanderBoom; Symbolics, Rev. D. VanderBoom; Church History, Rev. M. VanderWel; Church Polity, Rev. M. VanderWel; Ethics, Rev. J. Visscher; Practical Theology, Rev. J. Visscher; Knowledge of Holy Scripture, Rev. J. Geertsema; Co-ordinators: Rev. D. VanderBoom and Rev. J. Visscher.

b. *Church Visitors:* Rev. D. VanderBoom (co-ordinator), Rev. M. VanderWel, Rev. C. VanSpronsen, Rev. J. Visscher. Alternates: Rev. J. Geertsema and Rev. G.H. Visscher.

c. *Church for taking care of Archives:* Church at Smithers.

d. *Church for Inspection of Archives:* Church at Houston.

e. *Treasurer:* br. P.A. VanEgmond.

f. *Church for auditing the books of the Treasurer:* Church at Surrey.

g. *Committee for Financial Aid to Students for the Ministry:* Rev. D. VanderBoom, Rev. M. VanderWel (convener), and br. K.F. Huttema.

h. *Committee for Needy Churches:* Bros. H.A. Berends (convener), G. Boeve, and R. Paize.

i. *Deputies for Preaching Arrangements:* Rev. D. VanderBoom and Rev. M.

VanderWel.

j. *Counsellor for Vacant Church at Chilliwack:* Rev. M. VanderWel.

k. *Delegates to Regional Synod:* As ministers, the Reverends D. VanderBoom, M. VanderWel, C. VanSpronsen, with J. Visscher, G.H. Visscher, and J. Geertsema as alternates. As elders, the brothers H.A. Berends, A.C. Lengkeek, G. Vane, with M. Vreugdenhil and J.F. deLeeuw as alternates.

Classis meets in closed session. During this time, the Churches at Abbotsford, Houston, and Smithers request and receive advice regarding matters of discipline and supervision.

The Church at Chilliwack requests the continuation of the present arrangement with respect to preaching. Classis grants this request.

No one makes use of the personal question period. Censure ad art. 43 of the Church Order is not necessary either. The Acts were read and adopted; the *Press Release* was read and approved.

The chairman makes a few closing remarks, requests that we sing together from Ps. 107:12, 17, and leads in prayer. Thereafter he closes the Classis.

For the Classis
G.H. VISSCHER, Vice-chairman

OUR COVER
Scenic photo courtesy
of Government of Manitoba.



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.

DJAKARTA (RES NE)

Less than four months after its publication, the first printing, 5000 copies, of a one-volume New Testament commentary in Indonesian was sold out. The publisher, Agape Press, has already received 100 orders for a second printing of this commentary which is a translation from the English. With its 90 percent Muslims, Indonesia is the world's largest Islamic State. Only four to five percent of the population is Protestant and the total Christian population is 10 percent.

SALISBURY, ZIMBABWE (RES NE)

As a part of an overall policy aimed at keeping the church out of government and politics, Prime Minister Robert Mugabe has asked the white Dutch Reformed Church in Zimbabwe, an offshoot of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa, to state publicly its policy on apartheid. The Prime Minister asked the churches to "stick strictly to worship." Zimbabwe President Canaan Banana has warned that the government would take stern measures against churches and "mischievous elements used by external forces to destabilize the country."

BALTIMORE, MD. (EP)

A leading Soviet writer has come under sharp attack for suggesting ever so timidly that there might be a God. Anthony Barbieri Jr., Moscow correspondent for the Baltimore Sun, reports that Vladimir A. Soloukhin, a famous Soviet poet and essayist who has been a member of the Communist Party for 30 years, expressed this view in a widely read literary journal last year

that "in the Twentieth Century, there is no doubt for every reasonable person that a supreme reason exists in the world, in the universe, in life."

According to Barbieri, the suggestion, as mild as it was, runs counter to the official state theology of the Soviet Union — atheism — and won Soloukhin a scolding from no less a journal than *Kommunist*, the theoretical and political monthly of the Soviet Communist Party. There may be worse in store for the writer, since *Kommunist* complained about the frequency of "god-creating and mystic subjects" in Soloukhin's work. (CC)

MOSCOW (LAT)

The Rev. Billy Graham spent more than an hour with the six Siberian Pentecostals living as refugees in the U.S. Embassy here. But they later expressed disappointment at Graham's visit.

The Pentecostals, members of a fundamentalist Christian group, took asylum in the Embassy nearly four years ago in an attempt to win exit visas from the Soviet Union. They said following Graham's visit that his aids had refused to let them be photographed with the evangelist, "even for a family album."

It was nothing special. It was as if we were visited by an ordinary pastor," Lyuba Vashcherko, one of the six refugees, told reporters later. She said he prayed with them and read biblical selections, mainly from the Book of Revelation, but declined to discuss their situation.

"He said he understood their situation. I asked what he will do when he goes back. He said he would call on people and ask them to pray." (KWR)

FEUCHTWANGEN-ST.ULRICH (PN-HR)

The Evangelical Church in West Germany shortly will appoint a second "Circus-pastor." Since 1975 the Rev. Gottfried Pangritz has been working as such. Presently his territory will be the South and South-West of the Federal Republic while his future colleague will work in the North.

The task of the "circus-pastor" is the pastoral care of all who are working in circuses and fairs. In 1981, the Rev. Pangritz spent 191 days travelling through the Federal Republic. In these 191 days he visited 25 circuses and 80 fairs, and so on. He conducted 44 services, baptized 38 children, solemnized

10 marriages and conducted 9 funerals of people who had been working in the circus-branch. The "congregation" of the Rev. Pangritz numbers 6000 paying members. (ND)

LONDON (RNS)

Archbishop Robert Runcie of Canterbury, spiritual leader of some 70 million Anglicans worldwide, said in a televised interview here that he dreamed of unity with Rome by the end of the century.

But he also envisaged "considerable difficulties" ahead for both churches in a unity move.

"I dream of unity with Rome and with the great Reform tradition and with the Orthodox by the end of the century, but we will have to get a move on, certainly, if that is our target," the archbishop said, "I don't see why we should not have that target." (CN)

WASHINGTON (RNS)

Leaders of the New Right pledged a "full scale campaign" for a tuition tax credit bill this year that protects private schools from "government harrassment."

The conditional endorsement came in a statement listing among others the country's two largest Christian school organizations and conservative leaders who have endorsed tuition credits in the past, but fear they will increase government supervision of private schools.

As proposed by Congress and the administration, tuition tax credits would go straight to parents of children enrolled in elementary and secondary private schools and not directly involve school administrators. Proposed dollar amounts of the credit range up to \$500 for each child, depending on the family's income. (CN)

ALHAMBRA, CA (PBC)

"Evangelist Oral Roberts was reported in good condition following eye surgery at Alhambra Community Hospital. After building his multi-million dollar hospital in Tulsa, Okla., one wonders why he went to California for his surgery. One also wonders why this great 'faith' healer couldn't get healing for himself as he often preaches to his followers. I am sure he will have a good explanation for his decision to have surgery in another hospital. We will be waiting for it." (CN)

vO

school X crossing

A. School Focus

This month, the John Calvin School (Smithville, Ont.) is featured.

The school opened in 1964 with 104 students and 3 teachers. The number of students increased rapidly, due to the fact that families moved into the area in order to send their children to a reformed school.

Within a few years, the school had 7 teachers and more classroom space in the basement of the church. Due to a continued increase in enrollment, the school society voted in favour of a new addition — 4 classrooms, a new staffroom and a library. By this time, the number of students stood at 244. This necessitated the appointment of an 8th teacher. At the moment, the enrollment of the John Calvin School stands at 210. The number of teachers who have taught in Smithville since 1964 is 39.

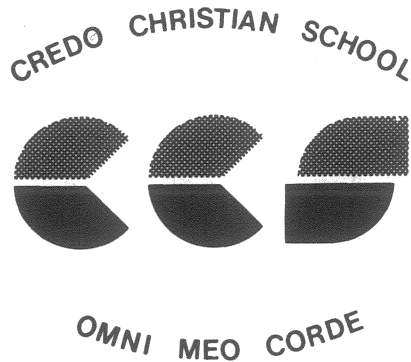
During the last 7 years the school was able to carry out an extensive remedial program which according to the principal, has had much success. The John Calvin School has also received much help for various projects from the Ladies Aid Auxiliary.

Mr. VanderVelde, the school's principal since 1964, will retire this year. He started his teaching career in Holland, in June 1939. Mr. VanderVelde served as teacher and as principal of several schools before coming to Canada. During his years in Smithville he did his work quietly and efficiently — very much concerned about the welfare of the students as well as the aims and goals of a Canadian Reformed School. We will miss him at our Principals' Club meetings and our Conventions. Although his frequent remarks and comments at these gatherings left some of us uneasy at first, I soon realized (once I got to know him) that whatever he did or said, was motivated by a genuine desire to serve the Lord in the field of education. Martin, may the Lord bless you and your wife in your retirement years!

B. School Crests

Three more crests were mailed to me during the past few weeks. The

first one comes from the Credo Christian School of Brampton-Toronto. It was just recently adopted by the School Board. The Latin words mean

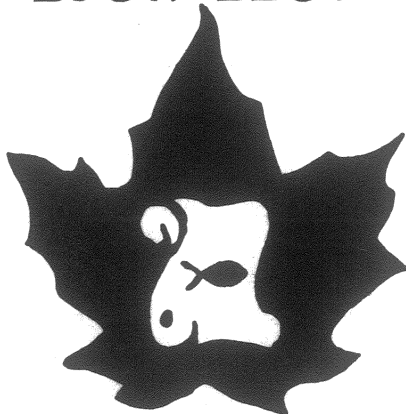


"... with all my heart." Since CREDO means "I believe," the school crest announces a confession that we may live and speak in humility and gratitude. The lettering will be in royal blue on a complimentary orange background. The new name of the school's newsletter is the Credo Courier.

In Chatham, the students of the Ebenezer Canadian Reformed School were all given a chance to draw what they thought should be the school crest. Three of the best submissions were combined into one crest. The symbolism:

- (i) Fish — Christianity.
- (ii) Scroll — Scriptures.
- (iii) Maple Leaf — Chatham — Maple City of Ontario.

Eben Ezer



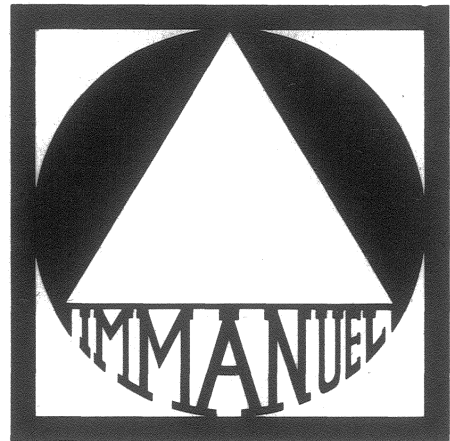
Chatham

The school's name *Eben Ezer* is the name given by Samuel to the stone set up by him in commemoration of the victory of the Israelites; hence any memorial of divine help and deliverance (I Sam. 7:12)

The third submission comes from Winnipeg. The school's logo contains the following symbolism:

- the triangle — the Triune God.
- the circle — eternity or endlessness.
- the square — man, as well as the four corners of the earth.

The Triune God is central to everything and the Immanuel, the "God with us" stands forever (part of the circle). Our activities are dominated by



the eternal council of the Triune God — man is nothing (blank) without the Messiah. Mr. D. Teitsma is the designer of this logo.

C. A Good School Bulletin

Dozens of school bulletins have ended up on my desk during the last number of months. After a while, one tends to build up impressions about certain schools from the contents of a school bulletin. This simply reiterates the fact that school bulletins are very important communication tools — not only for the local school community, but even more so for the Canadian Reformed community at large. I would like to offer the following observations:

- (i) The appearance is very important. Bulletins which are easily folded three or four times for mailing purposes and contain no official

cover, do not match up to those that have attractive covers which are well-designed. Under the same heading of "appearance," the reader is often motivated (positively or negatively) by the way the bulletin was typed. Single spaced articles run off on (perhaps) faulty Gestetner machines, and coming from old typewriters do not receive the attention from the reader which they perhaps should.

(ii) The content of a bulletin is not less important of course. It seems to me that parents first of all want to read about the school's activities. Some suggestions could be as follows:

— The principal's report should have a prominent place (not somewhere on page 6 or 7!). His report should include a "bird's-eye" view of the various school activities which marked the previous month. It should remind parents of events which are coming up. The principal should also include some thought-provoking items concerning education in his report.

— Each staff member should write periodically an article of interest. This article should be professionally written, leave the reader with something to think about and preferably should not be much more than one page in length.

— Reports from board meetings have their place in school bulletins; however, if they are so vague that each month the same report can be given, then the purpose should be questioned. It's quite obvious that the chairman opened the meeting with Bible reading and prayer, followed by a scrutiny of the minutes, a review of the principal's report, as well as reports from various committees. However, this format leaves most readers in the dark. (One further point — there is no *president* of a school society. A president heads a corporation such as General Motors and has a tremendous personal power of decision-making. He usually earns a six-digit salary. A school board has a *chairman* — one who guides and leads meetings, but not one who dominates).

— Contributions from students should be included. The best format for the staff is to make up a schedule so that all grades have a

turn and perhaps could make contributions according to a theme.

— Other interesting features which could be added:

- a parent's corner.
- a monthly curriculum overview.
- periodic write-ups on a teacher — especially those who came to the school recently.
- Bulletins should be issued on a regular basis, preferably on a fixed, monthly date.

D. News from the Schools

The following anecdote sounds all too familiar in our schools when some volunteer work needs to be done.

(a) Here's a story about four people named EVERYBODY, SOMEBODY, ANYBODY, and NOBODY.

There was an important job to be done and EVERYBODY was asked to do it. EVERYBODY was sure SOMEBODY would do it. ANYBODY could have done it, but NOBODY did it... SOMEBODY got very angry about that because it was EVERYBODY's job... EVERYBODY thought ANYBODY could do it, but NOBODY realized that EVERYBODY wouldn't do it... It ended up that EVERYBODY blamed SOMEBODY when NOBODY did what ANYBODY could have done... (which one am I? ...)

From the Ebenezer
Canadian Reformed School
Smithers, B.C.

(b) All schools experience periodic problems with student behaviour on school buses. Perhaps the following list of rules from the Parkland Immanuel Christian School (Edmonton) is helpful:

School Bus Rules

1. Passengers must be seated at all times when school bus is in motion.
2. The emergency exit (rear door) shall not be used except in emergencies.
3. Passengers must at all times keep their bodies or extensions of their bodies (arms, legs, head) completely within the school bus.
4. There shall be no loud or annoying noise which may distract the school bus driver's attention.
5. There shall be no consumption

of food, gum, or beverages on the school bus.

6. No litter is to be left on school bus or thrown from the school bus. School bus driver will hold passengers responsible for cleaning up litter left by them.
7. No fighting or disturbances of any kind is permitted on school bus.
8. No feet are allowed on seats or backrests.
9. Passenger seating is arranged by bus driver.
10. Passengers or parents of passengers will be held responsible for damage done to the school bus.
11. Passengers shall enter the school bus by the front door only.
12. When school bus has reached its destination and come to a complete stop, passengers shall leave the school bus by front door only.
13. Passengers are not to ride school buses other than the one to which they have been assigned. Exceptions will be considered (for after school birthday parties, etc.) if requests have been made at least one day prior to the event, and permission is granted by school bus driver. Regular school bus driver must also be notified of this change.
14. Parents of passengers shall notify school bus driver of absentees of passengers prior to route departure.
15. All passengers are to be dressed to suit weather conditions (cold, rain, etc.)
16. The school bus driver has the authority to enforce the rules of the bus. If a passenger persists in behaviour contrary to the rules, and having been admonished, the bus driver will inform the Transportation Committee Convener, who in turn will confront the parents with the passenger's misbehaviour. If the wrongdoings persist the passenger will no longer be transported for the duration of one week, and penalty will double for each offence thereafter.
17. Some of the above rules were obtained from the Alberta Highway Traffic Act and can be enforced by law. If not adhered to by passengers, local law enforcements could levy a fine to the bus driver. This fine will be-

come the responsibility of passengers or parents of passenger who is the cause of this offence.

- (c) A spirited dialogue was found in the school bulletin of the Dufferin Area Christian School (Orangeville)

The following conversation between two fishermen was printed on a poster and hung up in a classroom.

Hiyamac.
Lobuddy.
Binearlong?
Coplour.
Cetachenenny?
Goddafew.
Kindarthy?
Bassencarp.
Ennysizetoom?
Cuplapowns.
Hittinhard?
Sordalike.
Wahchoozin?
Gobbawurms.
Fishanoneboddum?
Rydononaboddum.
Watchadrinkin?
Jugajimbeam.
Igodago.
Tubad.
Seeyaroun.
Yeatakideezy.
Guluck.

During a P.T.A. meeting a parent studied the poster for a while and stated, "Now I understand why kids today speak the way they do. It's that new grammar you're teaching these days!"

- (d) Planning a program for any small high school can be very difficult due to limited finances, lack of teacher expertise or facilities. The *Credo Chronicle* (Langley, B.C.) seems to echo this.

A number of parents have approached us with concerns about students who don't seem to "fit" into our academic or business programs. Time and again, the question of Industrial Education is surfaced in the community. To say that "we're working on it" is perhaps small comfort to those whose children continue to apply subtle pressures at home. However, we can assure you that this question does have our attention, because we too recognize in some of our students a frustration that comes from trying to achieve beyond ones level of ability. This frustration is often translated into

unacceptable behaviour. But, indeed we would like to suggest . . . in a most emphatic way . . . that this problem does have our attention and that of the board. We believe that our education needs to provide learning experiences for *all* our covenant youth, regardless of their ability. In the coming year, we would like to begin to translate these principles into concrete action. More will be written about this as our options are further investigated.

- (e) The selection of good books is a difficult task for our parents and teachers. Miss Hutten, teacher at the Ebenezer Canadian Reformed School (Chatham) offers the following helpful suggestions:

Choosing a book

Since we base our lives on the Word of God, *that* must be our first choice for reading. How do we use it to choose and deal with other books?

- A. Choosing and dealing with a book for Junior High School Literature Class.

The book must be an enjoyable one which develops the comprehension and vocabulary of the students by use of the devices we have previously dealt with. The book must state a view of life, and not necessarily a Christian one. With proper guidance, students will be able to pick it out. The author's viewpoint within the plot must be plainly visible so that with study and discussion the student is made aware of its acceptability, or lack of it in the light of God's Word. The presence of sin in a book, e.g. swear words, or a murder case, do not necessarily rule the book out. That does not mean, of course, that the book would be chosen because of that particular sin. It does mean that the student is exposed to a certain extent to the godless world we live in. Here again, proper guidance must be provided so that sin is shown as displeasing to our Lord. The student, then, can use what he learns to live a life in full service to God.

- B. Help the child choose a book. (Parents and Teachers)

Since our role as parents and teachers is to teach our children to find and enjoy the riches of a life in service to God and to reject what is unworthy of Him, we must realize our great responsibility. A

child's years are very important. They are the formative years and impressions are carried on to maturity. A book for a child can have great influence and parents must be aware of what type of book their children read. A child should read according to his level of maturity. Every child is different and parents must be aware of his or her capabilities. Close eye must be kept on what children read because there is a lot of junk on the market. Periodic discussions with children about a book, to make sure they understand the author's viewpoint etc. are important. One particular book should not be forced because then reading becomes a chore. Limits such as age limits, however, can be set and books can be suggested. As this is a difficult task, I recommend the book *Honey For A Child's Heart* by Gladys Hunt. This book has articles on reading for children and also a list of suggested reading material.

A general positive attitude in the household, and at school, toward reading, is very effective. One way of accomplishing this is allowing for time to read, and reading aloud. It causes contact in the family and a general feeling of well-being. It also provides a beautiful excuse to discuss a book. Another way is by limiting TV watching. There are undoubtedly many other ways but I think by now it is clear that reading literature is definitely part of our stewardship. Let us then prayerfully take care what and how we read.

E. *The Next Issue . . .*

One more School Crossing column will appear in *Clarion* before the summer vacation. Some of the topics which will be dealt with are:

- (a) "The Annual Headache" — a final presentation of letters which have been received, plus some personal comments.
- (b) "Graduation — 1982" — an overview of what the various elementary schools in Ontario do in this respect. (That is, if the questionnaires which were mailed out some time ago, are returned to me).

Until next time!

NICK VANDOOREN

Letter-to-the-Editor

Dear Editor:

In the March 26, 1982, issue of *Clarion*, there appears in the "News Medley" a series of statements that are misleading and damaging to the reputation of our teachers.

It is true that the existing procedure of yearly contracts is not the best system. Many teachers would prefer a permanent contract after two years of teaching. This would imply a suitable length of time for both the board and teacher to terminate the bond. However, the implication that getting rid of yearly contracts will allow "... the advertising revenues of *Clarion* (to) suffer ..." is entirely incorrect. The large number of advertisements is due to the large demand for teachers, but a relatively low supply. The "anxiety and uncertainty" occurs when school boards in January would like their teachers to make decisions about their future for the following September. The boards are often forced to apply this unwanted pressure so that they can have first pick at the limited number of teachers available to fill vacancies.

Why is the yearly contract still in place? Let us assure you that it is *not* because we teachers have pushed for it. On the contrary, permanent contracts would provide the security to teachers that presently is limited. However, only the local school boards, represented in the League of Canadian Reformed School Societies, can change this. So far, this has not been done.

We also view with great dismay the inaccurate musings of the "News Medley" in making the following statement:

"Why do people have a contract for a year ... and why don't they want one for five years? Because then they have lost their lever which may sway the boards or employers into the direction of granting higher salary increases, with the stick behind the door of strike action, picketing, etc."

Yes, you are wrong in thinking that this is the background of the yearly contract negotiations. Resisting a similar use of offensive hyperbole, we offer the following:

- 1) The Salary Committee appointed by the League is responsible for drawing up the final salary grid and contract suggestions for their member schools. This system is the result of a voluntary agreement among school boards. The C.R.T.A. sends two delegates which have some input to this Salary Committee, but have no direct say in the final report.
- 2) Each school society has the freedom to amend the details of the Salary Report,

although most follow it closely. Involvement of teachers in salary discussions at local schools is limited or non-existent.

- 3) Even though the financial situation of the supporting community must be kept in mind, both the League and the C.R.T.A. agree that teachers' salaries must be a fair reflection of the training and experience required for the profession.

In conclusion, we regret that these potentially damaging phrases appeared in the "News Medley." They do not reflect the continued effort by the C.R.T.A. and the League to develop salary procedures based on mutual trust.

On behalf of the Canadian Reformed Teachers' Association in Ontario,
MR. A. GUNNINK, Chairman
MR. H. VAN DOOREN, Vce-Chairman

RESPONSE

Dear Brothers,

Why are some of our teachers so upset about my remarks that even an official letter on behalf of the Canadian Reformed Teachers' Association of Ontario was deemed necessary?

I re-read what I wrote but cannot see how from what I wrote the idea can be derived that I claimed that *our teachers* do not want a permanent contract and that *they* wish to have the stick of strikes behind the door of the conference and negotiating room.

What did I endeavour to argue?

I compared the practice of yearly contracts with the situation as I knew it in the old country and in British Columbia: permanent appointments, perhaps after a trial period of one or two years.

I asked, "What is behind *the* (not: our teachers') practice of yearly contracts?"

I am convinced that the background is what I see in the world of labour relations all around us: the strike weapon as the ultimate means of compelling the employer to grant ever-higher wages. Our teachers' association's flat but unsubstantiated denial of this conclusion fails to shed a different light on the question.

I asked, "Should we not shy away from such practices?"

Since the background of yearly contracts is such, should we not distance ourselves from it and abandon the (most likely innocently and inadvertently taken over) practice as found all around us and come to a more permanent relationship?

I still am not convinced that I was wrong in describing the background of yearly contracts.

The Teachers' Association is wrong in assuming that I saw this background with our teachers as well.

vO

PRESS RELEASE

of the Canadian Reformed Teachers' College Association meeting of the Executive Committee held April 16, 1982.

The meeting was opened with reading from Hebrews 11 and prayer. After the minutes were read and adopted with minor change, the agenda was established.

Incoming and outgoing mail was first on the agenda. A letter regarding the arrangement of transportation in cooperation with Timothy Canadian Reformed School was received.

Our Treasurer presented his report to the meeting. During the last few months our expenses have exceeded our income. However, there is no reason for great concern. Some income is yet expected. Thankfulness was expressed for the faithful and continued support.

Various matters from the Principal's Report were discussed and dealt with. It appears that next year we will have a minimum of 12, maximum of 19 students. It seems likely that we will begin our one-year programme next year. A descriptive report of Mr. VanderVen's visit to the West, and the calendar for the 1982/83 school year were other items from the report.

In order to alleviate some of the work load of our board secretary a recording secretary was appointed. H. Homan will continue as corresponding secretary.

After suggestions were made for the next meeting, the meeting was adjourned with prayer.

The Executive,
C.R.T.C.A.



CALLED to Carman, Man.:
REV. J. DEJONG
of London, Ont.

CORRECTION: Yearbook 1982
Canadian Reformed Churches,
p. 15:

Immigration: A. Zuidhof,
Somerset Towers, Apt. 211,
2045 Carling Ave.,
Ottawa, Ont. K2A 1G5,
Phone: 722-1562

our little magazine

Dear Busy Beavers,

Here are the 2 stories about GOOLY I received.
I think you'll like them!

Both the writers deserve a little reward, don't you think?

GOOLY

by Busy Beaver *Cynthia Eenkhoorn*

(A story with two endings!)

Gooly is going to a baseball game today with his friends. He likes playing baseball and is good at playing outfielder.

He's up at bat. Whack! a nice hit. But second base caught it and he's out.

"Too bad, Gooly," his friends say.

"But it doesn't matter," says the coach.

Soon the next team gets up at bat, and it's close to the end of the game.

They need to get to bat for some points!

Gooly's team got two of them out, but you need three.

Uh - oh, it's Wes the Whacker!

He always hits home runs.

But there's only 15 minutes left.

Wes is at bat. He swings.

"Strike!" yells the ump.

The other team is worried because he usually hits straight off.

He's ready. Whack!

The ball is flying right for Gooly. He *needs* to catch it.

"I got it, I got it" he says!

Ending #1: But did he catch it?

Ending #2: Gooly caught it, they're up at bat, and he's the hero!



GOOLY

by Busy Beaver *Paul Kuntz*

Gooly was a member of the Busy Beaver Club. One day he invited some friends to his house. They were: Booly, Mooly, Hooly and Kooly.

Gooly started to tell them about the Busy Beaver Club. He told them that it was a fun club with riddles and jokes. And then it was a nice club because there were quizzes and games and contests. And then he told them that you also learned a little about the Bible and names, places, times etc. from the Bible.

Gooly's friends weren't hesitant at all! They joined the Club right away and they all sent in riddles and puzzles and pictures!

* * *

GOOLY is a cartoon character made by Busy Beaver *Les Haan*.

Don't you think it's time to have another

Cartoon and Picture Contest?

Draw or make whatever you like: cartoons of animals or people, pictures, cards, designs!

Whatever you like doing most!

Do your very best. Give the other Busy Beavers some competition!

Send your cartoons, pictures, etc. to:

Aunt Betty

Box 54,

Fergus Ontario

N1M 2W7

* * *

Now it's high time for birthday wishes!

To all those Busy Beavers celebrating a June birthday we wish a very, very happy day with all your favourite things. But most important we wish you God's blessing and guidance in the brand new year ahead of you. Happy Birthday! Many happy returns of the day!

Henry Dekker	June 1
Doane de Witt	2
Gerrilynn Huizinga	3
Marcelle Lindhout	3
Harold Dykstra	4
Arlene Buist	6
Carina Ploeger	10
Calvin Lodder	11
Julia Huttema	12
Jason Klaver	13
Pauline Leffers	14
Linda Van Dyk	14
Cheryl Hansma	17
Sheryl Boes	20
Jacob Jongs	20
Debbie Medemblik	21
Joyce Dalhuizen	21
Marianne Bergsma	22
Joyce De Gelder	23
Lynda Van Middelkoop	24
Karen Gay Barendregt	26
Pauline Lodder	26
Miriam Vanderwerf	26
Cathy Dalhuizen	28
Debbie De Boer	28
Harold Jansen	28